

Welcome to TurkoTek's Discussion Forums

[Archived Salons and Selected Discussions](#) can be accessed by clicking on those words, or you can return to the [Turkotek Home Page](#). Our forums are easy to use, and you are welcome to read and post messages without registering. However, registration will enable a number of features that make the software more flexible and convenient for you, and you need not provide any information except your name (which is required even if you post without being registered). Please use your full name. We do not permit posting anonymously or under a pseudonym, *ad hominem* remarks, commercial promotion, comments bearing on the value of any item currently on the market or on the reputation of any seller.

[Turkotek Discussion Forums](#) > [Rugs and Old Masters: An Essay Series](#) > 2.
[Geometric Rugs in Early Renaissance Paintings](#)

Reminiscence of fourteenth century Il-khanid rugs in eighteenth century Iranian ones?

Welcome, [Filiberto Boncompagni](#).

You last visited: September 14th, 2012 at 09:17 AM
[Private Messages](#): Unread 0, Total 2.

[User CP](#)

[Register](#)

[FAQ](#)

[Calendar](#)

[New Posts](#)

[Search](#)

[Quick Links](#)

[Log Out](#)



Page 1 of 2 [1](#) [2](#) >

[View First Unread](#)

[Thread Tools](#) [Search this Thread](#) [Display Modes](#)

April 12th,
2012, 08:39
PM

#1

[Pierre](#)

[Galafassi](#)

Members

Join Date: Oct
2009
Posts: 45

[Reminiscence of fourteenth century Il-khanid rugs in eighteenth century Iranian ones?](#)

Hi all,

Even though the first Persian miniatures were created to illustrate technical or scientific manuscripts, from the Seldjuk school of Baghdad onward (eleventh century), attention to detail, naturalistic rendition of people, clothes and objects were rarely considered priorities by miniaturists when illustrating literary plots and their pigments (gold, lapis lazuli, cinnabar etc..) were often brighter than life.

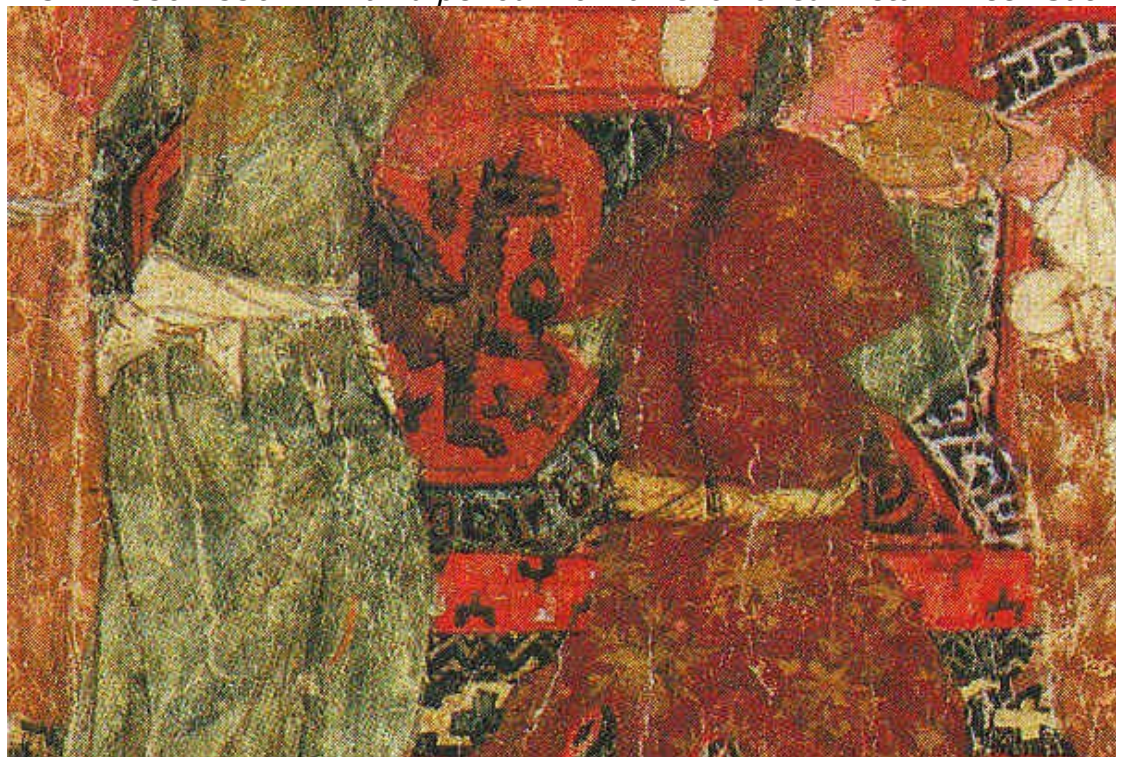
Thus any ruggie looking for good examples of Seldjuk- or Timurid- rugs in miniatures should take their representation cum grano salis.

However, there are some examples of perfectly credible rugs, especially in miniatures painted during the late Il-khanid period (school of Tabriz). We have already shown two such cases in the Salon «Animal-rugs in old masters paintings».

FIG 1. 1330-1340. Il-khanid period. The bier of Iskander. Tabriz. Freer-Sackler.



FIG 2. 1330-1336. Il-khanid period. Zohnak enthroned. Detail. Freer-Sackler.



It is quite possible that both Il-khanid miniatures below also give a realistic representation of a type of fourteenth century turco-mongol rug, characterized by a narrow border and a field of regular «waves».

FIG 3. 1300-1325. Il-khanid period. Birth of Ghazan. Stadtsbibliothek Berlin.



FIG 4. 1300-1340. Il-khanid period. Ghazan reading the Koran. Stadtsbibliothek Berlin.



This, otherwise unknown, field of «waves» might have survived in two extant rugs, both dated from the eighteenth century, which H. Kirchheim and al. (1) tentatively attribute to northwestern Iran.

FIG 5. North western Iran. Eighteenth century. H Kirchheim.(1)





FIG 6. North western Iran. Eighteenth century. H Kirchheim.(1)



Best regards
Pierre

(1) *Orient Stars*. H. Kirchheim. Pages 120-121 (text) and 150-151 (pictures)



April 19th, 2012,
08:54 PM

#2

[Pierre Galafassi](#)

Members

Join Date: Oct 2009
Posts: 45



Hi all,
Another Il-khanid miniature featuring a rug with «waved» field has surfaced:

FIG. Ilkhanid period. Tabriz. 1300-1320. Hulagu Khan and wife Doquz



I feel it necessary to comply with Rugdom's respected tradition of harebrained theories with no trace of a proof:
All three waved rugs enjoy the honor of an Il-Khan ruler's backside sitting on them.

This particular motif might have had a special meaning for Mongol rulers. Something about the good old times on the shores of the Orkhon ?

Please note that these are no mere waves, there is a strange little appendix too. Anybody has a good idea explaining it?

The border of the third rug contains signs which look suspiciously like writing to me (No provocation intended Horst). Anybody familiar with Uyghur or Mongol script here?

Regards
Pierre



April 19th, 2012, 11:10 PM

#3

[George Potter](#)



Members

Join Date: Nov 2009
Posts: 2

Pierre

The waves could be something like the image below, labeled (Kirchheim "Seljuk" fragment) at the American Conference on Oriental Rugs - ACOR 7



Regards,

George



April 20th, 2012, 12:18 AM

#4


[Pierre Galafassi](#)

Members

Join Date: Oct 2009
Posts: 45



Hi George,

Indeed it looks extremely similar! Excellent. 

Let's indulge in the delights of pure speculation now:

- Why would Mongol rulers enjoy sitting on Seldjuk (Oghuz turks) rugs?
- Rugs which the local moths should have finished munching for some time, by the way.
- Oghuz turks were not (unless I err) part of Hulagu's Turco-Mongol army, the Seldjuk of Rum certainly were cut to little pieces by Hulagu and Co.
- Could these Il-khanide miniatures create a doubt about the identification of the fragment as "seldjuk" ?

Best regards
Pierre



April 20th, 2012, 09:47 AM

#5

[Filiberto](#)
[Boncompagni](#)

Administrator

Join Date: May 2008
Location: Cyprus
Posts: 32



Hi Pierre,

Quote:

Could these Il-khanide miniatures create a doubt about the identification of the fragment as "seldjuk" ?

Mmmmh. Maybe...
Regards,

Filiberto



April 20th, 2012, 02:38 PM

#6

[Pierre Galafassi](#)

Members

Join Date: Oct 2009
Posts: 45



By the way, I just noticed that FIG 2 (Zohnak enthroned) too shows a "wave" motif, although not in the field but in the rug border. (The dark blue border just below the red one (reminiscent of a "leaf and wineglass border").

Martin once complained that he was starting to see the word Allah (in Kufic) everywhere, I fear that I have caught a similar illness (seeing waves). Let's hope it is curable.

Best
Pierre



April 20th, 2012, 02:53 PM

#7

[Steve Price](#)

Administrator

Join Date: May 2008
Posts: 55



Hi Pierre

Seeing waves in rug designs isn't a problem and needs no cure. If you start seeing waves that move around, be very afraid.

Regards

Steve Price



April 20th, 2012, 10:09 PM

#8

[Pierre Galafassi](#)

Members

Join Date: Oct 2009
Posts: 45



Quote Steve Price. *"If you start seeing waves that move around, be very afraid"*

Ooops, I planned to spend the next vacation on the west coast (of France) but you might be right, let's go to Switzerland instead.



May 24th, 2012, 05:14 PM

#9

[Pierre Galafassi](#)

Members

Join Date: Oct 2009
Posts: 45



Hi all,

FIG 1, FIG 2, FIG 3 show some more extant rugs from the seventeenth- to the nineteenth century, all featuring «wave» motifs and, again, woven in the northwestern part of Iran.

Am I wrong thinking that this particular rug motif is not frequent in other regions?

The major Il-Khanid school of miniature painting was based in northwestern Iran too (Tabriz).

This could be a mere coincidence, but could just as well indicate that the Il-khanid miniature-painters took their inspiration from rugs which were popular in northwestern Iran at the time (imported by the turco-mongol conquerors or indigenous), which motifs remained in fashion during several centuries.

FIG 1. Northwestern Iran. XVII XVIII. V & A museum




FIG 2. Northwestern Iran fragment . XVIII. 258X110



FIG 3. Northwestern Iran. XVIII XIX. 556X233. MET





Best regards
Pierre



May 24th, 2012, 05:47 PM

#10

[Filiberto Boncompagni](#)
Administrator

Join Date: May 2008
Location: Cyprus
Posts: 32



Hi Pierre,

As far as I know, the carpets in your last post represent gardens, and the "waves" part should represent watercourses...

<http://www.metmuseum.org/toah/works-of-art/67.156>

Regards,

Filiberto



May 24th, 2012, 10:39 PM

#11

[Pierre Galafassi](#)
Members

Join Date: Oct 2009
Posts: 45



Hi Filiberto,

Yes, it is indeed highly likely that the waves in these rugs were meant to represent water in a garden. IMHO it is also possible that water was represented in the Il-khanid rugs. As we know, water plays an important role for Arabs and Persians, as shown by their poetry, architecture, gardens and even by their idea of paradise. It would seem logical to think that the same was true for other central asian populations as well, especially nomads and oasis dwellers.

Best regards
Pierre



May 25th, 2012, 06:33 PM

#12

[Filiberto Boncompagni](#)
Administrator

Join Date: May 2008
Location: Cyprus
Posts: 32



Hi Pierre,

Waves must be certainly the most universal way to symbolize water. I accept zig-zag lines as "stylized waves" without problem as well.

Fact is that two of the Ilkhanid miniatures show also those devices on the tops of the outer corners of the zig-zags. I don't know what they are nor what they mean but they detract a bit from the idea of symbolizing water, that is... 🤔

Regards,

Filiberto



May 25th, 2012, 08:52 PM

#13

[Pierre Galafassi](#)



Members

Join Date: Oct 2009
Posts: 45

Right.

I haven't a clue what this little hook on the "waves" was supposed to mean. 😞



June 20th, 2012,
02:49 PM

#14

[Pierre Galafassi](#)



Members

Join Date: Oct 2009
Posts: 45

Hi all,

Two more examples of Il-khanid rugs with the «wave» field-motif in fourteenth century miniatures, can be seen in J.L. Cowen's beautiful book «Kalila wa Dimna: An allegory of the Mongol Court».

One can safely assume that this type of rug was real and popular in Il-khanid Persia. Perhaps especially in the Tabriz area.

Both rugs feature a kufic-like border.

Cowen calls the «wave» field-motif «Seldjuk», but does not give the reasons for this attribution. It is likely that the author means the «Great Seldjuk» dynasty of Iran, which was destroyed by Kwaresm, which rulers were in turn defeated by Gengis Khan's Turco-mongol armies a few decades later. And not the «Seldjuk of Rum» dynasty which ruled over part of Anatolia from its capital in Konya (and was also terminated by the Gengiskhanids).

FIG 1 Il-khanid period. Tabriz. 1330-1340. Father teaching his sons. Kalila wa Dimna. Istanbul.



FIG 2 Il-khanid period. Tabriz. 1330-1340. The guest beats the mouse. Kalila wa Dimna. Istanbul.



Regards

Pierre



August 5th, 2012, 09:04
PM

#15

[Pierre Galafassi](#)



Members

Join Date: Oct 2009
Posts: 45

Hi all,

Eventually, an extant rug has surfaced (FIG 1) with a field featuring «waves» which are identical to the fragment (labelled «Seldjuk» by Kirrcheim) posted in this thread by George Potter and reasonably similar to the rugs illustrated in our handful of Il-khanid miniatures («waves with hook»).


FIG 1. Eastern Anatolia Kurdish. Kagizman area. Mid-nineteenth century. 260X112.





The extant rug is given by Zipper and C. Fritsche (Oriental rugs Volume 4, Turkish, page 188), as being from Eastern Anatolia (Kagizman area), woven by Kurds and dated from about the middle of the nineteenth century. Unfortunately, the authors do not explain the reasons of this rather precise attribution, which, if taken at face value, would support the hypothesis of the home of this very rare motif being situated in an area covering northwestern Persia, eastern Anatolia and southeastern Caucasus. An area which was under direct control of the Il-khanid rulers of Persia during nearly a century. And before that, for quite a while also under control of the Great Seljuk Persian dynasty. If the date (mid-nineteenth century) can be trusted, this extant rug is not very likely to have been inspired by mere commercial considerations. Also the rarity of the motif makes this option rather unlikely.

Of course the survival of such a rare motif during four centuries would be puzzling.

Apart from its (field-) analogy with fourteenth century Il-khanid rugs, this extant piece also carries border motifs which are surely more frequent in Turkmen rugs than in Anatolian ones. The well known *sainak* and the «hexapod» found in *onurga-* (or is it *temirchin?*-) *guls*.

Borrowed by the (hypothetical) Kurdish weavers, I guess.

Best regards
Pierre



September 11th, 2012,
09:29 AM

#16

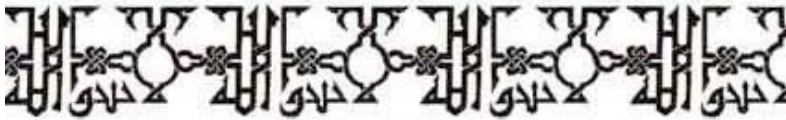
[Martin Andersen](#)
Members

Join Date: Jul 2008
Posts: 4



Hi All

I am just looking around in this highly interesting series of essays and discussions. And can't escape my narrow tunnel vision on the kufic border. With no intention to highjack this tread, I can't help putting in a note regarding "The guest beats the mouse"-rug. As Pierre has pointed out the border looks kufic, and to me it looks very directly related to how the kufic border ended up in the caucasian versions:



best
Martin

Last edited by Martin Andersen; September 11th, 2012 at 09:57 AM.



September 11th, 2012,
02:52 PM

#17

[Steve Price](#)

Administrator

Join Date: May 2008
Posts: 55



Hi Martin

I don't want to inhibit discussion of this very interesting subject, but I have inside information that an essay outlining the timeline of development of kufic borders will appear within a few days. For that reason, it might be easier and less awkward to delay following up on this for a short time.

Regards

Steve Price



September 12th,

#18

2012, 12:48 PM

[Martin Andersen](#)
Members

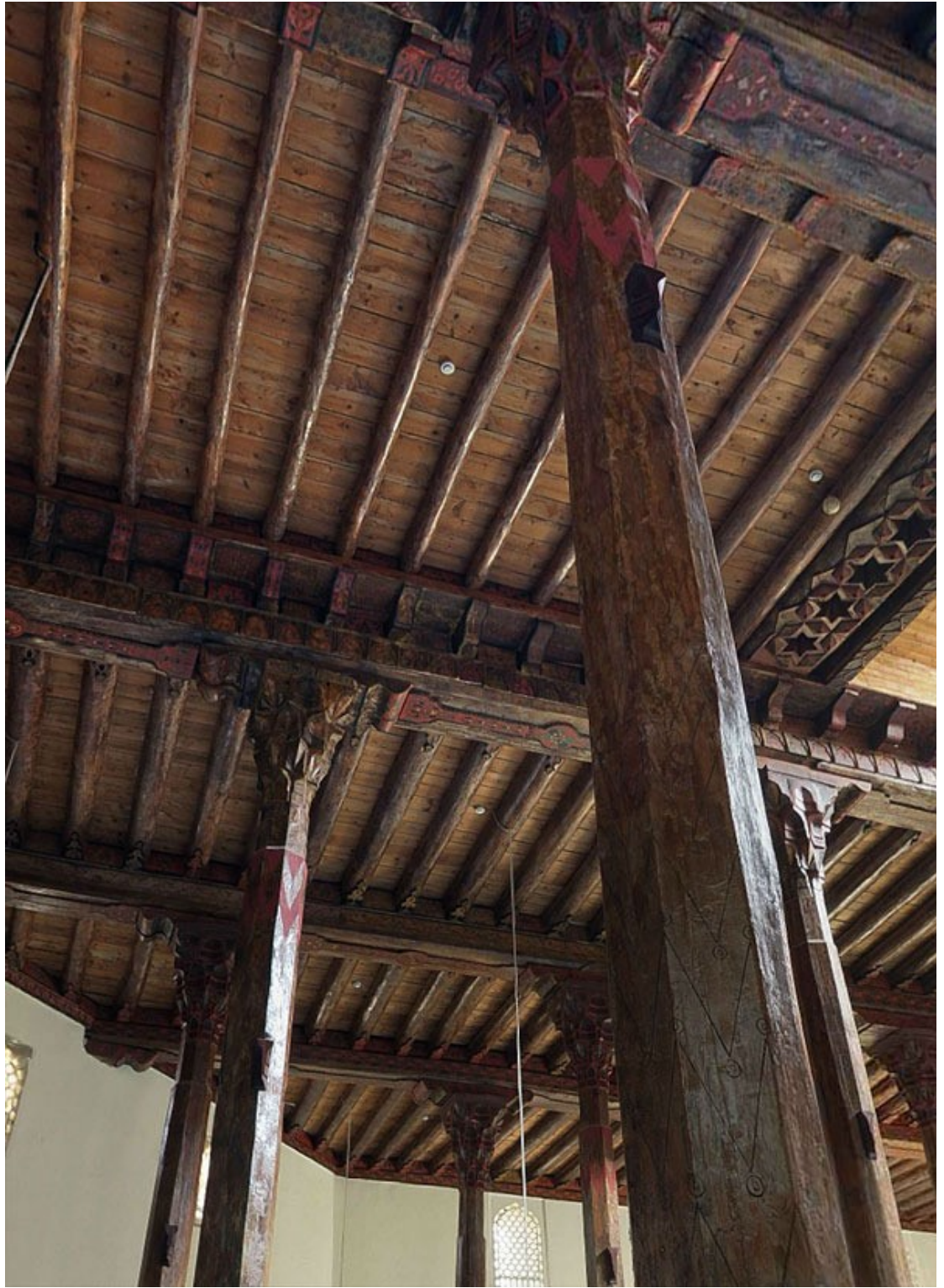
Join Date: Jul 2008
Posts: 4



Hi Steve and All

I will save the kufic topics for the new essay, i am sure it will be very interesting.

In the mean time here is a photo related to the wave/zig-zag pattern discussed in this tread:



I am generally convinced that the rugs have been an integrated part of a total setting in which the architecture have played a huge role. The pillars in the Seljuk Eşrefoğlu Mosqu still have reminiscences of their original colour in the top. Lots of ornamentation in stucco and paint have been lost during time. And these perhaps less prominent and luxurious ornamentations is probably slightly overlooked in the published material. One could hope that there still may be old survived material away from the touristic main sites. The problem is were to look for it, hopefully there is an increasing awareness of cultural heritage in all of the Islamic world.

I will (inshallah) be in Konya and Beyşehir next week, bringing my camera and tunnel vision regarding the Seljuk ornaments and the kufic border 😊

best
Martin.

Last edited by Martin Andersen; September 12th, 2012 at 01:29 PM.



September 12th, 2012,
05:25 PM

#19

[Pierre Galafassi](#)


Members

Join Date: Oct 2009
Posts: 45



Hi Martin,

I agree, there is an interesting analogy between this Il-khanid kufic border and the (500-600 years younger) Caucasian / Kuba rug border.

You must have got an eagle eye,  indeed the "wave" motif on top of the columns in the mosque is identical, including the odd little hook, with the motif of the Il-khanid rugs shown in this thread. Assuming that the Seldjuk builders of the mosque were also responsible for the painting of the column it would prove that the motif pre-dated the Il-khanid period and that it was used (also) in Anatolia (where, by the way, except for a trail of destructions, the Il-khanid did not stay) .

Enjoy your stay in Anatolia! I am very much looking forward to your pictures.

Best regards
Pierre



September 12th, 2012,
06:42 PM

#20

[Martin Andersen](#)

Members

Join Date: Jul 2008
Posts: 4



Hi Pierre

The Eşrefoğlu Mosque is build 1296, so its very late Seljuk, I suppose one could say its contemporary to the rugs on the Il-khanid miniatures.

The wave zig-zag pattern is not only painted but also carved into the pillars, you can see it at the bottom. Personally I think its original, stylistically it fits in for me (as opposed to the brand new terrible wall-to-wall carpeting 😊)

best
Martin



Page 1 of 2 **1** **2** >

Moderation

Merge Posts



<< [Previous Thread](#) | [Next Thread](#) >>

Posting Rules



You **may** post new threads
You **may** post replies
You **may** post attachments
You **may** edit your posts

[BB code](#) is **On**
[Smilies](#) are **On**
[\[IMG\]](#) code is **On**
HTML code is **Off**

Forum Jump

2. Geometric Rugs in Early Renaissance Paintings

All times are GMT +3. The time now is 07:38 PM.

[Contact Us](#) - [TurkoteK](#) - [Admin](#) - [Mod](#) - [Archive](#) - [Top](#)

Powered by vBulletin® Version 3.7.0
Copyright ©2000 - 2012, Jelsoft Enterprises Ltd.