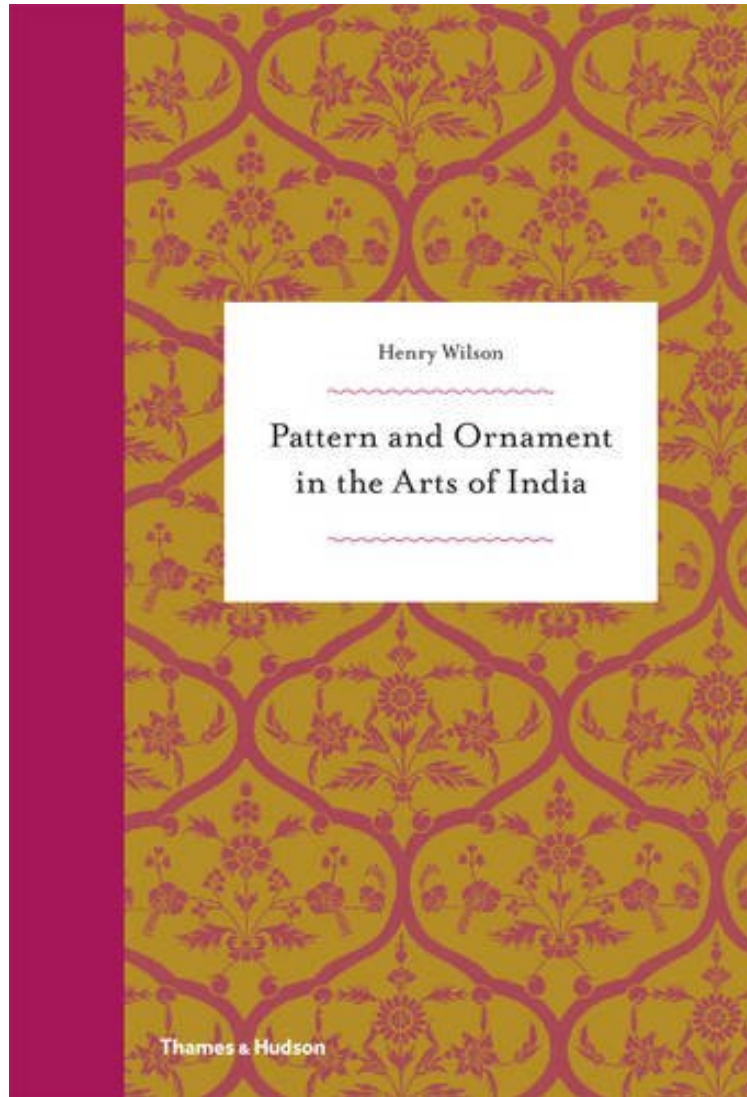


(Download free pdf) Pattern and Ornament in the Arts of India

Pattern and Ornament in the Arts of India

Henry Wilson

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Henry Wilson : Pattern and Ornament in the Arts of India before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Pattern and Ornament in the Arts of India:

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Amazing bookBy Alon VernerAmazing11 of 12 people found the following review helpful. A beautiful book with a few flawsBy CustomerA very nice book, which is prevented from being a completely lovely book by a few small issues.Although this is a large book, it does not contain as many photographs of patterns and decoration as you might think. Just over 1/3 of photographed items also have an illustration of the same pattern or decorative design. In places this can be quite useful, such as the facade of Mandir Palce at Jaisalmert (reader images 12) because the photo is relatively small on the page, and the lighting makes the

design more difficult to determine. However in other places this practice is simply redundant (such as images 34) because the pattern in situ is perfectly visible, and the illustration take up so much space on the page it seems like filler material. Additionally, the illustrations are close approximations, rather than perfect reproductions. Some are less accurate than others. An example of this is in images 56, where there are clear but minor differences between the design and the illustration, although the caption describes them as being the same, to images 78, where the illustration is "based on" the original: the central and side panels have been kind of blended together. This means that in the few instances where illustrations are given for patterns which have not been photographed (e.g. pp 206, 181) I'm extremely hesitant to accept these as gospel. The reason I think this matters is: a) in Western ornamentation small details can change the symbolism of a design e.g. is it acanthus leaf or some other kind of leaf. My knowledge of Indian ornamentation is about .25/10 (that's why I bought the book) but it's a reasonable assumption that there are similar fine shades of meaning. Details count. b) One of the paradigms of the study of ornamentation has been the classification and ordering of one culture's ornament into a system devised by another culture i.e. Owen Jones's Grammar of Ornament. To avoid this I think it's better for the artifacts (patterns, in this case to speak for themselves. Henry Wilson clearly has an affection for India, and has written several books on Indian architecture and design, however I still prefer to see the originals, and hear Wilson's discussion in support. plus, bonus reason: c) In all instances the illustrations have lost the delicacy of the original design and seem like stencil designs rather than useful references. Another niggle is that the introductory text and many of the captions are printed on coloured backgrounds: while this is OK (but not great) for yellow, pale pink, mustard, and orange, I had trouble with the text on grey, kahki, steel blue, dark pink, and green. Finally my last criticism is that the title is slightly misleading; this is pattern and ornamentation applied in Indian architecture (mostly Shahjahani style), not in the arts of India. There are no pieces of furniture, textiles, or other decorative artifacts. The introduction has some small photos of wider aspects of Indian decorative design, but this is not what the book is about, and I think a clearer title would have been useful. As long as you know you're getting a book of architectural photographs then all good. However, these are minor points, and I would still recommend this as a must-buy for anyone with an interest in pattern: the photos are very good, and it can be fun to play 'spot-the-difference' with the illustrations.

The richness of the arts of India is overwhelming, and perhaps most noticeably so in its architecture. This innovative volume reveals the exquisite detail of the decorative compositions, their finesse, precision, and creativity. It also highlights the skill, patience, and pictorial imagination of the many thousands of craftsmen and their patrons. The timeline runs for almost two thousand years, from the Buddhist stupa at Sanchi of the first century BC/AD to Rajput palace interiors of c. 1900. Hundreds of atmospheric photographs are juxtaposed with graphic transpositions of the designs, patterns, and ornamentation to reveal the nature of the architectural detail, where stone, wood, mirror work, and plaster are transformed into masterworks of decorative art. 350 full-color photographs

About the Author Henry Wilson is well known as a photographer of architecture and interiors, with a special interest in India. His books include *India Contemporary* and *Pattern and Ornament in the Arts of India*, and he is a frequent contributor to *The World of Interiors*, *Architectural Digest*, and other design magazines. He lives in London.