

Questions from Part II Lecture I – lightly paraphrased

Handout:

<https://frominstitute.org/course-materials/127>

Ancient China:

Carol Harris adds: Its my understanding the tomb of Qin Shi Huang has not been excavated because the Chinese government doesn't want to risk the environmental degradation to its contents. When the terracotta warriors were excavated, they were brightly painted and the color completely disintegrated upon being exposed to sunlight. There is concern that they do not yet have the technology that is needed for adequate conservation.

Betsy Banks asks: I had a question about how important a role feng shui played in the Chinese buildings. One of the floor plans looked like the buildings were at funny angles and I wondered if that was the reason.

I think the funny angles was more of the 3-D illustration than anything else. I think you may be thinking of the drawing of the courtyard house. But I think feng shui played a big role in Chinese architecture. Looking at the feng shui wikipedia page it looks like feng shui has been around in some form since 4000 BCE, and as you saw today, the Chinese architects codified everything. Feng shui seems to have originated in astronomy, but architecturally it makes sense that if you have land that you seek out someone who can tell you the best spot to build and how to orient your house. Apparently the Chinese did that even before the invention of the compass. One would want to know about sun, wind and water to site buildings well.

Pantheon:

David Salem writes: I've wondered about the marble flooring in the interior of the Pantheon. Does the floor date to the 2nd Century CE, or was it added during the Pantheon's service as a church?

A: "The marble work on the floor containing patterns of circles and squares is a 19th century accurate reproduction of the original floor."

Nancy writes (paraphrased):

The 12 point type is fine but the red on black is hard to make out.

I have issues with Microsoft products and if anyone has a direct line to Steve Ballmer let me know.

And I'll try to brighten my screen. Remind me Carla next time!

Nancy adds:

I will never be able to think about the Pantheon without wondering about the Christmas decorations stored [above] those triangular staircases.