

Art in Europe from 4th to 10th Century

Code: 100562
ECTS Credits: 6

2025/2026

Degree	Type	Year
Art History	OB	2

Contact

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Teachers

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Teaching groups languages

You can view this information at the [end](#) of this document.

Prerequisites

- General notion of the historical-artistic period in the context of the history of Western art.
- Sufficient knowledge of English and French (and, if possible, also Italian) that allow the proper use bibliography and/or electronic resources in these languages.
- The intellectual attitude and level of general culture of a person who, having voluntarily and consciously enrolled in a university degree, is of course interested in studying and gaining new knowledge.
- It is absolutely essential that both oral and written expression are correct in content and form, as must be required of anyone who has completed high school and aspires to a university degree, regardless of the language used.

Objectives and Contextualisation

1- To provide a general vision of this artistic period that runs between the end of antiquity and the beginnings of Romanesque, parallel to the specific knowledge of its various manifestations within a complex and changing territory. This should allow to assimilate the profile and specificities of the art of this period in order to be able to identify and evaluate the works then produced.

2 - To understand the fundamental relationships between art and the historical, religious, social, economic, political and cultural context, as well as the various functions and readings of the work of art.

3- To know and learn how to conveniently handle the relevant bibliography and certain electronic resources, insofar as they allow the knowledge provided in the classroom to be expanded and information to be sought when necessary.

4- To acquire and progressively master a specific lexic that allows the correct interpretation and description of a work, a typology or an iconographic theme.

5 - To dismantle false myths and erroneous interpretations about this period and its artistic manifestations, largely derived from the weight of a certain historiographic tradition and the lack of knowledge of the scientific bibliography that allows its objective and updated understanding.

Competences

- Critically analysing from the acquired knowledge a work of art in its many facets: formal values, iconographic significance, artistic techniques and procedures, elaboration process and reception mechanisms.
- Interpreting a work of art in the context in which it was developed and relating it with other forms of cultural expression.
- Recognising the evolution of the artistic imagery from the antiquity to the contemporary visual culture.
- Students must be capable of applying their knowledge to their work or vocation in a professional way and they should have building arguments and problem resolution skills within their area of study.
- Students must develop the necessary learning skills in order to undertake further training with a high degree of autonomy.

Learning Outcomes

1. Accurately defining and explaining an artistic object with the specific language of art criticism.
2. Analysing ideas about an artistic phenomenon in a given cultural context.
3. Analysing the creators of an artistic phenomenon in a specific cultural context.
4. Analysing the recipients of an artistic phenomenon in a specific cultural context.
5. Applying the iconographic knowledge to the reading of artistic imagery.
6. Connecting an artistic imagery with other cultural phenomena within its period.
7. Distinguishing the elaboration techniques and processes of an artistic object.
8. Efficiently presenting knowledge in oral and written form.
9. Encouraging creativity and fomenting innovative ideas.
10. Examining an artistic imagery and distinguishing its formal, iconographic and symbolic values.
11. Explaining the reception mechanisms of a work of art.
12. Identifying the artistic imagery, placing it into its cultural context.
13. Reconstructing the artistic outlook of a particular cultural context.
14. Working in teams, respecting the other's points of view and designing collaboration strategies.

Content

This is one of the four core subjects that make up the topic General History of Medieval Art, from 24 ECTS: one in the second year (Art in Europe from the 4th to the 10th centuries) and three in the third year (Byzantine Art, Romanesque Art and Gothic Art). It is therefore also an introduction to Medieval Art.

Much less well known than Byzantine, Romanesque or Gothic art, and often misinterpreted and underestimated, the art that developed in European territories during this period is largely the result of a Christian interpretation of the classical legacy or, if one prefers, of the transformation of the pagan world in late Antiquity. During the convulse seven centuries that are taken into consideration, a diverse art was created - albeit with common formulas - that established the foundations -both typological and iconographic- of the later European artistic culture.

Programme

1.- Ancient art or medieval art? *Interpretatio christiana*: survival and transformation of the Roman heritage. Holy places and relics as driving forces for artistic creation.

2.- Early Christian foundations. Early Christian art, a Roman art. The constantinian impulse. Architectural typologies and iconographic programs.

3.- Romans and barbarians. Disintegration of the Western Roman Empire. Italy: Ostrogoths and Byzantines in Ravenna.

4.- Carolingian Renaissance. Church, empire and *renovatio*. The Palatine complex of Aachen and the court of Charlemagne. The Benedictine monastery: plan of St. Gallen. Worship spaces: the Early Christian model and the novelties. The *Westwerk*. Illuminated manuscripts.

5. Christian territories of the Iberian Peninsula. 9th century: Asturian art, a royal patronage art. 10th century: Monastic *scriptoria*. Illuminating the Apocalypse: the *Beatus*.

6. Art of the Ottonian empire: artistic forms of a political ideology. Emperors and ecclesiastical princes as artistic patrons: Bernward of Hildesheim.

Activities and Methodology

Title	Hours	ECTS	Learning Outcomes
Type: Directed			
Development of the programme (classroom-based master classes)	54	2.16	3, 4, 12, 5, 1, 7, 10, 11, 13, 6
Seminar			
	6	0.24	12, 1, 10, 6
Type: Supervised			
Written coursework	30	1.2	3, 4, 12, 1, 10, 13, 6, 14
Type: Autonomous			
Reading of texts indicated by the teacher	15	0.6	1, 10, 13
Study (consolidation and expansion of content explained in class through bibliography and other resources)	45	1.8	3, 4, 12, 5, 1, 10, 11, 13, 6

- During classroom-based instruction, the programme will be developed in master class sessions, always with the accompaniment of images and occasionally the reading of texts or the use of some electronic resource. Readings will be assigned and others will be recommended.

- Interventions by students will be welcome, in the form of questions, comments or contribution of complementary information that can generate a debate or lead to other aspects of interest.

- The Virtual Campus /Aules Moodle will be used to provide lists of bibliography, links and other material deemed appropriate, as well as to warn of incidents that may affect the course.

- There will be a regular control of attendance to class. Attendance is necessary to obtain one's own class notes, for a correct understanding of the subjects and for participation in the activities that may be carried out. In no case does the existence of the Virtual Campus / Aules Moodle, or the notes floating around on the Internet, save face-to-face instruction nor are they any guarantee that the course will be passed. It is, therefore, the absolute and exclusive responsibility of the student for the lack of knowledge arising from not following the course in person.

- All information regarding readings, tasks, calendar and programmed activities will be provided in the classroom and/or through the Virtual Campus / Aules Moodle.

- E-mail will only be used if the student is unable to come to the Faculty or if it has been agreed with the lecturer.

- Tutorials are reserved for specific and particular doubts, leaving those of collective interest for interventions in the classroom.

- The teaching methodology and the evaluation proposed in the guide may undergo some modification subject to the onsite teaching restrictions imposed by health authorities.

Annotation: Within the schedule set by the centre or degree programme, 15 minutes of one class will be reserved for students to evaluate their lecturers and their courses or modules through questionnaires.

Assessment

Continous Assessment Activities

Title	Weighting	Hours	ECTS	Learning Outcomes
Classroom exercises	20% of the final mark	0	0	3, 4, 2, 12, 5, 1, 9, 10, 13, 6, 8, 14
Mid-term exam 1	40% of the final mark	0	0	3, 4, 12, 5, 1, 7, 10, 11, 6, 8
Mid-term exam 2	40% of the final mark	0	0	3, 4, 12, 5, 1, 7, 10, 11, 6, 8

To pass the subject, students must obtain a grade of no less than 5 out of 10.

A grade of *Not assessable* will be awarded if the student has completed less than 30% of the assessment activities.

When the results of each evaluative activity are published, the procedure and date for grade review will be announced (via Moodle).

The following assessment tasks will be carried out:

A) Two midterm exams

One halfway through the semester and another at the end, covering the material taught in each part. Dates will be set on the first day of class.

B) Classroom exercises:

One or two classroom exercises (which will account for a total of 20% of the final grade), to be specified in due course.

Resits (Make-up exams)

A missed exam may be retaken only under the following conditions:

- if it could not be taken at the scheduled time (with valid justification)
- if the final grade is a fail with a score no lower than 3.5
- The resit date is set by the Faculty. No changes or individual exceptions will be allowed. If any changes occur, they will affect the entire group and will be duly communicated.
- The resit exam will follow the same structure as the midterms. The length may vary slightly.
- There is no resit option for classroom exercises; only for exams.

Single assessment

Students opting for single assessment are not exempt from attending class. The only difference is that they will have a single date to complete all assessments for the course.

It will consist of the same components:

- one exam on the course content (80% of the final grade)
- one or two exercises to be specified (20% of the final grade)

Date: A single assessment date will be set within the official period defined by the Faculty.

IMPORTANT

If a student engages in any irregularity that may significantly affect the grade of an assessment task, that task will be given a grade of 0, regardless of any disciplinary process that may follow. If multiple irregularities occur in the assessments of the same subject, the final grade for that subject will be 0.

For this subject, the use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) technologies is allowed only in very specific and justified cases. AI use is permitted exclusively for support tasks, such as proofreading and/or translation, and never for the creation of written exercises. If used (and only when permitted), students must clearly identify the parts generated with AI tools and specify which tools were used.

Lack of transparency in the use of AI in any assessed activity will be considered academic dishonesty and may result in partial or total penalisation of the activity's grade, or more serious sanctions in severe cases.

Assessment tasks involving irregularities are not eligible for resits.

It is not permitted to take photographs in class or record sessions by any means.

Bibliography

Bibliographic selection (general and introductory works)

* Once the course has started, the complete bibliography of the subject will be provided.

Enciclopedia dell'Arte Medievale, 12 vols., Roma 1991-2002 (also accessible [on-line](#))

The Grove Encyclopedia of Medieval Art and Architecture, C. Hourihane (ed.), 6 vols., Oxford University Press, Oxford 2012 (also accessible online via subscription)

Caillet, Jean-Pierre (dir), *L'Art du Moyen Age. Occident. Byzance. Islam*, Reunion des musées nationaux / Gallimard, París 1995.

Garcia Marsilla, Juan Vicente, *Història de l'art medieval*, Publicacions de la Universitat de València, 2004 (also accessible [on-line](#))

Bango, Isidro G. / Abad, Concepción, *Arte Medieval I*, Historia 16 (col. Conocer el Arte, 4), Madrid 1996.

Nees, Lawrence, *Early Medieval Art*, Oxford History of Art, Oxford University Press 2001.

Mathews, Thomas F., *The Clash of Gods. A Reinterpretation of Early Christian Art*, Princeton University Press, 1993. Ed. corregida i augmentada, 1999.

Krautheimer, Richard, *Arquitectura paleocristiana y bizantina*, Cátedra ("Manuales Arte"), Madrid 1984 [ed. or. anglesa a 'The Pelican History of Art' 1965].

Lowden, John, *Early Christian and Byzantine Art*, Phaidon (Art & Ideas), London 1997.

Krautheimer, Richard, *Introduction à une «iconographie de l'architecture médiévale»*, Gérard Monfort, París 1993 [publicat originalment com a article al *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes*, V (1942), p. 1-33].

Belting, Hans, *Imagen y culto. Una historia de la imagen anterior a la era del arte*, Akal, Madrid 2009 [ed. original alemania, 1990].

Yarza Luaces, Joaquín et altri, *Arte Medieval I. Alta Edad Media y Bizancio* ("Fuentes y Documentos para la Historia del Arte" II), Gustavo Gili, Barcelona 1982.

Barral i Altet, Xavier, *La alta Edad Media. De la antigüedad tardía al año mil*, Taschen (col. Arquitectura mundial), Colònia 1998.

McClendon, Charles B., *The Origins of Medieval Architecture. Building in Europe 600-900 AD*, Yale University Press, New Haven - Londres 2005.

Stalley, Roger, *Early Medieval Architecture*, Oxford History of Art, Oxford 1999.

De Blaauw, Sible, *Storia dell'Architettura Italiana. Da Costantino a Carlo Magno*, 2 vols., Electa, Milà 2010.

Bango Torviso, Isidro G., *El prerrománico en Europa. De Carlomagno a los otones*, Historia 16 ("Historia del Arte" 17), Madrid 1989.

Caillet, Jean-Pierre, *L'art carolingien*, Flammarion (col. Tout l'art), París 2005.

Riché, Pierre (dir.), Caillet, Jean-Pierre; Gaborit-Chopin, Danielle; Palazzo, Éric, *L'Europe de l'an mil*, Zodiaque, La Pierre-qui-Vire 2001.

Bango Torviso, I.G., *Arte prerrománico hispano. El arte de la España cristiana de los siglos VI al XI*, Espasa Calpe(Summa Artis, vol. VIII-II), Madrid 2001.

Sapin, Christian & Heber-Suffrin, François, *L'architecture carolingienne en France et en Europe*, Picard, París, 2021.

Deliyannis, Deborah; Dey, Hendrik & Squatriti, Paolo, *Fifty Early Medieval Things: Materials of Culture in Late Antiquity and the Early Middle Ages*, Cornell University Press, 2019.

Osborne, John, *Rome in the Eighth Century: A History in Art*, Cambridge University Press (British School at Rome Studies), 2020.

Deliyannis, Deborah Mauskopf, *Ravenna in Late Antiquity*, Cambridge University Press, 2010.

Electronic Resources

It is recommended to use those of the main museums (Metropolitan, British Museum, Louvre).

Specific electronic resources will be provided throughout the course.

Software

No specific software is necessary. Although unlikely, if required later in the course, this would be indicated in due time.

Groups and Languages

Please note that this information is provisional until 30 November 2025. You can check it through this [link](#). To consult the language you will need to enter the CODE of the subject.

Name	Group	Language	Semester	Turn
(PAUL) Classroom practices	1	Catalan	second semester	morning-mixed
(TE) Theory	1	Catalan	second semester	morning-mixed