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FROM TRADITION TO THE FUTURE**



Oral, Visual, and Ritual Reflections of the Crane Flock Motif in Turkish Culture

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Abstract

The crane flock motif appears in Turkish culture as a multi-layered symbolic motif with historical and spatial continuity. This study aims to examine the crane flock motif from a broad perspective, ranging from literary texts and folk poetry to weaving art and ritual practices. The presence of cranes and their passage in the *Divanu Lugati't-Türk*, and their use as symbols of migration, messengers, and loyalty in folk songs and poems, reveal the cultural and spiritual context of the motif. The flight of the crane flock in a shape resembling the letter "V" is associated with concepts of unity, solidarity, and navigation.

Descriptive and comparative methods were applied in the research, and the individual and social meanings of the motif were examined. The crane flock motif builds a bridge between the minstrel tradition, one of the oral cultures performed through folk poetry, and the material culture weaving tradition, embodied in the field of handicrafts. The visualization of the motif in the backgrounds and borders of Anatolian kilims through the concepts of movement and direction establishes a rhythmic connection with traditional ceremonies such as the Crane Semah. It is understood that the crane flock motif, from the belief in the Sky God to the Alevi-Bektaşî tradition, serves as a memory transmitter representing the spiritual journey and guidance of the goddess.

The findings show that the crane flock motif is not only an aesthetic element but also a powerful symbol influencing cultural memory, social identity, and spiritual values. The rhythmic and orderly flight of the migratory bird reveals the motif's function of continuity, direction, and

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movement in visual and ritual narratives. In conclusion, the crane flock continues to exist in Turkish culture as a unique and rich cultural element in literary, visual, and ritual contexts.

Keywords: Crane, Crane Flock Motif, Turkish Culture, Weaving Art, Folk Poetry
