

Byzantine Art: Museum Response Paper

Write a 2-page double-spaced description, analysis and comparison of two Byzantine objects from the Metropolitan Museum of Art's collection. You MUST go to the Metropolitan to see your objects in person.

Information (directions, hours, location of Islamic galleries) can be found at www.metmuseum.org. Admission to the museum is SUGGESTED. This means that you must pay something, but it need not be more than a penny if you wish. I believe the suggested donation for students is \$7.00. If you want to pay less, simply hand the cashier whatever you are willing to pay – do not be shy, they expect a wide range of payment! WHEN YOU PAY, GET A RECEIPT AS YOU MUST STAPLE IT TO YOUR PAPER.

1. Examine the objects, taking notes about your observations; sketching the object is also useful for later while writing.
2. Write down the information on the label: the date, maker, medium, etc. Check your spelling! If the label has a lengthy description or other information, remember that this is a source that must be cited if you use this information.
3. The paper will consist of two parts, about 1 page each:
 - Write an approximately 1-page description of the objects that includes: what the objects are, the size, shape, color(s), function (if applicable) and approximately when it was made. Describe what each object is made of and if significant how the object was made. (i.e. the technique of throwing a pot for a pottery bowl does not have to be described but if a pot is specially glazed with metals - likely to be mentioned on a label – then you should note this.) If the object has a representational subject – e.g. a hunting scene – then this should be described. The style should be mentioned: is something carved in a crude or refined manner? Are the figures painted realistically? Cartoon-like? Do they have volume or are they flat? Your description should be objective and NOT include comments such as “This object is the most beautiful thing I’ve ever seen.” or “I chose this object because it caught my eye because it is beautiful.”
 - Write an approximately 1-page analysis and comparison of the artistic choices made for your objects. Discussion might include: how their forms relate to function (why might a brazier – a small grill or heater – be rectangular with feet?); how does its form relate to where it was used and by whom (who reads an illustrated story of legendary kings?) What motifs were chosen and their placement and why? (why is there an inscription at the bottom of a cup that would likely be covered by whatever one is drinking? Why would a pitcher used for banquets have an image of a dancer on it?)
4. **DO NOT DO ANY RESEARCH FOR THIS PAPER!** Rather, I want you to examine the object and make assumptions about why it looks the way it does based on what you see. You do not have to be correct, you only have to make sound assumptions and hypotheses based on what you see. If you do look up something about which you are curious, that source must be properly cited. **Any academic dishonesty will result in an F for the paper and I will report it.**

Late papers will be marked down one day for every day (not class) that they are late (i.e. A to A-, A- to B+, etc.)