



Western Civilization from 1650 to the Present

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TOPIC 4.3. PRIMARY SOURCES: LANDSCAPES AND INTERIORS

LANDSCAPES	<p>As you know, during the Renaissance artists strove to depict the natural world as it appeared to the eye. During the Baroque period, landscape painting flourished as artists worked to capture the effects of light and atmosphere for the purposes of pictorial drama. One of the most famous Baroque landscape painters was the Frenchman, Claude Lorraine, whose Sunrise (1646-47) exemplifies his fascination with light.</p> <p>During the eighteenth century, Rococo artists continued to explore the dramatic possibilities of landscape. The Rococo style succeeded Baroque Art in Europe. It was centered in France, and is generally associated with the reign of King Louis XV (1715-1774). It is a light, elaborate and decorative style of art. In addition, compositions often were asymmetrical. This stylish asymmetry became an important characteristic of Rococo art and design in general.</p> <p>Consider how the natural world appears in François Boucher's Rest on the Flight to Egypt (1737) and Jean-Honoré Fragonard's The Bathers (1765).</p> <p>How do these landscapes resemble and differ from Lorraine's "Sunrise"? How do they resemble and differ from each other? How do they exemplify the French Rococo style?</p> <p>Now take a look at two still-life's by Jean-Baptiste-Siméon Chardin: The Silver Goblet and The Ray.</p> <p>How do these works present the natural world? How might Chardin's still-lifes be understood as an aesthetic alternative to the Rococo landscapes of Boucher and Fragonard?</p>
INTERIORS	<p>Wealthy art patrons not only commissioned artists to produced sculptures and paintings. They also engaged designers to create interior spaces in which to display those works, spaces that reflected their values and social status. Take a look at this room with stove, created between 1684 and 1685.</p> <p>What are the distinctive decorative elements of this room, and what artistic style do those elements reflect?</p> <p>Now examine the following eighteenth-century interiors: bedroom (c. 1718), Tapestry Room from Croome Court (1760-69), and Boiserie from the Hotel de Cabris (1775-78).</p> <p>How do these interiors resemble and differ from the seventeenth-century room with stove? How do they resemble and differ from each other?</p> <p>What do all these interiors suggest about the people who commissioned: who do you think they were; how do you think they saw themselves and wished to be seen by others?</p> <p>Adapted from Humanities in the Western Tradition by Marvin Perry</p>