



## Chitgari (ornament printing on textile)

Ornament printing on textiles is the process of printing patterns on textiles, usually of linen, cotton or silk, by means of incised wooden blocks. The widespread material used for wood-block printing is called «chit» a pure cotton fabric thus in Tajik the craft of ornament printing is widely known as «chitgari» (production of *chit*). In the past this form was widespread but today it is practiced in Istaravshan city in the workshop of master Saidov Miramin.

Ornament printing process starts with choosing a pure cotton fabric, which is boiled for one or one and a half hours in order to make it thoroughly clean from any sorts of extra elements that it has absorbed during the weaving process. In addition after the boiling process the fabric becomes extra soft attaining high absorbance quality. After boiling it is soaked in fresh clean cold water and left to dry. In separate pot a mixture from pistachio tree or *mozu* (seed of a tree) is prepared. Afterwards the fabric is soaked in





the 800 gram *mozu* mixture and dried. A dried fabric than is hammered by *kudung* (wooden hammer) and woodblocks with pattern chosen is laid over it.

First a black color patterns is laid and left to dry, afterward red and than yellow color prints are laid. After patterns are printed and dried the fabric is washed in clean water and dried. The final process is when red ochre is sprinkled all over it and dipped into boiling water and kept for some time. Once the red ochre is absorbed into the spaces without pattern the fabric is dried. The usual and common patterns used are vegetal, geometric and imaginative designs.

Only natural organic pigments are used in woodblock print fabric making, which are extracted from the mixture of different vegetable and fruit peels and black pigment from iron. During the process all pigments used are kept separately in set bowls.





