



The Philosophy of the Border: Evolution of Boundaries in Carpet Design

Introduction

In carpet art, the border is not merely a decorative frame but a structural element carrying symbolic and cultural meaning. The border separates the inner field from the external world, providing protection and regulating the composition. This article examines the evolution of the border from single to multiple layers and its deeper philosophical significance.



1. The Stage of the Single Border

In the earliest carpets, the border was woven as a single band. Its function was primarily semantic: to separate the inner space (the field) from the outer world, transforming the carpet into a 'sacred bounded space.' The field itself was simple, often filled with scattered patterns. The border framed this infinite surface, acting as a cosmic boundary.



2. The Emergence of the Double Border

Over time, carpets developed a dual system with a main border and a smaller guard border. This created visual harmony and served as an optical transition between the field and the main border. It also reinforced symbolic protection by surrounding the central space with additional layers of defense.



3. Development of Multiple Borders

From the medieval period onwards, carpets often featured three, four, or even more layers of borders. This reflected stratification, cultural richness, and a cosmological interpretation of the border as protective concentric layers.



4. Relationship Between Border and Field

The border did not merely frame the carpet but also contained protective symbols. These motifs acted like a 'symbolic army' defending the field. Among them, the dragon motif holds a special place as a powerful guardian figure.



5. The Pazyryk Carpet Example

The Pazyryk carpet, dated to the 5th century BCE, demonstrates the protective and symbolic functions of the border vividly. Its borders depict horsemen and animal figures, surrounding the simple central field with a dynamic layer of defense.

Conclusion

The border in carpet art is not merely a decorative element but an ontological and cosmic boundary. Initially, the single border marked a basic protective limit. Later, multiple borders emerged, reflecting both aesthetic richness and the growing complexity of cultural thought. The symbols within, particularly the dragon motif, represented a symbolic army guarding the field.





