

Renaissance and medieval art



**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

The piece art Virgin of the rocks is a painting done by the talented and renowned artist Leonardo da Vinci. This piece of painting was done during the renaissance age. The painting shows a woman dressed in blue kneeling between two little nude children and on the far right is an angel. The angel appears to be holding on the back of the child sited on the right. The children appear to be conversing with each other while the woman and angel are listening keenly to the conversation. The child on one knee on the right is holding his hands together in what appears to be a gesture in prayer. The child on the right has a cross placed on his right shoulder. They all appear to be inside a rock structure with an opening at the back. The background comprises of a water body and hilly or mountainous structures.

Nativity is a piece of medieval art. This painting is the work of Guido da Siena. The painting shows a woman who is wrapped in long cloth lying down. Behind the woman is a small child who is also wrapped in long cloth and lies in what appears to be a cot. Behind and overlooking the sleeping child, are two cows. One is black in color while the other cow is brown in color and has horns. They all appear to be inside a structure that is sealed from all sides. Overlooking the structure where the woman, child and cows are angels. These angels are six in number with three angels on either side. On the lower side are adult human beings, a child who is also placed in a cot and a white dog.

There are various similarities between the Nativity painting and Virgin of the rocks. Despite these arts being done in different periods there are some aspects of resemblance in that renaissance and medieval art. In both paintings there are angels, two little children and a woman covered in long

cloth. Also there are brown structures in which the paintings are done.

However there are disparities and differences between the two paintings. In the nativity painting there are six angels, a dog, two cows and five adult human beings. The animals in this painting probably indicates the traditional way of life during the medieval age. In the painting Virgin on the rocks there is only one angel and a water body and rocky hills in the background.

There are also other similarities and differences in style and message. In Virgin of the rock the two children are John the Baptist and baby Jesus. John the Baptist seems to be in a praying gesture while Jesus is bestowing his blessings on John. The woman or virgin is Mary mother of Jesus. The angel is Gabriel. The painting is thus symbolic as evidenced in the New Testament. Leonardo da Vinci also uses stylistic effects of light and darkness to create an illusionistic atmosphere. He also employs a linear perspective whereby the objects in the fore front are large in size and scale unlike those in the back which are much smaller. Originally this painting was done on wood but was later transferred on canvas. The painting also employs use of color, emotion and deep poses which seem so real and humane.

The Nativity painting does not employ such stylistic devices as depth neither does it create a linear perspective. All objects in the painting are proportionate to each other in the sense that they all appear to be centralized in the same position. All objects are equal in scale as there is no vanishing point. This painting was also probably done on wood since paper as a material for painting and drawing was not available readily.

Throughout history art has always been regarded as an important source of information. Art has been used to record history. Pieces of art thus reflect ideas, beliefs, values systems, tradition and way of life during the said period. Art therefore has a reason behind it as it is symbolic. However art as a source of history is not fully reliable to the extent that an individual artist may be influenced by his own personal, ideological and religious bias and prejudice when doing a piece of art. This in turn will not reflect the true picture of the said time.

Bias and prejudice will thus be a hindrance . Similarly a piece of art is not comprehensive and inclusive of all information. Therefore omission of certain information is thus will not lead to a true reflection of history. For instance the painting Virgin of the Rocks depicts John the Baptist as being young and almost of age to Jesus Christ. However this is not so since John the Baptist is way much older than Jesus. However it still provides a biblical view point of the birth of Jesus for instance in the nativity painting . There is a bright star and white object around baby Jesus and Madonna head. This probably is an indication of their saintly and even divinely status.