

Contribution of Ruisdael in the art of Holland during Baroque Art

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Introduction

Baroque art was started in the time period C. 1590 A.D. and it ended around C. 1720 A.D. it started in Italy and spread over almost in all the Europe mainly in the areas such as Spain, France, Germany, netherlands or Holland etc. this art went beyond to Europe like America and Africa. This art is known as international art. It has many varieties of subjects and styles. The term Baroque was used to this art in 19th century A. D. by an art historian. This art was mainly or chiefly used in painting and decorations of the churches.

The term Baroque has derived from two different languages, the first is taken from Portuguese in which it has the meaning “irregular pearl” and the another version is taken from Italian word which has the meaning “highly intellectual” or has lack of clarity. There is a freedom of expression. There is no rigidity in the art work of Baroque period. Baroque art in Europe was divided into two phases the one phase was that in which the art was practiced in Catholic countries and those were Italy, Spain, Flanders, and the other phase of Baroque art was that in which the art was practiced in protestant countries and those were Holland etc. the artists who did their works under this style were Caravaggio from Italy, Velasquez from Spain, Rubens from Flanders, Bernini from Italy, Poussin from France, Rembrandt from Holland. The non catholic art is less religious than traditional art. In England, Baroque art is used for architecture. Due to missionaries and trade his art was flourished in different continents and areas. As a result, the new artistic capitals were emerged in Europe particularly in Holland. There were many cities like Amsterdam, Leyden, Utrecht became artistic centers in Holland. In France, Paris emerged as artistic capital. In Spain, Madrid was evolved as artistic capital. In England, London was artistic capital. In Italy, Rome was an important place for artistic activities.

Baroque art was very dynamic art. There is a lot of movement is seen in the art. The compositions are more open and they expand it beyond the boundaries. There is lot of emphasis on emotions. The depiction of feeling, human suffering, life and death are visible in their

extremes. Violence is also visible here. The Renaissance composition is more static and they show human in a stable manner, where as in Baroque art, the composition is dramatic and the figures are more dramatic manner. The naturalistic style developed in this art. The colors also have dramatic impact. The sensuous style given by colors is seen the works of the artists like Rubens and Bernini. The term Baroque is identified as many times as the catholic reaction to the growth of Protestantism. The Protestants were against the decoration of church. They believed that the house of God and this should be simple. The light and shade in Baroque art is dramatic and due to that images also made dramatic. Emotions are also very dramatic and highly dramatic. Architecture, painting, and sculpture unified and they are conceived as a single design.

The range of themes got extended during Baroque period. The religious theme got more important, but there is a change in depiction. The dramatic themes are made like miracles, which are more dramatic. There is highly emphasis on emotions, which we seen in choice of subjects. The treatment of crucifixion is shown in different manner by the baroque artist. The portraits are also very important subject matter specially in Holland. There are so many portraits of middle class, merchants, traders. The group portraits are also made, for example, the night watch. There is more emphasis on expressions. They are trying to show the specific state of mind. There is major change in Renaissance portraits. The face is serene, but the depiction of face is more dramatic. The artist named Rembrandt who made self portraits. There was another subject matter, which was used to paint by artist in numerously, was landscape. The pure landscape was start making in this period particularly in Holland. The landscape was used as background of the painting before this art, but in Baroque art we dont see any human element shown in the paintings of landscape. There were artists who were expert in flower study, fruit study. The genre themes became a major part in Baroque art specially in Spain and Holland.

Baroque art or style was encouraged by the Roman catholic Churches in respond to the Protestant Reformation of the early 16th C. C. E. This style also defined the art in Europe between Mannerist and Rococo. In this style we can see that the love of movement, which expressed itself in contrast between large and small, near and distant forms between concave and convex, dark and light. This style gave the exaggeration in motion, easily interpreted, very clear detailing which produced drama, tension, grandeur and exuberance in the field of art. These are the hallmarks of this art. Under the leadership of architecture, the art of

sculptures, paintings, decoration and garden planning were brought together. The artists of this style attempted to blur the boundary between appearance and reality which transcended the representation transformation of visual truth. The use of natural light in the sculptural groups. Their goal was to depict the heightened sense of reality in their work.

Baroque in Holland or Dutch Baroque

The 17th century Baroque era in Holland was the "Dutch Golden Age", a time for extraordinary prosperity and social solidarity of the merchant class. There was strong middle class market for contemporary Dutch art which reflected pleasure in life, good times, and general abundance of products from around the world. During the Dutch golden age, the Dutch school of Realism established itself as one of the greatest movements of oil painting in the history of art. The newly improved oil paints were used by the artists of this school. The works by its leading members such as Rembrandt and Vermeer represent the summit of human creative achievement and command. The school also set standards of categories of naturalism, still life, genre scene paintings which have hardly been equalled, far less exceeded.

Jacob Van Ruisdael : (C. 1628 - 1682 C. E.)

The Dutch landscape artist Jacob Van Ruisdael raised to the highest level of quality and variety. The paintings of landscapes based on the observation of the visible world. He also considered as the pre-eminent Dutch landscape artist of 17th C. C. E.

Ruisdael was born in Haarlem in C. 1628 C. E. He was the son of Issak Ruisdael, a landscape artist, and a nephew of the gifted landscape artist Salomon Van Ruisdael. During C. 1630 C. E., Haarlem was the centre of Dutch paintings. Salomon was one of the innovators of the new style of Dutch paintings specially landscape paintings that emphasized tonality and realism. By lowering the horizon and limiting the palette to a monochromatic colour range, the artists rejected the artificial, imaginary landscape of the previous generation and created naturalistic impressions of the local Dutch countryside unified by an enveloping atmosphere. Jacob's youth reflected the influence of his uncle and other artists of Haarlem school of art. Jacob introduced stronger colour,

compositional accents and light to create a unique Baroque landscape. Jacob renowned for the unmatched number of subjects he depict and wealth of clearly observed naturalistic details in his works. By 1648 C. E., he already became an independent artist, and then he became a member of the Haarlem guild. The flat countryside around his native town provided subject matter for Ruisdael's brush again and again. With in the area of small canvas, he created the levels of fields on which the linen cloth, which was the major product of Haarlem, was sketched out and appear to extend on both sides as far as the eye can see.

Shortly after 1650 C. E., Ruisdael became familiar with the different kind of landscape, hilly and wooded, through travels in the border areas of eastern Holland and western Germany. Reminiscences of this experience appear in many of his painting, for example, in the 'Wooden Bridge' which dated around C. 1652 C. E., a new monumentality is incorporated into a rugged landscape whose structural strength is characteristics of Dutch paintings about 1650 C. E. The richness of colour and plasticity of forms of his mature works are evident here.

About 1656 C. E., Ruisdael moved to Amsterdam, where he seem to had spent the rest of his life. His extraordinary gift for evoking a higher reality in nature was embodied in a series of masterpieces. The brooding, emotion-filled cemetery or Jewish cemetery at Ouderkerk, dated around C. 1660 C. E. is unique in its explicit allegorical intent. He made the preparatory drawings for this painting. Death and destruction of both man made objects and natural objects in contrasted with the rainbow, symbol of resurrection.

Like Rembrandt, Ruisdael used contrast of light and shade to dramatize his subjects and integrate his compositions. In his paintings, clouds sweeping across the sky cast shadow across the landscape while dramatically illuminating church towers, castles or weathered trees. Ruisdael depended on his carefully observed drawings to rendered the views of specific locations and botanically accurate trees and vegetations. His range of subject matter was wide like countryside roads, winter scenes, seascapes etc. Under Ruisdael's brush, his models were transformed and arranged.

Works of Ruisdael

1. A River Scene

Time Period : C. 1632 C. E.

Medium : Oil on Wood

In this work the formation of trees and bushes on the bank almost seems to rise as a mirage from the motionless water. The whole painting shows the modulation of color in almost monochromatic scale and this scale adjust towards the sky. In the water of river, there are tones of blue and brown color. In the foliage on the banks of the river, the greenish grey color is used. In the distance, haze horizon is shown due to that this painting looks calm into the harmony of air and water. The deep and wide space quality is visible here. The boats are shown in the river near the banks of the river. The refined and delicate brush brush work is used in this painting which gives this painting a sensitive look. This painting gives a feeling of real view of the bank of Dutch river or lake.



