

ARTH 345 Spring 2021

Test 3

- Start time and deadline: The test will be available on Blackboard from 12 noon, April 9 to 5 pm, April 10. The test is not timed; I recommend that you download the document, compose your answers, and upload to Blackboard by the deadline.
- You can consult the videos, readings and your notes. You have all you need from course materials to complete the test, so please DO NOT use random sources on the internet.
- Format: the test consists of 2 parts.

Part 1: Short Answer Questions

- 3 questions, 2 points each
- You should be able to answer the questions in 2 – 3 sentences

Sample questions:

1. What was the WIC (Dutch West India Company)? How was it financed, and for what purpose was it formed?
2. What does it mean to paint “wet-in-wet”?

Part 2: Slide Essays

- I will show you an image covered in class and ask you to answer a question
- Three of these questions, 20 points each
- Please write your answer in prose, not in bullet point form
- Each answer should be about 150 – 200 words in length

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Test 3 covers modules 7 to 10

A New Republic

- The Dutch Republic as a new political entity in Europe in the late 16th and 17th century
- Government and politics:
 - Not a monarchy; decentralized government.
 - Power and influence in the hands of affluent merchants and professionals, who dominated government councils
- Religion:
 - Officially Calvinist (Protestant)
 - Practiced religious tolerance
- Economy:
 - Small country, few natural resources
 - Main source of wealth: commerce and trade

How do these factors affect art: who were the buyers? What kinds of subjects were in demand?

Mannerists and Caravaggisti:
Utrecht in the early 17th century



Utrecht Mannerists and Caravaggisti



- Mannerists in Utrecht
 - Religious and mythological paintings for wealthy patrons
 - Characteristics:
 - Emphasis on artists' personal styles
 - Elegant, elongated figures in difficult poses
 - Pastel palette
 - Learned, complex references

Utrecht Caravaggisti



Gerrit van Honthorst, Saint Sebastian, c. 1623

- Younger generation of artists who saw the work of Caravaggio in Italy
- Adopted Caravaggio dramatic, direct approach
- Characteristics of this style
 - Large figures dominating foreground
 - Few extraneous details to distract viewers (contrast with Mannerists)
 - Exaggerated tonal contrast—dark shadows and bright highlights
- Produced both religious paintings and genre scenes
- Utrecht as a Catholic stronghold; a demand for paintings of saints and other Catholic subjects remained

Art and Communal Identity: Dutch Landscapes



Dutch Landscapes

- Most popular genre in the Dutch Republic in terms of volume made and sold
- Related to the close and fraught relationship between the Dutch and land
 - Large areas reclaimed from the sea
 - No monarch as the emblem of the country; the Dutch turned to their distinctive land instead
- Artists did not paint outdoors; paintings composed in studios
- Pictures do not focus on modern alterations to the land, but human's peaceful existence in nature
- Recurring themes and motifs refer to Dutch history and prosperity, e.g., landmarks of Dutch Revolt, windmills, cattle
- Landscapes can therefore convey deeper meanings, despite their realistic appearances

Practice question. How does Cuyp selectively portray the Dutch town of Dordrecht?
What elements does he emphasize and what does he downplay?

Albert Cuyp, *View of Dordrecht with Cattle*, late 1640s.



Dutch Trade and Colonialism: Brazil and Asia



Dutch Colonialism and the Slave Trade

- Formed the WIC (West India Company)—joint-stock company with quasi-governmental powers—to conduct trade in Africa and the Americas
- Fought Portugal and native populations to establish colony in Brazil
- Two professional painters employed by WIC to create images of Dutch Brazil
 - Eckhout drawing on racial stereotypes in rendering native inhabitants of Brazil
 - Post's depictions of life in the colony—how did art relate to reality?
- Dutch participation in the slave trade:
 - Slave labor in sugar plantations in Brazil; sold slaves to Spain
 - Slave trade absent from or glossed over in “high art”

Practice question. What kind of image does Frans Post create for the Dutch colony in Brazil in the 17th century? How does it depart from historical reality?

Frans Post, *Sugar Mill on a Small River*, c. 1650s



Andries Beeckman, *The Castle At Batavia*, c. 1661. Oil on canvas, 108 x 151.5 cm.



Dutch trade with Asia

- Formed the VOC (East India Company)—joint-stock company with quasi-governmental powers; granted monopoly over trade in Asia
- Established colonies in India and Indonesia
- Artistic impressions—like those of Brazil—downplay the problems faced by the VOC and the violence it inflicted on various groups around Indonesia
- One of the significant commodities the Dutch bought was porcelain from China
 - Spurred innovations in Dutch ceramics production: invention of Delftware

Social Identities: Images of the Dutch Urban Elite



Dutch portraiture

- The dominant social group in the Dutch Republic were not the nobility or a king, but wealthy merchants who served on government councils
- Needed a different visual language to express this urban elite's piety and virtue, but also their wealth and influence
- We looked at two successful portrait painters: Rembrandt and Frans Hals
- They did not use the grand classical language of Rubens or the lavish colors of Van Dyck—would have been inappropriate for non-noble burghers
- Blend costumes of costly fabrics with understated backgrounds and restrained poses and expressions

Dutch group portraits

- Directors of professional organizations (e.g., militia companies, guilds, charities) commissioned group portraits for display in board rooms
- A distinctive Dutch type of portrait
- Most common: officers of civic militia companies
 - Organizations of male citizens from upper class
 - Original purpose: patrol and defend their cities; by 17th century fulfilled mostly social and ceremonial functions
 - Sign of status to be in one of these companies

Practice question. How did Rembrandt approach the traditional Dutch genre of group portrait? How is this painting different from earlier examples?

