

Threads of the Dead: An Investment in Appearance in Ancient Central Asia ©

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Spring 2013

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Threads of the Dead: An Investment in Appearance in Ancient Central Asia

The Cherchen Cemetery outside the village of Zaghunluq is located on a tableland north of the Cherchen River in the Tarim Basin, approximately six kilometers southwest of Cherchen City (Illustration I).¹ The cemetery space covers about 800,000 square meters, running 1,100 meters from north to south and 750 meters east to west with an elevation of approximately 1,270 meters.² The area of Cherchen is also known as Qiemo and is found in the Taklamakan Desert in the Xinjiang Region of China.³ The Cherchen Cemetery contains hundreds of graves dating from approximately 1000 BCE to the early centuries AD, although the exact number is difficult to ascertain because of frequent damage by local salt diggers and tomb raiders.⁴ The town of Cherchen, where the cemetery is located, was quite close to what would become the southern passage of the Silk Trade Route, exposing it to countless travelers and foreign goods.

I. GEOGRAPHICAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING:

During the glacial period, the entire Tarim Basin was filled with a large sea, similar in size to the Mediterranean today. Gradually the sea shrank into a large lake in the northeast area of the Tarim Basin, known as Lop-nor, leaving behind a high

¹ Binghua Wang, *The Ancient Corpses of Xinjiang: The Peoples of Ancient Xinjiang and their Culture*. (China: CIP, 1999) 79.

² H.E. Dexiu, "A Brief Report on the Mummies from the Zaghunluq Site in Charchan County" in *The Bronze Age and Early Iron Age Peoples of Eastern Central Asia*. Victor Mair, ed. (Philadelphia: The University of Pennsylvania and Museum Publications, 1998) 169.

³ Cherchen may also be spelled Charchan or Chärchän but for the purposes of this study it will be spelled as Cherchen.

⁴ J. P. Mallory, and Victor H. Mair, *The Tarim Mummies: Ancient China and the Mystery of the Earliest Peoples from the West*. (New York, NY: Thames & Hudson, 2000) 189.

concentration of salt in the soil.⁵ Originally the Tarim River fed the Lop-nor Lake, creating an environment of marshlands filled with reeds, rushes, poplars and tamarisks, which are often found in the graves in the Cherchen cemetery.⁶ Lop-nor was so shallow that a strong storm or change in current of the Tarim Basin could completely shift the location of the lake and move it from its southern location up into its northern basin. The lake moved from south to north during the 4th century BCE, causing the nearby town of Loulan to go into a severe draught and to be left as a ruin, which was eventually found in the 20th century by Sven Hedin and Sir Aurel Stein. Judging from the amount of reeds and plant life found in the tombs of the Cherchen graves, it would appear that the area had more access to water during the time of the burials.

The Tarim Basin no longer resembles the wetlands that were present during the time of the Cherchen people and has now been completely taken over by the Taklamakan Desert. The Taklamakan is an extremely harsh region with an average of 5% humidity and only receives about 35 mm of rain a year.⁷ The combination of the low groundwater levels and high amounts of salt left over from the sea make it nearly impossible for bacteria to grow, which aids the preservation of bodies and organic materials found in the tombs of the Cherchen Cemetery. The best-preserved corpses are thought to have died around midsummer so that their bodies dried out quickly and then were essentially freeze-dried by the frigid winter temperatures. Furthermore, most of the graves found in the area are relatively shallow, allowing the bodies to remain well aerated.⁸

⁵ Sven Hedin, *Across the Gobi Desert*. (New York City: Greenwood Press Publishers, 1968) 376.

⁶ Hedin, 369.

⁷ Mallory and Mair, 177.

⁸ Dexiu, 170-4.

II. EARLY ARCHAEOLOGICAL EXPLORATIONS:

From the combination of extreme temperatures, low moisture and high salinity in the Taklamakan, the area now contains a large amount of preserved, ancient burial sites that have long attracted archaeologists. The Taklamakan later became a part of the Silk Trade Route, encompassing many different kinds of people and trade items that have remained in the region, making the area a treasure trove for explorers. The Swedish explorer and archaeologist, Sven Hedin first traveled into the region in 1900 and discovered the remains of the Loulan village.⁹ In the ruins, Hedin was able to find an old house with several manuscripts written on wood and paper that indicated the town was still thriving around 260 AD.¹⁰ Marc Aurel Stein followed Hedin's exploration in 1906 and 1914 and relocated Loulan with the help of Hedin's maps.¹¹

Throughout both Hedin and Stein's expeditions, they discovered several preserved bodies, whose tombs and cadavers seem to follow similar burial traditions. Each body was contained in a bottomless coffin made out of two, hollowed out poplar trunks with a short board along each side. Seven short boards lay across the top and there were several cowhides stretched across the coffin. The bodies within the coffins wore felt caps with big feathers and thick, woolen garments. The racial type of people found in these coffins did not seem to be Mongoloid but appeared to be what Stein referred to as "Homo Alpinus" or similar to what is identified as the Caucasoid racial group, including light-colored hair, long noses, and elongated skulls.^{12 13} Stein found additional groups of

⁹ Elizabeth Barber, *The Mummies of Urumchi*. New York: W.W. Norton, 1999, 92.

¹⁰ Hedin, 363.

¹¹ Barber, 92.

¹² Barber, 94, and C.P Thornton and T. G. Schurr, "Prehistoric 'Europeans' in Xinjiang? A Case for Multiple Interpretations," in *The Interplay of Past & Present:*

Caucasoid graves spanning a long time period beginning around 1,000 BCE until the time of the Chinese occupation around 100 BCE.

Another Swedish explorer, Folke Bergman, followed in the steps of Stein and Hedin in 1934 and also explored the route through the Taklamakan Desert. He found another cemetery about forty kilometers from the main course of the river, where a group of wooden posts sticking out to of the ground had been painted with red ochre. Much like the graves found by Stein, the bodies in the cemetery were contained in coffins made out of heavy curved boards, rather than tree trunks, with no bottom and covered with ox hides. The bodies were all fully dressed with headdresses, mantles, loincloths and shoes or moccasins.¹⁴ Bergman reexamined a grave earlier discovered by Hedin of an old woman wearing a dark brown mantle with yellow and red piping along the borders of the garment. She wore a felted wool cap with a yellow exterior lining and red cords with the split skin of an ermine adorning the top.¹⁵ She also had a small bundle of wool wrapped in a piece of red felt.

The Caucasoid people found by Stein and Hedin demonstrate many of the same characteristics as the bodies recently excavated from the Cherchen Cemetery. The Cherchen people also created textiles with colored piping, felted hats with decorative touches and incorporated red wool on to their bodies and other burial goods. It would appear that not only the people found in Cherchen, but the Caucasoid people found

Papers from the Session of the annual EAA meeting in St. Petersburg, 2003. Editor A. Bolin. Södertörn University College: 2004.

¹⁴ Barber, 102-103.

¹⁵ Barber, 105.

throughout the Tarim Basin had developed their own specific culture, in which textiles played an important role.

III. CONTEMPORARY EXCAVATIONS AT THE CHERCHEN CEMETERY:

One tomb in particular that contained multiple, well preserved and well-dressed bodies can be found in Tomb A (Illustration II), which will form the focus of this study.¹⁶ Tomb A was excavated in 1985 by a team of excavators lead by Dolkun Kamberi.¹⁷ The mouth of the tomb is 5.35 meters long by 3 meters wide and 2.4 meters at its deepest.¹⁸ The tomb was structured in several layers, with the first layer being about 50 centimeters of sandy soil. The next level was composed of 30 centimeters of scattered reeds that contained a sheep's head and two drinking cups made from cows' horns. 1.75 meters southwest from the main burial chamber at this level was the skull and foreleg of a horse, from which the bones and flesh had been removed and replaced with reeds. In the layer beneath the scattered reeds of the burial chamber, there was an opening into the lower section of the tomb covered by a white felt blanket and a large, brown robe made of wool beneath the blanket. Placed on top of the two textiles was a leather saddle and a round bottomed, black pottery jar.¹⁹

Beneath the two textiles were two reed mats measuring 3.8 x 2.4 meters, which were immediately followed by two buffalo skins and a horse skin. Under this section were another two layers of mats made from woven willow branches covering twenty-five

¹⁶ See Table 1 in Appendix. All titles of tombs are arbitrary labels created for the purpose of this paper and their official titles, locations and contents can be located in the table.

¹⁷ Dolkun Kamberi, "The Three Thousand Year Old Charcharn Man Preserved at Zaghunluq: Abstract Account of a Tomb Excavation in Charchan county of Uyghuristan." *Sino-Platonic Papers*. 44, 1994, 1-7.

¹⁸ Kamberi, 5.

¹⁹ Kamberi, 5.

tree limbs laid across the step rim of the tomb-chamber, making a square pit measuring 0.75 meters in both width and height.²⁰ The layer of tree limbs comprised the roof of an unfilled tomb chamber below, which contained the bodies of three females and one male. All four occupants were lying on their backs on willow mats that made up the floor of the tomb, and wearing maroon robes, felt stockings and white leather boots that extend above their knees. Beneath the bodies, a 2.6 x 0.6 x 0.3 meter gutter had been dug with fourteen small tree limbs in between the gutter and the mat to create air circulation around the corpses and probably to separate them from moisture in the soil.²¹

In the center of the tomb was the male body (“Cherchen Man” Image 1), positioned with his feet towards the two, slightly decayed women (Images 5 & 6) and another woman remaining in good condition lying perpendicular to his head (“Cherchen Woman” Image 2).²² The male appears to be of Caucasoid descent with a prominent nose, wide eyes, and was approximately 2 meters tall while living. His body was carefully propped up by a small piece of wood on his right side with his legs bent and arms placed with the right hand above the left. The man had long, yellow-brown hair plaited into two 30 centimeters braids and a neatly trimmed beard.²³ In the bottom of half of his braids, pieces of red yarn had been woven into his hair and more red yarn passed through each of his earlobes.²⁴ Red wool was used again in a woven strap tied tightly around the man’s head and jaw in an effort to keep the jaw shut while the tongue swelled during decomposition. Wool was an apt fiber to use for such a tool because it is one of

²⁰ Kamberi, 5.

²¹ Kamberi, 5-6.

²² Barber, 44.

²³ Kamberi, 6.

²⁴ Barber, 24.

the few materials used in weaving that can stretch 25-30% of its own length, allowing for the body to swell and then decrease without breaking. Even with the capacity to stretch, the band on the Cherchen Man was tied so tightly that it created an indentation in the back of his skull.²⁵ Clearly the people who buried this man were well aware of the physical changes that take place during decomposition and were actively interested in maintaining the body's original appearance.

Along his temples, there is bright yellow, ochre face paint in a swirl design with rays extending out of the spiral, which spread across his cheek over the bridge of his nose.²⁶ The face paint must also have been applied post mortem because there are visible wrinkle lines in the paint, which have crinkled in the lines around his eyes. Such lines would have been created when the paint was still damp and the flesh bloated during decomposition and then later resettled back in its former shape. Two spoons with traces of ochre were found in the tomb, further indicating that the face paint was specifically connected to the funeral purposes.²⁷ In addition to the face paint, an unidentified form of animal protein was found smeared over the Cherchen Man and the Cherchen Woman, which possibly served as an anti-bacterial agent. Fish paste was often used in Peru to help preserve bodies, yet other Mongoloid groups from the same region have no record of using any type of mummifying agent in their funerary practices, which could indicate that it may have been a tradition unique to their culture.²⁸ The Cherchen people who buried these bodies were evidently familiar with the natural processes involved in death and spent a significant amount of time performing these funerary rituals. The rites and

²⁵ Barber, 28.

²⁶ Barber, 24.

²⁷ Mallory and Mair, 192.

²⁸ Mallory and Mair, 177.

practices concerning burial traditions must have been important to their society in order for them to willingly spend so much time and effort on the elements so far discussed.

The Cherchen Woman positioned perpendicular to the Cherchen Man at the top of the tomb also remained in good condition (Image 2). Similar to the other bodies in the tomb, she was on her back with her legs bent and her arms positioned with the right over the left on her chest. Her hair was woven into four braids, two of which were made out of her own hair and the other two being 45 centimeter long lengths of additional human hair with red wool added to the ends of the braids. Similar to the Cherchen Man, she also had red wool inserted through her earlobes. The Cherchen Woman also had a dark red woolen strap tied around her jaw identical to the band found on the Cherchen Man, although her strap was not tied so tightly and her jaw was forced wide open by the swelling of her tongue.²⁹ Painted across the bridge of her nose are yellow spirals made of ochre as well as a red triangle with another yellow spiral inside.³⁰

The two other women (Image 5 & 6) found in Tomb A were positioned at the feet of the Cherchen Man, lying parallel to him with their heads towards his feet and their feet positioned near the wall. Both women were in partial states of decay and had decomposed significantly more than either the Cherchen Man or Cherchen Woman and were unable to be studied as thoroughly. Nevertheless, both women had been placed in a similar manner to the other occupants in the tomb, lying on their backs with their knees bent and their arms on their chest with dark red straps tied around their heads to keep their jaws shut.³¹

²⁹ Barber, 47.

³⁰ Barber, 47-8.

³¹ Barber, 47-8.

There was an assortment of other goods included in the burial, such as several pieces of black pottery, all of the same shape and color. One piece of black pottery was found with the white felt blanket and the brown overcoat in the upper layers of the tomb. Just as the Cherchen Man and Woman used red wool on their bodies, so did several of the grave items. Such items include reed bundles bound in red wool yarn and suspended from a forked branch stuck into the floor of the tomb as well as a bundle of red yarn. There were also some bone and wood objects, such as combs, drinking cups, a wooden milking pail, some long needles, a spindle with spirals carved into it, and a horn hook used to hold up clothing.³²

Near the horse head and the foreleg buried outside of Tomb A, was another small grave known as Tomb A-2, added shortly after the main tomb was completed. Within Tomb A-2 was a small infant, no more than three months old, just above the level of the adult's main tomb (Image 9). The baby's tomb was structured similarly to Tomb A with a layer of reed mats above the body and then a smooth curved slab of wood. About two feet away from the baby's tomb was a sheep's head buried in another grave.³³ The baby was positioned on a blanket of white felt with a small pillow under his head and tiny tufts of orange wool in his nostrils. Although the baby had no designs painted on its body, he did have flesh colored paint applied across his face and two blue stones placed over his eyes.³⁴ Buried with the baby was a small cup made from a cow's horn and what appears to be a makeshift baby bottle made from a sheep's udder attached to a little bag so that milk could be suckled from the teat. Obviously the caretakers of the baby were

³² Kamberi, 6-7.

³³ Barber, 52.

³⁴ Barber, 52.

concerned with his welfare even in the afterlife and deliberately arranged him with items he used during life, just as they did for the adults.

The structure of Tomb A is consistent with other burials in the Cherchen Cemetery, with the majority of graves being composed of multiple layers of reeds and tree trunks with an unfilled chamber at the bottom. In 1989, excavators performed a “rescue excavation” after some additional tombs had been discovered by locals mining for salt in the area and were able to recover two more tombs. One of the tombs only contained a collection of bones from a group of six individuals, which once again showed that groups were often placed together in the same tomb. The other tomb excavated at this time, Tomb B, was located about 8 meters from the previous tomb and contained four bodies throughout the layers but with only one of these bodies placed in the main part of the tomb (see Illustration III). Similar to the other tombs, this grave was arranged in a series of layers with an unfilled chamber at the bottom. The tomb was dug in a rectangular shape measuring 3.5 meters long from west to east and 2.8 meters from north to south with 0.4 meters of sand comprising the first layer.

Within this layer was the body of an infant, which disintegrated after being excavated, and the mutilated body of the young woman.³⁵ The woman appeared to be around twenty years of age with yellow brown hair, and her body had been badly maimed. Her eyes had been gauged out and her arms and legs cut off, leaving only the head and the torso.³⁶ The condition of her body has led to some speculation about human sacrifice, yet there was no damage done to the shoulder or the hip sockets, so it is more likely that the woman’s body had been dismembered after she was initially buried,

³⁵ Dexiu, 169.

³⁶ Dexiu, 173.

possibly by graverobbers.³⁷ The infant in the top layer was quite similar to the baby found in Tomb A-2, in that he had been arranged with his fists placed over his torso and his right foot crossing the left, just as the other baby was positioned beneath his swaddling wrap. The infant in Tomb B, however, had no garments with him but did have two green stones placed over his eyes just as the baby in Tomb A-2 had blue stones placed over his eyes.³⁸ Both blue and green colored rocks are geologically rare and do not frequently occur in nature, so the people burying these two infants must have deliberately searched and saved these rocks for the purpose of the infants' funeral. Furthermore, it is highly likely from the particular color choice and the placement of these stones that they were meant to reflect the eye color of the babies.

Under the level of sand containing the young woman and the infant was a layer of poplar logs and mats made from tamarisk branches, reeds and cattails. As Sven Hedin discovered in his travels in the Taklamakan Desert, the Lop-Nor Lake would have turned this region into a wetland area supplying the people of Cherchen with a large supply of such marshland vegetation.³⁹ In the center of this cover was a hole about 0.3 meters in diameter with the body of a one-year-old child shoved upside down through the hole so that his head was hanging upside down over the main section of the tomb. The young boy was about 72 centimeters tall and had light brown hair arranged in a braid tied once again with red wool.⁴⁰ Found around the boy in this layer of the tomb was some millet cake,

³⁷ Kimball, 145.

³⁸ Dexiu, 173-4.

³⁹ Hedin, 396.

⁴⁰ Dexiu, 172.

pottery and a few fragments of a woolen blanket. Beneath the layer of reeds was an unfilled chamber about 1.2 meters long, 0.6 meters wide and 0.9 meters deep.⁴¹

The only occupant of this part of the tomb was an older woman whose body had been cut into three separate parts. Her head had been severed from her spine and placed on her abdomen, which had been detached from her lower body and placed along the west side of the tomb. Her lower body was lying on the east side of the tomb with the knees propped up and her feet on the ground. Excavators believe that grave robbers had reopened the grave and damaged her body, much like that of the younger woman, which had also been severely damaged.⁴²

The old woman had long, white hair arranged into two braids with red wool braided into the ends exactly like the bodies found in Tomb A (Image 8). Also like the occupants of Tomb A, this woman had decoration applied to her face with black paint on her eyebrows as well as two ovals in the center of her forehead directly beneath her hairline.⁴³ She had permanent tattoos on her eye lids in the shape of semi-lunar designs and a complex swirled design covering the back of her hand and extending up her index, middle and ring fingers (Image 7).⁴⁴ The woman was buried with objects similar to those found in as Tomb A, including a wooden comb, a bunch of reeds tied with red wool, a spindle whorl with an inserted staff, a cup made out of a cow horn, a tree branch hook, and spoons.

There were also some other items that indict this woman may have held some elevated status within the community, such as an object described as an altar by

⁴¹ Dexiu, 170.

⁴² Dexiu, 170.

⁴³ Dexiu, 171.

⁴⁴ Dexiu, 172.

excavators and pieces of white wool with red repeating scroll designs. These items would have hardly served any domestic or agricultural purpose, so they must have been specifically connected to either the funerary context or her occupation in life.⁴⁵ In addition to the tattoo on her hand, the woman's fingernails were exceptionally long, more so than is customary with the shrinkage of flesh around the nails that normally occurs during decomposition.⁴⁶ With such manicured hands, it would have been nearly impossible for her to participate in any kind of manual labor, so she likely held a high enough position within her community to warrant a less physical occupation.

IV. TEXTILES:

Just as the burial practices of these Cherchen tombs reveal consistent patterns that link them together as a group, the regular trends found in their textiles continue to further develop their unity as a society. Because the bodies have been preserved just as they were arranged by their contemporaries, it is still evident which pieces were considered important enough to be included in the burial as grave goods and which pieces were selected to be worn by the corpses. The clothing on the bodies demonstrates easily observable patterns that instantly indicate the group of people were meant to be understood as a unit. For example, all of the bodies in Tombs A and A-2 are wearing a similar uniform of maroon robes, felt leggings and over-the-knee white boots. By maintaining a consistent pattern of color and garment type, a connection is established between the individual bodies in order to establish a group relationship.

⁴⁵ H.E Dexiu, 170 and Jeannine Davis-Kimball, *Warrior Women: An Archaeologist's Search for History's Hidden Heroines*. (New York City: Warner Books, 2002) 145.

⁴⁶ Mallory and Mair, 25.

Within these groups of textiles, there are slight variations between levels of quality and complexity of the garments worn on the bodies. Some figures are clearly accompanied by what can only be described as luxury items that used non-native, and therefore, costly materials in addition to complex types of decoration. Other garments employ more complex weaving patterns and types of elaboration that serve no utilitarian function, but would have been extremely complicated to execute and therefore raise the overall value of the textile. Only the most important members of the Cherchen society would have been able to afford garments with imported dyes or extra embellishment. By wearing these valuable garments, the status of the owner is put on display and is immediately visible anyone to anyone observing them.

A. UNITY IN COLOR:

When first observing these bodies, one immediately sees the rich burgundy color of the robes worn by each body. In both Tomb A and Tomb A-2, all of the occupants are dressed entirely in identical shades of burgundy. The Cherchen Man (Image 1) wears a two-piece suit made out of the maroon color, consisting of a robe that extends to about mid-thigh with a matching pair of pants. The Cherchen Woman (Image 2) wears a full-length burgundy dress that extends all the way to her feet, and the other two women, although slightly more decomposed, still show remains of their maroon garments over the majority of their bodies (Images 5 & 6). In addition to the robes, all of the adults also wear maroon straps tied around their heads to keep their jaws shut during decomposition. Even the baby in Tomb A-2 has his entire body wrapped in a maroon shawl matching the hue worn by the adults.⁴⁷ By covering the majority of each body in the same color, a link

⁴⁷ Barber, 38.

is immediately established between all of the figures. Clearly this color represented some kind of significance for this particular group of people since the dyers made a deliberate effort to create a consistent color in multiple pieces of clothing.

Maintaining such a consistent color, particularly this shade of maroon, would not have been a simple task. Most red dyes found in Asian textiles come from madder root, which is commonly found in the area. In order to be made into a dye, the root must be dried and then ground before being mixed with some kind of mordant, which is usually an inorganic, oxide chemical that prevents the color from fading over time or washing out with water.⁴⁸ Mordants are typically chemicals like aluminum or iron, which interact with the dye molecules and make the color permanent.⁴⁹ Madder can produce a variety of different reds, ranging from orange to deep ruby reds, but not the shade of maroon found on any of the bodies.

We can see examples of madder dye used on white wool in a series of banded textiles found in another tomb in Cherchen (Image 11). In 2008, a series of dye analysis tests using HPLC with diode array and mass spectrometric detection was performed on samples of banded textiles excavated from Tomb C in 1987 in Cherchen.⁵⁰ The tests showed that the *Rubia* species of madder, which is found locally around Central Asia, the Middle East, and the East Coast of China, had been used to create the bright red color found in banded textiles, as well as the decorative trim found on a blue chemise (Image

⁴⁸ Stuart Robinson, *A History of Dyed Textiles: Dyes, Fibres, Painted Bark, Batik, Starch-resist, Discharge, Tie-dye, Further Sources for Research* (Cambridge: M.I.T, 1969) 25.

⁴⁹ Xian Zhang, *Analysis of natural yellow dyes using HPLC with diode array and mass spectrometric detection*. (Boston: Boston University, 2008) 5.

⁵⁰ Zhang, 90-1.

12).⁵¹ In some areas of red, researchers found that some yellow dye had been added to the red even though there is no apparent orange coloring. The shade of red used in these analyzed garments is quite similar to the bright red found in Tomb A, as can be seen in the felt stockings of the Cherchen Man or the bright red piping on his maroon robe.

In order to create the darker maroon color, the dyers would have most likely used the same *Rubia* madder as was found in the bright red garments, however, they used brown wool instead of white wool. White or light colored wool is used more frequently in dyed textiles because it can absorb a larger amount dye more quickly than darker colors of wool and achieve brighter, more saturated colors. The Cherchen dyers must have produced a vat of particularly strong madder dye and then dipped the brown wool several times, using more time and more dye material in order to create the rich burgundy color.⁵² The color was found again in smaller examples, such as in Tomb D, where a piece of maroon and red striped cloth as well as a dome-shaped hat were found in that color, but nowhere else in the Cherchen cemetery was a group of figures dressed so consistently in the same color.⁵³ The people of Tomb A and A-2 wanted to be associated with one another and the maroon color created a kind of uniform that establishes a visual connection to link them together as a group.

The decision to create this shade of maroon must have been a deliberate choice made by the dyers in the Cherchen community. They acknowledged the difference between the shades of red by juxtaposing the deep burgundy and the bright red together, as seen in the bright red piping found along the seams of the Cherchen Man's maroon

⁵¹ Zhang, 99.

⁵² Barber, 39.

⁵³ See Table 1 in Appendix

robe.⁵⁴ By using the combination of the dark wool with the madder dye, the dyers create a color different from other colors made from simply mixing dyes. The distinctive maroon color immediately establishes something unique that separates the people in Tomb A and A-2 from other people in Cherchen while still linking the individuals together.

Furthermore, the process of developing the burgundy color demanded more time and more dye, which made the color more valuable and raised the status of anyone in possession of the garment. Anyone wearing the garment was labeled not only as someone of the Cherchen dyers' community, but also as someone who could afford or warrant the higher quality garment.

Another type of textile that was found on all of the bodies in Tombs A and A-2, are red and blue cords tied around the wrists. On all of the figures, the cord has been used to arrange the right hand above the left and keep the hands positioned on top of the abdomen. The cord was obviously an addition during the burial process where a specific body position was an important part of their funerary traditions and in the case of Tomb A, was only accomplished through the use of this specific textile. Not only did the burial tradition require a specific body position, but it would appear that the position could only be accomplished through the use of a particular textile.

The combination of red and blue seems to reflect another pattern found not only in Tomb A, but in the general Cherchen aesthetic. While red is used frequently on garments as both the main color as well as in smaller sections in decoration and piping, the color blue is rarely seen without some accompanying red. Within Tombs A and A-2, the only visible use of blue found on the adult bodies is in the red and blue cords, not

⁵⁴ Barber, 27.

counting the blue found in the stockings visible only after the boot had deteriorated. The baby in Tomb A-2 is actually the only body that wears a visible garment of blue, found in his small bonnet that has a layer of bright red underneath (Image 9). Also included in Tomb A, although not worn, is a blue shawl woven in a lightweight, plain weave. The main body of the shawl was made from a light blue color with two red stripes woven through it. On the sides of the textile, the weavers incorporated a ribbed band with alternating bars of red and blue ending in a small blue braid.⁵⁵ By maintaining a regular pairing of the two colors, another pattern is created that can be identified with the textiles of Cherchen. Other examples, such as a chemise in Tomb D in Cherchen, also had a blue body with red border along the cuffs and bottom of the garment (Image 12).

B. DIFFERENTIATION THROUGH QUALITATIVE CHOICES

1. CONSTRUCTION:

While color was used as tool to group individual people together, the construction of the textiles suggests that there were subtle, individual differences in quality varying from garment to garment. Just as people today can differentiate between a cheaply made, bargain t-shirt and an expensive, tailor-made suit, so can similar distinctions be found in the textiles produced in Cherchen. Depending upon the amount of tailoring and quantity of fabric used, the textiles can be sorted into differing levels of quality and luxury. The different levels of quality then reflect upon the type of person who would chose or be allowed to wear such garments, indicating what kind of position he or she would have held in the society. Someone who owned a garment specifically altered for his or her

⁵⁵ Barber, 50.

body type or with larger amounts of fabric could warrant the more expensive garment, and therefore would occupy a higher position in the group.

The Cherchen Man's maroon robe is open down the front and goes down to about mid-thigh in the front and extends to the knees in the back (Image 1). The robe is constructed in a T-formation, made of two long rectangles woven for each half of the robe body and then sewn down the center of the back. The sleeves are composed out of two long, narrow pieces of fabric that are sewn into tubes and attached to the shoulders at 90-degree angles, as opposed to most modern shirts that have been tailored to round out the shoulders.⁵⁶ By using the T-formation, the fabric does not have to be cut and the natural selvedge, or place at the end of the cloth where the weft wraps around the warp to begin a new row, creates a finished edge on the garment without additional sewing.⁵⁷ Although the design of the robe may appear simple at first glance, the construction of the garment ensures that no piece of fabric is wasted and allows the weavers to create pieces of fabric specially made for the size of the garment. At least one of the other women who had begun to decompose (the other has deteriorated too much to examine the fit of her maroon textile) has a similarly constructed garment, which is more fitted along her legs. Yet her robe differs from the Cherchen Man's in that it extends past her knees and is fitted snugly around her legs and becomes more of a dress.

The Cherchen Woman still wears her robe in good condition, which is of a distinctly different construction than the decomposed woman or the Cherchen Man. (Image 2). The Cherchen Woman's robe extends past her knees all the way to her feet, following the example of the other woman in functioning as more of a dress than just a

⁵⁶ Barber, 25.

⁵⁷ Barber, 26.

robe. Her dress differs, however, from the other woman, in that her garment is less fitted than the other occupant and flows out from her waist with copious amounts of fabric around her legs. The makers of her garment did not seem so concerned with the conservation of material, and the extra fabric surrounding her legs would have served little functional purpose. By using more material, it automatically raises the value of her garment as opposed to one with a limited amount of fabric.

Furthermore, the actual fabric of the Cherchen Woman's dress seems to be of a higher quality than the Cherchen Man's robe. The fabric of her dress has a softer feel to the material as well as a brighter sheen.⁵⁸ The wool may have some type of mohair or crude silk mixed into it in order to produce the higher gloss of the fabric. The decision to include mohair or silk was most likely an aesthetic decision since the sheen or softness of the fabric would not have served any utilitarian purpose. Even though the color of the robes is used to establish a relationship between all of the members of the tomb, there are still indications of their status in relation to one another as individuals.

Another area of variation in construction methods can be seen in the braiding pattern of the red and blue cords, with every type of braid just slightly altered for each person. The cord found on the Cherchen Man was plied to make a diagonal red, red, blue, blue repeating pattern (Image 3). The cord around the Cherchen Woman's hands (Image 4), much like her dress, employs a more complex method of construction than the Cherchen Man's cord. Her cord appears to have been braided with multiple cords of red, blue and pink in a fishtail braid.⁵⁹ The cord found on the baby was wrapped around his entire body and was just made out of one red and one blue cord that had been plied

⁵⁸ Barber, 48.

⁵⁹ Barber, 47.

together and is by far the most simple of the methods used in the cords (Image 9).

Although the placement and the color combination is consistent and marks them as a unified group, the distinct variations on the type and complexity of braid once again reflects upon their individual status.

Although the Cherchen Man's robe and red and blue cord may not be as complex as the Cherchen Woman's, he does have another type of cord that is more complicated and quite unique. In addition to the blue and red cord, another cord is tied around the Cherchen Man's waist to hold the front of his robe closed and is composed of five different colors: blue, green, yellow, bright red, and maroon (Image 3). Each thread emerges individually from the cord and then is pulled back within the cord in a manner that makes the colors appear to spiral around one another.⁶⁰ The technique used to make such a cord is most likely similar to the method used in the Japanese craft of *kumihimo*, where one uses a flat disk held up by four legs with a hole in the center (Illustration VII). Various bobbins are hung in a circle around the outside of the disk and then the individual threads are funneled through the center to create the cord.⁶¹ The pattern used to create the Cherchen Man's cord would have required 24 different threads in the five colors.⁶²

Even though the cord would not have taken a large quantity of a thread to make, it still would have required dyers to create five individual colors, each with a different raw material and dyeing process. The red, as mentioned previously, would have come from madder dyed on white wool and the maroon was of the same shade created by the

⁶⁰ Barber, 28.

⁶¹ Barber, 58.

⁶² Barber, 59.

combination of red dye on dark brown wool. The yellow cord would have been made by some variety of weld, which currently grows from the Mediterranean to Western Asia and Northwest India.⁶³ The blue would have come from one of the isometric forms of indigo, which is derived from a shrub in the legume or pea family and found natively in India, and the green would have been made from a combination of the weld and indigo dyes.⁶⁴ The amount of time needed to dye all the individual colors, let alone weave them all together in the pattern found in the Cherchen Man's cord, would greatly increase the value of the textile. The Cherchen Man is the only occupant of the tomb, and as far as we know, the only person in the Cherchen Cemetery to be found with this type of cord. The cord was an object unique to him and reflected upon his position within the Cherchen society.

2. WEAVING:

Just as the method of construction was altered based upon the type of garment being produced, so was the type of weaving deliberately chosen according to the type of garment being woven. The Cherchen weavers were familiar with several kinds of weaving patterns and could vary the weight of their garments from a light gauzy fabric—as seen in a blue shawl—to a dense, thick fabric—as found in a brown overcoat also found in Tomb A. Because certain weaving patterns are more time consuming than others or require more material to weave, the type of weavings can also be distinguished from one another and contribute to overall quality of the garment. More complexity and more material raises the value of the garment and once again, reflects upon the type of person who would be able to own a more expensive garment.

⁶³ Zhang, 96.

⁶⁴ Zhang, 99, *Ibid* 5, and Robinson 24.

The most basic of weaves is called a plain weave, also known as a tabby weave (Illustration IV). The plain weave can be found in the Cherchen Man's maroon robe and is created by alternating the horizontal weft above and below the vertical warp threads. The weight or density of the fabric can be changed based upon how much the threads are packed together as the weaver continues, but generally the plain weave is less time-consuming than most types of weaves.⁶⁵ In contrast to the plain weave, a variation on twill, known as the long-hop twill, was also found on several items of clothing in Tomb A, such as the Cherchen Woman's dress and a brown overcoat found in another level of the tomb. In traditional twill weave, the weft goes over two and under two of the warp and each row is offset by one so that a diagonal slant is created in the fabric (Illustration V). The weft is then packed down hard to create a denser, more durable fabric, however it does take more time and more material to produce the final cloth. The long-hop twill type of twill found in Cherchen differs from traditional twill in that the weft goes over three and then under two, creating a denser fabric as well as a more dramatic illusion of diagonal texture than in traditional twill (Illustration VI).⁶⁶

The use of the long-hop twill requires more work from the weaver than a regular plain weave, because the weaver must now keep track of the count of warps and wefts and be sure to continue the pattern in each row to maintain a consistent diagonal slant. The long-hop twill acts as another trait unique to the Cherchen people's weaving practices that set them apart from other weaving communities. Just as the construction method of the Cherchen Woman's robe indicated a slightly higher value, so does the use of the long-hop twill. Where the Cherchen Man's robe was of the simpler plain weave

⁶⁵ Barber, 26.

⁶⁶ Barber, 39.

and utilized a construction method that did not waste any additional fabric, the Cherchen Woman's garment used a more complicated style of weave and a higher quality type of fabric.

The Long-hop Twill also reappears in the dark brown overcoat found with the white blanket and saddle in the upper layers of Tomb A (see Illustration II). The main body of the coat is an undyed, natural, dark brown and appears at first glance to be woven into diagonal rows that enter the sleeve cuffs at an angle. To bring more attention to the cuff area, the ends of the sleeves and the bottom of the coat have a red border woven into the fabric, in the same bright red color that was used in the decorative red piping found on the Cherchen Man's robe. In addition to the decoration on the cuffs, the sleeves of the brown overcoat have been slightly tailored so that they gradually taper off at the cuffs.⁶⁷ From using a combination of the long-hop twill, tapering of the sleeves and incorporating the bright red color into the decoration of the cuff, the garment becomes quite a valuable textile. The makers of this garment deliberately chose methods that were more complex and time-consuming to create a higher quality garment.

Long-hop twill was not the only option for creating a more complex type of weave and another variation can be found in the maroon shawl worn by the baby in Tomb A-2. The majority of the shawl uses plain weave and is the same color and weight as the Cherchen Man's robe (Image 9). The difference in the baby's wrap is that the weaver has added a line of overspun wool, which is thicker and curlier than regular thread, every 25-30 rows. The addition of the overspun yarn creates horizontal lines of zigzags throughout the blanket, adding some texture to the textile and differentiating it from regular plain

⁶⁷ Barber, 39.

weave.⁶⁸ By including this line of decoration into the weaving of the shawl, the complexity of the garment is increased and would require more time by requiring the weaver to incorporate the overspun yarn in as she wove in regular intervals. Once again, by increasing the complexity of the weaving process, the overall value of the garment is increased and signifies the status of the owner.

Another type of weaving used by the Cherchen community was band weaving, where one textile was made of several individual sections and then sewn into one piece, as can be seen from Tomb C (Image 11). Most of these bands were quite narrow and ranged from a centimeter to 1.25 centimeters wide but could be as long as 1.6 meters. The number of bands also varied greatly from textile to textile and some used as many as thirty-seven bands in one blanket.⁶⁹ Most of the bands were a single, dyed color like yellow, red, orange, blue or occasionally an undyed brown, but some of the bands utilized multiple colors in elaborate patterns. Patterns with triangles or “X” shapes woven were often spread out between the more common, solid colored stripes, which would have been less time consuming to make and require fewer different colored threads.⁷⁰

Band weaving does not require a loom and would have been easy to start and stop while moving from place to place. The weavers just needed something to tie the other end of the band to, like a tree or the weaver’s foot, and then one could pull back and weave.⁷¹ Judging by the amount of wool used by the Cherchen people, herding sheep must have been a full time occupation and band weaving would have been an easy

⁶⁸ Barber, 52.

⁶⁹ Barber, 54.

⁷⁰ Barber, 54.

⁷¹ Barber, 55.

task to pick up and drop while watching over a herd of sheep.⁷² In comparison with loom weaving, creating so many individual bands is a rather time consuming way to make a large textile. While weaving one individual band was not a particularly difficult task, creating enough bands to make a large textile would have required much more effort than creating a textile of equivalent size on a loom. The individual time needed to make each band and then sew them all together signifies a more valuable textile in comparison to a piece of plain-woven cloth.

An additional type of banded cloth was found in the Cherchen Cemetery that used another type of band weaving, was the half basket weave used to create 17.8-centimeter wide strips, which were then sewn together to make a skirt. Half basket weave is similar to twill, where the weft goes over two warp threads and then under two, but the half basket weave incorporates two weft threads in each row under the warp.⁷³ The majority of the textile is made of alternating red and yellow stripes, with red even being added on to a yellow strip, so symmetry was not an issue of concern. The end of the garment contained a decorative plait of red, white and blue, and the sides of the garment were sewn together to create a giant circle. The top of the garment was gathered up to make a kind of skirt and there are marks around the top of the skirt where the material was regularly gathered to hold around the waist.⁷⁴ The weavers in Cherchen must have been advanced enough in their band weaving techniques that they were able to alter the size and complexity of the band based upon the type of garment.

⁷² Barber, 57.

⁷³ Barber, 61.

⁷⁴ Barber, 61.

One of the most complicated methods of weaving in the Cherchen Cemetery is tapestry. Tapestry weaving is quite distinctive from other weaving methods in that sections of color or pattern are woven individually in a block on the loom and then the separate parts are stitched together to create one solid textile. Tapestry is thought to have originally come from the Near East in 4000 BCE, around the time when sheep with wooly coats were first bred. Wool is able to stretch more than plant fibers like linen or hemp, and it was only once wool became available that the tapestry weave became possible.⁷⁵ Even though the Cherchen Cemetery was used into the early centuries AD, finding the tapestry weave is a rather remarkable discovery since the Egyptians only picked up the technique around 1500 BCE from Syria.⁷⁶ Clearly the weavers in the Cherchen community were quite advanced in their weaving methods and were aware of the different approaches of other weavers as well.

The largest intact piece of tapestry weave is found in a beautiful blue chemise found in Tomb D at Cherchen. The chemise had a strip of multicolored tapestry along the bottom of the garment and in the cuffs of the sleeves. The decoration along the bottom of the garment uses a lightning bolt design with red, blue, yellow and brown and the sleeves use a swirl and lightning bolt pattern made of the same colors as the bottom. Such a large amount of tapestry in such complex designs would have instantly raised the value of any garment.

Other examples of tapestry fragments have been found throughout the Cherchen cemetery, usually involving some kind of decorative pattern. One small piece was made of red and yellow swirls in a similar pattern to the design found on the painted cloth

⁷⁵ Barber, 66.

⁷⁶ Barber, 62.

found on the decomposed woman's knee in Tomb A (Image 6). Another piece of tapestry was found with zigzags of blue, light red, yellow, maroon and peach on a white background.⁷⁷ A few other samples of tapestry scraps were found throughout the Cherchen Cemetery that were dyed in the same color as the robes found on all of the adults in Tomb A. Since many of the pieces of tapestry found in Cherchen are so small, it is difficult to discern what kind of textile they would have formed; however, the labor-intensive nature of the weave itself would indicate that any textile involving tapestry would have been an expensive garment. Furthermore, because tapestry was often used for patterned textiles, it frequently incorporated many different colors, which would also increase the value of the garment.

C. LUXURY ITEMS:

1. BLUE:

Through the combination of color, weaving and construction methods used by the Cherchen textile makers, there are certain garments that strongly indicate items with a luxury status. When the dyers, weavers and tailors have all used their most complex techniques and rare materials in one garment, the textile—as well as the owner—reflects a high status within society. Most of the garments embodying these characteristics are not worn by the corpses, but are included in the burial as a type of grave good, perhaps too valuable to risk being damaged by regular wear.

One instant indicator of such luxury status can be seen in the vibrant blue color found in several of the garments in Cherchen. The sapphire color in these textiles was made from a species of the indigo plant, not naturally found in the Cherchen area, or even

⁷⁷ Barber, 62.

the Taklamakan region.⁷⁸ In order to obtain the plant substance, the Cherchen people must have traded with other groups from the south and been willing to sacrifice some of their own goods in exchange. There are two types of indigo commonly used in textile dyes, one known as Indian indigo that generally produces a richer, darker blue and Old World Indigo, more commonly known as woad, which produces a lighter blue. Indigo is processed using a vat dyeing system, where the plant substance is mixed with an alkaline solution, like ammonia, that transforms the dye substance into a leuco-compound that fixes on to the fiber when exposed to air. When the wool is first placed in the vat, it becomes a pale yellow that then turns to a deep blue once removed from the solution and will remain both water and light fast.⁷⁹ The process of dyeing with woad is slightly more complicated since it uses only the leaf of the plant, but it produces an even longer lasting color than the Indian variety of indigo.⁸⁰

The hazard of working with the indigo dye is that when using ammonia, which could be made through decomposing urine, toxic fumes evaporate into the air. The fumes are so toxic that if a dyer were to be exposed to them over a long period of time, they would cause serious health problems for the dyer. Furthermore, in order to obtain a vibrant shade of blue, the wool would have to be dipped in the vat multiple times and thus prolong the dyer's contact with the fumes. Not only would indigo have been rare and therefore expensive since it was not locally available, but the dyer could sustain serious health problems from using the dye. Blue becomes a very valuable color and even in small amounts can elevate the worth of a textile.

⁷⁸ Zhang, 99.

⁷⁹ Robinson, 26-7.

⁸⁰ Robinson, 23.

One of the largest examples of blue can be found in Tomb D located in Cherchen, where an entire chemise made of blue was discovered (Image 12). At first glance, the entire body of the chemise seems to be made out of blue wool, with the collar of the garment appearing to be a shade lighter than the body. The weavers were able to create the illusion of a larger amount of blue wool as well as a darker shade by using dark brown wool in the warp of the fabric. The blue wool used in the weft is packed down so tightly that it covers the brown wool in the warp. By making use of other, less expensive wool in the unseen warp of the garment, the weavers were able to create the impression of a much larger amount of the expensive blue material. Furthermore, by making the body of the garment appear to be a darker shade of blue, it also created the impression that the dyers had used more dye to create the richer, dark blue hue and further increased the value of the garment.

The collar of the garment uses the same illusion as the body, although in this section, the color of the warp makes the collar appear to be a lighter shade of blue. Peach colored wool in the warp and then the blue once again in the weft, providing a contrast to the darker shade of blue found in the main body.⁸¹ The collar was a complicated addition to the garment, stretching across the shoulders, chest and back with the outer edges decreasing by five squares to form a large steeped cross. To create such a shape on the loom would have been extremely time consuming and complicated because the shape of the collar would have been shaped through adding and dropping warps and wefts varying in each line. The fact that the weavers were willing to spend so much time on a

⁸¹ Barber, 64.

nonessential part of the garment adds to the evidence that this textile was meant to be a high luxury piece.⁸²

In addition to the blue color of the garment and the complicated collar, the weavers also incorporated the decorative tapestry border along the bottom of the garment and the cuffs, as mentioned previously. Since the two patterns of tapestry used in the cuffs and along the bottom require five colors, the value of the garment is raised again because of the all of the separate dyes required to create them. The value of the decoration is augmented even more by the use of those colors in the tapestry weave, which is an advanced type of weave and quite time-consuming to execute. From the combination of the valuable blue dye, the complex construction of the collar, and the intricate tapestry weaving of the cuff and the hem, this chemise becomes the ultimate luxury item.

Another large amount of blue can be seen on the shawl included as a grave good in Tomb A. As mentioned previously, the majority of the garment is made of light blue with two red stripes and a decorative blue and red fringe border. Such a large portion of the blue color, beyond just a small amount used as decoration, immediately would indicate to anyone viewing the wearer that he or she occupied a high status. Furthermore, the garment is more of an accessory garment, as opposed to an essential item like a shirt or a dress that would have been needed on a daily basis. A shawl is still needed in cold weather but is more of a supplementary garment, which further indicates the owner's ability to possess additional items of clothing beyond the basics. Anyone who was able to

⁸² Barber, 64.

afford a large amount of blue fabric on an accessory item would have occupied a position high enough in their society that allowed them to own such items.

In Tomb A-2, the baby wears a blue hat, made out a layer of cobalt blue felt formed over another layer of red wool around the infant's head. Although the layer of blue felt is stretched relatively thin over the red cap, there is still a significant amount of material used to make the baby's bonnet, and the color is a particularly deep shade of blue. In order to create such a vibrant shade, the dyers must have dipped the wool multiple times, using more dye material and exposing them for a longer period of time to the fumes. The baby must have been important to the people who buried him, otherwise they would not have bestowed such a costly cap upon the child. Each body has a blue and red cord wrapped around their hands, which testifies not only to their unity as a group through wearing the textile, but that all peoples within the group had warranted a status to possess such a costly item.

1. HATS:

Hats were another item repeatedly found at Cherchen, particularly in Tomb A. No fewer than ten different varieties were found with the bodies, far more than could ever be needed for everyday purposes. Other tombs in Cherchen may have included a hat worn by the corpse, with an additional hat or two in some cases, but no other tomb had such an abundance of hats as Tomb A. Most of the hats were made out of dense, matted felt with a few exceptions. Felt was a natural complement to a nomadic lifestyle since it was far lighter than wood or metal and therefore could be more easily transported when moving from place to place.⁸³ In order to make it, a layer of combed, unspun wool is spread out

⁸³ Barber, 37.

and sprinkled with whey or hot water, and then wrapped up in a mat. The wool must then be mashed and kneaded together over an extended period of time, like being attached to the back of a horse while riding. The liquid applied to the wool causes the scales on the surface of the wool fibers to become tangled up in one another, creating one solid fabric. Particular types of wool are the only natural fibers that will behave this way and depending on how much it was kneaded, the felt could become quite dense and in some cases waterproof. Felt was used beyond just clothing for flooring, bedding, saddle gear, tent coverings or even dishes.⁸⁴

Felt was a perfect material for hats. Not only could they be made light enough to prevent hindering the wearer, but could still be quite warm. Felt can also be molded into an assortment of different shapes and sizes, which inspires a lot of variety in the types of hats' shapes. Such a variety was certainly evident in Tomb A, where each of the ten hats was a different style. One hat resembled the shape of a circus tent with a pointed tip at the top and four sides that sloped down to the rounded rim along the bottom. The color of the hat looks to be a natural brown but had small bits of red wool sprinkled throughout the felt.⁸⁵ Another hat was made out of two pieces of white felt molded into a helmet shape, and the top of the hat had two rolls of felt curved up to almost resemble horns.⁸⁶ One of the most impressive of the collection included a tall, dark brown hat that curves back from the head to form a high rounded peak at the top while the bottom forms a cuff around the wearer's face (Image 10). Around the edge of the cuff is a buttonhole stitch in

⁸⁴ Barber, 37.

⁸⁵ Barber, 33.

⁸⁶ Barber, 33.

light tan along the front of the hat and down the back, holding the two halves together.⁸⁷ In addition to the fact that no one person needed ten hats for practical reasons, many of these hats included ornament details and shapes that would have required extra work from the maker. In the case of the tall brown hat, the decorative shape might have even decreased the practicality of wearing the hat. Just the ability to own so many hats indicates that the owner must have occupied a position high enough in their society that warranted the possession of the headwear collection.

One of the hats was constructed in a more complicated and time-consuming method than the felt hats. This hat resembles a beret, with the top divided into four quadrants and each section ribbed in perpendicular directions. A thin stick wrapped in a fine thread was stuck through the top, which narrows down to a band fitting around the head. At first glance, the beret appears to be have been knitted in a looped technique, however, there is no evidence for knitting in this region for another 2,000 years.⁸⁸ Instead, it is believed that a *nalbinding* technique had been used, where a needle and thread is used to increase the width of the top and then decrease the bottom rim to the size of the wearer's head. Such a technique would have been quite time consuming because the hatmaker would have needed to tailor the opening of the hat specifically for the size of the wearer's head.⁸⁹ Another hat was found in a nearby tomb in Cherchen that used the *nalbinding* technique and was a dark red, dome shape with a spiral woven into the hat that circled around from the tip to the base of the hat.⁹⁰

⁸⁷ Barber, 33.

⁸⁸ Barber, 33.

⁸⁹ Barber, 33.

⁹⁰ Barber, 60.

In a time when possessions were limited, the sheer amount of non-essential pieces of clothing in the tombs such as hats, shawls, cords, and overcoats indicates a high status. The variety in shapes and colors would merely be for the benefit of the owner and demonstrate his ability to possess such a large amount of material goods. Where other less wealthy or less respected members of the society would have to be concerned with food or working garments, these people were able to create their own extended collection of hats, which were evidently important enough to warrant inclusion as grave goods. Only a higher status member of society would have been able to own so many supplementary garments and by wearing and possessing them, demonstrates his or her status.

V. SUBESHI CEMETERY:

The traditions and cultural practices in Cherchen are not an isolated case in the Taklamakan Desert. Other groups of Caucasoid burials have been found throughout the Tarim Basin dating before and after the period of the Cherchen Cemetery and employ similar textile and funerary traditions. One cemetery in particular, located in Subeshi, continues many of the same customs as the Cherchen Cemetery. Much like those found in Cherchen, these people were buried wearing complex textiles that also reflected their position within society. The people of Subeshi developed visual signifiers of value in their garments by using color, types of garments and funerary practices in a similar manner to the people of Cherchen.

The Subeshi Cemeteries are located in a gorge along the northern foothills of the Flaming Mountains, approximately 350 miles northeast of the Cherchen Cemetery in the

village of Zaghunluq.⁹¹ The word “Subeshi” comes from the Uyghur dialect and means “origin of water,” and researchers found the first traces of ancient dwellings and graveyards about three kilometers away from the Subeshi oasis. Over 300 square meters have been excavated in multiple cemeteries at the site, with approximately 52 tombs and three houses being recovered so far. The findings in Subeshi date between the 5th to 4th Century BCE, which is about 500 years after Tomb A in Cherchen.⁹² The first eight tombs were excavated in 1980 and another five were exhumed during an emergency excavation between 1991 and 1992, after grave robbers had ransacked another 35 tombs.⁹³

Two main types of tombs have been found in Subeshi: vertical shaft graves and shaft graves with separate side entrances.⁹⁴ Shaft graves are rectangular pits, dug typically no more than two meters deep and arranged in layers of dry grass and pebbles. The main opening of the grave was covered with a wooden covering, placed at the top of the grave or on the side. Much like the graves in Cherchen, many of the tombs are group burials containing multiple bodies in unfilled chambers.⁹⁵ The bodies are also similarly arranged to the Cherchen people in that the cadavers are lying on their backs with their knees bent and their hands placed on their stomachs. The bodies rest upon grass mats or cushions about 10 cm thick and their heads are consistently oriented towards the west or northwest.

⁹¹ Binghua Wang. *The Ancient Corpses of Xinjiang: The Peoples of Ancient Xinjiang and their Culture*. (China: CIP, 1999) 103.

⁹² Mallory and Mair, 195.

⁹³ Wang, 103.

⁹⁴ The following information was taken from a text translated from Chinese, and it is unclear from the description whether the tomb description was intended for the vertical shaft graves, the shaft graves with a side entrance, or both.

⁹⁵ Wang, 103-5.

Another similarity between the two cemeteries is a type of animal protein or fatty substance spread on the skin of the bodies to act as a kind of preservative tool. While the specific type of animal fat is still unidentified, it would appear that both cultures were concerned with the preservation of their dead. Remnants of a red pigment were also found scattered on the floors of the tombs, as if thrown in during the burial. The red pigment may have been used in some kind of face paint, as seen on the Cherchen bodies, however, not enough flesh remains on most of the faces to determine whether face paint had been used.⁹⁶ Cosmetic kits were, however, found with several of the women and contained whitener, rouge and a product similar to mascara. The black mascara product may have been used in a similar manner to the makeup found on the older woman from Tomb B, who had black applied to her eyebrows.

Although much of the facial flesh on Subeshi bodies has deteriorated, their hair has remained in very good condition and also seems to follow the gendered standards that were common in Cherchen. For men, hair was shorn between ear and shoulder level, although some males in Cherchen still maintained a single, long braid of hair. The women in both Cherchen and Subeshi have their hair arranged in numerous long braids. While the Cherchen women have their braids loose with red wool braided into ends, the majority of the women at Subeshi have their braids gathered into nets made of thread.⁹⁷ The hairnets were made with some kind of needle technique or by another method called *sprang*, which is similar to the technique used in cat's cradle. One simply twists parallel

⁹⁶ Wang, 105-6.

⁹⁷ Wang, 106.

threads until the entire length has been twisted and then the thread is darned crosswise to prevent it from untwisting.⁹⁸

In addition to placing significance on their hair, both the women of Subeshi and the people of Cherchen have placed significance upon their hands, particularly the left. In Tomb B at Cherchen, there was an older woman found with elaborate spiral tattoos all along her arm, hand, and up her index, middle and ring fingers (Image 7). Her tattooed arm was arranged on her chest while her unmarked hand was placed towards her side, as if to draw further attention to the tattooed hand. On the Cherchen Man in Tomb A, there was a white, leather thong strapped around the fingers of his left hand, although the its purpose is still to be determined. Two women in Subeshi were also documented as wearing a white leather glove or mitten on one hand, with the mitten once again being only on the left hand (Image 13).⁹⁹ Whether the emphasis placed upon the left hand is utilitarian or symbolic is unknown, but nevertheless the decision reinforces the continued traditions between Subeshi and Cherchen.

Besides the objects included on the bodies, there were other grave goods specifically laid out beside the individual people. Both the Cherchen and the Subeshi Cemeteries have contained saddles, indicating that both societies rode horses and believed it to be significant enough to include in their burials (Image 15). Both cemeteries also had small amounts of food stored in small bags made of goat or sheep leather, usually containing millet and mutton, which was more frequently found in Subeshi than Cherchen.¹⁰⁰ The Cherchen and Subeshi people shared many key lifestyle

⁹⁸ Barber, 200.

⁹⁹ Wang, 107.

¹⁰⁰ Wang, 88 & 110-1.

factors, both concerned with horseback riding and raising sheep and/or goats as seen by their use of leather and mutton, and eating and storing grains like millet. The connections in their lifestyles and burial practices make the similarities in their textiles even more compelling by arguing their societies were constructed in a comparable manner.

The woolen textiles found in Subeshi also share some similar characteristics to the ones discovered in Cherchen. Red trim was frequently used in the Cherchen textiles, in the Cherchen Man's maroon robe and pants to as well as a brown overcoat located in a separate layer of his tomb. The decision to use red trim was continued on several females in Subeshi (M.6, Cemetery III), who wore wool shirts with red trim along the collar and sleeve. Another Subeshi woman was found with red trim on the cuff of her shirt as well as sewn along the seams of a mitten worn on her left hand (Image 13). The color was not limited to women, and a male in Subeshi was found with a decorative piece of rectangular leather attached to his chest with red trim around the outside and triangles and swirls painted in the front (Image 16).¹⁰¹ Some textile traditions, such as the Slavic cultures, used red around the openings of garments in the belief that the color had the power to ward off sickness and demons from passing through the clothing.¹⁰² While placing red trim on garments may have been a purely aesthetic choice, the use of the red trim on the mitten and the leather piece seems to imply a more spiritual or symbolic purpose on less utilitarian items. By imbuing the color with spiritual power, not only is the color but also any garment using the color, elevated to a higher status in addition to the person wearing the garment.

¹⁰¹ Wang, 108.

¹⁰² Elizabeth Barber, *Women's Work: The First 20,000 Years: Women, Cloth and Society in Early Times*. (New York: Norton, 1994) 94.

The color red was found again in the red and blue cords tied around the wrists of the mummies in Cherchen, another tradition that was continued into the burial practices at Subeshi. All of the bodies in Tombs A and A-2 had a red and blue cord, braided in various methods, tied around their wrists. While not all of the bodies in Subeshi were found with the red and blue cords, some of the women had a red and blue cord tied around their waists to hold up their wide, striped skirts (Image 13). Furthermore, the long skirt with wide colorful stripes is similar to skirts found in Cherchen, which combined a series of banded textiles in red and yellow stripes to create large skirts. Although the Subeshi traditions are not exactly the same as what was seen in Cherchen, it would seem that the Subeshi people had adapted the practice from the Cherchen tradition and designated it towards a specific type of individual.

The people in Subeshi also seemed to share the Cherchen people's passion for hats. While a variety of ten different hats were included in the burial of Tomb A, almost all of the burials in Subeshi included headwear of some kind. Men typically wore a helmet-like covering made out of felt, not dissimilar to the white, helmet-shaped hat mentioned above from Cherchen.¹⁰³ Some of the women's hats from Subeshi were particularly impressive, several being found with what closely resembles the Western image of a witch hat (Image 14). The "witch" hats had a wide rim that wrapped around the wearer's face, which was then topped by a tall cone that narrowed as it extended into the air. The tall peaks of the hats were kept upright by being stuffed with reeds or a stick, and one woman was even found with two points coming out of her hat.¹⁰⁴ Most of the hats were made out of undyed black wool, although one woman was found with a hard

¹⁰³ Wang, 112.

¹⁰⁴ Barber (1995), 199.

leather hat in a similar shape.¹⁰⁵ The shape of the witch hats are similar to one of the hats in Cherchen (Image 10), which also had a tall point and a rim that wrapped around the wearer's face and possibly served as inspiration for what would later become the Subeshi witch hats.

While the men's hats may have been more conducive to utilitarian functions, such as warmth or protection from the elements, the tall "witch" hats could have hardly been functional in agricultural or domestic work. Large pieces of headgear have often been used to show respect or social status within societies, and hats must have been an important part of both Cherchen and Subeshi culture in order for them to be included prominently in so many tombs. It would appear that whatever compelled these women to wear these hats was not labor-intensive, since no practical or physical work could have been accomplished while wearing such a garment. Instead the need for these hats must have been based upon a need specific to the Subeshi society and only designated to certain women, who were elevated above other members of their community. While hats were perhaps beginning to designate some kind of elevated status within the Cherchen society, the Subeshi "witch" hats must have been used to delineate a position within their society that was elevated enough that they did not have to perform manual labor.

VI. LIFE IN THE TARIM BASIN:

From the combination of textiles and grave goods located in the Cherchen and Subeshi Cemeteries, the important aspects of their daily lives become increasingly evident. First and foremost, the most frequently found items are products made from sheep. Not only was wool used in all of the garments found in Cherchen and Subeshi, but

¹⁰⁵ Wang, 106.

it was used to make other kinds of textiles, such as the yarn used around reeds, spindles, and along the seams of garments. Colored tufts of wool were inserted in nostrils of the Old Woman in Tomb B as well as the baby in Tomb A-2. Smaller pieces of red wool were also passed through the Cherchen Man and Cherchen Woman's ears and all of the bodies in Tomb A had maroon wool straps tied around their jaws. In addition to using wool for textiles, sheep were an important source of food in both Cherchen and Subeshi, and pieces of mutton in leather bags were placed by several of the bodies.¹⁰⁶ Body parts of sheep were found buried near tombs, such as the sheep head located in the reed layer of Tomb A.¹⁰⁷ The placement of just the severed sheep head would appear to indicate some kind of value associated with the sheep other than its utilitarian functions of providing wool and meat. In order to produce such a large number of sheep-related products, the Subeshi and Cherchen people must have been responsible for substantial herds.

Subeshi and Cherchen appeared to have access to other kinds of livestock, as seen from the horse head and foreleg buried 1.75 meters southwest from Tomb A at Cherchen.¹⁰⁸ Saddles were also included in Tomb A above the main chamber as well as in tombs in Subeshi, indicating that riding horses was an activity significant enough to include into the afterlife. The Cherchen and Subeshi people also appear to have cows, due to the number of cow horn cups found in almost every burial. In Cherchen, Tombs A, A-2 and B all contained cups made from the horns of cows.¹⁰⁹ From the combination of sheep, horses, and cows, the Cherchen and Subeshi communities must have been

¹⁰⁶ Wang, 88.

¹⁰⁷ Kamberi, 5.

¹⁰⁸ Kamberi, 5.

¹⁰⁹ Kamberi 6 & Dexiu 170.

responsible for a large number of livestock, requiring sizeable amounts of land and water for grazing in addition to constant care and handling provided by herders.

During the Late Bronze Age and Early Iron Age when the Charchen people would have been present, many nomadic communities would rotate their grazing pastures based on the seasons. Herding nomads in the steppe and desert regions of ancient Central Asia developed at the same time as agricultural communities, when early farmers would move their herds to less fertile regions in order to make room for crops.¹¹⁰ During the summer months, shepherds would move their flocks up into the mountains and then return to lower elevations during winter, which were more sheltered from the elements.¹¹¹ The Charchen Cemetery is located at the base of the Altun Mountains and would have been a prime location for seasonal rotation grazing, allowing for a greater range of territory to sustain large herds of livestock.

If the Charchen people did follow a nomadic lifestyle, this would place an even greater value upon their textile goods. The perpetual change of location prevents a long-term accumulation of material items, and textiles were one of the few goods that could be easily transported from place to place.¹¹² The change of camps from one location to another entails a considerable amount of additional amount of work. The task of transitioning and reestablishing the main camp would have most likely been the duty of the women of the society, who were also the main producers of textiles.¹¹³ Female chores had to be compatible with childcare, which typically meant that their duties were

¹¹⁰ Elise Boulding, *The Underside of History*. (Newbury: Sage Publications, 1992) 248.

¹¹¹ Michael Frachetti, *Pastoral Landscapes and Social Interaction in Bronze Age Eurasia*. (Los Angeles: University of California Press, 2008) 152.

¹¹² Boulding, 274.

¹¹³ Boulding, 251.

concentrated in the domestic area, and they did not participate as frequently in activities like herding that required more movement.¹¹⁴ Weaving, spinning, and carding wool was an apt occupation for the domestic environment since it could be easily resumed or halted while taking care of children in the main camp area.

While textile production would have occupied much of women's time, women had several other duties vital to the survival of the group. In addition to childcare, women were also responsible for most of the food preparation for the society. The majority of a woman's day could be easily be consumed with the butchering, preparing and cooking of the meals for the community. The women would have also been responsible for any livestock that remained at the camp and most likely would have participated in the training of the horses used by men in herding.¹¹⁵ All time spent on textiles would have taken away from other vital tasks for the community, making the decision to use the time-consuming methods an even more valuable choice. Devoting significant amounts of time to textile production would suggest that the people of the Cherchen community saw the making of garments as an equally important activity for their society as food and reproduction. The garments that clearly demonstrated more complicated, and therefore more time-consuming, techniques would have been an instant indicator of a valuable item.

The society of Subeshi, in contrast to Cherchen, was more permanently fixed, as evidenced by the houses found at the excavation site.¹¹⁶ The word "Subeshi" means origin of water and there is still an oasis located near the cemetery. By having access to a reliable source of water, the Subeshi people probably had yearlong grazing areas

¹¹⁴ Boulding, 251.

¹¹⁵ Boulding, 274.

¹¹⁶ Wang, 103.

available to them and did not have to circulate to different locations throughout the year. Nevertheless, textiles still remained a critical aspect of their society and remaining in one location would have allowed them to accumulate more material goods than the nomads of Cherchen.

The more sedentary Subeshi lifestyle could be responsible for some of the adaptations made to the textile culture from the traditions found in Cherchen. Where the Cherchen textiles were precious because they were often few, the Subeshi people were able to possess larger numbers of textiles and so that no longer became as clear of indication of status. Instead the Subeshi people adapted their textiles to showier purposes in order to further demonstrate their status. One example of this can be seen in the change in styles of hats from Cherchen to Subeshi. In Cherchen, the hats in Tomb A are valuable because there are so many in an environment where possessing large quantities of garments is unusual. Yet in Subeshi, the women developed their “witch” hats, which were ostentatiously unpractical and clearly meant to signify something about the wearer’s status.

VII. CONCLUSION:

The culture of the Cherchen people is woven throughout their textiles in order to designate elevated individuals, specifically seen in their color choices, weaving patterns and construction methods. The combination of these elements developed consistent patterns that indicated which garments were most valuable and what kind of individual was able to possess such textiles. The makers of these garments deliberately chose the more complicated, more expensive and more time-consuming options that immediately displayed the value of the garment to anyone who saw it. The appearance of the textiles

must have been important enough to those who owned them that the visual recognition of the precious garment warranted the additional expense. The textiles worn by the Cherchen people make a statement about the person's identity within society, which would extend even beyond death.

The funerary practices used in Cherchen make it very clear that the Cherchen people were not only familiar with the deterioration of the body after death, but they intentionally took measures to slow the decomposition process in addition to maintaining the form of the bodies in a very particular way. As seen throughout the Cherchen and Subeshi Cemeteries, the majority of the bodies were laid out in the same position, lying on their backs with their knees bent and their hands placed over their stomachs. In Tomb A, the people burying the bodies maintained a consistent body position by propping up the figure with small pieces of wood and used the red and blue cords to keep the right hand above the left. The Cherchen people were also aware of the swelling of the tongue after death and tied maroon straps around the head to keep the jaw in place. They also coated the bodies with an animal protein in order to preserve the skin. All of these actions indicate that the members of the Cherchen society were very concerned with preserving the bodies in a recognizable pattern, and their choice of textiles further is an integral part of their funerary traditions.

Color was consistently used to group people together. Just as sports fans wear specific colors to show allegiance to one team over another, so did the people in Tomb A use maroon to indicate they were associated with one another. Beyond just using a small amount of burgundy in decoration or detail, these bodies were completely bedecked in the same shade of maroon. Not only does the color link them together, but because that

particular shade of burgundy required more dye than most other colors, it indicates that they were all of a higher status since they could afford the more expensive color.

Furthermore, the consistent pairing of blue with red, as seen in the cords wrapped around their wrists, exhibits another pattern that would be easily recognized just from observing the figures. Because the cords were used not only to maintain a consistent position of the right hand above the left but also paired blue with red, the cords demonstrate that all of the people found with this textile were of the same cultural tradition. The combination of blue with red was expanded into other textiles, such as the infant's hat in Tomb A-2, the blue and red shawl in Tomb A, and the banded textiles in Tomb C. By creating a precedent of associating the two colors together, the combination of red and blue becomes another visual indicator of Cherchen group.

Yet within those groups created by color, the Cherchen people used construction methods and weaving practices to create levels of status between individuals within the group. This type of distinction can be seen when comparing the Cherchen Man's robe to the Cherchen Woman's dress. The Cherchen Woman's dress consistently uses more complex methods and higher quality materials. The fabric of her dress has a higher gloss and softer feel because of the mohair or crude silk incorporated into the woolen thread, which was then woven in the long-hop twill to create a denser, more complex fabric. Not only does the combination of these two factors create higher quality fabric, but the dress also uses more fabric than the Cherchen Man's robe. The Cherchen Woman's robe would have been able to function just as well if it were made out of undyed wool in a plain weave and cut off at the knees, but the dressmakers decided to add a large flowing skirt to the bottom of the garment. By incorporating the additional fabric, the dress is more

valuable and indicates a higher status owner. Such indicators between high and low status can be found on garments that are not worn, such as the brown overcoat. The coat also uses the long-hop twill and incorporates red decoration along the cuffs and the bottom of the coat, once again making the choice to include more complicated techniques that served no practical function. Whoever wore the coat would have been able to demonstrate his or her status by being able to possess the more valuable textile.

Other garments found in Cherchen were unquestionably luxury items and were designed so that they could be immediately observed as such. Any large amount of blue dye was an immediate indicator of a valuable garment. The use of indigo as a high quality material was particularly evident in the case of the elaborate chemise from Tomb D, which used blue throughout the main body of the textile. The chemise also utilized advanced weaving techniques as seen in the tapestry weave found along the decorative borders as well as the complex construction in the creation of the collar. The decision to include such elements in no way increases the functional aspects of the garment but is solely based on making the most valuable aspects of the textile visible to anyone observing the wearer. The same could be said of the multitude of hats located in Tomb A or the massive “witch” hats found in Subeshi. Wearing a large, decorative hat was an easily observable way to demonstrate a higher status. Particularly in the case of the “witch” hats, these garments would have been impossible to wear in any kind of practical setting and yet the Subeshi people took great care to include these hats in their burials. Therefore, the hats were an inseparable part of the woman’s identity that must accompany her even beyond death.

The identity reflected in these garments may be related to the mummies' Caucasoid background. Especially in the Cherchen burials, some of the funerary traditions seem to be emphasizing their physical appearance, such as the placement of the blue or green stones over the eyes of the infants. Both blue and green are difficult colors to find in rocks and it is highly unlikely that they were chosen at random. Furthermore, almost all of the hair that had been woven into braids had some kind of red wool used either to tie off the ends or was woven into the hair itself, possibly alluding to the reddish tones of the hair color. The physical features of blue or green eyes and reddish hair would have distinguished these people from any Mongoloid contemporaries. In addition, almost all of the bodies in both the Cherchen and Subeshi Cemeteries had their heads oriented towards the west or northwest. In most funerary traditions, bodies are typically oriented towards some kind of spiritual center or place of long-standing importance. By orienting themselves towards the west or northwest, they may be indicating some kind of connection to an ancient Caucasus heritage.

The use of twill would also strongly suggest an Indo-European connection. Twill was not a type of Chinese weave and would not be used in China until the 1st millennium AD.¹¹⁷ The earliest examples of twill are originally believed to have come from the area between the Caucasus and Turkey between the 4th and 3rd millennium BCE.¹¹⁸ The twill weave became even more popular during the 2nd millennium BCE, as can be seen with the fragments of twill plaid found in the Halstatt salt mines in Austria. The salt in the mines, much like the high salinity in the soil of the Tarim Basin, prevented bacteria from deteriorating the cloth while preserving the colors. The earliest eastern examples of twill

¹¹⁷ Mallory and Mair, 218.

¹¹⁸ Mallory and Mair, 218.

plaid are actually found in the Tarim Basin at the site of Qizilchoqa, which is dated around the same time as Cherchen.¹¹⁹ The style of plaid found in Qizilchoqa is nearly identical to the plaids found in Halstatt, employing the same weight of cloth, color scheme, width and pattern of striping.¹²⁰ Such precise details would have been almost impossible to recreate by accident and it would appear that the people in the Tarim Basin must have had some relation to the weavers in the Caucasus region.

The use of red trim is another trait that has an Indo-European background. Bright red piping or decoration was often found on both Cherchen and Subeshi garments, along the collars, sleeves and seams as well as wrapped around other grave goods such as bunches of reeds and spindles. The tradition of putting red around the openings of the garment is once again an Indo-European tradition, still found in traditional Slavic cultures. They believed that the color of bright red, or blood red, represented life and had powerful abilities to ward off sickness and foul spirits. The color functions as a type of protection for the wearer, to keep them healthy and prolong their life. Red takes on a semiotic function: by wearing the color, the wearer demonstrates an understanding of the significance of the color and is familiar with its power.

Whether or not the Caucasoid people found in the Tarim Basin are directly related to the Indo-Europeans is not certain, but there are definite connections between the two groups. Both the twill weave and the use of red trim show evidence of Indo-European traditions that would not have otherwise been found in the region of the Tarim Basin or from the traditions of Mongoloid people. Particularly in the evidence of the tartan patterns, the weave pattern was too specific to have been reproduced by accident. Just as

¹¹⁹ Mallory and Mair, 218.

¹²⁰ Mallory and Mair, 218-219.

the Subeshi people chose to continue some traditions of Cherchen exactly and adapt others, so did the Caucasoid people of the Tarim Basin carry on the cultural elements of their older Indo-European ancestors.

Regardless of whether the people in Tarim Basin were Indo-European or not, both the people in Cherchen as well as Subeshi developed a sophisticated language of textiles that was evocative of their community. Their color choices, construction techniques and weaving methods were all tools they used to reflect the identity of the people who wore these garments. Time and time again, they deliberately chose to include the more complex and more time-consuming approaches in order to elevate a plain textile into an intricate garment. Through their clothing, the Cherchen people were able to capture a piece of themselves and carry it on past the limits of death.

Table 1

Name	Official Name	Location	Contents
Tomb A	Tomb 85QZM 2	Cherchen	-4 Bodies: One Man and three women in maroon robes and white boots -Ten Hats
Tomb A-2	Tomb 85QM 1	Cherchen	-Baby in a blue felt cap and maroon shawl and blue stones placed on his eyes.
Tomb B	Tomb 89QZM2	Cherchen	-Infant with Green Stones on the eyes and a mutilated young woman -One year old child -Older woman with tattooed hands
Tomb C	Unknown	Cherchen (disturbed by grave-robbers)	-Various banded textiles
Tomb D	Unknown	Cherchen (disturbed by grave-robbers)	-Turquoise Chemise -Three pieces of Tapestry -Sheep brocade -Wide banded skirt -Maroon shred with red piping -Light dark red fabric with bright red stripes. -Dark red dome hat
Tomb E	Unknown- excavated in 1991- 2 by Lu Enguo through the Xinjiang Institute of Archaeology.	Subeshi (Ransacked by grave-robbers after excavation)	Women with large conical black hats, striped skirt and mittened hand.



Image 1- Cherchen Man



Image 2-Cherchen Woman



Image 3-Cherchen Man's Hands



Image 4-Cherchen Woman's Hands



Image 5-Decomposed Woman 1



Image 6-Decomposed Woman 2



Image 7-Older Cherchen Woman's Hand Tomb B



Image 8-Cherchen Old Woman Tomb B



Image 9-Baby from Tomb A-2

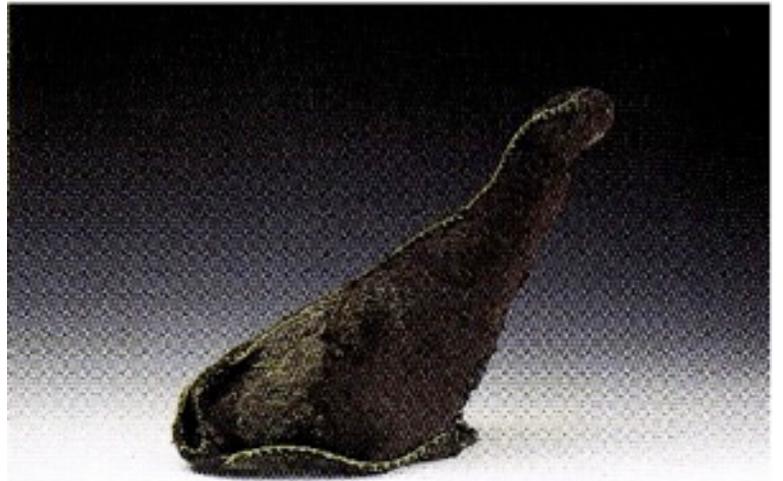


Image 10-Cherchen Hat



Image 11-Cherchen Banded Textile



Image 13-Subeshi Woman



Image 12-Cherchen Chemise



Image 14-Subeshi Woman with Hat



Image 15-Subeshi Saddle



**Image 16-Subeshi Man with
Leather Talisman**

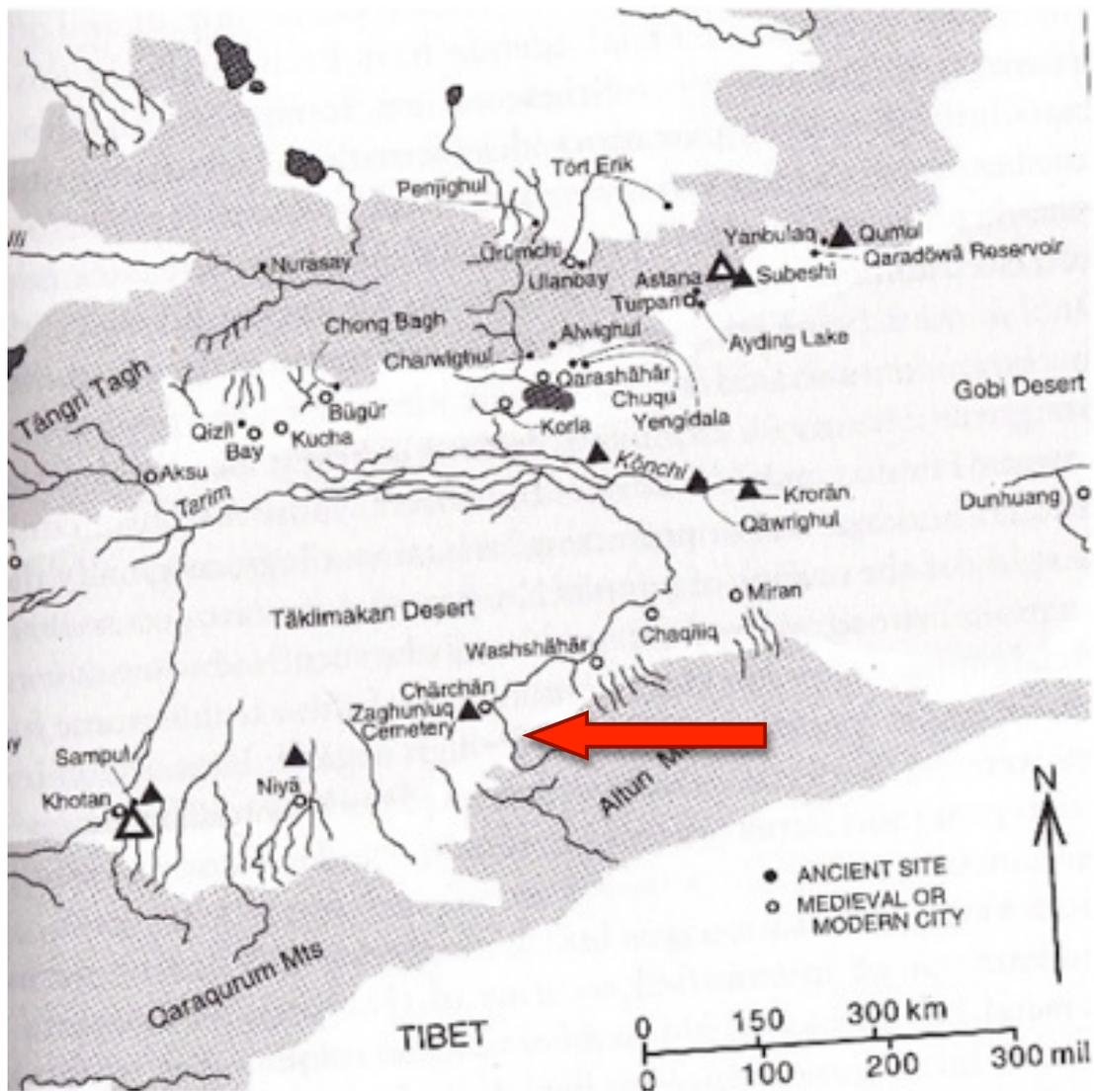


Illustration I

TOMB A
85 QZM2

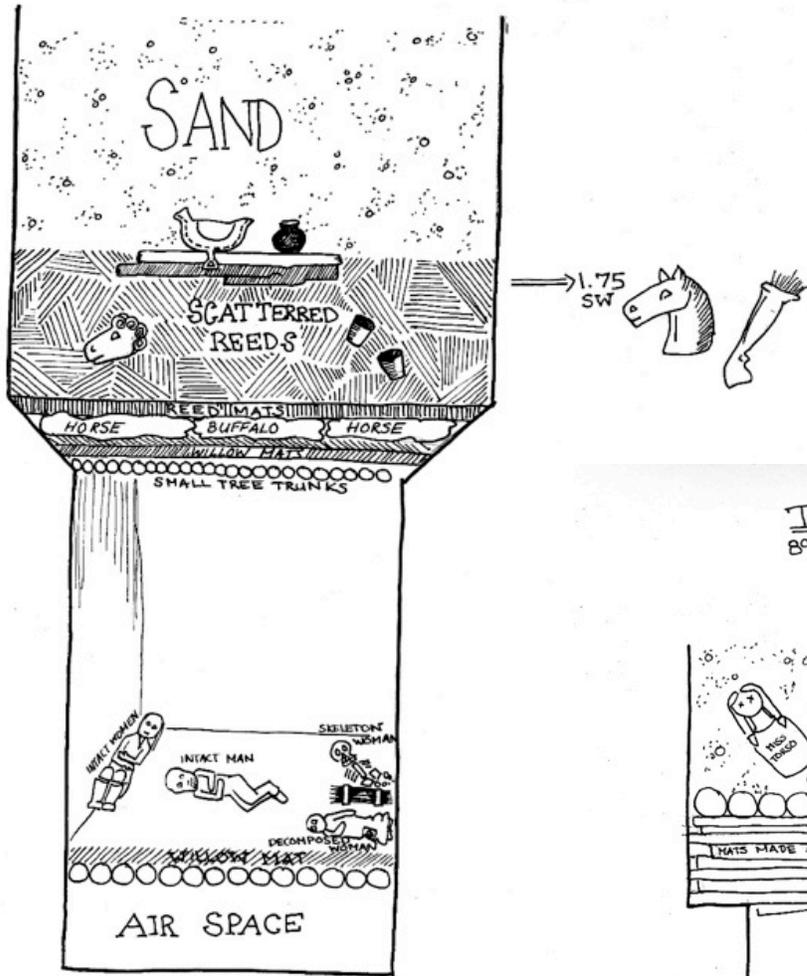


Illustration II

TOMB B
89 QZM 2

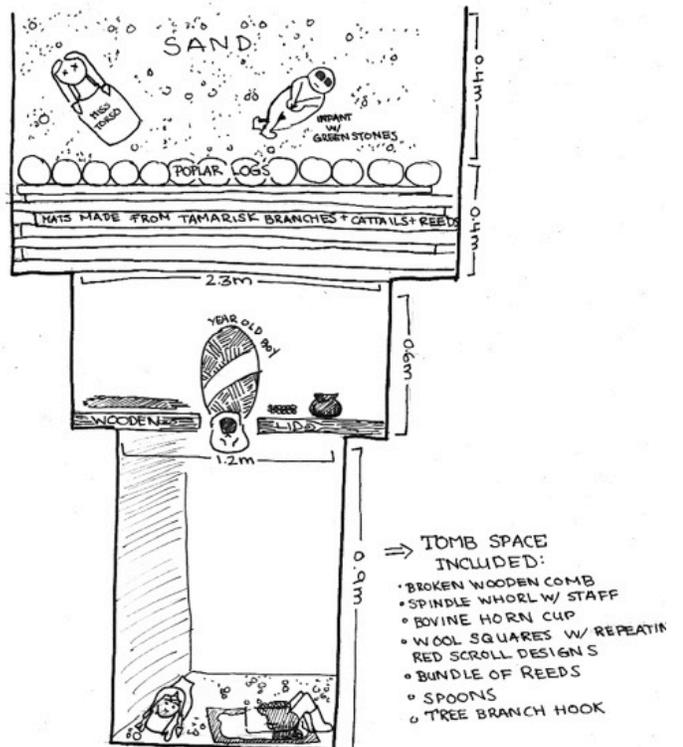


Illustration III

Weaving Patterns

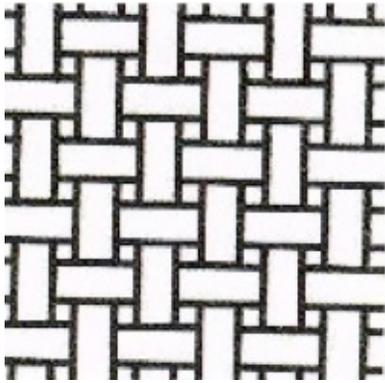


Illustration IV-Tabby or Plain Weave

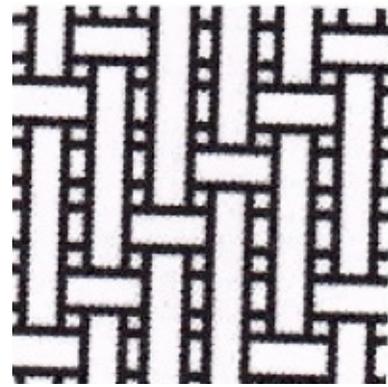


Illustration V-Twill Weave

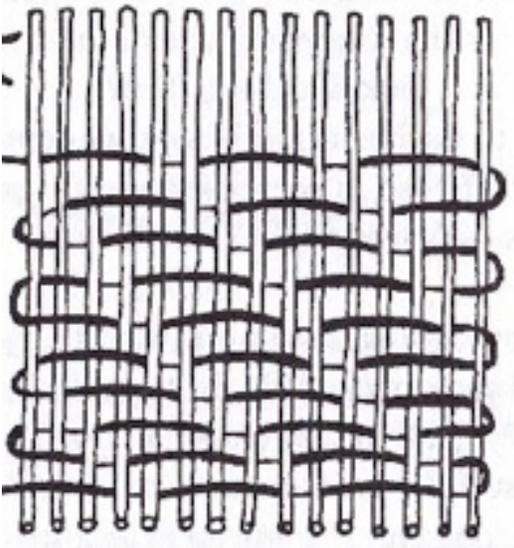


Illustration VI-Long-hop Twill

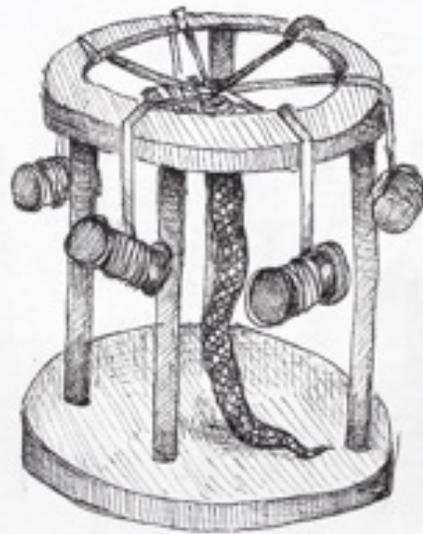


Illustration VII-Kumihimo Method

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