

Exam Preparation

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AHT Exams

AHT100

Mid-year exam (30%), 1 hour 30 minutes, Monday 19 and Tuesday 20 June

- 5 questions: 4 single images for 15 minutes each,
- 1 pair of images for 30 minutes

AHT200

Mid-year exam (20%), 40 minutes, 19, 20, 21 June

- 4 slides, 10 minutes each
- 3 from the exam list, 1 mystery slide

AHT300

End-of-year exam (50%) Friday October 27.

- two images from the image shortlist and two comparative analysis questions related to the course content from weeks 16-26.

Study strategies

- Compile notes for each image on the short list; consider printing out an image of each artwork and compiling your study notes on the back, or, have a word.doc for each image.
- Begin by identifying the movement, period or style for each image
- Then outline the key characteristics of this movement/period/style

Example:

Artemisia Gentileschi, Susannah and the Elders, 1610, oil on canvas, 170 x 119 cm

- Baroque: painterly surfaces, appeal to senses, chiaroscuro, movement (diagonal lines), moment of becoming, bridging devices, accessing intellect through emotions

****Characteristics of the Baroque according to Heinrich Wölfflin**

Study strategies

How does Gentileschi's composition exemplify these characteristics of the Baroque?

Baroque: painterly surfaces, appeal to senses, chiaroscuro, movement (diagonal lines), moment of becoming, bridging devices, accessing intellect through emotions



Study strategies

- Once you have labelled each work on the exam list with its respective movement/period/style and key characteristics, go through the corresponding lecture images (these can be found with the weekly readings on the student portal)
- Focus on the introductory text that provides the themes, theories, historical background (social, political, religious, cultural) for each lecture
- Use this text to make notes for each work on the exam list. These notes will provide the broad context for your more specific analysis of each image.

Study strategies

- Heinrich Wölfflin's characteristics of the Baroque
- The Counter Reformation
- The Scientific Revolution
- Royal and courtly patronage

Artemisia Gentileschi, Susannah and the Elders, 1610, oil on canvas, 170 x 119 cm



Study strategies

- Once you have identified the broad context for each artwork, go back through your lecture and tutorial notes as well as the weekly readings to compile more detailed visual analysis for each image:

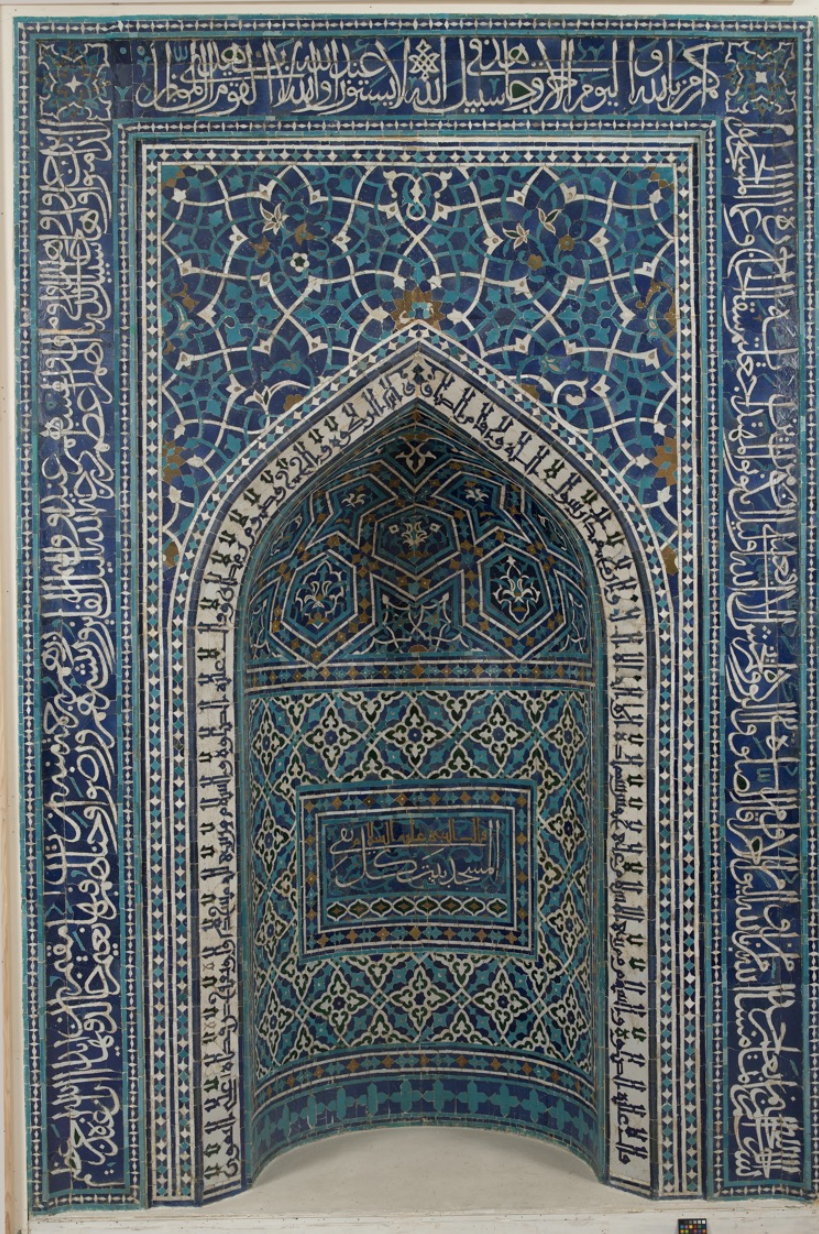
Use the formula for visual analysis as subheadings and fill in with dot points:

- **Subject (for contemporary art replace with Concept)**
What is the content of the artwork? Which moment has the artist depicted?
- **Form (for contemporary art replace with Method)**
How is the subject represented? What are the effects of medium, technique, composition, light, colour, space, and scale?
- **Context**
Why is the subject represented in this way? What makes its formal characteristics historically significant? What kinds of social, political, religious, or philosophical meanings did the artwork have in its time?

Guide to visual analysis

available from AHT100 page of the Student Online Learning Portal

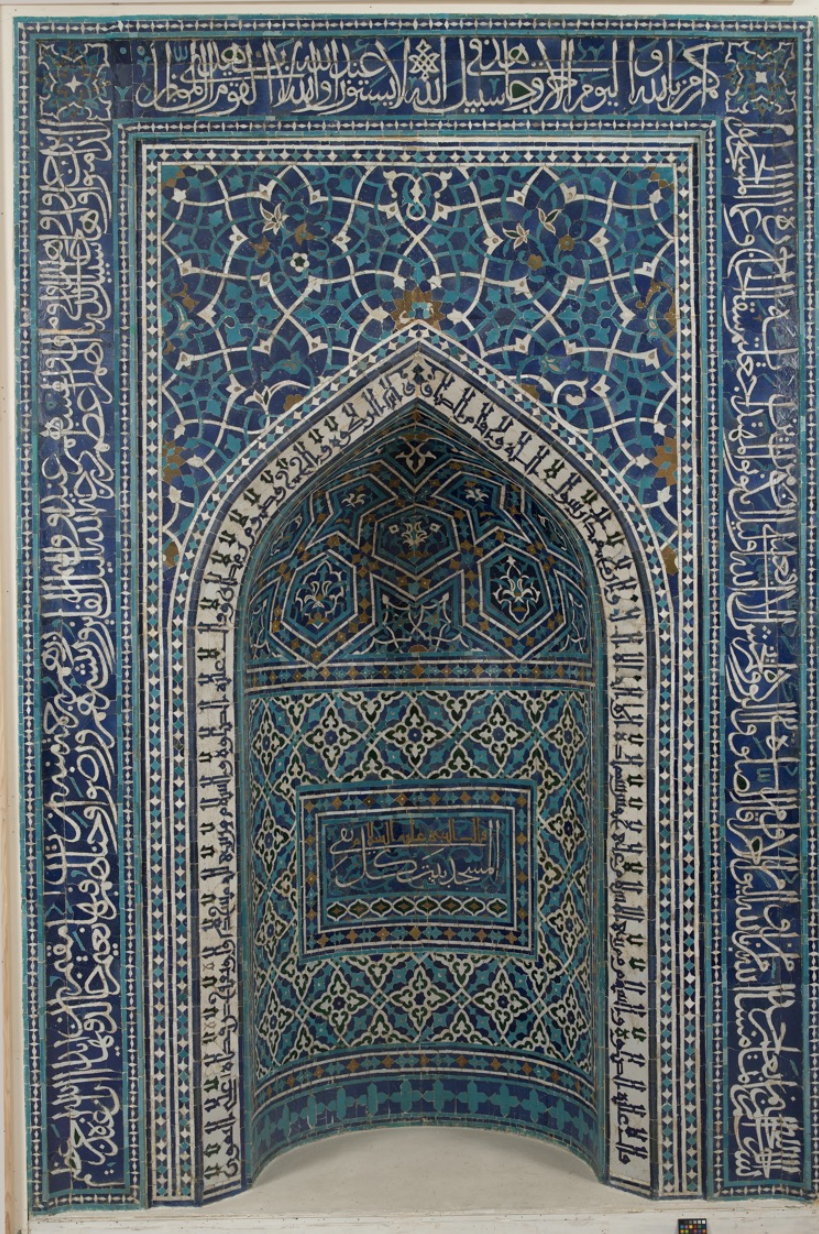
- **Choice of medium and materials** (oil paint, tempera, fresco, ink on paper, ink on silk, marble, bronze, clay, engraving, etching, aquatint)
- **Technique** (smooth or rough? Linear or painterly? Expressive or detached?)
- **Scale** (large or small relative to the viewer? Grandiose and monumental, or personal and intimate?)
- **Relationship between the artwork and viewer** (playful and imaginative, heroic and edifying, moralising and didactic, or intellectual and analytical? Are we to admire and learn, or participate emotionally or psychologically?)
- **Composition** (Orderly or dynamic? Symmetrical or asymmetrical? Sparse or crowded? Open or closed? How are directional lines used to draw your attention? How are things grouped?)
- **Space** (abstract, shallow, schematic, perspectival, or deep?)
- **Colour** (bright, clear, pure, rich, dark, brooding, or dull? Naturalistic or symbolic?)
- **Light** (contrasting or diffuse, clear or atmospheric? Is there an identifiable light source?)
- **Gaze and gesture** (how do sightlines or actions draw your attention to aspects of the work? What are the points of focus?)



Subject/What?

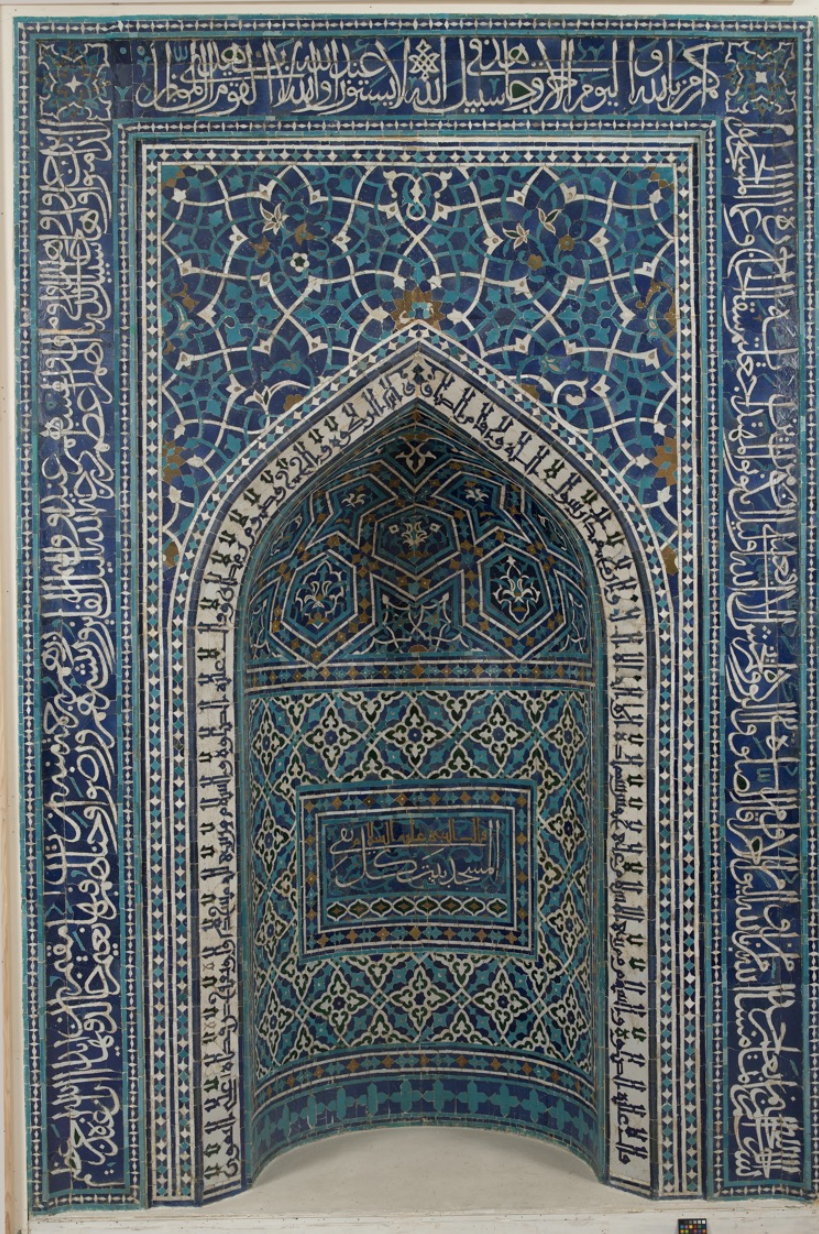
- Mihrab = prayer niche
- Essential element of mosque architecture
- Indicates direction of Mecca towards which Muslims pray; a directional pointer
- Set in the Qibla wall

Mihrab (prayer niche), 1354-55, Ilkhanid period, Isfahan, Iran, polychrome glazed tiles, 343.1 x 288.7 cm, Metropolitan Museum of Art



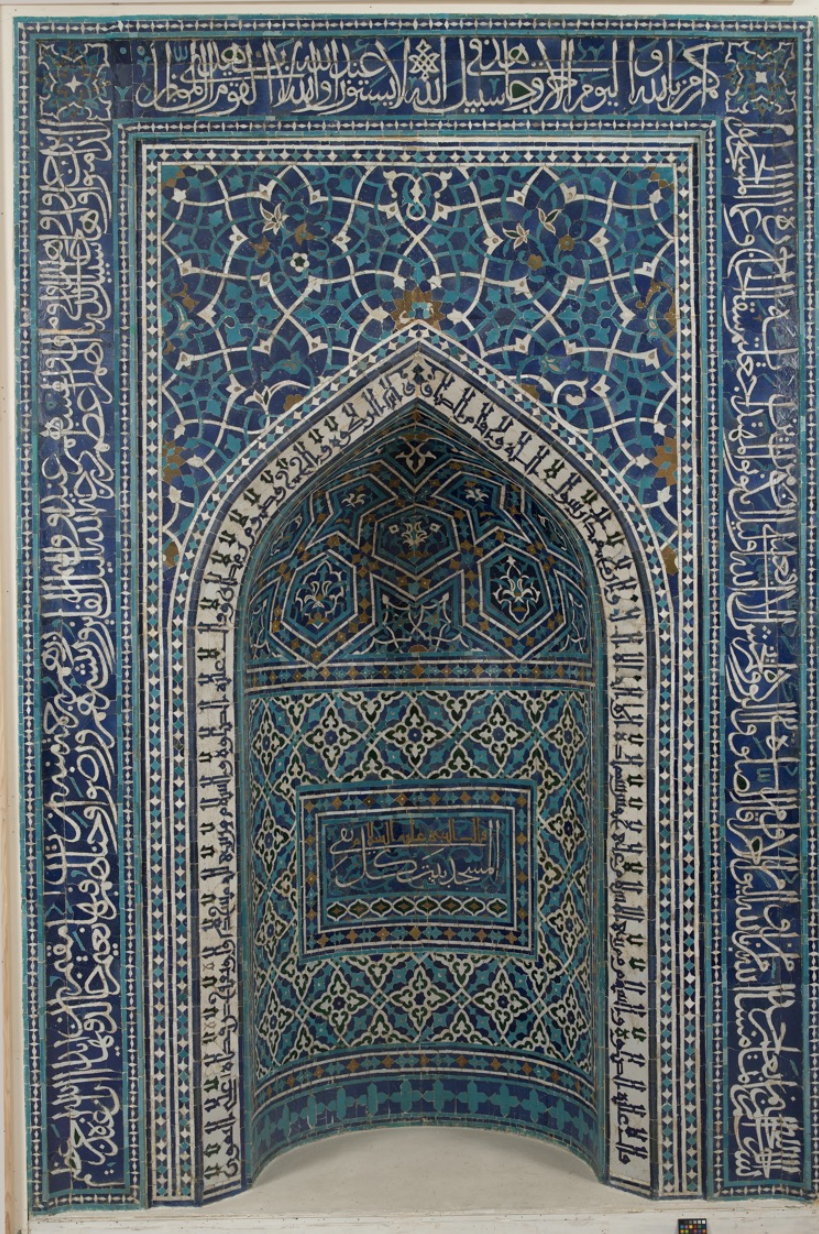
Form/How?

- Deep, rounded niche with pointed vault
- Glazed mosaic tilework in dark blue, turquoise, ochre, and white
- Calligraphy: embellishment of sacred words of Quran (thuluth and kufic scripts)
- Interlacing vegetal patterns: associated with paradise
- Repeating geometric patterns: controls abundance of vegetal forms, assoc. with geometry and symbolism of light



Context/ Why?

- Aniconic tradition of devotional imagery
- In a madrasa, school of theology
- visually encompasses the beauty and order of God's creation and the principles of Islam for the student



Study Strategies

Finally, see if you can condense these notes into three key words for each artwork on the list. These key words will help you recall your notes during the exam.

- Directional pointer
- Aniconic
- Symbolism of paradise and light

Study strategies

- These three key terms might relate to subject/form/context or be more thematically oriented:



Velázquez, *Christ in the House of Mary and Martha*, c1617

- Action/Contemplation
- Baroque
- Counterreformation

Practice

- Once you have compiled your notes for each image on the exam list, test yourself by either answering practice questions (AHT100) or writing out a visual analysis (AHT200) for artworks on the list.
- Mirror the live exam conditions as much as possible: time yourself (AHT100: 15 minutes per single image; 30 minutes per double) (AHT200 10 minutes per image); write with a pen on paper
- Tip: practice the exam list out of order

Sample AHT100 exam questions

1. In what ways does Artemisia Gentileschi's *Judith Beheading Holofernes* exemplify the Baroque style?
2. How is linear perspective used to create space and meaning in Masaccio's *Holy Trinity*?



1. In what ways does Artemisia Gentileschi's *Judith Beheading Holofernes* exemplify the Baroque style?

- Define the Baroque style using Wolfflin's criteria and the Counter Reformation context (faithful to text, legible, accessible)
- Apply criteria to AG's painting, e.g. appeal to the senses, movement, bridging distance between spectator and painting
- Effect: involve viewer emotionally and sensorially in the story
- Why: AG creating works for Counter Reformation; focusing on feminine strength and virtue

Sample AHT100 compare and contrast exam questions

1. How do *Riace Warrior A* and *Seated Buddha* construct the ideal body differently, and why?
2. Compare and contrast the representation of the Annunciation by Fra Angelico and the Workshop of Robert Campin. What do these approaches say about the differences between the Italian and the Northern Renaissance?



Compare and contrast the representation of the Annunciation by Fra Angelico and the Workshop of Robert Campin. What do these approaches say about the differences between the Italian and the Northern Renaissances?

Fra Angelico

- Fresco: integral to the site of San Marco
- Classical architectural setting: revival of Ancient building techniques and notions of proportion and harmony (also used to rebuild San Marco)
- Linear perspective: order and rationality in space

Workshop of Robert Campin

- Portable folding triptych in oil on timber (for domestic use)
- Domestic space crowded with objects relating to everyday life (look for spiritual meanings within everyday things)
- Oil paint used to depict lustrous textures, interest in material goods relates to mercantile culture
- Lack of linear perspective and meticulous detail relates to influence of illuminated manuscripts



Compare and contrast writing tips

- Start with a sentence or two that outlines your argument in response to the question
- Divide your analysis into two paragraphs, starting with the earlier work
- Transition to the second artwork with contrasting phrases such as 'by contrast', 'whereas', 'while', 'on the other hand'

The Exam

- Bring extra writing implements
- Wear a watch
- Before writing your response, spend 2-3 minutes making an outline for how you plan to answer the question.
- This outline should include the identification of the artwork's movement/period/style as well as subject/form/context dot points tailored to the question
- Once you have an outline, briefly plan what you will discuss in each paragraph
- Tip: write a paragraph each for subject/form/context or for your three key words
 - Eg: directional pointer, aniconic, paradise and light (Mihrab)

- **The Exam: The Mystery Slide (only for AHT200)**
- Don't panic if you can't remember the artwork
- Make an educated guess on the artist, title, and date
 - The title is often related to the subject
 - It's okay to guess the decade or part of the century rather than the exact date
 - Eg: 1920s, early twentieth century
- See if you can identify the movement/style: eg. Post-Impressionism, Futurism, etc.
 - This will help you with your analysis: how can you relate the key characteristics of the movement or style to the mystery slide?
- Fall back on the formula of subject/form/context to guide you through an analysis
- Don't forget the formal qualities of the work: medium, scale, composition, relationship to viewer, etc.
- Be specific!

The Exam

- If you finish a question/analysis early, use the extra time to review/revise your response or earlier responses – don't just sit there!
- Come up with ways to counter the stress of the exam environment: get a good night sleep the night before, listen to music or exercise before the exam, practice slow deep breathing
- Try not to worry – you are not alone!

Good luck!!!