

# FELTS OF CENTRAL ASIA

## Mosaic Technique

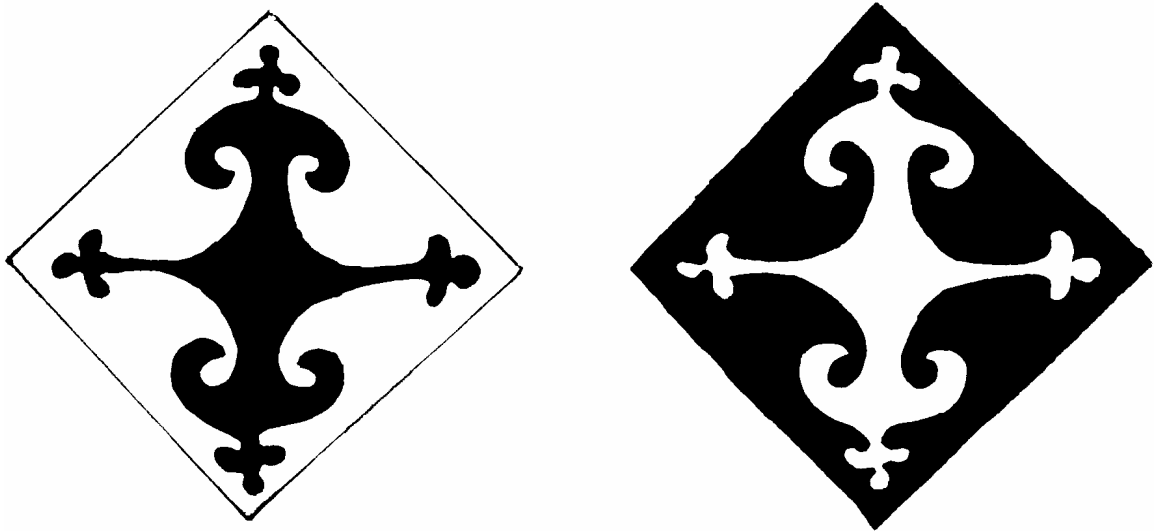
PATRICIA SPARK © 1991

It is thought that felting began in Central Asia. There are pieces of felt from this area in existence today which are approximately 3,000 years old. There are several different approaches to making the motifs on the felts. If the design is put in during the process of making the felt with bits of colored fleece, yarn or partially felted fleece, the method is called "inlaid" felt. The motifs can be embroidered, appliquéd, or quilted after the piece of felt is made. However, a special piecing technique is used to make the felt called "mosaic" felt. (Called Shirdak or Syrmak in Kirgiz or Kazakh, respectively.)

### To Produce a Mosaic Felt:

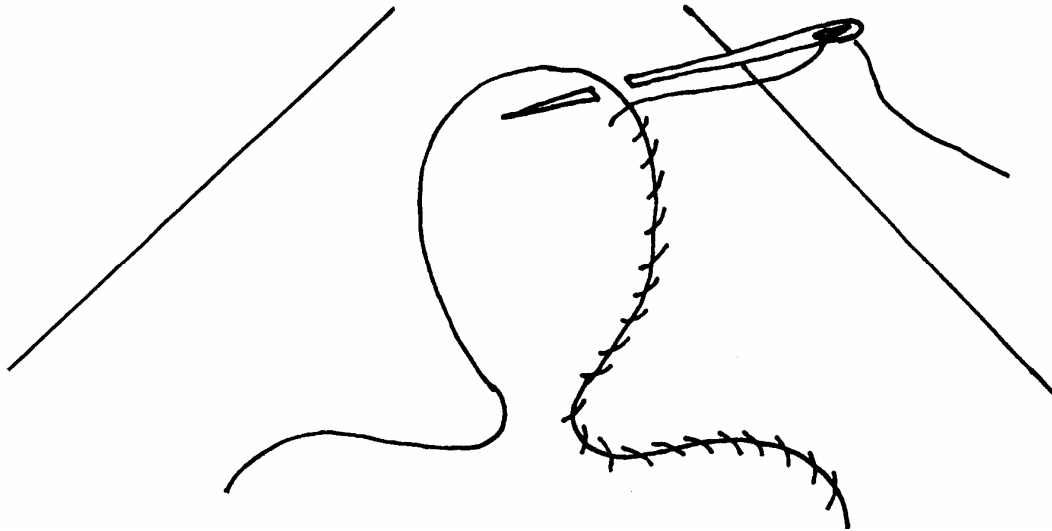
1. Choose a negative/positive type design, where the foreground and background can fit together like a zig-saw puzzle.
2. Make two or more sheets of fulled felt of contrasting colors.
3. Lay two contrasting sheets of felt on top of each other. Cut the same motif out of both sheets. The motif cut from one of the colored sheets is removed and replaced with the motif from the second sheet. The piece which is removed from the first sheet is then placed into the second sheet. This results in the type of negative/positive treatment, with the motifs and backgrounds interchanging. (fig. A)

fig. A



4. Fit the pieces together like a jig-saw puzzle, and then sew them together with an overcast stitch. (fig. B)

fig. B



5. Cover the overcast, butt seam with two yarns which are plied in opposite directions, creating the look of a "v" cord. (fig. C) These yarns are couched over the seam. (fig. D,E)

fig. C

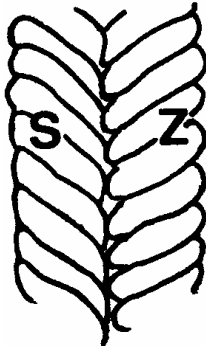


fig. D

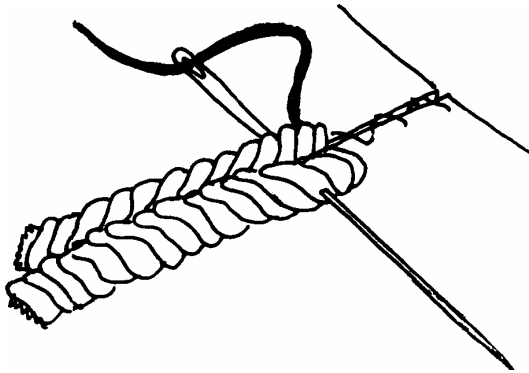
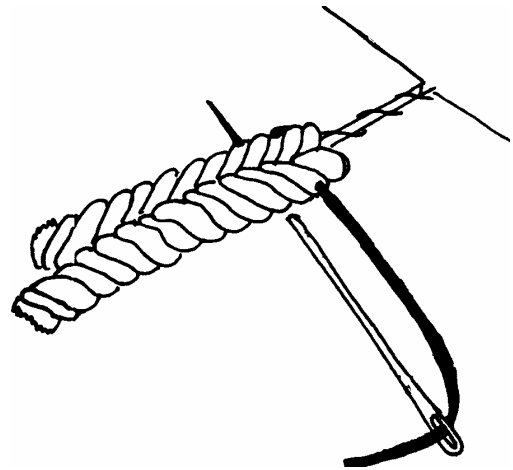
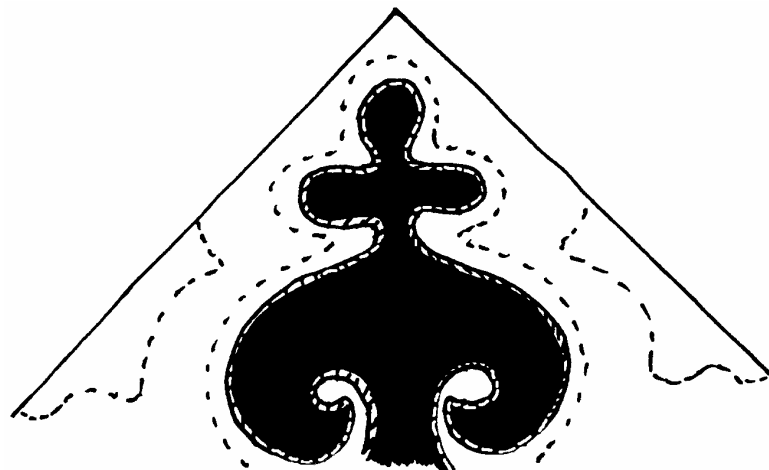


fig. E



6. After the pieces are sewn together and the seam is covered, quilt the cloth to another piece of felt. The quilting line usually follows the motifs in an outline manner. (fig. F)

Fig. F



7. The rug is edged with wool rope or cord.

Spark © 1991