

The Reflection of the Renaissance on Education, Society and Women

Luofan Liang^{1,a,*}

¹Goldsmith University of London, Lewisham, London, SE14 6NW, United Kingdom
a. llian002@campus.goldsmiths.ac.uk

*corresponding author

Abstract: After the Black Death, many people began to question their faith, and when the split in the church and the confrontation between the Pope and the Emperor greatly limited the ability of religion to control the minds of the common people, humanism developed and once again put the care of the individual at the centre of humanity, people's beliefs, and value shift drastically. "Art is the reflection of the society" – so as other factors that exist in the same period. Seeing this revolutionary period of human history from different perspectives – from the large western population to the small individual, every part of it is a reflection. The paper aims to reveal and portray the moment from three different points of view – Education, Society and Women by studying and analysing related and valuable topics researched. The paper will dive into different categories to analyse the impact and reflection of the Renaissance.

Keywords: Renaissance, education, society, women

1. Introduction

Renaissance is one of the milestones of human history – the rebirth. Europeans achieved limited advancements in science and art throughout the Middle Ages, which lasted from the fall of ancient Rome in 476 A.D. to the start of the 14th century. With the strong influence of history, reviving the strong, curious, and exploring humanity was what led to the rebirth of society. The influence of the Renaissance is incomparable especially to art – to the later Baroque and Rococo till contemporary nowadays. It stated a fundamental role in the development. Along with the current influence of society, the creation becomes timeless and tells the future generation a story about a significant period in history. Art is like a mirror of the big environment as people have different opinions and perspectives of the world. At that stage, a big environment has been reflected in the outcome - art/literature and moments. The most consequential rebirth in the renaissance is art, as a subject that is an imitation of life, but not 'copying life' - artists and creators were adding their thought and understanding into their creations.

Education emerged with the emergence of human society and developed with its development, thus demonstrating the historical nature of education. The aims, systems, contents, methods and means of education have all changed accordingly with the development of human society. In this order, there are primitive societies, slave societies, feudal societies, capitalist societies and socialist societies. Education in different social forms has its characteristics and varies from one historical period to another within the same social formation. Education is therefore education in development,

education in society, and a living education. Renaissance paintings or statues gradually changed from religious symbols, allegories, or depictions of saints to depictions of common people's or individual lives.

Renaissance artworks were the product of the liberation of Europe after the Black Death and the great schism of the Western Church in the eleventh century. The artistic form of the Renaissance grew in Italy, with the Medici family leading the way in funding the property of various Renaissance artists. By focusing on how women have been portrayed in art and cultures during the historical era people have chosen as the mirror of reality, people can determine how well women have been understood throughout the decades. There is much to discuss regarding women in art and about themselves because of the social contract and the inherent beauty of women. Women's experiences and needs are seen as significant factors in determining how real and ideal images of women are produced and consumed. The differences in art by and for women also provoked new reflections on the specificity of women as creator consumers and subjects of visual culture [1]. The focus of this paper is addressing the reflection of the renaissance on a different subject.

2. Social Factors in Renaissance

2.1. Education

Education can determine society in some ways because what has been taught and how the information is spread is what the society value – humans as the creation of their environment, what people value, believe and behave are influenced and taught by the environment they are in.

In ancient Greek times, and even in the Middle Ages, the main relationship between gods and men was reflected in mythology, where gods were above men without being around them, and where gods were above men and in harmony and unity. The gods were thought to be the most perfect embodiment of the divine. The greatest difference between the gods and men centred on the extraordinary and miraculous powers of the gods, a desire and need for a better future for mankind and self-energy in a socially unproductive society - they placed their expectations on the gods [2].

When it comes to medieval views on education, the humanist ideas of ancient Greek culture profoundly impacted the development of European culture. In general terms, the humanist glow of the Renaissance was ignited by ancient Greek humanism, and while the two may appear to be the same, they are indeed different. After the gloom of the Middle Ages, gods and mankind were placed in the opposite position in Renaissance humanism. The revolution was sparked by Dante's *Divina Commedia*, which also marked the beginning of the Renaissance. Combined with the social conditions of the time, the rise of nascent capitalism, the progress of socialist productivity and the ability of people to pursue the lives they aspire to and control their destinies. Renaissance humanism also had a strong spirit of optimism compared to the ancient Greek period. Ancient Greek humanism was like the helpless cry of ancient ancestors in adversity for man to take charge of his vision. But it was limited by various social conditions. As society developed, human productivity and thought under the influence of the new age and the new culture developed to a point where it was sufficient to change the conditions of nature and the mythical thinking of man.

The most popular educationalism during the Renaissance was Humanist education which focused on the development of the individual in its aims of training, opposed asceticism in its teaching methods, respected the child's nature and believed that through education, an acquired power, the individual could be reshaped to transform society and nature. These are expressions of humanism, where the power of the human being, the value of the human being, is fully affirmed. Because education revived the ancient Greek concept of liberal education, the aims of education changed and took shape. The concept of playing with the human educational objectives shifted from training teachers in the Middle Ages to training gentlemen for coping with the stars. At the same time, the

moral outlook on education changed with the moral education centred on the doctrine of original sin that had begun to disintegrate.

2.2. The Society, Humanity, and Identity

Speaking through the whole period from a social perspective, what people think about the social concept, how people behave as individuals, what values they believed in, and what it is like as a historical period. During the medieval period, the establishment of church culture, which was used to propagate religious dogma and thwart heretics, was linked to the emergence and growth of education during the Medieval Era. People believed based on a piece of paper and a group of superiors because of the church's superior power. Living under these contracts limited people's thinking, not because they couldn't be innovative, but rather because they couldn't seek to broaden their perspectives and ideas, and even the human tendency to be curious was curbed. The emergence of the capitalist mode of production not only shook the foundations of medieval society, but also established the value of the individual, affirmed the meaning of real life, and promoted the development of secular culture, thus forming an ideology in opposition to religious and theocratic culture - humanism. Humanism affirms that man is the creator and master of life. They demand that literature and art express man's thoughts and feelings, that science should work for the welfare of life and that education should develop man's personality. That is, that thought, feeling and wisdom should be liberated from the fetters of theology. Thus, humanist scholars and artists advocated human nature against divinity, human rights against theocracy, and personal freedom against personal attachment.

Most of the figures in medieval art are so identical and exhibit rigid anatomy. The observer can scarcely tell them apart, which in some ways causes them to lose their individuality, even if they are the most inconsequential characters. Due to the concept that the divine was superior to humans and the lack of expression on the figures' faces due to ignorance of the human body's structure and disconnection from ancient Roman and Greek culture. Giotto was the first to add expressions and the first to use perspective to the figures in sacred religious paintings, and these religious figures were gradually given human emotions and came to life as a result of the development of the commercial economy, the rise of the Italian bourgeoisie, and the revival of humanist ideas [3].

There are numerous incredible paintings from the medieval era, such as Maesta Altarpiece by Duccio di Buoninsegna. However, upon closer inspection, the paintings all share the same characteristic of having signified topics than true creativity and experiments, due to the issue of relatively plain and uniform buildings [4]. As the art exhibit during the medieval period, the lack of anatomical correctness and volume, as well as minimal contrast between the facial features and being religiously oriented most of the time. Thoughts, concerns, and expressions cannot be seen in the paintings. People who live in this society naturally grow more closed up and more uniform as how the art is reflected. As Jacob Burckhardt has put it, the "discovery of man and the world" was inspired by this shift toward a more secular viewpoint and optimism towards the state of humanity [4]. Many people in the Renaissance, influenced by classical concepts, started to learn more about the world and its potential as human beings. In the renaissance in Italy, a new worldview that valued men's and women's worth and capacities came into being. The renaissance was an attempt to recreate the vanished culture of ancient Rome and Greek. Participants in the Renaissance in Italy strove to produce works that were on par with the ancients, whom they considered to be the height of civilization. An increased number of artists and patrons start sprouting through these centuries within the renaissance, because of the awakening of society, people start to explore and take lectures. With the initial interest of ancient Rome, humanism start spreading and developing, which is a major component of the humanism prevalent throughout the Renaissance was an appreciation for both nature and people. The human body's aesthetic appeal was no longer regarded as a sinful object of lust but rather as an amazing creation that merited investigation. It motivated designers and scientists to examine its

structure and purpose. In addition, with the influence of naturalism, artists create the piece, which is vibrant, life-like, and sensual. In contrast to medieval painting, characters in renaissance artwork (painting in particular) are more easily recognized as distinct persons with proportions. This might simply be a result of the superior anatomical, artistic, and technical education system, or it could be a result of the Greek and Roman resurgence, which is reawakening the concept of “self” and “identity” in the person. Paintings’ figures no longer appear to be the same, the motion that was shown has more flexibility to it, and even the subject matter was no longer just based on the Christian religion that predominated the art. Instead, both artists and clients would include their interests in their work. They exalted human intelligence and strength, lauded humanity’s perfection, and nobility, denounced religious dogma and feudal hierarchies, pushed for individuality, equality, and freedom, encouraged the growth of the human personality, demanded earthly happiness, and advanced scientific and cultural knowledge – anatomy, math, science, and other liberal and mechanical art were widespread, people started to not only improve but create.

3. Women

3.1. Women Artists/Creators

There are many brilliant women artists during mediaeval times that had never been mentioned nowadays that is because during the early mediaeval women often work alongside men as illustrators, embroiderers etc. But their work has never gotten enough recognition. With the dedication have been limited in addition to the social change, women faced several constraints that they did not have to deal with during the early medieval period as a result of the societal changes brought on by the Gregorian Reforms of the 11th century and the development of feudalism. These changes had an impact on convents as well, which led to a steady erosion in their prominence as institutions of higher study and places where women could once again rise to positions of authority.

Despite the Renaissance’s reputation as a time of rebirth, cultural progress, and intellectual growth, a key subject in the discussion of the lives of Renaissance women is the idea that women were denied all political rights and were seen as the legal property of those male figures. Increasing respect for culture can be seen in the abundance of oddities and artefacts that emerged from Renaissance Italian urban society. Even with the increasing cultural progress women artists during this period were still underrepresentation by other male artists due to society. As mentioned, art reflects society, which does not only include images on paintings, but also the whole history. Plautilla Nelli (1524–1588) was the first known woman artist of the Italian Renaissance. The work is elegantly presented, and they are as delicate as other well-known renaissance artists by the public now. Because of the inequality in education that women get back in the day, she copied work from other historians. She could have produced amazing work if she had been able to accurately depict figures from life-like men could, and her women were superior to her men because she could observe them more closely [5]. She was a pioneer character in art during the renaissance, developing her signature way of painting from her experiences and observations as a sister. Her signature appears in the rose hues that appear on her painting’s lips and cheeks as well as the sister’s habit’s organised use of drapery. Eyes move with the move into the golden glimpse of the skies, uniting the saint with an earthly god. The saint’s simple clothes are painted with powerful vertical and diagonal lines [6]. These signified that although women artists in the early renaissance were not dominant in the art market, they took different approaches. As Nelli succeeded in getting an education, rising to leadership within the convent and the art world despite the difficult road she had been through to get a position as such.

3.2. Women in Art

Women are frequently represented in art. They are not simply depicted by artists, but also frequently used as symbols for other aspects. Women in Renaissance art portrayed certain sets of aesthetic and social standards and values that were held by the artists and clients who commissioned the works since paintings of the period reflected cultural values and concepts rather than conventions and realities. Since the goal of the Renaissance was to resurrect the magnificence of the Greek and Roman cultures, numerous naked individuals are shown in Renaissance art. In addition to representing desire and other sensual delights, the Renaissance artists' representations of women's nudity also served to revive ancient Greece and Rome and their platonic ideas of goddess perfection and the ideal beauty - a particular physical repeatedly idealized portrait of women as a 'the standard beauty of having a high and round forehead and defining the structure of cheeks and jaw with the thin eyebrow [7, 8].

Women's nudity or figure somewhat indicates the innocence, purity, and values that society added to and expected from women. This point can also be proven by the role that women in were in renaissance artwork [9]. The humanist influence in many places during the renaissance, viewers and artists had different standards and perspectives in the way they viewed and created art - in Tiziano Vecelli's (Titian) *Venus of Urbino*. The woman in the work of art is full of humanity, a flesh and blood body full of life, with a voluptuous and perfect body and a dignified appearance, both youthful and charming, healthy and mature, and embodying the fundamental spirit of the Renaissance's open humanity. She transforms the pastoral mood of the past, which positioned Venus in an idyllic landscape, and challenges feudal asceticism with concrete and realistic artistic images. Titian was influenced by Giorgione's *Sleeping Venus*, which shows a nude woman lying on her side. The woman in Titian's painting is seen in her bedroom, which enhances the realism of the situation. At the other end of the room, two servants who may have been observing are looking through the cupboards for something to wear for her. The small dog on the bed is unimpressed with the show and is curled up in a ball. Despite bearing the name of the goddess Venus, the *Venus of Urbino* depicts a stunning naked woman in a normal context. She is not only depicted indoors, but the author also shows her with her eyes wide and a provocative expression. In essence, the artist is portraying a stunning naked woman in her context, including her surroundings, dynamics, and emotion, which reflect not only the changing times but also the artist's sensitivity and awakening.

In contrast to Giorgione's *Sleeping Venus*, Titian's *Venus of Urbino* moves away from controlled classical beauty and instead expresses the secular beauty of flesh and blood and soul to great effect. Titian sings and celebrates the joys of life, borrowing from the legendary goddess of love to depict the beautiful naked woman on earth. In the premise that Renaissance artists often used the nude to represent a Platonic beauty. *Venus of Urbino* subtly combines the sacredness of Venus with the eroticism of mortal women, reflecting the changing perceptions of the time and the artist's desire to create expressions of these controversial themes [10].

4. Conclusions

The result of the study is expected and unexpected at the same time. With the study and knowledge, a deeper side of the renaissance has been revealed personally. This paper seeks the period of the Renaissance from different perspectives and reflects how the renaissance influenced the subjects. Education can sum up how knowledge is disseminated as it might have an impact on society in several ways. In addition, in a society where Humanists started disagreeing with "divinity" and "divine rights," as well as "humanity" and "divine rights." They claimed that man, not God, should be at the centre of everything because they were extremely unhappy with the Church's dominion over the spiritual realm. A special group of people has been studied in the paper – Women. 'Women' is a topic that is always under the spotlight, seeing the era with people's eyes as women at the time and artwork, this

paper studies women can help to explore and study Renaissance with a different approach and see the time with a different interpretation, not just seeing Renaissance as a period which is dominated by Leonardo Da Vinci, Michelangelo and other male artists that “represent” the time. To conclude, the renaissance is an inspirational historical period that not only affects humanity and contributed to art. From the following art movements Baroque and Rococo to contemporary even digitals nowadays, the impact of the renaissance continently influences artists’ acts and stimulates the creativity of artists timelessly can be seen in the art piece. The difference between the prevalent method of patronage support of artists observed in the Renaissance, consider digital art is done in a corporate professional environment in entertainment sectors like video games. Comparing important and small works from the Renaissance side by side with the sketches that show the artists’ early conceptions of those works today may reveal the act of producing in combination as a digital artist. But certainly, it is not just a superficial influence on the creating process and aesthetic, but also a great innovation and development of the artist’s pioneering ideas and artistry.

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