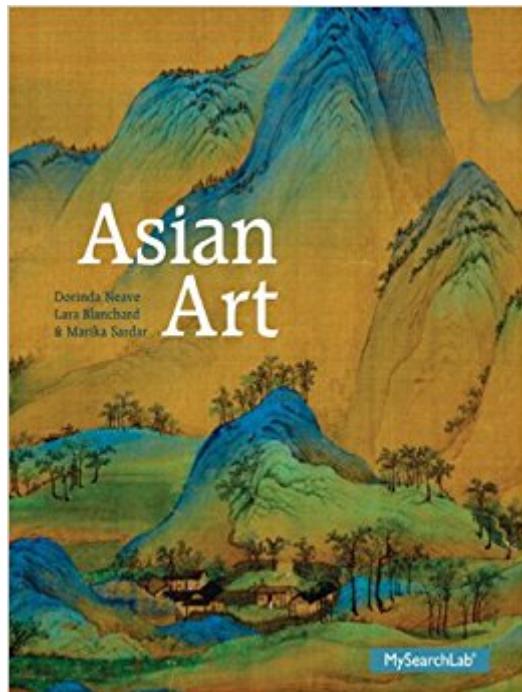


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## Asian Art



## **Synopsis**

Illuminates the rich history of Asian Art from ancient times to the present    Asian Art provides students with an accessible introduction to the history of Asian Art. Students will gain an understanding of the emergence and evolution of Asian art in all its diversity. Using a range of analytical skills, readers will learn to recognize patterns of continuity and change between the arts and cultures of various regions comprising Asia. Images set within their broader cultural and religious backgrounds provides students with important contextual information to understand and decode artworks. MySearchLab is a part of the Neave / Blanchard / Sardar program. Research and writing tools, including access to academic journals, help students explore Asian Art in even greater depth. To provide students with flexibility, students can download the eText to a tablet using the free Pearson eText app. Note: This is the standalone book if you want the book/access card order the ISBN below:

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## **Customer Reviews**

Thank you for saving my butt in Asian Art Class!

Excellent discussion of asian art and its historical significance with very good photos of art works

Not as interesting as the authors claim it will be.

The publication of this book was anxiously awaited. There hasn't been a comprehensive Asian art textbook since Sherman Lee's ancient tome that used terms like "Oriental" for artifacts and cultures alike, the Asianist equivalent of "primitive art" for books. Those old books are fascinating as artifacts themselves but extremely time-consuming to teach with as you constantly have to stop and explain to students those dusty terms that 19th century people used to talk about art from east of Suez and south of the Nile's First Cataract. So imagine a 21st century professor's excitement at the prospect of a new Asian Art textbook, one written by women no less, some of them with actual Asian ancestry! (Not that an author's membership in either of those is a requirement). Zipping through our advance desk copies, we are immediately impressed by the canonical works discussed and illustrated but also by the inclusion of modern and even contemporary art of Asia and of the Diaspora, too! Asian Art's Introduction alone is tremendously useful as it draws on Asian literary classics, philosophy and folklore to explain major concepts in aesthetics. The omission of an important artwork here or there is easily forgiven if we are to finally get a nice new textbook to replace the old Orientalist Lee book or the admittedly good and inexpensive but prohibitively numerous (half dozen) Thames & Hudson books (one for each Asian region) some of us have been using in lieu of Lee. So we approve the new Asian Art textbook and draft it into immediate service. All seems right with the semester. Until in the later parts of otherwise very nicely written/illustrated chapters on Buddhist art in India and Southeast Asia we notice a troubling, repeated omission. Where is the ornate and iconographically complex Pala art of Bengal-Bihar that extended Buddhist India's reach deep into the eastern tropics, the snowy Himalayas, and into the second millennium? In a forgiving mood, we shake off the foreboding and barrel ahead. But finally, the magnitude of the omission becomes clear when we try to cross from India into neighboring Tibet and Nepal. Bengal and Bihar are the bridge to the Himalayas and the bridge is out! Given that the iconography and style of Pala Buddhist art informed the foundation of Nepalese and Tibetan Buddhist art, it's a punishing climb to Himalayan art without Bihar and Bengal. And Himalayan art itself? How is it treated in this feverishly awaited volume? Tibet is nowhere to be found; not in the illustrations! For

this massive subject of Buddhist (and Bon) art, there is no chapter at all. And when we search the Index desperately, like dying climbers on the shoulders of Mt. Kailash, for even honorary mentions of what is arguably the richest iconographic tradition in Buddhist Asia we find almost nothing. Nepal had a single entry. Bhutan too, one. Tibet is mentioned four times, once for its language, once for its geographical location (as part of China), once for the fact that Mongolian invaders of China practiced the Shakya (Sa skya) branch of Tibetan Buddhism, and once, bizarrely, for an 8th century polo match that it lost to China. The fact that in that same century a Buddhist debate was held at Samye Monastery in Tibet to determine which branch of Buddhism Tibet would adopt once and for all and that the Indian debaters handed the Chinese debaters their collective butt, before the Tibetan king handed them their proverbial hats thenceforth adopting Indian Buddhism for his country is not mentioned. Even though it is a far more germane topic to the development of Asian art and culture than polo... Awestruck by the brazen Bengali-Himalayan omission we are left to fend for ourselves when teaching the essential topic of Himalayan art. For an Asian art history course without Tibet and Nepal is like Indian food without cumin or coriander, like Thai pagodas without gold. There is not a single sand mandala in this book! There is not a single thangka. The word doesn't even appear in the index, nor do "dorje" or "chorten"! And the one chorten that is illustrated in the book is the Mongolian "White Stupa" in Beijing. When you discover that an essential part of something is missing, you can experience a strange mix of incredulity, awe and confusion. When you discover that even the pathways and bridges to the missing thing are also missing, you get downright suspicious, even angry. Robert Thurman, Steven Kossak, Jane Casey Singer, Pratapaditya Pal will all tell you that Tibetan art owes a lot to Nepal and that Nepal owes a lot to Bengal-Bihar. They are in effect an ancestral line with Tibet at the end so by eliminating either Bengal/Bihar or Nepal, you can eliminate Tibet, or said another way, if you want to neatly eliminate Tibet, eliminate the evolutionary lines that lead to it. In the classroom the professor has to scramble to deal with the omission. Quickly, s/he scurries about to find a PDF and adjusting the PowerPoint on the subject as to supplement the loss to students... and to make the course worthy of the tuition and textbook fees. And now, instead of explaining why Sherman Lee still calls people "Oriental" the professor must try and explain why Tibetan art and its Indo-Himalayan ancestors are missing entirely from the textbook. The professor admits ignorance or otherwise points out some interesting facts about the publishing business. The course stops for 10 minutes to discuss the expansion of Pearson Education to Pearson Education Asia and the dozens of locations of Pearson Education China especially (by far Pearson's greatest Asian focus).

Students and professor begin to wonder if Chinese politics is the reason why the book Asian Art has turned out to be the proverbial ĂfĂcĂ â ¬Ă Å“six for a nine.ĂfĂcĂ â ¬Ă Å• They also wonder if the authors of a book called Asian Art CHOSE to omit the essential chapters on Tibet and its ancestral line (without explanation thereof in the Intro or Preface) or if they were compelled to do so by parties above their pay grade or across the Pacific Ocean. Some begin to bristle at the possibility that a foreign nation can induce a publisher in New Jersey to cheat American students of key parts of their art history educationĂfĂcĂ â ¬Ă Å|

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