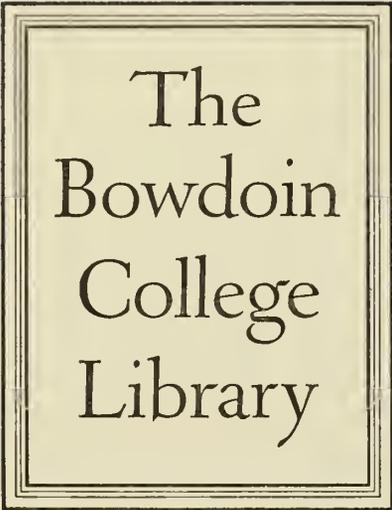




*Treasures
from Near
Eastern
Looms*



The
Bowdoin
College
Library

*Treasures from
Near Eastern Looms*

ERNEST H. ROBERTS

BRUNSWICK, MAINE

1981

Bowdoin College Museum of Art
Brunswick, Maine
September 11, 1981 to November 22, 1981

The Textile Museum
Washington, District of Columbia
December 11, 1981 to February 6, 1982

Cover: *Carpet Fragment*, Caucasian, Dagistan area, ca. 1850

Photographs by Robert H. Stillwell
Design by Michael W. Mahan
Printed by J.S. McCarthy Co., Inc., Augusta, Maine

Copyright © 1981 by Ernest H. Roberts
Library of Congress Catalog Card Number: 81-68474
ISBN: 0-916606-02-3

Portions of this catalogue are reprinted in altered form from other publications. We are indebted to the following institutions for permission to use their material: to the Allen Memorial Art Museum, Oberlin, Ohio, for the chapter introductions and descriptions of plates 12, 19, 24, 28, 63, and 65, which appeared in "Catalogue of Islamic Carpets," *Allen Art Museum Bulletin* 3 (1978-1979) by Ernest H. Roberts; to The Textile Museum, Washington, D.C., for glossary entries and drawings from "Definitions and Explanations," a section of *Early Caucasian Rugs* by Charles Grant Ellis, published by that museum in 1975, and for the loan of the map which appears on page 61 of this book; to the Joslyn Art Museum, Omaha, Nebraska, for descriptions of plates 28, 35, 44, 57, and 67 from *A Rich Inheritance: Oriental Rugs of 19th and Early 20th Centuries*, published by that museum in 1974; and to the Near Eastern Art Research Center, Inc., for the description of plate 68 from *Islamic Carpets* by Joseph V. McMullan, published by the center in 1965.



FOREWORD

The Bowdoin College Museum of Art is extremely pleased to present *Treasures from Near Eastern Looms*, a selection of oriental carpets from the Roberts Collection. The exhibition and catalogue are the culmination of

many shows and related publications in which some carpets from the collection were initially seen or described. The catalogue, largely a compilation of earlier writings by Ernest H. Roberts with new introductory essays, was funded by donations from Lee Howard Beshar, the Near Eastern Art Research Center, the All Service Corporation, and a group of private donors and businesses; I am most grateful for their generosity. The publication, designed by Michael W. Mahan and including photographs by Robert H. Stillwell, serves as a visual record of this first show completely devoted to the rarely-seen and unusually beautiful Roberts Collection.

Planning and realization of the catalogue and exhibition stretched over four years, and many people donated time and expertise to the project. The most essential role was played by Ernest H. Roberts, who formed the collection and is responsible for the text of the catalogue. I am deeply appreciative of his enthusiastic support, commitment of time, and enduring patience. Marcia Roberts, who collaborated with Mr. Roberts in the acquisition of the collection, has been of invaluable assistance. Louise W. Mackie, associate curator in charge, Textile Depart-

ment, Royal Ontario Museum, wrote the historical introduction. Her contribution is gratefully recognized, as is that of Ralph S. Yohe and W. Russell Pickering, who composed the essay on Ernest H. Roberts as a collector. The cooperation of Chloe H. Young, acting director of the Allen Memorial Art Museum at Oberlin College, in the loan from that institution of six rugs formerly in the Roberts Collection, is much appreciated. And I wish to express my particular gratitude to members of the staffs of the Bowdoin College Editor's Office and the Museum of Art; with customary efficiency and wit, they gracefully managed the challenges of catalogue and show.

Art museum exhibitions of oriental carpets rarely occur in Maine, and *Treasures from Near Eastern Looms* is one of the first to take place in the state, certainly the first at Bowdoin College. This occasion offers convincing evidence that carpets such as those in the Roberts Collection are beautiful works of art; the difficulty of structural analysis, geographical attribution, and dating make them especially intriguing. We hope that *Treasures from Near Eastern Looms* will deepen understanding—of the technical and artistic achievement of the weavers and of the culture from which they come—and offer an unforgettable visual treat for all.

Katharine J. Watson
Director
Bowdoin College Museum of Art

P

REFACE

From my viewpoint, the length of time I've been collecting oriental rugs is less important than the fact that my collecting did indeed become a reality. As a businessman, I had made the common mistake of making business my only world. This never afforded me the luxury of an outside interest or hobby. Many times I am asked what initiated my interest in collecting oriental rugs. The answer is quite simple—unexpectedly, in May of 1968, an aunt gave up housekeeping and presented me with a few oriental rugs that had been tucked away in her attic. She thought they had been “handmade” overseas somewhere. Upon unfolding the rugs, I was immediately struck by the designs and colors; this is when my world began to change. I was bewildered, too—it was hard to believe that something people walked on could seize my interest. The first thing I did was to determine whether these rugs were indeed handmade. Once that was confirmed, I started to read extensively on the subject, and it was at this point that a new meaning came into my life. How wonderful it is to be born twice: to a world of reality, coping with every day's events, and to a past world rich in culture, beauty, and artistic endeavor. Finally, an interest other than business had caught my attention, and, since then, collecting oriental rugs has become a passion of mine.

After I started collecting oriental rugs seriously, I realized that having a passion and knowing what you're doing are miles apart. At that time, many new collectors were interested in the more popular antique rugs of Persia, the Caucasus, and Turkey. Their interest made these rugs scarce and expensive. But in the late 1960s the rugs

of Near Eastern Turkestan were little known to collectors and their prices more affordable. So, I started to build my collection on antique rugs from the Turkestan region (now USSR); most of the rugs in this exhibition came from there. At first, because of my inexperience, I made many errors in choosing the right rug. However, as I am sure any serious collector will tell you, sheer determination can be your strongest ally and will eventually help you overcome the “new collector mistake” syndrome. Most helpful, too, have been examining rugs at museums, attending lectures, rubbing elbows and exchanging viewpoints with fellow enthusiasts at meetings of various rug societies and, of course, just seeing and handling thousands of rugs. Today I still have fun finding old rugs in the marketplace and talking with reputable merchants and art dealers, and I still feel a thrill when I decide what best examples to add to the collection.

So journey with me, if you will, into the world of collecting and the land of the Near East, where carpets of extraordinary beauty were created. Oriental rugs are a true art form which can grant us the privilege of viewing a heritage of artistic achievement created on the looms of the master weaver, and stimulate in us the excitement of realizing how discipline of design and complexity of color can orchestrate a symphony of enduring beauty. The carpets of the Near East create an understanding of the past, teaching age-old ways of city, village, and nomadic culture.

In the past ten years, oriental rugs have become increasingly popular, appealing to the layman and the connoisseur alike. Recent interest in primitive art has brought attention and recognition to oriental rugs, a

long-neglected art form. Museums the world over are displaying oriental carpets from their own as well as private collections, and the public response has been enthusiastic. Recently, an international conference was held on oriental carpets in Washington, D.C., with over 900 collectors, scholars, and art museum staff members attending, including 250 people from 27 foreign countries. In January 1981, The Textile Museum in Washington, D.C., held an exhibition of Moroccan carpets with over 2,000 people attending the opening. Recent rug exhibitions have been held at the Columbus Museum of Art, Columbus, Ohio, and the Allen Memorial Art Museum in Oberlin, Ohio. Both shows attracted record numbers of people.

Most of the rugs in this collection were made in the eighteenth or nineteenth centuries and are from small village or nomadic looms. They possess the individual dignity which characterizes the peoples from which they come and reflect earlier design traditions which continue to this day. The rugs, on the whole, combine discipline of pattern and weaving skill. The delicate designs from

the Persian area (plate 1) contrast sharply with the powerful, bold forms from Turkey (plate 20), Turkestan (plate 57), and the Caucasus (plate 27), each pleasing to the eye and each an exciting piece of art. Freedom of designs, marriage of colors, and overlay of patterns characterize the rugs in this collection; they represent the finest craftsmanship of their day.

The significance of the examples in this catalogue and exhibition, as well as the entire collection, goes beyond me personally. If I can preserve these rugs for present and future generations to study and enjoy, my role as a collector will have been achieved. Thank you for allowing me to share with you the pleasure I continue to have in pursuit of my avocation, as well as the privilege I feel in assembling this group of rugs made by master craftsmen. I hope that by viewing the present exhibition or reading this catalogue, you will develop a better understanding of oriental rugs. Maybe your understanding will turn into an important interest in your life.

Ernest H. Roberts

aCKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Collecting rugs has been easy and enjoyable over the years because of the help and encouragement of a person who shares my enthusiasm. For this, I wish to express my profound gratitude to Marcia Roberts, who has been very supportive and has made her own valuable contribution to the collection, including assistance in the acquisition, examination, cleaning, and minor repairing of the rugs.

I also wish to acknowledge the many people who have expressed opinions, both technical and otherwise, in helping to establish this collection and who have shared their valuable knowledge: Ralph Yohe, Madison, Wisconsin; W. R. Pickering, Washington, D.C.; May H. Beattie, Sheffield, England; Charles Grant Ellis, research associate, The Textile Museum, Washington, D.C.; and the late Joseph V. McMullan. I am grateful for the continual encouragement of my fellow rug enthusiasts: Arthur Jenkins, Moscuteh, Illinois; Dennis Dodds and Myrna Bloom, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania; and Lee Beshar, New York City, New York. Special thanks to

my friends Louise Mackie, associate curator in charge, Textile Department, Royal Ontario Museum, Toronto, Canada, for her assistance with this exhibition and catalogue, and Walter B. Denny, associate professor of art, University of Massachusetts at Amherst, for his participation with Miss Mackie in the exhibition's opening symposium at Bowdoin College. My sincere appreciation goes to Katharine Watson, director, Bowdoin College Museum of Art, and her capable staff for making this exhibition possible and for bringing it to Maine; and to Andrew Oliver, director, The Textile Museum, for arranging that the collection also be shown in Washington, D.C. My daughter, Kathleen Brooks, deserves very special recognition for her assistance in developing technical analysis, as do my associates Jan Fullerton and Joanne Bilancini for their unstinting help in the laborious tasks of typing, retyping, and editing catalogue text.

Ernest H. Roberts



INTRODUCTION

The superb use of colors and lines to create imaginary gardens and abstract images has been admired in oriental carpets for centuries.

Ever since the Renaissance, oriental carpets have been imported and treasured in Europe, where they were often represented in religious paintings by such masters as Hans Memlinc, Hans Holbein the Younger, and Carlo Crivelli. Oriental carpets were items of great luxury as well as exotic status symbols, so they were often displayed not on the floor but on the tops of tables. Where else could they be so well shown off and not worn out? This fortunate attitude is one of the main reasons that some carpets have survived hundreds of years.

Precious and easily portable, oriental carpets were also transported to the American colonies by immigrating families who were fortunate enough to own them. So distant from their place of origin in the Near East, carpets were treasured and displayed, a fact recorded in eighteenth-century paintings. One of Gilbert Stuart's paintings of George Washington portrays him standing on a Turkish carpet.

In their homeland in the Near and Middle East, carpets were an important part of the vital textile industry. Textiles were visible everywhere, covering everything and everyone, princes and nomads alike. Only the quality and quantity varied. Interior spaces were colored by an abundance of textiles, visible from floor to ceiling. They enhanced walls, covered cushions, and enlivened floors. They formed the prevailing aesthetic and were the primary transmitters of taste and fashion, at home and abroad.

Textile manufacture was the largest and most important industry and the major employer. Textiles were woven in every village. The qualities of all types of weav-

ing were easily recognized by knowledgeable consumers. Those of special quality were always expensive and were often accumulated as a secure form of savings, redeemable for barter or cash. The finest fabrics, often of great renown, were exported in the lucrative textile trade.

Knotted-pile carpets have always been items of luxury and indicators of wealth. Yet in a textile environment where individuals sit and recline on cushions and carpets, woven floor coverings are an integral part of the living space. They provide both physical and psychological warmth. People seated near or on carpets can feel and appreciate the soft knotted-pile surface and admire, peruse, and contemplate the wonderful combinations of colors and patterns.

An impressive variety of patterns has been woven in oriental carpets for centuries in several traditions: tribal, village-city, and court. Each tradition tends to have its own artistic style, using patterns which range from strong, angular designs to delicate, curving ones. The patterns are generally organized in continuous repeats, centralized layouts, or directional arches. Within each of the three categories are endless thematic variations in line and color.

The continuity of patterns woven generation after generation is a feature that characterizes oriental carpets. Young weavers learn traditional patterns woven by their elders, which they in turn proudly try to reproduce as accurately as possible. This respectful attitude is responsible for the artistic strength of many nineteenth-century rugs, such as those made in Turkey and those woven by the Turkoman tribes.

While carpets can be enjoyed and appreciated as artistic creations in their own right, one may gain additional pleasure from the study of their broader cultural

context and history. For carpets are an expression of a culture, and they often provide glimpses into life styles. Particularly intriguing and appealing to Westerners are the carpet weavings of the wealthy Turkoman tribes who inhabited the arid land east of the Caspian Sea. The Turkomans wove the greatest variety of knotted-pile weavings ever known. The weavings range from practical, and often stunning, storage and transport bags to superb decorative trappings worn by camels while transporting brides. All were made with care, often for dowries, by the women when they were not attending children or preparing food. The patterns woven by the individual Turkoman tribes continue long-standing artistic traditions, some of which are identifiable in fifteenth-century carpets from Turkey. But since most Turkoman carpet weavings were made for use and not for trade or export, at least until this century, most Turkoman carpet weavings have been worn out. Few are older than the nineteenth century. Yet some of the early nineteenth-century Turkoman tribal carpet weavings display a clarity of drawing and a balance of color, with shades of red dominating, that rank them among the most sophisticated weavings in the world.

Oriental carpets have been woven for thousands of years. Probably developed in imitation of animal skins in the steppes of Asia, the oldest sizeable carpet is 2,500 years old. Dated to the fifth century B.C., it was found frozen in the Altai Mountains in Siberia at the Sythian site of Pazyryk. The pattern, with rosettes, elk, and humans, is similar to contemporary Persian art, and the structure is the same as that of rugs woven today.

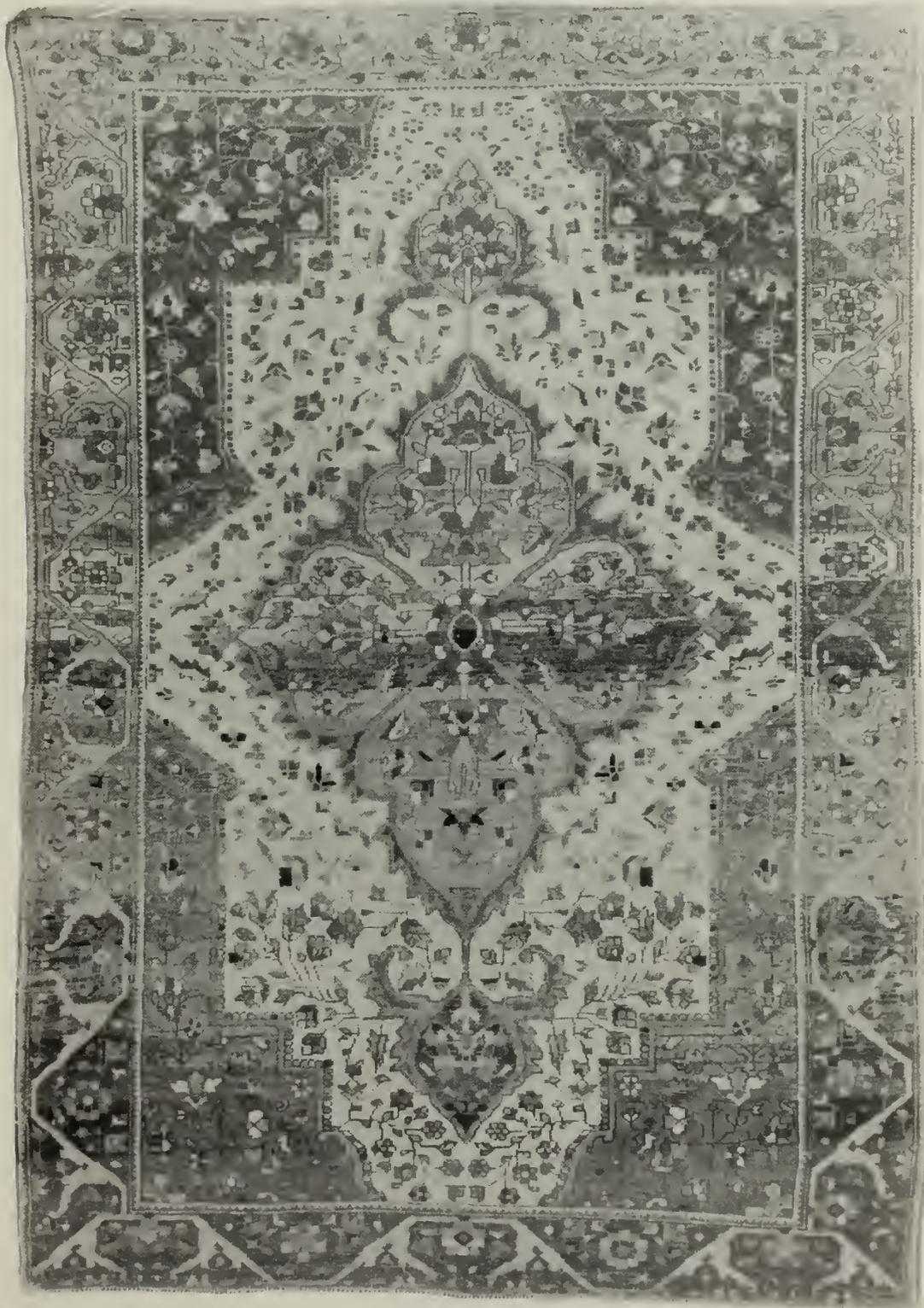
Since carpets are woven to be walked on, it is not surprising that only fortuitous circumstances enable them to survive the vicissitudes of time. Such was the case for some huge Turkish carpets woven in the thirteenth century which remained stacked in a dark corner in a mosque in Konya until their discovery early in this century. The

strong, bold patterns in Turkish carpets acquired international fame during the Renaissance. Quantities were exported to Europe, where they were called Turkey carpets. During a brief interlude around 1600, carpets were woven in the Istanbul area with fashionable patterns from Ottoman court art which had far-reaching effects on village carpets. Elements of the refined court style were adopted and changed by village weavers, who preferred more angular drawing with bold colors. This provided an artistic continuity and design clarity which is still visible in Turkish carpets today.

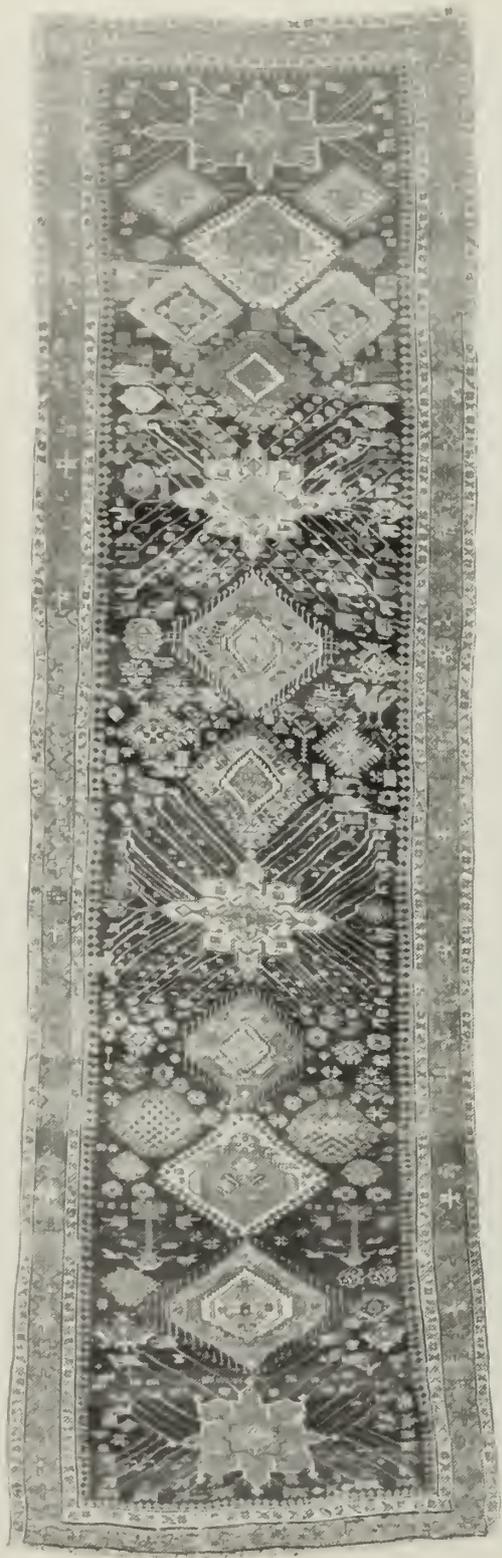
In contrast with other traditions, Persian village-city carpets have always been dependent on the art of the court. The oldest, surviving only from the sixteenth century, display a wide variety of patterns whose sophisticated balance of delicate drawing is closely related to the bookbindings, illuminated pages, and idyllic miniature paintings from the Safavid dynasty court art of the book. Flowers and gardens often grace Persian carpets, reflecting a long-standing love of flora in an arid climate. Although warfare interrupted city production, the nineteenth-century revival of carpet weaving continued to draw upon the supreme artistic achievements of the Safavid court art of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.

Persian carpet weaving also influenced the development of carpet weaving abroad, in India and the Caucasus. The mobility of artisans and the easy portability of carpets enabled artistic traditions to travel and sometimes to emerge in unexpected locations. A quest for the heritage of a carpet whose pattern and colors are already admired will inevitably lead to unexpected avenues and additional pleasures. Each carpet has its own story, cultural context, and artistic heritage, and is a source of constant enjoyment and pleasure.

Louise W. Mackie



1. Carpet with Central Medallion



2. *Large Medallion Rug*



3. Rug with Seven Large Medallions



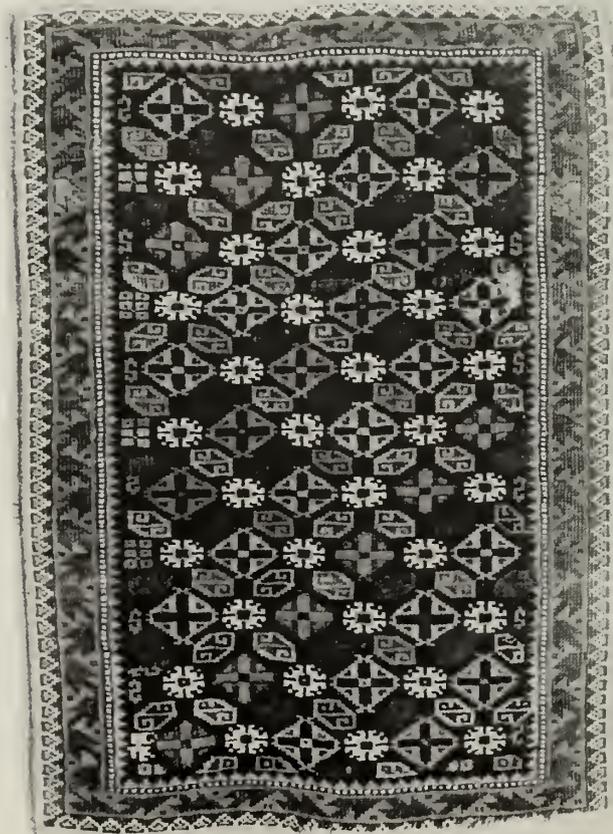
4. *Rug with Flat-woven Field*



5. Rug with Bird Field



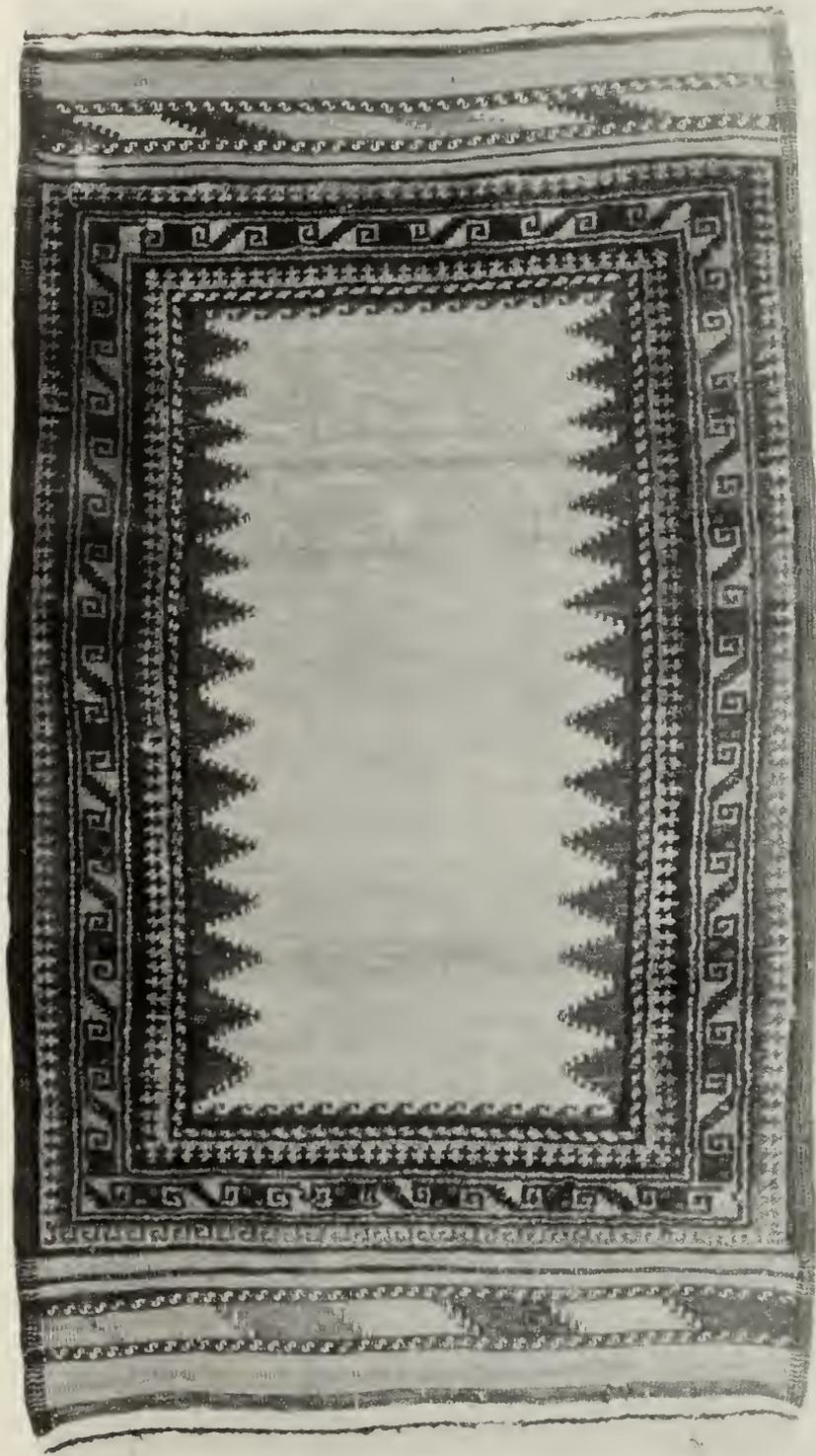
6. *Pillow Face*



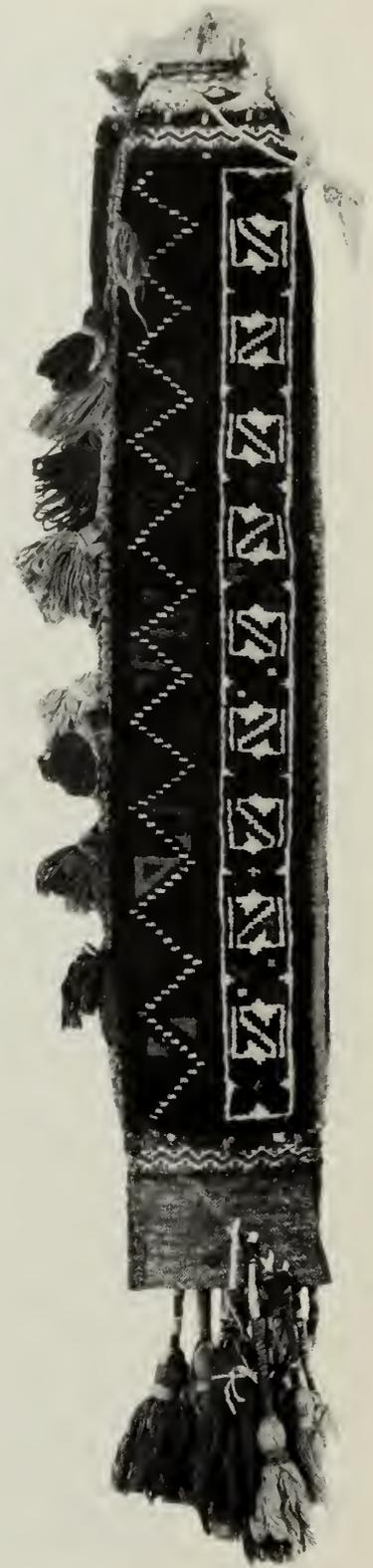
7. *Pillow Face*



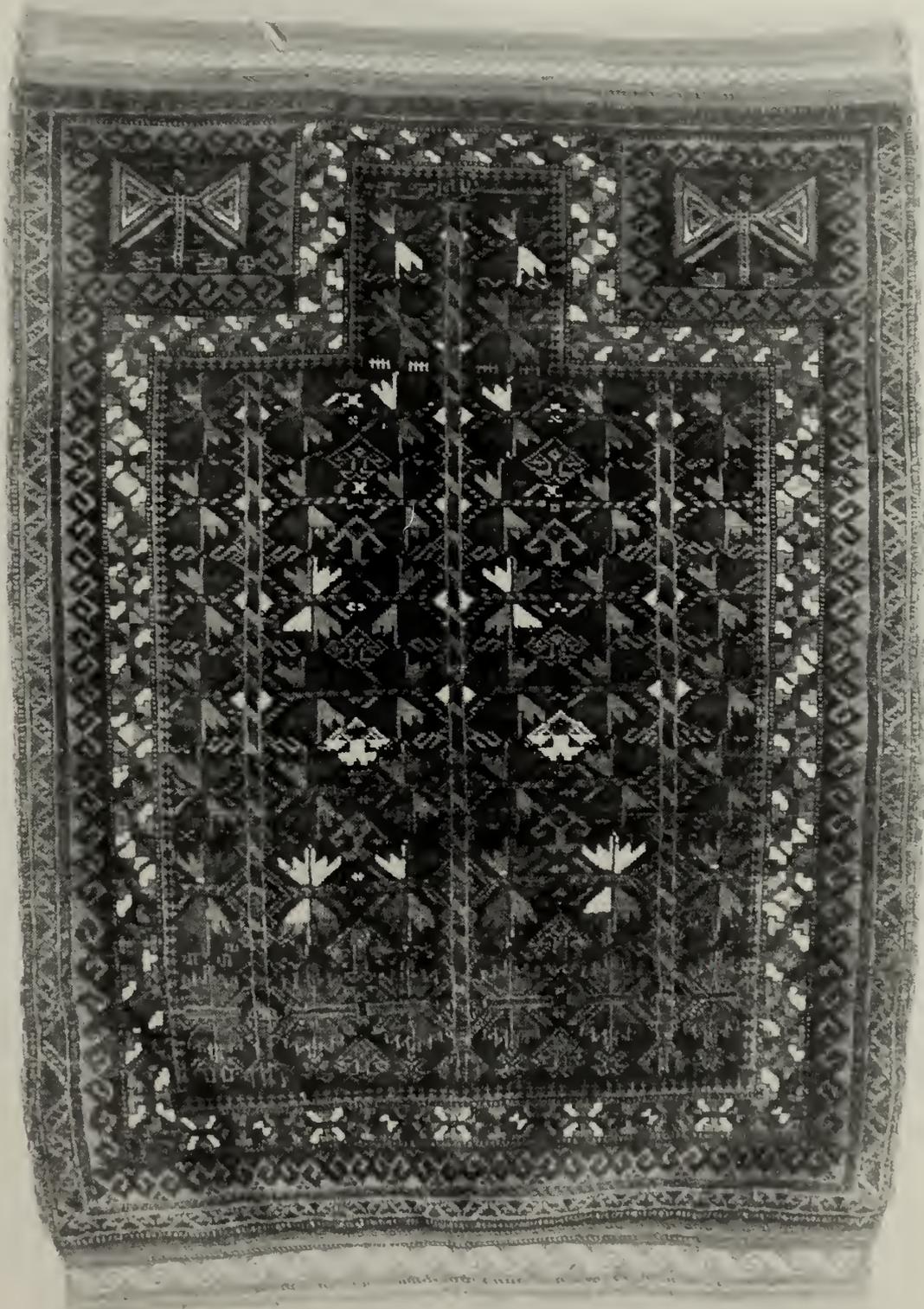
8. Kilim Rug



9. Rug with Allover Field Design



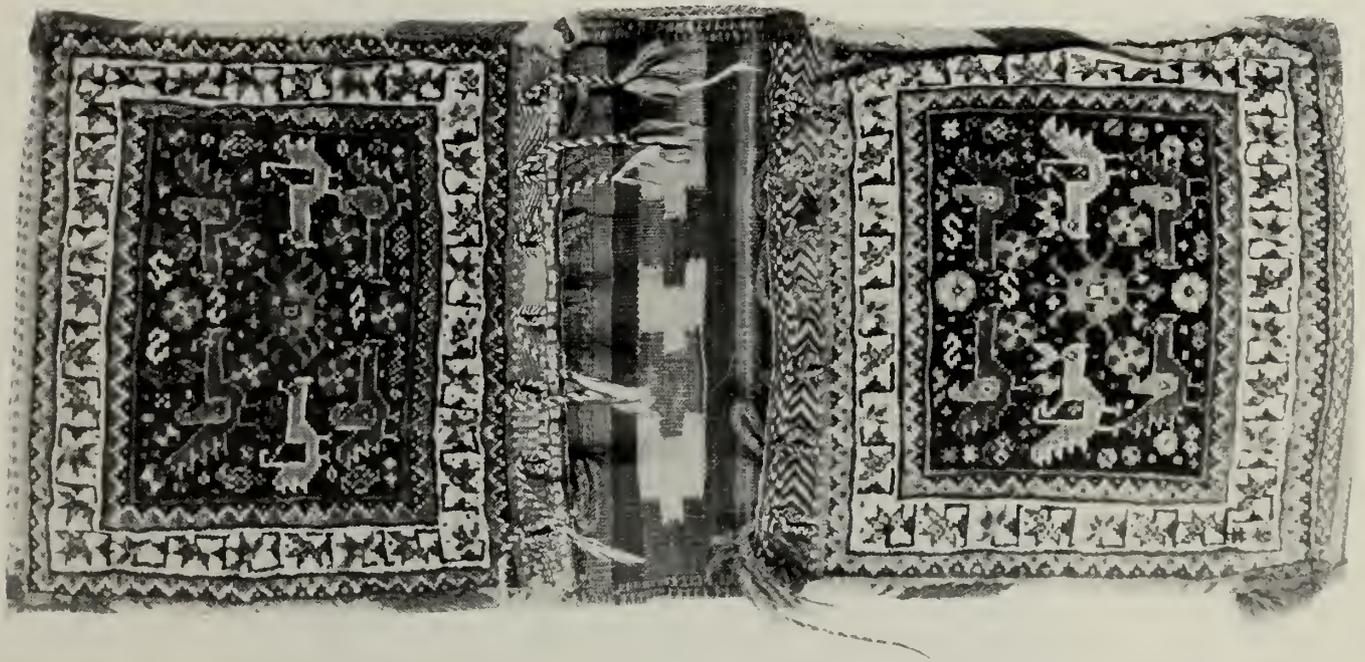
10. Gun Case



11. *Timuri Prayer Rug*



12. *Saddle Cover*



13. Donkey Pouches



14. Small Storage Bag



15. Large Saddle Bags



16. Saddle Bag



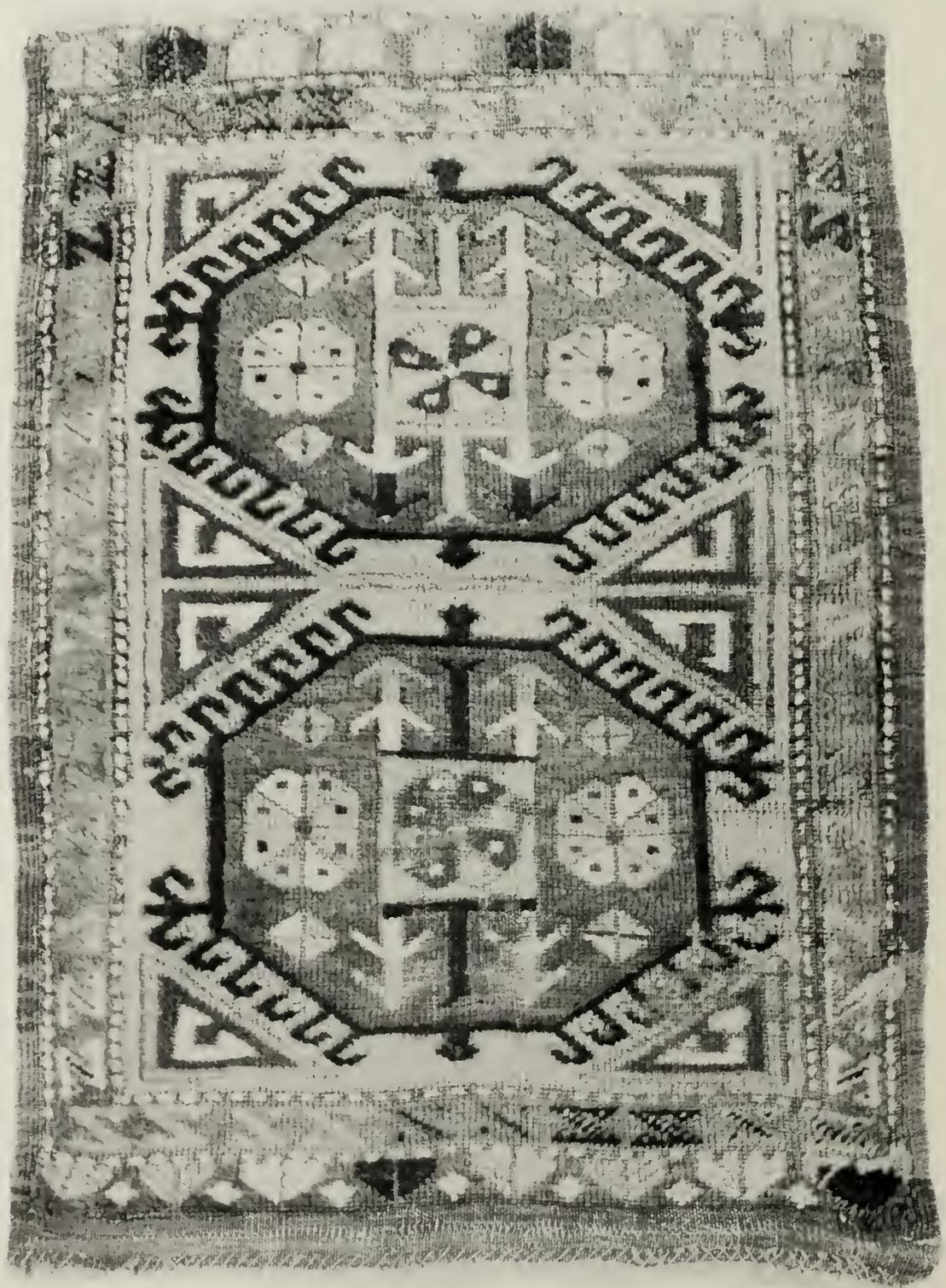
17. Saddle Bag Face



18. Rug with Floral Pattern



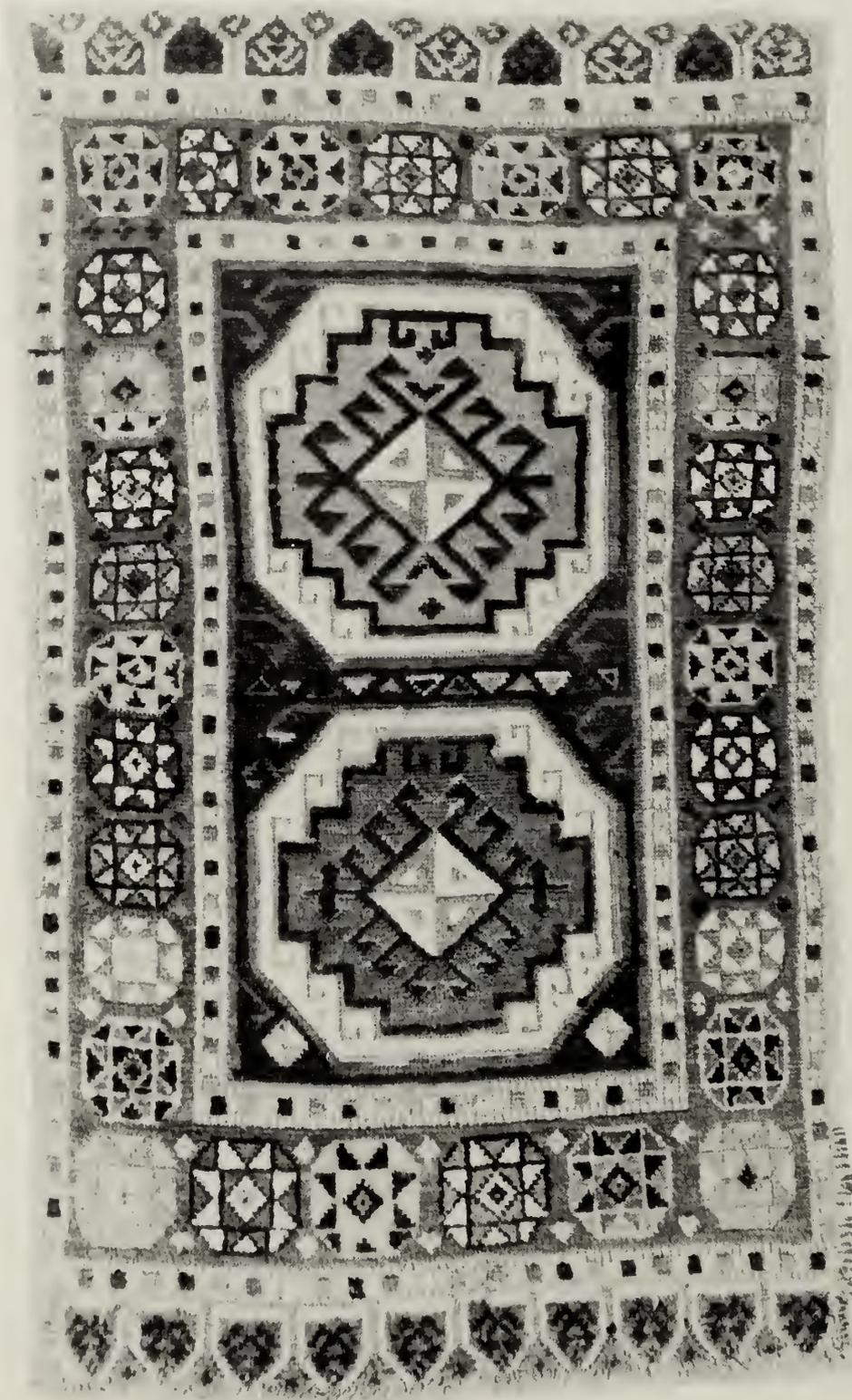
19. Tile Pattern Rug



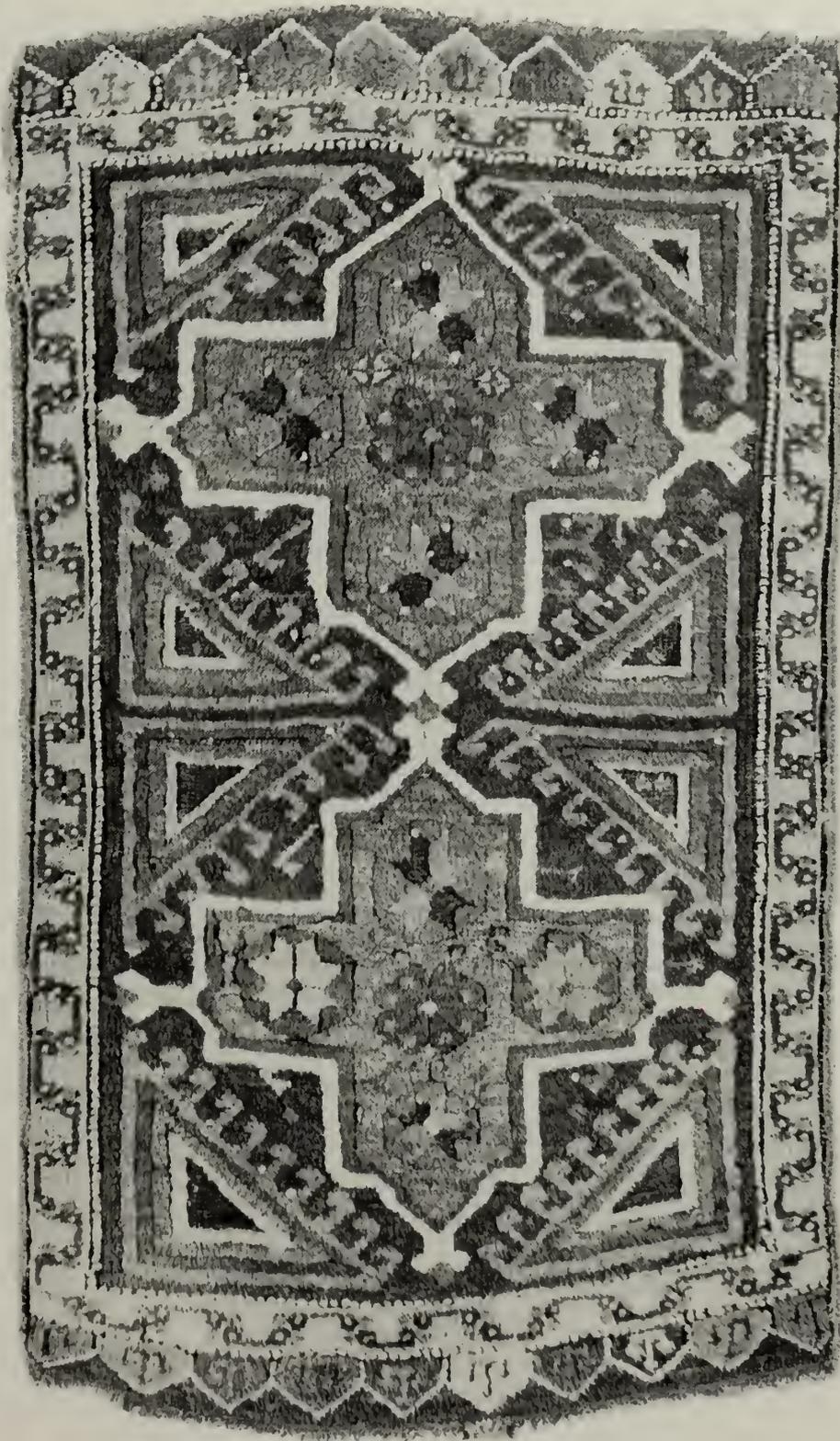
20. *Village Rug*



21. *Pillow Rug*



22. *Village Rug*



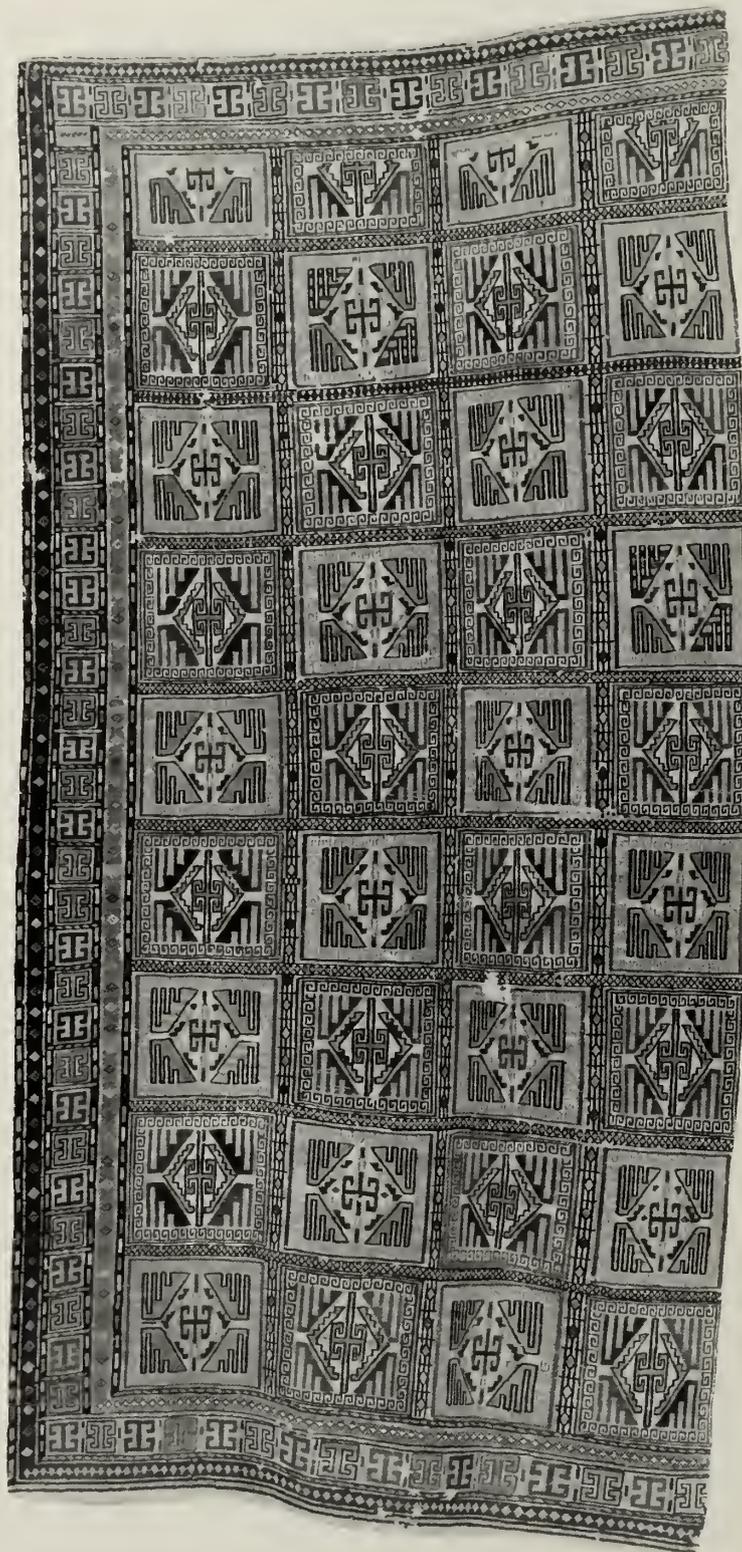
23. *Pillow Rug*



24. Prayer Rug, Flat-weave



25. Prayer Kilim



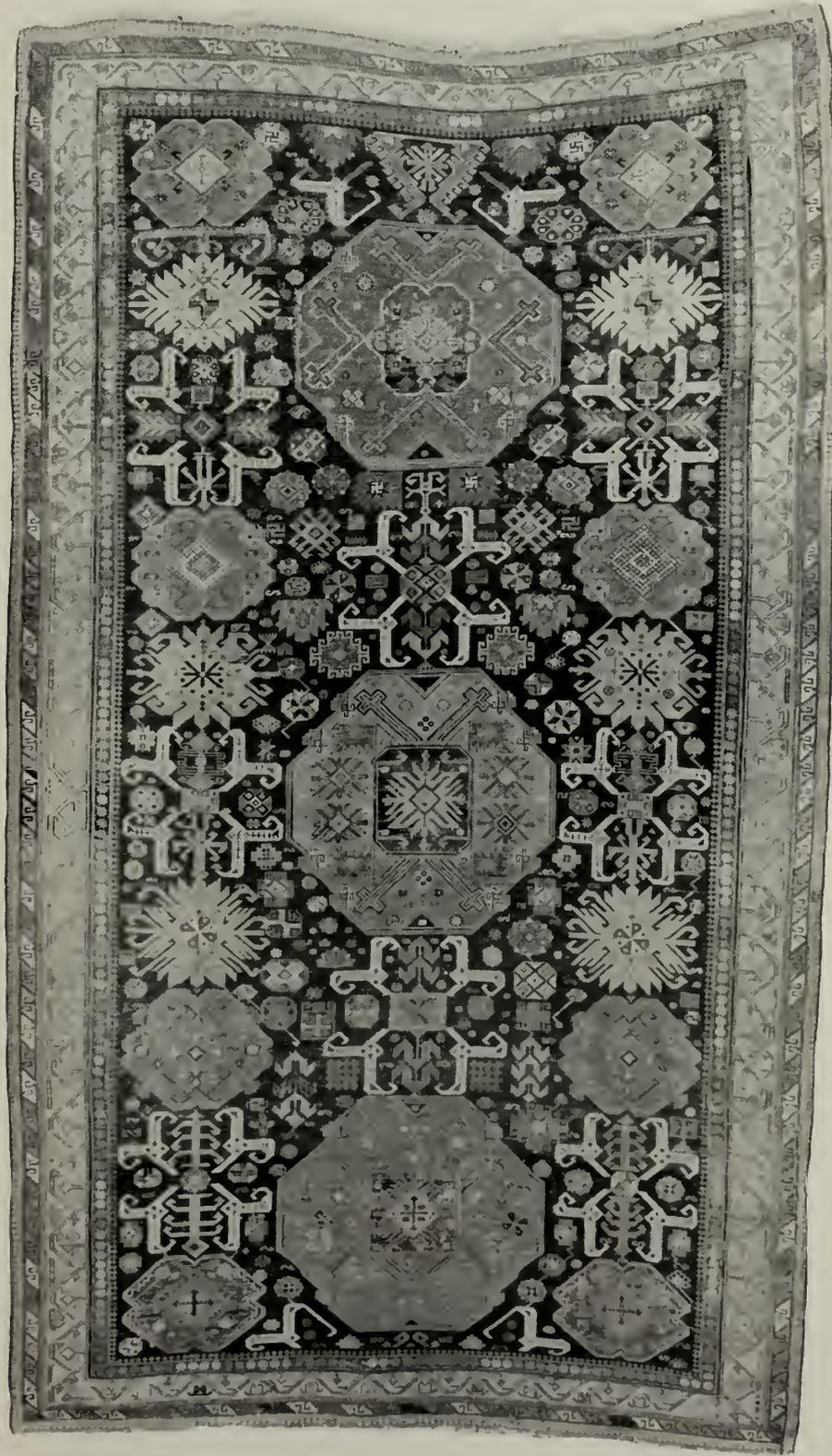
26. *Tile Pattern Kilim*



27. Carpet Fragment



28. Dragon Rug



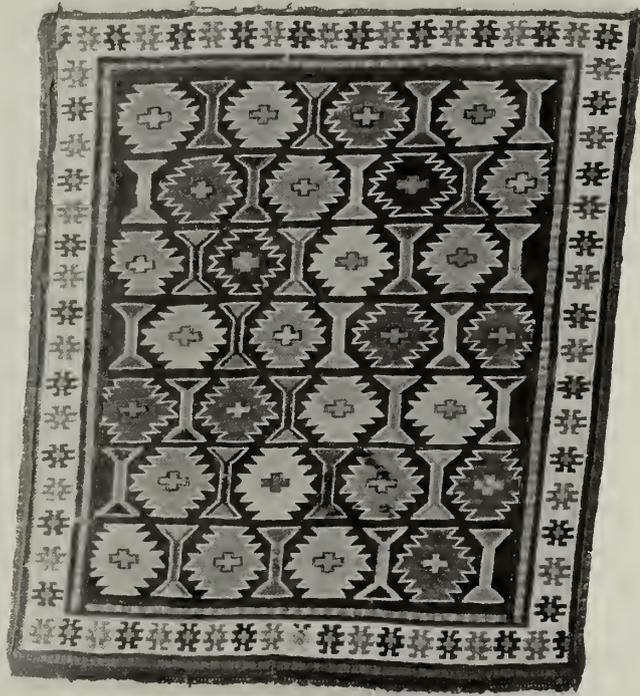
29. Large Soumak Carpet



30. *Pillow Face*



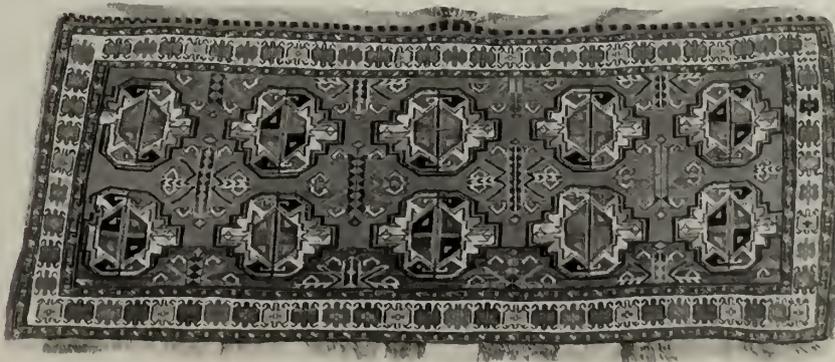
31. *Stylized Pillow Face*



32. Pillow Face



33. Utility Bag Face



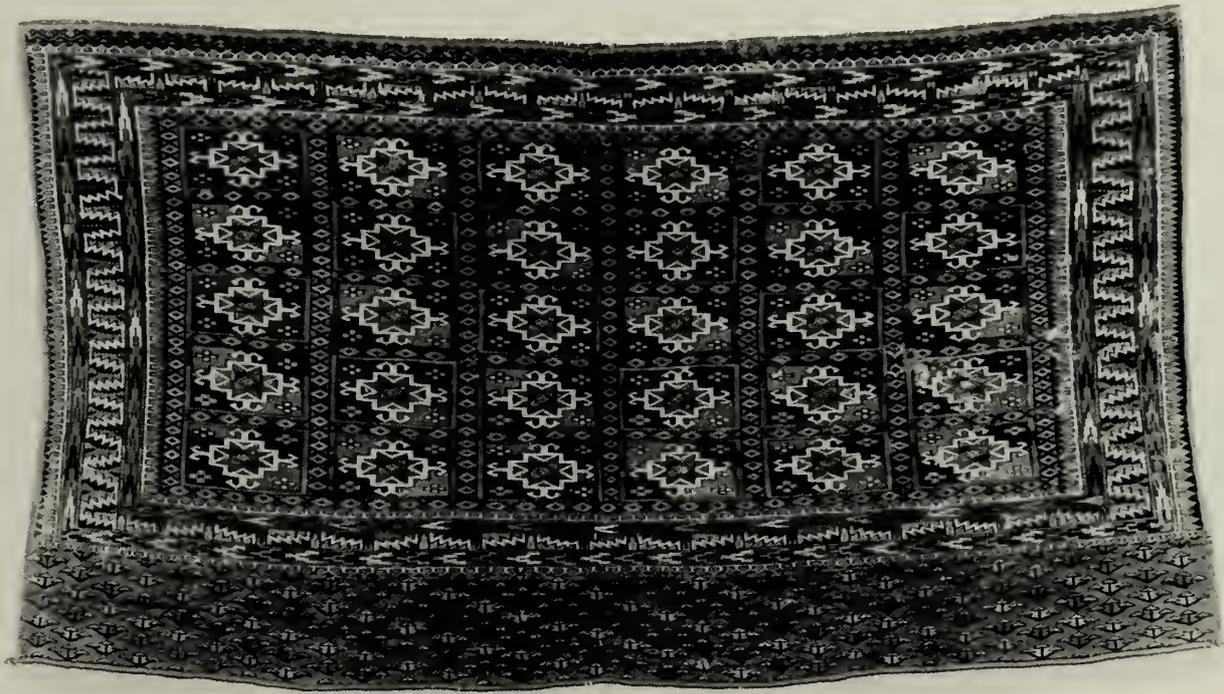
34. Bag Face



35. Bag Face



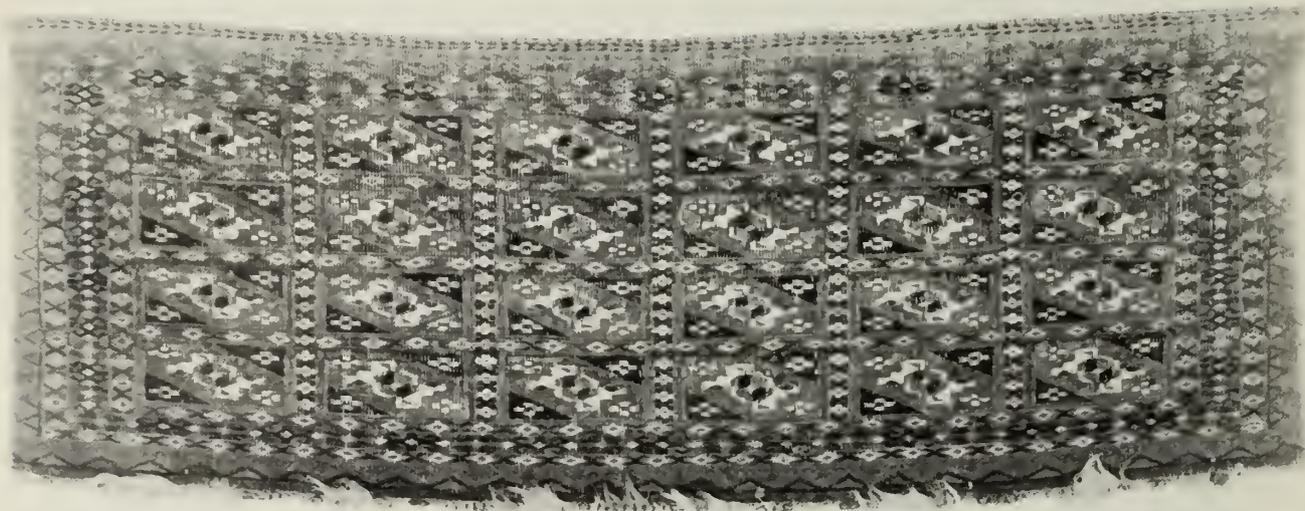
36. Large Storage Bag



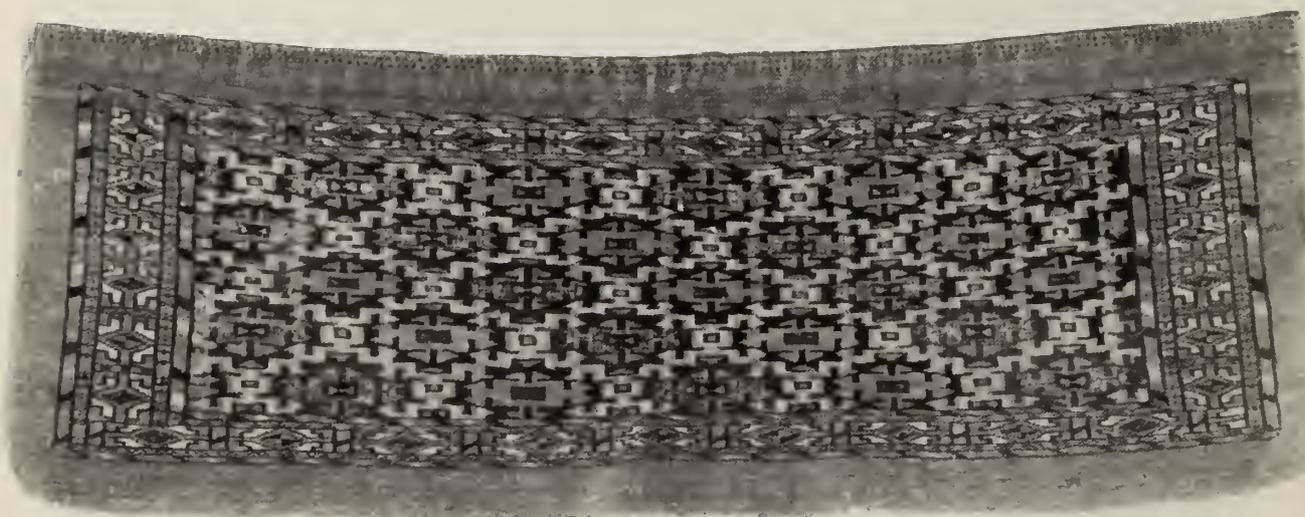
37. Large Storage Bag



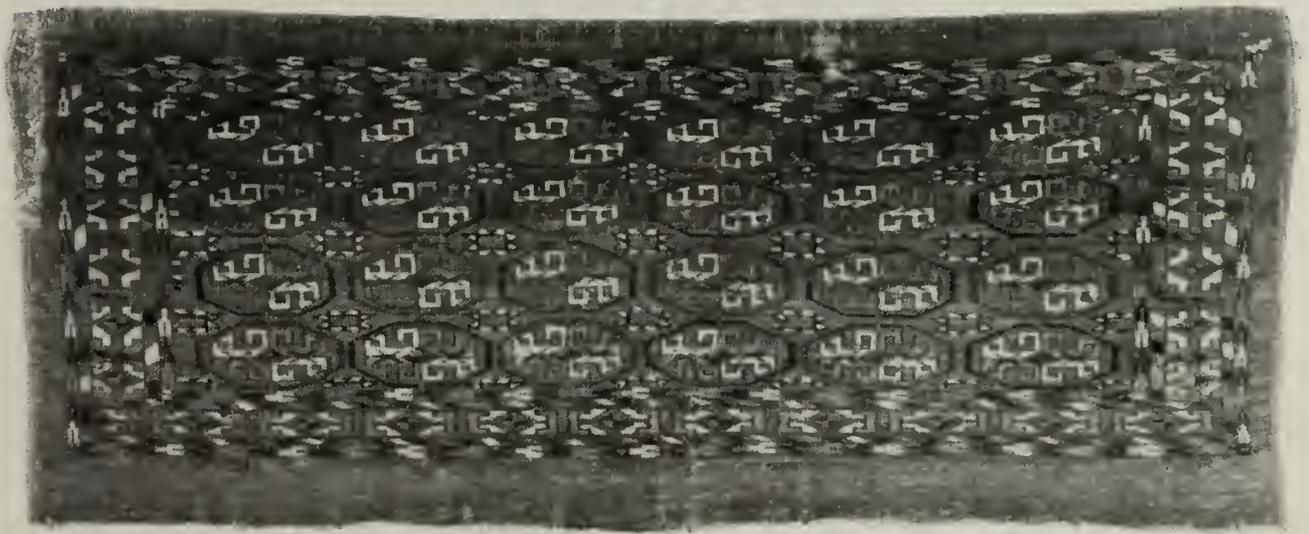
38. Small Utility Bag with Silk



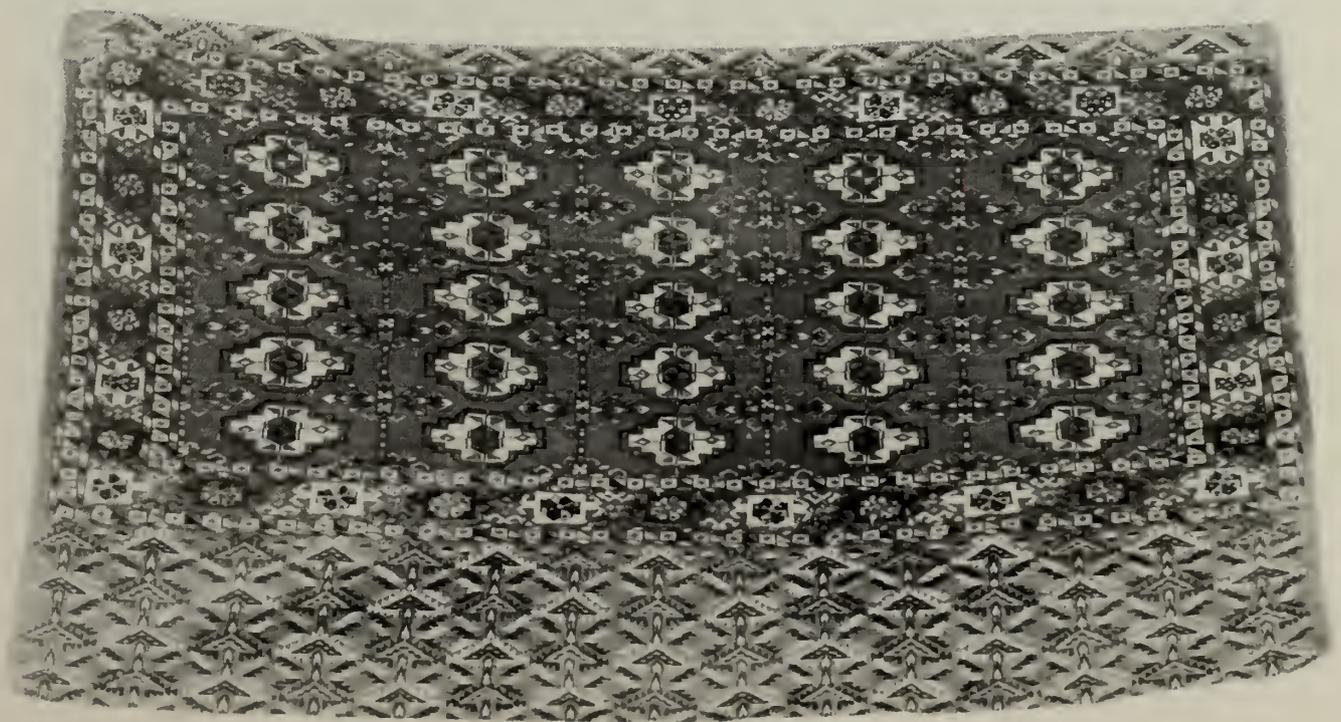
39. *Small Storage Bag*



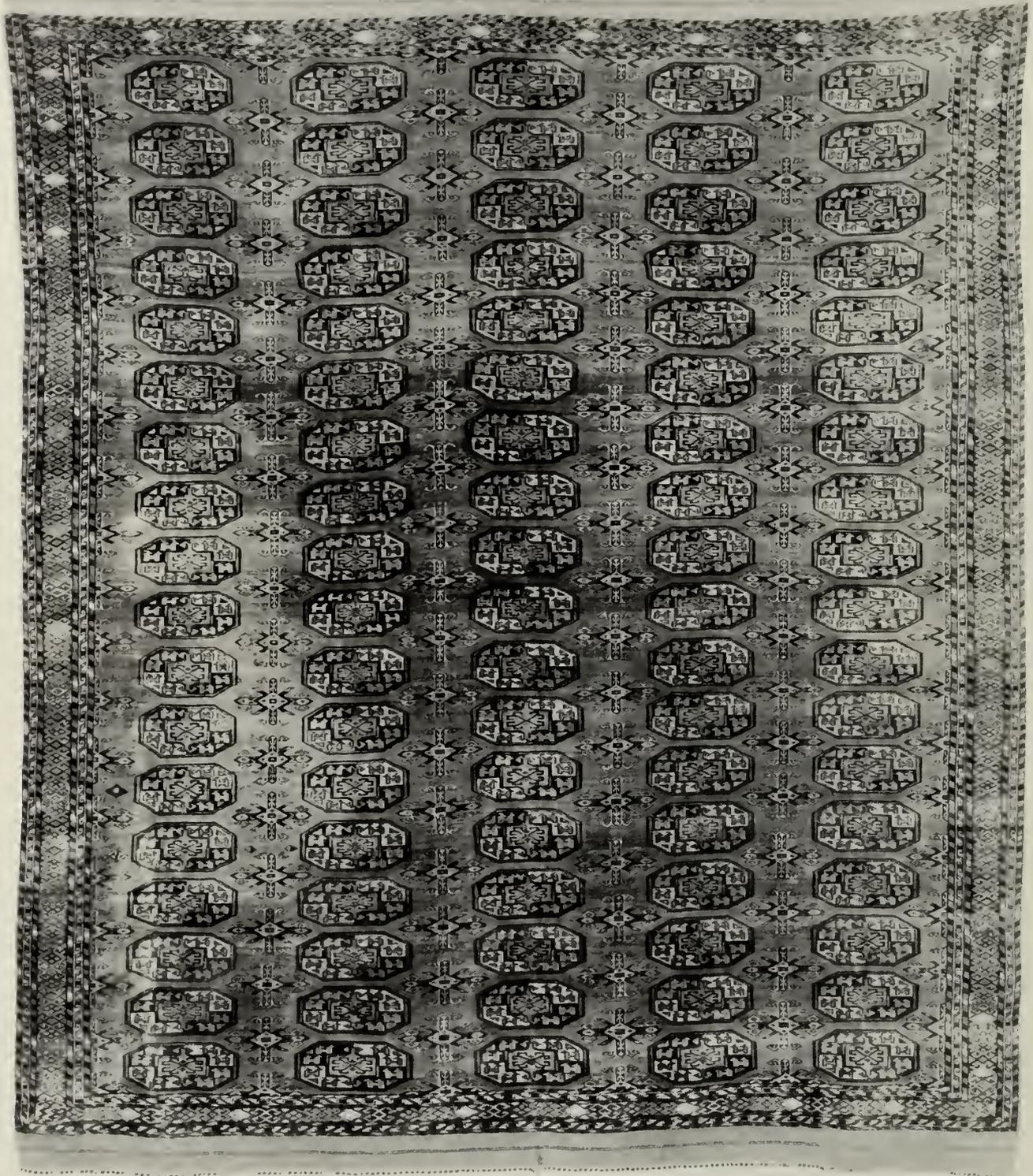
40. *Small Bag*



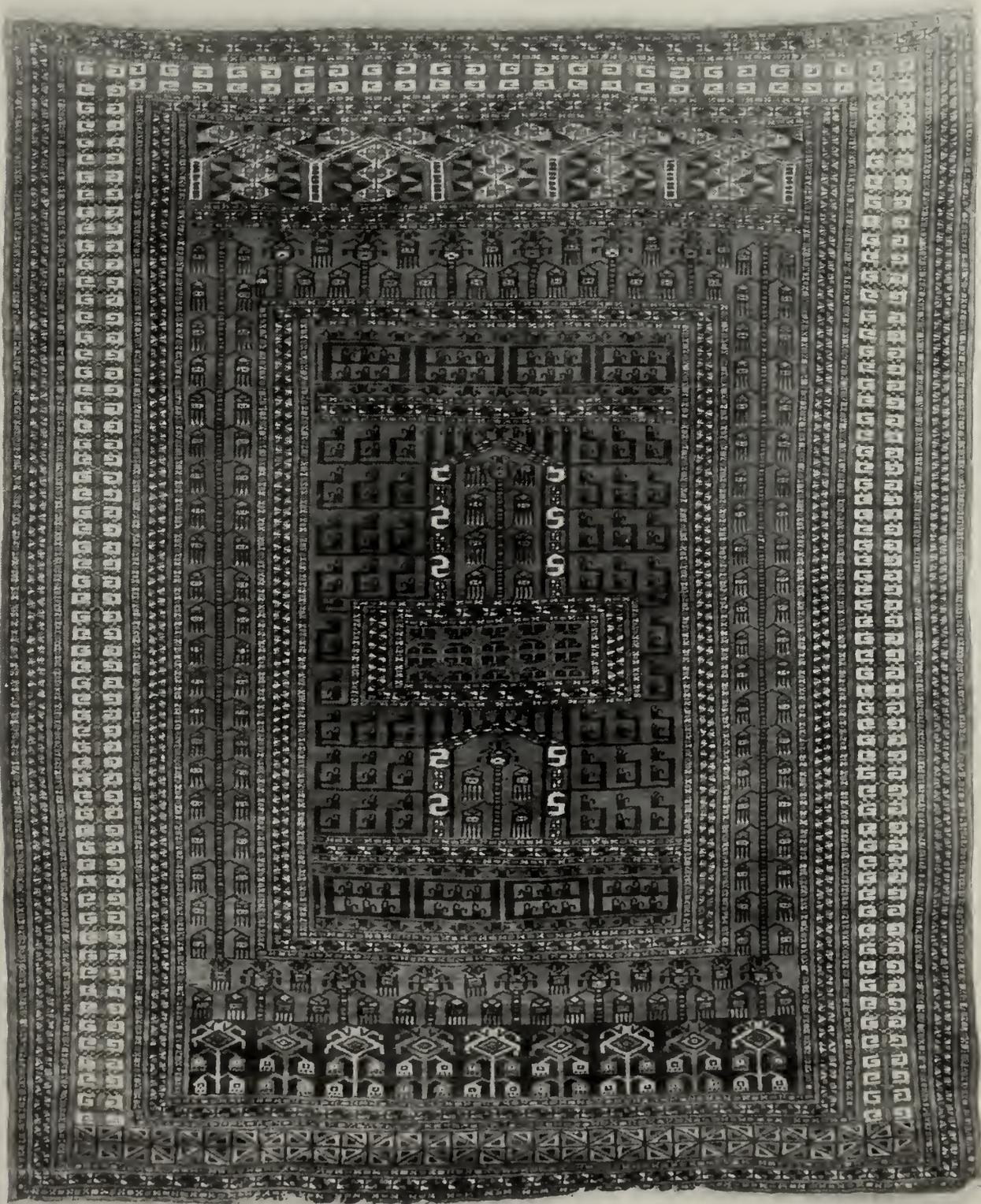
41. *Small Bag*



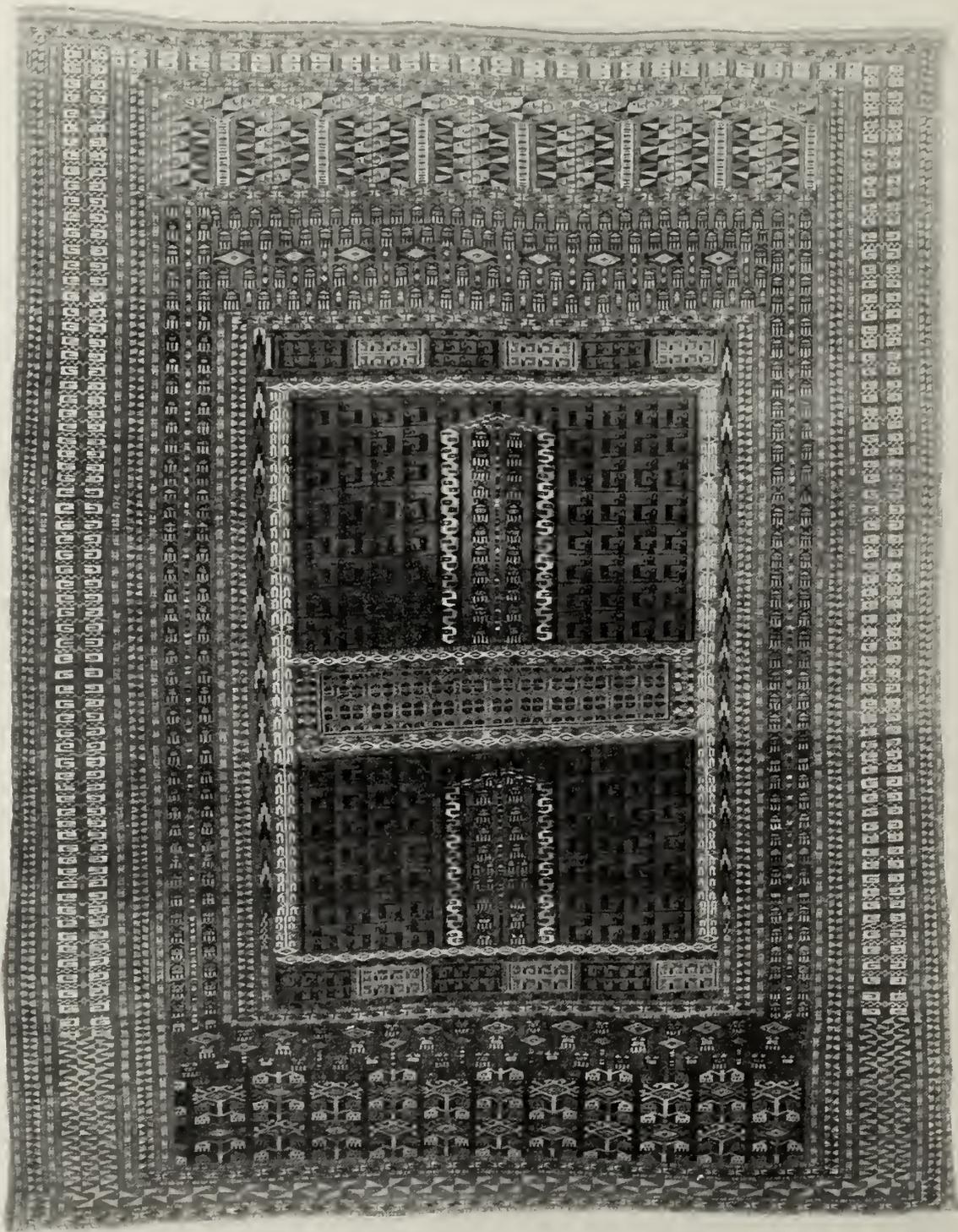
42. *Large Storage Bag*



43. Large Carpet



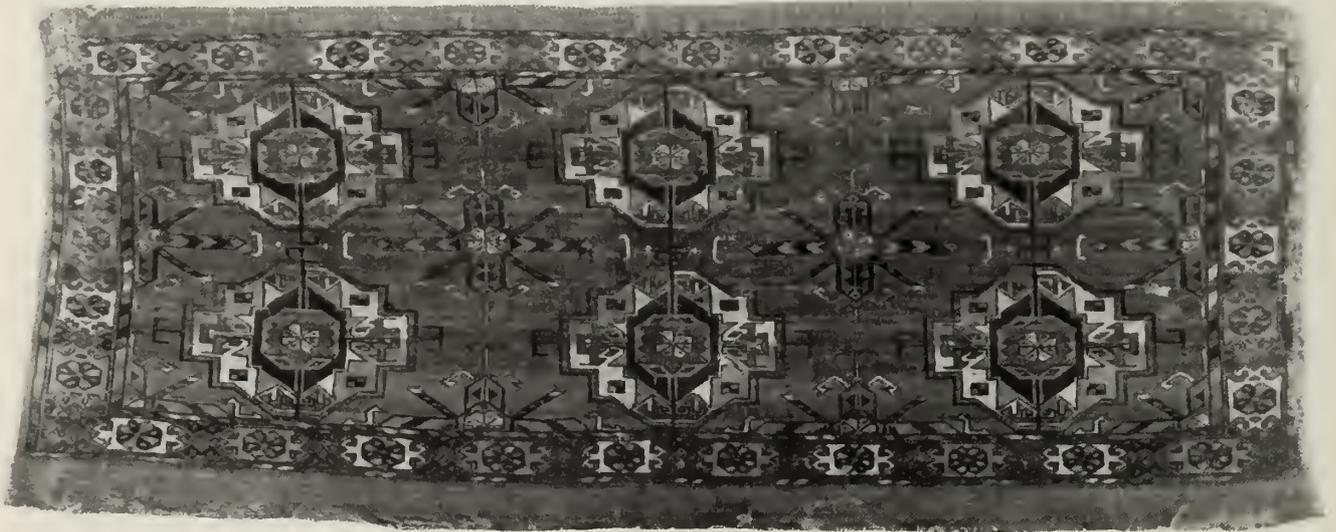
44. Door Cover



45. Rug with Multiple Niches



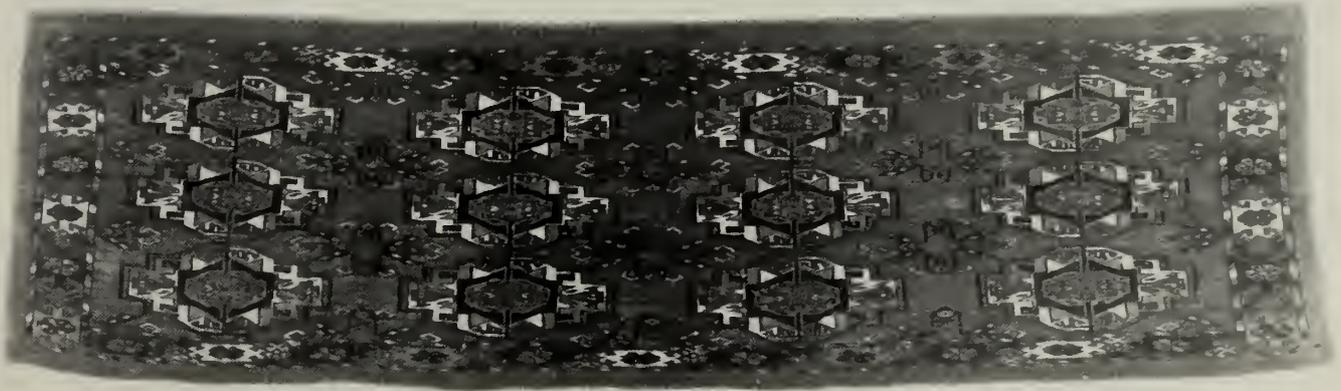
46. *Large Wall Bag*



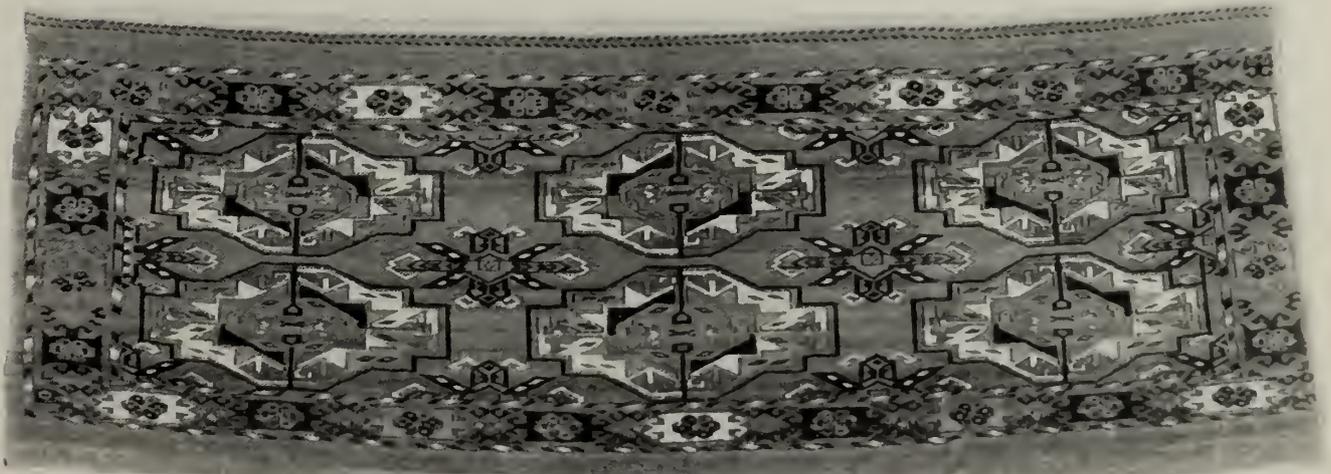
47. Storage Bag



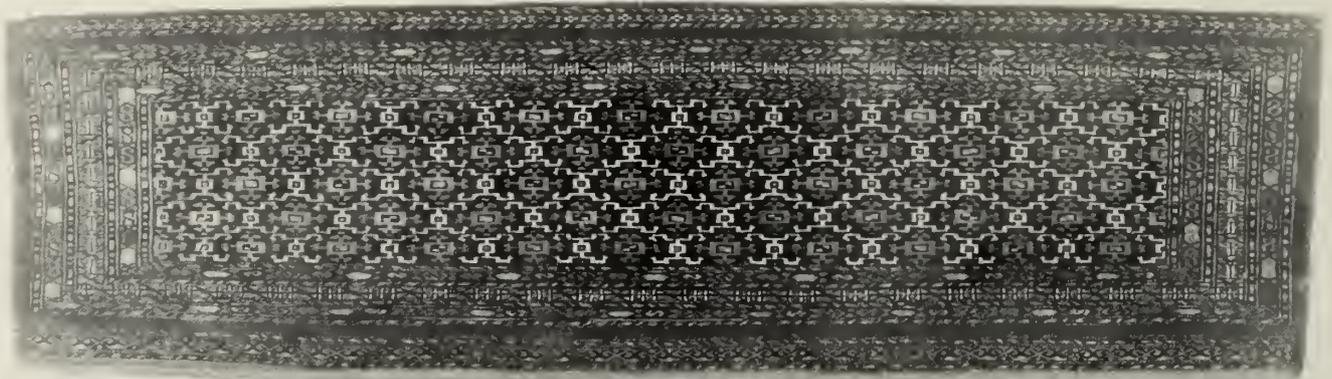
48. Storage Bag



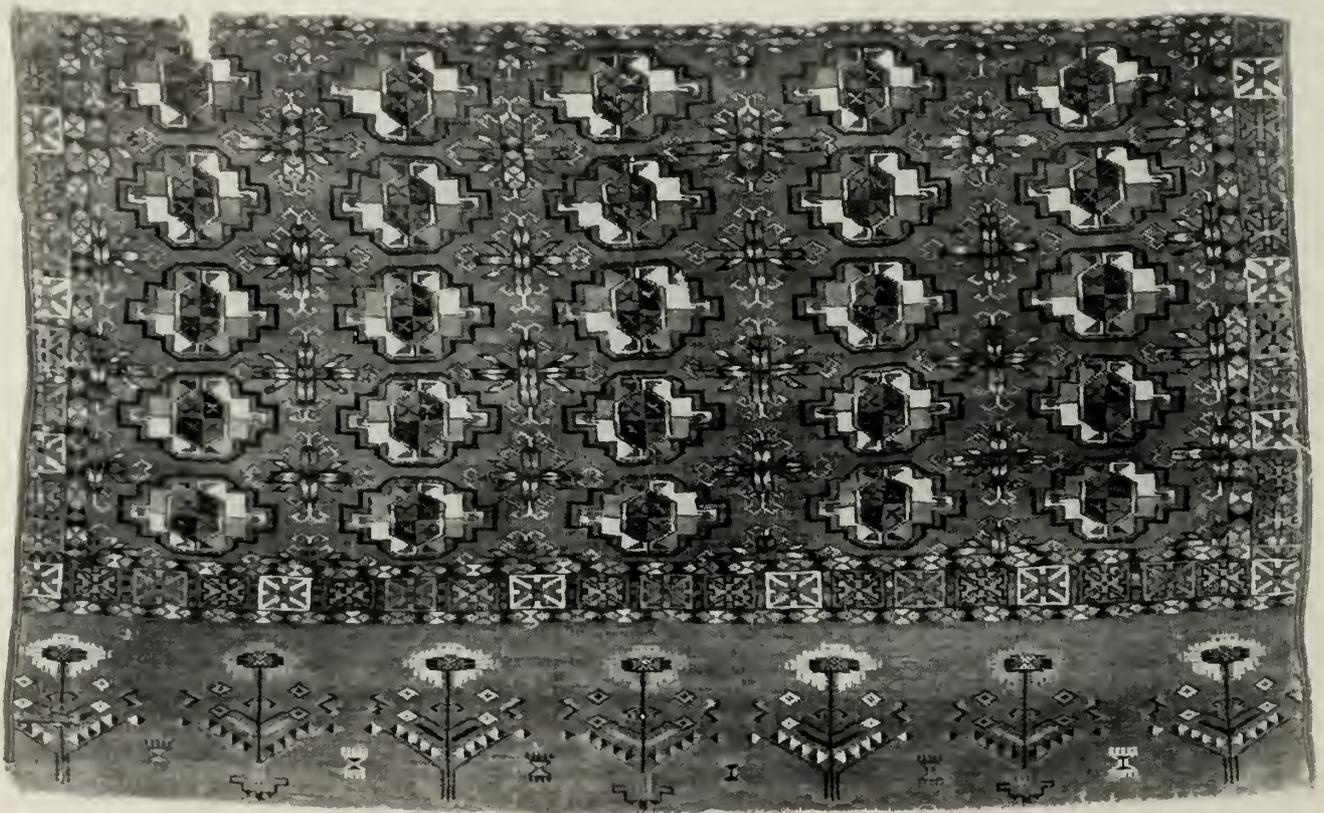
49. *Wide Storage Bag*



50. *Utility Bag*



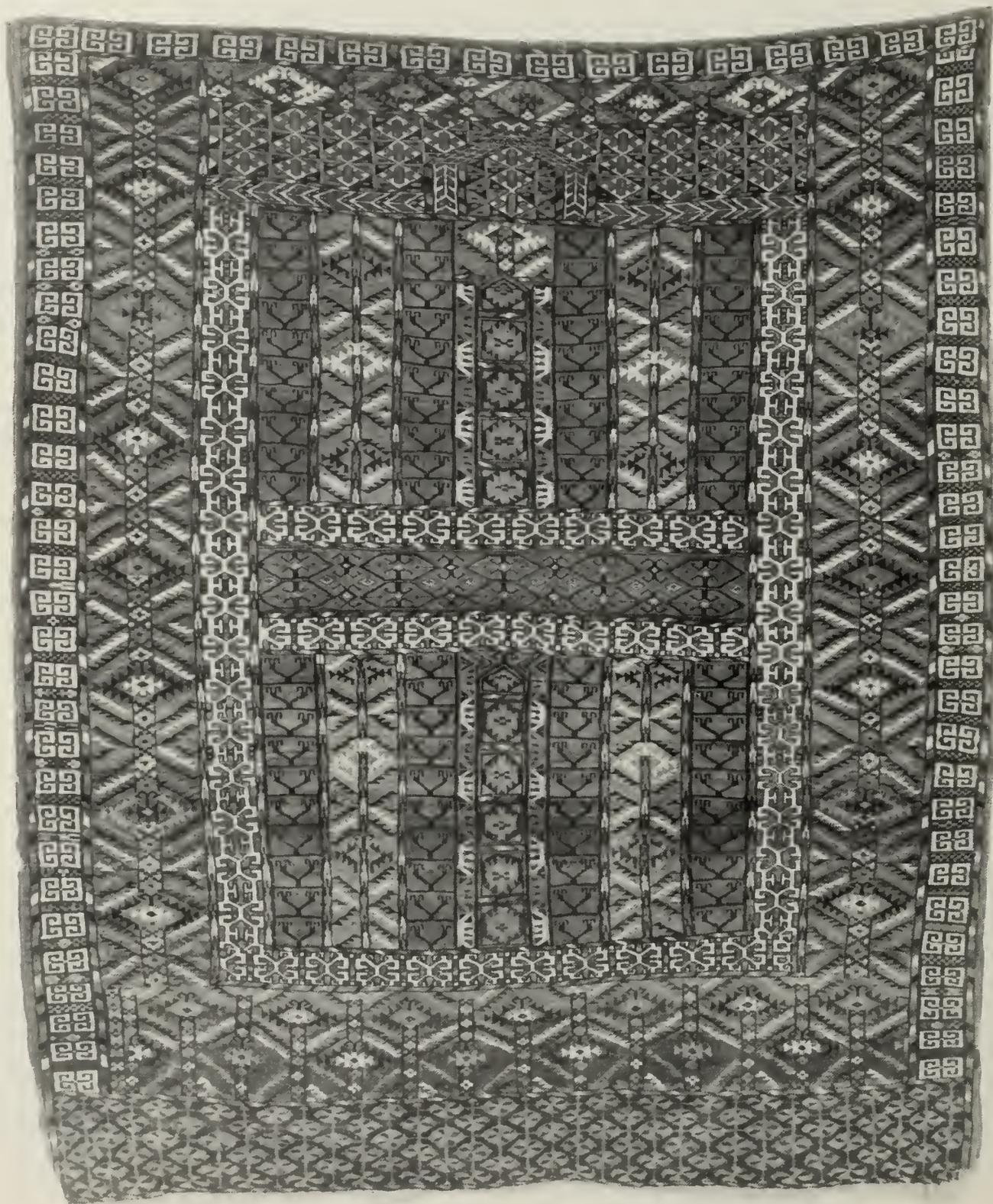
51. *Wide Bag*



52. *Large Storage Bag*



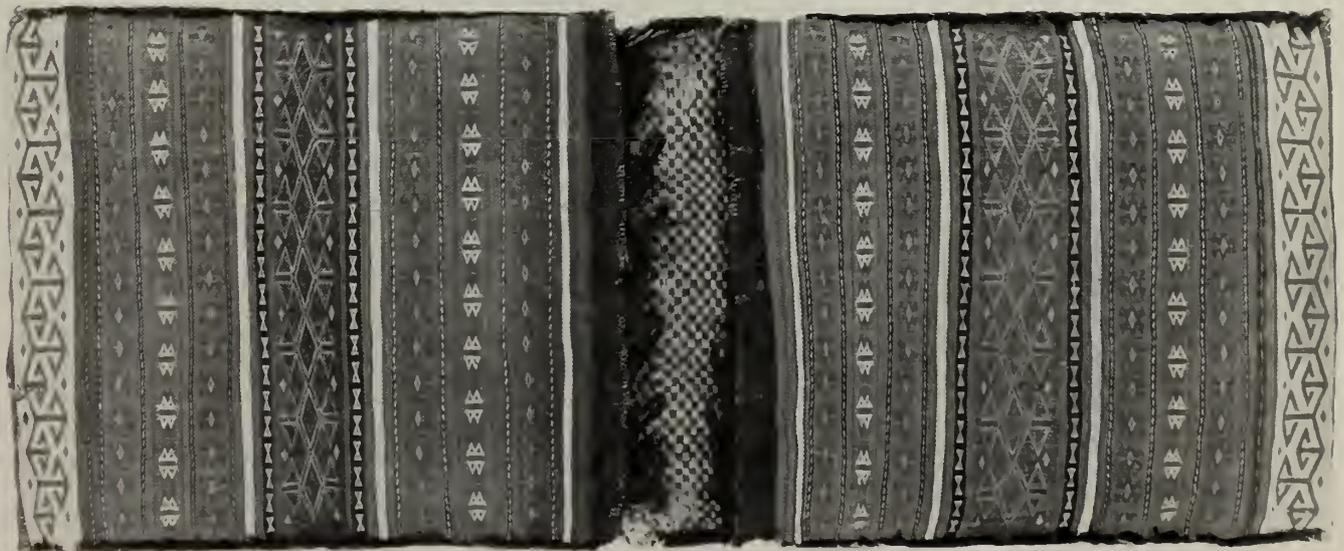
53. Main Carpet



54. Door Rug



55. *Tent Door Surround*



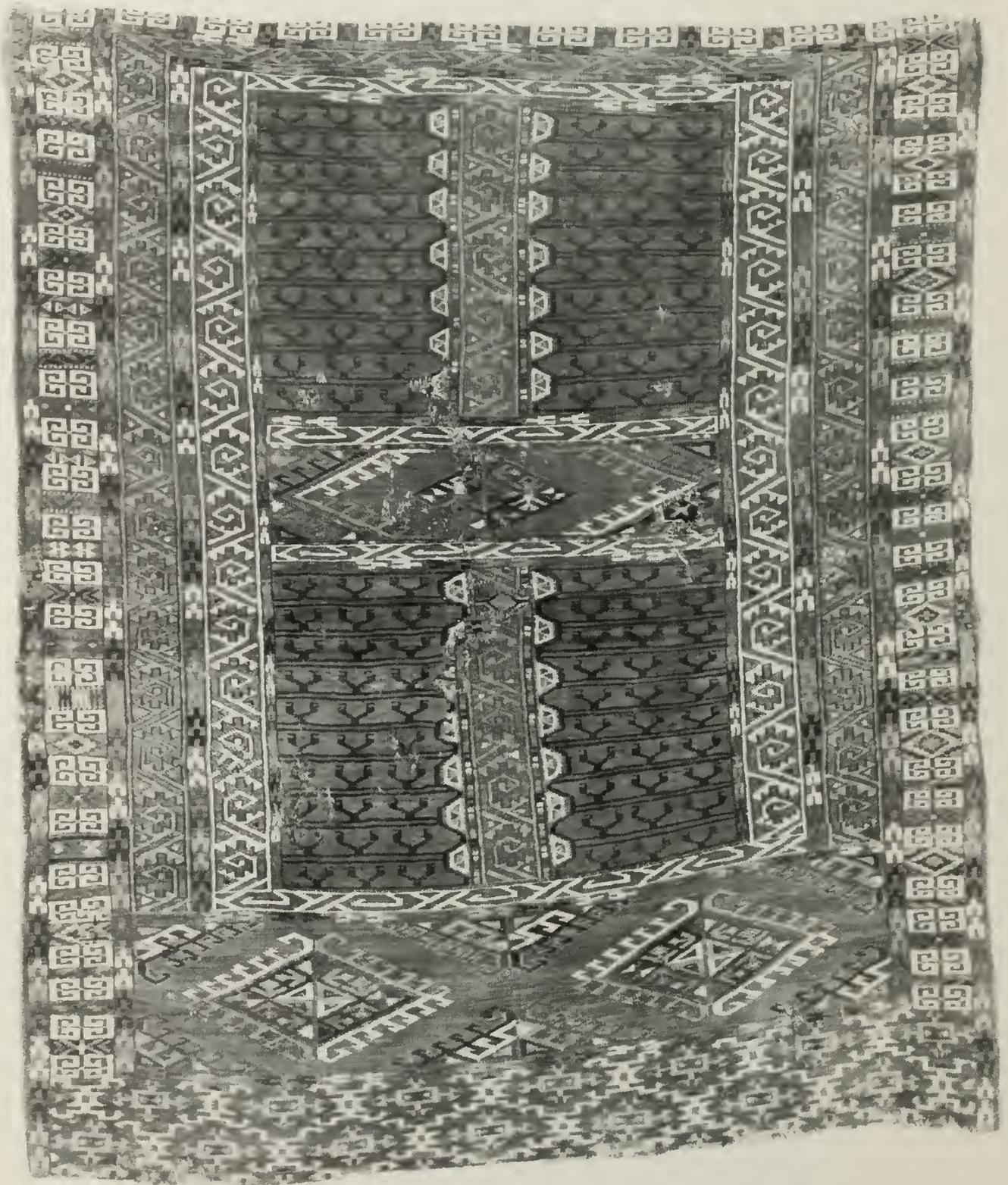
56. *Saddle Bag Pair*



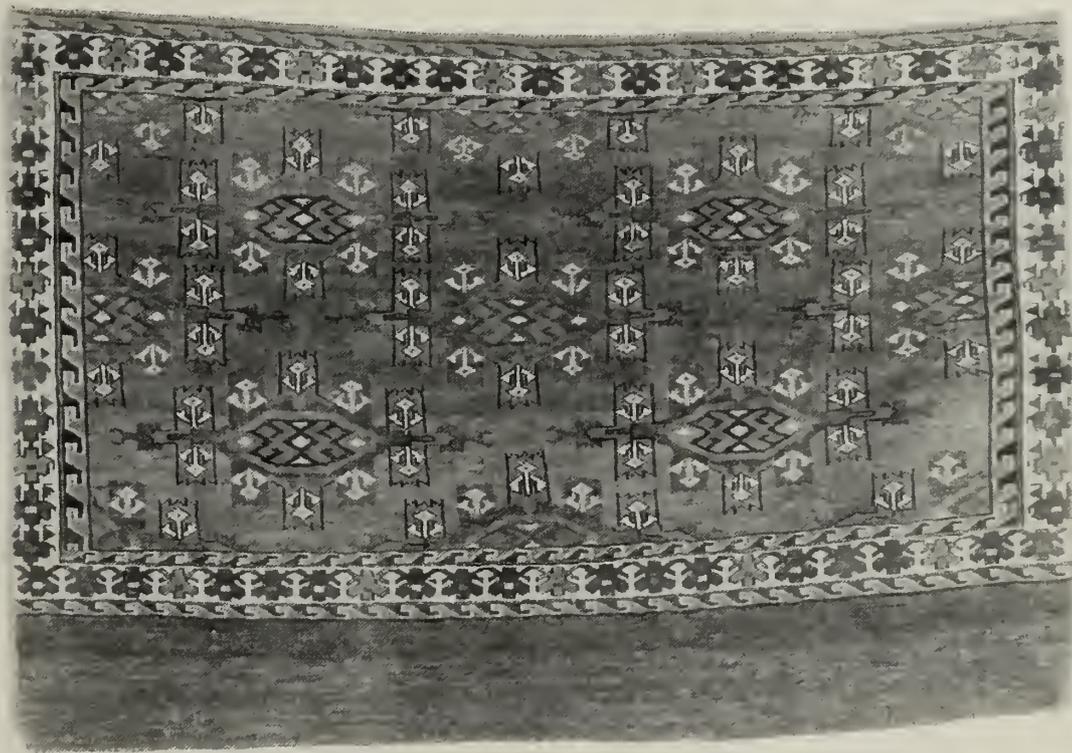
57. Large Carpet



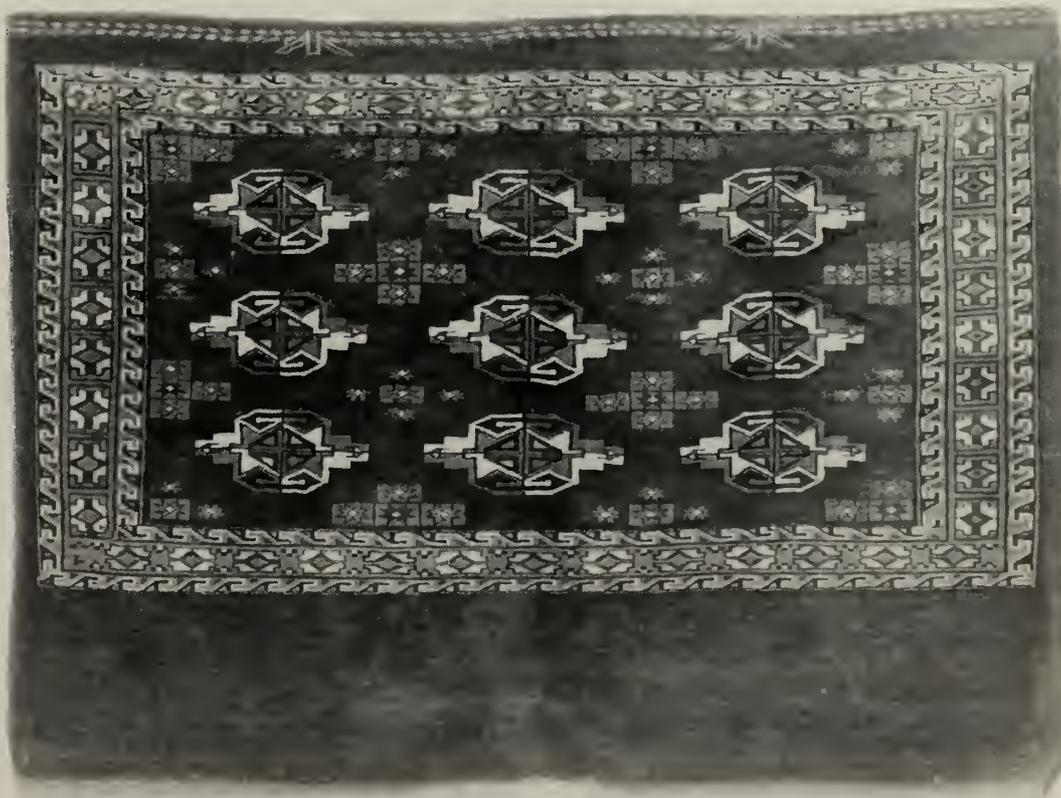
58. Carpet Fragment



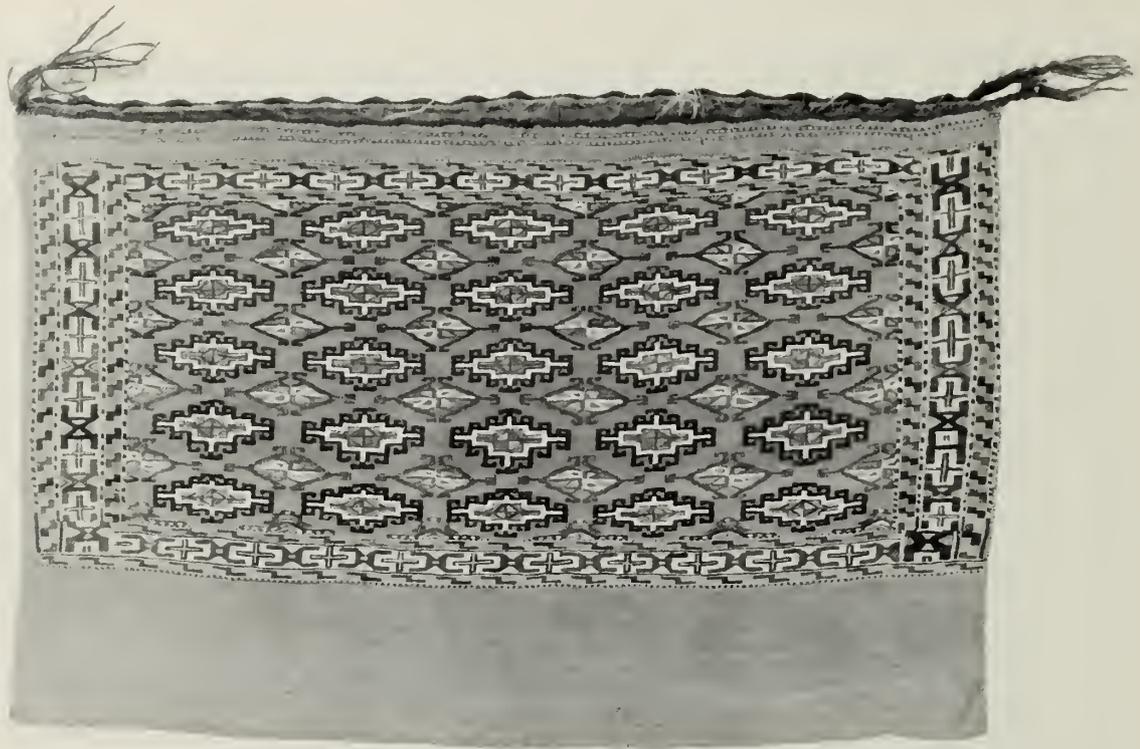
59. *Tent Door Rug*



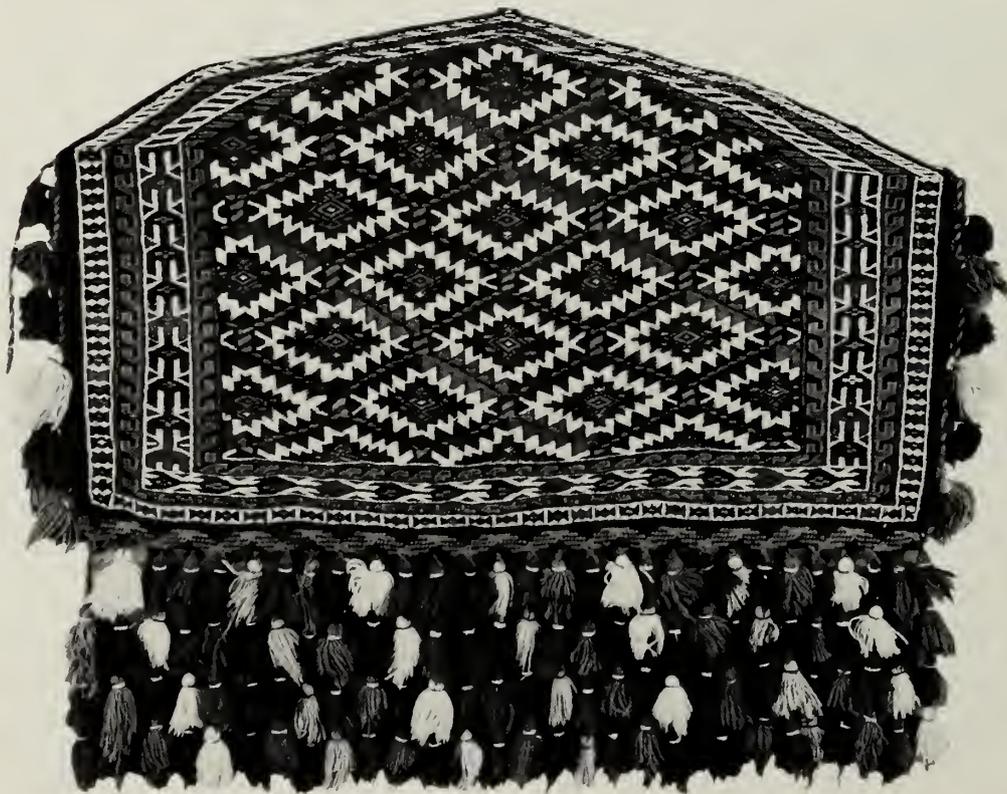
60. Large Wall Bag



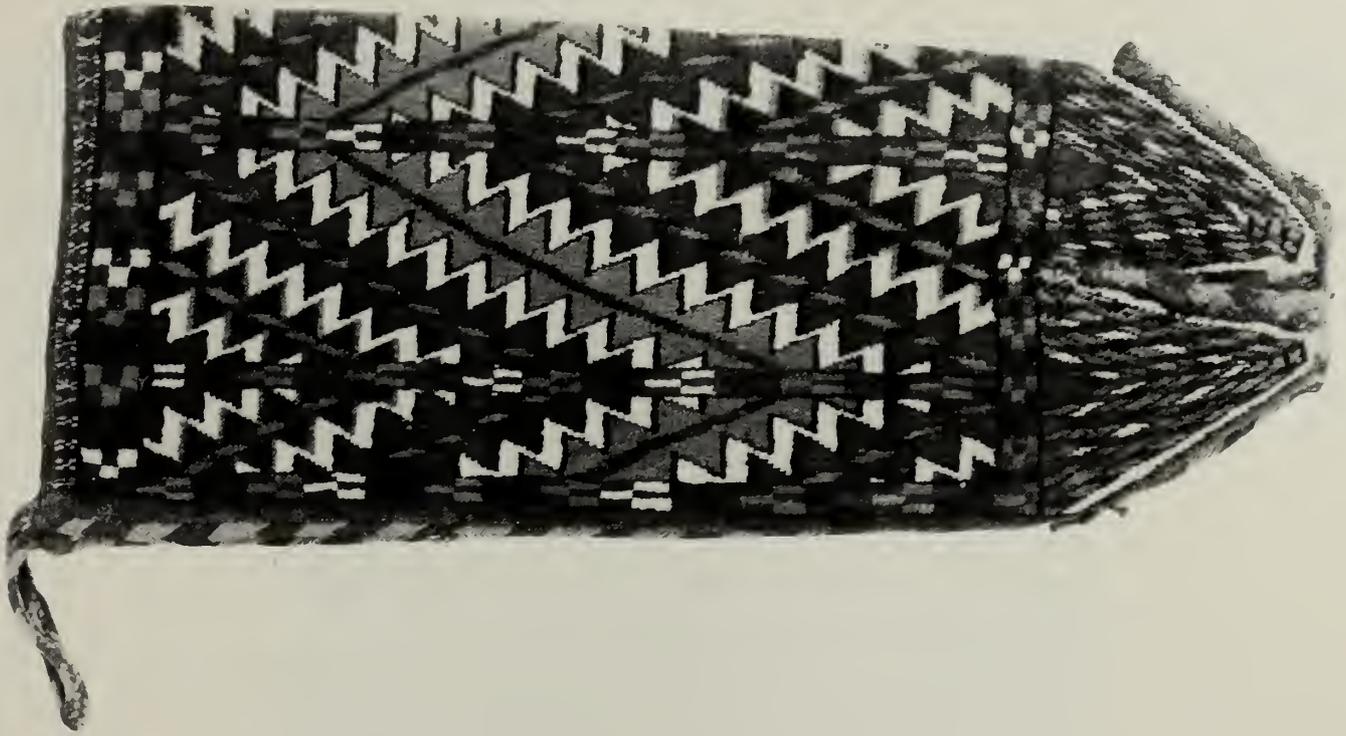
61. Large Wall Bag



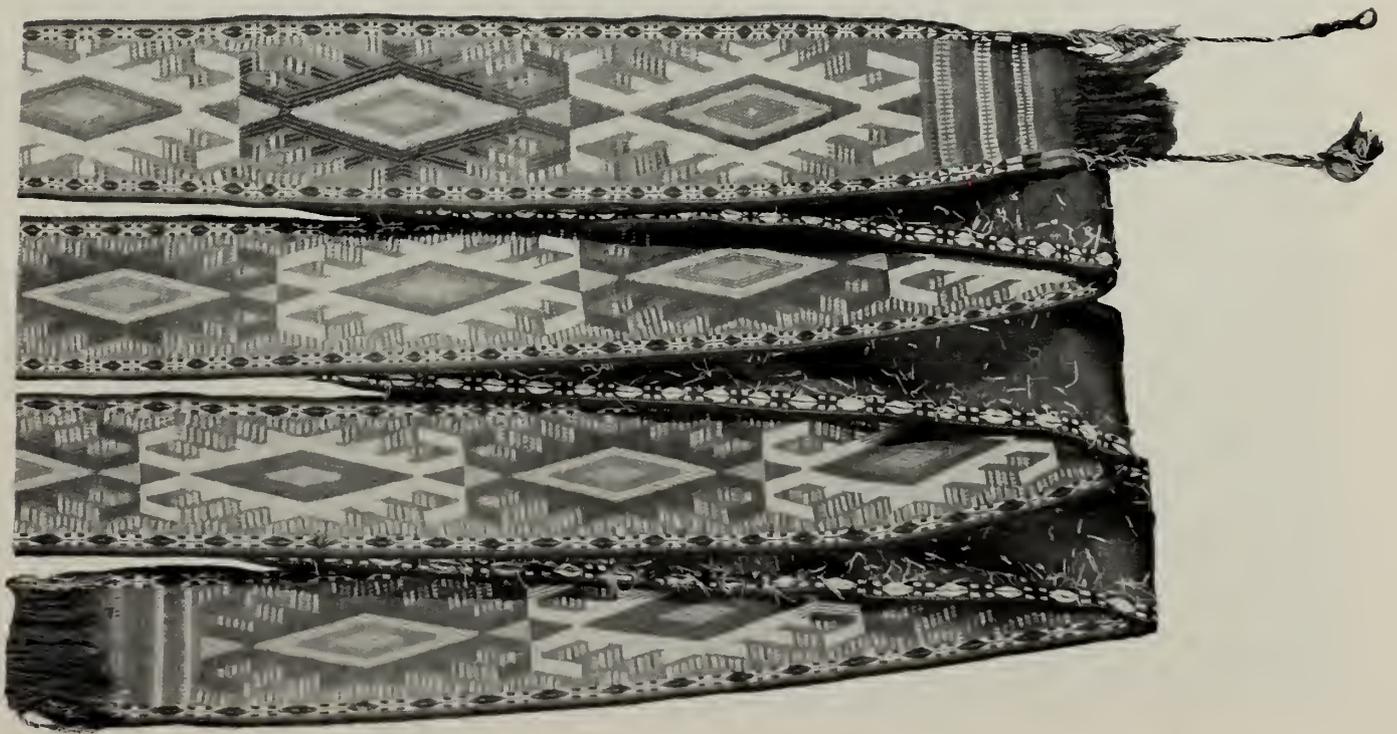
62. Utility Tent Bag



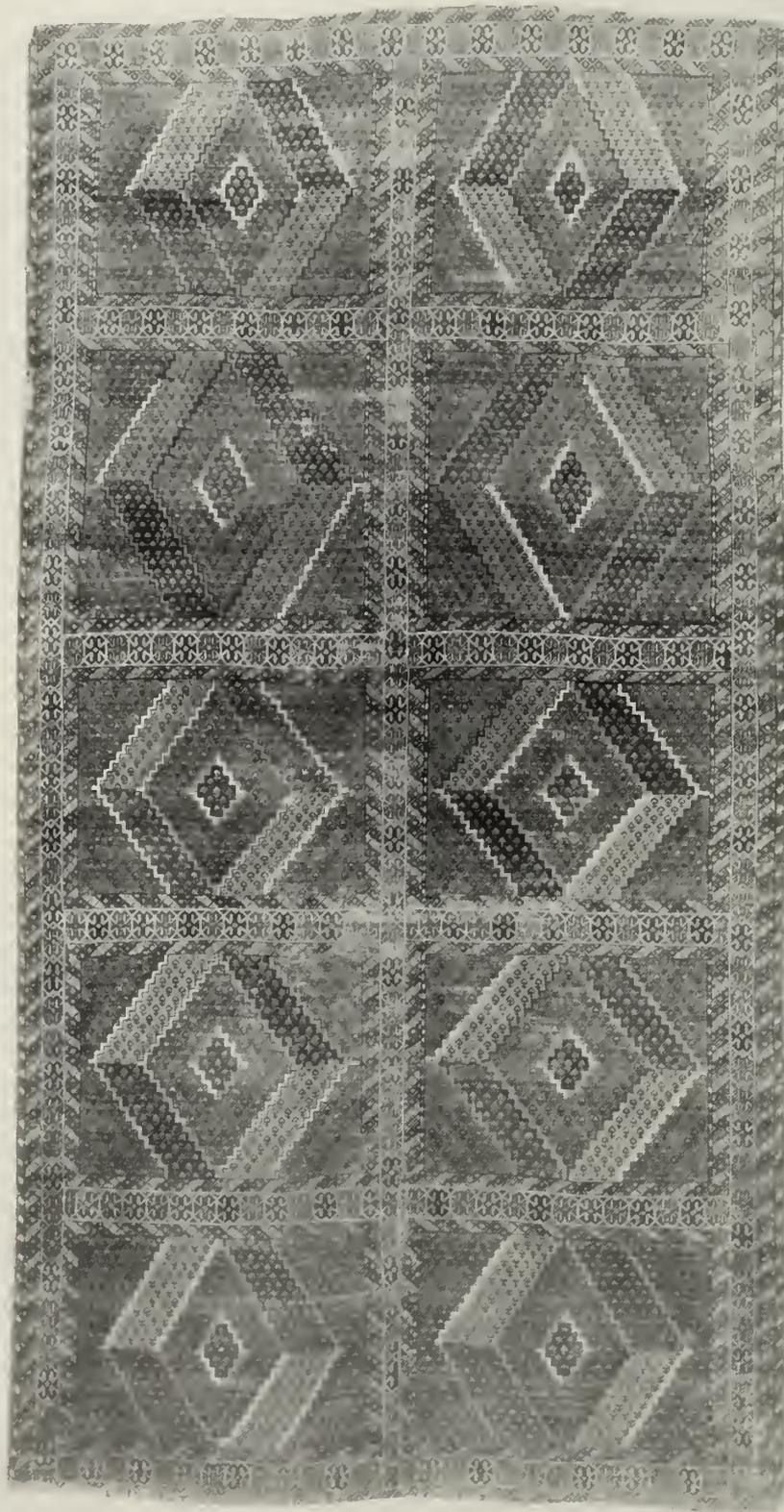
63. Tent or Animal Decoration



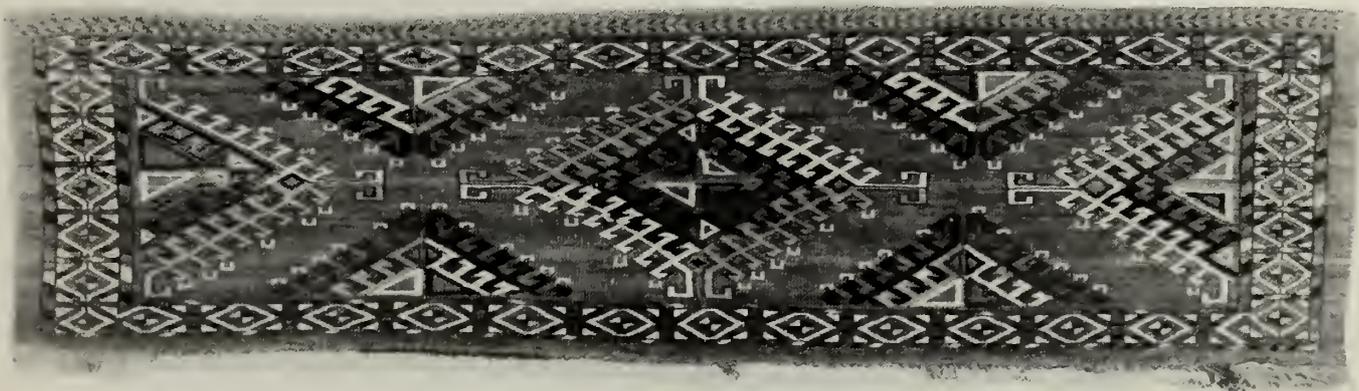
64. Strut Pole Cover



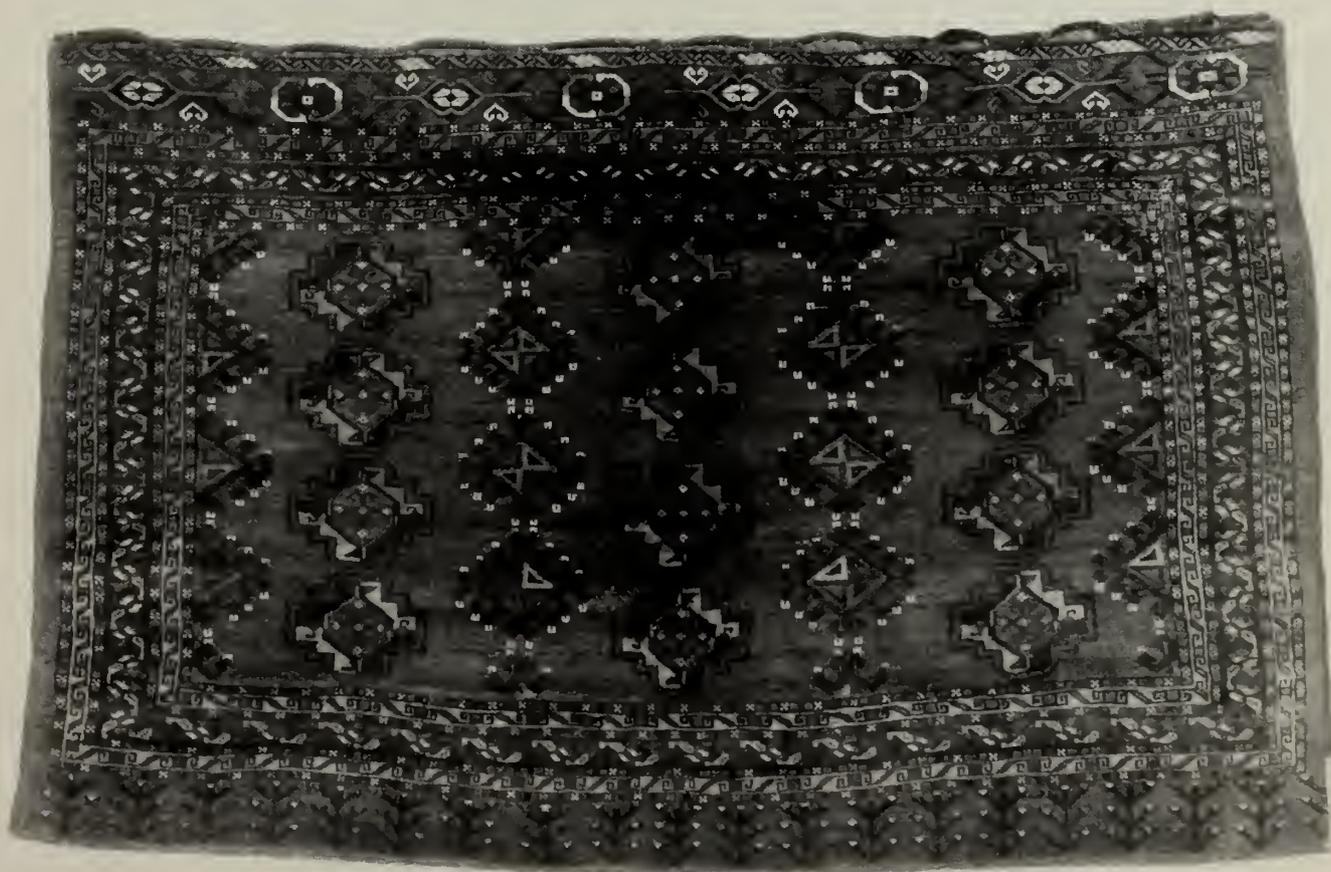
65. Tent Band



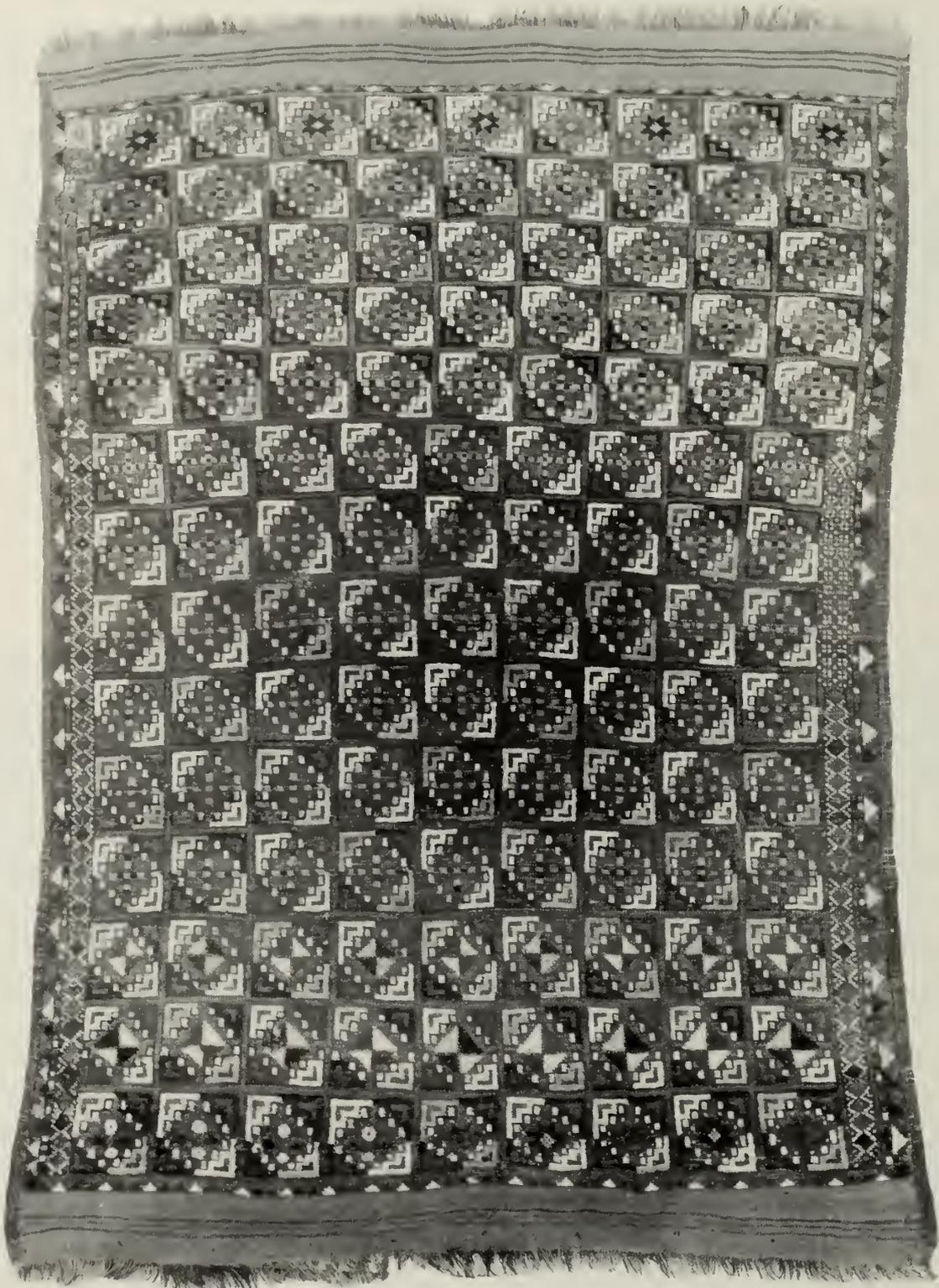
66. *Large Carpet with Diamond Motif*



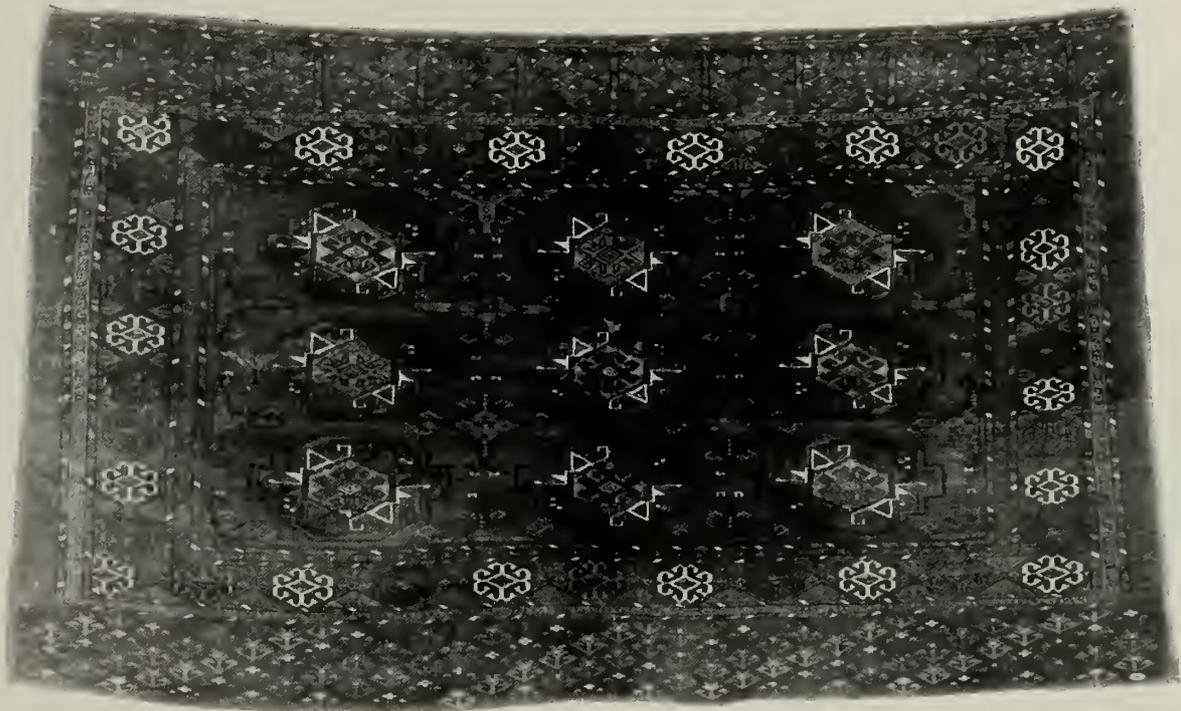
67. Large Utility Bag Face



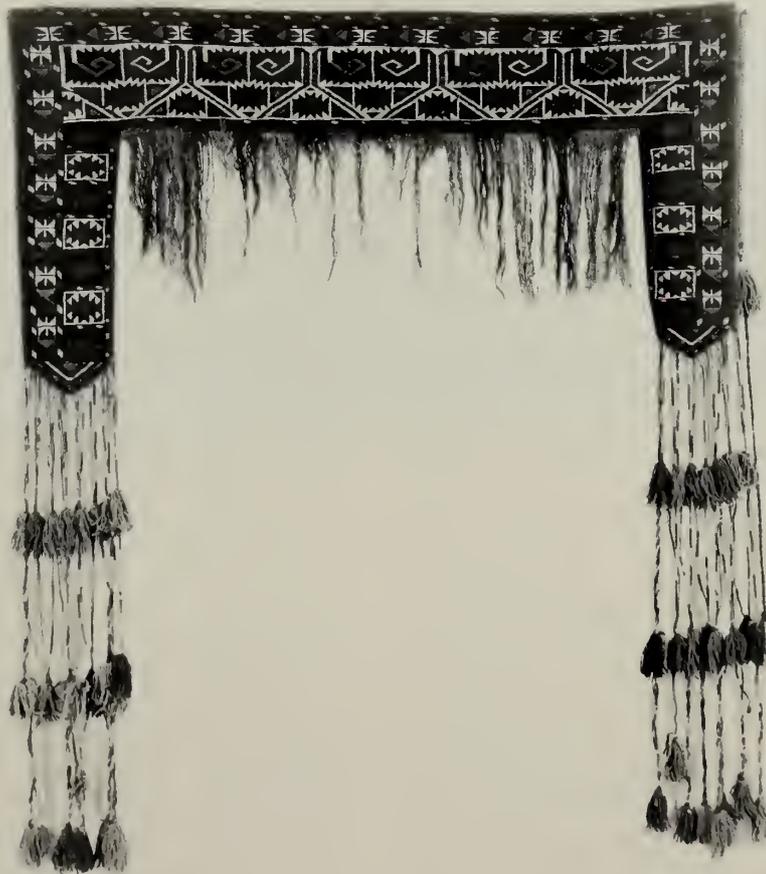
68. Large Storage Bag



69. Rug with Octagon Patterns



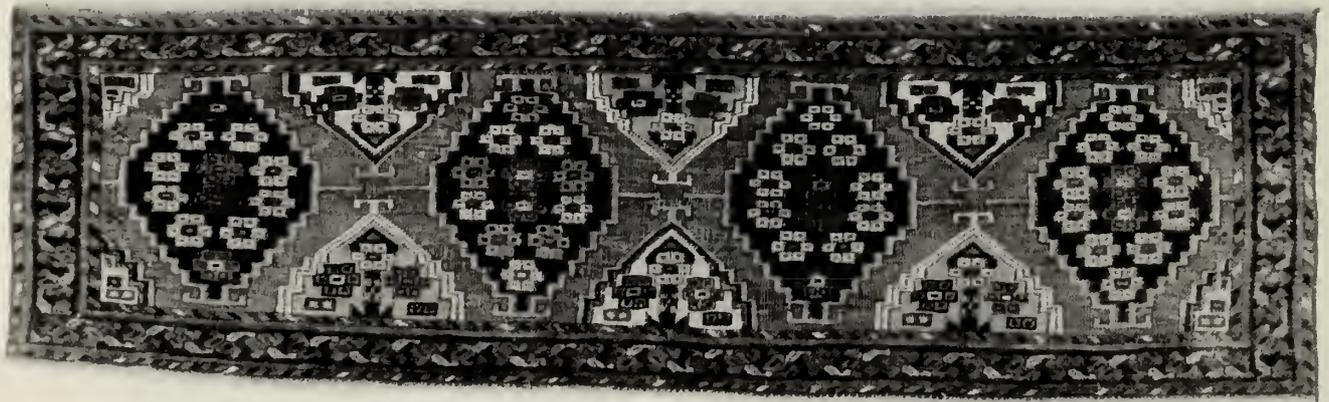
70. Large Storage Bag



71. Large Door Surround



72. *Large Pile Bag*



73. *Large Tent Bag*



PERSIA

With cultural expansion and economic resources superior to those of the Caucasus, Turkey, and Transcaspia, Persia has enjoyed prominence in weaving from the early development of the carpet. Factory, village, and nomadic looms of past centuries, as well as those of today, brought Persia recognition as the weaving center of the world and the home of fine carpet design. Records mention carpet weaving from the time of the late Sassanian Empire (224-641) and during the Caliphate, Seljuk, and Mongol periods (641-1449). With the establishment of the Sefavi dynasty (1449-1736), court factories were instituted and looms set up in many cities. Tabriz, Kashan, Isfahan, and Herat became centers for the manufacture of excellent rugs. Rug-making techniques were refined, especially during the reigns of Shah Tamasp and Shah Abbas. These princes were able to call upon the most gifted illuminators to contribute designs and upon master weavers to execute them. They were further aided by the full development of dyeing methods. Under these conditions carpet manufacture was raised to a fine art.

Design in Persian carpets was influenced both by nature and by architecture. Prayer carpets were patterned after the prayer niches in mosques; garden carpets containing flowers, birds, and waterways with fish were influenced by the formal gardens of the palaces; and the great compartment carpets reflected the designs of the formal palace courts.

With the dawn of the eighteenth century came a decline in court rugs. The skill, range of ideas, and material resources already built up had sustained the craft at a respectable level through nearly a century of political, social, and economic decline. However, the shock of the Afghan invasion in 1722 was devastating to practically every phase of Persian culture. By the time recovery was possible, the court schools and factories had disappeared. The period of the great rugs was over.

During the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, smaller shops in cities and villages became established throughout Persia. Demand for oriental rugs increased as affluent Europeans came to recognize their aesthetic value and to desire them for their homes and mansions. This demand not only brought about a resurgence of the Persian carpet industry, but it also brought nomadic rugs into the market. The nomads of southern Persia had a long tradition of weaving but heretofore had made rugs only for their personal use. While many of the new rugs were hastily woven, using poor materials and dyes, some of the new weaving centers took pride in developing rugs of high quality, borrowing designs and patterns from their forebears.

A Persian carpet showing a familiar formal style of design is exhibited in plate 1. The overall design in this example reflects the splendor of carpets from the great court manufacture period. Strong Caucasian influences can be seen in Persian carpet designs of the Karadagh weaving area, northeast of the city of Tabriz, near the

Caucasian border. Although the drawing in the rug in plate 2 echoes Caucasian elements, the motifs are drawn from earlier seventeenth-century northwestern Persian garden carpets. Plate 12 contains minute floral patterns common to Senna rugs; floral devices in the lower portion of the main blue field are similar to *herati* designs found in rugs from the Feraghan weaving district.

The Persian examples selected for this exhibition provide an indication of the variety of small village and nomadic weavings produced in the Baluchistan and Shiraz areas. The small carpets, animal bags, pillows, bag faces, and gun cases illustrate the diversity of weaving skills used; they are made in both flat-weave and piled techniques.

Plates 3, 4, 5, 8, and 11 illustrate the fondness of the Baluchis for employing a profusion of designs in their weaving. Plate 3, for example, contains large floral motifs composed of dainty white rosettes; plate 4 has an overall design of small geometricized forms in the main field; in plate 5, birds are used to highlight main field elements. The large *kilim* rug shown in plate 8 employs the *soumak* weaving technique and displays horizontal bands, devices used frequently as border designs in Baluchi rugs. A main border of dainty flowers, highlighted in white, helps to form the niche of the prayer rug in plate 11; three vertical stems separate the panels in the main field. The range of south Persian weaving skills is exemplified by the interesting contrast between the small donkey bags shown in plate 13 and the large saddle bags depicted in plate 15.

1. Carpet with Central Medallion

Persian, Malayer Saruk, ca. 1840
4' 11" x 3' 5"

This rug was made in an area between Hamadan and Arak (Sultanabad) called Malayer. It is known in the rug trade as Malayer Saruk because of the central medallion and formal layout usually found in Saruk carpets. The overall designs display the earlier splendor of carpets from the great court manufacture period. From the quartered central medallion, which is set on a field of white and adorned with small budded flowers, extend two large palmettes. An intricate arrangement of small flowers, vines, and leaves completes the main theme of the carpet. The border emphasizes the so-called turtle pattern, commonly found in Persian Feraghan rugs, and contains a set of formal palmettes. Carnations, floral buds, and leaves are connected by a prominent stylized vine.

Warp: cotton, 1-Z yarn, S plied
Weft: cotton, 1-Z yarn, S plied
Pile: wool, symmetrical knot (180 per sq. in.)

2. Large Medallion Rug

Persian, Karadagh, ca. 1825
12' 9" x 3' 10"

Karadagh rugs are usually decorated with large bold designs of Caucasian influence because they are made northeast of Tabriz near the Russian border. These rugs also display designs commonly found in Shirvan weaves of the south Caucasus. Motifs in this rug herald from earlier prototypes of seventeenth-century northwest Persian garden carpets which contained large flowers, palmettes, and floral sprays. Four lozenges with extended branches appear vertically in the center field, dividing the rug into three sections. Each section contains a variety of diamond medallions, rosettes, flowers, and shrubs, lending credence to the strong Persian influence that continues in the rugs from this area today. In the main border, two parallel vines contain tulips in full bloom. The white background of the lesser borders accentuates the small bud and leaf pattern connected by a minute vine.

Warp: wool, 2-Z yarns, S plied
Weft: wool, 2-Z yarns, unplied
Pile: wool, symmetrical knot (140 per sq. in.)

3. Rug with Seven Large Medallions

Persian, Baluchi, ca. 1875
5' 2" x 3' 3"

Dainty white rosettes act as the pivot for the large floral medallion motifs, framed by a stepped lattice arrangement and set on a field of blue, on this carpet of luxurious pile. A band of a lighter blue forms an *abrash*, adding a special effect to the main field. The reciprocal design in the larger border creates added charm and is contained by minute guard stripes found in the minor borders.

Warp: wool, 2-Z yarns, S plied
Weft: wool, 2-Z yarns, S plied
Pile: asymmetrical knot (127 per sq. in.)

4. Rug with Flat-woven Field

Persian, Baluchi, ca. 1890
6' 6½" x 3' 6½"

This rug exemplifies the superior weaving skills to be found in many Baluchi rugs. The main border of rosettes and opposing rams' horns surrounds a rust-colored main field of octagonal and *archetypal guls* often found on Turkoman and Turkish rugs. Both upper and lower panels are of flat-weave brocading.

Warp: wool, 2-Z yarns, S plied
Weft: wool, 1-Z yarn, unplied
Pile: wool, asymmetrical knot (130 per sq. in.)

5. *Rug with Bird Field*

Persian, Baluchi, ca. 1890

5' x 2' 4"

In the main field of this rug all but one of a flock of birds are apparently contemplating the feast in the six urns running vertically in the center field; the goose in the lower right-hand side is looking the other way. The main border has a very bold wavy vine with geometricized leaves and flowers attached.

Warp: wool, 2-Z yarns, S plied

Weft: wool, 2-Z yarns, S plied

Pile: wool, symmetrical knot (117 per sq. in.)

6. *Pillow Face*

Persian, Baluchi, ca. 1875

2' 8" x 2' 8"

The fondness of Baluchi weavers for using designs of Turkish and Turkoman origin is evident in the field surrounding the quartered central medallion on this pillow cover. The border contains repeating floral stems of deeply indented leaves and diamond-shaped flowers in full bloom.

Warp: wool, 2-Z yarns, S plied

Weft: wool, 2-Z yarns, S plied

Pile: wool, asymmetrical knot (90 per sq. in.)

7. *Pillow Face*

Persian, Baluchi, ca. 1850

2' x 1' 6"

White carnations separate diamond-shaped devices which appear diagonally through the main field. The overall effect adds charm and a suggestion of movement. The main border shows angular leaves connected in a wavy pattern and, through its simple design, draws attention to the center field. A white guard stripe frames the entire rug. Pillow faces and rugs of this size testify to the refinement of design, color, and weaving techniques found in small Baluchi products.

Warp: wool, 2-Z yarns, S plied

Weft: wool, 1-Z yarn, unplied

Pile: wool, asymmetrical knot (120 per sq. in.)

8. *Kilim Rug*

Persian, Baluchi, ca. 1890

9' 1" x 5' 3"

This *soumak* of Baluchi origin is rare because of its large size and was originally thought to be Turkoman. The origin is unquestionably Persian. The main dark blue field displays horizontal bands of designs commonly found in borders of Baluchi rugs. These

designs are made more prominent by the use of white cotton. In the main border the so-called crab motif alternates with a diamond formation.

Warp: wool, 2-Z yarns, S plied

Weft: wool, 2-Z yarns, S plied

Pile: *soumak* brocading

EXHIBITIONS: The Textile Museum, Washington, D.C., "From the Bosphorus to Samarkand: Flat-woven Rugs," May-September 1969; Civic Center Museum, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, "Heritage of the Middle East," January-February 1978.

LITERATURE: Landreau and Pickering, plate 22.

9. *Rug with Allover Field Design*

Persian, Baluchi, ca. 1875

3' 7½" x 2' 1"

Occasionally different weaving skills are employed on the same rug. The plain field of light tan with deep serrated edges typifies flat-weaving technique and is framed with borders of pile knotting. The minor borders of rust and green reciprocal trefoils call attention to the main border of interlaced S-designs. Both upper and lower panels are of flat-weave *kilim* construction.

Field: wool, flat weave

Warp: wool, 2-Z yarns, S plied

Weft: wool, 2-Z yarns, S plied

Pile: wool (borders only), symmetrical knot (63 per sq. in.)

10. *Gun Case*

Persian, Baluchi, ca. 1900

3' x 7"

This gun case demonstrates both pile and flat-weave techniques. A series of diamond devices lies in the main portion between border stripes composed of geometricized flowers running vertically. The rope at the top was used to place the case over the horn of a saddle or as a means of hanging it in a tent. Bundles of wool grouped together on the side and bottom are ornamental.

Warp: wool, 2-Z yarns, S plied

Weft: wool and goat hair, 1-Z yarn, unplied

Pile: wool, asymmetrical knot (80 per sq. in.)

LITERATURE: Roberts, plate 19.

11. *Timuri Prayer Rug*

Persian, Baluchi, 1869 (dated)

4' 2" x 3'

Prayer rugs of this type were made by the Timuri Baluchi tribes that inhabit an area of Zurabad in

northern Kurasan located near the border of western Afghanistan. The Timuris are a small tribe of Mongol descent and of the Sunni branch of the Moslem religion. Their rugs have all the characteristics of true Baluchis, though they are somewhat thinner. They use the Persian knot, which is an indication that they learned the art of weaving from their Persian neighbors. In this rug, the main border of dainty flowers, highlighted in white, helps form the prayer niche, which is flanked by winged devices in the spandrel area. The main field has three vertical stems which act as separate panels and from which spring an abundance of angular floral forms.

Warp: wool, 2-Z yarns, S plied
Weft: wool, 2-Z yarns, S plied
Pile: asymmetrical knot (90 per sq. in.)

12. Saddle Cover

Persian, Senna, ca. 1850
3' 2" x 3' 3"

Allen Memorial Art Museum. Gift of Ernest H. and Marcia Roberts.

Persian saddle rugs were a frequent product of the weavers from the Senna area and were made with some of the finest weaving techniques. The parts that would normally fit over the horn and saddle have been filled in but are evident on the field of blue. Other designs in the main field are similar to the *herati* design found in Feraghan rugs. The main and outer borders are repeats of flowers joined by connecting vines.

Warp: white cotton, 4-Z yarns, S plied
Weft: white cotton, 1-Z yarn, unplied
Pile: wool, asymmetrical knot (304 per sq. in.)

EXHIBITIONS: Allen Memorial Art Museum, Oberlin, Ohio, September 23, 1978–October 22, 1978.

LITERATURE: Roberts, plate 13.

13. Donkey Pouches

Persian, Shiraz area, ca. 1875
2' x 4" x 1'

This pair of pouches employs the pile technique on the pouch faces and flat-weaving on the back and in the area between the pouch faces. The small size makes the design, although plentiful, seem more abundant, with birds, stylized flowers, and S-forms filling the main field. The borders are a repeat of angular leaves connected to a stylized vine. Strands of braided wool are used to secure the pouches through slits at the top to keep articles from falling out. Tufts of decorative horsehair are scattered around the perimeter for special effect.

Warp: cotton, 1-S twist

Weft: wool, 2-Z yarns, S plied
Pile: (pouch face only) wool, symmetrical knot (156 per sq. in.)
Back: cotton, flat-weave

14. Small Storage Bag

Persian, Shiraz area, ca. 1900
9½" x 1' 7½"

Small bags like these were not necessarily made in pairs (see plate 13) but were made to use as pillows or containers. The designs in the main field and borders are the same as those found in larger bags and rugs and help to add decorative charm to an otherwise drab nomadic tent.

Warp: wool, 2-Z yarns, S plied
Weft: wool, 1-Z yarn, unplied
Pile: wool, asymmetrical knot (168 per sq. in.)

15. Large Saddle Bags

Persian, Shiraz area, ca. 1900
4' 9" x 2' 6"

These saddle bags were made in a Shiraz village of the Fars, a principal weaving province where almost one-third of the population are nomadic. The faces of these bags have an allover design of crosses enclosed by diamond forms. This is further enhanced by the use of a larger diamond on a white background, which surrounds the lesser device. Looped cable passes through slits at the top to secure the bags, which are used to hold articles when traveling or are hung inside tents for storage. The back is a plain allover weft flat-weave.

Warp: wool, 2-Z yarns, S plied
Weft: wool, 2-Z yarns, S plied
Pile: wool, asymmetrical knot (108 per sq. in.)

16. Saddle Bag

Persian, Shiraz area, ca. 1875
2' x 2' 3"

This saddle bag is one of two original sides and was made by the Qashqli tribe of the Qashqai located near the Shiraz district of the Fars province (see also plate 17). The luxurious pile on this bag is enhanced by the many variations of rich colors used in the main field of dark blue, which is covered with peacocks with rich plumage, white sheep, and an array of brilliantly colored flowers. A heavy meander placed on a white background of the main border frames the exciting field. The back, which is of flat-weave, has bands of horizontal colors made from the same dyestuffs used on the piled front.

Warp: wool, 3-Z yarns, S plied
Weft: wool, 2-Z yarns, S plied
Pile: wool with some silk, symmetrical knot (81 per sq. in.)
Back: weft-faced plain-weave, 2-Z yarns, S plied

17. Saddle Bag Face

Persian, Shiraz area, ca. 1875
1' 8½" x 2' 1"

This bag face is also from the Qashquli tribe. The main border, containing a heavy vine set on white, is the same as in plate 16. This field contains a series of different-sized diamond motifs interspersed with a few animals, S-forms, and eight-pointed rosettes. The Qashquli are the finest weavers among the seven tribes of the Qashqai. This example has a very fine weave and is supple to the touch. Its excellence sets it apart from weavings of the other tribes from the same district.

Warp: wool, 2-Z yarns, S plied
Weft: wool, 1-Z yarn, unplied
Pile: wool, asymmetrical knot (160 per sq. in.)

TURKEY

There has always been a high regard for Turkish carpets. Since the thirteenth century, exquisite nomadic and village carpet examples have been recorded by historians, writers, travelers, and master artists. It was Marco Polo who documented thirteenth-century carpets and described them as "the finest in the world." Knotted carpets from Turkey are among the oldest examples of oriental rugs and predate carpet weavings of the Persian, Caucasian, and Turkoman looms. This strongly suggests that the knotted carpet originated in Turkey. The design styles of fifteenth-century carpets have been preserved for us because of the important role they played in paintings. The painters Lorenzo Lotto and Hans Holbein used them so frequently, each depicting a particular style and design, that today rugs of these types are referred to as "Lotto" or "Holbein" carpets (see plates 20 and 21). The exportation of these early carpets established their popularity in Western culture.

Like their Caucasian counterparts, Turkish rugs display bold geometric patterns and vibrant, well-balanced color schemes and, with few exceptions, employ heavy warping, coarse knots, and multiple wefting. A great variety of Turkish village rug designs have persisted into the twentieth century, though rugs from the late eighteenth and nineteenth centuries preserved antique designs more faithfully. Each village has its own conventional style, and each style is sought after by con-

noisseurs. Among these Turkish carpets are those showing strong Caucasian designs in both pile (plate 21) and flat-weave (plate 26) techniques. The carpet in plate 19 shows a simplified design of the nomadic rugs of the Yoruks.

Turkish prayer rugs and *kilims* have always been held in high esteem; two interesting prayer *kilims* of nomadic manufacture are exhibited here. In plate 24, an array of tulips of different sizes fills the prayer field, upper spandrel area, and main border; white cotton, supporting a latch-hook design, is used to form the prayer niche. A charming older example from the mid-nineteenth century, plate 25, shows the prayer niche on a light blue field; geometric elements which have lost all trace of their original floral form are placed uniformly throughout the rug, and the effect is made more interesting by the use of *abrashes*.

The excellence of Turkish weaving skills is demonstrated in two pleasing examples which depict both vigor in drawing and versatility of design. In plate 18, the central pole is composed of diamond-shaped units from which floral devices spring; large octagonal rosettes separated by tong-arched figures appear in upper and lower spandrel areas. In the border area of plate 22, there is an interesting and bold display of large stepped octagons and eight-pointed rosettes—features common in Turkish rugs.

When viewing these Turkish examples, it is easy to understand why they have been an important part of our Western culture for centuries. Close study of the rugs forces one to take seriously a rich and complex decorative tradition, and results in a greater awareness of the importance of this art form.

18. Rug with Floral Pattern

Turkish village, ca. 1850
5' 4" x 3' 5½"

The central pole set on a rust-colored field is composed of diamond-shaped units from which spring floral devices and is flanked on either side by a series of crosses. Large octagonal rosettes appear in the upper and lower spandrel areas and are separated by bold tong-arched figures. Covering the inner border, white on brown, are eight-pointed stellate forms, while the white outer border is a repeat of carnations uniformly separated by an interrupted heavy vine.

Warp: wool, 2-Z yarns, S plied
Weft: wool, 1-Z multiple yarns, unplied
Pile: wool, symmetrical knot (54 per sq. in.)

LITERATURE: A fragment of a very similar rug appears in McMullan, plate 116.

19. *Tile Pattern Rug*

Turkish, Yoruk, ca. 1875

6' 4" x 3' 10"

Allen Memorial Art Museum. Gift of Ernest H. and Marcia Roberts.

Admiration for Turkish tile designs is manifest in this splendid Yoruk rug. A serrated leaf design is used in the main border with alternating key and S-designs in the outer border. The main field design is quite common and was used in medallions on earlier Turkish carpets, porcelains, and tiles.

Warp: wool, 2-Z yarns, S plied

Weft: wool, 2-Z yarns, S plied

Pile: wool, symmetrical knot (54 per sq. in.)

EXHIBITIONS: Civic Center Museum, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, "Heritage of the Middle East," January-February 1978; Allen Memorial Art Museum, Oberlin, Ohio, September 23, 1978-October 22, 1978.

LITERATURE: Roberts, plate 41. *Hali* 1:50, fig. 7.

20. *Village Rug*

Turkish, ca. 1725

2' 11" x 2' 2"

Purity of artistic endeavor is usually preserved in older rugs, as this example shows. The field is uncluttered, and attention is immediately drawn to the large tendrilled octagonal medallions with interiors of stylized large rosettes, shrubs, and flowers. Diamond forms frame the octagons, and the border arrangement has a repeat of S-forms set on gold, with chevrons at the top and the bottom of the rug. This particular style of rug is slightly different from the ones that the fifteenth-century painter Hans Holbein used in his paintings, so it is known as a "Holbein Variant."

Warp: wool, 2-S yarns, Z plied

Weft: wool, 2-S yarns, Z plied

Pile: wool, symmetrical knot (54 per sq. in.)

21. *Pillow Rug*

Turkish village, ca. 1825

2' 10" x 2' 2"

The design in the main field of this nineteenth-century carpet has been in continuous use since the fifteenth century. European artists used rugs of this style in their paintings as points of interest on tables, floors, and balustrades (see also plates 20, 22, and 23). The basic pattern is very simple: a *gul* with stepped octagons contains diamond-shaped rosettes bearing tendrils. The discriminating use of white in the main field and to form reciprocal trefoils at either end makes the overall design forceful.

Warp: wool, 2-Z yarns, S plied

Weft: wool, 1-Z multiple yarns, unplied

Pile: wool, symmetrical knot (77 per sq. in.)

22. *Village Rug*

Turkish, ca. 1825

3' 5" x 2'

The intentionally bold design elements on this rug are favorites among village weavers. Upon a field of dark blue, two large stepped octagons contain extraordinary floral devices in heavy stylized form. The border is made more interesting through the clarity of alternating colored eight-pointed flowers. Smaller borders of gold contain floral buds, with gables at each end. If this rug had a back, it could be used as a pillow or for storage. As it is, it could be used as a horse blanket or as a decorative furniture cover.

Warp: wool, 2-S yarns, Z plied

Weft: wool, 1-S multiple yarns, unplied

Pile: wool, symmetrical knot (72 per sq. in.)

23. *Pillow Rug*

Turkish village, ca. 1850

2' 11" x 1' 9"

Small village rugs are always a favorite among collectors because they were rarely used in places where they would be abused. Moreover, small rugs like this one were primarily for casual or decorative use, and many old examples have survived the ravages of time. A heavy white outline frames the central medallion and draws attention to the five different-colored rosettes within. Tendrils extend from the diamond forms, which contain the medallions. A simple vine carrying minute flowers is well-defined on a gold background and composes the main border. Bold arches containing a shrub device flank the main field at either end.

Warp: wool, 2-Z yarns, S plied

Weft: wool, 1-Z yarn, unplied

Pile: wool, symmetrical knot (80 per sq. in.)

24. *Prayer Rug, Flat-weave*

Turkish village, ca. 1875

7' 8" x 4' 10"

Allen Memorial Art Museum. Gift of Ernest H. and Marcia Roberts.

Turkish prayer rugs and *kilims* were very popular during the nineteenth century and were made mostly by nomads or Turkish village weavers. This prayer *kilim* shows an array of tulips of different sizes in the prayer field, upper spandrel area, and main borders. All white areas are of cotton and are used prominently in the framing of the prayer field.

THE CAUCASUS

Warp: wool, 2-Z yarns, S plied
Weft: cotton, 1-Z yarn, unplied
Pile: flat-weave slit-tapestry technique

EXHIBITIONS: Joslyn Art Museum, Omaha, Nebraska, "A Rich Inheritance," November 17, 1974–January 12, 1975; Civic Center Museum, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, "Heritage of the Middle East," January–February 1978; Allen Memorial Art Museum, Oberlin, Ohio, September 23, 1978–October 22, 1978.

LITERATURE: *A Rich Inheritance*, plate 14. Roberts, plate 42.

25. Prayer Kilim

Turkish village, ca. 1850
5' 3" x 3' 5½"

Prayer *kilims* of this type were made in western Turkey, and this charming older example, with its excellent patina, is a choice rug. The rust-colored center field forms the prayer niche and is set on a light blue field. Geometric elements which have lost all trace of their original floral form are uniformly placed throughout this rug, and the effect is made more interesting by the use of *abrashes*. The slits are formed when the weaver changes direction, separating the colors with white zigzag lines. This is known as slit-tapestry technique in *kilim* weaving.

Warp: wool, 2-Z yarns, S plied
Weft: wool, 2-Z yarns, S plied
Pile: flat-weave slit-tapestry technique

26. Tile Pattern Kilim

Turkish village, ca. 1850
6' 8" x 3' 4"

Usually a repeated pattern is uninteresting; however, the design of this Turkish *kilim* is an exception. The change in color in the field lends a checkerboard effect which makes each tile pattern stand on its own. A further enhancement is the rows of minute flowers separating the tile elements. Many Turkish rugs and bag faces have the same pattern displayed in this field. The main border has a kufic key ornament found in earlier seventeenth-century rugs from Turkey and the Caucasus. This *kilim* is one-half of a pair that were made separately and joined in the middle.

Warp: wool, 2-Z yarns, S plied
Weft: wool, 2-Z yarns, S plied
Pile: *soumak* weft brocading on flat-weave ground

Caucasia and Transcaucasia link Europe and Asia. Caucasia, bounded on the west by the Black Sea and on the east by the Caspian Sea, is an area of about 167,000 square miles of rugged mountains and pastoral slopes. In few places in the world is there such a diversity of people and languages. Armenians, Georgians, and Scyths migrated into the Caucasus as early as the seventh century B.C., followed by the Kurds. From the eleventh through the fourteenth centuries A.D., various Turkish tribes invaded and settled there. By the nineteenth century the population consisted largely of Armenians, Azeri Turks, Kurds, and Georgians. Once a Persian territory, the Caucasus was acquired by Russia in 1813.

Carpets and fragments of rugs made in the Caucasus before the seventeenth century are hard to find, but there seems little question that the early carpets were influenced by Persian and Turkish designs. Naturally, a relationship reflecting the prototype rug art of neighboring Persia and Turkey developed, the influence of which can be seen to this day. European paintings helped to document the style and design of the early period of oriental carpets. Unfortunately, the exportation of early Caucasian rugs did not begin until two centuries later, thus denying us records of Caucasian prototypes.

In contrast to Persian rugs, with their floral patterns, Caucasian rugs are covered with bold geometric forms as diverse as the region and people who made them. Made mostly by nomads in scattered districts, the antique ones display a profusion of types and patterns very similar to the eighteenth- and nineteenth-century rugs found today. The quality of these rugs testifies to an extraordinary contribution to a nomadic art form that is held in high regard.

The bold designs of most of the Caucasian rugs in this exhibition were worked in flat-weave; one rug (plate 27) was made by the knotted technique. The latter is a splendid example of a large piled carpet fragment and displays geometric patterns with exciting vigor. The octagon-shaped medallion in the center contains a motif of trees, shrubs, and flowers in the style of earlier seventeenth-century garden carpets. The Silé rug in plate 28 comes from a group of pileless carpets brocaded in the *soumak* manner. The large S-forms in the field represent stylized dragons and are thought to be patterned after the dragon rugs of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Plate 29 offers evidence of the excellence which can be found in the manufacture of large Caucasian rugs and reflects the influence of fifteenth- and sixteenth-century court manufactured garden carpets of northwest Persia. In this example, the overall design reflects geometrically the artistry of its earlier Persian cousins. The design of the rug in plate 30 echoes the bold elements of its prototype, the famous Turkish Phoenix Dragon Rug of the

fifteenth century. Further elements of Turkish influence in Caucasian weavings are evident in plate 31. Plates 32 and 33 attest to the variety of geometric floral motifs found in small Caucasian pillows and utility bags.

Most of the examples catalogued here exemplify the finest weaving skills to be found in Caucasian rugs, as they were usually made for the weaver's personal use. Thus, individual pride and workmanship were of paramount importance.

27. Carpet Fragment

Caucasian, Dagistan area, ca. 1850

2' 11" x 2' 9½"

Occasionally, when a rug is partially destroyed, there are portions worth saving which are called fragments. We are fortunate to have this unusual carpet fragment preserved for us. It is exciting to imagine the whole rug. The center octagon-shaped medallion with extended tendrils contains a variety of trees, shrubs, and flowers and is patterned after earlier seventeenth-century Caucasian garden carpets. The field of blue highlights brilliantly colored rosettes and large diamond-shaped palmettes. This fragment is important because it is proof that the uncluttered designs in the field of early Caucasian rugs became more popular in later rugs.

Warp: wool, 2-Z yarns, S plied

Weft: wool, 2-Z yarns, S plied

Pile: wool, symmetrical knot (130 per sq. in.)

28. Dragon Rug

Caucasian village, ca. 1860

8' 6" x 6' 8"

Allen Memorial Art Museum. Gift of Ernest H. and Marcia Roberts.

This Silé rug comes from a group of Caucasian pileless rugs brocaded in the *soumak* manner. The large S-forms and reverse S-forms which cover the field appear to be stylized dragons and are commonly thought to derive from the dragon rugs of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. The patterns of these early rugs consisted of elaborate trellises of serrated leaves enclosing stylized dragons frequently in combat with other fabulous creatures. Through the centuries the dragon motif has continued to have a particular fascination for Caucasian weavers, although its stylistic evolution gives this nineteenth-century version only a remote resemblance to the prototype. This rug was woven in two pieces and joined down the middle.

Warp: wool, 2-Z yarns, S plied

Weft: wool, 2-Z yarns, S plied

Pile: *soumak* weft wrapping

PREVIOUS COLLECTIONS: Louis Jacoby, Berlin, Germany; Mrs. Gertrud Jacoby, Oberlin, Ohio; Mrs. Ursula Stechow, Oberlin, Ohio; Ernest H. and Marcia Roberts, Oberlin, Ohio.

EXHIBITIONS: Joslyn Art Museum, Omaha, Nebraska, "A Rich Inheritance," November 17, 1974-January 12, 1975; Civic Center Museum, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, "Heritage of the Middle East," January-February 1978; Allen Memorial Art Museum, Oberlin, Ohio, September 23, 1978-October 22, 1978.

LITERATURE: *A Rich Inheritance*, plate 48. Roberts, plate 52.

29. Large Soumak Carpet

Caucasian, Derbent village area, ca. 1850

10' 9" x 6' 5"

Many large *soumak* rugs woven in the Caucasus reflect earlier fifteenth- and sixteenth-century court manufactured garden carpets of northwest Persia. The overall design in this example, woven in the Derbent area, reflects the artistry, in geometric form, of its Persian ancestors. Three extraordinary central octagons dominate the main field and represent flowering trees in full bloom. Fourteen large palmettes are arranged along the inner borders of the main field, and groups of four L-shaped leaves separate the center octagons and border palmettes. An abundance of buds, flowers in bloom, small trees, shrubs, and leafy forms compete to balance the main field of the carpet. Two lesser borders contain small carnations and S-forms. The larger border shows a heavy wavy vine of geometricized flowers uniformly attached.

Warp: wool, 2-S yarns, Z plied

Weft: wool, 1-S yarn, unplied

Pile: *soumak* brocading

30. Pillow Face

Caucasian village, ca. 1860

1' 11" x 2'

The weaver used a design of extraordinary vigor in this pillow face. A dark blue background gives the bold design elements a third dimension that excites the imagination. An earlier version of this design is the Turkish Phoenix Dragon Rug of the fifteenth century. It is interesting that more men than women collect oriental rugs, and the men favor the bold designs of the Caucasus and Turkey. Maybe this rug shows why.

Warp: wool, 2-Z yarns, S plied

Weft: wool, 2-Z yarns, S plied

Pile: *soumak* brocading

LITERATURE: A sister to this rug appears in Landreau and Pickering, frontispiece and plate 42. The Turkish Phoenix Dragon Rug is discussed in Erdman, 1970.

31. Stylized Pillow Face

Caucasian village, ca. 1875

1' 6" x 1' 9"

Elements of Turkish influence appear in Caucasian weavings because Timurid influence dominated Near Eastern art culture for centuries. In this example, a variety of diamond motifs are abundant in the main border area and surround a white octagonal field containing pointed carnations. Flowers attached to parallel vines fill the minor border. Unexpectedly, birds and goats are interspersed in the center and corners of this unique pillow face.

Warp: wool, 2-Z yarns, S plied

Weft: wool, 2-Z yarns, S plied

Pile: *soumak* brocading

EXHIBITIONS: The Textile Museum, Washington, D.C., "From the Bosphorus to Samarkand: Flat-woven Rugs," May–September 1969.

LITERATURE: Landreau and Pickering, plate 47.

32. Pillow Face

Caucasian village, ca. 1875

1' 9" x 1' 6"

A formal arrangement of various-colored serrated floral forms dominates the blue field of this delightful pillow cover. Orange and blue carnations set in a white border add their own measure of charm. *Soumak* pillow faces are among the finest weavings found in the Caucasus. Because they were usually made for the weaver's personal use, pride and workmanship were most important.

Warp: wool, 2-Z yarns, S plied

Weft: wool, 2-Z yarns, S plied

Pile: *soumak* brocading

EXHIBITIONS: The Textile Museum, Washington, D.C., "From the Bosphorus to Samarkand: Flat-woven Rugs," May–September 1969.

LITERATURE: Landreau and Pickering, plate 50.

33. Utility Bag Face

Caucasian village, ca. 1875

1' 5½" x 3' 1½"

Bags of this type originally had backs and were used for storage. Many of the backs were removed to save weight in shipment to America, which is why they are known as bag faces. In America, many of them were used as floor mats and did not survive as they were not originally intended to be walked on. In the center of this bag face are three star-shaped medallions, a design most popular in the Shirvan district of the Caucasus. Stylized flowers uniformly surround the

starred medallions. A larger border with a white background contains a flowered S-form connected by a straight line. Two minor borders display flowers and continuous chevrons.

Warp: wool, 2-Z yarns, S plied

Weft: wool, 2-Z yarns, S plied

Pile: wool, *soumak* brocading

34. Bag Face

Caucasian village, ca. 1890

1' 6" x 3' 7"

This bag face was originally thought to be Turkoman because of its traditional Saryk Turkoman design. Closer examination of weaving techniques confirms a Caucasian origin. The ten stepped octagons in the main field are a version of the Turkoman Saryk *gul*. The small devices dividing the *gul* represent a flower form. The border decoration appears to be a turtle design but is really composed of alternating colored flowers.

Warp: wool, 3-Z yarns, S plied

Weft: wool, 2-Z yarns, S plied

Pile: *soumak* brocading

EXHIBITIONS: The Textile Museum, Washington, D.C., "From the Bosphorus to Samarkand: Flat-woven Rugs," May–September 1969.

LITERATURE: Landreau and Pickering, plate 38.

TURKESTAN

Turkestan covers the area of Transcaspia between the south Caspian Sea on the west, the middle Amu Darya on the east, the Aral Sea to the boundaries of Persia to the south, and Afghanistan to the southeast. From the nomadic looms of this diverse region of mountains, stepped plateaus, and vast desert wastelands come the most exquisite examples of Turkoman weaving. Turkoman rugs have been called the "Rembrandts of carpets," surpassing all others in their richness of color, fineness of weave, and fidelity to "family" motifs.

Until stability was imposed in the late nineteenth century, the region was marked by five hundred years of unrest and a nomadic way of life. Until the twentieth century, no other Near Eastern culture remained as nomadic. This inhibited cultural growth and retarded the writing of chronicles which would have aided in tracing the various patterns that have become common features in Turkoman rugs.

Difficult as it is to date Turkoman rugs earlier than 1850, designs in these carpets have preserved a tradition

established as early as the Seljuk period (1037-1194). Designs and patterns can also be traced to rugs with similar patterns found in Anatolia and to fifteenth-century Timurid miniature paintings of the Herat school. This is not surprising, as it was the Turks who founded the Ottoman Empire. Therefore, it is logical to conclude that these design elements hark back to pre-Islamic Turkish and Persian traditions of central Asia.

Until the middle of the nineteenth century, the Turkoman people were divided into nomadic and semi-nomadic federations, each with its own peculiar design characteristics. Identification of Turkoman rugs in terms of each federation has been difficult until recently. The study of the various weaving techniques, such as the way the knots are tied, the type and color range of the pile, the wefting material and color, the diameter of the warps, and the combinations of field patterns, has helped to identify the origins of these magnificent rugs. The principal tribes producing them were the Salor, Saryk, Tekke, Chodor, Yomud, and Ersari, all of which are represented in this exhibition.

Turkoman rugs can easily be distinguished from others by the red used almost exclusively as a basic ground color. There is the dark—almost oxblood—red in Salor and Saryk carpets; Tekke and Ersari carpets are characterized by a forceful bright red; then there is the reddish-purple used by the Yomuds and the brown-red of Chodor pieces.

The earliest Turkoman weavers were the Salors. Showing a precision in weaving unmatched in Persia, Turkey, or the Caucasus, they earned an unsurpassed reputation. Their history of carpet weaving excellence, long known by collectors throughout Europe, has more recently been recognized in the United States. Their nomadic way of life also produced excellent bag faces for utility purposes; these became choice tent decorations. The storage bags depicted in plates 35 and 36 are outstanding examples of the Salor weaver's ability to create a richness in color by varying the shades of only a few basic colors. Plate 37 shows a formal arrangement of oblongs in the main field separated by avenues of minute floral forms. Silk is used to highlight the overall design in plate 38, while the smaller bags, treasured by the nomads, show the diversity in Salor patterns (plates 39, 40, and 41).

It is not uncommon to see design influences crossing federation barriers through intermarriage between Turkoman federations. Saryk weaving skills matched those of the Salors, and the large Saryk carpet in plate 43 is rendered more interesting through the combined use of design elements of the Saryk, Yomud, and Ersari.

Because of the arches in the center panel and the row of arches at the top of the door rugs in plates 44 and 45, they were at first thought to be prayer rugs. This theory was later disproved, and the arches now are thought to represent the nomadic tent (*yurt*). Plate 46 provides an ex-

cellent illustration of a Saryk bag that has survived the ravages of time. White cotton, frequently used by the Saryks to highlight design elements, helps form the nine stepped *guls* in the main field. Plate 46 further emphasizes the strong correlation of design elements used by the Salor, Tekke, and Ersari.

With the defeat of the Saryks by the fierce war-like Tekkes in 1861, intermarriage influenced and combined designs of both federations—note the rug in plate 42, where Saryk design elements appear on the Tekke loom. Occasionally, there is a weaving so supple you could fold it up and put it in your pocket; this is the case with the Saryk storage bag in plate 49, where the material has developed a patina which adds to its luxuriousness. Plate 51 offers an interesting example of a weaving of late Saryk manufacture which uses an abundance of silk for the design elements. Silk is also used to compose the wefting—a feature most unusual in Turkoman weaves.

Chodor carpets are among the most numerous produced on Turkoman looms and are highly prized among collectors. In plate 53 is a Chodor carpet with an overall design of *Ertmen guls* separated by a trellis comprised of vines.

The Tekke Turkomans continued the weaving skills of their Salor and Saryk forebears and employed these skills to make an abundance of door rugs, large storage bags, tent door surrounds, and saddle bags (plates 52, 54, 55, and 56).

Yomud weavers continued to use the design motifs of their federation, but the construction of their carpets and bags was not as fine as those of the Salor, Saryk, and Tekke. Nevertheless, the Yomuds did not lack imagination, as evidenced by an early Yomud fragment, plate 58, where the patterns are unique and unlike those of any other Turkoman design. The *gul* of the Yomud carpet in plate 57 is representative of a design element belonging exclusively to the Yomud tribes. By slightly varying the colors of each *gul* in this carpet and arranging them across the field, the weaver has created a design both pleasing and free from monotony. A very old door cover can be seen in plate 59; a variety of designs make this rug an interesting example and shows the depth and versatility of patterns found in Yomud weavings. Proof of the broad nomadic weaving culture of the Yomud Turkomans is further evidenced by the animal decoration in plate 63, the strut pole cover in plate 64; and the tent band in plate 65.

The Ersaris were the least nomadic of all the Turkoman federations and established their trade routes from the Aral Sea, south along the Amu Darya (Oxus River) into northern Afghanistan. Most Ersari motifs, such as those depicted on the large storage bags in plates 67, 68, and 70, were borrowed from other Turkoman federations. However, the Ersaris had a fondness for diamond motifs, and plate 66 shows a large carpet with ten three-dimensional diamond patterns, forming compart-

ments which create the illusion of a box-within-a-box. The Ersari Turkomans also developed unusual patterns such as that shown in plate 69, which depicts a skillfully rendered overall design of octagons contained within squares.

35. Bag Face

Turkoman, Salor, ca. 1860
2' 8" x 4' 3"

The octagonal *guls* with their reverse-volute edges are characteristic of weavings by the Salors, the earliest Turkoman tribe, now extinct. This piece is a particularly outstanding example of the Turkoman weaver's ability to create great richness using shades of a few basic colors.

Warp: wool, 2-Z yarns, S plied
Weft: wool, 1-Z yarn, unplied
Pile: wool, asymmetrical knot (375 per sq. in.)

EXHIBITIONS: Joslyn Art Museum, Omaha, Nebraska, "A Rich Inheritance," November 17, 1974-January 12, 1975; Civic Center Museum, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, "Heritage of the Middle East," January-February 1978.

LITERATURE: *A Rich Inheritance*, plate 61.

36. Large Storage Bag

Turkoman, Salor, ca. 1885
2' 8" x 4' 8"

This complete bag, with back, demonstrates how Salor designs became more crowded in later weaving examples. It further shows the infusion of motifs brought about through tribal intermarriages. In the main field are designs of true Salor origin (see plate 35), while the borders and lower panel show strong Tekke influences. The major *gul* has a band of light orange framing the octagon. This gives a fluorescent effect which calls attention to the elements surrounded by the octagon.

Warp: wool, 2-Z yarns, S plied
Weft: wool, 1-Z yarn, unplied
Pile: wool, asymmetrical knot (420 per sq. in.)

37. Large Storage Bag

Turkoman, Salor, ca. 1875
2' 3" x 4' 1/2"

Avenues of minute flowers separate the oblong ornaments which compose the main field. Each oblong is quartered in alternating blue and red and contains a hooked, stepped rectangle outlined in white, displaying eight-pointed stellate forms. Deeply serrated leaves comprise the main border, and a minute guard stripe flanks the inner main field. Alternating rows of orange

shrubs give a sense of angular movement to the entire floral field and lower panel.

Warp: wool, 2-Z yarns, S plied
Weft: wool, 1-Z yarn, unplied
Pile: wool, asymmetrical knot (264 per sq. in.)

38. Small Utility Bag with Silk

Turkoman, Salor, ca. 1850
1' 11" x 2' 11"

The basic pattern is similar to that on plate 39, a series of rectangles separated by floral channels. Each rectangle encloses a serrated diamond device outlined in white. Two corners in each rectangle are silk. The main border is composed of rows of adjoining oblong shapes, each containing a star device. Small geometricized flowers make up the two remaining borders. The lower panel shows a simple treatment of seven vertical stems from which oval carnations extend. The abundance of silk used in the pile adds luster to the entire surface.

Warp: wool, 2-Z yarns, S plied
Weft: wool, 2-Z yarns, S plied
Pile: wool and silk, asymmetrical knot (288 per sq. in.)

39. Small Storage Bag

Turkoman, Salor, ca. 1850
1' 8" x 2' 8"

Salor designs in the main *gul* on smaller bags become the center designs of *guls* on larger bags and carpets. Such is the case here (see plates 35 and 36). A series of rectangles holds the main octagonal design containing quartered rosettes. The dark corners of each rectangle produce a rhomboid illusion in this main element. Small floral buds are arranged to divide the rectangles and outline the borders.

Warp: wool, 2-Z yarns, S plied
Weft: wool, 2-Z yarns, S plied
Pile: wool, asymmetrical knot (403 per sq. in.)

PREVIOUS COLLECTIONS: Ralph Yohe

40. Small Bag

Turkoman, Salor, ca. 1840
10" x 2' 5"

Small bags were treasured by the nomads, who had the patience to produce some of the finest examples of loom craftsmanship for their own personal use. For this reason, they are sought after by rug collectors. The main field design is the same lattice pattern found in the Saryk bag in plate 51 and the Yomud tent door rug in plate 59 and contains an abundance of silk pile. The borders are unusual: an oblong outline encircles

minute rhomboid flowers in red and blue surrounded by white forms, separated by two small indented star forms and flanked on both sides with small flat bands.

Warp: wool, 2-S yarns, Z plied
Weft: wool, 2-S yarns, Z plied
Pile: wool and silk, asymmetrical knot (312 per sq. in.)

41. *Small Bag*

Turkoman, Salor, ca. 1825
1' 1" x 2' 7"

This bag displays a border arrangement identical to the one in plate 40. The main octagonal *guls* framed in a heavy blue outline are closely juxtaposed and show a quartered latch-hook motif. Minor elements between the main *guls* are star devices with square centers.

Warp: wool, 2-Z yarns, S plied
Weft: wool, 2-Z yarns, S plied
Pile: wool, asymmetrical knot (276 per sq. in.)

42. *Large Storage Bag*

Turkoman, Saryk, ca. 1875
2' 3" x 4' 3"

Occasionally we see a Saryk bag with many features of Tekke origin. This is easy to understand because the Saryks were defeated by the Tekkes in 1861, and intermarriages combined designs of both federations with Saryk weaving techniques. The brilliant red field adds sharp contrast to the vertical rows of stepped octagonal elements of white and light pink wool. White again is interspersed to illuminate the major border rosettes. In the lower panel a group of diamond-shaped floral devices is arranged to create a trellis pattern illusion.

Warp: wool, 2-Z yarns, S plied
Weft: wool, 1-Z yarn, unplied
Pile: wool, asymmetrical knot (288 per sq. in.)

43. *Large Carpet*

Turkoman, Saryk, ca. 1875
8' 10" x 7' 6"

This example combines Saryk, Yomud, and Ersari design elements. The construction, however, indicates Saryk manufacture. By the time it was made, circa 1875, design influences had already crossed federation barriers through intermarriage. The main octagonal *guls*, forming the five vertical columns, are divided into four parts, using stylized cartouches as an axis, with each part containing two double-headed animal figures, presumably rams. The minor *guls* with rhombus centers seem subdued, calling attention to the larger *guls*. A closely set series of hooked diamond motifs

dominates the main border area, with top and bottom borders illuminated by small diamonds made of white silk.

Warp: wool, 2-Z yarns, S plied
Weft: wool, 1-Z yarn, unplied
Pile: wool and silk, asymmetrical knot (180 per sq. in.)

44. *Door Cover*

Turkoman, Saryk, ca. 1875
5' 3" x 4' 3"

This *engsi* and the one on plate 45 are closely related, having come from the same weaving area probably a generation or two apart. The traditional large cruciform design in the main field, called *hatchli*, probably descends from a formal garden design. The five gable formations at the top of this rug were thought at first to represent multiple prayer niches. This theory was disproved later (see plate 54). White S-figures in the center and major border areas are made prominent by the use of white cotton. Saryk door covers are rare, but because they are woven more durably than other Saryk items, some excellent examples survive.

Warp: wool, 2-Z yarns, S plied
Weft: wool, 1-Z yarn, unplied
Pile: wool and cotton, symmetrical knot
(144 per sq. in.)

45. *Rug with Multiple Niches*

Turkoman, Saryk, ca. 1900
6' 8" x 4' 9"

Turkoman rugs of this design were used to cover doors and sometimes are regarded as prayer rugs because of the arches in the center panel and the row of arches at the top. The provenance of rugs of this type is in dispute, with some scholars claiming them for the Saryk tribes and others for the Kizil Ayak subtribes, both of the Pendeh oasis area. These rugs are often called *hatchli*, meaning "crossed" in Armenian, a reference to the broad horizontal and vertical bands crossing in the field.

Warp: wool, 2-Z yarns, S plied
Weft: wool, 1-Z yarn, unplied
Pile: wool, asymmetrical knot (198 per sq. in.)

EXHIBITIONS: Joslyn Art Museum, Omaha, Nebraska, "A Rich Inheritance," November 17, 1974-January 12, 1975.

LITERATURE: *A Rich Inheritance*, plate 58.

46. Large Wall Bag

Turkoman, Saryk, ca. 1825

2' 6" x 3' 1"

This is an excellent example of the few Saryk bags that time has preserved. White cotton is used to highlight the nine stepped *archetypal guls* on this bag, which show a strong correlation to *guls* used by the Salor, Tekke, and Ersari. The secondary cruciform element is also used frequently on Tekke, Ersari, and Yomud rugs. Wear has reduced the sides, interrupting a series of unusual diamond-shaped floral border motifs. The lower panel shows a field of large floral shrubs, well-organized on a plain red background. This is a classic example of a bag in western Turkestan style.

Warp: wool, 2-Z yarns, S plied

Weft: wool, 2-Z yarns, S plied

Pile: wool, symmetrical knot (190 per sq. in.)

EXHIBITIONS: The Textile Museum, Washington, D.C., "Turkmen Tribal Carpets and Traditions," October–December 1978; Montclair Art Museum, Montclair, New Jersey, "Turkmen Carpets and Traditions," January 1981.

LITERATURE: *Turkmen Tribal Carpets*, plate 19. *Hali* 3: 226, plate 4.

47. Storage Bag

Turkoman, Saryk, ca. 1825

1' 8" x 3' 11"

The overall artistic theme of this bag is the same as the one in plate 48 except that the minor motifs are smaller. The drawings of the field elements and border designs are precise and clear throughout, a familiar feature of Saryk Turkoman weavings.

Warp: wool, 2-Z yarns, S plied

Weft: wool, 1-Z yarn, unplied

Pile: wool, asymmetrical knot (264 per sq. in.)

PREVIOUS COLLECTIONS: Joseph V. McMullan

48. Storage Bag

Turkoman, Saryk, ca. 1850

1' 3" x 3' 8½"

Six stepped octagonal *guls* encircling center rosettes on a brick red field echo the rosettes found in the main border. Lozenges with extended tendrils make up the minor motifs and seem to be touching each other. In this example, freedom of design offsets the Saryk Turkoman's conservative tendencies and provides a subtle artistic balance (see also plate 47).

Warp: wool, 2-S yarns, Z plied

Weft: wool, 2-S yarns, Z plied

Pile: wool, asymmetrical knot (312 per sq. in.)

49. Wide Storage Bag

Turkoman, Saryk, ca. 1875

1' 3" x 4' 5"

Many Saryk bags and rugs are woven very tightly and feel stiff because of the compactness of the knots.

There are exceptions. The weaver of this bag used materials so supple that the bag could be folded and put in your pocket. The wool has a patina which adds to its luxuriousness. All design units are the same as found in plates 47, 48, and 50, except that the centers of the main *guls* each contain a star device within an oblong from which spring small palmettes.

Warp: wool, 2-S yarns, Z plied

Weft: wool, 2-S yarns, Z plied

Pile: wool, asymmetrical knot (384 per sq. in.)

50. Utility Bag

Turkoman, Saryk, ca. 1890

1' 4" x 3' 9"

The six main *guls* on this rug (woven circa 1890) are similar to the ones in plates 47 and 48 (woven circa 1825 and 1850 respectively), although they have been elongated and practically fill the main field. All the major field units have sharply drawn lines in very dark blue. Usually a decorative shag or fringe, partially shown here, hangs from the bottom of storage bags, and a rope at the top fastens the bag to a tent wall or to an animal during transportation. When hanging in a tent, the bag serves as a nomad's bureau drawer, providing storage for clothing or other articles.

Warp: wool, 2-S yarns, Z plied

Weft: wool, 2-S yarns, Z plied

Pile: wool, asymmetrical knot (372 per sq. in.)

51. Wide Bag

Turkoman, Saryk, ca. 1900

1' 6" x 4' 7½"

The center motifs resembling pomegranates are framed by an interesting chain-like lattice pattern which is made more forceful by the use of white cotton. This design is the same as that found in the lower panel of the Yomud tent door cover shown in plate 59. An abundance of red, green, purple, and yellow dyed silk has been used to form the main field elements. Silk is also used in the weft, which is most unusual for Turkoman weaves. Unusual, too, is the number of borders, which show S-designs and budded flowers in alternating stripes surrounding the main field.

Warp: wool, 2-S yarns, Z plied

Weft: silk, 2-S yarns, Z plied

Pile: wool, cotton, and silk, symmetrical knot (240 per sq. in.)

52. Large Storage Bag

Turkoman, Tekke, ca. 1875
2' 2" x 3' 6"

Uniformly stepped cartouches in the main field are separated by a *nebegul* (minor) design used in many Tekke carpets and bags. The borders repeat smaller floral forms. The intentional illustration showing seven blooming flowers, set in a row in the lower panel, has a striking effect that overshadows the numerous designs in the main field. Although this rug and the Tekke door rug in plate 54 were woven about the same time, their flower designs are from different centuries. The flowers on this rug are copied from originals several hundred years old which have evolved into the more abstract diamond-shaped floral forms in the border of the Tekke rug.

Warp: wool, 2-Z yarns, S plied
Weft: wool, 2-Z yarns, S plied
Pile: wool, asymmetrical knot (198 per sq. in.)

53. Main Carpet

Turkoman, Chodor, ca. 1875
12' 4½" x 7' 8"

Chodor carpets are among the largest of the Turkoman weavings and can be fourteen feet long. In this example, there is an overall design of *Ertmen guls* between a trellis of flowered vines containing small rosettes. The red and white *guls* alternate in diagonal rows set on a violet-brown background. The interior of each *gul* is composed of eight-pointed floral devices which serve as an axis for a smaller floral arrangement. On the white outer border is an angular vine containing hooks which frame serrated lozenges. Each end is banded uniformly by blue, white, and red decorated chevrons.

Warp: wool, 2-Z yarns, S plied
Weft: cotton, 2-Z yarns, unplied
Pile: wool, asymmetrical knot (128 per sq. in.)

EXHIBITIONS: Civic Center Museum, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, "Heritage of the Middle East," January-February 1978.

54. Door Rug

Turkoman, Tekke, ca. 1875
4' 11" x 4' 2"

For many years, these rugs were thought to be Turkoman prayer rugs. This idea was probably based on the arch at the center top, which was considered a prayer niche. Recently, it has been discovered that the domed arch design represents the shape of the tent in which the nomad Turkoman lives, and the rug is used to cover the opening of the dwelling. Generally, the

center of Tekke door rugs is divided into four quarters by vertical and horizontal panels creating a cross or *hatchli* effect. However, in this example, three vertical columns are separated by rows of branches. Immediate attention is drawn to the inner border as one wonders whether the floral devices are red design on white or white design on red. The main border is a repeat of diamond-shaped flowers with the outer border displaying a key device, a favorite on door rugs. Rosettes set against a brown background harmonize to complete the lower panel.

Warp: wool, 2-Z yarns, S plied
Weft: wool, 1-Z yarn, unplied
Pile: wool, asymmetrical knot (200 per sq. in.)

55. Tent Door Surround

Turkoman, Tekke, ca. 1880
3' 1" x 3' 8"

Turkoman weavers made decorations for almost every occasion. Door surrounds (*kapunuks*) were hung over the door opening inside the tent on special occasions or placed on the chest of a camel during bridal ceremonies. The *kapunuk* has a pile the same as that used in rugs, and the designs are often incorporated as border elements in larger carpets.

Warp: wool, 2-Z yarns, S plied
Weft: wool, 2-Z yarns, S plied
Pile: wool, asymmetrical knot (276 per sq. in.)

56. Saddle Bag Pair

Turkoman, Tekke, ca. 1890
3' 8" x 1' 7"

The weft-faced horizontal bands are derived from border designs found in rugs. On the white bands on either end, flowers are attached to a simple vine meander. This saddle bag pair is made to be placed over a horse or donkey or can be used for storage in a tent. The braided loops at the top of each bag are necessary for closure to prevent its contents from spilling.

Warp: wool, 2-Z yarns, S plied
Weft: wool, 2-Z yarns, S plied
Pile: weft-faced plain weave

57. Large Carpet

Turkoman, Yomud, ca. 1875
10' 7¼" x 6' 2¼"

The *gul* of this rug, known as the *Kepche gul*, is unique to the Yomud tribes. The field is a deep plum-red, characteristic of Yomud rugs, and shows a pronounced *abrash*. By varying the colors of each *gul* slightly and arranging them spaciouly across the field,

the weaver has achieved a pleasing design free from monotony.

Warp: wool, 2-Z yarns, S plied

Weft: wool, 2-Z yarns, unplied

Pile: wool, asymmetrical and symmetrical knots (171 per sq. in.)

EXHIBITIONS: Joslyn Art Museum, Omaha, Nebraska, "A Rich Inheritance," November 17, 1974-January 12, 1975; Civic Center Museum, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, "Heritage of the Middle East," January-February 1978.

LITERATURE: *A Rich Inheritance*, plate 57.

58. Carpet Fragment

Turkoman, Yomud, ca. 1825

1' x 3' 3½"

The patterns in this fragment are unique; according to current rug experts, there has never been a Yomud or other Turkoman weaving of similar design. Color and bold designs combine to create the excitement of the whole rug. The artistic achievement here is further proof that Turkoman rugs are the Rembrandts of the Near Eastern loom.

Warp: wool, 2-Z yarns, S plied

Weft: wool, 1-Z yarn, unplied

Pile: wool, symmetrical knot (96 per sq. in.)

59. Tent Door Rug

Turkoman, Yomud, ca. 1825

4' 9" x 4'

This very old *engsi* shows years of wear, damage, and poor repair. However, this does not detract from its beauty or importance. The use of many design patterns makes this a unique and interesting example and shows the depth and versatility of Yomud weavings. The color is just as pure and the texture just as supple as they were the day it was woven. The center field is divided into four parts, each containing uniform rows of branch motifs. The vertical center panel and two adjacent borders are patterned with very formal curled leaves. The horizontal panel dividing the main field, together with the wide lower panel, are covered with diamond-shaped *guls* (*Dyrnak*) with hooks, a design commonly found in large Yomud carpets. A continuous key arrangement set on white decorates the outer border. The bottom of the panel contains geometricized flowers contained within an irregular white trellis pattern, a motif rarely found in Yomud rugs and indigenous to early Salor and Saryk weavings.

Warp: wool, 2-Z yarns, S plied

Weft: wool, 1-Z yarn, unplied

Pile: wool, asymmetrical knot (119 per sq. in.)

60. Large Wall Bag

Turkoman, Yomud, ca. 1880

2' 3" x 3' 5" (outer borders missing)

Large wall bags (*chivals*) were made in abundance by Yomud tribes and generally used to contain their household items. These bags had the versatility to be used as large pillows or to store grain. Usually their design patterns are the same employed in larger rugs. The *Kepche gul* in the main field is similar to the one in plate 57. Connected floral devices repeat in the white border.

Warp: wool, 2-Z yarns, S plied

Weft: wool, 2-Z yarns, S plied

Pile: wool, symmetrical knot (80 per sq. in.)

61. Large Wall Bag

Turkoman, Yomud, ca. 1880

2' 7" x 3' 7"

The larger *guls* in the main field are similar in design to those used by the Saryks and are uniformly placed on a background of violet-brown, a color usually found in Chodor carpets. The blue background of the minor designs adds a note of unusual charm. Yomud designs on wall bags are numerous (see plate 60) and may descend from prototypes from other Turkoman federations. The abundant use of gold and white in the border and main field lends unusual clarity to the overall design.

Warp: wool, 2-Z yarns, S plied

Weft: wool, 2-Z yarns, S plied

Pile: wool, symmetrical knot (162 per sq. in.)

62. Utility Tent Bag

Turkoman, Yomud, ca. 1920

2' 5" x 3' 9"

Priscilla Bokara Roberts Collection.

This *chival* was probably made in northern Persia by Yomud weavers who migrated from Turkestan in the late nineteenth century. This bag of weft-faced plain weave has both stepped and diamond *guls* in a weft-wrapped brocaded *soumak* weave set on a red background. The bag was used for storage of household items and usually hung on the wall of a tent. Braided loops at the top served to close the opening and prevented spillage of items during travel. The extended braids fastened the bag to the wall of the tent.

Warp: wool, 2-S yarns, Z plied

Weft: wool, 2-S yarns, Z plied

Pile: *soumak* brocading weave on plain ground

PREVIOUS COLLECTIONS: W. R. Pickering

63. *Tent or Animal Decoration*

Turkoman, Yomud, ca. 1900

2' 3" x 3' 11"

Allen Memorial Art Museum. Gift of Ernest H. and Marcia Roberts.

This *asmalyk* would have been used for decoration as a tent hanging or on an animal during some special occasion. *Asmalyks* are pentagonal, and in this particular example the use of white highlights a stepped diamond-shaped design much used by the Yomuds. Bundles of wool shag on sides and bottom add charm to the whole piece.

Warp: wool, 2-Z yarns, S plied

Weft: wool, 2-Z yarns, S plied

Pile: wool, asymmetrical knot (112 per sq. in.)

EXHIBITIONS: Civic Center Museum, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, "Heritage of the Middle East," January-February 1978; Allen Memorial Art Museum, Oberlin, Ohio, September 23, 1978-October 22, 1978.

LITERATURE: Roberts, plate 61.

64. *Strut Pole Cover*

Turkoman, Yomud, ca. 1900

2' 2" x 11"

Woven devices were made to cover strut poles during the transportation of *yurts* (wooden-framed tents) from place to place by camel. This strut pole cover afforded protection to the camel from the sharp edges of the tent frame and was also used to bundle the strut ends together. This cover shows designs commonly found in larger Yomud weavings.

Warp: wool, 2-Z yarns, S plied

Weft: wool, 2-Z yarns, S plied

Pile: wool, symmetrical knot (135 per sq. in.)

65. *Tent Band*

Turkoman, Yomud, ca. 1900

56' x 1' 2"

Allen Memorial Art Museum. Gift of Ernest H. and Marcia Roberts.

The Yomud tribe made bands to adorn the interiors of their tents. This flat-weave example has a brocaded design worked into a ground fabric. A series of simple, graduated diamonds with large Ws at the ends connects the motifs. The field has interrupted spines which help to break the exaggerated main design. The border design, set on a white background, repeats and seems to form avenues for the main field design.

Warp: wool, 2-Z yarns, S plied

Weft: wool, 2-Z yarns, S plied

Pile: flat weave

EXHIBITIONS: Allen Memorial Art Museum, Oberlin, Ohio, September 23, 1978-October 22, 1978.

LITERATURE: Roberts, plate 60.

66. *Large Carpet with Diamond Motif*

Turkoman, Ersari, ca. 1850

11' 2" x 5' 9½"

This rug immediately calls attention to the popularity of diamond motifs among Ersari weavers. The Ersari Turkomans were the least nomadic of all the Turkoman federations and established their trade routes from the Aral Sea, south along the Amu Darya (Oxus River) into northern Afghanistan, borrowing rug motifs from other Turkoman federations along the way. Ten three-dimensional diamond patterns, each forming a compartment, create a box-within-a-box illusion. They are made from small floral buds and, through changes in color, form a simple but powerful design. The geometric lozenges in the main border expand into vertical and horizontal bands and separate the compartment elements. The outer border has a barber-pole stripe which encompasses the carpet.

Warp: wool, 2-S yarns, Z plied

Weft: wool, 2-S yarns, Z plied

Pile: wool, asymmetrical knot (72 per sq. in.)

67. *Large Utility Bag Face*

Turkoman, Ersari, ca. 1900

1' 4½" x 4' 10"

This large bag face for a camel or tent bag exhibits the diamond-shaped latch-hooked *guls* probably derived from similar devices used by Yomud weavers. The structure of the fabric, however, identifies this piece as a product of the Ersari tribes.

Warp: wool, 2-Z yarns, S plied

Weft: wool, 2-Z yarns, S plied

Pile: wool, asymmetrical knot (112 per sq. in.)

EXHIBITIONS: Joslyn Art Museum, Omaha, Nebraska, "A Rich Inheritance," November 17, 1974-January 12, 1975.

LITERATURE: *A Rich Inheritance*, plate 56.

68. *Large Storage Bag*

Turkoman, Ersari-Afghan, ca. 1900

3' 7" x 5' 7"

Large cartouches and diamond-shaped, hooked *guls* are uniformly placed in the main field, creating rows of independent vertical columns. The border of undulating vines and small flowers, set on dark blue, adds distinction to the lesser borders of S-devices and small floral buds. The horizontal band near the top contains stylized carnations and petal designs

reminiscent of designs from Persia. Budded floral shrubs in the lower panel add their own note of clarity to the overall architecture.

Warp: wool, 2-Z yarns, S plied
Weft: goat hair, 1-Z yarn, unplied
Pile: wool, asymmetrical knot (80 per sq. in.)

69. *Rug with Octagon Patterns*

Turkoman, Ersari-Afghan, ca. 1850
6' 5" x 4' 7½"

This Ersari-Afghan has an overall field of large squarish octagons and is filled with two varieties of diagonal, six-sided cartouches which create a unique effect. This is achieved by a skillful rendering of the motifs within the squares. Diagonal cartouches are created through a white outline of two opposite corners of the squares in the central rosettes. The dark color of the second set of corners seems to fade the square forms in the overall pattern, leaving white hexagonal shapes that suggest movement. Apparently the weaver changed the border patterns at her fancy, a certain sign of individualized work.

Warp: wool, 2-S yarns, Z plied
Weft: wool, 2-S yarns, Z plied
Pile: wool, asymmetrical knot (56 per sq. in.)

PREVIOUS COLLECTIONS: Joseph V. McMullan
EXHIBITIONS: The Textile Museum, Washington, D.C.,
October 1965–February 1966.
LITERATURE: McMullan, plate 125.

70. *Large Storage Bag*

Turkoman, Ersari, ca. 1880
3' 2" x 5' 6"

The Ersari traditionally made larger wall and storage bags than other Turkoman weavers. These bags were mostly used in their tents or mud brick dwellings and held clothing or useful articles. Ersari weavers borrowed designs from other Turkoman federations, predominantly the Salor, Saryk, Yomud, and Chodor. In this example, we see nine stepped octagonal main *guls*, a favorite among the Saryk, on a field of red. The center of each *gul* contains a hooked diamond motif set on silk pile. Lesser cross-shaped floral devices separate the main elements. White and blue floral ornaments comprise the larger border, while small floral sprays dominate both upper and lower panels.

Warp: wool, 2-Z yarns, S plied
Weft: wool, 1-Z yarn, unplied
Pile: wool with some silk, asymmetrical knot
(153 per sq. in.)

71. *Large Door Surround*

Turkoman, Ersari-Afghan, ca. 1880
5' 4" x 4' 9"

Many weaving products are called Ersari-Afghan because the Ersari Turkomans migrated from the south Turkestan Amu Darya river region into northern Afghanistan. Soon their products started to include the wool and dyestuffs found in Afghan rugs while maintaining the designs they had brought with them. The origin of this large *kapunuk* is unclear. However, its design motifs reflect both Saryk and Yomud family influences. Long tassels attached to bundles of wool are added decoration and extend the lines of the side panels. This *kapunuk* was made to hang over the door opening on the inside of a tent during special occasions.

Warp: wool, 2-S yarns, Z plied
Weft: wool, 2-S yarns, Z plied
Pile: wool, asymmetrical knot (96 per sq. in.)

72. *Large Pile Bag*

Turkoman, Ersari, ca. 1875
1' 8" x 4' 11"

This *chuval* (tent bag) or *mafrash* (wide bag) was made by the Ersari of northern Afghanistan (see plate 73). The stepped center design element is a well-known device and is enclosed by joined serrated leaves. Small flowers are interspersed throughout the main field. On the sides, four winged plaques enclose rosettes. A heavy stylized form of stepped Y-branches repeats in the main border.

Warp: wool and goat hair, 2-S yarns, Z plied
Weft: wool and goat hair, 2-S yarns, Z plied
Pile: wool, asymmetrical knot (96 per sq. in.)

73. *Large Tent Bag*

Turkoman, Ersari, ca. 1825
1' 5" x 4' 11"

This bag was made in northern Afghanistan by Ersari weavers (see plate 72) and shows three completed medallions of Chodor origin (see plate 53). This is a good example of the Ersari weavers' tendency to borrow designs indigenous to the Salor, Saryk, Tekke, Yomud, and Chodor federations rather than to develop their own. In the main border, the flowers attached to the wavy vine are more delicate than geometric, reflecting the strong influence of Persia.

Warp: wool, 2-S yarns, Z plied
Weft: wool, 2-S yarns, Z plied
Pile: wool, asymmetrical knot (99 per sq. in.)

GLOSSARY

Abrash. The wool used by the rug weavers was traditionally dyed in small lots with vegetable dyes which did not penetrate the wool evenly, so large amounts of wool in exactly the same color were not usually available. Many rugs have *abrash*, wide stripes or color changes, where the weaver ran out of the wool from one dye lot and began using another.

Brocading. There are two methods of weaving patterns or designs into plain-weave rugs by adding supplementary wefts. Weft-wrap brocading (also called *soumak* weave) involves wrapping the extra wefts around a few warp threads at a time; weft-float brocading involves weaving them over and under the warp. In both techniques the supplementary wefts alternate, every few rows, with the basic weft.

Chuval. Nomadic tribes hung *chuwals*, large, deep, woven bags, from the framework of their tents to use as storage containers. Usually only the fronts were decorated; many of the weft-faced plain-weave backs have been removed. The depth of *chuwals* made by Turkoman tribes is usually greater than their width.

Engsi. Tent doorways were often covered with *engsi*, small knotted-pile rugs woven for the purpose and hung on the outside. *Engsi* often have gable designs at the top similar to those on prayer rugs, but many scholars now believe that the origins of the two designs are unrelated, the *engsi* gables depicting tent outlines and the prayer rug gables the shape of prayer niches in mosques. See *hatchli*.

Flat-weave. Flat-woven rugs have no pile. They are made only of interwoven warp and weft threads and have no knots.

Gul. Common design devices in the shape of medallions. They are often octagonal but may be diamond-shaped, hooked, or stepped. Each Turkoman tribe has its own traditional *gul*, but weavers of several tribes borrow motifs from each other.

Hatchli. The Armenian word for "crossed," *hatchli* designates a large cross pattern in the center field of a rug. *Engsi* are traditionally decorated with *hatchli* designs which divide the rugs into four panels.

Herati. A lozenge with four leaves curling from it encloses a flower center in the common *herati* rug pattern.

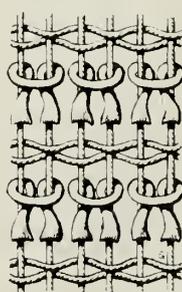
Kilim. Tapestry-woven rug. Discontinuous colored wefts are woven back and forth in each color area in weft-faced plain weave. Rug specialists refer to *kilims* as flat-woven rugs to distinguish them from pile rugs.

Mafrash. A very wide Turkoman storage bag that is smaller than a *chuval*.

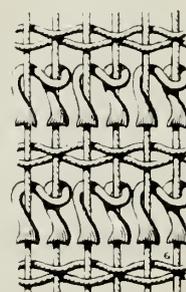
Pile. Yarns which project from the plane of a fabric to form a raised surface. The pile in rugs is composed of the cut ends (or loops) of the yarns which form the rug knots.

Ply. The twisting together of two or more single yarns. The direction of ply is always apparent, while the direction of the original spin of the single yarns may be more difficult to determine. The direction of plying is usually opposite to the direction of the spin of the single yarns.

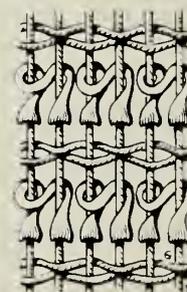
Rug Knots.



Gördes (Ghiordes)
or "Turkish"
symmetrical



Senna or
"Persian" asym-
metrical; open on
the left



Senna or
"Persian" asym-
metrical; open on
the right

Selvedge. The side edge of the rug, or selvedge, may be decorated, bound, or reinforced during the weaving.

Shot. The passage of a weft across a fabric. In rugs, one or more weft shots, usually in plain weave, follow each horizontal row of knots.

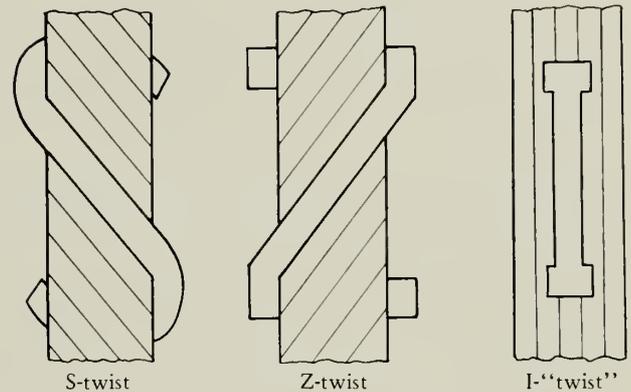
Warp. Yarns that run lengthwise in a fabric from one end to the other, interlaced at right angles by the wefts, and around which the pile rug knots are wrapped. The warps in rugs are usually spun and plied for strength.

Weft. Yarns that run crosswise in a fabric from selvedge to selvedge, interlacing the warp at right angles. Unlike rug warps, rug wefts are often somewhat loosely spun and frequently not plied or very loosely plied. This allows the wefts to be firmly compacted and to hold the rug knots securely in place.

Weft-faced plain weave. In plain weave, each weft passes alternately over and under successive warps producing the simplest possible interlacing of warp and weft elements. In weft-faced plain weave, the wefts are sufficiently numerous and compacted to cover the warps completely.

Yarn twists, S and Z. The direction of the spin or twist of a yarn conforms, when viewed in a vertical position, to the diagonal of the letter S or the letter Z.

I. When there is no apparent twist in the yarn, its fibers conform to the vertical of the letter I.



BIBLIOGRAPHY

Azadi, Siawosch. *Turkoman Carpets and the Ethnographic Significance of Their Ornaments*. Translated by Robert Pinner. Fishguard, Wales: Crosby Press, 1975.

Beattie, May H. "Background to the Turkish Rug." *Oriental Art* n.s. 9 (Autumn 1963): 150-157.

Beattie, May H. "Coupled-column Prayer Rugs." *Oriental Art* 14 (Winter 1968): 243-258.

Beattie, May H. "Some Weft-float Brocaded Rugs of the Bergama-Ezine Region." *Textile Museum Journal* 3 (December 1971): 20-27.

Bogolyubov, Andrei Andreyevich. *Carpets of Central Asia*. Edited by J.M.A. Thompson. Wolverton, Basingstoke: Crosby Press, 1973.

Cammann, Schuyler V.R. "Symbolic Meanings in Oriental Rug Patterns: Parts I-III." *Textile Museum Journal* 3 (December 1972): 5-66.

Clark, Hartley. *Bokhara, Turkoman and Afghan Rugs*. London: John Lane, 1922.

Denny, Walter B. "Anatolian Rugs: An Essay on Method." *Textile Museum Journal* 3 (1973): 7-25.

Denny, Walter B. *Oriental Rugs*. Washington, D.C.: Smithsonian Institution, 1979.

Dimand, Maurice S. *Peasant and Nomad Rugs of Asia*. New York: Asia House Gallery, 1961.

Edwards, A. Cecil. *The Persian Carpet*. London: G. Duckworth, 1967.

Eiland, Emmett and Shockley, Maureen. *Tent Bands of the Steppes*, 1976.

Eiland, Murray L. *Oriental Rugs*, expanded edition. Boston: New York Graphic Society, 1976.

Eiland, Murray L. *Oriental Rugs from Western Collections*. Berkeley, 1973.

Ellis, Charles Grant. *Early Caucasian Rugs*. Washington, D.C.: The Textile Museum, 1975.

- Ellis, Charles Grant. "The Ottoman Prayer Rugs." *Textile Museum Journal* 2 (December 1969): 5-22.
- Ellis, Charles Grant. "A Soumak-woven Rug in a Fifteenth-Century International Style." *Textile Museum Journal* 1 (December 1963): 3-20.
- Emery, Irene. *The Primary Structures of Fabrics*. Washington, D.C.: The Textile Museum, 1966.
- Erdmann, Kurt. *Oriental Carpets*. Translated by Charles Grant Ellis. New York: Universe Books, 1962.
- Erdmann, Kurt. *Seven Hundred Years of Oriental Carpets*. Edited by Hanna Erdmann. Translated by May H. Beattie and Hildegard Herzog. Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1970.
- Ettinghausen, Richard. "Islamic Carpets: The Joseph V. McMullan Collection." *The Metropolitan Museum of Art Bulletin* 28 (June 1970): 399-434.
- Hali: The International Journal of Oriental Carpets and Textiles* 1 (Spring 1978) and 3 (1981).
- Irons, William. *The Yomut Turkmen*. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1975.
- Jones, H. McCoy. *Rugs of the Yomud Tribes*. Washington, D.C.: The Washington Hajji Baba, 1970.
- Jones, H. McCoy and Boucher, J.W. *Baluchi Rugs*. Washington, D.C., 1974.
- Jones, H. McCoy and Boucher, Jeff W. *The Ersari and Their Weavings*. Washington, D.C.: International Hajji Baba Society, 1975.
- Jones, H. McCoy and Yohe, Ralph S., eds. *Turkish Rugs*. Washington, D.C.: The Washington Hajji Baba and The Textile Museum, 1968.
- Jones, H. McCoy; Yohe, Ralph S.; and Boucher, Jeff W. *Persian Tribal Rugs*. Washington, D.C.: The Washington Hajji Baba, 1971.
- Kendrick, A.F. and Tattersall, C.E.C. *Hand-woven Carpets Oriental and European*. New York: C. Scribner's Sons, 1922.
- König, Hans. "Some Ideas on the Design of Ersari Rugs and Their Origin." *Hali* 2 (1980): 275-282.
- Landreau, Anthony N. "Rugs from the Bogolyubov Collection." *AARP* 13 (June 1978): 41-49.
- Landreau, Anthony N. and Pickering, W.R. *From the Bosphorus to Samarkand: Flat-woven Rugs*. Washington, D.C.: The Textile Museum, 1969.
- Landreau, Anthony N., ed. *Yoruk: The Nomadic Weaving Tradition of the Middle East*. Pittsburgh: The Museum of Art, Carnegie Institute, 1978.
- Mackie, Louise W. *The Splendor of Turkish Weaving*. Washington, D.C.: The Textile Museum, 1974.
- McMullan, Joseph V. *Islamic Carpets*. New York: Near Eastern Art Research Center, 1965.
- McMullan, Joseph V. and Reichert, Donald O. *The George Walter Vincent and Belle Townsley Smith Collection of Islamic Rugs*. Springfield, Mass.: George Walter Vincent Smith Art Museum, 1970.
- Moshkova, Valentina. *Carpets of the Peoples of Central Asia in the Late Nineteenth and Early Twentieth Centuries*. Tashkent: Izdatel'stvo "fan", 1970.
- Mumford, John Kimberly. *Oriental Rugs*. 4th ed. New York: C. Scribner's Sons, 1915.
- O'Bannon, George W. "The Saltiq Ersari Carpet." *Afghanistan Journal*, Jg. 4, H. 3 (Fall 1977): 111-121.
- Petsopoulos, Yanni. *Kilims*. New York, 1979.
- A Rich Inheritance: Oriental Rugs of 19th and Early 20th Centuries*. Omaha: Joslyn Art Museum, 1974.
- Roberts, Ernest H. "Catalogue of Islamic Carpets." *Allen Memorial Art Museum Bulletin* 36 (1978-1979).
- Schürmann, Ulrich. *Caucasian Rugs*. Translated by Alan Grainge. Braunschweig: Klinkhardt & Biermann, 1965.
- Schürmann, Ulrich. *Central-Asian Rugs*. Translated by Alan Grainge. Frankfurt am Main: Verlag Osterrieth, 1969.
- Straka, Jerome A., et al. *The Oriental Rug Collection of Jerome and Mary Jane Straka*. New York: Jerome A. Straka, 1978.
- The Textile Museum. *Prayer Rugs*. Washington, D.C.: The Textile Museum, 1974.
- The Textile Museum. *Rugs of the Near and Middle East from the Collections of Arthur D. Jenkins, H. McCoy Jones*. Washington, D.C.: The Textile Museum, 1963.
- The Textile Museum. *Turkish Rugs from Private Collections*. Washington, D.C.: The Textile Museum, 1973.
- Tschebull, Raoul. *Kazak Carpets of the Caucasus*. New York: Near Eastern Art Research Center, 1971.
- Turkmen Tribal Carpets and Traditions*. Edited by Louise W. Mackie and Jon Thompson. Washington, D.C.: The Textile Museum, 1979.
- Wertime, John T. "Salt Bags from Iran." *Hali* 2 (Autumn 1979): 198-205.

