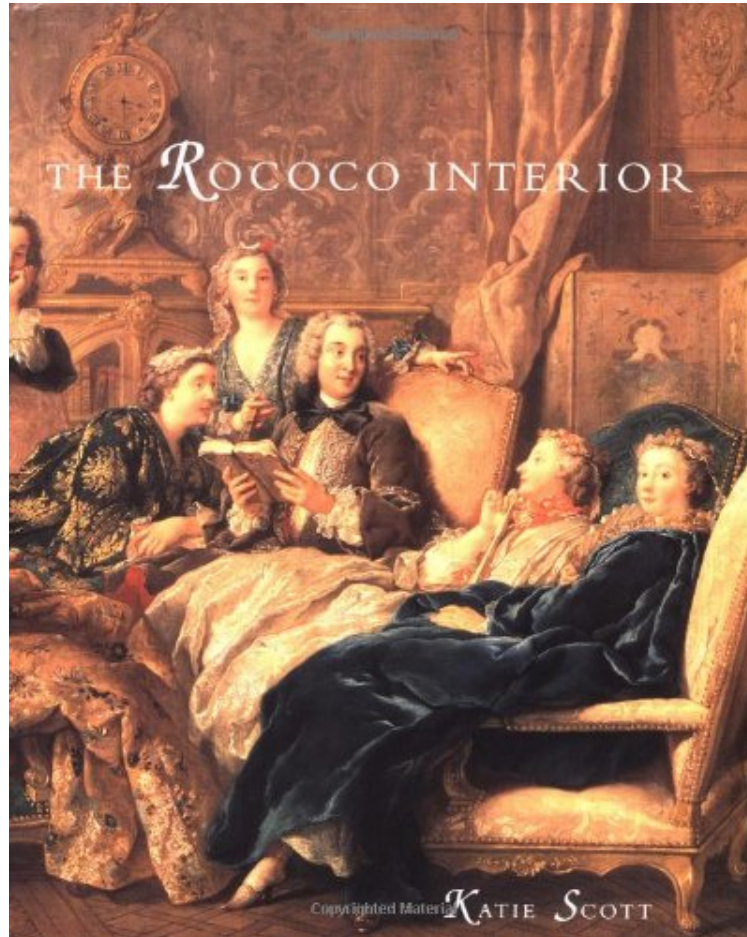


(Free read ebook) The Rococo Interior: Decoration and Social Spaces in Early Eighteenth-Century Paris

# The Rococo Interior: Decoration and Social Spaces in Early Eighteenth-Century Paris

*Katie Scott*

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**Katie Scott : The Rococo Interior: Decoration and Social Spaces in Early Eighteenth-Century Paris** before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Rococo Interior: Decoration and Social Spaces in Early Eighteenth-Century Paris:

7 of 16 people found the following review helpful. Rather heavy on the pedantics, and too light on the aesthetics By Thomas J. Hickey Rather heavy on the pedantics, and too light on the aesthetics This book reads like a pedantic Ph.D. dissertation, or rather like three such dissertations sewn together into one bookbinding. Part I is an economic and technology history of eighteenth-century decorative-arts production. It is an unlikely reason why anyone would purchase this high-gloss, coffee-table-style, oversized book. Part II is a sociology of the layout and design of the Parisian noble's htel. It seems unlikely that these sociological considerations applied exclusively to the rococo period and not also to the ancien rgime society of the preceding baroque and succeeding neoclassical styles. Part III sets forth

the historical thesis that political change in the form of the decline of monarchical absolutism reduced the status of the rococo style from noble status to commercially common, and thus brought about its eclipse. I find this an unsatisfactory explanation for the ascendancy of the neoclassical style. Overall I found the book a disappointment. It shows little appreciation for the aesthetics of the style, which is quite charming. It has remarkably little color photography, and certainly too many black-and-white photos for such a book with a \$90 price tag and only 318 pages. Nonetheless I read the whole book more than once, and found some interesting historical material. I think that the title may be misleading. The book is a social and cultural history. I refer readers interested in a better visual and aesthetic presentation of rococo interiors to *Furniture: From Rococo to Art Deco* (Evergreen Series). The latter has more than two and a third as many pages, at least a dozen times as many color photos including not just furniture but the room decorations as well, and about a fifth of the price.

This work offers an account of the forms and functions of interior decoration in Parisian domestic architecture during the first half of the 18th century - the period generally known as the rococo. It charts the rapid and sometimes dramatic changes in both the style and the imagery of the art of that time, and explores the relationship between social status and the consumption and display of decoration in public and private interiors. The book is divided into three parts. In the first, Katie Scott looks beneath the surface of decorative schemes in order to understand how they came into being. Approaching rococo decoration from the perspective of the workshop, she provides an examination of the technologies developed for the manufacture of decorative materials, of the institutional structures - guilds and academies - that governed their production, and of the organizational arrangements that co-ordinated their development on site. In the second part, the relationship between the meanings of decoration, both as the embellishment of a thing or place and as the acknowledgement of the prestige of the patron or client, is investigated, and the ways in which decoration came to represent and describe a certain type of noble status are traced. In the final part, Scott looks at how rococo decoration variously articulated shifting ideological positions. By focusing on the genres of the grotesque, the pastoral and mythological, she is able to explore the nobility's changing relationship with the absolutist state. In the last two chapters, the orientation of her exploration changes: she considers the effect on the rococo of an increasingly aggressive commercial culture by first, examining how the nobility responded to pressures from below, and, then, by assessing the impact of the printing press and the rise of public exhibitions.

From Booklist The term *noblesse oblige* has never been so well defined as in Scott's in-depth examination of the rococo period, the first half of the eighteenth century. That 1 percent of France's 26 million citizens could have such an influence not only on decoration and the arts but also on conduct in society is documented in detail and in both black-and-white and color photographs. This scholarly and thoughtful (and occasionally pedantic) exploration investigates all parts of design, architecture, and thought: the manufacture of goods, such as wallpaper and carved woodwork; the artisans' practice in guilds and abbeys; the signs of status; the influence of the king through the Palace of Versailles; and the rise of yet another privileged class and reactions against rococo. More a social than an aesthetic exploration, this will find a place among expansive historical and design collections. Barbara Jacobs