



Agra

New production from India using traditional designs. An unexpected revival.

Indian rugs produced during the second half of the 19th century are not a natural sequel to the Moghuls. There is not any direct link with village craftsmanship. The Moghul rugs, made in the court manufactories, already disappeared at the end of the 18th century.

The villagers were mostly making cotton flat weaves (dhurries). Very few knotted rugs were to be found on the marketplaces.

Only about a hundred years later, commercial motivations revived a production of hand knotted rugs. From 1860 on, the British rulers started to install looms in several jails (Agra, Amritsar, Poona, etc.) and prisoners were trained to become skilful weavers. Indian rugs were shown at international exhibitions in London and Chicago (1895). Around 1900 the demand grew stronger, the production increased and inevitably quality became poorer. But there is a revival as in most places due to strong competition.