THESIS

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SYMBOLISM - ITS APPLICATION TO TEXTILE DESIGN

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INTRODUCTION

The origin of all art is probably in the desire of man to express his ideas and then to convey them to others. Symbolism may be said to be one of the richest sources of design. The use of symbolism by early man, and man through the ages, comes from his desire to put his thought into definite expression. It is plainly discernible that nature has appealed to the mind of mankind and moved him to express his ideas of it in its many manifestations.

Man seems to have had certain needs, religion, information, art and wealth, which have moved him to express himself in an artistic manner.

The authority of religion in matters both spiritual and material has had a direct and far-reaching influence on art. Also, the direct need of man to be in a sympathetic relationship to an unknown power has caused him to express himself artistically.

Certain forms of art developed to enable one man to give information to another by means of pictorial signs or symbols.

Other artistic efforts were attempted and achieved merely for the pleasure man received from the line and the color.

Desire for personal ornamentation to enhance the wearer's appearance led man to make ornaments. Often, these personal ornaments were the expression of the creative artistic urge, and were also emblematic of the powers or the wealth of the maker. Ornaments were sometimes used as the medium of exchange.
Other forces which caused the making of artistic objects and decorations were suggestion and expectancy. Probably, in some instances, a suggestion first started the representation, some form suggesting a resemblance to some object. To the early man a resemblance indicated an actual affinity, and therefore possessed an important place in sympathetic magic. The natural object was carved or painted to enhance the resemblance, and the object usually became a charm or a fetish.

Expectancy is closely connected with the association of ideas, and was practiced as follows - if a certain form was natural to a man-made object - this same form was given to a similar object made by a different method and was "conditioned by the former's limitations."

The art of both ancient and modern man is directly influenced and conditioned by environment. In order to understand the art of a people, one must consider the physical conditions, the flora and fauna, and the social and the religious life of the district. Environment differs with locality; diverse peoples in different times vary in ideas, ideals, skill, tools, and materials. It seems that the character of a people is reflected in their decorative art. For example, it is not surprising that among insular people, who are constantly associated with the sea, a multitude of marine designs and symbols is found. This is why there is such a vast number of ideas in art, and why ideas so different still bear a certain resemblance to each other.
A design is created; then it is acted upon by the ideas of separate individuals, by environment, and by outside forces. In this manner a design is given its individual personality.

It has been seen that the life of primitive man was a "succession of symbols." Every unusual event, occurrence, or natural phenomena - as thunder or hail - were significant of something. These signs became symbols, and the symbols were used as a language of pictures and designs.

Symbols usually need an explanation. Since they suggest objects instead of picturing them, one must have a background of history and a knowledge of social life and religion to understand them.

To understand symbolism one should know its development. A symbol was first made in a simple likeness or pictograph. Then "the sign of the concrete grew to be the symbol of the abstract." Next "retrogression set in when new religions and new ideas had sapped the vitality of the old conceptions, and the ideograph came to have no more than a mystical meaning." Finally, the symbol lost all significance and was used only for its decorative value.

"For centuries that are gone and are still to come, designs or signs or marks, may be regarded as designs, to express thought, without any conception of an artistic idea. Hence we must not regard Design and Ornament as analogous terms. Ornament came with civilization. Design was of utilitarian impulse. It was symbolical."
"It is sentiment, and above all religious sentiment that resorts largely to symbolism; and in order to place itself in more intimate communication with the being, or abstraction it desires to approach. To that end men are everywhere choosing natural or artificial objects to remind them of the Great Hidden One."

Thus the realm of religion, art and social life is filled with symbolism. To early man can be traced many of the symbols, signs and customs in use today.
Prehistoric or Paleolithic man, in a stage of early development, lived in caves and caverns. These caves or caverns are now thought to have been not only shelter but also a place where he spent his leisure and developed the first ideas of art, for it is upon these cave walls we find simple drawings and paintings of the animals of the time. It seems certain that these drawings possessed symbolic significance, and it is probable that they had a religious significance.

"The countless pictures of animals which have been discovered in paleolithic caves are not sporting pictures, not the products of idle moments of amusement. The latest belief is that they are religious pictures, pictures that have a certain spiritual significance. Primitive man, in his conceit, liked to believe that he was descended from the lion whose strength he admired, or the tiger whose agility he envied. He made of these animals a god and in eating the god he believed that he became one in common with him."

"This would seem to indicate that sacrifice was not originally offered to the god; adopting the opposite theory, the god himself was sacrificed and gave his strength, his spirit, his life to the people."

Thus did animal worship grow out of the eating of animals. "Man, believing himself descended from the animals he admired and therefore eating them to be one with them, gradually came to hedge around these animals certain tribal taboos. Ultimately the animals
became sacred and as such took part in the tribal ceremonials. From this it was just a step to the taboos of those animals as food. They were worshiped; they were incorporated into totems."

Animal and nature paintings and representations by early man may also be explained by sympathetic magic. Symbols of animals and nature were made so that primitive man would possess magic power over them.

Some symbolical forms and representations which are commonly found in primitive art are as follows:

1. The scroll is found in the earliest manifestations of art, and subsequently in many and in varied forms. The scroll is said to follow the lotus motif in its importance in decorative art. However, its original symbolism is not known. It has been suggested that it might have represented the wanderings of the soul. It is interesting to note that there is a break of 1000 years between its use by the Egyptians and its use in the decorations of other ancient peoples. This form is found in Crete, on the coast of the North Sea, in Central Europe and in Ireland. Modifications of the scroll are found in the subsequent art periods.

2. To primitive man the sea symbolized the vastness between life and death. The waves of the ocean were depicted by conventionalized scrolls, which are thought to have developed later into more geometric designs.

3. The fish-shaped character was a symbol of immortality as it could "reach both shores." The fish was again used as a symbol
in early Christian art.

4. The circle and the cross of four rays, either alone or inscribed within a circle, was symbolic of the sun in prehistoric Europe.

5. Four lines crossed to make a star form represented God and Heaven.

6. Horizontal zig-zag lines were symbolic of rain, storms, or lightning; while a zig-zag line in a vertical position was symbolic of a mountain.

7. A square form was symbolic of the sun.

8. A triangle form was symbolic of an ox.

9. The symbol of a man was a peculiar rock-shaped form.

Many of these lines and forms can be traced through the ensuing art periods to modern times. However, it is probable that the forms lost their original symbolism and were used only for decorative purposes.

The swastika is thought to be the most ancient of the symbolic forms and is found almost universally even at the present time. This design is variously called the "fylfot" and many other names. The term swastika is apparently from "swasti" - a Sanscrit word meaning "good fortune."

It is thought that its primary symbolism is not definitely known; however, at present it is generally accepted as the symbol of "good luck." There has been many theories as to what it originally symbolized - the female sex, water, storm, fire, and the air and sky god. It is claimed that it originated as the symbol of the Aryan
supreme deity from whom came the power for the movement of the universe. It is also suggested that when the arms of the swastika rotate to the right, it is symbolical of the movement of the sun; if the arms rotate to the left it is symbolical of the movement of the stars.

Another explanation as to the original symbolism of the swastika is that it probably represented the four parts of the earth, the wheel being the motion of the heavens and the sun. This explanation also makes the swastika symbolic of the sun, the winds and the four regions of the earth. The swastika is also thought to symbolize prosperity, fertility and abundance.

In ancient Greece the swastika was symbolic of the sun, and it is thought that the Greek key pattern and the Greek meander pattern can be traced to the swastika. In Christianity the swastika is symbolic of faith in the Crucified.

The swastika is first found in very ancient Greece, Rome, Phoenicia, Swiss Lake dwellings, Crete, Italy and the Celts from the Danube to Western Ireland, Scandinavia, Iceland, Scotland, Saxony, and occasionally in the art of the Slavs and the Finns. It is also found in Persia, India, China and Japan. It has been discovered in Africa, North and South America, Yucatan, Mexico, and among the Pueblo Indians. It is curious to note that it has not been found in the art of Assyria, Chaldea or Egypt.
PLATE 1 - PREHISTORIC SYMBOLS

A. Symbol of the sun
B. Symbol of the sun
C. Symbol of the world
D. Symbol of God and of Heaven
E. Symbol of man
F. Symbol of a mountain
G. Symbol of an ox
H. Symbol of a fish
I. Symbol of lightning
J. Example of Prehistoric design
K. Example of Prehistoric design
PLATE 1
PLATE 2 - SCROLL FORMS

A. Freehand form of the scroll
B. Freehand forms of the scroll
C. Variation of the scroll form
D. Variation of the scroll form
E. Border variation of the scroll
F. Geometric border motif which is thought to be a variation of the scroll
G. Scroll design of Mycenae
H. All-over design of scrolls
A. Early forms of the swastika
B. Variations of the swastika
C. Swastika form found in Crete
D. Swastika form found in China
E. Swastika form found in China
F. Swastika form found in Spain
G. Swastika form found in ancient Greece
H. Swastika form found in Scandinavia
I. Swastika form found in Scandinavia
J. The triskelion variation of the swastika
ASSYRIAN, CHALDEAN, AND BABYLONIAN ART

In the very early centuries B.C., the designs and forms of Assyria, Persia, Babylonia and sometimes Egypt are so similar that it is difficult to distinguish between them and classify them. Since the art and decoration of Assyria, Babylonia, Chaldea, Media and Persia are so closely allied, they can be considered as one.

The war-like nature of the Assyrian nation greatly affected its art. The Assyrians were also famed for their hunting, and their art reflects this spirit.

Assyrian palaces and temples were decorated with huge stone statues of frightful creatures which were symbolic of the various Assyrian gods.

To the Assyrians the world was full of evil spirits or demons. The only sure method by which the evil spirits could be kept under control was to place in a conspicuous location a statue as their representation. An incantation was written upon, or said over the imagine and it was then supposed to keep the evil spirits in the distance. This is the explanation of the extensive use of amulets, statues and representations of hideous forms found in Assyrian art.

One of the most horrible of these statues or representations is the figure of the South-West wind. This wind is considered evil for it dries out the crops and brings fever to the people. Its image is usually found in every home.

The necklace found upon the sculptures and representations
of old Assyrian kings, and still in use today, is more of an armlet than an ornament. This necklace consists of a ring of gold from which are suspended five divine emblems, symbolic as follows:

The Lunar crescent is symbolic of Sin, a god.
The four-rayed medallion is symbolic of Sun or Shamash, a god.
The triple-pointed medallion is symbolic of the triple pointed thunder of Adar, a god.

It is thought that the symbolism of these emblems has kept them from changing their form or usage.

The lion as a decorative motif is first found in the art of Assyrians. The lion was the symbol of their sun god. The lion has always been considered as the King of Beasts. He is the symbol of courage, majesty and strength. In repose or in action his body is well adapted for use as a decorative motif.

The lion in a highly idealized form was used in Egyptian art in connection with their religion and the overflow of the Nile. The overflow of the Nile came in the Zodiac period of which the lion was the symbol, and thus the lion came to signify the flooding of the Nile.

In the art of the Greeks and Romans the lion is again used. To these people the lion served as the guardian of gateways, temples and springs. However, the form of a lion asleep is symbolic of a "fallen hero."

The lion is used extensively as a symbol in Christian art. He has several symbolical interpretations. He is considered as the
symbol of Christ, as the Devil that roams through the world searching for souls, and as the symbol of St. Mark.

A highly conventionalized figure of a lion was employed extensively in heraldry and can be said to be one of the most used of animal forms.

Lion motifs are found in later art epochs as in the Renaissance and Rococo periods. Its applications were numerous, and its symbolism varied according to the style - Assyrian, Egyptian, Greek, Roman, or Christian - from which it was taken. However, if its style and symbolism cannot be determined it can be assumed that the lion was used as a symbol of nobility, strength and dignity.

In the arts of all peoples there are found fabulous animal figures; that is, animal forms made of a combination of other animal parts. Combinations consist of human and animal parts and combinations of various animals.

Forms which include human and animal parts are the lion forms, and winged bulls of Assyria, the sphinx of Egypt, the Centaurs of Greece, and the Gargoyles of the Middle Ages and the Gothic period.

Imaginative animal forms are the griffins or chimera, and the unicorns. The griffins usually consisted of a lion's body with the wings and the head of an eagle, and sometimes fore feet like those of an eagle. Griffins are found in Assyria, Babylonia, Greece, and Rome, and in the later periods of Louis the 13th and Chippendale. They were often used as symbols of fire, and "enlightenment and unassailable superiority." In Persian art the
griffin was symbolic of the evil powers, and in Grecian mythology the griffin was sacred to the goddess Athene.

The unicorn, which is also an imaginative beast, contained the body and the head of a horse and the legs of an antelope. The horn of a narwhal protrudes from the center of its forehead. In China the unicorn is one of the four beneficent animals. It is also the symbol of the first of the nine military grades. The unicorn is found in Christian art where it is symbolic of chastity. In heraldry the unicorn is symbolic of the "supporter of the arms of Great Britain," and also of watchfulness and wisdom.

The winged bull was symbolic of protection and was a beneficent genius. This form is later found in Christian art where it was symbolic of "God the Holy Ghost."

The grotesque form which had an eagle's head and carried a basket and arrows was symbolic of Ashur, the Assyrian god.

A solar disc with wings was symbolic of Ashur who was considered the mightiest of the Assyrian gods.

The eagle is a much used form in decorative art and is rich in symbolism. He can be said to be the most used of all the bird forms. He is chosen because of his majesty, size, and strength, and is used as the symbol of these qualities. The eagle as a decorative form is first found in Assyria, Persia and Egypt.

In Grecian mythology the eagle guarded the thunderbolts of Zeus, the father of gods and men. The Romans used the eagle as a "standards of their legions." In Christian art the eagle is sym-
bolical of St. John the Evangelist. In heraldry, after the lion, the eagle is the most used creature. He appears in both the natural and decorative representations. The eagle with two heads is of Byzantine origin. The eagle is again found as a decorative motif in the Empire period of France when Napoleon adopted many Roman decorative forms and symbols. The eagle is also found in the national emblems of Germany, Austria, Russia and the United States.

Symbolic forms which were commonly used in the art of Chaldea are:

The simple circles as the symbol of San.
The circle with a cross as a symbol of San.
An orb with four rays as a symbol of San.
An eight-rayed star is the symbol of the female principle of San.
A rosette in the center of a star, which gives the effect of revolving, is thought to be a symbol of the revolving of the universe.
A trident is the symbol of Ul who was the god of the atmosphere. This symbol may have had its origin in lightning.
An arrowhead is the symbol of Hoa, as he was the patron of the Chaldean letters.
The serpent is the symbol of Knowledge and is also a symbol of Hoa.
The crescent, or the new moon, is a symbol of Sin, one of the triad of Sin, San and Ul, Assyrian gods.
The cedar is the Chaldean Tree of Life. It was thought that the name of Ea, a god, was written upon the heart of the cedar.

Some forms which were symbolic in Babylonia are:

Water was the symbol of life, and was considered as sacred. Ea was the god of water.

The thunderbolt was the symbol of Adad, the god of rain and subterranean water.

A vase of water was the symbol of Ishtar, the mother goddess and the goddess of love.

A scorpion was symbolic of Ishtar, the goddess of animals that live in the water.
PLATE 4 - THE GRIFFIN

A. Grecian griffin
B. Roman griffin
C. Renaissance griffin
A. The Assyrian necklace with the symbols of Sin, Sun and Adar

B. The Tree of Life symbol

C. The Tree of Life found in Sicilian textiles

D. Guilloch border design of Assyria and Babylonia

E. Rosette motif

F. Figure of the Winged Bull

G. Figure of the South-West wind
PERSIAN ART

Reference to Persian ornament usually includes the art of that country since the Mohammedan period, or about the 7th century A.D.

Persian art shows scarcely any creative genius except in the rugs and textiles. The Persians borrowed indiscriminately from the other nations. From Egypt they borrowed the decorative symbol for their god, Ashur Mazda. The hideous animal forms are also reflective of early Egypt.

In oriental rugs could be read the religion, life, and history of the weavers if the symbolism and meaning of the designs and forms were completely known and understood. These forms are symbolical, and the symbols themselves have remained and have been used long after the original meaning was lost or forgotten.

From the 14th to the 16th centuries Chinese motifs made their appearance in Persian rugs and textiles, but it is obvious that the Persian weavers used these motifs and symbols without knowing their original use or meaning.

Flowers that were in popular usage at this period were the pink peach blossom, rose and jacinth. These blossoms were used in the most decorative manner with graceful curves and with well adapted naturalism. Many of the fabric designs of this time suggest scenes.

In the antique rugs of Persia are found the following symbols:
The eagle flying upward symbolized good fortune.
The eagle with closed wings, or descending in flight
symbolized misfortune.
The Phoenix was symbolical of life.
Leopards and hounds were symbols of fame.
The dragon represented death, destruction, or a stormy night.
The unicorn and antelope were symbolical of the moon and a peaceful night.
The circle decoration signified eternity.
The Tree of Life, or Hom, and the fire altar were the two most important motifs in Persian design.

The fire altar can be traced to the religion of Zoraster or the worship of fire. In this religion the fire was a visible sign of the faith which aided in uniting together the tribes of the Medes, Persians, Bactrians and Iranians.

It is not definitely known how, when, or where the Tree of Life originated. This form probably originated in a cedar, date, pomegranate or a papyrus tree. It is even claimed that the Tree of Life is a variation of the lotus. This motif and its symbol have been traced to varied sources such as the cone and flower designs in Assyrian sculpture work, the shawls from Cashmere, and the paintings found on Egyptian walls.

The Tree of Life motif was without doubt originally a religious symbol. To the Persian it was symbolic of the eternal reincarnation of man. In Persian art it is used in many forms varying from a complete tree, almost filling a space, to a simple representation by a flower or a spray. The series of blossoming branches
on the Ghiordies rugs is a form of the Tree of Life. In Hindoo
design it appears as a conventional shape. The influence of this
motif is thought to be found in the palmette scrolls, honeysuckle
designs, the "egg-and-dart" designs of Greece, and the shell designs
used in the Renaissance.

Thus, since its original use as a symbol, the Tree of Life
has assumed many forms and many symbolic interpretations which vary
with the country which adopted and adapted the motif.

The pomegranate is the symbol of life. According to fable, it is the fruit picked from the Tree of Life by Eve and eaten by
Adam. It is one of the three flowers, including the lily and the
iris, that were dedicated to Juno. The pomegranate is also used in
the wedding ceremony of Turkey.

The cone is also one of the most outstanding forms in Per-
sian, Indian and Oriental art. It is suggested that it might be
symbolic of a swaying cypress tree. It is also thought to repre-
sent a pear, palmette, loop, river loop, a crown jewel, a flame, or
the outer side of the hand. However, it is probable that the cone
is a form derived from a leaf. The origin and symbolism of the
cone are not definitely known; however, it is found with many vari-
tions and adaptations.

The artichoke motif is first found in the textiles of Persia
and India, and later it appeared in Sicily and in the countries in-
volved in the Renaissance. In Persia the artichoke is symbolic of
life and fruitfulness.

Octagons made with an outline similar to a square and
arranged edge to edge, vertically, do not seem to possess any certain symbolism, but are known as the "Elephant's Foot."

The Herati, or more commonly known as the Fish design, is made of a rosette surrounded by two curved leaves which are supposed to be similar to two fishes.

The ewer-in-the-niche found on the prayer rugs is the symbol of purity.
One of the most important industries of India is that of textile weaving. The prints of India, and the Cashmere shawls are two types of fabrics that India has given to the textile world. These textiles are remarkable for their beauty of design and color harmony.

Indian art is concerned with Brahminical mythology, symbolic references, allegories, and fantastic imaginative forms. It is not concerned with natural representation, every day life, or historical events. The following are some of the Indian figures:

- An elephant is symbolic of patient endurance.
- A peacock is the symbol of Kali Mahakali, the queen of the robbers.
- An elephant with a howdah, or a protected riding seat, is symbolical of prudence.
- A diamond shaped lozenge symbolizes life.
- A triangle with its apex upward denotes Siva, or fire personified.
- A triangle with apex downward signifies Vishnu, or water personified.
- The hyena is the symbol of witchcraft.
- The horse is the sign of the sun.
- An ass symbolizes humility.
The cone motif is one of the most used motifs in Indian textiles. It is found in Indian prints and in the Cashmere shawls. It is used extensively in the Paisley shawls that were woven in Scotland in imitation of the Indian Cashmere shawls.
The Egyptian civilization, which existed for over 4000 years B.C., exerted a great and powerful influence upon art and upon later civilizations.

Weaving was an important industry of Egypt and Egyptian linens were famous for their beauty. These textiles were often embroidered in gold and silver metallic threads and in colors.

Motifs and forms commonly found in Egyptian art and decorations were closely related to the everyday life and religion of the people. Most of the forms possess a symbolic meaning. Hieroglyphics were used for decoration. Hieroglyphics were the expression of thought by means of pictures of single objects which suggested the idea. Thus many pictures of objects have a significance and value only as a language.

Simple decorations were characteristic of the earliest Egyptian work. The pressing of clay upon interlaced boughs to make vessels, and the resulting impression with its decorative effect, is thought to be the origin of the parallel, waving and zig-zag lines and geometric forms. These lines at later periods often became symbolic of certain objects or ideas.

In later periods of Egyptian art, other influences were noticeable. Plant and animal forms were used extensively. The lotus, papyrus and the palm are found throughout the life and the art of the Egyptians. These forms, more or less modified, are found in the art of such other countries as Greece, Rome, Assyria, India
and China. The extensive application of these forms in Egypt can be explained in two ways: these plants were bound up in the home life of the people, and they were sacred to their gods Isis and Osiris.

One authority states that the lotus can be said to be the keynote to the symbolism of the Orient. The lotus symbol is found universally in Egyptian and Chinese art and as early as 3998 B.C. The lotus flower is the most used motif in Egyptian art. As a symbol of the sun, it brought into being other symbolic relations, such as a symbol of life, of immortality and of resurrection. It is found in various forms, ranging from a natural form to the highly conventionalized motifs and borders.

In Egypt, the lotus plant is thought to be symbolic of fertility or the seasonal fertilization of the land by the great river Nile. It is thought, too, to be symbolic of the sun. The flower is also the symbol of the south part or Upper Egypt. The papyrus was the symbol of the northern part of Egypt, and these two plants were often used united by a hand to symbolize the united kingdom of Egypt. The hand represents the hand of the god of the Nile. The papyrus is commonly found in Egyptian art, but not as extensively as the lotus.

In Greece the lotus flower was the symbol of the bloom of youth. The lotus sepals, curled into volutes and spirals, are thought to be the basis of the Ionic order of Greek architecture and of the Greek key or the Meander pattern. However, the Greek key design is also thought to be closely related to the swastika. Some
authorities believe that the famed "egg-and-dart" pattern of Greece is the lotus blossom highly conventionalized.

In India the lotus is the symbol of Laksmi, the goddess of beauty and riches. In China it is symbolic of purity and virtue and also of the summer season and the month of July. In Japan it is the symbol of Buddhahood and of death. To Buddhists the lotus is symbolical of the world. The lotus in various forms is found in Assyria and Persia.

The palm was used during events or occasions of rejoicing such as the feasts of Osiris, the Olympian games, or the Roman triumphal processions. In this manner the palm became the symbol of victory and of peace. Later the Christian Church adopted the palm as a symbol of the same virtues.

It was during the 19th dynasty, the reign of Rameses, that the height of splendor in Egyptian art was reached. During this era the uraeus (sacred serpent) and the sacred beetle or scarabaeus were used.

The cobra is the symbol of the "protecting goddess of the South," the sun god, and the generative powers of the sun. The cobra is found on the two sides of the winged disc motif. The snake which was worshiped by the early Egyptians was symbolic of lightning. It is thought that this symbolism might have originated in the similarity of a snake darting over the ground to the darts of lightning. The asp was symbolic of royalty, immortality and of divine goodness.

The serpent, or snake, is an animal form which is only occasionally found in textile design. However, the serpent is rich in
symbolism. It was first used extensively as a decorative motif in Egypt. The serpent is found in Greek art and mythology. A pair of serpents are often found twisted around the caduceus or the staff of Mercury. The caduceus is in modern times the symbol of commerce and the medical profession. On early tombs it was used with its tail in its mouth as a symbol of eternity. In mythology the serpent was symbolic of evil, envy and harm.

The serpent again makes its appearance in Christian art where it is symbolic of sin, evil, the devil and temptation. It is often found here being trod upon by the Blessed Virgin Mary.

The sun occupied a large place in Egyptian life and symbolism and is variously represented. To the Egyptians the sun was symbolic of everything that was good. It also symbolized power and eternity. The sun god was a protector of the people in life and in death. The uraeus is a symbol of the sun god. A symbol of the sun god is usually found on the costume of one alive, and is always found on the body ready for burial. The eye of the sun was considered as the uraeus poised on the head of the sun god. This explains the custom of the rulers of Egypt wearing the uraeus as a decoration on their crowns. The motif of the sun between two wings and two cobras is symbolic of the sun on wings in the heavens, being carried between its attributes, life and motion. The sun god is also represented as a soaring falcon or as the scarabaeus rolling a ball. The scarabaeus, or the sacred beetle, is a symbol of the sun god, immortality and the transmigration of the soul. This form is often
worn as a charm.

The conventionalized fleur-de-lis is a floral decorative motif which can be traced back to early Egypt. It is claimed by various authorities to be the conventionalized form of several distinct flowers. Its origin and its symbolism also have different stories. Many peoples have used this device in various ways.

One authority claims that the conventional fleur-de-lis is the three flowers of the white lily. It is also thought to be the iris in conventionalized form.

In the art of Ancient Egypt and India the fleur-de-lis is a popular motif. To these people it was a symbol of life and resurrection and was "the attribute of the god Horus." It is found on Etruscan bronzes and on the early Roman and Gothic sculpture.

This device seems especially related to French royalty and French design. It was first found among the French rulers in the year 1147. The three petals are symbolic of Charity, Piety and Justice. During the 12th century its use in heraldry was begun. It was used as a heraldic device in France, England and Germany. In 1300 a French king reduced the fleur-de-lis to three "in honor of the Trinity." It is not known why the royal house of France adopted the fleur-de-lis as an emblem. A myth which attempts to explain its use says that a lily was given by an angel to Clovis, who was the founder of the Frankish nation, at his baptism in 496 A.D. Another myth is to the effect that the fleur-de-lis was representative of the flag which was held in place of the sceptre at the proclamation of a
Religion exerted the greatest influence upon Egyptian art. The many and various deities with their symbols are found throughout Egyptian art. These deities were pictured in crude forms and were the subject of many myths and superstitions. Many of them were supposed to dwell in the bodies of animals, although a few were fabled to live in such objects as posts or trees. The animals believed to harbor such gods were cows, goats, cats, crocodiles, frogs, fishes and birds. While the lotus flower was worshiped as a god, it was also symbolic of the sun. Later this animal worship was greatly exaggerated. This explains the cat cemeteries, crocodile graves and ibis graves of Egypt.

The grotesque, imaginative animals - like the human forms with animal or bird heads - were a later development. The deities that were first represented in animal forms were then given these human figures with the animal heads. So it would seem that the large number of animal and grotesque forms found in Egyptian art are the symbols of their gods and religion. For example, Ba was an Egyptian god who was symbolized by a bird-like figure with human arms and head. This figure was usually symbolic of the revivified soul of a dead body.

The sphinx is an imaginary form first found in Egyptian art, consisting of the body of a lion with a human head and bust. Occasionally a ram's head was used.
The sphinx has been considered symbolic of the mystery of life. The male figure of a sphinx is also thought to be symbolic of royalty or of a ruler. The sphinx was later used in Roman art with the addition of wings; this is thought to show the influence of Assyria. During the Renaissance and the Rococo styles, the sphinx form was again revived. The sphinx motif or form is also found in Chippendale.

The belief of the Egyptians in life after death, if the deceased possessed certain necessities, accounts for the many paintings in the tombs. The possessions of the deceased were placed within the tomb. However, if this could not be done, the objects were then represented by paintings upon the tomb walls. The occupation and the social life of the deceased were also painted, as it was thought that these symbols or representations would take the place of the real objects in the future life. Death rites were closely connected with symbolism. The coffins were decorated with symbols. The barge which carried the soul had its stem and stern made of large lotus blossoms.

The female figure, in a kneeling or sitting position, with large outspread wings, is symbolic of the goddess Nut, while the feather she holds is the symbol of power.

Symbols which are commonly found in Egyptian decorative art are:

The crescent---symbolical of the moon.

The star---symbolized a star.

The ostrich feather---symbolical of truth and justice.
The sceptre——symbolical of wealth.
The crook——symbolical of a ruler.
The fan——symbolical of "Kingly power."
A club-like form——symbolic of steadfastness.
The crocodile——symbolic of the reason or mind.
The hawk——symbolic of power and eternity.
The hawk perched on a mummy——symbolic of the soul of the mummy.
A row of asps——symbolical of royalty.
A vulture——symbolic of the "protecting deity of the North" and the protector of the king.
Zig-zag lines——symbolic of water.
The Tau, or St. Anthony's Cross, is found in many countries with practically the same symbolism. It is found in Egypt, Palestine, Gaul, Germany, Phoenicia and Rome. This symbol has a close resemblance to the Egyptian Key of Life and is found throughout Western Asia. To all these peoples it is the symbol of Life.
To the Celts, Teutonics and Scandinavians this form was a symbol of lightning. In Central America it was a symbol of fertility and of Life.
PLATE 6 - EGYPTIAN SYMBOLS

A. Winged globe symbol
B. The scarabaeus symbol
C. The sphinx form
D. The lotus and the papyrus symbol
E. Variations of the Tau or the Egyptian Key of Life
F. The Nile pattern
G. An Egyptian all-over pattern illustrating the scroll and the rosette
PLATE 6
PLATE 7 - THE LOTUS

A. A natural form of the lotus
B. A natural form of the lotus
C. A natural form of the lotus
D. Conventionalized form of the lotus
E. Conventionalized form of the lotus
F. Conventionalized form of the lotus
G. Conventionalized lotus in a border design
H. Conventionalized lotus in a border design
I. Conventionalized lotus in a border design of Assyria
J. "Hypothetical derivation of the 'egg-and-dart' moulding from a lotus pattern; according to Goodyear 1."

1. "Lotus anthemion on a vessel from Rhodes; after Salzmann."
2. "Lotus anthemia on pottery from Naukratis; after Flinders Petrie. 2."
3. "'Egg-and-dart' moulding from the Erechtheum."
4. "Degraded 'egg-and-dart' pattern painted on a Grecian vase."

2 W. M. Flinders Petri, Naukratis, i., 1884-85; Egyptian Exploration Fund, 1886.
PLATE 8 - FORMS OF THE FLEUR-DE-LIS AND THE SERPENT

A. Heraldic form of the fleur-de-lis
B. Fleur-de-lis of the Middle Ages
C. Fleur-de-lis of the 17th century
D. Fleur-de-lis of the 18th and 19th centuries
E. Fleur-de-lis of Sicily in the 13th century
F. Fleur-de-lis of the period of Louis the 14th
G. Fleur-de-lis of England in the 17th century
H. The cobra of Egypt
I. The caduceus of Rome
J. The serpent as a symbol of eternity
K. A heraldic form of the serpent
The art of China abounds in symbolism. In 3000 B.C. references are found to symbolism in textile design. It is recorded that an emperor of this time ordered robes for his court, demanding that "the designs be symbols of their official distinction." It is thought that perhaps the symbols to which the reference was made were of Chaldean origin, for the Chinese civilization probably came from that source.

Nature had perhaps the greatest influence upon Chinese art. Natural and fantastic animal and floral forms were extensively used. These forms were rich in symbolism.

Among the fantastic animal forms used as symbols the dragon is the most decorative. This monster possesses several symbolic significances. The dragon spouting fire represents the unrestrained forces of the universe; the dragon clutching a fighting tiger represents the restrained forces of the universe. The Sky Dragon supports the skies and prevents their caving in, while the Earth Dragon controls the rain and the wind. The dragon is sometimes found clutching a round pearl, which symbolizes wisdom being protected from the evil influences of demons or bad spirits. It is interesting to note that here is found the origin of the claw-and-ball foot so commonly found on the furniture of the Georgian period in England. The five clawed dragon is the symbol of the Emperor, while the four clawed dragon is the symbol of the nobility of the first and the second rank. The three clawed dragon is a symbol of Japan.
The ogre, a creature with a horrible face and huge protruding eyes, is not a true symbol but was used as a decorative form and its purpose was to warn all who looked upon it "against greed and gluttony."

Among the first of the animal forms to be used in Chinese art were those of the dragon, turtle, phoenix and unicorn. These four animals were regarded as the four beneficient animals, and expressed the following symbolism:

The unicorn and the phoenix were symbolic of the coming of new life in the springtime.

Turtle and dragon were symbolic of the summer rains which made the crops plentiful and fruitful.

Other symbolic animals were:

Bats or "Fu"---symbolic of happiness.

Butterflies---symbolic of happiness or of Buddha or Sukyamuni, the All-Wise.

Carp---symbolic of perseverance.

Crane---symbolic of immortality and longevity.

Crow---symbolic of evil.

Deer---symbolic of official emolument.

Doe-horned or chilen---symbolic of nobility.

Dragon and phoenix together---symbolic of a newly married pair.

Duck---symbolic of conjugal affection.

Elephant---symbolic of the Bodhisattvas or the bearer of the
Rewel of the Law.

White Elephant with the Patra or the alms bowl—symbolic of the seven gems of the Universal Monarch.

Frog—symbol of the moon.

Goose—symbolic of domestic felicity.

Horse—symbolic of the "strength of a noble man."

Lion—symbolic of victory and teacher. However, it is thought that perhaps this symbolism is due to the fact that the words lion and teacher are pronounced the same.

Magpie—symbolic of good luck.

Owl—symbolic of dread.

Peacock with a dragon—symbolic of power in the air.

Phoenix, or a creature known as the mythical fungkin, is a bird resembling a pheasant. The phoenix is supposed to make its appearance to man only to announce prosperous times or joyful news. The bird is also the symbol of the Empress of China.

Stork—one of the most used symbols of longevity. It is surrounded with fables such as the following: the stork does not eat after it becomes 600 years of age, and when it attains the age of 2000 years it becomes black in coloring.

Stag, young—symbolic of long life.

Swallow—symbolic of good luck.

Tortoise—symbolic of long life.
Floral designs are common in Chinese art, the forms being more naturalistic than those found in Persian art. Flowers as the peony, chrysanthemum and lotus are used extensively. The lotus is used in a conventionalized form, but is easily identified by the seed pod. The lotus design is commonly used with its stems and leaves making large scrolls, the border of the design often being made of the swastika and fretwork.

Flowers in China were endowed with symbolism:

Chrysanthemum—symbolic of autumn.

Fig Tree—symbolic of Buddha or Sakyamuni.

Gourd—symbolic of happiness.

Myrrh—symbolic of sorrow or chastity.

Myrtle—symbolic of maidenhood or the nuptial wreath.

Mulberry Tree—an attribute of the goddess of silk, "Si-ling-chi."

Peach—symbolic of longevity and old age.

Peach Blossoms—symbolic of February.

Peach Stones—symbolic of life.

Peach Tree—symbolic and is the Chinese "Tree of Life."

Three Peaches—symbol of Tong Fang So, the thief.

Peach and a Bat—symbolic of the two-fold perpetuation of happiness and longevity.

Pine Tree—symbolic of Buddha.

Peony Tree—symbolic of spring and month of March.

Plum Blossoms—symbolic of the winter season and the month
of January.

Withered plum blossom---symbol of a bastard.

Three plums---symbolic of longevity.

Plum blossom with pine and bamboo---symbolic of the three friends, Tao'tse, Buddha and Confucius.

The months possess symbols in both flowers and animals.

January---plum blossom and tiger.

February---peach blossom and rabbit.

March---tree peony and dragon.

April---cherry blossom and serpent.

May---magnolia and horse.

June---pomegranate and hare.

July---lotus and monkey.

August---pear blossom and cock.

September---mallow and dog.

October---chrysanthemum---wild boar.

November---gardenia and rat.

December---poppy and bullock.

The seasons of the year are also represented by symbolical flowers as:

Peony tree---spring.

Lotus---summer.

Chrysanthemum---autumn.

Plum Blossom---winter.

Chinese symbols which have a religious significance suggest a similar origin with those of other ancient nations. Many of the
Chinese decorative motifs find their origin in one of the three main religions of China—Confucianism, Taoism and Buddhism.

Most of the symbols of the Mandarins, those in state positions and learned men are of Confucian origin. The "Eight Ordinary Symbols" are:

Hollow lozenge - an obsolete musical instrument.
Solid lozenge - a metal mirror.
Sounding stone - from which one could obtain justice by striking it.
Rhinoceros horns - bravery.
Coin - wealth.
Books in group of two - wisdom and learning.
Round ball or a pearl - talisman against floods and fires.
Leaf - good luck.

Symbols in Taoism have a geomantic influence and indicate a belief in astrology. Such symbols are referred to as the "Emblems of the Eight Immortals," and are symbols of divinities, as follows:

Castanets---symbolic of Tsao Kuo Ch'io, one of the eight immortals.
Flower baskets---symbolic of Lan Tsai Ho, a garden patron.
Flute---symbol of Han Hsiang Tzu, the patron of musicians.
Lotus pod---symbol of Ho Hsien Ku.
Sword---the symbol of Lu Tanh Pin.
Fan---the symbol of Chung Li Ch'uan, one of the eight immortals.
Bamboo Musical Instruments—symbolic of Chang Kuo Lso, the artists' patron.

Gourd—symbolic of Li Tieh Kwai.

The religion of Buddha also has its symbols. The "Eight Buddhist Symbols" are:

Wheel—symbol of law.

Knot of Destiny—symbol of longevity.

Canopy—symbol of sovereign rank.

Umbrella—symbol of official authority.

Lotus Blossom—symbol of purity from the impure.

Urn Form—a relinquary.

Conch Shell—a talisman of mariners.

Twin Fishes—symbolic of domestic faith and happiness.

The following forms are symbolic of the three all-prayed-for abundances:

Pomegranate displaying its seeds—symbolic of sons.

Sacred Peaches—symbolic of years.

Buddha's hand—symbolic of happiness.

The rugs of China are especially noteworthy for their decorative symbolism. Symbols used in the rugs are those of religious origin and are taken from nature and from geometric designs.

Sometimes, in the field or border of the rug are introduced animal forms such as the rat, cat, bear, dog, monkey, goat, horse, serpent, dragon, hare, ox, and tiger. These animals are the symbols of the Zodiac.
There are symbolical interpretations for many of the geometrical designs, but it cannot be definitely said whether the symbolism is the result of the existing ideas or was connected with the form after it came into being.

Other forms, objects or designs possessing symbolic significance are:

Horn of the Rhinoceros---symbolic of victory and bravery.
Wind instruments---symbolic of sorrow.
Coin---symbolic of wealth.
Mountain---symbolic of firmness.
Snuff Bottle---symbolic of scholarship.
Pearls---symbolic of perfection and riches.
Peh Knot---symbolic of longevity.
Tae-Keih---symbolic of the male and female principles in nature.
Y form---the Great Unit.
Old Man with a Staff---symbolic of long life.
Swastika---symbolic of the heart of Buddha. The swastika is one of the chief symbols found in China.
"Greek Key"---symbolic of the wave forever overlapping on itself.
Knot of Destiny---symbolizes power. This is an ancient symbol that can be traced back to the era of King Solomon.
Round Disc---symbol used in the "worship of the Earth."
Ribbon ornament---symbolic of the Heaven.
Buddha's Sceptre---symbolic of success in literary work.

Cloud Band---symbolic of the Diety.

"Chou" character---symbol of a prayer for long life.

Eight-spoked wheel---symbol of good law.

Flowing circular bands---symbolic of water and clouds.

Monogram---symbolic of longevity.

Disc bound with ribbons and cords---symbolic of the Jewel of the Law.

Equilateral cross inscribed in a square---symbolic of the earth.

Red Ball---symbolical of light. The early chimes were similar to the early Egyptians and worshipped the sun.

This is thought to be the origin of this motif.

The Eight Mystic Trigrams or the Fa-Kwa are composed of the symbols of the male and female principles in nature.

1. Heaven
2. Light, Fire, Heat
3. Wind
4. Mountains
5. Mists
6. Thunder
7. Water
8. Earth

Motifs were also used to give class distinction. The literati used as their symbols the coin, lozenge, pearls, scrolls, books,
lute, rhinoceros horn, leaf and sonorous stone. Rugs for the literary class were distinguished by the use of a book, inkwell, sceptre or incense burner, while the presentation rugs were distinguished by the use of bats.

The following symbols were used to denote the various grades in the Civil Service:

First grade - pelican.
Second grade - hen.
Third grade - peacock.
Fourth grade - crane.
Fifth grade - white pheasant.
Sixth grade - stork.
Seventh grade - Mandarin duck.
Eighth grade - quail.
Ninth grade - jay bird.

The following symbols were used to denote the various grades in the Military Service:

First grade - unicorn.
Second grade - lion.
Third grade - panther.
Fourth grade - tiger.
Fifth grade - bear.
Sixth grade - tiger.
Seventh grade - rhinoceros.
Eighth grade - seal.
Ninth grade - sea horse.

Art motifs from foreign countries that were brought into China were made to harmonize with Chinese art principles, and were gradually absorbed into the art of China. However, the influence of the art of China on the art of other countries is more pronounced. There is a certain resemblance between the art of early Assyria, Persia, Egypt and China, but it is not known definitely which country was influenced by the art of the other. In a later period, the influence of China is found in certain types of Persian rugs and textiles. Chinese motifs and influence are found in the periods of the three Louis of France, in the textiles of England, and in the style of Chippendale. In modern times, Chinese motifs in their original forms and in modifications and adaptations are used in textiles and in decorative art.
PLATE 9 - SYMBOLS IN CHINESE ART

A. Forms of Solomon's Knot
B. Forms of Solomon's Knot
C. Forms of Solomon's Knot
D. Forms of Solomon's Knot
E. The Knot of Destiny symbol
F. The Peh Knot
G. Tae Keih symbol
H. The Joo-e Head
I. The book symbol
J. The bat or "Fu"
K. The coin symbol
L. The symbol of longevity
PLATE 10 - SYMBOLS IN CHINESE ART

A. "Eight Ordinary Symbols" of Confucious
B. "Emblems of the Eight Immortals" from Taoism
C. The twin fish symbol
D. The phoenix bird
PLATE 10
Grecian Period

Greek art is a more advanced stage in the slow progression from the more primitive representations of nature and symbolic conceptions to a more idealized and developed stage. The symbolic interpretation of form was continued in more natural motifs. However, symbolic forms were always considered in their relation to decorative and ornamental harmony and use.

Symbolism was used extensively to portray Greek mythology which is curiously related and connected with Grecian religion. The gods of the Greeks each possessed their individual and identifying symbols. This symbolism was also borrowed by the Romans. Grecian symbolism was as follows:

- Scythe---symbol for Chrono or Saturn.
- Thunderbolt---symbol for Zeus or Jupiter.
- Horses---symbol for Helios.
- Trident---symbol for Neptune or Poseidon.
- Golden Apple---symbol for Venus or Aphrodite.
- Crescent---symbol of Diana or Artemis.
- Cauduceus---symbol of Mercury; this symbol has in modern times become the symbol for commerce and the medical profession.
- Lion's Skin and a Club---symbol of Hercules.
- Chimera---imaginary creature sacred to the goddess Athene.
- Centaur---imaginary animal that is so often found in Greek art is symbolic of the lower nature in mankind or of
animal force.

Urn or Crater---symbolic of plenty.

Draped Urn---symbolic of death or sorrow.

Pine Tree---Grecian Tree of Life.

Many of the Grecian motifs were the floral forms that were native to the country. These simple natural forms were idealized, producing a style which would influence and inspire various art periods down through the ages.

The acanthos (akanthos) is perhaps one of the most commonly used of all the plant forms. The acanthos leaves were used extensively by the ancient Greeks and Romans, and are found throughout the design of Western Europe. In its wide application it exhibits many varieties - the chief difference being in style, shape and marginal treatment. The Greeks made the leaf edges pointed; the Romans made them more round and broad and used more emphatic curves. In the Byzantine and Romanesque, the leaf was used in its stiffer aspects. Early Gothic used the acanthos leaf in rounding forms, while the later Gothic made the leaf into long rather bizarre forms. The Renaissance further developed the acanthos, especially the tendril form. Following this period the use of the acanthos declined except in the use of historic designs in which it was already established. Although the acanthos has had wide application in various countries, it is not thought to have had any great symbolic significance, but was used because of its great decorative value. However, about the 13th century in Medieval Europe, the acanthos was symbolic of paradise.
The scroll, another extensively used form is probably an invention from the acanthos - the natural plant without the tendrils. The scroll developed through the successive styles in the same manner as the acanthos. Like the acanthos, the scroll is not known to have any symbolic meaning, and was used only for its decorative value.

The rose has ever been a popular flower. There is an old tradition that Venus, on her way to meet Adonis, stepped upon a thorn. The bush was stained with blood and some of the nectar Venus was carrying. The blood and nectar mixed, and upon that spot on the bush there grew a beautiful red rose. It is thought that because of this ancient tradition the rose has become a symbol of joy, love and beauty. It is sometimes called the flower of wisdom.

The rose was a popular flower of Greece and Rome, and its blossom, both in architectural and rosette forms, is common in Greek, Roman, Sassarian and Byzantine art.

The lily is also a popular flower form. Perhaps no other flower has had such religious significance. It seems that from the earliest times it has been the symbol of truth, purity and honor.

In Christianity the lily is the symbol of the Resurrection. It is found in the art motifs of Hellas, Assyria and India.

The laurel is symbolic of glory, honor and triumph. The use of the laurel can be traced back to an early Greek tradition. The Greeks and Romans wove the twigs of the laurel tree into crowns with which they rewarded their heroes and victors in the Olympian games. In Greek mythology the laurel was sacred to Apollo. The use of the
laurel, as an art form persisted, and has come down to the Middle Ages when the laurel was used to crown the poets. In later periods the great poets, athletes and heroes were given laurel wreaths as symbolical of victory, and in still later periods the laurel became symbolic of victory and glory.

Olive branches were also symbolical of victory. This symbolism is shown in the ancient custom of the slaves carrying olive branches and going out to meet the returning heroes who were crowned with the laurel wreaths. The olive branch possesses the symbolism of peace in Christian art.

The ivy leaf and vine as an art motif can be traced back to its origin in ancient Greece where it was the vine sacred to their god Bacchus, because the filters for wine were made of the wood of the ivy plant. It is found in representations of Bacchus and the Bacchantes. The use of the ivy as a decorative design is found in east, central and south Europe, and in England. In its early forms the ivy was symbolical of the god Bacchus, and in later periods became symbolical of friendship.

Two animal forms first used in Grecian art are the dolphin and the centaur. These two forms have appeared in subsequent art periods and occasionally are found in modern decorative art.

The dolphin, symbolic of the sea, sea power, freedom and joy, has been a much used motif in decoration. The form of the dolphin is first found in early Greece and Pompeii, and in later Greek and Roman art. The dolphin was sometimes used with Neptune, Heriads
and nymphs, or with a trident which is usually associated with Neptune. The extensive use of the dolphin can be attributed to the respect which was paid to him by the ancients, and later to the great decorative possibilities that are found in and made from this form. It is thought that its use in Italy was chiefly because of its decorative adaptiveness, but its use in France is of historical origin.

In about 1199, a Viennois ruler, Guigo, assumed "Dauphin" as a title, and the figure of a dolphin as his crest. A successor later surrendered his province to the king of France on the terms that "Dauphin" should always be the title of the heir to the throne of France. These terms were respected, and the title was in use until 1830.

The centaur is an imaginary creature composed of the body of a horse and of a human. It is first found in Greece, as it was first symbolic of the Thessalian races. Centaurs are mentioned in the mythology of Greece in their struggles with the Lapithae, and connection with the Bacchantes and Dionysus. In later periods the centaur became symbolic of the higher and lower natures in man. It is also symbolic of animal force. In later periods of art the centaur is probably used for its decorative possibilities only.

The origin of the mask can be found in the earliest period of Greek art. Masks were used in the harvest games of this period. Later they were used in the Greek plays and in the theaters. These masks were employed to entirely conceal the face of the wearer, or to give the wearer some certain characterization. Masks were made to
imitate and express various ideas or meanings, and were comic, tragic or grotesque. The mouths were large so that the voice of the speaker would be amplified.

The mask was next found as a motif of decoration in theaters and other buildings, and in architectural details along cornices and on arches.

In the Renaissance and Rococo periods, the mask motif again came into favor as a decorative form and is again found in the decorative textile designs of the three Louis of France and in modern decorative art.

The grotesque masque, or mascaron, is a type of mask. It is a caricature or an imaginative face made of parts of human, animal or plant forms, or is a distortion of the original face.

In ancient times the caricature is found only in the earlier Greek periods. However, in the Renaissance and Rococo periods the grotesque masque experienced a revival, and it is found in the period of the Louis of France and in Chippendale ornamentation.

The mask itself is not a pure symbol. It is used to express various moods or feelings, or a characterization according to its face. Thus, comedy, tragedy, fright, joy or hypocrisy can be expressed.

The trophy design originated among the ancient Greeks. The weapons dropped by vanquished armies were hung upon the trees as signs of victory. The custom was later incorporated into architectural decorative motifs. The use of trophies as decorative forms
gradually increased, and they appeared on state buildings, army quarters and upon weapons and objects connected with war, victory and hunting.

During the Renaissance the trophy is found in intarsiatrua and in the decorative textiles. It is also a decorative motif in the period of Louis 16th. A variation of this motif is the use of hunting weapons arranged in the form of a trophy.

The symbol is somewhat similar to the trophy. It is a grouping together of objects to represent a certain idea such as the symbol of that idea. An example of a symbol is the grouping of several musical instruments with flowers and a knot of ribbon as the symbol of music. Other arts and professions are symbolized by similar grouping of their representative objects. Symbols were commonly used by the guilds, and by later art periods including modern decorative art.

Shell forms are frequent motifs found in decoration. Although they occasionally possess symbolic significance, they are chiefly used for their decorative possibilities. The first use of shell forms was probably in Greece where the conch shell was associated with Aphrodite. Again the shell is used in Christian art as the symbol of Baptism. During the Renaissance, the shell form was used in architectural motif as the background for niches, fountains and basins.

The shell motif is found in the textiles of Louis 13th, Louis 14th, Louis 15th and Louis 16th. It is doubtful if the shell possessed any symbolic significance during these periods. It was used
merely as a classic motif and for its decorative possibilities.

Three abstract designs which should receive comment because of their extensive use in Grecian art and in the subsequent art periods are the Greek frets, the Guilloche and the "egg-and-dart" patterns.

The typical Greek meander frets are thought to be of early textile origin. The term meander is derived from the river Meandros in Asia, which has many turns in its course. The Guilloche is thought to have had its origin in the fret pattern. It seems that these two abstract designs do not possess any symbolic significance, but they owe their extensive use to their decorative potency.

The "egg-and-dart" pattern, which is so commonly found in Grecian art, does not seem to possess any definite symbolism. However, it has been suggested that it is symbolical of Aphrodite and Ares. The origin of this pattern is not definitely known although there are several theories as to its source. Many authorities suggest that it is a conventionalized plant form, the "egg" being the flower and the "dart" being the leaf.

There are many variations and modifications of the Greek fret, Guilloche and "egg-and-dart" patterns, which have been used successively in the various art periods including modern decorative art and architecture.

Other symbolic forms are:

The Y form---symbolical of the way of life, one path of virtue and one path of vice. It is thought that this form originated with the Pythagorians.
The Butterfly coming from a chrysalis---symbolical of the soul.

Psyche as an infant---symbolical of the soul.
PLATE 11 - FORMS OF THE ACANTHUS

A. Natural form
B. Grecian form
C. Roman form
D. Byzantine form
E. Moyen form
F. Gothic form
G. French Renaissance form
H. Acanthus form of the period of Louis the 13th
I. Modern form of the acanthus
PLATE 12 - THE ROSE

A. Rose form of England about 1750
B. The rose and a sacred monogram of the 15th century
C. Rose of Italy in the 17th century
D. A Persian Rhodian rose
PLATE 13 - THE DOLPHIN AND SHELL FORMS

A. A Graeco-Italic dolphin form
B. A dolphin form of the Italian Renaissance
C. A 15th century dolphin form
D. A dolphin motif of the 17th century
E. Form of the nautilus
F. Form of the snail
G. Form of the interior of a scollop shell
H. Form of the exterior of a scollop shell
I. Shell form of the period of Louis the 16th
PLATE 14 - CONVENTIONALIZED FORMS OF GREECE

A. The Greek fret or the meander pattern
B. The Guilloche
C. The Chinese fret
D. Variations of the Greek palmette bands
E. The Greek "egg-and-dart" patterns
   1. Grecian form
   2. Renaissance form
   3. Modern form
ROMAN PERIOD

Rome is usually considered the successor of Greece in art and decoration. The Romans adopted and borrowed many of the Grecian art forms. Often the Romans adopted the symbolism with which the Greeks had endowed their decorative motifs. However, there are some symbolic decorative forms which originated in the Roman period.

The grotesque, as a decorative motif, can be traced to Pompeii, and Roman painting and architecture. The grotesques were imaginative forms made of a combination of animal, plant and human parts and were most fantastic. The grotesque is later found in Medieval times, in the Renaissance, in the styles of ornamentation influenced by the Classic, and in the decorative motifs of Chippendale.

Two decorative forms said to be the most typical of Roman art are the laurel and fasces. The laurel and its symbolism were borrowed from the Greeks. It was many centuries later that it was adopted by Napoleon as one of his decorative motifs and incorporated into the Empire style. The fasces were symbolical of the power of the rulers and counsels over the people. This symbol was borrowed by Napoleon and used as a decorative form in the Empire style.

The axe was symbolical of the right of the people to appeal. The wheels of Triumph were used to denote triumph, and were the wheels of a chariot elaborately decorated.

The male lion was symbolic of majesty.

The female lion was symbolic of protection.
The female wolf was considered as the guardian of Rome, for a female wolf mothered Romulus and Remus.

The use of the oak leaf as a decorative motif can first be found in early Rome. In Roman mythology the oak was a tree of the god Jupiter. It was symbolic of strength and independence. The use of the oak leaf is again found in Gothic, Italian Renaissance, and German and English decorative forms. In modern times the oak leaf and its many variations is still in use.

A much used motif of Roman decoration was the festoon of flowers or fruit. This motif was symbolic of the mortality of man. It originally was a form of decoration connected with the feasts and festivities of the early Romans. These festoons were hung between pilasters, along friezes and panels. Knots of ribbon were used between the festoons. However, in certain festivities the spaces were filled with the heads of various animals killed in sacrifices.

This type of decoration is found in several different adaptations, and is in modern use. The Renaissance used it, the spaces between the festoon usually being filled with figures, masks, rosettes, or the heads of cherubs or angels. Festoons may be of flowers or fruit, or both.

The use of the heads of oxen and rams as a decorative motif originated also in the sacrifices at certain Roman festivities. The heads of the sacrificed animals were hung on the wall, and the spaces between them draped with festoons of fruit or flowers. The ram's
head, and sometimes the heads of other animals, are used as a decorative motif in architecture. The ram's head is also used as a decorative motif in the style of Chippendale.
PLATE 15 - FORMS IN ROMAN ART

A. The trophy
B. The symbol
C. The fasces
D. An eagle form of Rome
E. An eagle form of Gothic art
F. An eagle form of Byzantine art
The basis of Byzantine art is found in Roman art, but it clearly shows the influence of the early Christian era and the work of the Orient, Persia, Egypt, and Syria. It was in the 4th century that the old pagan and classic forms and symbols were beginning to be replaced by the symbolism of Christianity.

From the first to the 8th centuries, the Persian and Byzantine weavers were the chief producers of silk textiles. These weavers used patterns which were usually symbolic. Many of these patterns consisted of the "Trees of Life," with the personages on both sides in worship.

It seems that the scenes showing men on hunting expeditions, men in chariots, and animals being slain are merely pictorial and do not possess a historical or symbolical significance.

Human heads in various forms are first found in Byzantine art. The heads can be those of cherubs, angels, babies, or youths. The heads of the cherubs or angels are thought to have several symbolic meanings according to their use. Generally, the cherub is symbolic of eternal youth, but in Christian art it is symbolic of purity and innocence. It is found in heraldry and in the Italian Renaissance as an architectural motif. The form is again employed as a decorative motif in the period of Louis 13th. In modern art cherub heads are found in religious painting and architecture.

The peacock is the symbol of immortal life. It is thought that this symbolism originated because the eye-feathers are replaced
each year, and because the eyes on the feathers are never closed. The peacock was also the symbol of the empress. In Christian art it is symbolic of immortality and the step from earthly life to eternity. In modern art and decoration, it has become the symbol of vanity and pride.
CHRISTIAN PERIOD

The introduction of Christianity had the most direct and powerful influence in changing the art of the ancient world. One of the ways in which this was accomplished was through borrowing of the old art designs and forms and giving to them new interpretations. The persecution of the early Christians forced them into using pagan art designs; however, they adopted only those that would be in harmony with the new religion. Of the ancient pagan art motifs, the Christians used only those forms which would serve as a basis for the Christian art of the future.

It seems as though the early Christian art was a stepping stone from the pagan art to the art of the Middle Ages. With the coming of the northern cultures, there also came the introduction of new art designs, and the introduction of new interpretations to those forms already known and used.

The symbols of the early Christian Church often took their "aptness" from the references found in the scriptures. This gave the symbol "associative faculty" and "decorative value," and supplied the need of a mode to express the new ideas. The use of symbolism developed greatly in the first of the 6th century and during the 7th century. Many of the symbols are directly taken from the other religions, as well as from pagan art.

In Christian art the most important symbol is the cross. The various forms of the cross that are used are countless, as is also its application to various objects of utility and decoration. The
cross has many symbolic interpretations, although it usually symbolizes Christianity, Christ, the Resurrection, and Sacrifice. The most commonly used of the cross forms are the Latin or the Roman cross used by Christian art, and the Tau or Egyptian cross of ancient Egyptian origin. The Maltese cross came into usage about the time of the Middle Ages, and is symbolic of service. The form of the Latin cross mounted on a globe is symbolic of salvation.

The circle is symbolic "of God and perfection, without beginning, without end."

The square is symbolic of "Earth, Life, and Earthly Life." It is also symbolic of the New Jerusalem. It is thought that it acquired this symbolism from the texts: "and the city lieth four square."

A square within a circle symbolizes the "eternity of life."

Star forms were used in Christian art in many forms and symbolic interpretations.

The five pointed star contains five Alphas and is called the star of beauty. It was once called the Symbol of Health, held to be a talisman against witchcraft, and claimed to point out the five places where the Savior was wounded. It is also symbolic of guidance, exalted being, Christ, morning, and Heavenly Wisdom.

The six pointed star was symbolic of "the Creator."

The seven pointed star was symbolic of "seven gifts of the Holy Ghost."

The eight pointed star was symbolic of the rising sun or of "Regeneration."

The nine pointed star was symbolic of the "Fruits of the Holy
The twelve pointed star was symbolic of the "twelve disciples," and also the twelve tribes of Israel.

The octogon was "symbolic of regeneration, and for this reason is often used for the ground plan of fonts."

The triangle, and variations of the triangle and the circle interlaced, are symbolic of the Holy Three or the Trinity.

Floral forms were employed in Christian art, and possess symbolic significance as:

Grapes and corn ears---symbolic of the bread and the wine in Holy Communion.

Holly---symbolic of rejoicing. Used during the Christmas season for decoration.

Ivy---symbolic of "faithfulness and dependency."

Lily of the Valley---symbolic of humility.

Palm---is symbolic of "victory and righteousness."

Oak---symbolic of strength.

Palm leaf---symbolic of martyrdom.

Pansy---symbolic of the Holy Trinity.

Pomegranate with its seeds---symbolic of the Church and her congregation.

Rose---symbolic of the Blessed Virgin Mary.

Red Rose---symbolic of martyrdom.

Shamrock, in its conventional rendering---symbolic of the Holy Trinity. The "shamrock is a natural illustration used by St. Patrick in Ireland to convince his hearers of the
feasibility of the doctrine of the Trinity."

Water lily—"water was symbolic of purification, while the lily was symbolic of purity; the two symbolizing purification by baptism."

Christianity also endowed certain animal forms with symbolism as follows:

Butterfly—symbolic of the Risen Christ; of the Resurrection.

Dove—symbol of Christ. Probably this symbolism was suggested by the text: "and Jesus when He was baptized went up straightway out of the water: and Lo: the Heavens were opened unto Him, and He saw the Spirit of God descending like a Dove, and lighting upon Him." The dove is also symbolic of "God and the Holy Spirit." The dove with the olive branch comes from the Old Testament, in the account of Noah and the Ark: "And the dove came unto him in the evening; and lo in her mouth was an olive leaf plucked off."

Dragon—symbolic of Satan and sin. This symbolism can be traced to a reference in the scriptures.

Hart—symbolic of solitude and the life of a hermit.

Lamb—symbolic of Christ. This symbolism probably was suggested by the text: "Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sins of the world."

Lion—symbolic of Christ and of St. Mark.

Phoenix—symbolic of the Resurrection, and is a pagan adaptation.
Peacock---symbolic of immortality and is a decorative form borrowed from pagan art.

Pelican---symbolic of Christ as in the Holy Eucharist.

Serpent---symbolic of sin and temptation, and probably acquired this symbolism from the account of Adam and Eve in the Garden.

Unicorn---symbolic of chastity in womankind. A myth connected with this imaginary creature relates that it allows only virgins to approach it. It is a form that was borrowed from pagan or Chinese art.

Winged bull---symbolic of "God the Holy Ghost."

Fish---symbolic of Christ and the Christian religion. This symbol is often erroneously explained as having a certain symbolic connection with Christ and a fish. The symbol came into use as an acrostic composed of the initial letters of "Jesus Christ, Son of God and Savior." These letters in Greek spelled out the word "fish." Twin fishes crossed over each other are symbolic of Christianity.

The Four Evangelists are represented by symbols as follows:

Man---symbol of St. Mathew.

Lion---symbol of St. Mark.

Ox---symbol of St. Luke.

Eagle---symbol of St. John.

Other forms which possessed symbolism in Christian art are:

Ship---symbolic of the Church. This symbolism is occasionally represented by a ship with St. Peter or Christ as a
helmsman. This is symbolic of the faithful being carried safely to their destination in Heaven.

Anchor---the symbol of patience and hope. The anchor is one of the oldest of forms used in Christian symbolism and has been found in the catacombs. In modern decorative art it has become an emblem or a symbol of the sea, of a sailor, or of the navy. It is also symbolic of firmness and patience.

Shell---symbolic of a pilgrimage.

Mitre---symbolic of authority.

Fire---symbolic of martyrdom, purification, and of sacrifice. Skull---symbolic of mankind, while the skull and cross bones are symbolic of death. This is a very old and a much used death symbol.

Halo, Aureole or Numbus---symbolic of the sanctity of the person whose head it surrounds. This is thought to have had a pagan origin, as it was used in the East during the early centuries as the mark of a ruler.

Cherubs---symbolic of purity, innocence and eternal youth. The axe, lance and sword are symbolic of martyrdom, and are also the individual attributes of saints of the Church.
PLATE 16 - FORMS IN CHRISTIAN ART

A. Variations of the cross
B. Forms of the cross used on altar linens
C. A cross motif found in early Coptic textiles
PLATE 17 - FORMS IN CHRISTIAN ART

A. Symbolic forms of the Trinity
B. Form of the Tau or the cross of St. Anthony
C. A monogram formed by the letters "Chi Rho" and a cross
D. A holy monogram
E. A Christian decorative form with the letters
   signifying Christ
PLATE 17
About the 13th century, the influence of Asia was appearing in the textiles of Southern Europe. This Chinese influence was most noticeable in Persia, from which it was transmitted to Western Europe. This Chinese influence brought about the gradual disappearance of circular bands, groups of people and animals, which were replaced by floral designs. The floral designs were highly conventionalized, but gradually became more naturalistic. However, the floral motifs were arranged in repeat patterns, and never with the freedom of the Chinese textiles. Chinese motifs and forms that were adopted into the textiles and decorative art of Western Europe were undoubtedly used because of their decorative possibilities, and without reference to or knowledge of their original symbolic meaning or use.

A decorative form which developed and was commonly used in this period is the grotesque monster. These monsters were symbolic of the devil and of evil spirits. This symbolic form probably had its source of inspiration in the Roman satyr which, in the early days of Christianity, was considered an evil motif because of its pagan origin.

Heraldry is an important phase of medieval decoration and symbolism.

Heraldry or armorial bearings came into usage the latter part of the 11th century A.D., at the time of the Crusades. The type of
Heraldry was always related to the general contemporary style. Several different countries developed heraldry, but each according to its own decorative characteristics.

Heraldry can be divided into several main periods:

Early Gothic---11th to the 13th centuries.

Late Gothic---13th to the 15th centuries.

Renaissance---16th to modern times. It was during this period that heraldry became a decadent art.

It was in the 14th century that heraldic devices were introduced into textiles for costumes as a distinguishing mark of the nobility. Ornamentation of heraldic forms can be utilized as decorative motifs in many ways. In olden times heraldic motifs were used on textiles, in architecture, and on household furnishings.

Heraldry is also used in modern decorative forms. It is used by fraternal organizations in their uniforms, jewelry, buildings, and architecture. Heraldic devices are also used by commercial organizations in their trade marks, and often in their advertising. In modern times it is usually a modification of the original forms. The shape of the shields or the charges are adapted to certain special forms of ornamentation.

Heraldic forms were entirely symbolic, each device being an individual symbol of a family, an event, or some brave act of the knight or his family. When a knight committed some extraordinary act, he was given permission to add a symbol of his bravery to his original coat of arms.
Units of heraldry which were popular were such devices as lions, eagles, griffins, dragons, leopards, fish, birds, and fleur-de-lis. However, many other forms such as anchors were used. A few typical symbolic forms are as follows:

Sword---the arms of mercy.
Two-edged sword---symbolic of the maintenance of chivalry and justice.
Lance---symbolic of truth.
Spur---symbolic of knighthood.
Unicorn---symbolic of the "supporter of the arms of England."
Griffin---symbolic of wisdom and of watchfulness.
Horse---the individual device of Stuttgart.
Serpent consuming a small child---device found on the heraldry of the Visconte of Milano.

It was during the Anglo-Saxon era that the textile arts assumed a definite place in England. Textiles of this early period were chiefly heavy linen canvas, decorated with worsted embroideries. In an inventory of about 1364 A.D., a reference is made to textiles embroidered with lion, leopard, and eagle forms. It was in the Neroma period that heraldic forms began to be used with floral designs. Stories and events were also worked on these textiles in embroidery.

In England, during the 13th century, the sacred embroideries were so well known that references to them are often found in the inventories of Western Europe.
An outstanding development in English textiles is the crewel work, which is embroidery with colored worsted threads. Crewel embroidery work was used extensively both for costumes and for the decorative textiles. Motifs used in the crewel work were naturalistic floral forms and animals. These forms were used as designs, or were sometimes arranged to portray stories or scenes. It is thought that many of the decorative motifs and their arrangement show the influence of Indian textiles. It is interesting to note that adaptations of the Indian Tree of Life have been found in these textiles.

Forms which are commonly found in early English textiles are:

- Broom plant---symbolic of the Plantagenet family.
- Oak tree---symbolic of the English Tree of Life.
- Rose---symbolic of England.
- Thistle---symbolic of austerity and independence.

The figured silks of Sicily are rich in symbolism which can be traced to Byzantine and Saracen sources. About the 13th century, the textiles made in Northern Italy began to compete with the Sicilian fabrics. The Saracenic motifs began to be used only for their decorative value, and lost their symbolic meaning. Designs used were those of Saracenic origin, with Italian motifs, such as castles, cartouches, and fantastic forms. Religious themes, like scenes from the New Testament, cherubs, angels and tabernacles were used. The Chinese
Ribbon form was used with its original symbolism.

In the 14th century, Venice became famous for her velvets. These velvet patterns were reproductions of Persian forms such as the palmette and scrolls of flowers. It was during this century that new forms were introduced in textile design. The delicate tendrils of the Orient became the knotty boughs forming the pointed oval shape which surrounded a group of animals. In the new form, the pomegranate, which was to be a characteristic form of the 15th century, was placed in the lower part of the oval. The pomegranate was now symbolic of the apple of Love. This form was originally subordinate to the animal forms, but later became the main motif of the design.

The pomegranate, arranged in the center of the oval, is symbolic of Christian Love; while the floral forms surrounding the pomegranate are symbolic of the love that, with faith, produces the fruit of eternal life.

The vase form replaced the pomegranate during the 16th century. It first appeared as a container for the pomegranate, but gradually grew more elaborate until it entirely replaced the pomegranate.
PLATE 18 - HERALDIC FORMS

A. Heraldic forms known as "Marks of Cadency."
B. The lozenge motif
C. The dolphin motif
D. The crescent moon motif
E. The cross cramponee
F. Heraldic devices in costume design
During the Renaissance, the designs became smaller and new motifs were again introduced. Grotesque designs of Rome were used for inspiration. Small bunches of flowers with frames of flowers and leaves came into usage. Gothic and oriental architectural designs and vertical treatments were replaced by Renaissance architectural designs and the horizontal treatments.

It was during this period that heraldic motifs were used in textile design. Repeat motifs were often composed of birds and animals of heraldic origin, and were probably used for their decorative value rather than for any symbolic significance.

The framework of the motifs gradually disappeared during the transition from the Renaissance to the Baroque style. A branch with leaves and flowers replaced the center symmetrical motifs. This new motif gradually grew to the typical pattern of branches arranged in vertical lines. The vase motif was still in use, but with greater contrasts in coloring and design.

It was in this era that the scenic pictures and the repeat patterns were discontinued. Inferior patterns with over-emphasized parts were used. The designs were sculptural and attempted to produce not only line and color effects but also relief. The result was often poor and wearying.

The Renaissance with its love of the classical mythology stimulated the use and study of symbolism and allegory. Symbolism was used extensively throughout the 16th century.
CONCLUSION

It can be said that since the Renaissance there have been no new decorative forms. The styles and periods of decorative art that follow the Renaissance can all be traced back to some earlier period, and the motifs are adaptations of earlier forms. Of course, a few new decorative forms are introduced, but no new period as a whole. Many of the old forms are greatly changed and adapted to meet new ideas and needs. Probably only a few of the old motifs retained their original significance, but became used for their decorative possibilities only.

Examples of this adaptation can be seen in the Louis of France periods. In the style of Louis the 13th are found the eagle, lion and griffin of Assyria, the olive, laurel, acanthus, shells, scrolls and masques of Greece, the oak and wreaths of Rome, and the cherubs of Byzantine. The style of Louis the 14th includes the fleur-de-lis of Egypt and the classical motifs of Greece and Rome. In the period of Louis the 15th are found motifs of classic origin and motifs taken from the Chinese. The period of Louis the 16th also includes classical motifs and motifs from the preceding French periods.

The Empire style of France is described as a Classic style. It was not the result of adapting classic art to contemporary art, but was copied directly from Greek and Roman art. Motifs commonly used were the Grecian vases, and the fasces, axes, eagles of Rome. However, many other Roman forms were taken directly.

The style of Chippendale should be included among the periods
of decorative art. Motifs of this period show the influence of the early periods of art. The signs of the Zodiac are thought to have been adapted from China. Many other Chinese motifs are found in the style of Chippendale, thus strongly showing the Chinese influence. In this period are also found the sphinx of Egypt, the griffins of Assyria, and many Greek and Roman motifs.

In contemporary art, symbolism is of greatest use and application in decorative design. Symbolic forms in the past occasionally became degraded, but this occurred only when its use became pedantic and the following of rules replaced original inspiration.

Symbolism in art and in decoration will always have a prominent place. When man desires to express the mysteries of nature, mankind and the universe, he will employ symbolism to express his ideas and images.
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