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**THE ABANDONMENT OF THE  
RENAISSANCE REALITY IN EARLY  
MANNERIST ITALIAN PAINTING**

107378

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**ERKEN DÖNEM MANYERİST  
İTALYAN RESMİNDE GERÇEKLİĞİN  
YİTİRİLİŞİ**

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## **PREFACE**

The chief aim of this thesis will be to observe the sixteenth century through Italian art, especially painting in Tuscany region within 1517-1561 time frame, that is reformation and counter-reformation periods, early mannerism, with a reference to the social and historical background. The consequences of the century will be limited within Italy although most of the countries other than Italy had been affected from that shift. It is also acceptable that to understand what was happening at the time in Italy was somewhat understanding the general.

My eagerness to understand the reason of the condemnation of Mannerism for centuries motivated me to choose this period. It may not appear impressive to study the period from today's perspective and understanding due to our being accustomed to reforms and revolutions, but to respect the novelty of the events of the social and economical realm of the sixteenth century will make us appreciate the times more. The historical and social setting of the period, pregnant to ever changing and radical attitudes, besides arts will guide us to realize that modern capitalism, new perception of the universe, freedom in religion were problems the sixteenth century had tried to bring out solutions to.

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## **THE ABANDONMENT OF THE RENAISSANCE REALITY IN EARLY MANNERIST ITALIAN PAINTING**

### **SUMMARY**

As an art movement Mannerism was born in Florence, spread to Rome and then to other countries having an international character. The most representative pieces of the early period can be found in Tuscany region especially in Florence.

A transformation period in social, religious, political and cultural fields was encountered in the beginning of the sixteenth century primarily in Italy then in the other countries in Europe. It was lived right after the dominance of rationality, objectivity and mathematical truth of the Renaissance and with the help of the historical events, geographical improvement, technological and scientific innovations, the values of the former century changed for good and were replaced with new ones.

The transformation period can clearly be observed in arts due to the effect of subsidiary events. As the representatives of the transformation period Early Mannerist artists reflected this effect to their art. Religion was likewise a direct influence on arts. In the sixteenth century religion was also pregnant to some changes and was criticized.

In the beginning of the sixteenth century the masters of High Renaissance were still creating; although they continued on depicting in the same style their art started to show other indications than the stiff canons of the Renaissance due to the historical happenings.

What the next generation achieved was to take the indications and construct a new style with the new perception of reality. Each artist of Early Mannerism brought to light his subjective perception therefore displayed a creative character. The most distinguishing feature was their subjectivity instead of the objectivity of the Renaissance. They reflected their interpretation of reality, in itself an epoch-making event. After the dominance of absolute rationality in the Renaissance, intellectuals bewildered to confront with dualities. The artists were overwhelmed with the rational. They started to distort the realities, which took them to excessiveness.

The stiff perception of the Renaissance reality was being replaced by different realities. The accepted dogmas formerly never been criticized were starting to be shaken. It was a crisis period and artists wanted to find solutions to the crisis of the era, which led them to search for different answers. One-sided view was not satisfying the intellectuals anymore thus they began to possess different angles. The artists were not interested in the ideal beauty as perceived in High Renaissance and found other values to praise. They started to distort and elongate the body, rejected the order, the balance, the perspective rules. They rejected the perspective because it was man's perception. In Renaissance everything was organized according to man but chiefly the scientific innovations proved that the perception which hitherto has been accepted was not right. Man centered world collapsed; the status of man devaluated. This caused insecurity. The intellectuals more aware of the transformation period became neurotic or skeptical.

The first signs of capitalist order experienced at the beginning of the sixteenth century brought a positive change in public's becoming more interested in arts. The changing structure of the arts raised the status of the artists and their work became theirs than the demand of their patron. The independent artist was born in mannerist period. The first signs appeared in due course of the personality of the artists of High Renaissance namely with Michelangelo, Leonardo and Raphael.

Even though the Early Mannerists inherited a legacy at its peak from the masters of High Renaissance they did not try to imitate the masters but added their characteristics to the innovations. By this way they constructed a new style and even this peculiarity needs to be appreciated. The representatives of the Early Mannerism were Pontormo, Rosso, Beccafumi, Parmigianino and Bronzino. Although Bronzino's works indicate some features of Late Mannerism and Late Mannerists constructed their art on Parmigianino's they can still be counted as Early Mannerists. Only if their life is observed with a flashback, the change in their style can be revealed.

During the second half of the century contrary to the Early Mannerism the arts production was strictly under the control of the court and due to the Counter-Reformation under the control of the church. Unfortunately at this time the arts took an academically character and lost its creativeness. At the beginning of the seventeenth century Mannerism was replaced by Baroque.

Although the transformation period was a short lived one it appeared in the crisis periods during the following centuries. All the innovations it sheltered indicate similarities with the twentieth century art, mostly in connection with critical thinking.

In the movements of the first half of the twentieth century the influences of Mannerism are detected.



## **ERKEN DÖNEM MANYERİST İTALYAN RESMİNDE GERÇEKLİĞİN YİTİRİLİŞİ**

### **ÖZET**

Manyerizm uluslararası bir hareket olup Floransa'da doğup Roma'ya oradan da diğer Avrupa ülkelerine yayılmıştır. Toskana bölgesi, özellikle Floransa, akımın en temsil edici örneklerini barındırır.

Onaltıncı yüzyılın başında öncelikli olarak İtalya'da ve daha sonra diğer Avrupa ülkelerinde sosyal, dini, politik ve kültürel alanlarda bir geçiş dönemi yaşanmaktadır. Bu dönem Rönesans'ın rasyonel, nesnel ve matematiksel gerçeğinin hakimiyetinden hemen sonra yaşanır ve tarihi olayların, coğrafi keşiflerin, teknolojik ve bilimsel buluşların yardımıyla önceki yüzyılın değerleri yenileriyle yer değiştirir.

Tarihsel olguların da etkisi ile geçiş dönemi netlikle sanatta gözlemlenir. Geçiş dönemi temsilcileri olan Erken Manyeristler bu etkiyi sanatlarına yansıtırlar. Aynı zamanda dinin de sanat üzerinde yadsınamaz etkisi olmuştur ve onaltıncı yüzyıl başında yeniliklere gebe olup eleştirilmekte idi.

Onaltıncı yüzyıl başında Yüksek Rönesans sanatçıları halen üretmekte idiler; her ne kadar stillerini sürdürseler de tarihsel olayların etkisi ile sanatları Rönesans'ın katı kurallarından farklı işaretler göstermeye başladı.

Yeni neslin başarısı bu işaretleri alarak yeni bir sanat akımı inşa etmek olmuştur. Her bir Erken Manyerist sanatçı öznel algısını gün ışığına çıkarttı ve böylelikle yaratıcı karakter gösterdi. En ayırd edici özellikleri Rönesans nesnelliğinin yerine öznelliklerini koymalarıdır. Hakikat yorumları başlı başına dönemsel bir yeniliği ifade etmektedir. Onaltıncı yüzyıl aydınları Rönesansın mutlak rasyonallığından sonra ikilemlerle karşılaşmaktan şaşkındılar. Sanatçılar ise rasyonellikten boğulmuşlardı. Onları aşırılığa götürecek olan gerçekleri çarpıtmayı seçtiler.

Katı Rönesans gerçeği başka gerçeklerle yer değiştirmekte idi. Şimdiye kadar hiç eleştirilmemiş ve kabul olagelmış dogmalar sarsılmaya başlıyordu. Bu bir kriz dönemi idi ve sanatçılar kriz dönemine çözüm bulmak üzere farklı cevaplar aramakta idiler. Artık tek yönlü bakış açısı aydınları tatmin etmiyordu, böylece farklı açılardan



bakmaya başladılar. Onlar Yüksek Rönesans'ın ideal güzelliği ile ilgilenmiyorlardı ve takdir edecek yeni değerler buldular. İnsan vücudunu uzatıp, çarpıttılar, düzeni ve perspektif kurallarını reddettiler. Perspektifi reddettiler çünkü perspektif insan algılamasının neticesi idi. Rönesans'ta tüm düzen insana göre kurulmuştu fakat özellikle bilimsel yenilikler şimdiye kadar kabul edilmiş olan algılamanın doğru olmadığını kanıtladı. İnsan merkezli dünya yıkıldı, insana atfedilen değer azaldı. Bu güvensizlik ortamı yarattı. Geçiş döneminin farkında olan aydınlar nörotik ve kuşkucu olmaya başladılar.

Onaltıncı yüzyılın başında gözlemlenmekte olan kapitalist dönemin ilk işaretlerinin olumlu yansımaları toplumun sanatla daha fazla ilgilenmesi olmuştur. Sanatın değişen yapısı sanatçının değerini arttırmış ve yarattıkları eserler patronun zorlamasındansa kendi yaratıları olmaya başlamıştır. Özgür sanatçı Manierist dönemde doğar. İlk işaretler Yüksek Rönesans dönemi sanatçılarından, özellikle Michelangelo, Leonardo ve Raphael'in kişiliklerinde belirir.

Erken Manieristler her ne kadar Yüksek Rönesans ustalarından en yüksek noktaya varmış olan bir miras devralsalar da onları taklit etmeyerek yeniliklere kendi karakterlerini eklemişlerdir. Böylece yeni bir akım oluşturmuşlar ve bu özellikleri bile takdire değerdir. Erken Manierist temsilciler Pontormo, Rosso, Beccafumi, Parmigianino ve Bronzino'dur. Bronzino'nun bazı eserleri Geç Manierist özellikler taşısa ve Geç Manieristler sanatlarını Parmigianino'nun sanatı üzerine kursalar da yinede her iki sanatçı da Erken Manieristler arasındadırlar. Geçmişleri incelendiğinde stillerindeki değişiklik anlaşılabilmektedir.

Onaltıncı yüzyılın ikinci yarısında sanat üretimi Erken Manierist döneme karşıt olarak sarayın ve Karşı Reform hareketine bağlı olarak kilisenin otoritesi altına girmiştir. Maalesef sanat bu dönemde akademik bir karakter kazanarak yaratıcılığını yitirmiştir. Onyedinci yüzyıl başında Barok sanat Manierizmin yerine geçer.

Geçiş dönemi kısa sürmüş olsa da takip eden yüzyıllardaki kriz dönemlerinde kendini hissettirir. Barındırdığı tüm yenilikler yirminci yüzyıl sanatı ile eleştirel düşünce bağlamında benzerlik göstermektedir. Yirminci yüzyıl başı sanat akımlarında Manierizmin etkileri görülür.



## **1. INTRODUCTION**

The two commonly accepted facts: 1) Modernism, as Renaissance, is the age of the rationality, the mind and the mathematical truth. 2) Post-modernism is, as Mannerism, a reaction to the rationality of modernism making it appealing to compare the similarities of the Post-Modern era with the Mannerist period and attribute it to arts. A comparison between Mannerism and the Gothic era in view of so many similarities between two periods is as tempting. At the end, all of these intriguing ideas lead to the origin of the mannerist era and the rejection of truth.

The artist of the Renaissance from the beginning until Michelangelo and Raphael was trying to depict in a two-dimensional surface the three-dimensional reality. After that the reality, objectivity and naturalism of the Renaissance are replaced with rejection of the reality, subjectivity and unnaturalism. The most outstanding feature of the sixteenth century arts is the rejection of the Renaissance reality, which in consequence influences the art of twentieth century. The goal of this thesis will be to inspect with which value the reality is replaced.

The emphasis on this thesis will be on the transition period between 1520-1560, which represented the searching and creation attitude more than the mature period, because of the legacy that Mannerist artists inherited from the masters of High Renaissance. The traces of Mannerism exclusively in painting and in Tuscany region of Italy will be explored, with an addition of one artist from Parma due to his decisive importance for mannerist period, to limit the scope of the field and due to the limitation of time.

The method used is in a way a conventional method, first to give the historical background and then look at the art works from the frame of history. The method used nowadays is the vice-versa, first to observe the art piece and then to take out the historical facts that shaped it. But considering that this master thesis is the first step to an extending research, the conventional method seems the most useful one.

This thesis benefits a great deal from the opportunities of today. The globalization, with its many disadvantages, is very rewarding in the education system. The rapid growth of technology due to globalization in the information age gives access to

anything and almost everything that has been written at a near-to-zero cost and is very time efficient. The periodicals or academic journals can be read, archives and the web galleries in the Internet can be visited, and books that are published anywhere in the world can be ordered through the Internet.

On the contrary the condemnation of the period for years, although it is not true for the twentieth century, narrowed the search field. The single published book with an inter-disciplinary approach to Mannerist period is Hauser's 'Mannerism', although there are many about the Renaissance. Some books on the art of Europe do not accept the period of Mannerism or even if they do accept the period, it has a pejorative meaning. It will be safe to say that it is different from the other artistic periods that some people had to persist to get it approved. The books that are unavailable in Turkey can be ordered through the Internet but it is costly for that reason the books within reach are examined.

Mannerism is a European movement and to deal with a uniquely different culture occasionally results in giving depthless explanations which although is a disadvantage from the start is not hampering at all.

The second part focuses on the historical background of the sixteenth century and reveals the reference to the former century with all its political, economical, social setting. Religious outlook is touched on briefly as art is influenced from it, and scientific and technological innovations are also cited. Innovations other than what is told can be announced but the intention is to reveal the ones that are directly connected with Mannerism.

The third part concentrates on the philosophy and the features of the art of the fifteenth century, the perception of reality, different interpretations of artists and the aims of the masters of High Renaissance are emphasized to indicate the inheritance, which mannerists gained from the former century.

The fourth part, the transmuted tendency and the taste of the first half of the sixteenth century is revealed with the distinction of the transition period from Late Mannerism. The birthplace of Mannerism, political condition of Italy and the reflection of it to arts, the patronage system, taste of the sophisticated and the subject matter of Mannerism is also laid open in the same chapter. In the following section the shift in the perception of reality and its influence on the masters of High Renaissance is cited to indicate the first signs of the new style and its being an international movement. The common features of the Early Mannerists, the short biographies of artists and digital samples of their work are exhibited and discussed briefly. The scheme is not

to make a general assessment of the paintings but to stress the mannerist features in them. At the next part the evolution of artists is told.

At the evaluation and conclusion part features and peculiarities of the Renaissance and Mannerism is introduced and the features of Late Mannerism and peculiarities of the arts were touched on briefly.



## **2. HISTORICAL BACKGROUND**

Interdisciplinary approach to events, to see the evaluation within the historical context that includes political, social, economical, religious, scientific and technological aspects are crucial in order to understand the arts. The historical events shaped the production of arts, which were radically different than the former century. The discoveries of the New World started the exploitation and effected mainly the economical situation, geographical explorations gave rise to trade, and with exploitation and imperialism slavery trade began. The change in the interpretation of the universe meant a revolution of reason against orthodoxy and conventional beliefs. The reform and Catholic reform divided the European religious map into sections. These transformations will be discussed in the coming chapters but it is clear that the sixteenth century is a period of transformations and it can be detected in the arts.

The provoking and epoch-making events affected the artists and the production of theirs. The disadvantage of the sixteenth century artists was the inheritance of the great masters. The masters of High Renaissance brought the arts to its zenith so what will be discussed here is how they had shaped the legacy.

### **2.1 Political**

“Since Middle Ages, Italy was divided up into a large number of independent states, each with its own form of government, its own traditions, customs and dialects. The disorganization of the Holy Roman Empire and its ongoing dispute with the papacy to the extent of the church authority in secular government left Italians largely self-governing within their communes.” Burckhardt (1944: p.52) stated in “Civilization of Renaissance”. During the fourteenth and the fifteenth centuries many of the petty principalities consolidated into five major political units as the kings of Naples and Sicily, the papal states and three major city states of Florence, Venice and Milan. The other relatively smaller city-states had caused the undetermined political situation because of the shift of their loyalty from one to another. In the south the area was largely agricultural, didn’t know about urbanization and economic expansion of areas of the north. An urban bourgeoisie was indispensable for the development of

cultural, intellectual and artistic trends of the Italian Renaissance, which were lacking in the south. There didn't exist a unity to put together the divided forces, which had both advantages and disadvantages.

The Italian Wars in between 1494-1559 were the attacks of the French, Austrian and Spanish armies because of the lack of a unity in Italy. But the reason of the wars was the undetermined policy between Italian states. In the first decade of the century French defeated the combined forces of Spanish and Papal armies in Ravenna. After that the treaty of Mechlin was signed in which Henry VIII, Maximilian I, the Pope Julius and Ferdinand of Aragon agreed to invade France while the peasant revolts started in Germany and expanded to Hungary. (1513) Pope Julius was succeeded by Leo X who started the licensing of the sale of the indulgences. By 1515 we are confronted with Francis I as the king of France and Charles V first as the king of Spain and then the Holy Roman Emperor who was a religious Catholic.

1517 was an important date for the reform when Luther had nailed the list of the requests called 'Ninety-five thesis' which caused his excommunication by Pope Leo X. After Leo X, Giuliano de Medici as Clement VII succeeded. When Clement VII started to be in charge in 1523 there was chaos. The papacy was bankrupt, Protestants were rebelling in Germany and there was a growing desire for church reform. In England Henry VIII was demanding annulment of his marriage, the Ottomans, under the leading of Suleyman the Magnificent, were advancing in Hungary while in Italy the papacy was drawn into Spanish-French conflict. Although Clement VII had been elected as an Imperial candidate, his aim was continuing to prevent any invasion of Italy. France appeared the greatest danger thus he supported Charles V. But with the battle of Pavia, where the Germans and Spanish had defeated the French and Swiss and taken Francis I as prisoner, he was convinced that Spain was the threat. So he joined to the anti-imperial league of Cognac in 1526. Francis I was released from the captivity after signing the treaty of Madrid where he announced his interest in Italy and agreed to support Charles V. But on the contrary Francis allied against Charles V with the Pope, Venice, Milan and Florence.

The consequence was the Sack of Rome carried out by an army formed mostly by Lutherians to punish Clement VII and invaded Rome for eight days and left the city in ruins (Hauser, 1951: p.97). Rome by the beginning of the sixteenth century was where the money, the patronage, the leading artists and craftsmen were. After the Sack most of the artists left the city due to the political, economic and religious distress. This city which symbolized the unity of the Christendom, lost its leading role with the reform movement and most of the faithful Christians started to criticize

the importance of the clergy so even the Papacy had lost its secure place. Pope was imprisoned.

The Sack of Rome frightened the Medici family and they fled away from Florence where a republic was created. After the sack of Rome, Florence regained its former importance. Florence had been oligarchy in the fifteenth century and from 1494 on shifted to a republic and then became a Medici principality in 1512. Last republican regime was in 1527-1530 and was besieged into surrender by a Papal and Imperial army. From 1530 to 1537 Alessandro de Medici was ruling Florence and afterwards the patricians who were the representatives of Charles V entrusted Cosimo I de Medici as the Duke the capital of a Duchy in 1537 and Grand Duchy in 1567 (Shearman, 1967: p.135). He changed the position of the leader of Florence from chief among equals to unchallenged chief of state and worked for the easing of the duchy away from Imperial control. He laid the foundations of Medician principality that would continue without interruption for the next two centuries. In the second half of the sixteenth century, the life style changed to aristocracy and manifested itself in the courtly forms of life of the upper bourgeois and the Spanish fashion. While the Pope was away from Rome he made peace with Charles V by the treaty of Barcelona and crowned him in Bologna (1530), which was an explanatory event. After the peace, the imperial army led by the Prince of Orange besieged Florence. Charles V chose to be crowned in Bologna because if it would have been Rome, it could have meant an apology for the sack of the city. Italy still possessed the importance as being the center of religion. In 1534 Clement VII died and was succeeded by Paul III while Luther created the German mass, completed the transition of Bible into German and was followed by the translation into English. These events made the Pope, with the insistence of Charles V, to call a general Council in 1545 at Trent to discuss the reformation.

Italy was busied with the council while there was a civil war going on in Germany. In the second half of the sixteenth century Spain was the dominant power with its economic supremacy, owing it to its gain from the mines of Mexico. In 1550 Julius III had become the Pope and in 1556 Charles V abdicated, assigning Spain to his son Philip II, Holy Roman Empire to his brother Ferdinand II.

## **2.2 Economical**

As mentioned, in medieval times, all the social and economical rules were in accordance with the Christian doctrine and the economical production was mostly agricultural. Working was a mission that God demanded from his mortals and the



guild was controlling the amount of the trade. According to the doctrine nobody had the right to earn unfair but in the fifteenth century this mentality had changed for good.

The Crusades and the awakening of the cities helped the transition from village economy to city economy and agriculture to be replaced by commerce. The Crusades had opened unknown distances to European mind and awakened the passion for travel and adventure. Even in Crusades, the interest of the Italians was wider than the other nations since they already had a naval power and had commercial relations with the East (Burckhardt, 1944: p.171).

Economically, the feudal life style of the medieval age shifted to bourgeois and the living area reallocated, from rural places to the cities. The widespread trade formed a new social class, bourgeois, and capitalist people. Renaissance was an age with capitalists rather than capitalism. (Hale, 1993: p.386) The money had become an important value. The emphasis on investment, manufacture and commerce at the expense of agriculture reflected something of the urban bias of civility (Hale, 1993: p.386). When the population moved to the cities and began to trade they started to earn more than they needed so they became interested in traveling and in arts. This was also connected with the shift of the Catholic into Protestant because Catholic religion was against the idea of earning as much as the bourgeois wanted. There was an undoubted increase in knowledge among those that traded and traveled who took their skills to other countries.

In the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries major economies, including Italy, were at intervals because of the difficulties caused by foreign competition, partly by war, weather and disease and partly by the widening of the economic world through the discoveries of the fifteenth century and the opening of oceanic routes (Hale, 1995: p.120). The bankers in Florence were the richest throughout Europe from the fourteenth century to the sixteenth century. They were hit by a decline in the demand for their services in the sixteenth century due to the dependence on the Spanish economy nourished from the income of the New World. Afterwards Holland took the leading role in the banking system.

The discovery of the new world by Cristoforo Colombo in 1492, the route to India in 1497 by Portuguese Vasco de Gama and the circumnavigation of the globe by Magellan's team (although his aim was to reach to South America which was opposite of Portuguese sailing) in between 1519-1522 were the leading events that changed the balance of European continent. The nationality of the great explorers illustrated the division of the New World set up from pole to pole in between Spain

and Portugal (Tanilli, 1987: p.45). One consequence of the geographical inventions was the growing of capitalism and the other was the economic dominance of Spain for fifty years.

The discovery of the New World by Spain and Portugal caused the major change in the world economy; colonization emerged helping the construction of capitalism. Large deposits of precious metals from Spanish America were brought to European markets increasing the supply in money and causing a rise in prices. According to the mercantilist theory one country's richness was considered as having as much money and gems as possible, and the aim was to immobilize and keep the wealth inside the country (Hauser, 1951: p.99). Spain and France were the first countries to be affected by the consequences of mercantilism and in the second half of the century Italy experienced it. During periods of deflation the markets became tight; not even then the high level of prices was uninterrupted.

When Charles V began to establish his rule in Italy, because of the discovery of the new sea-routes and the emergence of the oceanic nations as economic powers and because of the powerful period of the Ottomans, the center of world trade shifted from the Mediterranean to the West. The geographical inventions and colonization changed the type of the commerce and the commerce routes (Tanilli, 1999: p.71). The shift of the small capital resources to the large-scale industry, the shift from the goods trade to purely financial business caused the end of corporative rule dominant in Middle Ages. The economic activity moved to province more remote from production. The progressive transfer of population from agricultural to industrial production caused unemployment, overcrowding and inhuman living conditions, increasing flight of serfs from the land, rising prices plus falling wages (Hauser, 1951: p.100).

The sixteenth century also faced scarcity at the middle of the century. Scarcity, capitalism, expansion of working class and falling wages caused even the sack of bakeries (Montanari, 1995: p.128). Finance capital became a world power as political control became a function of capital. Capitalism brought the competition of individuals who were protected by the guild in the Middle Ages. Standing free but isolated they started to feel insecure. The introduction of machinery speeded the mechanization of labor and made worker alien to his labor. Every value seemed to be summed up in money. Everything had a price that eradicated the uniqueness. Economic rationalism followed capitalism, and capitalism followed political realism (Mészáros, 1970: p.14). Money depersonalized economic relations and itself because one coin indicated no other significance than the other coin. Capitalism and industrial



labor caused alienation. The realism turned the worker into a mere entry, a calculation of investment (Hauser, 1965: p.56). The consequence was the peasant revolt starting first in Germany.

In the sixteenth century the Italian economy had a small share of the world trade. The foreign invasion, the Sack of Rome in 1527 by the Spanish troops under Charles V, the reorientation of the trade routes, the economic revolution throughout Europe and the economic crisis in the Mediterranean sea burst over the most civilized country in the world. This meant that Italy, a country hitherto had the economic supremacy as well as in the arts and religion, was losing its power (Chastel, 1968: p.8). John Hale proposed that the expansion of population and the exploitation of markets in other countries caused the increase in the volume of the world trade but it was wrong to assume that there was an absolute decline (Hale, 1993: p.38). The axis of the west hitherto had lain principally on the Mediterranean was shifting towards the Atlantic route. The Italian economist Cipolla suggested that this influx of money from America only assured some equilibrium in the economy of the day. In Italy main force behind the system was the need for reconstruction after the disasters of the Sack of Rome and the foreign invasion of Florence in 1530 (Tapié, 1961: p.6).

### **2.3 Social**

“During Middle Ages human being was unconscious to recognize himself as an individual, he was only a member of race, party, family or corporation through some general category. The first country to break this chain was Italy”, stated Jacob Burckhardt (1944: p.72). Man became and recognized himself as spiritual individual. But the family, kinship and fraternities were still strong in Italian Renaissance. It was not true to say that with Renaissance individualism blossomed. Reversibly John Hale defended that with the emigration from the land to the towns individualism was experienced more in fourteenth century than in the Renaissance.

“In the fifteenth and the sixteenth centuries the empire and feudality were coming to an end and the political unit started to be ‘absolutism’. Italy did squeak through the chivalrous and feudal times more easily on account of the impact being not as strong as in the other countries in Europe” (Tanilli, 1999: p.94-95). Mercantilism was the financial point of view and needed a support to broaden and widen. The widespread tendency of administration was absolutism through the sixteenth century. The struggle between bourgeois and aristocrats caused the rise of absolutism. In the character of the states, whether republic or despotic, lied the chief reason for the early development of the Italian. Renaissance seemed to be the particular form in

which Italian national spirit emancipated itself from universal European culture (Baxandal, 1988: p.23). In Florence some old nobility devoted themselves to trade and some enjoyed the satisfaction of their titles.

The sixteenth century was pregnant to many variances. The speed in urbanization and the high population caused the decrease in the food production and the increase in prices (Tilly, 1998: p.50). These changes mostly affected the peasants while landlords and capitalists were content over the rise of the prices and fall of the wages, in result united the two classes.

The century also faced collective revolts. The peasants were the only social class to have been widely affected from the economical situation mentioned above and the wars of Italy. The revolt was taking place in Germany in between 1524-1526, which exploded under the name of 'Peasants War' and spread to our countries. These revolts could only have taken place in the nations where capitalism was not yet formed or where the unity was provided under pressure.

There was a successful revolt in the sixteenth century; the struggle was against Catholicism and to construct the native Protestant Church. Some of the wealthy princes, landowners and some of the oligarchies supported the revolt, being in conformity with their profit, assuring its success. Bourgeois needed new ethics and aristocrats wanted to take back the wealth of the church. So they supported the revolt.

The political ethic of the sixteenth century was political realism, known before but never been published. Machiavelli wrote a book for the first time about dual moral standards of the period as a service for princes, and not only the views of princes changed but also the interest in his opinions from the public widened. Soon it became the ethic of the period. The dual moral standard of Machiavelli was praised also by Luther where he changed his attitude according to the situation just as Machiavelli advised. He stood on the side of the powerful when the Peasants War was taking place and caused the death of thousands of people.

In the sixteenth century differences between nations became sharply accentuated. The rivalry between north and south sharpened and the reform movement stressed the reverseness.

## **2.4 Religious**

In medieval times everything was organized according to God and to church. The church started to be more than powerful and clergy who were talking about the deity started to be well to do which was against the doctrine. As a result of hierarchy and power gain, the importance of the clergy grew larger making them a vital factor, and the concept of church and the doctrine began to change. When Christianity was first born the concept of the church was to be poor. The primitive church was replaced with Catholic Church (Tanilli, 1999: p.58).

Church stood as the other foundation, apart from seniors, who possessed the land and was on its way to become much richer, almost like a fiscal firm. From the tenth century to the fourteenth century Catholic Church resolved the problems within itself but in the beginning of the sixteenth century the attack against the church was very strong. Church's wealth and the indulgences made people feel uneasy. The change of the economical situation gave courage to the people to stand against the church. The nobles wanted their land back and the poor wanted social improvements. The mentality of bourgeois was in contrast with Catholic religion. They wanted to earn as much as possible and it was banned in the Catholic religion. This was the economical feature of the reform movement. So all sorts of people from different social classes supported this upheaval.

Erasmus in 1508 started the stand against the decadence of the church, and in 1516 German friar Martin Luther proceeded the protest. He was more religious than the former and was disgusted from the decadence of the church because of the indulgences. Martin Luther started to protest by writing his opinions on the Roman Church. After a short while his thoughts started to spread first to the public mostly with the help of the invention of the printing press; and with the quickened process leapt to other countries bringing much support. Luther translated the Bible into German and the English translation followed. He appalled the church authorities by calling for a redefinition and for a reform of some of the doctrinal positions.

His emphasis of the denial of freedom of the will and the unchangeable faith made a deep impact. There was no firm ground under anyone's feet and objective reality could change according to the subjective viewpoint. He was resisting the idea of having priests between God and man. However, Luther was condemned as heretic by Pope Leo X, and was excommunicated due to the Edict of Worms. This did not prevent his ideas to flourish. Everywhere attitudes towards the Christian Church reflected a form of doublethink, distrust and mockery of its personnel (Hale, 1995:

p.115). Ultimately another branch of Christianity named Protestantism came out, the solution differed from country to country, Calvinist, Lutheran, Anglican (Tapié, 1961: p.3). With the reformation movement the united Christendom of Europe had been spoiled. Although war had characterized the nature of European history for centuries, the fissuring of the continent by the reformation from the 1520s was divisive on a radically different and unprecedented scale (Hale, 1993: p.112).

The response of the Roman Church to the demands of the reformers was the Counter-Reformation. The Jesuits led a campaign to support Catholic doctrine. The council convened at Trent in 1545. Paul III hoped to get widespread approval to condemn the Protestant heresy and thereby gain support for a suppression of the reformers by force. In the end, the Council of Trent succeeded by offering a united front against the Protestants. The Church proved itself capable of action, and reinforced its presentation of the orthodox faith. In the second half of the sixteenth century the theological conflict had become a political power struggle. By the time of Martin Luther's death in 1546 the reformation was completed. The Council of Trent ended in 1563 thus also bringing Counter-Reformation to a theological halt that became the supreme training ground of political realism.

German peasants were deeply affected by Luther's ideas and they believed that what Luther rejected in religion gave them reason to revolt against their economical and social conditions (Tanilli, 1987: p.98). Luther declared that Christ had purchased with his own blood the freedom of all Christians so the peasants proclaimed that they would no longer be owned as property and demanded the abolition of serfdom. Princes were supporting Luther's struggle so why wouldn't they rebel? The Peasants War begun in 1524 as a response to Luther's urgings of democratic reform and a reaction to an unbalanced social system. But when they rebelled, Luther, initially sympathetic to the peasants, immediately changed his attitude and wrote the pamphlet 'Against the Thieving and Murderous Gangs of Peasants' (Greenblatt, 1988: p.13).

The social, political, religious and economical events of the period cannot be evaluated apart from each other, each event affected the other. What Luther had accomplished was a great example of the political realism of Machiavelli.

## **2.5 Scientific**

The perception of the universe also changed in the sixteenth century. Ptolemaic system was historically the most influential of the geocentric cosmological theories

that placed the earth motionless at the center of the universe with all celestial bodies revolving around it. Aristotle formed the Ptolemaic system before Ptolemy's quantitative formulation in the fourth century BC. The planetary spheres were enclosed by the heaven of the fixed stars, which rotated due to the impulse it received from 'the primum mobile' with the aid of God ([http:// es.rice.edu](http://es.rice.edu), 17.6.2001a).

On the contrary, the Copernican system was a representation that placed the sun at the center of the universe, making it the center of the rotational movements of the planets. The system, developed by Copernicus in the sixteenth century, represented a great innovation in astronomy. The Copernican system simply did not fit into the Aristotelian way of thinking. During the sixteenth century the church did not consider the Copernican issue important and no official pronouncements were made. His book had been published a few days after his death gave new currency to the ancient Pythagorean hypothesis that the sun was at the center of the universe and planets revolved round the sun (<http://www.es.rice.edu>, 17.6.2001b). Copernican theory was published in 1543 and had been expanded by Bruno in the next century. The change from the Ptolemaic to Copernican system had many impacts on the social life and on arts. The Ptolemaic system stated the world and God in the center of everything (Hauser, 1965: p.44).

In Renaissance man was the purpose of creation. The buildings were designed according to man; he was the focusing point of the painting and with the humanist movement the importance had been twofold. Starting with the scientific innovation of Copernicus it was realized that the earth was revolving around the sun and it was a planet just as the other planets in the universe. So neither the world nor the human being could be in the center. Nothing seemed, as it was believed to be.

The social, political and economical condition of the coming period was affected from the transition. At the beginning making the man essence of everything and then taking it back from him caused a feeling of insecurity and this had been reflected to arts. Man became alienated from the society and also from the self. Religion was also influenced from that shift. The Copernican theories questioned the orthodox religion and church authority profoundly causing Protestantism and the Catholic reform. The consequence of Copernican theory was the collapse of geocentric dogma and which in effect brought suspicion.

The astronomical discoveries beginning with Copernicus contradicted with the divine truth of the Bible. Uncritical doctrines of the church were starting to be criticized.

The invention of printing gave public the access to the new discoveries and they, in a way, realized that they had been deceived.

## **2.6 Technological**

The most important technological innovation from the perspective of art world was the invention of printing press. Spiritual teachings relied on mural painting, mosaic, and stained glass common in Catholic Churches until the invention of printing press. Protestant reform rejected the visual imagery and insisted upon the primacy of the word. Mass production of printed material meant that religious and philosophical literature was widely available to individuals despite the fact that the literature of reform was widespread but the peasantry had remained largely illiterate.

The invention of the printing press in the fifteenth century affected the widening audience's consciousness. By the invention of the print the artworks started to travel and with the mutual impact, the art of the sixteenth century began to be international. The rate of literacy increased from thirty percent in 1400 to sixty percent in 1530 that meant the twofold within a century (Hale, 1995: p.268). Although the print was an invention of the German, it expanded rapidly in Italy, especially in Venice.

In the beginning of the sixteenth century hundred and fifty presses were found in Florence (Burke, 1986: p.71). A newly extensive middle class readership was identified and aimed at because the books were the most pervasive cultural wares. The broadened literacy of the age owed much to the cash available to produce, market and buy them (Hale, 1993: p.274). The stock of knowledge was enormously enriched and abstract laws gave way to perceptual models. It seemed every human activity could be defined and implied. Treatises were written not only on ethics or on natural science but also on cooking, warfare and riding (Chastel, 1968: p.37). The book written in French was translated and known in England. Luther translated the Bible into German that let even the general public to understand the Bible. This development caused people to question the necessity of the position of the clergy discussed in the chapter on religious background.



### **3. PERCEPTION OF REALITY IN HIGH RENAISSANCE**

Renaissance was born in Italy because opposition to the guild ideal of the Middle Ages was strong and the first European banking system developed here. Most of the Italian states, above all Florence, until the sixteenth century were the cities having the most powerful banks throughout Europe. The emancipation of the urban middle class here arose earlier than in the rest of Europe with the help of the feudalism and chivalry. Rural aristocracy not only had town residences but also adopted themselves to the urban financial aristocracy. The most important factor, the tradition of classical antiquity, was never entirely lost where classical remains were to be seen everywhere (Hauser, 1951: p.10). They had ancient Greek and ancient Rome's background to re-value. Humanism was a term defined in the nineteenth century to describe the conditioning of ideas drawn on the knowledge of classical antiquity (Hale, 1993: p.194). But meanwhile antiquity was only a fashion even among highly educated ones. The names started to be latinized and man turned to antiquity for solution to every problem. Translated texts became more accessible with the help of the invention of the print, which meant a revaluation of the conventional thoughts. The accusation of being irreligious by the Counter-Reformation, the rise of absolutism and bourgeois caused humanists' devaluation in the sixteenth century.

The doctrine of the fifteenth century was Neo-Platonism, consisting of Plato's mature period. Plato believed that all the beauty lied in the geometric forms not in the content; the result was mathematical beauty that constituted harmony (Akyürek, 1994: p.117-118). Humanists in the fifteenth century Italy also devoted themselves to the metaphysical side of ancient philosophy, above all to reappraise Plato. One chief center of theistic modes of thought lay in the Platonic Academy in Florence where Michelangelo was also a member. An unreserved theism strove to treat the world as a great moral and physical cosmos. The belief was to see the world as a creation of God and a copy of a pattern and to eternalize God as its mover. The soul of man can, by recognizing God, take him into its narrow boundaries but also by love to him itself expand into the infinite (Burckhardt, 1944: p.341). That doctrine was mostly revealed in the works of Michelangelo. For him, the beauty of form was a manifestation of divine grace that moved him when he had found it in the human



body. He believed the divine was most clearly revealed in what was most perfectly created (Shearman, 1967: p. 56).

The crucial change occurred in the education system and in training. Mercantilism was the dominant occupation in the Renaissance and merchants were expected to be educated especially in mathematics. Many of the painters, themselves business people, went through the same mathematical secondary education of the lay schools as merchants and therefore both knew and used the geometry. Not only the education system was common but also the artists of the Early Renaissance were economically on equal footing with the petty bourgeois tradesmen. The increasing demand for works of art in the Renaissance led to the ascending of the artist from the level of the petty bourgeois artisan to that of the free intellectual worker. (Hauser, 1951: p.46) The skills that any painter used to analyze the forms he painted were the same as any commercial person used for surveying quantities (Baxandal, 1988: p.86). The painter used the familiar things that the merchant learned such as columns and paved floors to invoke his response. The merchants recognized the compositions first as a compound of geometrical form then as its deviations due to the common education they have received as the painters. The rendering of the mathematical reality in two-dimensioned surface was something that the tradesman was also able to understand.

With the emancipation of the religious dogma, the artists began to depict more freely what they had seen. Although there were attempts of the realistic observance even in the end of the thirteenth and the beginning of the fourteenth century, only in the Renaissance the perception of reality was developing according to the scientific innovations and mathematics and from the outset it was very rational. Consequently art, which was produced at that time, was congenial to the scientific outlook. The artists started to be versatile and reached the peak point with the masters Leonardo da Vinci (1452-1519), Raphael (1483-1520) and Michelangelo (1475-1564). With the versatile nature of theirs, they were not only painters but also observers. Arts almost took another shape.

The artistic commissions of the fifteenth century were mostly religious. But from the middle of the century on, the percentage of the secular works increased and the homes of rich middle class citizens and the palaces of princes were adorned with artworks. The patrons were the guild, religious fraternity or the state. But in Florence the guilds were not strong, as in the other states, it helped the foreigners to work here and the less dependence of the Italian artists to the guilds was provided on account of the commissions from the courts (Hauser, 1957: p.52). The more liberal policy, open to stimulus from outside, could explain their cultural lead. Especially the people with

reasonable incomes who commissioned works shouldn't be overlooked. The fifteenth century notability was enthusiastic for wealth (Emison, 1997: p.7). With the shift in the economical condition the bourgeois was earning more than he needed so he wanted to spend it. Much of the art produced at this time provided a vision of opulence and was seen in opulent setting. A painting, a sculpture and a building symbolized money that might be spent directly on charity. Towards the end of the fifteenth century, art in Florence took an upper middle class patrician character preserving its liberalism. A group of wealthy people who represented this class attached more importance to elegance than to intellectual independence (Hauser, 1951: p.81).

According to the economic historian Roberto Lupes the economic recession was helpful for the Renaissance, merchants spent their money on arts at times when there were fewer profitable ways of placing their money than usual investment in culture.

### **3.1 Old Masters Of High Renaissance**

High Renaissance sheltered two tendencies: one was very much in accordance with the concept of the Renaissance that the composition had clarity and fitness to purpose, the other was totally reverse with the former where the artist was dealing with elegance and grace of ornament (Sherman, 1967: p.42).

When the artist started to depict what he observed, nature became an important tool. The main change was a new awareness of men himself as 'center and measure of all things' which became the basis of the Renaissance thought. In medieval times it was believed that all the evil came from the human body, for that reason Christianity limited the role of the mind and forced to obey the authority.

In the Renaissance a significant proof of the widespread interest in natural history was the collection and comparative study of plants and animals. Renaissance added to the discovery of outward world the whole nature of man (Burckhardt, 1944: p.184). With all the innovations of the Renaissance the old masters came to the peak point. The understanding of the beauty and the aim of the Renaissance art varied from artist to artist. The help of their written materials or the notes that they took during their lifetime makes their ideas known. For example for Leonardo the most important thing that an artist should seek for was to imitate nature and never add something else. For Alberti an artist should seek the most beautiful parts in nature and combine them to get to his purpose (Blunt, 1962: p.30). For Michelangelo the beauty was superior to scientific truth. Whereas Leonardo was strictly reverse of

making too much drawing from the masters, otherwise he would be no other than an imitator and this would lead him to 'Mannerism'. He had given very much importance to grace and decorum that shaped his artistic production. He believed the depicted figures should be expressive of the spiritual and emotional state of the figure and the apparent action should be appropriate to the sex and age of the figure (Semler, 1998: p.29). Instead Michelangelo was always interested in the figura-serpentinata. He used flame-like figures to represent the act of movement. The contra-posta form from the classical times were replaced with the figura-serpentinata and used frequently afterwards.

These were the different perceptions of art, which was starting to mature and wouldn't get its final shape until the next century. During the High Renaissance there was an evolution of varying perceptions. Although Renaissance had its declared rules to achieve beauty in an artwork, each of the three masters took it to another dimension that paved the way to Mannerism.

The customer, a state or a church controlled the art of the Renaissance. At the beginning of the fifteenth century painting was still too important to be left to the painters. The artist was a workman. The starting point of production was to be found in the commission by the customer (Baxandal, 1988: p.52). The painter was employed and controlled by an individual or a small group. The market was not determined by supply but by demand, the products were being used for the purpose and had concrete connection with practical life (Hauser, 1951: p.35-36). The crucial steps that were taken to make the artist freer in the end of the fifteenth century led the way to Mannerism. Leonardo was a great model to observe the change of the perception of art. He stated that an artist should not imitate nature or try to improve it, which would make him unnatural and mannered (Blunt, 1962: p.30). It was strange that within two decades that became the main theme of Mannerism.

#### **4. MANNERISM: THE NEW PERCEPTION OF REALITY**

Italian word 'manierismo' comes from 'maniera' meaning simply style and manner. In its broadest sense, it means excessive or affective adherence to a distinctive manner especially in art and literature. (Gardner, 1926: p.631) The tendency in art history is to name the style at a later date. Most of the movements were termed at the end of the nineteenth century. Most frequently the terms used for movements do not imply any allusion but the sixteenth century was different. The first usage of the term 'Mannerism' to indicate the style was in the seventeenth century by Bellori to signify the style as artificial and unnatural and as means of contempt. Dvorak was the first one who discerned the positive aspects of the mannerist evolution (Becherucci, 1964: p.448).

Mannerism was basically an Italian style, which reacted against the equilibrium of form and proportions that were characteristics of High Renaissance. In its first thirty years the influence of Italy could be observed in other countries, as artists of the north were hungry for the copious and for the varied. The innovation of print pioneered in Germany helped Mannerism to become an international movement and publication through prints helped the inventions of the artists to be broadcasted to other countries (Burckhardt, 1944: p.118). Thus native impulses were widespread.

When the term 'style' is used to define the artist's perception of carving or painting there is no intention of equivocate. Whereas the style can be unstable, can change due to psychological attitude, maturity or to the historical realities of the period, similar to the realities of contemporary art of today. It is difficult to imagine an artist from Kosovo depict or perform without any hint of the war that is going on in his country. By this very reason the sixteenth century art could not be imagined without the transitions going on in Italy that made the leading country passive while other countries progressed. An objective distinction can not be made unless these conditions are considered. Thus a transition period between High Renaissance and Late Mannerism could be detected.

In the beginning of the sixteenth century Julius II as the Pope was trying to redecorate the city and make some monetary reforms to avoid a papal bankruptcy (Hale, 1995: p.180). At that time Rome was where the money and the patronage were

therefore he commissioned Raphael and Michelangelo in the Sistine Chapel and the two masters moved to Rome. The gravity of development shifted to Rome, which freed Florence to make innovative beginnings. The authority was felt less than in Rome and until the foreign invasion Florence was economically in good condition. Friedlander suggested that this was the one reason why Mannerism was born in Florence. He added that Rosso who went to Rome in 1523 and confronted with Parmigianino took the style to Rome where it matured. (Freedberg, 1966: p.449) The other reason he indicated was for Florence to regain its former importance as an artistic center after the Sack of Rome. The return of the Medicis with the support of Charles V also meant a sudden increase in commissions for artists. Shearman, on the contrary, stated that Mannerism flourished in Rome where Michelangelo and Raphael had settled. He believed that during the pontificates of Julius II (1503-1513) and Leo X (1513-1521) the papacy assumed the manners of a principality, which led the style to flourish in Rome.

Even if Friedlander's suggestion was to be accepted after the first signs of the new tendency, the residence of the new style couldn't have been Florence anymore. For the papacy the flourishing of Mannerism provided a new spiritual basis for every aspect of life through religious reform. In this struggle Catholic Church engaged all its force and consequently the residence of papacy, Rome, became the real home of Mannerism (Becherucci, 1964: p.455).

The widespread tendency of administration in Europe was absolutism under the influence of the French and Spanish courts and the artistically ambitious court households helped it spread all over Europe. Italy was besieged by Spanish troops and the obvious impulse of Spanish sovereignty changed the life style in Italy and immediately influencing the arts. The key institution was the court in Florence as well as in other small states. The new court led to a new and artificial aristocracy, an intellectually and socially exclusive spiritual movement in accordance with the taste of the period and of the court. Hence the style was aristocratic and courtly due to the demand.

One of the consequences of absolutism was the bias for ostentation. Princes were declaring their sovereignty by pouring out money on magnificence. Power required display so the artworks they possessed served as prestige, political propaganda or as support for the religious belief. The desire for prestige was the mainstream. The bias for the opulence shared since the half of the fifteenth century took a courtly character in the sixteenth century. The French and Spanish court households throughout Europe poured out money on the mansions or the facades of their mansions for



display, the wealthy families of Italy were not an exception (Chastel, 1968: p.10-11). The rampant fashion for the portraiture and reproducible medals were the other mediums of trying to win prestige of the courtly household or use of propaganda. The artists revealed in their portraits the ideal image as much as courtiers wanted to give of themselves. After 1530s the portrait began to be enjoyed also by scholars, churchmen and the middle class. Afterwards artists caught the prevailing mood with the result that self-portrait abounded, the sixteenth century became a sort of hall of mirrors (Chastel, 1968: p.26). The formal and aesthetic needs also affected the gastronomical taste. The tables for the banquet were adorned because of the bias for ostentation, which was totally parallel with the image of the aristocrat (Montanari, 1995: p.115).

Conversely a new development in patronage, a symptom of a new conception of a work of art began. A circle of people started to buy works of art as a source of private pleasure with an enthusiasm. Mostly prelates, aristocratic collectors, church and state commissioned the artworks. Main motives for the art patronage was piety, prestige and pleasure. To buy an artwork as an investment was connected with the rise of the market system. Within the sixteenth century collectors originated and the artist began to work freely, without the control of the customer (Baxandal, 1988: p.14).

In the beginning of the sixteenth century before the reformation, with the help of humanism, the interest of the popes and the bourgeois in arts made the artists more free to paint or carve in their own style. The artist came in contact not only with priests and a few princes but also with educated people and began to carry out works other than he was commissioned. This would make him the sole creator of his work. Although within a century the change of the position of the artist was observed it would be safe to say that still in the first half of the century the patron and the artist were limited by the standard taste of the period.

The procedure of ordering an artwork was to sign a contract between the patron and the artist, at times with a middle-man between the patron and the artist, where every detail was determined. Peter Burke mentioned a patrician art dealer of the first half of the sixteenth century in Florence who was a systematic purchaser of contemporary and antique works on behalf of king Francis I of France. Until the artist was accepted as a workman the patron was the decision-maker of the details the artwork would contain, such as the duration, the material and the color. Gradually the artist was gaining his freedom while the balance of the artist and the patron was changing in favor of the artist.

As the social and intellectual status of the artist has risen, to possess works of great reputed artists became fashionable and to spend money on artworks a duty of the powerful. At around 1520s and thereafter some works were commissioned for no other reason than the desire of the patron to own an artwork of Michelangelo (Shearman, 1967: p.44). From then on the patron was not demanding what he liked but was buying ready-made which introduced the idea of an artwork to be placed in a gallery. Until the Counter-Reformation the customer or the public did not block the style of the artist in the subject matter even when working on religious commissions (Hauser, 1965: p.268). But this did not stop classical scholar or theologian to give suggestions until the end of Counter-Reformation for the planning of the artwork.

The artist started to work more freely with the help of his ascending position and became liberated from the rules, which resulted the avoidance of subject matter. The absolute work of art as having no other function than that of being an artwork is very common today and to appreciate the struggle given for it is even more difficult. According to John Shearman in High Renaissance the artist regained the right to make something that was first and last a work of art and revealed it in Mannerism.

In Mannerist period several techniques, such as alchemy, magic and witchcraft, were available to understand and manipulate the world. Alchemy depended on the idea of a hierarchy of metals. Some artists believed and used alchemy in their paintings.

The social outlook of the period was skepticism in philosophy, relativism in science, double standards of Machiavelli in politics (Hauser, 1965: p.8). The advance of rationalism made men skeptical. The industrialization process replaced the tools with the machines hence people were alienated. Narcissism began to be observed. The scientific discovery of Copernicus asserted that the earth couldn't be regarded as the aim of the creation and there were no more homogeneous and equivalent parts.

After the consolidation of absolutism in the middle of the sixteenth century the style changed in the service of courtly taste. The academies started to be constructed under the leadership of Vasari. In consideration of these reasons the later Mannerism indicated semi-courtly and semi- academic character (Hauser; 1951: p.94).

#### **4.1 Old Masters In Mannerist Style**

Before the emergence of Mannerism the artists of High Renaissance showed some deviations from the canons of the Renaissance. During their long artistic life they witnessed the ever-changing values and reflected them in their works. The next



generation called 'Early Mannerists' developed those deviations, added to their style their subjective point of view and constructed Mannerism. After the 1550s the style was formed, and most of the representatives showed similar characteristics.

Arts, as mentioned, can not be disassociated from the social and historical background of the period. The pessimistic outlook of Italy due to the foreign invasion in the beginning of the sixteenth century was in contrast to the triumphant joy and hope that inspired artists previously. Whole spirit of the Renaissance changed profoundly. Although the same artists still lived and used the same techniques, their vision had changed. A tortured emotional outlook replaced the former serenity and calm joy that inspired artists with the belief that nature was intelligible. The pleasure of the untroubled, harmonious masterpieces of the Renaissance was followed by sorrowful compositions in which one feels grief and agitation. It could only find expression in the tortured form, which was one of the most important features of Mannerism (Tapiér, 1961: p.28). The features were the manifestations of the spiritual discontent or experimentation with former possibilities (Hauser, 1965: p.149). The hints of the style could be detected in some High Renaissance artists such as the mature works of Boticelli, Raphael, Michelangelo, Andrea del Sarto and Titian although they had different views of depicting.

In the final years of the fifteenth century the features of Mannerism could be detected in the last religious pictures of Boticelli. He was approaching to construct unorthodox composition and to displace the main figure away from the center.

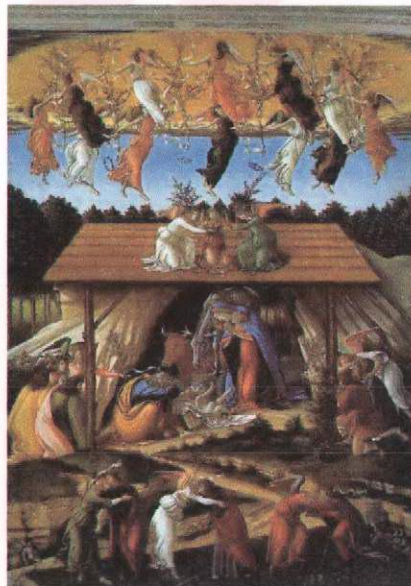


Figure 4.1: Boticelli *Mystic Nativity*, 1500, Canvas, 108.5x75cm. National Gallery, London

Arnold Hauser identified some hints in the fresco of “Fire in the Borgo” by Raphael, where the muscular figures reminded of Michelangelo’s. The fresco contains precedents of Mannerism: depiction of the protagonist not in the foreground, theatrical gestures and the bustle.



Figure 4.2: Raphael *Fire in Borgo*, 1514, Fresco, Stanza dell’Incendio di Borgo, Palazzo Pontifici, Vatican

In Raphael’s last painting, ‘Transfiguration’, the indications of the coming style could be detected. The theatrical gestures, the displacement of the main theme from the center of the picture, the rendering of the figures were depicted in a mannerist way.





Figure 4.3: Raphael *Transfiguration*, 1518-1520, oil on panel, 405x278 cm. Pinoteca, Vatican, Rome

Titian, the master of North Italy showed the similar tendency in “Assumption”. The brilliance of color and grace were the features of his work. After he went to Rome the mannerist indications like complicated compositions and usage of color increased in his work.



Figure 4.4: Titian *Assumption*, 1516-1518, Oil on canvas, 690x360 cm. Santa Maria Gloriosa dei Frari, Venice

Michelangelo opened the path for the Early Mannerists, which they took to diverse routes. If the later works of Michelangelo are observed, the mannerist tendency could be detected more easily. The “Doni Tondo” declared features like the figura-serpentinata form, the rendering of the Virgin and the figures in the background.



Figure 4.5: Michelangelo *Doni Tondo*, 1503, Tempera on panel, diameter 120 cm. Uffizi Gallery, Florence

The best example the successors of Michelangelo had constructed their work on was the “Last Judgement”, made in between 1536 and 1541, and epitomized the main features of Mannerism. The over-sized proportion of the figures, the displacement of the main theme from the center of the picture, the absence of a center in the picture, the alternation of crowded and empty spaces, the abandonment of the ideal physical beauty, the relegation of the background that caused an abstract space, the fragmentation of the picture, the display of the figures in nude, the awakening of the sensual imagination were the characteristics of the fresco which paved the way towards Mannerism. His style where space had no longer any reality was something that the Mannerists aimed for. The fresco contained everything that the reformation rejected and demonstrated the importance of the arts for Italy.

During the reformation for some northern countries the Christian thought mattered more than the arts, which meant the relegation of arts. For other countries like Italy the mixture of antique and religious elements were less dangerous than the loss of visual representation. This indicated the difference of North and South in their approach to arts.





Figure 4.6: Michelangelo *Last Judgement*, 1536-1541, Fresco, Sistine Chapel, Vatican

The disputes about nudity and objections to Mannerism had come to a head in religious art; the result was convening of the Trent of Council. The Trent saw that what they needed was relatively simple, undemanding, intelligible artistic representations that appealed to emotions and feelings instead of the mind. The Trent wanted to affect the churchgoers not the élite of connoisseurs (Hauser, 1965: p.75). They agreed on the artist's obedience of the canonical form of the Biblical stories and condemned the representation of nudity in the artworks of the church. The bishop was authorized to decide to ban the artworks. The disputes were mostly over "Last Judgement". It was believed and shared also by the intellectuals that those kinds of nudities could be depicted in a bathroom at one of the palaces but was unbearable in a vitally important chapel. Council's objection to Mannerism was connected to its formalism and sensualism.

There was another fact about the nude figures in Mannerism. Male nude was the preparatory work for the woman. If most of the woman nudes were to be examined it would be easily grasped that they were studied from the male body. When "Dawn" and "Night" of Michelangelo and "Venus" of Pontormo are observed, there is no hesitation that they were derived from the male model (Chastel, 1968: p.148). It was the male nude that would shape the new conception of woman figure in Mannerism. From quantity of evidence it is known that Michelangelo considered the female body inferior to the male. His studies for female subjects are drawn from men (Clark, 1956: p.241).



In the beginning of the century, the publication through prints helped the mutual influence of the northern and southern arts. Some turned to readily accessible prints for alternate solutions. The print provided more distant contacts than painting and gave the opportunity to Mannerism to be an international movement. Reducing every style to its linear principle at first made it adaptable to another media and secondly provided every artist to take any motif from its context and combine it with others. The artist used an idea from Raphael and another from Michelangelo. The motifs of "Last Judgement" spread in the forms of print for all the Florentine painters (Chastel, 1968: p.77-78). Woodcuts and engravings became more common in the sixteenth century.

Italian artists with the help of print started to observe the northern and German painters. In these countries the legacy was the Gothic period where elongation was the main feature. The gothic artists evolved their new ideal and depicted in that way (Clark, 1956: p.310). Besides elongation Italian artists also used the curiosity and horror in mannerist period. Hence Mannerism was deeply influenced by Gothic.

The southerners, namely Italians, were affected by the technically detailed paintings of the northern artist where the richness of texture was significant (Chastel, 1968: p.67). Realistic and unidealized expression of their engravings fascinated the Italians. The artists of the north traveled to Italy and made copies of the masterpieces. Meanwhile the transportation of the northern paintings to the south, encouraged painters to use linen or canvas for the painting instead of wooden panels (Hale, 1993: p.299).

The advantage of print was the dissemination of features of the styles in Europe simultaneously. This brought another feature of the sixteenth century totally opposite to the perception of art today. An artist's standing was strengthened by the closeness to one of the masters of art whose fame was already secure. But today the representatives who found their own ways are appraised eminently. For instance Parmigianino's compositions were inspired from the grace of Raphael's but taken to another way. The traces of Michelangelo were apparent in the compositions of Pontormo but this did not hamper his creativity and he became one of the leading artists of the period.

## **4.2 Early Mannerist Painters**

Pontormo, Rosso and Beccafumi were the first representatives of Early Mannerism and founders of Tuscan Mannerism. At first Pontormo and Rosso, the pupils of Andrea del Sarto, worked as apprentices in the Renaissance manner because of the



influence of their masters. During their youth on one hand, Italy was experiencing the foreign invasion, the reflection of Luther's reform and the Medici's sovereignty in Florence; on the other hand the masters Michelangelo and Raphael were in their heydays and producing in Rome. Pontormo and Rosso went to Rome to see their works in 1524 and at around the same time Fleming Adrian VI was replaced by Clement VII, a Medici, as Pope who seemed to reopen former opportunities to the artists.

The aim of the transition period founders like Pontormo, Rosso, Parmigianino and Beccafumi, was to replace the regular, conventional and classical canons of the Renaissance with subjective, unnatural features. The loosening of axial relationships, the interlacing of forms, the lack of proportionality, the substitution of a homogenous, unarticulated substance for a distinctly stratified structure were the general characteristics of Mannerism equally valid for the paintings (Panofsky, 1995: p.273). The characteristics of Early Mannerism were the presentation of a disordered cosmos, the emancipation from natural behavior, sensuous and realistic tendencies, and the approach to the bizarre, fantasy, complexity and invention. Three-dimensional form was de-emphasized in favor of a flatter and a more decorative activity. Idealization of the human figure for its own sake was also a characteristic of the Tuscan Mannerists. The Florentine passion for anatomy was related to the idea of energy, by making the bodily movement more vivid (Clark, 1956: p.240).

Knowing the canons of the Renaissance provided the Florentine artists to surpass it. Mostly they depicted their religious compositions in an expressive, emotionally agitated style. Spiritualism and expressionism were the main features of their compositions. They used the principals of classical painting but changed it into alien arrangements for instance deforming the reality, using the grotesque, secularizing the religious composition, rejecting the perspective. The distinctive feature was the emancipation from nature, which was the reason for their condemnation as 'unnatural', 'artificial'. The transition period was more about the struggle of the period and the creative process of the artist to find his own way.

In the first half of the sixteenth century, though exceptional artists like Michelangelo had great reputes and were producing ready-made, the demand was still constructing the art scene and coming from the court. Style was masking the brutal realities of power.

Both the heaviness of the inheritance from the masters of High Renaissance and the historical realities of the age made man feel insecure and skeptical. Melancholy and neurosis among intellectuals started to be a common feature (Hauser, 1951: p. 115).



#### 4.2.1 Jacopo Pontormo (1494-1556)

He was born in Empoli, worked in Florence with Leonardo a short while and with Andrea del Sarto (1486-1531) and led a hazardous life. He was against the social order for loyalty to his ideals. From 1513 on he worked independently but still in classical style. In 1520 after the portrait of Cosimo he was asked to paint the lunettes of a Medicean villa at Poggia a Caiano where he painted only one which was a spring time scene. During the plague in 1523 when everybody had fled away from Florence he was commissioned to paint in Certosa. According to Vasari his style had changed there. His style reminded of Dürer and lacked the grace of his earlier figures. (It was possible to have the prints of paintings of Dürer in Florence at that time which could explain his influence on Pontormo.)

The blend of Michelangelo's 'terribilita' and intense study of Dürer's engravings constituted his original style. Sharpness and brutality were the two major features of his art. The northern artists' meticulous style of drawing objects and Dürer's engravings fascinated the mannerists and the effects could be traced upon their works. Albeit the distortion and the elongation his superiority in draughtsmanship, and of the human anatomy was distinctive. He did the most disturbing elongation. He used light-toned, pale colors mostly reverse with the subject matter; his figures were profound in emotion. The rendering of his figures indicated influence of Michelangelo but the difference was the ornamental side. He had a physical prototype of figure, which constructed his compositions, tall, big eyes, half-open mouth and the face mostly reflecting the bewilderment and sorrow.

Vasari stated that Pontormo's evolution was contradictory with the successors of Mannerism on account of rejecting a good commission and then doing something for a miserable price. But this indicated not only his free position to choose the client with whom he would work but also his loyalty to his ideals mentioned above.

After 1530 he was intensely affected by Michelangelo (Freedberg, 1966: p.467). He worked in Cappella Capponi with his pupil Bronzino. In his last project he worked for eleven years but unfortunately it did not survive even to the next century (Monteverdi, 1965: p.134). During this period his pessimism and neurosis increased, he was solitary and withdrawn (Vasari, 1987: p.269). His obscure and neurotic character was revealed in his diary he wrote at the last phase of his life. According to Vasari, Pontormo died because of working too much with fresco that caused him sink into dropsy.

**“The Visitation”:** The color is unnatural and so is the light. It still indicates classical tendencies. The composition takes place under a niche and it can be said that it is a balanced composition. The expressionistic side is strong.



Figure 4.7: Pontormo *The Visitation* 1514-16, Fresco, Santissima Annunziata, Florence

**“Sacra Converzione”:** The color is fictitious, unnatural and the movements are artificial. There is no background. It is not certain if Christ is sitting on the lap of his mother or sliding down. Still it is a balanced composition.

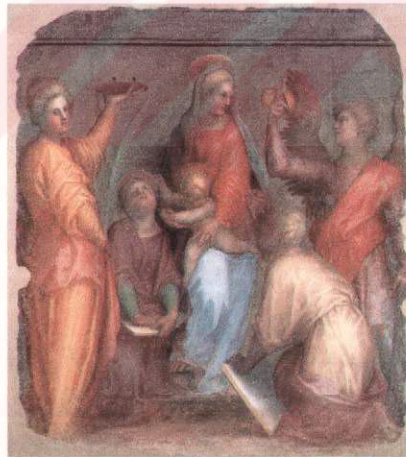


Figure 4.8: Pontormo *Sacra Converzione*, 1514, Fresco, Santissima Annunziata, Florence



**“Lady with a Basket of Spindles”:** The color is natural and quite pale. There is no background. The details are depicted meticulously. The texture is emphasized.



Figure 4.9: Pontormo *Lady with a basket of spindles*, 1516, Oil on wood, 76x54cm. Uffizi Gallery, Florence

**“Joseph Being Sold to Potiphar”:** The usage of the color contrasts with the subject matter. The event takes places in front of a monumental building, reminiscent of the Renaissance. The composition takes place in front of a background. The composition is packed. The aim of the composition seems to prove the artist’s skill at depicting the figures from different angles. His skill surpasses the subject matter. The movements are dynamic. The expression is very strong and theatrical on the faces and all the figures are depicted like a portrait. The steps, which would be one of the main features of Baroque, are used.



Figure 4.10: Pontormo *Joseph being sold to Potiphar*, 1515-1518, Oil on wood, 61x51.6 cm. National Galley, London

**“Punishment of the Baker”**: The color of the composition contrasts with the subject matter. He uses the color independently. The composition takes place indoors. There are four stories taking place in the painting, reminiscent of medieval painting, which means the rejection of the time. It is not possible to concentrate on one so the painting is fragmented. On the left-hand side the statue standing on the pedestal seems like one of the figures. The figures are depicted from every angle. It seems that the painter is concerned with the depiction of the figures more than the subject matter. The expression is very strong. Steps are used.



Figure 4.11: Pontormo *Punishment of the Baker*, 1515-1518, Oil on wood, 61x51.7 cm. National Gallery, London



**“Joseph in Egypt”:** Unnatural, light but charming color contrasts with the subject matter. The composition takes place in an unidentified place mostly outdoors. There are four stories taking place in the painting so the canon of the Renaissance is abandoned. The main story takes place in the center. The events are narrated next to each other as in a medieval painting, which means the rejection of the time. The frontality of the figures is abandoned as well. There are steps that are going nowhere and there are three nudes on statues. The movements of the figures give the painting a dynamic effect. The natural background is abandoned and a fictitious background can be observed.



Figure 4.12: Pontormo *Joseph in Egypt*, 1518, Oil on wood, 96x109 cm.  
National Gallery, London

**“Madonna and Child with the Young Saint John”, “Visdomini Altarpiece”:** The color of the composition is natural. The composition takes place under a niche where two children are unveiling the scene by opening up the curtains. The curtain is one of the chief motifs of Mannerism. The semi-rejection of the background is observed. The expressions of the figures are strong. The figures turn their heads swiftly where Madonna points which causes the artificial poses. In total the rendering of all the figures, the semi-rejection of the background, the theatrical effect are the symptoms of Mannerism. The posture of the Child is so unnatural, it is ambivalent that he stands or slides.



Figure 4.13: Pontormo *Madonna and Child with the Young Saint John*, Visdomini Altarpiece, 1518, Oil on wood, 214x185 cm. Uffizi Gallery, Florence

**“Portrait of Cosimo the Elder”:** The bright color of red is observed. There is no background. The rendering of the figure where upper part of the body is from the profile and the other part is from the front is a Renaissance canon of depicting the portrait. Latin writings on Cosimo’s chair and on the laurel, which is the emblem of Cosimo are observed. The Mannerist composition mostly shelters a reminiscent of antiquity.



Figure 4.14: Pontormo *Portrait of Cosimo the Elder*, 1518-1520, Oil on panel, 86x65 cm. Uffizi Gallery, Florence

**“Vertumnus and Pomona”:** The color is natural. The composition is joyful where color is in accordance with the subject matter. The composition takes place outdoors. The sky and tree which is a spring time scene can be detected. It is different from the emotional intensity of most of his religious works or from the portraits. When he is depicting the terrestrial subjects the figures are more sensual, more naturalistic and bear sharply observed elements of reality. His peasants with exposed limbs are as if caught in snapshot-like poses (Emison, 1997: p.19).



Figure 4.15: Pontormo *Vertumnus and Pomona*, 1519-1521, Fresco, Poggia a Caiano, Villa Medici



**“Madonna and Child with St. Joseph and St. John the Baptist”:** The color of the composition starts to be in contrast with the subject. The rejection of background can be observed. Distortion of the figures especially the figure of Christ is very obvious. Elongation is observed in the hands. The faces have mostly the same expression, in between grace and loveliness. The Child looks like a cupid. The texture is emphasized. The composition shelters symbolic elements like the bird in the hand of Christ.



Figure 4.16: Pontormo *Madonna and Child with St. Joseph and St. John the Baptist*, 1521-1522, Oil on canvas translated from wood, Hermitage Museum, St. Petersburg

**“Madonna and Child with Two Saints”**: The color contrasts with the subject. The composition takes place in front of a background where at the bottom the steps are seen. The rendering of the saint seems like being affected from grotesque. The terribilita of Michelangelo is observed in this figure. The saint has a very strong expressionist outlook. Distortion is obvious in the figure of Madonna. The Child is standing on the lap of his mother but is rendered in a way that makes the effect that he is flying up in the air. The composition shelters symbolic elements like the sheep and lion.



Figure 4.17: Pontormo *Madonna and Child with Two Saints*, 1522, Oil on wood, 72x60 cm. Uffizi Gallery, Florence

**“Christ before Pilate”**: The color is pale. The composition takes place in a quasi-abstract setting. The steps are seen and there is the feeling of depth. The elongation of the figures is very obvious.

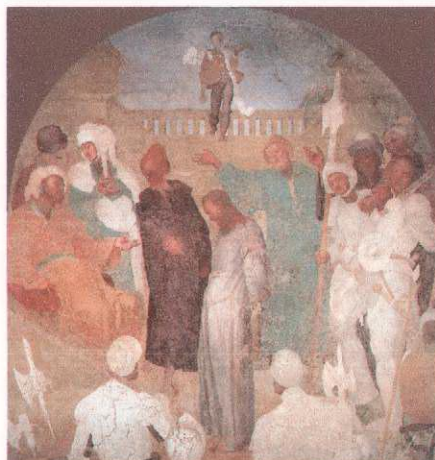


Figure 4.18: Pontormo *Christ before Pilate*, 1523-25, Fresco, San Michele, Carmignano

**“Supper at Emmaus”:** The color of the composition is unrealistic. The event takes place in a vague setting where there is no background. In this picture the traces of engravings of Dürer and the meticulous way of depiction are seen. Symbolism is evident; like the usage of bread. The expression of the figures gives the feeling of ambiguity.



Figure 4.19: Pontormo *Supper at Emmaus*, 1525, Oil on canvas, 230x173 cm. Uffizi Gallery, Florence

**“St. John the Evangelist”:** The color of the figure is natural. The rejection of background is observed. This figure is the one of those figures where he worked with Bronzino. Massive figure of St. John reminds the figures of Michelangelo.



Figure 4.20: Pontormo *St. John the Evangelist*, 1525, Oil on wood, Decoration of the Capella Capponi in Santa Felicita, Florence



**“St. Luke”:** The color is bright. The rejection of background is observed. This is another figure where he worked with Bronzino. The meticulous way of rendering of the details is observed.



Figure 4.21: Pontormo *St. Luke*, 1525, Oil on wood, Decoration of the Capella Capponi in Santa Felicità, Florence

**“St. Jerome”:** The color is fascinating. The rejection of the background is seen. The expression of the figure is very strong, revealing the sorrow. The massive figure of St. Jerome recalls the figures of Michelangelo.

**“Portrait of Maria Salviati”:** The color is natural. There is no background. Maria Salviati is the mother of Cosimo I de Medici. The elongation of the figure and meticulous way of depicting the details are the characteristics. The texture is emphasized.





Figure 4.22: Pontormo *Portrait of Maria Salviati*: 1526-1527, Walters Art Gallery, Baltimore

**“Annunciation”:** The color is unnatural. There is no background. This is another figure where he worked with Bronzino. The forms of the figures with exaggerated draperies are in the ornamental way.

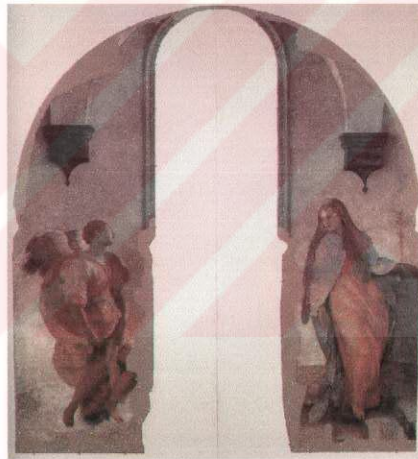


Figure 4.23: Pontormo *Annunciation*, 1527-1528, Fresco, decoration of the Capella Capponi in Santa Felicita, Florence

**“Visitation”:** The color contrasts with the subject matter. It takes place in a quasi-abstract background. The figures occupy almost all the area. St. Anne and her daughter Mary hug each other as to symbolize embracing of the Old Church of Rome with the Catholic Church as proposed in sermons of Savonarola. This was dangerous at the times of Counter-Reformation. Distortion and elongation are also clear. The expression is intensive. The feet of the figures, like the figures of Boticelli, are not touching the ground. Exaggerated draperies are noticed.



Figure 4.24: Pontormo *Visitation*, 1528-1530, Oil on wood, 202x156 cm. St. Michele, Carmignano

**“Deposition”:** The color totally contrasts with the subject matter. The rejection of the background is observed. This is another figure where he worked with Bronzino. In this painting he fuses the ideal of harmony and ornamental beauty from classicism with the liberty of form and expression (Freedberg, 1966: p.467). Distortion of the figures is detected. The faces of the figures convey grief, bewilderment and the figures look like they are the copies of each other. The feet of the figures, like the figures of Boticelli, are not touching the ground. The massive figure of Christ reminds the figures of Michelangelo. The woman who stands on the upper right of the painting is given a sensual way. Exaggeration of the draperies gives the composition momentum and increases the visual impression.



Figure 4.25: Pontormo *Deposition*, 1528, Oil on wood, 313x192 cm.  
Decoration of the Capella Capponi in Santa Felicita, Florence



**“Madonna and the Child with St. Anne and Other Saints”:** The color of the composition is independent from the subject. The background is abstract. Distortion is evident especially on Christ as well as the others. Elongation can be observed especially on the hands. The posture of Christ is bizarre. Bewilderment is dominant on the composition. The draperies are exaggerated.



Figure 4.26: Pontormo *Madonna and the Child with St. Anne and Other Saints*, 1529, Oil on wood, 228x176 cm. Louvre Museum, Paris

**“Halberdier”:** The color is fascinating. The background is abstract. It is one of the portraits of Cosimo I de Medici. The expression reflects the same bewilderment. Elongation is detected on the face of the figure. Impact of the northern artists can be seen on the meticulous way of giving the details.



Figure 4.27: Pontormo *Halberdier*, 1530, Oil on canvas, 92x72 cm. Paul Getty Museum, Malibu



**“Martyrdom of St. Maurice and Theban Legions”:** The color of the composition is natural when compared with the other examples of his. It is about the killing, by the order of Emperor Adrian, of a great number of Roman soldiers on the Mount Araf, because of their conversion to Christianity. It can be related to the besiege of Florence. The composition takes place in an unidentified landscape and is divided into four parts. In the background on the right the crucified figures seem like precedent figures of El Greco. In the middle part the war takes place and the nude figures are fighting, reminding the figures of Rosso in “Moses Defending the Daughters of Jethro” where he stresses the two dimensionality. But in this picture the nudity of the figures is awkward. One figure with the red flag is standing at the center as the focus point. The protagonist sits on a platform raised by the steps. The figures are depicted from each side and his concern of the forms are traced. This composition more close to the later mannerists is very different from his other paintings. The posture of the figures is artificial and the composition stresses the two dimensionality of the painting. The composition has a very strong expression of sorrow.



Figure 4.28: Pontormo *Martyrdom of St. Maurice and Theban Legions*, 1531, Oil on wood, 65x73 cm. Palazzo Pitti, Florence

**“Portrait of a Lady in Red”:** The color is fascinating. The lady sits under a niche in a quasi-abstract background. Although this is a portrait the expression of the face does not give the features of character. The face is like a mask hiding the characteristics. The details are meticulously rendered by the influence of the northern painters; such as the beads, the necklace and the chair. The stress is on texture of the dress and the fur of the chair.



Figure 4.29: Pontormo *Portrait of a Lady in Red*, 1532, Oil on wood, 89.7x70.5 cm Stadelches Kunstinstitut, Frankfurt

**“Fall”, “Flood”, “Resurrection”, St. Lorenzo Frescos:** They are known just from the drawings. He worked for eleven years on this fresco. According to Vasari they were without proportion, grace and balance and had to be supreme works of his in mannerist style.

#### 4.2.1 Rosso Fiorentino (1494-1540)

He was a painter and a decorator, worked as a pupil or an assistant of Andrea del Sarto. He was the other founder of Mannerism apart from Pontormo and constructor of French Mannerism together with Primaticcio. His first painting was dated 1516 or 1517 (Freedberg, 1966: p.582). In his religious compositions the expressive and emotional style was observed explicitly. His spiritualism was more inclined to excess and extravagance. Bold color contrasts, use of unusual viewpoints, the two-dimensionality and distortion of his figures gave the characteristics of his style. The main features of his art shared the sharpness and brutality as Pontormo. His paintings displayed the violent drama with crowded scenes, extreme foreshortening and bold color contrasts.



His works, before going to Rome, included protest against classical elements different from the other mannerist artists. Michelangelo, Raphael and Parmigianino influenced him when he went to Rome in 1523, the traces on his paintings could be observed. The curly head of his figures was very much alike with the curly head of the nude youth in the ceiling of Sistine Chapel of Michelangelo. He began to tolerate some classical values that he transformed and interpreted. His style owed too much to German engravings. During the Sack of Rome in 1527 the Germans took him as a prisoner. After his release he went to Bologna and worked there. It was said that he alarmed his patrons by the strange, almost demonical appearance.

He moved to France in 1530 and took the features of Mannerism to Fontainebleu, where according to the biography of Vasari he was supported by the king and lived like a lord. He was commissioned for the interior decoration of Gallery of Francis I. His style changed as soon as he migrated to France from the extravagant and expressive into a balanced and courtly style accordingly to the demands of the court. There was a dispute about his death, Vasari suggested that he committed suicide for accusing his friend unjustly and according to Peter Murray he died because of natural causes.

**“Assumption of the Virgin”:** The color is in accordance with the subject. The rejection of the background is seen. The composition is still classical and is divided into two. There are terrestrial and divine figures. Madonna stands in the air in between the cupids. The rendering of the angels is in Raphaelesque way but with more grace.



Figure 4.30: Rosso *Assumption of the Virgin*, 1517, Fresco, S.S. Annunziata, Florence

**“Madonna and Child with Putti”:** The color of the composition is still classical. The rejection of background is seen. The poses of the figures are more realistic and the elongation of the hand of Madonna is detectable. Madonna and Child are placed in the middle of the little angels, expressing their loveliness. The depiction of Madonna and Child is in a way caricaturistic.



Figure 4.31: Rosso *Madonna and Child with Putti*, 1517, Oil on wood, 111x75.5 cm. The Hermitage, St. Petersburg

**“Madonna Enthroned with Four Saints”:** Unnatural colors contrasts with the subject. It takes place in front of a quasi-abstract background. Two steps raise the throne. It is a balanced composition. Elongation of the hands is obvious. The depiction of the saint on the right hand side looks like grotesque and reminds the saint of Pontormo. The impact of the *terribilità* of Michelangelo is observed. The way Madonna sits and holds the Child is bizarre. The angels remind Raphael’s angels but in a distorted way. The expression of the composition is strong.

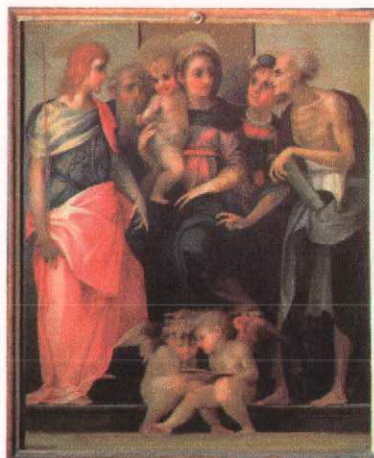


Figure 4.32: Rosso *Madonna Enthroned with Four Saints*, 1518, Oil on wood, 172x141 cm. Uffizi Gallery, Florence



**“Descent from the Cross”:** The color is very bright, absolutely not in accordance with the subject. The rejection of the background is seen. The composition consists of two parts. The upper part is very dynamic and the bustle of the figures is felt but on the contrary the lower part of the picture is more static and sorrow is dominant. He is in the limit of distortion. The distorted figures and unusual colors create a new form with a spiritual atmosphere. The strong expression of the composition is definite. The draperies are exaggerated.



Figure 4.33: Rosso *Descent from the Cross*, 1521, Oil on wood, 375x196 cm.  
Cathedral, Volterra

**“Madonna Enthroned with Ten Saints”:** The color of the composition is unnatural. The composition takes place under a niche often applied in the Renaissance. The composition is also symmetric like the compositions of the Renaissance. The rendering of the Child is bizarre. Distortion of the figures is evident. Elongation especially on the hands is observed. The expression is very strong. The impact of Michelangelo is detectable on the nude figure that stands in the foreground at the right hand side.



Figure 4.34: Rosso *Madonna Enthroned with Ten Saints*, 1522, Oil on wood, 350x259 cm. Palazzo Pitti, Florence

**“Marriage of the Virgin”:** The color of the composition completely contrasts with the subject. Rejection of the background is observed. The lightening paves the way to Baroque. The composition looks like a mythological scene. The frontal figures are lightened in an irrational way. Steps raise the place where the marriage takes place. The figures are like the variations of a single figure applied also by Pontormo. Elongation is very dominant and exaggerated draperies, fastidiousness in the details are detected. The composition is expressionist.



Figure 4.35: Rosso *Marriage of the Virgin*, 1523, Oil on wood, 325x250 cm.  
San Lorenzo, Florence

**“Moses Defending the Daughters of Jethro”:** The color of the composition is unnatural. There is a quasi-abstract background. The composition is from the Old Testament which is less bloody but no less violent in struggle. In the background the air and some roofs are seen but the picture doesn’t give a feeling of space, as if the artist wants to remind the beholder that it is just a two-dimensional surface meaning relegation of depth. The composition is based on the plastic dynamism used by Michelangelo and is transformed into a violent scene of hidden strength. The exaggerated musculature of the figures recalls the figures of Michelangelo and covers most of the plate. They are colossal. The girl is stiff and robust. Her hair is not in accordance with the subject matter. The artist no longer is on the urge to create a reality. There is no indication of depth through perspective, instead there are parallel layers with the surface of the painting. The meticulous way of rendering of the details is observed. Excess of form at the expense of spiritual content is aimed. The expression is in the sublime.

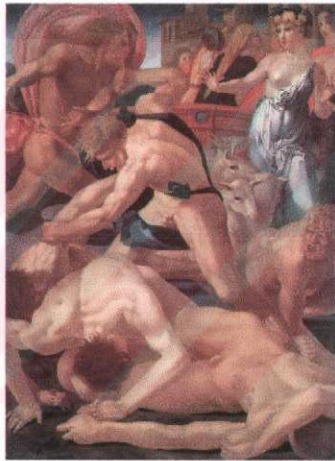


Figure 4.36: Rosso *Moses Defending the Daughters of Jethro*, 1523, Oil on canvas, 160x117 cm. Uffizi Gallery, Florence



**“Dead Christ with Angels”:** The color of the composition is independent from the subject. The background is abstract. It is a packed composition. In this composition there is grace, lacking in his other works. This painting quite different from the others is done during his stay in Rome. It is the time he starts to use some classical values. The figures become solid and sculptural like the dead body of Christ. The figures have strong expressions. The traces of Michelangelo’s style are detected in the Christ figure. A naked body of Christ, close-up, is filling the two thirds of the composition. The figure is colossal. There is a wound on his chest and on the ground there are some objects symbolizing the passion. But his face looks as if his body has not suffered at all; it exemplifies the painter’s new style for beauty. The two of four angels are not in pain and holding torches, calmly looking at Christ. The curly hair of the angels is very realistic and lively. The meticulous way of rendering is also evident. The texture of the dresses is stressed. The mannerists like to depict the scene of resurrection rather than crucifixion.



Figure 4.37: Rosso *Dead Christ with Angels*, 1525-1526, Oil on canvas, 133.5x104 cm. Museum of Fine Arts, Boston

**“Deposition from the Cross”:** The bright color of the composition is fascinating but not in accordance with the subject. The background of the composition is quasi-abstract. It is a very dynamic composition. Movement is very significant. The unusual perspective, violent colors and harsh lighting reproduce the disturbing effect. Distortion and elongation of the organs is very characteristic. The body of Christ is depicted like a sculpture, in Michelangelo style. Especially the woman figures are too much adorned and reverse with the subject matter, giving an artificial outlook. The details are depicted in a meticulous way. The texture of the dresses is stressed.

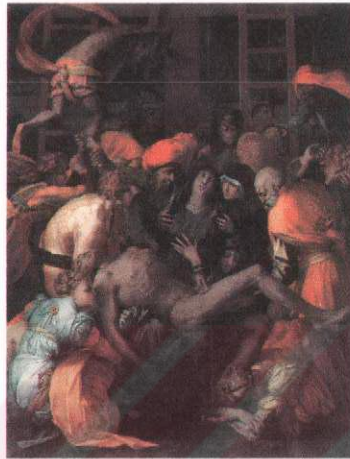


Figure 4.38: Rosso *Deposition from the Cross*, 1528, Oil on canvas, 270x201 cm. San Lorenzo, Sansepolcro

**“Risen Christ”:** The color of the composition is appealing but not in accordance with the subject. There is no background. The composition has grace, elongation and distortion. The figures have an ornamental character. Exaggerated draperies and meticulous way of rendering the details is inspected. The figure of the woman standing on the foreground at left-hand side of the picture has an arm like a man.



Figure 4.39: Rosso *Risen Christ*, 1528, Oil on wood, 348x258 cm. Duomo, Citta di Castello

**“Pieta”:** The color of the composition is bright but contrasts with the subject. The background is abstract. The composition reminds “Dead Christ with Angels”. It is a very expressive composition. Elongation, distortion and grace are three major features that are detectable. The rendering of Christ hints the figures of Michelangelo. The movements of the figures give the feeling of fictitiousness. The crouching figure at the right foreground is very artificial and the reason for the artist to depict in that way is to charm the beholder with his ability to draw the difficult poses. The figure has a marble effect. Northern artists inspired the meticulous way of giving details.





Figure 4.40: Rosso *Pieta*, 1537-1540, Oil on wood transferred to canvas, 125x159 cm. Louvre Museum, Paris

#### 4.2.2 Domenico Beccafumi (1486-1551)

He was a painter, printmaker, sculpture and illuminator who took his name from his patron. He lived in Siena. At the beginning of his career he was influenced by Leonardo and drew in the classical manner; but after traveling to Rome between 1510-1512 Michelangelo and Raphael inspired him. Thereafter his style changed in favor of Mannerism. He had a strong sense of Sienese artistic background, worked to bring together the bright and decorative coloring and the contemporary development in Florence and Rome. He added some mannerist features to his own style for instance the theatrical effect of the composition, the usage of wide range of color separated by sharp edges where he created emotional compositions lacking in balance and harmony. The setting of his compositions contained some canons of the Renaissance. He used dramatic effects, created figures in fantastic settings, and was concerned with light to convey emotion. He achieved the theatrical effect through strong perspective and contraposta. The compositions of Beccafumi, like most of the mannerist painters, had the sensual feature. In 1520 he became an official painter to Sienese republic. He taught his pupils the alternation shaft of light and patches of shadows.



**“Trinity”:** The color is bright. The composition has no background. God and Christ are circled with little angels. Elongation of the figures is detected.



Figure 4.41: Beccafumi *Trinity*, 1513, Oil on wood, 152x228 cm. Pinacoteca Nazionale, Siena

**“St. Paul”:** The color of the composition is appealing but unnatural. The composition takes place outdoors, in an undefined landscape. The rendering of the composition is in the classical style. It consists of two parts, divine and terrestrial. Madonna and Child stand at the upper part circled with the little angles covering them with a curtain. Steps raise the place where St. Paul sits and the color of his cloth is the focus point of the composition. Elongation of the organs is seen.



Figure 4.42: Beccafumi *St. Paul*, 1515, Oil on wood, 190x150 cm. Museo dell'Opera della Metropolitana, Siena

**“Stigmatization of St. Catharine of Siena”:** The cloth of the figure on the right has a bright color but aside from that the color is natural. The composition reminds the setting of the compositions of the Renaissance where the figures are depicted at the front and the nature or the monumental building rises at the background. The setting is unidentified. It is divided into two in where the divine and terrestrial figures are seen. St. Catharine is depicted in the act of miracle. The distortion, contraposta and exaggerated perspective are combined to provide a spiritual intensity. Little angels in the air again circle Madonna and Child. Influence of Michelangelo is detected. It is an expressionistic picture.



Figure 4.43: Beccafumi *Stigmatization of St. Catharine of Siena*, 1515, Oil on wood, 208x156 cm. Pinacoteca Nazionale, Siena

**“Tanaquil”:** Light toned colors are dominant. The composition takes place outdoors, in front of an unidentified background. The figure is a heroine of antiquity. It was painted to decorate a palace. Elongation especially on the hand of the figure is evident. The usage of background and perspective are traces of the Renaissance composition. He uses features of Mannerism within an old-fashioned setting. Most of the compositions of Mannerism shelter an antique element as this one. The stress is on the sensuality of the figure.



Figure 4.44: Beccafumi *Tanaquil*, 1520-1525, Oil on wood, 92.1x53.3 cm.  
National Gallery, London

**“St. Lucy”:** The color of the composition is fascinating. The background is abstract, the lightening is like Baroque and distortion is traced. The figure has grace. Elongation on the hands is seen where she holds a vase with two eyes on top of it.



Figure 4.45: Beccafumi *St. Lucy*, 1521, Oil on wood, Pinacoteca Nazionale,  
Siena



**“Holy Family with St. John”:** The color is natural. The rejection of the background is noticed. The distortion is very evident on the Child figure. Madonna has grace. The main features are elongation and grace. The way the Child sits in his mother’s lap is bizarre. The texture is emphasized.



Figure 4.46: Beccafumi *Holy Family with St. John*, 1530, Oil on panel, diameter 84 cm. Uffizi Gallery, Florence

**“Moses and Golden Calf”:** Beccafumi uses color in a more conservative way than Pontormo and Rosso. This is the most mannerist composition of his. It takes place outdoors but in an unidentified landscape. Elongation and distortion is detected. The frontal nude figure recalls the style of Michelangelo and is depicted with strong foreshortening. Moses has the figura serpentinata form. The woman figure is sensual and has the grace of Raphael. She and the Child are depicted in an artificial way. The details are meticulously depicted. This composition has a very strong expression.

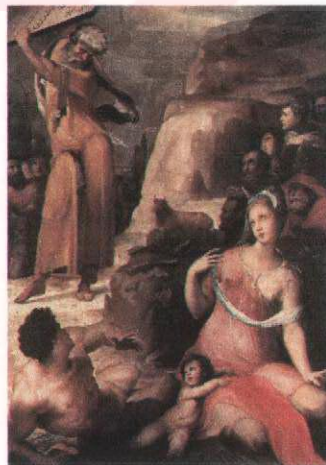


Figure 4.47: Beccafumi *Moses and Golden Calf*, 1536-1537, Oil on wood, 197x139 cm. Duomo, Pisa



**“Birth of the Virgin”:** The color is quasi unnatural but not close to Pontormo’s. The composition takes place in a room. Elongated and foreshortened forms are observed. The details are depicted meticulously. Lightening of the composition is paving the way to Baroque. The curtain as a mannerist medium is seen. Grace is important. The figure sitting in the foreground has an artificial pose and the sophisticated woman is stiff. The well-dressed woman is reversed with the subject.



Figure 4.48: Beccafumi *Birth of the Virgin*, 1543, Oil on wood, 233x145 cm.  
Accademia, Siena

**“The Annunciation”:** The color of the composition is unnatural. The composition takes place indoors, in an unidentified, quasi-abstract building. The landscape at the background reminds the compositions of the Renaissance. It is a tranquil composition, the artist got rid of all the details. The bird, the flower and the angel have symbolic meanings. The light makes the effect of a flash on the faces of the figures. Grace is very characteristic in this composition. The faces reveal strong expressions.



Figure 4.49: Beccafumi *The Annunciation*, 1545, Oil on wood, S. S. Martino and Viterro, Siena

**“The Fall of the Rebellious Angels”:** The color of the composition is quasi natural, different from the former painters. There is no background. It is a very dynamic and a very expressionist composition. The rebellion of Lucifer, greatest of the angels, who sought to usurp the place of Almighty, and the expulsion to hell with his angelic followers is depicted as falling. In this composition the fallen angels are shown scattered on the lake of Hell but rising at the call of their leader. They are depicted beautifully and lovely. God is at the top of the composition embracing the whole scene. The painting is filled with angels. Some angels are flying where others can not. The figures standing on the lower part of the composition reminds the figures of Michelangelo. The flame-like figures depicted from each side transform the composition to a dynamic one. The movement is distinguishing. The grace and the beauty of form, which is more important than the subject can be the interpretation of the artist.



Figure 4.50: Beccafumi *The Fall of the Rebellious Angels*, 1540, Oil on wood, 347x227 cm. Pinacoteca Nazionale, Siena

#### 4.2.3 Francesco Parmigianino (1503-1540)

He was born in Parma from where he got his name and was a pupil of Correggio. Parmigianino was influenced by the Roman classics and achieved a new ideal of physical beauty. Raphael influenced him in the way he depicted his figures with ultimate grace. The transition in his art towards Late Mannerism took place from 1520 to 1530; the noble harmony of classicism gave way to a haunting sense of unreality where sophistication was discerned in his portraits (Chastel, 1968: p.92). He was a great draughtsman and a great colorist and used sensuality lavishly. His art based on ideal of grace detached from all aesthetic considerations. He went to Rome in 1524 and during his stay he met Rosso, which effected his later style. During the Sack of Rome he moved to Bologna.



Throughout his life he encountered lavish patrons. He was influenced by his master Coreggio but created his own style using ornamental grace. The color he used between 1527 and 1531 started to have peculiar intensity and richness of texture, sometimes dissonant. He created a pictorial realm of harmonious beauty and purity of form where he used the classical elements and totally changed its character and meaning (Levey, 1966: p.99). When he was at the peak of his art he started to practice alchemy and use alchemic symbolism which changed his character and hampered his painting. Counter-Reformation influenced his style at his later paintings. According to Vasari, he was an odd, turbulent character who lived in eccentric seclusion that gave way to melancholic madness. Grave fever assailed state of melancholy and oddness; and dysentery caused his death at the age of thirty-seven. Peter Murray claimed that he was the first Italian artist to design specifically for reproduction.

**“The Conversion of St. Paul”:** The color of the composition is natural. There is a fictitious background. The setting reminds of the Renaissance. The horse depicted diagonally in the middle of the picture makes a movement effect. Even the face of the horse reflects grace. The figure is colossal as in Michelangelo style. Elongation is detectable at the hands of St. Paul and at the face of the horse.

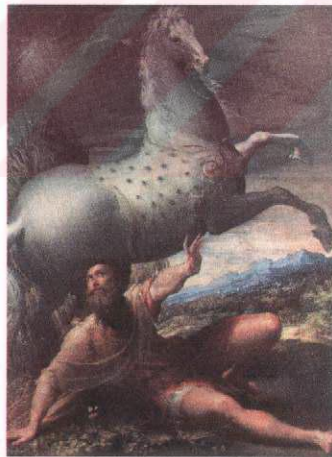


Figure 4.51: Parmigianino *The Conversion of St. Paul*, 1522, Oil on canvas, Kunsthistorisches Museum, Vienna



**“Portrait of Gian Galeazzo Sanvitale”:** There is a background. Elongation on the hands and at the face is evident. The meticulous rendering of the details is viewed. His face doesn’t give any clue of his inner-self.



Figure 4.52: Parmigianino *Portrait of Gian Galeazzo Sanvitale*, 1523, Oil on canvas, 109x81 cm, Museo di Capodimonte, Naples

**“Cupid Cutting a Bow”:** The color is natural. There is no background, featuring the rejection of space. The modeling of the cupid with the help of light and color gives marble-like-effect reminding the religious figures of Bronzino. Distortion and loveliness of the cupids are other features of this painting.



Figure 4.53: Parmigianino *Cupid Cutting a Bow*, 1523-1524, Oil on wood, 135x65.3 cm. Kunsthistorisches Museum, Vienna

**“Self-portrait in a Convex Mirror”:** The color is natural. The figure is represented indoors. He is pictured, at the age of twenty, through a mirror where the distortion is seen. The painter depicts his reflection from a convex mirror to a round wooden panel, which is an irony because most of his other works represent the same distorted form. Mirror is a requisite of mannerist period; it is used, as a means to reflect the image and its indirectness is important. A window lightens the scene from the left, illuminating his face. He has a feminine outlook. The face is rather a mask than a face. He doesn’t reflect a feeling. The rendering of the details is in fictitious way. The image of his right hand is slender and elongated. The texture is emphasized.



Figure 4.54: Parmigianino *Self-portrait in a Convex Mirror*, 1524, Oil on wood, diameter 24.4 cm. Kunsthistorisches Museum, Vienna

**“Rest on the Flight to Egypt”:** The color is natural when compared to other mannerists. There is an unidentified landscape, which can be a borrowing from another painting. The influence of Corregio is detected from the usage of the light. The light makes a flash effect and the faces are lightened suddenly. Grace in Madonna is in the sublime form and elongation on Madonna’s face is evident. Madonna is overdressed, reminding the figures in the portraits of Bronzino where they are dressed excessively, completely opposite of the subject matter. Christ and St. John look like cupids with the same loveliness. The meticulous rendering of the objects is artificial. Exaggerated draperies are detected.



Figure 4.55: Parmigianino *Rest on the Flight to Egypt*, 1524, Oil on panel, 100x89 cm. Prado Museum, Madrid



**“The Vision of St. Jerome”:** The color of the composition is unnatural. It takes place outdoors, in an unidentified landscape. St. Jerome has the figura serpentinata pose, which is the main pose of mannerist period. This is the reflection of a dream so the figures are placed at different plans; St. Jerome is pictured in the foreground, Madonna and Child lightened by the sun are placed in the background. Sleeping St. Jerome is showed in a foreshortened way. Elongation especially on the hand of St. Jerome is seen. The pose of Madonna and Child reminds of Michelangelo but the artist added the grace of Raphael.



Figure 4.56: Parmigianino *The Vision of St. Jerome*, 1527, Oil on wood, 343x149 cm. National Gallery, London

**“The Mystic Marriage of St. Catharine”:** The color is quasi-unnatural. The composition takes place indoors. It is a symbolic composition where the wheel represents the torture of St. Catharine. The dress of St. Catharine is very much adorned. Grace and elongation are the characteristics.



Figure 4.57: Parmigianino *The Mystic Marriage of St. Catharine*, 1527-1531, Oil on wood, 74.2x57.2 cm. National Gallery, London



**“Madonna of the Rose”:** There is no background. The meticulous rendering of the details and the emphasis of the texture are observed. It is a sensual composition with artificial loveliness. The modeling of Madonna with grace reflects the influence of Raphael. Madonna and the Child, depicted like a cupid, are very different from the former compositions. Grace and elongation especially on the hands of Madonna is clearly seen. This composition can easily be a mythological scene. The religious picture is depicted in the secular manner.

**“Madonna and Child with Infant St. John, the Magdalen and St. Zacharias”:** The color is natural. The composition takes place outdoors, at the back there is the fictitious landscape a combination of nature, a column and a monumental building. This composition is very similar to the painting of “Rest on the Flight to Egypt”. Artificial grace and elongation especially on the hand of Madonna are observed. The colossal figure of St. Zacharias reminds the figures of Michelangelo.



Figure 4.58: Parmigianino *Madonna and Child with Infant St. John, the Magdalen and St. Zacharias*, 1530, Oil on wood, 75.5x60 cm. Uffizi Gallery, Florence

**“Portrait of a Lady”:** There is no background. The details are rendered meticulously. The feeling of the texture is emphasized. Elongation on the hands is seen. The figure has a sensual posture.



Figure 4.59: Parmigianino *Portrait of a Lady*, 1530-1531, Oil on canvas, 67x53 cm, National Gallery, Parma

**“Madonna with the Long Neck”:** The color of the composition is natural. There is a fictitious background. A gigantic column at the back of Madonna rises and a Roman stands holding a scroll. The exaggerated contrast proportions of the frontal and the back figure seem like they are two different pictures glued together. The sensuality of the frontal figure is stressed. The exaggerated asymmetry is evident. The elongation is in its peak point. The odd way of rendering of the figures is prominent. Distortion of the figures especially of Madonna is observed. The figures are filled head to head in one side of the picture and the other side is bare empty. The Child looks like sliding from Madonna’s lap. It seems like the artist aims not to convince the faithful but to surprise the connoisseur. The scene is depicted in a secular way rather than a religious.

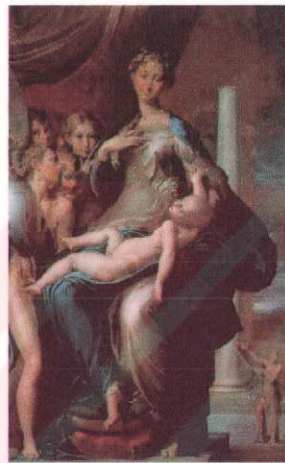


Figure 4.60: Parmigianino *Madonna with the Long Neck*, 1535, Oil on wood, 219x135 cm. Uffizi Gallery, Florence



**“Portrait of a Young Woman Called Antea”:** The color of the composition is bright and natural. The background is abstract. Elongation on the face and especially on the hands is detected. The meticulously rendering of the details and the emphasis on the texture is obvious. Her expression reflects loveliness.



Figure 4.61: Parmigianino *Portrait of a Young Woman Called Antea*, 1535-1537, Oil on canvas, 136x86 cm, Museo di Capodimonte, Naples

**“Madonna and Child with St. Stephen, John the Baptist and a Donor”:** In the background of the picture Madonna and Child is depicted. The representation reminds “The Vision of St. Jerome” where Madonna and Child is at the back and lightened by the sun. Parmigianino’s style changed in this composition. The figures having ultra grace and the ornamental usage of the form are abandoned. This painting could easily be attributed to another artist if it was not known as his.

#### 4.2.4 Agnolo Bronzino (1503-1572)

He was a poet, a painter and pupil and adopted son of Pontormo. His first paintings of 1528 reflected influences of his master, Pontormo. His attention was on portraiture from 1532 on. He worked as an official court painter to Cosimo I from 1540 on. He worked at the ducal court of Medici in Florence and became famous mainly owing to the official portraits of the duke, duchess, their children and members of the court. His portraits were means to protect the painted. He hid the self behind the face where he combined sharpest observation with discipline of pictorial pattern, giving a distinctive taste. (Hauser, 1965, p.199-200) He painted his portraits with a supreme controlled technique; rather than revealing his sitter’s character, aimed to convey his subject’s social standing and elegance. These were the documents of sophisticated aristocratic atmosphere of Medicean court in the sixteenth century. They did not give a hint of the characteristics of the portrayed because official images had to convey



authority and impassive assurance. His cold and strict models were rendered with perfect technique. The study of human face went beyond his sitter's physical reality to achieve an idealization of the members of the family. His attention to depict the details like his sitter's collar or the vein in the hand, gave the portrait a remote decorativeness.

He also painted altarpieces and religious narratives but even in these he usually maintained the artistic aloofness and formal beauty. His secular paintings were also the evidence of the sophisticated court taste. His style was cold, stiff and pedantic, less complex in artistic temper than Pontormo, where he clarified his abstraction of form and gave a simpler, crystalline immobility (Freedberg, 1960: p.631). Extroverted artistic and decorative elements prevailed in the art of Bronzino as well as Parmigianino. Bronzino depicted in a manner that denied nature in favor of high artifice. He lacked emotional intensity of his master especially at the religious paintings. His style was much more intelligible, he set his figures apart from one another in sharp definition. He was the founder member of Florentine Accademia del Disegno in 1563. The affect of Counter-Reformation changed his style seen in his later works.

**“St. Mark”:** The usage of color reminds of Pontormo. There is no background. Bronzino worked with his master Pontormo on “St. Luke” and “St. John” but finished this painting after his death. The three paintings reflect similarities. Michelangelo influences the rendering of the figure.



Figure 4.62: Bronzino *St. Mark*, 1525, Oil on wood, Cappella Capponi, Santa Felicita, Florence

**“St. Matthew”:** The color is natural. The background is abstract. St. Matthew is the other painting that he finished after the death of his master. Exaggerated muscular figures of Michelangelo are applied here which gives volume to the composition. The figure has an S-like or flame-like shape. The figure’s mouth is half-open and reflects the feeling of bewilderment and is similar to Pontormo’s. The distortion and exaggerated expression are evident.

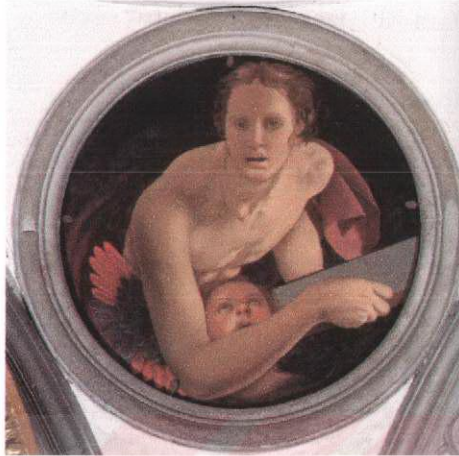


Figure 4.63: Bronzino *St. Matthew*, 1525, Oil on wood, Cappella Capponi, Santa Felicita, Florence

**“Holy Family”:** The color of the composition starts to be more naturalistic, different than Pontormo. The unidentified landscape at the back can be a part of another composition of some other painter. The meticulous depiction of the details is the influence of northern artists. The figure of Madonna and also St. Anne has grace and elongation on the hands is evident. There are some symbolic elements. The figures of Child and St. John are typical marble like figures of Bronzino.



Figure 4.64: Bronzino *Holy Family*, 1534-1540, Oil on wood, 124.5x99.5 cm. Kunsthistorisches Museum, Vienna



**“Adoration of the Shepherds”:** The unnatural color of the composition reminds of Pontormo. The composition takes place outdoors. The subject matter takes place in the front and there is the landscape definitely reminding us the compositions of the Renaissance behind it. Little angels are flying in the air and the Child is lying on a piece of Roman monument. The frontal figure on the left has an artificial pose and S-like shape and the nude figure is massive. Grace is observed in Madonna.

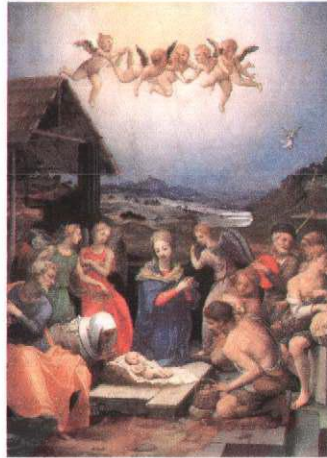


Figure 4.65: Bronzino *Adoration of the Shepherds*, 1535-1540, Oil on wood, 65.3x46.7 cm. Museum of Fine Arts, Budapest

**“The Panciatichi Holy Family”:** The color of the dress of Madonna is very bright and contrasts with the subject. There is a very dark background where an unidentified landscape with a castle is recognized. Grace, distortion of the figure of Madonna and elongation on the hands is tracked. Marble effect is evident on the figure of Madonna with the help of light and color. The meticulous depiction of the details is the influence of northern artists. It is an expressionistic composition.



Figure 4.66: Bronzino *The Panciatichi Holy Family*, 1540, Oil on wood, 117x85 cm. Uffizi Gallery, Florence

**“Venus, Cupid, Folly and Time”:** The color of the composition is very bright. The composition is artificial. There is no background. The stiff rendering of the bodies of Venus and Cupid with the help of color and light gives a marble-like feeling. The pale and elongated nudes stand against symbolic figures. The man behind Cupid has an over-exaggerated facial gesture. The eroticism of Venus and her son Cupid is discovered. Time is uncovering Venus and Cupid. Folly throws roses. There are some masks on the floor. The rendering of the details is in the northern way. The gestures are strained. It definitely achieves its aim in the way of eroticism. It is suggested in the guide of the National Gallery that the painting was a present for the French king and having so much symbols from mythology serves as a puzzle for the king to make him occupied for a time being. It is mostly claimed that this is the most erotic painting of its time.

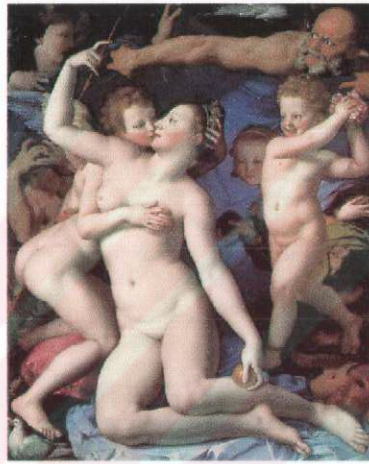


Figure 4.67: Bronzino *Venus, Cupid, Folly and Time*, 1545, Oil on wood, 146x116 cm. National Gallery, London



**“Lamentation”:** The color is appealing and bright but not in accordance with the subject. The usage of color in this painting is close to the general tendency of mannerists. There is a fictitious, unidentified background. The nude Christ is stiff and has a marble-like effect with color and light. The texture of the dress is emphasized.



Figure 4.68: Bronzino *Lamentation*, 1546, Tempera on wood, 115x100cm.

**“Portrait of Ugolino Martelli”:** The color is natural. The figure is portrayed outside of an unidentified Renaissance building. The column where he put his book is also a reminiscent of antiquity. Elongation of the figure is evident.



Figure 4.69: Bronzino *Portrait of Ugolino Martelli*, 1535, Oil on wood, 102x85 cm. Staatliche Museum, Berlin

**“Portrait of Lucrezia Panciatichi”:** The color of the dress is fascinating. There is no background. The details are depicted meticulously. The texture is stressed. Elongation of the face and hand is evident. She sits at unease. Her face is expressionless.



Figure 4.70: Bronzino *Portrait of Lucrezia Panciatichi*, 1540, Oil on wood, 104x85 cm. Uffizi Gallery, Florence:

**“Portrait of Bia, The Illegitimate Daughter of Cosimo de Medici”:** The color is very bright and natural. There is no background; in a way it is abstract. The texture is stressed very strongly. The details are rendered meticulously. The expression of the girl tells nothing about her. The unnatural and sophisticated side of the portrait is that other than her face nothing reveals her childness. Her dress, her posture are courtly.



Figure 4.71: Bronzino *Portrait of Bia, The Illegitimate Daughter of Cosimo de Medici*, 1542, Tempera on wood, 63x48 cm. Uffizi Gallery, Florence

**“Portrait of Giovanni de Medici”:** The color is natural. There is no background. The details are depicted fastidiously. In this portraiture the gesture and the outfit of the child reflects a contradiction. His outfit is in accordance with where he lives and reminds his being a member of an aristocratic family. But the gesture reveals that he is just a baby. The dress is contradictory with his age.



Figure 4.72: Bronzino *Portrait of Giovanni de Medici*, 1549, Tempera on wood, 58x45.6 cm. Uffizi Gallery, Florence

**“Portrait of Eleonora of Toledo”:** The color is very bright. The background, a red curtain, is in a way abstract. Elongation is in the sublime. The details are depicted meticulously. Her expression is very cold.

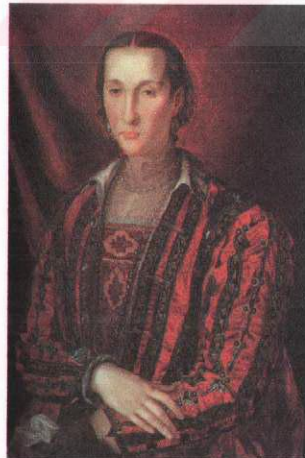


Figure 4.73: Bronzino *Portrait of Eleonora of Toledo*, 1560, Oil on wood, National Gallery, London



**“Portrait of Eleonora of Toledo with Her Son Giovanni de Medici”:** The color is natural. There is no background. Elongation of the hands is detected. The details are given meticulously. The dress of Giovanni contradicts with his childlike face.



Figure 4.74: Bronzino *Portrait of Eleonora of Toledo with Her Son Giovanni de Medici*, 1550, Tempera on wood, 115x96 cm. Uffizi Gallery, Florence

**“Portrait of Maria de Medici”:** The color is natural. There is no background. This is another portrait of a child reflecting the same features of contradiction. The portrait does not reveal anything about her just emphasizes the nobility and the dignity. The excessiveness of her dress is contrasting with the age. The details are given meticulously.



Figure 4.75: Bronzino *Portrait of Maria de Medici*, 1551, Tempera on wood, 52.5x38 cm. Uffizi Gallery, Florence

### 4.3 The Transitions Of Early Mannerists

**Pontormo:** Although he depicted independently from 1513 on until 1518 his compositions contained classical elements like the background. The use of color in his compositions, influenced by his master, always had the distinctive feature and gradually became independent. The altarpieces of “Joseph Altarpieces” (Fig. 4.76) exemplified freedom in his usage of color. The color didn’t have any connection with the theme of the painting, it stood for its own. During the 1520s the expression of his compositions intensified, Mannerism was elaborated. He was neither searching for perspective, nor trying to represent a rational world. The only obligation was to create an interesting design.





Figure 4.76: *Joseph in Egypt*





Figure 4.77: *Visdomini Altarpiece*

With “Visdomini Altarpiece” (Fig. 4.77) the features of the Mannerist style, which was coming forth, were realized. In this composition the rejection of the background, stressed expressions, influence of Michelangelo and dissonance of the color with the subject could be observed. He had the chance to see Michelangelo working on Medici Chapel, which in effect caused the biggest influence. The meticulous rendering of details was the result of Dürer and the northern painters’ influence due to the availability of the prints. When he was painting secular scenes he was more natural. His expressionism was increasing as he was getting mature. Elongation and distortion were more recognizable; rejection of background, usage of fictitious background and dissonant colors became the characteristics of his style. The influence of Michelangelo was distinctive at the saints he painted at Santa Felicità. He was at the peak point of his art with the painting of “Deposition” (Fig 4.78), which epitomized the mannerist features, the rejection of background, supreme dissonant colors, elongation, distortion and exaggerated expressions. He used ornamental beauty derived from classicism with the liberty of form and expression where his figures were profound in emotion.





Figure 4.78: *Deposition*

He caricaturized the classical subjects. Some claim that distortion was his own taste and others claim that he was influenced by the drawings of “Last Judgement”(Clark, 1956: p.323). The figures Rosso and he painted of contemporary society gave expression to the extremity of human spirit, to bewilderment and escapes into mockery (Becherucci, 1964: p.455).

In the paintings of Pontormo one confronts a prototype physical appearance; tall with long legs, symmetrical oval face containing wide open eyes and a half open mouth which reflects all the feelings (Murray, 1967: p.152).

A change in style is detected in the painting of “Martyrdom of St. Maurice and Theban Legion” (Fig. 4.79). It had features more in common with “Moses Defending the Daughters of Jethro”. The two-dimensionality of the figures was stressed, the perspective was rejected and the nudes reflecting an influence from Michelangelo



were depicted from each side. The figures in the composition served to demonstrate the ability of the artist to design figures apart from any meaning.

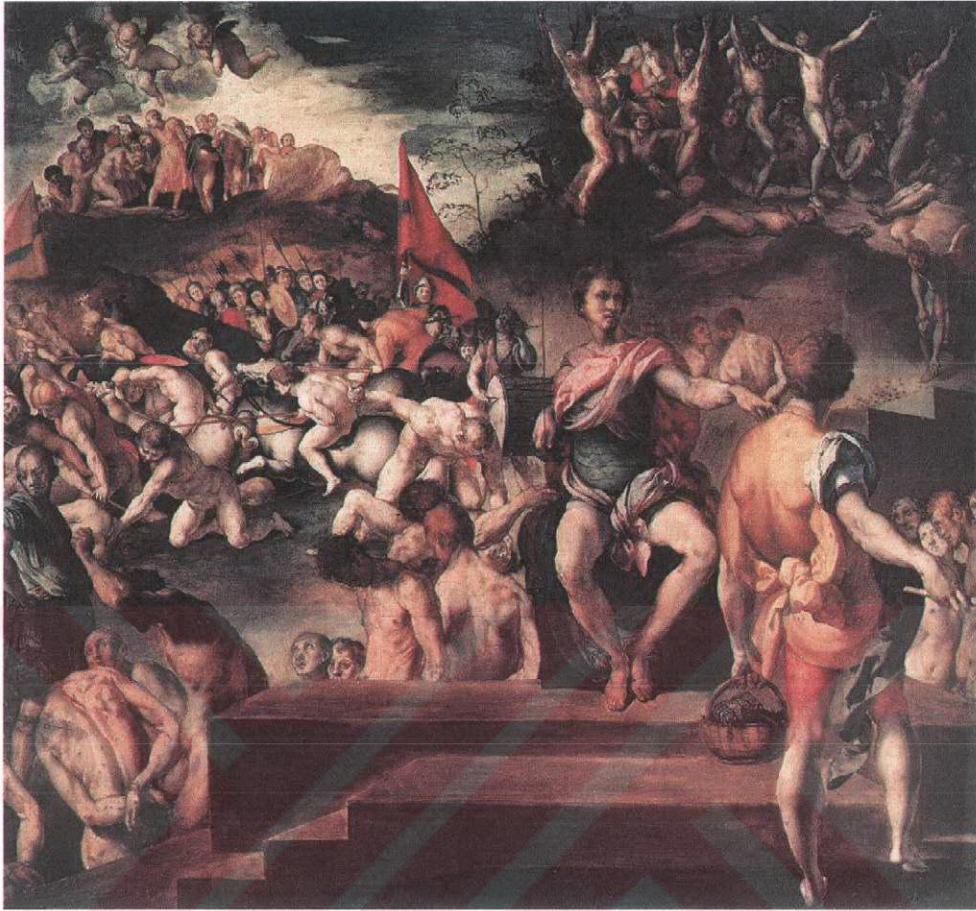


Figure 4.79: *Martyrdom of St. Maurice and Theban Legion*

**Rosso:** His first paintings, dated 1516, were still classical. He depicted figures in clouds. The color of the composition was in accordance with the subject. The faces of the figures were geometrical as if influenced by Egyptian Art. After 1518 the rejection of background or the usage of fictitious background were to be realized. The painting "Descent from Cross" (Fig. 4.80) dated 1521 could be the first full example of his new style. The excessive peculiarity of expression, the usage of dissonant colors, the elongation, the hustle and bustle and influence of Michelangelo could be detected. Emotion tended toward abnormality in his paintings. His figures expressed the extremity of human spirit. The religious and secular themes fused. His secular and religious paintings shared the same features.





Figure 4.80: *Descent from Cross*

“Moses Defending the Daughters of Jethro” (Fig. 4.81) was the exaggerated sample of his style. The fictitious background, the two-dimensionality of the figures, the rejection of depth, exaggerated expression was at its peak point. His muscular figures were influenced from Michelangelo. Rosso’s concern was form. When he was in Rome he depicted “Dead Christ with Angels” (Fig.4.82). The composition where he used some classical elements such as grace revealed some differences from his previous works; in away departed from his earlier extremity. Apart from the rejection of background, also the dissonant colors, the influence of Michelangelo, the elongation and distortion could be observed. At the beginning his style was protest against the classical, but as he got mature he tolerated some classical values such as grace and ornamental function of a work of art.

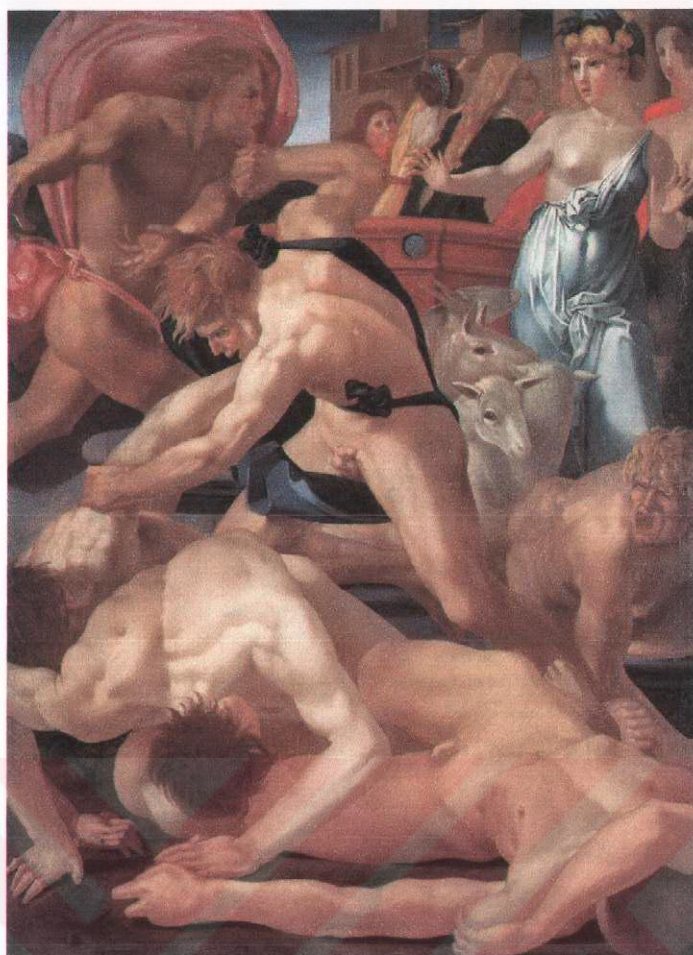


Figure 4.81: *Moses Defending the Daughters of Jethro*



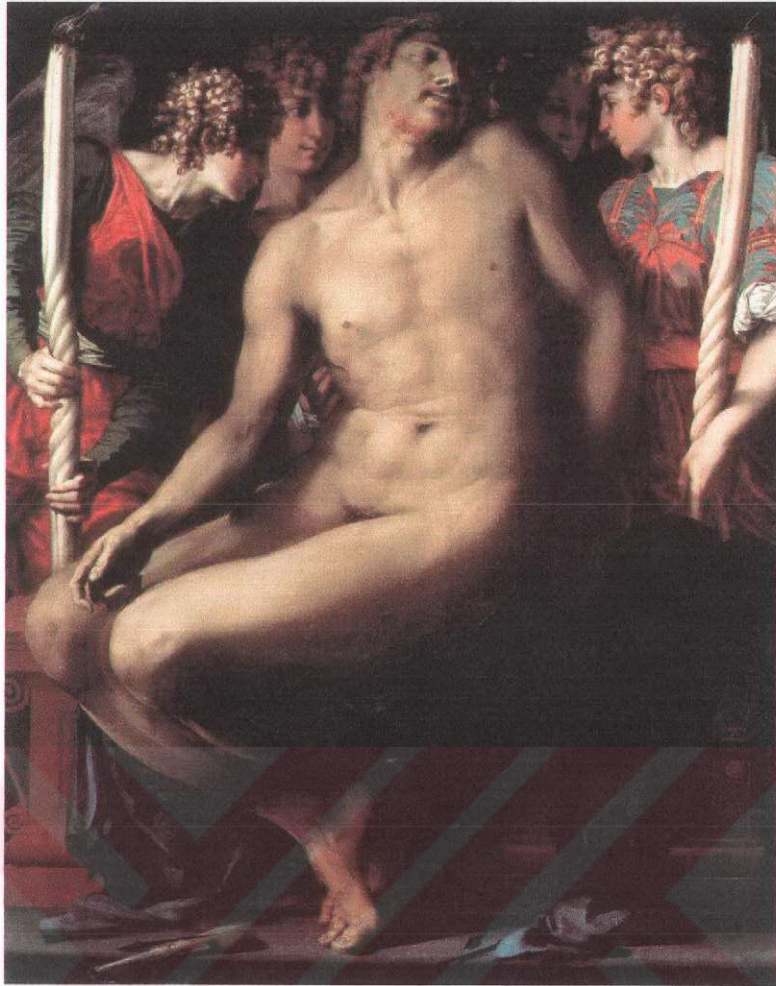


Figure 4.82: *Dead Christ with Angels*

He moved to France at 1530 and was commissioned under Francis I, his style changed to be decorative which lacked the expressiveness of his former paintings.

**Beccafumi:** Living in Siena he worked with traditional values when compared to other mannerists where he fused the features of Mannerism with the classical composition setting of High Renaissance. He used lucid colors sometimes dissonant with subject, in the setting of the Renaissance. The expression of his figures was more moderate than the other mannerist painters. He was in Rome between 1510-1512. At about 1520s in his depiction of secular works he used elongation, distortion and fictitious background and stressed the sensuality of the figure. After 1535 the mannerist features like two-dimensionality, elaborate contraposta, extraordinary perspective, strong expression, and the influence of Michelangelo and grace of Raphael revealed itself more than before. Grace gradually became apparent and the usage of dissonant colors increased. He like Rosso depicted figures in the clouds. The influence of Michelangelo and Raphael, abstraction, unidentified space and grace became the sublime with the painting of "Annunciation" (Fig. 4.83).





Figure 4.83: *Annunciation*

**Parmigianino:** He painted in mannerist style although the rendering of light revealed the influence of his master Coreggio who depicted in Baroque style. In his first paintings, for example “Cupid Cutting a Bow” (Fig. 4.84) and “The Holy Family”, the proportions were more natural compared to his later works. Since the beginning of his career the sweetness of his cupids and the fictitious background could be detected. His style distinctively matured from 1520s to 1530s although his death in an early age caused a short period for him to work. As he got mature the main features of his style like the elongation and the grace of the figures started to be observed more easily. At “Rest in the Flight to Egypt” (Fig. 4.85) the grace of Parmigianino revealed itself. “The Vision of St. Jerome” (Fig. 4.86) drew ideas of form and movement from Michelangelo. In this period the rejection of background or the usage of fictitious background, grace and elongation became the characteristics of his style.



Figure 4.84: *Cupid Cutting a Bow*



Figure 4.85: *Rest in the Flight to Egypt*



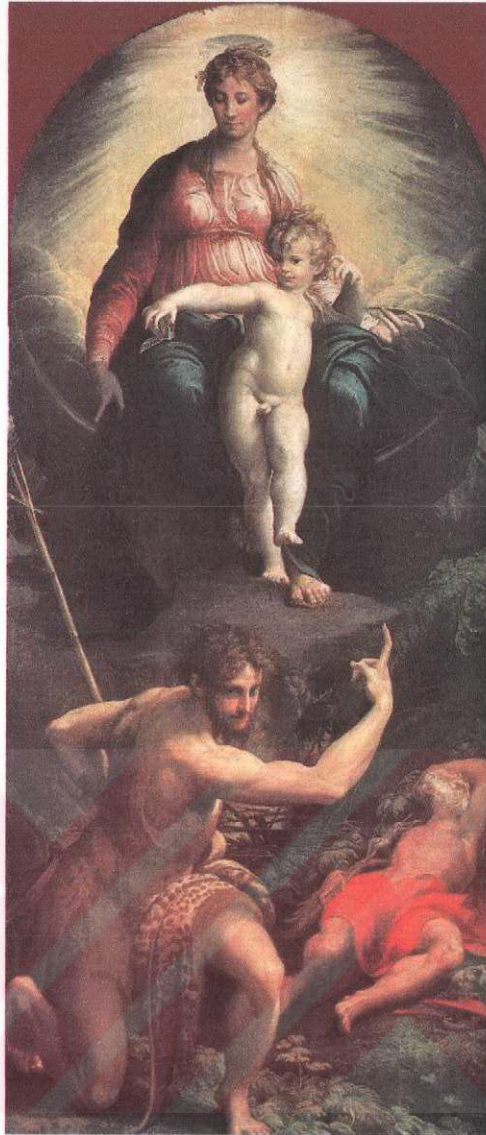


Figure 4.86: *Vision of St. Jerome*

The religious paintings could not be differentiated from the secular ones. Sensuality and artificial loveliness came forward especially in his religious paintings between 1528 and 1530. He transformed the human being to an artificial grace. Although he used classical elements, every element turned to be a creative deformation of its classical character and meaning. His later works enjoyed the fictitious background, ultra grace, elongation, sensuality and loveliness. The Counter-Reformation also affected the later paintings of Parmigianino where the traces could be observed in “Madonna and Child with St. Stephen, John the Baptist and a Donor” dated 1538-1540. In this painting his usage of grace and sensuality vanished.

**Bronzino:** Influence of Pontormo, his master, and indirectly influence of Michelangelo was strong on his style. His paintings showed mannerist features such as fictitious background or relegation of background. He spent 1546 and 1547 in

Rome. Michelangesque bodies in his compositions gave the marble effect, elongation and grace were detected. His religious compositions lacked the intensity of expression of former Early Mannerists; they were cold compositions and in accordance with the tendency of Later Mannerism form interested him more than the content. "Venus, Cupid, Folly and Time" (Fig. 4.87) stood as a very good example of his religious compositions. Freedberg stated that he transformed the form of Pontormo into crystalline immobility. Distortion and influence of Michelangelo increased whereas background vanished. He never gave the whole reality but revealed the surfaces and fragments.



Figure 4.87: *Venus, Cupid, Folly and Time*

In his portraits he presented the sharpest observation and severe discipline of pictorial pattern. In his first portraits fictitious background was observed but later background became to be abstract, elongation was continually the characteristic. The



portraits documented the social atmosphere of the sophisticated, self-consciously aristocratic world (Fig. 4.88). The Counter-Reformation began to disrupt the exquisite balance of his style. His artistic life revealed the transition from the early stages to classical perfection.



Figure 4.88: *Portrait of Lucrezia Panciatichi*



## 5. EVALUATION AND CONCLUSION

The aim in the Renaissance was accordance between art and reality. The artists were trying to achieve the rendering of the mathematical reality on the two dimensional surface. From the early dates of the Renaissance, figures acquired three-dimensionality and revealed facial expressions instead of the examples of the flatter scenes of mediaeval. They started to stand as groups instead of superimposing on a background. The figures appeared three-dimensional because of their plasticity and created their own space built up on an abstract geometrical pattern. The composition in the Renaissance was uniformed, balanced, and organized, rational, symmetrical and objective. The color was natural and in accordance with the subject matter. The most important item was the definiteness of the form whereas light and shadow were means to define the form. The shortening and perspective were the main characteristics.

There were usually three planes of a Renaissance painting depending on the composition. If it was an outdoor composition at the front the main story took place and the main figures stood, at the back the nature, the city or a monumental building rose which was a real and a natural setting and at the third plane the sky was located. It became important to depict the room, street or countryside (Hale, 1993: p.215). If it was an indoor composition all the details of the building were depicted meticulously.

The achieved balance in composition led the main story to take place at the center and the protagonist to be effortlessly detected, due to its proportionality. The details served for the unity of the composition that helped the beholder concentrate on the work of art.

Chiarascuro, a term defining three dimensional objects being depicted using light and dark areas of color rather than stiff outlines, was used to construct the figures and to give the feeling of depth (Gombrich, 1976: p.228). The technique made figures appear full and real. The sfumato method, found by Leonardo, provided smoothened surfaces and figures. The atmospheric perspective implied to give impression of distance, and chromatic perspective gave the feeling of closeness or far distance by contrast of the colors.



The painting had to be in logical consistency of attitude to create a more natural impact (Hauser, 1965: p.148). Decorum was very important. The target was to take objects from nature and to idealize but artists showed different tendencies. The knowledge of science and the texts of ancient Greek led the artists to study nature in a direct way. Linear perspective construction helped objects to be represented in relative sizes and insured that the viewer looked through a window into a more orderly world. What was seen was more perfect and comprehensible than nature. The aim was idealization. Men became the measure and center of everything; paintings reflected his world and architecture his proportions. The objective side of everything was revealed. All the important things were within the picture where the trivial was vanished.

In the sixteenth century, after a period of distinctive rationality and objectivism, a crisis period was experienced. The chaos in Italy had certainly caused anxiety and insecurity in the artists; they were overwhelmed with the anguish of the era. The discoveries at the beginning of the century provided a double think about the generally accepted dogmas.

The inheritance of masters of the Renaissance stood as another motive for artists to find an alternative way of interpreting reality. They couldn't top it, therefore they had to create their subjective reality. Becherucci hinted that the essential form of art pursued in all aspects of nature was not changeless and static but the dynamic principle of the unending process of becoming; and this hint supports the mannerist painters' disposition. They were ambivalent, hovering in between a rejection of the world and acceptance of it. The dislocation of time and space was articulated by presenting the figures at different planes.

The quintessential values of the Renaissance were rejected in the Mannerist period so the hard-hitting question was what to put in their place? The most drastic transition in Mannerist period was the subjectivity of the artist and the rejection of perspective. Mathematical point of view vanished and objectivism was replaced with subjectivism. Reality was presented in a new mode, in a subjective way. Mannerist painters got rid of the captivity of perspective where space had to be constructed through the figures as subjective observation. The perception of reality in mannerist period was against the classical order, which abstracted life in the form of pyramids or circles and failed to include antithetical principles of disorder. It sought to develop the dual nature of truth that included recognition of the disjunction of life like psychological and spiritual (Glasser, 1991: p.25). It expressed the multiple realities of psychological experiences rather than earthly ones.

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The term to describe the beauty, which couldn't be reduced to formulas or rules, was grace in the sixteenth century. It was impossible to define but yet spiritually subjective and used in the place of sweetness, elegance (Burke, 1986: p.149). The skill of the artist at rendering the figures in a graceful manner was superior to the subject matter. The beauty of the work of art nearly became its subject; the concept was a novelty never been totally experienced until that time. The expression of artistic qualities came before the subject matter. Renaissance's decorum devalued, style was superior to decorum.

The consistence of complicated forms, lack of symmetry and stylistic uniformity were main features. The characteristics of the period were disproportion of the figures in relation with each-other, concentration on the human form and neglecting of its environment and discontinuity. Verticality, equivocal and implied expression and deformation of monumental setting were aimed for.

The composition had a spiral movement and possessed varied elements, all independent of each-other (Hauser, 1965: p.12). Its essence was in its transition and union of irreconcilable opposites. Its effect was increased with the over-dimensioned size of the figures. The bare, unfurnished stage gave the composition an abstract and unreal character. The deep, linear perspective space of High Renaissance painting flattened and obscured so that the figures appeared as decorative arrangement of forms in front of a flat background of indeterminate dimensions. The classical *contra-posta* turned into *figura-serpentinata*, flame-like figures. When the concern was nude, all the humanist type of nude aimed at from the Greeks on, the rounded limbs and the full forms were abandoned (Clark, 1956: p.250). The aim was rendering of the nude in complex and artificial poses.

The fragmentation of spatial space was attained. Space became a medium in which man moves as in an alien world. In accordance with other features of the period, figure and space, man and his environment didn't belong to each other. The rendering of the figures and the fictitious space suggested the beholder an illusionary space and self-deception necessary to the artistic experience.

The main theme was displaced from the center of the picture. Principal figures were displaced in one side; subsidiary figures were emphasized; symmetrical and axial arrangement was distributed irregularly by distribution of the light over the composition. Lightening of the colors and elongation of the form diminished the plasticity of the figures and created the impression of dematerialization. The tendency was idealism, grace, richness, expressiveness and variety.



Mannerists sought for refinement of form and concept, by pushing exaggeration to great limits where the results were strange spatial relationships, jarring juxtapositions of intense and unnatural colors, an emphasis on abnormalities of scale, sometimes totally an irrational mix of classical motifs and other visual references to the antique, inventive, classical beauty beside ugliness and grotesque pictorial fantasies (Britannica Online, <http://www.britannica.com>, 16.7.2001). Mannerist features were observed in other branches of arts as well. Irrational inversion of the relation of mass and support was the symptom of Mannerism in architecture. This was, in a way, the new language of architecture.

The subject matter also changed in Mannerism especially when the religious paintings were the concern. The Old and New Testaments from the Bible were the subjects. The Old Testament was filled with prophecy, history of Christ's forebears and examples of godly and ungodly. The New Testament instead dealt with life, teaching of Christ along with additional examples of the righteous. The art commissioned by the church drew inspiration from the New Testament. The Church restricted the artists when they were depicting scenes from the New Testament, but the restriction was looser when it was from the Old Testament. On the contrary the Mannerists were fond of scenes of confrontation, violence and nudity from the Old Testament. Secular patrons commissioned them to paint a wide range of themes also in religious paintings towards the end of the century.

As patterns of admiration changed in life and was adapted by the art world, social change in the attitude led to less naturalism in art. Beauty and discipline no longer satisfied the artist; harmony with nature was no longer regarded as an open proposition (Hauser, 1965: p.6). The artistic spontaneity originated with but not from nature. Artificial overcame nature. It turned everything into artistic, artificial, artful form remote from nature. The mannerist artists based their forms on idealizations made by High Renaissance artists and took one step farther from experience of nature and nearer to aesthetic abstraction.

There was a change in taste from natural to fantastic, from simple and modest to difficult, complex and splendid. Symbolism started to be important. Fantastic representation of animal and human and floral forms running into each other and delight in animal grotesque increased. Fantasies, dreams and the imagination rendered with artifice and theatricality. Curiosity could be sensed in the mannerist work of art. Mannerism was an art expressing the unease, anxiety and bewilderment.

As grotesque was appreciated, the artificial style was something that the sixteenth century artist's aimed for (Shearman, 1967: p.18). It would be a big mistake to



appraise mannerist artworks with the same values of today. To like or dislike the artificiality of the past would be the subjective opinion of today but what should be done is to recognize that the taste of the public interested in art was in artifice and grotesque. The task of the artist was the amusement and excitement of the beholder. The work of art was valued for its capacity to excite wonder, to create oddities and odd features. Mannerist works of art were made to be enjoyed (Sherman, 1967: p.181).

The obscurity of the composition was appraised. The facility, being understood at once was disdained. Metaphor and anything that showed reality indirectly like mirror, mask and costume were requisites of Mannerism. Mirror was the means that best symbolize the mannerist idea of art, its inherent paradox, unreality, brilliance and magic. Mask symbolized the falseness. The individual revealed himself through his acts and movements (Chastel, 1968: p.12). The obscurity of the artwork served for the household of the court as a means to occupy them with. Natural simplicity applied in Renaissance was one way of achieving beauty but the artists of Mannerism explored other ways; less direct way of getting interesting effects for sophisticated art lovers.

The distortion in visual arts served to question their own identity. Life was disguise and dissimulation and art helped to disguise life (Hauser, 1965: p.50). Mannerist works were open to as many readings as possible in regard of their closeness to the life themes. They used paradoxes. The spiritual could be hinted by distortion of the form.

The mannerists used antique elements to enrich a scene, which provided an abstract setting for historical scenes (Chastel, 1968: p.78). Michelangelo's depictions of Christ like an Apollo, and Parmigianino's depiction of Madonna in a sensual way meant that the religious paintings were done in a secular manner. The religious pictures started to be fantastic; the artist selected something from the antique, something symbolic and something from the divine and combined them. While the south, mainly Italy, was depicting even the religious pictures in a secular manner in the north, due to the reform movement, people were destroying every object in the churches.

Hauser, at one of the seminars in 1968, epitomized Mannerism in a very comprehensive way with the following sentence. "From the beginning of Renaissance until the end of Impressionism the aim of pictorial representation was the reduction of sensual expression to its visual elements, the rendering of purely optical impressions and nothing more than what the eye could take in a single



moment and a single glance. The exclusion from the picture everything known but not seen, or seen at different moment of time from that represented. Mannerism was the only phase of development in which the continuity of this process was interrupted.” According to him, Mannerism survived as an undercurrent in the history of western art. It reoccurred and manifested itself of stylistic revolution associated with spiritual crisis.

Not only in painting but also in every branch of arts like sculpture, architecture the effect of Early Mannerism can be felt. The arts produced at that time went side by side with painting. Within the sixteenth century, irrational usage of architectural elements corresponded with the features in painting like irrational usage of light and color. At the second half of the sixteenth century the creative and the original features vanished and replaced with a courtly character.

Late Mannerism (1550-1580) represented an age of decoration, courtly character, dealt more with the outlook and reflected this attitude explicitly. The new court especially in Florence introduced a new and artificial aristocracy (Shearman, 1967: p.135). The art in this period served as a means of the despot’s political propaganda, in Italy Cosimo’s. The artistic freedom and liberalism vanished in the political scene as in the arts scene.

The strong belief in making drawings from the masters increased at the time of the Late Mannerism and made them very strict academicians (Semler, 1998: p.27). The artists needed some sort of institution for guiding their interests and training young artists. The structure of artistic production was formed by academies at the second half of the sixteenth century. The earliest was Academia del Disegno founded by Vasari in Florence in 1562.

The devaluation of religious works in 1560s could be connected with the lack of decorum. A change in style in religious art became apparent in 1560 in the last years of the Council of Trent (Sherman, 1967: p.169). The themes of most of the Mannerist paintings were so obscure that they could only have been chosen by a trained theologian (Blunt, 1962: p.131). This claim proved the emerged collaboration between artists and priests with the Counter-Reform. The Counter-Reformation changed the Early Mannerist’s freedom of depiction. When the secure lands under the Christendom began to shake the artistic period as a result transformed.

The convening of the Council of Trent meant the end of liberalism in church’s relationship with arts. The theologians supervised the art produced for church purposes and the painters had to keep strictly to the instructions of their spiritual



advisers (Blunt, 1962: p.110). Artists had to conform to the canonic form of Biblical stories and official interpretations. In its last session in 1561 the Council of Trent defined the role assigned to arts and religious imagery was admitted and welcomed as a support to religious teaching. Pope Pious IV first ordered the covering of the nudes in “Last Judgement” and in 1566 ordered the removing of some parts.

The style continued with undiminished vigor and conviction in secular and decorative works in Italy. Figurative art was being invaded and overwhelmed by decorative tendency (Chastel, 1968: p.108).



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Pelin Uran was born in 1974. She studied at Kadiköy Anatolian High School in Istanbul. Her undergraduate degree was from Mimar Sinan University History of Art & Archeology Department. In 2000 she started to her master degree in Istanbul Technical University, History of Art Department.

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