

1. IDENTIFICATION: (Artist, title, date, size, country of origin, period/style)

053. Merovingian Looped Fibula
Mid-Sixth Century
Early Medieval Europe

2. FORM: (use of design elements/ principles: color, shape, value, texture, line, space; balance, contrast, emphasis, movement, etc.)

Zoomorphic patterns/ animal style (ex. the fish), valuable stones inlaid with cloisonné technique, top loops in the shape of eagle heads, pieces match each other

3. MATERIALS AND TECHNIQUE: (art making processes)

Silver gilt worked in filigree with inlays of garnets and other stones (aka cloisonné technique)

4. CONTENT: (subject & genre: iconography, symbolism, the story)

Made of valuable materials to show wealth
Eagle - a popular pagan symbol for the sun, then used in imperial Rome, then to represent St. John



5. ORIGINAL CONTEXT/ SITE/ INTENDED FUNCTION OF THE WORK: (Overlap to #6)

Belonged to a wealthy Merovingian (Frankish) woman, found at a 'barbarian' grave
A brooch consisting of 3 parts: body, pin, & catch

6. INTENDED PURPOSE & MOTIVATION (why was it made?); **PATRON/AUDIENCE** (who was it made for?); **ARTIST'S DECISION MAKING:**

Symbols of status for early Medieval warrior lords (was originally popular in imperial Rome and the Byzantine empire)

7. INNOVATION/ CHANGE(S):

Return to more practical & functional art (Europe was in disorder, less time for grand projects)

CONVENTION/ TRADITION(S):
Use of eagle symbol

8. THEME(S):

Abstract, funerary/afterlife, animals, power

COMPARE TO ANOTHER WORK:
Like the Court of Gayumars folio (Islamic art), this piece had a wealthy patron who could invest in art. They also both show a blend of cultures, the folio showing influence from Chinese art and this piece showing a blend of 'barbarian' and Roman style.