

# Three essential elements of the baroque style in arts

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The baroque spirit defined the characteristics of the arts in the 17th C in Europe and as such, was a style that developed in the European region as well as its colonies (Bishop, 2008). The style ran through the final stages of the 16th C to the early parts of the 18th C. Originally; Baroque was a Portuguese term used to mean irregular or misshaped pearl. Therefore, some of the essential elements that characterized the baroque period included movement, lighting and twisting.

One of the styles that marked this period was the use of light where the artists ensured that the painting of artistic scenes were rather more natural (Bishop, 2008). In this case, the artists used lighting to produce emotional effects on their paintings. Though naturally the paintings were never confined on the building walls, the artists also painted on canvas and in this case, they had to study how the light had effects on their paintings.

Therefore, although the artists varied in terms of skills, one common element of the artists was the use of light as well as shade to construct the various works. In this regard, light is one of the characteristics that defined the essential features of the Baroque arts. The Calling of St. Matthew, a painting by Michelangelo illustrates the use of light as an element of the baroque arts to contract light and dark shadows (Bishop, 2008). In this painting, Matthew appears where the bright light ends entering the big room from a window that is not visible.

Another key element that characterized Baroque's art was the use of twisting where the artists used a combination of artistic features to develop and create art (Bishop, 2008). For instance, the artists would use a combination

of sculptures, architecture and painting to construct an art. A classic example is the Baldacchino di San Pietro by Gian Lorenzo Bernini's sculpture in the Vatican City (Bishop, 2008). The sculpture was finished in the year 1643 as Bernini used a combination of architecture and sculptures where the resulting art rests upon the four spiral columns or in other words, used the concept of twisting.

Finally, another most important element that characterized the baroque artistic period was the use of movement (Bishop, 2008). In this case, the artists made sure that the subjects shifted from churches to people and then landscapes. In most of the movements, religion was incorporated since the Catholic Church commissioned most of the arts but soon, landscape started taking center stage of most of the painting as opposed to the initial focus on movements like on people and church. Therefore, the paintings would be moved to two commonly used scenes of churches and landscapes since religion and geography defined the Baroque artistic movement. The Calling of St. Matthew, a painting by Michelangelo and Baldacchino di San Pietro by Gian Lorenzo Bernini's showcase the movement as an element of the baroque art (Bishop, 2008).

#### Reference

Bishop, P. E. (2008). *Adventures in the Human Spirit*, 5th Edition. Pearson