

World Religions in Greater Indianapolis Teaching Module

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Humanities Discipline: Art Appreciation ARTH110

Date: January 7, 2017

World Religions: Buddhism

Teaching Module Title: Ryoanji Garden

Teaching Module Goals: To explore whether the Ryoanji Garden in Kyoto reflects Zen Buddhism.

View:

Images of Ryoanji Garden:

1. <http://jpninfo.com/41131>
2. <https://www.khanacademy.org/humanities/art-asia/art-japan/muromachi-period/a/ryoanji>
3. <http://www.japan-guide.com/e/e3909.html>

Assigned Readings:

1. Department of Asian Art. "Zen Buddhism." In Heilbrunn Timeline of Art History. New York: The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 2000. http://www.metmuseum.org/toah/hd/zen/hd_zen.htm
2. <https://www.khanacademy.org/humanities/art-asia/art-japan/muromachi-period/a/ryoanji> Ryōanji (Peaceful Dragon Temple) Essay by Dr. Yoonjung Seo.
3. Official website: <http://www.ryoanji.jp/smph/eng/> Rock Garden: carving/design/perspective/earthen wall Guide: map
4. Kuck. L. (1935). *One Hundred Kyoto Gardens*. Kegan Paul, Trench, Truber & Co. Ltd. London. J.L.Thompson & Co. (Retail) Ltd. Kobe, Japan. Chapter: Ryuanji (or Ryoanji) Temple Garden. Pp. 110-113.
5. Kuck L. (1968) *The World of the Japanese Garden: From Chinese Origins to Modern Landscape Art*. Weatherhill. New York & Tokyo. Chapter 17: Ryoan-ji: Sermon in Stone. Pp. 163-171
6. Kuitert W. (1988). Themes, Scenes, and Taste in the History of Japanese Garden Art. J.C. Gieben. Amsterdam.
 - 6.2 The Subtemple Ryoan-ji. Pp. 114-118
 - 8.2 The Zen Garden. P. 150-160Case for why Ryoanji is not religiously inspired by Zen Buddhism

Instructor Resources:

Kuitert W. (1988). Themes, Scenes, and Taste in the History of Japanese Garden Art. J.C. Gieben. Amsterdam.

- 1.2 The Formation of the Scenic Garden: The Muromachi Period Until the Onin War (1334-1467) Pp. 64-69
- 3.1 Political and Cultural Role of the Zen Institutions Pp. 80-81
- 4.3 The Mediaeval Scenic Garden and its Appreciation Pp. 94-9
- 5.2 The Subtemple Pp. 103-105
- 8.2 The Scenic Garden Pp. 145-150

Study Questions:

1. Briefly, what is Zen Buddhism?
2. Describe the garden's appearance and formal qualities.
3. Give a brief timeline of its development.
4. What is the Japanese name for this type of garden? What is the English translation?
5. Give three interpretations of the garden.
6. How does this type of garden reflect Zen Buddhism?

7. Mention Kuitert's objection to the "Zen Interpretation" of the garden as presented by Kuck.

Written Assignment:

Write a one-page narrative about the Ryoanji Garden incorporating the study questions supporting the interpretation that the garden is religiously inspired. Alternatively, incorporate the study questions to support Kuitert's interpretation that Ryoanji should not be perceived as religiously inspired by Zen Buddhism.