

PROPOSED PAPER  
JAY HAMBIDGE AND THE THEORY OF DYNAMIC SYMMETRY

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ABSTRACT

The American art and design theorist, Jay Hambidge (1867-1924) was one of the first designers in the 20th century to realize the utility of discoveries in the natural science by Cook (1907) and D'arcy Thompson (1917) for use in art and design analysis. His work has been largely forgotten but when viewed within the present day discoveries and concerns for symmetry in many fields, scientific and artistic; he can be viewed as a true leader; one who was in upon the foundations of the symmetry movement of our century. Jay Hambidge made use of principles of Euclidian geometry and the proportions of the golden section of analyze examples of classical art. (Hambidge, 1919). His first book, The Greek Vase demonstrated the principles behind classical art and design. A second, more complete work, The Greek Temple (Hambidge, 1924) documented the research which Hambidge did in Athens on his measurement at the ancient sites. His wok demonstrated the use in matters of art and design of the same symmetry principles as Cook had outlined in his book Curves of Life (Cook, 1907). The basis of Hambidge's design concepts as well as geometric analysis was based on the work of Penrose. (Penrose, 1902) Hambidge first outlined them in at lecture in London in 1902. The twentieth century art and design field had made an extensive use of the ideas of symmetry, the principles of the golden section, and the theory of dynamic symmetry.

Many contemporary artists continue the tradition and work. The following demonstrates that the golden section and the principles of dynamic symmetry have become as central to their more recent work as it was when Hambidge first wrote and lectured on this ideas.

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