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The Terminology for Carpets in Ancient Central Asia

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This study seeks to gather and clarify the terminology for carpets used by peoples of Central Asia from about 300 BCE to 1000 CE time, including terms in Kharoṣṭhi, Khotanese, Sanskrit and its relatives, plus Persian, Sogdian, Chinese, and Turkic.

Terms Used in the Khotan Area

Thanks to the studies and publications of T. Burrow and H. W. Bailey, we have access to increased information about the peoples who lived in the Tarim Basin over 1500 years ago. To learn about the carpets these people made, I have looked into two major sources: Burrow's translation (1940) of about 760 Kharoṣṭhi documents found in Niya and the surrounding area by Aurel Stein, and Bailey's monumental work, the *Dictionary of Khotan Saka* (1979).

Both Kharoṣṭhi and Khotan-Saka (or Khotanese) scripts were used in Khotan and the southern Tarim Basin. The Kharoṣṭhi documents from Niya represent Prakrit, a Middle Indo-Aryan language and close relative of Sanskrit, and are dated from the third to fourth centuries CE.¹ Khotanese is a Middle Iranian language spoken and written in the Tarim Basin from about the fourth century CE to the early eleventh century CE.

In the approximately 760 Kharoṣṭhi documents, two major words for 'carpet' are found: '*kojava*' and '*tavastaga*.' Burrow translates the former word as 'rug,' and the latter as 'carpet.' There are also two variations: *kosava* and *thavastae*. In the index of his 1937 publication on the language of Kharoshthi, Burrow lists several related words as shown here:²

¹ Burrow provided the fixed date of 269 CE with a range of eighty years around it. John Brough (1965) later established a date of 235 to 325 CE for the documents.

² I'd would like to thank Swati Venkart at Ambedkar University Delhi for calling my attention to Burrow's 1937 Index.

Niya Kharoshthi (third–fourth century CE):

- *kojava* = Pali *kojava* 'a rug or cover with long hair, a fleecy counter-pane'. Both words may be connected with *kaucapaka*, which is enumerated among the different kinds of rugs (*kambala*) at Arth Śāstra II I I 100 [Burrow 1937, p. 84].³
- *kośava* Cf. *kojava* [ibid., p. 85]
- *tāvastāga* = 'carpet' (Prof. Thomas compares Gk *τάπης*, a loan-word from Persian, and N Pers. *tāftan*, *tābam*). From the same base is *thavamnāga* (see s.v.) Arm LW *tapest* and *tapastaka* 'mat', N Pers. *tabastah* = 'fringed carpet' [ibid., p. 94]
- *thavamnaga* (*thavamnae*, *thavamna-mae*, also *tavanaġa*) = Saka *thauna* 'cloth' (BSOS vii, 512) Cf. also for the form N. Pers. *tafnah* 'web' [ibid., p. 96–97].

In the documents, each of the two words appears at least thirteen times. In three of the documents, the two terms appear together, so we know they mean two different kinds of textiles. In three other documents, the word *kojava* is modified with *Khotani*, as '*Khotani kojava*', which likely means 'Khotan-made *kojava*.' In about half of the *tavastaga* occurrences, a measurement of the piece is given in such terms as '13-hand' (equivalent to a length of about 2 meters, the length of a regular bed)⁴; there are also 12-, 11-, 8-, 6-, and 4-hand *tavastaga*, whereas there are no measurements given for *kojava*.⁵ In three places, *kojava* is also spelled *kosava*.

Because of the large quantity of Khotanese documents discovered (2,300 text pieces in Dunhuang alone), no complete translation is available for all of the tablets and manuscripts. So I consulted H. W. Bailey's *Dictionary of Khotan Saka*. Bailey here does not use the English words 'carpet' and 'rug.' Instead, he uses 'covering, cloth covering, woven cloth,' etc. for the words that may refer to carpets. The words listed below are, I think, those that are close to the meaning 'rug' or 'carpet,' and

³ All the references given on this list are Burrow's original citations.

⁴ This is my interpretation. Tailors and women who knitted or made garments for family still commonly used hand-span for measurement in the 1960s and 1970s in Khotan, when I lived there.

⁵ In Document 583, however, there occurs the term '*kajaha vamnaga*' to which is attributed the measurement of 'two hands.' I cannot say if '*kajaha*' is a variation of *kojava*, but its small size seems to preclude its being a carpet. It appears side by side with a *tavastaga* of four hands, which itself is quite a small carpet, but big enough for a chair or throne.

those that share the same roots. I have modified the dictionary entries cited to make them simple and consistent.

Khotanese (fourth–eleventh century CE):

- *gahaā* 'covering' (from *gah-* 'to cover')
- *gahāvara* 'covering'; *gahāvara bema* 'woven stuff for covering'
- *-caihā-* 'piece of cloth'; base *cai-* 'to cover'
- *cauška-* or *khauska* 'covering'; base *kai-* 'to cover'. *karasta-* 'fur garment'; (*kambala*=blanket? *kabalija*=blanket cloth)⁶ suffix *-asta-* as Zor.P. *tapast* 'carpet' from base *tap-* 'to twist, spin' Pašto *krasta* 'felt, woolen cloth'. Base IE Pok (?). *kēr* 'to cut'
- *kamaiškä, kaimeja* 'covering'
- *kañjita-* 'wrinkled, rugged'
- *kāṃmadä* 'trousers'; *kabalija* – blanket cloth; Kroraina: *kamaṃte*
- *gaihe* 'he twist, spins' (Bailey compared it to: Buddhist Sanskrit *karattī* 'he spins'; Vedic *kṛṇattī*, base *kart-* 'to twist, spin'; Waxi *zip-*, *zup:-zovd* 'to spin,' *zitre* 'thread'; Oss. D. *zelun*, I. *zilyn* possibly with Old Indian *hel-* 'turn'; etc.)
- *ggeišš-, ggeils-* 'to turn, to make turn'
- *gvah-* 'to weave, spin'
- *thauna-* 'cloth, silk'. (Bailey compared it to: Kroraina lw [loan word] *thavaṃne, thavaṃnaḡa*, Kuci-Sanskrit *thavana*; Ossetic Digoron *tunä*, Ossetic Iron *tyn*, Uigur Turk. lw *ton*. From base *tap-* 'to twist,' Zor.P. *tapast, tapastak* 'carpet,' N.Pers. *tapast, tāftan*, Armen. lw *tapastak*, Greek *τάπης* 'carpet')
- *thauracaihä* 'woven covering cloth(?)'; base *tap-* 'to twist'; base *kai-* 'to cover'
- *painajä* 'covering'; possibly base *kan-* 'to cover'
- *pəma-* 'wool'
- *pəṃabara* 'covering'
- *pveca, pvaica* 'covering'
- *phaurthaka* 'cloth'

⁶ *Kambala* and *kabalija* are Sanskrit terms used in the Kautilya's Arthashastra and other Buddhist and Jain texts.

- *biye* 'weaver'(?)
- *bauñā* 'woven stuff'
- *baudāha* 'woven stuff'

The first several items in the list belong to the same group, as they are rooted in either *gah* or *kai*, and mean 'to cover.' The next few (*gaiha*, *ggeiśś-*, *gvah*) seem to share the root *kart-* for 'twist, spin, turn.' The two words starting with 't' belong together with the base *tap-* 'to twist.' And the rest are either 'p' or 'b' words. It was a delightful discovery for me that the 'g, k' and 't' words happen to fall into two groups that correspond to the two words in Kharoṣṭhi. See below:

- Kharoṣṭhi: *kojava*; *tavastaga*
- Khotanese: *gahāvāra*; *thauracaihä*

Obviously, they derive from the same two words. The parallels suggesting that at least the two Khotanese words are the right candidates for 'carpet'⁷ look sufficiently convincing when they are identified only as coverings. It must be pointed out, however, that, on the list, *thauna*, although its several equivalents in other languages mean 'carpet,' is defined by Bailey as 'cloth' and 'silk'; and according to the study by Duan Qing (2013), *thauna* was used as a measure word for a bolt of silk, and another word, *thaunaka*, was a standard-sized expensive silk product. Both authors connected *thauna* to silk, and we certainly need to be very careful when using the related word *thauracaihä* for carpet. However, Bailey also interprets *thauna* as 'cloth,' which implies different materials, and Burrow seems to concur with this. Because the parallels of *thauracaihä* in Kharoṣṭhi and a few Persian languages are interpreted as 'carpet,' I tend to consider this as a carpet of probably wool as well as a cover with a silk surface.

With regard to the words on the list starting with 'p' and 'b,' I think they are related to a certain group of Persian and Sogdian words, such as *fraspāt*, *faspā*, *bûp*, *parštarn*, and *-bisāt* etc., which are listed below.

⁷ I use 'carpet' throughout the text for the general sense, since it can be understood as meaning a flat or knotted floor covering or wall hanging, unless I specify it as flat or knotted.

Terms Used in Other Places in Xinjiang and Central Asia

A few other languages were used earlier than, and contemporary with, Kharoṣṭhi and Khotanese in the Western Region and Central Asia. Listed below are related words from these: Sanskrit/Pali/Prakrit, Avestan (Old Persian), Pahlavi (Middle Persian), Sogdian, and Persian (or New Persian).

Pali, Prakrit, Sanskrit in Arthashastra, and Buddhist Hybrid Sanskrit (300 BCE–700 CE)

- *kojava* 'a rug or cover with long hair, a fleecy counter-pane' Vin I.281; DhA I.177; III.197 (pavara); Davs v. 36 often in expl. of gonaka (q.v.) as digha-lomaka maha-kojava DA I.86; PvA 157.⁸ [*Pali-English Dictionary* by T. W. Rhys Davids and William Stede]
- *kocava, kocavaka* (F. Edgerton: *Buddhist Hybrid Sanskrit*, vol. II *Dictionary*)
- *kaukapaka* 'blanket' (Sanskrit in Arthashastra II, 11, 98) [Scharfe 1968, 1993]
- *paristoma* 'blanket' (Arthashastra II 11, 98; Sanskrit (PW) Mahabharata, Ramayana; Loan word from Greek περιστρώμα (Mayrhofer, EWA). [ibid.]

(The following is from R. L. Turner's *A Comparative Dictionary of the Indo-Aryan Languages* 1999 [1966]).⁹

- *āstara* 'covering, cushion, bed' Kathās. Pa. *atthara* — 'rug (for horses, elephants, etc.)', °*aka*<-> 'covering', °*ikā* — 'layer'; Pk. *attharaya* — 'covering', 'outer garment'; [1505¹⁰ p. 68]
- *upastāra* 'anything laid under' AV. [Cf. *upastīr*- 'cover' RV.: √*stī*¹¹] Pa. *upatthara* — 'cover, rug'; [2268 p. 106]
- *úpastṛṇāti* 'spreads'; 'spreads over, scatters under' RV., *upāstarati* VarBṛS.; NiDoc. *vastaramnena* inst. 'mat(?)'; Pk. *uvatthada* — 'covered'; *upastāraṇa* — 'cover' RV., 'undermattress' ĀśvGr. [2269 p. 106]

8 All the references through this list are original. Interested readers should consult the original sources.

9 The *Dictionary* contains many Indo-Aryan languages. I have kept only Rigveda (RV) Sanskrit, Avestan (AV), Pali (Pa), Prakrit (Pk), and Niya documents (NiDoc). I also eliminated the gender and parts of speech of the words. The reference sources are original.

10 Original entry number in the *Dictionary*.

11 √ = root.

- *kambalá* 'woollen blanket or upper garment' AV., Pa. *kambala* —, °*līya* — 'woollen stuff, garment or blanket'; Pk. *kambala* — 'woollen blanket' [2771 p. 139]
- *kōjava* 'fleecy cloth'. Pa. *kōjava* — 'rug or cover with long hair, fleecy counterpane'; Pk. *kōjavaya* — 'coverlet made of cloth stuffed with cotton—wool'; Addenda: *kōjava* —, cf. *kaucapaka* — 'kind of rug' Arthaś. [3490 p. 181]
- *gōṇī* 'sack', Pa. *gōṇa* — *saṁthata* — 'covered with a woollen rug', *gōṇaka* — 'woollen rug with a long fleece'; NiDoc. *goni* 'sack'; [4275 p. 229]

(The following is from Kumar 2008, p. 58.)

- *Chilamika* – a kind of carpet
- *Chitaka* – a carpet made with cloth pieces of many colors to the bedding
- *Palika* – white woolen carpet
- *Patalika* – a carpet with densely embroidered flowers
- *Uddalmi* – a blanket with hair on both the sides
- *Kaseyya* – silken carpet
- *Kutaka* – a carpet on which sixteen female dancers could dance simultaneously
- *Kojava* – a blanket with long hair

There is, besides, also a long list of woolen blankets recorded in Sanskrit in *Kautilya's Arthashastra*, a book of fourth-century BCE – third-century CE, within which a few are translated as bedspreads, floor covering, and even 'knotted in piles.'¹² But, unfortunately, different translators of the book give different interpretations to the words, and not all give the original words to match. In this situation, I quote only R. Shamasatry's (1915) translation, which keeps the original terms.

Blanket made of sheep's wool may be white, purely red, or as red as a lotus flower. They may be made of worsted threads by sewing (*khachita*); or may be woven of woolen threads of various color (*vanachitra*); or may be made of different pieces (*khandasanghatya*); or may be woven of uniform woolen threads (*tantuvichchhinna*).

¹² See Rangarajan 1992, p.732.

Woolen blankets are (of ten kinds): — *Kambala*, *Kauchapaka*, *Kulamitika*, *Saumitika*, *Turagastarana*, *Varnaka*, *Talichchhaka*, *Varavana*, *Paristoma*, and *Samantabhadra*.

Of the terms in this quotation, *kambala* and *kauchapaka* are connected to Kharoshthi and Pali *kojava* by Burrow; and Bailey also compared *kambala* with Khotanese *karasta*. I would like to point out two other terms *paristoma* and *tantuvichchhinna* for attention. I think *paristoma* shares with Sogdian *prštrn/parštar* listed below, and *tantuvichchhinna* may be related to most 't' or 'th' words in Kharoshthi, Khotanese, and several Persian groups.

Avestan (Old Persian c. 500–300 BCE)

- *fraspāt*- 'cushion' (Bailey 1979, p. 185)
- *fraspāt*; *upastərəna*- 'spread, rug' (Henning 1948, pp. 314–315, under Sogdian *fsp* and *faspā*).
- *tan* 'to pull, stretch' (Nourai)
- *tauruna* 'stretched, tender' (ibid., p. 471)
- *gaud* 'to hide' (ibid., p. 163)
- *ā-gaud* 'cover' (ibid., p. 163)

Pahlavi (Middle Persian c. 300 BCE–800 CE)

- *būp* 'a rich carpet' (West 1880, p. 271)
- *tadak* 'woven cloth' (ibid.)
- *tapast*, *tapastak* 'carpet' (Bailey, p. 185; Nourai)

Sogdian (c. 4th–10th centuries CE)

- *fsp* 'rug'; *faspā* 'rugs'; from Av. *fraspāt*-; *upastərəna*- 'spread, rug' (Henning, pp. 314–315)
- *ā-gaud*, *g`wd*, cover; *g`wnd*: 'to cover' (Nourai, p. 163)

(The terms below are from Gharib's *Sogdian Dictionary*.)

- *ā-gaud* 'cover, covering' (entry number 78)
- *ā-gunt*, *gaud* '(to) cover, (to) dress' (78)
- *abi-gauda* '(a sort of) covering' (2600)

- *gaudana* 'covering' (4367)
- *pati-gaud* 'covering' (7665)
- *anspāk*, *'nšp'kh*, *fsp* 'carpet, rug' (1098)
- *'nšp'kh* 'equipment, rug' (1120)
- *fsp'/f(a)spā* 'rafter, rug, wall' (3988)
- *prštrn/parštarn* 'rug, carpet' (7230)

New Persian (since c. 800 CE)

- *farasp* 'carpet' (Bailey, p. 185)
- *farš* 'carpet' (Encyclopedia Iranica: CARPET; Steingass)
- *tapast*, *tāftan*, *tabidan* 'carpet' (Bailey, p. 185)

(The terms below are from Steingass's Persian–English Dictionary.)

- *-bisāt* 'anything spread out; carpet, bedding, etc.'
- *būb* (equiv. to *yūb*) 'a rich carpet'
- *parda-galīm* 'a kind of carpet or rug used by cheats and jugglers'
- *palās* 'coarse woolen cloth worn by dervīshes; a woolen carpet'
- *ṭabsa* 'tapestry, a carpet'
- *ṭambasa* 'a carpet'
- *ṭanfasat*, *ṭanfasat*, *ṭanfisat*, *ṭanfusat*, *ṭin-fasat*, *ṭinfisat*, *ṭunfusat* 'a carpet or rug with a shaggy pile.'
- *tānīdan* 'to twist, weave, spin, to be twisted'
- *tanīda* 'woven; a cobweb; a weaver's instrument'
- *jājīm*, *jājīm* 'a fine bedding or carpet'
- *-jill* 'a carpet'
- *khālī* 'a large carpet'
- *ghālī* 'a carpet, tapestry'
- *qālī* 'a costly kind of carpet'
- *qālīn* 'a costly carpet'

- *gilīm* 'a garment made of goat hair or wool; a carpet or rug to lie down upon; a blanket'
- *-kilim* 'a carpet'
- *zīlū, zailū* 'a kind of woolen blanket worn by the poor'
- *zelūcha* 'a small woolen garment or carpet'

Several observations can be made regarding these lists.

First, the terms *kojava* in Pali, *kocava* and *kokavaka* in Buddhist Hybrid Sanskrit, and *kaukapaka* in Arthashastra Sanskrit, are the same words, or share the same root, with Kharoṣṭhi *kojava* and Khotanese *gahāvara*.

Second, the terms *āstara* and *upastāra*, etc., in Sanskrit seem to share the same component '-astar-' with many other words, such as *atthara*, *upatthara* (Pa), *attharava*, *uvatthada* (Pk), *fraspāt*, *faspā*, *parštarn*, *tapast*, *tapastak*, *upastara* (Pers), *parštarn*, *upastārəna-* (Sog), *vastaramnena*, *tavastaga*, *thavamnaga* (Khar), and *karasta*, *thauna*, *thauracaihā* (Khot).

Third, except for most of the New Persian words, all the others can be put into four or five groups with the words starting with letters: 'g, k/c,' 't,' 'f,' 'b, p,' and 'a, u.' (See the Carpet Terminology Chart, below.)

Fourth, the term *fraspāt* in Avestan, *fsp* or *faspā* in Sogdian, *farasp* or *farš* in Persian, seems to be one of the oldest and most continuously used. It does not seem to be used in Khotan, however, unless those 'p, b' words on the Khotanese list could be considered cognates with 'f' words (I am actually thinking of the words 'Farsi' and 'Parsi.' However, I will leave this problem to specialists.). The term does not seem to be known by the Chinese, for there is no close transcription recorded.

Fifth, the terms *gaud*, *â-gaud* in Avestan, *gaudana*, *abi-gauda/pati-gaud*, and the like, in Sogdian, seem also to share the same root with Kharoṣṭhi *kojava* and Khotanese *gahāvara*.

Sixth, the terms *tan* in Avestan, *tadak*, *tapast*, and *tapestak* in Sasanian Pahlavi, *tapast*, *tāftan*, *ṭambasa*, *tānīdan*, and *tabīdan* etc. in Persian, are also the oldest and most continuously used ones, and match the Arthashastra Sanskrit *tantuvichchhinna*, the Kharoṣṭhi *tavastaga*, Khotanese *thauracaihā*, and Chinese *tǎn* 毯, *tàdēng* 氈氈 and *tàbì* 氈壁.

Seventh, the terms in Steingass's Persian–English Dictionary, such as *khālī*, *ghālī*, and *gilīm/kilim* etc., seem to be newer generics in later times. I will discuss *gilīm* and *kilim* a little later.

Terms Used by the Chinese and Their Foreign Origins

Between the Warring States (475–221 BCE) and the Tang dynasty (618–907 CE), there are several terms for carpets recorded: *zhīpí* 织皮, *jì* 罽, 罽, *tàdēng* 氍毹, *tàbì* 氍毹壁, *qūshū* or *quyú*¹³ 毹毹, *qūlú* 毹毹, and *tǎn* 蓐, 綖, 毯. Most are believed to be foreign products from the west. For example, *jì* is interpreted as: *jì* 罽: 'woolen cloth from the western foreigners', in *Analytical Dictionary of Characters* (100–121 CE)¹⁴.

Among these terms, *zhīpí* is one of the earliest to refer to a woolen covering, literally meaning 'woven skin' or 'woven covering,' so it does not seem to represent a foreign sound. *Jì* also appears very early in such records, and it is the most popular term used throughout Chinese literature from the third century BCE¹⁵ to the early twentieth century of the common era. Related to *jì* 罽, there are *jìrù* 罽褥, *jìzhàng* 罽帐, and *jìbì* 罽壁, in which the second word is used solely to indicate function in the Chinese way of expression, such as mattress (*rù*), tent or yurt (*zhàng*), and wall hanging (*bì*). Besides *zhīpí* and *jì*, other terms like *tàdēng*, *qūshū*, and *tǎn* are all recorded as early as in *Analytical Dictionary of Characters*.¹⁶ *Qūshū* and *qūlú* derive from the same words, but *qūshū* is more commonly used. One of the characters for *tǎn* 毯 would have been in common use at least by the early fifth century, as shown in Chinese documents discovered in Turfan,¹⁷ not, as some scholars thought, as late as Tang or even Song dynasties.¹⁸ It is still a common word for a carpet or a thick covering such as a woolen blanket today. Below I will show that, except for *zhīpí* 织皮, all the other terms are indeed foreign transcriptions with their sources long existing in the Western Region.

13 The word has a double pronunciation: *shū* and *yú*. Different sources give different pronunciations. In Cantonese it sounds like *jiu*. I will use *shū* as the common pronunciation.

14 《说文解字》(Analytical Dictionary of Characters) 系部: 罽: 西胡毳布也。(Jì, woolen cloth from the western foreigners.)

15 《尔雅》Éryǎ (221–9 BCE), the first comprehensive dictionary in China. 释言: 氍, 罽也。

16 《说文解字》(Analytical Dictionary of Characters) 毛部: 毹: 毹毹、毹毹, 皆蓐(綖)之属, 盖方言也。从毛瞿声。毹: 毹毹也。从毛俞声。

17 In three documents related to loans and taxes that were found in Astana M1 Turfan, 毯 is used. One of these citations gives a date of 418 CE. See Qian Boquan 2001, p. 30.

18 Jia, Li, and Zhang (2009) give a date of Tang; Bidder (1964/1979) a date of the Song dynasty.

In 1919, in the chapter "Persian Textiles" of his book *Sino-Iranica: Chinese Contributions to the History of Civilization in Ancient Iran*, Berthold Laufer dealt with some Chinese terminology for imported textiles. Among these terms, two are relevant here: *tàdēng* 氍毹 and *tàbì* 榻壁. Laufer refers to the first term as 'woolen rugs,' and the second term as 'dance rugs,' though from the Chinese words we can tell neither the types of rugs they refer to, such as knotted-pile carpets or flat-weaving carpets, nor their exact functions, except that the second word *bì* 壁 from *tàbì* means 'wall.' Laufer thought that *tàdēng* represented a transcription of a Middle Persian word connected to the root 'tāp,' which means 'to spin,' as in the Persian word *tāftān* 'to twist, to spin.' His interpretation of the second term, *tàbì*, is that it came from a transcription of two Middle Persian forms, *tābiχ* and *tābeδ*, both with the root 'tāp.'

Since *tàdēng* appears in the *Analytical Dictionary of Characters* in the second century CE, in terms of time, it does fit the Middle Persian terms. For *tàbì*, I think Laufer made a reasonable connection to *tābiχ* and *tābeδ*. Besides these two, there is also *tapast* in Pahlavi. However, Tang dynasty monk Xuan Ying explains the term in this way: '*tàbì*, a woolen covering, used on the walls, so it got its name'¹⁹ — which makes *bì* 壁 'wall.' But Laufer also lists the other Chinese words for *tàbì* as 拓壁, 拓辟, and 拓必, in which only the pronunciation of the words matters, not their Chinese meaning. So it seems that Laufer might be right after all.

Laufer also discussed 檀 *tán*, which I think he mistakenly used as the word for 氈²⁰ (*dǎn*, *tǎn*, or *zhān*) or 氍 *tǎn*. He made a connection of *tan* to the Persian root *tan*, Avestan *tanva*, and Middle-Persian *tanand*, etc. *Tǎn* cannot be found in Oracle-Bone inscriptions and Pre-Qin literature (before 221 BCE). Instead, the word *tan* and related words in several Persian languages seem perfect analogs for *tǎn* 氈, 綫, 氍. So I think Laufer was right to make these connections. The terms *jì* and *qūshū* have been known as foreign words since before the Common Era. For the former, one modern

19 玄应 b. ? – d. 649–661: 《一切经音义》(The Sound and Meaning of the Tripitaka): 氍毹: 他盍反毛席也施之於壁因以名焉經文作闕非體也。 http://taipei.ddbc.edu.tw/sutra/C056m163_003.php accessed on June 20, 2014.

20 檀 *tán*, always refers to a kind of wood, specifically sandalwood, in Chinese literature. It is also used as a person's last name in Pre-Qin documents, such as Liji (Book of Rites). It does not appear anywhere as a textile unless it is wrongly used for 氈 or 氍. 氈 is explained in the Analytical Dictionary of Characters as being pronounced *dǎn* meaning felt. It is also pronounced as *zhān* for felt.

Chinese author once mentioned that *jì* was a transcription of the Persian word '*gilim*'²¹; and a few other authors wondered if the term *jiliyamu* 吉里雅木 (reversed transcription of *kilim*), used for carpets in Xinjiang as recorded in the Qing dynasty *Annals of Western Region* (《西域图志-服物》 1782), might be a transcription for *qūyú*²², based on the close similarity of their sounds.²³ These authors' suggestions make sense, although their use of modern vocabularies to match the terms of several hundred years earlier is very problematic, unless there is evidence of a continuous connection between the times.

Since both sources mention '*gilim/kilim*,' however casually, I will examine the idea, if only to clear it out of the way.

In Arthur Pope's chapter "Carpet Making — A History" in the multi-volume work *A Survey of Persian Art* he edited, he quoted several carpet terms from a tenth-century Persian geographical text *Hudud al-'Alam* (The Regions of the World; 982 CE) translated into English by V. Minorsky, where we see *bisāt*, *farsh*, *palas*, *gilīmīna/gilīm*, *zīlū* (pp. 2277–2279), which are also on the New Persian list, and *farsh*, also on the Old Persian list, shown earlier. Except for *farsh*, the terms in this Persian text, seem to appear for the first time in the tenth century. Although one scholar has tried to trace the origin of the term *kilim* back to the Turkic language, her date of the earliest appearance of it is found later than the Persian term *gilim*.²⁴

So, as Chinese *jì* and *qūshū* were already used as early as between 221 BCE and 121 CE, they cannot be transcribed directly from *gilim* or *kilim*.

Instead, I think they are derived from either Old or Middle Persian. To see this, we need first to understand that *jì* could be pronounced as '*gai*' in ancient Chinese, as it is still pronounced in some southern topolects, such as Cantonese, and *qū* could be pronounced '*ku*.' The words *gaud* and *â-gaud* (cover) in Avestan Persian that continue in Sogdian *gaudana* and Khotanese *gahāvāra* could be the

21 Shen Fuwei 沈福伟 2006, p. 57.

22 Another pronunciation for *qūshū*.

23 Jia Yingyi, Li Wenying, Zhang Hengde 贾应逸、李文瑛、张亨德 2009, p. 24.

24 Rasonyi 1971 and Acar 1983.

right candidates for the Chinese equivalents. These 'g' words all share the same root 'gah' or 'cai, kai' (to cover), which exactly fits *jì* or *gai*.

The same 'gah, gau' or 'cai, kai' or *kojava* and *gahāvāra* could be the origin for the Chinese term *qūshū* as well. In a couple of his publications (e.g., *Notes on Marco Polo*, 1959 p. 492), Paul Pelliot suggested that *qūshū* might be a transcription of a Sanskrit word *kaucapa*, which might also be the origin of Kharoshithi *kojava* or *kosava*. German ambassador, writer, and collector Hans Bidder, in his book on Khotan carpets,²⁵ however, mentions a Chinese source (*Pao-yen Tang Pi-chi Kuang-chi* 宝颜堂秘笈-广集) that explains *qūshū* as the name of a country, and he seems to agree with this by matching it to *Chu-so ta-na* (瞿萨旦那), or *Kustana*, an ancient name for Khotan. Since the original Chinese source is late in time (about the sixteenth century) and both the Chinese and Bidder's interpretations are speculative, I prefer Pelliot's and my own *kojava-kaucapa-qūshū* interpretations. Modern Chinese author Chen Zhutong once quoted from a Japanese source that made a connection between *qūshū* and the Arabic word 'ghashyat,' and several Chinese scholars followed his interpretation. It seems to me that this supposed Arabic connection cannot be right either. The term *qūshū* appeared as early as in the *Analytical Dictionary of Characters*, between 100 and 121 CE, and the *Annals of the Former Han* (《前汉纪》) in 200 CE, a time for which there is no record of any contact between Arabs and Chinese. Dàshí 大食 (Arabs) does not appear in Chinese records until the Tang dynasty in *Tōng Diǎn* (《通典》) 801 CE).

Besides, in some Chinese documents, *jì* was sometimes interpreted as *qūshū*. In other words, *jì* is *qūshū*. For example, an early seventh-century source quoted by the *Kangxi Dictionary* says: "*jì*, woven wool, a kind of *qūshū*."²⁶ In some texts *qūshū* was also transcribed as *qūlú*. In a Chinese translation of the Buddhist sutra *Majjhima Nikāya* (398 CE), for example, there are descriptions of some luxurious places covered with *qūlú* and *tàdēng*.²⁷ Since the original Buddhist text was very likely

²⁵ Bidder 1964.

²⁶ 《康熙字典》：《疏》罽者，織毛爲之，若今之毛氍毹也。《註》師古曰：罽，織毛也。氍毹之屬。

²⁷ 《中阿含經》卷第十四 東晉罽賓三藏瞿曇 (317-420) 僧伽提婆譯：彼八萬四千夫人及女寶還去不久，大善見王即共侍者還昇大殿，則入金樓，坐銀御床，敷以氍毹、毹毹，覆以錦綺羅縠，有襪體被，兩頭安枕，…… 中華電子佛典協會 Chinese Buddhist Electronic Text Association (CEBTA) http://tripitaka.cbeta.org/mobile/index.php?index=To1n0026_014 accessed on July 22, 2014

written in Sanskrit, it should not be far from the Prakrit *kojava*. To me it appears that, *jì* and *qūshū/qūlú* are two different transcriptions of the same original.

About *Kèsī* and *Gilim*

I am almost certain that another Chinese textile term, *kè* 縵, although not used to mean 'carpet,' also comes from the same root word 'gah, gau' or 'cai, kai.' Since it is a typical *gilim/kilim* in technique, a type of weaving that is also used for one kind of carpet, I would like to discuss it here. So far, no one has made a connection between this term and any foreign word.

Kè 縵, in Chinese interpretation, is a weaving technique that is done with 'continuous warps and stopped wefts' ('通经断纬'), which in English is simply called 'slit tapestry.' As the Chinese description has it, *kè* is a kind of weaving used for a colored pattern design in which a colored weft tread turns back and forth at the edge of the same colored area, leaving a small space (slit) between two different colored areas. The slits look like sharp cuts, so the Chinese called the technique and resulting textile *kèsī* 刻丝, literally 'cut silk,' or *kèsī* 縵丝 in the same sound and meaning but with different writing. The technique itself is attested as early as 2000 BCE,²⁸ used on the woolen textile fragments found in Xiaohe cemetery in the Tarim Basin. And there are also hundreds of woolen pieces woven in this technique found all over the southern parts of the Tarim Basin from between the fourth century BCE and the seventh century CE through archaeological excavations, such as those in Cherchen-Zagunluk and Khotan-Sampula, etc. The same technique used for silk weaving, however, did not appear until the Han dynasty (206 BCE–221 CE),²⁹ and the earliest example of the use of *kè* as made of silk is found in Turfan, in an eastern part of the Tarim, and dated to the Tang dynasty (618–907 CE).³⁰ The first appearance of the character *kè* is recorded in a dictionary called *Yù Piān* 《玉篇》 compiled in 543 CE. Notably, it does not appear in the earlier dictionary *The Analytical Dictionary of Characters* (100–121 CE). *Yù Piān* explained the term *kè* as meaning 'sewing and mending, weft weaving' ('縵, 紕 zhì 也, 经纬也'). During the Song dynasty (960–1279 CE), China witnessed a

28 Li Wenying 李文瑛 2008; Jia Yingyi, Li Wenying, Zhang Hengde 贾、李、张 2009.

29 Xinjiang Museum 2010 p. 110. The source unfortunately does not give a particular example.

30 Ibid. Also conf. Zhao Feng (2012 pp. 236–7) who thinks that *kèsī* 縵丝 was first formed in China as Tang dynasty.

flourishing time for *kèsī* production, when, in several major dictionaries and encyclopedias, *kè* 緜 was written as *kèsī* 刻丝 or *kèsī* 克丝, or *kèsī* 剡丝, with *kè* written in several homonyms, and *sī* 丝 or silk kept the same. It seems obvious that all the different written words for *kè* are unified by their sound, which is not shown in the writing itself.

To compare explanations of these techniques, I quote below the description and terminology for weft weaving and slit tapestry from the *Encyclopedia Iranica*:

Plain weaves. ... If the wefts are tightly packed so that the warps are hidden or almost hidden, the structure is called **weft-faced**³¹ plain weave, or tapestry weave. In Persia this structure is called *gelīm*³² (Turk. *kilim*). Conversely, if the warps are packed so closely that they completely cover the wefts, the weave structure is called warp-faced plain weave (*jājīm*).

In tapestry weave the wefts may be continuous (carried from edge to edge) or **discontinuous** (turned back around adjacent warps part way across the work as required by the pattern). ... Discontinuous wefts may either interact or not. In the latter instance, where discontinuous wefts are turned back at the boundary between two colors, the adjacent warps are not bound together and a slit is left between them; this weave structure is thus called **slit-tapestry** weave (Encyclopedia Iranica Online: CARPETS v. Flat-woven Carpets: Techniques and structures. <http://www.iranicaonline.org/articles/carpets-v>)

One can see that *kè* is exactly this "weft-faced discontinuous slit-tapestry." In modern times, flat-weaving, including slit tapestry, is called *gilīm/kilim* when made in the so-called "Oriental world" and *tapestry* when made in Europe.

However, although *kè* is exactly *gilim* technologically, the word is not borrowed directly from it. As discussed in the last section, the word *gilim* would not appear in record until the tenth century,

³¹ This emphasis is mine. Compare to *kè* 緜, which is a 'weft weaving.'

³² All emphases in this quotation are mine.

with New Persian, but *kè* was already recorded in the sixth century. It must come from an older terminology.

Since *kè* as a technology for silk weaving appears so late (c. seventh century CE) in the long history of Chinese silk weaving, and since the earliest sample appears precisely in the Western Region, I would not hesitate to say that the technology was borrowed from the people of the Western Region. The Chinese silk expert Zhao Feng has drawn the same conclusion.³³ The terminology, although it appeared at least one century earlier, must also come from the Western Region. It is interesting to note that, in *Yu Pian*, *kè* is not related to *sī* or silk. It seems that the Chinese had known the word and technique before they adopted them in silk-making, and it is logical to conclude that they had learned both in the Western Region.

So, what is the foreign term for Chinese *kè*?

Around the sixth century CE, there were several languages spoken in the Tarim Basin: Khotanese, Sogdian, Pahlavi Persian, Tocharian, and probably still Kharoṣṭhi. But as there is no record of the '*g, k*' words for 'carpet' in Pahlavi Persian and Tocharian, the choices for *kè* could be only *kojava* in Kharoṣṭhi, *gahāvara* in Khotanese, *gaudana* in Sogdian, and the words related to each of these. These words are all interpreted as 'cover' or 'covering' or 'woven cloth for covering,' which implies that they could be used to mean several things, such as a blanket or a cloak or a carpet. The later term *gilim* is indeed interpreted as 'a garment,' 'a carpet,' and 'a blanket.' So, to me, *kojava*, *gahāvara* and *gaudana* could mean a type of textile that could be used as a piece of cloth for anything including a carpet. In the next section, I will show that *kojava* and *gahāvara*, etc., could be either flat or pile textile.

So, as regards weaving technology, the Chinese *kè* fits these terms in at least one way, that is, flat-weaving. Although we do not know exactly whether *kojava*, *gahāvara*, *gaudana*, etc., are 'slit-tapestry,' some descriptions of the materials in Chinese documents (see the next section) suggest that they are colorful, nicely flat-woven textiles. In the Western Region, woolen cloth with complex colors and designs is mostly woven in the slit-tapestry method.

³³ Cf. Zhao Feng (2012, pp. 236–7). He thinks *kèsī* 缣丝 originally came from the West.

The Problem of Knotted and Flat-weave Carpets

Identifying the type of carpet weave—i.e., knotted, piled or flat—from the terms applied to it has always been a problem. In English, people use 'rugs' and 'carpets' in an interchangeable and also confusing way. Sometimes, 'rugs' mean knotted or piled carpets, but for the same piece, 'carpet' is also used. Technically, there are two basic different carpets: a knotted-pile woven carpet, which is thicker, fluffier, and softer, but heavier, and a flat-weave carpet, which is thinner, lighter, and more flexible. Both can employ the same designs, although flat-weave is more limited in its possible patterns. In his translation of the Kharoṣṭhi documents, Burrow used 'rug' for *kojava*, and 'carpet' for *tavastaga* with a reference for *kojava* as 'a rug or cover with long hair, a fleecy counter-pane' found in the *Pali – English Dictionary*. Laufer, though, translated *tādēng* with its Persian origin *tāp* and *tāftān* as 'woolen rugs', and *tābī* with its Persian origin *tābiḡ* and *tābeδ* as 'dance rug.' In the texts I deal with in this study, I found confusion as bad as the English use of 'rug' and 'carpet.'

To my knowledge, there is no clear description of the carpets accompanying the technical weaving terms found in those ancient Kharoṣṭhi and Khotanese texts and nothing in Chinese texts either. However, in Pali and Sanskrit documents, there are interesting descriptions on certain textiles that may shed light on carpet terms. The best known is the one in Pali for *kojava* as quoted earlier. In the famous Kautilya's Arthashastra, there are listed more than a dozen kinds of woolen blankets including bed and floor coverings, and a couple of translators used words such as 'knotted in piles.'³⁴ Burrow obviously used the Pali description of *kojava* for Kharoshthi *kojava* and Sanskrit *kaucapaka* and *kambala*. In his *Comparative Dictionary of the Indo-Aryan Languages*, Turner provided more sources. Besides Pali, he interpreted general Sanskrit *kōjava* as 'fleece cloth,' Prakrit *kōyāvaya* as 'coverlet made of cloth stuffed with cotton-wool,' and Sindhalese *koñdu* as 'made of goat's hair.' In *The Student's Pali-English Dictionary*, Maung Tin explained *kojava* as 'a coverlet made of goat's hair.' With these, it seems there is enough information for us to treat the term *kojava* as a textile of long hair.

But, there are problems. First of all, long hair or fleece does not make the textile necessarily a knotted pile rug or carpet. Some flat-woven textile could have fluffy long hair. Secondly, the possible origin word *kaucapa* in Sanskrit for *kojava* is described as a flat textile in some Buddhist documents.

³⁴ Rangarajan 1992, p. 732. Its "knotted in pile" requires an investigation.

And thirdly, my own researches in the ancient texts of several languages indicate that the term *kojava* in most cases refers to a flat-woven textile, while the term *tavastaga* refers to a different textile, likely one with a pile or knotted pile. Pelliot, the famous Sinologist, in his publication *Notes on Marco Polo*, vol. 1 (1959), discusses *kojava* particularly. In addition, he made the connection between *kaucapa* in Sanskrit and *qūshū* in Chinese, quoting the monk Yijing's (I-ching 义净 635–713) two transcriptions of *kauchavaka* and *kaucava* as ku-ch'e-po-chia 孤咕薄伽 (Pinyin: gu tie bo jia/ga) and kao-ch'e-po 高禡婆 (Pinyin: gao zhe po). For the latter, Yijing himself noted that the term was a name of a carpet. Pelliot commented:

As a matter of fact, I-ching must have written on the authority of some dictionary; *kaucava* was the designation both of a blanket worn as a garment and of a carpet; in the text translated by I-ching, it could not be a carpet, since it was the first of the five garments allowed to the monks by the Buddha.

Pelliot also pointed out that another monk, Huilin (慧琳 737–820), saying that *qūshū* was a foreign word of the Hu (foreigners in the Western Region), and that the fabric was popularly known as 毛锦 *maojin*, or 'woolen brocade.' We know that *jin*, whether made of wool or silk, is a flat-woven textile.

It seems clear that *kaucapa*, *kaucava*, *kaucavaka* or *qūshū* is a flat-woven textile that can be used both as a garment and as a carpet.

In accordance with this statement, Raj Kumar (2008) also verifies that *kambala* used in Buddhist and Jain texts is "evidently used in the sense of fine woolen cloth for making clothing" (p. 57), and that *kambalagani*, a related word, "included all kinds of woolen clothes" (p. 94). He also explains *koyavani* and its equivalent *kotava* as *kambala*—a hairy blanket, but adds that among blankets, one kind that is named *gudmas* is "made of light and long fibred loose flossy wool fibers teased out then brushed" (p. 94). He clearly seems to mean that *kambala* is a flat textile, and that *kojava* could be a flat-woven blanket but having long hair.

My own researches draw a same conclusion.

As mentioned in the first section, there are two different terms used for carpets, and sometimes they appear together in the same text in the Niya Kharoṣṭhi documents. For example, in Document 431–2 (two sides of the same tablet), the scribe wrote:

This document is written concerning the wine in Yave avana. [.....³⁵] With the horse was one *kojava*³⁶ and one *ayisdha*. A third horse I send from the *tomgha* aja. The *suvesta* Marega received it. (It is) four years old. Along with that horse one *avale*, two *kojava*, and also one *ayisdha* were sent there. The total is forty-four, (also) one white *kojava*. These objects were all packed there in the capital by the *tomgha* aja. In addition four *kavaji* made of felt and one *raji*. On another occasion the queen came here. She asked for one golden stater. There is no gold. Instead of it we gave carpet (*tavastaga*) thirteen hands long. Seraka took it. Many people here know this matter as witnesses. (Also) one *artavasa*.

Also in Document 633:

[.....] you do not sell. Priyavata and Sukmana have to go to the mountain with Kyutseya. There *kojava*, carpet (*tavastaga*³⁷), and ghee are to be bought. ... (Burrow 1940)

Both, but especially the latter example, make it clear that *kojava* and *tavastaga* are two different types of carpets. In Chinese documents, the terms *jì* or *qūshū*, and *tàdēng* also appear listed together as two different types of textile. Here are a few examples.

The *Analytical Dictionary of Characters* (100–121 CE) says: “*qū* 瞿: *qūshū* 瞿毳, *tàdēng* 毳登, both belong to felt and woolen carpets; local dialects.”³⁸

35 My elision.

36 All emphases are mine.

37 I add the original word from the original texts. In these two documents Burrow directly copied *kojava* and translated *tavastaga* for carpet. But in other translations of the documents, he used ‘rug’ for *kojava*.

38 《说文解字》(100–121 CE) 毛部: 瞿: 瞿毳、毳登, 皆氈絨之屬, 蓋方言也。从毛瞿声。毳: 瞿毳也。从

In the *History of Three Kingdoms* (《三国志》 266–319 CE), the author describes a country in the west that produced textiles made not only of wool but also of “bark fiber or wild silk to weave *qūshū*, *tàdēng*, and *jìzhàng*.”³⁹ In the same text, the author also gives a long list of imports from Da Qin 大秦 (the Roman Mediterranean region), including “ten kinds of colored *qūshū*, five-colored *tàdēng*, five-colored nine-colored under-body (sitting mat?)⁴⁰ *tàdēng*, ...”

In the same Buddhist sutra *Majjhima Nikāya* quoted earlier, a king’s palace is described as being a building (made?) of gold and a bed of silver that are “covered with *qūshū* and *tàdēng*.”⁴¹

Similar examples can be found also in many later records.

Unfortunately, however, none of these texts give any detail on which was a flat weave and which was a knotted-pile, except that they must mean two different kinds of carpets. Archaeology, as a matter of fact, finds that two different types of carpets did exist and are found together throughout excavations.

In Kharoṣṭhi documents I have also noticed that about half of the occurrences citing *tavastaga* give a measurement of the piece, such as the one acquired by the queen mentioned in Document 431-

毛俞聲。

39 《三国志-魏书三十-倭人传》(266–316) 國(安息之北 my note) 出細絛。作金銀錢，金錢一當銀十。有織成細布，言用水羊毳，名曰海西布。此國六畜皆出水，或云非獨用羊毛也，亦用木皮或野蠶絲作，織成氍毹、毼毼、蜀帳之屬皆好，其色又鮮於海東諸國所作也。.....大秦多金、銀、銅、鐵、鉛、錫、神龜、白馬、朱鬣、駭雞犀、瑇瑁、玄熊、赤螭、辟毒鼠、大貝、車渠、馬腦、南金、翠爵、羽翮、象牙、符采玉、明月珠、夜光珠、真白珠、虎魄、珊瑚、赤白黑綠黃青紺縹紅紫十種流離、璆琳、琅玕、水精、玫瑰、雄黃、雌黃、碧、五色玉、黃白黑綠紫紅絳紺金黃縹留黃十種氍毹、五色毼毼、五色九色首下毼毼、金縷繡、雜色綾、金塗布、緋持布、發陸布、緋持渠布、火浣布、阿羅得布、巴則布、度伐布、溫宿布、五色桃布、絳地金織帳、五色斗帳、一微木、二蘇合、狄提、迷迷、兜納、白附子、薰陸、鬱金、芸膠、薰草木十二種香。

40 I could not find any interpretation for the words ‘首下’. They could mean ‘body below the head of a person,’ or ‘a special spot under an important person.’ In the case of a carpet, I assume it is a mat for somebody important, maybe a mat for a throne, or one in front of a throne or bed.

41 《中阿含經》卷第十四 東晉罽賓三藏瞿曇(317–420) 僧伽提婆譯：彼八萬四千夫人及女寶還去不久，大善見王即共侍者還昇大殿，則入金樓，坐銀御床，敷以氍毹、毼毼，覆以錦綺羅縠，有襯體被，兩頭安枕，..... 中華電子佛典協會 Chinese Buddhist Electronic Text Association (CEBTA) http://tripitaka.cbeta.org/mobile/index.php?index=To1n0026_014 accessed on July 22, 2014.

2, who received a 13-hand long *tavastaga*; whereas there is no measurement for *kojava*. Other scholars noticed this difference too. For example, in "A Study of Textiles and Garments as Depicted in Kharoshithi Documents from Chinese Turkestan" (Sri Ratna Chandra Agrawala 1951), the author asserts that while *kojava* objects were counted in numbers, *tavastaga* carpets were given various sizes in cubits as 4, 6, 8, 9, 11, 12, 13. To explain this difference, I could only think that *kojava* likely was produced in a standard measurement such as a bolt or roll, which implies a standard loom that is set almost permanently for industrial production and also for complex patterns such as brocade in flat-weaving. Meanwhile, *tavastaga* must have been produced on a simple and flexible loom that allows all sorts of sizes. Knotted weaving might fit such a flexible loom. One can still find today many different-sized knotted carpets, such as a mat for a chair, a sitting mat, a saddle, a prayer carpet, floor carpets, etc., but not so many selections in size in kilims. Also, *tavastaga* might be priced on its small measurement, inch by inch, and more expensive (After all, the queen did not receive a *kojava* but instead got a *tavastaga* in place of gold!). Technically, a knotted-pile carpet would be more expensive because it takes extra material for the knots to pile and consumes more time for weaving, while a flat-woven cloth would cost less in both material and time.

To see how expensive a piece of a *tādēng* would be, I quote here an interesting story recorded in a tenth-century Chinese encyclopedia.⁴²

A man named Zhi Fa-cun, a foreigner from the West by origin, was born and raised in Guanzhou; he was so good at medicine that he became very rich. He had a *tādēng* as long as eight or nine *chi* (about 9 to 10 feet, or 3 meters⁴³), and with hundreds of images (woven) in it. It was so beautiful. He also had a bed made of agar wood of eight *chi* long that created a pleasant smell in the house all the time. A son of a high official named Wang Tan in Guangzhou asked many times for these two things from the man,

⁴² 《太平广记》(978 CE)《支法存》: 支法存者, 本自胡人, 生長廣州, 妙善醫術, 遂成巨富。有八九尺氍毹。百種形像。光彩曜日。又有沈香八尺板牀。居常芬馥。王譚為廣州刺史, 大兒劭之, 屢求二物, 法存不與。王因狀法存豪縱, 殺而籍沒家財焉。

⁴³ My estimation.

but Fa-cun refused to give them away. So Wang accused Fa-cun of corruption, killed him, and confiscated his belongings.

Two relevant points can be drawn from this story: the *tādēng* was given a measurement, and it must be a very expensive treasure that one would give one's life for.

So, to me *tavastaga* is more like a knotted-pile carpet, and *kojava*, or *jì* or *qūshū* is different. For the latter, there are more accounts indicating that it could be a flat textile.

Throughout the Chinese texts that describe the foreign textiles, I found that, although writers of different periods randomly used terms like *jì*, *tādēng*, and *qūshū*, etc., for carpets, just as we do today in using 'rug' or 'carpet' without clarifying the difference, they never used *tādēng* for garments. They used *qūshū* (see Pelliot's comments above) and *jì* for both carpets and garments. There are several accounts in the Han dynasty texts that mention *jì* as garments. The earliest one found describes some "barbarians" wearing clothes made of *jì* in a pull-over fashion.⁴⁴ One of the accounts states that King Wendi (汉文帝) once went hunting wearing clothes of *jì* and a felt hat.⁴⁵ Another account criticizes the court of King Wudi (汉武帝) as it became so corrupted that even dogs wore *jì* clothes.⁴⁶ One can find many more such descriptions employing *jì*.

It is apparent that *jì* is a relatively light and fine textile that could be used to make clothes. If *jì* or *kojava/gahāvāra* can be used to make clothes, it has to be a flat-woven textile.

* * *

To sum up the discussion, the terms *kojava* in Kharoṣṭhi, *gahāvāra* in Khotanese, *gaudana* in Sogdian, and *jì*, *qūshū*, and *kè* in Chinese, likely mean flat-woven textiles. They were recorded as being used for garments, blankets, and carpets. In the case of *kojava* in Pali, which contradicts this result—as it is clearly described as a hairy and fleecy rug or cover—I wonder if the Pali word happened to mean a particular type of textile: piled with long hair, or that the same word was used casually in

44 王充（27–97年）《論衡·恢國》（86 CE）：唐、虞國界，吳為荒服，越在九夷，屬衣關頭，今皆夏服，褒衣履舄。

45 應劭《風俗通義·孝文帝》（189–220）：文帝代服衣屬，襲氈帽，騎駿馬，從侍中、近臣、常侍、期門武騎獵漸臺下，馳射狐兔，果雉刺彘。

46 荀悅（148–209 CE）《前漢紀·孝武皇帝紀二》（200 CE）：犬馬被績屬。

other languages through its borrowing and lending processing. The terms *tavastaga* in Kharoṣṭhi, *thauracaihä* in Khotanese, *tādēng* in Chinese, and likely, *tapast*, *tapastak* in Pahlavi Persian, could mean knotted-pile carpets or rugs. At this point, it seems to me that the 'k/c, g' words and 't, th' words, like the modern usage of 'rug' and 'carpet,' are interchangeable in a casual way, except probably in some business transactions where the terminology needs to be specified.

Terms Used in Turkic Languages and Their Origins

The Chinese are not the only people who were influenced by Iranian, Indo-Aryan, and other European languages in Central Asia. The Turkic terms for carpets, by the eleventh century, for example, also show an interesting parallel with some Iranian terms. Here is a list of terms I obtained from the famous Maḥmūd Kāshgārī's *Turkic Dictionary*, compiled in the years 1072–74,⁴⁷ and Clauson's *An Etymological Dictionary of Pre-13th Century Turkish*.

- *kiviz* (*keviz*) 'carpet' (vol. 1, p. 384)
- *köwüz* 'a large carpet, or any mattress or sofa woven of wool' (Clauson 1972, p. 692)⁴⁸
- *kəzək*⁴⁹ 'weaving equipment' (vol. 1, p. 411)
- *kərim* (*kerim*) 'wall hanging'; *tam kərimi* 'a wall covering' (vol. 1, p. 419)
- *kəxik* 'curtain, covering' (vol. 1, p. 431)
- *kəpsün* 'soft mattress' (vol. 1, p. 461)
- *təxək* (*töşe:k*⁵⁰) 'covering, blanket' (vol. 1, p. 407)
- *tavrattī* 'twist, spin, weave' (vol. 2, p. 342)
- *yažim* 'mattress, covering' (vol. 3, p. 16)

I found that among these terms, except for the last one, *yažim*, all fall into two groups, one each of words starting with the sounds of 'k' and 't.' In the entry *töşe:k*, Clauson (1972, p. 563) specifies the word to be a Persian loanword. And indeed I also found an almost perfect match: *tavrattī* on the

⁴⁷ I used the Chinese translation of the dictionary in a form of Turk-Uighur-Chinese. See Kashgari in the bibliography.

⁴⁸ I missed this term in the Chinese translation of Kashgari's dictionary, so I quote it from Clauson.

⁴⁹ The original source for letter "ö" used on this list does not explain its sound. However, I found that Clauson used "ö" in place of "ö", e.g., "*töşe:k*" for "*təxək*".

⁵⁰ In Clauson 1972, p. 563.

Turkic list to *tavastaga* in Niya Kharoṣṭhi and *thauracaihä* in Khotanese. According to Clauson, *töše:k* first appears in a Uyghur Buddhist text of the eighth century CE. The date nicely overlaps with Khotanese, Sogdian, and Sasanian Persian.

Since the 't' words are related to Iranian and Indian families, I realized that the 'k' words might not be accidentally similar. *Kiviz/keviz*, *köwüz*, *kərim/kerim*, *kəxik*, and *kəpsün*, etc., are indeed in parallel with Kharoṣṭhi *kojava*, Khotanese *gahāvāra*, and the like, in both semantics and phonetics. This is a really exciting discovery. See the simple Carpet Terminology Chart that follows. Readers can judge for themselves.

These parallels convinced me that the Turkic terms with 'k' for carpets also derived from Iranian and Indian languages. Among the 'k' words, *kərim/kerim* is the closest to *gilim*, but later in time.

The actual Turkic term *kilim* appears in an Egyptian source quoted in Clauson's *An Etymological Dictionary of Pre-13th Century Turkish*. Under the entry *töše:k*, there is this sentence: "but in Kitāb Beylik *töšek* is *al-tarraha wa'l-firas* and *al-bisāt* is *kili:m*" (Clauson 1972, p. 563). This source (Kitāb Beylik) gives a list of Turkish vocabularies with Arabic equivalents; it was written in Egypt in the year 1313 (Clauson 1972, p. XXV, para. 50).

In the eighteenth century, the terms used by Turkic peoples in Xinjiang were recorded in a Qing dynasty document called *Annals of the Western Region — Costumes* (1782). Here there are found three terms used for carpets: 帕拉斯 or *palasi*, 吉里雅木 or *giliyam*, and 资勒察 or 资勒卡 or *zilecha*, *zileka*, all of which can be easily transcribed back to *palas*, *gilim*, and *zelūcha* in the (New) Persian dictionary. From my own residence in Xinjiang for more than twenty years, I also learned that, since the 1950s at least, the Uighurs of Khotan called a carpet *glenm* (it is not clear whether this is flat or knotted) and the Kazakhs of the Yili region called it *klem* and *haliklem* (the latter is said to be a carpet with long woolen hair, probably knotted). The terms are also obviously variations of *gilim*, *kilim*, and *hali-kilim*, all of Persian or Turkish connections.

Although I think that these modern terms used in Xinjiang were likely reintroduced into the region in modern times from the West, there is a possibility that the older terms never died out but were modified to fit new meanings.

Before I end this section, I would like to mention that in Kashgari's *Turkic Dictionary*, I found two very interesting words: *qüz* and *kəz*. The former is explained as "China-made silk with gold threads woven on red ground," and the latter as "a type of woven silk made in China." I cannot help but think of *kèsī* 縑丝. During the lifetime of Maḥmūd Kāshgārī, Song China was at its high point of economic development, and *kèsī*, or slit-tapestry in silk, was produced and exported in large quantity and high quality. I am almost sure that *qüz* and *kəz* mean *kèsī*. It is interesting to me that the Chinese of several hundred years earlier had learned the slit-tapestry technique and transcribed the term from the Western Region people, and now the textile and term came back to the Western Region as a Chinese import.

Early Iranian Terms and a Possible Interaction with Mesopotamian Terms

Out of curiosity, I searched for earlier (than Avestan) occurrences of 'carpet' in Iranian languages,⁵¹ and I came across instead an Assyrian Aramaic word for 'carpet maker' – *kāmidu*. It appears on a so-called wine list studied by J. V. K. Wilson. In his study *The Nimrud Wine List* (1913, pp. 67–70), Wilson listed the titles for a few textile workers employed by the king and queen in the time of Neo-Assyrian dynasties in eighth century BCE:

- *išparu* – weaver
- *ašlāku* – fuller
- *kāširu* – tailor
- *kāmidu* – felt maker, carpet maker (Conf. Sumerian: *túg-du*: AKK *šugurru*: carpet)
- *mugabuu* or *mukabuu* – sewer

Despite coming from a totally different linguistic family, the word *kāmidu* struck me, because it is so close to the Old Persian *gaud* in sound and meaning, as well as to the Sanskrit *kambala* and *kabalīja*, both for 'blanket' or 'blanket cloth',⁵² Khotanese words *kamaiškä* and *kaimeja*, both for

⁵¹ Although a few Greek authors described Achaemenid carpets (for example, Arrian's description of the tomb of Cyrus), they did not give the word in Persian. In Athenaeus and Xenophon (second–third century CE), the word *psilotapis* in Greek was used to refer to a special kind of carpet (A. U. Pope 1967, vol. vi, p. 2272), in which *-tapis* seems rooted with *tap-*.

⁵² Bailly did not single out *kameja*, *kambala* and *kabalīja* in his entry list, but he used the first one under *kamaiškä* (covering) and the other two at least twice as 'blanket' and 'blanket cloth' under *karasta-* (fur garment) and *kāmmadä*

'covering,' and *kāṇmadā* for 'trousers.' The correspondence looked a bit too strong to be a coincidence. Also, *kāširu*, a tailor, is someone who "cuts" and sews. The word might have a "cut" component in it. And, indeed, I found in the *Assyrian–English–Assyrian Dictionary* (Parpola 2007) these words: *gazāru* 'cut,' *gadāmu* 'cut down,' *qadādu* 'cut away,' *karātu* 'cut off,' *kašātu* 'cut down,' *kašāšu* 'cut through,' etc. They remind me of the Indo-European root word *kēr* 'to cut' as they were referred to by Baily and Clauson many times in their Iranian and Turkic studies.

For example, Bailey's entries for Khotanese *karasta*- and *kīḍakyä* give such references as:

- *karasta*- 'fur garment'; Pašto *krasta* 'felt, woolen cloth.' Base IE Pok (?). *kēr* 'to cut' (Bailey 1979, p. 54)
- *kīḍakyä* 'garment.' From *kart*- 'to cut, tailor.' Av. *kərati*- 'garment.' Base IE *ker*- 'to cut' (ibid., p. 60)

It is really amazing to see Iranian *kart*- 'to cut, tailor' and Assyrian *kāširu* 'tailor' paralleling each other.

Also, in his *Etymological Dictionary of Pre-13th Century Turkish*, Clauson notices some possible connection between the Turkic word *kes*- 'to cut, cut off' and the Tocharian-B word *käs*- 'to cut' and asks: "The resemblance to Tocharian B *käs*- 'to cut' is a coincidence?"⁵³ Now, the same question could be asked about the Tocharian *käs*- and Assyrian *karātu*, *kašātu*, and *kašāšu*, etc.

Considering that the Neo-Assyrian Aramaic language was once a *lingua franca* during the Achaemenid Persian period, the similarities suggest that the Assyrians and Persians borrowed words from one another then, or even earlier, and passed on the terms through Persian languages.

It appears to me that in the very early stages of language development, i.e., the Neo-Assyrian period of the tenth–eighth century BCE at least, Indo-European families started to share some words with peoples in Mesopotamia.

It may be interesting to note too that *The American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language* Online gives an etymological clue in a bracket under the term *kē-lēm, kil-īm*:

(trousers).

⁵³ Clauson 1972, p. 748.

[Turkish, from Persian *gilīm*, garment made of wool or goat hair, blanket, rug; perhaps akin to Akkadian *gulēnu* and Aramaic *glīmā*, cloak.] (Accessed on July 16, 2014 <http://ahdictionary.com/word/search.html?q=kilim>)

So, besides *kāmidu* and *kāširu*, there are Akkadian *gulēnu* and Aramaic *glīmā* (cloak) to think about. However, between the Akkadian *gulēnu* and the Aramaic *glīmā* and the later Persian word *gilīm*, there is about an 1800-year timespan (eighth c. BCE to tenth c. CE). I just do not see how the terms jumped, unless they were borrowed and modified at a very early stage and were passed on in different forms. My search through several possible Iranian and Indian languages indicates that the closest matches are the 'k, g' words in the Carpet Terminology Chart, below.

Conclusion

I conclude by highlighting several issues that are dealt with above and that I hope have been made better understood in this study, through the following summarized points:

- The terms for carpets used by the people of the Tarim Basin, especially those of Khotan, are specifically discussed, particularly *kojava* and *tavastaga* in Prakrit Kharoṣṭhi at around the third–fourth century CE, and *gahāvara* and *thauracaihā* in Khotanese from about the fourth to the eleventh century.
- The above terms are found to share the same root words with the Pali *kojava*, Sanskrit *kocava*, *kocavaka*, and *kaukapaka*, Old Persian *â-gaud*, and Sogdian *gaudana*; and Old Persian *tan*, *tauruna*, Sanskrit *tantuvichchhinna* and *thavana*, Sasanian Pahlavi *tadak*, *tapast*, *tapestak*, and Persian *tapast*, *tāftan*, *ṭāmbasa*, etc.
- Several Chinese terms for carpets from Central Asia recorded in early historical documents are confirmed to be transcriptions of foreign words that were used by peoples of the Western Region in the languages of Old Persian, Sanskrit, Prakrit, Khotanese, Sasanian Persian, and Sogdian. The terms 罽 (jì), 毳 (qūshū), 氍毹 (kè), and 氍 (kè) could come from any one of the following: Sanskrit *kocava*, *kocavaka*, and *kaukapaka*, Pali *kojava*, Old Persian *gaud*, Niya Kharoṣṭhi *kojava*, Khotanese *gahāvara*, *gaihe*, etc., and Sogdian *gaudana*. The terms 氍毹 (tādēng) and 氍壁 (tābi) could be from any of these: Old Persian *tan*, *tauruna*, Niya Kharoṣṭhi *tavastaga*,

Khotanes *thauracaihä*, Sasanian Pahlavi *tadak*, *tapast*, and *tapestak*, and Persian *tapast*, *tāftan*, *ṭambasa*, *tānīdan*, and *tabidan*, etc.

- It is decided, but not finally confirmed, that *kojava*, *gahāvāra*, 罽, and *qūshū* 毼 are used to mean both flat-woven and pile textiles that can be used for garment, blanket, and carpet; and *tavastaga*, *thauracaihä*, and *tādēng* 毼 are mostly knotted-pile carpets with the possibility of being flat textile as well.
- It is confirmed that *kè* 緜 in Chinese is not only a word transcribed from a foreign one, but also a technique learned from the Western Region; it is flat slit-tapestry weaving.
- The words starting with 'k/c, g' in both Iranian and Indian languages seem to be shared with Mesopotamian languages.
- The eleventh-century Turkic terms *kiviz* (*keviz*), *kərim* (*kerim*), and the like, and *təxək* (*töşe:k*), *tavrattī*, etc., are aligned with two similar sets of Iranian and Indian terms, which indicates that the Turkic words are loanwords from these languages.
- My search for the origins of *gilim/kilim* through Iranian, Turkic, Indo-European, and Aramaic languages, found that *gilim* did not appear in written records until the tenth century in a Persian text, and *kilim* did not appear in a Turkic dictionary in the fourteenth century. Both are rooted in earlier Iranian languages.

CARPET TERMINOLOGY CHART

Language	Word (k, g)	Word (t, th)	Word (f, p, b, a, u) ⁵⁴	Date
Kharoṣṭhi (Niya)	<i>kojava, kosava goni</i>	<i>tavastaga, thavastae thavamnaga</i>	<i>vastaramnena</i>	3rd–4th c. CE
Khotanese	<i>gahāvāra gahaā, cauṣka, khauska, kamaiškā, kaimeja kabalīja</i>	<i>thauracaihū</i>	<i>painajā, peṇabara, pveca,</i>	5th–11th c. CE
Pali	<i>kojava gōṇa, gōṇaka</i>		<i>atthara, upatthara paristoma</i>	3rd c. BCE – ?
Prakrit	<i>kōyavaya</i>		<i>attharaya, uvatthaḍa</i>	
Sanskrit (Arthashastra)	<i>kaukapaka, kambala</i>	<i>tantuvichchhinna</i>	<i>Paristoma</i>	2nd c. BCE – 3rd c. CE
Sanskrit (Buddhist Hybrid)	<i>kocava, kocavaka</i>			200 BCE – 700 CE

⁵⁴ These words may or may not belong together to a same group. Only for the sake of space do I put them in the same column.

Language	Word (k, g)	Word (t, th)	Word (f, p, b, a, u) ⁵⁴	Date
Sanskrit (Kuci)		<i>thavana</i> ⁵⁵	(<i>â-stara</i>) ⁵⁶	4th–5th c. CE
Avestan (Old Persian)	<i>â-gaud, gaud</i>	<i>tauruna, tan</i> ⁵⁷	<i>fraspāt</i> <i>upastara,</i>	6th c. BCE – 2nd c. CE
Sasanian Pahlavi (Mid Persian)		<i>tadak, tapast,</i> <i>tapastak</i>	<i>fars, frasp, farasp, bûp</i>	3rd–8th c. CE
Sogdian	<i>gaudana, â-gaud</i>		<i>faspā, parštarn,</i> <i>upastārāna-</i>	4th–10th c. CE
Persian (New)	<i>gilīm, qālī, etc.</i> ⁵⁸	<i>tapast, tāftan,</i> <i>tabidan, ṭabsa</i>	<i>farasp, farš,</i> <i>-bisāṭ, būb</i>	10th c. CE –
Chinese	<i>jì (gai), qūshū,</i> <i>kè</i>	<i>tādēng, tàbì, tǎn</i>		3rd c. BCE – 6th c. CE

⁵⁵ Under *thauna* in Bailey 1979. No specific definition is given.

⁵⁶ This word is from Macdonell's *A Practical Sanskrit Dictionary*.

⁵⁷ These two words are interpreted as 'to stretch, tender,' not directly as coverings or carpets.

⁵⁸ These are not in the Persian etymological dictionary. Their earliest appearances are in the tenth century.

Language	Word (k, g)	Word (t, th)	Word (f, p, b, a, u) ⁵⁴	Date
Turkic	<i>keviz, köwüz,</i> <i>kerim</i> (<i>köwüz,</i> <i>kebis, kibis,</i> <i>xewis</i>) ⁵⁹ <i>kilim</i>	<i>tavrattı, töşe:k</i>		8th–11th c. CE Since 14th c. CE
Aramaic (Neo-Assyrian)	<i>kāmidu, kāşiru,</i> <i>glīmā</i> (cloak)			10th–7th c. BCE
Akkadian	<i>gulēnu</i> (cloak)			8th c. BCE (?)

⁵⁹ Terms in parentheses are dated from the thirteenth century or found in various Turkic languages (Clauson 1972, p. 692).

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