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AP Art History

Mrs. Eckel

Early Islamic Art

*How did religion influence art and the expression of the sacred across different times and cultures? Select two works of art. One should be Islamic, and the other can be from another culture you have studied so far. Describe the notion of the sacred and how this is reflected in the works of art that you select. Please fully identify your selections and include how each work of art reflects the beliefs and values of its culture.*

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| http://i.gyazo.com/5b1481f02aa5913b1159b77da1446b8d.png | http://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/thumb/a/af/Vettii.jpg/330px-Vettii.jpg |

The first work of art shown above and to the left is the Selimiye Mosque in Edirne, Turkey. The Mosque set a precedent of opulence that successive Ottoman mosques followed afterwards. As shown in the photograph given above, the mosque makes use of both height and light: the dome rises high and makes use of natural light to illuminate the artistic detail that decorates the dome. Additionally, the arches accentuate the sheer opulence of the mosque which was justified as giving glory to Allah (since Islam does not usually put such an emphasis on complicated designs).

The second work of art shown above is a shrine to Roman gods. The Roman Empire and Roman people made use of architecture for worship much like Muslims have with their mosques. The Romans constructed public mosques for prayer to various gods and goddesses—most notably the goddess of peace when the Roman Empire was at war—though the shrine pictured above was found in the Lararium at the House of the Vettii and dates back to approximately the first century A.D., created by an unknown artist(s).

Though cultures and styles of worship vary greatly, the works of art given above demonstrate that—despite cultural differences—many people and empires have used architecture to enable them to worship effectively. When it comes to Early Islamic Art, mosques are a fantastic example of the use of architecture in religious worship, while shrines and altars were more prevalent in the Roman Empire.