Part III
The Baroque
Prelude
The Baroque World

- Baroque Period (c. 1600-1750)
- The term Baroque (originally a pejorative) “...is problematic because the period encompasses a broad range of developments, both historic and artistic, across an expansive geographic area.” (Gardner’s Art Through the Ages p. 608)
The Baroque World

- Portuguese word *barroco* = an irregular pearl (Adams p. 425)
- Baroque Style “... is characterized by theatrical, expansive, and even violent subject matter and the disruption of Renaissance order and symmetry. By eliminating the regulated linear perspective used in the Renaissance, Baroque artists achieved a new sense of dynamic tension.” (Adams p. 427)
Baroque Style

• grand size or spectacle
  - to impress

• elaborate ornamentation (or metaphors)
  - sometimes called “conceits” in literature and drama

• dramatic use of light in painting

• “surprising” effects like illusionism

• intense emotion
  - affections in music
Louis XIV

- le Roi-Soleil “sun king”
- King of France; reigned 1643-1715
- divine right of kings
- part of the “Age of Absolutism”
- great arts patron
  - Lully, Molière, and Racine all worked at the French court
size and ornamentation to impress

Palace of Versailles
size and ornamentation to impress

St. Peter’s, Rome

inside St. Peter’s
Italian Baroque

• “... much of Italian Baroque art was aimed at propagandistically restoring Catholicism’s predominance and centrality. ... During the seventeenth century, dramatic theatricality, grandiose scale, and elaborate ornateness, all used to spectacular effect, characterized Italian Baroque art.”

[Gardner’s Art Through the Ages p. 609]
Elaborate Ornamentation
Pietro da Cortona *Triumph of the Barberini*
Elaborate Ornamentation

Pietro da Cortona  *Triumph of the Barberini*

- “The grandiose and spectacular *Triumph of the Barberini* overwhelms spectators with the glory of the Barberini family (and Urban VIII in particular).”

- “Divine Providence appears in a halo of radiant light, directing Immortality, holding a crown of stars, to bestow eternal life on the Barberini Family. The laurel wreath (also a symbol of immortality) reinforces the enduring Barberini legacy.”

- The bees are Barberini family symbols

- “The papal tiara and keys announcing the personal triumphs of Urban VIII (a member of the Barberini family) are also clearly visible.”

[Gardner’s Art Through the Ages pp. 626-627]
Art in the Baroque

dramatic use of light

Georges de la Tour
single light source (e.g., a candle)

Caravaggio
extremes of dark and light; dramatic
Art in the Baroque

dramatic use of light

Carvaggio’s
The Calling of St. Matthew

Gentileschi’s
Judith and Holofernes
the “surprise” of illusionism
Fra Andrea Pozzo, Glorification of St. Ignatius
Art in the Baroque
Italy

Bernini’s David
note the “action”; intense emotion

Michelangelo’s David
seems calm, in repose, relaxed
Philosophy and Science in the Baroque

• Baroque marks the maturing of Modern Philosophy (*Culture and Values* p. 383)

• turn from:
  - medieval focus on absolute and eternal
  - to Renaissance focus on particular and perceivable
  - scientific method, objective truth demonstrate objectively
Philosophy and Science in the Baroque

- for example, Motion:
  - Aquinas (1225-1274) discusses it abstractly; as metaphysical
  - Galileo (1564-1642) drops weights from the Tower of Pisa to see how bodies move in time and space
Philosophy and Science in the Baroque

- Important figures:
  - Galileo (1564-1642)
  - Rene Descartes (1596-1650)
  - Thomas Hobbes (1588-1679)
  - John Locke (1632-1704)
Philosophy and Science in the Baroque

• Galileo
  – (1564-1642) Italian
  – believed Copernicus was right
  – Church universe view Ptolemaic:
    – earth center of universe; sun, moon, planets revolve around it
  – felt Church officials incompetent to judge
  – held in house arrest at the end of his life
  – *Dialogue Concerning Two New Sciences* (1638)
Philosophy and Science in the Baroque

• René Descartes
  - (1596-1650) French
  - called “Father of Modern Philosophy”
  - first principles derived by Cartesian Doubt
    - doubt everything; what is left (indubitable) is truth
  - “Cogito, ergo sum” (I think therefore I am)
  - Discourse on Method (1637)
  - Meditations (1641)
Philosophy and Science in the Baroque

- Thomas Hobbes
  - (1588-1679) English
  - materialism
    - “All that is real is material, and what is not material is not real.”
    - Truth lies in material things
  - *Leviathan* (1651)
    - theory of society
    - denies a divinely established morality (without denying God’s existence)
    - laws created to protect humans from one another
    - individuals give up personal liberty for security
    - absolute ruler best government
Philosophy and Science in the Baroque

- John Locke
  - (1632-1704) English
  - British Empiricist
  - *Essay Concerning Human Understanding* (1690)
    - tabula rasa (blank slate)
    - argues against innate ideas in humans
    - instead we derive our ideas from experience and perception
  - Character on the TV show *Lost*
Literature in the Baroque
conceits (elaborate metaphors)

• Giambattista Marino from *Adonis*
• Marinism named for Marino’s style
• Marino known for elaborate conceits (fanciful expressions and elaborate metaphors)
• A “knot” is an elaborate metaphor
  - the nymph and satyr are knotted up having sex
  - So the knot theme starts as a physical knotting of their bodies
  - becomes knots as in tree wood
  - evolving into a symbol of their knotted relationship
• A metaphor of love

“Here on the edge of a bed I saw
A libidinous and lascivious satyr
Clutching in his close embrace
A most beautiful nymph, ...

Locked in this robust lover’s strong arms
...
She feigned at times to elude his grasp,
And all the while the shackles
Of that coarse and knotty embrace
Grew faster and closer than any bolt
That locks and binds wood.
...
And his goddess, who with loving knots
Has bound his heart, begins to provoke him
With witty speech and sly ways, and,
Mocking, goads and tempts him”

[In Umberto Eco *History of Beauty*, p. 232]
Literature in the Baroque

- Molière
  - French; playwright and actor
  - *Le Bourgeois Gentilhomme*
  - known for Comedies

- Cervantes
  - Spanish; early novelist
  - *Don Quixote*

- John Milton
  - English; poet
  - *Paradise Lost*