

CENTRAL AND EAST ASIA

(China, Korea, and Japan)

Religions developed:

Hinduism: Many different sects of Hinduism. Belief in the infinite variety of the divine: nature, gods, humans. Orthodox Hindus accept the Vedic (ancient Sanskrit) texts as divine. Vedic texts assign Brahmins (a caste of ritual specialists). Enlightenment, or reaching Nirvana, ends the cycle, through good deeds and living a devotional life to charities, religious fervor, and love of all.

Buddism: Teaches individuals how to cope in the world full of misery. Buddha, Siddhartha, when he was a prince first, rejected worldly concerns and courtly life and decided to live in the country. Believes in reincarnation, a cycle of birth and rebirth. Enlightenment, or reaching Nirvana, ends the cycle, through good deeds and living a devotional life to charities, religious fervor, and love of all.

Jainism: Teaches that the way to liberation and bliss is to live a life of harmlessness and renunciation. The aim of Jain life is to achieve liberation of the soul.



What is the **CONTEXT** of this art work?

Gardner's Art through the Ages: A Concise Global History, Chapter 17, 18, 19 STOKSTAD, 5th Edition, Chapter 10

CONTEXT

The arts of South and Southeast Asia represent some of the **world's oldest, most diverse, and most sophisticated visual traditions**. Many of the world's **great religious and philosophic traditions developed** in these regions with **distinctive religious art forms** to support the beliefs and practices. **India's ancient worldview** that dominated South Asia:

- a: differentiated earthly and cosmic realms of existence,**
- b: recognized certain sites or beings as sacred,**
- c: understood time and life as cyclic.**

The religions developed - **Hinduism, Buddhism, Jainism, Sikhism** - sought **spiritual development, release, or divine union** through **religious methodologies and social practices**. Adding to **India's worldview** were **preexisting animistic and popular beliefs from Southeast Asia** from India's attempts at colonization. **Religious practices are iconic**, and **figural imagery of divinities and revered teachers** plays a prominent role. South and Southeast Asia also **supported foreign cultures and religions including Greco-Roman, Christianity, and Islamic cultures** from West and Central Asia. **Islamic influence is strong in India, Malasia, and Indonesia**, due to partial control of Islamic sultanates from 1000 - 2000 CE. Today, South and Southeast Asia have the **world's largest Muslim population**. **Architecture is frequently religious in function**. Temples intended to **house deities or shrines** were **constructed or rock cut**. Rock cut caves containing Buddhist imagery, shrines, stupas, and monastic spaces span from India through Central Asia to China. **Islamic architecture takes two major forms: secular** (forts & palaces) and **religious** (mosques & tombs). Islamic **mosques are decorated with non-figural imagery**, including calligraphy and vegetal forms. **All mosques have a Qibla wall** facing Mecca, with a **Mihrab**, a focus for prayer. Artistic and architectural traditions are deeply rooted in Asian aesthetics and cultural practices. **Painting styles** in India favor **contour drawing of forms over modeling**, and **calligraphy** was an important art form in Islamic art in architecture, decorative objects, ceramic tiles, and manuscripts. **Practice of Asian religions necessitated the development of novel art and architecture forms to support them**. The cultures were interconnected through trade and politics and **trade greatly affecting development of art and culture** by way of the **Silk Route and maritime networks**. These routes were vital for the transmission of cultural ideas and practices.

APAH 250 ARTWORKS

- 193. Terra cotta warriors
- 194. Funeral banner of Lady Dai (Xin Zhui)
- 195. Longmen caves
 - Longmen caves, detail
- 196. Gold and jade crown
- 197. Todai-ji
 - Great Buddha
 - Guardian figures
 - gate
- 201. Travelers among Mountains and Streams
- 203. Night Attack on the Sanjō Palace
- 204. The David Vases
- 205. Portrait of Sin Sukju
- 206. Forbidden City
 - front gate
 - Hall of Supreme Harmony
 - Palace of Tranquility and Longevity
 - unlabeled plan
- 207. Ryoan-ji
 - dry garden
 - unlabeled plan
- 208. Jahangir Preferring a Sufi Shaikh to Kings
- 210. White and Red Plum Blossoms
- 211. Under the Wave off Kanagawa (The Great Wave)
- 212. Chairman Mao en Route to Anyuanring a Sufi Shaikh to Kings

VOCABULARY

aniconic	mandala	dharma	Vishnu
samsara	karma	chalya	Samsara
yakshis/yakshas	ascetic	stupa	Buddhism
bodhisattva	nirvana	yasti	Hinduism
torana	schist	Shiva	Bhagavad Vita