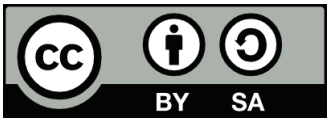

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10 Art and Ritual Life

Symbolism of Space and Ritual Objects, Mortality, and Immortality

Jeffery LeMieux and Rita Tekippe

10.1 LEARNING OUTCOMES

After completing this chapter, you should be able to:

- Identify and describe the different architectural forms that are used for diverse ritual purposes and those associated with specific religious groups
- Recognize a variety of symbolic and functional components of architectural centers for worship, including building parts, auxiliary structures, and furniture, as well as to discuss its significance and uses
- Identify and describe sculpture, paintings, and a variety of religious objects that are used to express beliefs, to teach religious doctrine, and to perform ritual acts
- Recognize and discuss some of the specific forms of art associated with funerary and memorial functions in different belief systems

10.2 INTRODUCTION

Art and architecture have ever been used to express our deepest human interests, including the universal concerns with the meaning of human life itself and whether or not our spirit will continue in an afterlife. Thought and belief about these concerns have led individuals to create art about them; they also have led people to ally with like-minded individuals, forming philosophical and religious groups and institutions that have frequently further formalized their thought and belief concepts and contemplations and used art and architecture to give concrete form and image to these ethereal notions.

10.3 EXTERIOR RITUAL SPACES

The well-known site of Stonehenge, in Wiltshire, England, although not completely understood today, provides us with insight into the early evolution of a ritual location. (Figure 10.1) It

Figure 10.1 | Stonehenge
Author: User "garethwiscombe"
Source: Wikimedia Commons
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was developed over the course of some 1,500 years (c. 3,000-1,600 BCE). The site's configuration has astronomical implications, with a design of a ritual offering or sacrifice table, and portal placed in relationship to the sunrise at the summer solstice. (Figure 10.2) Its concentric rings were made of wooden posts, earthen ditches, and thirty **megaliths,** or large stones, each of which is approximately thirteen feet high, seven feet wide, and weighing more than twenty-five tons. In places where two megaliths support another horizontal stone, a **dolmen** or **cromlech** is formed. (Figure 10.3) Other parts of stone, wood, and earth were placed in particular spots for which the choice of location and use are now unclear.

How could Stonehenge have been built with prehistoric knowledge and technology? It is believed that the large stones were quarried from twenty-five to 150 miles away, floated, and log rolled to the final site and then placed by creating inclined dirt ramps. (Figure 10.4) Once the upright stones were placed, the spaces were filled with dirt, the capstones rolled into place, and all the dirt removed. As is clear with these construction methods, it is important to recognize that prehistoric people did not lack in either clever mental ability or tireless devotion.

Many sites across England and other parts of Europe show a kinship to it in their use of space and materials and their desire to engage with the cosmos. Stonehenge is the largest of approximately 1,000 stone circles found on the British Isles. Their existence and the fact that these sites were used for such a long time gives us some insight into the ways our earliest known ancestors devised views of the universe and their place in it, as well as how they addressed such issues through artistic expression.

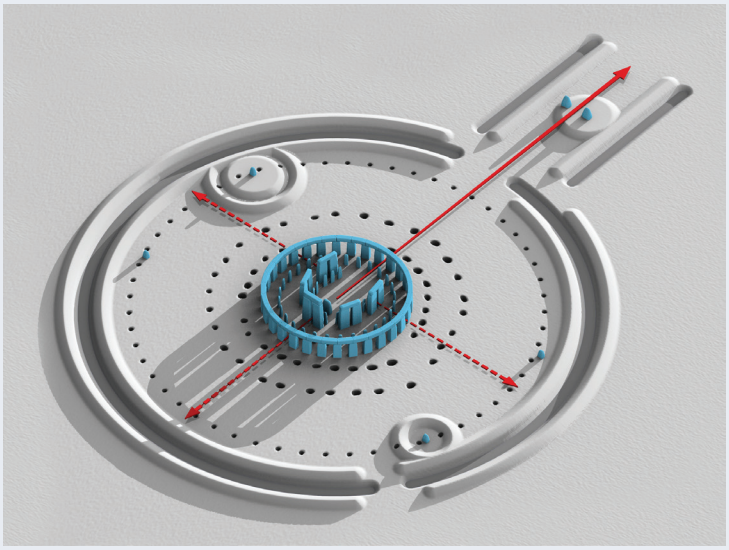

Figure 10.2 | Digital rendering of Stonehenge
Author: Joseph Lertola
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Human societies from widely separated times and locations have constructed strikingly similar forms

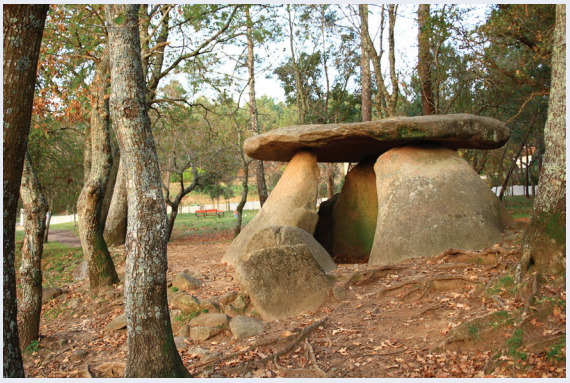

Figure 10.3 | Dolmen of Oleiros, Spain
Author: Arturo Nikolai
Source: Wikimedia Commons
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It is a short step to placing the altar on a built, raised platform to accentuate its status. For example, a **heiau** is a Hawaiian temple composed of a Polynesian raised earthen or stone temple platform in an enclosed area that might also contain stone markers and cult images. Heiau were used for a variety of reasons: to treat the sick, offer first fruits, control rain, and achieve success in war (for which human sacrifices were made). Heiau are found throughout the Pacific island. This print depicts the heiau at Waimea, on Kauai, one of the Hawaiian islands, as it existed prior to European occupation. (Figure 10.5) The print was created by artist John Webber (1751-1793, England), who accompanied British explorer Captain James Cook on this third Pacific expedition (1776-1779). Although many Hawaiian Heiau were deliberately destroyed at the official end of the Hawaiian religion in the nineteenth century, some have since been fully rebuilt and are now public attractions.

Figure 10.5 | Drawing of Heiau at Wimea
Artist: John Webber
Author: User "KAVEBEAR"
Source: Wikimedia Commons
License: Public Domain

of symbolic or physical enclosure or elevation of the sacred. The altar is the most simple and expedient means. An altar, found in religious settings and structures to this day, is a piece of **liturgical** (religious ritual) furniture possessing ancient symbolism—primarily as the site of sacrifice, most often in the offering of animals ritually slain for the deity.

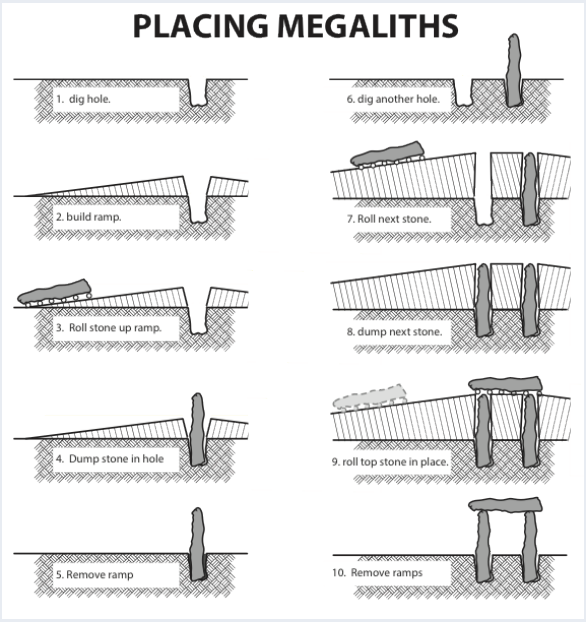

Figure 10.4 | Diagram Depicting Placement of Megaliths
Author: Jeffrey LeMieux
Source: Original Work
License: CC BY-SA 4.0

Olmec, Maya, and Aztec, built large temple complexes dedicated to religious worship, which included animal and human sacrifice. One such fine example of these large complexes is the Mayan temple at Chichen Itza. It is a four-sided pyramid with staircases of ninety-one steps on each side all leading to a temple at the top. The number ninety-one is no accident: four times ninety-one equals 364, which, paired with one final step at the top, represents the number of days in the solar year. Quetzalcoatl appears in succeeding Central American religions.

In the Aztec culture, Quetzalcoatl was related to gods of the wind, of the planet Venus, of the dawn, of merchants, and of arts, crafts, and knowledge. He was also the patron god of the Aztec priesthood, of learning and knowledge.

The gateway is another architectural method for creating or recognizing a ritual or sacred space. Ritual gateways are found more often in Asian religious settings, though with a broad view any entrance could be construed to be a marker for a physical and spiritual transition.

Shinto is an ancient religion native to Japan. The main focus of Shinto is the veneration of the deeds and images of ancestors in home shrines. In public places, ***torii***, or Shinto gateways, are often found marking the sites of important ancient events or framing beautiful views. The "floating gate," so named because when the tide is high, it is surrounded by water and appears to float, of the Itsukushima Shrine near Hiroshima is a good example. (Figures 10.6 and 10.7) The entrance gate was erected in 1168; it has been destroyed, redesigned, and rebuilt several times.

Figure 10.6 | The torii gate at Itsukushima Shrine on the island of Itsukushima at low tide
Author: Dariusz Jemielniak
Source: Wikimedia Commons
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Figure 10.7 | The torii gate at Itsukushima Shrine on the island of Itsukushima
Author: Jordy Meow
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10.4 THE SACRED INTERIOR

Sacred interior spaces offer several advantages over exterior sites such as platforms and gateways. In particular, they offer controlled access to the ritual space, for example, as we saw with complexes such as the Temple of Horus at Edfu (see Figure 7.42) and the Temple of Hephaestus

in Athens, Greece, (see Figure 7.44) and they permit a new level of control over who is admitted. The nature of an interior space may also act as a metaphor for a personal encounter with the sacred within oneself.

We have noted that architectural forms have often been adopted and adapted according to the ways they serve group or congregational needs. Many religious centers meet a variety of purposes and needs, so they might include spaces or separate buildings for schools, meeting rooms, and any type of subsidiary accommodations. We will look, however, primarily at the basic distinctions among architectural forms that articulate and address the ritual and practical needs of the group.

Figure 10.8 | Nanzen-ji garden, Kyoto
Artist: Musō Soseki
Author: User "PlusMinus"
Source: Wikimedia Commons
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It should be added that many practices are personal and individual and so may not require any sort of separate building; some may use a space within another sort of building or a room or corner within the home. Also, many rituals have been conceived as addressing a natural setting, such as an open field, a sacred grove of trees, a grotto or cave, or a specific spring, lake, or seaside spot. (Figure 10.8)

Some of the basic features within many churches and temples reflect these notions. Although there are many exceptions, the layout of a structure most often relates to the four directions of the compass and the sites of most sacred precincts address the rising and setting of the sun. Altars are usually placed in the east. Over time, some adaptations have been made to accommodate other considerations; for example, a church or temple might be situated near a sacred mountain or a place where a miraculous occurrence took place. With these ideas in mind, we will briefly survey a few important types and features.

10.4.1 Features and Forms

Innumerable symbolic features are associated with worship; a few stand out as basic to identification of a building or site associated with a specific belief system. We quickly recognize and identify the distinctive implications of a **steeple** (church tower and spire) or a minaret, or the form of a stupa or pagoda, and we can sometimes discern how these and other such expressions came into use and accrued significance. (Figures 10.9 and 10.10) As discussed in Chapter Seven: Form in Architecture, the Islamic minaret was developed as a tower associated with a mosque that was used primarily to issue the call to prayer (and also to help ventilate the building). (see Figure 7.50) In the

Figure 10.9 | Church of the Covenant
Author: User "Fcb981"
Source: Wikimedia Commons
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past, the **imam**, or prayer leader, charged with the ritual task would climb to its summit and intone the *adhan* five times each day, making the call in all directions so that the surrounding community would be notified; now, electronic speaker systems achieve this function. But the minaret has other implications and uses, as well. (Figure 10.11) It has become a striking visual symbol of the very presence of the mosque and of Islam's presence in the community; over time, many mosque complex designs have incorporated multiple minarets—most often four, with one at each corner of the main structure. The visual significance may have been further accentuated to rival the Christian presence of a nearby steeple or bell tower.

The bell tower has been used similarly to announce the onset of Christian services by ringing at specific times. Public clocks are sometimes added, with the function of noting the time, ringing or chiming a tune on the hour, the half hour, or the quarter hour. Because churches were often community centers, the bells could also give public notice of celebration, mourning, or warnings of emergency like fire. In the Middle Ages, the control of the bell ringing was sometimes a political issue, especially as urban communities developed governments and sought independence from local churches

Figure 10.10 | Phoenix Hall
Artist: Musō Soseki
Author: User "うぃき野郎"
Source: Wikimedia Commons
License: CC BY-SA 3.0

Figure 10.11 | Minaret of the Great Mosque of Kairouan, Tunisia
Author: Keith Roper
Source: Wikimedia Commons
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Figure 10.12 | Tournai, Belgium
Author: Jean-Pol GRANDMONT
Source: Wikimedia Commons
License: CC BY-SA 3.0

Figure 10.13 | Washington National Cathedral
Author: Carol M. Highsmith
Source: Wikimedia Commons
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in certain ways. At Tournai, Belgium, such struggles notably led to a sort of visual combat of towers on the town skyline. The city's civic leaders there were granted the right to control the bell ringing for community notices and built a separate tower away from the church located on the town square. The Church countered by renovating the church building to include four bell towers, seeking thereby to assert its own rights to identify itself with the task. (Figure 10.12)

The steeple or bell tower visually implies a Christian presence and is generally part of the church building, usually on the façade. Over time, builders have added multiple towers, as they did at Tournai and elsewhere. Doing so emphasized the width of the façade, or other parts of the building, such as the transept, the "arms" in a Latin cross plan church, or the **crossing**, where the "arms" meet. For example, at Lincoln Cathedral in England, towers are placed at either side of the façade and another marks the crossing. (Figure 10.13) Some steeples and towers associated with Christian use, however, have been erected independently of other buildings. For example, the Campanile, or bell-tower, by Giotto in Florence follows the Italian tradition of erecting the tower adjacent to the church. (Figure 10.14)

Figure 10.14 | Giotto's Campanile
Author: Julie Anne Workman
Source: Wikimedia Commons
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More specific features of church and stupa structures, among others, include space within or outside for circumambulating, walking around a sacred object. In medieval churches that

featured display of relics and accommodated pilgrim visitation, the **ambulatory** might be altered to allow visitors to walk around a ring or succession of chapels at the end of the church where the apse was located. (Figure 10.15) As referred to in Chapter 7 Form in Architecture, at the Sanchi Stupa, provisions were made for the devotee to walk around the fence surrounding the stupa, then enter one of the gateways and circumambulate the mound on the ground level, then climb the stairs and circumambulate again on a walkway attached to its exterior surface. (see Figures 7.52) (Great Stupa at Sanchi: https://s-media-cache-ak0.pinimg.com/564x/e2/14/b2/e214b2c65c63f16198bf64b1dbc63d67.jpg) Since the stupa is an earthen mound faced with masonry, it has no

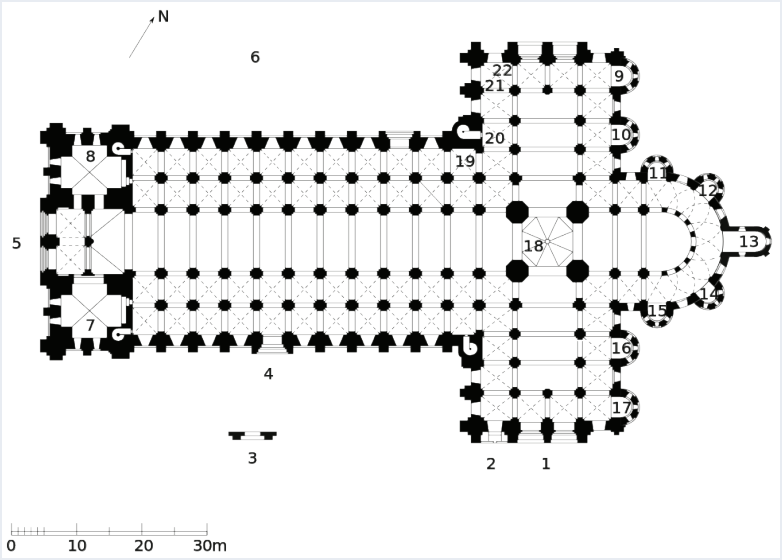

Figure 10.15 | Floorplan of St. Sernin
Author: User "JMaxR"
Source: Wikimedia Commons
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Figure 10.16 | Relief of a sacraficial alter
Author: Wolfgang Sauber
Source: Wikimedia Commons
License: CC BY-SA 3.0

Figure 10.17 | A Romanesque baptismal font from Grötlingbo Church, Sweden
Artist: Master Sigraf
Author: User "Bilsenbatten"
Source: Wikimedia Commons
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interior space accessible to the practitioner and all of the rituals are accomplished outside.

The provisions for making an offering of animals ritually slain for the deity can be seen in the ruins of the Anu or White Temple in Uruk (c. 3,000 BCE), today Iraq, which stood atop the ziggurat there. (The White Temple floorplan: https://classics.unc.edu/files/2014/02/UkWhTpl.gif; Temple and Ziggurat: https://classics.unc.edu/files/2014/02/UkWhTRecon.gif) The sanctuary chamber included a large altar table with channels along a sloped ditch to carry away the blood and other fluids resulting from the ritual sacrifice. Other types of sacrificial altars were provided for fire rituals that involved making offerings to a deity of an animal, grain, oil, or other substances, as can be seen in this Roman relief depiction of the sacrifice of a bull. (Figure 10.16) Some of these altars were part of temple complexes, while others were found in homes and used for private devotions. Larger ritual fires are also part of the practices among some sects and are still in use; bonfires are a related practice.

Ritual ablutions, or cleansings, also have artistic accommodations in the forms of fountains and pools, which were once a standard part of Christian atrium courtyards that marked the entryways to churches and are frequently provided in courtyards for mosques. (Islamic Pre-Prayer Ablution Fountain in Kairaouine Mosque Courtyard in Fes, Morocco: http://encircleworldphotos.photoshelter.com/image/I0000EvE9geT8XFA) Vestiges are found in holy water fonts that still stand at portals to Catholic churches, where the practitioner dips the fingers and makes the sign of the cross. Also related are baptismal fonts or tanks used for the ritual cleansing, which, along with other ceremonial rites, signifies the entry into some faiths (Figure. 10.17) Another type of symbolic liturgical furniture that appears in many worship contexts and is given considerable artistic attention is the **pulpit**, or **minbar**, as is it called in Islamic centers. It is the site of preaching, reading scriptures, and other addresses to congregations, and is, sometimes, very elaborately adorned. (Figures 10.18 and 10.19)

Figure 10.18 | Baroque pulpit in the Amiens Cathedral, France
Author: User "Vassil"
Source: Wikimedia Commons
License: Public Domain

Figure 10.19 | Amr Ibn al-Aas Mosque (Cairo)
Author: User "Protious"
Source: Wikimedia Commons
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10.4.2 Sculptural and Painted Expressions of Belief

Beyond the types of symbolic features and forms we have explored, there exists a tremendous variety of objects expressing common or personal belief and devotions. In many instances, they adorn temples, synagogues, and churches; at other times, they were designed to be used in private or family settings. Even the sects with the most austere attitudes about the use of art, such as the Shakers, have a design aesthetic that is related to the belief system of finding creative solutions in the functionality of the form. (Figure 10.20). A lot of artistic efforts have been applied to religious expression, often entailing the notion that the most lavish and sumptuous goods should be provided for these purposes.

Figure 10.20 | Rocker in the Shaker Village at Pleasant Hill
Author: User "Carl Wycoff"
Source: Wikimedia Commons
License: CC BY 2.0

Figure 10.21 | Bodhisattva Avalokitesvara (Guanshiyin), Shanxi Province, China
Author: Rebessa Arnett
Source: Wikimedia Commons
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Sculptures, paintings, drawing, prints, film, video, performance art, visual demonstrations, all have been brought into service in this regard. They might vary as to whether they embody a point of doctrine or a shared tenet, or express a personal veneration for a deity or holy personage, or offer a viewpoint about exuberance or restraint; regardless, they have abounded. Often, they also epitomize the sentiment of a cultural moment in a particular place or the development of a particular line of thought in theology, philosophy, or devotional practice.

Figure 10.22 | Virgin and Child of Jeanne d'Evreux
Author: Ludwig Schneider
Source: Wikimedia Commons
License: CC BY-SA 3.0

Figure 10.23 | The nave of Vézelay Abbey
Author: Francis Vérillon
Source: Wikimedia Commons
License: CC BY-SA 3.0

Figure 10.24 | The central portal of Vézelay Abbey
Author: User "Vassil"
Source: Wikimedia Commons
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An example is the elegant and graceful Bodhisattva Guanyin, a spiritual figure of compassion and mercy, created in China in the eleventh or twelfth centuries during the Liao Dynasty (907-1125). (Figure 10.21) The sculpture acts as a compassionate guide for the Buddhist devotee who would look to such an elevated being for loving guidance on the spiritual journey. The ideas of patron saints or dedicated intercessors like the Virgin Mary were popular in the West, as well, especially during the Middle Ages, an era when great riches were often lavished on images of veneration for these spiritually accomplished models of sanctity. The graceful Virgin of Jeanne d'Evreux was a gift in the early twelfth century from the French queen to the Abbey of Saint-Denis, the site for royal burial at the time. (see Figure 7.64 and Figure 10.22) The young mother, playfully engaged with her divine infant son, was rendered with striking and inspiring emotional effect.

In Christian churches of the Middle Ages, and for some denominations today, the sculptural embellish-

Figure 10.25 | Lower Compartments Detail, Vézelay Abbey
Author: User "Vassil"
Source: Wikimedia Commons
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ment of the interior not only showed the respect of believers but also provided considerable food for devotional thought, often in the form of Bible stories, tales of the saints, and theological ruminations. Such was the case at the French Romanesque Vézelay Abbey (1096-1150). (Figure 10.23) The tympanum above the portal contains a relief sculpture by Gislebertus depicting the Last Judgment, with Christ sitting in the center (Figures 10.24 and 10.25) The capitals on the piers in the interior have lively depictions of Old Testament tales such as Jacob and the Angel, and other scenes such as the Conversion of St. Eustace, a Roman general who while hunting saw a vision of a crucifix between a stag's antlers and adopted Christianity. (Figures 10.26 and 10.27) These are all told through delightful, puppet-like Romanesque figural forms. Visual stories such as these were meant to reinforce the importance of remaining true to God despite challenges to their faith in this lifetime.

Figure 10.26 | Reliefs in Vézelay Abbey
Author: User "Vassil"
Source: Wikimedia Commons
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Figure 10.27 | Reliefs in Vézelay Abbey
Author: User "Vassil"
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10.4.3 Ritual and Devotional Objects

In devotional centers where the philosophical or religious beliefs allow the use of figural imagery, the use of cult statues and other images of deities or persons associated with the ideology are important focal points for worshippers. Some, like the cross, are essential statements; others play subsidiary roles, designed for amplifying or enhancing the spiritual experience and providing additional opportunities for contemplation or stimulus of devotional response. As we have noted, Buddhist and Hindu temple complexes often have a great array of portrayals of deities and/or spiritual

leaders, as befits polytheistic religions. Part of the complaint of the Protestant revolt was that Christian churches had become too similar in spirit to polytheistic cults, with the wide selection of saints comprising a system that seemed no longer sufficiently focused on the central singular God. Part of the effect, in artistic terms, was that the decoration of many Protestant churches changed character—as well as liturgical focus—eliminating many of the lavish accouterments that had accrued around Catholic ritual.

While few general rules exist for Christian decoration, the Catholic churches usually have a large and prominent crucifix above the main altar where the **Mass/Eucharist, t**he primary religious ritual for Catholics, is celebrated; Protestant sites are more likely to have a plainer cross or none at all, and are unlikely to have an altar. Throughout the ages, the character of the crucifix has seen tremendous variation, from an expression of the extreme suffering of Christ to a much more iconic expression of the belief behind the symbol. Between the time of Christianity's legitimization in 313 CE and the tenth century, for example, representations of Christ on the cross generally showed him as alive, having gloriously defied death. Crosses also varied considerably in scale. The Gero Crucifix (c. 965-970), now placed over a side altar in Cologne Cathedral, Germany, compared to others of its era was very large at six feet, two inches, and was considered to be provocative in eliciting contemplation of the suffering of Christ. (Figure 10.28) Over the next several centuries, depictions of Christ on the cross in northern Europe would increasingly emphasize the agony of the human being in the throes of death, as opposed to his everlasting triumph, in ever more graphic portrayals of the event central to Catholic worship and to the liturgy of the Mass. (Figure 10.29) The range of

Figure 10.28 | The Gero Crucifix
Author: User "Elya"
Source: Wikimedia Commons
License: CC BY-SA 3.0

Figure 10.29 | Pietà
Source: Met Museum
License: OASC

Figure 10.30 | Replica of the Chalice of Doña Urraca
Artist: User "Locutus Borg"
Source: Wikimedia Commons
License: CC BY-SA 3.0

emotional content in Christian imagery is vast and ever changing. This diversity is a typical characteristic for objects that are related to devotional use, as the nature of active faith is to grow and change, ever producing fresh new expression.

The variety of liturgical equipment that was conceived for Christian ritual over the centuries provided great outlet for inventiveness. While some versions of ritual objects were simple and utilitarian in design, others clearly spurred flights of great fancy and flair. An important symbolic and functional object in all worship centers is the candlestick and a tremendous variety of these were created. One of the most elaborate was the enormous seven branched candelabra cast of gem studded bronze and covered with a mass of imagery of saints, plants, animals, and angels, with the whole immense and tangled array supported on four large dragon-form feet. (Duomo Milano - Candelabro Trivulzio: https://it.wikipedia.org/wiki/Candelabro_Trivulzio#/media/File:IMG_6849_-_Duomo_-_Menorah_Trivulzio_-_Foto_Giovanni_Dall%27Orto_3-Mar-2007.jpg; Candelabro Trivulzio base detail: http://neuteboom.it/wp-content/uploads/2012/10/20121029-063521.jpg) The complexity of the iconography, as well the intricacy of the work, is befuddling. Candleholders were not simply basic pieces of equipment, but also carriers of implications for the spiritual quest and the nature of religious inspiration, at least in part based on the symbolism of light as a representation of the Holy Spirit, purity, and peace.

Service objects for the altar table also received a great deal of attention, respect, and their fair share of artistic ingenuity. The chalice of Doña Urraca, from Spain, exemplifies spolia, the re-use of precious objects and materials from the past.(Figure 10.30) As daughter and sister to kings, Doña Urraca oversaw monasteries and made provisions for their liturgies with lavish equipment. Made up of two antique onyx vessels for the base and cup, the chalice was fashioned with gem-studded bands and inscribed as a gift from Doña Urraca to the palace chapel in Léon, Spain. An ivory situla, or small bucket, is another liturgical object, used for sprinkling holy water in blessing at the Mass and other rituals, accomplished by dipping a sprinkler or a spray of leaves or straw into the vessel and flicking the water across the crowd. (Figure 10.31) This example is finely carved out of ivory with scenes from the

Figure 10.31 | Situla (Bucket for Holy Water)
Source: Met Museum
License: OASC

Figure 10.32 | Chasuble (Opus Anglicanum)
Source: Met Museum
License: OASC

life of Christ and supplied with bands and inlay of gilt copper. Additional liturgical equipment includes vestments; these often have received great attention, as well. (Figure 10.32) This fourteenth century example from England is of velvet embroidered with silk, metal thread, and seed pearls that ornament scenes from the life of the Virgin Mary.

Special attention was also paid to books of Scriptures, as well as those that were used for the Mass and other ceremonies. In the Middle Ages, the pages of books had to be created as manuscripts on parchment or vellum, as we have observed before; they were frequently supplied with lavish and showy covers, particularly those that might be used by important people or for important occasions. The commissioning of such was another deep and significant expression of faith due to the sacred writings they contained, the value of all liturgical equipment, and the merit accrued by donating riches for spiritual purposes.

The front and back covers of the Lindau Book Gospels were created at two different times and places with somewhat different design ideas. (Front Cover of the Lindau Gospels: http://www.themorgan.org/sites/default/files/images/collection/download/m1-front-cover.jpg; Back Cover of the Lindau Gospels: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Rear_cover_of_Lindau_Gospels.jpg) The front cover (c. 880 CE), which features a crucifix motif of the victorious Christ in gold repoussé, is further embellished with fluttering angels and an extraordinary encrustation of gems set with high prongs. The back cover dates to a century earlier and is thought to have been made for another (lost) manuscript. It is flatter, with engraved and enameled designs in the **Hiberno-Saxon** or **insular style**, which originated in the British Isles around 600 CE. The intricate serpentine and geometric patterns are similar to those found on the delicately crafted gold and cloisonné objects at the Sutton Hoo royal burial site in England. (see Figures 5.18 and 5.19)

The contents of such books also often warranted rich illumination, or illustration, as we see in the prayer book or book of hours called the *Trés Riches Heures du Duc de Berry*. (Figure 10.33) It was created by the Limbourg Brothers (Herman, Paul, and Johan, active 1402-1416, Netherlands) for John, Duke of Berry, a French prince. Throughout its heavily illustrated pages or leaves, it is brightly colored, carefully inscribed,

Figure 10.33 | *The Nativity*
Artist: Limbourg Brothers
Author: User "Petrusbarbygere"
Source: Wikimedia Commons
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and replete with depictions of the Duke and of his many architectural and land holdings. It is well known for its calendar pages that depict activities associated with the changing seasons of the year, such as this scene of January showing the Duke seated in resplendent blue to the right at a sumptuous feast. (Figure 10.34)

A significant visual spiritual event is the ritual creation of a sand mandala, often performed for a specific occasion by a group of Tibetan Buddhist monks, although there are other spiritual and cultural groups that create related works. (Figure 10.35) To systematically build a complex mandala involves a carefully planned and meticulously executed approach and one that has very specific pictorial implications. Basically a diagram of the Buddhist conception of the universe, mandalas might vary in expression of particular beliefs, teachings, or purposes. The process takes up to several weeks; surprisingly, at its completion, it is destroyed and ritually discarded, perhaps in a fire or a lake, to symbolize the fleeting nature of the material world. An impressive and colorful spectacle to witness, it is accompanied by additional sensual stimulation from the sounds of chanting and the scraping of the colors for the design, as well as the fragrance of flowers and incense.

Figure 10.34 | *January*
Artist: Limbourg Brothers
Author: User "Petrusbarbygere"
Source: Wikimedia Commons
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Figure 10.35 | Mandala
Author: User "GgvlaD"
Source: Wikimedia Commons
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10.5 MASKS AND RITUAL BEHAVIOR

Masks are found in all cultures throughout history. Early human cultures were primarily nomadic, so the portability of masks and other ritual objects may have been an important feature of their design and partly why they are so prevalent. Masks and the rituals in which they function may have been among the earliest ways in which humans acknowledged the objects and forces of nature as spirits or conscious beings.

The design of a mask is determined by its functions, and these functions are determined by the religious worldview of the culture in which they are made. In **animist** cultures, the forces of nature, objects, and animals are all thought to have spirits or essences. Rituals are performed that are aimed to please or guide these spirits in the hope that they will bring good fortune or that will help the culture avoid calamity.

Contemporary African tribal rituals generally center on a number of life issues: birth, puberty, courtship and marriage, the harvest, the hunt, illness, royalty, death, and ancestors. In Burkina Faso, animal masks enter the community to purify its members and protect them from harm. (Figure 10.36) In Nigeria, Yoruba **Egungun**, or masquerades, involve both masks and costumes. (Figure 10.37) Costumes are made from layers of cloth chosen not only to demonstrate the family's wealth and status, but also to connect the wearer to the spirits of ancestors who return to the community to advise and to punish wrongdoing. Once completely concealed, the wearer is possessed by and assumes the power of the ancestor through dance: as the pieces of cloth lift, they bestow blessings.

Figure 10.36 | Mask of Burkina Faso
Author: Andrea Praefcake
Source: Wikimedia Commons
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Figure 10.37 | Yoruba Egungun Dance Costume
Author: User "Ngc15"
Source: Wikimedia Commons
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Due to a generally harsh climate not conducive to agriculture, Inuit cultures located in the Arctic regions of North

Figure 10.38 | Eskimo Medicine Man
Photographer: Frank G. Carpenter
Author: User "Yksin"
Source: Wikimedia Commons
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Figure 10.39 | Havré (Belgium), chaussée du Roeulx - The Gilles
Author: Jean-Pol GRANDMONT
Source: Wikimedia Commons
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America subsisted mainly on fish and other sea dwelling animals, including whales. Early twentieth-century explorer and anthropologist Knud Rasmussen asked his guide, an Inuit shaman, about Inuit religious belief. His response was that "we don't believe, we fear."

While it is a myth that Inuit elders were sent off into the wild to die (elders were and still are highly valued members of the tribe), many of the totemic and mask images of this culture are warnings against the dangers of making bad choices in a cold, harsh, and unforgiving environment. In this circa 1890 image, a Yupik (Eskimo) shaman exorcises evil spirits from a young boy; note the complex mask and large claws. (Figure 10.38)

Mardi Gras, which is French for "Fat Tuesday," is the day of Christian celebrations immediately before Ash Wednesday. Today, it is commonly considered the season of festivals, or carnivals, extending from Epiphany (Three Kings' Day, when the Magi attested to the infant Christ's divinity) on January 6 each year to the actual day of Mardi Gras, that is, the day before Lent begins. Originally associated with pagan rites of spring—the renewal of life and fertility—Mardi Gras dates back as a Christian rite to the Middle Ages in Europe when people ate as plentifully as they were able before the fasting and lean eating that took place during Lent. The associated festivities were a time to

Figure 10.40 | Mardi Gras in Binche, Belgium
Author: User "Marie-Claire"
Source: Wikimedia Commons
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ignore normal standards of behavior and celebrate the excesses of life. Often dressed in masks and costumes as a means of casting aside one's identity and social restrictions, the carnivals of Mardi Gras allowed a sense of freedom rarely known in societies that upheld a strict social hierarchy. (Figures 10.39 and 10.40) We could discuss many more such visual experiences in the context of spiritual and philosophical ideas about the artistic expressions we devise to reflect our beliefs about mortality and immortality and how we connect these notions for ourselves. Suffice it to say that we can stay aware of the pervasive nature of art and visual experience in reflecting them.

10.6 FUNERARY SPACES AND GRAVE GOODS

Figure 10.41 | Banditaccia (Cerveteri)
Author: User "Johnbod"
Source: Wikimedia Commons
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Archaeologists have dated the earliest burial sites found worldwide to around 100,000 BCE, though some argue that certain ones are as old as 300,000 BCE. A considerable body of art related to funerary customs and beliefs has been found at such sites, and in many instances it is much more extensive than other types of evidence of how people lived. This disparity is likely due to the general respect given to sites of tombs and burial grounds. Usually considered sacred places, they have often been left intact when other parts of a settlement have been destroyed and rebuilt. These places, the ways they are marked, decorated, and furnished, supply us with a good deal of data to explore for insights into beliefs and practices related to burial practices and the afterlife, including how the people prepared for both during their lifetimes. Burial sites often include **grave goods**, such as personal possessions of the buried individual, as well as food, tools, objects of adornment, and even a variety of household goods.

The Etruscans and their culture, predecessors to the Romans on the Italian peninsula, existed from c. 800 BCE until conquered by the Romans in 264 BCE, They are well known for their highly developed burial practices and the elaborate provisions they made for the afterlife. They created a type of mound tomb known as a **tumulus**, made from **tufa**, a relatively soft mineral/rock

Figure 10.42 | Tomb of the Reliefs at Banditaccia necropolis
Author: Roberto Ferrari
Source: Wikimedia Commons
License: CC BY-SA 2.0

substance that is easy to cut and carve, but hardens to become very strong. (Figure 10.41) Like the Egyptians, the Etruscans grouped their tombs into a necropolis, but they were not reserved for the highly born.

Within each tomb, the Etruscans created and decorated chambers in ways that showed what they expected would happen in a "next lifetime." (Figure 10.42) They expected to rejoin their family and friends and to continue many of their ordinary activities and their celebrations. (Figure 10.43) Some tombs were supplied with a complete stock of household furnishings, while others showed scenes of athletic or leisure activities, and still others, ritual banquets. Their terra cotta sarcophagi included portraits of individuals and couples who expected to reunite and continue their married life in the afterlife. (Figure 10.44)

Figure 10.43 | 5th century BC fresco of dancers and musicians, Tomb of the Leopards, Monterozzi necropolis, Tarquinia, Italy
Author: Yann Forget
Source: Wikimedia Commons
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In other cultures, as we have seen, the wealthy and powerful were provided with exquisitely detailed tombs and mausolea. The Samanid Mausoleum (892-943) was created in what is today Bukhara, Uzbekistan, for a Muslim amir, or prince, of the Persian Samanid dynasty (819-999). (Figure 10.45) Islamic religious traditions forbid the construction of a mausoleum over a burial site; this is the earliest existing departure from the tradition. The carved brickwork shows remarkably refined design and craftsmanship.

In ancient China, tombs for the important and the wealthy were very richly appointed and it is clear that the expectations for the afterlife included a need for food and other sustenance, as

Figure 10.44 | Sarcophagus of the Spouses, Cerveteri, 520 BCE
Author: User "sailko"
Source: Wikimedia Commons
License: CC BY-SA 3.0

Figure 10.45 | Samanid Mausoleum in Bukhara, Uzbekistan
Author: User "Apfel51"
Source: Wikimedia Commons
License: CC0 Public Domain

Figure 10.46 | Altar Set
Source: Met Museum
License: OASC

well as ongoing ritual appeasement of deities and evil spirits. Artisans' remarkable skills at casting bronze were put to use for a variety of fine vessels for food and wine, altars for ritual, and various other objects. (Figure 10.46) Also included were jade amulets, tools, and daggers. Some tombs were laid out like a household of the living, and nested coffins were decorated with mythological and philosophical motifs similar to those on the bronzes and jades. In the tomb of a woman known as Lady Dai (Xin Zhui, c. 213-163 BCE), a fine silk funerary banner carried mythological symbolism of her life and death as well as a depiction of her and her coffin. (Figure 10.47) The expectation for musical enjoyment was exemplified in tombs that enclosed elaborate sets of tuned bells along with a carving showing how they would be arranged and played.

The Terracotta Army of Qin Shi Huang (r. 247-210 BCE), who unified China and ruled as the first Emperor of the Qin Dynasty (221-206 BCE), is another dramatic example of craft, devotion, and ritual meant

Figure 10.47 | Western Han painting on silk was found draped over the coffin in the grave of Lady Dai
Author: User "Cold Season"
Source: Wikimedia Commons
License: Public Domain

Figure 10.48 | Terracotta Army
Author: Gveret Tered
Source: Wikimedia Commons
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to honor the dead. The figures were first uncovered in 1974 by local farmers in the Shaanxi Province. The Terracotta Army is a now famous collection of more than 8,000 life-sized, fired clay sculptures of warriors in battle dress standing at attention, along with numerous other figures, pieces of equipment, and animals such as horses, around the mausoleum of Emperor Qin Shi Huang, from whom China's name originates. (Figures 10.48 and 10.49) It is believed the figures were intended to protect the emperor in the afterlife.

Research has shown that the figures were created in local workshops in an assembly line fashion. Heads, arms, torsos, and legs were created separately, modified to give individual character, and assembled. The figures were then placed in rows according to rank. They were originally brightly colored and held weapons. It is believed that most of these weapons were looted shortly after the creation of the Terracotta Army.

Finally, we will take a brief glimpse at a remarkable tomb complex that was developed over time near Beijing, China, for the emperors of the Ming Dynasty (1369-1644). (Figure 10.50)

Figure 10.49 | Terracotta Soldier with his horse
Author: User "Robin Chen"
Source: Wikimedia Commons
License: Public Domain

Figure 10.50 | Watercolor overview of the Ming Tombs
Author: User "Rosemania"
Source: Wikimedia Commons
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A series of thirteen tomb complexes cover more than twenty-five square miles of land on a site nestled on the north side of a mountain, where, according to Feng Shui principles of harmonizing humans with their environment, it would be best situated to ward off evil spirits. The layout includes a number of ceremonial gateways leading to "spirit paths." (Figures 10.51 and 10.52). The walkways are lined with various large sculptures of guardian animals that would also foster protection for the emperors, each of whom had a large and separate tomb complex within the precincts. Mostly unexcavated as yet, the findings so far reveal burial sites that resembled the imperial palaces in form with throne rooms, furnishings, and thousands of artifacts, including fine silks and porcelains. Again the expectation of continued power, prestige, and enjoyment of life's pleasures is clear.

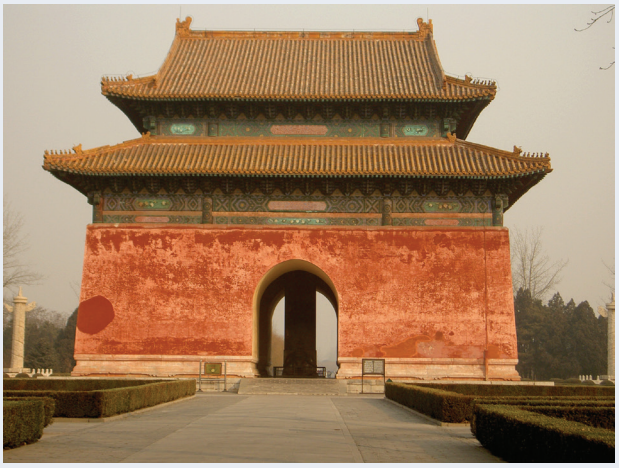

Figure 10.51 | Pavilion with "ways of souls" a turtle-borne stele at the tombs of the Emperors of the Ming Dynasty
Author: User "ofol"
Source: Wikimedia Commons
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Figure 10.52 | The spirit way at the Ming Tombs
Author: User "Richardelainechambers"
Source: Wikimedia Commons
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10.7 BEFORE YOU MOVE ON

Key Concepts

As for the design of a building for sacred purposes, its many features will be determined by the requirements of specific rituals and cult usage. Meeting individual or community needs determines the most defining elements of design and plan. If a space is needed for a large gathering, it might be accomplished either out-of-doors or within a building. If an outdoor arrangement serves the purposes, it may or may not require a building, as well. For instance, as we noted with Greek temples, the cult rituals were performed in the open area outside the structure that housed the deity. Similarly, Buddhist stupas were set into a complex where devotees could approach the stupa itself, as well as visit any of the subsidiary shrines or other buildings around it. Some of them might house cult statues for deities or include libraries for scriptures, treasuries, dining halls, or

other features of use or interest. Often the grounds of a sacred complex will emphasize natural features of the settings used for contemplation, such as gardens or wooded pathways, fountains, pools, and lakes. These might include careful and meaningful arrangements of statues, iconic imagery, or rocks, trees, and plants. Monastery complexes often provide for all the activities needed to sustain the community, providing for their sacred and social activities in community and individually, while also making accommodation for visitors.

Art and architecture, from the earliest times, have been used to express human beliefs about life and death, as well as to provide for worship, burial, and memorial needs. Basic differences in worship centers are related to ritual purposes and the forms provide for rites that are performed by individuals or congregations. The settings and décor will express the distinctive doctrine and beliefs of the sect that worships there. Burial sites and centers reflect both the customs for treatment of human remains and the beliefs about what will happen to the individuals after death.

Objects created for worship centers and for individual contemplation and devotion are also designed to refer to specific beliefs and to inspire believers in religious practices. Both the religious architecture and the artworks also serve to emphasize and glorify the central beings and concepts of the belief system, often with elaborate or lavish artistic expression.

Test Yourself

1. Discuss some of the implications we can draw from the use of grave goods by citing three specific examples and their meanings.

2. Name several ways in which customs and practice for burial and commemoration affect the creation of art and architecture.

3. Describe the ritual use of tribal masks in different cultures.

4. Describe the specific features of artworks in two different cultures that show their belief that gods reside in the heavens.

5. Describe the uses and meanings of effigy mounds.

6. Discuss specific ways in which religious complexes address astronomical features at two or three different sites.

7. Discuss at least three art or architectural works that are specifically related to ritual use and describe the ways that they work in this regard.

8. Describe the ways and the reasons that some religious groups use or reject artwork that includes figural imagery for sacred context and its results for the artwork they use.

9. Consider the use of precious and luxurious materials for ritual art objects and cite examples, discussing their specific meanings.

10.8 KEY TERMS

Altar: a sacrificial or offertory table.

Animist: the belief that spirits are associated with objects in the natural world.

Burial Mounds: early cultural collections of skeletal remains and grave goods.

Cromlech: a circular arrangement of megaliths.

Dolmen: a large upright stone or marker.

Effigy Mounds: earth mounds formed in the shape of animals or symbols.

Egungun: a general term for Yoruba masquerade rituals.

Elevated Platform: a raised area intended to confer status.

Gateway: a structure intended to mark a passage from one state, world, or phase to another.

Grave Goods: artifacts interred with deceased members of family or tribes.

Imam: Islamic prayer leader, the one charged with the duty to issue the call to prayer at appointed times.

Mandala: a ritual diagram with cosmic significance. Used by many different religions, and either circular or containing circular components, often designed for contemplation of specific teachings or tenets related to the particular belief system. varieties are used in diverse sects of Hinduism, Buddhism, Native American tribal worship, and others.

Mausolea: plural of mausoleum. An above-ground structure designed for entombment of the deceased.

Megalith: literally, "large stone."

Minaret: a tower, usually tall and slender, associated with a mosque and signifying Islamic presence in a location.

Pagoda: a Buddhist structure in China, Japan, elsewhere that signifies the practice of Buddhism in that place. The form evolved from the burial mound conception of the Stupa that appeared in India as the primary structural symbol of the belief system, as it spread to China and took on the native architectural form of the watchtower.

Portal: an exceptionally grand entrance, most often referring to cathedral or other church architecture.

Ritual Mask: masks designed to be used in religious or secular ceremonial events.

Sacred Interior: interior spaces devoted to ritual or ceremony invoking a highest good.

Sacred: held as a highest good.

Sarcophagi: plural of sarcophagus – a burial container, usually of stone or other masonry material, often embellished with sculptural decoration.

Stonehenge: a famous arrangement of vertical stones from prehistoric Britain.

Stupa: a Buddhist monument signifying the presence of relics of Sakyamuni Buddha or sacred objects associated with the beliefs. Formed of an earthen mound, faced with brick, stone, or stucco. Worshippers circumambulate outside the stupa, rather than enter it.

Temple Mound: earthen mounds formed to elevate a ceremony, ritual, or elite.

Terra Cotta: porous low fired ceramic.

Terracotta Army: famous arrangement of 6,000 clay soldiers meant to guard the grave of the first emperor of China.

Toranas: stone structures placed at the Buddhist Stupa at Sanchi and at other stupa sites which form gateways to the circular path around the stupa.