

RESOURCES

WEB GLEANINGS By Judith S. Ames

Traditional and Contemporary Asia: Numbers, Symbols, and Colors

ASIA

Meaning of the Flags of Asia

URL: <http://tinyurl.com/gvao83v>

From the *Nomad Revelations* blog, graphics for the flags of all Asian countries are presented in alphabetical order. The graphics are accompanied by descriptions and the symbolic meaning of the flags.

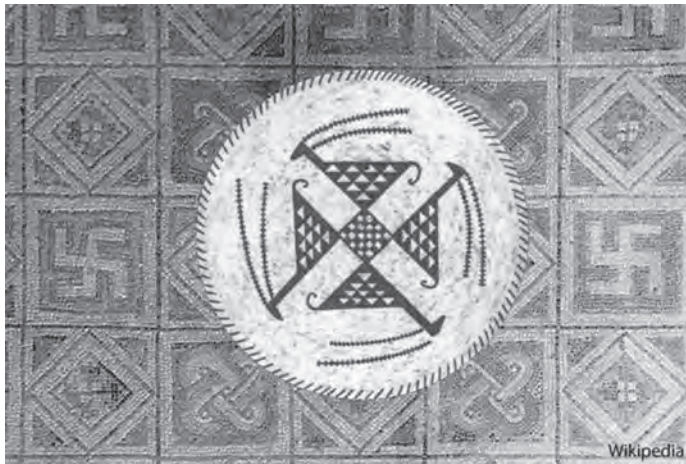
Symbols in Asian Art

URL: <http://tinyurl.com/zmu9oyj>

This is a collection of blog posts from the Daruma Museum. These posts focus on symbols in Asian art. There are reviews of books about symbols, as well as articles, including a lengthy one by Dr. Ilana Singer titled “Decorative Motifs in Japanese Art.”

The Symbol of the Swastika and Its 12,000-Year-Old History

URL: <http://tinyurl.com/kce9ylv>



This article from the *Ancient Origins* website traces the history of the swastika, beginning with the origin of the term in Sanskrit. There is a collection of links at the end and a thirty-minute video produced by the BBC about the use of the swastika for thousands of years. The comment section may be of interest to some; symbols in general, as well as the swastika in particular, are discussed.

CHINA

Cultural Reflections Embodied in Modern Architecture

URL: <http://tinyurl.com/zb25x9m>

In his article, Professor Suining Ding (Indiana University–Purdue University, Fort Wayne) describes the elements of Chinese garden architecture, along with the symbolic meanings in Chinese garden design. A small chart summarizes these elements and their meanings, accompanied by photographs that illustrate the important principles.

The Chinese Dragon

URL: <http://tinyurl.com/oweqlkd>

This is an interesting article from *China Highlights* about the symbol of the dragon in China. There are sections about the symbol, the legends, the dragon’s nine “children,” and the chronology of the concept of the dragon in China.

Chinese Lucky Numbers

URL: <http://tinyurl.com/l2rz6cm>

Topics on this page include lucky numbers in Chinese, unlucky numbers, and the symbolism of Chinese numerology. Some travel destinations and attractions have special numerical meanings, and these too are mentioned.

The Chinese Zodiac, Explained (video)

URL: <http://tinyurl.com/zrujeym>



This is a TED talk that focuses on the interest that Chinese people have in the signs of the Zodiac. The speaker looks at the cycles and the meanings of the signs, and the implications of some of the signs in making decisions. There are interesting details of how the Zodiac influences the birthrate.

Sacred Mountains of China

URL: <http://tinyurl.com/jfu26ns>



This article from the website *Sacred Sites: Places of Peace and Power* begins with an overview of China’s sacred mountains and is followed by a more detailed description of five of them. At the bottom of the page is a clickable map showing the location and name of many of these sacred sites.

Chinese Symbols and Meanings

URL: <http://tinyurl.com/h77rkwd>

A long list of Chinese calligraphic symbols is presented, leading to the individual Chinese characters and their meanings. The site is a store for the purchase of artwork, but the representation of the symbols is valid, nevertheless.

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Chinese Characters

URL: <http://www.chinese-tools.com/learn/characters/list.html>
This website lists many common Chinese characters and their meanings. Selecting a character will also display a calligraphic script of it, along with its stroke order and additional phrases using the character.

Symbolism of Colors (China)

URL: <http://tinyurl.com/laqpx99>
This page from *Nations Online* offers the history in China of the symbolism of the basic colors, as well as the current view of a color's symbolic meaning.

Chinese Calligraphy—Lesson Plan

URL: <http://tinyurl.com/h23qffd>
This page from Columbia University's *Asia for Educators* site is a useful introduction to Chinese calligraphy and also features sample classroom exercises for instructors who wish to teach calligraphy in their classes.

JAPAN

Symbology in Japan

URL: <http://tinyurl.com/m3478mk>
This article from the *Cherry Blossom* online store presents short explanations of the meanings of some of the most prominent symbols in Japan. The items include cranes, cherry blossoms, and carp.

The Traditional Colors of Japan

URL: <http://tinyurl.com/hrjchvx>
This is a discussion of four major colors in Japan: red, black, blue, and white in a variety of contexts from the *Tofugu* blog. The historical use of color, as well as the use of color in traditional fashion and textiles, is offered. An added benefit is the article's presentation of many Japanese words in *hiragana*, *kanji*, and *romaji*.

Sacred Journeys—Shikoku (video)

URL: <http://tinyurl.com/hu8pcvc>



This almost hour-long video from the PBS series *Sacred Journeys* follows a few different pilgrims on their journey through the eighty-eight temples of the Shikoku pilgrimage. The journey represents the path through the stages of nirvana: awakening, austerity and discipline, enlightenment, and, finally, nirvana.

Color Red in Japanese Mythology

URL: <http://tinyurl.com/hpesj9b>
The connection between red objects and Japanese deities is explored. The use of red in bibs, caps, and other fabric objects is discussed, with ample graphic examples for each category.

INDIA

Symbolism in Hinduism

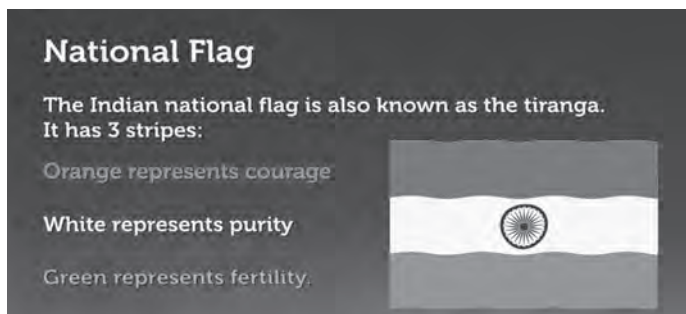
URL: <http://tinyurl.com/zncz4hv>
This page has links to numerous articles about the symbols and significance of aspects of Hinduism. The significance of certain rituals, the symbolism of various gods, and the meaning of several Hindu traditions are explored.

India's Sacred Cow

URL: <http://sociology101.net/readings/Indias-sacred-cow.pdf>
The author of this essay, Marvin Harris, ponders the reasons for India's reverence for and protection of the cow, even when famine situations exist. He looks at the historical context but focuses on the economic usefulness of the cow in Indian society, which is the basis for the cow's exalted position.

Indian National Symbols (video)

URL: <http://tinyurl.com/jyymbcp>



This YouTube video by *MocomiKids* is meant for children. There is no narration. Instead, there are titles, such as “National Flower: Lotus,” accompanied by graphics and short explanations of the meaning or significance of the symbol.

Environmental Education Centre Chennai

URL: <http://tinyurl.com/h9zlwz8>
A box in the upper-center portion of this page contains links to many sacred entities in India. Some of them are caves, gardens, mountains, and animals. Each of these pages has at least one photograph and a listing of the items in the specific category. ■

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