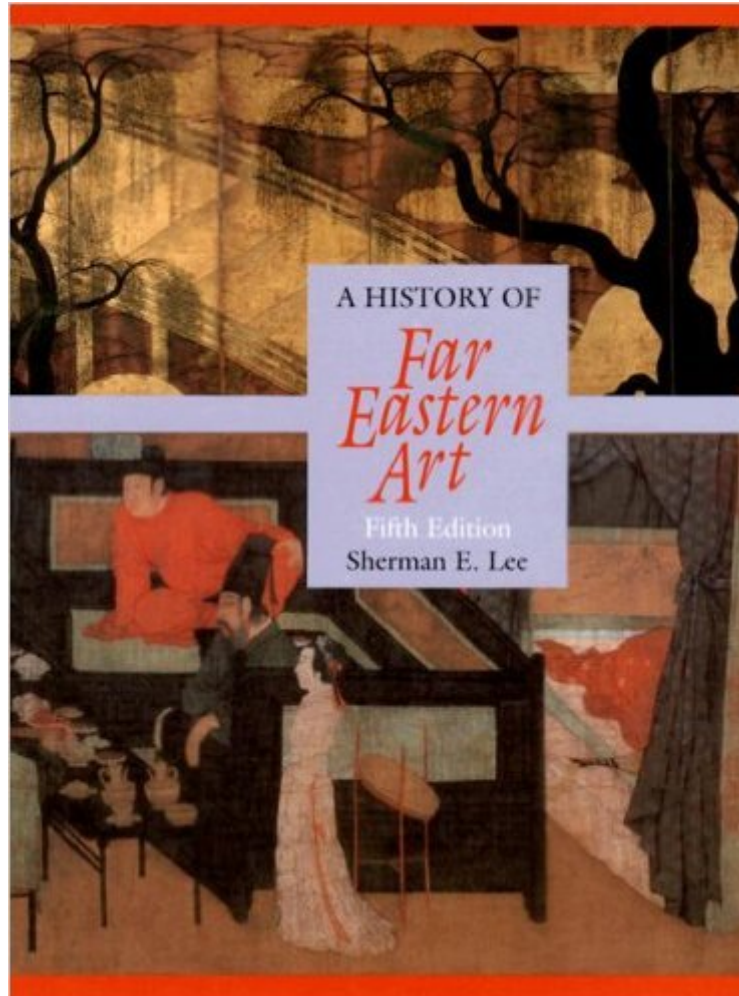


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History Of Far Eastern Art (5th Edition)



Synopsis

Covers Himalayan areas--Ladakh, Kashmir, Tibet, and Nepal. New chronologies in Stone age and Bronze Age, China, Korea, and Japan.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

I'm reading this book for an Asian Art class, and I find it has both significant strengths and significant weaknesses. Its major strength is the integrated approach: Sherman Lee organizes the book chronologically and thematically, rather than geographically. Instead of writing a section on Chinese art and a section on Indian art, Lee organizes his material by stage of development (Stone Age pottery) or by cultural movement (Buddhism), for example tracing the development of Buddhist styles in India, the adoption of those styles in China, Japan, and S.E. Asia, and the eventual synthesis of the Indian influences into local styles incorporating indigenous themes. Lee writes eloquently and even passionately about his subject, letting us know which cultures, styles, and artworks he admires. He covers a vast amount of cultures and time periods, easily enough material for dozens of books. The book does have significant flaws, however. Most frustrating are the black and white photos (presumably a cost-saving measure). Roughly 90% of the images in the book are black and white, and they cannot do justice to most of the subject matter. A second weakness is Lee's writing style, which is sometimes more eloquent than comprehensible. At times I had to reread a section several times in order to figure out what Lee was trying to say. He sometimes seems to be addressing himself to an audience of art critics who are already familiar with the material, rather than students encountering it for the first time. He will tell us that a particular art work is hieratic in

style, or is an example of Daoist style, without explaining why. Also the thematic, rather than chronological, approach means that some topics are fragmented into parts of different chapters.

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