

THEME: DEATH and the AFTERLIFE

FOCUS: Terracotta Soldiers of Shi Huangdi, Funeral Banner of Lady Dai, Neolithic Jade Cong

ONLINE ASSIGNMENT:

<http://www.smithsonianmag.com/history/terra-cotta-soldiers-on-the-march-30942673/?all>

ONLINE ASSIGNMENT: <http://www.art-and-archaeology.com/china/hunan/pmo2.html>

READING ASSIGNMENT: KLEINER: pp. 449, 454-456 and *SEE BELOW*

POWERPOINT: DEATH and the AFTERLIFE: QIN and HAN CHINESE

DYNASTIES: (Early Chinese Funerary Art)

CH. 16+33

47

DATE DUE: _____

1. Over the past 35 years, archaeologists have located near the present-day city of Xi'an a complex of underground vaults with as many as 600 pits, most of which is largely unexcavated. (Only three major pits are easily accessible.) At the site, 1,900 warriors of an estimated 7,000 have been disinterred so far. These were commissioned by the Qin emperor Shi Huangdi and were buried where the emperor's ancient capital of _____ once stood. These statues were made of _____.
2. Recent digs have revealed that in addition to the soldiers, Qin Shi Huangdi's underground realm, presumably a facsimile of the court that surrounded him during his lifetime, is also populated by what other types of statuary?
3. The individualized portraits of the soldiers appear to represent different types of people from different regions of China. Why might Shi Huangdi wish to have within his army, representations of different people from different regions?
4. Elsewhere in China, Confucianism held that a well-run state should be administered by the same precepts governing a family: mutual obligation and respect. Qin rulers, however, subscribed to a doctrine known as _____, which rested on the administration of punitive (harsh) laws.
5. Standardization was a hallmark of the Qin state. Among other accomplishments, the emperor _____ and introduced a _____. How can the importance relegated to standardization be exemplified by the Shi Huangdi's tombs?

6. According to a description written a century after the emperor's death, his principal tomb (not yet excavated) contains a wealth of wonders, including man-made streambeds contoured to resemble the Yellow and Yangtze rivers, flowing with shimmering _____ that mimics coursing water.

READ THE FOLLOWING:

Funeral banner from the Tomb of Dai (Western Han dynasty), c. 168 BCE, painted silk

1. "In 202 BCE, Liu Bang, a peasant, was elevated to emperor and became known as Han Gaozu ('Exalted Emperor of Han'), the founder of the Han dynasty. Building upon the imperial ambitions of Qin Shihuangdi, the Han dynasty created an empire that reached into Central Asia and rivaled the size and splendor of its Roman contemporary in the West. The Han designed large capital cities (long since vanished) with their borders aligned to the points of the compass and conceived as diagrams of the universe. The noble residents of these cities moved around the palace and emperor, who, like the sun, occupied the center of the Han cosmos" (O'Riley 121). "And while the Romans were converting Hellenistic thought into the philosophy of Roman imperialism, the Han intellectuals were reviving the pre-Qin teachings of Confucianism and Daoism and fusing them into doctrines that supported the ideals of their imperial Han leaders" (123).
2. "One of the best examples of Han painting comes from the tomb of the Lady of Dai, near the city of Changsha in Hunan south of the Yangzi River... The body of the lady, sealed within a multilayered coffin and robed in many layers of finely woven silks, was miraculously well preserved when the tomb was opened in 1972. The tomb is not a single deep pit, like the Shang burials, but a set of rooms resembling a dwelling" (123). "The painted T-shaped silk banner found in the innermost of the nested coffins may have been a personal name banner and symbol of the deceased around which the mourners assembled during the lady's funeral and the procession to the grave... In Han times, the Chinese believed that one part of the soul, the *po*, stayed with the body (as long as it was preserved and provided with ample offerings) while the other, the *hun*, underwent a long and perilous journey to paradise" (123). "The banner represents the lady within the Han conception of the cosmos. Near the center of the banner, two kneeling figures face the lady, who holds a thin walking stick and wears an elegant silk robe with swirl patterns... Above, a pair of figures at the base of the crossbar of the T-shaped silk banner squat beneath a large bell. These may be the officials who performed a funeral ceremony known as the *Summons of the Soul*." (123).
3. "Many theories have been proposed to explain this painting. In my opinion, the three horizontal bars serve as ground levels to divide the vertical composition into four parts. The top and bottom sections portray heaven and the underworld, respectively, and the middle scenes represent two stages of Lady Dai's existence in the afterlife. Ancient ritual canons identify these two stages as those of the *shi* (corpse) and the *jiu* (literally, "the body in its eternal home"). In the painting, family members are offering sacrifices to the *shi*; the *jiu* is represented by the woman's portrait. Compared with the earlier funerary banners from the same region, this banner shows many new artistic elements. Iconographically, it portrays the transformation from death to rebirth in a cosmological environment; stylistically, the two middle scenes represent an attempt to depict three-dimensional space- figures overlap, and the more distant ones are smaller" (Xin 24). The painting is mostly red, "the color of immortality" (24).
4. In early Chinese mythology, "in the beginning, there were ten suns, the sons of Di Jun, Chinese Emperor of the Eastern Heavens, and his wife Xi He, goddess of the sun. They lived in a giant mulberry tree that grew up from the waters of the Heaven Valley- waters that were always boiling hot because the suns all bathed there. Each morning, the suns took turns shining in the sky, leaving the others resting in the tree. But one day, bored with their orderly life, they all rushed up into the sky at once and ran around wildly having fun. Their tenfold strength began to scorch the earth but when their parents told them to behave and come down they would not listen. So Di Jun sent his archer, Hou Yi, to teach his sons a lesson. Yi then shot down nine of the ten suns. Di Jun was devastated and he stripped Yi and his wife Chang E of their immortality and banished them from heaven" (Philip 116). "When the ten suns refused to go home, their father gave Hou Yi a new red bow and a quiver of ten white arrows and told him to 'threaten my sons with this bow.' But Yi became so angry at the sight of the dead and dying burned people on earth that he shot first one, then another eight suns from the sky. When they landed, the people saw golden, three-legged crows (shown here with two legs), pierced with an arrow. Hou Yi was so angry that he had to be reminded to leave one sun in the sky" (117). "After his disgrace, Hou Yi traveled to the Kun Lun Mountains to bring back a portion of immortality. There was enough for one person to return to heaven and live as an immortal, or for two to become immortal. Hou Yi had planned to share it with Chang E, but she stole all of it and floated into the sky to live in the temple of the moon" (116). "When Chang E gulped down the elixir that Hou Yi had won from the Queen of the West, she began to float up to the moon. As she ascended, she tried to call out, but found she could only croak. To her horror, although

she had indeed become immortal, she had also been turned into a toad" (116). "When Chang E arrived in the moon, she found she was not alone. Her companion in the moon is a hare, which sits beneath a cassia tree (the tree of immortality) pounding herbs in a mortar to make the elixir of life" (116). In the center at the top of the banner is the goddess Nu Wa. "The goddess Nu Wa was the first god to appear after Pan Gu created the world. She had the body of a snake and could change shape 70 times a day. She molded the first people from mud, taught them to have children, and became the goddess of marriage. On either side of her are cranes—symbols of longevity. Below them are heavenly dragons" (117). "The dragons shown here are those that draw the moon and the sun across the sky" (117). "The ten suns lived in the legendary **Fusang Tree**" seen to the right (117). "The tree features in many ancient myths, often relating to the sunrise" (117). Every day the ten suns "took turns going out and shining on the earth" (117).

5. "Two intertwined dragons loop through a circular jade piece known as a *bi*, itself usually a symbol of heaven, dividing this vertical segment into two areas. The portion above the *bi* represents the earthly realm. Here, the deceased woman and her three attendants stand on a platform while two kneeling figures offer gifts. The lower portion represents the underworld. Silk draperies and a stone chime hanging from the *bi* form a canopy for the platform below...The squat, muscular man holding up the platform stands in turn on a pair of fish whose bodies form another *bi*. The fish and the other strange creatures in this section are inhabitants of the underworld" (Stokstad, *Art History* 404). "The heavenly gates are guarded by two soldiers. Above them, a bell is rung by two heavenly beasts, to report that the soul of the deceased is passing through" (Philip 116). The *bi* disk "is a jade symbol of status and moral rectitude" (116). "Below are two levels of the earthly realm, where the occupant of the tomb is shown as an old woman, leaning on her staff and surrounded by servants, and where sacrificial vessels are set out before her shrouded corpse. At the very bottom is the underworld. The aim... is clearly not to depict observed phenomena accurately, but it may well be that fidelity to a precise iconographical programme, whether shared widely or idiosyncratic to the lady herself, drives the representation" (Clunas 33).

6. The banner is very colorful, using the pigments cinnabar, red ochre, powdered silver, indigo, India ink, and a white made from ground shells, and its iconography can be interpreted with the aid of folk traditions. Heaven is symbolized both by the toad and the hare above the crescent moon, and also by the raven perching in the circular sun. Dragons and immortals also occupy this zone, since heaven is their element. In Chinese mythology the moon hare has a mortar in which it crushes the herb of immortality" (Fahr-Becker 86). "The underworld, represented by two large fish with coiling bodies, is optically distinguished from this world by an ornament made of a *bi* disk and the coiled bodies of dragons, and a wide tassel sweeping apart like the curtain of a theater. The underworld itself is in two parts: above, it shows the tomb with its grave goods, and below are the fish and strange zoomorphic forms: two have horns yet their bodies are those of big cats, while another couple have what are obviously turtle shells combined with serpentine necks. These turtle creatures are typical representations of the 'Dark Warrior,' the symbolic animal of the north, darkness, and winter. The horned cats bear a noticeable resemblance to the ceramic figures of guardians known as *zhen-mushou*" (86). Lady Dai is "situated on a patterned plateau with cats in the form of leopards... closer inspection" suggests "that they can be regarded as guardians averting ill luck. The ritual of *fangxiang shi*, the shaman, was practiced during the Han period: wrapped in an animal skin, the shaman touched the four corners of a tomb with his sword, a ceremony of cleansing which was intended to banish evil" (86-87).

Works Cited

Clunas, Craig. *Art in China*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997.

Fahr-Becker, Gabriele., et. al. *The Art of East Asia*. Cologne: Konemann, 1999.

O'Riley, Michael Kampen. *Art Beyond the West: The Arts of Africa, India and Southeast Asia, China, Japan and Korea, the Pacific, and the Americas*. New York: Harry N. Abrams, 2001.

Philip, Neil. *Myths and Legends*. New York: Dorling Kindersley, 1999.

Stokstad, Marilyn. *Art History*. New York: Harry N. Abrams, 1999.

Xin, Yang, et. al. *Three Thousand Years of Chinese Painting*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1997.

1. Because Chang'e greedily took for herself all of the elixir of immortality, she was transformed into a toad, the animal associated with the crescent

_____.

2. The figure in the center may be the deceased Lady Dai, the Queen of the West, or _____, the goddess with a body of a snake that could change shape 70 times a time. Flanking her are images of cranes, symbols of

_____.

3. The raven or crow is associated with

the _____. Originally there were ten suns, but when they began to scorch the earth, the archer

_____ shot all of them except

4. A pair of figures at the base of the crossbar of the T-shaped silk banner squat beneath a

large _____. The figures may be the officials who performed a funeral ceremony known as the "Summons of the Soul."

6. Found in the tomb of the marquise of Dai at Mawangdui, this banner was produced

during the _____ Dynasty and it is made of

_____. It was draped over the marquise's coffin.

8. Here dragons are intertwined with a

_____ disk. Disks such as these were often made of jade and were buried with the dead.

10. The banner is largely red in color. In Chinese art, red is often the color of

_____.



5. After his disgrace of shooting the suns, the archer traveled to the Kun Lun Mountains to bring back a

portion of _____. There was enough for one person to return to heaven and live as an immortal, or for two to become immortal. The archer had planned to share it with

_____, but she stole all of it and floated into the sky to live in the temple of the moon.

7. At the center of the vertical section, the standing figure on the first white platform is probably the marquise of

Dai. Here her "_____" (or one part of her soul) begins its ascension to heaven.

9. In Han times, the Chinese believed that one part of the soul, the

_____, stayed with the body as long as it was preserved and provided with ample offerings, as seen displayed here.

11. The underworld is represented here

with two large _____ with coiling bodies.

ADDITIONAL NOTES on the FUNERAL BANNER OF LADY DAI

THEME: IMAGES of POWER

FOCUS: Meditating Buddha from Gandhara, Bamiyan Buddhas, Longmen Caves, Dunhuang Caves

ONLINE ASSIGNMENT:

<http://usatoday30.usatoday.com/news/science/archaeology/2001-03-22-afghan-buddhas.htm>

ONLINE ASSIGNMENT: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bamiyan_Buddhas

ONLINE ASSIGNMENT: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Longmen_Grottoes

READING ASSIGNMENT: KLEINER: pp. 427, 431-433, 458, 461-462

POWERPOINT: IMAGES OF POWER: BUDDHIST ART AND ARCHITECTURE (Buddhism along the Silk Road)

48

DATE DUE: _____

The knot, or cranial bump, on top of Buddha's head is called an _____.

As one of the attributes, or lakshanas, of the Buddha, it evolves into a crown-like symbol of spiritual power.

The Buddha's hands overlap, palms upward, in the _____ mudra, the gesture of _____.

The first anthropomorphic representations of Buddha probably appeared in the first century CE when the Buddha increasingly became regarded as a _____ instead of only an enlightened mortal.



The dot, or curl of hair between the eyebrows, is called the _____.

It evolves as a representation of a third eye, which in turn symbolizes vision into a divine world.

Artists often depict the Buddha with elongated ears, a reference to his unique status since royalty was associated with the effects of wearing heavy _____.

Many early portrayals of the Buddha in human form come from Gandhara and depict the Enlightened One as a robed _____. The style of this Gandharan Buddha owes much to _____ art.

1. Images of the Buddha himself did not appear for at least 400 years after his death and even then were created only to remind followers of their own innate "Buddha Nature." This kind of early aversion to "idolatry" is typical of Christianity and other religions- many devotees of Christ railed against material images of Jesus for centuries, especially during two waves of "_____ " in the Byzantine Empire.
2. The colossal Buddhas at Bamiyan were cut at immeasurable cost (probably in the third and fifth centuries CE) into the tall cliffs of (what material?) _____ surrounding Bamiyan. The taller of the two statues is thought to represent the _____ Buddha, a celestial Buddha that symbolizes the "light shining through the universe." The shorter one probably represents the historical _____ Buddha, although the local Hazara people believe it depicts a woman.

3. The Buddhas at Bamiyan were key in the rise of Mahayana Buddhist teachings, which emphasized the ability of everyone, not just monks, to achieve _____. Bamiyan lay at the heart of the fabled Silk Road, offering respite to caravans carrying goods across the vast reaches between _____ and the Roman Empire. For 500 years, it was a center of Buddhist cultivation. The myriad of caves throughout the Bamiyan cliffs were also home to thousands of Buddhist monks and served as lodging for traveling merchants, monks, and pilgrims. The large Buddha statues were destroyed by Islamic fundamentalists known as the Taliban in the year _____.
4. The Chinese Buddhist pilgrim _____ visited Bamiyan in the year 630 CE. He described the site as having more than ten monasteries with more than a thousand monks. He also noted that both Buddha figures were "decorated with _____ and fine _____." Intriguingly, he mentions a third, even larger, statue of the Buddha in a _____ pose.
5. The westward expansion of the Tang Empire increased the importance of Dunhuang, the westernmost gateway to China on the Silk Road. Dunhuang long had been a wealthy, cosmopolitan trade center and a Buddhist pilgrimage destination. The Dunhuang Grottoes are especially important because in 845 the emperor _____ instituted a major persecution, destroying thousands of Buddhist temples and shrines. The emperor's policies did not affect Dunhuang, then under Tibetan rule, so the site preserves much of the type of art lost elsewhere.
6. The cave paintings at Dunhuang aided worshipers in gaining faith by visualizing the wonders of the Pure Land Paradise. Buddhist Pure Land sects, especially those centered on _____, Buddha of the West, had captured the popular imagination in the Period of Disunity under the Six Dynasties and continued to flourish during the Tang Dynasty.
7. In wall paintings at Dunhuang depicting the Buddha in a setting exemplifying the splendor of the Tang era, Buddha is surrounded by bodhisattvas and lesser divine attendants. Bodhisattvas had strong appeal in East Asia as serving what kind of function?
8. The Longmen Grottoes (or Caves) near the Chinese city of _____ were mostly developed under the Tang Dynasty as well. Work on the site, however, began during the Northern _____ Dynasty. Emperors from this earlier dynasty also sponsored Buddhist caves at the Yungang Grottoes near Datong.
9. Fengxian is the Ancestor Worshipping Cave where a large statue of the Vairocana Buddha was sculpted along with colossal images of disciples, bodhisattvas, and guardians. The statues were commissioned by the empress _____ and it is conjectured that the _____ was carved to resemble the Empress herself.
10. An inscription at the base of the Vairocana Buddha gives the year _____ as the year of carving. Among the figures flanking the Buddha are divine personages trampling an evil spirit. How might this group of figures, along with the Buddha, mirror the imperial court of the Tang Dynasty?

THEME: MAN and the NATURAL WORLD

FOCUS: Fan Kuan's *Travelers Among Mountains and Streams*, Guo Xi's *Early Spring*

ONLINE ASSIGNMENT:

<http://smarthistory.khanacademy.org/neo-confucianism-and-fan-kuan-travelers-by-streams-and-mountains.html>

ONLINE ASSIGNMENT: <http://www.learner.org/courses/globalart/work/285/index.html>

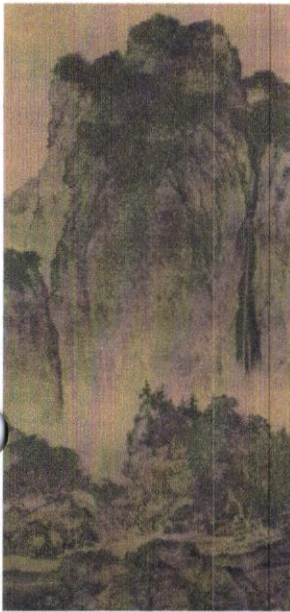
READING ASSIGNMENT: KLEINER: pp. 463 and 465

POWERPOINT: MAN and the NATURAL WORLD: CHINESE
NORTHERN SONG DYNASTY (Fan Kuan and Guo Xi)

49

DATE DUE: _____

Analyze how each of these works reflects man's relationship with nature by answering the following questions.



Fan Kuan. *Travelers Among Mountains and Streams*, Northern Song period, 11th century, hanging scroll, ink and colors on silk

How does this image reflect a view of nature from that of a Daoist recluse?

How does this image suggest ideas associated with Neo-Confucianism?

What role does Fan Kuan's technique, composition, and choice of materials play in expressing his philosophical view of nature?

Guo Xi. *Early Spring*, Northern Song Dynasty, 1072, hanging scroll, ink, and color on silk

For what reasons, similar to those of Fan Kuan, does Guo Xi incorporate evidence of a human presence in his landscape?

For what reasons, similar to those of Fan Kuan, does Guo Xi depict mountains dissolving into mist?



THEME: IMAGES of POWER

FOCUS: The David Vases, Forbidden City, Shang Xi's *Guan Yu Captures General Pang De*

ONLINE ASSIGNMENT: <https://www.khanacademy.org/humanities/art-asia/imperial-china/yuan-dynasty/v/david-vases>

ONLINE ASSIGNMENT: <https://www.khanacademy.org/humanities/art-asia/imperial-china/yuan-dynasty/a/chinese-porcelain-production-and-export>

ONLINE ASSIGNMENT: <https://www.khanacademy.org/partner-content/asian-art-museum/aam-China/v/forbidden-city>

ONLINE ASSIGNMENT: <http://whc.unesco.org/en/list/439>

READING ASSIGNMENT: KLEINER, pp. 988-989, 992-995

POWERPOINT: IMAGES of POWER: CHINESE YUAN and MING DYNASTIES (Chinese Decorative Arts and the Forbidden City)

DATE DUE: _____

1. Long imported by China's Asian neighbors as luxury goods and treasures, Chinese porcelains later captured great attention in the West, where potters did not succeed in mastering the production

process until the early _____ century. Like stoneware, porcelain objects are fired in

a _____ at an extremely high temperature (well over 2000 degrees F) until the clay fully fuses into a dense, hard substance.

2. The most stable and widely used coloring agents used as

underglazes for porcelains are _____ compounds, which emerge after firing as an intense blue. To obtain a wider palette, an artist must paint on top of the glaze after firing the work. These overglaze

colors, or _____, then fuse to the glazed surface in an additional firing at a much lower temperature.



3. The David Vases were created in 1351 during the Yuan Dynasty for a _____ temple

to honor a _____ who had been recently made into a god. When these vases were

created, China was part of a _____ empire that stretched all the way to eastern Europe. Although these particular vases were not made for a large export trade, they do resemble the

type of porcelain works that would have been popular in the country of present-day _____.

4. Most prominently on the vases are dragons, symbolic of _____ energy, with floral motifs. The neck depicts a phoenix, symbolic of _____ energy, along with an inscription that states the date and purpose of the vases. The handles form the shape of _____, a suggestion that the vases may have been inspired by earlier bronze vessels.

5. In 1368, Zhu Yuanzhong led a popular uprising that drove the last _____ emperor

from Beijing. After expelling the foreigners from China, he founded the native Chinese

_____ dynasty (r. 1368-1644). The new emperor built his capital at Nanjing (southern capital), but the third emperor, _____ ("Perpetual Happiness" r. 1403-1424) moved the imperial seat back to Beijing. Although Beijing had been home to the Yuan dynasty, Ming architects designed much of the city as well as the imperial palace at its core.

6. The Ming builders laid out Beijing as three nested walled cities. The outer perimeter wall was 15 miles long and

enclosed the walled _____ City, with a perimeter of 6 miles, and the vast imperial palace

compound, the _____ City, surrounded by a 50-yard-wide moat.



7. The layout provided the perfect setting for the elaborate ritual of the imperial court. For example, the entrance gateway to the complex, the _____ Gate, has five portals. Only the emperor could walk through the central one. The two entrances to its left and right were reserved for the imperial family and _____. Others had to use the outermost passageways. Entrance to the Forbidden City proper was through the nearly 40-yard-tall triple-passageway _____ Gate. Only the emperor and his retinue and foreign ambassadors who had been granted an official audience could pass through this gate.
8. Within the Forbidden City, more gates and a series of courtyards, gardens, temples, and other buildings led eventually to the Hall of Supreme Harmony, in which the emperor, seated on his _____ throne on a high stepped platform, received important visitors. The hall is the largest _____ building in China. Perched on an immense platform above marble staircases, this hall was the climax of a long _____ - _____ axis. In front of the hall were bronze statues of a turtle and a crane, symbols of _____.
9. Beyond that grand reception hall is the even more restricted Inner Court and the Palace of Heavenly _____ - the private living quarters of the emperor and his extended family of wives, concubines, and children. At the northern end of the central axis of the Forbidden City is the Gate of _____, through which the palace servants gained access to the complex.

10. An exceptionally large example of Ming history painting is a hanging scroll painted by Shang Xi around 1430. *Guan Yu Captures General Pang De* represents an episode from China's tumultuous third century (Period of Disunity) whose wars inspired one of the first great Chinese novels, *The Romance of the Three Kingdoms*. In the painting, Shang used _____ to focus attention on Guan and his attendants, who stand out sharply from the ink landscape.



11. The painting depicts Guan, renowned for his loyalty to the emperor and his military valor, being presented with the captured enemy Pang De, who has been _____, further heightening his humiliation. The historical warrior Guan Yu was the subject of a religious cult particularly supported by the Ming court. Like the Yuan predecessors, however, the Ming emperors had no formal academy structure for painters. Until recently, painters like Shang Xi were held in very low esteem, perhaps due partially to the fact that some of the stylistic features suggest the influence of Tibetan artists under the Mongols.

Compare and contrast the palace of Versailles with the Forbidden City in terms of their design, function, and ornamentation.

	How the Forbidden City is DIFFERENT from Versailles	How the Forbidden City and Versailles are SIMILAR	How Versailles is DIFFERENT from the Forbidden City
FUNCTION			
DESIGN			
ORNAMENTATION			

THEME: OBJECTS of WEALTH and RITUAL

FOCUS: Gold and Jade Crown from the Silla Kingdom of Korea, Old Silla *Maitreya*, Goryeo dynasty celadons, Portrait of Sin Sukju, Song Su-nam's *Summer Trees*

ONLINE ASSIGNMENT: <https://www.khanacademy.org/humanities/art-asia/korea-japan/korean-art/a/gold-and-jade-crown-three-kingdoms-period-silla-kingdom>

ONLINE ASSIGNMENT: <https://www.khanacademy.org/humanities/art-asia/korea-japan/korean-art/v/korean-celadons>

ONLINE ASSIGNMENT: <https://www.khanacademy.org/humanities/art-asia/korea-japan/korean-art/v/confucian-house>

READING ASSIGNMENT: KLEINER, pp. 470-472, 1001-1002 and *SEE BELOW*

POWERPOINT: OBJECTS of WEALTH and RITUAL (Korean Art)

DATE DUE: _____

READ the FOLLOWING

Portrait of Sin Sukju, Korean Joseon Dynasty, c. 15th century CE, ink and color hanging silk scroll

1. "It was common practice in the Joseon to make replicas of portraits of important ancestors, particularly meritorious subjects. These portraits, believed to embody the spirit of their subjects, were worshipped in various family shrines (*yeongdang*), which might belong to different branches of a family" (Lee and Chang 105). "Along with depictions of royals, one of the most important tasks of the court painters was the creation of portraits of meritorious officials (*gongsin*). Subjects who performed distinguished services for the state were exemplars representing the Confucian virtue of loyalty. Throughout the Joseon period, a large number of portraits of meritorious officials were created to mark such occasions as the foundation of the dynasty, the suppression of revolts, and the repulse of foreign invasions" (67). "Although numerous portraits of meritorious subjects were produced during the early Joseon period, only a few, unfortunately, have survived. Two such survivors are the portraits of Sin Sukju (1417-1475) and Jang Malson (1431-1486). The primary function of portraits of meritorious subjects was to celebrate their contributions to the state and to emphasize the Confucian value of loyalty to the king. An eminent literatus with important publications to his credit, Sin Sukju was also a key political figure of his time, who rose to the position of prime minister. He was named a meritorious subject four times during his life, including under kings Sejo (r. 1455-68) and Seongjong (r. 1469-94). Following the convention of fifteenth-century Korean *gongsin* portraiture, *Portrait of Sin Sukju* depicts the sitter in a three-quarter pose facing his right, resplendent official robe and an official black silk hat. Particularly eye-catching is the garment's luminous gold-embroidered green rank badge with peacocks. Despite the painting's weathered appearance, the portrait retains a lifelike quality, capturing not only the physical features of this eminent scholar-official but also his character" (67).

2. "Just as Sin and Jang became icons of the Confucian ideal of loyalty, so did their representations become models embodying that virtue for *gongsin* portraiture in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries" (67). "Another responsibility of court painters was to make pictorial records of various court rituals and ceremonies. Artists executed documentary paintings depicting court banquets for or gatherings of elder statesmen and state-examination alumni, that is, those who had passed the same civil-service examination. The promotion of Confucian learning in the early Joseon period was closely related to the recruitment of educated civil and military officials to the court. To recruit men of ambition, virtue, and talent, the Joseon state relied heavily on a ranking system based on civil, military, and technical examinations. Civil officials received by far the greatest honor and prestige; as a result, the civil-service examination became the most competitive. Under Confucian rulership, the primary emphasis was on state examinations, which served as important gateways to an individual's and therefore his family's success. The ruling *yangban*- degree holders and their families, as well as candidates who had not yet passed the civil-service and military examinations- enjoyed political, social, and cultural privileges and monopolized the state examination system. Although in theory male commoners were allowed to sit for the examinations, the education necessary to pass the examinations were made available almost exclusively to the sons of the *yangban*" (67, 69). "In Neo-Confucianism, the ascendance of the Mencian notion of the original goodness of human nature and the idea of the perfectibility of a person led to the emergence of the sage-kingship as a potent political ideal. However, there existed a wide variety of choices of how to translate the symbolic role of the monarch within the actual workings of the monarchy. At the beginning of the Joseon, two models at opposite extremes competed: one consisted of a purely symbolic ruler, with no power, in a prime minister-centered structure, the other, of an autocratic sovereign who sought the counsel of his ministers at his pleasure" (6). "By the mid-sixteenth century the Joseon court seems to have reached some semblance of an agreement on the balance between the symbolic and actual roles of the monarch. The ruler maintained the decision-making power of a sovereign, but this was to be exercised with ministerial counsel. A monarch ruling in partnership with a governing elite was nothing new in Korea- it is a form of government that

can be traced by to Silla (57 BCE- 935 CE)- but under the Joseon the political discourse was carried out in the Confucian rhetoric of the sage-kingship” (6). “Painting served as both a means of propagating Neo-Confucian beliefs and worldviews and a form of aesthetic pleasure and intellectual and moral cultivation. As such, it was practiced not only by the professional painters employed by the court’s Bureau of Painting (*dohwaseo*) but also by the political and cultural elite, including the scholar-officials in government and the monarchs themselves. The pursuit of painting by the king and the men in government, however, was accompanied by cautions expressed by the literati against excessive enjoyment of it, at the cost of diligent Confucian scholarship and effective governance” (18).

Works Cited:

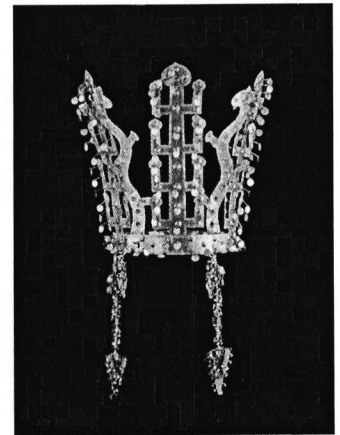
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Address ways in which the following works express both status or prestige and ritual or tradition.

Silla Crown from the Three Kingdoms Period in Korea, 5th-6th century CE, gold and jade

How the work expresses STATUS or PRESTIGE

How the work expresses RITUAL or TRADITION



Maebyeong Vase from the Goryeo dynasty, 12th century CE, stoneware with celadon glaze

How the work expresses STATUS or PRESTIGE

How the work expresses RITUAL or TRADITION

Portrait of Sin Sukju, Korean Joseon Dynasty, c. 15th century CE, ink and color hanging silk scroll

How the work expresses STATUS or PRESTIGE

How the work expresses RITUAL or TRADITION

