



Symmetry Comes of Age: The Role of Pattern in Culture

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This is the companion volume to the authors' groundbreaking *Symmetries of Culture*, the classic reference for symmetry analysis of pattern for anthropologists, archaeologists, art historians, mathematicians, and designers. Central to symmetry analysis is the use of symmetry in the more precise sense of its geometrical isometries in contrast to its everyday meaning of balance. For this volume, Donald Crowe and Dorothy Washburn invited colleagues from several disciplines to apply the method of symmetry analysis to actual case studies from cultures around the world.

The essays compiled here explore how cultural information is embedded in the symmetrical structure of pattern. From descriptions of patterns on objects as diverse as Nasca embroideries, Ica Valley ceramics, Quechua textiles, Yombe mats, and Zulu beadwork, as well as from Amazonian shamanic therapy, ceramic design among the Shipibo, and Turkish Yörük weaving, the contributors reveal how the symmetrical structures in the patterns describe aspects of each culture's fundamental principles for living in the world. This approach offers a profoundly fresh way to read the meaning in pattern by arguing that pattern communicates through the structural metaphors embedded in the symmetrical relationship of the pattern parts. The two volumes together offer readers a revolutionary new window into the communicative importance of design.

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