Dialogue

↳ Münevver Çamurcuoglu

(Kilim Loom Master)

Engaging in dialogue with Münevver Çamurcuoglu, a loom master of kilim weaving, has extended a deeper sense of Anatolian kilim motifs' cultural and regional nuances. Until this conversation, my knowledge of kilim motifs was fairly general and based on the web and library search. I had always assumed these motifs to be a selection of broadly recognised symbols across the general Anatolia terrain. However, Çamurcuoglu stated that even her hometown, Bartın, has specific motifs.

Through Master Münevver, I discovered that traditional motifs are not only representations of cultural beliefs but also reflections of specific geographical areas and local histories. She shared how motifs such as the "*Degirmen Tası*" (Millstone), "*Mihrablı*", and "*Bag Yapragı*" (Vine Leaf) pattern, unique to Bartın carry symbolism directly tied to the locality's heritage and way of life.

Her feedback on my initial drafts and sketches on contemporary motifs provided a valuable perspective, particularly her appreciation for how my designs had brought a "*breath of fresh air*" to the traditional patterns. She noted with a sense of approval that these designs seemed fitting for today's world yet still felt connected with the past. At one point, she even admitted, "*We were getting tired of weaving the same patterns over and over; it's nice to see something different like this.*" This reflection underscored the potential for innovation to complement tradition, rather than replace it, creating room for both continuity and change.

In discussing my intentions to modify kilim motifs, Çamurcuoglu emphasised the importance of not losing the aesthetic feeling behind, when adapting them for new forms and platforms. She highlighted how, in her traditional practice, every colour, every shape and every combination is carefully chosen to create harmony. This strengthened my commitment to ensuring that any contemporary adaptation keeps a sense of storytelling and aesthetics.

This exchange with Çamurcuoglu has also inspired me to explore and consider unusual, lesser-known regional patterns in my project. Understanding that each region, and indeed each nomadic group that into weaving, may have its own distinctive styles and motifs. They might project with a new direction and purpose to showcase the diversity of Anatolian kilims.

Ultimately, my dialogue with Çamurcuoglu has encouraged me to take a responsibility to approach this project not just as a designer but also as a messenger of the cultural heritage. The conversation has reframed my understanding of traditional kilim craft, moving me beyond the idea of motifs as mere design elements and instead seeing them as vessels of cultural identity and history.

In conclusion, this dialogue has been transformative. It has enriched my perspective, making me aware of the profound significance of regional motifs and the necessity of narrative depth within each pattern. By merging this awareness with my digital adaptations, I aim to create a body of work that respects the cultural roots of kilim motifs while allowing them to evolve in today's world. The project now feels less like a visual exploration and more like a respectful continuation of an age-old tradition, bringing the richness of Turkish kilim heritage into a new, contemporary context