



The Oriental Rug Lexicon

Peter F. Stone

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Return to Tradition describes the rebirth of an almost-extinct cultural tradition -- the hand knotted Turkish carpets made in remote villages on the Aegean Peninsula -- and the lives of the women who make them. It is the story of a unique project, called DOBAG, that reintroduced natural dyes, restored the integrity of this ancient folk art, and formed village cooperatives to organize production and marketing of the carpets. It also includes information about the designs, colors, motifs, and symbolism of the carpets which continue to evolve aesthetically in response to the weavers' needs and the consumer market. Although there are many books on antique rugs, this fills the need for information on contemporary carpet-weaving in Turkey and on the village women who weave the carpets. In Turkish villages today, very little has changed in the technology of carpet-making since its early beginnings. Women still use the drop spindle for spinning, and weave on the same type of loom as their ancestors. Villagers shear the sheep, card the wool, and dye the skeins much as their forebears did in ancient times. These traditional folkways have survived to this day, an unbroken link with the past. Since 1981 the DOBAG cooperative has produced about 1500 carpets annually, distributing them throughout the United States and Europe. DOBAG, an acronym for Dogal Boya Arastrima ve Gelistirme Projesi -- the Natural Dye Research and Development Project -- is supervised by Marmara University in Istanbul.

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