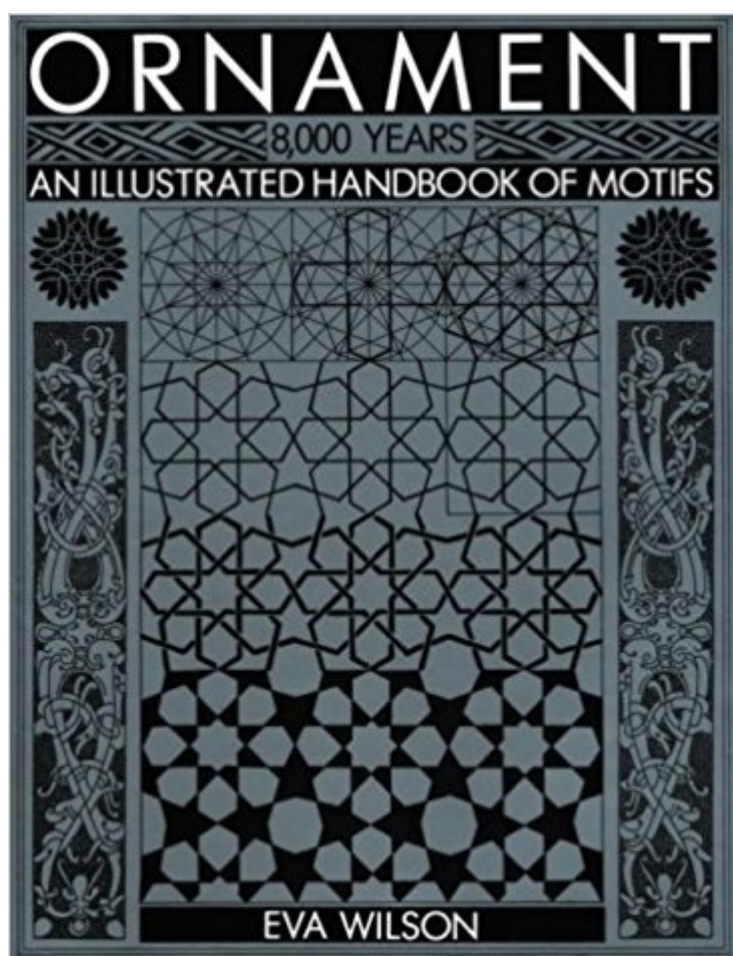


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# Ornament, 8000 Years: An Illustrated Handbook Of Motifs



## Synopsis

Discusses the history and symbolism associated with nine groupings of decorative motifs, including spirals, animals, plants, and geometrical constructions.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Ornamental motif books on specific styles, traditions, and periods abound. The title of this book suggests a greater inclusiveness than is actually delivered. Only nine groups of motifs are used to represent 8000 years of decorative design. Some categories are broad and general--spirals, scrolls, and animal ornament, for example--while others, like the Indian lotus motif and the palmette, are more specific. Six hundred large and strongly contrasted black-and-white line drawings and a comprehensive index help overcome the work's uneven subject approach. Examples are drawn largely from the British Museum. While rich in detail and research, the text only partially updates Flinders Petrie's 1930 classic *Decorative Patterns of the Ancient World*. Important, nevertheless, for large decorative arts, design, and archaeology collections. Russell T. Clement, Brigham Young Univ. Lib., Provo, Ut. Copyright 1994 Reed Business Information, Inc.

Of all ornaments and their origins, most notorious is the swastika--which, as Wilson points out, was first a Sanskrit word meaning "well-being," "fortune," and "luck." Other decorative motifs may not necessarily carry that perception-reality gap, yet all of the author's nine groupings of patterns were, at one time or another, imbued with different symbolic definitions. Wisely saving her sources until

the end, she carefully details the histories and chronologies of well-recognized motifs, divided into spirals, animals, Egyptian plants (lotus, papyrus, lily), leaves, the Indian lotus, the Celtic scroll, rosettes, and geometrical constructions. The more than 600 black-and-white illustrations provide an invaluable reference for students and professionals in arts and architecture, and some eye-opening information for talented amateurs. Barbara Jacobs

Glad I finally purchased a copy of this reference. Very well arranged materials and easy to find. You won't regret this useful reference if you are in the decorative arts.

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