

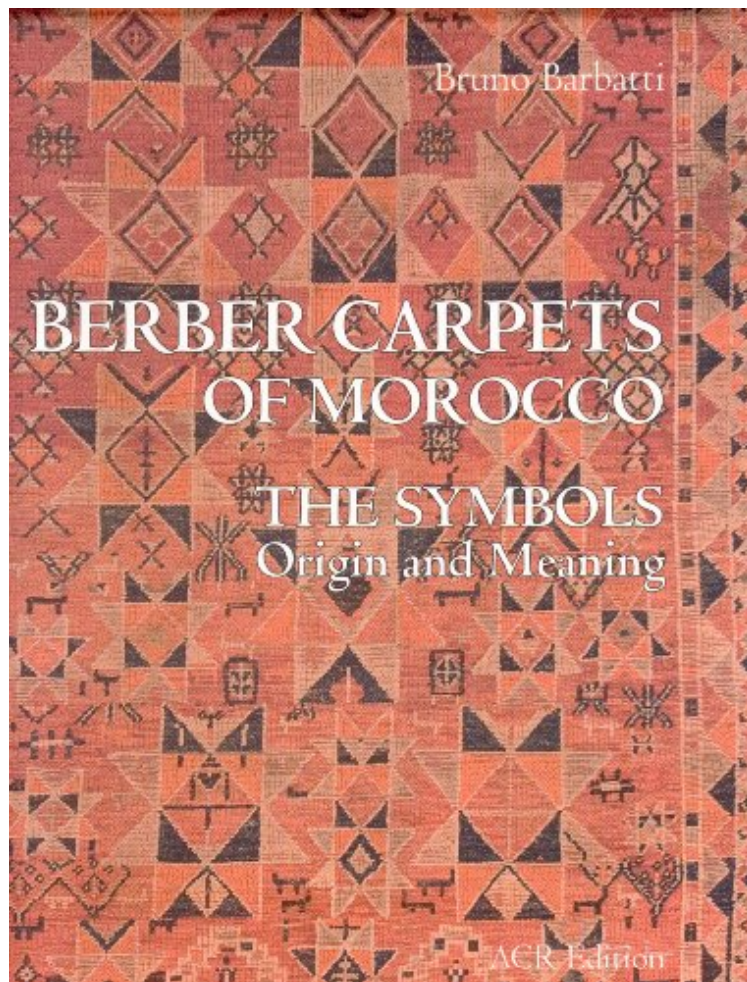
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[Download free ebook] Berber Carpets of Morocco. The Symbols. Origin and Meaning

Berber Carpets of Morocco. The Symbols. Origin and Meaning

Bruno Barbatti : Berber Carpets of Morocco. The Symbols. Origin and Meaning before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Berber Carpets of Morocco. The Symbols. Origin and Meaning:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. A one-of-a-kind book on the subject, which puts in ...By Jerome FordA one-of-a-kind book on the subject, which puts in perspective symbolism used in other parts of the world as well in designs.0 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Five StarsBy Seyed setayeshLove it9 of 11 people found the following review helpful. Great Photos, Disappointed in the Analysis of SymbolismBy JoAnn TurnerI had high hopes for this book, and I certainly am impressed with the photographs. But I'm not impressed with the level of scholarship or interpretation. I gave it 3 stars, because the book is beautiful, and it will add to my collection of books on Moroccan arts and culture. But I'm very disappointed in the text and the analysis of the symbolism. The text comes close to making me angry enough to throw the book across the room or want to send it back, neither of which I'll

do. The author has correlated Berber textile designs to Stone Age culture in the Near East and Europe. Interestingly, surviving examples of decoration from neolithic Africa are not similar to Berber textiles. There are some fertile areas here for future exploration and discussion. But the author assumes that ALL ancient symbols are exclusively sexual. Cave art, carvings, pottery, figurines, and textiles: nothing but sex, sex, sex. And not even sex in a metaphorical sense, attributes associated with gender in various cultures: masculinity related to action, femininity to receptivity, or that wisdom or intuition may be female while thought is male. Or the relationship between the sexes used as a metaphor for marriage or gender relations or society as a whole. Nope, all he sees are vulvas and phalluses everywhere, then there's birth and copulation. That's it. He doesn't incorporate mythology or story-telling, which all human beings use to make sense of the universe, or any of the rich symbolic language the Berbers have. On my walks through the markets of Marrakech, I was told all kinds of things about the meaning of gemstones and metals, what to eat or drink for certain ailments, what different henna designs mean on the hand. I'm not saying this is accurate about what Berbers really believe or what their history has been, but it points to a culture where every object can represent something else, from medicinal powers to cosmic forces. Yet none of that richness, intricate symbolism and colourful expression appears in this book. He says that asking a Berber woman about the symbols she designs may not yield results, but he assumes the person inquiring will be male. There are female anthropologists working with Berber women. There are women researching cultural and symbolic forms in traditional Berber, Arab and Middle Eastern societies. Examples include *We Share Walls: Language, Land and Identity* by Katharine Hoffman, or *Amazigh Arts in Morocco: Women Shaping Berber Identity* by Cynthia Becker. I agree it is astounding how many symbols have survived from the Paleolithic, that there must be mechanisms that explain continuity of meaning. This is fascinating to contemplate. But human beings are complex, human societies are complex. Meanings change with time. I don't believe the Berbers of Morocco are so lacking in mental sophistication that they've continued to use Stone Age symbols without ever explaining these symbols to themselves as they pass them down from generation to generation. Nor do I believe that all symbols relate only to sex, nothing else. Even the most "primitive" societies have more on their minds day to day than sex. And it's not remotely reasonable to describe the Berbers as primitive or primeval. The author does discuss some of the aesthetics and organization of Berber carpets, the way symbols that universally seem to represent the female are always surrounded by symbols that represent the male or that male symbols are often used to divide sections filled with female symbols. I agree that work on this level of composition and basic symbolism needs to be done, and it's interesting as far as it goes. But it can only go so far. While Berbers may be relatively isolated and have never been major players on the world stage, Morocco has been a diverse and dynamic place for thousands of years. In *The Berbers*, Michael Brett and Elizabeth Fentress write that one characteristic of Berber society for many centuries has been defining themselves in relation to an "Other," often invaders like Phoenicians, Romans, Arabs, yet the Berber peoples are still culturally distinct to this day. That survival in the face of change, invasion, and assimilation, means that there is both a flexibility and a strong core of identity within Berber society that is far from simplistic or primeval. What do male and female symbols mean in Berber thought? What layers have been built upon this foundation? I was hoping this book would provide more insight into Berber culture in its own terms, and it did not. Buy this book for the beautiful illustrations, many of them in colour, large scale and detailed. And for the interesting comparisons between Berber weaving and other similar styles of weaving in different parts of the world. Read the text for what it's worth. But don't think that this is the final or definitive word on symbolism in Berber textiles or Amazigh society in Morocco. I'll keep the book and enjoy the photos, and use my disappointment to spur me to read more about Berber culture and symbolism.

The top artistic quality of Berber carpets has already been a source of inspiration to artists such as Paul Klee and Le Corbusier. This book reveals a new slant on the origins of Berber carpets and on the sources and meanings of its motifs. Genuine Berber carpets are not the successors of well known Oriental carpets dating from the Islamic era but similarities in knotting techniques and certain motifs point to common roots harking back to the Neolithic period in Asia Minor. Because textiles wear out over time and a sequence of carpets across millennia no longer exists to prove the point, it is here that an author, for the very first time, presents the results of some in-depth, comparative research initiatives. He links the motifs of Berber carpets to rock art symbols and artefacts created by the first human civilizations, demonstrating that Berber carpets employ the same rules when using symbols and shapes and that there is a stunning similarity of correlation even with the characteristics evident during the Upper Palaeolithic period in Europe or the Neolithic Orient with the Mediterranean basin. The Berber carpet can therefore be considered as a definitive, genuine testimony of this archaic world. The book will speak volumes to anyone who is captivated by the origins of art and for whom the deciphering of symbolic language leads to a deeper knowledge and understanding of true meaning.

About the Author Bruno Barbatti was born in Zurich in 1926, the son of an architect of Italian and a mother of German origin. He is and feels himself a Swiss. He studied at the universities of Fribourg, Paris (the Sorbonne), Florence and Zurich, where he qualified as a Ph.D (history and German). He married Dominique Abadie, a French woman born in

Paris, who later became a writer. For thirty-five years he was a teacher of history and history of art at the High School for Mathematics and Natural Science in Zurich, where he had himself been a pupil. In consequence he combines scientific precision with his artistic sensitivity. During several journeys to Morocco and extended stays in Marrakesh, where his wife was for some years a teacher at the Lycee Mohammed V, he came to appreciate Berber culture. Berber carpets fascinated the couple. In the course of time they acquired, purely for their aesthetic pleasure, numerous pieces which 30 years later have proved to be a choice collection. In 1996 some of them were exhibited at the Museum Bellerive in Zurich. Following the ICOC conference at Marrakesh in 1995, this exhibition sparked the current interest in Berber carpets. Since then the author's inquiring and critical spirit has led him to undertake systematic personal research to determine the origin and meaning of carpet symbolism. The present work is the result. Readers will form their own opinions. However, it is certain, that all amateurs of Berber carpets and lovers of Morocco, as well as those who recognise in symbolism a more profound sense of the reality, will find here pictures, knowledge and vision.