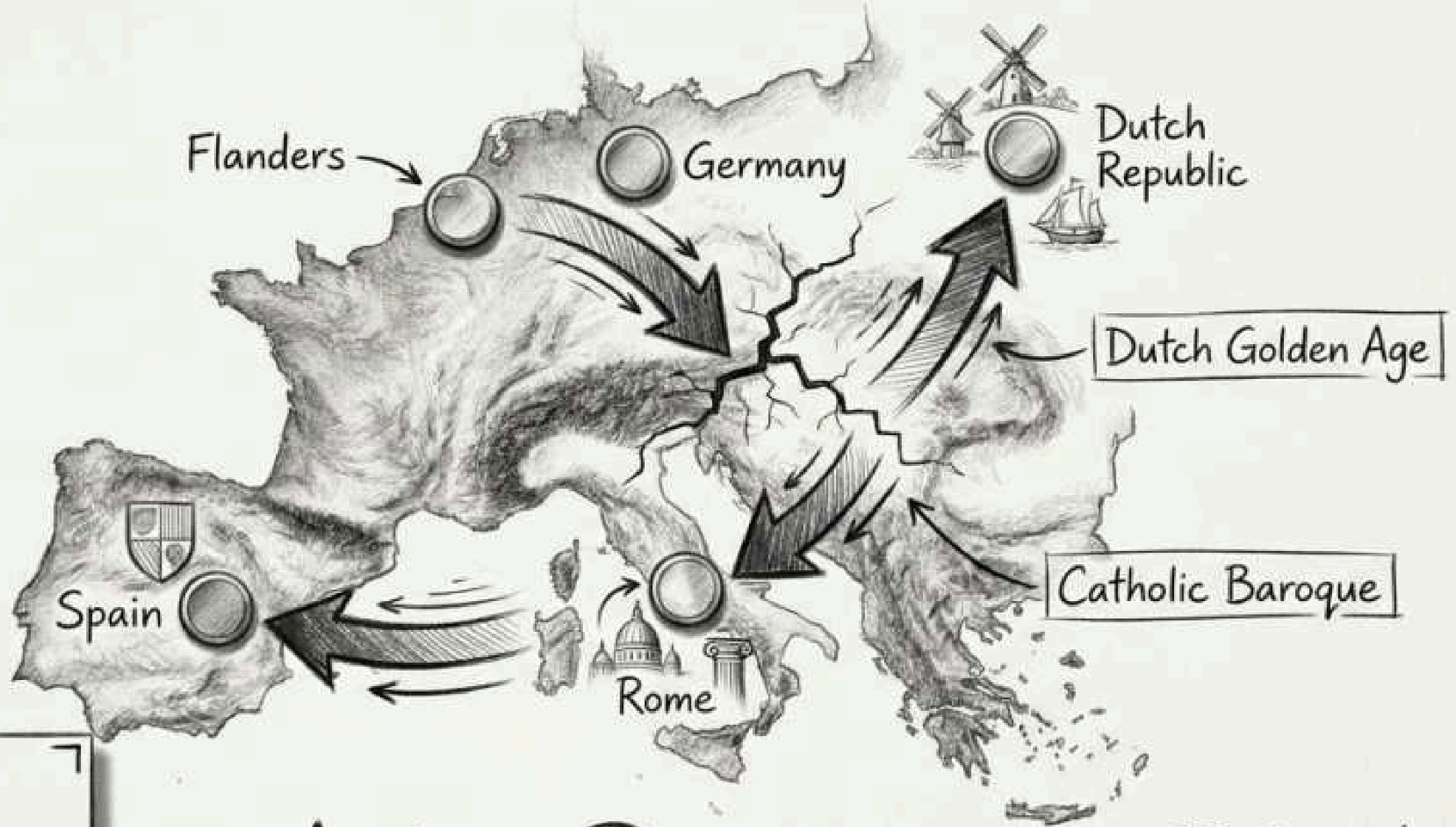
Northern Europe & The Baroque (1430–1700)

[¶ 2.1]



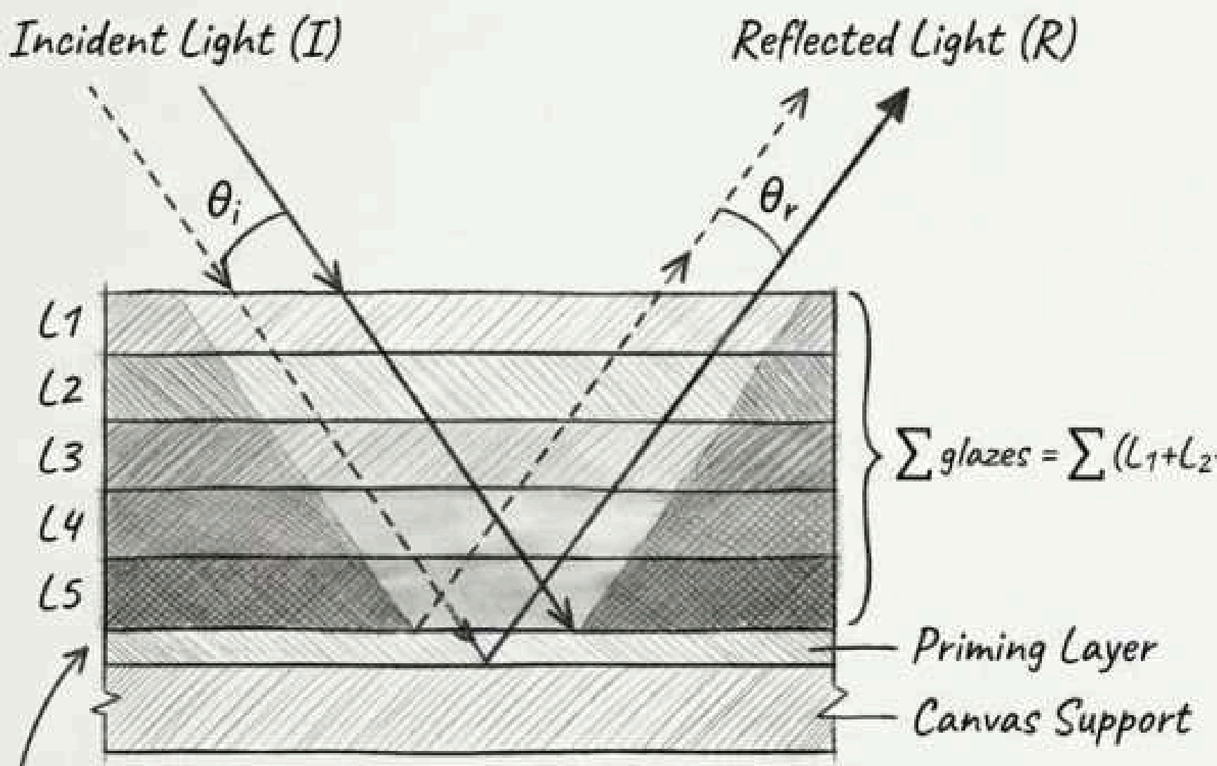
The Core Variable:

Who is paying, and what do they want to see?

Art = Patronage × Ideology

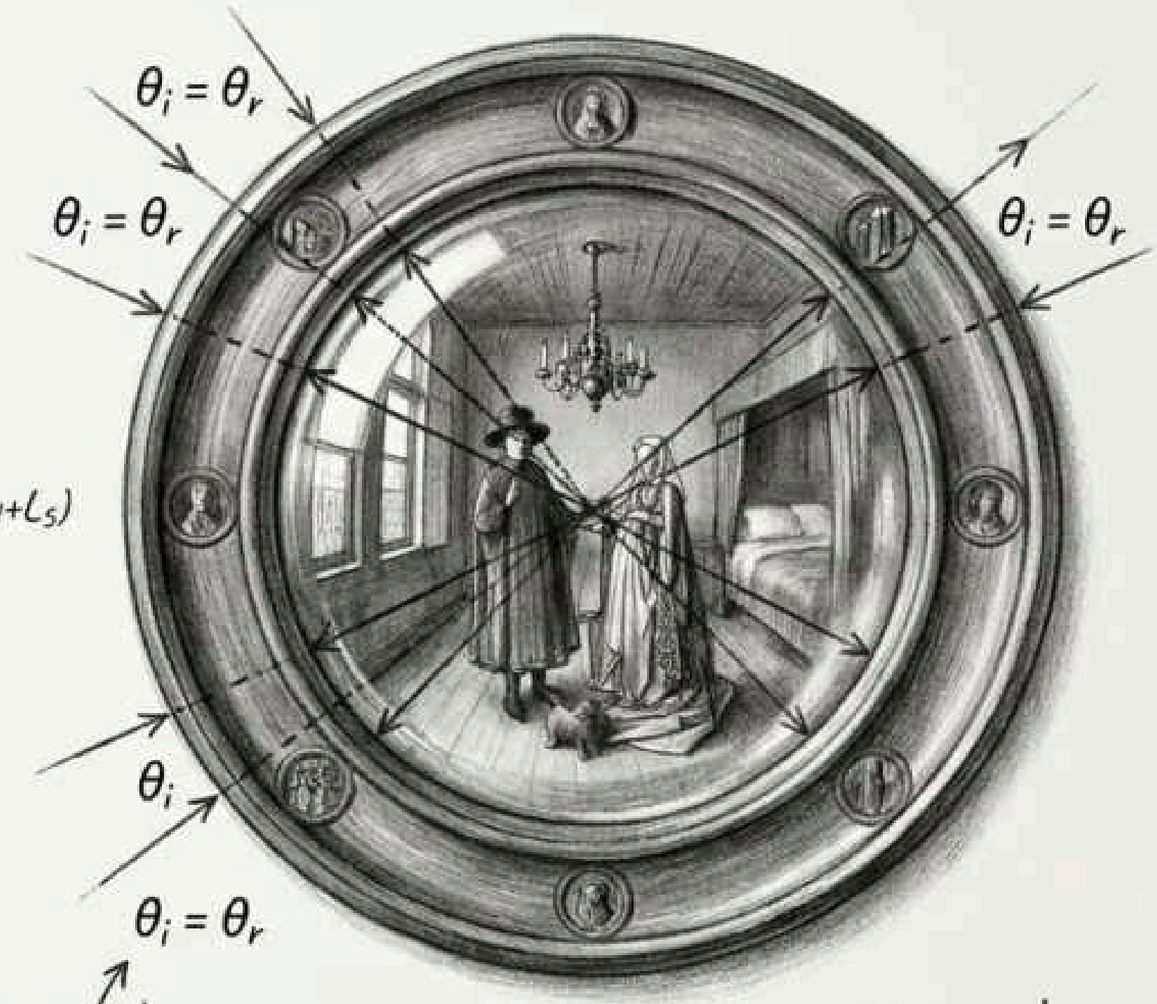
Jan van Eyck: The Perfection of Oil (1430s)

[¶ 2.2]



Microscopic detail achieved via translucent layering.

- ↳ Jewels
- ↳ Fur
- ↳ Glass

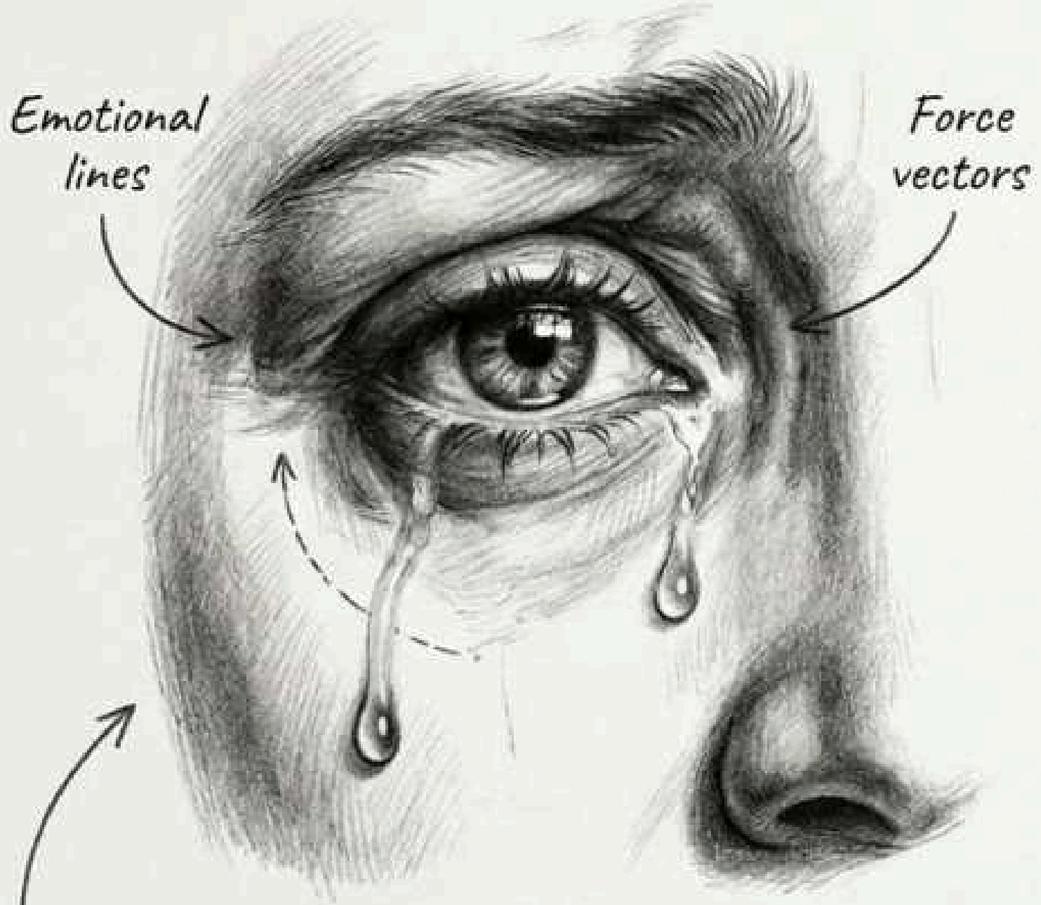


The mirror acts as a "witness statement".
Signature: Jan van Eyck was here in 1434.

Emotion vs. Strange Visions

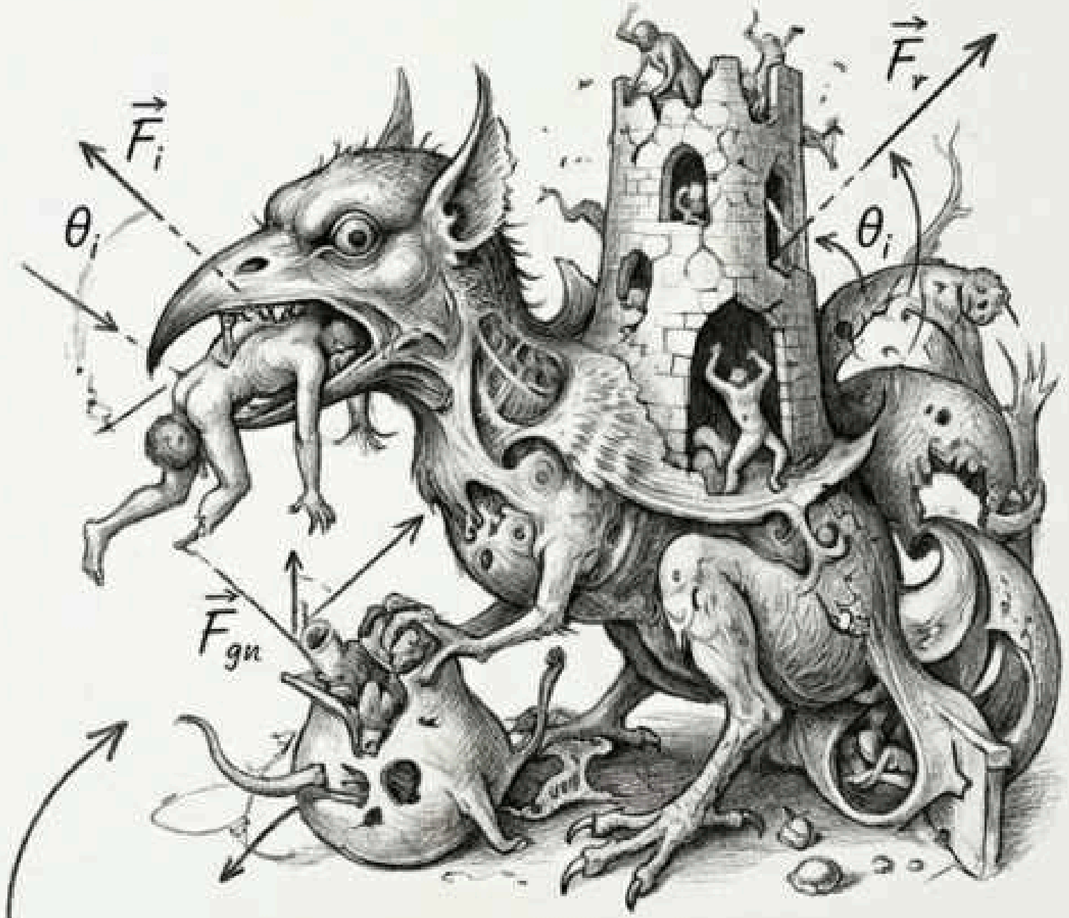
[¶ 2.3]

Rogier van der Weyden



Deeply emotional, moving religious realism.

Hieronymus Bosch

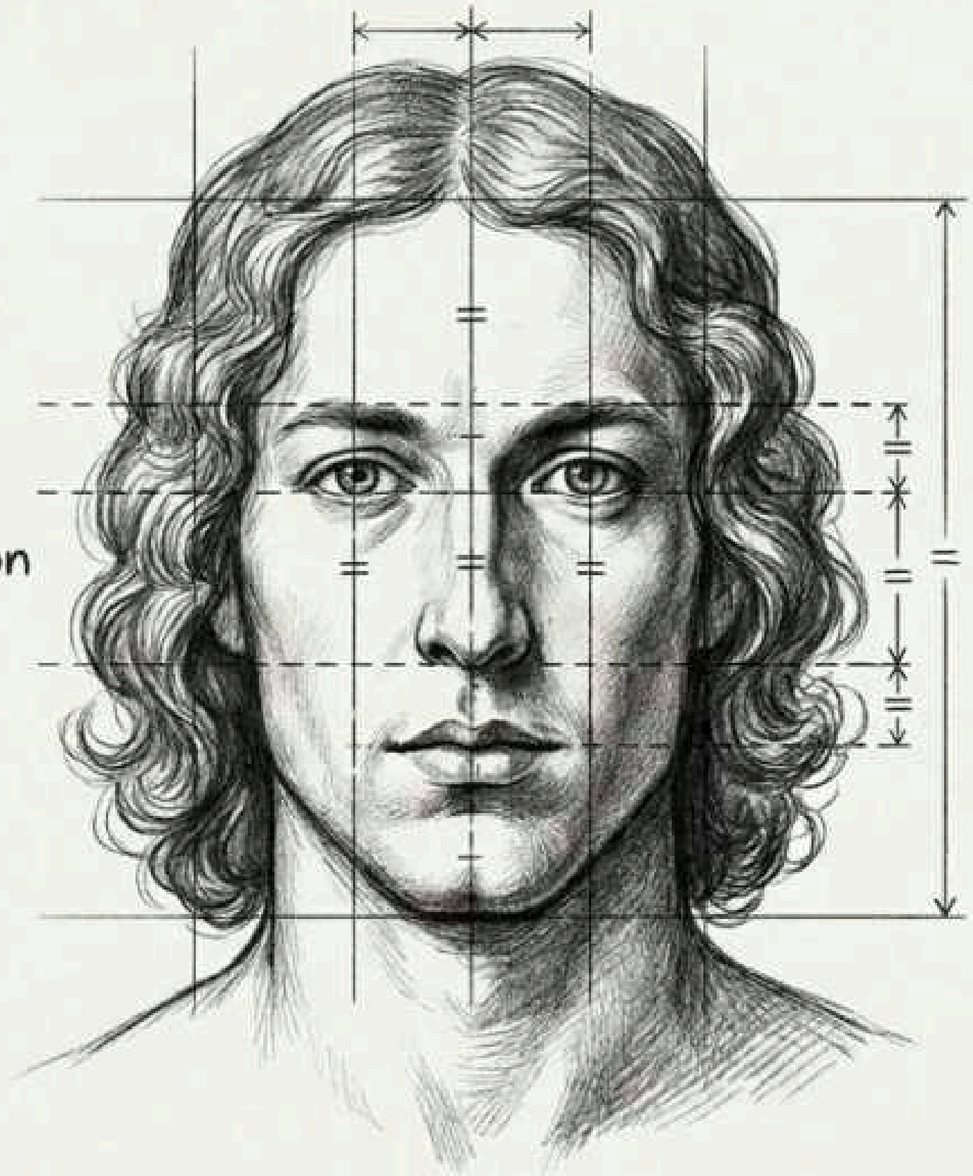


$\sum$ Explanations = 0 (No consensus on meaning)

The Multiplier Effect of Print

[¶ 2.4]

Impact = Image × Cheap Mass Reproduction

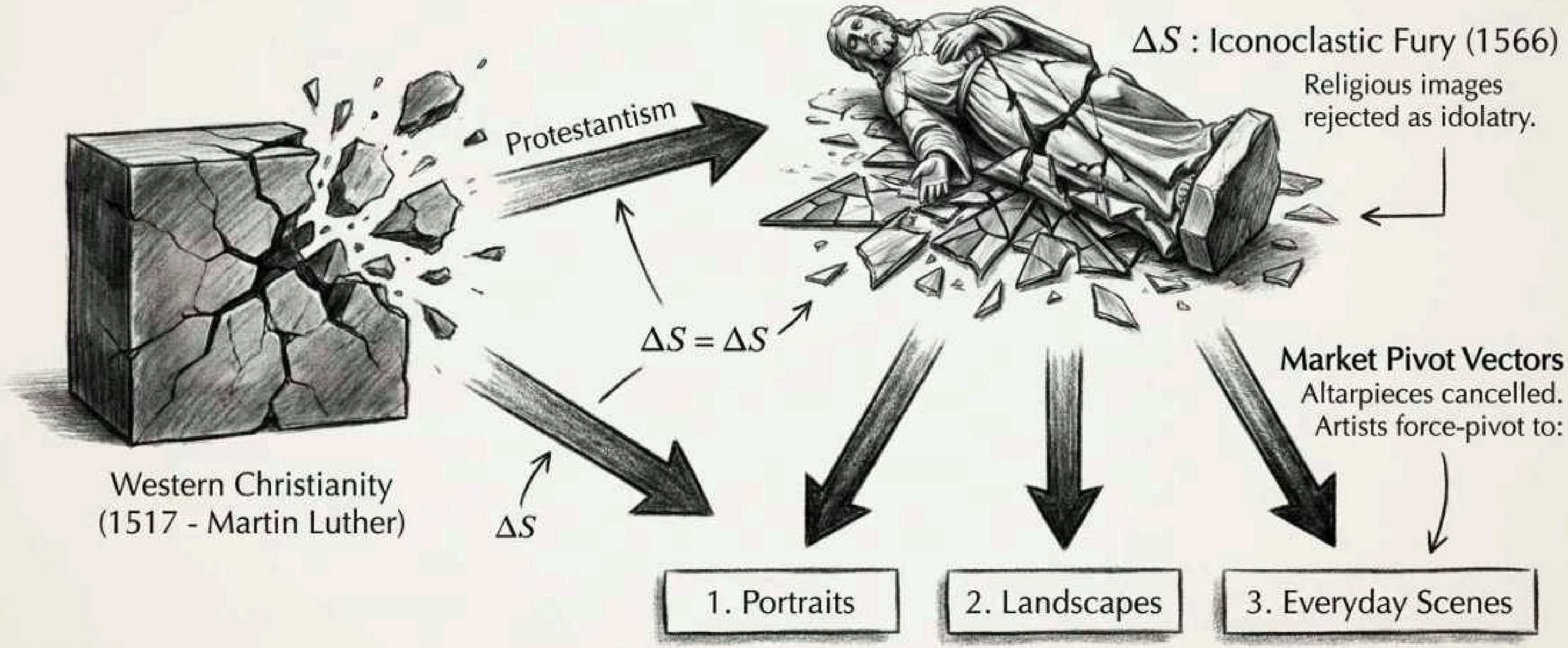


- Gutenberg's press (c. 1450) enables cheap, mass-produced woodcuts and engravings.

- Dürer becomes the first great printmaker; his traveling works make a bold claim to artistic divinity.

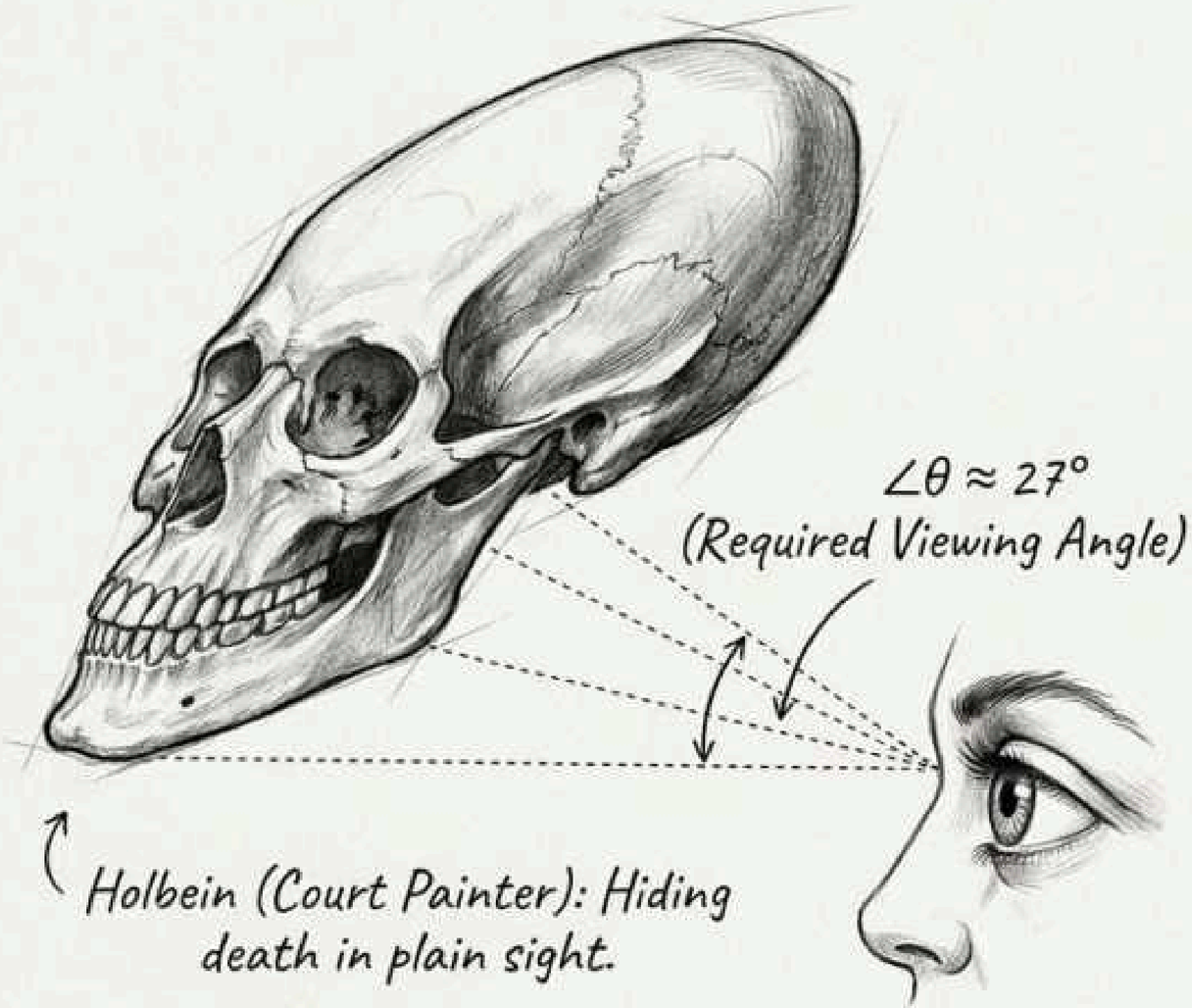
The Reformation & Iconoclastic Entropy

[¶ 2.5]



New Genres: The Tudor Court & The Peasant Landscape

[¶ 2.6]



Holbein (Court Painter): Hiding death in plain sight.



Bruegel: Elevating the ordinary peasant and harsh winter environments.

Mannerism & The Geometry of Distortion

[¶ 2.7]



1:8
Head-to-Body
Ratio
(High Renaissance
Harmony)

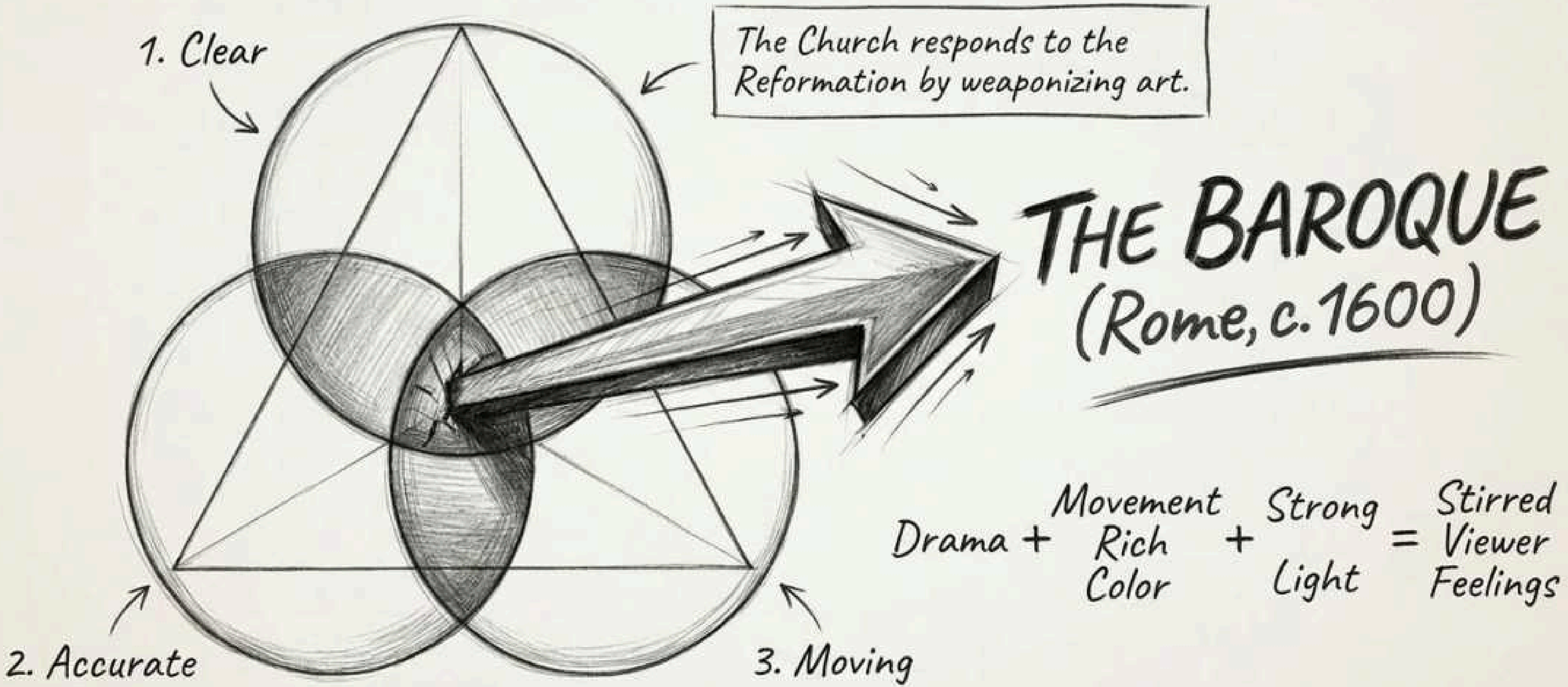


- Post-1520 Italy (Pontormo, Parmigianino).
- Pushing past harmony into deliberate distortion and strange colors.
- Historians view this as a cluster of styles, not a single rigid movement.

1:10+ Ratio
(Mannerist Elegant Distortion)

The Catholic Counter-Reformation

[¶ 2.8]

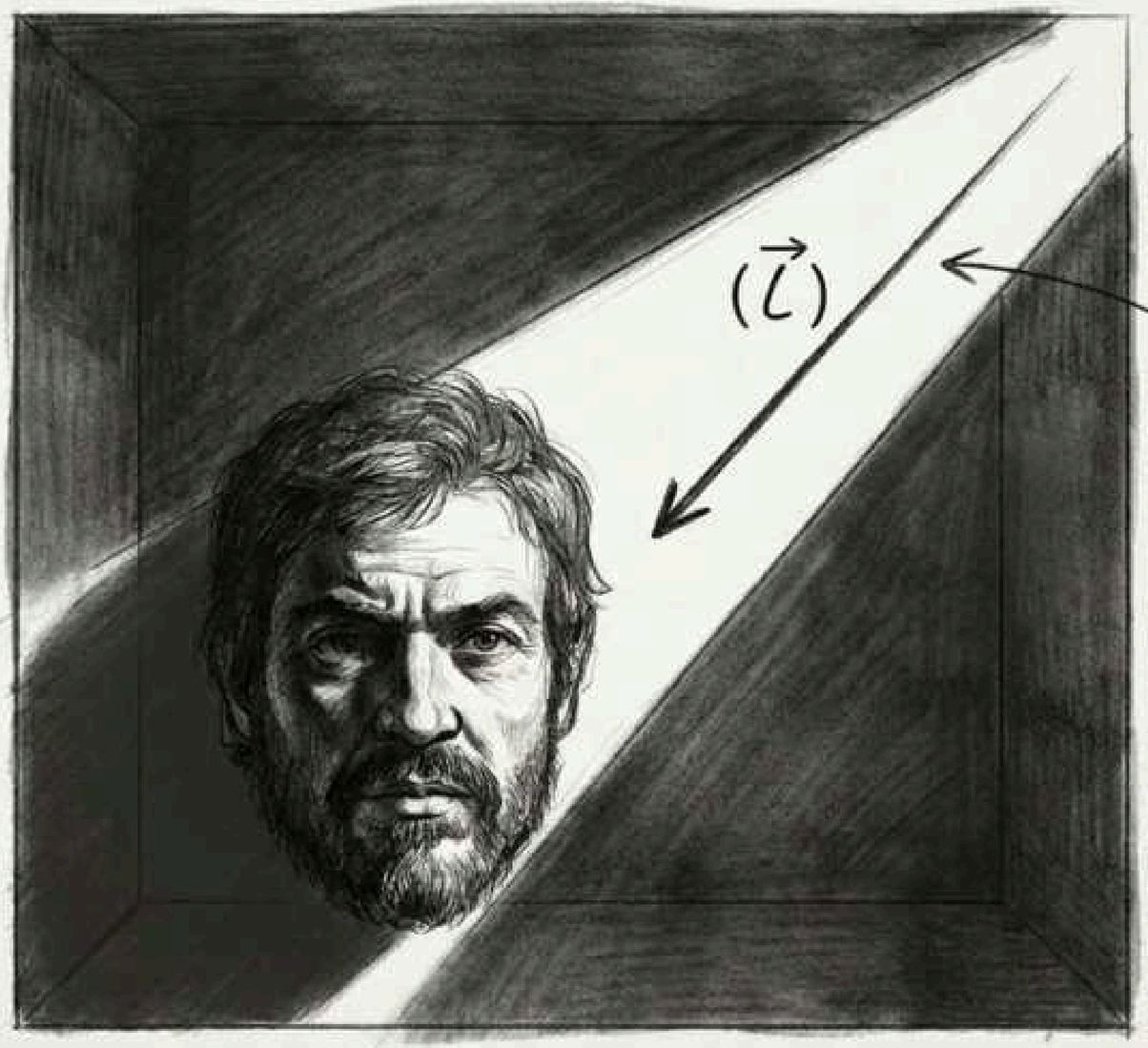


Caravaggio: The Great Innovator (b. 1571)

[¶ 2.9]

- Used ordinary, rugged people as models for holy figures.

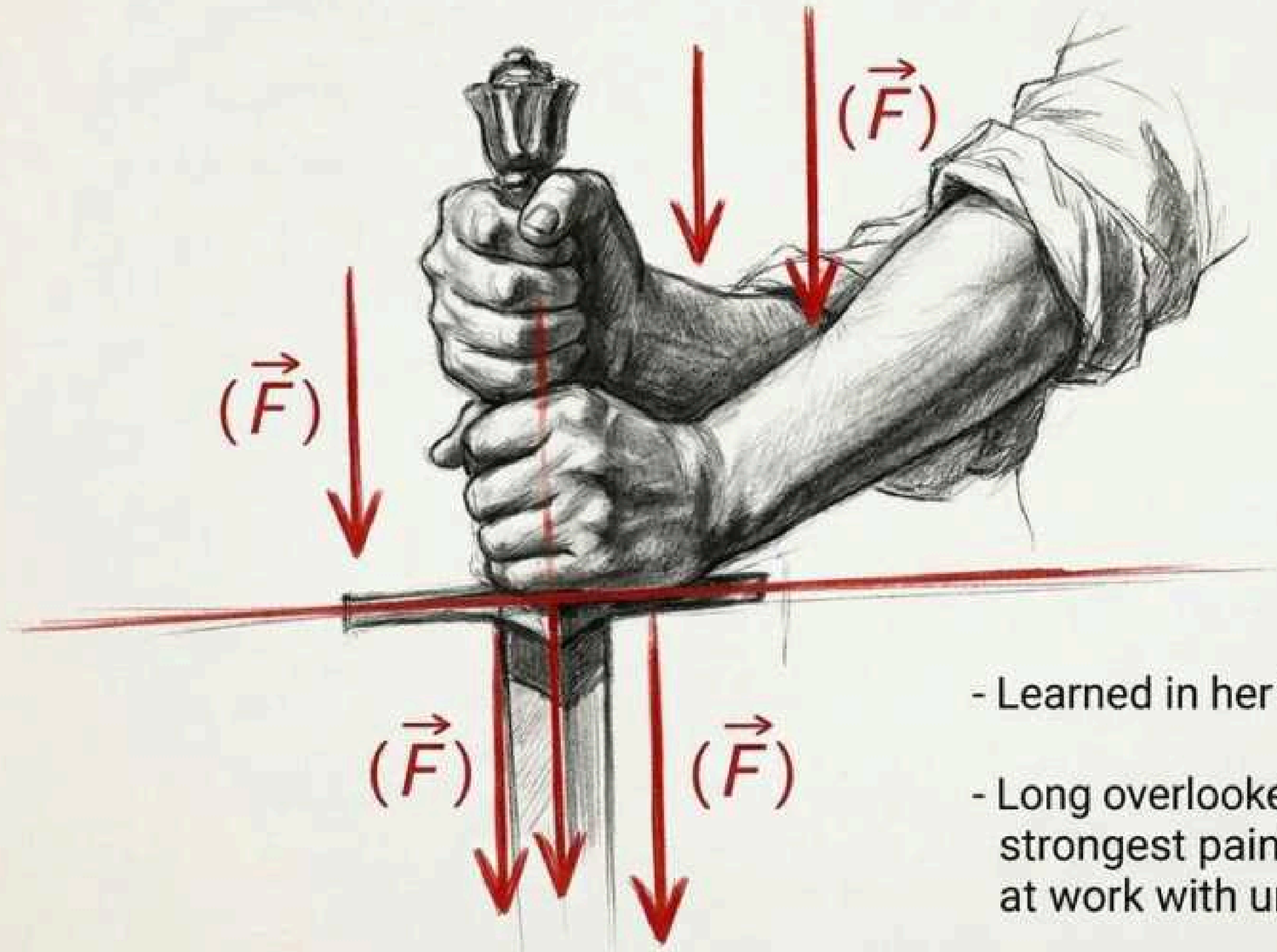
- Volatile life: Killed a man and fled Rome in 1606.



Chiaroscuro
(Extreme contrast of light and shadow).

Artemisia Gentileschi: Unflinching Force (b. 1593)

[¶ 2.10]



1616 Milestone: Becomes the first woman admitted to the Academy of Drawing in Florence.

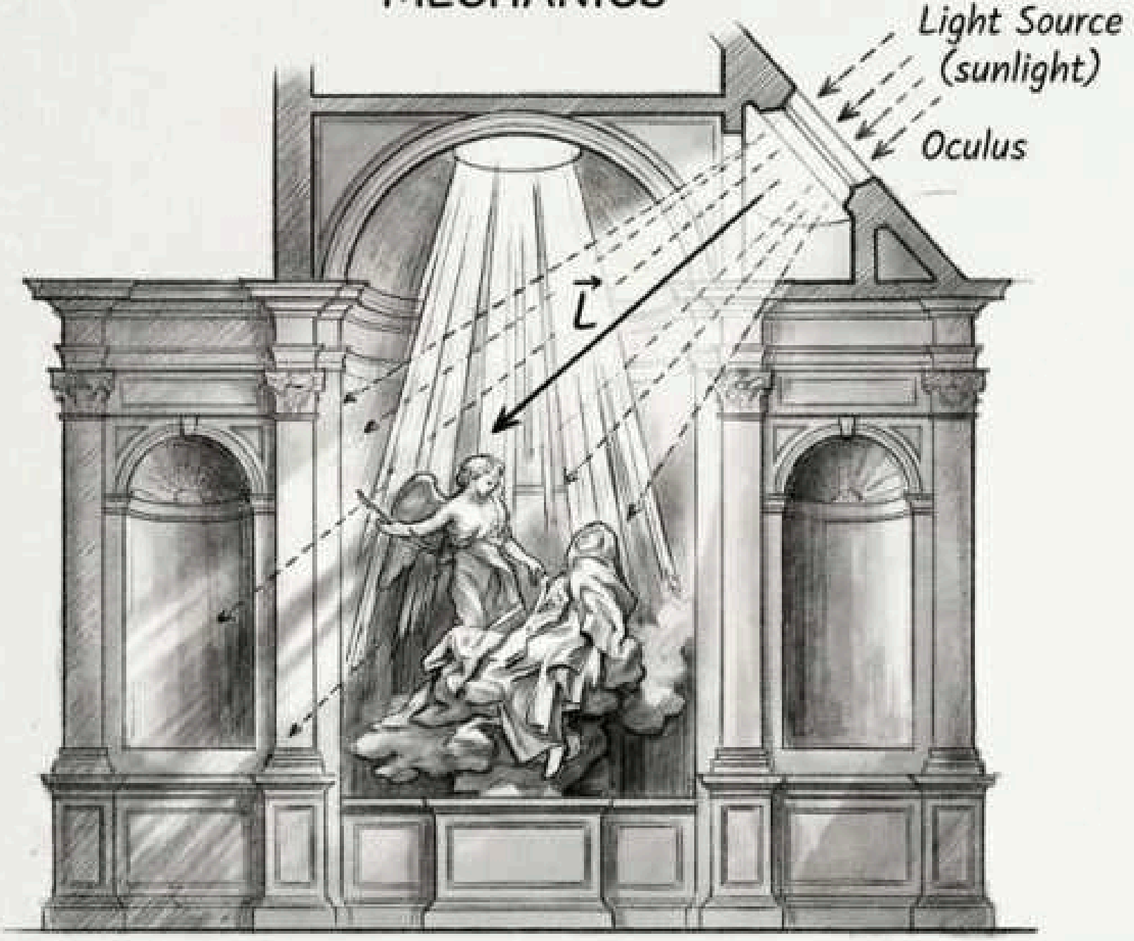
- Learned in her father's Rome workshop.

- Long overlooked, now recognized as one of the strongest painters of her age: Biblical heroines at work with unflinching force.

Gian Lorenzo Bernini (b. 1598): Sculpting Light & Space

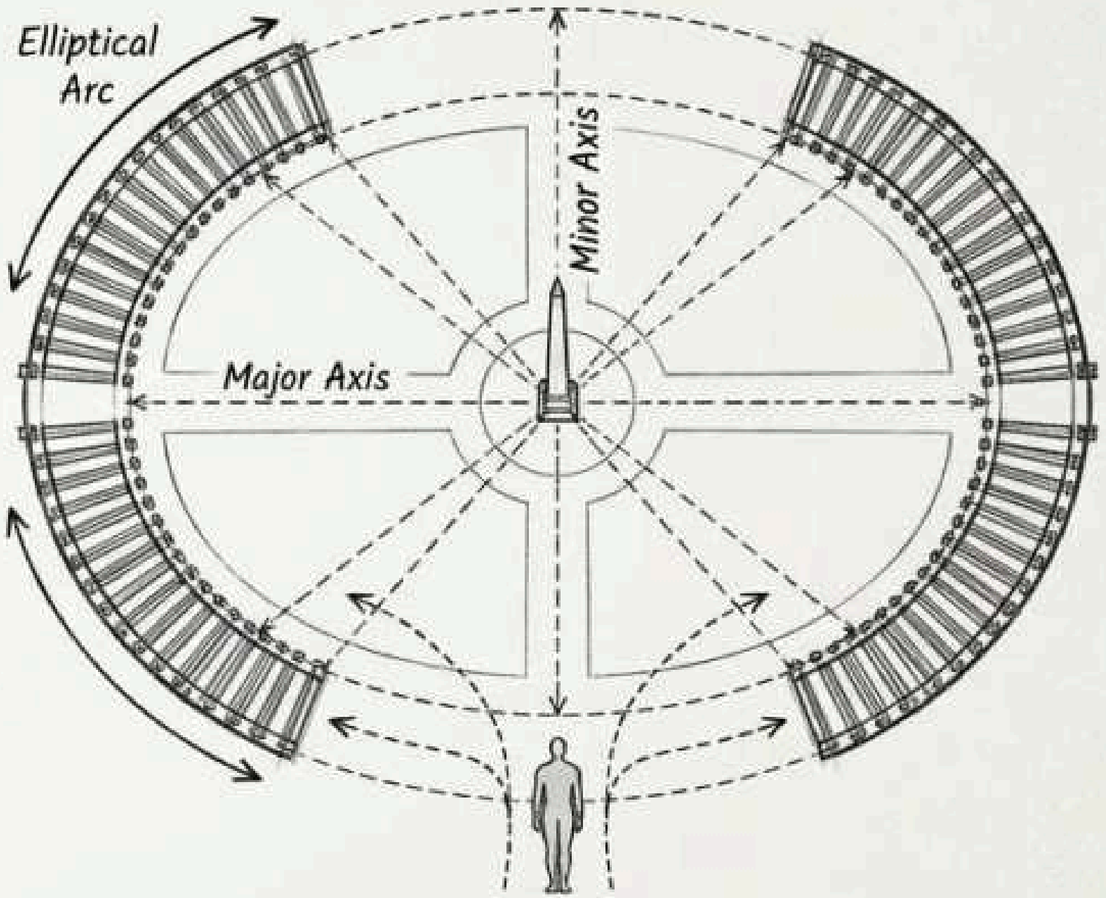
[¶ 2.11]

MECHANICS



Mechanical light diffusion blurring emotive marble and architecture.

GEOMETRY

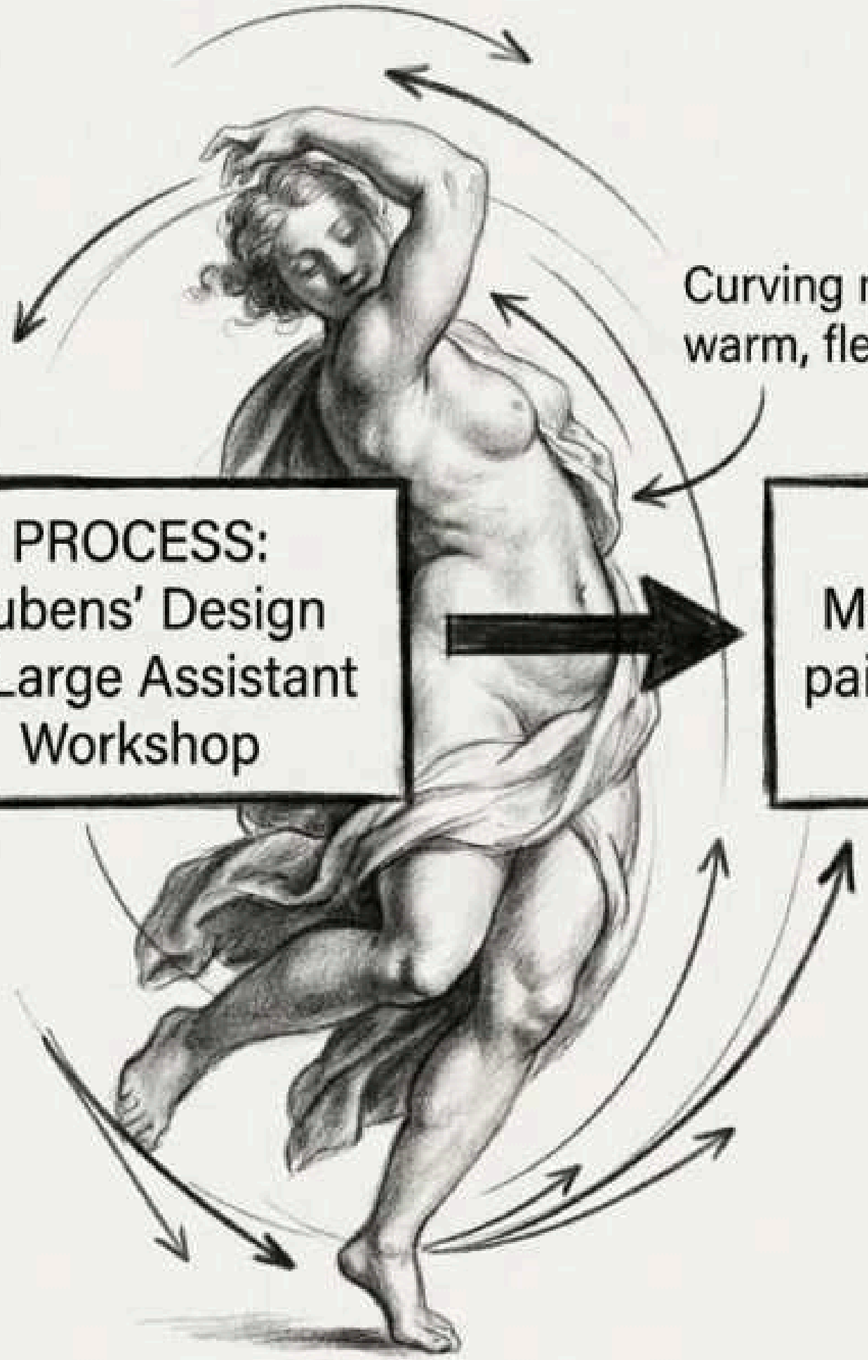


Elliptical geometry designed to embrace visitors.

Master sculptor, architect, and designer blurring all boundaries.

Peter Paul Rubens: The Workshop Engine

[¶ 2.12]



INPUTS:
Royal/Catholic Commissions (Spanish Netherlands)

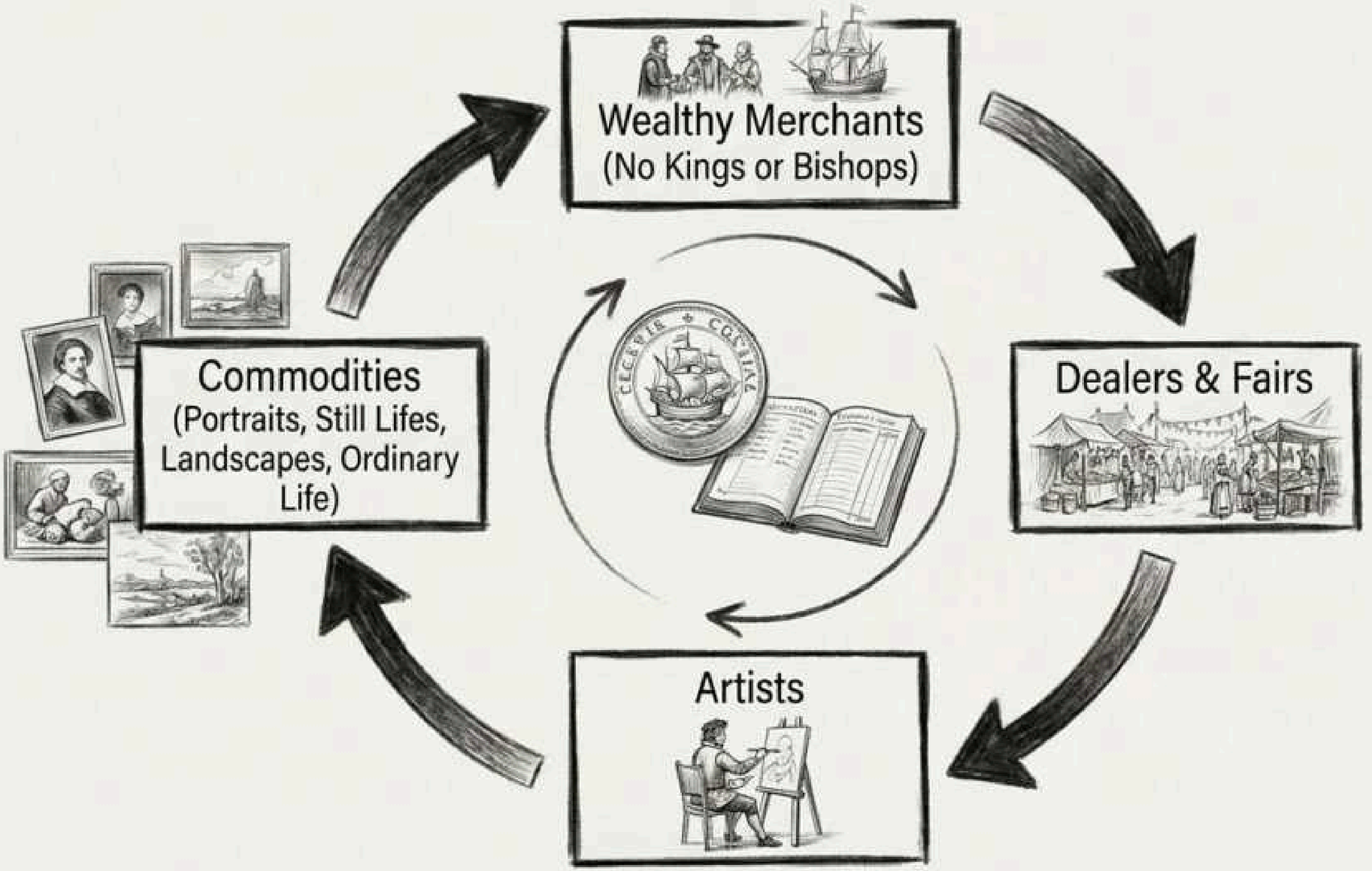
PROCESS:
Rubens' Design → Large Assistant Workshop

OUTPUTS:
Massive, energetic paintings of religion, myth, politics.

- Based in Antwerp (Catholic).
- Produced the grandeur demanded by Church and court.
- Served a dual role as an artist and a diplomat to kings.

The Dutch Republic: The Open Market

[¶ 2.13]

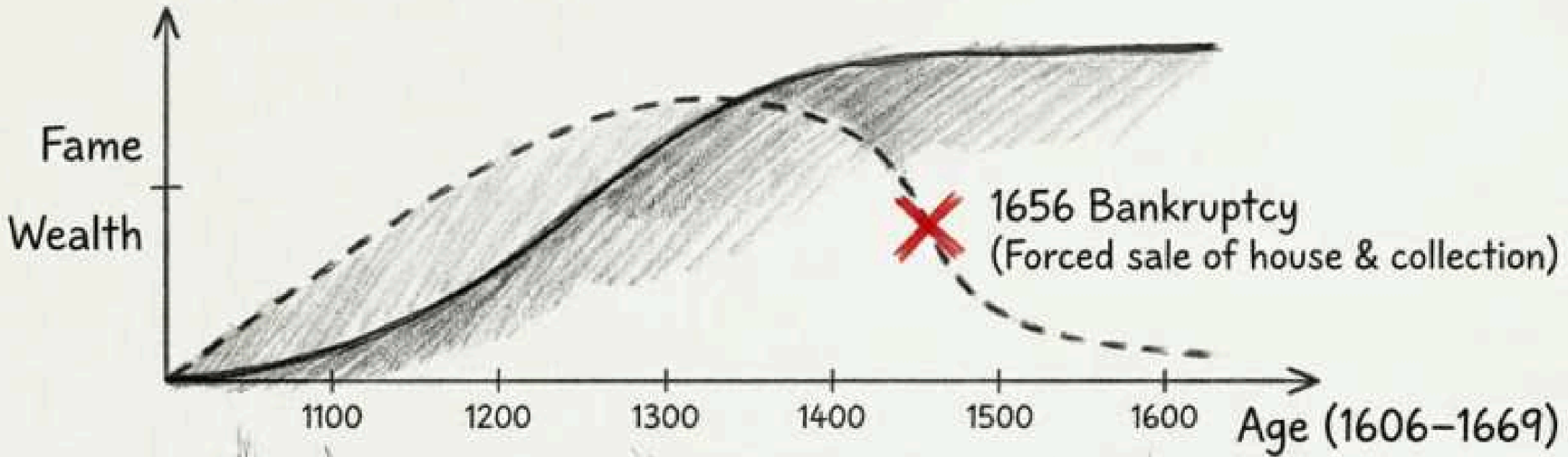


DIAGNOSTIC:

- Declared 1581 (broke away from Spain).
- Protestant and fiercely commercial.
- Art completely transforms into a market-driven commodity for the middle and upper classes.

Rembrandt van Rijn: Light, Motion, and Economics

[¶ 2.14]



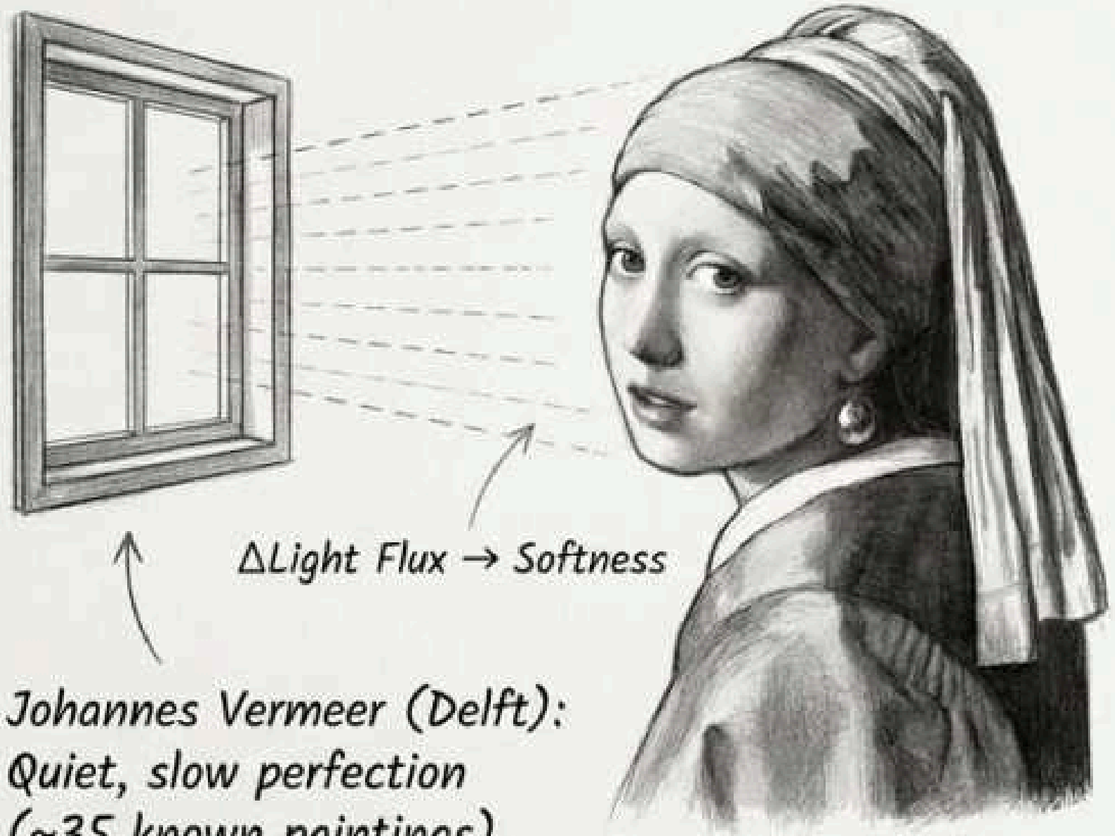
- The greatest painter of the Dutch Golden Age.
- Lifelong study of aging via 80+ self-portraits.



Delft & Haarlem: Interiors & Vanitas

[¶ 2.15]

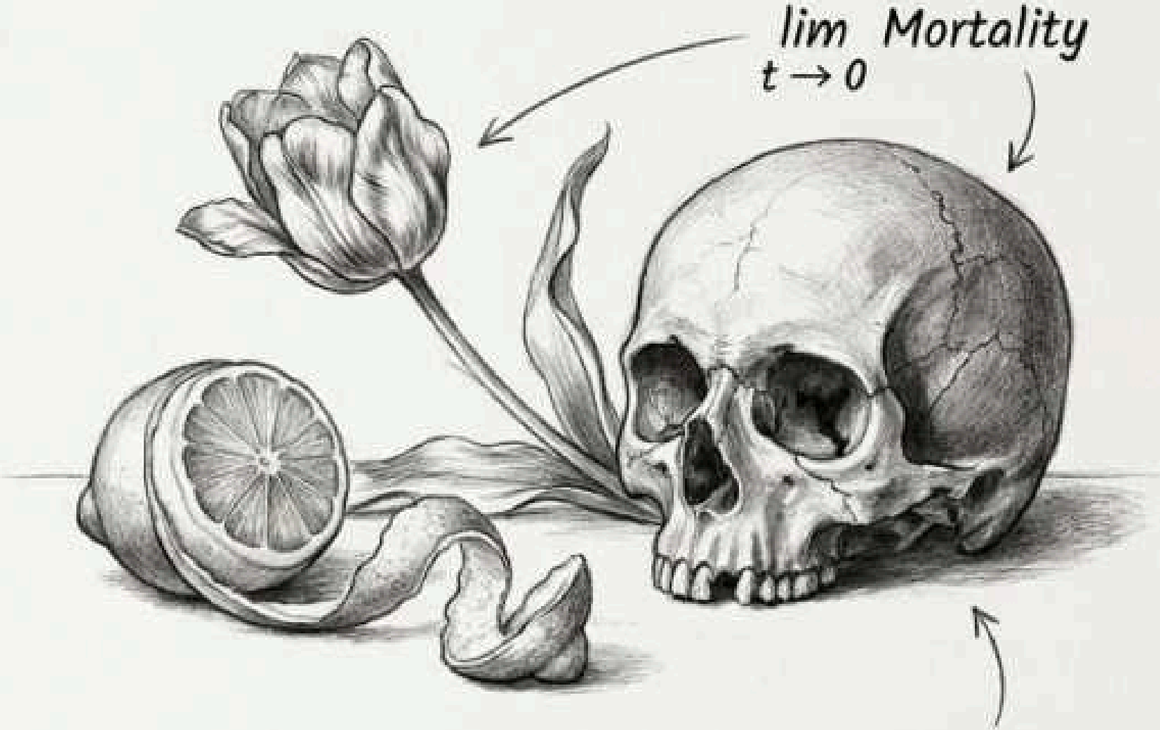
Optics



ΔLight Flux → Softness

Johannes Vermeer (Delft):
Quiet, slow perfection
(~35 known paintings).

Time

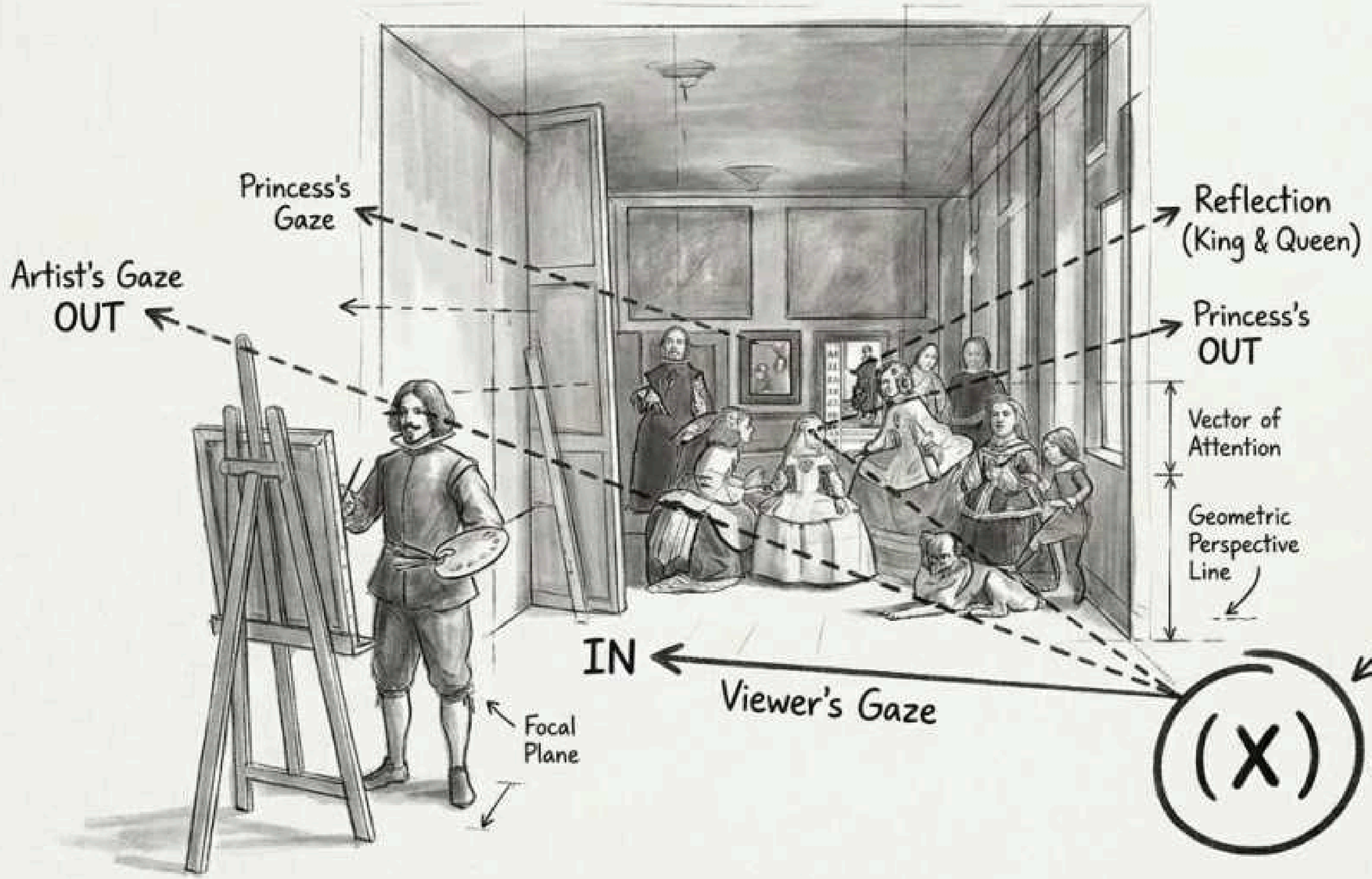


Still lifes carrying explicit moral messages about the shortness of life.

Meanwhile, Frans Hals (Haarlem) painted lively portraits with rapid, energetic brushstrokes.

Diego Velázquez & The Mirror of Power

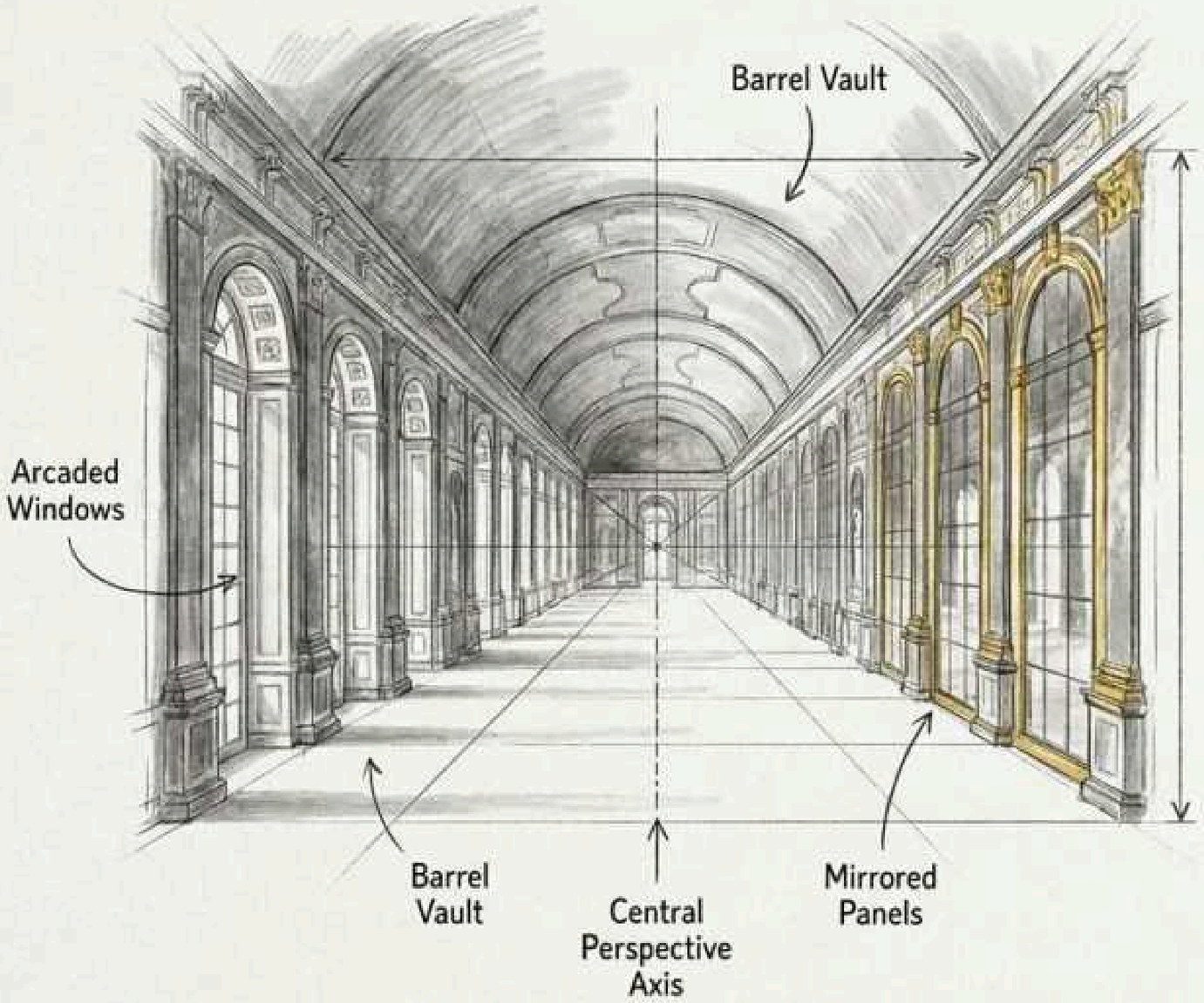
[¶ 2.16]

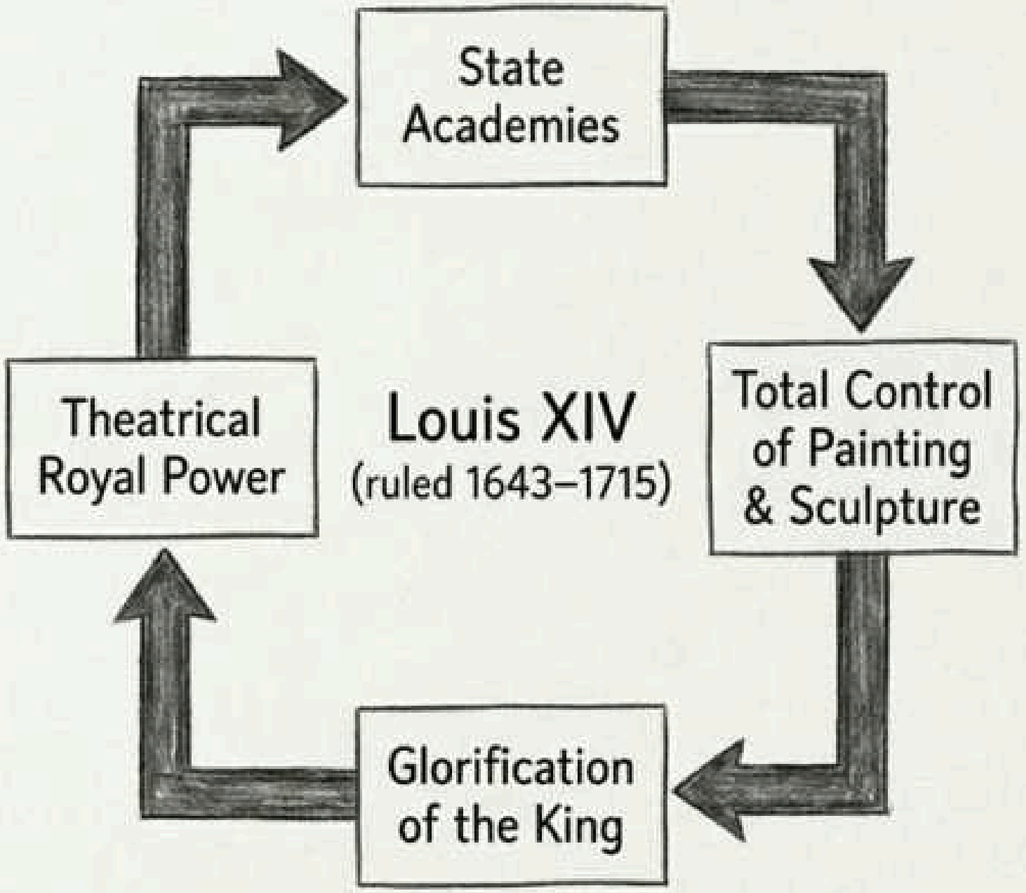


- Court painter to Philip IV of Spain.
- "Who is looking at whom is not clear."
- This psychological ambiguity is the source of the picture's endless power and debate.

Versailles: Art as State Infrastructure

[¶ 2.17]

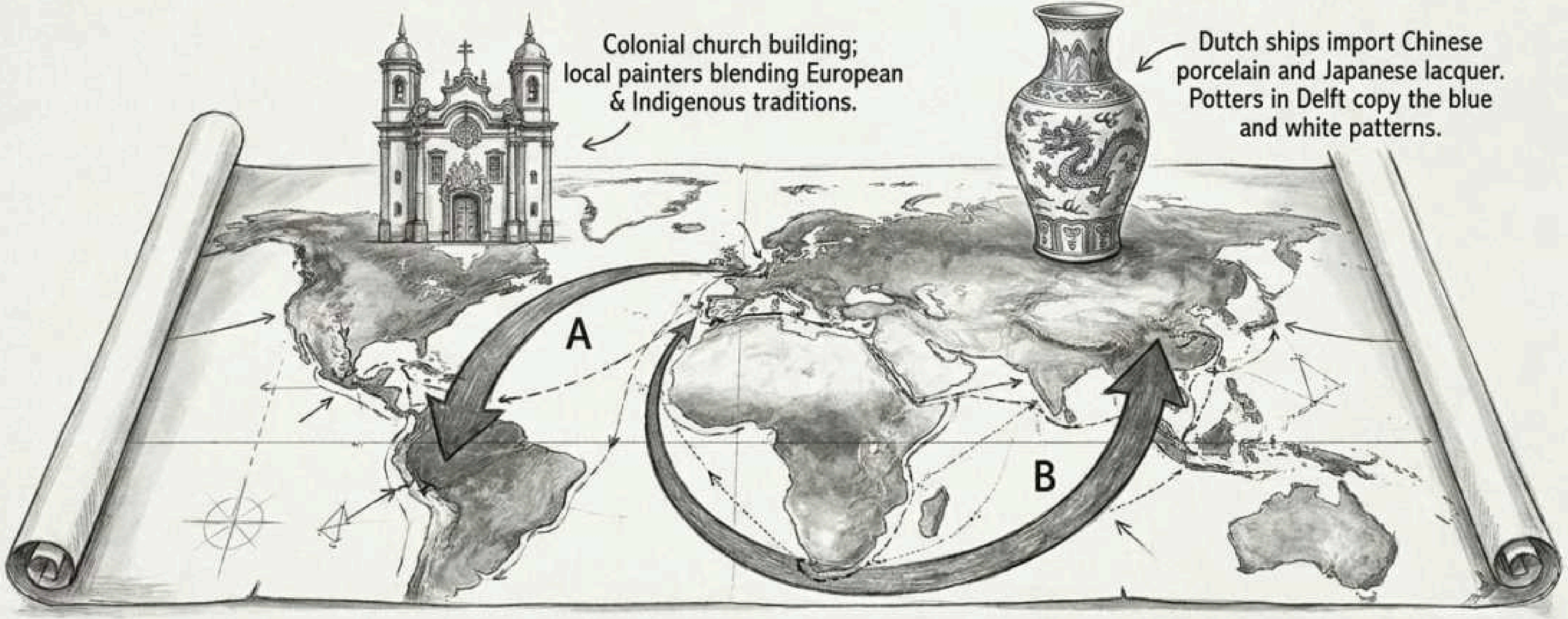




Art is weaponized as a strictly controlled tool of government, turning a palace into a stage for absolutism.

The Global Network of Art

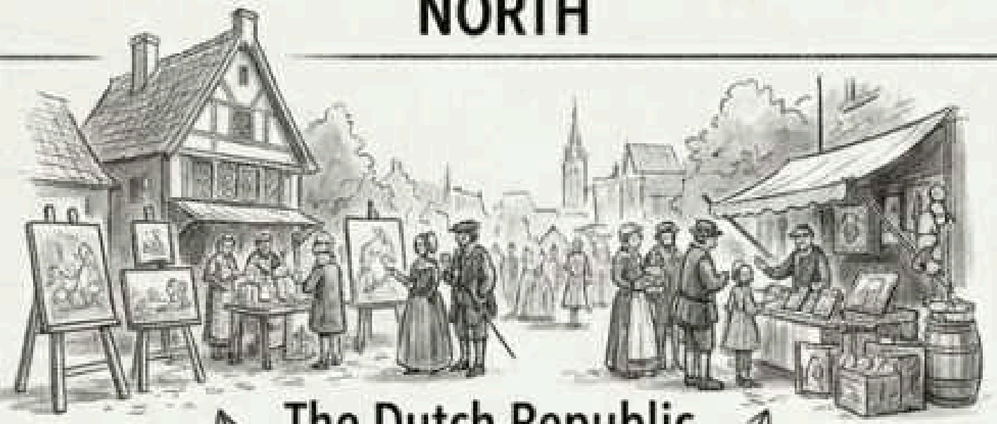
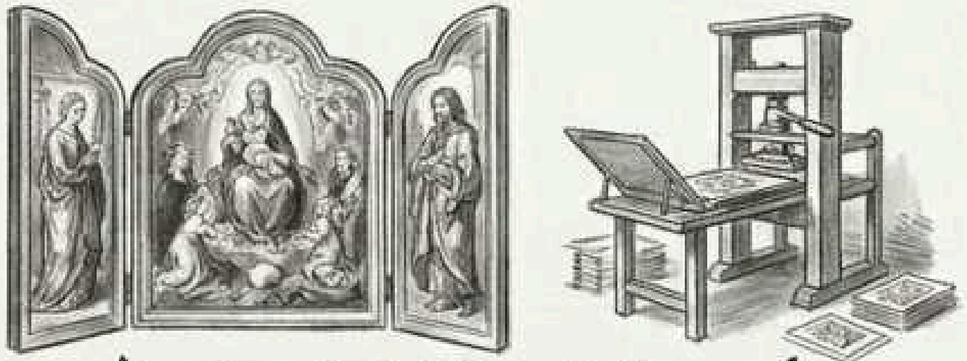
[¶ 2.18]



Even between 1430–1700, the history of art was a deeply interconnected global system.

Synthesis: A Fractured Europe (1430–1700)

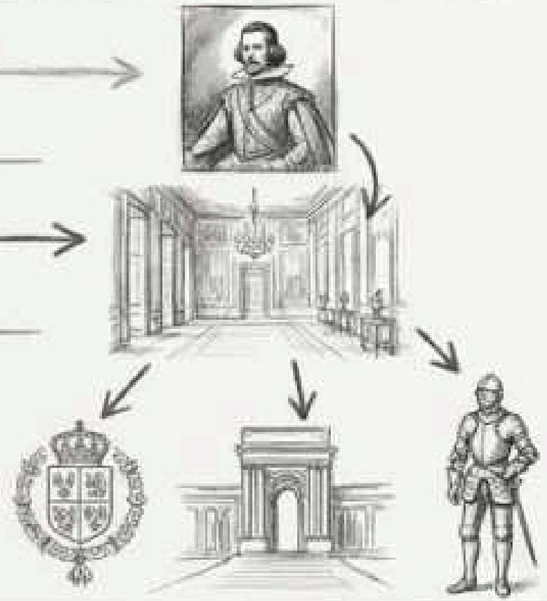
[¶ 2.19]

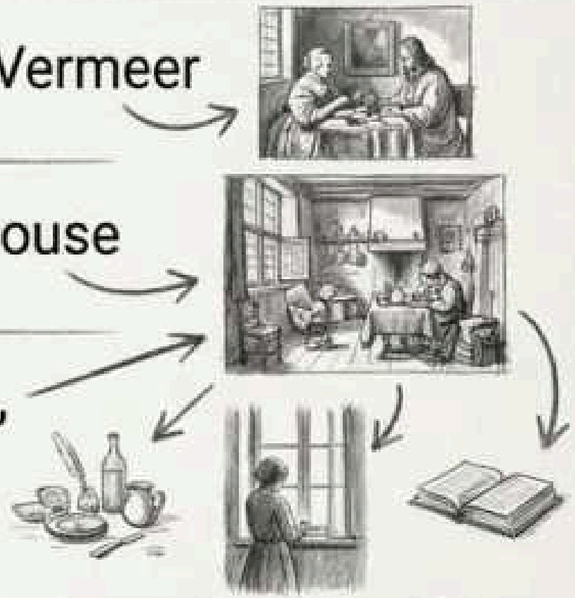
	NORTH	SOUTH
PROTESTANT (Market)	 The Dutch Republic (The Free Art Market)	X [Empty / Discarded]
CATHOLIC (Court/Church)	 Van Eyck, Dürer, Rubens (Flanders/Germany Oil & Print)	 Caravaggio, Bernini, Velázquez (Baroque, Fresco, Marble)

The Reformation permanently cuts religious art supply in Protestant lands, forcing an unprecedented market pivot, while the Catholic Church deploys the Baroque to inspire the faithful.

The Core Variable Answered: **Who Pays?**

[P_King] : The Royal Court	[P_Merchant] : The Ordinary Buyer
Artist: Velázquez	**Artist:** Rembrandt & Vermeer
Context: Palace	**Context:** Merchant House
Values: Power, grandeur, mirrors of state.	**Values:** Everyday life, personal scale, quiet morality.

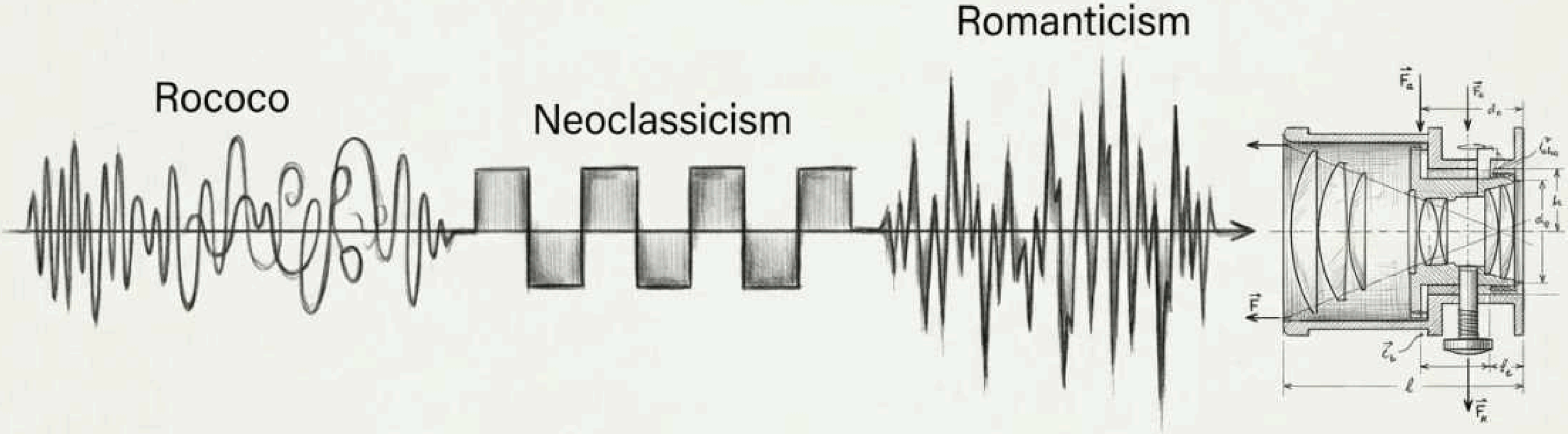




Does the person who pays shape the picture?
Compare what a royal court demands to project versus what an ordinary buyer desires to see.

Looking Ahead: The Age of Revolutions

¶ 2.21



Coming in Lecture 3: The Enlightenment, revolution, and the arrival of photography. Art begins to take sides.