



# The Illustrated Book of Signs and Symbols

*By Miranda Bruce-Mitford*



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For thousands of years, people have given symbolic meaning to the things around them. From animals, plants and flowers, rocks and minerals, to buildings and parts of the body, all are able to understand this mystical language and appreciate how it varies from country to country in different cultures and religions. This guide takes 2000 symbols from East and West, and explores their origins and significance in art, religion, psychology and folklore. The guide is colour-coded and cross-referenced for easy access of information.



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### Editorial Review

From Library Journal

Signs and symbols are parts of our lives that are often unnoticed or, if noticed, are not always understood. With this lavishly illustrated book, the author looks at the essence of signs and symbols and defines many of them in brief and simple terms. Bruce-Mitford, a contributor to *The World Directory of Minorities* (Longman, 1990) and a lecturer at the British Museum, covers a wide variety of symbols, explaining their significance from cultural perspectives throughout the world views. The introductory chapter discusses the differences between signs and symbols and offers brief overviews of ancient, universal, and modern symbols. The main body of the work divides signs and symbols into major categories such as mythologies, nature, and people. Within the categories are items such as ancient deities, planets, clothing, and international signs. Very handy cross-referencing on many pages leads the reader to related symbols. A useful glossary, index, and additional reading list complete the book. For lengthier and more comprehensive coverage of signs and symbols, Carl G. Liungman's *Dictionary of Symbols* (LJ 12/91) or Hans Biedermann's *Dictionary of Symbolism* (LJ 9/1/92) will serve better, but for straightforward definitions and excellent color illustrations, this book will be quite helpful. Recommended for academic and public libraries. —Elaine M. Lucas, Moline P.L., Ill.

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From [Booklist](#)

This book provides thousands of brief descriptions for symbols from all parts of the world. It begins with a historical introduction to symbols, ranging from ancient times to modern fictitious characters that reflect characteristics of ancient gods and goddesses.

The entries are grouped into four major categories: mythologies and religions; nature; people; and symbol systems (e.g., mathematical symbols, traffic signs). Each symbol is represented by a colorful photograph or painting. A short paragraph explains the origin of the symbol, as well as geographical or historical variations in meaning. For example, the entry on the Roman goddess *Minerva* discusses her Roman significance as well as her Greek counterpart, *Athena*. A clear cross-referencing system uses *see also* boxes. For example, the entry *legs*, found in the *People* section under human body and described as possibly representing the swift-footed sun, is cross-referenced to *triskele*, described as the movement of the sun. Useful are the glossary of terms, additional reading selections, and a detailed index found at the end of the book.

*The Illustrated Book of Signs & Symbols* is a good basic resource for public and school libraries for readers of all ages. However, far more extensive treatment of symbols can be found in *The Dictionary of Symbolism* (Facts On File, 1992) and *Dictionary of Symbols* (ABC-CLIO, 1991).

Review

>From religious symbols to modern and ancient signs alike, this covers thousands of signs and symbols used in art and communication from around the world. It's hard to categorize this book: where artists will find it handy for the initial location and research of symbols, any with a general interest in symbol origins and meaning will find this packed with important insights. -- *Midwest Book Review*

### Users Review

From reader reviews:

**Jewell Garza:**

Typically the book The Illustrated Book of Signs and Symbols will bring one to the new experience of reading the book. The author style to describe the idea is very unique. When you try to find new book you just read, this book very suited to you. The book The Illustrated Book of Signs and Symbols is much recommended to you to study. You can also get the e-book in the official web site, so you can easier to read the book.

**Jim May:**

Precisely why? Because this The Illustrated Book of Signs and Symbols is an unordinary book that the inside of the e-book waiting for you to snap the idea but latter it will shock you with the secret that inside. Reading this book alongside it was fantastic author who all write the book in such amazing way makes the content inside of easier to understand, entertaining method but still convey the meaning thoroughly. So , it is good for you because of not hesitating having this any longer or you going to regret it. This unique book will give you a lot of advantages than the other book have such as help improving your skill and your critical thinking method. So , still want to hold off having that book? If I ended up you I will go to the guide store hurriedly.

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