

Art Talk

Chapter 12

Art Traditions from Around the World

- Objectives
 - Briefly discuss art traditions from many cultures around the world.
 - Understand how cultural traditions influence artists' works.
- Begin reviewing your handout to follow along in the text and presentation.

Lesson 1

Art of Earliest Times

- Art from the past shows what the people who created it were like. The art reveals their feelings, their ideas, their actions, and their way of life. This combination of *behaviors and ideas of a group of people is called culture.*
- Prehistoric Art:
 - Prehistoric means before history, or before written records were kept.
 - The Paleolithic period, or *Old Stone Age, began about two million years ago, and ended with the close of the last ice age about 13, 000 B.C.*
 - The cave paintings that have been discovered from this time period were so well kept and so bright that scholars refused to believe that they had been created by pre-historic people.



The Hall of Bulls.
C. 15,000 B.C.
Altamira Caves,
Spain.

Lascuax Caves, France



Prehistoric Builders

- Eventually prehistoric people moved out of caves and began constructing their own shelters.
- Small tribal groups grew into organized villages surrounded by cultivated fields and domesticated animals.
- During the Neolithic Period, people built structures of stone.
 - The Neolithic period, or *New Stone Age*, is a prehistoric period stretching roughly from 7000 B.C. to 2000 B.C.

Neolithic Period

- During this time, agriculture continued to develop and stone tools were refined.
- Ancient structures called *megaliths* have been found throughout Europe, Asia, and even North America.



Mystery Hill.
Salem, New
Hampshire.
[www.megalithic.
co.uk/
article.php?sid=
10510](http://www.megalithic.co.uk/article.php?sid=10510)

• Stonehenge was built in three stages. The first was by the Neolithic people of the late Stone-Age (c. 2800 B.C.). The second by the people of the Bronze age.

They erected a double circle of 38 bluestone each. The bluestones (named for their bluish color) came from mountains 135 miles away. The remains of the third stage, built around 2100 B.C., are what we see today. These megaliths, called sarsens, came from about 20 miles away and weigh as much as 56 tons.



Stonehenge, England.
<http://www.aboutstonehenge.info/index.php?pg=stonehenge-wallpaper>

- Megaliths are *large monuments created from huge stone slabs*.
- Stonehenge is the most famous Megalith.
- Builders used an ancient building system called *post and lintel construction*. Upright slabs called posts, support horizontal slabs, called lintels.

The Development of Civilization

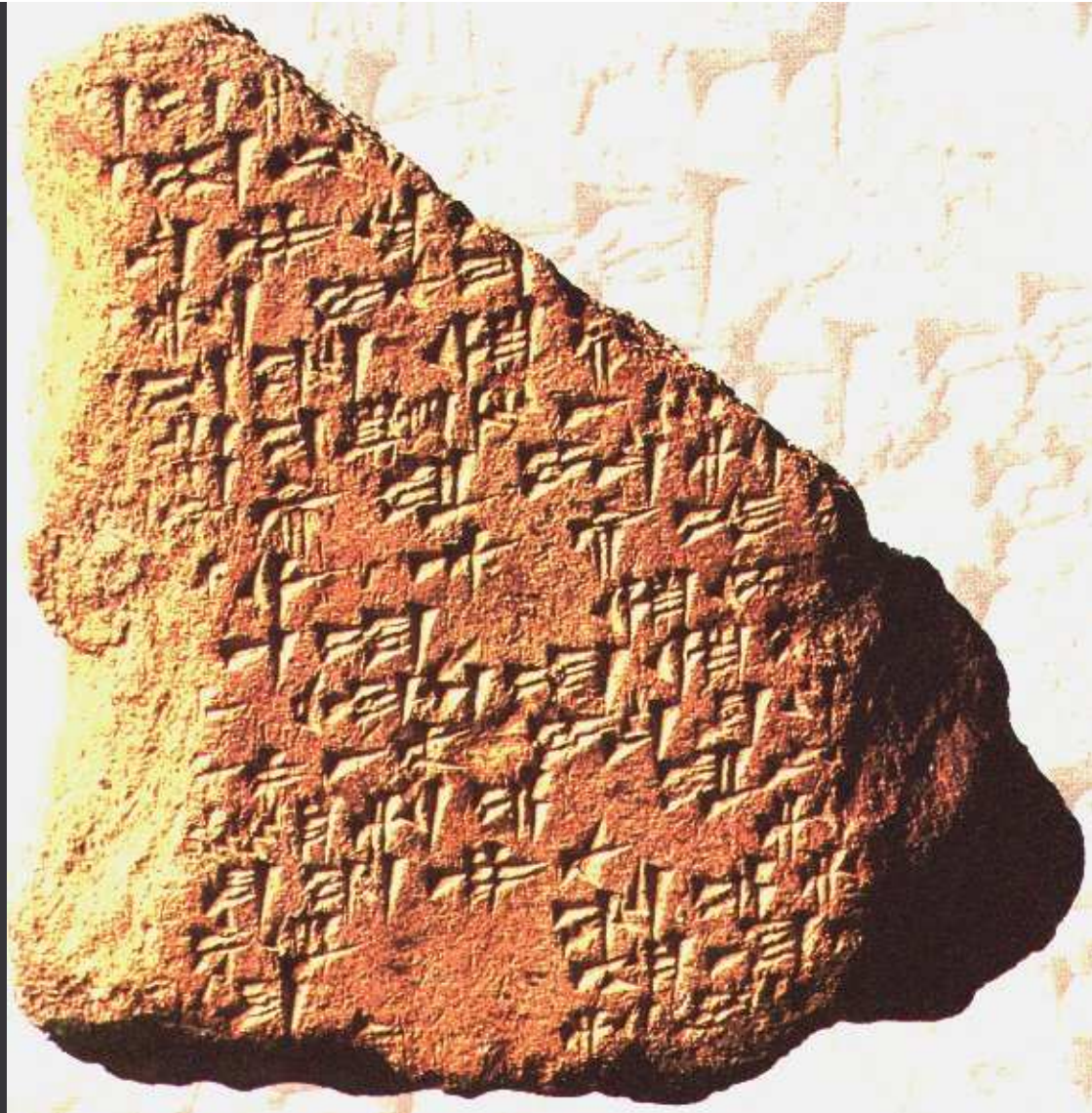
- As small tribes began to fight over grazing land and soil suitable for growing crops, they were forced to band together for protection and also to be able to produce more food.
- By 3000 B.C. four major civilizations had developed at different points on the globe. The ancient civilizations of Mesopotamia, Egypt, India, and China emerged at this time.

Ancient River Valleys

- The ancient civilizations of Mesopotamia, Egypt, India, and China, are referred to as ancient river valleys. Each of these civilizations was ruled by a monarchy, practiced religion based on nature, and achieved great skill in art and architecture.

Mesopotamia

- Mesopotamia was a fertile crescent of land between the Tigris and Euphrates rivers in the Middle East. Today this land is known as Syria and Iraq.
- The Sumerians were the first dominant group in the area. They were the first people to have a system of writing by using symbols.
- *Cuneiform* was the Sumerian writing system made up of wedge-shaped characters. These characters stood for concepts and ideas and were written on clay tablets.



<http://www.unf.edu/classes/freshmancore/core1images/cuneiform-claytablet-isrealmus1.jpg>

- Sumerian artists were naturalistic in their depiction of people.



Sumerian Gudea Statue, c. 4000 B. C.

Item category: Plaques and Figurines.

Size: Height: 10 1/2" Base diameter: 3 1/2".

Solid rounded gold wire flaring to form wide pointed terminals.

Material: Alabaster.

Culture: Sumerian, c. 4000 B. C.

- Sumerians also created structures known as ziggurats, or stepped mountains made of brick-covered earth.
- These temples had exterior staircases.



http://www.iranian.com/History/2005/March/Gutians/Images/gutians_sumer_ziggurat2a.jpg

Babylonia (750 B.C.) emerged from the Sumerian culture. Babylonia artists were much like the Sumerian artists in that they were very life-like.

- Assyria emerged after the decline of Babylonia.
 - Assyrian artists developed their own style of art and created precise, detailed reliefs using many colors. Human figures were given less emphasis.

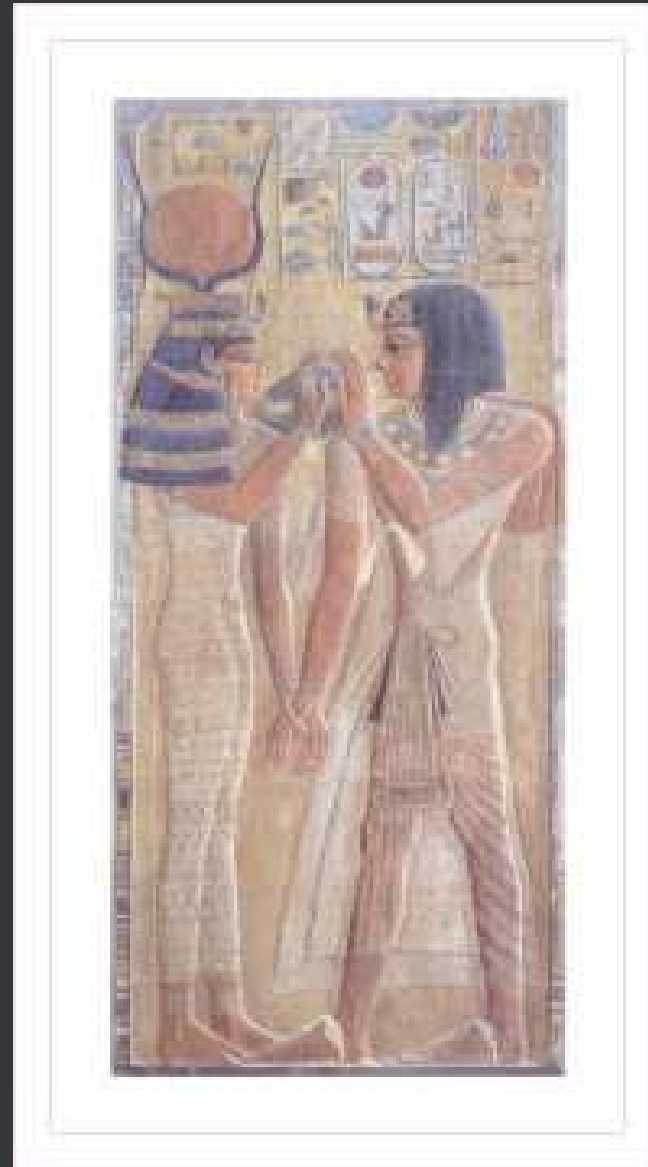


<http://www.talariaenterprises.com/images/4915a.jpg>

Egypt

- The culture of ancient Egypt developed along the banks of the Nile River more than 3,000 years before the birth of Christ.
- Religion influenced every part of Egyptian life.
- The *pharaohs*, or Egyptian rulers, were worshipped as Gods and held complete authority over the kingdom.
- The famous pyramids were built as tombs for the pharaohs and were designed to guide the spirit into the afterlife.

- Egyptian artists decorated temples and tombs according to very strict rules set forth by the priests.
- The rules required that each part of the body be shown from the most visible angle.
- The head, arms, and feet are shown in profile. The shoulders and eyes are shown from a frontal view.
- The paintings reveal a great deal about life in Egypt and were meant to remind the deceased spirit of life on earth.



Egyptian.
The Goddess Hathor Places the Magic Collar on Sethos I.
Thebes, Nineteenth Dynasty. C. 1303-1290 B.C. Painted bas-relief. The Louvre, Paris, France

India

- In 1865 railroad workers discovered a hill of crumbling, fired-clay bricks near the present-day city of Pakistan. When tested, the bricks were discovered to date back to 2500 B.C.
- In 1922, a second city was uncovered in the same area. It was called Mhenjo-Daro, meaning “Hill of the Dead”. The city was once home to about 35,000 people.
- Since then over 70 cities, town, and villages have been discovered in the Indus valley, as well as evidence of an organized kingdom with a central government that existed about 4,500 years ago.



Mohenjo-Daro, India. C. 2500 B.C.

- Experts believe the city of Mohenjo-Daro was abandoned because the climate changed. The ancient Indians built with fire-baked bricks, which meant they had ready access to timber. The area is a desert today.

- At the archeological sites, workers uncovered a number of small relief soap stone carvings. These carvings are the earliest known examples of Indian Art.



<http://www.takeourword.com/images/mohenjo.jpg>

China

- The Yellow River valley became the site of the ancient Chinese civilization.
- Beginning 4,000 years ago, it is the oldest continuous culture in the history of the world.
- The Chinese invented paper, porcelain, and woodblock printing as well as the compass and gunpowder.
- Historically, China was ruled by emperors and divided into dynasties, which were named after the ruling families.
- A *dynasty* is a period of time during which a single family provided a succession of rulers.

- Bronze vessels shown in ancient Chinese graves show extraordinary technical mastery – evidence of centuries of development required before such artworks could be created.

Ritual Wine Jar, **Zun**. China, Shang, early Anyang, 13th c. BCE

Bronze inlaid with black pigment, Clan Sign on the floor of the vessel.



Lesson 2

Art of Asia and the Middle East

- The art of Asia and the Middle East reflects different philosophies and religious beliefs from those in Western art.

India

- The art of India has been strongly influenced by the Hindu and Buddhist religions.
 - Hinduism is one of the world's oldest religions and was formed around 2000 B.C.
 - Buddhism began as a Hindu reform movement, and had a strong influence over the country from the third century B.C. to the sixth century A.D.
 - Among the earliest, and most important, examples of modern Indian architecture are *stupas*.
 - Beehive-shaped domed places of worship.

Great
Stupa.
Sanchi,
Madya
Pradesh,
India. C.
first
century
B.C.



- Stupas were built by Buddhist architects to house relics of Buddha, their religion's founder. Each stupa was reached through four gates covered with relief sculpture. Domes such as the one above were often erected over holy places, burial mounds, and holy relics.

- After the fifth century, Hinduism rose again in popularity because it was encouraged by the monarchs of the period.
 - Hinduism combined several different beliefs and practices that developed over a long period of time.
 - In Hinduism there are three primary processes in life and in the universe creation: creation, preservation, and destruction.
 - The three main Hindu gods reflect this belief system. They are Brahma, the Creator; Vishnu, the Preserver; and Siva, the Destroyer.



Brahma.

<http://perso.wanadoo.fr/revue.shakti/brahma.jpg>



Vishnu.

<http://www.wheeloftheyear.com/images/2003/vishnu.JPG>



SIVA AS THE LORD OF DANCE

(India, Tamil Nadu, circa 950-1000)

Copper alloy

30 x 22 1/2 x 7 in. (76.2 x 57.1 x 17.8 cm)

Anonymous gift, M.75.1

Los Angeles County
Museum of Art

The Hindu god Siva is called the Destroyer. This sculpture is rich in symbolism. Notice what the figure is standing on. The objects he holds are a drum that symbolizes creation and a flame that symbolizes destruction. How is destruction related to creation?

- In Hinduism, both humans and animals are believed to have souls that undergo reincarnation. Reincarnation is a purification process in which the soul lives in many bodies in many lifetimes until it becomes one with Brahma, the great soul.
- India exported its religions to the rest of Asia. In Kampuchea (formerly Cambodia) many temples were built of stone in the Indian style.



Southeast
Asia.
Temple at
Angkor
Wat,
Kampuchea
(Cambodia)
. 1113-50

The temple at Angkor Wat was originally a Hindu temple built between A.D. 1113 and 1150. Dedicated to Vishnu by its builder, it represents the Hindu view of the universe. The layout of this temple was designed to create a solar calendar by which the summer and winter solstices and the spring and fall equinoxes could be fixed. Why was this important in an agricultural society?

China

- China adopted Buddhism during the Han Dynasty, which lasted from 206 B.C. to A.D. 220. Buddhism was easily adopted in China because, like other Chinese religions, it stressed the harmony of human beings with nature.
 - An important part of Buddhism is meditation, focusing one's thoughts on a single object or idea.
 - Chinese artists found that long periods of meditation helped them to perceive the beauty of an object or a scene with greater clarity.
 - Chinese art of the last 2000 years has been greatly influenced by Buddhism and meditation.

- The Chinese were the first people to consider “picture painting” a valuable endeavor.
 - This was because many artists were also scholars who wrote poems in beautiful handwriting (calligraphy) using brushes that could make thin and thick lines. They used these same techniques to paint pictures.
 - They painted fans, pages of books, and scrolls.
- A *scroll* is a long parchment of silk.



University of California, Berkeley Art Museum, purchase made possible through a gift from an anonymous donor; 2003.1.7



- The earliest Chinese paintings were filled with images illustrating the beliefs that people should live together peacefully and be respectful of their elders.
- With the influence of a new religion, Buddhism, the focus of painting began to shift away from humans and toward nature.
- By around 1100A.D., the landscape was the main theme of Chinese painting.

<http://www.nyicm.org/images/landscp.jpg>

- The Chinese also produced sculpture for religious purposes and to honor the dead. During the Sung Dynasty (A.D. 960-1279), artists first produced ceramic objects of porcelain made from a fine-grained white clay called kaolin.
- Work in porcelain reached its highest point during the Ming dynasty (A.D. 1368-1644).
- Today, collectors especially prize porcelain from this dynasty.



<http://www.historyforkids.org/learn/china/art/ming.htm>

Japan

- In A.D. 552 the ruler of a kingdom in nearby Korea sent the Emperor of Japan a gift.
- The gift was a sculpture of Buddha. Along with it, came priests to spread the teachings of Buddhism.
- Eventually many of the people of Japan accepted Buddhism and over time learned new ways of making art.
- For the next 250 years, Japan would show strong influences of China, Korea, and other Asian styles in artwork produced.
- The first important Japanese artworks produced were temples.



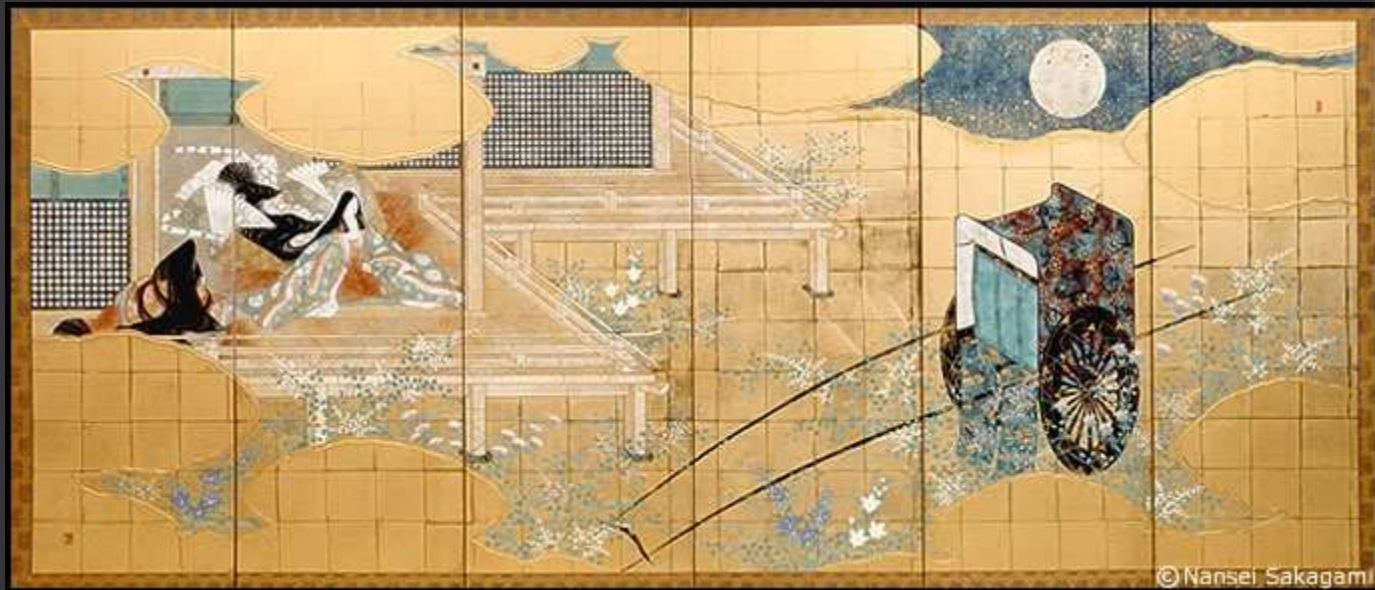
- The temples had to be made of wood because Japan is made of volcanic rock that could not be cut or used for building.
- Therefore, they used wood and in the process, developed architecturally elaborate wooden structures.
- Japanese temples are intricately assembled and decorated. They are fitted together with special joints made to withstand earthquakes and violent storms. The buildings had to be both aesthetically pleasing and durable.
- The Pagoda was one of Japan's most interesting temples of the time. A pagoda is a *tower several stories high with roofs curving slightly upward at the edges.*



Great Buddha. Kamakura, Japan,
c. AD 1252.

- The Japanese also created monumental sculptures, often of the Buddha.
- The Great Buddha at Kamakura was cast in bronze in A.D. 1252. It is outdoors in a grove of trees.

- In A.D. 784, Japan entered its golden age of art. During this period, Japanese artists developed a painting called Yamato-e, or pictures in the Japanese manner.” Paintings done in this manner were the first examples of pure Japanese art.
- Yamato-e screen paintings were use due brighten the dimly lit interiors of temples and homes as a temporary wall to divide a room.



http://www.nanseisakagami.com/gallery/daihyo/image/b_genji_aki.jpg

- Another new Japanese style of art was called Ukiyo-e meaning “pictures of the floating world,” which depict different aspects of the pleasures of life. The demand for artworks in this new style was great.
- As a result, artists invented a new style of creating mass-produced works of art called *woodblock printing*. This is making prints by carving images in blocks of wood. Artists could create many prints from one block of wood inexpensively.



http://www.druckstelle.info/de/holzschnitt_index.htm



http://images.amazon.com/images/P/389789811X.01._AA400_SCLZZZZZZZ_.jpg

Ando Hiroshige



Ando Hiroshige.
*Evening rain on the
Karasaki Pine*
(from the series
*Eight Views of Omi
Province*).
Nineteenth Century,
Woodblock print. 10
 $\frac{1}{4}$ x 15". The
Metropolitan
Museum of Art,
New York, New
York. H.O.
Havemeyer
Collection. Bequest
of Mrs. H. O.
Havemeyer.

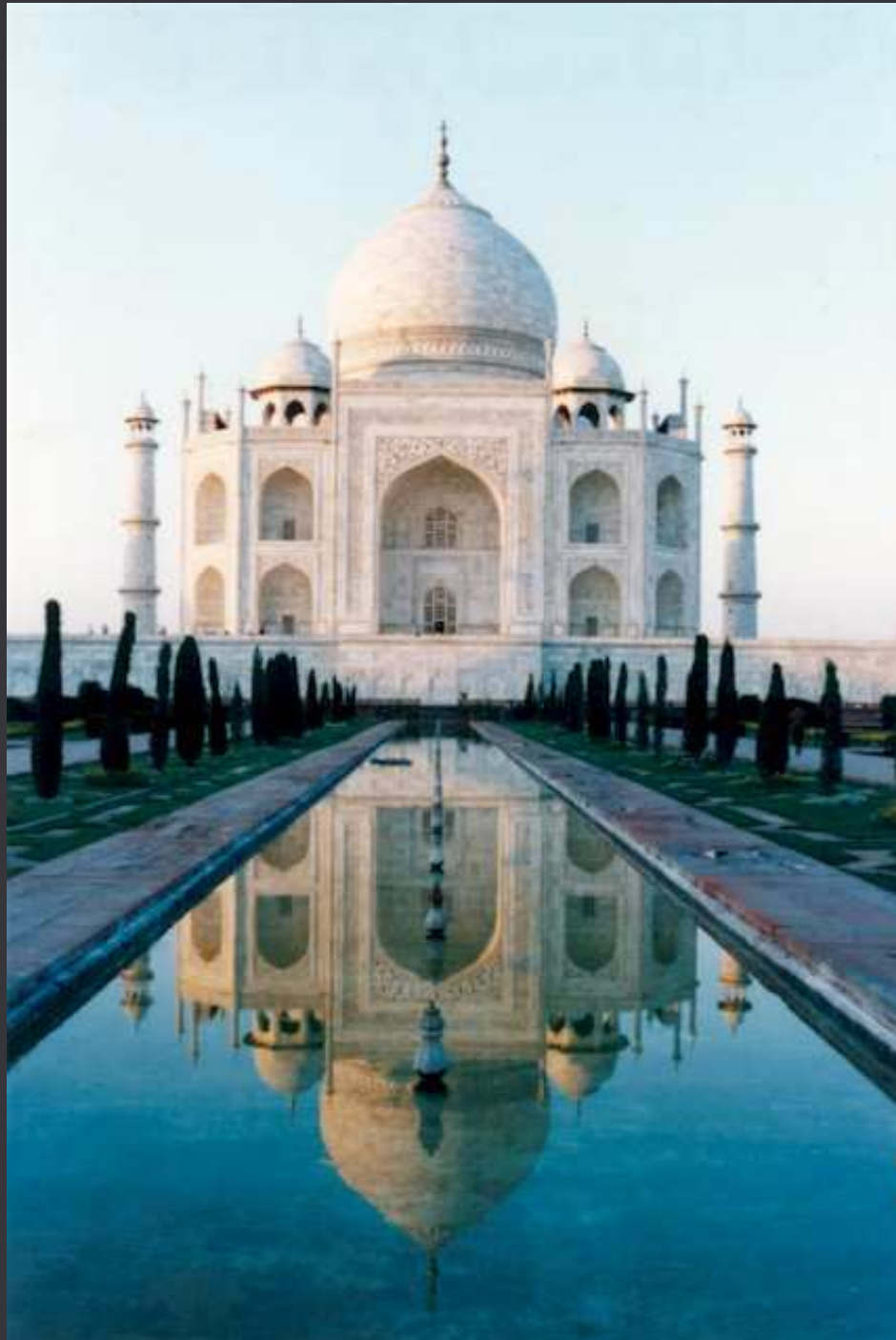
- Hiroshige is the most influential Japanese woodblock printer. He depicted the experiences of ordinary people and places, capturing moods and changing times and seasons.

Art of Islam

<http://www.thesahara.net/koran.jpg>



- In A.D 570, Muhammed was born in Mecca. He became a merchant and then as an adult received personal revelations that the Arabs should stop worshipping multiple gods and follow the teaching of one god, Allah.
- After his death his teaching were assembled into the Koran, a Holy Scripture. Those that follow the teaching of Muhammed are called Muslims and the name of the faith is Islam.
- Islam changed the religious beliefs and the art of the Middle East and much of Asia.



- Islamic art was characterized by the use of ornate, line, shape, and pattern. The interior of mosques, *Muslim places of worship*, were decorated with calligraphy, geometric patterns, and stylized plants and flowers. It was forbidden to draw people for fear of the general masses beginning to worship multiple gods again and forgetting Allah.
- The Taj Mahal as seen on the left, was designed to be in harmony with the surrounding gardens and pools.
- The Taj Mahal was built by an Indian leader as a memorial to his wife. The building is an outstanding example of Islamic architecture and is considered to be one of the most beautiful buildings in the world.
- Taj Mahal, garden and pools. 1632-43, Agra, India

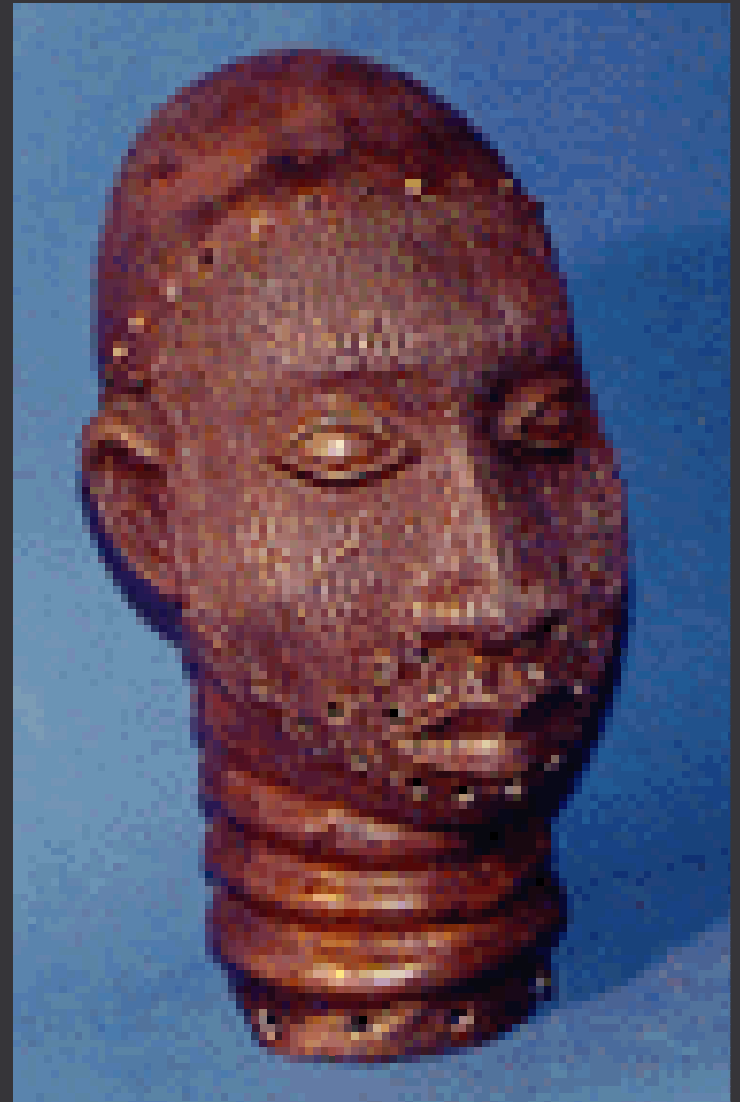
- Book illustrators, however, had much more freedom in creating their illustrations and depicted people and animals in everyday scenes.
- The religion of Islam also spread to the East and many Indians were converted.

The Art of Africa

- Throughout Africa, the visual arts were an important part of daily life.
- Sophisticated art of high craftsmanship has been created in the history of Africa from long established, sophisticated cultures.
- Dominant themes in African art include birth and death; the roles of men, women, and children; and the human relationship with nature.
- Artworks are often linked to celebrations and rituals, both nonreligious and sacred. Westerners are fascinated with objects from these cultures and have put them in museums.

Ancient Life

- Life and civilization began in Nigeria with the people of Yoruba. Yoruba cities developed between the years A.D. 800 and 1000. By A.D. 1100, artists of Ife had developed a highly refined, lifelike sculptural style to create portraits of the first Yoruba kings and queens.



The lines on the face of this figure probably represent ornamental scars made to indicate ancestry and to enhance physical beauty.

<http://www.introspecinc.com/warehouse/rpg0002.gif>

- According to Yoruba beliefs, the world consists of two realms; the real world that can be seen and touched; and the supernatural world of ancestors, gods and goddesses, and spirits. Works of art created for the real, or visible world tend to be realistic; whereas works of art created for the supernatural, or invisible, world tend to be more abstract.
- The sculptures of Yoruba celebrate the lives and accomplishments of individuals and encourage the living to match the accomplishments of previous generations.

The Empire of Mali

- The empire of Mali was founded by as powerful military leader and king named Sundiata. These figures reveal proud profiles, with jutting chins and heads held high atop sturdy necks. Their bodies appear straight and tall whether shown standing or seated upright on stallions. The figures represent members of the well-outfitted and well-organized army.



Inland Delta Region, Mali. Equestrian figure. C. thirteenth century. Ceramic. 27 1/4" National Museum of Art, Smithsonian Institution, Washington, D.C. Museum Purchase, 86-12-2

- The strength of Sundiata's great cavalry and army of foot soldiers enabled him to gain political power. Under his leadership, the empire of Mali became one of the largest and wealthiest kingdoms the world has ever known.
- The epic story of the rise of Sundiata is passed on by griots, *oral historians who are also musicians and performers*, throughout West Africa to this day.

- The city of Jenne is the oldest city in sub-Saharan Africa. In the art and architecture from this city there is an emphasis on vertical elements.
- The proportions expressed are expressive rather than realistic and convey a sense of harmony and balance.
- **Female Figure**, 19th–20th century
Bamana peoples; Mali
Wood, metal; H. 22 3/4 in. (57.8 cm)
The Michael C. Rockefeller
Memorial Collection, Gift of Nelson
A. Rockefeller, 1969 (1978.412.347)



- The images of the first man and woman described in Dogon myths of creation, this sculpture serves as an inspiration to living generations.
- These figures are seated on a stool with a circular support that symbolizes the link between the earth below and the spirit world above.
- Carved from a single piece of wood, the interlocking forms effectively convey Dogon ideas regarding the interdependence of men and women and their complementary social roles.



Seated Man and Woman.
Dogon People, Mali. Wood
(30"). Photograph copyright
1993 by the Barnes Foundation,
Merion Station, Pennsylvania.

The Kingdom of Benin

- Benin artists lived in what is now known as southern Nigeria, excelled in creating metal sculptures using a copper alloy possessing many of the same qualities as bronze.
- High-relief sculptures once covered the walls and pillars of the royal palace.



Kingdom of Benin, Edo people, Nigeria.

<http://www.marshall.edu/akanart/craftspeople.htm>

The Asante Kingdom



- The Akan people Ghana. In the first half of the eighteenth century, these people joined together to form a powerful confederation of states the included many cultural groups. The largest of these groups was the Asante.
- Gold was the measure of wealth for the monarchy and was worn as a sign of divine authority and absolute power.
- The king also controlled the use of special cloth create by wavers and called Kente cloth. Kente cloth is a brilliantly colored and patterned fabric that became the royal cloth.



Asante people, Ghana. Man's cloth (Kente cloth). Rayon. UCLA Fowler Museum of Cultural Hisotry, Los Angeles, California. Anonymous gift.

The Bwa People

- Although we often think of African masks of being from wood, they were constructed in different ways using a wide variety of materials.
- The Bwa people of Burkina Faso made masks of leaves, plant fibers, porcupine quills, and feathers.
- The Bwa people considered leaf masks the most ancient mask form and closely associated them with nature.



Bwa people, Burkina Faso, village of Boni. Detail of a leaf mask. 1985.

- The Bwa people also produced wooden masks that were used during village ceremonies or harvest festivals.
- The masks took different forms – animal, human, and abstract. All painted with black, white, and red geometric patterns.
- Plank masks were among the most abstract of all mask forms made by the Bwa people.



Bwa people, Burkina Faso, village of Pa.
Plank masks entering performance area,
harvest celebration.

Art of the Americas

- Archeologists believe that the first visitors to North America were groups of Asian hunters who crossed an ancient land bridge across the Bering Strait.
- They began to arrive in what is now Alaska between 20,000 and 40,000 years ago.

Art of MesoAmerica and South America

- The term *pre-Columbian* refers to the time period before the arrival of Christopher Columbus in the Americas in 1492.
- Art historians use the term to refer to the art of the Indian civilizations of early Mexico, Central America, and South America. However, archaeologists are discovering that many of these pre-Columbian civilizations were highly sophisticated and created magnificent works of art and architecture.

Olmec Culture

- Olmec culture is often called the “mother culture” of Mexico because the artifacts found in the region are the most ancient.
- The Olmec civilization dates from 1200 B.C. to A.D. 500. The Olmec artists carved altars, pillars, sarcophagi (stone coffins), and statues.
- The four huge human heads carved from volcanic rock are among the most interesting to see.
- The sculptures weigh 40 tons and stand 8 feet tall.



Olmec. Colossal Head. 1200 B.C. – A.D. 500. Basalt. 8' high. Anthropology Museum, Veracruz, Mexico.

Mayan Culture

- By around A.D. 800 the Mayan empire covered the Yucatan peninsula, modern Belize, Guatemala, and Honduras. The Maya were gifted mathematicians and had the most accurate calendar of any people in history and had developed the most hieroglyphic writing in MesoAmerica.
- The Mayan city Tikal covered 50 square miles and it is thought that 30,000 people lived there.
- The only surviving art form this culture are small sculptures and relief sculptures in temples and pyramids.



<http://www.roland-collection.com/rolandcollection/section/4/92.htm>



<http://mijnposter.nl/thumbs/525/008s.jpeg>



http://daddonastudios.com/pages/1/sculpture/images/Mayan_relief.jpg

Aztec Culture

- The largest of the cultures of ancient Mexico and Central America was the Aztec.
- This civilization emerged sometime between A.D. 1200 and 1325. The Aztecs were a warlike people and were very religious.
- The Aztec city, Tenochtitlan, was a collection of small islands connected by canals.
- IN the 15th Century, the Aztecs embarked on aggressive military campaigns to force other Mexican groups to pay them tribute.
- By the time the Spanish conquerers discovered the city in 1519, their island city covered over 25 miles and is today known as Mexico city.

- The Aztecs adopted many ways of making art based on the people that they conquered. They developed a painted book called a codex. The codex contained told mythological or historical stories of the Aztecs.
- Aztec art was also greatly influenced by religion. The Aztecs also built temples and shrines, some carved directly into the mountains.
- Highly stylized and elaborately ornamented sculptures depicted gods and religious symbols in bold, dramatic style.



<http://www.mallard.doncaster.sch.uk/images/hemera/sculpture%206.gif>



<http://mysite.verizon.net/vze6md7g/sitebuildercontent/sitebuilderpictures/aztec.jpg>

Inca Empire

- The Inca civilization flourished between the thirteenth and nineteenth centuries, and their empire stretched more than 2,500 miles from north to south. It included parts of Peru, Ecuador, Chile, Argentina, and Bolivia.
- Like the Aztecs, the Incas absorbed many cultural influences from neighboring civilizations and those that had flourished before it.
- Although a large civilization would require complex administration, the Incas managed to govern without the benefit of a written language.

- The Incas made calculations and kept records using pieces of knotted string of different colors, called *quipu*. The Incas' ability with numbers is reflected in their art.
- Inca artifacts were made with great mathematical precision.
- The Incas were masters of shaping and fitting stone. They were also highly skilled urban planners.
- The city of Machu-Pichu is evidence of their abilities. The stones of its buildings were so carefully matched that a knife blade cannot be slipped between any two.



<http://homepage.mac.com/marsviolet/paintings/machu-picchu-large.jpg>

Native American Art

- Christopher Columbus named the natives of the Americas Indians in 1492 because he thought he had landed on the east coast of India.
- Today, these first settlers are called Native Americans.
- Some groups were hunters, some were farmers and all created art of some kind.

The Artic Region

- The Intuit people inhabited present-day Canada and Alaska from the earliest times. Although they are often called Eskimos, they refer to themselves as the Intuit.
- Intuit society is loosely organized into family groups that rely on hunting and fishing for survival.
- The images of their artwork reveal their connection to their food source – seal, walrus, fish, whale, caribou, fox, wolf, and bear.
- The human figure is shown in the masks and dolls that they have created.

- Many of the figure engravings are done on walrus ivory. Much of the art on the engravings is less than an inch wide. The Intuits communicated through tiny, decorative circles and miniature figures.
- To accent the engraved lines used in works like this, artists filled them in with color or made them dark with soot.



http://www.p4a.com/item_images/medium/11/49/48-01.jpg

- Frequently, Inuit art was created to serve the religious needs of the people.
- Masks were worn by shamans, or medicine men, during ceremonial dances. While dancing he would go into a trance and interpret messages from the outer world.



Inuit. Mask of Moon Goddess. Lower Yukon or Northwest Bering Sea. Before 1900. Hearst Museum of Anthropology, The University of California at Berkeley, Berkeley, California.

The North West Coast Region

- Refers to an area rich in natural resources that runs from southern Alaska to northern California. Native cultural groups in this region, including the Haida, Tlingit, and the Kwakiutl, developed a complex culture in which art played a prominent role.
- Rituals were developed to include ceremonial masks and dramatic costumes.

Yagim Mask, 1920–25. George Walkus (Kwakwaka'wakw, active 1920s–1930s). Vancouver Island, British Columbia. RTCNA 155.



- In Kwakwaka'wakw ceremony, or the celebration of an important event, people gathered to enjoy a *potlatch*. This event enabled the members of one clan to honor those of another, while adding to their own prestige.
- Native Americans of the Northwest Coast lived in large family groups. Each family group traced descent from a mythological animal or human-animal, from which they took their name. In order to symbolize their association with this mythic ancestor, they carved totem poles.



- This photograph, taken by Bernard Atkins at Sgangwai'Inagaay (Ninstints) in 1957, shows preparations for removal of pole 15559.
- <http://www.royalbcmuseum.bc.ca/totems/totems1b.html>
- Totem Poles are tall posts carved and painted with a series of animal symbols associated with a particular family or clan.

The SouthWest Region

- The Native American groups of the southwestern United States include the Pueblo and the Navajo.
- Early Spanish explorers used the term *pueblo*, meaning village, to describe groups of people living in large, highly organized settlements. Ancient pueblo dwellings were built with adobe, or sun-dried clay walls.

- The Pueblo were especially adept at creating painted pottery. Each community developed its own distinctive shapes and painted designs. IN the Rio Grande Valley of New Mexico, for example, Pueblo pottery used black outlines and geometric shapes to create bold designs over a cream-colored base.



STORAGE POT . Glazed ceramic. Santo Domingo Pueblo. New Mexico, North America. Zim Collection. LMA 9294

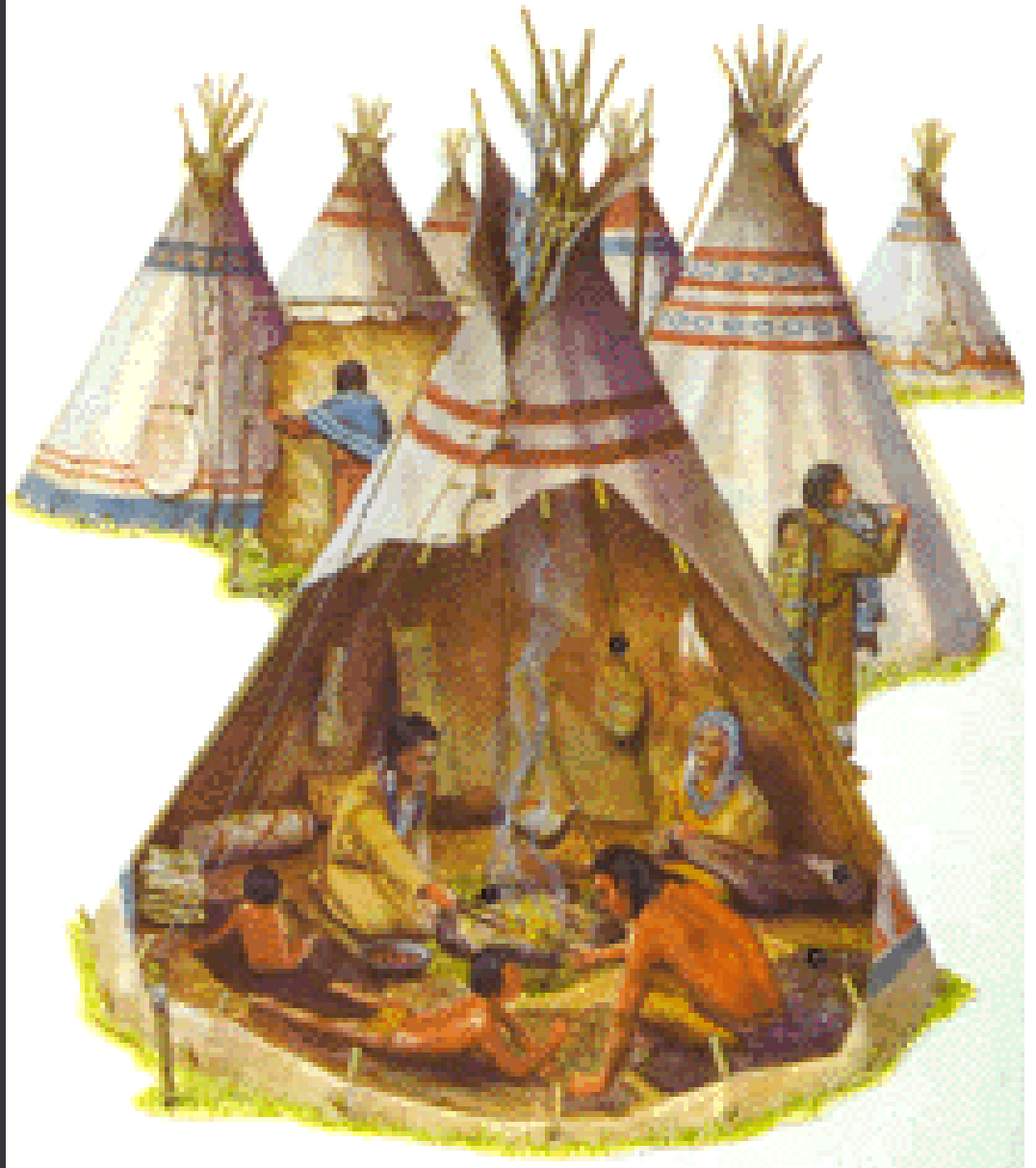
- The Navajo, another Southwestern cultural group, learned the art of weaving from the Pueblo. Male Pueblo weavers taught the Navajo weavers, who were women, to make cloth with looms at the beginning of the 18th C. As Spanish and Mexican settlers moved into the SouthWest, they introduced new designs and patterns which the Navajo adopted. By the 18th C., the Navajo were using European dyes and Spanish Wool to create weavings that matched the work produced by the best looms in Europe.
- The saddle blankets were used by the Navajos on their horses at social functions including ceremonial events. They are a rare genre of Navajo ethnological textile.



Great Plains Region

- The Native Americans of the Great Plains followed the huge herds of bison that roamed the broad grasslands of central North America.
- The different cultural groups of the Plains- including Blackfeet, Crow, Cheyenne, and Sioux – were highly skilled in the preparation of skins used for clothing, footwear, shields, and various kinds of containers. These were then painted or embroidered with porcupine quills and, later, glass beads.

- Because they were nomadic hunters, they created the tee-pee. This was a portable shelter made of buffalo hide stretched over poles that were lashed together in an upright position. The hides were covered with designs symbolizing the forces of nature and telling stories of heroic events.
- A large teepee contained as much space as a standard living room today.



<http://www.imomus.com/teepee.gif>



- The Great Plains Region artisans also created ceremonial headdresses for chieftains, which were worn during ritual dances.
- The elaborate headdress was created using natural materials found in the surrounding environment.

Woodlands Region

- The Woodlands made up the largest cultural group of Native Americans east of the Mississippi River. The Woodlands people combined hunting and gathering with simple farming. The Iroquois, made up of six different Woodlands groups, combined to form the highly organized Iroquois nation.

- Expert wood carvers, the Iroquois created wooden masks that were usually painted and decorated with horse hair.
- The best know masks were created for a society known as False Faces because of the masks they wore.
- These false face masks were thought to be sacred and represented the spirits who gave healers the magic they needed to treat illnesses.
- These masks were hidden away when not in use because they were thought to be very powerful and could cause accidental injuries.
- The masks were considered sacred and were not intended to be seen by nonbelievers.



Iroquois wooden false face masks, with metal circles decorating the eyes.

http://www.hancockhouse.com/products/iroquo_pics.htm

Chapter 12 Test

- Complete the Reviewing Art Facts on page 349 and answer the Thinking Critically thinking question #1 (p. 349) on a separate sheet of paper.
- Due September 20, 2006.
- You will also turn in the review sheet completed in class.