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Барокко (середина XVI – середина XVIII столетия). Коллизии контрастов. Эссе II

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Аннотация. Работа является продолжением публикации: Demchenko A. I. Baroque (the mid-16th to mid-18th centuries): Collisions of contrasts. Essay 1 // Pan-Art. 2024. Vol. 4. Iss. 4. В эссе последовательно раскрываются ключевые контрасты, антитезы, свойственные эпохе Барокко. В этой части автор обращает внимание на барочный темперамент, в частности на характерную склонность к гиперболизации. Отдельного рассмотрения заслуживает противостояние и «сотрудничество» стиля барокко с классицизмом и реализмом, а также возникший на пересечении барокко и классицизма «большой стиль». Также в эссе выделяются общие стороны художественного мира эпохи Барокко: концептуализм, воспроизведение жизни большой людской массы, чувство большого пространства, проблемность, глубокое постижение человеческой природы, создание «вечных образов», развитие оперы, барочный гуманизм.

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Baroque (the mid-16th to mid-18th centuries): Collisions of contrasts. Essay 2

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Abstract. This work is a continuation of the publication: Demchenko A. I. Baroque (the mid-16th to mid-18th centuries): Collisions of contrasts. Essay 1 // Pan-Art. 2024. Vol. 4. Iss. 4. The essay systematically reveals the key contrasts and antitheses characteristic of the Baroque era. In this part, the author draws attention to the Baroque temperament, in particular, its characteristic inclination towards hyperbolization. The opposition and “cooperation” of the Baroque style with classicism and realism, as well as “the grand style” that emerged at the intersection of Baroque and classicism, receive separate consideration. The essay also highlights the common aspects of the artistic world of the Baroque epoch: conceptualism, the reproduction of life of a great mass of people, a sense of a large space, problemativeness, a deep comprehension of human nature, the creation of “eternal images”, the evolution of opera, and Baroque humanism.

Hyperbolization became the most important sign of art of that time – that is *the Baroque temperament*: exaggeration in everything, zest for something exceptional, the irrepressibility of passions, immoderateness of aspirations.

The main building of the Catholic world – **St. Peter's Basilica and Square** in Rome (1657-1663) is a great illustration of this. The great oval square (its depth is 280 meters) before the basilica represents a vast space surrounded by 284 columns with a height of 19 meters. Two galleries forming the colonnade embrace this space “*like outstretched arms*” (in **Lorenzo Bernini's** expression, an architect and designer of the square). There is an obelisk in the centre of the square, and the fountains along the edges form its transverse axis. A giant four-row colonnade with its solemn rhythm leads to the basilica preparing for its staggering grandeur.

The construction of St. Peter's Basilica began in the first decades of the 16th century when it was conceived by the author of the original plan **Donato Bramante** (1444-1514) as a structure that should surpass all the temples of Christendom. Since 1546, **Michelangelo** managed the construction process, in particular, he developed the design of the dome, which ends with a lantern emphasizing the upward aspiration of all forms. Dominating the architectural environment, the dome serves as an important compositional point in the ensemble of the city.

The wall of the basilica curves, various and contrasting in size volumes complicate its configuration. All kinds of sculptural and ornamental forms inside the temple are presented in complex perspectives, which enhances the impression of infinite diversity. All this, combined with abundance and luxury of decoration, unexpected and bold plastic effects, is designed to symbolize the greatness, power and wealth of Catholic Rome (the main merit in creating the interiors of the basilica belongs to **Lorenzo Bernini**).

The same hyperbolism is characteristic of the Baroque style in the conveyance of human passions. To prove this thesis, we turn to two canvases by **Rubens**. An incredibly powerful pathetic is the essence of the action captured in the picture **The Elevation of the Cross** (1610). The final tragic meaning of the event is pushed far into the background. The artist conveys titanic efforts of both the Crucified and his executioners. There is no antagonism – everything is focused on united forces of the group of people raising the cross as an excessive burden.

Sharp turns of figures, chaotic lights and shadows moving over swollen muscles trembling with tension, colour saturation and general “uprising” of the composition built diagonally – all of this escalates the pathos of the painting to the utmost. It is worth mentioning that the main diagonal is crosswise contrary to a counterdiagonal with a heavily breathing dog in the bottom left corner and a tree bent under the gust of wind in the top right corner.



Illustration 01. Peter Paul Rubens – *The Elevation of the Cross*

The Baroque temperament in **Rubens's** work **The Consequences of War** (1637-1638) is presented in absolute completeness: pathetic hyperbolization, furious dynamics (everything in the picture leaned from left to right under a flurry of disaster), emphasized expression conveying the frenzy of emotions and finally, the affectation of the state. In addition, the above-mentioned qualities are accompanied by theatricalization (dramatic effect of the pictorial composition) and allegorism (a nude Venus with Amors). All taken together allowed the artist to express the idea of opposition to war with an exceptional passion. The fact that this was not an empty phrase for him is proved by one of his letters: “*I wish the whole world was at peace and we could live in the Golden Age and not in the Iron Age*”.

Various facets of the Baroque temperament including a strong tendency to pathetics, expression and ecstasity were revealed by musical art. The following works can serve as vivid diverse examples of these features:

- the finale of **Prelude, Fugue and Ciacona for Organ in D minor** by **Johann Pachelbel** (one of the actual predecessors of Bach, 1653-1706), with its gloomy colour and emphasized distressed mood;
- the second movement of **Concerto for Two Violins, Cello and Orchestra** by **Antonio Vivaldi**, with its characteristic perseverance of overcoming brought to fevered excitement;
- the beginning of **Bach's Chromatic Fantasia and Fugue for piano**.

The genre of fantasy in the last composition is interpreted as a form of absolutely free impulsive-spontaneous will. Behind the artistry of the music is an extraordinary personality with his complex inner world and boldly rebellious spirit. The dramatic pathetics openly declaring itself is both grandeur of thought, feeling, action and the excitement of the statement with its rhetorical intensity. Baroque art in general is characterized by oratorical rhetoric with the reproduction of declamatory speech, expressive gestures, inspired “strokes of a pen”. Pathetics goes along with high expression that conveys in this case passionate and violent excitement. Monteverdi, who worked a century before Bach, introduced a special designation in this regard: *stile concitato* – *agitated style*.

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So far we have dealt with the Baroque style, which gave its name to the era and was determinative for it. But the era literally woven of pronounced contrasts had no choice but put forward some opposing styles. Indeed, along with the Baroque and in contrast to it, there were classicism and realism.

Just as the Baroque style was preceded by Mannerism, so *classicism* was prepared by the emergence of *academism*. In 1585 in Bologna (Italy), the artists **Carracci** brothers (there were three of them, the most famous and talented of them was **Annibale**, 1560-1609) founded an academy in order to oppose the art based on the study of great masters of the past against Mannerism. It was historically the first academy. Later, similar institutions appeared in different countries, not only in the field of fine arts but also in the field of drama theatre, music, dance, which laid the foundations for systematic art education.

It was in academies that academicism developed, which required the observation of the rules borrowed from the classical art of Antiquity and the Renaissance. This was the main and common thing between academicism and classicism (the terms are identical, both come from the words meaning *exemplary*, *perfect*). In order to make sure of the above-mentioned, it is enough to compare the paintings **The Three Marys at the Tomb** by the academist **Annibale Carracci** and **The Rest on the Flight into Egypt** by the classicist **Nicolas Poussin**. They are related by the clarity of drawing and composition, a sense of sublime beauty, majestic character and features of dramatic excitement.

It is evident that each of these artists considered Greco-Roman Antiquity and the High Renaissance as the ideal of bright and intelligent life. Therefore, the characters of Christian legends appear in a corresponding manner. That is why even in the depiction of social motifs one can feel the spirit of nobility and sublimity.



Illustration 02. Nicolas Poussin – *The Rest on the Flight into Egypt*

In order to feel the imaginative line and aesthetics of classicism more perceptibly, let us turn to **Self-portrait** by *Nicolas Poussin* who was the leader of this trend in European fine art of the Baroque era. Here we can see a man of a distinctly classicist type in whose appearance seriousness and strength of intelligence are stressed. In the life of such a character, mind and rational principle prevails, which opposed the emotional spontaneity of the Baroque. The intellectualism of the image is emphasized by means of a background that is entirely built on the geometricism of straight lines (picture frames, the corner of the door) and is complemented by a graphically clear inscription (the attribution of a portrait) made in Latin script – in this case Latin serves as a symbol of accuracy, clarity, laconism.

In line with classicism, there appeared such a remarkable phenomenon as *French tragedy*. The cult of mind, which marked Poussin's works, became a defining moment for it. The domination of consciousness over emotions became most pronounced in the central for this genre problem of the struggle between feelings and duty.

Pierre Corneille (1606-1684), the founder of classicistic theatre, solves this dilemma in favour of duty, which is usually connected with the interests of the state. His play **Horace** depicts the confrontation between Ancient Rome and a rival city. By the will of circumstances, the fate of their dispute should be decided by a duel, for which three brothers from related families are chosen on each side. And the protagonist turns down everything that can interfere with the fulfilment of his duties (in this respect, his appeal to one of his wife's brothers on the eve of the duel is very characteristic).

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If the Baroque style tended to the unusual and extreme, classicism – to the sublimely perfect, then *realism* mainly turned to the ordinary, familiar, depicting a real person in real situations and circumstances.

Traditionally, much of the consideration of the Baroque era began with **Titian**. Let us start with him now. Everything in his **Self-portrait** (c. 1565) is ordinary, modesty is emphasized in everything (clothes, the appearance itself), which seems to say: the depicted character strives to live without standing out in any way. One can see an old man whose existence is burdened with the load of everyday worries (with this motif Titian anticipated many Rembrandt's portraits). The gloomy colour scheme, rough grey-brown strokes on the face speak for hardships of the ordinary course of things. And only from deep inside, the extraordinary character, its inner strength and wise understanding of life characteristic of artists shine through.

The combination of "text" and "subtext" noted in Titian's *Self-portrait* was highly characteristic of the greatest realist of the Baroque era, the Spanish artist *Diego Velazquez*. His works are distinguished by authenticity, a direct perception of the image and the depth of the reconstruction of the inner world hidden behind it. If we compare, for example, **Portrait of a Man** (the image of an intellectual of that time) and the painting **The Water-seller of Seville** (a depiction of a commoner), it is easy to see that the characteristic of completely different types turned out to be very accurate and capacious.

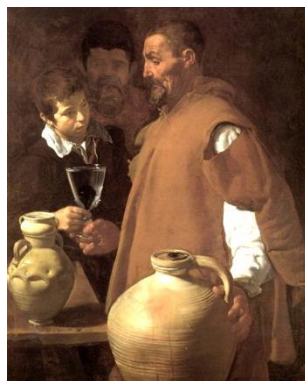


Illustration 03. Diego Velazquez – *The Water-seller of Seville*

The most important line of realistic painting was associated with *genre art*, which addressed a person's private life – everyday life, as well as scenes of leisure (entertainment, games, celebrations, revelry). It was during the Baroque era that such motifs first gained a quite significant place in the fine arts. The priority in this genre has always been given to Dutch artists. One of them was **Gerard ter Borch** (1617-1681), who specialized in compositions from the life of prosperous citizens. His work **Glass of Lemonade** is very indicative in this sense (c. 1665).

The above-mentioned definition of “*a person's private life*” is fully met by all the features: a small format of a picture, few characters, a home interior, a well-constructed story (a scene with an affair – the beginning of “molestation” by a young gentleman of an innocent girl with the complicity of an old procuress). Careful elaboration of all details, brilliant depiction of the texture of the objects create the illusion of full credibility, while the soft “enveloping” palette and the sophistication of silver colour bring poetry to the image.

In their favourite genre, Dutch painters achieved a wide variety of creative solutions and more than once reached the level of serious artistic generalizations. For example, let us turn to the picture **The Market in the Port** (1668-1669) by **Emanuel de Witte** (c. 1617 – 1692). Peaceful life typical of the Dutch genre art is depicted very unconventional here due to the scale of the image.

The canvas presents several interconnected plans:

- in the foreground there is an unpretentious scene (a fishmonger bargaining with customers);
- further on there is a crowded market place with buildings around it;
- behind them there are houses and the towers of the town and, in addition, a pier with boats and a ship sailing out to sea (so another genre is introduced into the painting – marina, that is, sea-piece).

Thanks to the freedom and mastery of spatial composition, the artist manages to achieve a voluminous capture of a certain piece of life. Much later, in the second half of the 19th century, Russian artists and in particular Ilya Repin relying on the achievements of their distant Dutch predecessors turned to ever broader generalizations in the true genre art.

It goes without saying, that the considered leading styles of the era (the Baroque, classicism, realism) did not exist in isolation from each other – they not only opposed each other but also inevitably interacted enriching their internal resources and intertwining in all sorts of combinations. It may be reminded, for instance, the above-mentioned Portrait of a Knight of the Order of Santiago by a realist Diego Velazquez with its clearly expressed purely Baroque juxtaposition of “white” and “black”.

Classicism, with all its focusing on Antiquity and the cult of reason, naturally could not exist outside its time as well. In the same French tragedy, external harmony and integrity often hid the strongest internal contradiction, which unites classicism with the Baroque style. What happened in the tragedies of the seemingly “pure” classicist **Jean Racine** (1639-1699)? He flawlessly observed all “formal” features:

- the unity of time and place of action is strictly maintained – the plot unfolds with rigid consistency within one space and one day;
- no “physical action” (violence, murder, etc.) is committed before the eyes of audience, it is only reported about – this is the ethics of classic drama;
- the tone is invariably noble, the artistic construction is perfectly harmonious, etc.

And all this is conflicting with the chaos of elemental passions reigning in Racine's plays, before which the human mind and will are powerless. For illustration, let us turn to his tragedy **Andromache** (1668). The main thing here is all-consuming passion. The characters are entirely subject to it, ready to do anything for it. Everyone wants to possess the one they love: king Pyrrhus molests Andromache, Hermione molests Pyrrhus, Orestes molests Hermione.

Let us take, for example, Hermione, betrothed to Pyrrhus, who postpones their wedding under various pretexts hoping to get Andromache's favour. Everything in Hermione is unpredictable, she rushes from blind love to intense hatred.

She has just desperately begged Orestes for revenge on Pyrrhus promising herself as a reward to Orestes who loves her and then (after he kills Pyrrhus) accuses Orestes, abjures the motherland and a little later she stabs herself over Pyrrhus's corpse.

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As one can see, there was no yawning chasm between the various styles. On the contrary, they could sometimes “cooperate” quite fruitfully. One of the most remarkable results of this interaction arose at the intersection of the principles and techniques of the Baroque and classicism. This synthesis went down in the history of art under the name of *the grand style*. *Grand* means majestic, solemn, ceremonial, characterized by brilliance and splendour. It developed in France during the reign of Louis XIV (1638-1715, king of France from 1643) and was intended to surround the court of *the Sun King* with an aura of grandeur and magnificence.

“The grand style” found its strongest and most distinct expression in architecture. It is characterized by extremely large scale, spatial scope, a solemn and ceremonial appearance in combination with strict rational logics, compositional restraint and balance coming from classicism. The most valuable in this regard was incorporated by palace and garden complexes. For many of them **Versailles** (near Paris), the main residence of French kings, served as a standard. It was built mainly in the second half of the 17th century. **Jules Hardouin Mansart** (1646-1708) completed its construction in 1678-1689.

Palace of Versailles is a grandiose structure with a huge half-kilometre-long façade. There are three rays of roads run outward from the façade “towards the state”, they are three directions, along which the orders and verdicts of the supreme power were distributed throughout the territory of France.

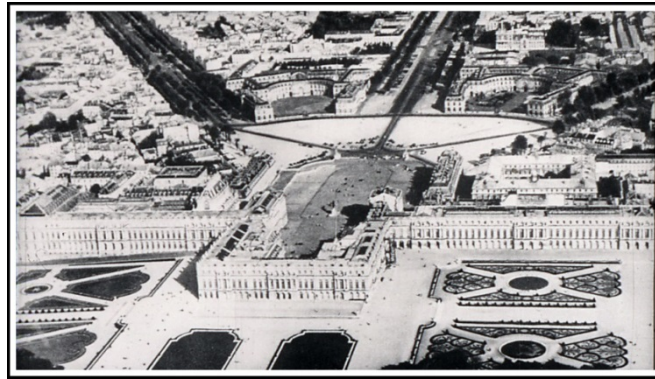


Illustration 04. Jules Hardouin Mansart – Versailles

In the same way, main roads diverge from the park façade leading to a giant green space – the work of *Andre Le Notre* (1613-1700), an outstanding landscape architect. It was he who created the so-called *French* (or formal) garden with a geometric network of alleys, with the correct outlines of pools, lawns, bosquets (a bosquet is a dense plantation of bushes and trees in a form of walls, trellises), with a strict arrangement of fountains, marble vases and statues, which are clearly seen against the background of lush greenery.

It ought to be pointed out here that in contrast to the French garden, the so-called *English garden* resembling a natural landscape was established at about the same time – another evidence of “the era of antitheses”.

If the external forms of Versailles (façades, park architecture) undoubtedly represent classicism, then the internal content (interior, décor) undoubtedly embodies the Baroque as well. The splendour prevailing in the palace chambers was largely achieved through the use of expensive finishing materials: bronze embossing, gilded wood carvings, primary timbers and an abundance of all kinds of decorative painting of course. According to a foreign ambassador of those times, “*beauty and grandeur shone as if in a dream or in an enchanted kingdom*”. To be convinced of the fairness of this evaluation, it is enough to see **the Hall of Mirrors, the Chapel** or any of **the plafonds** in the palace.

“The grand style” spread to all European countries. In the first half of the 18th century, it came to Russia with the deeds of Peter the Great. Here the heyday of “the grand style” reflected not only the desire for a new way of life but also the feeling of a powerful turn of the country on the rise. Much in this turn was naturally associated with the figure of Peter the Great. He who set as his goal to make Russia a leading power (during his reign the country was proclaimed an empire) and took the liberty to radically change all aspects of country’s life, turned out to be an extremely attractive image for art.

The first Russian emperor appears in such a highly and attractive manner in the sculptural **Portrait of Peter I** (1723) created by *Carlo Bartolomeo Rastrelli* (1675-1744). An Italian by birth, he was invited by Peter in 1716 and in fact laid the foundation for European types of sculpture in Russia. He created this bust in the canons of “the grand style” and it makes a multivalued impression.

On the one hand, we can see a typical ceremonial portrait, a solemn official monument where the monarch appears as encased in armour (the image of a mighty warrior with rich attributes of emperor’s attire). On the other hand, the exceptional severity of Peter’s appearance attracts attention (“*His face is terrible*” – the words from Pushkin’s future poem *Poltava*). The facial features are distorted by spiritual torment, there is a tragic seal on it: as if this man turned to stone under the load of thoughts and worries, who shouldered a huge power that was so difficult to move. The noted ambivalence clearly reflected the problematic structure of Baroque art multiplied by the peculiarities of the Russian mentality.

“The grand style” in Russia reached its culmination in the works of Bartolomeo Rastrelli’s son – the great architect *Francesco Bartolomeo Rastrelli* (or Varfolomei Varfolomeyevich, thus the original Italian name Bartolomeo inherited from his father was transformed into Russian).

The country had never been built so intensively before as since the early 18th century. The idea of building a new capital Saint Petersburg, which over time became one of the most beautiful cities in the world, stands out among the proposed initiatives. And then, with an interval of about one year, beautiful country complexes began to form: Tsarskoe Selo (Pushkin, since 1708), Peterhof (Petrodvorets, since 1709), Oranienbaum (Lomonosov, since 1710). The first two became country residences of Russian emperors, and much in them, as in the capital of that time, was created according to Rastrelli’s plans. He combined grandiose spatial scope and the clarity of volumes with the plasticity of architectural masses, with the richness of sculptural decoration and colour, with fancy ornamentation.

All this is completely presented in his true architectural pearl – **the Grand Peterhof Palace**. The superb natural surroundings of the palace are based on a combination of the techniques of the French (formal) and the English (landscape) gardens. A white-stone, harmoniously organized mass of the palace grows out of this environment. The single-domed chapels on the edges of the building add a bright Russian national accent (as you may remember, the same accent is added in the Catherine Palace in Tsarskoe Selo). The architecture is picturesquely combined with many other things: the Grand Cascade and the stairways framing it with the Large Grotto in the centre, pavilions with a colonnade, gilded sculpture, fountains, ponds, sea view.



Illustration 05. *Varfolomei Rastrelli – the Grand Peterhof Palace*

The magnificent palace halls are decorated with pure aristocratic taste (rigour, refinement and brilliance, elegance). Stucco and carved decorations, mosaic floors of rare beauty, executed according to Rastrelli's drawings, merge into a sparkling decorative ornament creating a triumphantly festive impression. One of the brilliant examples of interior design is **the Throne room** of the Grand Palace.

Direct equivalents of “the grand style” are easy to find in music where it was connected with creating the atmosphere of court festivities, processions and ceremonies. The most explicit idea of such an atmosphere can be given by **The Water Music** (1717), a collection of orchestral movements written by the German composer *George Frideric Handel* (1685-1759) for the English king's walk along the Thames.

The duration of this work is about three hours: an endless sequence of images, pictures, moods intended for perception in the atmosphere of a grandiose outdoor high-society reception (hence a great role of wind instruments that can provide the necessary volume of sound outside the concert hall). The culminating moments of *The Water Music* are the embodiment of the solemnity of “the grand style” with its bravura (emphatically major and *strepitoso*), splendour, decorative brilliance and the spirit of *pomposo* (Italian: *majestic, solemn, magnificent*).

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The previous exposition was devoted to the consideration of the main stylistic components of that multi-part conglomerate, what Baroque art is: the Baroque, classicism, realism and “the grand style”. Now let us define the general aspects of the artistic world of this era.

The most important aspect should be designated by the term *conceptualism*. This word in its Latin basis has several shades of meaning: a thought, understanding, a system. However, all of them are part of conceptualism, which is so characteristic of Baroque art. As a starting condition, it requires seriousness and sublimity of the imagery. The considered era was endowed with these features in abundance applying them even to the purely lyrical sphere.

Let us refer to the following. Since some time ago, one vocal miniature has been exceptionally popular among modern listeners. It is traditionally announced as *Ave Maria* by *Giulio Caccini*. This Italian composer (c. 1550 – 1618) was one of the founders of *opera*. Its principles had been developing at the end of the 16th century among scientists, poets and musicians who united in a community that went down in history as *The Florentine Camerata*. They sought to revive ancient drama, in which the word was inseparable from music, as far as one could guess from the descriptions that came down to them. As a result of their searches for a similar style, a completely new genre was discovered (the year 1600 is usually considered the birth of opera).

At the same time, the developing of *bel canto* (it. *beautiful singing*) began. It is a term that is given to a high style of classical singing with great breath, lightness and beauty of vocal performance, fineness and virtuoso coloratura (coloratura is fast, technically difficult passages in singing). *Bel canto* found its substantial expression in broad and flexible cantilena (cantilena is tuneful and smooth melody).

This is just the kind of cantilena we hear in *Ave Maria* by Caccini – deep-toned, beautiful, extremely expressive. According to the text, the composition is based on a phrase of only two words declared in the title (*Ave Maria*). Nothing more is needed for this magnificent chant – otherwise it is “self-sufficient”. Thus, in some ways resembling instrumental music, which was asserting its independence at that time, the art of singing tended to a certain independence from the verbal structure. The voice is accompanied by the organ, which emphasises the seriousness and sublime beauty of the lyrical outpouring.

Now it is necessary to explain that in fact the music in question was attributed to the Italian composer by the Russian guitarist, lutenist and composer Vladimir Vavilov who created it. He committed this fraud in the late 1960s for reasons of legal promotion of his composition on the concert stage. And since his *Ave Maria* has been engrained for the general public under the “pseudonym” of Caccini, we support the established tradition only for the reason that, being an excellent stylization, this miniature in all respects corresponds to the ideas about Baroque stylistics.

Incidentally, a composition that is invariably announced as **Adagio in G minor** for strings and organ by *Tomaso Albinoni* (an Italian composer, 1671-1751) is no less popular in the modern musical space. His compatriot, a musicologist

Remo Giazotto claimed that he composed this music in 1940s based on several measures he found in an archive. Later it was proved to be a pure hoax but the preferences of the general public encourage to perform this piece widely and successfully as *Albinoni's Adagio*.

The above-mentioned musical stylizations are very indicative of the amazing attractiveness of Baroque art for the modern listener. In particular, this attractiveness gave rise to a large flow of initiatives in the 20th century related to the so-called authentic performance of early music on instruments of that old time with the revival of the corresponding manner of sound production.

But let us turn to *the reality* of the Baroque era. Relying on seriousness and sublimity as the initial condition, its conceptualism strove to a sophisticated philosophical comprehension of existence. In literature, it is most naturally associated with the genre of fundamental epic. One of the most remarkable examples is the poem **Paradise Lost** (1667) by the English poet *John Milton* (1608-1674). This gigantic work of literature is a daring attempt to answer the question: how and why Evil, Darkness and Unbelief appeared. The author sees the original cause in the fact that the Lord gave the freedom of choice to everyone as well as because of His *connivance*. Among other things He, the All-seeing and All-knowing, predicted the seduction of the human race by Satan and did not prevent it.

Milton witnessed and participated in the English Revolution of the 17th century, which became the first revolution on a European scale and began with civil wars in 1642-1646 and 1648, the execution of the king and proclamation of the republic in 1649. He conveys grandiose social movements of his time, its contradictions and impulses through the titanic battles of cosmic forces, through the picture of Satan's rebellion against God.

The poet patiently investigates the reasons of this rebellion. One of them is the pride of Satan and others of his kind, the unwillingness to constantly thank the Lord for His blessings. Satan rebels against derogatory servility and calls on angels to revolt. Of course, the spirit of rebellion and theomachy embodied in the image of the proud Lucifer is easily projected onto the man, his ethics and psychology. Milton raises the question of the right and even the necessity to reject traditional morals at certain historical stages for the sake of progress. That is why V. Belinsky found "*the apotheosis of rebellion against authorities*" in his poem.

But the poet's thought goes even further. The central issue of *Paradise Lost* is the statement of *inevitability* of evil on earth. It is assumed that "alternative" characters exist who prioritize "anti-values". One of "the princes of darkness" Anarch, the king of Chaos, says: "*Havoc, and spoil, and ruin, are my gain*". Satan cast out of heaven with renegade angels (demons) formulates his programme threatening the Lord.

And finally, Milton suspects that the Lord's connivance was not accidental. The eternal endless battle of Good and Evil contains the main moving contradiction of existence, the springs and mechanism of its development. According to the poet, this is the inevitable dialectics of the existence of the world, one of its laws.

In musical art, the conceptualism of the Baroque era in its entirety expressed in Bach's and Handel's works, the most significant representatives of the German school of composers, which became the leading one at their time (the first half of the 18th century).

George Frideric Handel's fundamental compositions are connected with the genre of oratorio, which acquired its classical form namely in his work. Handel's oratorios are musical compositions for soloists, choir and orchestra consisting of many movements and written on various plots. They are huge musical canvases where the presentations of different situations and statements evolve into a vast panorama.

The masses of people are usually in the centre of these grandiose stories, which resulted in the leading role of the choir. Handel's choral scenes are extremely large-scale, vivid and expressive. He often uses polyphonic methods, which allows him to create a bright picture: large streams of people as if catching up with each other and merging into one huge stream and in general creating the impression of the welter of a crowd. Excellent examples of such an interpretation of polyphony can be found in the oratorio **Messiah** (1742).

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Handel's mastery of choral writing conveying *the movement of large masses of people* constituted one of the greatest achievements of Baroque art. Let us take a look at this mastery in painting.

On the way to depicting of human multitude, the Dutch school created an original specific genre – *a group portrait*. In the best works of this kind, a large group appears not in the statics of ceremonial poses but in active motion, showing what this circle of people exists for. It is stated in the title and revealed in the essence of the famous picture **The Night Watch** by *Rembrandt* as an example.

The impetus for depicting crowded gatherings was given at the dawn of the Baroque era. The huge canvases by *Paolo Veronese* (1528-1588) are clear evidence to that. The most famous of them is **The Wedding at Cana** (1563). It is based on the gospel story of a wedding celebration where, according to the legend, Christ performed the first of His miracles turning water into wine. As often in the case of Veronese, a mythological motif gives occasion to depicting the life of Venetian society, which he belonged to. Here the patrician elite of Venice is having a feast, as judged by royal luxury of the architecture, by the dazzling beauty of clothes and the number of servants.

The following detail also speaks to the obvious modernization of the plot: the King of Spain Charles V and the Ottoman sultan Suleiman are among the characters, and in the centre of the picture there is a group portrait of the famous Venetian painters of that time depicted as musicians – Titian, Tintoretto, Bassano and Veronese himself. The canvas is filled with movement, as if voices of a large crowd are heard in it (138 characters are depicted here).



Illustration 06. Paolo Veronese – *The Wedding at Cana*

Artists also found subjects for reconstructing the life of great human masses directly in the realities of their time. **Diego Velazquez** depicts an episode of the Eighty Years' War in the picture **The Surrender of Breda** (a city in the Netherlands). It is of importance to note that he painted from the position of a loyal Spanish citizen who considered the occupation of a foreign country to be quite normal.

In the centre of this multi-figured composition (the front flanks of both armies, their weapons, war horses are shown) the commander of the Dutch garrison is handing over the key to the fortress to the Spanish commander. The first is bowed in a fawning pose, the second is full of humane sympathy for the defeated. The act of capitulation is captured against the background of a huge space – a valley with the lake spreading below in clouds of fire as evidence of the battle that had just been fought.

It was natural to expect that in contrast to the restrained manner of realistic painting (for example, that of Velazquez) the Baroque style in this meaning was inclined to an exceptional temperament with hyperbolic emphasis and fantastic surroundings. This is precisely the perspective that can be found in the picture **Battle of Lapiths and Centaurs** by **Luca Giordano** (1632-1705). The mythological plot (centaurs tried to steal away the women from the Lapiths tribe) is turned into picturesque “fire-breathing” fantasy: a furious fight, intertwining bodies, a wide inclusion of the fantastic element (half-men, half-horses, gods in the sky helping the battle of earthly beings, strange flying reptiles) – everything in this densely crowded canvas is filled with violent dynamics and masterfully united by a single impulse of turbulent movement.

Baroque artists showed no less temperament in depiction of real life. It began with **Pieter Bruegel's** genre painting, which “was inherited” by his son **Pieter Bruegel the Younger** (1564-1638). One of his illustrative works is **Village Fair with Theatrical Performance and Procession**. This gigantic, scrupulously painted canvas, with its number of figures depicts a colourful crowd with the accent characteristic of his father, which gave cause for the already mentioned nickname (“peasant” Bruegel). The multitude is realized in this case through the abundance of scenes and plots: each group of characters lives its own life on a wide city square so that the picture on the whole seems to be woven of a number of autonomous drawings and sketches.

In parallel with the reproduction of life of a great mass of people that entered Baroque art, an emphasized *sense of a large space* becomes characteristic of artists' worldview of that era – sometimes immeasurable, in some ways almost cosmic. And here, again, **Bruegel's** name should be mentioned among the first. A clear idea of such aspirations can be given by his famous picture **The Hunters in the Snow** (1565), where, through the connection of an endless series of close and distant views, an exceptionally deep perspective is developed.

It is natural that the two above-mentioned motifs (the multitude and a large space) often interacted with each other. And it turned out that in the hands of masters, even pure genre painting was capable of conceptual ascents.

For example, we can find it in the canvas **Winter Landscape with Skaters** by the Dutch artist **Hendrick Avercamp** (1585-1634). Outwardly we see a simple picture depicting city dwellers' leisure in winter. But the abundance of angles, poses, positions of the countless crowd scattered to the horizon is striking so that behind the subject of burghers' unsophisticated amusements and behind their “mass” there is evident an inner idea of a hive, the picture of endless human vanity. And this “swarm all over the place” appears clearly visible before the viewer – that is why the action is put to a huge skating-rink.

* * *

The inevitable consequence of Baroque conceptualism and its necessary component was such a quality as problemativeness. Moreover, it came largely from the corresponding mood of a person. It is enough to look at **Self-portrait** (1588) by the Italian artist **Jacopo Tintoretto** (1518-1594) in order to be convinced of this.

The extreme gloom and darkness of the colour, the harshness and nervousness of the brush-stroke intensify the expression of the exhaustion of the face with wrinkles and folds from endured sufferings. This is a face of a person tired of life, worn out with distressing thoughts. The deep eye-hollows filled with immense grief as if illustrating the biblical phrase “*in much wisdom is much grief*”. This is a tragic image of an old man seeking and not finding an answer to his questions turning to life and fate.

This state of mind of human souls turned out to be the main reason for the so-called insomnia and torment of the era, which raised the most difficult questions, lived with intense spiritual quest, ascending to deep philosophical insights. The Baroque enriched the experience of art with an understanding of the complexity and contradiction of the world and the individual human personality. In order to imagine the level of problematicity that entered the artistic creativity of that time, it is worth recalling the plays by *William Shakespeare* – in total they give a completely grandiose, all-embracing panorama of human life.

Johann Sebastian Bach was equal to this titan. He concentrated in his legacy all the most significant and global of the musical art of his time. His greatest works are distinguished by their monumental scope, incomparable depth of artistic generalisations, the tendency to global philosophic problematics. Bach’s organ music is very indicative in this regard. It was in this era and in the work of this composer that the organ experienced its greatest flowering. The “king of instruments” allowed Bach to reveal emphatically serious content, to speak about the profound and majestic in life, to convey the flights of the human spirit with their power and grandeur.

All above-mentioned can be found, for example, in **Fantasia and Fugue in g-moll** for organ. The titanism of the main image and grandiose pathetics of oratorical speech create the impression that the author defines and resolves “world problems” (“the construction” of the organ literally trembles from the internal tension and fall of rolling sound masses). And in contrast, there are episodes of introspective states, reflections and analytical immersions that gives other edges of complex problematic mood.

The most important aspect of Baroque conceptualism with its characteristic problematic mood was aimed at *a deep comprehension of human nature*. Its revealing, in comparison with previous artistic eras, becomes more multidimensional and multivalued, psychologically complex. The acuity of the vision of human nature allowed Baroque art to create a series of prominent, individual characters that became generalised and common, preserving their symbolic function until now.

Such characters are usually classified as *eternal images*. Perhaps no other time has put forward such an abundance of them as the Baroque era. Shakespeare’s dramaturgy is beyond reach in terms of these images: Romeo and Juliet, Othello and Iago, Macbeth (male and female), Hamlet, King Lear, Falstaff.

* * *

Four highly distinctive figures that came into art with the Baroque era are embedded in human consciousness with the greatest force: Faust, Don Juan, Hamlet and Don Quixote. In the following exposition we are interested not so much in the main literary source, with which we usually associate each of these figures, but the features and qualities associated with them and widespread outside this source.

Don Juan is perhaps the most contradictory literary character: both appalling and attractive. In the ordinary interpretation, he is a seeker of amorous adventures. Broadly speaking, he is a rake, a frivolous lover of life overwhelmed by a thirst for sense enjoyment. More broadly speaking, he is an image of a liberated personality who does not take into account conventions and prohibitions, a daring breaker of moral and religious norms, a bold rebel who becomes a victim of his indomitable desire for freedom and the absolute (the desire to go to the last limit in everything).

The prototype of the associated image and plots was the Spanish folk romance (a narrative genre that was discussed in connection with Góngora’s “Black Romance”). This is a story about a caballero (a knight, a nobleman) who defiled the ashes. It is told in the manner that is completely characteristic of the Spanish romance – in lively, flexible, energetic verse, into which dialogical speech is widely and freely introduced.

The frivolous hero was extremely depressed by the fact that the skull he had kicked on the road, in response to an offer to come to the feast, had given its consent but pride did not allow him to refuse his offer. The skull arrived at the appointed hour but refused dinner and led the caballero to his grave – the caballero was saved from death only by the fact that he prayed.

Such was the seed, from which so much fruit subsequently grew, dozens of all sorts of versions, including Mozart’s opera and Pushkin’s “little tragedy”.

Now let us turn to the figure of *Hamlet*. It would seem that this image belongs entirely to Shakespeare’s tragedy of the same name. However, not only Shakespeare but many other writers of the Baroque era have vibes of Hamletism here and there. Let us take, for example, *John Donne*’s poems (1572-1631), a younger contemporary of Shakespeare. Through intense self-analysis, he conveys a complex vibration of a range of contradictory feelings, looking into the frightening depths of the human soul (**To the Countess of Bedford on New Year’s Tide**).

“Broken is the human race”, Donne said in his poetic work **An Anatomy of the World** (1611), almost with one voice with Shakespearean Hamlet. He most often conveyed this brokenness in the prism of lyrical experiences. If for a Renaissance man love was a joyful, life-giving feeling (“*Blessed be the day, and the month, and the year, / And the season, and the time, and the hour, and the moment, / And the beautiful country, and the place where I was joined / To the two beautiful eyes that have bound me*”, exclaims Petrarch in Sonnet 61), then for Donne it is almost always suffering, pain, a curse, that is, a feeling full of painful contradictions, a fierce struggle.

It is very vividly expressed in the poem **Twickenham Garden** (a garden in one of the estates the poet often visited), created at the highest level of Baroque poetics and where the symbol of love torments and the demon of duality (the demonic in the nature of the Hamlet type) are equally presented.

That was Hamletism – a destructive and alluring disease of the century.

* * *

We will consider two other of the most fundamental “eternal images” purely associatively on the material of visual arts.

First, we will try to model the figure of *Don Quixote* and do this using two directly opposite images. The first of them is *Titian's Equestrian Portrait of Charles V*. In this work, a strange duality is striking: external grandeur (the ceremonial monument of the armoured Spanish king) and the seal of hidden sadness on the face; a heroic message and something comically theatrical (short stature, hypertrophy of a sharply protruding chin). In life, Charles V was the *Don Quixote* of big European politics, he tried to create “a world Christian power” under the banner of Catholicism, suffered defeat and abdicated the throne. And if you give him thinness, eccentricity and disproportionate height...

This is exactly what we find in abundance in the painting **A Clown Training a Magpie** by *Alessandro Magnasco*. This is truly an “anti-parade” thing, in which comedy appears in combination with internal tragedy. Eccentricity reached a breaking point: the skinny figure of a comedian in an absurd cap in front of a bird with its head raised. But at the same time, this is a painful grotesque of a beggarly existence in some ruins (the poverty is emphasized by the almost monochrome painting in brownish-grey tones).

If we take something in between these works by Titian and Magnasco, then we will probably get an image of *Don Quixote* that is quite identical to what we know from the novel by *Miguel de Cervantes* (1547-1616).

Now let us try to imagine *Faust*. Both *Faust* who first entered literature in the German “folk book” of the late 16th century, and *Faust* from Goethe's famous tragedy written at the turn of the 19th century. Let us recall that the “folk book” is a type of cheap publication that became widely circulated, designed for the widest readership and often based on the treatment of some folk plots.

So, who is *Faust*? Firstly, he is a fanatical scholar, an ascetic, exhausted from countless scientific works. Something similar can be found in **Portrait of John Locke** by the English artist *Godfrey Kneller* (1649-1723). *Locke* (1632-1704) developed a theory of *knowledge*, which makes him akin to *Faust*. In the portrait, his whole being is directed somewhere into the distance. His gaze, as they say, is *unseeing* (outside the surrounding reality), he inquisitively stares right through the mists of abstractions. But at the same time, something demonic is hidden inside this character – in his obsidian black eyes, in the stubbornly compressed lips.

From here it is a stone's throw to *Faust* in whom the rebellious pathos of the God-fighter flares up. As if continuing the associative series, the sculptor *Lorenzo Bernini* creates his **David** in exceptionally sharp contours of the face and body. The figure is sculpted in a sharp turning, in the tensest pose of a swing. The face with angrily bitten lip and knitted eyebrows is not so much a fight against the supposed Goliath, as a rebellion against the heavens, to which the character's hateful gaze is directed. In his evil stubbornness, he is ready to fight alone against everyone and everything. What a contrast to the image of *David* in Renaissance sculpture! Let us recall, for example, *Michelangelo's David* – calm, balance, harmony shine through his image.

Or here is another kind of *Faust* – disillusioned with life, tortured by the anguish of heavy thoughts of the meaning of existence. The character of the painting **Diogenes** was named by *Jusepe de Ribera* after the ancient Greek philosopher to whom the words “*I am looking for a man*” are attributed (according to the legend, he wandered the streets of the city in the daytime with a lit lantern – this detail is taken into account in the image). The artist dressed him in rags, expressively outlined his dishevelled hair, wide eyebrows, thick shadows on his face, dull, lustreless eyes, in which an inescapable melancholy lurked – everything speaks of the hopelessness of a man who no longer expects anything from life.

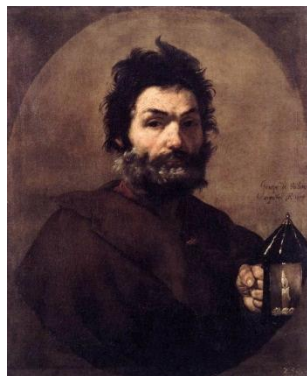


Illustration 07. Jusepe de Ribera – *Diogenes*

And finally, *Faust* who is in league with the devil. It may seem paradoxical but this motif is expressed in *Titian's* painting **Caesar's Dinar**, illustrating the well-known Gospel parable: a Jewish priest with sanctimonious intent asked Christ to whom people should pay the tax – to Caesar, the Roman emperor, to whom Judea was subject, or to Christ,

who called himself the king of the Jews. Christ replied: "Give unto Caesar what is Caesar's, and unto God what is God's". Let us forget the biblical legend for a while and then we will discover in Titian's painting a peculiar variation on the theme of Faust: the insidious Mephistopheles seduces a noble, thinking person. The situation is conveyed through a sharp, emphasized contrast (again, an antithesis!) of two faces, deliberately brought together in space: the pure, clear, sublimely spiritual face of the tempted and the demanding, sarcastic physiognomy of the tempter.

And again, if we bring together the above-mentioned and many other similar images into some kind of unity, we would receive a multifaceted portrait of a complex, sharply contradictory character, the outline of which is usually associated in our minds with the appearance and essence of Faust.

The bright, extremely original characters and types discussed above show how deeply Baroque art entered the essence of human nature.

Music also achieved much in this regard, including opera, born in the Baroque era, where the nature of the genre (the emphasis on individual destinies, the need to reveal the contrast of characters) encouraged an active search for relief and diversity in the depiction of images. By the beginning of the 18th century, a verified system of expressive means and developed musical forms had set up in this genre. For example, **Recitative and Aria of Cleopatra** from *Handel's* opera **Giulio Cesare**. The fullness and scope of understanding of human nature is combined here with the revelation of the depth of feelings and thoughts of a suffering woman.

In this expanded opera form, the functions of recitative and aria are clearly distinguished. Recitative is a lively, excited human speech (musically intoned, of course), conveying the essence of an event and various shades of emotional reaction to it. Aria is the state of the heroine, embodied by means of a holistic (without detailing), plastically rounded vocal cantilena. The role of the orchestra is very important here – its *ostinato*, i.e., constantly repeating phrases, form the core, on which the broad chant of the voice is layered.

* * *

Recitative and aria of Cleopatra is written in the character of *lamento* (Italian: *complaint, lament*) – a lyrical genre, a favourite genre of Baroque composers. As never before in music, they were able to convey the suffering of the soul and deep sympathy for the suffering person. It was in such sad outpourings that *Baroque humanism* expressed itself most clearly, manifesting itself through sincere empathy, through a deep understanding of how difficult it is to live in the earthly world.

We often hear such sympathy and understanding in *Bach's* music, particularly in Final Chorus of his *Passions* (from the Latin *suffering*). Passion is a musical and poetic narrative based on the Gospel text about the last days of Jesus (the Passion of Christ).

In the final vocal movements of **St Matthew Passion** and **St John Passion** (the composer's most large-scale oratorios), Bach conveyed, in accordance with the plot, the nationwide farewell to Jesus who had gone to the other-being. This is written in the character of *lamento* too (No. 67 from St John Passion should perhaps be named as particularly indicative).

Most often, *lamento* for Baroque composers is not just a *complaint* or *crying*. Their most expressive *lamenti* combined the power of the soul's suffering, bitterness, grief and the significance of the state, the sublimely majestic structure of its expression (restraint and nobility with all the internal expression and sincerity of emotions). They had not only an understanding of the hardships of human life, not only sympathy and compassion but also the desire to support him, to build resilience to the vicissitudes of fate and trials. As one of the most perfect examples of such an interpretation, we should name the farewell *Lamento* of the main character of *Purcell's* opera **Dido and Aeneas**.

The most important feature of Baroque humanism was precisely the combination of deep sincerity and inner fortitude of spirit. The final phrase of *Shakespeare's* tragedy **King Lear** is symptomatic: "The weight of this sad time we must obey". The following idea was affirmed in the art of this era: in comparison with the grandeur of the world, the man is weak and pitiful but at the same time he is great. His greatness lies in his strength of spirit, in his courage, in his readiness for adversity. And one should seek the support in this unreliable, "unfaithful" existence only in oneself. The German poet *Christian Hofmann von Hofmannswaldau* speaks of this in the poem **Chiding** with passionate pathos, and the pathos of the call is answered by energetic interruptions of rhythm, as well as the overall bouncy, muscular verse.

But in addition to inner fortitude of spirit, the feeling of love turned out to be saving for Baroque man. This seemingly fragile thread of lyrical feeling was capable of supporting a person in the most severe storms of life. That is why *William Shakespeare* conveys the idea of the greatest value of love from sonnet to sonnet.

In works of musical art, among colossal tensions and non-stop running of energy, islands of extraordinary tenderness of the soul constantly emerged, secret places of the intimate were revealed. *Antonio Vivaldi's* instrumental concertos are very characteristic in this regard. Being the creator of the named genre, he steadily asserted the idea of "a well-organized contrast" (the composer's definition): a three-movement cycle with the tempo order *Allegro – Adagio – Allegro* (fast – slow – fast).

The fast movements (the first and third, that is, the outer ones) are sustained in rapid motion – this is the energy of action, high vital activity. In the slow (middle) movement, the active pulse freezes, and the world of the soul comes into its own. This is the centre of lyrical emotions and reflections, the centre of deep humanity. Here the cantilena reigns, supported by the soft and sensitive vibration of harmonies. The solo violin could "sing" such a cantilena best of all, and, apparently, to a large extent for this reason, almost half of Vivaldi's five hundred concertos were written for this instrument. One of the remarkable examples of such a cantilena can be heard in the slow movement of Vivaldi's **Concerto for Violin and Orchestra in A minor (op. 4, no. 4)**.

In painting, the humanism of the Baroque era found its highest expression in the works of **Rembrandt**. It is no coincidence that his closest attention was drawn to the images of old people, who had experienced much and therefore, needed sympathy and understanding more than anyone else. That is why these images are full of the artist's warmth and special love for the man – outwardly restrained, but reverential and often poignant.

His **Portrait of an Old Man in Red** radiates a sense of wisdom, kindness and undying interest in life. One can see traces of a long life on his face covered with wrinkles. In this picture, like in other similar works by Rembrandt, the depiction of hands plays a huge role: they, like the face, tell a lot about a person.

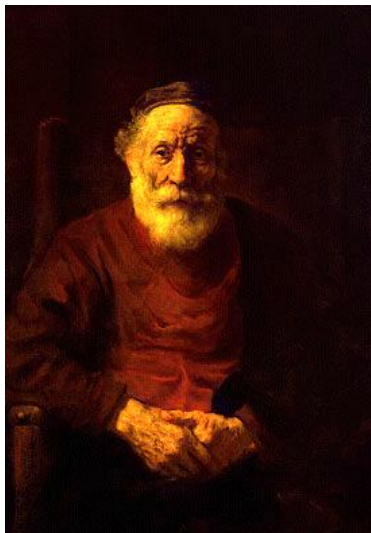


Illustration 08. Rembrandt – *Portrait of an Old Man in Red*

This is also fully presented in the **Portrait of the Brother's Wife** (another name is the *Portrait of an Old Woman*, 1654). As almost always in such cases, the artist creates a portrait-biography. Looking at it, an attentive observer can read a lot about the difficult life of this elderly woman. Concentrating the lighting, surrounding the head with a veil like a hood, the artist focuses the viewer's gaze on the face. Time has graved deep furrows on her face, the extremely sad eyes carry the feeling of the best time of life that has irretrievably passed. There is so much kindness and careful attention emanating from the author, in which true humanity is embodied.

Following the same line, there is one of **Rembrandt's** last canvases – the famous **Return of the Prodigal Son** (c. 1668-1669), written on the subject of the biblical parable of the dissolute son, who left his father's house and returned to it after many ordeals and adversities, when everyone believed him dead. There are two figures in the centre of the painting: the unfortunate wanderer, who had come down to the point of poverty and humiliation in his wanderings, fell on his knees before his father, and the blind old man, who placed his hands on his son's shoulders (and again, how much these hands tell us!). Otherwise, the faces of the main and secondary characters are ordinary, there is no pathos and only the essence, the inmost comprehension of a deep inner feeling. We become witnesses to a moment of supreme spiritual enlightenment: the repentance of the son, pressing himself close to his father, and the endless paternal love, ready to forgive everything.

* * *

The highest humanity in its own way also declared itself in the depiction of moments of harmony of spirit, which occasionally appeared in the Baroque era. Painters recorded such moments, as a rule, in a family atmosphere, through the consonance of close souls.

We find this, for example, in the painting **The Holy Family with a Little Bird** (1645-1650) by the Spanish artist **Bartolomé Esteban Murillo** (1618-1682). The painting on its own belongs entirely to genre art: a scene of private life, a purely domestic interior, objects of the carpenter's work on the right side of the canvas and attributes of the spinner's craft on the left, a bird in the hand of a Child and a dog in front of him (it is also fundamentally important that the artist refused halos over the heads of the saints).

Nevertheless, the biblical motif (Christ's childhood) illuminates the painting with its legendary glow – first of all, by means of the silvery airy haze enveloping the figures. But another thing is even more important: the depicted scene radiates vital harmony, which is supported by such a significant detail: Joseph, who is usually painted far in the background, turns out to be an equal participant of the action. Maximally poeticizing the event, the author emphasizes the spirit of intimacy, soft lyricism with a gentle colour scheme, conveying the sincerity and warmth of human feelings, the atmosphere of serene family happiness.

Peter Paul Rubens develops about the same motif in a completely real and concrete perspective in his **Self-portrait with Isabella Brant** (1609-1610). The artist depicted himself with his young wife in a blooming garden, in expensive suits and solemn poses. This ceremonious touch, stressed by a virtuoso and precise drawing, as well as a meticulous depiction of all the details of clothing, is intended to indicate the wealth and satisfaction with life

of the married couple, their calm confidence in themselves and their future. This is the material basis of their happy family life, illuminated by the grace of consent, spiritual harmony and mutual tenderness, which is conveyed by the entire set of means – from the gesture of intertwined hands to a single tonal range, representing the spirit of quiet luxury and excellent taste.

As could be expected, the art of the Baroque era also reached the heights of ideally sublime harmony. To be convinced of this, let us once again turn to the painting by **Rubens. Portrait of the Lady-in-Waiting to the Infanta Isabella** (c. 1625) is a portrait that is both formal and deeply human. The pearl-white foam of the grand dame's formal jabot becomes a wonderful background for recreating the lively charm of the face – it is assumed that the artist painted his daughter here, and if so, then his "interest" in creating a masterpiece is easily explained.

The light *golden* reflections, of which the image is woven, convey the thrill of life, sparks of *golden* light shine in the eyes, flyaway strands of *golden* hair frame the forehead and temples. A slight smile emphasizes the intelligence, subtlety, grace and spiritual richness of the girl. The thoughtful face and dreamy look of large light eyes resonates with the reflections of the divine in her beauty, captivating in its transparent clarity, tenderness and lyricism. The soft radiance of her luminous face brings us closer to what Goethe and then the Russian symbolists of the turn of the 20th century designated by the concept of Eternal Feminine.

Johann Sebastian Bach was able to convey such moments of radiant light and complete peace in his music with inspiration:

- it could be a solemn praise of the universe, a hymn to its beauty and grandeur in moments of bright serenity, when the human spirit soars to the eternal – such, for example, is the sublime, free singing of the strings in **the Overture** from the **Orchestral Suite No. 1**;
- it could be the angelic face of human nature in its divine radiance – the silvery flow of figurations in **the Prelude in C major** from the first volume of **the Well-Tempered Clavier**;
- and finally, it could be an incomparable oasis of light, supreme wisdom and humanity, the harmony of the earthly and heavenly, which is given by the feeling of the sublime beauty of being – **the Aria** from the **Orchestral Suite No. 3**.

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