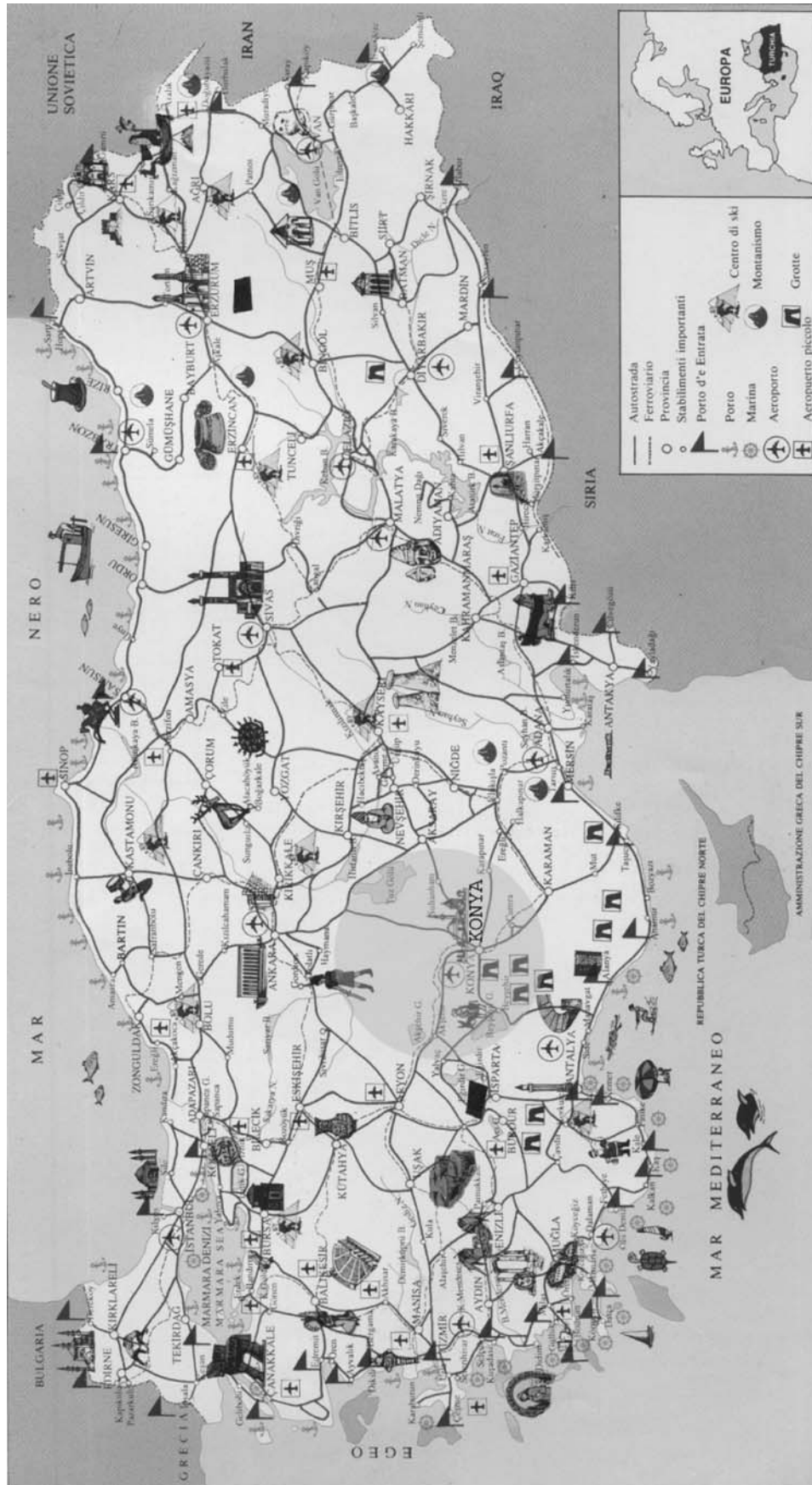


THE LANGUAGE OF KILIM OF ANATOLIA

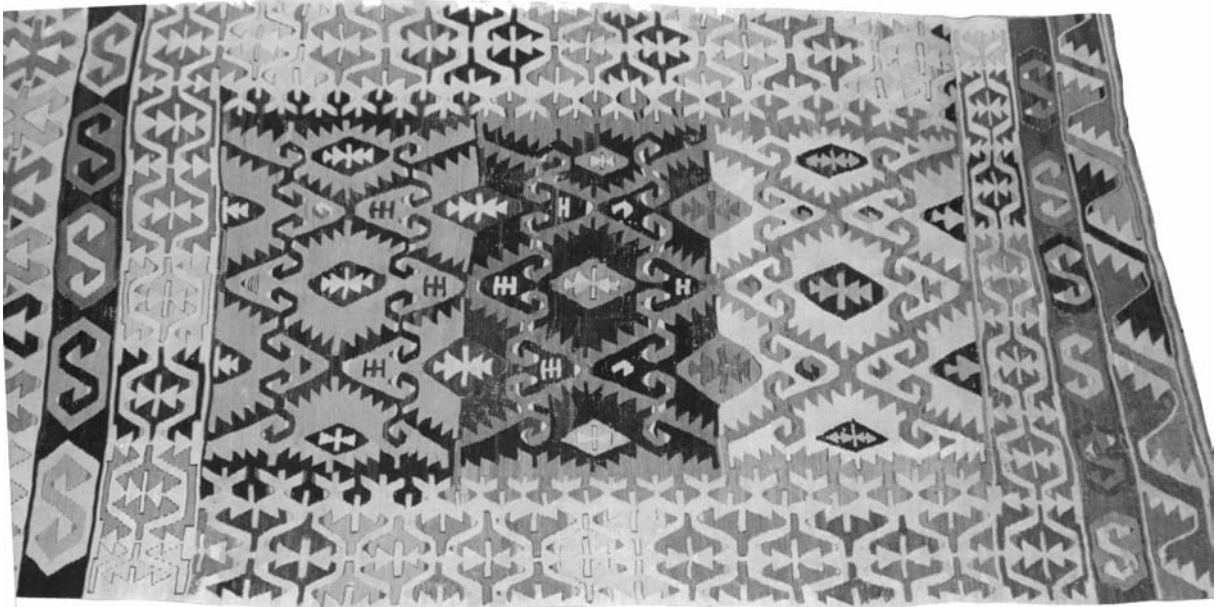
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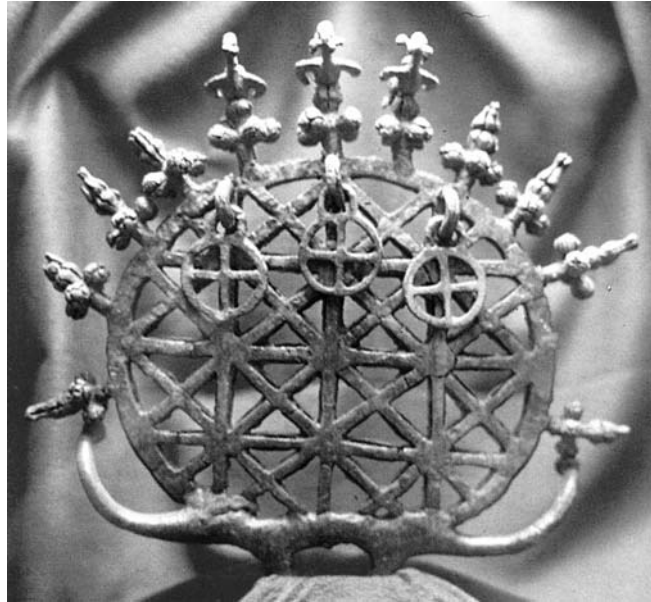




Goddess Mother of Çatalhöyük - KONYA







Hittite Sun



Hittite Ram Horn



Hittite Bull

The Language of Kilim

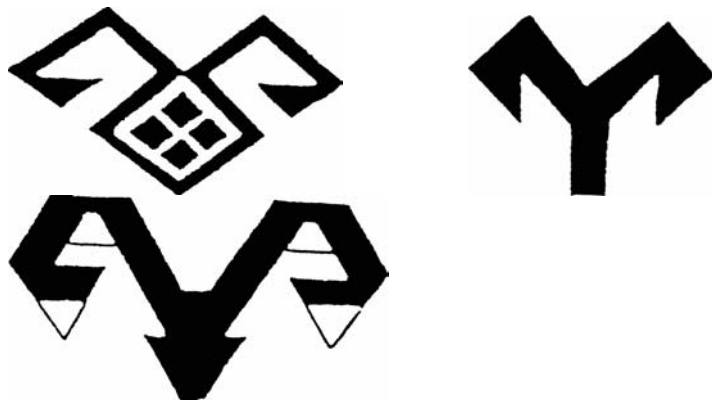
SPINNERS AND WEAVERS OPEN AND CLOSE THE INFINITE CYCLES CHARACTERIZING THEM, HISTORICALLY AND COSMICALLY.

Those who know the language of Kilim read it like a story that it's weaver tells. As a mirror the Kilim reflects the life of its weaver and the culture of the group to which she belongs. The reason the rams horn (Kocboynuzu) has various names is that in different regions it represents virility, the father and courage. In spite of the stylisation, the motif of Elibelinde (hands on hips), is a symbol of the mother and of the fertility of the woman. It has maintained the human shape.

In order to understand the symbolism, it is necessary to refer back to the beginning of the history of man. In ancient times, man had to fight for survival, was threatened by scarcity and by natural events, believed that the universe was wholly alive, considering the earth to be one's mother and the creator of life.

The men of these societies with their arrows, knives and axes, were given over to hunting, on whose outcome depended the prosperity of the group. This justifies the large variety of anthropomorphic symbols from the paleolithic era. From that period the so-called Venus of Laosel represented a feminine figure with a rams horn in her hand. At the beginning of the Neolithic era, the invention of the plough changed the orders on which those ancient societies rested. Its use required the employment of oxen that put the male force into prominence. It was because of this that the horn of the bull began to represent the male force pulling the plough.

In the Neolithic era at Catalhoyuk, an ancient Hittite village, one of the most ancient civilisations of the world, going back 6000 to 7000 years BC, witnessed the bull being born from the statues representing the Goddess Mother. The symbolism was to foretell the delivery and to increase fertility.



Koçboynuzu (Corno d'ariete)



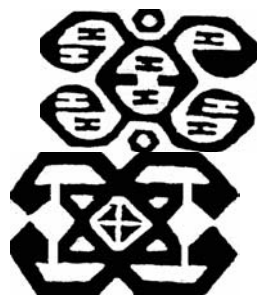
Elibelinde (Le mani sui fianchi)

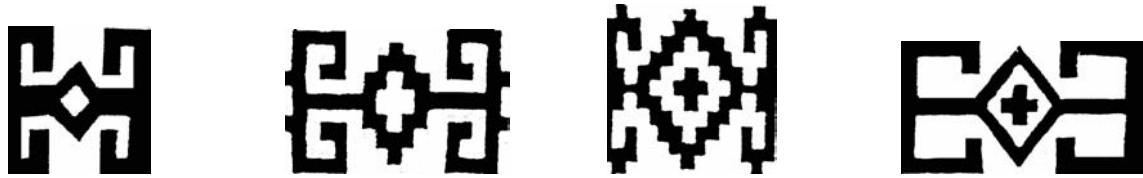
There is a similar tradition in 10th century BC "taken on" by the mongols of Hitay, but on this occasion the ram takes the place of the bull. With the arrival of the labour pains, the Mongolian emperor, greeted the sun eight times then returned to encircle, waiting for the moment of delivery. At the moment of delivery, a little bell round the neck made a noise, which was believed to diminish the pain of delivery.

When the nomadic tribes of breeders of oxen established in the Middle East they covered the pastures of the Steppes and experienced the burning sun and thunderstorms. The sky and the terrible cold was part of nature and became a powerful God of the Sky (Goktanri) but represented not only the sky but the moon, sun and stars, the spirit of the sky.

In agricultural societies, the myth of the Goddess Mother was always a virgin and generator of life, as a result of the understanding of the male role in conception, this was modified with the appearance of the celestial ones, to which was attributed the role of lover or son. These were born in spring and they coupled with the Goddess Mother fertilising her. They died in the autumn, the time of harvest and returned to the sun then returned the following spring. This myth had differing names in different cultures. In the Middle East, Yersu (earth and water) and Goktanri (God of the sky).

In some cultures such as the near Middle Eastern Turks, the myth of sky and earth does not die and have rebirth to the rhythm of the seasons, but represents a joint one.





Ram's Horns

In order to guarantee the rebirth of the Earth in spring, the agricultural societies sacrificed to the Earth Mother, animals with horns like bulls and rams, attributing to them the force of the celestial ones. The blood was a substance that offered life, therefore the force that the blood possessed fortified the earth and fertilised it for an abundant harvest. In Summer, the nomadic Turks of Asia Minor went back to the plateau's (Yaylak) and in winter came down towards the sea to their winter quarters (Kislak), were the inheritors of the pastures and plains that nourished their animals, sacrificed a horse for the celestial God and a ram for the divinity of Yersu.

The agricultural societies had their celestial ones who fertilised, and identified with the sun and clouds, carriers of rain and were indispensable to the rebirth of life. The typical natural events of spring, to grow tall during the days the sun reheats the soil and with frequent rains, were understood by these cultures like the mystical wedding between sky and earth. The Goddess Mother becomes a spouse. In the writing of Göktürk, it is told of Yersu and Göktani, the sacred two's union gave origin to a concept of divinity, monotheist. The spirit of this divinity, in mythology of Göktürk. Ilteris Kaghan and it's woman in the task to reunify and strengthen the Turkish descendants.

In the Far East the concept of the sacred pair still endures. In the Chang era, there are a couple formed by Tigh, God of abundance and Oytu, Goddess Mother, the sky is the man and the rain his semen, but in its evolution the agriculture becomes less important and activities like mining, working metals, commerce are more important, although breeding animals endures and thus the male principal is stronger. The myth of the goddess is clouded with time, Oytu mother disappears. Thunder and lightning become important symbols.



The plateau tents (Yaylak)



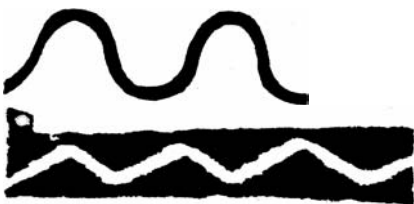
Winter Quarters (Kislak)

The dominant male is still important to the Gokturk. The origin is found in strong patriarchal nature in the myth of the God Ulgen

The earth and sky did not exist there was nothing but a vast sea. The God Ulgen flew over this sea, trying to find a dry point on which to land. Without warning it saw a cliff emerge from the waves. the God wondered if he had created it. In the same moment the Goddess Mother came from the depths of the sea. He wondered if the cliff would sink when he left. Ulgen took inspiration from this incident and began to create the sky and the earth. Denying that something exists would cause it to die.

The great Goddess was forgotten, reappearing without warning, wrapped in mist in order to remind men that she was the true creator. The God Ulgen is known in the Middle East as Kudai or Kayrakan (supreme God) has symbols of thunder and lightening. The Hittites in Anatolia have the myth of Kesük, the great God of storms and rain with the symbol of the thunder bolt. The bull represented the force of man and was represented by lightning. It remains as a pear tree and the horn in the ritual sacrifices.

On the Aegean coast, west Anatolia, Zeus has the symbols of the eagle, cornucopia, lightning. thunderbolt the sacrifices were again animals with horns.

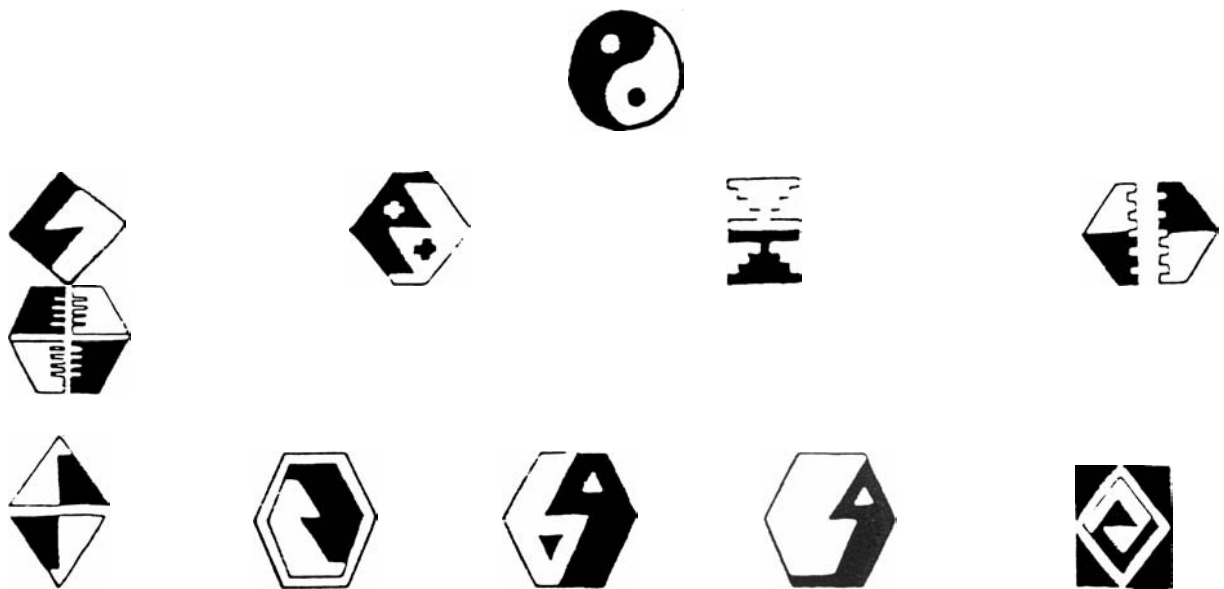




Symbols of thunder and lightning

The horns are closely tied to the liturgy and represent the male. The god Akayaz had symbols of lightning bolts, thunder and horns. The horn became a symbol of sovereignty and the divine right. In 1050 AD the head of the Turkish tribe Cau, in China used a ram skin with horns encircling the shoulders during religious ceremonies. The Mongolians of Hitay used a ram skin, horns and tail to symbolise the prince. The horn represents virility and is used in the Kilim designs.

In Kilim design the Elibelinde takes the meaning of ram's horn. In Turkish villages the hands on the hips that represents the mother Umay or Ak is modified in order to represent the sacred wedding between earth and sky and the two principals, male and female (ying and yang). There are Kilim which only use ram's horns motif. The Kilim reflect farm life, in which the men are less important than the women, who by their nubility and fertility ensure the survival of their way of life.



The masculine and feminine principals (Ying-Yang)



Masculine and feminine



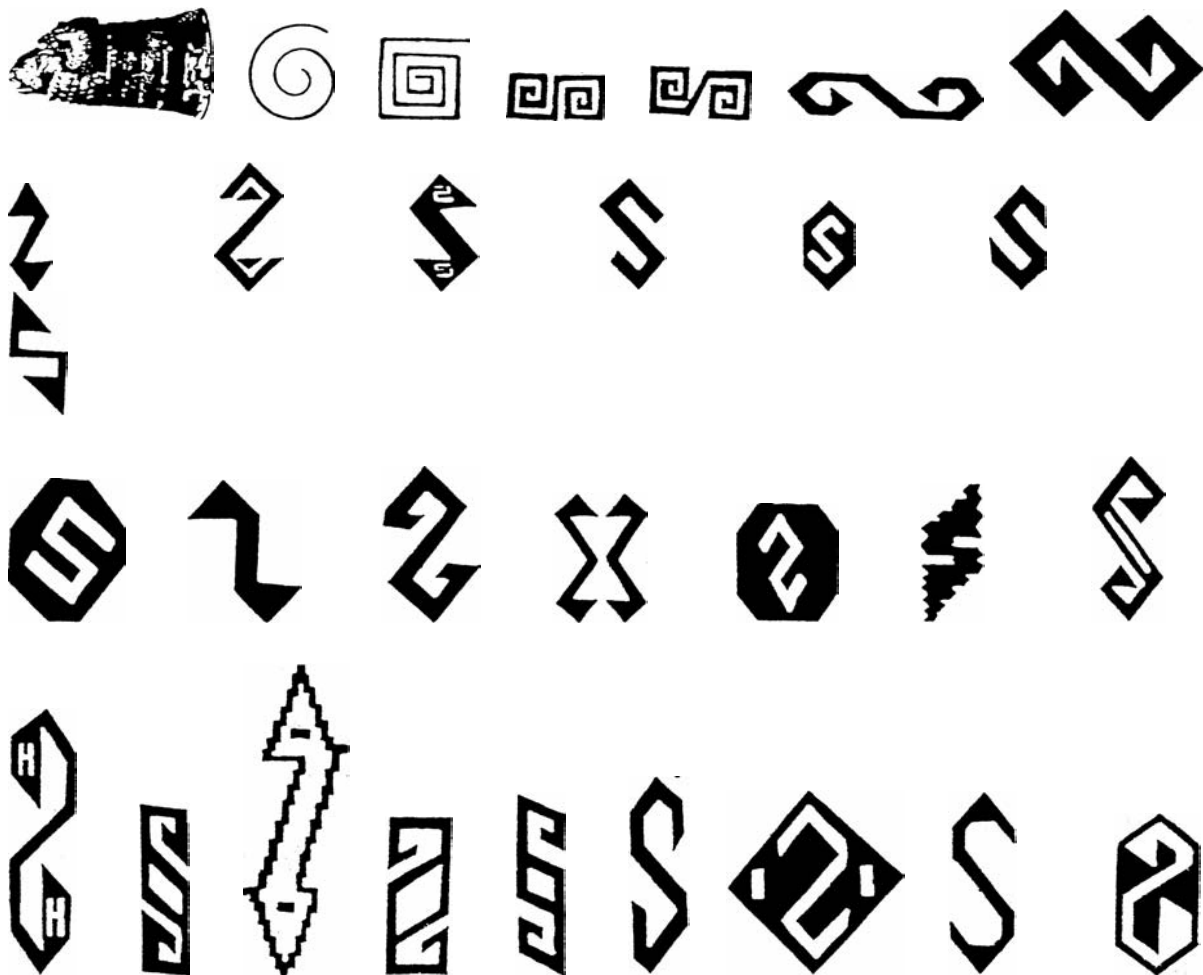
Elibelinde (feminine)



Kocboynuzu (masculine)

The two spheres acquired with time have precise meanings. The symbols with male valence as the ram's horns, they were used as propitiatory symbols to guarantee fertility and protect delivery. The women of Nahcivan who did not succeed in conceiving, asked aid of a ram's statue in red stone on an ancient tomb. The ritual prescribed passing under the legs of the statue. Similar rituals are celebrated in Anatolia. Statues of rams are still placed on men's tombs. The frontal view of the ram's horns recalls the shape of a spiral, the symbol of eternity. In the weaving techniques the spiral is represented by barbed shapes while the profile of the rams horns is the origin of the reason they are on Kilim.

Çengel (unicorn) is thought today to be a symbol of protection and a powerful amulet against the evil eye. Two Elibelinde and two rams horns (Koçboynuzu) joined with an overlap in the centre forming a rhombus or two united triangles represent the evil eye. The symbol of protection against the evil eye returns to the relation between man and woman and to the coitus.



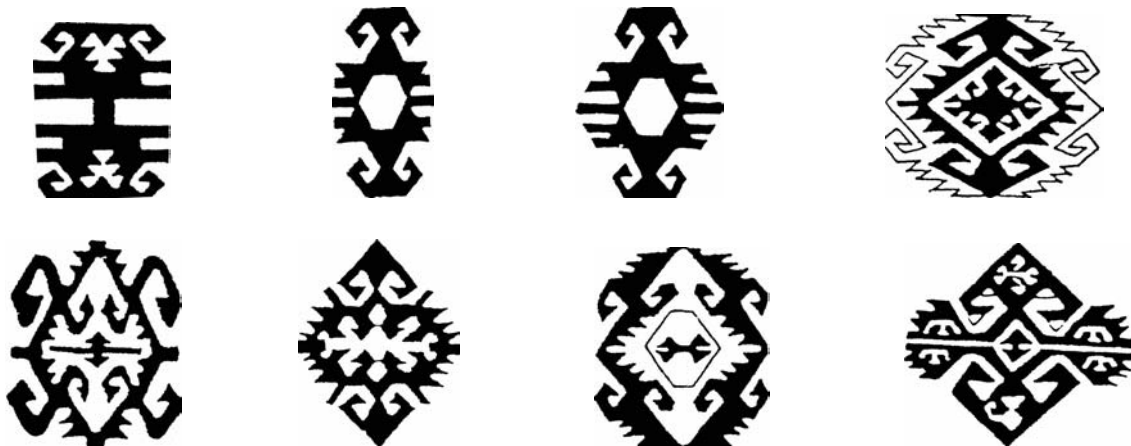
Millet and pomegranates symbolise abundance and fertility. At a small village, Side in Antalya, there was found a statuette of Aphrodite who held a pomegranate. In the village of Ertegli, near Konya, there is a bas-relief that was found on a cliff İvriz, which dates back to the late period of eighth century AD, a representation of King Urpallu, the God of fertility.

The first one shows an offering of millet and clusters of grapes, symbols of abundance, while the God of fertility wears a hat with horns. In the Kilim there is a recurring motif of ears of millet.

Elements like shade and perspective represent reality which is, difficult to represent in weaving but leaves space for symbols and use of colour.

Far from limiting, the techniques of the Kilim design allow emotions to be expressed, in abstract form. This renders the Kilim an artwork of great value, as it reflects the culture and life of the women who weave them.

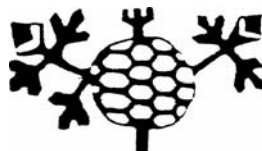
Their techniques and designs have been learnt through childhood, adolescence and marriage. The skills have been handed down from the mother to daughter, so designs and colours reflect their cultural heritage and are the property of the entire group.



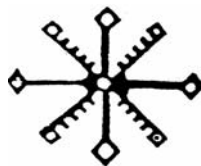
The Mirror of the Life of the Women



Pomegranate x2



Millet x2



Opium

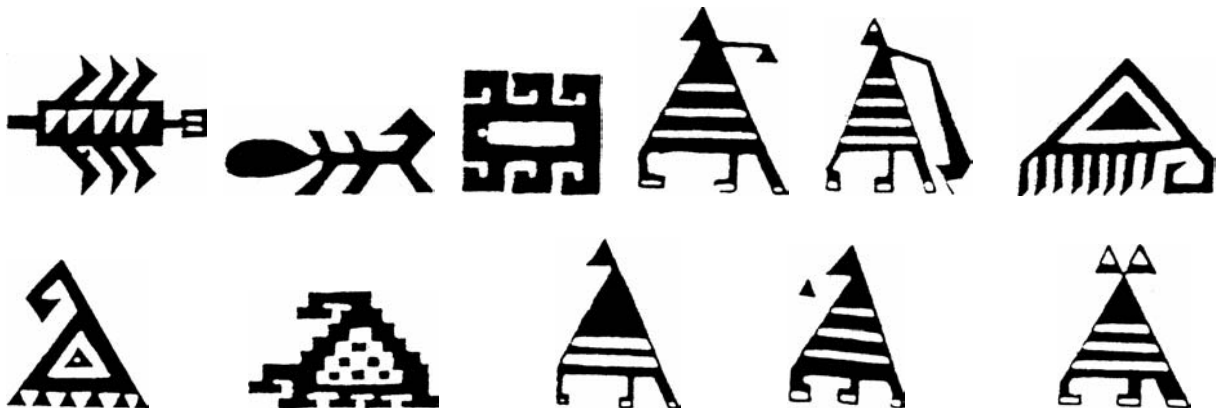


Grain

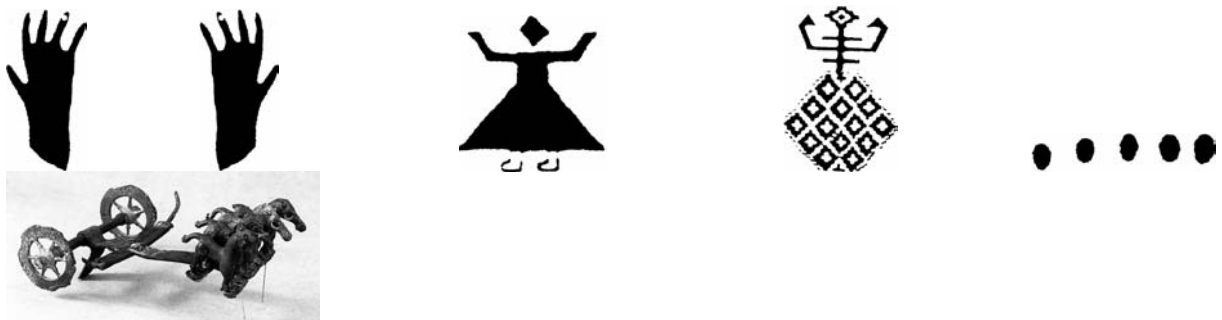


Opium

The Kilim expresses the desires and aspirations of the weaver and in a way to mean the destiny. Frequently the symbols of the Kilim represent the power of an object, when a woman weaves a scorpion, this removes the threat of that animal from her hearth and the village and her country. For the same reason the woman will use a symbol as an augury of fertility and to preserve the cycle of life. Elibelinde interlaced with Kocboynuzu recalls the ancient myth of the celestial divinity that with the spring rains it makes the earth fruitful. Thanks to the ceremonies celebrated in the name of the Goddess Mother and the God of the Sky, the next harvest is abundant. If in spite of this the great goddess is angry, it would be necessary to pray. Then the hands that before had guided the wagons, threw nets, attended children, seeded fields turned to the sky in an action of admission of impotence and great faith. They become sacred then they acquire a magical power and in a position to protect mankind from a bad fate. The hands, wherever in the world can be put in relation with primitive religions, in how many symbols of protection, imposition and gift of force. Some legends of the ancients confirm this. Rhea of Crete, goddess creator mother, gave birth to Zeus at Lyctus in the cove of Dikte, and supporting the hands to the earth from there it draws the force in order to alleviate the pains of the delivery. The prints of the five fingers will later become Daktilis which means fingers.



Scorpion motif (Akrep)

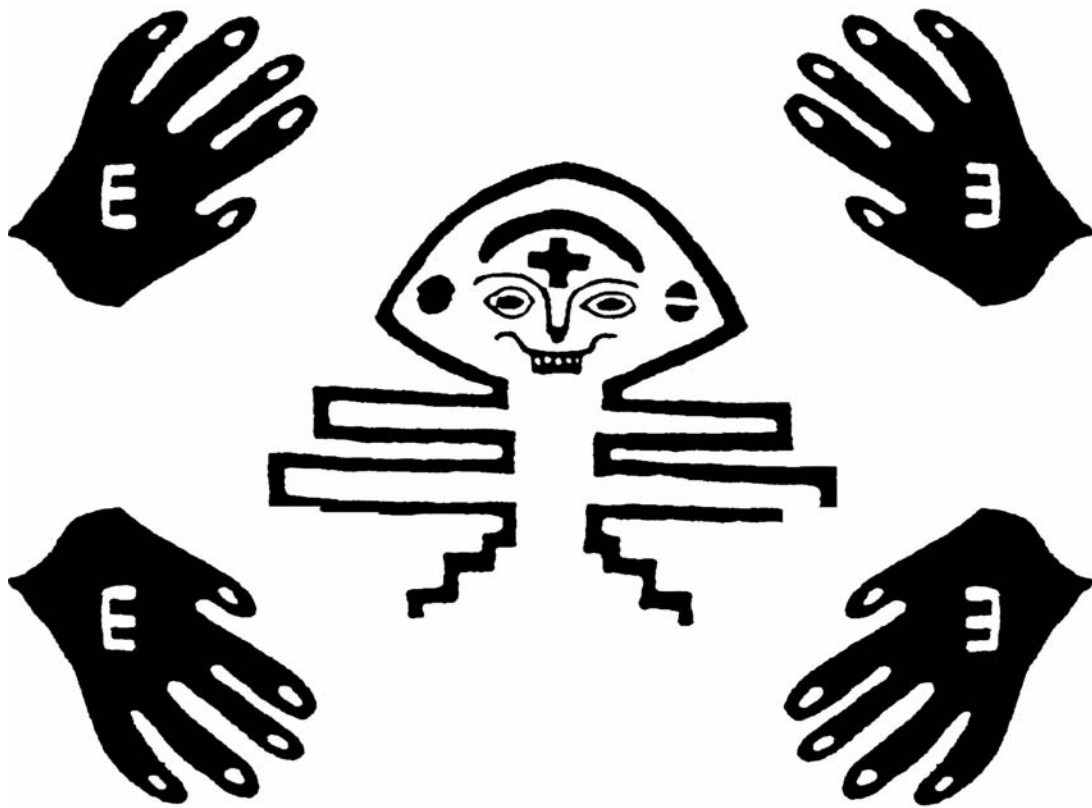


eHand(el)

Daktilis

Hittite Chariot

In Asia Minor, in a tribe near Yakuds, the young women have a ritual where clapping hands are used to induce a trance, which produces unrestrained laughter, this means that the spirit of Aysit will enter and guarantee fertility and numerous progeny. During delivery, the presence of a crowd using the tips of their fingers alleviated labour pains. On these occasions they burnt small tents made from beech wood, decorated with designs of red deer, suns and moons evoked the Goddess Mother to aid the birth. In this area when a new house was built, a glove was thrown in the air and if it fell palm up then this was a bad augury and it was thrown again until it fell palm down.



The Shaman launches gloves in the air

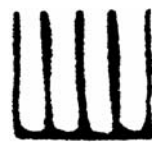
Next, a fire was lit to symbolise the future hearth and a pray was offered up "Master of these places, spirits of flame of fire listen. Protect this place in your arms". The ceremony continued so that the fire was never extinguished, the family increased and the cattle were numerous.

Adding a hand on the Kilim, a woman signed her work and it symbolised the same. In some regions the hand symbolised Fatima, daughter of the prophet Maometto, in others it represents the hands of Hüseyin, the small son of Mohamed, or God and the four angels, Ariel, Mihael, Raphael, Gabriel or Mohamed and the four first elected caliphs from the Muslims, Ebubekir, Omar, Osman and Ali or the five prayers of the day or the five principals of Islam, the testimony, the pilgrimage to Mecca (at least once in the lifetime), the Ramadan and Zekat (to donate to the poor ones a fortieth of the unearned income of every year) and the five prayers of the day.

These are the same reasons that this design is used in the design of the Kilim, to act as a charm against the evil eye. Gradually the hand became stylised and transforms into five points that are found on the edges of the carpets of the village of Do, close to the city of Antalya, where they are called the five stones. It is thought that the origin of this comes from a game. The five stones are found in the western region around Osselet. Even if the relationship has been forgotten there still remains this tradition of the number five.



Hand of Fatima



In modern times, stars with five points represent the five fingers. It is found in Kilim from Döşemealtı in Antalya and is called five stones which is a game but because of the technical difficulty in weaving five points it is a design that is not used on modern Kilim. If you see a five-pointed star they are likely to be irregular, this is why most stars have six or eight points. In Anatolian Kilim the star represents good health but does not represent the sky. In the legends of Zümrüdü, the eagle (anka) and the comb (tarak) are another representation of the five fingers. Modern reasons for including the design are to protect during birth and weddings against the evil eye. An eye woven in a Kilim is to meet evil with evil. This is like the ancient sculptures with an eye represented by a triangle, rectangle and the square with diagonals. The cross attracts the evil eye and that disperses the dangerous energies in the four directions. In Anatolia the cross predates Christianity as seen in the Hittite remains. It represents the four seasons. The ancient Turks represented each quadrant with a different animal and colour.

The circle represents the sun. It was believed that the sun and the day drove away the night and the dark, this gave rise to the wind.



Star



Dragon



Zümrüdü Anka (Eagle)



Comb (Tarak)

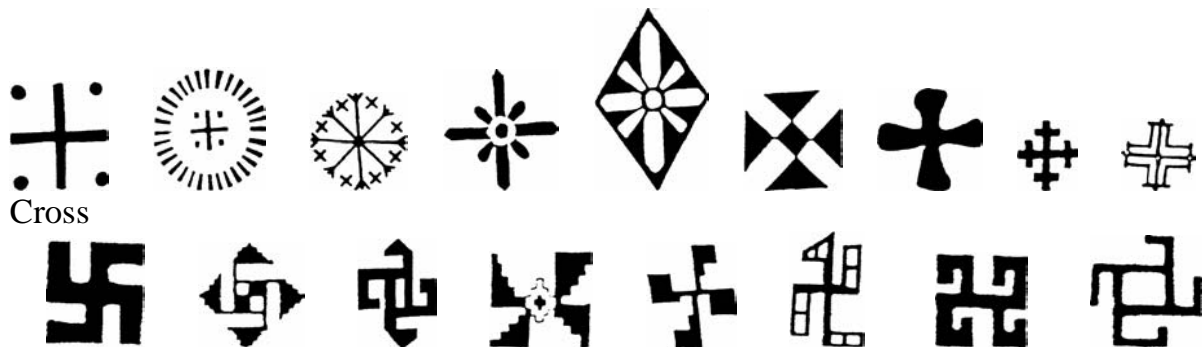


In the Far East the wind represented the breath which gave the origin to the world, the God of the four winds. In the designs, the square with the cross is still analogous with the stylised eye, a powerful amulet against the evil eye. The four ends and the junction point of the cross bring us back to the number five. The four corners of the square could also represent the four seasons or four directions. In ancient Turkey the earth and the sky were in four parts, each represented by an animal and a different colour, all designated by a different God. These were represented by a cross. Later this evolved into a pentagon, similar to the five-pointed star.

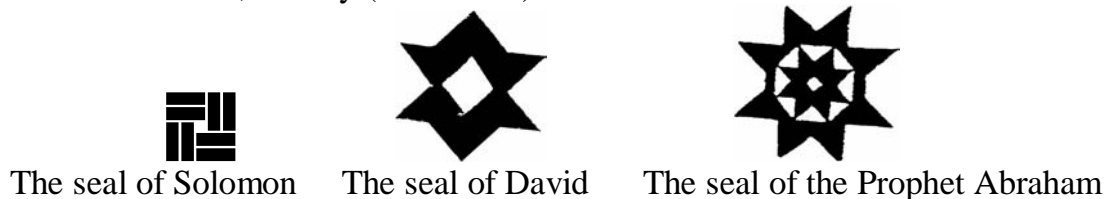
The colour yellow, which neutralises the evil eye, was used for the fifth part. For the Gokturk, the sky was subdivided into seven or nine levels and the goddesses lived on the third and fifth. On the third level there was a lake called Aksüt (white milk) and man's life and spirit depended on it, god Ulgen ordered the birth of the creator child whose spirit came from the lake.

On the fifth level was the Mother Creator (Anam Yaritici) who looked after the lake Aksüt and it was where all the spirits were housed. This strengthens the hypothesis that the third and fifth have a relationship with feminine one and the Goddess Mother. The number three represents the power of the Goddess Mother, the creation or birth, the control of life and death of women. The geometric construction of the star with six points derives from two triangles, the legacy of the Goddess, representing its sex and relationship with abundance and fertility and the evil eye.

The five-pointed star known as the seal of Solomon (Muhru Suleman) was used in Anatolia before it became known as that.



Buddhist swastika sun, destiny (Cark felek)



A six pointed star formed from two triangles (Mührü Süleyman) gave protection from the evil eye. The triangle was used to represent the genital zone on the statuette of the Goddess Mother and this was why it represented abundance.

Historically the apex of the triangle was directed upwards or downwards the direction having no importance but later the downwards pointing one represented feminine and the upwards one masculine also earth and sky, and therefore the sacred wedding. In Kilim the fetters (bukagi) are used to represent strength in a wedding and to avoid a breach. The fetter chains join the front legs of the animals and prevent them from escaping. On the Kilim two triangles are used joined at the base representing fidelity and union at a wedding.

The circle represents the perfect circular movement of the skies and it has no beginning or end but in a culture where time is not conceived as linear but circular, ever repeating. To be part of a circle affords protection. It appears in the form of a ring, necklace, belt or crown. Today you can find people who never remove an engagement ring. At various times, the circle has been used ornamentally in several ways.



Symbols of fidelity and Union of the Wedding

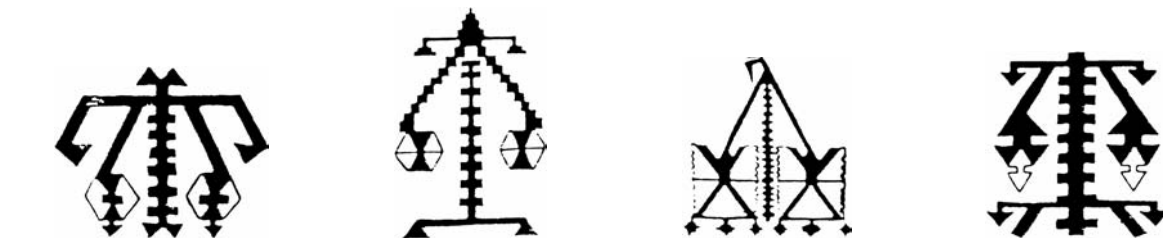
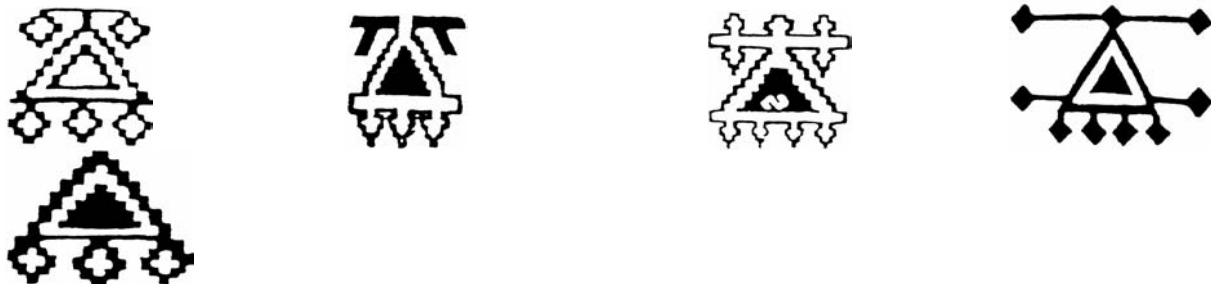


The circle symbols all originate from magical functions of protection against the evil spirits. On wedding veils in Anatolia they appear as small golden circles and as earrings. The earring design appeared on their Kilim which expressed the desire to marry. The Turkish women of Anatolia use many symbols to represent infinite energy and power of nature to renew and reproduce and to remove bad maladictions.

The Goddess Mother is represented by idols of human shape and as a tree. The legend of Erzobotof of the Yakuds people, narrates that the supreme tree was large, it was the mother of all existing things, existence depended on it, the sky and the earth were building blocks, it's roots wrapped the entire world, it's branches crossed the nine stages of the sky. Underneath was found the water of life and it passed through its roots. This water when used gave eternal youth and continuing fertility. This tree had an owner, one old goddess with a white hair like snow and three large breasts, rounded like a partridge's.



Earrings

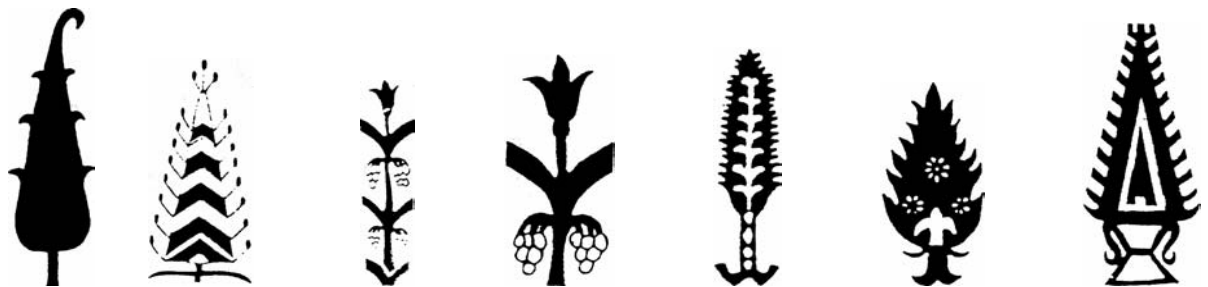


Water of Life

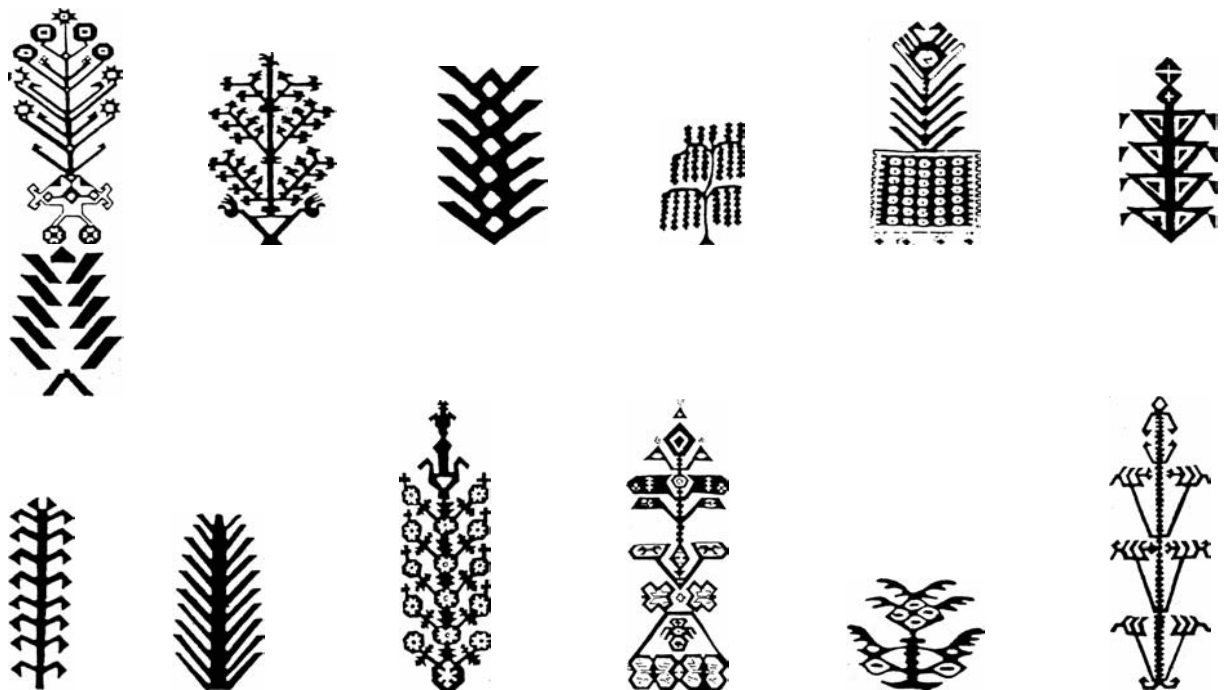
The humble willow raises its branches towards the sky. Again the tree symbol implies life and all the beliefs. After Gilgamesh, man has always searched for the tree of life and the water of life.

There were sacred places dedicated to the Goddess Mother with stones, water and trees which had to form the perfect landscape. There were places such as a garden with water that fertilised the earth and trees with abundant fruit, which made the earth sacred.

Man and nature were each part of the whole. Lions, tigers, deer, snakes and birds inhabited the sacred places like the Goddess Mother. It was the tree that dominated the entire forest. In the symbols for the Goddess Mother we find re-united the principals of good and evil, ambivalence, life, dead women and the pear tree corresponds to you and various aspects and experiences of life. With its power it was the creator for all the civilisations, to Ephesus it was Artemis and wore a tower shaped crown, near Sumeris called Inanna-Dumuzi, in Egypt Isis-Osiris, between the Ittiti Hapet- Hupapa and near Fenici and the Frigiens Kybele-Alys.



Tree of Life



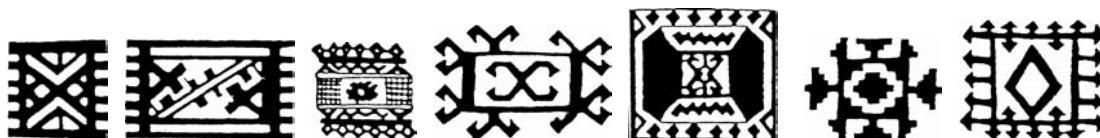
In Asia Minor, to the Turks, the sacred fire represented the centre of the house and during prayers made by the congregation, the women moved round the fire throwing grain into the flames and reciting; Oh mistress of these places! Spirits of fire and flames! Listen! St Madre protect us in your arms, protect us under your roof. Oh Goddess of abundance and food! In the Kilim, the reason for the motif named Muska is found, and a piece of paper on which is found the Koranic registration folded to a triangular shape. It is used for protection, like a ballot to realise a desire, in order to find out who loves you and to throw the evil eye on someone and protect against it. The Nazar is frequently used by Turkish women and represents the evil eye and had to attract the malevolent look, which was dangerous. The Koran describes the evil eye as a power of possession and may be an envious look and it particularly effects children.

According to Turkish tradition, the girl has to have a secret place to hide her desires and wear amulets for her own life and that of her husband. This explains some of the designs on the Kilim, her desire to marry and have a son. Sandik symbol is a sarcophagus.

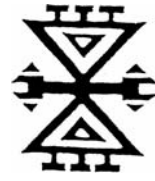
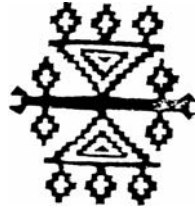
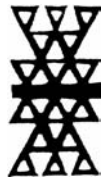
The Turks lead a nomadic life and were obliged to transport all their goods and therefore the Kilim was light and easy to carry and quickly replaced the cumbersome knotted rugs. The plaited horsehair, representing desire was used at weddings. The women made a slide for their hair called Belik. They attached ribbon and tape to the slide but when a widow they cut them.



Muska motif (Nazar)



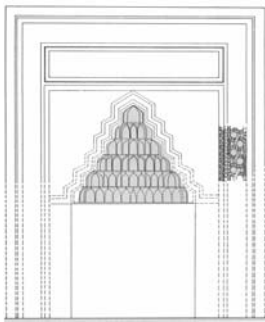
Symbol of Sandik (furniture chest)



Hats that are called Belik

It is now rare to find belik in a Kilim it symbolises immortality and eternity. Turkish women of Anatalia used this form of images and symbolic designs over the centuries with their secret designs remaining hidden even from their husbands.

In time, with the changes of religion the designs were adapted to Islam, for example the Mihrap, the direction of Mecca that is found on the carpets, originally were the two legs of the Goddess Mother, or the traditional shape of the nomad to symbolise the nomad tent, with Islam this is interpreted as the door to paradise. The ancient signs lost their meaning and have been used to describe daily life lived by the rules of traditional Muslims. The women who weave the Kilim always did so with deep feelings. The Kilim is a personal history, which was not shown to strangers. The nomads did not sell their kilim, if they did they did not tell the meanings of the symbols. In some regions the meanings are not known today and it is difficult to decipher the code. It is sometimes thought that the importance of the meanings is exaggerated and the designs are solely decorative because they will only name the design and not give the meaning.



Mosque



Kilim with prayer niches (Mihrap)



Here is a legend well known to the nomads;

One day the head of a nomadic tribe, found an abandoned Kilim at the entrance to his tent. He looked at it carefully, and he said, find me the father of the girl who wove this Kilim. When he came he said to the father that his daughter did not want to marry the man her father had arranged for her, her heart was with another.

The astonished father replied, that he was a poor nomad and a rich man had asked for the hand of his daughter. This is for her good, but my daughter's sweetheart is poor.

The the girl thought that the gentleman was a monster. The head of the tribe said that his daughter had woven a Kilim and he recognised her work. He had learnt all from the language of the Kilim. He said that he would give horses and camel to him and the father would be able to prepare for your daughters wedding to her sweetheart. He told him to tell his daughter that she weaves well but to put less green in with the red next time, and that he was mistaken.

Another story;

Once upon a time, a girl of a village near Konya was in love with the son of the Sultan, not having ever seen him.



Photos of black tent and Kilim in front of upright loom.

The girl was finishing her weaving when the Dervish arrived and said you have made a mistake. The foolish girl was a good weaver but she did not succeed in giving the meaning of the words of the Dervish.

One day the prince was hunting near the village and he fell from his horse and fainted. This girl who loved him was able to cure him by using mountain herbs. When he had recovered he fell in love with her. In time they got married. During the wedding festivities the mysterious dervish appeared. The bride approached him and asked him what her mistake was. He said that she was mistaken in her understanding of the design of the Kilim and that the Kilim said that the prince did not love her but now she had married him.

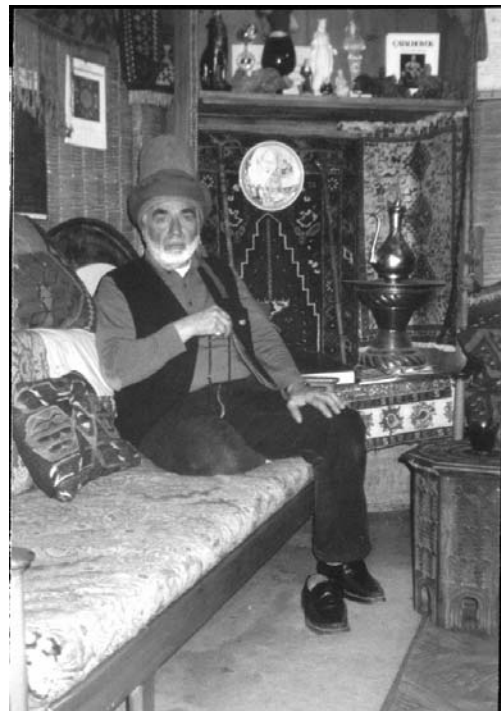
A nomadic saying;

The carpet and the kilim are woven with colours and every woven reason is transformed in legend.

Uzeyir Ozyurt



Girl making kilim



The Dervish