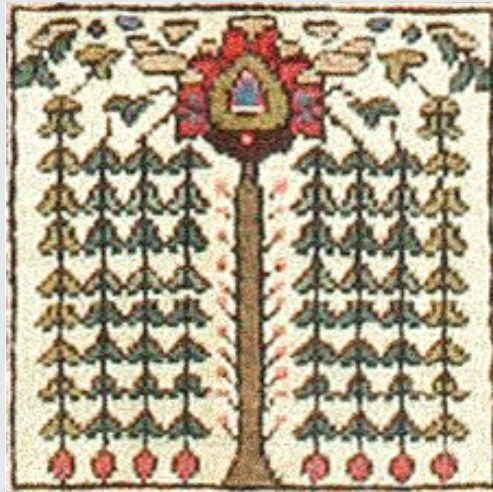


Bakhtiari rug

Wild and Vivid





Bakhtiari rug

Wild and Vivid

Dedication

To My Friend Dr. Mark R. Jones

You were the man that helped me to realize my dreams. Without you, none of this would be possible. Your interest and inquiring mind about oriental rugs inspired this project. You are the most imaginative and perceptive person I have ever met. Very few people have these gifts. You have faithfully believed in my vision and understood the importance of this project.

You came in as a curious investor, and have become my most loyal and trusting friend. You were the Godsend that made this all possible.

To My Father Mozafar Khazai

I dedicate this work to my late father – the man who initially cultivated the passion I have for thinking ambitiously and having big dreams. Acting as a living example, he nurtured the virtues of discipline and hard work within me, which have led to my life's achievements and overall success. His unending generosity, courage, friendship, networking, and ability to live life large will always leave me in awe.







The Bakhtiari is an Iranian tribe, a subgroup of the Lor people. Actually, there is no ethnic difference between Bakhtiaris and other Lors. This naming backs to the Safavid era. Because they showed courage in the wars between Iran and ottomans and also their role in defeating the Portuguese occupiers, the Safavid King called them Bakhtiar (Bakht-Yar), which means "fortune companion".

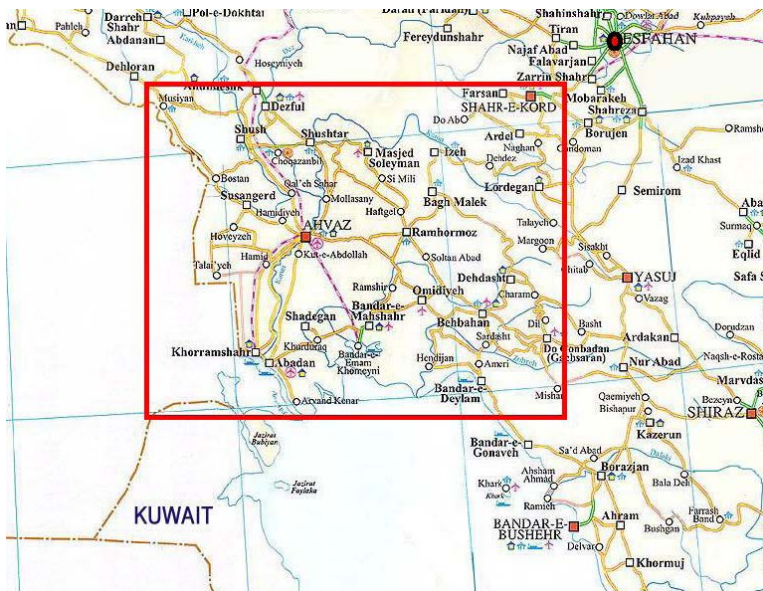
The Bakhtiari tribe includes two branches: Char-Lang and Haft-Lang, and both have their own subgroups. This tribal structure, also, have been formed at the Safavid era due to the social class structure and the taxation system of the time. They speak the Bakhtiari dialect, a southwestern Iranian dialect, belonging to the Lori language, which is a subset of middle Persian language.







Nowadays the Bakhtiaris inhabit in five southwestern Iranian provinces: Chahar Mahal and Bakhtiari, Khuzestan, Lorestan, Bushehr and Isfahan. Chahar Mahal and Bakhtiari is the heart of the Bakhtiaris' habitat, which is located on the hillsides of the Zagros Mountains.



The habitat of Bakhtiari people specified on the Iran's map



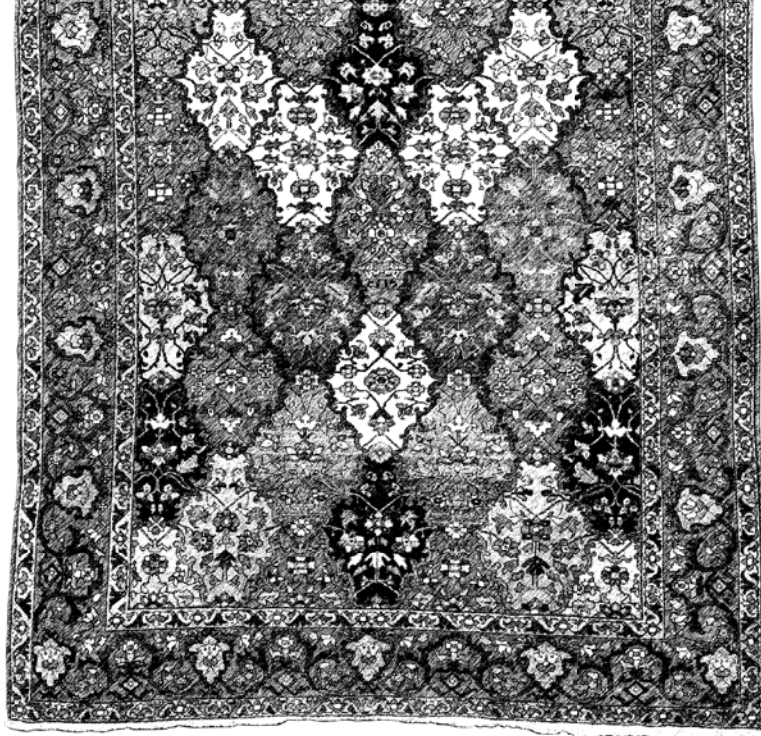


The Zagros Mountains contain several ecosystems. Some parts are forest steppe having a semi-arid climate and other parts (the Chestnut forests) are mantled with rainforest and there are rivers, lakes and waterfalls. With its natural resources, this region has been one of the oldest human habitats. Signs of early agriculture date back as far as 9000 BC to the foothills of the Zagros Mountains, in cities later named Anshan and Susa. Jarmo is one archaeological site in this area. Shanidar, where the ancient skeletal remains of Neanderthals have been found, is another. Some of the earliest evidence of wine production has been discovered in the Zagros Mountains, and some believe these hillsides are the very first place of the horse domestication. At least, there are evidences enough to the claim the most ancient horse culture formed in this region by the ancestors of the Lor people.



Nomads prepare for migration





The Chahar Mahal and Bakhtiari province has been the pathway and often the settlement for several nomads and settled people, such as Kurds, Lors, Khamse, Arabs, Qashqai Turks and Armenians. Its neighbor provinces are Isfahan, Khuzestan, and Fars. The province has been under the rules of Haft-Lang Khans (tribal chiefs) and its capital is Shahrekord.

The result of the combination between nomadic and settled people is obvious in the woven pieces of the region. With their designs, patterns, colors and even the weaving techniques, Bakhtiari rugs mirror this cultural fusion.

Although each of the Bakhtiari clans have had its own patterns and designs and the designs were easily recognizable, but since 200 years ago the patterns have started dialogues, making a range of various designs.

Bakhtiari rugs of the Chahar Mahal and Bakhtiari Province are woven by the settled Bakhtiaris of towns and villages rather than those Bakhtiaris who continue their nomadic life. The best Bakhtiari rugs of the area are made in these cities and villages: Chaleshtar, Shalamzar, Saman, Hinegan, Qahfaroq, Boroojen, Ashgaftak, Pirbalut, Arjang, Vardanjan, Boldaji, Faradonbeh and Ardal.



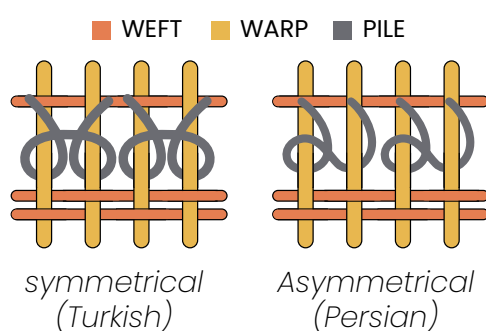


Technical aspects and the structure of Bakhtiari rugs

Sheep wool is the main raw material in carpet production. The wool used in Bakhtiari rugs is hand-spun and of high quality. Bakhtiaris shear their sheep once a year, generally in April. Because of the influence of other tribes, the quality and styles of weaving differ part to part in the province. Among Bakhtiari rugs you can find both wool and cotton warps.



Most of the Bakhtiari weavers knit symmetrically but in some regions like Hinagan and Nasrabad the common knot is asymmetric. The ways of weft-passing are also diverse. Most of Bakhtiari rugs are single-wefted, but in Shahr-e-Kord double-wefted rugs are also woven. Weaving double-wefted rugs have been started since 80 years ago.



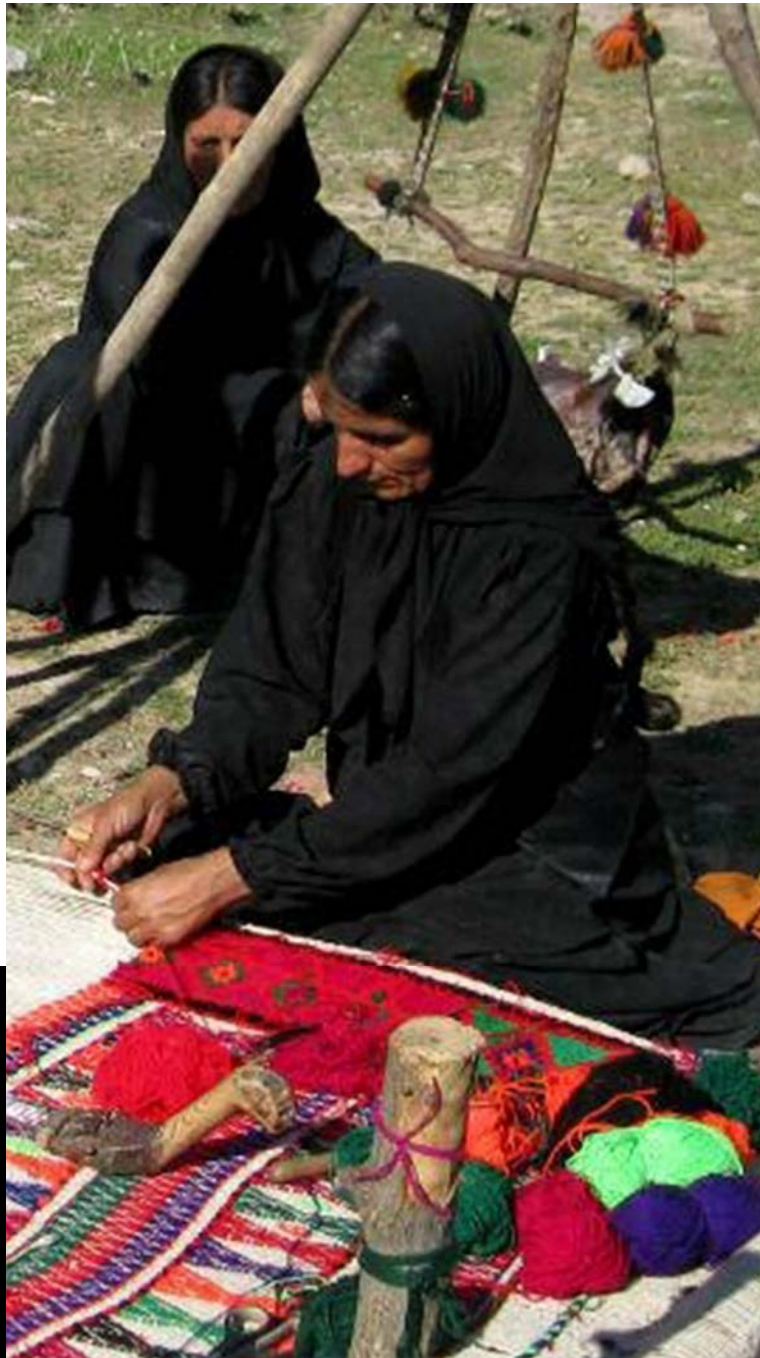


Except the looms provided by the National Carpet Cooperation of Iran, other looms in Chahar-Mahal and Bakhtiari region are mostly horizontal, and even big sized rugs are woven horizontally. The number of rajs is normally between 17 and 20, but in recent years this number has risen up to 40. In the past, the carpets were mostly flat-knitted but little by little the round-knitted (Lool Baf) rugs have been replaced, and nowadays both ways of knitting are common in Bakhtiari.



The weave structure of Bakhtiari rug

Bakhtiari rugs are various in sizes. Small and medium are more common but there are also rugs in big sizes and you can find among them square rugs too. Wide and narrow Runners and Kallegi are also woven in Bakhtiari regularly.



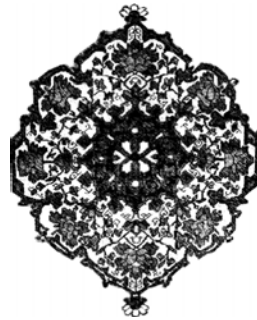


Dyeing and painting of Bakhtiari rugs

In the past, women from Bakhtiari nomads gathered and dried natural plants and derived colorants from them by boiling. By adding sour pomegranates juice (as mordant) they were able to make the colors fixed. The result was vivid and wild colors on the Bakhtiari rugs.

Bakhtiaris use gray wool instead of white, which gives darker tonalities. The crimson and green of Bakhtiari rugs are their main characteristics in comparison with the same colors in other Iranian rugs. They use also black instead of dark blue and cobalt-blue. Yellow, which is very common in Bakhtiari rugs, is obtained from reseda and rubia.





Rugs with self-colored wool are also common in Bakhtiari. Rugs with these natural colors are known as five-colored (white, milky, gray, chestnut and brown), which was a famous description for Bakhtiari rugs during 60s and 70s in Europe and America.

'Bibi-Baf' is a category in Bakhtiari rugs, which namely means Lady-Woven. Bibi means "lady", and in Bakhtiari culture it is a title for wives and daughters of the Bakhtiari Khans (tribal chiefs). In the past, there were rug-weaving workshops under supervision of these bibis. Some of the bibis were themselves weaver too; actually, rug weaving was a common side interest for the Iranian ladies, including the Bakhtiari bibis. But of course, the main products of the Bibis' workshops were woven by skillful workers. Bibi-Baf rugs were standing on a high level of quality and color. Kheshti (brick) and Sarvi (cedar) were the most common designs in these workshops. The last generation of Bibi-Bafs were woven in 1930. In this year, the Khanate system was annulled under the command of Reza Shah.



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Designs and patterns of Bakhtiari rug

Bakhtiari designs are mostly geometric and the rugs are categorized as nomadic or village-woven. In the past, there was no loom-drawing and Bakhtiari rugs were all improvised-woven. Since 80 years ago Bakhtiaris have started to make loom-drawings for some of their rugs.

Their closeness with other Lurs (as well as other tribes such as Qashqais and Armenians), have an effect on Bakhtiaris' designs. nevertheless the main original Bakhtiari design is Kheshti.

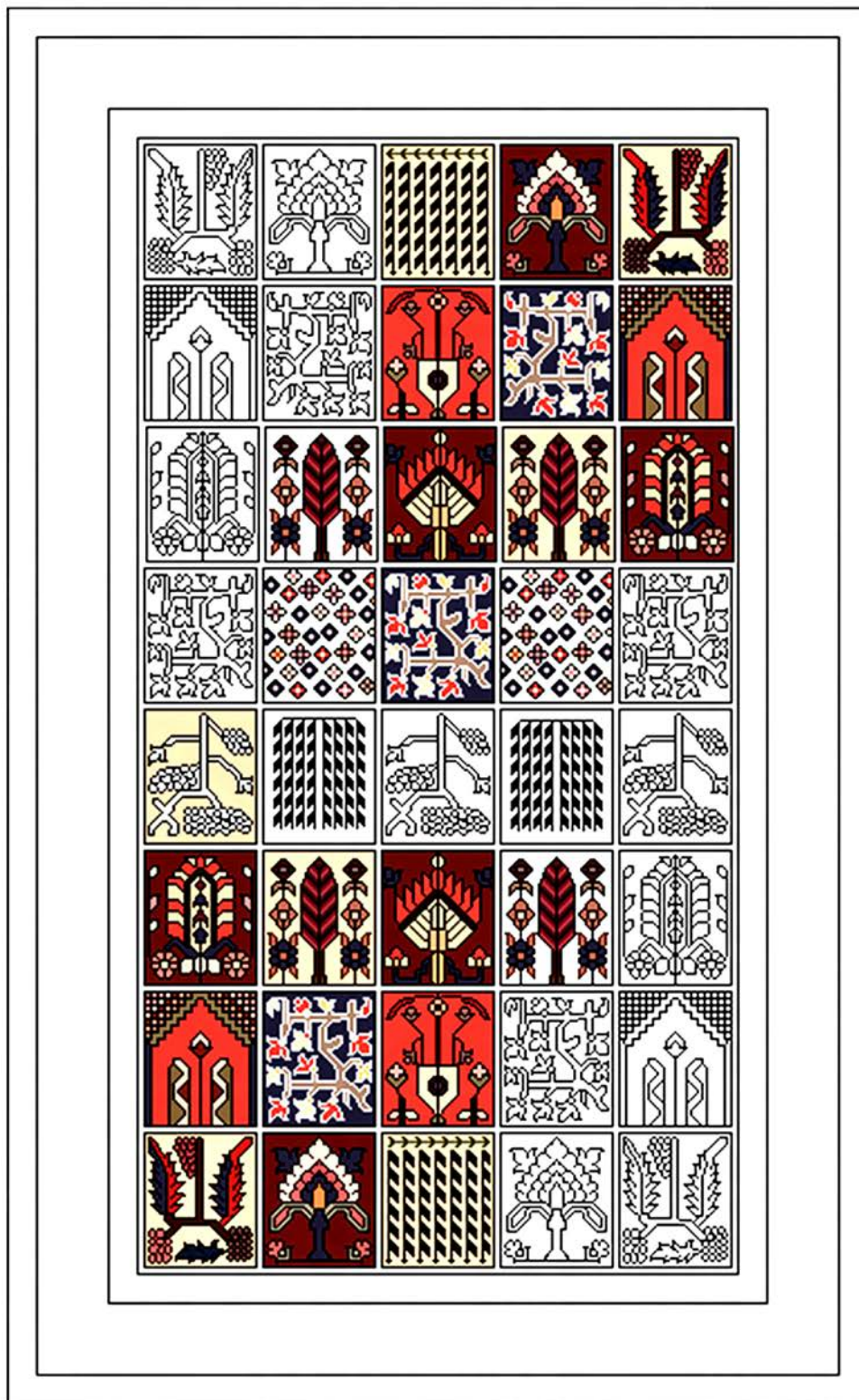
The Persian word 'Khesht' means brick or adobe, which is a basic material in Iranian architecture. Iranian bricks are mostly square and the square frames in Bakhtiari designs justify the appellation.



The title 'kheshti' (brick) comes from Iranian architecture



Bakhtiari Kheshti rug



These Pictures show the main repetitive pattern of the rug.



Bakhtiari Kheshti rug



Bakhtiari Kheshti rug



Bakhtiari Kheshti rug



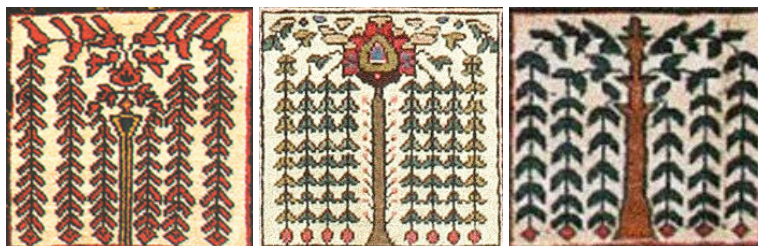
Бактиари кнесhti rug



The square frames of a Kheshti design are arranged orderly side by side, and there is a pattern inside each of them, such as a splendid branch, a bush, a vase full of flowers, or birds, gazelles, panthers and other animals, or a cedar tree. But the most prominent pattern is the weeping willow, which have become an emblem for the Bakhtiari rugs.



Weeping willow



Weeping willow pattern



Bakhtiari Kheshti rug



There is another type of design, known as Qab-Samovar (samovar frame), which its patterns are repetitive as well as Kheshti's, with this difference that the squares of Kheshti have changed to Rhombus. It should be noted that in some examples the frames look like samovar, so this type is well-known as Qab-Samovar design. Cedar is the main pattern inside the Samovar frames.



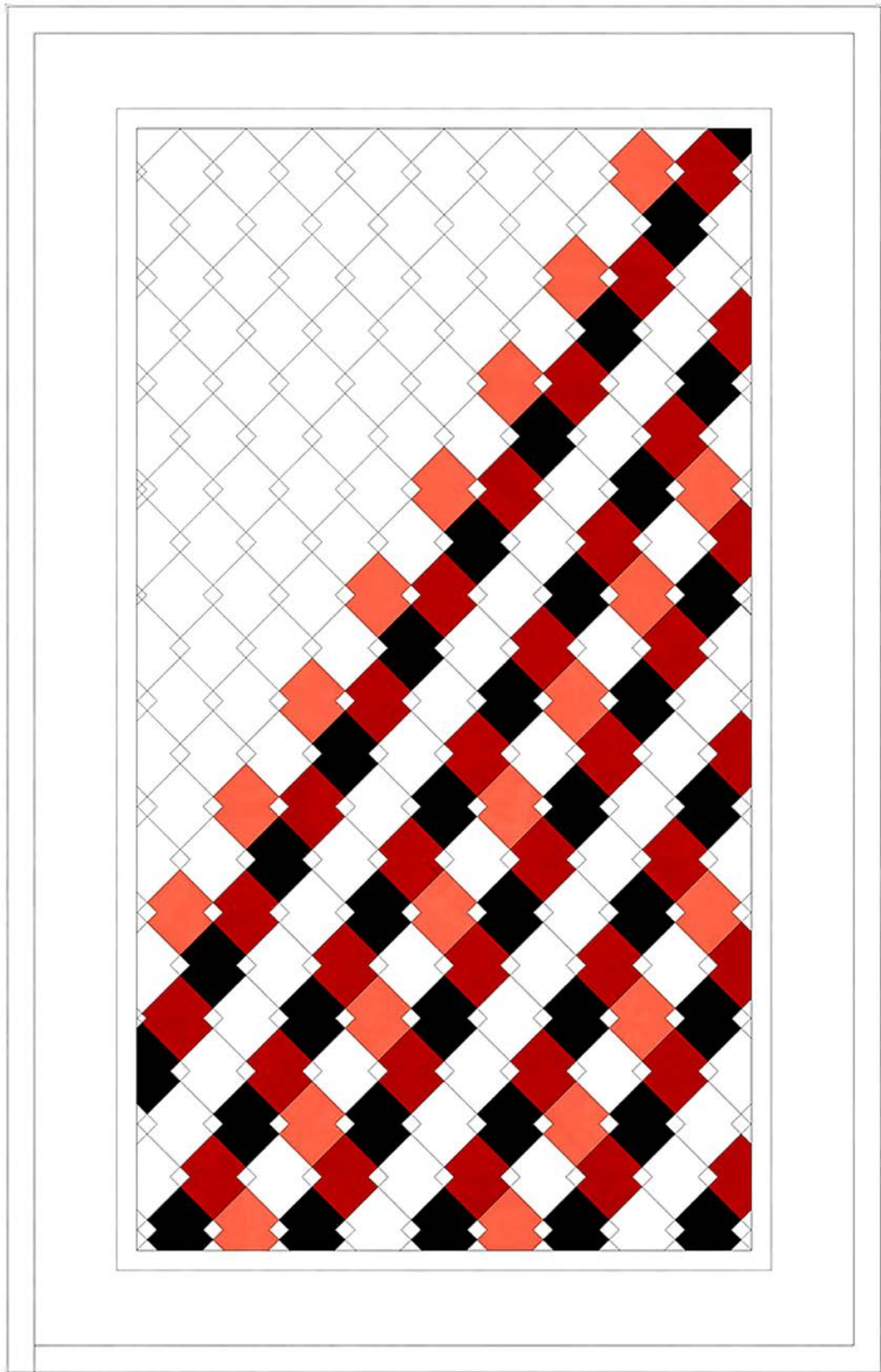
Samovar



Bakhtiari Samovari rug



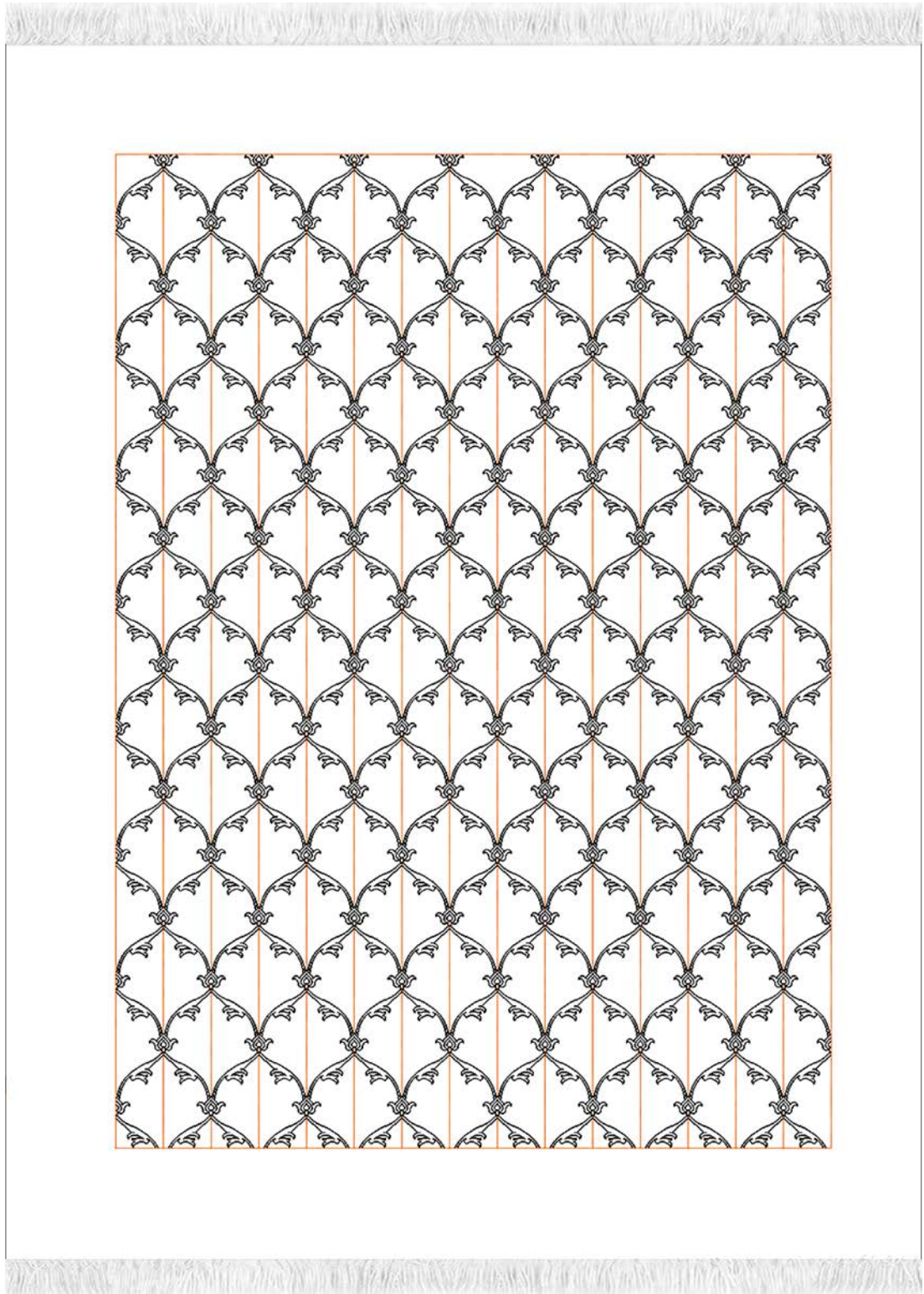
Bakhtiari Samovari rug



These Pictures show the main repetitive pattern of the rug. With its vertical and horizontal repeats. this pattern makes a bigger repetitive pattern



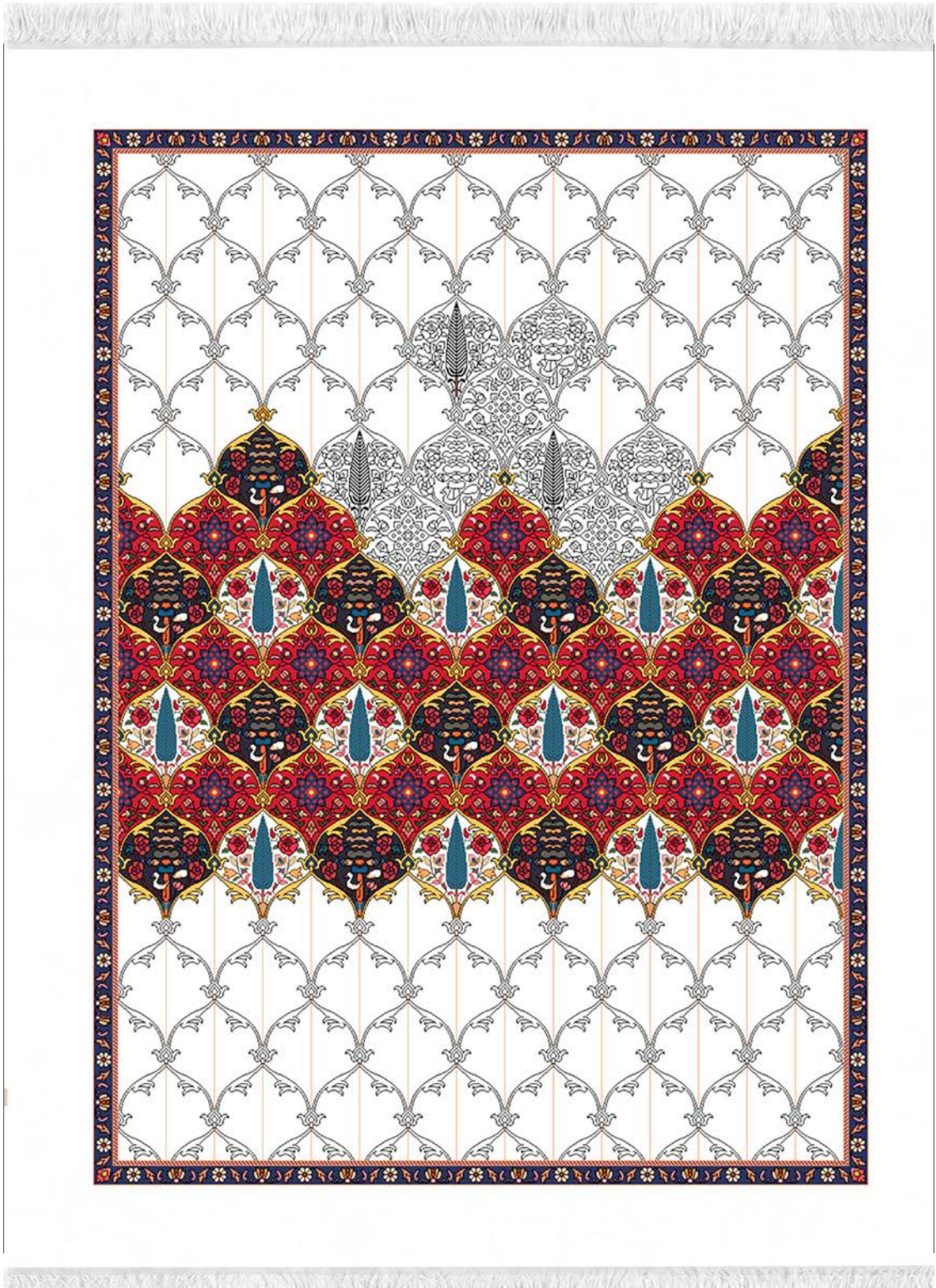
Bakhtiari Samovari rug



Eslimi (Arabesque) frame



Bakhtiari Samovari rug



These Pictures show the main repetitive pattern of the rug. With its vertical and horizontal repeats, this pattern makes a bigger repetitive pattern



Bakhtiari Samovari rug



Bakhtiari Samovari rug



Bakhtiari Samovari rug



Bakhtiari Samovari rug

The third type of Bakhtiari rug designs is known as 'the tree of life'. These designs are all-over, and in their middle stands the tree. Tree of life is a mythical concept used in science, religion and philosophy. It is shown as a branched tree, representing the idea that all the livings are relative and the life has a single source on the earth.



Bakhtiari 'the tree of life' rug



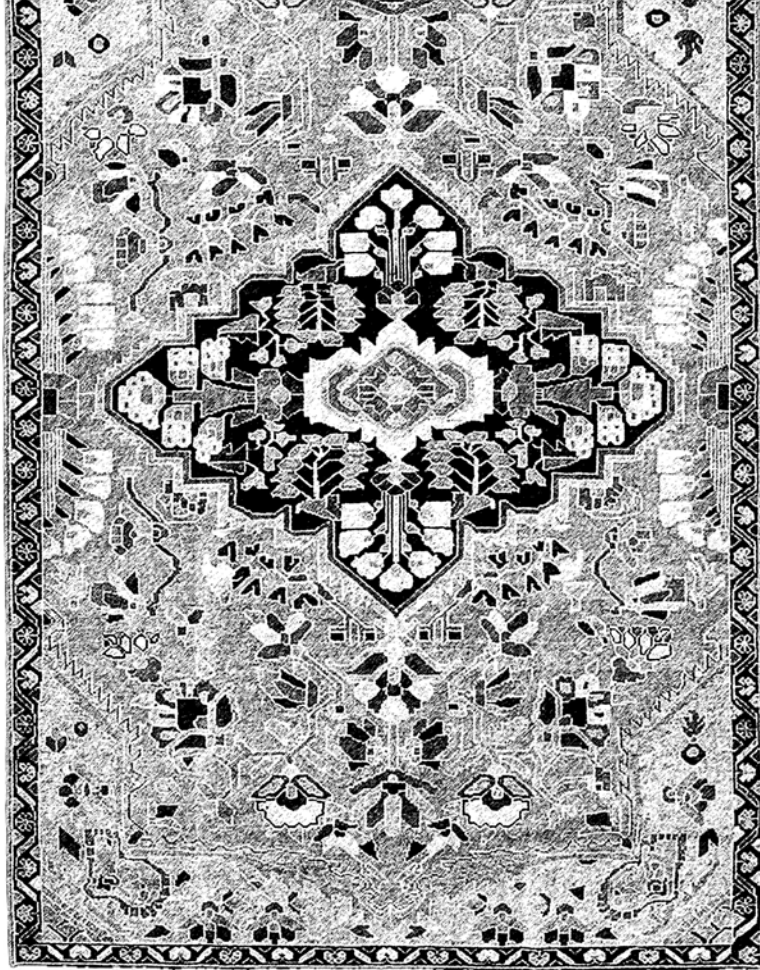
Bakhtiari 'the tree of life' rug



Bakhtiari 'the tree of life' rug



Bakhtiari 'the tree of life' rug



The medallion rugs of Bakhtiari are among the most beautiful village-woven medallion rugs. The flowers and other patterns of these rugs are big and asymmetrical which both are common traits among village-woven rugs. The colors are shiny and diverse. The stars of such medallions are eight to twelve pointed, which are keys to their Bakhtiari origin.





Bakhtiari medallion rug



Bakhtiari medallion rug



Bakhtiari medallion rug



Bakhtiari medallion rug



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Bakhtiari medallion rug



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Bakhtiari medallion rug



Bakhtiari medallion rug



Bakhtiari medallion rug



Bakhtiari medallion rug

In terms of design, the Bakhtiari rugs are very diverse. Some experts even categorized some of the Qashqai, Lori and Armenian rugs under the Bakhtiari title; the cultural combination in the Chahar Mahal and Bakhtiari makes it reasonable. However, an original Bakhtiari rug has its own elements and aesthetics as mentioned above.



Bakhtiari rug



The Cedar tree-Pattern



The Mihrab-Pattern



The Flower-Pattern



The tree-Pattern



The tree-Pattern



The Mihrab-Pattern



The Cedar tree-Pattern



The Cedar tree-Pattern



The tree-Pattern



The Panther-Pattern



The Animal-Pattern



The Shah abbasi-Pattern



*The Gol va Morgh
(Flower&Bird)-Pattern*



*The Gol va Morgh
(Flower&Bird)-Pattern*



*The Gol va Morgh
(Flower&Bird)-Pattern*



The Deer-Pattern



The Gazelle-Pattern



The Peacock-Pattern



The Grapevine-Pattern



The Plant-Pattern



The Vase-Pattern



The Cedar tree-Pattern



The Vase-Pattern



The Vase-Pattern



The Cedar tree-Pattern



The Flower-Pattern



The Vase-Pattern



The Vase-Pattern



The Grapevine-Pattern



The Tree-Pattern



The Paisley-Pattern



The Tree-Pattern



The Weeping Willow-Pattern



The Weeping Willow

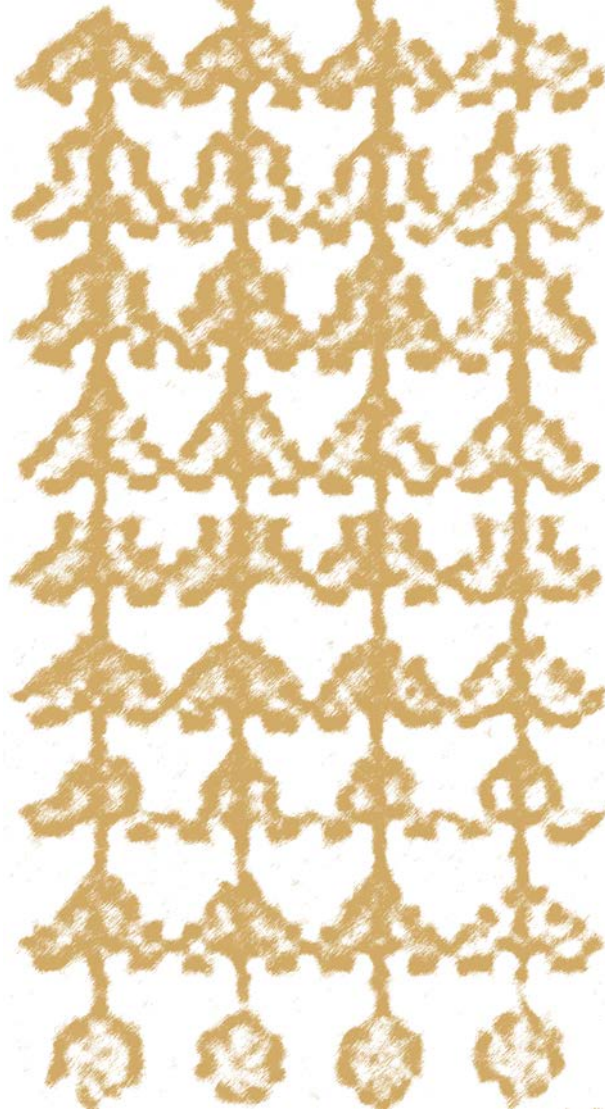


The Weeping Willow



The Weeping Willow





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