Learning Journal 7

Regional religious beliefs have a profound influence on a country's art and architecture. In China, Daoism has significantly shaped the artistic and architectural expressions throughout history. Here are some examples:

Daoist temples and monasteries often incorporate elements that reflect the philosophy's principles of harmony with nature, balance, and simplicity. The use of natural materials like wood and stone, curved roofs, and integration with the surrounding landscape are common features (Little & Eichman, 2000). The Taoist Temple of the Celestial Masters in Zhengzhou, for instance, exemplifies this harmonious relationship with its natural setting and the use of organic architectural forms.

Furthermore, Daoist art and symbolism are prevalent in various forms, including paintings, calligraphy, and sculptures. The depiction of Daoist deities, mythological figures, and symbols like the yin-yang, the Bagua (eight trigrams), and the Taiji (the ultimate reality) are common motifs in Chinese art, reflecting the religion's cosmological and philosophical beliefs (Robinet, 1997).

This connection between Daoism and art/architecture can be explained by the religion's emphasis on aligning human creations with the natural order and the cosmic principles of the Dao (the Way). Daoist philosophy encourages a harmonious coexistence between humans and nature, which is reflected in the organic and minimalistic designs of Daoist architecture. Additionally, Daoist art and symbolism serve as visual representations of the religion's teachings, myths, and concepts, helping to perpetuate and disseminate these beliefs among the masses.

Part B:

Roman philosophy had a strong relationship with Greek philosophy, as many Roman thinkers were heavily influenced by and built upon the ideas and schools of thought that originated in ancient Greece. The Romans adapted and integrated Greek philosophical concepts into their own cultural and intellectual traditions.

The three main schools of Roman philosophy were:

1. Stoicism: Emphasizing virtue, reason, and self-control as the path to a good and meaningful life. Stoics believed in living in harmony with nature and accepted fate with equanimity. Prominent figures include Seneca, Epictetus, and Marcus Aurelius (Inwood, 2003).
2. Epicureanism: Founded by Epicurus, this school emphasized the pursuit of pleasure and the avoidance of pain as the ultimate goal of life. However, it advocated for moderation and the cultivation of virtues to achieve lasting happiness and tranquility (O'Keefe, 2010).
3. Skepticism: Influenced by Pyrrho of Elis, the Skeptics questioned the possibility of certain knowledge and advocated for suspending judgment and maintaining an open mind, as absolute truth was considered unattainable (Bett, 2010).

Among these schools, the idea of Stoicism resonates with me the most. The emphasis on virtue, reason, and self-control as guiding principles for living a meaningful life aligns with my personal values and beliefs. The Stoic concept of accepting what is within our control and not dwelling on external circumstances that are beyond our control is a powerful perspective that can promote inner peace and resilience.

In my daily life, I can apply Stoic principles by cultivating virtues like wisdom, courage, temperance, and justice through conscious effort and self-reflection. I can strive to respond to challenges with equanimity and focus on what I can control, rather than being consumed by factors beyond my influence. Additionally, the Stoic practice of negative visualization, which involves contemplating potential adversities and losses, can help me appreciate the present and develop a mindset of gratitude.

Word count: 550

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