

CHAPTER 9: THE LANGUAGE OF FAITH: SYMBOLISM AND THE ARTS, C. 300-600 C.E.

Assigned pages for this chapter are pp. 17, 22 (beginning with "Symbolism and Early Christian Art")-33; pp. 34 (beginning with "The Buddhist Identity")-40. Both sections on music are skipped in this chapter. The chapter summary on pp. 42-43 should be reviewed.

1. Where did Constantine shift the seat of power in 330 C.E., and what was this eastern successor to the Roman Empire called? _____;

2. In the centuries after the death of Jesus, was early Christian belief uniform or was there a variety of beliefs?

_____ What were some of the questions that people tried to resolve about this new faith? _____

3. The Council of Nicaea, which met at _____, Turkey, in _____, produced a statement that came to be known as the Nicene Creed. This creed marks a change from Classical _____ to Christian _____.

4. The sarcophagus of Archbishop Theodorus (Fig. 9.2, p. 22) is ornamented with a collection of early Christian symbols and with a few that are not specifically Christian. What symbols do you recognize (after reading the text on p. 22)?

5. The four evangelists, Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John each have their own symbols--all winged creatures. Pair up the evangelist with his symbol:

Matthew = _____ Luke = _____

Mark = _____ John = _____

6. The subterranean burial chambers known as _____ are the source of some of the earliest Christian art, chiefly frescoes with scenes from the Old and New Testament.

7. Early Christian art avoided the **realism** of Roman sculptures and portraits. Moreover, the Jewish prohibition against depicting human form ("graven images") led to the production of very few free-standing sculptures between the second and eleventh centuries C.E. One very famous figure, however, is the *Good Shepherd* c. 300 C.E. This figure retains the hallmark _____ stance of Classical Greek sculpture.

8. Overall, early Christian art is much more _____ than realistic.

9. What is the term for the position with upraised arms indicative of prayer? _____ [See Fig. 9.4, p. 23]

10. The early Christian church buildings in the West were modeled on what Roman structure? _____

11. The central hall of a church is called a _____.

12. The upper wall above this central hall is called the **gallery**, and it was often decorated with _____ and _____.

13. At the east end of a church, crossing the **nave**, was the rectangular area called the _____.

14. The semi-circular space at the very east end of the church is called the _____. [Note the significance of the east--the direction from which the sun rises. It's symbolic of rebirth (cf. Egypt) and new beginnings.]

15. The Latin _____ plan became the model for medieval churches in the West.

16. The most outstanding example of Byzantine church architecture is the [H]_____ [S]_____ in Istanbul, formerly called **Constantinople**.

17. This church was commissioned by the East Roman Emperor _____ in 532 C.E. and is topped by a massive _____. [The church later became a mosque and is now a museum.]

18. The above powerful East Roman (**Byzantine**) Emperor attempted to reunify the Eastern and Western divisions of the old Roman Empire. While not succeeding in this, he left a legacy for the legal systems of later Europe by commissioning the revision and codification of _____.

19. The stunning Byzantine church of **San Vitale** (c. 526-547 C.E.) contains elaborate mosaics with a depiction of the above emperor and his wife, **Theodora**. This church is located in _____, _____.

20. The significance of the **iconography** in San Vitale is the depiction of the bond between _____ and _____. [Think back on the theocratic monarchies of Mesopotamia and Egypt.]

21. Iconoclasm literally means _____, and the Iconoclastic Controversy refers to the conflict over _____. This controversy along with other matters ultimately led to a **schism**, a break between the _____ Church (Constantinople) and the _____ (Rome) Church.

22. In Buddhist architecture, the _____ has several kinds of symbolic value, for example, the Dome of Heaven or the World Mountain, and it is a three-dimensional form of a **mandala**.

23. The _____ are stories of the Buddha's previous lives; they are often called "birth stories."

24. The two forms of Buddhism mentioned in the second column of p. 34 are _____ and _____, a later development. See also p. 13.

25. These individuals have played an important role in perpetuating the teachings of Buddhism: _____.

26. In the early centuries after Buddha died, artists avoided depicting the Buddha in human form. Instead, he was represented by variety of symbols, such as the _____, _____, _____, and [W]_____ [L]_____.

27. By the second century C.E., human depictions of the Buddha showed the influence of _____ and _____ representations of the god _____.

28. Sculptures communicate ideas about events in the life of the Buddha or about his teachings by depicting the Buddha's hands in certain symbolic gestures called _____.

29. Where did the Buddha preach his first sermon? _____

30. Please see p. 13 in Chapter 8. What emperor made Buddhism the state religion of India in the 3rd century B.C.E.? _____, and what were some of his policies? _____

Vocabulary: dogma, iconography, *alpha* and *omega*, *chi/rho*, catacombs, icon, iconoclasm, monastic

Some additional information:

pitaka - literally 'basket'. The Buddha's teachings were collected and divided into three *pitakas*, giving us the name *Tripitika* for the canonical Buddhist scriptures.

Jatakas - the Buddhist Birth Stories. These stories incorporate elements of animal fables, and in story fashion tell about the Buddha's previous births, sometimes as an animal (before his birth as Siddhartha Gautama). The stories illustrate the Buddha's compassion and other virtues.