

THE SYMBOLISM OF AMAZIGH SYMBOLS (ANIMAL, OBJECTS, TATTOO)

دلالة الرموز الأمازيغية
(رموز الحيوان، الأشياء، الوشم)

LE SYMBOLISME DES SYMBOLES AMAZIGH (ANIMAL, OBJETS, TATOUAGE)

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الملخص:

تم التطرق في هذا المقال إلى موضوع دلالة الرموز الأمازيغية (رموز الحيوان، الأشياء، الوشم)، حيث تعتبر هذه الرموز تراث إنساني عريق متوارث عبر الأجيال، والتي تحدد الهوية والثقافة الأمازيغية بمختلف الاشكال التي توحى إلى المعاني والدلالات المختلفة. يهدف هذا المقال إلى معرفة مختلف الرموز التي تتعلق بالحيوان والأشياء سواء طبيعية أو مصنوعة ورموز الوشم، المستعملة لدى المجتمع الأمازيغي بمختلف أنواعه وكذا محاولة التعرف على دلالاتها ومعانيها. قمنا بداية بالتطرق إلى مفهوم الرمز، ثم الحديث عن الرموز التراثية لدى المجتمع الأمازيغي بشكل عام، بعدها تطرقنا للعنصر الهام وهو معرفة هذه الرموز ومختلف دلالاتها (رموز الحيوان، الأشياء، الوشم).

الكلمات المفتاحية:

الرمز الأمازيغي؛ دلالة الرموز؛ الحيوان؛ الأشياء؛ الوشم.

Abstract:

The significance of Amazigh symbols-such as artifacts, animals, and tattoos-is discussed in this article. These symbols create Amazigh identity and culture and serve as reminders of old human heritage.

This article aims to the various symbols related to animals and objects, whether natural or artificial, and tattoo symbols used by the Amazigh community of various kinds, as well as trying to identify them. We first touched on the concept of the symbol, then talked about the heritage symbols of the Amazigh community in general, then we touched on the important element of knowing these symbols and their various connotations (animal, objects, tattoos).

Keywords:

Amazigh symbol; Connotation of symbols; Animal; Objects; Tattoos.

1. INTRODUCTION:

Ancient history studies reveal diverse cultures, customs, symbolism, and artistic expressions in heritage artefacts like textiles, tattoos, pottery, and jewelry, providing insights into life aspects and significant associations. Ancient societies used them to achieve diverse ideologies and the preservation of life, and to express different emotions such as pain and sorrow or joy and happiness. Some people have a diverse cultural heritage that is passed down from one generation to another through their ancestors, ideas, discoveries, and aspirations for life, and artistic forms that distinguish them from other peoples, including the Amazigh people who have left behind a distinct art with various forms and symbols that have many meanings and connotations. They depict their past lives, drawing inspiration from nature (animal, objects, etc.) and using them in various aspects of their lives such as tattoos, to express their feelings and experiences.

In this article, we will raise the following problem: What is the significance of animal symbols, objects, and tattoos in Amazigh society? This presumes two basic hypotheses: that some symbols may represent the identity of the Amazigh person, and that they may also be a symbol of the life circumstances they are experiencing, whether of joy and happiness or of sadness. These signs have been found since ancient times on the rocks and walls of the caves inhabited by the Amazigh in North Africa, and their use has evolved to include jewelry, pottery, and carpets. It can be said that they have become an integral part of clothing and decor. We described the Amazigh symbols used in various heritage elements and provided some analyses along with explanations of their symbolic meanings (animals, natural elements, and man-made objects, tattoos) in the Amazigh society.

2. The Amazigh symbols:

2.1 - The symbol

The symbol carries wide meanings and concepts, closely linked to signification; as it takes on meaning and value from what it indicates and suggests. Some ancient Greek philosophers, including "Socrates" and "Plato," adopted it as a means of expressing psychological impressions... instead of the direct narrative style, as they found that the mind is incapable of reaching the truths and that knowledge cannot satisfy the human desire to know the secrets of the universe¹. The symbol is meant to represent "the form that indicates something that has an independent existence, represents it, and substitutes for it, and refers to abstract concepts and ideas". The symbol "ranges from a simple sign to a network of complex signs that combine both realistic and symbolic expression, where its value or meaning is derived from the people who use it, meaning that society is the one that confers meaning on the symbol"².

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The reality is that "the symbol loses its meaning and value when it goes beyond the community in which it originated, as it does not have inherent characteristics that define its meaning and impose it on the community. All symbolic behavior patterns, which the community has agreed upon, are usually the ones that have defined its meaning. Therefore, different cultures symbolize the same thing with different symbols"³. The symbol, with its multiple sources, whether from nature, heritage, or imagination, is the basis for the survival of society and is a language of inspiration. It also opens up and expands fields for the imagination to move freely, allowing humans to reach the essence of things and perceive their hidden reality behind the apparent form. It is also a means to understand events and relationships between what exists within and outside of humans, and between humans through the social system⁴. It can be said that the symbol is a representation of signs and shapes that may be clear or obscure symbolizing various aspects of human life since settling on the earth, and expressing various phenomena surrounding him, whether natural or man-made to consolidate everything he was experiencing in his era and to pass on to the historical epochs that follow to remain a witness to that.

2.2- The heritage symbols of the Amazigh community

Talking about symbols means talking about a history that dates back to the earliest roots of humanity, where humans contemplated nature and sought to understand its phenomena through the various artistic forms they created. Preserving symbols is akin to preserving the essence of nature, renewing values and ethics, and social change in the face of progress⁵. Amazigh symbols represent a collection of ethical values and social customs, each conveying rich philosophical meanings of life, death, work, and hope⁶. It becomes apparent that Amazigh symbols are characterized by several anthropological features that distinguish them from other symbols, evident in "architecture, textiles, jewelry, tattoos, and others". From an artistic perspective, symbols are the visual language used by individuals (artists) to express their own feelings and those of others around them, as well as their feelings towards events, beliefs, and ideas, in form, in the language of thought, and human belief. This symbol will not deserve its name unless it includes the social, cultural, and intellectual values of the environment in which it exists. Because symbols relate to topics in human life such as lifestyle, habits, traditions, and society, they are more than just shapes in and of themselves. Since civilization is the one that assigns meaning to tangible objects and establishes their symbolic significance⁷.

Amazigh symbols are a group of symbols known for their unique design and unique language, embodying the power of the creator and the independence of wide imagination in the field of creativity. Geometric shapes are attractive and suggest meanings and messages that were common before the appearance of pen and paper. In general, Amazigh writing was originally used for naming, describing, and comparing with the hieroglyphic style known to the ancients⁸. Amazigh masculine and feminine symbols are always distinct, with feminine symbols surrounded by

masculine symbols, primarily characterized by "lines, loops, fish bones, ropes..."⁹. The masculine symbols are not fewer in number, but they are less distinctive because they occupy a different space and generally form feminine decorations¹⁰. These symbols also vary from one region to another, making it easy to identify the source of their elements. Some symbols have specific benefits, while others have an aesthetic role. The history of the Amazigh symbol is very ancient, and it is not clear whether the original designs were used on the body as tattoos or on material objects (fabric, pottery, leather, wooden objects...). We have found that the same pattern has been present for a very long time in both forms¹¹.

So, the Amazigh symbols, sometimes referred to as Tifinagh, possess a substantial amount of significance and exhibit variations in different places inhabited by the Amazigh people. There are different types, which are:

✓ Tifinagh Alphabet :

-Regional Variations: The Tifinagh script has distinct variations based on geographical regions, including the Libyan (or Tuareg) and the Central Saharan scripts.

-Advantages: The utilization of the Tifinagh script is essential for the preservation of the Amazigh language, since it plays a vital role in safeguarding their linguistic legacy and cultural identity.

✓ Cultural Symbols:

-Amazigh symbols, such as the "Y" shape representing pride and freedom, and the "cross" shape representing life elements, are both aesthetically pleasing and symbolic.

✓ Geometric Patterns :

-Amazigh art and decorating often feature geometric designs, with regional variations including spirals, zigzags, and diamonds, each with its own aesthetic appeal or cultural significance.

✓ Functional Symbols :

-Traditional crafts often use symbols to communicate ideas or ward off evil, often serving beyond simple ornamentation.

The Amazigh people always use symbols in their lives, especially women, to express events around them, emotions, feelings, convey messages and different meanings to others, create different symbols and shapes, sometimes adding colors to make them look more beautiful, and become famous in society and remain in circulation for many years¹². It is present on clothing, rugs and furnishings, traditional or modern utensils, and even home decor, among others. Amazigh symbols have occupied a significant place in Amazigh art and life. These symbols express beliefs and ideas in the form of symbols or written texts that convey Amazigh news in ancient times, when people relied on symbols for communication. These symbols consist of geometric patterns with different meanings and are full of special aesthetic value. These symbols contain many Amazigh ideas, most of which are directly related to the land and its components, where symbolic shapes can show

the extent of the Amazigh people's ability to adapt to all phenomena around them, including animals, plants, geometric shapes, and even numbers.

3. The symbolism of Amazigh symbols

The Amazigh society is characterized by unique symbols, which vary depending on the artistic elements embodied in them, such as pottery, textiles, jewelry, etc., which include everything surrounding the Amazigh person, such as animals, natural or man-made objects, and tattoos that the Amazigh people have adopted since ancient times, especially among women.

3.1 - Animal symbols

- **Snake**
The snake symbolizes agility and skill in women, and is used in magical rituals. It symbolizes the back of the snake, or the Centipede which the Amazigh people never kill, believing that it causes problems in the household¹³. Used in textiles, jewelry, and pottery, it symbolizes the resurrection of the dead¹⁴, and symbolizes life in its primitive form due to its flowing body and lack of limbs. It invigorates and fertilizes the world, and is also considered a spirit that protects places. The Amazigh believed in the existence of sacred spirits that shield them from harm and evil, maintain the health of men, and fertilize women. They believe that if a woman does not conceive, it is due to that spirit that governs their lives¹⁵. It is a symbol of knowledge among the ancients, as they believed it had the ability to enhance the flow of springs and the opening of grains¹⁶. The Amazigh symbol, a symbol of protection and resource preservation, is often associated with snakes. Despite their natural role in life cycles, snakes can pose a threat to people in desert regions. This symbol's spiritual meaning may stem from a heightened dread and veneration for snakes. However, snakes can also be seen as symbols of fear and evil spirits, reflecting prehistoric attitudes towards venomous animals. Additionally, snakes are linked to religious rites, often focusing on symbolic forces rather than practical solutions.

- **Crab and frog**
Their symbols are used in magical rituals¹⁷. Crabs, symbolizing protection due to their strong shells, are often used in Amazigh jewelry and art as a significant characteristic. The crab's association with sea life in coastal regions like Morocco and Algeria may be linked to the Amazigh people's belief in sustenance and abundance. In Amazigh culture, frogs are associated with fertility, renewal, and protection. They can survive on land and water, symbolizing rebirth and flexibility. Frogs are also used in jewelry and talismans to ward off bad luck and provide good fortune. Though connecting these natural behaviors with spiritual meanings of protection and adaptation may indicate a predisposition to interpret natural phenomena in a way that transcends their reality, the crab adjusts in its movement and defense mechanism. This symbolic projection is probably connected to rural or coastal populations that use symbols to try to understand the natural world. Frogs,

symbolizing natural metamorphosis and fertility, may not have deeper implications than other symbols. Their life cycle may have spiritual or magical connotations in Amazigh culture, and their appearance or movement may make them an odd or repulsive emblem, leading to inconsistencies in interpretation.

- **Scorpion**

Symbol of evil and death or endurance¹⁸, it also symbolizes protection, courage, strength, patience, toughness, and represents a magical defense against the evil eye. Among the ancients, it symbolizes treasure protection. Scorpions are revered by Amazigh cultures for their protective abilities and association with the natural and spiritual aspects of their existence, particularly in amulets and jewelry, symbolizing abrasiveness and flexibility. In Amazigh tradition, the scorpion symbolizes a complex fusion of strength and wonder, terror and protection. This sign can be seen as a representation of how people interact with nature in a hostile environment, but it can also draw criticism in a number of ways. First, rather than a true comprehension of the animal's character, the overabundance of negative symbolism may represent an innate dread. Second, the paradox of utilizing a scorpion as a protective emblem could stem from antiquated beliefs or attempts to subdue supernatural powers by means of ominous symbols. Ultimately, Amazigh culture's use of the scorpion as a symbol illustrates the influence of customs and folklore on forming shared understanding, yet understanding its complex meanings necessitates critical analysis.

- **The fish**

Due to the abundance of its eggs, it has come to symbolize fertility, life, masculinity, protection, and warding off the evil eye. Fish are revered as lucky charms and protective symbols in jewelry, bringing good fortune and a crucial link to water resources for Amazigh communities' agriculture and survival. With an emphasis on life, fertility, and nutrition, the fish emblem in Amazigh culture represents an intricate interaction between humans and the natural world. On the other hand, it's possible that the biological simplification of fish behavior has been given overly spiritual interpretations. Furthermore, the symbol's spiritual or philosophical significance may be limited by the coastal populations' material reliance on fish. Fish may also be used in rituals and artistic creations as a reaction to ingrained customs without careful consideration of their significance, rendering the symbol static in form but lacking in meaning renewal.

- **The chameleon**

It holds a strong symbolism as it is believed to ward off harm and break the effects of magic. The chameleon's ability to change color and blend in with its environment symbolizes adaptability and metamorphosis. It also represents protection and camouflage, symbolizing prudence and avoiding danger. The chameleon also represents the Amazigh people's close relationship with nature and reverence for its species. The chameleon's color change is not a symbol of spiritual

or social adaptation, but rather a biological response for survival. Critics argue this suggests flimsy adaptation rather than drastic change, advocating for situational adaptation. Traditional beliefs may clash with the chameleon symbol, which promotes adaptation over stability. Overemphasis on form may lead to a critique of surface-level societal or personal transformations, where adaptation is reduced to formality rather than a structural shift.

- **The bird**

Symbolizes love, purity, fertility, and wealth in general. The swallow symbolizes "women, femininity, fertility, and reproduction", and is found in textiles, pottery, and clothing. As for the Partridge, it symbolizes "beauty, love, and freedom". It also symbolizes a beautiful and obedient woman, and the square composed of small squares symbolizes "her eyes, and a good wife", and is a symbol of "bravery and agility"¹⁹. In Amazigh culture, birds symbolize freedom, independence, and self-actualization. They serve as messengers between heavenly and worldly domains, representing direction and spiritual realities. Birds symbolize renewal, renewal, and the cyclical nature of life, reflecting fresh starts and continuity in the natural world. The bird symbolizes flight from psychological and societal constraints, often indicating failure to confront challenges. It is connected to spirituality and the distance humans from nature. Being confined in a cage can symbolize power and control, and a conflict between freedom and reality. Flexibility and adaptability are often seen as desirable qualities, but can also signify giving in to external forces. The fish in a tank can represent oppression and suffocating living circumstances. Silence can be seen as a virtue, but concerns about speech's importance in the face of injustice or oppression may arise.

- **Spider**

Symbolizes patience, hard life, and harmony. The spider holds significant symbolic meaning in Amazigh culture, representing protection, patience, knowledge, resilience, and originality. Its meticulous web-weaving technique symbolizes wisdom and patience, as it patiently waits for the perfect moment to capture prey. The spider, in Amazigh beliefs, serves as a protector, guiding and watchdog over households. Its ability to weave intricate webs resembles the Amazigh people's weaving and textile customs, symbolizing innovation and interdependence. In mythology and folklore, spiders are depicted as cunning and intelligent beings who outwit adversaries or guide individuals, showcasing their cunning and intelligence. The spider symbol, despite its cunning and intelligence, may encourage dishonesty and conflict with moral principles. Its portrayal of preparation and results may be oversimplified, as real-world problems require more complex qualities. The spider's symbolism suggests passive waiting, submitting to fate, which may lead to procrastination and missed opportunities. It's crucial to consider both its benefits and drawbacks.

- **Ram**

Symbolizes fertility, integration, and resistance. The ram is revered for its endurance and resiliency, playing a significant role in ceremonies, mythologies, and artistic expressions. Rams are significant in religious and cultural ceremonies, particularly on Eid al-Adha, where they represent commitment and offering value for others. In Amazigh tradition, rams are connected to fertility and prosperity, representing both land fertility and animal welfare. Their representation in art and agricultural rites underscores their significance. Ram horns are a symbol in Amazigh culture, representing strength, kinship, protection, and traditional practices. They are also a potent spiritual emblem in Amazigh mythology, representing nature's generative and protective elements. The ram's symbolic implications are deeply rooted in Amazigh culture, influencing daily life and spirituality. The ram is revered in Amazigh culture as a representation of a man's physical toughness and fortitude, as well as his capacity to overcome obstacles. Nonetheless, it is seen excessive to priorities physical prowess and masculinity as the foremost standards for human worth. People who lack physical strength or who don't conform to stereotypical ideas of what it means to be a man may face marginalization in societies that place a premium on this kind of strength. In addition, the emphasis on men as fertility symbols runs the risk of marginalizing women's roles in this regard. Strictly concentrating on the masculine side of reproductive symbolism could perpetuate ideas that downplay the contribution of women to these essential processes.

- **Salamander**

Also known as a newt, symbolizes renewal and growth. The salamander is a symbolic animal in Amazigh culture, representing protection, change, and adaptation. It is associated with fire and water, and is believed to have a magical affinity for fire, making it a guardian emblem. Symbolizes rebirth and adaptability, demonstrating resilience in various habitats. It is also associated with spiritual and physical worlds, symbolizing duality and hidden wisdom. Its existence is seen as a sign of awe and mystery, symbolizing the capacity to travel between realms. Salamander motifs in Amazigh culture symbolize resilience, metamorphosis, and supernatural endurance, often found in ceramics and jewelry, symbolizing harmony of elements and adaptation. Even while the salamander represents the capacity for transformation, placing too much emphasis on this symbol could lead to an overly literal interpretation because regeneration is portrayed as a simple or instinctive process. This viewpoint could result in a reduction in the significance of individual effort and tenacity while overcoming obstacles. Additionally, it promotes superstition; people may be discouraged from applying practical or rational thinking to situations by viewing it as a symbol of protection against dangers. They may rely in magical or supernatural forces to overcome obstacles rather than using reason to deal with them.

• **Bee**

In Amazigh culture, bees symbolize fertility, hard work, community, and harmony with nature. They are revered for their role in pollination and honey production, sustaining life. Bees are seen as emblems of tenacity and unceasing work, aligning with the principle of community welfare. Bees symbolize abundance, and life cycles in Amazigh culture. They are essential for pollination, promoting plant and crop development. Cooperative nature, particularly in hives, reflects mutual assistance and communal cohesion, reflecting the collective value of each person. They are revered in Amazigh beliefs as messengers between spiritual and corporeal realms, with their honey being a sacred material. Also believed to bring protection, good fortune, harmony, and prosperity, making their presence a sign of wealth and safety in certain cultures. Bees, symbols of wealth, and work ethic, are prevalent in Amazigh culture's jewelry, textiles, and pottery. They symbolize community life, individual labor, production, harmony with nature, and life-nurturing. Critics argue that the bee emblem's emphasis on group productivity and cooperation may diminish individual freedom and rights. The symbol could be interpreted as a request for submission to group directives, leading to feelings of pressure and overcommitment. The ideal bee system may also overlook the human side, requiring breaks from production responsibilities. This could result in a culture that denies people the freedom to voice their thoughts and make decisions.

• **Snail**

The snail, a symbol of endurance, fertility and the cycle of harvest patience, and protection in the Amazigh culture, symbolizes perseverance and gradual advancement, reflecting the Amazigh's emphasis on fortitude and fortitude in challenging circumstances, such as the arid landscapes of North Africa. The snail shell, a symbol of life cycles in various civilizations, symbolizes the spiraling development and evolution of life. In Amazigh culture, the snail represents simplicity and harmony with nature, symbolizing a modest, grounded life that moves at a natural pace without excess, reflecting the importance of coexisting peacefully with the natural world. The snail's shell symbolizes security and self-sufficiency, reflecting the Amazigh concept of taking one's "home" with oneself. It also represents adaptability, illustrating the Amazigh people's ability to adapt to various situations, such as nomadic lifestyles or difficult environments. Amazigh art often incorporates the spiral pattern of the snail's shell in ceramics, textiles, and jewelry, symbolizing continuity, mobility, and metamorphosis in Amazigh culture. In Amazigh culture symbolizes patience, adaptability, humility, and balance with nature. However, it can be criticized for overemphasizing patience, idealizing adaptability, and diminishing personal ambition or innovation in societies needing rapid progress to face contemporary challenges.

- **Lizard**

Considered a symbol of nobility and spiritual enlightenment²⁰. In a setting that emphasizes the importance of survival and the capacity to overcome obstacles, this emblem is seen as significant. The lizard sign, though, is subject to criticism in a number of ways. The strong emphasis on adaptability may serve to perpetuate the belief that one should accept things as they are without actively seeking to improve them, and the lizard's surface-level metamorphosis may help people avoid having a serious conversation about their issues.

- **Donkey's head**

Used in magical rituals. Also found paired with a comb, symbolizing a husband's mistreatment of his wife, drawn by women as a symbol of their marital suffering. The donkey's head sign in Amazigh tradition combines positive and negative meanings, representing simplicity, folly, patience, and endurance. Critics argue it can be used for social punishment, defamation, and promotes passive acceptance of challenging situations without effort to improve them.

- **Insects symbols**

The Amazigh woman draws many insects such as "butterflies, flies, horse flies, and others" so that her husband keeps flying over her without interruption²¹. The fly is also a symbol of life in its enthusiasm, vitality, and its ability to multiply endlessly²², all these Amazigh symbols are drawn on pottery, house walls, fabric, jewelry, tattoos, and others as they embody the ancient ideas of the Amazigh people²³.

3.2- Some symbols of natural and man-made things

- **The moon and the stars**

Symbolize a beautiful woman surrounded by her children²⁴, or a mother guarding the universe within a space filled with hostile creatures about the bright light²⁵, it represents an amulet against the evil eye among the Amazigh people, where it confronts and divides it into four directions in the air²⁶. The moon and stars hold significant symbolic meanings in Amazigh culture, relating to time cycles, spirituality, direction, and fertility. The moon's waxing and waning phases are used to determine festivals, ceremonies, and agricultural activities, reflecting the idea of rebirth and life's eternal continuance. The moon symbolizes fertility, nurturing, and life cycles, including menstruation and childbirth. Its phases correspond to women's life stages and nature's nurturing quality. In Amazigh cosmology, the moon provides light and protection, affecting human emotions and the natural world. The stars are considered wisdom, defense, and sacredness by the Amazigh people. They serve as guides for nocturnal travels and represent understanding and direction. Amazigh theology and folklore believe the stars are supernatural beings, providing cosmic defense and harmony. In Amazigh culture, stars symbolize spirituality, humanity's interconnectedness, and the spirits of departed ancestors, providing protection and direction from above. Moon and star themes are common in Amazigh art and tattoos,

symbolizing fertility, protection, and spirituality. These celestial figures represent harmony between the ground and sky, and are used to evoke cosmic energy and protect individuals. They also represent the guiding principles shaping existence and fate. The Amazigh culture heavily relies on the lunar calendar for festivals and ceremonies, particularly related to agriculture and religion. These lunar cycles are also central to their religious rituals, which continue to hold cultural significance even after Islam. The moon and stars in Amazigh culture symbolize renewal, guidance, and connection to nature. However, they may rely heavily on natural cycles, potentially reducing focus on rationality and scientific progress.

The comb, spindle manual, or “kardach” in Tamazight language (Wool comb machine)

These items are made by humans and are tools specific to wool, symbolizing textiles in general. The comb and spindle hold significant symbolic and practical meaning in Amazigh culture, particularly in women's duties, fertility, creativity, and weaving life's fabric. They are used in artwork, rituals, and social conventions, symbolizing harmony, appeal, and defense in textile-making traditions. Combs are symbolic tools for personal maintenance and beauty, particularly for women, representing fertility, authority, and social identity. They enhance human dignity, attractiveness, and cultural expression. In Amazigh iconography, comb patterns serve as protective talismans, shielding against negative energies. The comb, a symbol of order, feminine power, and protective characteristics, is frequently used in Amazigh decorative arts, particularly in traditional tattoos for females. The spindle, a symbol of women's creative potential and weaving, represents the act of creating new things, such as communal ties, families, or textiles, reflecting the essence of Amazigh culture. Also associated with fertility and life cycles, symbolizes the interconnectedness of generations and the continuity of life, reflecting the role of women in nurturing life. The spindle symbolizes the passing down of cultural knowledge and abilities, often passed down through generations of women. It also holds spiritual significance, symbolizing the cyclical nature of life and the ability to transform raw materials into useful and beautiful objects. In the Amazigh culture, women are traditionally involved in textiles, weaving, and spinning. The comb and spindle symbolize their roles in home management, economic growth, and cultural knowledge transfer. Women's weaving skills are seen as essential for maintaining tribe traditions and supporting families and communities. They are used as protective motifs in Amazigh jewelery and tattoos, honoring ancestry and cultural customs. They symbolize harmony, continuity, and life's creative energy, transforming everyday items into symbols of spiritual and social value.

- **Honeycomb**

Symbolizes softness and the beehive²⁷. The beehive symbol in Amazigh culture represents values like organization, teamwork, and unity, promoting social harmony. Despite criticisms of individuality pressure and resistance to change, it remains a blend of strength and rigidity, reflecting traditional communities' challenges.

- **The crescent**

A symbol of Islamic religion, a symbol of resurrection, among the Amazigh people, this shape is associated with the centuries²⁸. It is usually found on the tombs of righteous saints, accompanied by a star to indicate the flame of the soul. It also symbolizes renewal, as it represents the moon in one of its phases where it disappears and then reappears²⁹, just like how a human is born, grows, and dies like the moon. The crescent moon symbol in Amazigh culture symbolizes time, transformation, fertility, spirituality, and identity. However, it's criticized for its reliance on traditions, traditional female roles, and spiritual mystique.

- **The Axe (chaqor in Tamazight language)**

Considered a symbol of loyalty, internal balance, and clarity³⁰. The honeycomb symbolizes community and teamwork in Amazigh culture, as bees work together to build a hive and produce honey. It emphasizes cooperation for collective benefit and the collective's power. In Amazigh agricultural and pastoral communities, mutual assistance fosters vibrant communities. It filled with honey, symbolizes wealth, nutrition, and abundance. It symbolizes laborious efforts and natural resources, and in Amazigh culture, bees are essential for agriculture and pollination. Also, symbolizes the balance between nature and humanity. Structure symbolizes fertility and life continuation, supporting the hive through honey production. It symbolizes nurturing cycles of procreation and growth, highlighting the need to nurture both the environment and human life. The honeycomb, with its symmetrical hexagons, symbolizes harmony, balance, and order in Amazigh iconography. It reflects the concept of coexisting peacefully with nature and social realms, reflecting Amazigh ideals of balance, reverence for the natural world, and structure. It's a symbol of divine harmony and interdependence, is associated with sacred geometry in Amazigh beliefs. Bees, revered for their honey production, create a connection between earth and sky. The hexagonal honeycomb pattern symbolizes the universe's underlying structures, emphasizing the importance of harmony in our lives. Amazigh jewelry, textiles, and ceramics often use the honeycomb pattern as a symbol of community, fertility, and wealth. Its geometric shape complements Amazigh appreciation for abstract patterns. Bees, guardians of the hive, also serve as protective emblems.

- **The Cross**

A religious symbol, representing movement and the creator's essence among the Amazigh people. It signifies the energy of life and rebirth of the soul or revelation. Some believe it is a symbol of Christianity³¹. It also symbolizes the legs or arms of a man³². In Amazigh tradition, the cross has multiple connotations that include spirituality, cosmic balance, protection, and cultural identity. However, there are issues with this symbol's spiritual ambiguity, concentration on the past, and dependence on outside powers. He has difficulties adjusting to the current society and ideas, which call for more adaptability and variation in the interpretation of conventional symbols.

- **The Chair**

It is drawn by the woman who shows love and respect for her husband. This symbol is important in the Amazigh house. This is an expression of her love and respect for him³³. The chair symbol, a symbol of authority, wisdom, and stability, symbolizes leadership and appreciation in Amazigh culture. However, it faces criticism for its rigidity and reliance on tradition, requiring a more flexible interpretation.

3.3 - Tattoo symbols

Tattoo cultural, religious, philosophical, political, and social meanings. They generally, aim to adorn women, and there are meanings that symbolize the society to which that tattoo belongs and express its culture. They believe that it preserves its owner from forgetfulness in old age. Amazigh tattoos often feature a sword symbolizing resistance, strength, honor, and protection. This symbol represents the wearer's ideals and individuality, symbolizing their inner strength, heritage, and community, and reminding them of their bravery and self-defense against external threats.

The crescent and star are potent symbols that stand for femininity, safety, direction, and cosmic harmony in Amazigh tattoos. The star stands for direction, safety, and spiritual clarity, while the crescent moon symbolizes life cycles, fertility, and the feminine side of nature. Collectively, these symbols serve as both individual talismans and cultural markers, symbolizing the harmony between cosmic and earthly forces. Crows and owls in Amazigh tattoos symbolize spiritual protection, knowledge, and a connection to the unseen world, providing protection and direction for those who choose these powerful symbols. Flowers are used as symbols for life, fertility, beauty, growth, and protection in Amazigh tattoos. Despite the fact that these motifs frequently lack actual floral representations in favor of abstract or geometric designs, they nevertheless have deep roots in nature and represent important facets of Amazigh culture and faith. The prayer rug represents spirituality, faith, and a link to the divine, while the pitcher represents sustenance, fertility, and domestic life in Amazigh tattoos. These motifs, which stand for both the bodily nourishment of the body and the spiritual upkeep of the soul, emphasize the harmony

between the material and spiritual facets of existence. Collectively, they highlight how crucial it is for Amazigh culture to combine material responsibilities with spiritual devotion. As we find other symbols used in tattoos by the Amazigh people with different meanings, including:

The monkey is a representation of cleverness, quick thinking, resourcefulness, and playfulness in Amazigh tattoos. It also represents the contrast between deceit and playfulness. The monkey can be used as a tattoo to represent these attributes, serving as a reminder to always strike a balance between wit and lightheartedness in day-to-day living or as a reflection of the wearer's personality. The snake has deep symbolic implications in Amazigh tattoos that are connected to fertility, metamorphosis, protection, and healing. The snake, a species that is both feared and respected in many cultures, has a significant symbolic meaning in Amazigh culture. It is viewed as a protector, a force for rebirth, and a symbol of the contradictions inherent in life.

The scorpion symbolizes bravery, protection, risk-taking, resilience, healing, and fertility. It represents resilience, power, and protection against evil influences. Its dual nature highlights life's complexity and the value of fortitude in difficult times. The fox symbolizes intelligence, resilience, and self-reliance, representing the ability to thrive in harsh environments and the importance of wit and cunning in overcoming obstacles. The tiger is a symbol of fury, independence, and mystery in Amazigh tattoos, while the lion stands for strength, power, courage, and majesty. Though with slightly different subtleties, both animals represent traits of bravery and leadership. When combined, they offer a potent combination of qualities that express the wearer's wish to incorporate both dynamic and dominant facets of resilience and strength.

The wolf is a sign of strength, loyalty, familial ties, wisdom, and cunning. It embodies intelligence, ingenuity, endurance, and a strong bond with societal and familial systems. The wolf is a potent and complex emblem in Amazigh culture because of its autonomous spirit and spiritual connotations, which deepen its metaphorical meanings. The deer is a symbol of grace, tenderness, spirituality, and sensitivity in Amazigh tattoos. It represents grace and serenity, as well as a closer relationship with nature and the spiritual realm. The deer's symbolism reflects concepts of fertility, abundance, and personal development, as well as the significance of upholding a calm and contemplative way of living.

Amazigh people wear tattoos featuring a fish symbolizing fertility, abundance, spirituality, and resilience, representing the enduring nature of life and the fish's adaptability and metamorphosis. The bat symbolizing metamorphosis, adaptation, and protection, promoting situational adaptation, hidden knowledge, and personal change, particularly for those seeking balance in life. The eagle, a symbol of strength, vision, freedom, and dignity in Amazigh culture, symbolizes independence, mental clarity, and personal strength. The butterfly symbolizing metamorphosis,

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beauty, fragility, and freedom, promoting personal development, grace, and artistic beauty, reflecting a carefree attitude towards life.

Green bird symbolizes spiritual development, harmony with nature, prosperity, and rejuvenation in Amazigh tattoos, promoting joy, freedom, reconnection with nature, and constructive change. The palm tree symbolizes tenacity, cultural identity, and development, representing the wearer's fortitude, cultural pride, and harmony, peace, and prosperity. The dagger tattoo design symbolizes bravery, defense, rank, and ancestry among Amazigh, representing their commitment to defending their community and pride in their cultural customs. The Amazigh people wear tattoos with a ring representing dedication, unity, and completion, symbolizing their commitment to cultural traditions, accomplishments, and spiritual protection.

The necklace in Amazigh tattooing symbolizes beauty, status, protection, and cultural identity, representing the wearer's aspirations for security, social status, and cherished customs, enhancing its spiritual significance³⁴. If a woman is a widow, she may have a tattoo from ear to ear symbolizing her deceased husband's beard. The palm tree is a common face tattoo, drawn as a straight line surrounded by dots representing seeds, placed between the lower lip and chin of the woman. The tattoo is associated with the Carthaginian goddess "Tanit," considered a symbol of fertility, war, and the lunar goddess of the Amazigh people. Tattooing is considered one of the most beautiful symbols that can adorn a woman's face³⁵.

The Amazigh people derived the decorative elements of pottery, leather, and silver artifacts from the tattoo itself. Some Amazigh regions still use writings and decorative symbols to adorn their homes³⁶. Symbols derived in textiles generally represent "man, woman, society, mating, fertility, pregnancy, birth..."³⁷. Amazigh tattoos are symbolic of identity, spirituality, beauty, metamorphoses, and communion with ancestors, among other things. Even while it captures significant elements of Amazigh culture and spirituality, it struggles with issues of generational divides, social pressure, and tradition preservation. Tattoos are seen as a form of self-expression in the modern era, but traditional Amazigh tattoo symbols demand a closer examination, with an emphasis on their various interpretations and how to adjust to contemporary social shifts.

4. CONCLUSION

The Amazigh community is one of the communities full of diverse symbols inspired by nature that it has been living in since its existence on Earth, many of which represent the Amazigh identity and culture, which carries meanings and connotations, and these symbols (animals, objects, tattoo) have a special meaning in the Amazigh community. As this community used it in various traditional works that they were doing, such as pottery, ornaments, textiles..., to express their feelings, emotions and everything that they live in their daily lives.

Because the Amazigh symbol has authentic roots, we find that many researchers and scholars collect it for inspiration and preservation as an ancient cultural heritage, its origins come from the land, traditions, heritage, human living needs, security and stability. From it, we came up with some suggestions that may increase the value of our topic in the future, we mention:

*The aim is to restore the Amazigh symbol in general and to be inspired in particular by the meanings of the symbols known in this cultural heritage and to preserve and use them in various traditional works (textiles, ornaments, pottery, etc.) to remain in the collective memory in its modern form as a symbol of Amazigh civilization and culture.

*Considering that the Tamazgha region is large and vast, more research and study is needed to understand the characteristics of this ancient society, identify other meanings and connotations that may be unknown until today, and conduct extensive and comprehensive research on the symbols used.

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