



AP[®] Art History 1999 Scoring Commentary

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Question 1

Students have two tasks. They must discuss how **each** artist conveys power and authority.

Students may discuss the power of Chefred (Khafre in latest editions of Gardner, Stokstad) in terms of iconography, the canon of proportions, the king's expression, and the material. Iconographic discussions may include the following: the god Horus enfolding the king's head, lions as symbols of regal authority on the throne's sides, the king's traditional royal costume (short kilt, linen headdress with uraeus, the cobra symbol of Ra, and the false beard which symbolized royalty), and the intertwined lotus and papyrus plants beneath the throne representing the king's power over Upper and Lower Egypt. In addition, the king is seated on a throne and is carved as one with it, symbolically identifying the king with his seat of authority. Formal discussions of Chefred that embody the imposing majesty of power focus on the idealized body and face (a canon of ideal proportions). The expression of the king may be discussed as an embodiment of power in the way the king stares forward with an imperturbable calm. Finally, the material contributes to the conveyance of power in the use of diorite, one of the hardest types of stone, which insured the permanence of Chefred's image.

Students may discuss the power of Henry VIII in terms of the king's physical bulk, display of affluence, and the pose. Holbein uses Henry VIII's huge frame (he was over 6 feet tall and had a 54-inch waist) to create a monumental, overpowering portrait of absolute, almost divine power. The king's massive presence literally fills up the picture plane. There is no indication of spatial setting or objects in the surrounding space to denote his office. All that Henry VIII wears denotes wealth and status while implying power: the work of goldsmiths, embroidery, fur, and jewelry combine to create a display of tremendous wealth. Finally, stance and demeanor represent power: the direct and steady stare along with the left thumb hooked into the cord which secures his sword combine to express an air of supreme confidence and authority.

Points to Remember

- The question does not ask for the two works to be compared or contrasted.
- Both works are well known to students, and notions of how artists convey power will have been discussed by most AP teachers.
- It is unlikely that students will distinguish between the terms power and authority. What one student may refer to as an aspect of power another may describe as a representation of authority.

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Question 2

Students have one task: to **discuss** the Byzantine elements of the work.

This particular image does not seem to be available in the major texts, Janson, Gardner, or Fleming. Even though many teachers teach about Early Christian and Byzantine as one, Janson and Gardner separate the information and make distinctions concerning Early Christian and Byzantine works.

Elements:

Stylistically this work recalls earlier Roman roots the angels are wearing toga-like garments and sandals; their heads have something of an individual character. The distinction between the truly Byzantine characteristics and those of the Early Christian are not at all distinct, however, certain Byzantine characteristics can be identified. The **bodies are dematerialized and elongated** and placed side by side, **isocephalically** to avoid as much as possible the creation of the illusion of space. Even though there is a suggestion of overlapping by the throne and the narrow strip at the bottom of the work, the image is relatively flat. The flatness is enhanced by the use of the **gold background** and very **little reference to the material world** that was abundantly present in Early Christian mosaics. The **drapery forms do not suggest a clear relationship between the cloth and the body beneath it**. The figures themselves are typical of the Byzantine style, with the **frontal presentation** of the holy personages, Madonna and Child, and the **huge staring eyes**.

Discussion:

Discussion might include reference to how the elements work together to portray real Christian eternal presence which holds actual sacred power. Students might also discuss the symbolic meaning conveyed by the subject matter, Christ's hand gesture, the presence of the angels, or the throne.

Point to remember:

This question does not ask for mere description. It asks the student to discuss the elements that define the work of art as Byzantine. Students may have a tendency to just describe what they see or identify Early Christian elements such as the use of mosaics, religious subject matter, the presence of enthroned figures, and the use of halos. Even though these characteristics overlap with Byzantine art, they are not considered true elements that would distinguish Byzantine works.

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Question 3

Students have two tasks:

1. to identify the artist, and
2. to discuss the ways in which the meaning of the chapel is expressed by the interaction between sculpture and architectural setting.

1. Identification

Identification of Bernini is required. This is a major work in all texts; Janson, Gardner, and Stokstad all have large color photographs of St. Theresa in addition to photographs taken to show the sculpture within the larger context of the chapter. (Fleming, however, gives the fullest discussion about the interaction between the sculpture and the architectural setting.)

2. Discussion of meaning

St. Theresa of Avila, Spain was a Carmelite nun and saint of the Spanish Counter-Reformation. Represented is a vision, which took place following the death of her father. The Saint describes an angel piercing her side repeatedly with arrows, which she regarded as divine love. On either side of the altar piece are marble relief portraits of Cardinal Federigo Cornaro, his father, and six cardinals of the Cornaro family, shown as witnesses to her conversion.

Essays should deal with the ways in which Bernini created interdependence (or interweaving) of diverse visual elements to create a total effect between the sculpture and its architectural setting to convey meaning. The meaning needs to be stated. From the readings, the chapel was meant to convey the illusion of the mingling of the spiritual and the physical to help the viewer identify with a miraculous event. Discussion is likely to focus on Bernini's (and the Baroque period's) interest in illusion as a device to integrate sculpture with architecture and to engage the viewer.

Issues which might be discussed:

- Harmonizing of elements: **metal** (gilded shafts carried the light, meant to be seen as bursting forth from the fresco, of a concealed window onto the sculpture); **marble** (marble paneling of agate and dark green frame the picture); **forms** (interacting and dramatic and dynamic forms within the sculpture and the surroundings); **colors** (the use of gold on the sculpture and in the architecture); and **light** (use of symbolic - the metal shafts - and observable light -light coming from the concealed window).
- Harmonizing architecture, sculpture, and painting through theatrical arrangements: **Theatrical arrangement** with theater boxes present as if people were observing the spectacle, relief figures on the side walls of the chapel interact with one another with in their boxes; sculpture surrounded by actual and illusionary architecture; **painting** the fresco dissolves architectural and sculptural boundaries and extends the space above.

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Question 3 (cont.)

Point to remember:

This question does not ask for identification of either the chapel or its stylistic period. Good answers will generally display a knowledge of the period or other works by Bernini and distinguish themselves from those who are able to make observations simply by viewing the slide.

Question 4

Students have one task: to discuss ways in which the artist demonstrates his interest and understanding of perspective in this work.

Because the question states "the new theory" of mathematical perspective, the best answers will go beyond what can easily be observed by relating the work to its period and/or discuss the discovery and use of scientific perspective as a compositional tool. This painting was commissioned by the Medici family and hung along with two other paintings by Uccello in Lorenzo's room; it depicts Niccolò da Tolentino at the center, the victorious general of the 1432 battle of San Romano. Both Gardner and Janson include color photographs of the work (Stokstad shows instead *The Deluge*, a fresco in Sta. Maria Novella, Florence).

Issues which may be discussed:

- Careful compositional organization or placement of figures, objects, and shadows which lead the eye into a central deep space.
- Discussion of foreshortening of figures or objects.
- Discussion of the recent discovery of perspective by Brunelleschi, and its adoption here as a tool to organize space and composition.
- The pattern formed by the repetition of shapes on the ground forms a grid-like stage from which to measure space.

Points to remember:

Identification of artist, work, or period is not required. Better essays will generally identify the period. Students must clearly demonstrate an understanding of mathematical perspective as a compositional device. Weaker essays may list vocabulary without knowledge or direct connection to the work. Remember this is a five-minute question.

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Question 5

Students have one task. They must discuss specific characteristics of this Mannerist painting.

This painting by Jacopo da Pontormo exhibits almost all the stylistic features characteristic of the early phase of Mannerism. Formal characteristics of Mannerism that the student may discuss include the pose or proportions of the human figure, space, color, and composition. Figures may be described as elongated, stylized, rejecting classical proportions, and elegant. The space is ambiguous and it is difficult to determine where figures are located within this space. This space seems too shallow for so many bodies. Two heads seem to have no bodies beneath them. The palette may be described as strident or acidic. Renaissance centrality is rejected in favor of Mannerist instability, with figures pushed into the foreground plane and the margins of the canvas.

Mannerism was the style of the courts and was often erotic and provocative even when handling religious subjects. As opposed to Renaissance harmony and rational clarity of meaning, Mannerism expressed irrational or highly dramatic emotions.

Points to remember:

- Students are **not** required to identify the artist or work.
- Students should be familiar with this early Mannerist painting. It is in all four major texts and embodies almost all the stylistic features characteristic of early Mannerist painting.
- Students need to **discuss** the Mannerist characteristics and not simply produce a list.

Question 6

Students have two tasks: to identify the art historical period from which both works come, and to discuss the works as exemplars of the social values of that period in the place where the works were made.

Students are not expected to know either artist or the title of either work. Regardless of the survey text they used, they will have seen similar works, group portraits of somberly dressed citizens. Students should not have trouble placing these "unknown" works in the Baroque era, or in associating them with Dutch culture (or Holland or the Netherlands).

Issues That Might Be Raised:

- Dark clothing of people represented relative simplicity and uniformity of dress in contrast to the elaborate development of Catholic Baroque art; links to beliefs of some forms of Protestantism; this kind of dress as reaction against ostentation and expense of aristocratic dress; links to form of government found in Netherlands, burghers, bourgeois, nonaristocrats.

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Question 6 (cont.)

- Primary emphasis on group identity in both cases, with those portrayed clearly involved in a group endeavor — hard to pick out a group leader; links to communal nature of government and society.
- Secondary (and yet strong) emphasis on individual identity and personality — painters' skills in depicting individual physiognomies and personalities, and in making use of compositional devices to differentiate individuals; links to materiality (Van Eyckian appreciation for "things"); respect for the individual in Dutch Baroque culture; a gregarious fellowship of men in pursuit of a common goal.
- Realistic style in which both works were painted; links to materiality — merchants, mercantilism — of Dutch Baroque culture. The informal portrait and lack of idealism.
- Civic pride (independence from Spain and new wealth); the "night painters." The Dutch were right up there with Caravaggio; no country bumpkins, they.

Points to Remember:

Students are not asked to compare and contrast these two works, and thus may deal with each work individually.

Question 7

Students must explain why paintings like the one on the right were comparatively well received by the 19th-century viewing public, while works like the painting on the left met with significant public disfavor.

Students are not asked to identify the paintings or recognize the style or general type of either work.

Students should recognize that an essentially academic, narrative work (Pre-Raphaelite) is being juxtaposed with a much more radical one (Impressionism) in terms of subject matter and style.

All survey texts discuss Impressionism in some detail. All discuss the Pre-Raphaelite movement as well, but less fully. Readers will find that students' responses have more to say about the Impressionist painting. Many students will know about the initial difficulties of Monet and other Impressionists in having their work understood and accepted by the public. Some students may know about British industrialists' fondness for Victorian narrative paintings, Pre-Raphaelite works like the one shown among them.

Points to be made include:

- Regarding Monet: unfinished, sketchy, apparent lack of subject matter, rejection of traditional.
- Regarding Hunt: high finish, anecdotal, moralistic, academic, far more traditional.

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Question 8

Students have two general tasks:

1. Clearly identify two specific religious examples and their respective cultures; one culture and image **must** be non-European based.
2. Identify specific ways in which each image conforms to and reinforces the religious beliefs of that culture.

Points to remember:

- This question does **not** ask for a comparison between the two choices.
- The choices the student makes at the beginning are extremely important.
- If you are unfamiliar with the work cited, please find a colleague who is familiar with it to read this essay. The examples, particularly non-European-based choices, do vary widely and may differ from standard textbook designations. Remember, they have much of world art to choose from! Problems arise when a student chooses an image that is a general type such as an African mask or a Buddha or Christian icons, etc, without specifying a particular work.
- The question asks students to discuss how the work conforms to a particular religion; thus, generally the best responses will demonstrate a basic understanding of the religious beliefs that their chosen works represent or illuminate. Those students who have made choices of specific images often make more focused remarks about the particular religious context of that object. Weaker responses will usually not provide this background information, or the information given will be generalized, drawing loose connections between the work and its background.

Note:

Some students used the image of the Byzantine *Madonna and Child, Seated Chefren*, or the *St. Theresa in Ecstasy*, seen in earlier free-response questions.

Question 9

Students have two general tasks:

1. Identify two artists, each from a different art historical period, who have each explored the effects of light in their painting.
2. Discuss the function and use of light in paintings by each artist, using specific examples.

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Question 9 (cont.)

The question addresses how light functions within the context of a work of art and how an artist uses light. Artists may be chosen from a variety of art historical periods, spanning the history of art, though the Renaissance to modern eras will predominate in the answers.

Students have been asked to identify **specific paintings** by each artist, but may not make this distinction. Among the difficulties encountered with this question is the tendency for some students to overlook the reference to "painting" in the first sentence of the question, and the word "specific" in the last sentence. If students choose media other than painting (such as sculpture or architecture), they may not receive a score higher than 7. If they do not identify at least one specific painting, they may not receive a score higher than 5.

Students' discussions must indicate a clear understanding of the artist's manipulation of light and its effects within the context of a given work. Renaissance, Baroque, Romantic, or Impressionist artists, and works that comprise some modeling of form, would constitute good choices. The most common choices, by far, seem to have been Monet and Caravaggio; others include Vermeer, Turner, Leonardo, Rembrandt, Renoir, and Van Gogh. Students are by no means limited to these periods or artists. Problematic choices might include paintings in which overall lighting is used and modeling is minimal, making it difficult to discuss how light is used or how it functions. A flatly colored painting that emphasizes line, for example, would be a problematic choice, such as a Greek vase painting, an Egyptian tomb painting, or a Roy Lichtenstein work with similar formal emphases on contour and flat areas of color.

A good essay might include discussion of any of the following:

- a. how light and shadow are used to model form;
- b. how dramatic use of lighting creates an atmosphere or mood, or connotes a sense of spirituality (associations with the Divine, etc.);
- c. how a strong light source (natural or artificial) - its direction and intensity - can enhance spatial illusionism, mass and volume; or
- d. how natural light reveals and affects form and how it might be captured in a painting to create a variety of effects.

Points to remember:

- Students are asked to choose artists from **different** art historical periods.
- Students are asked to discuss **specific** works.

Note: Essays that merely describe a painting, or merely state that light exists in a painting, without demonstrating an understanding of how light is used or how it functions within the work, do not essentially answer the question.