

# ARTSTOR

ARTSTOR INTERDISCIPLINARY

## ARTSTOR RESOURCES IN RELIGIOUS STUDIES

The ARTstor Digital Library is a visual resource of value to scholars, teachers, and students across the arts, humanities, social sciences, and beyond. This handout is part of a growing series designed to highlight ARTstor's relevance to a variety of fields of study.

### ARTSTOR COLLECTIONS RELEVANT TO RELIGIOUS STUDIES



Several ARTstor collections will be of interest to scholars, teachers, and students of religion, both Eastern and Western traditions. Eastern religious traditions are richly represented in the Huntington Archive of Asian Art and the Mellon International Dunhuang Archive, both of which abound in images of Buddhist iconography. The latter is a pioneering attempt to document – through tens of thousands of still images, as well as Quick Time Virtual Reality (QTVR) panoramas – the Buddhist cave shrines in Dunhuang, China, located in the Gobi desert along the ancient Silk Route. Another collection of note is the American Council for Southern Asian Art (ACSAA) Collection, which features the art and architecture of South and Southeast Asian countries, such as India, Pakistan, Afghanistan, Nepal, Tibet, Burma, Thailand, Sri Lanka, Cambodia, and Indonesia. Coverage of South Asia also extends to representations of Muslim faith from the Islamic Art and Architecture Collection, which was compiled from the teaching slides of three prominent scholars of Islamic art and architecture, Walter B. Denny (University of Massachusetts – Amherst) and Jonathan Bloom and Sheila Blair (Boston College).

Western religious traditions are also represented in the ARTstor Digital Library. The Illustrated Bartsch, a digital version of the 96-volume corpus of Old Master prints, offers an overview of European visual culture from the 15th to the early 19th century, with special strengths in the Renaissance and Reformation eras. As such, examples of religious iconography abound among the 50,000+ prints (engravings, etchings, woodcuts etc.) reproduced in the collection, whether you are looking for representations of individual saints like St. Agatha or St. Jerome, or searching for religious subjects such as “The Holy Family” or the “Annunciation.” Keyword searching for religious figures and themes will also prove fruitful in the encyclopedic Image Gallery. Photographic documentation of religious ceremonies and sites, such as temples, cathedrals, and mosques, abound. These include historic photographs of Western cathedrals (the Andrew Dickson White Collection of Architectural Photographs, the Clarence Ward Archive, etc.) and funerary monuments (Giza Archeological Expedition Archive, the Farber Gravestone Collection, etc.), as well as contemporary Quick Time Virtual Reality files of ancient and modern religious sites from Columbia University’s collection of QTVR Panoramas of World Architecture.

## HELPFUL SEARCH TIPS

Keyword searches are likely to be most successful. Truncating your search term (e.g. buddhis\* or synagog\*) in order to retrieve terms with variant endings will enlarge your search results. For more precise searches, you can search for phrases within quotation marks (“...”), or use the Advanced Search feature to limit your searches by date or geographic region.

- ❖ A search for “martin luther” yields over 100 images
- ❖ Searching for “shiva” produces more than 700 results
- ❖ “buddha” or “jesus” will both return more than 1000 images each

## HELPFUL BROWSING CATEGORIES

ARTstor’s collections may be browsed in a number of ways. For instance, the Huntington Archive of Asian Art may be browsed by region and period, while the Illustrated Bartsch is organized by country, century, or volume. Within the ARTstor Slide Gallery, there is a category specifically dedicated to “Religion.” You may also browse across all of ARTstor’s collections by geography or object classification, so that those specializing in specific areas within Religious Studies may access images relevant to their primary interests. For example, you can browse ARTstor for “Decorative Arts, Utilitarian Objects, and Interior Design” and then expand that browsing category to narrow the set down to “Iran” or “Turkey” for examples of prayer rugs. Alternatively, you can start by browsing geographically first, such as selecting “France” or “Morocco” from a controlled list of countries, and then choosing the category for “Architecture and City Planning” to view Medieval cathedrals or mosques.



### Image Credits:

- 1) Leaf from Fatah al-Haramain, mid-16th century | Ottoman | The Metropolitan Museum of Art
- 2) Unitarian Church, Madison, Wisconsin, 1947 - 1951 | Frank Lloyd Wright, American, 1867 - 1959 | The Carnegie Arts of the United States
- 3) Siva Nataraja, late 10th century | Indian | The Minneapolis Institute of Arts
- 4) Portrait of Mary Baker Eddy, ca. 1885 - 1895 | The Schlesinger History of Women in America Collection
- 5) Pilgrimage to Mecca | The Image Gallery
- 6) Mikveh Israel Synagogue, drawing 1961 | Louis Kahn, American, 1901 - 1974 | The Museum of Modern Art
- 7) Shinto Priests Carrying Shrine, 1980's | The Image Gallery