

Symbolism of Persian Rugs, Part One

Motifs are derived from symbols that were used in ages gone by to inform, communicate and to convey ideas. Over time, some of these signs merged with myths, acquired hidden significance and moved into the world of esoteric symbolism. In this context, their use may not be limited to decorative purposes. Due to the hidden forces they are believed to imply, their primary purpose may well be psychological rather than aesthetic. Here is a comprehensive list of commonly used motifs in Persian rugs...

Hair Band

Persian women express many of their feelings by their hair style. The newly married young women plait their hair and tie threads of different colors at the end of each plait. Hair band motif indicates the desire to get married. If the woman uses some of her hair in weaving, she is trying to express her desire for immortality.

Hair band, in general, is an ornament used by the bride in the wedding ceremony. Hair bands are made of black cord, wool, doubly twisted silk thread, horse tail as well as beads, sea shells, golden thread and corals. The type and form of the hair band and the motifs used to represent it changes according to region expressing the weaver's mood as illustrated below.



Earrings

Earrings are indispensable as a wedding present in Persian culture. A girl using this motif is trying to inform her family that she wants to get married. Earring motifs used in various parts of Persian are illustrated below.



Fetter

Fetter is a sort of cuff placed on the front legs of horses to keep them from running away. The cuffs are connected to each other by a chain. As used on [Persian carpets](#), it symbolizes the continuity of the family union, the devotion of the lovers and the hope that they should always stay together. Various fetter motifs used in different regions.



Chest

This motif in general, symbolizes the trousseau chest of a young girl. Since the material in this chest is to be used in the husband's house, the expectations and hopes of the young girl are reflected in the pieces she has woven, knitted and embroidered.

Regarding the fact that the motifs carved on the wooden cradles are similar to the ones on the trousseau chests and that jajims having chest motifs are generally used as cradle covers, it can be stated that the motif stands of the desire to getting married and having a child.

Chest motif is realized by numerous techniques in Persian as figured below.

