

Motif Repetition and Fill Patterns

The technique of motif repetition to fill a figure has a very long tradition in carpet design. Central fields are often filled with multiple instances of one or more motifs arranged in a regular pattern. Figure 27 shows a complex example. A variety of motifs have been placed in the carpet's central field to form recurring patterns of interlocking motifs. A number of square motifs are arranged along lines placed on the diagonal relative to the carpet's rectangular shape. They are also combined with other



Figure 27. Detail of a Kurdish carpet, author's collection.

motifs oriented in such a way as to create lines of pattern that read visually as diagonals. The rectangular areas within these crisscrossing diagonal lines are filled with other motifs based on three-fold mirroring and oriented along the carpet's width and length.

Many of Colenbrander's carpet designs feature central fields that contain repeated motifs. The fill patterns found in his work are not, however, always composed in the same way. This chapter investigates the types of fill patterns devised by Colenbrander.

An example of the simplest type of fill pattern used in Colenbrander's carpets is shown in Figure 28. The central field in *Vlammen* is composed of repetitions of a cross-like form contained within a filled circular motif. This motif is placed at regular intervals across the length and width of the central fields. The overall effect is more static and less visually interesting