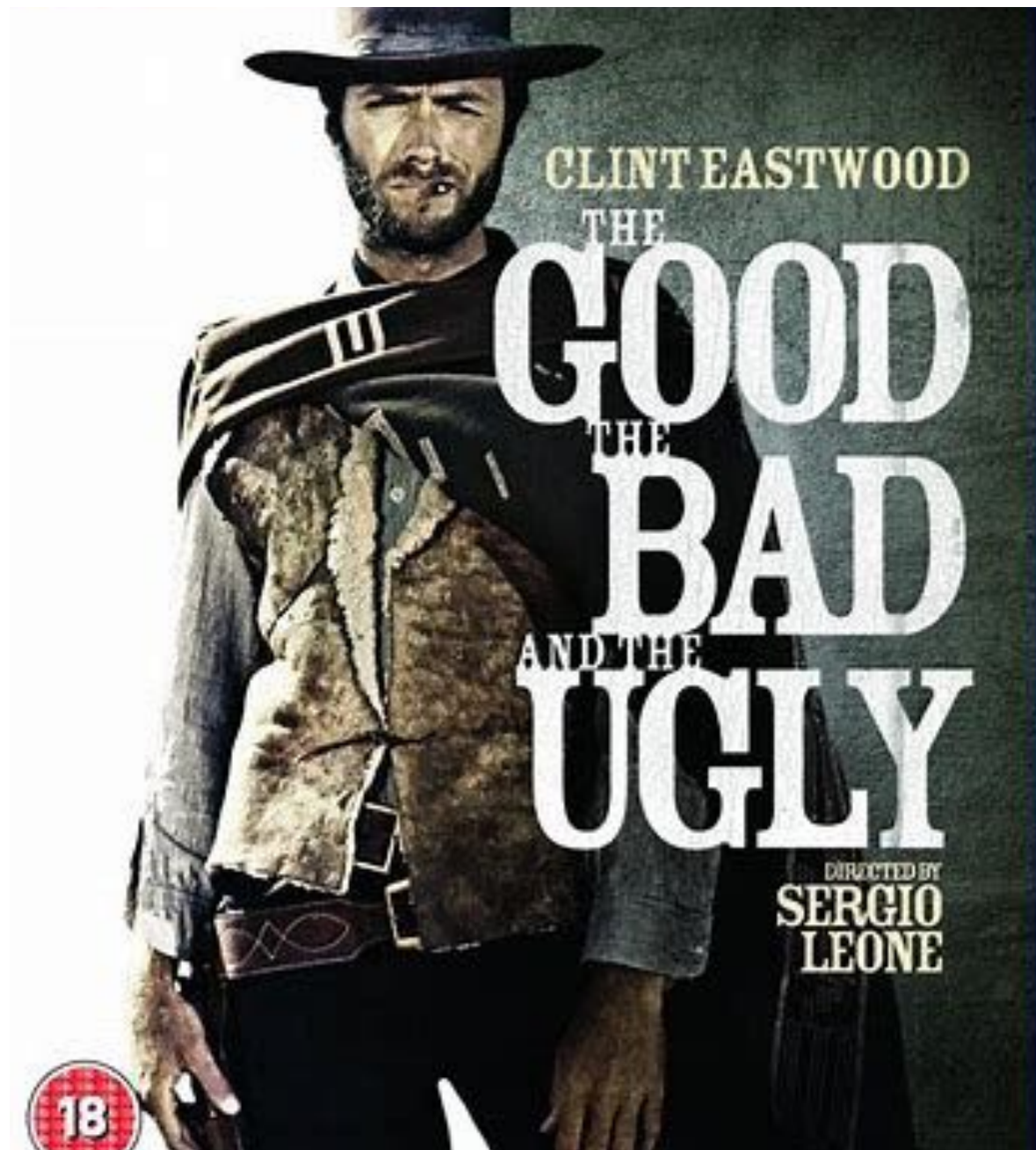


Relics and Remnants

Ray Kerkhove, Avatar's Abode 2022

From negatives to positives...



Creating 'RELIGIONS' FROM RELICS & REMNANTS

1. Relics



Museums, Shrines



2. Tombs



Pilgrimage Centres



3. Places & buildings



Shrines, Centres



4. Words

(Avatar's words, memories)



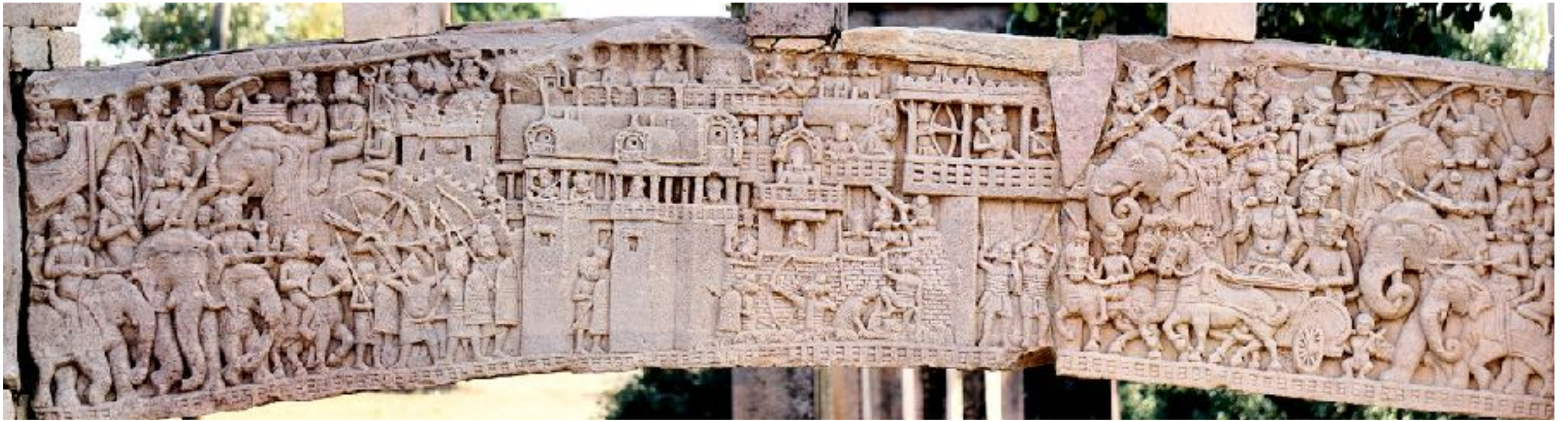
Archives, Canon

BAH! WHO NEEDS THEM!
–wars and divisions!



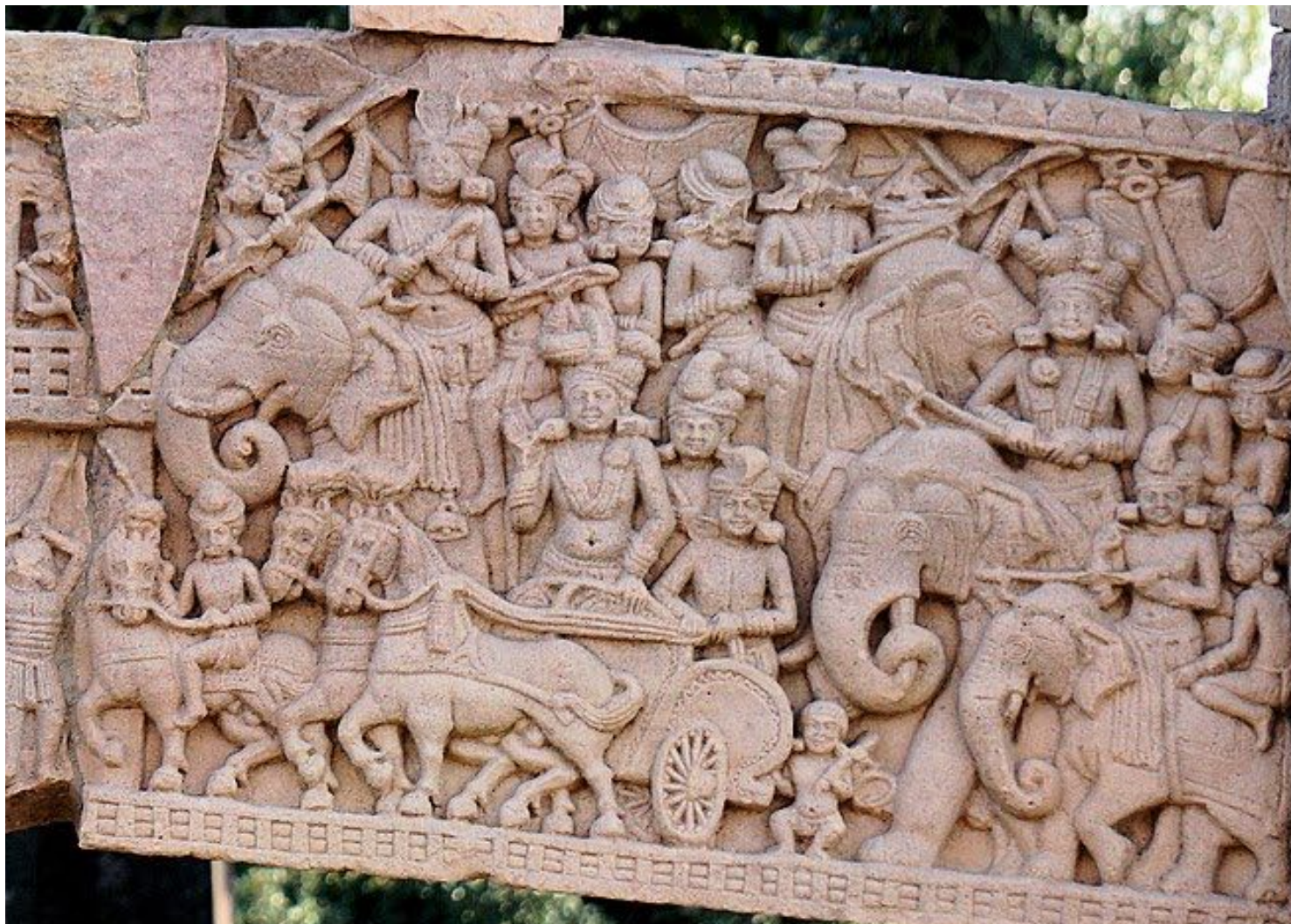
*Kamli Coat back.
Kamli Coat photos from M&C Collection.*





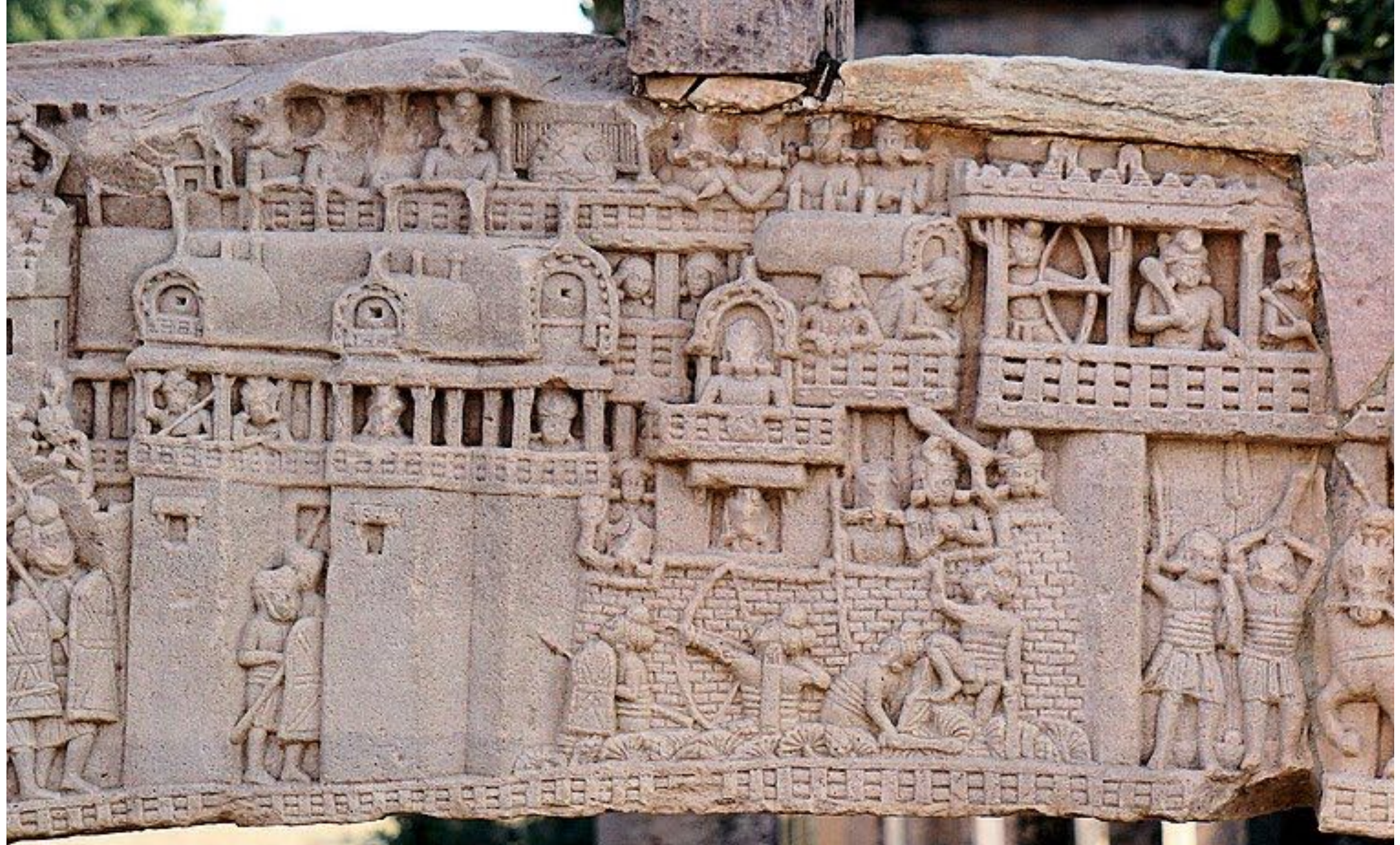
Battle over Buddha's Relics

Sanchi c.100 BC

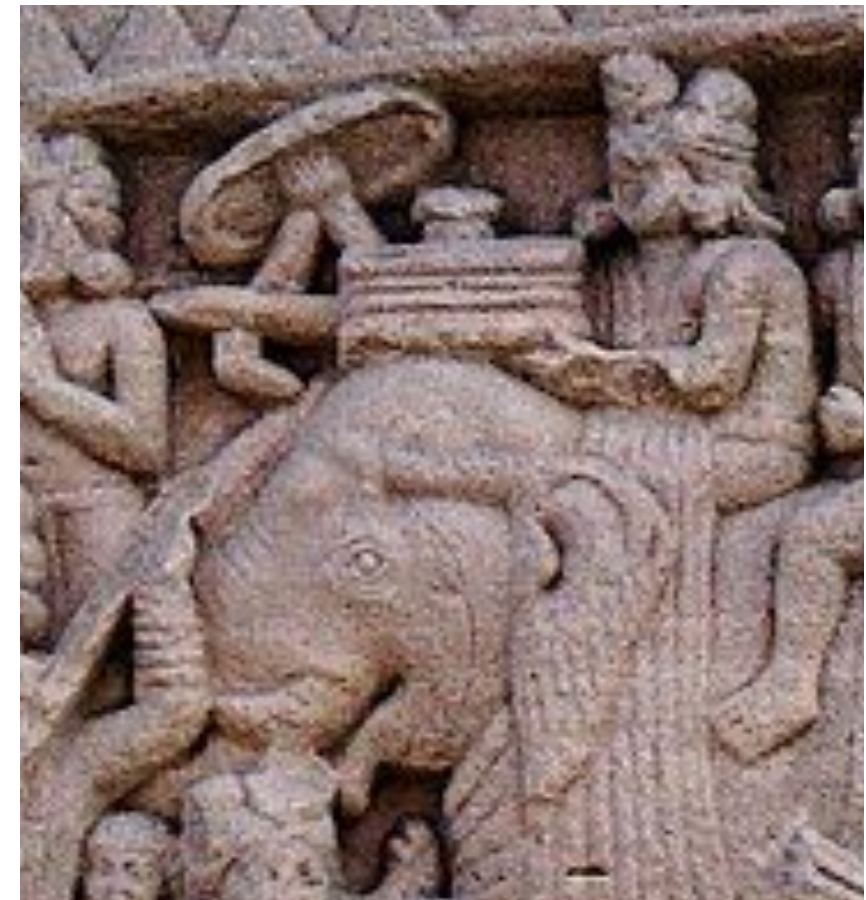
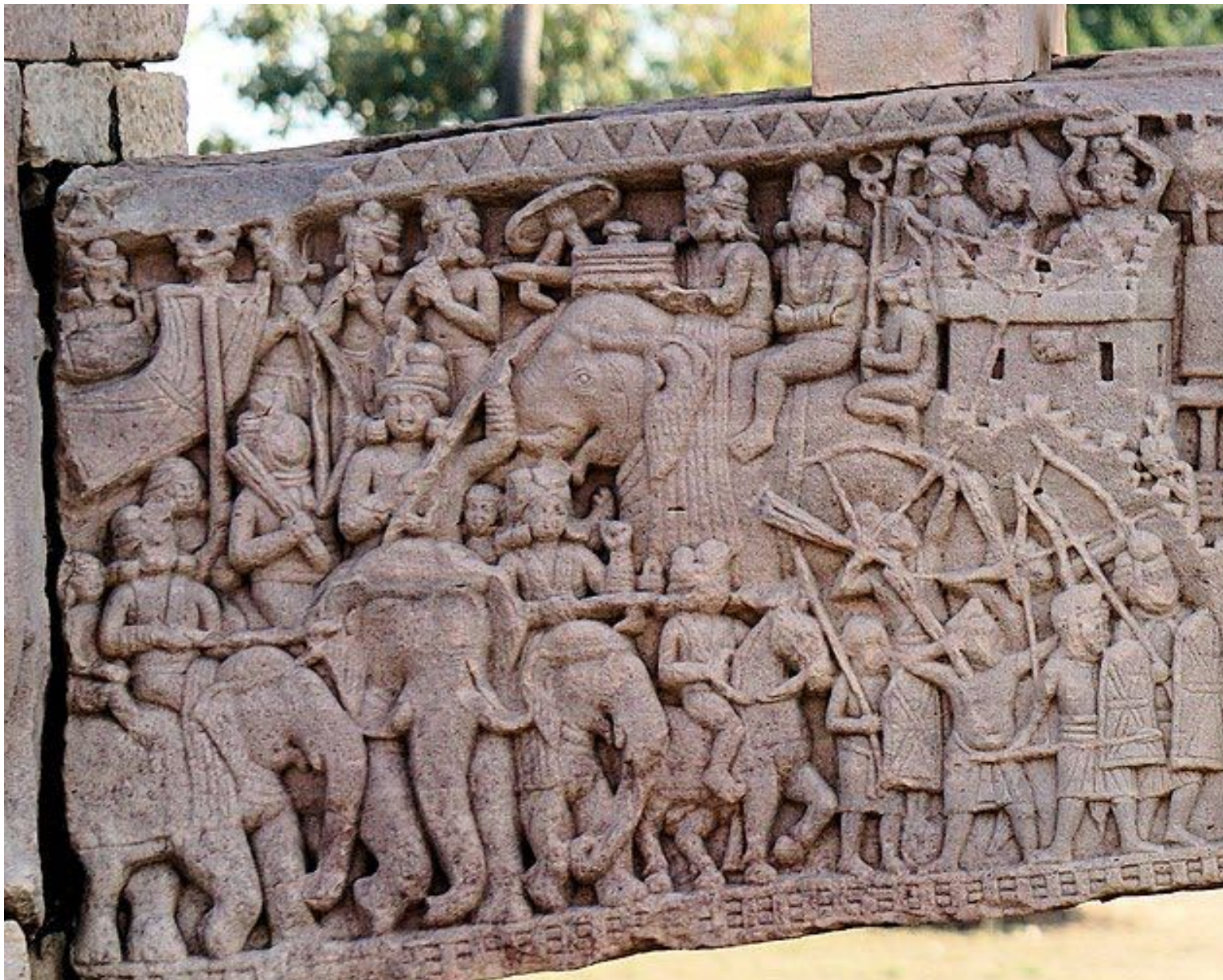


King of Malla - Buddha's Relics to capital





Siege of Kushinara (Malla defending)



Victorious 7 clans

Finally, agreement – cremation - relics divided by Buddha's disciples among 8 royal families & disciples.

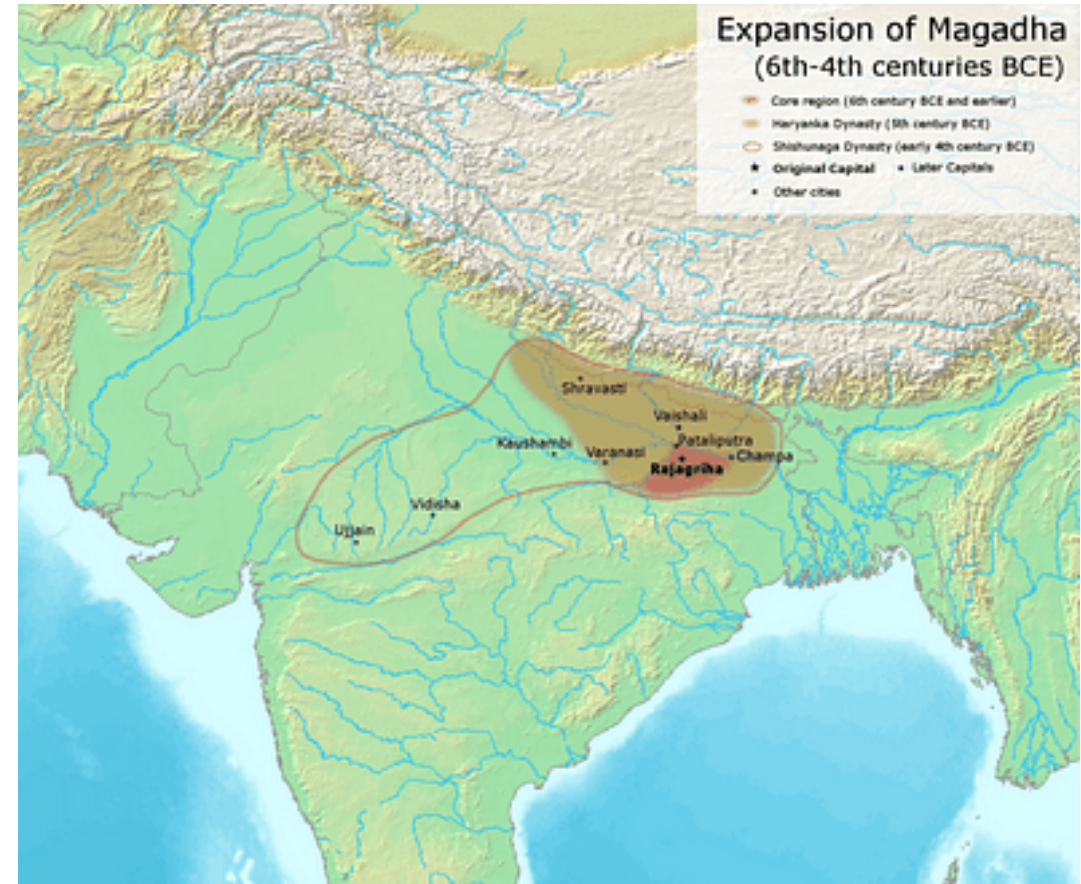


Kusinara: where Buddha died, cremated & relics divided





Ajatashatru of Magadha (493-460 BC)– son of Bimbisara - leaving to fight relics war



Magadha – predecessor of Mauryan Empire



Stupa built by Kg Ajatashatru at Anandajoti

Relics taken from 8 guardian kingdoms by [Ashoka](#) (268-232 BC) -enshrined in 84,000 stupas



Naga kings at Ramagrama - too powerful, refused to surrender relics



CRUSADES, CHRIST'S TOMB & 'TRUE' CROSS



Holy Sepulchre

- Destroyed 1009 by 'the mad Caliph' Al-Hakim
- Rebuilt 1048
- 'Liberated' by Crusaders 15th July 1099



Reliquary of the True Cross



2nd Crusade (1147) : St Pope Eugene II – Papal Bull

“the relics of the saints have been given over to the trampling under foot of the infidels and dispersed.”



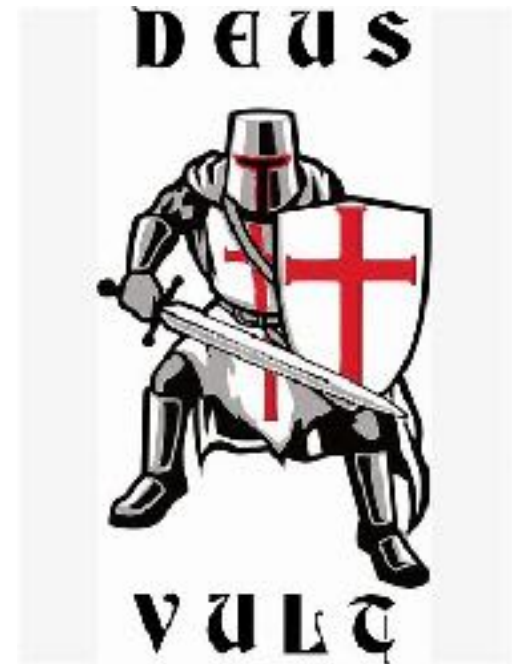
Order of the Holy Sepulchre



St Bernard of Clairvaux

- Benedictine Reviver
- Doctor of the Church)
- Knights Templars' Orders

“Deus vult! (God wills it!)
...Cursed be he who does
not stain his sword with
blood.”

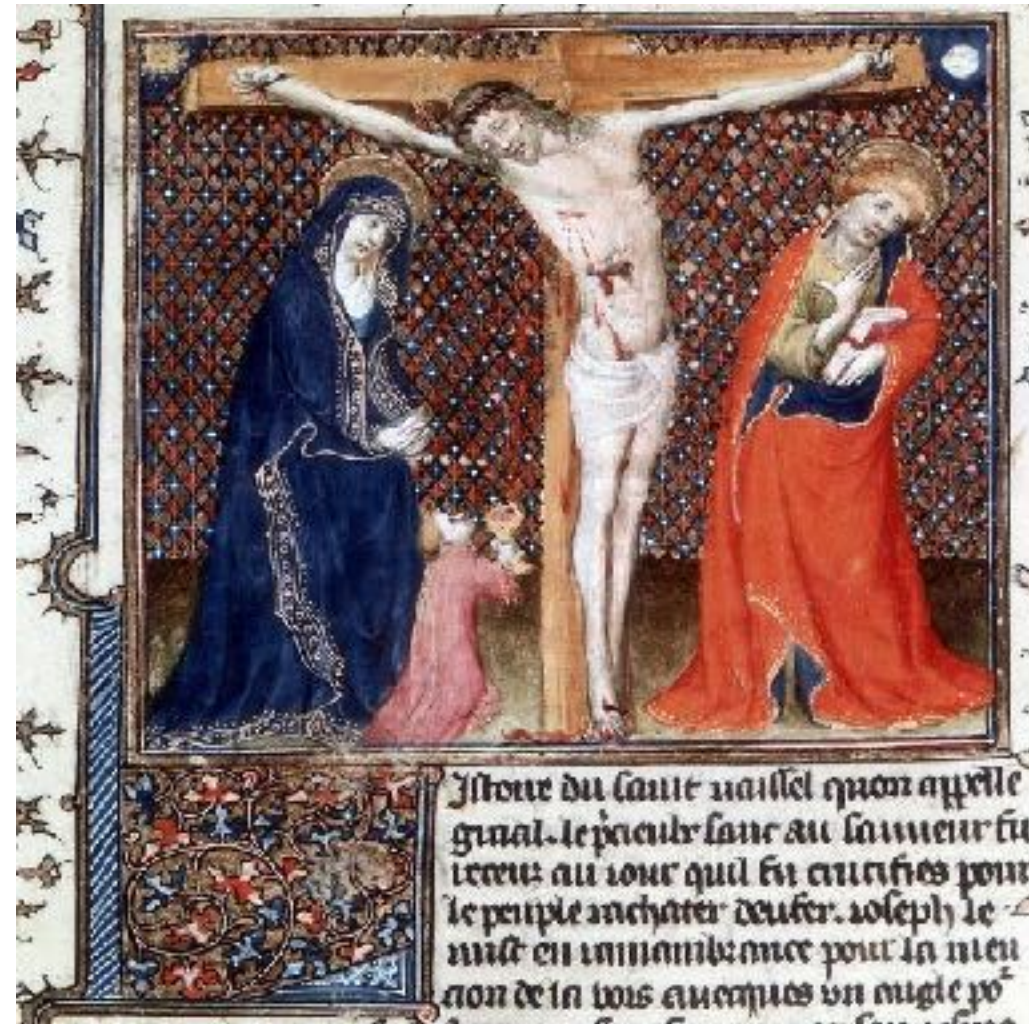


Knights Templar & Crusades: protecting & 'liberating' Jerusalem & the True Cross (1099)



QUEST FOR THE HOLY GRAIL

- Gives unending wine
- Gives longevity
- Grants all wishes
- Grants occult powers



- Last Supper.
- Joseph of Arimathea - blood of Jesus.

Basilica of San Isidoro in Leon, northern Spain

Hitler, Van Eyck's Ghent Altarpiece & the Holy Grail



Nazi theft 1934-1945



Arthur, Knights Templar - quest for the Holy Grail



Perceval, 1190





Valencia Cathedral, Italy: Holy Grail

Carbon-dated to between 200s BC – 200s AD, Middle East.

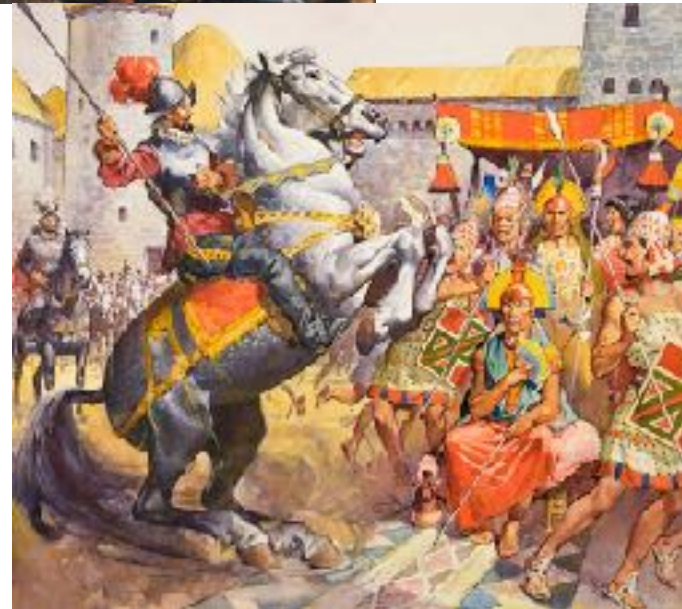
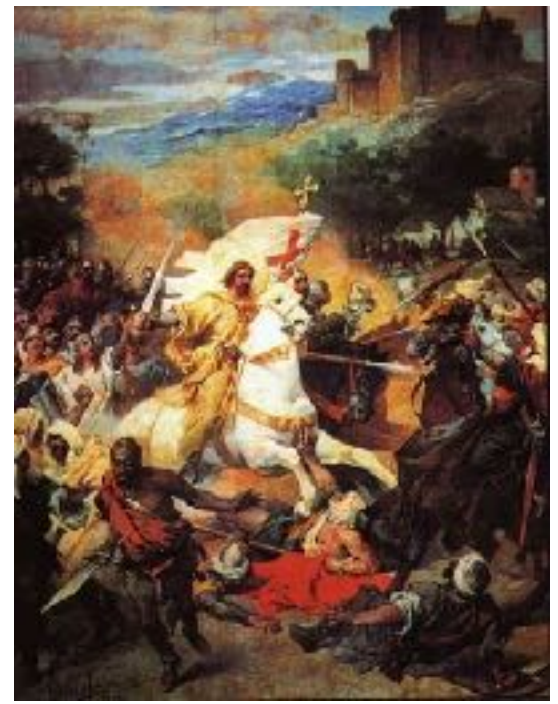
San Juan de la Peña during
Moorish Conquest of Spain



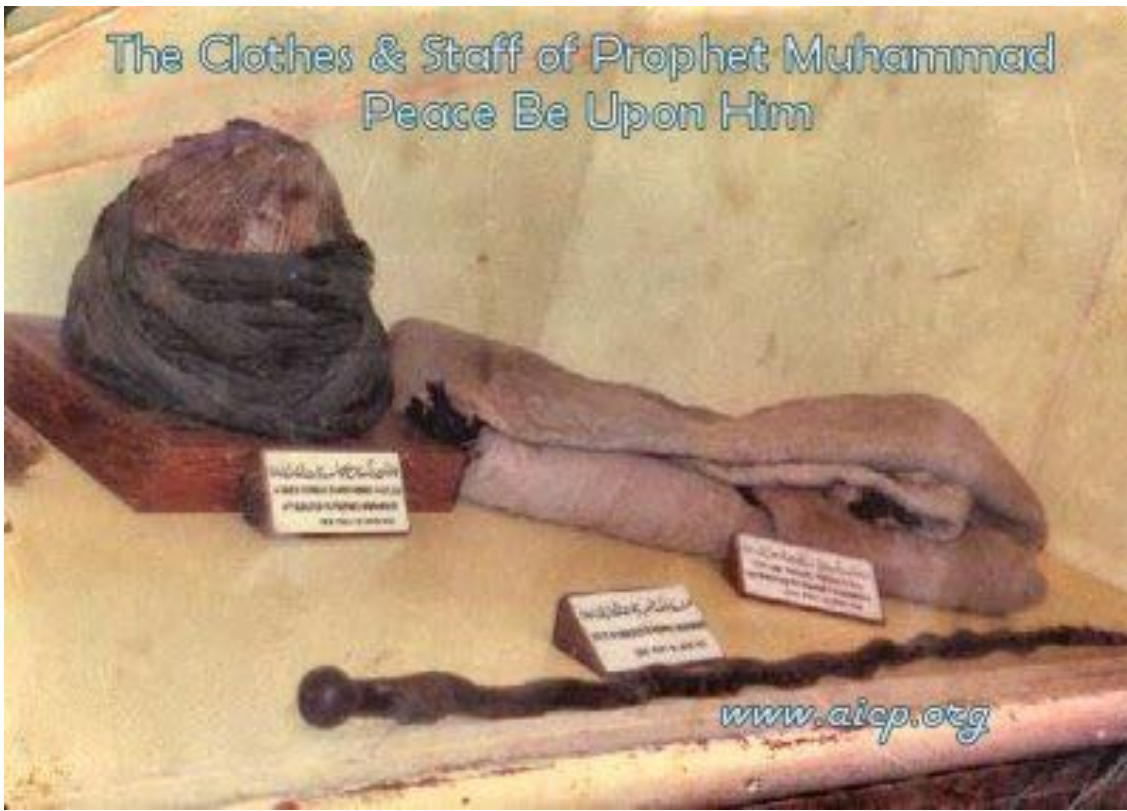
Saint Peter to Rome... Vatican soldier to Spain....

... to Valencia's Gothic cathedral.





Santiago de Compostela Cathedral (St James) Spain



Turban, cloak and stick

MUHAMMAD RELICS



Bowl



Tooth



Footprint

CALIPHATE CUSTODIANSHIP

Caliphs - Umayyads – Abbasids – Mamluks - Ottomans.

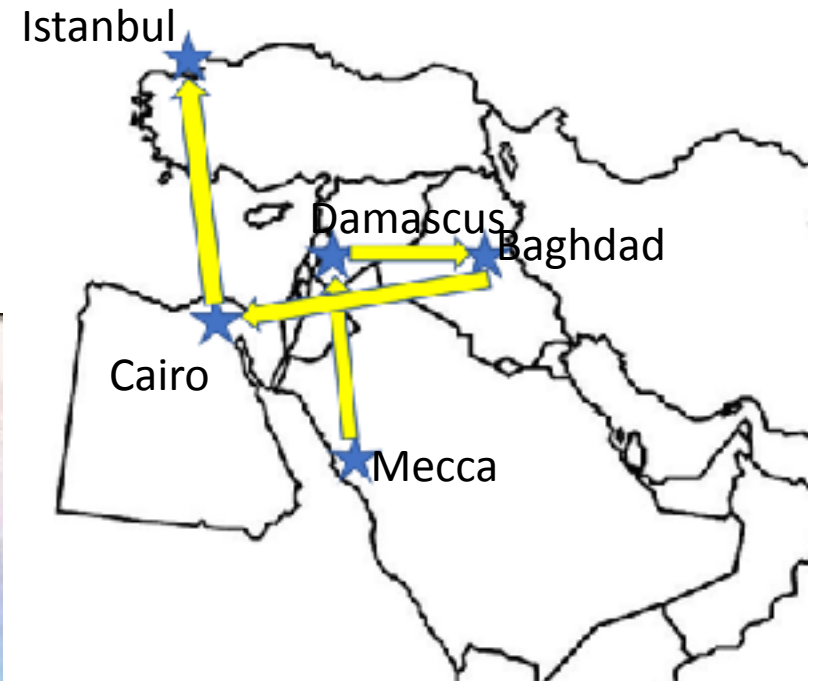


Topkapi Palace Istanbul



Blessed Mantle Chamber

seal of Muhammad - several letters sent to foreign dignitaries – till 1600s.



OVERBLOWN? THE ADORATION OF RELICS



Notre Dame, Paris, France:
Crown of Thorns



OPULENCE? King of Thailand's Buddha
bone; The Bimaran casket. Afghanistan



Bamberg Cathedral, Germany:
Holy Nail



Basilica of the Holy Blood,
Bruges, Belgium: Christ's blood





Eight nested reliquary boxes supposed to contain a **finger bone of Gautama Buddha**. The innermost container, the miniature temple, is made of solid gold. From the **Famen Temple Shaanxi (China)**.



Shwedagon Pagoda (Rangoon, Burma), **8 strands of Buddha's hair** kept by disciples





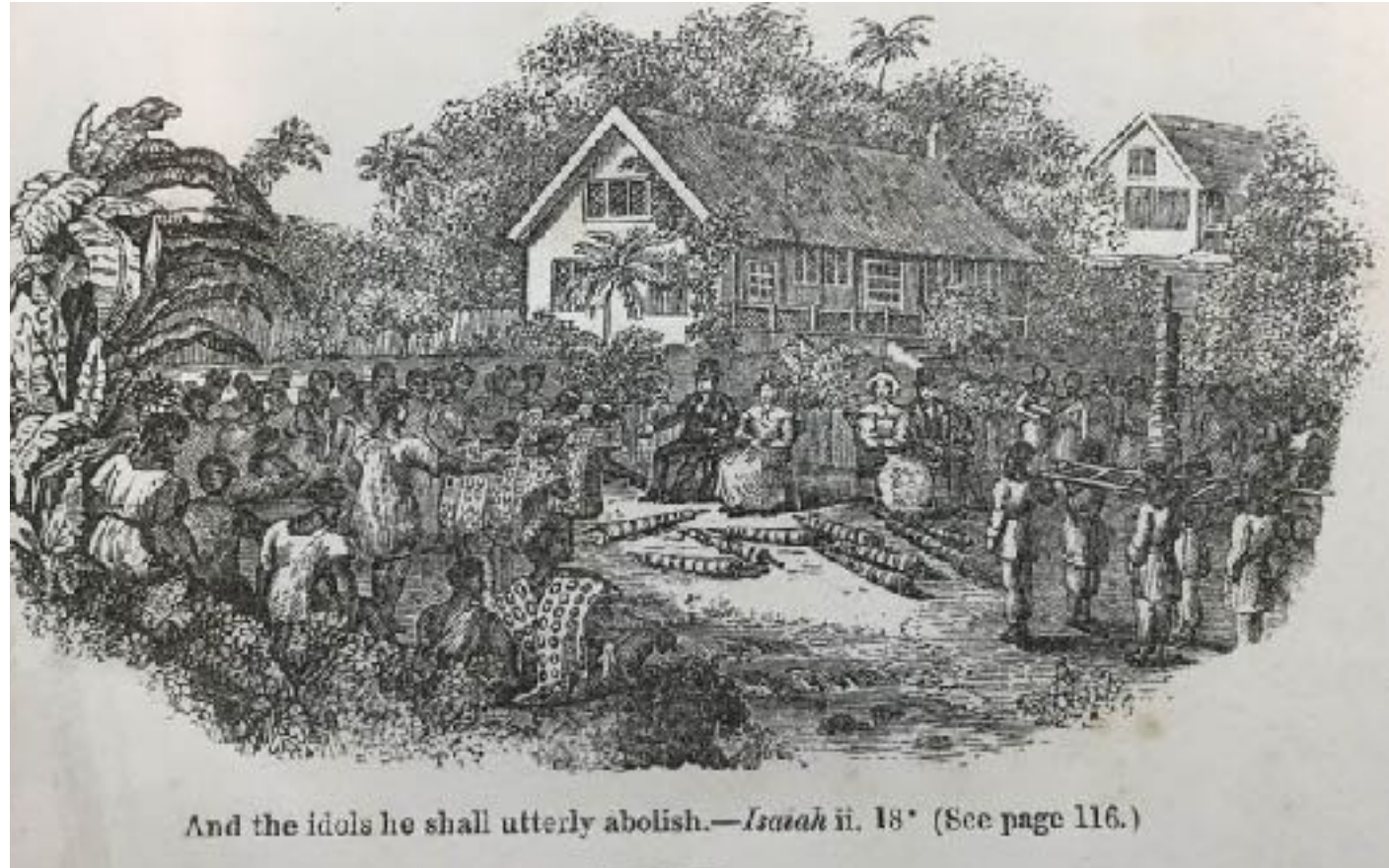
Jiming Si temple, Nanjing

Part of Buddha's skull fragments





A case for ICONOCLASM?

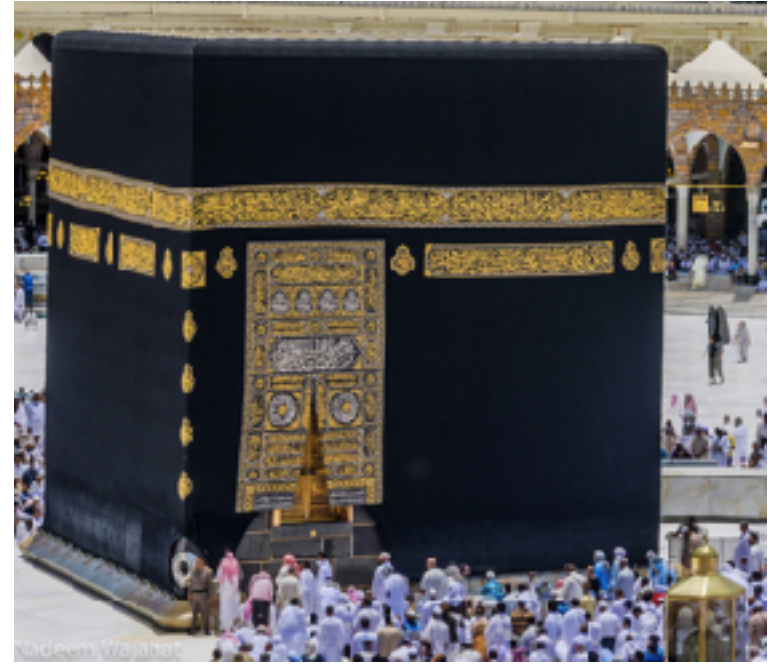




Cleansing the Kaaba

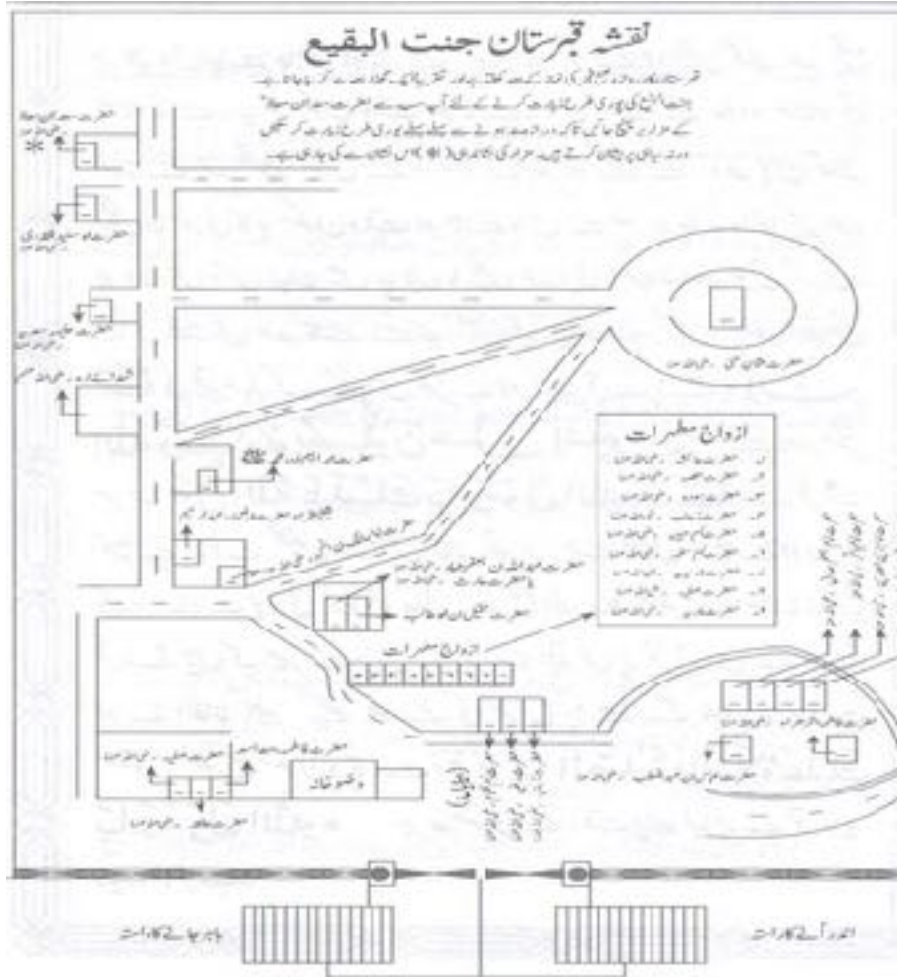


Abraham destroying the idols,
from al-Biruni's Chronology of
Ancient Nations.



VIELING SACREDNESS

Better to destroy them?



Plan of former graves near Muhammad's tomb



Graves of Muhammad's wives (Muhammad expressed a preference that all graves including his own be unmarked and unadorned)



Muhammad's family and companions' graves



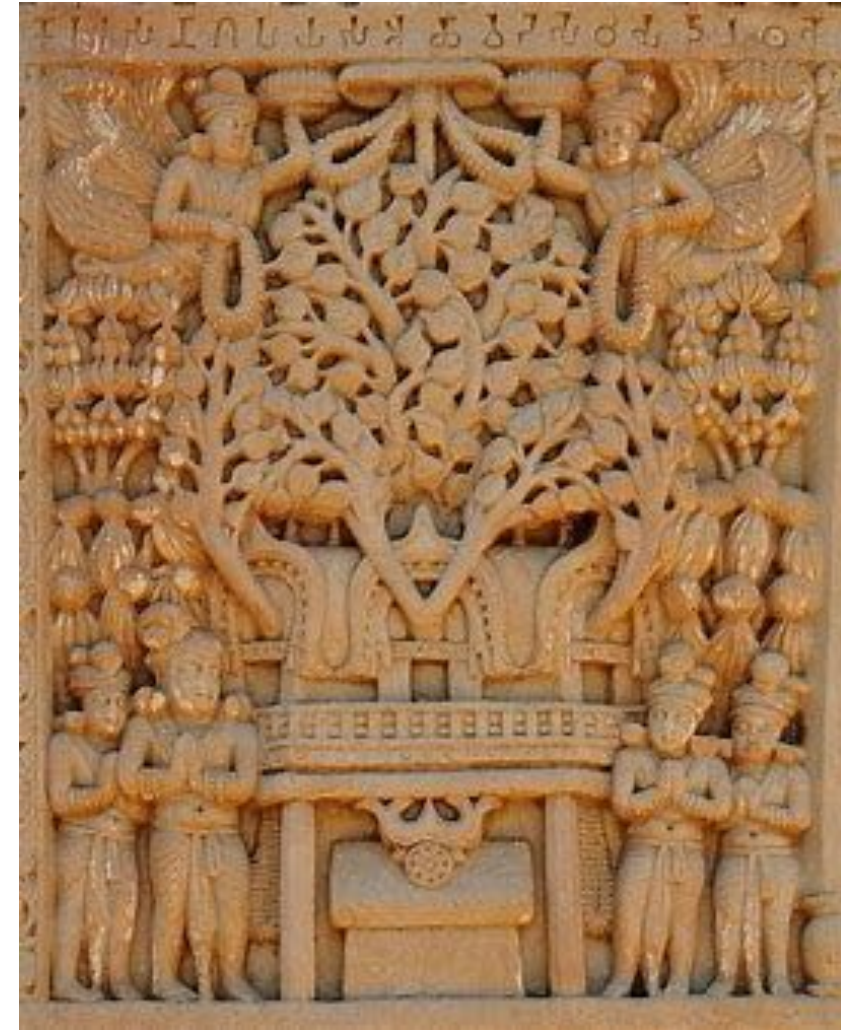
Destruction of the Shrine of the Prophet Muhammad (saw)'s companion Hujr bin Adi in Syria



Masjid Nabawi Museum: The house of A'isha bint Abu Bakr R.A. after the burial of Umar al-khattab (model)

“Since it is not permitted to make an image of the Buddha's body, I pray that the Buddha will grant that I can make an image of the attendant Bodhisattva. Is that acceptable?" The Buddha answered: "You may make an image of the Bodhisattava"”

Aniconism – Buddha as Empty Throne or pipal (bodhi)



Miracle at Kapilavastu: Buddha rises in the air, praised by celestial beings (only shows **Buddha's Path - Chankrama** - slab)



The **Great Departure** – of the invisible man....



Hui Neng, Zen
Patriarch
638 – 713

Return to Emptiness



Liang Kai, *The Sixth Patriarch (Hui Neng)
Tearing a Sutra* c. 1202



Confucianism



Temple of Heaven



JAINISM
Tirthankara – gone!

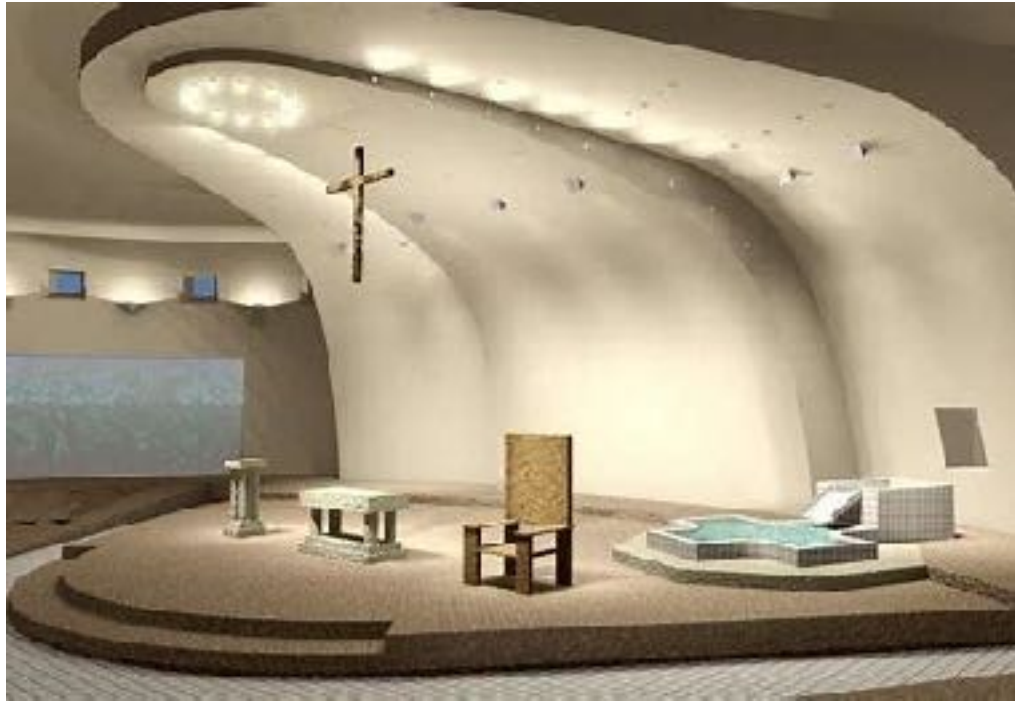




Reformation iconoclasm



Zurich 1524



Scottie Morrison's God



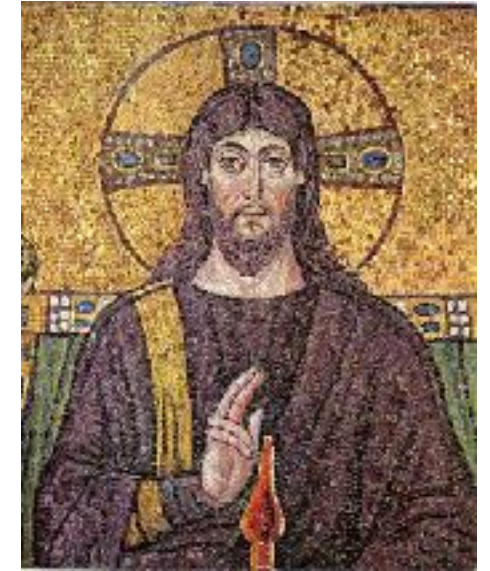
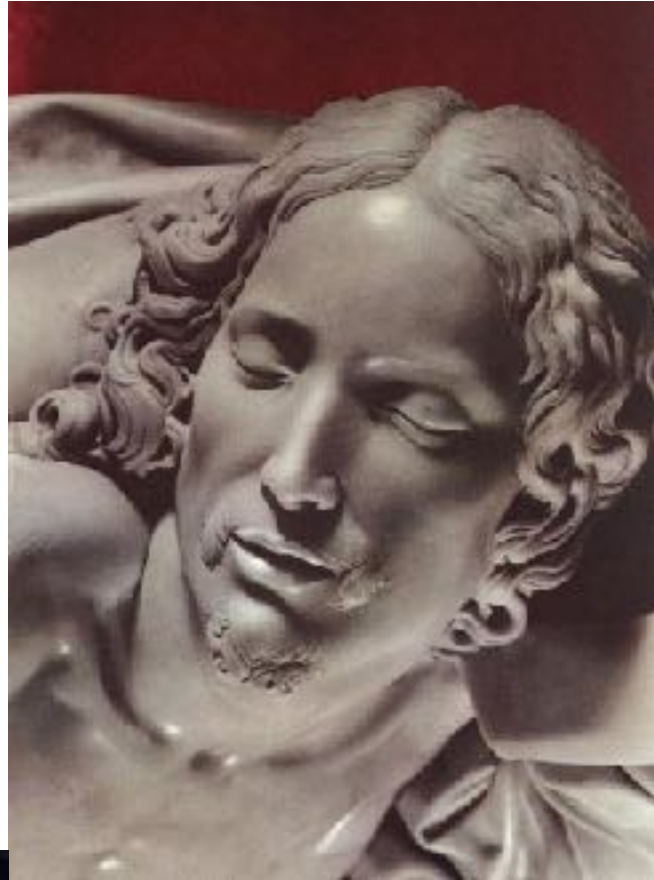


Byzantine (orthodox) iconoclasm 726-787, 814-842

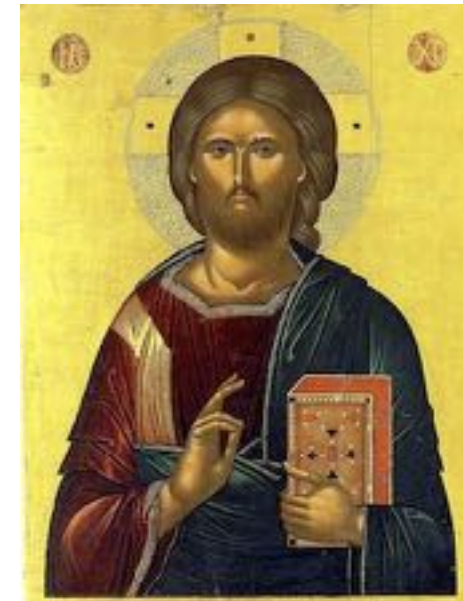
MERITS OF RELICS & REMNANTS

1. **For itself** – inherent beauty.
2. **Intimacy through proximity** – enables us to ‘feel closer.’
3. **Testimony** - hard evidence or proof.
4. **Understanding** – context of actions and words.
5. **Symbol** – iconic emblems - themes fo culture.

For its own sake – inherent beauty of Avataric form –seeking IKON (Image)



Rembrandt & Michelangelo



THE AVATAR'S
HOLY WORDS





Holy Mantle, *Hırka-i Şerif*, or *Burda* – goat hair, Istanbul

Gift from Muhammad to Arab poet Ka'b ibn Zuhayr in thanks for his Poem about the Prophet



Seamless Holy Coat of Christ, Trier (Germany)





Kanlı Coat back.

Kanlı Coat photos from Mev'ci Collection.

BARAKA



"This is the **most sacred of my possessions**," Baba told them. "**What it has in it** will be revealed after I drop my body. Then, **thousands and thousands of men and women will come to worship it.**"
LM 3570 (1954)

"You won't be able to understand the significance of the taking off and putting on of this coat."

Intimacy through proximity – places and pieces help us 'feel closer.'



40 kms from Srinagar Amarnath Cave, Kashmir: where Shiva invents and teaches Yoga philosophy to Parvati



Mt Kailash



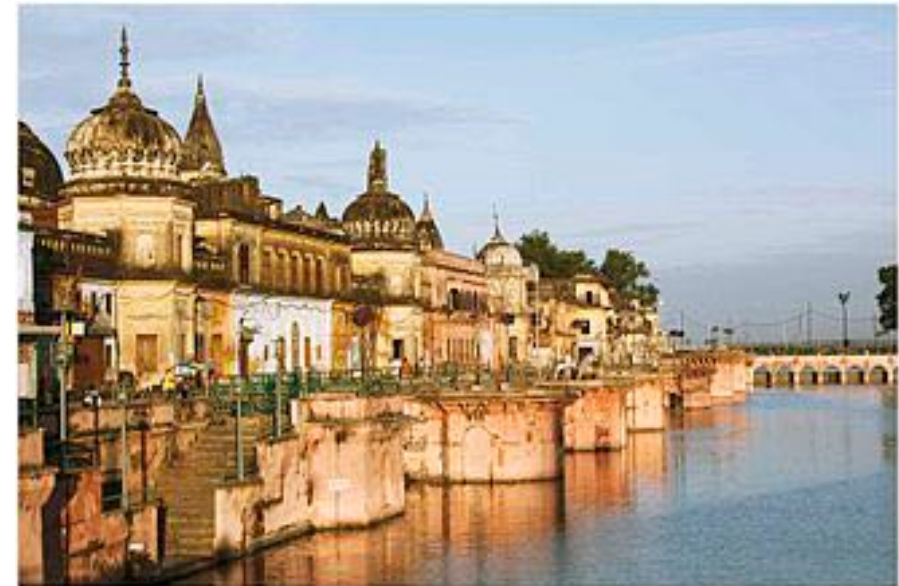
Noah's tomb, Syria



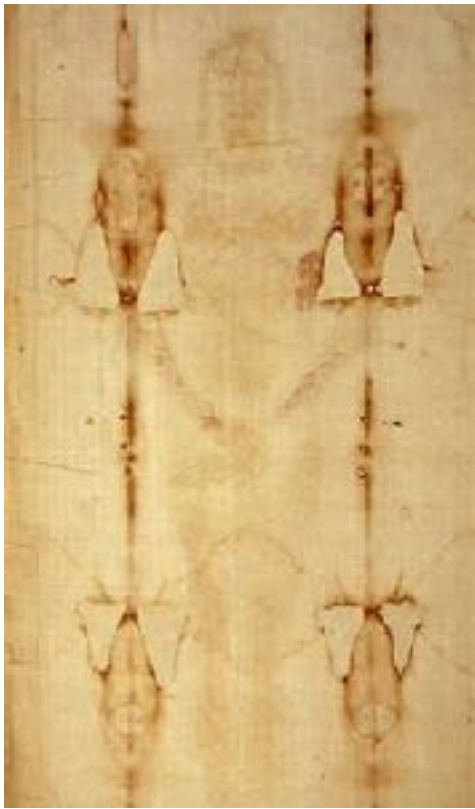
Cave of the Patriarchs, Hebron (Israel)



Ayodhya: Rama shrines on Sarayu River (Rama died where he was born – Ayodhya)



PHYSICAL REMAINS “A God I can touch” (tactile reality)



God in my pocket – I got Him in a locket







Muhammad's shirt



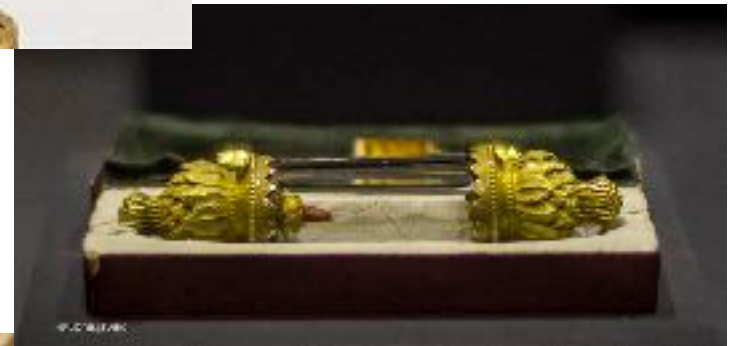
“ON BUDDHA’S TOOTH!”

Temple of the Tooth, Kandy (Sri Lanka)



Buddha's Tooth Temple Singapore

Sakal-ı Şerif ("By the Beard of the Prophet")



As testimony - hard evidence or physical proof



Piprahwa vase with relics of the Buddha. The inscription reads: ...salilanidhane Budhasa Bhagavate... (Brahmi script: ...𑀓𑀚𑀭𑀸𑀓𑀲𑀺𑀓 𑀧𑀻𑀲𑀭𑀻𑀓𑀢𑀻𑀶𑀯𑀻𑀓𑀭𑀻𑀲𑀻𑀓...) "Relics of the Buddha Lord".



Buddha's cremation stupa, Kushinagar (Kushinara)

“Source Materials”

Gospel of Thomas



Joseph Caiaphas – High Priest



Gospel of John Fragment (Manchester Uni) 150-200 ad

Papyrus 75 (Luke's Gospel) c. 175 AD



Pontius Pilate stone

BIBLICAL 'PROOF'

King Ahab of Israel? 800 BC



'House of David' 830 BC

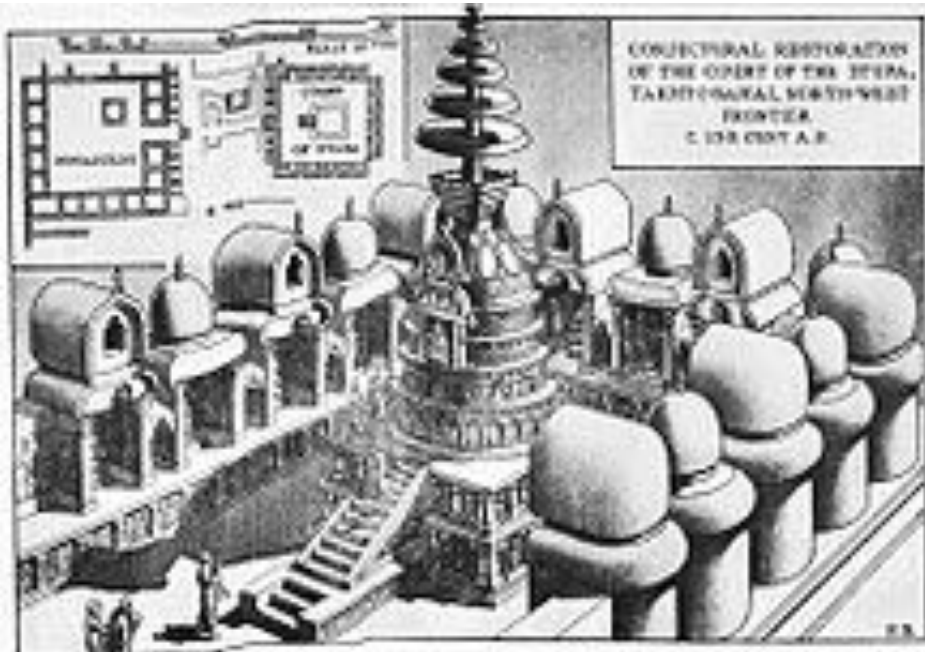


Seal of King Hezekiah –
prophet Isaiah's patron
700s BC



Lumbini pillar
'Buddha, Sakyamuni'
(c.250 BC)

Gandharan texts on birch bark 100bc-100 ad



Conjectural restoration of [Takht-i-Bahi](#), a major Buddhist monastery in [Mardan](#), [Pakistan](#)





University of Birmingham

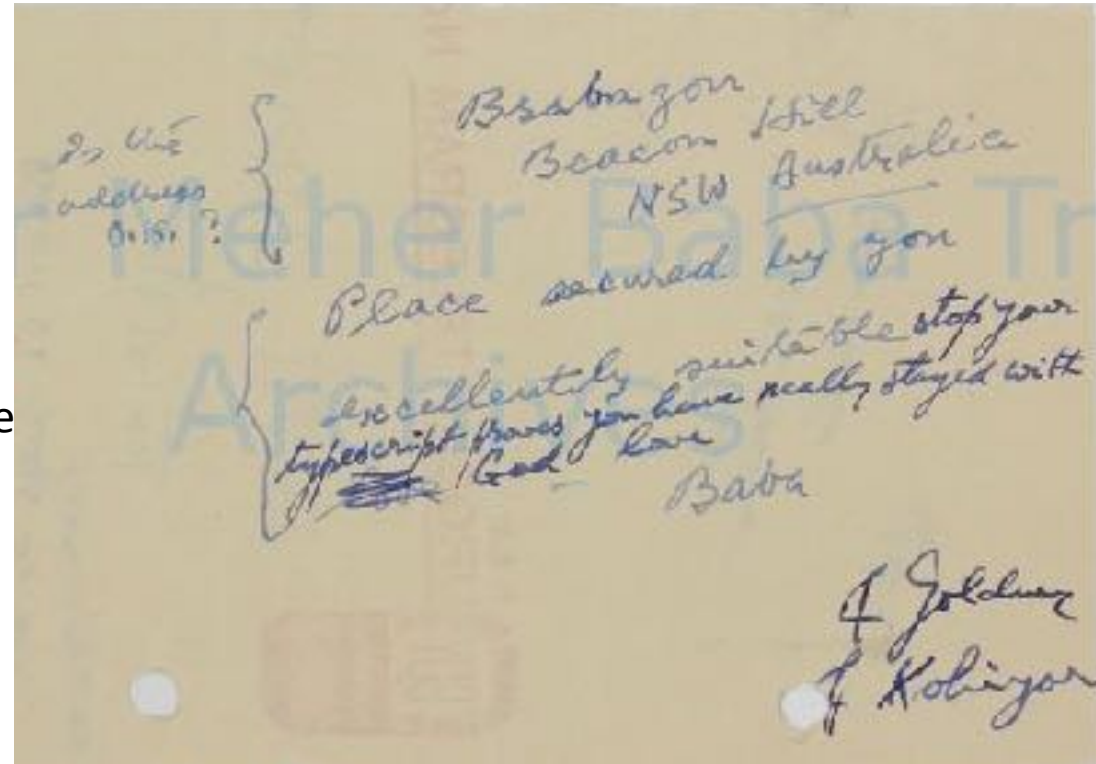


Egypt Quran fragments
Vienna



Tashkent (Hast-Imam) Uzbekistan

Actual cable
whereby
Meher Baba
endorsed
Avatar's Abode
as "excellently
suitable"



F. Goldner
F. Kobizor

To aid understanding – context

Muhammad's Covenant with St Catherine's Monastery, Sinai



“Hard evidence” of inter-faith tolerance

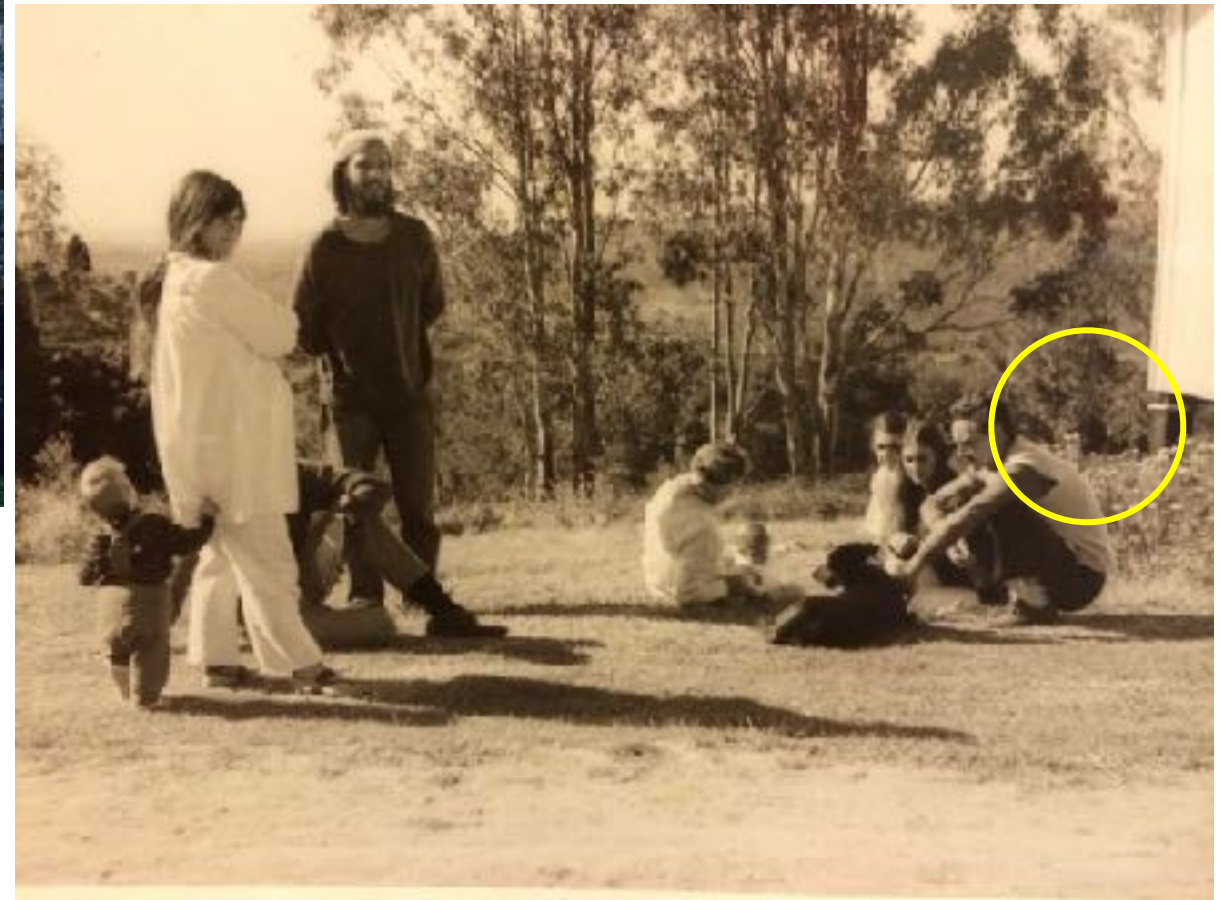
“No one is allowed to plunder these Christians, or destroy or spoil any of their churches, or houses of worship, or take any of the things contained within these houses and bring it to the houses of Islam.”



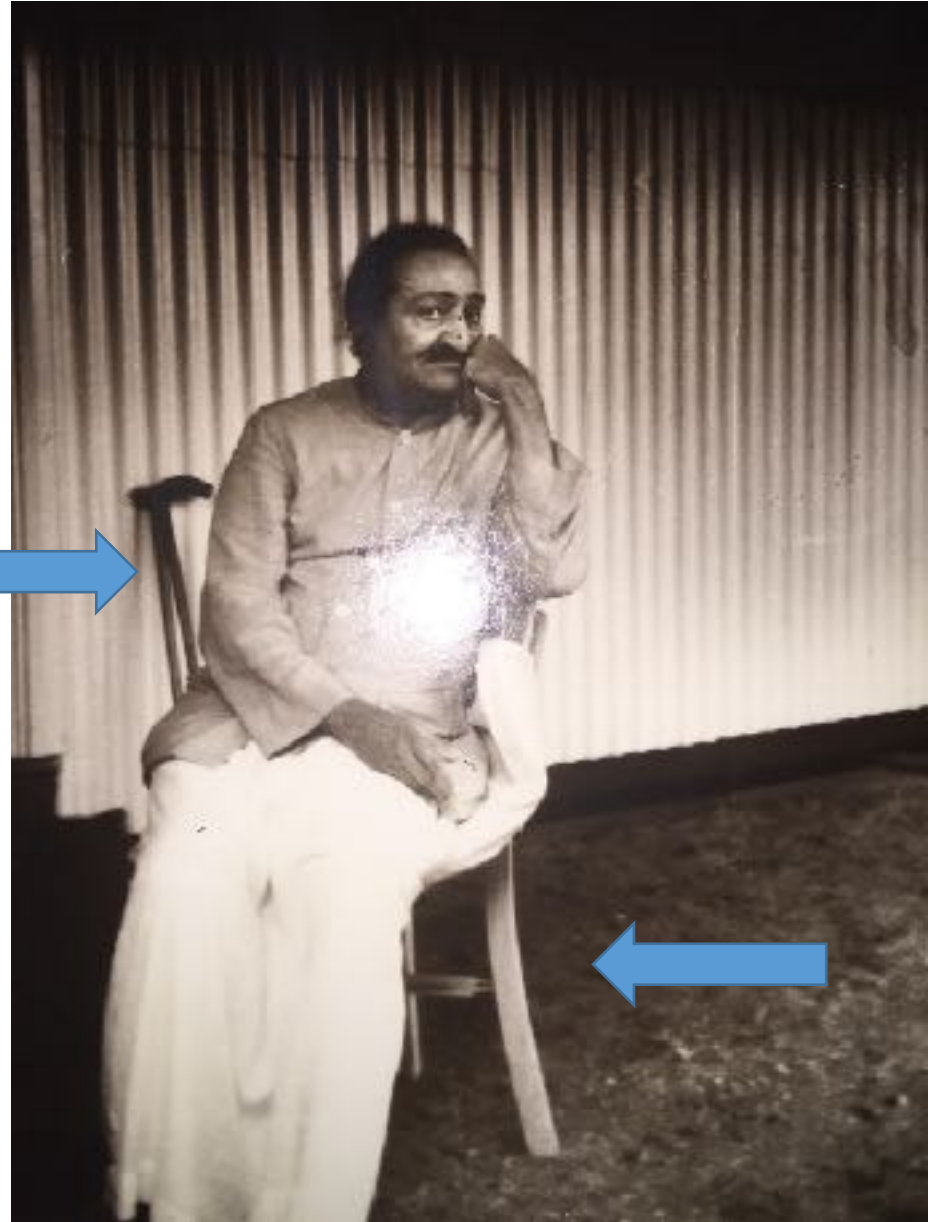


Photos validating testimonies/ resolving disputes

(debate over where Baba stood)



Demonstrating conditions of the time



14/11

Francis Hill
Oct. 24/57.

11/B

Dear Francis,

Thank you for years of the 500 & for all the information regarding Babas. It was good to hear from you again.

Please thank Baba for the message of love to me. Please tell him that on the 14th, the day I received your letter with the message, I completed (except for a few corrections, & corrections) an outline, near reading of "Stay with God", & that by 1st Dec, it should all be quite finished & typed.

Tell him that if by 1st Dec it is in His Kingdom to come to Australia next thing, & I would like to hold the Babas in one place - or approximately the same thing in that (at Elizabeth Bay) - & would like a place prepared for this here - the country, where everyone would have the fullest opportunity of my company, & will be entirely free to carry out their own living work, & that there is the money available to do it well. If He would like such a Place in the hills or near the coast or in flat or in undulating country, near Sydney or some hundred or two miles away, or some considerable distance, such as Queensland, which is 500 miles north from here, & where the climate will be delightful in May & where mangoes & bananas grow in abundance, He has but to indicate, & it will be done in time for Him.

Adding new understandings.....

Francis' 24th October 1957 letter requesting Baba consider Queensland © A.M.B.P.P.C

"If He would like such a Place in the hills or near the coast or in flat or in undulating country, near Sydney or some hundred or two miles away, or some considerable distance, such as Queensland, which is 500 milers north from here, & where mangoes & bananas grow in abundance, He has but to indicate, & it will be done in time for Him.'

To symbolise – iconic emblems – themes for art

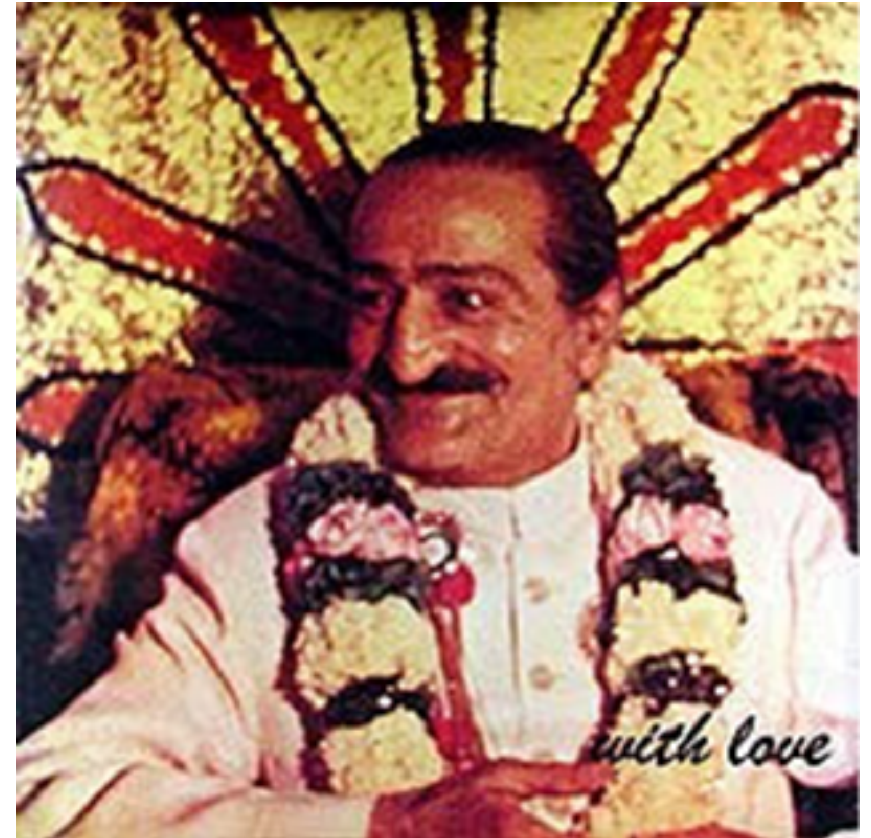


“The building block that was rejected became the cornerstone of a whole new world” - Jesus, Matthew 21: 42 (Noel Stookey @ 1977)

“**He is like a gauge** against which man can measure what he is and what he may become. He **true**s the **standard** of human values...

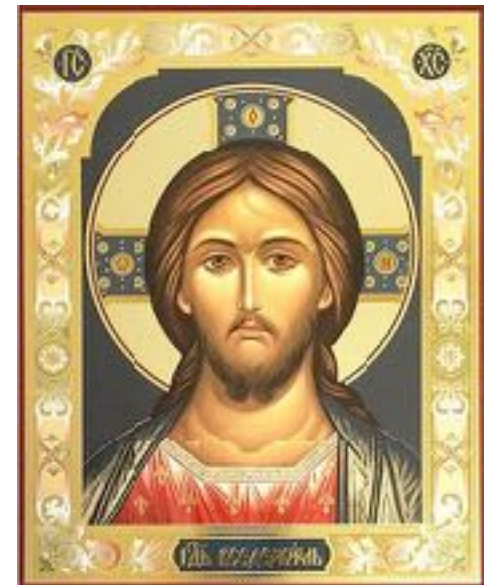
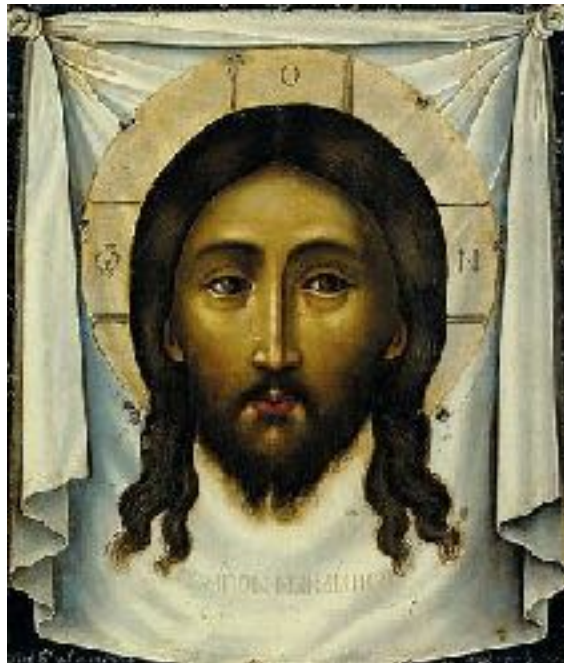
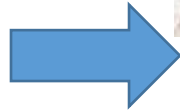
“The unfoldment of life and consciousness **for the whole Avataric cycle...** is endorsed and fixed in the formative and material worlds during the Avatar’s life on earth. “

- ‘The Avatar,’ *Discourses* 269-270

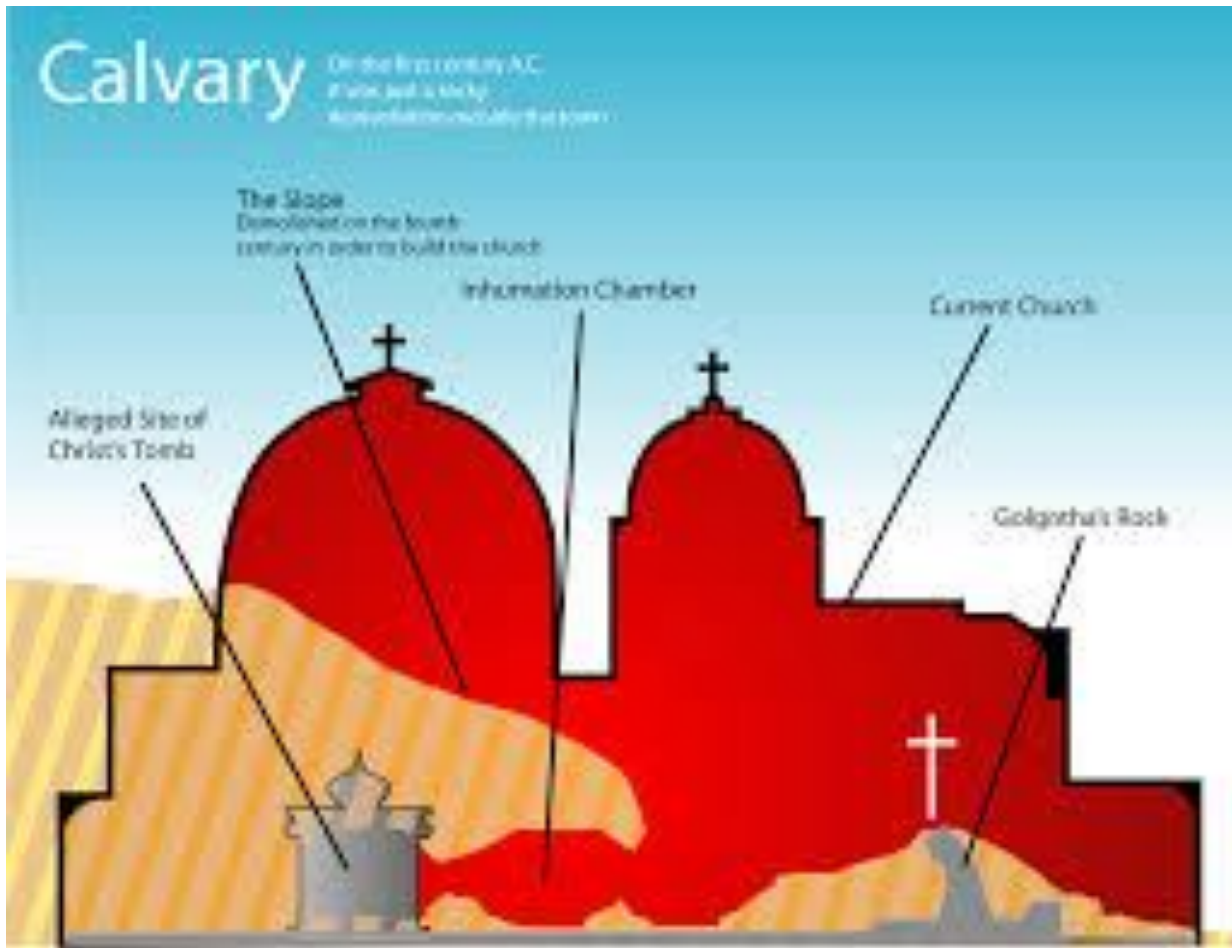


ICON AND REMNANT

Turin & Edessa (Veronica)



CULT OF THE EMPTY TOMB

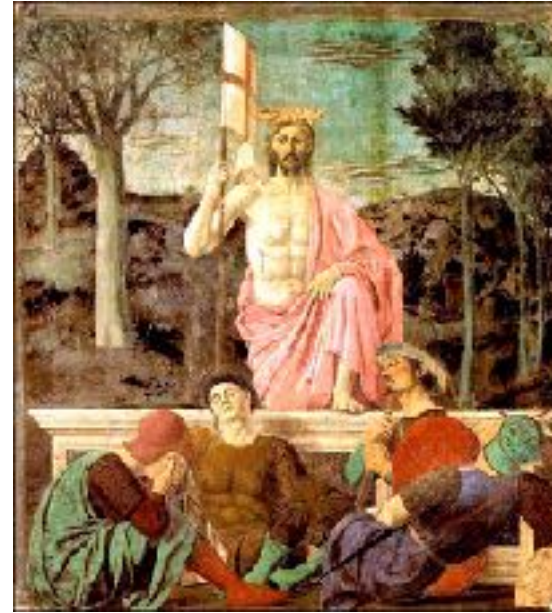


Church of The Holy Sepulchre
(= Jesus' tomb - Calvary in Jerusalem)





RISING FROM DARKNESS AND DEATH



From catacomb to church

LIGHT IN THE DARKNESS:
Depth & contrast in Western Art



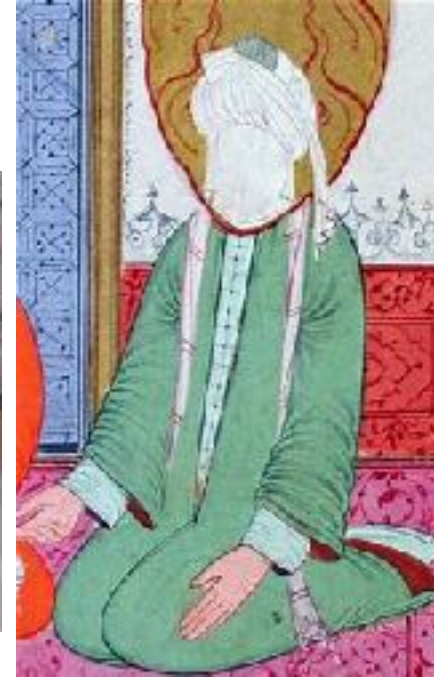
Ochre & Buddhism



Green in Islam

“Two Gardens, dark green and fresh.” [Ar-Rahman (55:64)]

“Upon them will be green garments of fine silk and heavy brocade.” [Al-Insan (76:21)]



Medina (Muhammad's Tomb)



Shiraz mosque





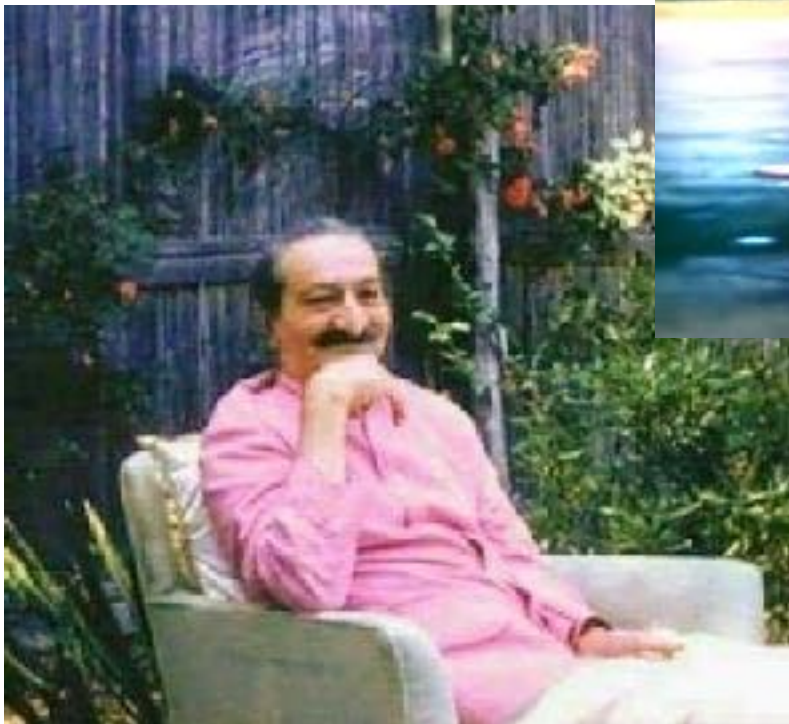
Salmon pink galore...

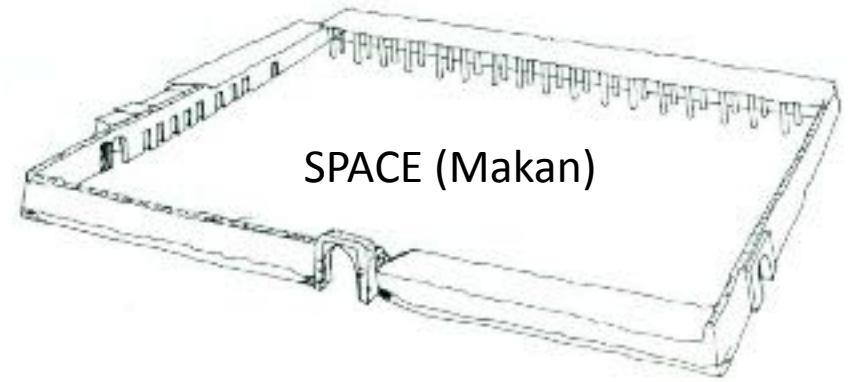
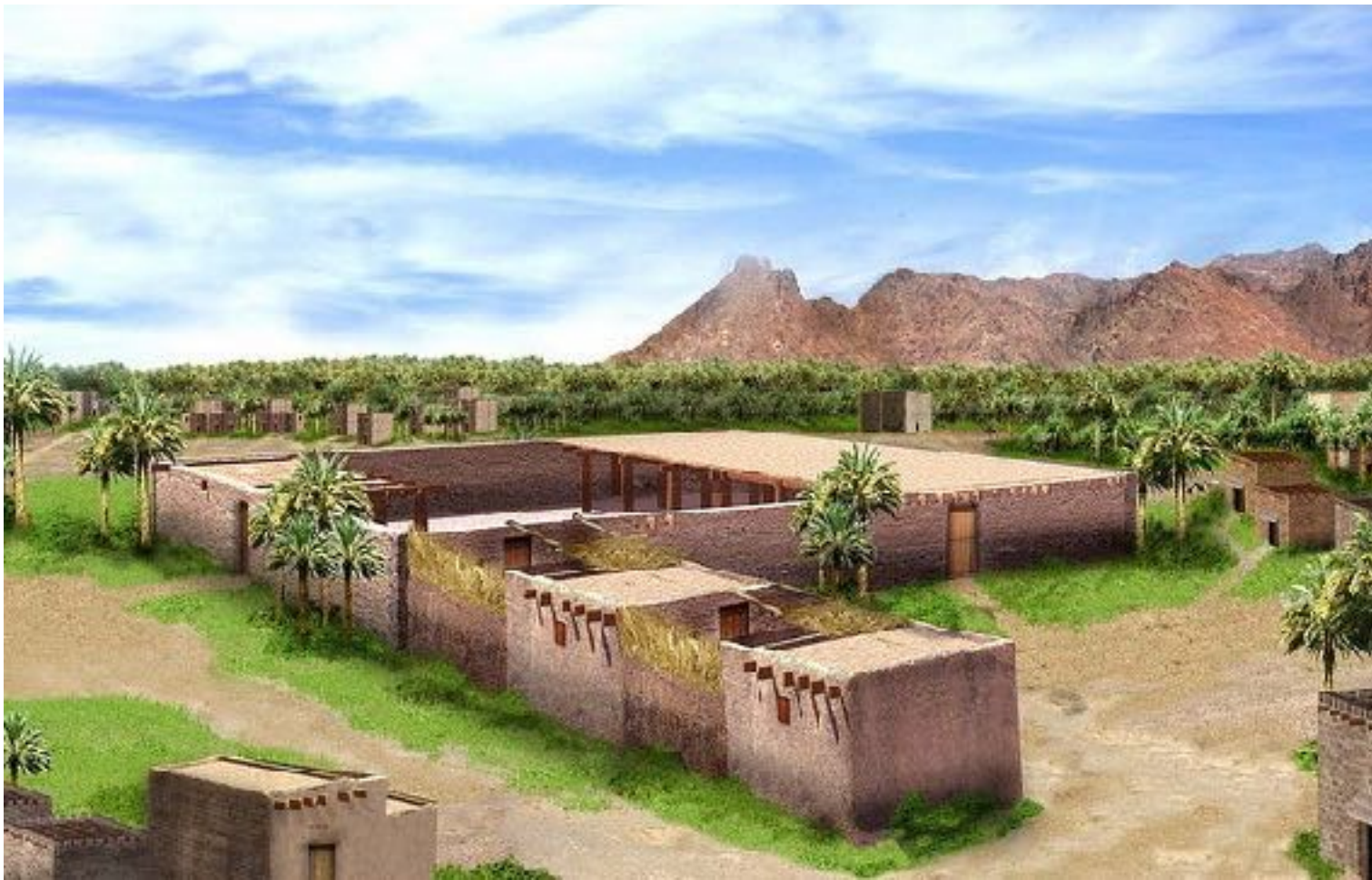


Wodin



Pam Rubenstein





“People of the verandah”

Avataric buildings as templates

Makan (space) and Sahn (courtyard): Divine Vastness - Leveling humanity



Jaipur



Cairo

Abu Dhabi



Qatar

Buildings become iconic



(Turkish tile)



Entrance Medina mosque
& carpet



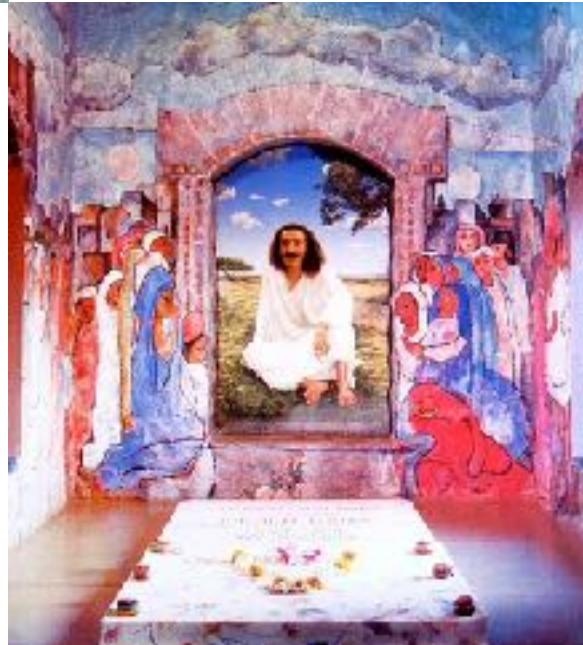
Samadhi as icon



Replica samadhis: Columbus, New Mexico (USA)

Blum's painting of Amartithi pandal

Samadhi art:
Helen Dahm's murals



Bombay Centre

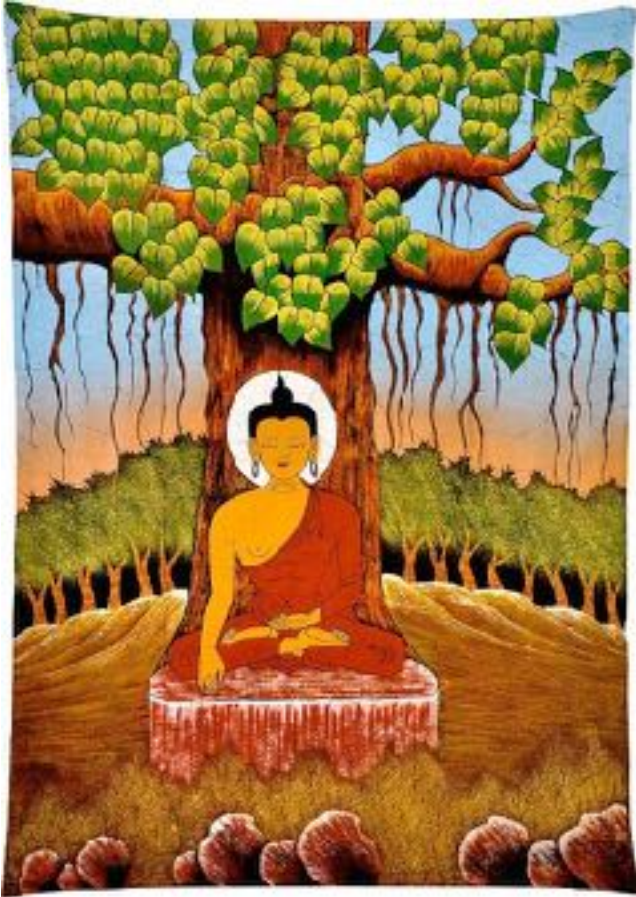


Avataric relics as source for design...



004-KER-LIC-01-MER-DIV-5-DES-DEK-000001

Even plants....



HONOURING THE PIPAL (BODHI TREE)

Asoka swooning in grief (supported by his queens) at neglect of Bodhi tree at Bodhgaya



Bodhi temple erected by Asoka



From earth mound to Stupa

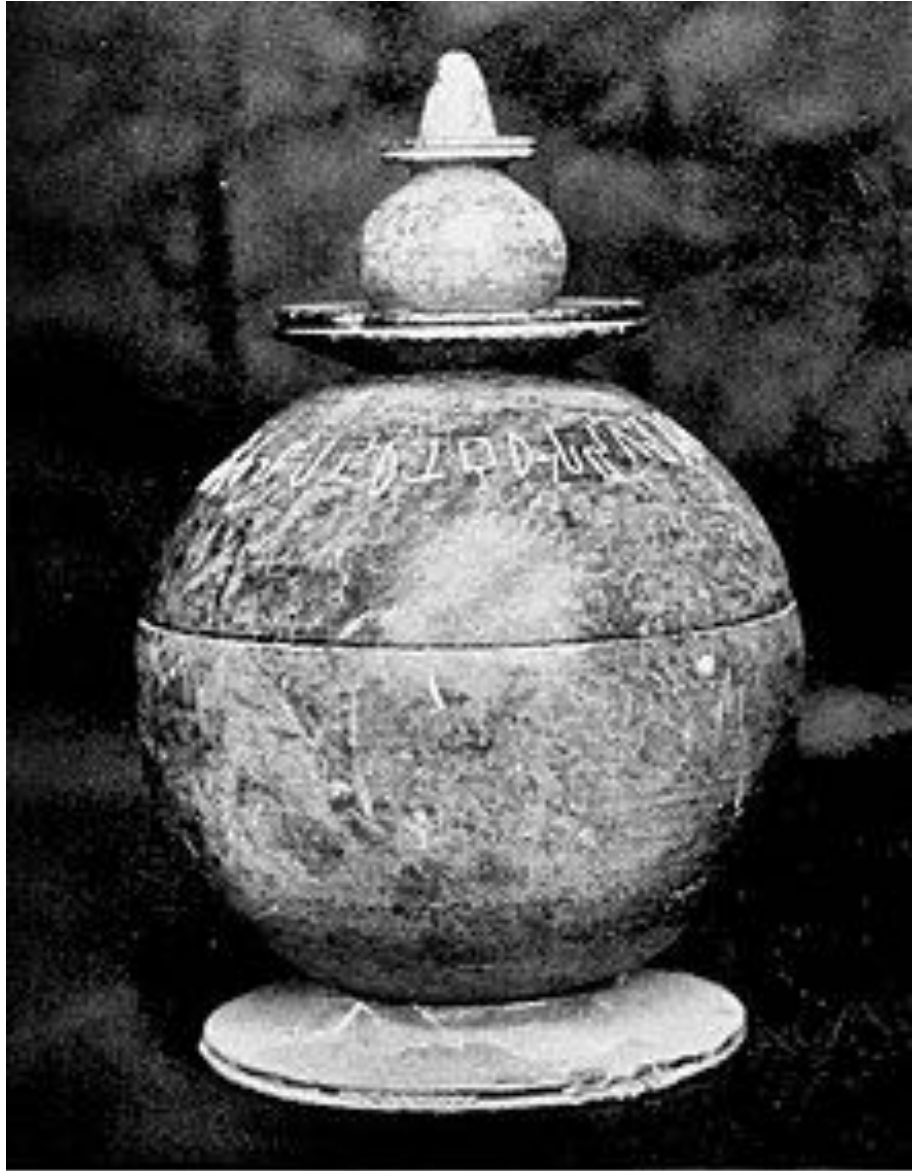


400s BC



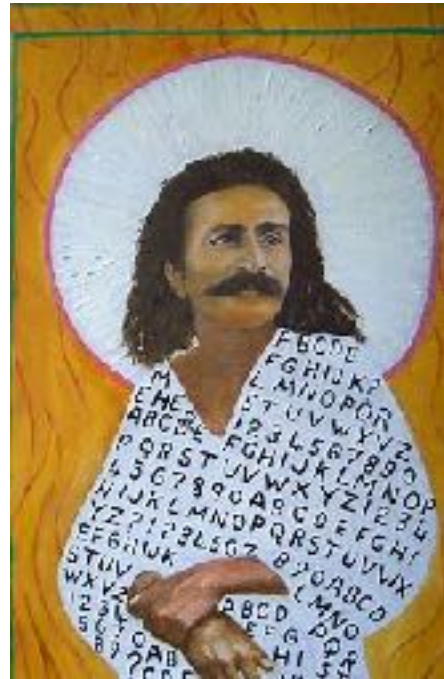
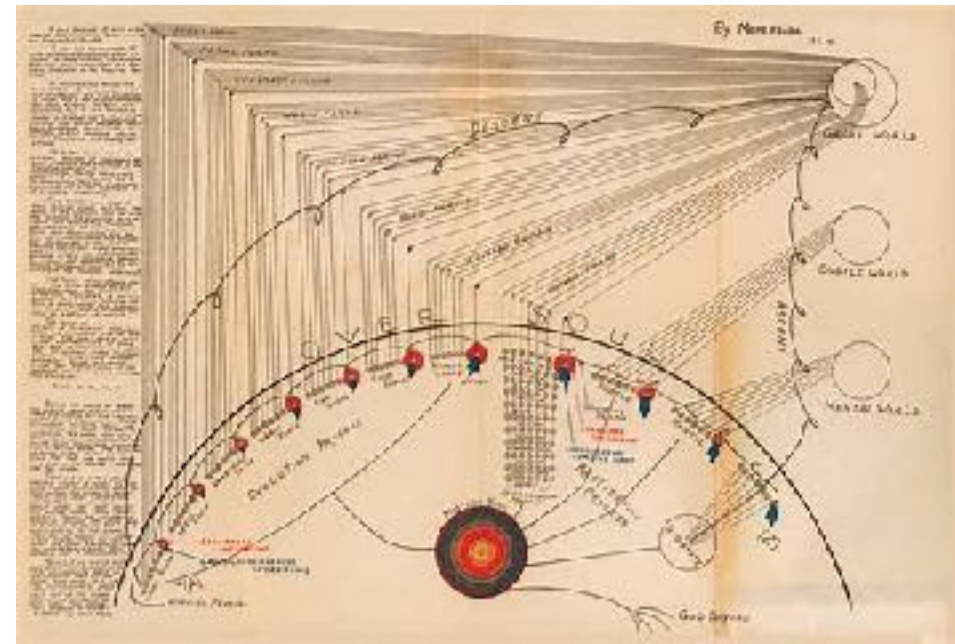
300s BC





Cremation vessel to Stupa





MASTERY in SERVITUDE

Pen and ink,



THE END (OF THE BEGINNING)

THANK YOU!