



پښتونستان ګاونډي علوم او مطالعات فریښی
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one in the centre, and a smaller one either side. The Geyiklú say there should be no pouches, and it is possible that this net has now become confused with another similar length of webbing, complete with net and pouches, called âsmâ or âsmâlix, that was hung across the interior of the tent in a chord from strut to strut, there it could be used on the right hand side (as seen from the door) as a pelmet for the bridal curtain, with the pouches for mirror and comb, on the left hand side, with the pouches for salt and spoons, or at the back for supporting weapons horizontally.

The length of webbing used to fasten the two flank felts are generally arranged in symmetrical pairs according to pattern, and whether sewn to the front or the rear edges, they are all of the same size, that is to say 6.5-8.5cm broad, and 250-350cm long. The free ends are finished in flat six part plaits 3cm by 1 cm on each corner, which provide an extra 80cm in length for fastening the struts. In finely decorated tents the webbing may be up to 9.5cm wide. Nowadays the most common patterns are those worked in the paired warp float technique, including the çicekleme, or pisik tirnayi (cat's claws) and şayi already described, and another in large chequers of two colours about 1cm square, called ulduz (star) or qâpâjâ (chequer). The Qârâdâyi have another design in a series of angularly cranked S

shapes, called qâyçi qulpi (scissor handle), or (Hâjji 'Alflu) çâxmâx (cooking piece). A plain complementary warp pattern is used to build up alternating blocks of colour in interlocking red and blue motifs, called dört âyizli (with four mouths). Weft wrapping on a plain ground can delineate a series of motifs with individual names such as qiyânax (hoof), âşiq (knuckle bone), dârâx (comb), yârpâx (leaf), kevkir (skimmer), and çâlmâ (rattle), spaced out along the webbing. The same technique is used to build a pattern of long branching motifs, called qizlâr naqş, or to make hexagonal figures at intervals joined by a central line and filled with flowers, called âlmâ nâqşî, usually on a white ground. Another, called evdirme geçme consists of a broad zig-zag moving from one border to the other all down the webbing, with lateral spurs, and in this the colour changes periodically. Almost all these webbing patterns are finished with ladder borders.

The felt ties cross one another where they are drawn tight at the rear of the tent, and create a network of colour there. This, with the effect of the ties at the door and the coloured plaits drawn through the roof ring, form the main decoration in all but the most splendid tents, and even there they play an important part, set off against the new white felt.

The second half of this article will be printed in our next volume.

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with two toggles for fastening it to the strut: the pad may be embroidered with ram's horns. This girth passes around the periphery of the tent with its lower edge 25cm above the floor, sometimes wrapped around each strut in turn; and sometimes running outside to wrap alternate struts. It is usually in a complementary paired warp pattern of small alternating lozenges, called çiçekleme or (Geyiklü), pisik tırnayı. If this pattern is restricted to two or three stripes superimposed on a plain-woven ground, it is called şâyî: there may be five or six colours.

Roof girths, gergiç, gözex, or yännix, are done in weft-float brocading on a plain woven ground. They may be up to 17cm broad and 780cm long, in pairs, and at their finest they have an elaborate fringe of black braid mesh with tassels along the lower edge. One end is provided with three toggles or buttons and loops so that it can be fastened to the door strut and the other has the warp threads plaited into the usual long tail. They pass over the outside of the roof struts on either side of the tent, with their ends crossed over one another above the door and at the rear, where the tails are made fast; they start about 1.5m above the ground at either end, and rise slightly as they circle the dome in between. In a pattern called qizil gül a dark coloured plain-woven background is divided by bright brocaded hexagonal outlines, each of which contains a central motif in a different colour, like a flower. The background may be dark blue, the reticulation in yellow or orange, and the flowers red, pink, white purple, yellow and green. The whole effect is very gay. The net sewn to the lower edge is of 5mm plaited braid, formed simply into a four-sided 5cm mesh on the diagonal: it is made five or six meshes deep, and the tassels are bound to the lower points, in the same colours as the flower motifs. The net is known as tor, and the tassels as pomçâq, tumçâq, or qotâz.

Though even a pair of roof girths is rarely seen nowadays, they were used more extravagantly in the past for decking out chiefs' tents. It seems

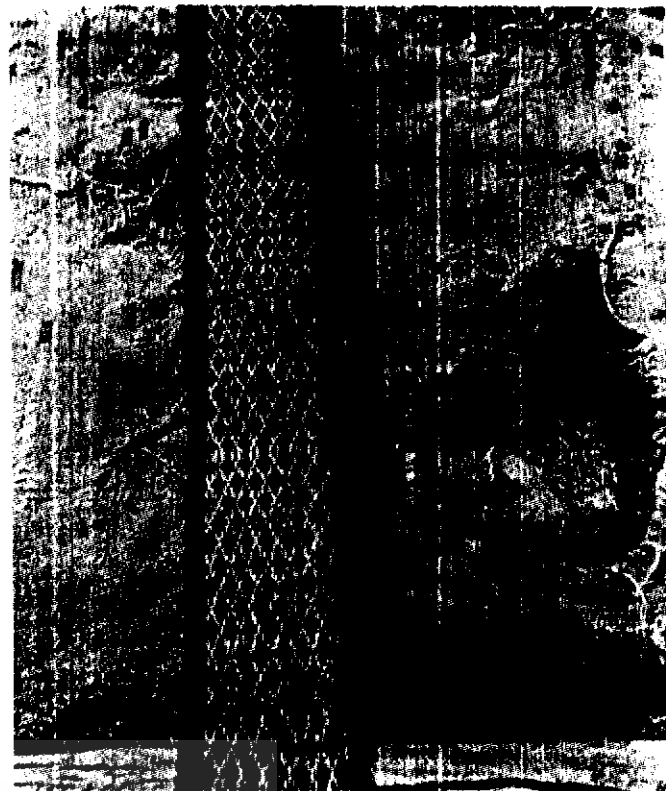
that three rows could be used on each side, one at the level of the wrapping girth, one below it, and the third at the upper edge of the cane screen, so that the tassels of each overhung the girth below, and the whole of the more vertical part of the dome sides was covered with layer upon layer of tasselled valances.

A simpler type of roof girth, also called gergiç is woven 11-12cm broad, and may be provided with an assortment of motifs in weft-float brocading on a plain ground. Since they are not furnished with a fringe, such girths can be passed around the struts more freely, starting 130cm from the ground, leading upwards over the door to 190cm and then falling again in a great circle as they pass over eight or nine struts. They are then wrapped a full turn around the next strut, close to the crossing of the wrapping girths on either side and only 90cm from the floor. They then rise and fall again in further sectors of great circles towards the back of the tent, where they cross, and are made fast to struts at about 110cm. This arrangement is used by the Tâliš Mixâillu.

Another band can be fitted around the lower part of the roof ring, below the slots, with a black network fringe that can be gathered in to conceal the branching of the centre tackle and the tangle of upper felt ties. The net is made in the same way as the fringe on the roof girth, but here it is called tor or (Qârâdayi) çarx bâyi: the diagonal four-sided mesh is about 13cm across and hangs down in a skirt 150cm long or more. The band at the top is 15-16cm wide and some 350cm long with plaited ends that can be tied at the back of the ring. It is worked in a series of large, closely-packed motifs in weft float brocading and soumak on a plain rep ground. The net is drawn inwards and bound so that it forms a cone, point downwards, around the ropes. The points of the lowest meshes are trimmed with tassels, and each crossing of the net is decorated with a mother-of-pearl button or a small tag of coloured cloth. In a Qârâdayi example there were three pouches sewn to the lower edge of the band over the net, a large

While the majority of other *tâyfas* use tents which are regarded by this élite as nondescript, certain of them are distinguished by their sobriety. For example among the Kelâš the wrapping girths are simple white; for the felt ties, the webbing is replaced among the Seyyidler by ropes of wool plaited in four parts, *örme*, and among the Hüsün Âjil (Hüseyn Hâjilü) by round plaits.³⁶ In general a high degree of decoration is a sign of a continuing prosperity which has allowed the women to develop and transmit the necessary skill in weaving.

The techniques used for this work are plain weave and wrap-pattern plain weave, *qilijâ*, supplementary paired-warp pattern weave, *lâdi*, weft-float brocading, *çâlmâ* or *keçme*, and soumak, *sekme* or *qâyix*. These yield an established range of motifs and patterns, of which there are so many that an adequate description would require a separate article. Each tent may contain a different combination of these, so a considerable variety

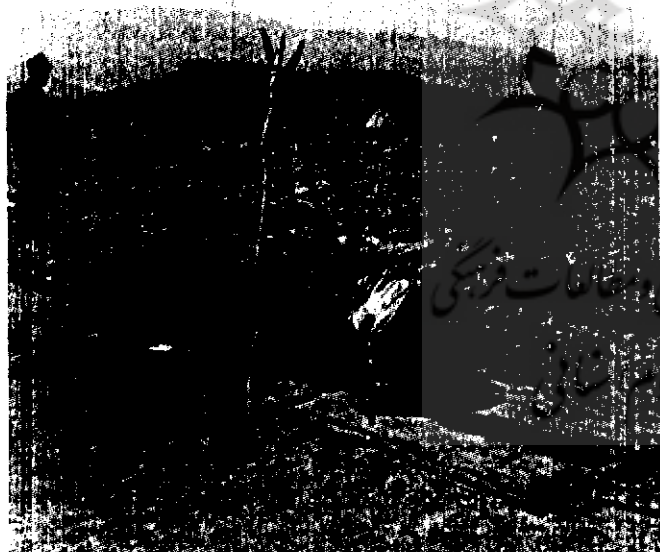


Webbing still on the loom: *Çiçekleme* pattern in paired warp technique. Hüseynaxli *Qârâdây*.

results.

The wrapping girths, *bâstirix*, are 6 or 7cm wide, and their length is proportionate to the size of the tent; those for a twenty-six strut tent are 17m long. They are most often woven in a warp-covered rep, in which the pattern is made by alternating groups of three warps. This two-coloured chequer is called *evirne* or (*Qârâdâyi*) *disleme*. Alternatively an interlocking pattern of two colours, *dört ayizli*, can be woven in a complementary warp pattern.

The foot girth, *tâbân örkeni*, may be as narrow as 7.5cm, though usually 11-12cm wide; there may be one only which runs from door strut to door strut, some 24m long, or there may be two, one running from each side. One end is reinforced with a special pad and fitted



Webbing being woven on a ground loom, *çiçekleme* pattern. Hüseynaxli *Qârâdâyi*.

36. I have not seen the tents of any of these groups, and there may be an element of exaggeration in this account of their plainness. They are all in allegiance to the *Geyikli*!

and running down the end itself to within 10cm of the ground. Each face of the webbing is 9-10 cm wide, and it is sewn through the canework with lines of alternating coloured thread in a double running stitch. The webbing thus protects the canework where it is most exposed near the door. Each of the screen ends is fitted with a pair of toggles with loops to match, so that it can be fastened to the appropriate door strut. They are known as āšiq, čilik, or iškil. They are now made from sections of dâydayân ayat, water elder, which is not only a strong, dense wood, but has the reputation of being efficacious against the evil eye. Sometimes, as the name āšiq or knucklebone suggests, bones from sheeps and goats were used to give protection, particularly parts of the neckbones. Both toggles and loops are fastened to the webbing at the end of the canework, so that the tip of the screen can be brought up to the inside edge of the doorpost and then held there.

The screens may be drawn together at the back in two ways. Either the two pieces are simply overlapped, and the upper one like the lower is stretched and tied to the nearest strut, or the ties on one are passed through loops placed on the other, and then led back as a simple tackle. The tension is important, since the screens help to prevent the feet of the struts from slipping outward, when there is no foot girth.

CORDAGE

The ropes used are mostly of wool, and occasionally of hemp. If of wool they are plaited by hand in one of three techniques, all of which use the same basic yarn, plied S of 3 Z. The round plait, top kečme is made of eight parts, four of one colour and four of another, each part being laid up Z of two yarns, but the yarns, and therefore the parts, for one colour are about twice as thick as those for the other. The resulting rope has two narrow facets opposite one

another, between two broader facets of the other colour. A special flat plait, gelin qāšī' is made from exactly the same eight parts so as to form a continuous spiral of thick dark brown yarns down the two edges, with alternating brown and white V shapes between them. These are the most common varieties: the round plait is made from 10mm to 15mm in diameter, and the flat plait from 15 x 5 mm to 25 x 10mm. The ends of the webbing are plaited in an ordinary flat plait 30 x 10mm. Hemp ropes, kendir, are sometimes used in place of wool for the felt ties.

The rope used to haul down the crown of the tent is known as čöskü ipi or čöskü örmesi.³⁵ It is made in a flat plait 20x10mm from eight parts, four black and four white, and it is 12m long. One end of the rope is made into an eye passing tightly round the shouldered end of a wooden hook, the doyânâx. This is made from the crotch of a branch with an angle of about 30°, each arm cut about 25cm long and 3.5cm thick, with a solid section up to 10cm long left at the angle to give it strength. This hook is regarded as being male (kiši). It is used as a pulley upon which a turn of the rope can be pulled taut, in a three part tackle.

Such cordage is collectively called ip-sâp: the thick ropes are called sijim, and the thin ones jiye.

THE GIRTHS

Webbing is used for the inside felt ties, the wrapping girth, and for the additional foot girth and roof girths found in large tents. There are characteristic variations between one tribe and another. The Geyiklü, Hâji Xojâlu, and Qojâbegli tâyfas are notable for tents equipped with richly-woven girths dyed with vegetable colours. The Tâliš Mixâillu tents are almost as fine, and among the Qârâdâyi a tent of the Hüseyn Axli tâyfa was the most elaborately decorated of any I have seen.

35. Tapper, 1971 p. 754-5: čöskü örməsi. The words sijim and örmä (ibid) are general ones for a heavy rope and a plait.



Erection of âlâčix. The centre tackle and cane screens are set up, and the first flank felt is fastened on.



Erection of âlâčix. The insertion of the struts into the roof ring

felt in lines, loops, circles and blobs of brown or blue wool. The loops are sometimes filled in with small areas of teased wool coloured red, green, or orange. There appears to be a single fundamental pattern which appears in varying degrees of simplification or degeneration. At its most elaborate this consists of a tall rectangular outline, finished with a triangle to bring it to a point at top and bottom. From three to six little loops protrude from each of the long sides, with others on the points. A line running from top to bottom between the points divides the whole figure in two, and each half is filled with a network of branches from the centre line, or a series of lozenges one above the other. The small intervening spaces are decorated with alternating roundels.

The door flap is hung on two ties sewn to the upper corners, each 150cm long, and made of wool in a plain or a round plait. They are called qāpīliyin bāyi, or qāpi bāyi, the flap itself being known as qāpilix. It can be secured on the inside by a second pair of ties, yelix, which are fastened to the canework 75cm from the ground. These vary somewhat from one tâyfa to another. In a Tāliš Mixāillu tent, for example, each tie consists of two lengths of round-plaited wool 1m long, their lower ends tasselled, and their upper ends fastened together at the canework in a round felt disc with decorative stitching, set 20-25cm in from the side.

THE CANE SCREENS

The screens are named čix, čiy, or četen.³⁴ They are made up by the method usual in Iran and Central Asia. The canes are all cut to the same length, which is usually between 60cm and 70cm. They are bound side by side with paired lines running across them, each of which holds two canes with a half turn, then another two, with a half turn, and so on. Adjacent lines are arranged so that the half turns in the pairs

alternate above and below any single cane. These lines were usually of goat hair, plied Z of 2 S, but it would appear from reports of coloured lines used in the past that wool was once used too; nowadays industrially produced cotton string is often used, and the nomads made a Z ply by doubling it. The hair and woollen lines are called qātmā, and the cotton tāvlâmâ ip.

The canes, which are not split, are laid ten per decimetre. At their simplest the binding lines run at right angles to the canes, and parallel to one another: there are usually four at equal intervals, the outermost being 7cm from the edges. Alternatively straight lines of this kind can be combined with diagonal runs which zig-zag back and forth across the width in opposite directions, to form a series of lozenges point to point along the length of the screen. This pattern is called duz gūllū. There are usually three straight lines, one down each edge and one down the centre, and the lozenges are then contained within the outer two and centred on the middle one: the arrangement thus requires five lines altogether. In the past more elaborate patterns were worked in different colours with seven or nine lines. I have not seen an example of this work, but 'Ali Xān Geyiklū drew me a sketch showing a series of lozenges down the centre as usual, with a smaller zig-zag on either side: if each of the zig-zags were contained between straight lines, and another ran down the centre, a total of nine would be needed.

Two lengths of this screening are required for a tent, long enough to overlap by a metre or more when they are extended from either side of the door towards the rear. The lines of binding are prolonged to form a tie at the top and bottom of each screen, 150cm long, čiy bāylāri.

The front ends of both screens are finished with strips of webbing, usually blue or indigo-coloured, folded over the last 2m of the top edge

34. Tapper, 1971 p. 754. His spelling is čātān. Op't Land also gives hasir (P. 241) which he describes as a general name: I have never heard it used in this context.

tufts. I saw a similar cross on a Hüseynaxli (Qârâdâyi) tent, coloured magenta, blue and orange. Whatever its form, this crest is called qotâz. The felt is also embellished with yarn couched on, to match the roof felts. This forms brown or blue meridional lines that divide the dome into quarters, and another around its junction with the skirt. One Tâliš Mixâillu tent had a ram's horn motif, qoç buynuz, in each of the four panels, couched in the same way. In more ordinary tents these lines may be used only to hide the pleats in the felt, or they may be omitted altogether. They can only be seen if the felts are new and white: later they merge with the background.

Externally and internally the tent appears to be covered with three layers of felt which overlap successively, since it cannot be seen that the upper and lower sets of gores in the roof felts are stitched together.

THE DOOR FLAP

The door is formed by a long rectangular flap of felt mounted on a flexible cane backing. It measures about 3m by 1m. The canes, which are cut 1m long to match the width, are the same as those used for the cane screens (q.v. *infra*), and are bound together in the same way, in pairs packed close together, about ten to the decimetre. They are not split. The binding medium is goat hair yarn in a Z ply of 2 S, in four lines of paired threads spaced regularly across the width so that those near the edges are set in 12cm from the cane ends. There is often a further element in this canework which is absent in the screens: long strips of thin white leather 2.5cm wide are passed over and under the pairs of canes in an alternating pattern worked closely and evenly over the surface.³³ All their ends are concealed on the side covered by the felt. These strips are called bâylix; the tribesmen explain that with the constant use that the door flap endures, the goat hair bindings wear out very quickly, and that the leather



Door flap with ornament. Tâliš Mixâillu.

strengthens the work.

The felt for the facing is made from the same thickness as the roof felts, and it is cut large enough to be turned over all four edges of the canework, forming a border on the inside 10cm wide with the edges tucked in and stitched through from one face to the other. Sometimes the edges are protected with broad goat-hair webbing which is folded over the felt to make a dark border 10 cm wide, both front and rear. This may be set off with the two lines of stitching in two alternating colours, perhaps white and orange.

The face of the door, on the outside, is usually decorated with a pattern laid into the

33. This resembles the technique found on Scythian shields !

The rear felt is provided with two ties on each of its straight edges. One of these is attached at the level of the bottom edge of the upper set of gores, but since this edge is free, it is sewn to the lower set at this point; the other is fastened half way down the side of the lower set.

The ties, čól báyí or čól ipi, or (Hâjji 'Alîlu) yân báyí, are made of brown and white wool in a special flat plait known as gelin qâšî. Where this is attached to the felt it is made into a crow'sfoot, čârpânâ or čârpânix, of three parts to distribute the stress over about 70cm of the edge. In a large tent the complete tie is about 550cm long, including a crow'sfoot of 50cm.

The ties on the front and rear edges of the flank felts are arranged differently one from the other to accommodate the doorway and the smoke flap; the ties on one of these felts are a mirror image of those on the other. The smoke flap on each side is provided with a single tie of round-plaited rope 170cm long, the âtânâx báyí, sewn to its lower corner. The remaining ties, of which there are at least three on each felt edge, are known as bâyîlâr or yân ipler: the upper ones are generally plaited, and those lower down are made of handwoven woollen webbing about 7cm wide, which is sometimes plain, and sometimes decorated. Such webbing ties are called örken, örčer, or (Hâjji 'Alîlu) qol örkeni. The exact arrangement varies to some extent from tâyfa to tâyfa, and also according to individual taste, but in general the more important tribesmen decorate their tents with finely woven ties which tend to follow established patterns, whereas ordinary folk use plain ties.

On the front edge there may simply be four lengths of webbing sewn at a regular spacing to the lower gore, the lowest about 80cm above the ground. In larger tents the tie at the top of the lower gore is often a round plait, while four others below it are of webbing; or the topmost two ties may be flat plaits, the three next below of webbing, and the lowest of flat plait again. On the rear edge there is often a flat plait with a crow'sfoot at the junction of the upper and the lower gores.

Below this there may be from three to five lengths of webbing at equal intervals. In simpler cases there may be two flat plaits at the top, and two pieces of webbing lower down the edge. In all cases I have seen, the lowest 70cm of the felt which overlaps the cane screen is left entirely without ties. The plaits at the top of the front edge are between 200cm and 300cm long, and the webbing up to 350cm. The plaits on the rear edge are 150cm to 200cm long, and the webbing there about 300cm. Where decorated webbing is used, it is carefully attached so that the good face will be exposed when the felt is in position. Even where it is plain, the wool is usually dyed red, orange, or blue.

The topmost felt is called tepenik, or (Geyiklü) tâpâlix or kâllâlix. It consists of a domed covering for the roof ring, which fits exactly, and a skirt 25-30 cm wide around its lower edge, which lies flat over the upper edges of the roof felts and keeps the joint waterproof. The large Tâliš Mixâillu tents I examined had top felts made up carefully from two to six pieces, cut to form a neat circular edge. By contrast a small Geyiklü tent was provided with a new top felt simply pleated into shape from a square of material 150cm by 150cm, and the corners, which were rounded, were left untrimmed.

Ties for securing this cap are provided at quarter points around the circumference, where the domed part meets the skirt on the inside. They are of brightly coloured wool in a round plait 1m long. These are the tepenix bâyîlârî.

If the tent is an elaborate one, the top felt may be decorated; the method seems to vary with the tribe. The most conspicuous ornament is a gay woollen pompon which stands erect on the very summit. Among the Tâliš Mixâillu it is single, and of red, white and blue wool about 9 cm across, standing 20cm high at the top of a stem tightly bound around with dark blue yarn. The Geyiklü favour a cross made in the same way, 25cm high and 30cm across the arms, with red

the webbing. This yarn, which is triple-ply for thickness, is couched in place with thinner thread of the same colour. The designs on either side of the doorway are made roughly symmetrical. The upper end of the webbing finishes at the top edge of the lower gore; at this point the collar of upper gores is not stitched to the lower set, but left freely overlapping it for a distance of 50-80cm back from the door-edge. The collar is extended by the addition of an extra gore to project over the door from 60-140 cm at its lower edge. This arrangement leaves a flap free on either side, so that one can be laid over the other to seal the roof completely, or else pulled back on one side, or both, to open the smoke hole. When both are pulled back fully, the space between the door struts is exposed, and one to one-and-a-half strut spaces on either side of it, depending on the cut. These flaps are called *âtânâx*, or *qâršilix* (Hâjji 'Alîlu). In well-made tents the two or more gores which made up a flap may be prolonged by 10 cm at their lower edge, so that the collar is somewhat deeper than usual where it is free from the lower gores, including that part where it overlaps them freely. The entire perimeter of the collar may be trimmed with a thick couched yarn of brown wool in two parallel lines close to the edge, which then turn downwards to remain close to the edge of the longer flap gores, and finally run up the straight edge of each flap to end close to the roof-ring.

The straight edges of the lower gores of the rear felt may be decorated with a similar double line to within 30cm of the ground, and the straight edges of its collar can be made to match with the stitching around the perimeter running up the straight edge to end at the top. Since the rear felt overlaps the hindmost gore of each of the flank felts, this ornament is seen to advantage. The bottom edges of both upper and lower gores are left uncut, thinning irregularly; but while the lower gores may be allowed to vary a little in length, the upper ones are carefully arranged so that the edge of the collar is even throughout.

Though the bottom edge does not actually touch the ground, it comes within a few centimetres of it, and each of the three roof felts follows the curve of the struts up to the roof ring, so that the length of the gores required depends on the size of the tent. The proportion of the upper set to the lower varies between 3:5 and 3:6 in length. The lower gores are therefore about 300cm long for a large tent and 230cm for a small one. The width also varies from 110cm at the ground in the one case to 60cm in the other, and 80cm at the lower edge of the collar to 65cm. The lower set tapers to about half its width, and the upper to a third. The rear felt is usually smaller by a gore or so than the flank felts, but it may also be of the same size. The flank felts are usually, but not invariably, equal. There are thus from six to eight gores in the rear, and from six to fourteen in the flank felts. The cases in which the flank felts are unequal are generally the poorer tents, and probably indicate the re-use of felts for economic reasons, relatives' cast-offs being adapted for a smaller tent. Occasionally small tents are fitted with only two roof felts, of about the same size: one Tâliš Mixâillu tent for example, with twenty-four strutš, had flank felts of ten and twelve gores, and no rear felt. These poorer tents generally show much less evidence of care and finesse in the fitting and detail of the felts than those of richer men.

All three roof felts are secured in place by plaited ropes and lengths of hand-woven webbing whose ends are sewn on at particular points along the straight edges; but because the rear felt overlaps the others on the outside, and because one edge of each of the flank felts meets the doorway, there is some differentiation in their treatment. They are all similar in one respect, though: at each of the top corners of all three felts is sewn the end of a woollen rope 150cm long, *boyâz bâyi* or (Hâjji 'Alîlu) *jiye*, which is plaited in a round section with two colours in a technique called *top kečme*. In larger tents a third of these ropes may be added at the top centre of each felt.

Two further pegs are sometimes provided for fastening the rear felt ties: they are placed near the third strut from the door on either side, and each is used to secure two ties. These pegs are known as čârpi or yellix. I saw these only among the Qârâdâyi, however, and it is possible that their use is confined to this group.

A heavy mallet, toxmâx, is used to strike in the stake and pegs. The head is a cylindrical section of timber 30cm long by 15 cm in diameter, transixed at right angles by a haft 60-80 cm long and 3-3.5cm in diameter. It is not usually bound.

THE DOORWAY

Though the doorway is differentiated only by the selection of two of the stouter roof struts to stand on either side, it is marked by a small tasselled rope, qâpi qotâz or pončâx. This is made from a round plait of several colours of wool in eight parts, and it is long enough, 1m or more, to span between these struts. Its ends are finished with tassels, and it is decorated with a series of smaller tassels at intervals which hang down over the door. It is fastened over the entrance with a half hitch on each side. No threshold is provided.

THE FELTS

It appears that the Šâhsâvân have no word for the complete suit of felts, except kečeler, the ordinary plural. All are made from material of the same thickness, which varies rather unevenly between 1.5 and 2.0 cm. One of the most remarkable features of the tent is the way in which all the roof felts, with the exception of the topmost, are cut in gores so as to correspond approximately to the segmentation of the dome by the struts. The relationship of the gore width to the interval between the struts varies according to the size of tent in question. The gore size itself depends on the more or less standard dimensions of the felt blank from which it is cut, and which measure about 1 m by 2.5m;

both felt blank and gore in fact have the same name, qâlîp or qâlîp. The seams between these gores are oversewn with double S ply white woollen thread, or with industrially-made S spun cotton thread. Each seam is sewn twice, because of the thickness of the felt, once along the outside, and once along the inside edges.

The two flank felts, yân'keče, and the rear felt, dâl keče, cover the whole of the structure except for the roof ring, around which they fit snugly. All three are fan-shaped, with two straight sides the same length as the struts they are to cover, the top trimmed to a concave arc of about one third of a circle, and the bottom left as a somewhat irregular convex arc to match the curvature of the tent's ground plan. Each of these felts is made up of two series of gores arranged concentrically, the upper set being fewer in number than the lower, and about half the length. This collar-like set, the ârâxçîn, is sewn onto the upper edge of the lower set, which is also arc-shaped, so as to overlap it by about 10cm, the lower edge of this lap being left free. The upper edge of the collar is trimmed with strips of felt about 4cm wide sewn to the gores in the usual way.

This represents the basic pattern of the roof felts, to which the rear felt conforms completely. The two flank felts are modified at their front edges to provide a doorway, and flaps to cover or control the smoke hole which lies between the top of the door opening and the front of the roof ring. The straight edges of the lower set of gores which will abut the entrance on either side are trimmed with a handwoven webbing, the yaxalix, 6cm broad, and plain-coloured in a warp-faced rep. It runs down close to the edge of the felt to within some 35cm of the bottom, where it turns at right angles and runs across the gore for 70cm. The lowest part of the felt, which is thus untrimmed, is left quite plain. The remainder, in the better tents, is decorated with a rectangle of black or indigo yarn in a criss-cross design about 200cm tall and 60 cm wide, in the angle made by

There are a few variations. On one occasion I saw the inverted fork of a branch used, the long limb being driven into the ground, and the other shortened one serving as an integral, downward pointing hook to hold the tackle instead of the peg. Tapper also shows a pair of pegs used instead of a stake, struck in with their points towards one another, and quite close together, so that the load from the tackle can be spread between them. 32 If the ground is altogether too hard for the stake to be used, a heap of flattish stones is stacked up in its place like a pedestal, to shoulder height, and so arranged that the centre rope can be passed underneath. Alternatively a sack full of heavy stones may be tied on the rope. When the frame is new and set up for the first time (q.v.) a special arrangement is used.

This stake has acquired some symbolic importance, for during the preparations for a wedding, when the bridal tent is being set up, the stake for it is brought by the bridegroom's father from his own tent: it does not necessarily have to be

new or old, but he may have to make a new one to replace it. It is then struck in by the bride's father and her brothers in turn (or if she has none, by her father's brother) who pray for her as they drive it home, saying "Qizim seni görüm bu oylânân senin vâslâtin bu çöskü kimin möhkâm olsun", My girl, may I see (you in) your union with this young man as strong as this stake!"

THE PEGS

Four pegs, yân mixlâr, are used to secure the ends of the wrapping girths. These are 30-40 cm long and 3-4 cm in diameter. They are struck well into the ground around the circumference of the tent at points corresponding to 2,4,8, and 10 o'clock if the door lies at 12. or if the girths are long enough, at 1,5,7, and 11 o'clock. They are placed close by the feet of the struts, so as not to cause an obstruction outside. Thus in a small tent the pair of pegs on each side is placed about four struts apart, and in a larger one, six to eight.



Erection of âlâcix. Striking in pegs for the wrapping girths.

32. Tapper, *ibid.*

sometimes finished to a square 10 x 10cm or a rectangular 10 x 6 cm profile. This is pierced transversely some 20cm from the top by a round hole into which is driven a tightly fitting wooden pin, dāmāx, about 30 cm long and 2.25 – 3.00cm in diameter, placed so that its arms project equally on either side. The top of the stake itself is often fitted with a wrought-iron ring, qālāvat,³¹ bound tightly around the end, to prevent the edges

from splitting under the blows of the mallet. When in position the stake is driven in so that only 30-40 cm remain exposed above the ground, with the pin set at right angles to the axis through the tent door. If the ground is flat the stake is placed exactly in the centre of the tent, and if it slopes, it is set a little uphill to prevent the structure from leaning.



Interior of a Beg's guest tent, showing the centre tackle and stake, the smoke hole open beyond, and the door flap pulled to one side. The bands crossing above the doorway are roof girths, and the wrapping girth lies below them. A foot girth runs in front of the cane screen. The other bands are felt ties. Tališ Mixâillu.

31. Tapper, 1971. Appendix I, figure III.

the three groups of spokes, where they are let into the rim. The sides of the triangle then form great circles on the dome. In the older pattern seen at Miândoâb these great circles were formed from pairs of laths, and there were only two of these sets, instead of three. In either case the resulting roof is firm but heavy. The front is marked.

The laths arranged radially are called qubbâ by the tentmakers, and the great circles qursâq, but I was told too that some of the tribesmen refer to all the laths together as qumbârâ (cannon-ball?), these being in general the same people who call the roof ring dunnûx. Op't Land reports that the unspecified Šâhsävân he met called the laths kolabareh.²⁶

THE STRUTS

All the struts are in principle identical, planed to a rectangular section 4 cm by 2.25 – 2.50 cm. At their upper ends the last 8 cm is reduced in thickness from the underside to 2 cm, and tapered from either side to a width of 3 cm, so that the tip may fit the slots in the roof ring. At their lower ends they are cut across the thickness at a splay of 45° so as to form a sharp edge along the inner side of the foot. Their length is proportional to the size of the tent, but there is some variation in practice. The smallest twenty-four strut tents have struts between 315 and 385 cm long overall, while in the twenty six strut system they measure from 420 to 442 cm, in the twenty-eight strut system from 440 to 450cm, and in the largest thirty-two strut system about 460cm.²⁷ This is the full range of sizes, since thirty strut tents are not made. Such variations

occur between one tent and another: the difference in length of the struts in any one set is unlikely to exceed 10 cm, and is accounted for by the re-tapering of broken tips, as well as inequalities in the carpenters' work. As the upper tips of the struts protrude through their slots into the roof ring, some 5.5cm of their effective length is lost, and the sharpened lower ends of many sink from 3 to 5 cm into the ground.

Each strut is curved evenly, with the deepest part of the curve occurring a little higher than the middle of its length. Before the strut is placed in position the depth of the curve is 30-40 cm at this point, measured at right angles to the chord between the strut tips. It increases when the frame is erected to 40 cm in a twenty-four strut tent, and about 75 cm in twenty-six and twenty-eight strut tents.

The struts are known as čubux (Op't Land gives čabux²⁸), and their top ends as bâlâ (baby). Since there are small variations in the thickness, two of the stouter struts are later selected to stand either side of the tent entrance, where they are called qâpî čubuxlari. They may be marked with a small notch cut across their inner edge; in ordinary tents however no special distinction is made.

THE CENTRE STAKE

The central stake is called čöskü or čöski²⁹. It is made of mulberry wood, dut,³⁰ or some other suitable timber, cut from a section of 10 cm diameter or more. It is long enough to reach a man's solar plexus when stood upon its tip, that is 120cm, and the lower half is tapered gradually to a point. The upper part is sometimes left round,

26. Op't Land, op. cit., p. 241.

27. I have not seen a thirty-two strut tent, so I have cited the length mentioned by the tentmaker. In fact the theoretical sizes he gave me were somewhat different to those I measured in Šâhsävân camps and I give these in the section on manufacture.

28. Op't Land, op. cit., p. 240, spelled tsabukh.

29. Op't Land, op. cit., p. 240 records the word mikh, but this is a general Persian word for peg or nail, and may not have been used specifically. I have nevertheless heard the tentmakers refer to it as čöskü mîxi.

30. Other timbers listed by 'Ali Xân were elm, qârâÿâč, and oak, pâlut.

section of this article.

The rim of the roof ring is made up of two felloes, called *qânât* by the tentmakers, bent into a semicircular shape with their ends scarfed so as to overlap smoothly by 20-30 cm. The outer surface of these felloes is flat, while the inside is convex, so that the section is thickest at the centre, about 2.5 cm. The dimensions vary with the size of the tent. A twenty-four strut tent crown is made with felloes some 16 cm deep, that for a twenty-six strut tent 21 cm, and that for twenty-eight struts 25 cm. The diameter in all these cases is about 90 cm internally or a little more, though the tentmakers told me that it should increase by increments of 7 cm, except for the thirty-two strut model which is half an *ârşîn* or 20 cm (sic!) larger.

²⁴ The scarfed joints are bound with two or three thin iron straps whose ends are fastened with wire links on the outside of the ring, and the tip of the felloe exposed on the outside of each joint is nailed with three large, square-headed, wrought iron nails, *mismâr* or *qâdâx*, which are clenched on the inside. A number of slots appropriate to the size of the tent pierce the felloes at equal intervals along the centre line all round, each measuring 2.5cm by 3.5cm; the spacing is carefully arranged so that there are never any superfluous holes.

An old roof ring I examined near Miândoâb was made similarly except that it was bound around the rim with ten sets of rawhide strips 1 cm wide, made from camel's neck leather. Three or four turns were passed around the felloes at each point, and the turns twisted together on the inside to catch the ends, which were not knotted. A pair of these bindings were placed together at each of the scarfed joints, and the remaining six were spaced equally around the rim in the intervals between the slots. When I described this to 'Ali Xân he confirmed that this was the old pattern used

generally by the *Šâhsāvân*, and that the strips were called *tesme*.²⁵

The convexity of the inner surface of the ring allows a reduction in thickness towards the upper and lower edges, which are planed flat in most cases to a surface 0.5 cm wide, or else allowed to taper off. Close to the top edge is pierced a further set of slots to hold the ends of the spokes. Unlike the strut slots, however, these are not made at right angles to the plane of the rim, but are set at an angle to the horizontal so as to bow the spokes upward into a dome. The slots are known generally as *delix* or *kân*. Those for the spokes are about 3 cm by 0.25 cm, their length being parallel to the edge of the roof ring and they are spaced in six groups as follows: there are two major groups of three laths each (each lath having its own slot) which cross one another at a diagonal whose ends are spaced equally 30 cm either side of the diameter formed by the two felloe-joints. The laths in each group lie parallel and adjacent to one another, even touching. A third group of only two laths, also adjacent, is placed across the first two symmetrically, so that it lies at right angles to the diameter between the felloe-joints. The ring is thus traversed by a six-armed cross, whose tips are set in the rim symmetrically, but not equidistant from one another. The third group of spokes lies outermost, and the point at the centre where all three groups cross is fastened with a number of 2 cm panel pins clenched on the inside. The laths themselves are all equal in size, measuring 6.5cm wide, 0.25 cm thick, and about 125 cm long; their ends are trimmed down to a width of 3 cm to fit the slots.

The pins are called *mix*.

This dome is further strengthened by three single laths arranged with their tips overlapping to form an isosceles triangle in plan. The apices of this triangle are each nailed to one end of each of

24. Actually a Russian *ârşîn* is 71 cm, and an Osmanli one 68 cm, so the tentmaker's estimate was pretty vague. I did not ask whether any 32 strut tents had been made since his father's time.

25. The tentmaker however knew nothing about this type of joint and reinforcement: it must have antedated his generation.

value that the Šâhsävân and other Âzari tribes give to the number thirty-two.²²

THE ROOF RING

The roof ring is now known generally as čembere. However I heard from two sources that there was another name too. The first of my informants was 'Ali Xan Geyiklû, the present Geyiklû chief. As his comment is of some importance it is worth quoting in full: Türkü dilinde ävvälde biz de dünnûx diyerdik bunâ; yavâş yavâş bu istilâhlâr deyişildi, dönderdik čembere de dedik, vâli âşilde, âşil Âzerbâyjân türküsünde dünnûx dür. Čembere ikiminjisi dil diyerlër".

At first we called this dünnûx in Turki. Slowly these idioms changed, and we turned to

calling it čembere too. But originally, in original Âzarbâijân Turki, it is dünnûx. 'They say čembere as a second form of speech".

My second informant was Idris Dežâm, one of the brothers who makes tent frames in Ârdâbil. He said that it was known to the trade and to most of the tribesmen as čembere, but that some of the older tribesmen called it dünnûč.²³ I could not induce him to be more precise. He deals with all the tribes as their sole supplier.

Despite this, I never met a tribesman who called it by any name other than čembere, and it is noteworthy that 'Ali Xan always called it by its common name too. Both Tapper and Op't Land record only this word. I shall discuss the implications of the other term in the historical



Roof ring, with struts beyond. The great circle laths are paired.

22. The Šâhsävân theoretically consist of 32 tribes, though in fact they are more. The Qizilbaş too may have comprised 32, and there is Qârâbâg tribe called Otuz iki (Tapper 1971 p. 407). There are also supposed to have been 32 Özbek tribes descended from the 32 sons of Maruh, the son of Japhet! (Bahaeddin oğel, Türk, Mitolojisi I, Ankara 1971, pp. 381-385).
23. The tentmaker, not being a tribesman, pronounced many words rather differently from the Šâhsävân.

which can be considered: the volume or floor area enclosed per unit of the hemispherical outer surface. Since the volume increases as the cube of the radius, and the surface area as the square, the space enclosed in the larger tents is relatively greater; if the floor area is considered, it will be seen that the ratio of surface area to floor area remains constant, since both vary as the square of the radius. Anyone who can afford the extra cost of the felt covering for a larger tent therefore obtains a commensurate gain in floor space, and a greater advantage in volume.

The weight of the tent frame and cover is concentrated virtually within the hemispherical surface, and if the shape of the tent remained hemispherical however large it was, it would seem possible, within limits, to increase the span of the dome by increasing the size of the frame members. This is prevented by two other factors, the restriction of height and the loading imposed by the centre tackle. The height of the tent increases only slightly with the size of the structure: the height from the ground to the underside of the roof ring is usually somewhat less than 2.00 m in 24 strut tents, and somewhat more than 2.00 m in the larger ones. The main constraint appears to be the need for a man to be able to hold up the ring at the correct height during the erection of the frame, for with his hands a metre apart at either side of the rim, a tall man cannot lift it higher than 2.00m or so, and though a man may gain height by climbing onto a storage pack (about 50 cm high), it should be remembered that most tribesmen are not particularly tall. The height of 2.15m to the underside of the ring places the struts at 2.30m in the centre of the tent: this is as high as a tall man can reach, and would appear to represent the optimum for convenience in erection and in freedom of movement. The gain in comfort with any further increase above this seems to be unimportant, and in-

sufficient to justify the greater cost and weight.

This limitation of the height leads to a flattening of the dome in the larger tents and the struts are placed under relatively greater stress. The situation is worsened by the use of the centre tackle to impose a point load at the centre of the span, which increases the stress tending to deflect the struts. Any thickening of the struts would also add weight to the predominantly horizontal centre section of the tent, which is supported entirely by the resistance to deflection inherent in the section: that increase in weight would tend to cancel out any gain in strength from the extra thickness. As the diameter is increased a point will be reached at which the struts can no longer support the combined stresses. The fact that extra girths are used in the 28 strut tent to restrain the struts at their feet and near the point of their maximum bending shows that the system is already under considerable stress at this size. The 32 strut size may well be the largest possible.

Such a combination of economic and structural factors explains why 32 strut tents are so rare, and it also indicates that the reason why 30 strut tents are never made may be that the advantages they afford over 28 strut tents are negligible. The Ārdābil tent makers however provide a different explanation for the absence of the 30 strut model: they say that it does not work, because when it is first hauled down to the centre stake, it tilts to one side and leans over. But if this is due to the impossibility of dividing thirty by four, the same argument should prevent the 26 strut model from working too, when it is in fact one of the most popular. I have heard of only one example of the 32 strut tent still being used, although there appear to have been several about forty years ago, all owned of course by important chiefs.²¹ Its use by such leaders may possibly be connected with the rather special

21. The tent still extant belongs to the Ceyiklū. Chiefs who used to own them appear to have included Hâtam Xân Geyiklū, Norûz Xân of the Qojâbeglu, Amrâslân Xân of the Isâlî, and Nejez Qulu Xân of the Ārâllu.

before moving off towards the *Muyân*. They arrive there at the beginning of November, and pause for a few weeks in the autumn pastures so as to prepare their winter quarters which lie a few kilometres away. They then move in, and remain there in a fixed establishment from November to March. They move out at the end of March but stay another month in the winter pasture until they set out on the migration again at the beginning of May. The tents must therefore be set up and struck again at least six times a year, without including their use on the migration. The trek itself consists in theory of fifteen daily stages with traditional stopping places, *düşerge*, where the tents are set up, so the *Şahsavân* may move camp about thirty-five days a year. However close relations may share tents to save trouble on the migration, and in any case an *âlâçix* is set up then without centre tackle or cane screens, unless the weather is severe.¹⁹

The winter camp differs from the others in providing an elaborate series of shelters, some of them underground, for both men and animals. The simplest is a circular enclosure of upright canes, their tall tops left waving thickly in the air: this may be used as a corral, *tövle*, for the horses. A *vânâ* provides shelter for certain of the sheep: a long rectangular pit, *dâm*, is dug into the ground two to three metres wide and waist deep or more. The walls of this are lined with plaited canework, *çitek*, and it is arched over with bundles of canes, *qom*, tied together with osiers, *burgu*. These are bridged in turn with purlins of cane, *tâpân*, and the vault which results is covered in 10 cm of earth, so that from the outside the whole construction looks like no more than a barrow-shaped mound until one sees the entrance ramp sloping down to it. Sometimes a smoke hole is made in the vault, and the shelter is used as a dwelling. Other underground caves for animals, *köhül*, may have up to four chambers provided

with mangers, *âxur*, and vent holes. The subterranean dwellings are called *dâm*. To judge from the accounts of travellers they must be of considerable antiquity as a type; they are not limited to the *Muyân*, and occur extensively in Armenia.²⁰

Besides channels for fresh water, camps may be provided with drainage ditches, and a lavatory, *âftâhâ*, surrounded with a dry stone wall and carefully placed so as to soak away inoffensively.

THE ÂLÂÇIX FRAME AND ITS SIZE

The roof ring and the struts are the only parts of the tent bought from the craftsmen at *Ârdâbil*, and they are referred to as *çâti*.

When they are assembled and hauled down at the crown with the centre tackle, the struts meet the roof ring horizontally. The resulting diameters are in practice as follows: for 24 struts, 535-650 cm; for 26 struts, 700-750cm; for 28 struts, 750 cm; and for 32 struts a computed 770 cm. When these figures are considered it becomes clear that the structural limitations of the frame in relation to the span are such that the diameter of the tent cannot be increased in direct proportion to the number of struts used: the effective increase in size from one number of struts to the next diminishes as the number of struts increases. In terms of floor area the gains from an increase of 24 to 26 struts, and from 26 to 28, taking average floor diameters of 650, 725, and 750 cm, show a diminution of from 8.09m² to 2.90m², and from an increase of 28 struts to 32, they decrease still further to 2.38 m². Clearly the tent is governed by the principle of similitude. Thus in the larger sizes not only is more timber required for the larger number of struts, with a proportional increase in cost and weight to be reckoned with in transport, but the advantages gained are relatively small if measured in floor space. There is however another criterion

19. Tapper 1971 pp. 37-38, 177, 180, 135. Tapper has *düşâlgâ*.

20. The same kind of construction as the *vânâ*, seems to be known in Kazakhstan as *pânâ*. See Qazad Sovet Entsiklopediyasui (Alma Ata 1972), p. 129.

together. The traces of such large camps can still be seen. ¹⁷ Nowadays the presence of a well-organised gendarmerie has ended raiding, and although wolves still seize an occasional sheep, they can usually be dealt with. A summer camp now consists of a cluster of four or five tents in a minimal herding unit, pitched within a hundred metres of one another near the middle of the pasture area that they have rights to. In winter two or three of these units combine in one camp, and on migrations the tire now moves together.

There is not much discernible order in the arrangement of a camp, which varies a good deal according to the nature of the site. In general one can only say that the tents are conveniently close together, and that they are pitched with their doors opening downhill, or away from a prevailing wind.¹⁸ Among the summer camps I saw, that of Farhâd Beg Tâliš Mixâillu consisted of the usual herding unit pitched in a hollow, roughly enclosing an open area in the middle, with their doors tending to face onto the hollow because of its slopes; the tents of the Beg's family were placed higher up on a ridge, so that one could look down on the others. His own tent stood a little apart, with a canvas kitchen tent as annexe, so that it could be used for entertaining visitors with the minimum of disturbance, while his wife's tent, a large tent full of stores, and his retainer's tent stood in a line along the ridge quite close together, facing away from his own and looking out over an outcrop into a small valley. There were ten felt tents in all, including one kûme. A hollow of this kind can form a useful night-shelter, ârxâj, for the sheep, though sometimes a stone-walled fold, kalek, is used.

By contrast there was another camp of the same tribe further along the hillside, belonging to

Ismâ'il Beg and Hamza Beg Pâšâ'i, two brothers. Here all the tents were pitched on a broad plateau-like ground that sloped gently one way; the body of the camp was grouped in a straggling fashion, leaving a space for the ârxâj roughly in the middle towards the lower end, and in the interval between these tents and those of the brothers, which were placed a little way down the slope, but on a slight eminence, with their kitchen and retainer's tent as before. All the tents faced more or less downhill, so that the Begs actually looked away from their camp towards the peak of Sabalân. Thus it seems that when a chief camps with a herding unit, prospect and a commanding position are more important than practical considerations; occasionally his tent is to be found set back from the rest in a more retiring position.

A Qârâdâyi camp had rather the same layout as the last example, with the Beg's tent on an eminence at one corner, but within the camp the arrangement was dominated by a large, roughly circular stone-walled fold, here called âyil, with two âlâçix and two kûme placed against it at roughly equal intervals, and all facing downhill.

The camp is known as obâ, whatever its size, though there is a special term, binâ, used to describe a shepherds' camp moving independently of the stock-owner. The spring, summer, autumn and winter pastures are called yâzlâx, yâylâx, güzük and oişlâx respectively, and these terms can also be used for the camps in them, though only the summer and winter quarters have established positions. The Şâhsâvân spend June in the spring pastures at the foot of Sabalân. before moving up the mountain to stay in the summer quarters throughout July and August. In September they move down again and stop for a while in the Mişkîn plains, buying stores

17. Tapper 1971, p. 38 & pp. 139-40.

18. Wind direction generally plays a primary role in determining the orientation of Central Asian tents, especially in mountain areas; other preferences for eastward or southward orientation may modify this, but frequently appear to be given as rationalisations of what is basically a climatic decision. Similarly Tapper (1971 Appx. I) says that when tents are pitched in the Muyân to face across the Aras, this is explained as an enjoyment of contemplating past enemies on the scene of their defeat.

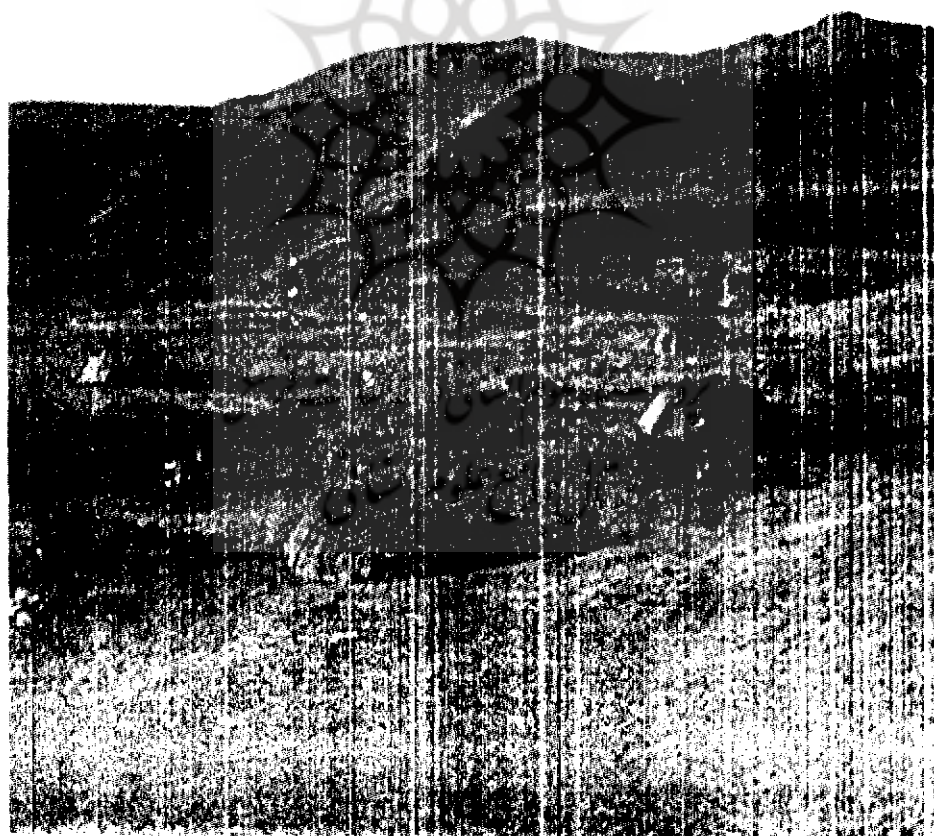
Similarly, cuttings are sometimes made into the hillside to the same end, and some platforms are created between a cutting into the upper part of the slope and an embankment on the lower. A drainage channel may be cut around the circumference of the tent on the uphill side, and if possible water is channelled into a ditch cut conveniently close to the tent door for the use of the household. The tents of less important members of the herding group may dispense with most of these refinements, and they apparently do not mind pitching the tent on gently sloping ground: there is nothing in its construction to prevent this.

In any case the site must be cleared of stones, and when this is done over the whole camp site one can see small cairns of these at intervals of fifty metres or so (this also makes it easier for the sheep to graze). A platform of rocks is built 10-20 cm high around the back of the tent inside

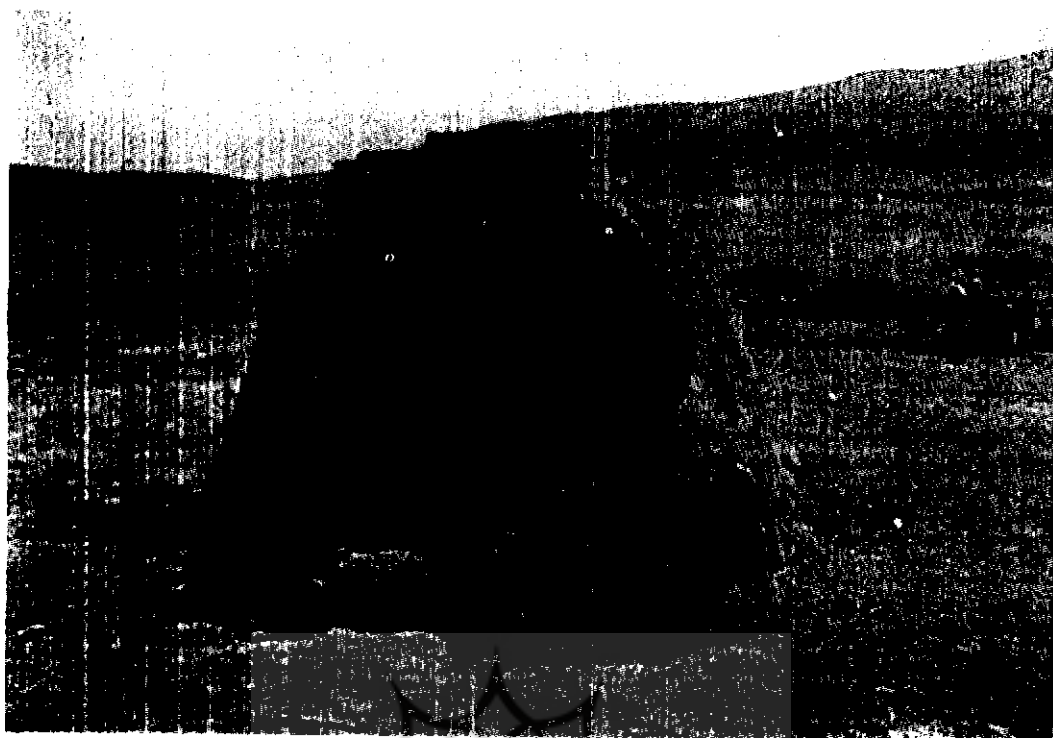
to keep the baggage off the ground if there is any likelihood that it might become damp. A hob for the sunken fireplace may also be built with flat, roughly rectangular stones laid end to end so as to enclose the back and sides of a square. All this may remain from year to year, and a campsite, yurt, is easily recognized.

THE CAMP

The size of a camp is governed by the need for pasture, but this has not always been the only factor; tribesmen can still remember times when the combined depredations of wolves and raiders were a problem important enough for nomads to group together in large camps for mutual protection. In those days the tribal section, or tire, used to camp on one site in the Muyân in the winter: twenty to thirty tents in all. They often stayed together in the summer pastures too, and in between the entire tribe might migrate



A Tâliš Mixâllâ herding unit in summer pastures on Mt. Sabalân: Three âlâçix with a Kütme in the background.



Kûme. Front showing door flap open. Tâliš Mixâillu.



Ĉatmâ: A temporary tent. Miâdoâb Qârâdâyi.

firmly into the ground as far apart as required, and then bent over towards one another until they overlap, where they are bound together.

In the case of the *Šāhsāvān* there are from seven to eight of these bender arches, at intervals of sixty to seventy centimetres, each of which spans about two and a half metres, leaving just enough clear height to stand up in. The ends are formed by four more withies for each, stuck into the ground in a semicircle, and bent inwards to join at the top of the first arch, so that they enclose the quarter of a sphere. The frame is completed with a ridge stick tied onto each arch in turn. The doorway is made at one end of this frame between the central pair of end withies, which are placed far enough apart to make room for it and a smoke hole a little further back. The benders are further reinforced by a wrapping girth that runs from arch to arch at chest height, passing around each in turn to end either side of the doorway. A low cane screen is then placed around the bottom of the frame outside, to end again at the door. The curved rear of the framework is covered with a roughly semicircular felt cut in gores, and the remainder is roofed in with two long rectangular felts, each curved at one end to fit next to the doorway. One of these incorporates a long narrow flap which runs along the ridge of the tent, overlapping the other felt, and which can be folded back at the front end to open the smoke hole. The equipment is completed with a door flap like that of the *ālācix*. This tent is about five metres long.

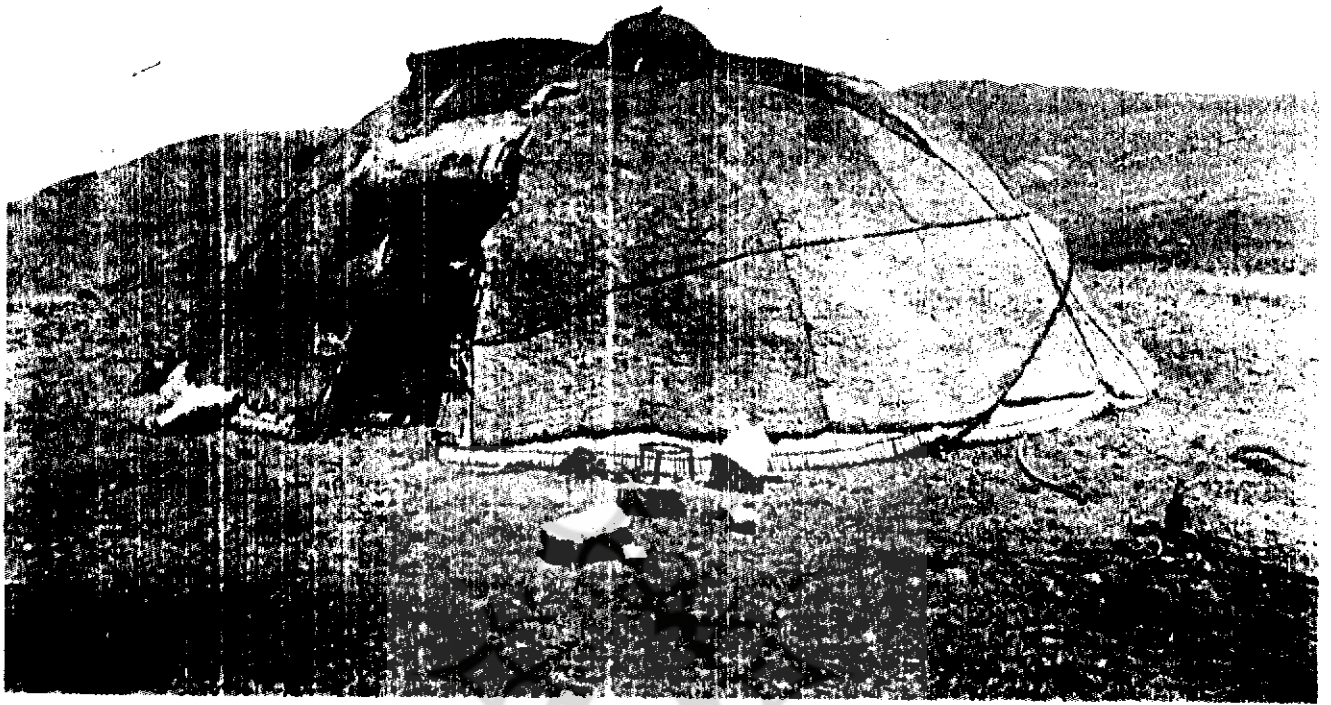
The *Qārādāyi kume*, though roughly the same in shape, is built rather differently. It is a little lower, and nearly three metres wide for the same length. The main difference lies in the construction of the ends for which the withies are planted in a semicircle on plan as before, but bent from front and rear so as to traverse the six main arches at right angles, and joining to form a secondary system of six longitudinal arches. There is no ridge stick. The roof covering is in a single piece made up of metre-wide strips running length-

wise down the tent, the central one being folded back for the smoke hole. This type of framework and covering resemble the *Tāliš* tent in principle, but the tent differs in having wrapping girths, cane screen, and an end felt as before. The same construction seems to be used by the *Hājjī 'Alīlu Qārādāyi* at *Miāndoāb*.

If shelter is required at a halt during the migration, some tribesmen may avoid the trouble of setting up the whole *ālācix*, and instead set up about eight of the roof struts to form the structure for a screen. The struts are arranged with their bases in an arc of a semicircle or less, but their tops are bunched together and bound where they cross near the tips, and the lashing is propped up at head-height with a forked stick set up more or less vertically. One of the larger roof felts is draped over the struts and tied down, leaving the straight sides open. This arrangement is the *čātmā*. Although the roof wheel and centre tackle are absent, the wrapping girth is retained.

THE SITE

Since the tribes usually return to the same campsites year after year, in both summer and winter quarters, and since the extent of each herding unit's pastures is very strictly defined, there is a tendency to pitch the tents in exactly the same location each time. The sites, particularly those in the summer pastures, are often on hill-slopes: in such cases the most level parts of the ground are chosen, and if need be, a flat plinth is built up by means of a dry stone retaining wall infilled with earth. This is often done for the more important tents, those of the chief and his brothers: the wall follows a circular arc in plan, somewhat larger than the tent so as to leave a walkway of a metre or more in width around the periphery; and it is built in a few courses over only the hollows of the site, so as to bring it up to the minimum height at which a level platform can be achieved over the whole area. After a year or so the compacted ground becomes overgrown again with grass and mosses.



An ordinary Tâliš Mixâillu âlâčix, with weathered felts. The door flap is rolled up, and the blackened smoke flaps are open.

5. The wrapping girths play an important part in the strength of the structure, and they are pegged to the ground.
6. There is no special door frame, as distinct from the struts.
7. As a result of the small size of the roof ring, the struts span a larger proportion of the dome than usual.
8. The roof is covered with three main felts, the largest of which cover the two sides, and they are made up of gores.
9. The smoke hole is not through the roof ring, but in front of it.
10. As a result the roof ring is covered with a close-fitting top felt.
11. Special flaps are provided for the smoke hole, and the roof felts are designed to include these.
12. The cane screens are low.

I shall return to these points after a fuller examination of the structure and arrangement of the âlâčix.

The kûme belongs to a less elaborate, but much more widely spread group of dwellings, represented in Iran among the Tâliš, Târîm Turks, the Baluch, and in various parts of Fârs and Kermân. It is also found in Afghanistan, Tajikistan, and Özbekistan, as well as Anatolia, but it does not seem to be characteristic of Central Asia. In England (where it is used by Gypsies) it is known as the bender tent because of the construction. Essentially this consists of a series of parallel arches, each of which is formed of two relatively slender and flexible withies stuck

spreading at the foot. In large tents further girths may be added for the same purpose, one at the foot and one half way up the strut. Secondly a large stake is driven into the ground at the centre of the tent, and a tackle consisting of a long plaited woollen rope is passed up and down between a belaying pin in the top of the stake and the rim of the roof wheel; this is hauled taut so as to increase the bow of the struts and draw the roof ring down towards the ground to the level mentioned. The whole frame is thus balanced between the tension on this rope and the strain on the elastic roof struts, which would, if released, spring upwards.

The base of the tent is encircled by a low cane screen in two lengths: the front ends are fastened on either side to the roof struts chosen to frame the entrance, and the other ends overlap one another at the back.

The dome is then covered with three felts in the shape of truncated triangles, which extend from the rim of the roof ring to the ground. Two of these are fitted one on either side of the doorway, covering most of the sides, and the third, which is somewhat smaller, is placed

over them at the rear, so as to overlap at their radial edges. The larger felts are provided with special flaps overlapping the space between the top of the doorway and the roof ring, which can be folded back to allow the hearth smoke to escape. The roof ring is covered with its own small felt, stitched in a domed shape with skirts to overlap the edges of the main roof felts; the equipment is completed by a door felt backed with canework, which hangs from its top edge.

The frame appears to have been reduced to as simple a structure as possible within the context of the Central Asian type, and the tent shows the following peculiarities:

1. There is no cylindrical wall trellis.
2. The roof struts are about half the usual number, and twice the stoutness.
3. The roof wheel is relatively small and compact, with a pronounced dome and a characteristic system of flat lathing spokes in a deep rim.
4. The structure depends for its stability on the centre tackle.



Erection of *qalā'ix*. The second flank felt is spread out.

type seems to have been more common, with the names *dā*, *dāyā*, *māyārī dāyā*, *qārākecā* or *jomā*, according to the locality.¹⁵ The Caucasus seems to confine the extension of both types, and they are found primarily in the Kûr and Aras basins. It is noteworthy that the *âlâcîx* seems never to occur without the *kûme*, though the *kûme* type may occur by itself, as it does among the Tâliš, where it is called *pârgân* or *porgâh*, or among the Târîm Turks, where it is called *pûri*, and is used alongside the black tent. In Iran the *âlâcîx* is regarded as specially characteristic of the Šâhsāvân, both by themselves and by the Tat, or settled Turks of the area, though it is interesting that the family responsible for making the tent frames, while Turkic, is not Šâhsāvân. In fact the *âlâcîx* is very much a symbol of tribal identity for the Šâhsāvân, and they are apt to make scathing reference to black tents when they refer to the tribes of the south.¹⁶

The tent is known in a general sense as *eynev*, or home, so that a nomad may say "tikerik eyi", "we pitch our tent", or "eyimizde", "at home".

Besides the occasional modern canvas tent, there is a third form to be seen among both Šâhsāvân and Qârâdâyi: this is in fact half an *âlâcîx*, set up as a semicircular screen at temporary halts on the migration, and it is called *çâtmâ*.

The *âlâcîx* frame consists of only two elements, the roof ring, and a set of radiating, curved struts. The roof ring is about a metre in diameter, with spokes of thin lathing so strongly curved as to give it a hemispherical profile. The struts measure between three and five metres long, according to the size of the tent, and span at regular intervals between the ground and the slots in the rim of the roof ring. There are between twenty-four and thirty-two of them: the resulting structure encloses a space from five to eight



Roof ring rigged with centre tackle, looking towards the rear of the tent.

metres in diameter, with the ring supported about two metres above the ground. This structure however has no inherent stability, and it depends for its rigidity upon the tension of two further elements. Firstly a pair of narrow woollen girths are wrapped around the lower part of each strut in turn, one encircling the front half of the tent and one the rear, and are pegged at the ends to the ground. They rise high enough at the mid point to allow for a door. Their function is to maintain the struts at the correct spacing, and prevent a spiral collapse, and to restrain the struts from

15. See for example V.P. Kobuichev, "Krestyanskoe Zhilishche Narodov Azerbaydzhana v XIX v." in *Trudui Inst. Etnografii LXXIX, Kavkazskiy Sbornik III* (Moscow 1962), pp. 31-36 and map. Also K.T. Karakashlui, *Materialnaya Kultura Azerbaydzhana* (Baku 1964), pp. 63-68.

18. Tapper 1971, p. 761.

fieldwork in the summer quarters of the Tâliš. Mixâillu and Bâlâbeglû tâyfâs on Mt Sabalân in July 1970, and the winter quarters of the Geyiklû tâyfâ at Qârâ Sâqqâl Qişlâx near the Muyân in December the same year. I revisited the Geyiklû in two camps at the foot of Sabalân in September 1974. Of the Qârâdâyi, I visited the summer quarters of the Hüseynaxli at Sâjliq Yâylâx, and a nearby camp of the Korlâni clan in August 1974. I was able to introduce some historical perspective by visiting the Hâjji 'Alilu in the neighborhood of Miândoâb at the southern end of Lake Rezâiyeh: this is a group which split off from the main body of the tâyfâ some 75 years ago. I saw them in November 1970 and September 1974. Finally I spent two days interviewing the tent-frame maker Edrîs Dežâm and his brothers in their workshop on the Khiâbân-e Shâh at Ârdâbil. For background information I have relied heavily on Richard Tapper's excellent thesis.

THE TENT

The Šâhsävân and Qârâdâyi tents are made in exactly the same way, and such differences as there are between them lie only in the decoration, and in slight differences in the terminology. Both groups call the hemispherical tent âlâçix, and the barrel-vaulted one kûme. Either kind may be used as a dwelling; but though either kind may also be used as an annexe, usually a kitchen, the principal tent in such cases is always an âlâçix. The kûme is less spacious and less convenient than the other: and its frame, being home-made in a rough and ready fashion, represents much less of an investment than the frame of the hemisphere, which is carefully made by a skilled craftsman, and expected to last for twenty years or more. Though the use of an âlâçix in preference to a kûme does not necessarily reflect the social standing of the owner, there is no doubt that the kûme is regarded

as inferior, and the tribesman concerned will replace it with an âlâçix as soon as he can afford it. That the expense is within the grasp of most active members of the tribe is shown by the distribution of the two types: the average on Šâhsävân campsites is about seven âlâçix to two kûme.¹³ The condition of the felts gives a clear idea of the owner's prosperity: in a beg's principal tent they are usually a fine, clean white, set off by coloured designs worked into the door flap, and on either side of the doorway, with perhaps a pompon on the summit of the dome. From this ideal state they change colour under the influence of the weather outside and the hearth-smoke within, through gradations of yellowish white, yellowish brown, and the usual peat-colour, until they finally decline to a tattered black: these stages can be described as âl âlâçix or qârâ âlâçix. Most tents are furnished quite simply inside, and it is only in begs' tents that one finds elaborately worked girths and decorations. A kûme is almost invariably brown or black.

The use of âlâçixlar may extend a little beyond the confines of the Šâhsävân to the east and south: I have been told that they are used by Turks in the vicinity of Khalkhal, and by Âvşâr tribes in the Sahand area. The Qârâdâyi offshoot use them at Miândoab,¹⁴ where they winter, and in their summer quarters on Mt Sahand above Marâgheh; I was told too, that some of them use the summer pastures at Sâh Yûrdi near Šâhîn Dezh, where their presence accounts for the fact that some of the local Čahâr Döwli sheepfarmers use the âlâçix. This must be its furthest extension southwards. To the west it is limited by the Kurdish sphere of influence after Marand, to the east by the Tâliš. To the north, it was formerly used in Qârâbây as far as Kâlbâjar, and in the Qâzâx district to the northeast of Lake Sevan: within these Soviet areas the barrel vaulted

13. Tapper, 1971, p. 752. According to his census (p. 67), only 153 out of 832 people, i.e. about 18%, live in a household which is confined to a single kûme.

14. The winter camps I have seen were at Xirda Gül Kent, Dâlik Dâs, and near the Pâsgâh-e Čûlik on the lake shore. The Hâjji 'Alilu tents are sometimes seen pitched alongside the black tents of local Kurds.

Aras. The tribesmen speak a variety of Âzâri Turki, which in certain respects appears to be closer to Anatolian usage than the ordinary language of Tâbriz or Ârdâbil.⁵ Their own traditions relate that the founders of the confederation came from Anatolia, seeking to live under Safavid rule rather than Ottoman, and their name itself embodies a declaration of loyalty, "those who love the Shah". The history of their emigration is being studied in detail by Richard Tapper:⁶ the area has been inhabited by Tûrkmen tribes, or tribes of Tûrkmen origin fairly continuously since the Oyuz invasions of the eleventh century. From the time of Timur's campaign against the Ottomans until the end of the seventeenth century tribes moved back into Âzarbâijân from Anatolia; most of the tribes forming the core of the present confederation seem to have arrived between 1600 and 1700, and in 1698 there is the first record linking the name "Chaseven" specifically with the Muyân.⁷ Besides these Tûrkmen elements the confederation appears to have assimilated Kurdish, Arab, and Tâliš tribes, some of which had been in the area for a considerable time. Other Šâhsävân groups dispersed elsewhere, and are still to be found in Kharâqân, Khamseh, and Fârs, but none of them

use the âlâçix: those who use tents live in the black goat-hair ones characteristic of the locality.⁸

The Qârâdâyi tribes form a much smaller and simpler group: while the Šâhsävân include fifty-six tribes,⁹ or tâyfa, they have only six,¹⁰ and of these only three remain nomadic, with three thousand five hundred tentholds.¹¹ Their range too is more restricted: with summer quarters on the slopes of Qârâdây (or Qârâjâ Dây), and winter quarters in the Arasbârân, the more nomadic tribes need only migrate between 30 and 75 km. The few nomads remaining in the other three tribes move only 10 to 30 km.¹² The Qârâdâyi in general seem to be regarded by the Šâhsävân as inferior to themselves – a view which, rather to my surprise, I found was endorsed by the Qârâdâyi whom I visited. The explanation appears to be that some if not most of the Qârâdâyi, though turkicised, are of Kurdish origin, and they are therefore culturally dependant. In actual fact the most elaborate tent I saw in Âzarbâijân was a Qârâdâyi one! They spend about six months of the winter in houses, unlike the Muyân tribes who live in tents or dugouts.

The material presented here is taken from

5. The dialects of different tribes vary somewhat, though Tapper tells me that the principal difference can be accounted for geographically, in a distinction between eastern and western groups. The terminology given in this article is drawn from tape recordings of Tâliš Mizâillu and Geyiklû informants, which are consistent in showing an almost complete absence of the distinction between closed g and open â that is normally found in Âzâri. Instead g is used throughout most words, and such openness as there is at the ends of words or in suffixes appears to be accounted for by the somewhat higher pitch and stress on the last vowel. Thus they say kûmé, keoo and čemberé rahte than hûmâ, keos, or čambârâ, and I have shown them as they are pronounced. The â is used mainly in loan words such as har or ävvâl, but oddly enough in the name Šâhsävân itself (instead of the orthodox Soviet spelling Šâhsevan) perhaps because it is applied to them by the Persians.
6. R.L. Tapper, "Black Sheep, White Sheep and Red-Heads", in Iran IV, (1966), pp. 63-84 the thesis cited above (1971), and Šahsavân in Safavid Persia, in Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies, Vol. XXXVII, part 2 (London 1974), pp. 321-354.
7. Pere de la Maze "Journal du Voyage de Chamakie à Ispahan" in Nouveaux Mémoires des Missions de la Compagnie de Jésus dans le Levant, III, (Paris 1723), p. 409.
8. Z. Ardelân, "Nizâm-e Xânevâdegi dar İl-e Šâhsävân", in Lectures Given in the Second Congress of Persian Studies, edited by H. Zarrînkûb, (Meshed University Press 1973), vol. 2, pp. 146-150 and p. 144.
9. Tapper, 1966, p. 81 ff.
10. P. Oberling, "The Tribes of Qarâca Dâg", in Oriens 17 (Leiden 1964), p. 63 ff.
11. Ibid, pp. 65, 71, 76.
12. Ibid, p. 63.

Ālāċix and Kūme, the Felt Tents of Āzarbâijân.

by: Peter Alford ANDREWS

Two types of tent are used by the nomads of north-east Āzarbâijân: one is hemispherical, the other tunnel-shaped, and both are covered with felt. In most tentholds this felt is worn by the weather to the colour of peat, so that the brown round shapes blend with the landscape, looking quite different from the peaked black goathair tents of the Kurds further to the west and south. The hemispherical type belongs to the Central Asian tradition of domed tents, like those of the Tūrkmēn in Khurāsān,² but in several ways it is not quite what one would expect, and these peculiarities make it an interesting subject for study.³ The smaller tunnel-shaped tent appears to belong to a different tradition, which is also represented a little further east among the Tālīš, and in Anatolia.

Most of the nomads who use these two tents in Iranian Āzarbâijân are Šāhsāvān, and the rest are

their Qārādāyi neighbours. The Šāhsāvān are a confederation of tribes whose summer pastures lie on the slopes of Mt Sabalān and Mt Qošā at heights up to 4,000 m above sea level, or in the surrounding ranges of Buzguš, Bayrau and Tālīš. They migrate northwards in winter to the low-lying Muiyān steppe about 150 km away, near the Russian frontier on the River Aras, where they and their flocks can enjoy the relatively warm weather. The trek either way lasts from a fortnight to a month in May and October. The group was formerly divided into two el or branches, the Meškin eli and the Ārdābil eli, but the Ārdābil eli is now largely settled, and the remaining nomadic tribes of both branches are now administered together. It was estimated recently that seven thousand tentholds, or fifty thousand individuals still migrate to the Muiyān,⁴ though the Government of Iran is encouraging settlement by large irrigation projects now being carried out on the

1. Acknowledgements. This article is based on fieldwork I carried out as Fellow of the British Institute of Persian Studies at various times in 1970, and briefly in 1974, when it formed part of my general survey of nomad tents in Iran. I am most grateful to the Institute for supporting this work so consistently, and to the Imperial Government of Iran for giving me permission to carry it out. I owe a considerable debt to my wife who has helped me throughout this fieldwork in many ways, and particularly in making friends with the tribespeople. The Šāhsāvān and Qārādāyi were unfailingly hospitable, and it was their willing and good humoured help that made our work possible. I should like to thank particularly Āli Xān Geyiklū, and Hamza Beg and Ismā'il Beg Pāšāyi of the Tālīš Mixāillu.
2. For a description of the Tūrkmēn tent, and remarks on the Central Asian type in the context of the Middle East, see P.A. Andrews, "The White House of Khurasan", in *Iran* XI (1973), pp. 93-110.
3. The Šāhsāvān tent has been described in some detail, in its anthropological context, by R.L. Tapper, *The Shahsavan of Azarbaijan*, Ph.D. Thesis (London 1971), Appx. I, p. 752 ff., but this is not generally available. There is also an article by C. Op't Land, "The Admirable Tents of the Shah Savan", *International Archives of Ethnography* L. no. 2 (1966), pp. 237-243, but this seems to be based on a somewhat brief experience of the tent, and some of the details given are uncharacteristic.
4. R.L. Tapper, Thesis. (1971), p. 44.