

Anglo-Turkish Society / Royal Anthropological Institute lecture, 14 November 2019, 6.00 pm

Speaker: Dr Peter Andrews

Venue: Royal Anthropological Institute, 50 Fitzroy St, Fitzrovia, London W1T 5BT

Title: 'A Migration of Tents; Evolution and diffusion of nomadic tent types across Central Asia'

The arrival of nomadic Turks in Anatolia was dependent in part on the dwelling they developed, which allowed them to cross the whole length of Central Asia from their heartland in the Altay. How this dwelling, the felt tent, developed and was disseminated, is therefore significant. The earlier evidence for its appearance has to be assembled carefully from a few reliable texts, and the rather rare pictorial evidence, from the Sogdian period onwards, that has survived, but this can be augmented by inference backwards from present survivals, now far apart but once united by a common tradition. The present divergence in tent forms among Turkic and Mongolian nomads, and in their material culture generally, result from distinct cultural impulses that arose separately, and continued, to combine here and there, but often to retain their identity. The differences between Türkmen, Noğay, Qazaq, Qaraqalpaq, Özbek, and Qırğız tent forms, with their varying decorative schemes, on the one hand, and the Mongolian forms on the other, can then be related to the historical interaction, or lack of it, between these peoples. An idea of the original Türkmen form can be inferred from comparison of the tents in Anatolia, Azerbaijan and Qarabağ, and Khurasan.

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Nogay trellis tents, cart tents and bow-top vans in the Volga Steppe, late 18th century, by Geissler



Peter Andrews with his Turkish wife Mügül

Peter Andrews, after reading architecture at Cambridge, completed his studies with a thesis on low cost housing in Ahmedabad at the Regent St. Polytechnic School of Architecture, and was registered as an architect in 1966, working for various large firms in London. He taught architecture at the Oxford Polytechnic 1970-80. He first studied architecture in India in 1960.

He began research on nomadic architecture in 1967, as a Research Fellow at the Architectural Association 1968-70. He received awards for fieldwork: SSRC '67, RIBA '67-68, British Inst. of Persian Studies '69, 73, 78, 85, Central Research Fund, London, '71-74, British Academy '80, British Council Specialist '87. Encouraged by A.Upham Pope, and Sir Mortimer Wheeler, he entered SOAS, University of London as a postgraduate in 1970, learning Persian, and Ottoman, and taking his Ph.D. in 1980 with a thesis on the history of tents in the Middle East and Central Asia.

He then wrote a chapter for Sir Basil Gray on Islamic architecture in India. In 1981 he was appointed to a research position in ethnology at the University of Cologne where he also lectured 1984-2005. His further research was funded by the German Research Society (DFG) for the Universities of Tübingen ('81-86, 89-90); Heidelberg, S.Asian Seminar ('87-89), Bonn, Central Asian Seminar ('92-97); Bamberg, Turkology, (1999-2001). He was appointed Trust Professor of Islamic Art and Archaeology at Bamberg 1990-91. Since returning from Germany in 2006 he has been an Honorary Research Fellow at the University of Bristol (Anthropology), working on the Alevi community in Turkey. From 1966 he has conducted extensive fieldwork, assisted by his Turkish wife Mügül, in Morocco, Turkey, Iran, Qatar, Pakistan, Mongolia and Qirgizstan.

He has published *Ethnic Groups in the Republic of Turkey*, Wiesbaden 1989 for the Tübingen Atlas of the Middle East (TAVO Series B, No.60)(the first book on this delicate subject) with a second volume in 2002 (60b); *Nomad Tent types in the Middle East*, 2 vols. Wiesbaden '97 (TAVO B 74/1/1-2); *Felt Tents and Pavilions: the Nomadic Tradition and its Interaction with Princely Tentage*, 2 vols., London 1999 (Kölner Ethnologische Mitteilungen, Sonderband), funded by the Getty Grant Program; 3 ethnological maps incl. *Gulf States: Migrant Workers from Abroad*, for TAVO; further, (with Mügül Andrews) *Türkmen Needlework*, London 1976 (Central Asian Research Centre); (with S. Azadi) *Mafrash, Woven Transport Packs as an Art Form among the Shahsevan and other nomads of Persia*, Berlin and Munich, 1985; (with K. Jettmar and a contribution by G. Buddruss) *Sazin, a Fortified Village in Indus-Kohistan*, (Heidelberger Akademie der Wissenschaften, Antiquities of Northern Pakistan, Reports & Studies, vol. 4), Mainz 2000; (with drawings by Mügül Andrews, *Tentage at the Calico Museum and its Patterns*, Ahmedabad 2015. He has also published more than 60 academic articles, most recently in *Peacock in the Desert*, Museum of Fiune Arts, Houston 2018, and made seven museum collections including *The Turcoman of Iran*, 1971-2, for which he wrote the catalogue. He was a founder member of the Carpet Circle at SOAS, and served on the International Academic Committee for the International Conference on Oriental Carpets from 1982. He continues writing on tents in India, Central Asia and the Middle East.



Working on a tent at the Victoria and Albert Museum, 2015

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