

Home examination

KUN 2306E – Art and visual culture of the later Middle Ages

- Distribution of assignment: 15.12.2013, in Fronter, from 10:00.
- Handing in of assignment: 18.12.2013, in Fronter, before 14:00.

Choose **one** of the following topics

1. The notion of seeing is fundamental in late medieval spirituality. Explain how medieval theories of sight and optics provided a foundation for the idea of visual piety and visual communion, and apply this in two case studies. Choose two works of art, or objects, illustrated in the syllabus, and describe how the visual perception of these functioned as acts of devotion.

Use as heading: **Vision and devotion**

2. José van Aelst in “Visualizing the spiritual”, and Jeffrey Hamburger in “Vision and the Veronica”, both present examples of visual aids, produced by and for nuns to use in the meditation on the passion of Christ and the divine mysteries. Give an account of the thinking connected to the use of images as tools for meditative exercises in the late Middle Ages, and describe how this was put in to practice by the nuns.

Use as heading: **Images in female monastic devotion**

3. In his essay “The medieval work of art: Wherein the ‘work’? Wherein the ‘art’?”, Jeffrey Hamburger argues that images of the Ark of the Covenant worked to replace absence by presence, and to put the visible in the place of the invisible. Herbert L. Kessler, in “Turning a blind eye: Medieval art and the dynamics of contemplation” also speaks of how to represent the, as such unseeable, divine in visible form. This is the fundamental challenge of Christian art: give an account, by way of examples from the curriculum, of how this dilemma has been tackled by artists in different media.

Use as heading: **To show the invisible by means of the visible**



Formal requirements:

- Size/scale: 6-7 pages. Any pictures are viewed as attachments, and are not counted as pages of the essay (paper).
- The recommended font is New Times Roman (font size 12), with 1 ½ line spacing. We recommend the reference system Chicago as a standard for footnotes and bibliography (see <http://www.ub.uio.no/english/writing-referencing/>). Exam papers without references will be assessed to F
- The essay (paper) is graded on a descending scale using alphabetic grades from A to E for passes and F for fail.
- For more instructions on submitting essays (papers) in Fronter, see: http://www.hf.uio.no/ifikk/english/studies/admin/submitting/submitting_fronter.html