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AP European History Period 1

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**Question 4: Compare and contrast the characteristics of Renaissance Art with art of the Baroque period, and discuss the influence and role of the Catholic Church in both art movements. (Students will need to rely on the art lessons, handouts, group exercise, and lecture notes to adequately answer this question).**

**Introduction:**

1. **Contextualization:** The Renaissance and the Baroque period were two significant period of time in which development in art was made. Renaissance art emerged with a distinct style in Italy in around the 1400’s. Baroque art began around the 1600’s in Rome and Italy, and spread to most of Europe.
2. **Restatement:** The art of the Renaissance and Baroque periods had many similarities and differences; the Catholic Church exercised influence and possessed a role in both.
3. **XY Thesis:** Renaissance art and Baroque art differed in many fundamental ways, such as a disparity between the emphasis on emotion and ornateness of works.**(X)**. However, the two styles had certain similarities, like the focus on naturalism and realism in paintings and sculptures **(Y)**. The Catholic Church influenced both, acting as a patron of art during the Renaissance and as a perpetuator of the Baroque style. (**Z**)

**Body 1:**

1. **Topic Sentence:** The Renaissance and Baroque styles were unlike each other in many ways.
2. **Evidence:**
   1. **Display of emotion -** Renaissance paintings and sculptures paid so much attention to detail of the body that they did not portray **as much** emotion. Baroque art pieces showed famous scenes of people filled with emotion.
      1. **Analysis:** Renaissance artists were among the first to use linear perspective in their work, which also made them the first to give more realism to their works. However, their focus on detail and depth made paintings and sculptures seem to lack emotions and fail to capture strong emotion. Baroque artists tried to stray away from the “stillness” of former works and focused more on the drama of the subject they were portraying. For example, Michelangelo’s David is emotionless and acts more like a celebration of the human body than a tribute to the famous scene between David and Goliath. The figure of David as created by Bernini is full of emotion, ready to fight Goliath.
   2. **Symmetry -** The art pieces of the Renaissance showed more orderly symmetry than did those of the Baroque period.
      1. **Analysis:** Renaissance portraits and sculptures tended to air on the rational side, which meant that works were often perfectly symmetrical to give a balance to the painting. The paintings and sculptures of the Baroque period were often asymmetrical to portray more feeling.
   3. **Detail -** Whereas Baroque art is characterized by gaudy, ornate details, Renaissance art is characterized by the fusion of religion (Christianity) and science in order to create realism through art.
      1. **Analysis:** Baroque art was centered on the idea of persuasion, as a form of propaganda for the Church. For this reason, Baroque art was thoroughly detailed and was often “over-the-top.” Reflecting the humanist views of the time. Renaissance art was a mix of religious subjects and secular painting styles in order to portray realism.
   4. **Color** - Baroque art is often very dark with only one single source of light in the painting, as opposed to the rich, brighter colors of the Renaissance.
      1. In order to emphasize emotion, Baroque art is very dark, with one source of light in the picture often times (like “The Crucifixion of St. Peter”). The pictures of the Renaissance (like “the School of Athens”) feature lighter hues that are brighter and richer.

**Body 2:**

1. **Topic Sentence:** Although they possessed their differences, Renaissance and Baroque art also shared a certain sameness.
2. **Evidence:**
   1. **Naturalism and Realism -** Both Baroque and Renaissance styles strived to create a “true-to-life” image that was as realistic as possible.
      1. **Analysis:** Because neither of artists of both time periods wanted to distort the human body and the scenes around it, they tried to create an image that was as realistic as possible. Since Baroque art was mostly used to move people to the Catholic Church, it had to be realistic enough so people would be inspired by the paintings. As for Renaissance art, they focused on human anatomy and the realistic portrayal of objects in a more secular way.
   2. **Shading -** Baroque and Renaissance works both showed evidence of shading, especially the technique called chiaroscuro.
      1. **Analysis:** Although the color scheme of art during the Baroque period were much more extreme and gaudy, both of the types of art retained shading. Chiaroscuro, the creation of a deep contrast between darks and lights to shade, was prevalent in both of these forms.
   3. **Subjects of Work:** Both the Renaissance and the Baroque periods produced art that were centered around Christianity and mythology
      1. **Analysis:** Since the Renaissance was based on a revival of the antiquities, there were many paintings based on Greco-Roman mythology (like The Birth of Venus) but there were also many works that were based upon religious subjects like David by Michelangelo. Baroque art was also often centered upon religious subjects (like The Calling of St. Matthew) but also had mythological subjects (like The Apotheosis of Henry IV and the Proclamation of the Regency of Marie de Medicis).

**Body 3:**

1. **Topic Sentence:** In both the Renaissance and Baroque periods, the Catholic Church exerted much influence over art.
2. **Evidence:**
   1. **Baroque Art’s Role in the Counter Reformation -** The Catholic Church used the Baroque style in order to catalyze the Counter Reformation.
      1. **Analysis:** The Church needed to use art in order to help their cause to bring people back to the church and teach the laity on the Catholic teachings and morals. They also hoped it would bring back piety along with people, and intended for Baroque art to delight and persuade the viewer. Baroque art confirmed the Church’s authority and importance, and was associated with a form of propaganda for the Church.
   2. **Church as a Renaissance Patron of the Arts-** The Catholic Church often acted as a patron of the arts during the Renaissance period.
      1. **Analysis:** The High Renaissance of Leonardo da Vinci, Michelangelo and Raphael transformed Church art fundamentally through breaking the old icons. Some artists like Michelangelo and Raphael worked almost exclusively for the Papacy for much of their artistic careers.

**Conclusion:**

1. **Restatement:** The works of the Renaissance and Baroque periods were similar and different in many ways, but were both affected enormously by the Catholic Church.
2. **Synthesis:** The happenings with Renaissance art are, interestingly, both analogous to and one of the catalysts of the Protestant Reformation. The new introduction of old documents for reform are both present in the Renaissance and the Reformation. Baroque art is similar to ideas of the Counter Reformation in that they both challenge old ideas for the sake of bringing back people to the Catholic Church. This doesn’t really work. Try to make connection to M. Ages and who was the patron at the time. Answer the same question for art during a different time period.