

Analysis Seminar 4: Art History Using the Comparative Method:

Late Medieval Art in Europe

Each of the four analysis seminars in this course invites you to use a different tool of analysis commonly used by art historians and critics as we explore our topics. In this final seminar, we go beyond formal analysis, the historical moment, and iconology to utilize a comparative method to understand the often-subtle shifts and changes in a similar art form because of different time periods, cultures, or places.

Choose two works from the two different historical eras from chapters 16 and 17. Both works should be of the same form, i.e. two paintings, two sculptures, two buildings, two vases, etc.

Your report should be at least 750 words in total, and should include:

- 1. Images:** Post images or links to your two chosen works, with the APA citation and URL to the sources.
- 2. Material Data:** Name the artist/designer (if known), date(s), current location or museum, materials used and size. Note its use(s) and any special production techniques utilized. Please be very detailed.
- 3. Formal Analysis:** For each art piece, describe the "observable properties of matter", according to: Line, Shape and Form, Space, Texture, Value and Light, Color, Movement, Repetition, Variety, Rhythm, Balance, Compositional Unity, Emphasis, Economy, and/or Proportion. Say something about your chosen work using most of these categories--and others that may seem appropriate to the medium. Look closely. And look at other reproductions of the image on the web to look even closer. Try to utilize the art history terminology you are learning from your readings within each category.
- 4. Context:** Consider the relation of this chosen work to its specific historical world: the politics, religion, family life, wars, etc. Describe how this work reflects this historical moment in time.
- 5. Iconography:** Examine the work that you chose and discuss its symbolism beyond the "natural subject" matter. That is, first note exactly what you see depicted (the natural subject matter). Then, tell us what that subject matter means symbolically, within its own time and culture? Try to relate the symbolism to philosophy, religion or ideas within its culture. This section will probably require research beyond your readings.
- 6. Compare and Contrast:** What is the same in each? What is different here? How so? Why?
- 7. Personal Reflections:** Why did you choose these works? What are their least and most attractive aspects to you?
- 8. APA citations** to your research sources.