deten neuen Methoden gelingt es in der ganz überwiegenden Anzahl der gewählten Beispiele, neues Licht auf die komplexen Zusammenhänge von Gegenständen, Personen und Bedeutungen zu werfen.

Hans Peter Hahn
Institut für Völkerkunde, Universität Bayreuth


Material from the historical collections of the Kunstkammer (Peter the Great Museum of Anthropology and Ethnography - MAE) at St Petersburg was exhibited for the first time in the West at Dresden in 1994. With 1500 exhibits, this was the largest exhibition from the Kunstkammer ever to have been shown abroad. This small volume, which is not a catalogue, both commemorates the occasion and provides the opportunity for the publication of written and visual material which has, equally, not been available before. The plates contain some sixty photographs from the years 1928-9, and the drawings set in the text are by the expedition artist. It is primarily a monument to the research conducted in Turkmenistan by E.G. Gafferberg, D.D. Bukinich, G.G. Gulbin, G.K. Schulz, and A.P. Bulgakov in the Soviet Central Asian Expedition of 1926-9 under the direction of the Iranist Prof. I.I. Zarubin, and under the aegis of the great V.V. Barthold. It was Zarubin whose attention was drawn to the Iranian-speaking nomads from Afghanistan, Baloch, Hazara-ye Qal’a-ye Nou, and Gamsehi, who had recently fled to Turkmenistan. The purpose of the research was, quite simply, to record the everyday life of these nomads in full detail: hence the title of the book. The team also collected the material exhibited.

The text begins with a short introduction on the history of Central Asian research at St Petersburg, and a longer section on the organisation and achievements of the expedition: the latter is frank, mentioning the extraordinary tactlessness of its members when they first encountered the nomads, and how they learned to mend their ways to the point where they were accepted. It gives details of the activities of individual members, and of what they brought back after two years’ work. The near-destitute nomads were persuaded to part with their possessions, besides provisioning the visitors, in return for 270 pieces of Bokharian silk which had been presented to Nicholas II by the Amir of Bokhara – material which the museum would doubtless be happy to have retained today! This is followed by biographical details of the members, so far as they can be reconstructed – for Schulz and Bulgakov none survive. When 115 members of the Academy of Sciences were arrested as “enemies of the New Order” from 1930 onwards, Gulbin and his colleagues were among those to be eliminated. Bukinich seems to have been lucky enough to be in Mongolia at the time of this dismal persecution, and only Gafferberg survived the war years until 1971, though her work was censored. Very fortunately, the detailed notebooks of these scholars have survived at the MAE, and it is these, and their thousand photographs, which are drawn on in the present publication.

Part 2 gives a synopsis of the ethnea concerned, first as regards their classification as Iranian nomads, and second for the three groups concerned individually: here more modern sources are exploited to provide a useful and well-informed general background. Rzehak’s advantage,
as someone to whom both Western and Russian sources are familiar, is in evidence. The other ethna studied by the expedition, Zuri, Barbari, Taimani, Taimuri and Pašton, are not represented here. Part 3 describes the somewhat confused circumstances which explain their presence in the USSR, ranging from the effects of the American Civil War on the cotton trade, to the flooding of the Helmand in 1913-14 and the resettlement of Pašton tribes. The results were that poverty, a shortage of pasture and the depredations of tax collectors together made life in northwest Afghanistan intolerable, while Merv became attractive as a centre for cotton production needing labour. Further confusion following the civil war in Turkmenistan led to some movement back to Afghanistan, but favourable conditions created by the new administration, coupled with the opportunity for occasional smuggling, led to a return from 1926 onwards. In the 1930s the fate of the nomads was almost as dismal as that of the ethnologists. The Soviet state entirely failed to realise that the tribesmen did not subscribe to their idea of class struggle, and antagonised charismatic leaders to the point where they and their followers left once more; changes in state policy towards ethnic plurality led first to the publication of a Baloc alphabet, and then to the execution of its author five years later. Between 1937 and 1940 nearly half the Baloc and almost all the Hazara in Turkmenistan emigrated. Now some 25,000 Baloc remain in the east of the country, including large enclaves of Ġamsedī and Barbari. Much of the detail given here is drawn from the MAE archives, and newly available. It is part 4, however, which offers some twenty pages of information digested from the notebooks, and illustrated by some of the original sketches, under the headings of animal husbandry, domestic crafts, dwellings, camps and leaders, marriage relationships, the household and distribution of labour, costume, cosmetics and grooming, beliefs and amulettes, calendar, and amusements. Hitherto only a little of this material has been published in relatively short articles. Only Zarubin was, it seems, able to publish some of his linguistic findings as a book, on Baloc tales: Gafferberg's book on the Baloc of Turkmenistan (1969) was to be based on her own later field work of 1958-61. The existing publications are not overlooked here, but painstakingly referred to by footnotes throughout, as are the archival sources: both are credited to their individual authors. The result is a short, but highly informative and readable account which can only leave one wishing for more: the material is plainly a treasure which should be published in its entirety as soon as possible. Where a particular theme has been covered by a published article, this is not repeated, but there is supplementary material here: thus to Gafferberg's article on Ġamsedī tents we have a detail on the rôle of the tent as the bridegroom's contribution to his wedding, as against the bride's dowry, or a description of a Ġamsedī camp. The material is always to the point, with no superfluous verbiage, and wherever possible related to specific examples. In view of the absence, in Western sources, of any comparable material on the Ġamsedī and Hazara, even this foretaste is most valuable to the ethnologist. It is, however, so arranged as to convey an idea of nomadic life to the general public too. The present editors are to be congratulated on their work in collating these sources in such an accessible form. Of the photographs, ranging from the pitching of tents to the tying of turbans, and from prayer to dances, the Baloc have the lion's share and the Ġamsedī very few. They are printed in sepia, which may be intended to conceal their condition as plates, but somewhat obscures the detail too. A small note of criticism applies to the drawings: they are untitled, so one is left unaware of the exact subject or the artist. Another applies to the publisher: the spine is not firm enough, and my copy at least is defoliating.

Peter A. Andrews
Institut für Völkerkunde, Universität zu Köln