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Motif, Culture and Appropriation: A Comparison of Western and Eastern Design

Motif around the world has been inspired by an exuberant amount of culture. It reflects the makers identity, and the growth of their personality alongside their native traditions. This can be represented by nature, religion and craftsmanship etc. This independent project will discuss, the native meanings of designs that have been dulled by Western influence and show how appropriation has affected design. I will also discuss the differences between art and craft through anthropology and semiotics. Using the key thinkers Roland Barthes, Karl Marx and Stephen Davies. Their theories will be supported through research into a series of motifs and more specifically a case study with the British Museum.

The use of ornament can be defined to decorate for the purpose of beauty and to appease the eye of the viewer. Whether made from an artist or craftsman, the ornament is made for the pleasure of oneself and others. 18th century Philosopher Immanuel Kant discusses beauty and the sublime accordingly. 'The beauty of a thing is not judged in terms of its kind or function, but instead, in terms of its formal and perceptible properties as given directly to the senses' (Davies, S, 2006, p.8). This view sees beauty as an immediate delight, a love and desire that appears before any other immediate thought. It is appreciation without knowledge, more of a biological attraction/ impulse to indulge in what is beautiful.

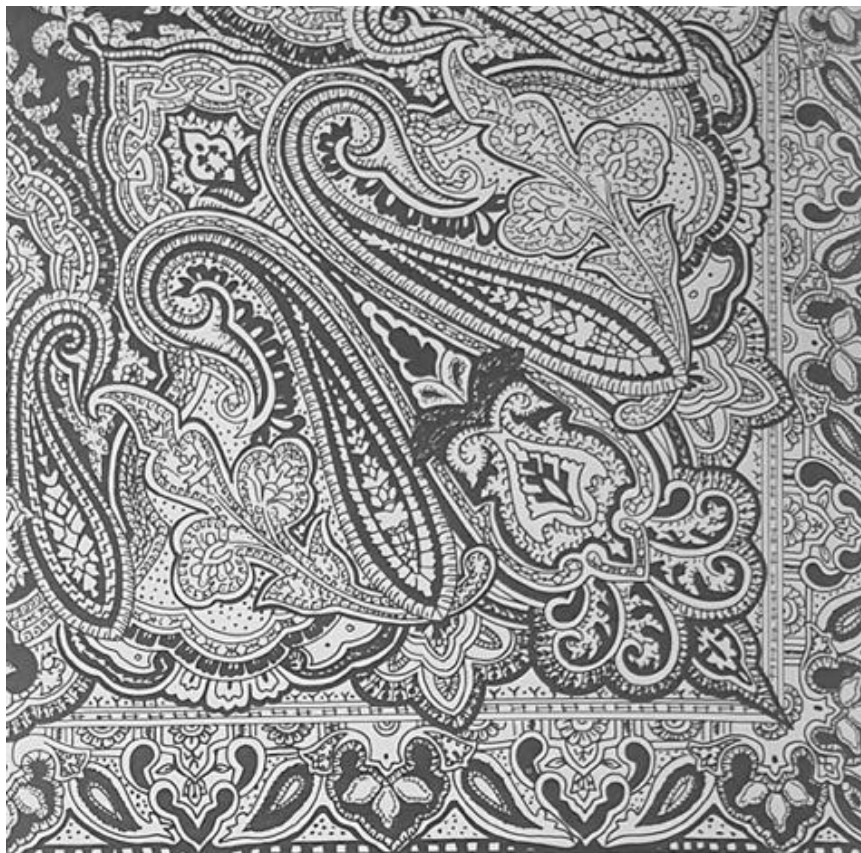
Ornament, throughout the ages has been heavily influenced by nature, and the connection between nature and aesthetic is beauty. A key element of beauty is the golden ratio. The golden ratio is a mathematical spiral deemed as a proportion of perfection that presents itself in natural and man-made forms. We subconsciously see this spiral in our surroundings and unknowingly use it as information to determine and to compare what is beautiful. 'The human eye is capable of interpreting an image featuring the golden ratio faster than any other' (Carlson 2010). This statement aids the analysis that both nature and beauty are visualised by the beholder as something instinctive with immediate admiration. We can apply this idea of beauty everywhere and see how it has enforced designs in different cultures. If motif is a representation of beauty, then that beauty becomes a universal language of meaning. Seeing beauty as a language allows you to see art as language. Beauty is universal and is within art however, it only gives you the immediate picture 'Aesthetic experience is not solely perceptual. It is infused by a cognitive but non-conceptual process' (Davies, S, 2006, p.8). In order to understand the full picture, you need thinking, knowledge and reflection, a sublime approach. Kant describes the sublime as beauty with indifference and emotion 'the vastness of the night sky, with its countless number of stars'. The scene painted contains feeling of personal insignificance and reflection. Some see different stars to others and therefore have different understandings and perceptions of what is in front of them. For example, a piece of art made in India representing Indian culture would be interpreted differently by people outside that culture. So, it could be said that anyone can see beauty, but we all have different perceptions of what that means, and that can be determined by the individual's identity.

Beauty within art is determined by identity and identity can be determined through culture. Creativity has allowed the development of culture through visual ways of expression and storytelling. Motif was once a staple of one's culture. It conveyed the life of the craftsman it was born to and therefore art was able to tell a story. Motif in different countries resembled that of personal culture, culture that represented the place it was made and the traditions that came into place to create these motifs. Tradition sets up the fundamental values of a country and like language, signifies what that place stands for. In semiotics, a motif is a symbol to translate a craftsman's meaning and intention. This means that through personal development, that motif will communicate the culture, tradition and personality of the craftsman which would be completely unique to anyone else. Semiotician Roland Barthes theorises about the use of signs and symbols within culture. I have analysed from these theories that anything in culture can send a specific message with the methodology of semiotics, but the specific message of the symbol can vary if its visuals change, such as colour and setting. Symbols dictate an individual's current thoughts and perceptions; they are metaphors that enhance the importance of the craftsman's views. This has been an ongoing evolution since the beginning of craft. Unlike signs which are universal (like beauty), symbols can be seen as almost a secret language (like the sublime). Motif as a symbol will be understood by its maker and those who have the same mind as them. But to outside viewers, the meaning will not be understood completely. This could say that Motif made within culture is meant to be shared for a specific community, and the colours and settings have deep cultural connections, altering these would result in altering or demeaning the knowledge of these symbols. 'Each symbol system reflects a specific cultural logic, and every symbol functions to communicate information between members of the

culture in much the same way, but in a more subtle manner than, conventional language' (Barthes, R. year N/A).

So, in order to fully appreciate motif, you need an understanding of beauty and culture together. Using one without the other would undermine the creation, as the function of motif is to be more than beautiful, it is to be sublime.

Anyone can appreciate what's in front of them but not everyone can acknowledge its meaning. Falling back on the significance of nature. Natural forms have had a significant impact on motif. Native foliage has been a main source of inspiration in native countries since craftsman started creating. Forms are chosen for both beauty and cultural connection. One example of this is the Paisley motif.



(Figure 1 Liberty & Co, 1860, *Handkerchief*, London)

An example of motif that started with cultural significance is the paisley pattern. The design resembles that of a growing shoot of a date palm tree in ancient Babylon in the Middle East. The tree was a dependency for its people, and it provided all the essentials for survival, therefore becoming a symbol for life (Evans, 2008, p.38). The importance of the paisley brought meaning to those who displayed it. The design resembled the roots of native people and acknowledged their lives and history. It was a way to show case middle Eastern culture, using the motif as an expression or symbol of gratitude and pride for the tree that gave them life. The origin of the paisley plays an integral part in understanding what it means, and without this history we would only be able to perceive the beauty of it. Here we understand the cultural significance of a motif to its native country and what it symbolises and represents. Specifically for the paisley motif this meaning became faded with the introduction of Western trade.

The end of the 15th century saw influential trade between the West and the East due to revolutionary enhanced sea travel. Trade started the beginning of culture's crossing paths and introduced the creation of cross-cultural art, as a result of the new being seen as a source of inspiration. The book *Pattern by Joan Evans 1975* discusses the west's impact on Indian style, like that of the paisley motif. Page 61 states the influence Indian design had on the west, specifically within ornament and decoration. This led to the west showcasing cultural meaningful designs with no knowledge on what these designs symbolised. 'Indian figures, histories, and landscapes, and Indian hangings or

‘chintz’ put in Western terms as ‘prettily representing sundry trades and occupations of the Indians, with their habits.’ (Evans, 1975, p.61). The book represents an overall impression of novelty that the west held towards Eastern countries. Reducing Indian culture to a novelty of the strange exotic world outside the west. Soon, trade and colonisation led to seeing motif as product, seen for ornamentation as opposed to native symbol with cultural significance. Western appropriated design had an absence of common principles that all native designs share. Culture. In the strive for manufactured production, there is the result of novelty. To which art and motif now struggle to leave this uncultured category and become recognised in their own habitat once again. Western design thrives off misapplying borrowed art for personal profit, without any attempt to produce art for passion and meaning. The manufacturer compared to the craftsman; the difference is the craftsman produces to do what they are passionate about. ‘Practising art which had grown up in their civilisation, and strengthened with their growth’ (Jones, 2016 p.77). Theorist Owen Jones discusses how all native designs provide the same cultural principles, there is always a care for the overall form of a motif as the motif itself is treated with importance. ‘We find nothing that has been added without purpose, nor that could be removed without disadvantage...the difference which creates the style is not one of principle, but of individual expression’ Jones goes on to discuss the flowing influence in Indian design and the qualities they possess ‘Beauty, imagination and order. Without...neither beauty nor imagination can begin to be expressed (Jones, 2016, p.7).

The difference between the craftsman and the manufacturer is that the craftsman produces for passion and the manufacturer produces for profit. So,

in favour of the craftsman, does that mean that passion is the overall driving force to creation, and culture and beauty just happen to fall into that? This could mean that if there is passion in the work being produced, it does not matter how it is perceived by others. This sees the motif as an element simply created by the maker for their own personal development. Aiding to this, philosopher Karl Marx conveys his interpretation of the craftsman, suggesting that art is the way in which 'man creates himself and recognises himself as he is in his products...man exercises his freedom and realises his potentialities.' (Marx, 1992). It is through craftsmanship that we see the development of making from the backbone of native traditions. We get to see both culture and beauty through passion that is each unique across motif all over the East. It is this craftsmanship that dulled along with the paisley when Western trade came into place. Marx further discusses the repercussions of craftsman producing for industry. Stating that, the craft becomes alien to the craftsman once it has been reproduced for profit, sold by the capitalist. The craftsman then alienates himself from a craft that has become an industrialised burden to produce for trends rather than creative growth and personal development. Finally traditional teamwork within craft becomes competition, crafting for success and wealth instead of crafting for community benefits. Crafting for wealth is the most estranged result of capitalism as craft traditionally was a way to survive, improve quality of life and identify oneself. (Marx, p.206).

The decline of producing for passion soon came into place with the arrival of the Western trend seekers. The desire for novelty became so strong that when one culture became tiresome the west was thirsty for a new one. Western traders became venturers and sought motif and pattern to manufacture, take

home and populate the markets. Directing new trends for the purpose of profit and capitalism. But soon, “collecting” wasn’t enough, the West also had to influence these “exotic” designs with Western familiarities to give buyers a false sense of identity. The exotic craftsman that had once created for passion, then was given the burden of impossible demand and now must change the design to fit a country that does not produce meaning to them. Business in Western ornament became about manufacturing what was selling. Painters in China were given flower designs suited to Western trends. Countries began appropriating other cultures entirely. Decoration became such a competitive market that ‘Eastern ornament offered little attraction to designers already occupied with styles that had not lost their novelty’ (Evans, 1975, p.62). Patterns were becoming forcibly cross-cultured for the Western eye to keep up with trends. Designs that were for example seen as recognisably Chinese, now had European touches and motifs to become sellable. One example of cross-cultural art made for capitalism is Chinese lacquerware. East Asian lacquer is a resin taken from the toxic sap of the native *Rhus verniciflua* tree, it is a natural plastic that is used as a coating for surface decoration and or carved into the surface. (James, Brennan, 2004). This traditional Chinese process grew popular with the West.



(Figure 2. 1640-1643, Mazarin Chest, V&A, London.)

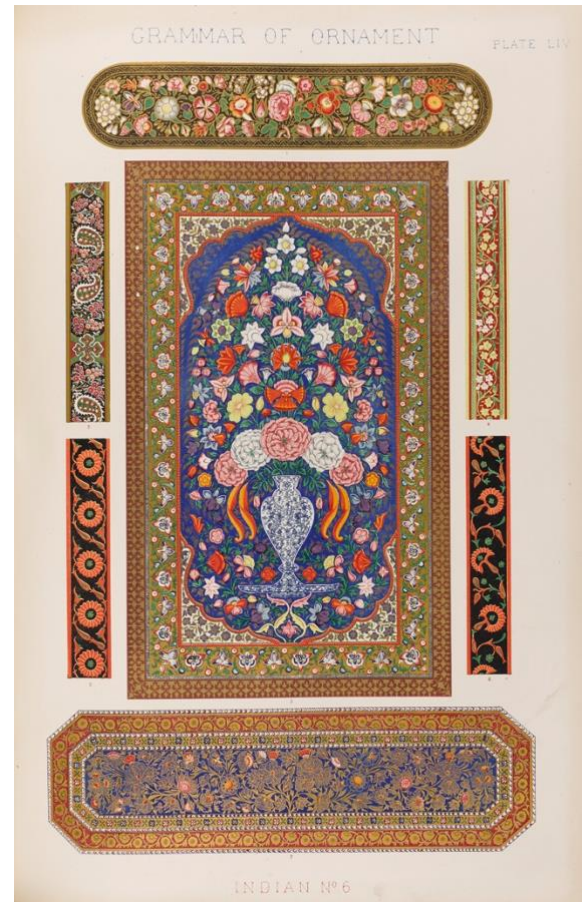
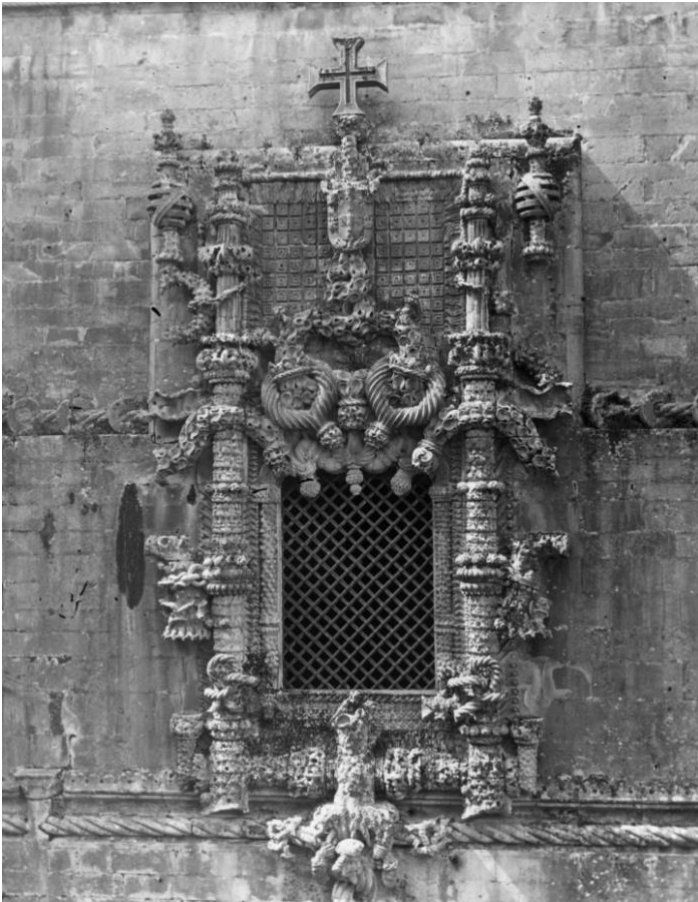
This lacquered East Asian chest displayed in the V&A combines the Chinese culture with Western influence. This chest was created around the same time as Western artisans were venturing to the East. They were to impose the East with designs suited to European taste. 'At the end of the sixteenth century...most blue and white ware produced in China was frankly intended for

the European market' (Evans,2008, p60). The placard placed next to this piece describes that the west was 'immediately attracted by the lustre and decorative brilliance of objects made from lacquer'. Soon East Asia began crafting off European influence, using Western shapes with Eastern knowledge. This chest specifically, was shipped to the west with designs that allude to both Chinese and Western influence.

The advancement of appropriation through colonisation shows the west's determination to profit at the expense of others. However, it is sometimes seen that appropriation is confused for appreciation, and appreciation can soon turn into appropriation once exploited for personal gain. The Oxford English dictionary defines appropriation as 'the deliberate reworking of images and styles from earlier, well-known works of art'. Reworking is not always seen as appropriation; however, my interpretation of the word is that if you rework a motif that you have no understanding of you are stripping it of its possible meaning and cultural significance. Like the paisley pattern, recreating something with no story, no meaning, will give no purpose to the creation and therefore dismantle its beauty. This confusion of appropriation is discussed in the book 'Pattern' by Joan Evans in page 67 'perhaps we have helped them a little in their proportions where they were lame or defective, and made them more pleasant,' (Evans, 2008, p.67). Western copiers describe their role as enhancing cultural art. Instead of viewing the original motif as a sacred cultural drawing. A motif created off the basis of story and worship, it is viewed simply as imperfect to the European eye that wonders to its idealised version of beauty. In contrast, the copier and the viewer are different. Further the book discusses a Western woman's response to this style of appropriation 'it put me

in mind of the fine ladies of our age, it delighted my eyes, but gave no pleasure to my understanding.' (Evans, 2008, p.67) So coincidentally, appropriated ornament can be appreciated but it cannot be fully understood, as appropriated work does not follow the same principles that Owen Jones discusses. Appropriation simply follows what is selling. If we can now see the difference between original work and appropriated work, then what category does cross-cultural art fall under? The word is defined as an exchange and combination of influence, resulting in new art. (Roots, 2022).

Cross-culture could be seen as the intended way to appreciate art that has been exchanged from other countries. It shows the learning of another culture within its own as opposed to the taking of it. One of the first examples of cross-cultural art was the Indian influence in Portuguese architecture. Unlike much of the West's borrowing of art, Portugal in the 15th century was seeing first-hand what cultures create. Instead of taking, they used this as inspiration from their travels, and introduced it to their country for the benefit of the community to broaden cultural awareness and appreciation.



(Figure 3, 1910, Window of the chapter house in the convent of the Christ of Thomar, Portugal)

(Figure 4, Jones, O, 2016. Grammar of Ornament, Indian Plate 6)

Figure 3 (left) shows the window of the chapter house in the convent of the Christ of Thomar. It resembles Indian and Portuguese influence. As a comparison, to the Right is Owen Jones' Indian motif investigation from the grammar of ornament. The two images share similarities in form and shape. The Portuguese window almost resembles that of an Indian rug, but remains true to its own culture, it gives both inspirations space to be understood and appreciated and has been created for the purpose of the community. Cross-

cultural art seems to have an allowance and respect for the symbols it uses and gives motifs a reason to be present. Unlike appropriated designs, cross cultured work pays homage to its inspiration, and it shows others that the craftsmen themselves have ventured to another country and experienced the new for themselves and have had a physical experience that has fuelled the development of future work. Owen Jones describes the craftsman's experience with cross-cultural work as 'exhibiting the same art but modified by the character of the mixed population over which they rule. The Indian uniting the severe forms of Arabian art with the graces of Persian refinement' (Jones, 2016, p78). This description tells us that the combination of cultures has developed into mixed populations and that art and motif also change through populations becoming cross cultured. Travel in the East has allowed countries to combine identities such as culture, race and religion, and a mixed population allows for a mixed culture of art that shows the identity of the craftsman. As identity and religion spread, so does artistic style and tradition.



(Figure 5, Reliquary Bimaran casket, 1st century)

(Figure 6, 2013, Buddha, Asian Civilisations Museum)

On the left is The Bimaran Casket, one of the oldest depictions of Buddha. Buddhism originated in India and soon spread across the globe. The Buddhism belief is that life is a cycle of suffering until you are reborn and that you must seek enlightenment to leave the cycle. 'Siddhartha Gautama was the first person to reach this state of enlightenment and was, and is still today, known as the Buddha.' (Roots, 2022). What had started within Indian culture, carried on as an influence all over the world, and this religion and following of Buddha has allowed cultures to depict him differently. This is an example of cross-culture, other cultures creating Buddhist image based off their own

craftsmanship and identity. Figure 6 depicts the Buddha following in the Greek style. The sculpture originated from north Pakistan in the 4th century, which was under the rule of a Buddhist king, but the country was then taken over by Greece. (Roots,2022). These two very different cultures resulted in cross cultural art representing a realistic depiction of buddha, influenced by Greek art. Creating in this style has not in any way lessened the Buddhas cultural significance, but it has shown how other cultures interpreted the religion differently for it to fit in with their own identity.

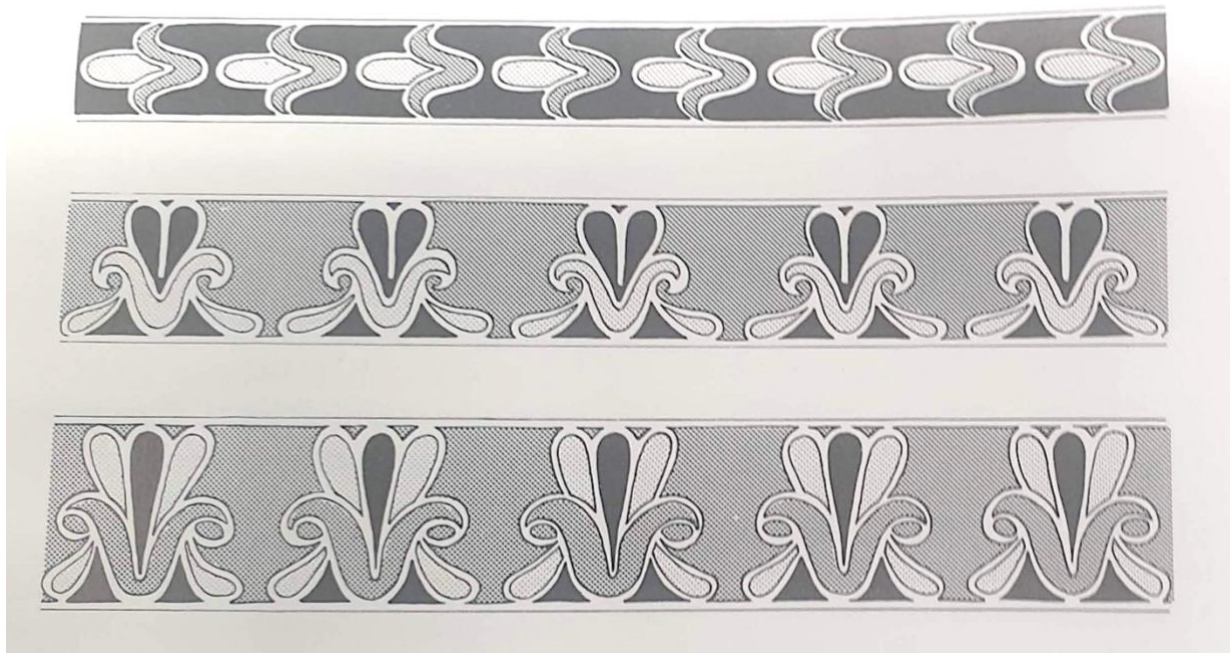
Like sculpture, Buddhism also influenced motif. The Indian lotus is associated with the religion, and its meaning goes beyond its physical appearance. Like that of the paisley. It is an example of religious influence of culture and gives further suggestion that all motif contains a deep history. Peter Phillips and Gillian Bunce converse about this in their book 'Repeat Patterns'. Page 102 delves into the life of the lotus and how they close at night and open at sunrise. Further research into the flower tells that the flower specifically blooms out of muddy water, 'although it often grows in mud, and returns within it at night, it always blooms clean the following day,' (total pond 2022). The life cycle of the lotus is filled with symbolism, it reflects rebirth and purity, fundamental values within Buddhism. The lotus will always bloom bright from darkness, like the journey to enlightenment. The motifs religious background encouraged much of Eastern design.



(Figure 7, Wilson, p143, 2001.)

Even the colours of the lotus resembled different meanings in designs, cementing Owen Jones' statement 'nothing has been added without purpose' (Jones, 2016, p.7). Designs made with culture focus on every detail in order to fully celebrate the design. For example, the white petals of the lotus represent being awakened to 'spiritual perfection. This lotus is known as the womb of the world' (Total Pond 2022). The purple lotus is depicted as an open flower or bud, with the petals representing the 'noble eightfold path: one of the principal teachings of Buddha.' (Total Pond 2022). These meanings that surface with the colours fall back to semiotics. The colours of the lotus very explicitly symbolise religious following, therefore if the colours are changed, the symbol

is altered. However, the same flower can grow in a different garden. The same lotus can also be found in Egypt and its depiction in motif is clearly incomparable to that of the Indian depiction. This confirms that appropriation would be very difficult to be completely at the cause of coincidence. These two cultures have seen the same flower. Whilst approached similar symbolisms, they have created completely different artistic interpretations that reflect the artistic traditions from their personal culture. In Egypt the resurgence of the flower symbolises the rise of the sun which provides life to the world. The flower resembles Egyptians' own deity 'Horus' (Phillips, Bunce, p102, 1993) Egyptian god of the sun. Religion plays an immense role in the connection between motif and culture. Especially in the past, the creation of nature was seen to be a gift from a deity or driving force. We can see the same motif being expressed with the same esteem but different depictions across cultures without these cultures connecting or seeing other work. Manifesting that work created with meaning will still be completely unique as each craftsman will see a form in a different light if their intent is to create honestly and off their own past.



(Figure 8, Wilson, p.106, 2001)

Ornament can be used to be appropriated or it can be used both culturally and cross-culturally. The ethics that come with the appropriation of art is seen to demean and devalue what has been created. It is my analysis that the true way to unite motif is to use it cross- culturally, thereby using and understanding ornament to benefit designs and the traditional crafts that you already know, like that of the roman buddha.

The modification of art is seen as positive, but the connotation of reusing motif is negative. But not all borrowing is appropriation. The reference of the lotus is an example of how information is received differently from an individual and therefore the outcome of their translation is inevitably distinct. However,

could the statement 'not all borrowing is appropriation dispute this? Perhaps replicating is just a human instinct, like our instinct to draw from nature due to the beauty we see in the golden ratio. Could replication be a technique for motifs that are already viewed as perfect from outside cultures? Wilson analyses this from a craftsman's perspective. 'There is universal reluctance to go out and find a new leaf or flower in the garden...instead, the old leaf or flower design is amended and altered to suit a new purpose' (Wilson p.12, 2001). It could be determined that from what we have seen from the lotus, all design from nature should represent and tell a story of that of the maker and their identity. This puts replication in a new perspective, is replication an instinct for familiarity? Wilson answers in her own experience that the craftsman will always turn to the familiar as it is what has been practised and perfected. Creating the new could suggest a spiral down to that of the amateur. 'I turn to familiar form, one which I can already draw fluently and well, a craftsman's choice, not that of the creative artist.' (Wilson p.12, 2001). If the craftsman identifies with the familiar symbol (like nature), then it is apparent that cultural designs will have similarities in natural forms that are native to more than one environment. Simple forms like that which resemble geometry, and the golden ratio are bound to be interpreted all over the world but it is the overall outcome and story that should define its cultural origin. In one case, this can be represented in the 1987 Indonesian rice barn.



(Figure 8, British Museum, 1987, Rice Barn)

In 1987 the British museum invited craftsmen over to London from their village in Sothern Toraja. The assignment was to create their native Indonesian rice barn using traditional crafts and techniques for exhibition. The barn resulted in multiple Indonesian motifs that were created in the village. As the work

progressed, 'the significance of the structure and its lavish decoration were explained in detail by the builders' (Wilson, p.14, 2001). Each motif had significant meaning to the Indonesian people. The spirals and geometric forms are sometimes taken and interpreted differently into appropriated designs. As an attempt to compare past cultures with the present day for the purpose of aesthetic. But when looking into this study, the village of craftsman explain that their motifs go much further than appeasing forms. This study of cultural anthropology proves that pattern is information and language that communicates within one's culture or 'village'. The barn was built for the department of Ethnography. Ethnography is defined in the oxford English dictionary as 'the scientific description of peoples and cultures with their customs, habits, and mutual difference'. Therefore, ethnography within design presents ornament as a recurring development of anthropology.



(Figure 9, Motif 11, Wilson, p.15, 2001)



(Figure 12, Motif 12, Wilson, p.15, 2001)



(Figure 13, Motif 13, Wilson, p.15, 2001)

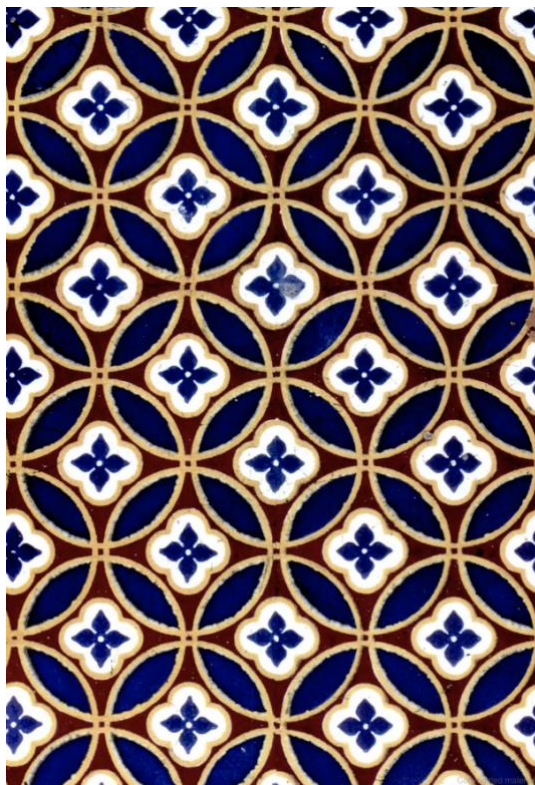
(Figure 14, Motif 20, Wilson, p.15, 2001)

The craftsmen's motifs each had traditional meanings and teachings. Motif 11 referenced a tadpole, a lesson to get people to live peacefully as one. 12 represented the movement of a ceremonial dance. Figure 13 resembled the swordbelt, symbolising bravery and 20 showed the linking of the called pumpkin vine. (Wilson, p.15,2001).

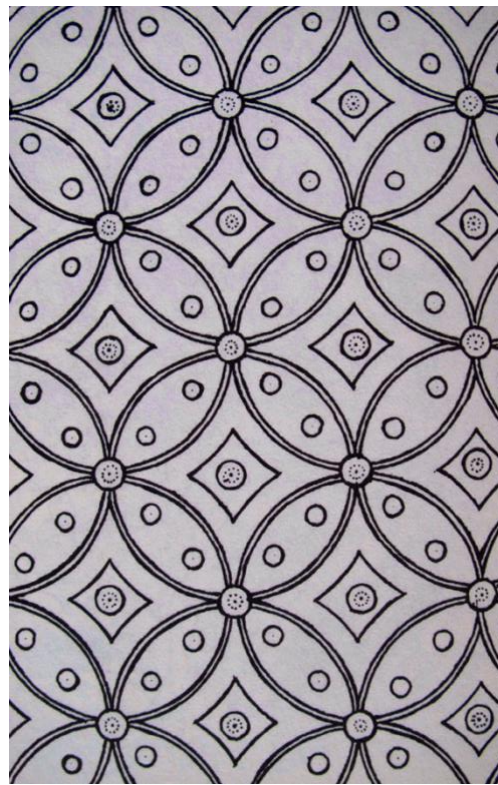
These patterns represent some of the oldest geometrical forms, forms that seem based on aesthetic. These symbols alone do not give out any knowledge

to a stranger, it is the native craftsman themselves that keep the meaning alive.

Geometry is used in motif around the world. It is a further representation of the golden spiral that captures the eye of the viewer, and it is what influences the craftsman to extract from nature. A way to abstract physical forms to see the world in linear and curved shapes. These shapes alone inform overall image or translation of picture for both knowledge and beauty. Only when we see these patterns out of context do we realise what has been appropriated. Geometric forms out of context are hard to connect with specific culture, however comparing an appropriated pattern with its original geometric source allows the viewer to be conscious of the recycling of patterns taking place. The book 'Pattern Design a Period Design Sourcebook by Sian Evans'. Includes a pattern from 1858 Buckinghamshire referencing the mid-Victorian gothic revival.



(Figure 13, Evans, p.14,1858)



(Figure 14, Elphick, 2014)

After researching deeper into cultural patterns, I believe this English Victorian gothic style has been derived from the kawung motif, originating in Indonesia. Once representing the Areca palm blossom that gave life to many natives. The tree obtains symbolism of hope and wisdom, which was seen to reflect that of those who wore the design. The four petals represent the 4 elements. 'Batik artists and philosophers Agus Ismoyo and Nia Fliannm interpret Kawung further with binaries of death and regeneration' (Elphick, 2014) Ismoyo goes on to describe the flower 'like a sieve to sort through life's experiences' (Agus, Elphick 2014). Comparing these two patterns, it is apparent that the appropriation of motif can be traced from ancient times to that of the gothic and Victorian periods. It is feasible to say the same is represented in more modern designs. These two comparisons show how geometric forms and patterns in general do not inform us of their deep connection, it is through finding the original source and context from the native craftsman that we are allowed to understand the extensive meaning.

Wilson's analysis of the craftsman and their instincts for familiar form puts appropriation in a different light. This could suggest that the craftsman themselves also must be seen differently. Throughout this discussion, the maker has been described as the craftsman, not the artist. It has become apparent that the birth of motif was through tradition and culture, and it was the job of the native craftsman at the time to replicate in order to carry on tradition and reflect this tradition onto their community. 'a craftsman is trained to execute his craft to perfection, not to create new designs' (Wilson p.12, 2001) this entails a level of respect between craft and tradition, to preserve the past. So, from a craft perspective replication is not appropriation

but it is a way of protecting personal culture. This now suggests that not the craftsman, but the artist is the one responsible for appropriation. The word Artist is described in the Oxford English dictionary as 'a person who creates paintings or drawings as a profession or hobby' (Stevenson, 2010) but what is even more interesting is the synonyms in the thesaurus 'creator, originator, designer' (Waite, 2009). All these words alluding and symbolising the creation of new art and new designs 'which, if they are successful, in the course of time may be added to the pool of traditional motifs' (Wilson p.12, 2001). Art can become craft for the craftsman to reproduce but craft cannot become art as it has already been and existed in the art world. Philosopher Steven Davies delves into the difference between craftsman and artist. 'a work of craft is good if it matches the appropriate template and performs its desired function. By contrast, the artist must be creative and original. Good art cannot be produced by slavish rule following and imitation' (Davies p.5, 2006). Art in summary is the start and end of something, it is what it is, and its appearance cannot be developed further. However, crafts are ongoing and express cultural anthropology. This could lead to the idea that art is a product of craft and craft in the East is not art but anthropology, a semiotic representation of advancing culture. Subsequently, the art and the artist could be determined to show a source of craft but prioritise its beauty as its main functionality. Davies considers this and discusses how creating art is a biological impulse to consume pleasure. He also acknowledges my analysis that art is a product of culture, whereas craft is a development of culture. This suggests that during the West's colonisation, there was no distinction between art and craft. Individuality was seen as something to replicate and not appreciate. 'People who do not distinguish art from craft do not share the same concept and do not make art in terms of that concept. The concept was not possessed prior to

the eighteenth century, nor was it possessed outside the west before the globalisation of Western culture.’ (Davies, p.5, 2006) In these terms. Art is seen as relatively new in comparison to craft, and the Westernisation of craft in the East is a major component in the creation of art we see today. The west's misconception of seeing craft solely for beauty, has ultimately led to the West's creation of its own art, that serves no cultural purpose but to appease the viewer. ‘non-Western cultures do not have art in our sense, and that art as we now understand...was not produced in the west.’ (Davies p6 2006) Western art is based off appropriated or inspired crafts, used without their indigenous knowledge.

Ultimately, motif around the world has changed and appropriated through Western colonisation. Western traders saw craft as art and through that miscommunication the borrowed motif lost its cultural significance. It is only through research of these native designs that we can see their true potential and become knowledgeable on the importance of native design to native community. The west's importance for beauty, dulled its importance for culture and this turned motif from anthropology and language to that of a physical aesthetic for the corporate market. However, it is this reconstruction of motif that has allowed craftsman and artist to live separately, providing more opportunity for cultural change. Understanding the importance of motif allows it to be used appropriately in its own context, this is important for designers especially within surface pattern design. Allowing craft to be both cultural and sublime, respected in all aspects as opposed to being appropriated and placed for industries sake.

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Figures

Figure 1 Liberty & Co, 1860, *Handkerchief*, London.

Figure 2 Artist unknown, 1640-1643, Mazarin Chest, V&A London. Viewed on 28/10/22.

Figure 3 window of the chapter house in the convent of the Christ of Thomar, 1910, Portugal. Accessed on:

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BeMuse Volume 6 Issue 3 - Oct to Dec 2013

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