

Submitted by Kay Miller

“Faith in Motion”/“Portable Faith” – Globalization Second Gallery talk – Rachel McGarry and Jan-Lodewijk Grootaers – October 24, 2012

Rachel – We organized this exhibition it’s called “Faith in Motion.”

Jan-Lodewijk – Title will change to “Portable Faith.” The impetus came from Rachel, who wanted to do a show with small objects that compel people to look closely. For the Globalization theme we came up with the idea of religion. Many small objects are related to religion and represent different religions.

R. – When you bring people on your tours have them get in close, looking at small objects. Contemporary art today is so large; people talk about wall power. This little pendant is exquisite. To make something this small was a real challenge for the artist. When people see craftsmanship, quality, and difficulty of creating objects maybe they will gain appreciation for looking at small objects.

- Small, portable religious objects. One **way that ideas spread. Small.** People could carry.
 - Gallery has objects that represent major religions.
 - Small, light-weight. Portable.
 - Ideas often spread through prints. Prints were the language by which ideas were translated and spread through prints across the Alps and Mediterranean Sea.
- Objects fulfilled **several types** of uses/origins:
 - Personal devotions. Carried for worship as they traveled.
 - Missionaries brought as tool in converting people.
 - Souvenirs from pilgrimages in holy places. Pilgrims bought devotional objects from peddlers and brought back home. Often ephemera.
- Some objects, as with Congo Crucifix, show a cultural, religious and artistic mix. Images brought from country of religion’s origin. Then changed, adapted, added to by indigenous artists. Additions came from culture where the religion was new. Each object tells a story.

“Crucifix,” Congo Artist, 19th c., #92.36



Artsconnected label: The Kongo kingdom, a large and centralized African state spanning parts of present-day Democratic Republic of Congo, Republic of Congo, Angola, and Gabon, adopted

Christianity as its state religion at the end of the 15th century. For the next two centuries, Portuguese missionaries introduced Christian (Catholic) crucifixes, devotional objects, and figures of saints, which were copied by local artists. Many of these became powerful objects that were incorporated into local beliefs and practices.

Jan-Lodewijk

- Example of **syncretism**: the intermingling of religious and artistic traditions & ideas.
- This crucifix a mixture of elements from Congo, the Congo Kingdom, & Portuguese or southern European Christianity
- Mingling of global religious influences started at end of 16th Century. This crucifix is newer than that. Probably 19th c.
- Syncretism = Part of **Globalization**. First, Portuguese missionaries went to Kingdom of Congo. Quickly converted the king. Kingdom of Congo very quickly became Christian state. Partly a political choice - one party of the elite. Example of globalization.
- When Portuguese left, Christianity remained important. Some expression of Christianity was purely indigenous, as with St. Anthony religious movement, which was spearheaded by a woman around 1800. This crucifix used to be next to the St. Anthony figure in Africa gallery.

Rachel: Gallery: Will add a video and websites to kiosks

- Top 10 religious iPad apps: **"God on the Go."** <http://www.wordofgodtogo.com/index2.html>
Includes Kabbalah Oracle, Fasting and Prayer, Alarm for sundown and how to orient toward Mecca, The Buddha Box.
- Map - spread of religions in 90 seconds.
- Lots of religious iPad apps are available.
 - Artistry is often lost in these apps. But aesthetics were a major consideration with religious objects in this gallery.
 - Today, apps focus on communication & being clever, fast and convenient.
 - Found one Arabic app that was beautiful.

Jan-Lodewijk - Will include one loaned, very contemporary work by Mary Margrill, artist in NY state who combines religious symbols from various religions. **All about positive energy.**

<http://www.marymargrill.com/life-path-collection.htm>

"Necklace," Kotyit (Cochiti Pueblo), 1900, #90.58.180



Gallery label: *Blending the distinct artistic traditions of both the Koyit and Spanish colonists, this stunning beaded necklace is a study of religious assimilation. Introduced in the 16th century by Spanish missionaries, Catholic iconography inspired the work of subsequent generations of Pueblo artists. This distinct necklace style is characterized by its strong central pendant, a double-barred cross. Known to Catholics as the Cross of St. James (the patron saint of Spain), the icon was readily adopted by Pueblo artists who associated it with their own ancient symbol for the dragon fly. The cross sits atop a stylized Sacred Heart, a Christian symbol of Jesus' love and sacrifice. While the necklace is visually dominated by this central pendant and fringe of crosses, close inspection reveals the inclusion of three amulets. A polished jet square, a rough-edged turquoise disc, and a miniature stone arrowhead lend an extra element of strength and protection to this potent symbol of Christian faith.*

Description: *Four strands of tubular coral beads, round metal beads, single beads of jet and turquoise, small arrowhead; 14 small sheet crosses; large double-barred cross of bruised heart type.*

Jan-Lodewijk

- Native American Necklace. About 100 years old.
- Pregnant with **multiple meanings:** In this case, a symbol that Spanish missionaries used - the **cross of St. James** with a double transverse - is recognized by the Pueblo as symbol of their own culture - the **dragon fly**.
- Three amulets among necklace beads: An arrowhead. Polished jet square. Small turquoise disc.
- Don't know for whom this was made.
- Clearly a very powerful ornament combining imported & indigenous ornaments.

"The Annunciation," 1637, Jerome Wierix, Flemish, 1553-1619



Gallery label: *From Jerome Nadal's "Evangelica Historiae Imagines"*

“The Annunciation, plate from Giulio Aleni’s “Tianzhu jiangsheng zhuxiang jingjie,” (An Illustrated History of the Lord of Heaven Who Became Incarnate in the Flesh), Jinjian Church, Fujian Province China,” Artist Unknown, Chinese, Published by Giulio Alenia, 1637, # P.10,509



Gallery label: *These illustrations, one time accompanied by Chinese text, are based on Jerome Nadal’s “Images from the Gospels” (Antwerp, 1593), a sumptuously illustrated Latin treatise produced at the instigation of Saint Ignatius Loyola. The images are emblems, with key elements notated and explained in turn. For example, A represents God’s declaration of Christ’s incarnation, and B shows the angel Gabriel delivering the news to Mary. At the far right, D marks Mary’s house in Loreto, which became a pilgrimage site promoted by the Jesuits. (According to legend, angels carried Mary’s house from Nazareth to the Italian town of Loreto in 1291.) Creation is depicted in the small vignette in the sky marked F. and the Crucifixion, as explained in note G, reminds the viewer of Christ’s redemptive sacrifice.*

For the most part, the Chinese woodblock cutters faithfully reproduced the original engravings, adopting many of the European pictorial conventions. Mary’s prie-dieu, for example, appears convincingly three-dimensional, though the room behind her lacks depth. Reminiscent of Chinese art, the swirling clouds are described with bold calligraphic lines, to wonderful effect.

Gallery label: *Giulio Aleni, an Italian-born Jesuit, lived in China for nearly four decades, arriving in 1613 and remaining there until his death in 1649. Mastering the Chinese language, Aleni wrote a number of religious and scientific treatises in China and founded several Christian missions there. These prints come from a book Aleni published in the Fujian Province to help in his conversion efforts.*

ArtsConnected label: *Prompted by the success of Jerome Nadal’s illustrated Gospel stories, the Jesuit missionary Giulio Aleni produced a condensed version in Chinese. The museum’s nine prints from this book were cut down by a previous owner but would originally have included notes - in Chinese rather than Latin - explaining the various details in the scene. For the most part, the Chinese woodblock cutters reproduced the images from Nadal’s Gospels faithfully, adopting many of the European pictorial conventions used in the original engravings. Mary’s prie-dieu, for example, appears*

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“The Risen Christ Appears to His Disciples,” 1637, Woodblock print, Giulo Aleni. P.10,514



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Rachel:

- Giulio Aleni, Italian Jesuit missionary, went to Fujian Province in China in 1613. His journey probably started in Italy, went to Portugal. Around Africa's horn to India, then to China.
- In China over 30 years. While there, created this illustrated Bible. He copied from Jerome Nadal's well-known Jesuit missionary text. Engraving of that text shown to left of Aleni's prints.
- Exhibit has two prints from Aleni's "The Illustrated Life of our Lord Jesus Christ."
- Prints were made in China by Chinese wood cutter.
- Copied Nadal's composition. But changed it to **incorporate Chinese artistic conventions**, as in the Annunciation scene. Aleni works in clouds with beautiful scrollwork associated with Chinese art tradition.
- Rachel discovered these prints when researching Ricci map for Tititan exhibit.
- Originally had Chinese text below print. Was cut off some time before print came to MIA. Numbered in Chinese.
- **Interesting fact:** Christians were the most zealous missionaries. When look at map of the of religions, Christianity is all over the place.
 - Christianity in 2010 practiced in over 5,000 languages.
 - Islam practiced in 2,000 languages.
 - Can trace the Christian influence through Christian objects – interesting mix.
- Missionaries used different artistic traditions in order to reach and convert people

- Working with local artists, created teaching materials that reflected indigenous cultures.
- Christian doctrine complicated. Missionaries wanted to make doctrine accessible to people
 - See this in letters from Jesuit missionaries: “We can’t just put up the crucifix. It’s a horrifying image in China to them.”
 - Cultural disconnect: The concept that Christians would **kill their lord, their king** is really upsetting. And then you **eat him?**
 - Can you send us more Nadal Bibles? They ran out. Very expensive to make because contained huge number of engravings. Made in 1593.
- By 1613, Giulio Aleni was in China. Found pictures best way to tell story of Christ and explain Christian doctrine.
- Language barrier for international missions was the reason that picture Gospels were so treasured, so beloved, by missionaries. That’s the way they explained things. The problem was more a language barrier than literacy.

“Saint Veronica with the Sudarium,” c. 1475, copy after Maste E.S., # P.68.80



Gallery label: Devotional woodcuts are rare today because, ironically, they were such a common part of life in 15th-century Europe. Available by the thousands from peddlers at shrines and fairs, these mostly anonymous works were carried by pilgrims, tacked up for use as home altars, and sewn into clothing. Because they were so ordinary, they were not collected and preserved as fine art.

This fine hand-colored example depicts Saint Veronica. According to legend, Veronica pitied Jesus as he carried his cross to Calvary and offered him her kerchief, or sudarium, which miraculously retained the imprint of Jesus’ face after she wiped his brow. The cloth presumed to have been Veronica’s – her name means vera icon, or “true image”- was kept as a holy relic at Saint Peter’s Basilica in Rome until the city was sacked in 1527. The church granted indulgences, that is, less time in purgatory, to those who prayed before the relic, a benefit that extended to images of it. This made the veil a popular subject in religious art until the Reformation, when such practices came under criticism.

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Rachel:

- Lovely 15th c. German wood cut. Hand-colored.
- Sudarium: Latin word, meaning 'sweat cloth.' Used for wiping the face clean. Small cloths of various sorts, for which sudarium is a general term, played a considerable role in Ancient Roman formal manners and court ceremonial. Many such uses were transferred to Christian liturgical usage and art. A **cultural transfer= part of Globalization.**
- Poignant object: Shows Veronica with her sudarium. Story: Veronica takes pity on Jesus as he carries his cross up Mt. Calvary. Hands him her kerchief. Wipes his brow. His face is miraculously imprinted on her kerchief.
- It becomes a holy relic stored in St. Peter's in Rome until sack of Rome in 1527. Indulgences were granted not only to anyone praying before the actual sudarium in St. Peter's but also before **any image** of the sudarium.
- Popular image in 15th century art.
- Included in show because they were very common in period. Irony: they were **so** common in 15th century that they're rare today. Have become **ephemera**: transitory written or printed matter not meant to be retained or preserved.
- Sold by peddlers at shrines in 15th century.
- Gets to that other part of religion where pilgrims bought objects of faith and carried these portable objects of faith homes where they were tacked to wall and seen by others.
- Another 15th c. wood cut – same idea of pilgrimage:

"Sudarium Displayed by Two Angels," Albrecht Dürer, 1513, #P.139



Gallery label: *The German Renaissance artist Albrecht Dürer was a legend in his own time. His prints, marked with his famous AD monogram, were known in every corner of Europe, and his virtuoso technical skill has never been equaled. We can trace only part of the journey of this magnificent engraving since it left Dürer's studio in Nuremberg in 1513. Collector's marks on back of the print indicate it was in the Netherlands in the 17th century, England in the late 19th, and Portland, Ore., in the early 20th. It arrived in Minneapolis in 1916.*

Scholars have noted that the face of Christ closely resembles Dürer's own; the intensity and sadness of his gaze are remarkable, even at this tiny scale. Dürer, who would become a Protestant sympathizer, executed this print just four years before Martin Luther posted his 95 theses in 1517, critiquing, among many things, the practice of granting indulgences for praying to images like the sudarium.

Rachel.

- Created in the year Dürer executed "Melencolia," famous old master prints, an allegorical composition that's the subject of many interpretations.
- Durer's premiere moment in engraving. Art of engraving never reaches this height again
- Get up close. Appreciate the miracle of virtuosity.
- Works in this show about globalism and faith. Albert Durer executed four years before Martin Luther nailed his 95 theses on cathedral doors & Protestant Reformation began.
- Durer was Protestant sympathizer. Once Luther made his public proclamation, it was very unlikely that Dürer would execute anything like this again in Germany.
- Image of Christ's face is self-portrait of Dürer, most scholars believe. Looks very much like acknowledged painted self-portrait of Dürer.
- Wings and fluttering drapery.
- Can trace its ownership path really well, especially considering how small it is. Collectors' marks on back. Shows was sold in Holland, England, Portland, Ore, and Minneapolis by 1917

"Icon Polyptic and Leather Case," Ethiopia, 18th/19th c., #98.244.4a,b



Gallery label: From an early age, the kingdom of Axum, precursor of today's Ethiopia, came into contact with Christianity. Around 324 CE King Ezana adopted the new creed as a state religion – thus making Ethiopia one of the first Christian countries in the world. Christian images from various Middle Eastern and Mediterranean artistic traditions were introduced, and many foreign artists worked at the court. Over time, Ethiopian icons developed their own characteristic style.

The use of small, portable icons became especially popular in the 18th century. This triptych consists of three panels, two of which are finely carved with crosses on the exterior. The remaining four sides are painted in vivid colors. The two that are visible show standard compositions: Mary holding Christ seated between archangels Michael and Gabriel, and Saint George, who is very popular in Ethiopia, slaying the dragon. An object of personal devotion, such an icon would also be worn around the neck to protect the traveler.

Jan-Lodewijk –

- Little diptych. Larger Ethiopian diptych downstairs in African gallery.
- Christianity came to Ethiopia very early. King Ezana [Asana] converted and made it the state religion in 354 CE.
- Long tradition of Christian art in Ethiopia. But very few Ethiopian art objects survive from first millennium. From 1300-1400 on, Ethiopian artists start to make pictures of saints - **icons**.

- Roman Christian missionaries all over the place. Arrived in Ethiopia. Thought they had to **re-convert the people**. Came with examples of their art.
- Interesting mixture in Ethiopian iconography. Here can see Madonna, Christ Child. On left see St. George, a very popular saint in Ethiopia, who kills the dragon. To the right, the Madonna is surrounded by Archangels Gabriel and Michael.
- Small portable icon, carried during travels. Opened for prayers.
- Larger Ethiopian diptych. Imagery same as those in Catholic churches in Rome at the same time.
- Madonna in larger Diptych was clearly inspired by the icon at Santa Maria Maggorie Church. Engravings (prints) of that icon, which is really a big one, were made and taken by Italian missionaries to Ethiopia. Those were mobile.
- Missionaries had schools & teachers in Ethiopia who taught students to copy icons, spreading artistic & religion ideas.

“The Qur’an,” Persia, #B.96.4.2



Gallery label: *In the first decades of Islam, the divine revelation was transmitted by oral tradition. Following the death of Prophet Muhammad in 632 CE, the Qur’an had to be written down to secure it. For Muslims worldwide, Arabic, the language of the Qur’an, holds a special significance and is believed to be sacred. Regardless of what language they speak, Muslims are taught to read the Qur’an in Arabic. In this portable Qur’an from Persia, we see a beautifully ornamented double frontispiece with calligraphy in black, gold, and red. In conformity with Muslim avoidance of human and animal figuration, notably in religious contexts, the decorations consist of floral motifs and geometrical patterns.*

Jan-Lodewijk

- Prophet Muhammad died 632. Only 10-20 years after his death, the Koran was written down. Had been transmitted orally during his lifetime. He received holy word orally from Ala through Archangel Gabriel. Koran was made canonical at one point.
- Koran written In Arabic because it’s the **language of God** [Ala] and of God’s message.
- Because of Koran, Arabic language has special status not only where Arabic is spoken and written but also in Pakistan, Indonesia, Iran, Mali & Israel, among others.
- Copying Koran is **act of devotion**. Not everybody can write down the Koran. Have to go throughout religious training and spiritual training.
- Korans are exquisitely decorated by abstract and floral motifs.
- General tenancy in Islam to prohibit depiction of animals, human beings & spirits. Especially prohibited in religious contexts.

- In secular sphere – treatises & poetry - find lots of artistic depictions of humans, animals and spirits. Modern texts that were illustrated.
- Look at closely with magnifying glass how different colors were used to make beautiful pattern. Gold leaf applied between the colors.

“Nativity, Chinese export plate,” 1745, #82.45.1



Gallery label: This scene of Christ’s birth comes from a New Testament illustration by Dutch artist Jan Luyken. Most likely an engraving of the design was sent by ship to China, where this plate was made for the Dutch market. In addition to the Nativity, Chinese painters adapted Luyken’s illustrations of the Crucifixion, Resurrection, and Ascension for various export goods.

Rachel –

- An enterprising export porcelain manufacturer in China got engravings from Flanders and put religious motifs on export porcelain to send back to Europe.
- Nativity scene.
- For Dutch Market. Made in China for religious market in Europe

“Rosary and Rosary Box,” Tibetan, late 19th century, #98.119.2.1-2



Gallery label: The use of prayer beads (also called rosaries or malas) to foster meditation is common to many religions across the world – Buddhism, Christianity, Hinduism, Islam, Sikhism. The religion scholar Joseph Campbell explains their effectiveness:

There is a form of meditation taught in Roman Catholicism where you recite the rosary, the same prayer, over and over and over again. That pulls the mind in. In Sanskrit, this practice is called japa, “repetition of the holy name.” It blocks other interests out and allows you to concentrate on one thing, and then, depending on your own powers of imagination, to experience the profundity of this mystery.

This Tibetan rosary consists of 108 black beads, a number sacred to Buddhists. The main beads were used to count prayers and are punctuated by colored beads, brass symbols, and tassels. The round silver storage box is decorated with the eight precious symbols of Buddhism: a conch shell, vase, umbrella, knot, paired fish, wheel, lotus, and canopy.

- Prayer beads from Tibet in 19th c.
- Prayer beads are universal. Called japa [or malas] in Tibet.

“Miniature Pendant with Deposition from the Cross,” German, 1550, #94.33



Gallery label: This exquisitely wrought religious pendant, a masterful combination of worldliness and spirituality, would have been worn on a chain around its owner's neck. The central scene depicts Christ's dead body being taken down from the cross. Spare wood, delicate carving, and miniature scale heighten the pathos and focus attention on the fragility of life. The luxurious exterior, rendered in gold, stones, and inlaid enamel shows two popular saints, Saint Roch in his pilgrim dress – a staff and traveling cloak with a scallop shell – showing his wounded thigh, and Saint Sebastian, pierced by arrows. Protectors of the sick, the two saints were frequently invoked against the plague and represented together in port cities, where epidemics like the Black Death struck first and most ruthlessly. Their presence here suggests that the pendant was intended for a wealthy merchant or nobleman who lived near the sea, or traveled from port to port and needed special protection from disease.

- Devotional pendant from South Germany in 16th century
- Moving deposition of Christ taken down from cross.

- Carved from wood.
- St. Sebastian and St. Roch – both associated with **protection** against **plague**. Appear together only in port cities where infectious diseases enter.
- Probably owned by trader or wealthy merchant.

“Yad (Torah Pointer),” Morocco, 1900, # 2003.165.2



Gallery label: The Torah pointer is used for reading the Torah (biblical) scroll, to avoid touching the sacred manuscript with the hand. The flat form of this pointer is typical of Morocco. Although primarily a Muslim country since the 7th century CE, Morocco has had Jewish communities for over two thousand years. The first Jewish Diaspora to that country dates back to the 4th century BCE, while the second large-scale immigration followed the expulsion of Spanish Jewry in 1492. Over the centuries, Jews in Morocco benefitted from official protection. They performed services for the sovereigns, including the collection of customs duty and diplomacy, and they were engaged in commerce and crafts, especially jewel-making for themselves and their Berber and Arab fellow-countrymen.

- Comes from Morocco where there was a very old Jewish Diaspora that is at least 2,400 years old. Another wave after expulsion of Jew from Spain and Portugal in 1492.
- Made from silver.
- Used to avoid touching holy book while reading.
-

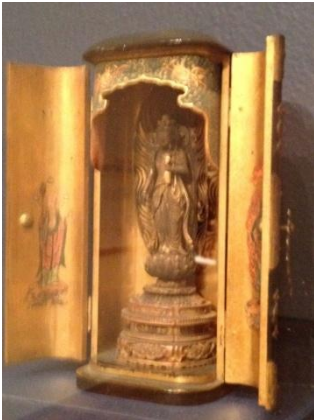
“Standing Kannon,” Japanese, Buddhist, #56.44



- Japanese twist on Buddhist tradition.

- Edo period – probably 19th century
- Concealment of deities, probably associated with Shinto shrine practice.
- Don't see outside Japan.
- This one especially small. So was made to be portable.

Zushi (Shrine) with Kannon, 19th century, #35.7.234a,b



Wall label: Buddhist statues in Japan frequently reside in zushi, which are wooden shrines or cabinets adorned with doors that can reveal or conceal the deity. These box-like altars represent a distinctly Japanese twist to Buddhist practice, and some scholars believe the tradition can be traced to Shinto Shrines, where statues are rare and always concealed.

Enshrined in this miniature altar is Kannon, a bodhisattva of supreme compassion, flanked by painted images of Jizo (Kishigarara), a deity who tries to save condemned souls, and Fudo, a wrathful deity who slashes humankind's deluded thoughts with his sword. The small scale of this shrine indicates that it was meant to be portable, so its owner could travel in the company of his or her chosen deity.

Rachel:

- Portable shrine. Black lacquer case with two doors. Gold pomegranate and leaves on each door; brass mountings. Inside gold. Under canopy wooden figure of Kannon with gold and black robes stands on lotus base with pierced metal mandola behind her. On right hand door, inside, figure of Du-do (Japanese version of Siva, the destroyer), black body, green skirt, red flames. Left-hand door, Jizo, a Bodhisattva (Kshitigarbha in Sanskrit) protector of children, travelers and pregnant women.
- Buddhism came to Japan around 6th century. "Standing Kannon" dates from 7th century.
- Earliest art objects of faith associated with Buddhist tradition show influence of China and also of Korea in way figure is made.
- Artistic influences reflect the religious faith's journey into Japan.
- Standing figure is Kannon = Buddhism's supreme compassionate being.
- You have the wrath bodhisattva who with his sword slashes all your bad thoughts
- This one has two names, one of them Jizo – who forsakes going into the afterlife to help you get into heaven.

“The Following of Christ,” Thomas a Kempis; Henry laye, 1616, #30.1



Rachel -

- This little book, this is the only copy I could find. I've checked Oxford & all the other great libraries in England. Have not found a single other copy.
- Early English book translated into English and published in 1616 in **Flanders for export to England**. It's Thomas a Kempis's "The Following of Christ."
- The book is an anonymous text, but was attributed to Thomas à Kempis. Gives you tips on how to lead a divine, virtuous life.
- Thomas à Kempis – (c. 1380 – 25 July 1471) - canon regular of the late medieval period and the probable author of *The Imitation of Christ*, one of the best known Christian books on devotion.
- Written around 1418-20. Circulated in manuscript form.
- Now available in 2,000 editions. In every single language. One of most popular books ever published.
- This example from 1616.
- Often made **pocket-size** to carry wherever you went.
- Amount of wear on the binding shows that whoever owned it must have carried it around a great deal . Important, precious object..
- No illustrations. Just straight text.
- Every page of this book carefully cut. Shows book well used. Contrast to famous editions of "Ulysses" by James Joyce, bought but never read, pages uncut.
- It was a guide book forever.

“Ganesha,” Cambodia, 13-14th century, #99.216.11



Jan-Lodewijk

- Ganesha – Hindu deity with elephant head.
- Remover of obstacles.
- Hinduism starts in India. This made in Cambodia.
- Hinduism introduced to Cambodian artists in 17th century.
- Certainly differences in style between Indian and Cambodia.

“Diptych with Scenes from the Life of Christ” Master of the Passion Diptych, 1375, #83.72



Gallery label: *Elephant ivory has long been valued for carving. The material itself is attractive, being rare, exotic, sensuous, and fine-grained. The limitations of size imposed by the dimensions of usable ivory in a tusk serve as a challenge to the carver to create miniature works of art. This Gothic ivory diptych is an exquisite example of a devotional object that provided focus for private meditation, both at home and during travel.*

During the first millennium, ivory from the African elephant reached Europe in small quantities mainly from the trans-Saharan trade. From the 13th century onwards, however, large amounts of the “white gold” were accessible through increased contact with the eastern Mediterranean, which was part of a trading network that reached all the way along the East African coast. The maritime and mercantile Swahili people who live there obtained the raw material from the African interior. Ivory thus constitutes one of the early “global commodities.”

Artsconnected label: *The carved scenes of this diptych (hinged two-paneled object) read from left to right, beginning at the bottom: the Annunciation, the Nativity, the Adoration of the Magi, the Betrayal of Judas, the Crucifixion, the Resurrection, the Ascension, and Pentecost.*

In the Middle Ages, wealthy nobles commissioned exquisite diptychs, illustrated prayer books, and other portable religious objects which they could carry on their frequent travels. These works provided a focus for private meditation and attested to the owner's refined taste. Visual storytelling served as an important instructional aid in an age before books were widely available.

Jan-Lodewijk

- Ivory was an early global commodity.
- There was Indian ivory that was imported. But at this time ivory came from Africa via a new trade route following African coast.

- Cypress, in the Mediterranean Sea, was center for trade. Connected eastern African coast with Europe.
- Traders on that coast belonged to the Swahili culture. It was already a very **early globalized culture**, combining elements even in the language from Africa - the Arapin [Arab] and the Persian and India.
- Arab traders got their ivory from the inland – Congolese or Tanzanians who would bring the ivory to the coast.
- Thousands of elephants killed every year so their tusks can be carved into religious objects. Still true today. Christian & Buddhists. Recent articles on “Ivory Worship,” in National Geographic, New York Times and National Public Radio – all 2012 articles
- Used to be a village killed an elephant and used every part of elephant. Would eat for a month. Now carcass left.
- **Religious objects are the market driving poaching & slaughters.**