

# Renaissance versus baroque essay

[Art & Culture](#), [Renaissance](#)



Renaissance, also known as “ Rebirth”, is considered as the start of modern history during the 14th century. The Renaissance was first experienced in Italy and then adopted by the rest of Europe. After the Renaissance ended in 1600, the Baroque period was experienced from 1600 to 1800.

Both periods employed polyphony and used same instruments in compositions. The differences experienced in the Renaissance period were still common in the Baroque period but in regards to factors such as, texture, medium, and genres (LiveReal, 2005). This paper focuses on the various techniques of art that were portrayed by these eras.

Baroque period was highly influenced by the Roman Catholic Church. The church was against secular art hence it was in support of art that was based on religion when many artists wanted to present art of reality by exhibiting events as they were instead of sticking to the elements of art and design. The major characteristics of baroque art included dynamic mobility in art as well as clear emotion. This means that the theme of art was very clear for everyone to understand the meaning behind any given work.

The Catholic Church preferred to use this art to draw more people to the church. Perhaps, the church knew that people are most likely to visit a place where they are entertained. The Catholic Church intended to use baroque to fight the activists who led to the split the Roman Catholic Church but it was not easy because the reformers also incorporated baroque art when they felt it was necessary.

In this era artists did not rely so much on the elements of design while adding features such as shadows and contrasts in their images. Before this

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period, contrast and shadowing was artificial because it was generated by blending various colors. In baroque era, the artists worked on their art in open places such as gardens where the sunlight struck the surfaces of their works and thus the shadows that they portrayed were real as opposed to previous eras where artists worked indoors and thus the aspects of art were based on assumptions.

The paintings that were done in baroque presented a lot of mobility in them because the subjects were accorded some gestures, unlike in renaissance where the images were stiff. The era of baroque was an outcome of the struggle of the artists who denied a chance to exhibit their talents in the renaissance period. In fact baroque was started by the artists whose work was rejected at the exhibitions of art (Fitzpatrick, 2005).

The rebels who had split from the Roman Catholic Church did not apply religious themes in their works unlike their counterparts who supported the use of religious themes in art. Baroque was not only used in painting alone in other areas as well. For instance, baroque was employed in architecture.

If you look at the chapel of St Theresa in Ecstasy which was built in 1645 you will notice that its designer Bernini (1598-1680) employed a lot of baroque style on this building. This includes the modification on the structure of the Catholic Church building. Fitzpatrick (2005) argues that the buildings were meant to be appealing hence people used to be amazed by their elegance. Baroque period certainly had the most creative artists in all fields.

In theatre the baroque style played a very important role because it led to the introduction of multimedia technology based on baroque style. This meant that the scenes of a play could be changed instantly. The changing of scenes is important because it helps people to notice how the events in a play unfold unlike when the scene remains constant. Monteverdi's Orpheus is a good example of plays that applied baroque style.

The sculptors also embraced this style in their work and they did this by making sculptures that could be viewed from various perspectives. The sculptures had integrated lighting which means that the lights were fixed on their surface. They also had water fountains and thus they were used in palaces to add beauty.

In this regard, renaissance in art is a period that started from 1400 and ended in 1600 to pave way for baroque style. According to Nash (2008), in renaissance the artists were very conservative because most of their work was based on religion. The major achievement of this period is the emergence of oil paints. During this era artists brought back the ancient styles of art that had been forgotten due to the rise of new styles. The renaissance commenced in Italy and northern Europe. The changes were the results of political stability and economy.

People's way of life changed and as well as art. The works in art were limited to religion but later on artists begun to draw paintings of nude people which were rejected by the church. Despite of this, artists who did not have an opportunity to display their art came together and established their own exhibitions that comprised of rejected works. There are artists who remained

dormant to an extent that they combined new and old techniques in their art.

When renaissance begun in Italy the artists shifted their emphasis to the form of human body unlike their counterparts in northern Europe who paid more attention to the surfaces of their works. The European artists were also concentrating on lighting and symbolism.

This means that their paintings had an underlying meaning. Among the new aspects that were reborn include perspective which refers to the various points from which an image can be observed. The artists of renaissance merged the shadows of their paintings to create intensity in their works. Leonardo da Vinci's Mona Lisa (1503-1506) provides the best impression of renaissance in art. Contrast was created by merging multiple bright colors.

The artists who existed during renaissance used to travel frequently and that's how they managed to come up with creative ideas that were influenced by what they had seen in other places. The church motivated the artists by sourcing artwork from artists. It seems the church dominated the art market because most of the artworks were of religious nature.

Renaissance was further enhanced by the invention of the printing press.

The emergence of printing press meant that people could share ideas and reserve them in books. It is not art only that was affected by renaissance but the religion too was evolved. The Roman Catholic Church was split into two which led to the formation of the Protestants wing. The rebels were against the oppressive teachings of the Roman Catholic which they perceived to be

enslaving them. They thought that they understood the teachings of the Bible after it was printed in their respective native languages.

In renaissance the financing of the art also shifted from being funded by a royal family to being funded by the church. The Roman Catholic had a passion for art and that's why they did not consider the expenses that they were incurring on art works. In the final end there was a competition among churches based on art. This means that art had ceased from being a form of entertainment and communication and become a symbol of wealth. This is because some paintings and buildings took long timeframes for the artworks to be completed.

In conclusion, renaissance and baroque came as a result of enlightenment among artists. We can also say that the artists were very creative and paid attention to detail. If this was not true the various new aspects of art would not have been realized if the artists did not consider doing things in diverse ways as opposed to their predecessors.

The church was involved actively in both periods. Moreover, in the two periods there are reforms which are directed towards art. Therefore, the eras were not only concerned with studying classical text, but also influenced painting, carving, and architecture. Paintings and sculptures sought new ideas to standard and visual problems which incorporated arithmetic and linear perspective in the work of art.

Fitzpatrick, A. (2005). *The Baroque Period*. Minnesota Creative Company.

LiveReal. (2005) Renaissance and Baroque Europe. Web.

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Nash, S. (2008). Northern Renaissance Art. New York: Oxford University Press.