

Analysis of seventeenth-century church interiors using the Munsell system

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Abstract:

The aim of this research was to record and compare the colours used in works of art in a form which would provide an unambiguous record but which would also be more familiar to the scholar working in an art-historical field. In the latter context, importance is placed on visually perceived colour rather than on colorimetric notation. Two metrics for similarity were used; one based on the closest spectral match and the other based on the closest colorimetric match. We suggest that the colorimetric matches are closer to the originals. The investigation is grounded in the case-study of four post-Byzantine churches in Arbanassi, Bulgaria. Such presentation allows the comparison of colours from different sites by overcoming problems linked to colour vision, colour memory and colour reproduction in print. This is the first time that this method of colour comparison has been used in art historical research connected to a Bulgarian historical site in particular.