

FREDERICK THE GREAT'S PORCELAIN DIVERSION:
THE CHINESE TEA HOUSE AT SANSSOUCI

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Abstract

This thesis signals a new approach in the study of the Chinese Tea House at Sanssouci. It argues that Frederick the Great's exotic pavilion, although made of sandstone and stucco, is porcelain in essence. The garden building reflects the many meanings of this highly valued commodity and art form in the privileged society of the king and his contemporaries. The pavilion is unique in that it was inspired by the type of sculptural ornament designed to decorate the eighteenth-century table of the nobility.

The Tea House is a thematically integrated structure that demonstrates the influence of porcelain on interior décor and architecture. The designation of the garden building as a *Gesamtkunstwerk* acknowledges the blending of architecture, painting, and sculpture; characteristics shared by porcelain centerpieces. They exemplify the intermediality associated with the development of eighteenth-century porcelain and the interpretation of Frederick's pavilion.

Résumé

Cette thèse annonce une approche nouvelle dans l'étude de la Maison de Thé Chinoise à Sans-Souci. Elle soutient que le pavillon exotique de Frédéric Le Grand, fait de pierre et de stuc, représentait intrinsèquement la porcelaine. Ainsi, cette construction de jardin refléterait de fait les sens multiples accordés par la société privilégiée du Roi et de ses contemporains à cette commodité de luxe et à cette forme d'art. Le pavillon est unique parce qu'il s'inspire des ornements sculptés qui décoraient les tables de la noblesse du XVIII^{ème} siècle.

La Maison de Thé est une structure cohérente dont le thème décoratif témoigne bien de l'influence de la porcelaine sur le décor intérieur et sur l'architecture. Sa désignation en tant que '*Gesamtkunstwerk*' lui reconnaît sa qualité d'intégrer architecture, peinture et sculpture, en un mot tous les attributs qui qualifient les centres de table en porcelaine. Ceux-ci illustrent l'intermédialité associée au développement de la porcelaine au XVIII^{ème} siècle et éclairent d'un jour nouveau l'interprétation du pavillon de Frédéric.

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- Fig. 93. Reinterpretation of the Chinese Tea House Interior, 2002, in Samuel Wittwer, “Interior Decoration and War Trophies-the Porcelain Table Services of Frederick the Great of Prussia,” *International Ceramics Fair and Seminar*, London, 2009, p. 42.

Aerial view of the Chinese Tea House, Preussische Schlösser und Gärten.

FREDERICK THE GREAT'S PORCELAIN DIVERSION: THE CHINESE TEA HOUSE AT SANSSOUCI

INTRODUCTION

The Chinese Tea House stands on the grounds of Frederick the Great's summer palace Sanssouci, at Potsdam, Germany. The exotic pavilion was designed by the king and constructed by his architect Johann Gottfried Böhmer between 1754 and 1763.¹ This thesis argues that Frederick's garden pavilion is exceptional in that, although it was constructed of sandstone and stucco, it is porcelain in essence. The flowing form, celadon colour, golden figures and ornaments, and the surfaces painted with exotic birds, monkeys, flowers and fruit, encourage the perception that this structure is a life-size model taken from the repertoire of sculptures from the Meissen Porcelain Manufactory.²

Frederick's pavilion is unique because his little pleasure palace was inspired by the type of ornament Meissen designed to decorate the dessert table of the nobility in the middle of the eighteenth century. Porcelain figures and

¹ The definition of exotic suggests the origins and the characteristics of the Chinese Tea House that invoke the European perceptions and interpretations of China. Exotic is defined as 1. Introduced from another country; not native to a place where found. 2. alien. 3. strikingly, excitingly, or mysteriously different or unusual. *Merriam-Webster's Collegiate Dictionary*, Tenth Edition, Merriam Webster Incorporated, Springfield, Mass., 1993, p. 407.

² The term celadon is thought to have originated from a character named Céladon who appeared in the seventeenth-century pastoral, *L'Astrée*, by Honoré d'Urfé, who wore soft grey-green ribbons. Peter Hughes, *Eighteenth-Century France and the East*, The Trustees of the Wallace Collection, London, 1981, p. 20; Francis Watson, in Gillian Wilson, *Mounted Oriental Porcelain in the J. Paul Getty Museum*, J. Paul Getty Museum, Los Angeles, 1999, p. 1. This classification has now been replaced by the term "greenware." Robert Finlay, "The Pilgrim Art: The Culture of Porcelain in World History," *Journal of World History*, Vol. 9, No. 2, Fall 1998, University of Hawaii Press, p. 149, n. 25.

ornaments were arranged around the centerpiece in a garden setting for the delight and entertainment of the guests, but the choice of arrangements also afforded the opportunity to impart a complex set of messages.

Recognizing the influence of porcelain on this structure signals a new approach in the study of Frederick's pavilion. Within the historical and aesthetic contexts the influence of porcelain on this building has not been acknowledged. This is likely a result of its categorization under the indiscriminate heading of Chinoiserie architecture,³ or that of an overly ornamented folly.⁴

The garden pavilion is a thematically integrated structure that demonstrates the influence of porcelain on interior décor and architecture based on the early perceptions of porcelain as a precious material, and interpreted through the eighteenth-century culture of this highly valued commodity and art form. Porcelain influenced interior décor and architecture from its first appearance in the West during the medieval period, and it continued to do so well

³ In the eighteenth century the style was referred to in French as: *le goût Chinois, la façon de la Chine, à l'Indienne, l'engouement pour la Chine*, in English, as in the "Chinese taste." Chinoiserie interior décor was referred to as *à la manière des ouvrages qui viennent de la Chine*. The obsession for everything Chinese was referred to as "China mania" and "China fancy." The term Chinoiserie was only adopted by the Académie Française in 1878. See Hughes, *Eighteenth-Century France and the East*, p. 32 n. 7. James Stevens Curl defines Chinoiserie as a style of European architecture and artifacts in the Chinese taste intending to evoke China, first appearing in the seventeenth century and reaching the heights of delicacy and inventiveness in the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, notably in Germany. According to Curl one of the most celebrated examples is the Chinese Tea House at Potsdam, *Oxford Dictionary of Architecture*, Oxford University Press, 1999, p. 145.

⁴ This type of structure has been the topic of numerous studies that concentrate on the unusual and fanciful qualities of what are considered generally useless buildings. Frederick's kiosk has been mentioned in Michel Saudan and Sylvia Saudan-Skira, *From Folly to Follies: Discovering the World of Gardens*, Abbeville Press, New York, 1988, p. 139; Sally Sample Aall, *Follies and Fantasies: Germany and Austria*, Harry N. Abrams, New York, 1994, p. 85; and Nick Barlow, Tim Knox, and Caroline Hughes, *Follies of Europe: Architectural Extravaganzas*, Garden Art Press, Stancombe Ltd., London, 2008, pp. 100-104.

into the eighteenth century after the arcanum for European porcelain was discovered.⁵ Synonymous with the impact on physical space, porcelain also had an effect on the image of its possessor in response to the changing relationship of this commodity with Europe. In the sixteenth century, a porcelain object was perceived as precious, mysterious, and magical.⁶ It was worthy of being placed in a royal treasure chamber to be appreciated for its rarity and value and to be enjoyed for its artistry. The owner of such an object was envied for the acquisition of such an item, and his or her *cabinet de curiosité* enhanced by its presence. In the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries porcelain was sought in great quantities to form a collection that exhibited the wealth, prestige, and connoisseurship of its owner.⁷

The Tea House is not a frivolous construction or “folly.” The superficial ornaments should be recognized as a vocabulary of design elements developed over hundreds of years of European perceptions of the Far East and contact with its trade goods. They were parts of a language understood by the exclusive eighteenth-century society of Frederick and his intimates that was representative

⁵ The term arcanum refers to the secret recipe for porcelain. See Otto Walcha, *Meissen Porcelain*, Trans. by Edmund Launert, Cassell Ltd., London, 1981, p. 502. The definition is “mysterious knowledge, language, or information accessible only to the initiate,” *Merriam-Webster Collegiate Dictionary*, 10th Edition, 1993, p. 60.

⁶ Europeans also believed that porcelain was endowed with magical properties. Drinking from a porcelain cup was thought to provide protection from arsenic, mercury, and aconite, a poisonous plant. Janet Gleeson, *The Arcanum*, Warner Books, New York, 1998, p. 51; It was also believed that a celadon porcelain vessel possessed the power to reveal poison by breaking or changing colour. George Savage, *Porcelain Through the Ages*, Cassel & Company, London, 1961, p. 47.

⁷ Sarah Richards, *Eighteenth-Century Ceramics: Products for a Civilised Society*, Manchester University Press, Manchester and New York, 1999, p. 12.

of Cathay and intrinsic with Chinoiserie architecture and with porcelain.

The Tea House is a manifestation of Frederick's princely attributes and accomplishments as an architect, philosopher, musician, and patron of a porcelain manufactory. These qualities would have been admired by his contemporaries and appreciated by the select group of individuals invited to the Tea House. The exotic style of the structure exhibited the King's familiarity with the literature on the Celestial Kingdom. The characteristics of porcelain made reference to China and the Berlin Porcelain Manufactory. The European perception of this far-off land was encouraged by the idea that as distant, different, and mysterious as the Celestial Kingdom was, it was also a vast Empire with an Emperor whose responsibility toward his people was worthy of admiration and emulation. The fact that Frederick's intellectual idol, François-Marie Arouet de Voltaire, held positive views of China and its Emperor reinforced this perception. An architectural project that associated the King with both porcelain and the Celestial Kingdom bestowed these characteristics on Frederick. The Tea House functioned as an instrument of the monarchy creating an elaborate display that presented a positive image of Frederick the Great as sovereign.

By the time Frederick designed and commissioned the Tea House, the formula for European porcelain had been discovered under the patronage of Augustus the Strong, the Elector of Saxony and King of Poland, and his manufactory had been in production for over forty years. These events had signified great scientific and technological achievement and the potential for economic gain for the Saxon state. Under Augustus' direction the Meissen

Porcelain Manufactory produced unique objects that were also considered valuable, a form of high art, and the perfect medium through which to express every nuance of the life of the court. Frederick and his burgeoning porcelain enterprise established mid-century, hoped to emulate Augustus to acquire these same benefits. Indeed the ownership of a manufactory became so important that it was considered one of the attributes of a Prince.⁸

The Chinese Tea House at Sanssouci was not the first building to demonstrate the relationship between porcelain, interior décor, and architecture. John Nieuhoff (1618-1672), a steward with the Dutch East India Company recorded his voyage to China in his travel account entitled *An Embassy from the East Indies Company of the United Provinces to the Grand Tartar Cham, Emperor of China*, that was published in 1658. Nieuhoff described the Porcelain Pagoda at Nanking as:

a high steeple or Tower made of purcelaine, which far exceeds all other Workmanship of the Chineses in cost and skill, by which the Chineses declared to the world the rare ingenuity of their Artists in former Ages. The outside is glazed over and Painted with several Colours, as Green, Red, and Yellow.⁹

⁸ This was suggested by Carl Eugen von Württemberg, founder of the Ludwigsburg Porcelain Manufactory. He wrote that the ownership of a porcelain works was “a necessary attribute to the glory and dignity of a prince.” This quotation is found in several publications; W. B. Honey, *German Porcelain*, Faber and Faber, London, 1947, p. 5; J. H. Plumb, “The Royal Porcelain Craze,” *In the Light of History*, Allen Lane: The Penguin Press, London, 1972, p. 57; Philip Rawson, *Ceramics*, University of Philadelphia Press, 1984, p. 64; Finlay, “The Pilgrim Art,” p. 175. All the authors cited above refer to this quotation without reference.

⁹ The book was published in Dutch in 1658, in French in 1665, and in English in 1669. John Nieuhoff, *An Embassy from the East India Company of the United Provinces to the Grand Tartar Cham Emperour of China. Delivered by their Excellencies Peter De Goyer, and Jacob De Keyzer, at the Imperial City of Peking. Wherein the Cities, Towns, Villages, Ports, Rivers, etc. In their passages from Canton to Peking, are Ingeniously Described by Mr. John Nieuhoff, Steward to the Ambassadors*, Printed by John Macock for the Author, London, 1669, p. 84.

His observations may have inspired the imagination of Louis XIV, for only five years after the French publication in 1665 of Nieuhoff's account, the King of France commissioned a structure called Le Petit Trianon de Porcelaine. This pavilion, designed by his architect Louis Le Vau for the King's mistress, Madame de Montespan, was constructed in the park of Versailles and used as a pleasure palace to escape the stifling formality of the court. Although Le Petit Trianon de Porcelaine was a Baroque structure, it was heavily ornamented with blue and white vases and urns along the balustrade, and coloured tiles on the roofline.

What is particularly important is that the association between porcelain and architecture was clearly established in these two instances even though this valuable material was not used in either case.¹⁰ The exterior of the Porcelain Pagoda was covered in coloured glazed tiles and that of Le Petit Trianon de Porcelaine, in blue and white faïence. It was Nieuhoff's perception that porcelain was used for the exterior of the Pagoda at Nanking as it was for Louis XIV and his contemporaries when viewing Le Petit Trianon de Porcelaine.¹¹ Le Vau also used blue and white fabric and tiles for the interior, and painted metal for the garden furnishings. These materials mimicked the signature porcelain of China to

¹⁰ Meredith Chilton, "Rooms of Porcelain," *International Ceramics Fair and Seminar*, London, 1992, p. 25.

¹¹ The difference between true hard-paste porcelain and faïence could have been easily discerned on the roofline. Even at close range it may have been difficult to verify what was real Chinese porcelain for most persons. Louis XIV's *inventaire général* listed ceramic objects as *porcelaines fines* and *porcelaine* without a differentiating description of the two, or a designation of their countries of origin. See H. Belevitch-Stankevitch, *Le Goût Chinois en France au Temps de Louis XIV*, Réimpression de l'édition de Paris, 1910, Slatkine Reprints, Genève, 1970, p. 139.

create a thematically integrated structure that paid homage to Cathay through the characteristics of its most fascinating commodity.¹² This pavilion has been credited with establishing the trend for the nobility to construct exotic pavilions in their palace gardens, and with its erection, inspiration, and a model for their design and décor.¹³

The Chinese Tea House was designed in this context. Buring chose to use celadon green stucco, gilded sandstone, and surfaces painted with exotic images for the exterior of the Tea House to convey this same message. He also employed these same finishes inside the structure, assuming that the select few who would have the opportunity to see the Chinese Tea House would make the appropriate associations. The characteristics of this highly valued commodity, so admired by

¹² China was known by various names throughout history. Cathay was the name by which North China was known in medieval Europe. The word is derived from Khitay (or Khitan), the name of a seminomadic people who left southeastern Mongolia in the 10th century CE to conquer part of Manchuria and Northern China, which they held for about two hundred years. By the time of Genghis Khan (died 1227), the Mongols had begun referring to North China as Kitai and South China as Mangi. Kitai is still the Russian word for China. Either Muslim merchants or two Franciscan friars who visited the ancient Mongol capital of Karakorum in 1246 and 1254 are thought to have introduced the name Cathay to Europe. Marco Polo (1254–1324), who journeyed to China almost fifty years later, was the person who really put the image of Cathay before the European public. His descriptions of a Cathay that possessed a far more sophisticated culture and technology than the contemporary West were circulated throughout medieval Europe. *Encyclopædia Britannica Online*. 02 Sep. 2008; According to Père Jean Baptiste Du Halde the Western Moguls called the country Catay, the Latins called it Sina, the English and Spaniards, China, the Italians, Cina, and the Germans, Tschina. *The General History of China. Containing a Geographical, Historical, Chronological, Political and Physical Description of the Empire of China, Chinese-Tartary, Corea and Tibet. Including an Exact and Particular Account of their Customs, Religion, Arts and Sciences. Adorn'd with Curious Maps and Copper Plates*, Trans. by Richard Brookes, Vol. 1, London, 1736, p. 1; China has also been called the Celestial Kingdom, the Celestial Empire and the Court of Heaven. The former Chinese Empire: – so called from the Chinese words, *T'ien Ch'ao* – Heavenly Dynasty, as being the kingdom ruled over by the dynasty appointed by heaven. *Webster's New International Dictionary of the English Language, Second Edition*, G. & C. Merriam Company, Springfield, Mass., 1950, p. 431.

¹³ Eleanor Consten Von Erdberg, *Chinese Influence on European Garden Structures*, Harvard University Press, Cambridge, Mass., 1936, pp. 60-61.

Europeans, were perceived as porcelain irrespective of the materials used. They made a clear reference to China as well as to the eighteenth-century culture of porcelain. Buring then enhanced the interior by exhibiting a selection of the King's Meissen porcelain collection to complete the décor, blending the fantasy of Cathay with the reality of eighteenth-century Europe.

THE CHAPTERS

Chapter One describes the design and commission of the Chinese Tea House. It investigates the origins of the structure's ground plan and makes reference to the literary and architectural sources that impacted the design of this exotic pavilion within its garden setting. It shows the King and his building office knowledgeable and familiar with publications on the subject of the Celestial Kingdom, its people, architecture and gardens. More importantly, I respond to the tradition of criticism that focuses on the Tea House's external design elements, on its lack of architectural authenticity, and on its frivolous nature. In recognizing the porcelain qualities of the Tea House, the chapter acknowledges the shared iconography of this art form with architecture.

Chapter Two examines the fascination of Frederick, his family and his contemporaries in the perceived designs, motifs, materials, and ideas of the Celestial Kingdom, illustrating that the Far East was not only a source of exotic trade goods, but of architectural inspiration and philosophical admiration. It

elaborates on the importance of architecture as a vehicle to display the king's princely attributes, as exhibited by the pavilion, his patronage, and his interests in architecture, philosophy, music, and porcelain that were exhibited in the form, design, and content of his Tea House.

Chapter Three describes the infatuation of Europeans with porcelain, one of the Celestial Kingdom's most desirable commodities. It elaborates on the European perception of this material, its characteristics and qualities, both real and imaginary, that established it worthy of collection and display in princely treasure chambers and porcelain rooms. It also describes the impact of porcelain on architecture as illustrated by Le Petit Trianon de Porcelaine. This pleasure palace established the arrangement of a thematically integrated structure that influenced the design and décor of the Chinese Tea House. These events led to the integration of this foreign substance into court culture, impacting interior décor and architecture from the medieval period until the beginning of the eighteenth century.

Chapter Four investigates the continuing exploration of porcelain with interior décor and architecture through the products of the Meissen Porcelain Manufactory. It elaborates on Augustus the Strong's obsession with porcelain that initiated the discovery of the arcanum and the establishment of the Meissen Manufactory. In particular it focuses on the influences of various media on the development of European porcelain that impacted the interpretation of Frederick's pavilion. This chapter draws attention to the importance of porcelain as a medium for self-representation and its participation in court spectacle and display as

exemplified by dining services and complex centerpieces. It draws parallels between the design of Frederick's garden pavilion and the type of table ornament designed to decorate the eighteenth-century royal table.

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

The Chinese Tea House is a representation of the European fashion to construct Oriental garden pavilions that reached a peak in the eighteenth century. The pavilion displays the contemporary fascination with the distant Far East, its philosophy, and its trade goods. The unusual ground plan, colourful exterior and ornamented surfaces express the exotic. Designated as Rococo, Chinoiserie, and a folly, the structure has been perceived as little more than a phenomenon of the "Chinese taste." This perception is reflected in the literature on the Tea House and in the lack of importance assigned to the structure within the program of Frederick's architectural endeavours.

Frederick's many biographers have elaborated on the military prowess for which he was designated the "Great," and his many attributes and accomplishments as patron, architect, writer, musician and composer, all of which contributed to his reputation as the "Philosopher of Sanssouci." Although Frederick's architectural projects have proven worthy of discussion in these biographies, the design and commission of the Chinese Tea House has barely received notice. References to the pavilion are scant, although his larger

commissions merit some commentary. The Marquis de Catt, Frederick's reader, recalls the King's discussion of his architectural projects during his visit to the battlefield at the time of the Seven Years War, noting that Frederick spoke of his love of architecture and drew sketches of the commissions at Sanssouci that included the Tea House.¹⁴ Thomas Carlyle and Nancy Mitford make no mention of the pavilion in their biographies of Frederick.¹⁵ Pierre Gaxotte only makes reference to the kiosk as part of a program of enlargements to the palace property.¹⁶ Giles MacDonogh refers to Frederick's use of the structure for dining with his dear friend and comrade at arms, Maréchal Keith when he was no longer able to walk the distance from his home on the Sanssouci grounds to the Palace proper because of his advanced age.¹⁷

The lack of commentary on the construction of the Chinese pavilion suggests that it is the perception of these authors that an exotic garden building was a frivolous structure and simply the result of the "China fancy" that took over Europe in the eighteenth century. These authors have implicitly assumed that this fashion of the day for *le goût Chinois* was not a serious type of architecture that

¹⁴ Henri de Catt, *Frederick the Great: Memoirs of His Reader Henri de Catt 1758-1760*, Trans. by F. S. Flint, Constable and Company Ltd., London, 1916, Vol. 1, pp. 67-68.

¹⁵ Thomas Carlyle, *History of Frederick the Great*, Chapman and Hall, London, 1897, 8 Vols., and Nancy Mitford, *Frederick the Great*, Penguin Books, Middlesex, 1973.

¹⁶ Pierre Gaxotte, *Frederick the Great*, Trans. by R. A. Bell, Yale University Press, New Haven, 1942, p. 232.

¹⁷ Giles MacDonogh, *Frederick the Great*, St. Martin's Press, New York, 2000, p. 334. This comment is also found in Jutta Nicht, "Die Ausstattung des Chinesischen Hauses Geschichte und neu Konzeption," *Das Chinesische Haus im Park von Sanssouci*, Herausgegeben von der Stiftung Schlösser und Gärten Potsdam, 1993, p. 97.

participated in court spectacle and display, or was to be placed within the public sphere where it could make a political statement. This point of view does not recognize the importance of the Far East for Frederick and his contemporaries as a source of design motifs, architectural innovation, or intellectual stimulation. Nor does it acknowledge the length of time that the *Bauamt* had been involved in planning for this structure, or the ways in which Frederick's interests are manifested in the design and interpretation of the pavilion.¹⁸ It also does not take into consideration the King's involvement in every aspect of his architectural projects and the pleasure he received from this pastime.¹⁹

In 1789, Heinrich Ludwig Manger, an architect in Frederick's building office, and an architectural historian, published a history of the buildings in Potsdam, in which he was critical of the king's pavilion. He questions the use of the ornamental details on the exterior of the pavilion and the architectural authenticity of the Chinese Tea House. Manger writes:

¹⁸ Heinrich Ludwig Manger, *Baugeschichte von Potsdam, besonders unter der Regierung Friedrichs II*, Berlin & Stettin: Friedrich Nicolai, 1789, Vol. III, p. 542; *Die Bauten des 18 Jahrhunderts im Park von Sanssouci*, Staatliche Schlösser und Gärten Potsdam-Sanssouci, 1969, *Friedrich II. und die Kunst, Ausstellung zum 200. Todestag*, Herausgegeben von der Generaldirektion der Staatlichen Schlösser und Gärten Potsdam-Sanssouci, 1986, pp. 180-210. Hans-Joachim Giersberg, "Friedrich der Grosse als Baumeister: Anmerkungen zu seinen Skizzen," pp. 21-24, and "Friedrich der Grosse als Baumeister," pp. 66-71, in *Potsdamer Schlösser und Gärten. Bau und Gartenkunst vom 17. bis 20. Jahrhundert*, Stiftung Schlösser und Gärten Potsdam-Sanssouci, Potsdamer Verlagsbuchhandlung, 1993; Heinrich Hamann, "Die Gartenkunst in Potsdam unter Friedrich dem Grossen," *Potsdam Schlösser und Gärten. Bau- und Gartenkunst vom 17. bis 20. Jahrhundert*, Stiftung Schlösser und Gärten Potsdam-Sanssouci, Potsdamer Verlagsbuchhandlung, Potsdam, 1993, pp. 32-36; Marion Dreger, "Das Chinesische Haus," *Potsdamer Schlösser und Gärten Bau und Gartenkunst vom 17. bis 20. Jahrhundert*, Stiftung Schlösser und Gärten Potsdam-Sanssouci, Potsdamer Verlagsbuchhandlung 1993, pp. 116-119.

¹⁹ Frederick's correspondence of April 3, April 20, May 8, May 20, and October 25, 1742, with his secretary Charles Etienne Jordan illustrates his passion for his projects. Frederick II, King of Prussia, *Correspondence, Letters Between Frederick and M. Jordan*, Translated from the French by Thomas Holcroft, London, 1789.

It is a pity, that at the time the book by the Englishman Chambers was not known here, otherwise Buring could have been better informed about the real architecture of the Chinese. As far as is known, they do put pagodas and idols in their temples, but never on the roofs. Much less do they depict companies of themselves drinking tea or smoking tobacco in front of their houses; and it is most doubtful whether they ever planted palm trees in regular distances from each other, in order to build roofs on their living trunks when they had grown to a sufficient height, and erect their dwellings under them. Yet the architect must be excused in this case, as he had not enough freedom, but had to adhere to a sketch made by the king. And after all, the house would not be considered characteristic and decisive enough as an Asiatic design if the palm trees were not here to suggest the climate, and if the figures of Chinese and their entertainments under such trees were not here to suggest the real Chinese element, as one could neither plant real palm trees, nor actually have Chinese people under them.²⁰

Manger's commentary has provided a basis from which the critical commentary on the pavilion has developed.

Marie-Luise Gothein, author of *A History of Garden Art*, written in 1928, criticizes the structure and finds no artistic merit in the Tea House. She considers it "one of the most freakish attempts at this foreign style," proclaiming, "...the whole place merely a fancy that lies prettily in the middle of a space bordered with hedges..."²¹ Her choice of the terms "freakish" and "attempt" denigrates

²⁰ The original quotation is from Manger, *Baugeschichte* Vol. I, p. 237. There are numerous translations of this passage, see Erdberg, *Chinese Influence*, pp. 83-84; Hugh Honour, *Chinoiserie: The Vision of Cathay*, John Murray, London, 1961, p. 113 and Dawn Jacobson, *Chinoiserie*, Phaidon, London, 1993, p. 94.

²¹ Marie-Luise Gothein, *A History of Garden Art*, Trans. by Mrs. Archer-Hind, E. P. Dutton, New

Frederick as the architect, and Büding, who carried out the commission, by suggesting the project was less than successful. It illustrates her disregard of the literature that had made such an impact on the design and construction of this exotic pavilion and its surrounding garden; such as the illustrated travel accounts, the Jesuit reports, as well as the many design books published to provide a suitable interior decor. Gothein determines the Tea House a frivolous and meaningless structure by the use of the term “fancy.” By doing so she diminishes the importance of the Far East in the preoccupations of Frederick and his contemporaries.

Frederick’s Tea House is an example of Chinoiserie architecture, and of the trend to erect Oriental garden pavilions initiated eighty years earlier by the construction of Le Petit Trianon de Porcelaine. Louis XIV’s pleasure palace is considered by Eleanor Consten von Erdberg as the first attempt in Europe to represent the Far East in architecture, and therefore subsequent structures fall within the study of Chinoiserie, Rococo Chinoiserie, or Oriental architecture in the West.²²

It was the ornamentation on the exterior of Le Petit Trianon de Porcelaine, which created such an impact at the time of its construction. Faïence vases and urns were used to establish the Chinese nature of the building. It was not the “porcelain” or the fact that this material made the association with China that

York, 1928, p. 193.

²² Erdberg, *Chinese Influence*, p. 59.

became the focus for subsequent research on this type of structure, but rather the use of superficial decoration. Although authors on Chinoiserie architecture have varying points of view, their focus on Frederick's Tea House has been to concentrate on its ornamental details even when the discussion concerns the architectural structure.

Erdberg, for example, endeavours to categorize the architecture of such buildings in her work, *Chinese Influence on European Garden Structures*. However, she bases her analysis on the external design elements to classify what she defines as three phases of the Chinoiserie style.²³ Hugh Honour in his book, *Chinoiserie: The Vision of Cathay*, refers to the pavilion as “fantastic,” and writes that the Tea House is “more bizarre than any chinoiserie building previously - or indeed subsequently - erected in Germany...”²⁴ Honour does not elaborate on the characteristics that make the structure “fantastic” and “bizarre,” but one must assume it to be the golden figures and palm trees on the exterior. Oliver Impey in his publication *Chinoiserie: the Impact of Oriental Styles on Western Art and Decoration*, finds the Chinese Tea House merely the dressing of a Neoclassical building in fanciful surface decoration set into a formal garden.²⁵ Patrick Connor, to the contrary, finds the Tea House “delightful” in his book, *Oriental Architecture in the West*, and proceeds to list the details found on, and around, the

²³ Erdberg, *Chinese Influence*, pp. 59-71.

²⁴ Honour, *Chinoiserie*, p. 113.

²⁵ Oliver Impey, *Chinoiserie: The Impact of Oriental Styles on Western Art and Decoration*, Charles Scribner's Sons, New York, 1977, p. 149.

Tea House, which make the pavilion appealing.²⁶

Other historians have focused on a single element to find the meaning of the structure. Saskia Hüneke, in her article on the sculptures surrounding the Tea House, has determined that one particular element, the caduceus, the only ancient motif on the structure, provides a clue to the meaning of the building.²⁷ Willy Kurth in his book, *Sanssouci*, finds that the figures of the *Vorhallen* (entryways) epitomise the type of pleasurable and flirtatious interaction found in the images of Antoine Watteau, Nicolas Lancret, Jean-Baptiste Pater, Jean-François De Troy and François Boucher. He finds that the sculptors have managed to illustrate the mood of the period by the expressive gestures of what he discerns are life-size porcelain figures made of sandstone, oblivious to other more definitive characteristics of the pavilion that make this same association.²⁸

As previously noted, Frederick's pavilion also appears in the literature devoted to European "follies."²⁹ Tim Knox calls these structures "extravagant edifices raised for amusement and diversion." Frederick, who designed the pavilion and who found diversion in his architectural projects may have agreed with this description of his building had Knox not later clarified his statement by

²⁶ Patrick Connor, *Oriental Architecture in the West*, Thames and Hudson, London, 1979, p. 24.

²⁷ Saskia Hüneke, "Die Sculpturen von Johann Peter Benckert und Johann Gottlieb Heymüller," *Das Chinesische Haus im Park von Sanssouci*, Herausgegeben von der Stiftung Schlösser und Gärten Potsdam-Sanssouci, 1993, p. 61.

²⁸ Willy Kurth, *Sans Soucis*, Henschverlag und Kunst und Gesellschaft, Berlin, 1962, p. 66.

²⁹ See p. 2, n. 3.

noting that many of these structures also had forms that were “bizarre.”³⁰

The emphasis these recent authors have placed on the decorative and ornamental aspects of the pavilion assuredly have been influenced by the literature published on the Rococo that denigrates the style, finding it frivolous, derivative, and related to the feminine.³¹ These ideas are the result of a superficial understanding of the movement, and have been refuted by Fiske Kimball, Henry Russell Hitchcock and Anthony Blunt, and have been challenged more recently by the work of Melissa Hyde, Ewa Lajer-Burcharth, Jennifer Milam, Mary Sheriff and Katie Scott.³²

³⁰ Barlow, Knox and Hughes, *Follies*, p. 6.

³¹ The fact that these ideas prevailed well into the twentieth century may be the result of the negative associations reinforced by the ideas expressed by Adolf Loos in his article “Ornament and Crime” written in 1908, where he associates ornamentation with degeneracy. Loos wrote “the evolution of culture is synonymous with the removal of ornamentation from objects of everyday use.” “Ornament and Crime,” in *Ornament and Crime: Selected Essays*, Trans. by Michael Mitchell, Ariadne Press, Riverside, California, 1998, p. 167.

³² Fiske Kimball, recounts the association of the Rococo with the negative characteristics of the style as well as its association with Madame de Pompadour coined in the studio of Jacques Louis David by painter Maurice Quai in 1796-1797. The Rococo began with the type of decoration designed by Jules Hardouin Mansart who worked in the studio of Le Pautre during the last fifteen years of the reign of Louis XIV. It was further developed by the members of the studio into the style known as Régence (1715-1723) and reached its maturity during the reign of Louis XV. It ended with the emergence of classicism toward the end of the century. The term “Rococo” was coined in contempt at this time and Fiske Kimball acknowledges that the criticism commonly associates the period with frivolity, decadence and the excesses of Madame de Pompadour, *The Creation of the Rococo*, Philadelphia Museum of Art, Philadelphia, 1943, pp. 3-5; Anthony Blunt (Ed.) *Baroque and Rococo Architecture and Decoration*, Harper & Row, New York, 1978, reiterates this association, p. 19. Two recent publications address the negative associations of the Rococo and French painting. Melissa Lee Hyde also reminds the reader of the association “Van Loo, Pompadour, Rococo!” established by Maurice Quai in the studio of Jacques Louis David, and that the artists were critical of Ancien-Regime aesthetic taste in general, and of its painting in particular. Madame de Pompadour was considered responsible for the degeneracy of French taste, morals and art. Hyde also makes reference to Jules and Edmond Goncourt’s identification of the marquise as the “Godmother of the Rococo,” in *Madame de Pompadour*, Paris, Firmin-Didot et cie., 1888, p. 313, cited in *Making Up the Rococo: François Boucher and His Critics*, The Getty Research Institute, Los Angeles, 2006, p. 10; Mary D. Sheriff brings up the continued association of Rococo painting with qualities such as frivolous, diminutive, decorative and light-hearted which are perceived as both negative and feminine, in *Fragonard: Art and Eroticism*, The

Kimball in his seminal work on the Rococo has acknowledged that the movement was concerned with interior design and the ornament of surface, and that within this context the Orient provided inspiration.³³ He also wrote that the Rococo was manifested in architecture where there was a novel treatment of plastic and spatial forms, which I argue is discernable in the design of Frederick's pavilion.³⁴ Anthony Blunt writes that the Rococo enjoyed a great success and produced works of great invention and sophistication in the German states: in particular there were complete structures "in which the architecture is inseparable from the Rococo decoration..."³⁵ This description suggests the design of the Tea House and the relationship of porcelain and architecture. It implies the concept of the *Gesamtkunstwerk* (a total work of art), that distinguishes the two volumes dedicated to the garden building.³⁶

Arno Krause, author of *Das Chinesische Teehaus im Park von Sanssouci*, 1963, writes that the garden pavilion is a *Gesamtkunstwerk* in that it manages to

University of Chicago Press, Chicago and London, 1990, p. 28. See also Katie Scott, *The Rococo Interior*, Yale University Press, New Haven and London, 1995; Ewa Lajer-Burchard, "Pompadour's Touch: Difference in Representations," *Representations*, No. 73, Winter 2001, pp. 54-58, and Jennifer Milam, "Playful Constructions and Fragonard's Swinging Scenes," *Eighteenth Century Studies*, Vol. 33.4, 2000, pp. 543-559.

³³ Kimball, *Rococo*, pp. 3, 138-140, 151, 152, 172, 194.

³⁴ Kimball, *Rococo*, p. 3; Blunt, *Baroque and Rococo*, pp. 17-18; Henry Russell Hitchcock, *Rococo Architecture in Southern Germany*, Phaidon, London, 1968, p. 1.

³⁵ Blunt, *Baroque and Rococo*, p. 17.

³⁶ This term was first used by Richard Wagner in *Das Kunstwerk der Zukunft*, (*Artwork of the Future*) 1849, to describe his concept of a work of art for the stage, based on the ideal of ancient Greek tragedy, to which all the individual arts would contribute under the direction of a single creative mind in order to express one overriding idea. However, the term is applied retrospectively to projects in which several art forms are combined to achieve a unified effect. Ingrid Macmillan. Grove Art Online. Oxford Art Online. June 22. 2008.

combine architecture, sculpture, and painting.³⁷ A more recent publication written to coincide with the one thousandth anniversary of the city of Potsdam, *Das Chinesische Haus im Park von Sanssouci*, is the most detailed account of the Tea House to date, with contributions from scholars who have written on the history of the structure, the decorative elements of the interior and exterior, as well as the surrounding garden. It also chronicles the most recent restoration that was completed in 1993.

In the foreword, Hans-Joachim Giersberg, an historian who has written extensively on Frederick as an architect and on his architectural commissions, echoes this interpretation.³⁸ He adds that architecture, sculpture and painting join in this structure to create an inseparable whole of content and form that makes the building appear as if it is created in one piece and is a perfect example of this concept.³⁹ Although they do not associate the Tea House with porcelain, these are characteristics that also describe the complex porcelain sculptures that were products of the eighteenth-century culture of porcelain.

The centerpieces used to ornament the dining tables of the nobility have been well documented in the large body of works on the history of European

³⁷ Arno Krause, *Das Chinesische Teehaus im Park von Sanssouci*, Staatliche Schlösser und Gärten Potsdam-Sanssouci, Potsdam, 1963, pp. 5-8.

³⁸ Apart from those works mentioned on p. 12, n. 17, Giersberg also wrote; "An Architectural Partnership: Frederick the Great and George Wenzeslaus von Knobelsdorff at Schloss Sanssouci," *Connoisseur*, Volume 195, No. 783, May 1977, pp. 4-15; *Friedrich als Bauherr, Studien zur Architektur des 18. Jahrhunderts in Berlin und Potsdam*, Berlin: Seidler, 1986; (Ed.), *Royal Palaces in Berlin and Brandenburg*, Stiftung Schlosser und Gärten Berlin-Brandenburg und dem E. A. Seeman Verlag, Leipzig, 2001.

³⁹ Hans-Joachim Giersberg in *Das Chinesische Haus im Park von Sanssouci*, Herausgegeben von der Stiftung Schlösser und Gärten Potsdam-Sanssouci, 1993, p. 9.

porcelain as well as in publications on princely dining habits. They have been important in understanding the impact of porcelain on eighteenth-century life. Otto Walcha's book, *Meissen Porcelain*, has proven invaluable.⁴⁰ His history has provided insight into the discovery of the arcanum, the establishment of manufacturing processes and the development of the contemporary culture of porcelain that I argue has influenced the interpretation of Frederick's pavilion.

Acknowledging the significance of the discovery of the elusive porcelain recipe by systematic scientific investigation, the production of objects that were representative of the court and its interests, and their appreciation as high art as well as a valuable commodity, attests to the importance of this material for the king and his contemporaries. There is little wonder that the ownership of a manufactory was determined of primary importance. Yet, there is little or no appreciation of the influence of porcelain on architecture and no acknowledgement especially on that of the Chinese Tea House. Porcelain barely enters into any commentary on the structure even though its characteristics are so obviously present.

It is my suggestion that the influence of porcelain on architecture has not been established because this type of structure has been embedded in biased notions of the exotic and the frivolous, when in fact, closer examination reveals a tradition of pavilions influenced by this commodity. It could be assumed that this indifference is rooted in the perception that porcelain is a common commodity, rather than recognizing the wondrous substance and respected art form that it was

⁴⁰ Otto Walcha, *Meissen Porcelain*, Trans. by Edmund Launert, Cassell Ltd., London, 1981.

in Frederick's time, or that porcelain is simply a decorative art that has little consequence or value.

In fact, several publications have concentrated on specific areas of the history of porcelain that have illustrated its importance. Meredith Chilton has described porcelain figure sculptures as masterpieces of technology.⁴¹ Claire Le Corbeiller has focused on porcelain figures as sculpture and as historical document.⁴² Anna Somers-Cock has written about the use of porcelain in room décor.⁴³ Maureen Cassidy-Geiger and others have participated in the most recent publication that has demonstrated the importance of porcelain in royal diplomacy.⁴⁴ None have recognized the impact of this material on architecture.

The influence of porcelain on the design and interpretation of the Tea House provides an interesting example of how a commodity functions in a complex social structure. It was the European perception of Chinese porcelain as a material that was mysterious and magical that established its value and desirability when the initial contact with this fascinating material was made. This

⁴¹ Meredith Chilton, "Technical Masterpieces: Creating Porcelain Figures in the Eighteenth Century," *Figures From Life: Porcelain Sculpture From the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York ca. 1740-1780*, Museum of Fine Arts St. Petersburg, Florida, 1992, pp. 21-28.

⁴² Claire Le Corbeiller, "Porcelain as Sculpture," *The International Ceramics Fair and Seminar*, London, June 1988, pp. 22-28; and "Figures to Adorn the Middle of the Desert," *Figures From Life: Porcelain Sculpture from the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York ca. 1740-1780*, Museum of Fine Arts St. Petersburg, Florida, 1992, pp. 9-11.

⁴³ Anna Somers Cocks, "The Nonfunctional Use of Ceramics in the English Country House During the Eighteenth Century," *Studies in the History of Art*, Vol. 25, 1989, pp. 195-215.

⁴⁴ For meaningful essays on the use and importance of porcelain and diplomacy see Maureen Cassidy-Geiger (Ed.), *Fragile Diplomacy: Meissen Porcelain for European Courts ca. 1710-63*, The Bard Graduate Center for Studies in the Decorative Arts, Design, and Culture, Yale University Press, New Haven and London, 2007.

phenomenon benefits from consideration of Igor Kopytoff's theory "The Cultural Biography of Things: Commoditization as Process." The material and its diverse uses can be understood as culturally determined responses made all the more complex by the transcultural nature of Chinese porcelain and its appreciation and redefinition in the West.⁴⁵ The fascination with porcelain fueled the demand for the material, its collection, the research for, and the discovery of the arcanum as well as the development of its use in contemporary representations.

Kopytoff's approach lends credence to my argument that porcelain functioned as an art form and purveyor of ideas, images and associations.⁴⁶ It does not fully explain the phenomenon of the Tea House. It is the intermediality of porcelain that exemplifies Frederick's pavilion. The influence of prints and engravings, metal work, ivory, sugar and bronze sculpture, impacted the development of production methods and the products of porcelain manufacture. The merging of architecture and porcelain in the Tea House reflects the broad range of influences that impacted its interpretation. The Tea House may have been constructed for pleasurable activities, but it is not a useless construct. It is a representation of personal and broader interests and ideas that were pertinent and relevant to Frederick, interpreted and conveyed through the medium of porcelain.

⁴⁵ Igor Kopytoff, "The Cultural Biography of Things: Commoditization as Process," in Arjun Appadurai (Ed.), *The Social Life of Things: Commodities in Cultural Perspective*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1986, pp. 73-83.

⁴⁶ Kopytoff, "The Social Life of Things," p. 90.

CHAPTER ONE

THE CHINESE TEA HOUSE AT SANSSOUCI

Frederick the Great's Chinese Tea House on the grounds of his summer palace Sanssouci has been considered at worst a "folly" and at best a representation of the contemporary trend for the nobility to construct exotic garden pavilions in their palace gardens. This chapter recounts the history of the structure. It refutes the idea that Frederick's building is a fanciful, overly-ornamented, and useless structure. I argue that Frederick's garden pavilion was a representation of his interest in the exoticism of the Far East and expressed his wider interests in architecture, philosophy, music, and porcelain that informed his reign as an Enlightenment ruler, and his Tea House design as well. The superficial ornamentation was a means of giving voice to a vocabulary of design elements that, to Frederick and his circle, spoke of China, its architecture, philosophy, and of porcelain in particular. In creating a magical pavilion that recalled the Far East, Frederick and his architect Johann Gottfried Buring also synthesized a building of porcelain.

The Glowing Tea House

The Chinese Tea House glows golden and green awaiting discovery behind a high circular hedge in the park some distance away from the formal palace gardens. The undulating celadon façade is surrounded by life-size golden figures in Chinese costume and headdress. An orchestra of Chinese musicians

stands on pedestals between the gilded arched windows, swaying in rhythm to their melody where the building flows outward. They entertain the groups of men and women who are talking, drinking coffee and tea, and eating pineapples and melons, clustered at the base of golden palm trees where the pavilion flows inward. The turquoise and pink, scalloped and rippling tent-like roof sits delicately on the golden palm fronds sheltering the figures of this exotic world. A golden mandarin surveys the scene from his vantage point on top of the cupola seated on a cushion and shielded from the sun under a golden parasol. The birds and monkeys painted on the underside of the roof at the entryways serve to draw the visitors through the glass doors to join the Tea Party that has already begun inside. These painted citizens – men and women of the Celestial Kingdom – peer down from the balustrade overlooking the circular salon to the new arrivals who come to enjoy the ambiance of Cathay. Another mandarin sits in the boughs of the gilded chandelier, overseeing the king's guests who gather amid the golden candle sconces and the porcelain collection perched on golden brackets against celadon walls. Light streams in through gilded arched doors and windows, framing the view of golden figures at the entryways, colourful flowers in the gardens, orange trees in gilded pots, and tall porcelain vases tucked into niches carved in the hedges (fig. 1).

Design and Construction of the Tea House

The Chinese Tea House was constructed in the Southeastern corner of the deer park, approximately eight hundred meters to the West of the summer palace.

It is a single storey structure, twenty meters high and eighty meters in circumference. The trefoil pavilion is constructed on a two-tiered sandstone base with four steps leading up to each of the three entryways. The walls are punctuated by three French doors and twenty-one windows. The structure is encircled with two programs of golden life-size Chinese figures. Columns in the form of palm trees support the rippling copper roof. The structure is crowned by a tambour with six oval windows that light the interior, and is topped with the figure of a seated Chinese mandarin. The interior consists of a circular central salon twelve meters in diameter, with three narrow elliptical shaped cabinets approximately six meters wide and five meters deep extending outwards.⁴⁷

The pavilion was erected between 1754 and 1757, but the interior of the structure was only completed in 1763 due to interruptions caused by Frederick's participation in the Seven Years War (1756-1763). The building was finally inaugurated at a ceremony in the garden on April 30, 1764, in the presence of Frederick's family and invited guests.⁴⁸

Although Frederick drew the plan for his Oriental garden pavilion, it was not an original idea.⁴⁹ He based his sketch on that of the trefoil garden structure, Le Trèfle, Bâtiment Chinois, designed by the architect Emmanuel Héré de Corny,

⁴⁷ Manger, *Baugeschichte*, Vol. 1, p. 238.

⁴⁸ Klaus Dorst, "Die schöne sinesische Pagode," *Das Chinesische Haus im Park von Sanssouci*, Herausgegeben von der Stiftung Schlösser und Gärten Potsdam-Sanssouci, 1993, p. 36.

⁴⁹ The drawing disappeared at the time of the construction, see Gerhild H. M. Komander *Das Chinesische Haus im Park von Sanssouci*, Stiftung Schlösser und Gärten Potsdam-Sanssouci, 1994, pp. 1-2.

and constructed for the twice dethroned King of Poland, Stanislas Leszczynski, between 1738-1741 in the park of his palace at Lunéville, France.⁵⁰ Stanislas had taken refuge at Prussia's capital, Königsberg, after his second dethronement in 1735, and he corresponded regularly with King Frederick William I and Crown Prince Frederick thereafter. Stanislas continued this relationship with Frederick after his ascension to the throne in 1740.⁵¹ On June 15, 1754, Stanislas sent a letter to his friend, now known as Frederick the Great:

Je me donne...la liberté de vous envoyer les plans
des ouvrages que j'ai fait construire...Je m'expose à
vous les présenter, sachant que vous êtes le suprême
juge de tous les arts.⁵²

I take the liberty of sending you the plans of the works
I have had constructed, knowing you are the supreme
judge of all the arts.

Frederick replied to Stanislas, July 2, 1754:

Je la remercie de tout mon coeur du livre de plans
qu'Elle a bien m'envoyer.⁵³

I thank you with all my heart for the portfolio of
plans which you have sent me.

Included in the portfolio dated 1752 was the plan for a small Chinese

⁵⁰ Komander, *Das Chinesische Haus im Park Sanssouci*, 1994, pp. 1-2.

⁵¹ Carlyle, *Frederick*, Vol. III, p. 151; Mitford, *Frederick*, p. 71.

⁵² Pierre Boyé, *Correspondence Inédite de Stanislas Leszczynski, Duc de Lorraine et de Bar Avec Les Roi de Prusse Frédéric-Guillaume Ier et Frédéric II 1736-1766*, Berger-Levrault & Cie, Editeurs, Paris, Nancy, 1906, p. 73. All translations are mine unless otherwise noted.

⁵³ *Ibid.*, p. 75.

garden structure with a trefoil ground plan and an undulating roofline (figs. 2, 3, 4). Although the portfolio of plans is available for perusal, the building no longer exists.⁵⁴ Frederick's design for Tea House loosely follows Héré's clover leaf pattern for Le Trèfle, but the king's pavilion has one continuous facade of chambers and entryways. Frederick's structure, like Le Trèfle is covered by an undulating tent-like roof, but at Sanssouci the main roof is scalloped, angling more steeply and rippling more gently than the building at Lunéville. Images of Le Trèfle's exterior show that Héré's design was lacking in the type of ornamentation that Büding had placed on and around the Tea House.⁵⁵ Büding's ground plan reveals the final outcome of Héré's influence and Frederick's design and shows the circular central salon of the Tea House much larger and the three bedrooms of a squashed kidney shape much smaller than those of Le Trèfle (fig. 5).⁵⁶

Frederick had never been to Lunéville to see Stanislas' Chinese pavilion, but it appears that he, and his building office, had already received information regarding the design of Le Trèfle years before the deposed king had sent the collection of designs. The thirteen years that had elapsed between the completion

⁵⁴ Emmanuel Héré de Corny, "Elévation a trois faces d'un Bâtiment Chinois nommé le Trèfle situé a un des bouts du Canal du jardin Royal de Lunéville," *Recueil des plans, élévations et coupes, tant géométrales qu'en perspective, des châteaux, jardins et dépendances que le Roy de Pologne occupe en Lorraine, y compris les bâtimens qu'il a fait élever, ainsi que les changemens considérables, les decorations et les autres enrichissemens qu'il a fait faire à ceux qui étoient déjà construits, chez François, graveur, 1752*, Staatliche Museen zu Berlin, Kunstbibliothek.

⁵⁵ Héré de Corny's plans show three drawings representing a groundplan, façade, and cut-away view of the Oriental interior décor, see "L'Élevation à Trois Faces d'un Bâtiment Chinois Nommé Le Trèfle..." Planches 16-18.

⁵⁶ Dimensions of the structure are found in Dorst, "Die schöne," p. 34.

of Stanislas' structure and the construction of Frederick's Tea House had provided ample time for information about it to reach Prussia. Frederick may have been apprised of the construction from the deposed king himself even before he had sent him the plans. Of course, it is also possible that Frederick had heard of this building through conversations with his intellectual idol, François-Marie Arouet de Voltaire, who had a close relationship with both Stanislas and Frederick. The French philosopher had lived with Stanislas for a time and then later, in close proximity to him at Cirey.⁵⁷ Frederick had established a relationship by correspondence with Voltaire, in 1736, two years before the construction of Stanislas' Chinese pavilion. Voltaire had visited Frederick at Rheinsberg in 1740, during the erection of Le Trèfle, and again in 1743, immediately after its completion. Voltaire also spent three years from 1750-1753 at the Prussian court, during the planning stages, and just prior to the construction of Frederick's Chinese pavilion. These meetings would have provided an opportunity for a discussion of Stanislas' and the king's architectural projects.

Heinrich Ludwig Manger, was employed at the Potsdam building office from 1752. He recorded that Frederick made drawings of all types of buildings as well as of decorations and interior furnishings for his personal projects. He also wrote that the king had a particular habit of making sketches from the plans of other architects and submitting these copies as his own.⁵⁸ If Manger's

⁵⁷ Krause, *Das Chinesische Teehaus*, p. 14; Marion Dreger, "Das Chinesische Haus," *Potsdamer Schlösser und Gärten. Bau und Gartenkunst vom 17. bis 20. Jahrhundert*, Stiftung Schlösser und Gärten Potsdam-Sanssouci, Potsdamer Verlagsbuchhandlung, 1993, p. 18.

⁵⁸ Manger, *Baugeschichte*, Vol. I, p. 243.

commentary on Frederick's habit of copying the designs of others and presenting them as his own is accurate, the king would have had little difficulty taking inspiration from any building he had heard about or seen.

The existence of a map of the Sanssouci Palace grounds dated 1752 showing a marker where the Tea House was to be constructed confirms that plans had already been underway for a garden pavilion at this time (fig. 6). This fact suggests that the *Bauamt* had received information about Stanislas' kiosk and was in the process of preparing drawings for the construction of the pavilion before the portfolio of designs had arrived in 1754.

The architect George Wenzeslas von Knobelsdorff (1699-1753) had been associated with the Prussian court for years, and he was in Potsdam at the time the maps were drawn showing the placement marker and the ground plan. The amount of time that elapsed between the garden plans of 1752 and the construction date leads one to believe, as Hans-Joachim Giersberg suggests, that Knobelsdorff had been involved in the planning of a Chinese garden structure sometime before his death on September 16, 1753.⁵⁹ Frederick had sent Knobelsdorff to Italy in 1736-1737, and to France in 1740, to study architecture.⁶⁰ One may assume that he had seen the plans, or the structure Stanislas built at Lunéville, and then prepared some sketches several years before the Tea House commission was actually undertaken.

⁵⁹ Giersberg, *Friedrich als Bauherr*, pp. 115-116.

⁶⁰ Eberhard Hempel, *Baroque Art and Architecture in Central Europe*, Trans. by Elisabeth Hempel and Marguerite Kay, Penguin Books, Middlesex, 1985, pp. 265-266.

Several drawings of a Chinese pavilion found in Frederick's building office show some similarity to illustrations of another Chinese structure, the Pagoda of Sinkicien. These sketches may have been derived from the illustrations by John Nieuhoff and Johann Bernhard Fischer von Erlach.⁶¹ These were originally thought to have been drawn by Knobelsdorff and would have confirmed that he had been involved in the planning of a Chinese structure before his demise. The drawings have since been attributed to Knobelsdorff's friend, the painter and architect Andreas Ludwig Krüger, who is thought to have made these sketches in 1745 (fig. 7). Their existence confirms that there had been some interest in a Chinese pavilion at least nine years before Büding began the commission on Frederick's design.⁶²

The Tea House and the Garden

The work on the pavilion and its surrounding gardens began at approximately the same time. Frederick had been involved in all aspects of planning the gardens at his homes in Ruppín, Rheinsberg, and the formal gardens of Sanssouci, and he participated in the garden design for this new commission as well. It had been his intention to use the area of the deer park in the Western part

⁶¹ Johann Bernhard Fischer von Erlach included images of the Porcelain Pagoda at Nanking and the Pagoda of Sinkicien found in Nieuhoff's report in his *History of World Architecture*, Translated by Thomas Lediard, London, 1730.

⁶² The drawing by Andreas Ludwig Krüger, *Chinoiserie-Skizzen*, Graphitzeichnung aus undem Berliner Skizzenbuch, HZ 3827, *Staatliche Schlösser und Gärten: Berlin*, Stiftung Schlösser und Gärten, Potsdam Sanssouci, is noted in Sybille Harksen, "Chinoiserie im Park von Sanssouci," *Das Chinesische Haus im Park von Sanssouci*, Herausgegeben von der Stiftung Schlösser und Gärten Potsdam-Sanssouci, 1993, pp. 50-53, and Dorst, "Die schöne," p. 30.

of the palace grounds to enhance the exotic nature of the Chinese House. The idea of integrating an exotic pavilion within a suitable garden had already been achieved with the construction of Le Petit Trianon de Porcelaine eighty years before. This building that became a model for subsequent structures built in the Chinese style in the German states. The task of designing the garden was originally given to court gardener Philip Friedrich Krutisch, and he was sent by the king to Wilhelmstal to study the new style that had been adopted for the surroundings of the Asiatic pavilion that had been constructed there in 1750. The work was taken over by Joachim Ludwig Heydert in May 1756, and improvements to the garden continued until 1772 under the direction of court gardener F. Z. Saltzmann (fig. 8).⁶³

This design had been influenced by the styles of gardening that came to be known as the English Landscape Garden and the Anglo-Chinese Garden. Frederick's was a variation of these with characteristics that included an asymmetry in the arrangements of plants to imitate nature with lawns, clumps of trees, winding paths, and meandering waterways. A canal, commonly seen on designs drawn by Europeans of Chinese gardens, was excavated on the parkland side of the garden and a Chinese bridge was later commissioned to add to the exotic character of the area.⁶⁴ Manger described the organization of the garden

⁶³ Hans Huth, *Der Park von Sanssouci*, Deutscher Kunstverlag, Berlin, 1929, p. 14. Jörg Wacker, "Der Garten um das Chinesische Haus," *Das Chinesische Haus im Park von Sanssouci*, Herausgegeben von der Stiftung Schlösser und Gärten Potsdam-Sanssouci, pp. 11-24.

⁶⁴ The plans for the bridge signed by Chambers were found in the library of the Nues Palais at Potsdam by Hans Huth in the 1930's. Proof of receipt of payment for the sketches confirms that Frederick had received them. The project was never undertaken. Hans Huth, "Chambers and

around the Tea House: “In the park were placed many new serpentine paths, some of them even in the Chinese manner, or as they say now in the English way, bordered with many kinds of exotic plants.”⁶⁵

Heydert also used the trefoil design of the structure to integrate the architecture of the building with the garden. Three clearings were cut into the forest that surrounded the pavilion to correspond to the three chambers. They were planted with lawns and bordered with hedges that extended toward the surrounding woods to give the impression of three star-shaped radials projecting into the forested areas. The flowing form of the pavilion was also accentuated by colourful flower beds running in elongated curves along the inside of the hedges encircling the Tea House and the circular pathway surrounding the structure (fig. 9). To reinforce the Chinese character of the garden, large porcelain vases from the Meissen manufactory were set into niches in the hedges at the edges of the lawns, and gilded pots with orange trees were placed directly across from each of the three entrances to the building (fig. 10).⁶⁶

The excursion from the palace and its formal gardens through the newly

Potsdam,” *Essays in the History of Architecture Presented to Rudolf Wittkower*, Phaidon, London, 1967, pp. 214-216. The sketch, *Aufriss einer Chinesischen Brücke*, 1763, Feder in Schwartz, farbig aquarelliert; 22 x 37 cm, Planslg. Nr. 2365 is found in the archives of the Stiftung Schlösser und Gärten Potsdam-Sanssouci. Proof that a bridge was actually constructed was only discovered by Sibylle Harsen in 1977. A detailed bill for repairs on the Chinese Bridge from J. J. Treppen dated 1788 describes the paint colours used to restore the bridge and confirms that it was not designed by Chambers. Marion Dreger, “Die Chinesische Brücke,” *Potsdamer Schlösser und Gärten Bau und Gartenkunst vom 17. bis 20. Jahrhundert*, Stiftung Schlösser und Garten Potsdam Sanssouci, Potsdamer Verlagsbuchhandlung, 1993, p. 146; Wacker refers to a report written in 1782 by Saltzman regarding the necessity of repairs to the bridge that leads to the Chinese Kitchen, and the collapse of the bridge in 1788, “Der Garten um das Chinesische Haus,” p. 17.

⁶⁵ Manger, *Baugeschichte*, Vol. I, p. 267.

⁶⁶ Krause, *Das Chinesische Tee Haus*, p. 14; Dreger, “Die Brücke,” p. 116.

landscaped park suggested a voyage to the Celestial Empire on the other side of the world. The placement of the Tea House some distance from the palace emphasized the separation between the real world of Frederick's palace and the fantasy world hidden within the park. The Tea House could only be reached by following the curving paths that led from the formal palace gardens through the newly planted bosquets of imported trees, foreign plants, and covered pathways that prolonged the voyage to the Asiatic pavilion. The Tea House was meant to be "discovered" glowing golden and green behind the high circular hedge that separated the pavilion and its gardens. Concealing the Chinese kiosk and the lifesize golden figures that surround it behind a wall of greenery made the revelation of this scene all the more dramatic. This was accentuated by the animation of the figures socializing and making music in this hidden, foreign world, co-existing alongside that of Frederick the Great (fig. 11).⁶⁷

The Chinese Tea House: A Chinoiserie Folly

Frederick's and Büring's Chinese Tea House is a European interpretation of an Oriental structure ornamented with a vocabulary of design elements that suggest the exotic. The sources for the design and ornamentation of Frederick's pavilion were based on European perceptions of Chinese architecture established over hundreds of years of contact with the Far East and its trade goods. Even so,

⁶⁷ Erdberg writes that one of the important characteristics associated with the new styles of garden design was the element of surprise in the form of an architectural element or an unusual characteristic of nature itself. See *Chinese Influence*, pp. 36-37.

the Tea House is categorized as Chinoiserie architecture and as a folly.⁶⁸ The significance of these classifications is found in the convergence of characteristics that define the garden building as useless or frivolous, and the persistence of negative associations in relation to the design and ornamentation of the pavilion. A closer examination of the structure, and the influences that impacted its design, refutes these notions.

The negative commentary on Frederick's garden pavilion began as early as 1789. Heinrich Ludwig Manger published a history of the buildings in Potsdam in which he was critical of the ornamental details on the exterior of the pavilion, and questioned the architectural authenticity of the Chinese Tea House. His commentary was published shortly after the death of the king, when the fashion to construct Oriental garden structures had somewhat waned. Manger does not question the type of decorative elements chosen by the architect and artists involved in the pavilion's construction and ornamentation. Manger comments only on the exterior design elements, and describes how they were misused on the structure to undermine its architectural authenticity. He excuses the architect,

⁶⁸ Erdberg has categorized three phases of the Chinoiserie style: the "Exotic," the "Grotesque," and the "Imitative." The Chinese Tea House she characterizes as a successful blending of the "Exotic" and the "Grotesque," using exotic ornamentation and Asian figures as decorative elements on the exterior of the structure. The "Exotic" is represented by structures of a unique and individual approach initiated by the construction of the Le Petit Trianon de Porcelaine which was the first to use ornamentation on the exterior of the building. The "Grotesque" is concerned with the decorative use of Chinoiserie figures, often exaggerating the unusual characteristics associated with the fantastic and unrealistic images of China, like the illustrations of Chinese persons by François Boucher and Gabriel Huquier, which show Europeans wearing pigtailed and fanciful costumes of the Far East. The third classification, the "Imitative," she considers an accurate interpretation of the Chinese style found in Chambers' books of Chinese architecture and design and does not concern Frederick's garden pavilion. *Chinese Influence*, pp. 10-15, 68.

Büding, because the design was forced upon him by Frederick.⁶⁹ Manger also determines the presence of the ornamentation necessary to suggest the climate and the real Chinese element because of the inaccuracy of the building design. This was perhaps because the trefoil design did not appear sufficiently “Chinese.”

Manger had never been to China, but he finds the Tea House lacking what he assumes to be the accurate architectural interpretations of pagodas found in the drawings of architect Sir William Chambers. Chambers published two volumes of Chinese designs, the first during the construction and decoration of the Tea House, and the second just at the time of its completion. Chambers had visited China twice between 1743 and 1748 as a supercargo with the Swedish East India Company. During the months spent in Canton he diligently learned all he could about Chinese life, and although he had never been outside the city, he felt confident that his limited knowledge of China was enough that he could express an opinion on the country and its architecture.⁷⁰ His observations were recorded in his first publication entitled *Designs of Chinese Buildings, Furniture, Dresses, Machines and Utensils* 1757.⁷¹ Chambers dedicated this book to his Royal patron Augusta, Dowager Princess of Wales and her son George, Prince of Wales, Frederick’s cousins. As a result Chambers was commissioned by the Princess

⁶⁹ Giersberg writes that Manger must have been unaware of the portfolio of plans by Emmanuel Héré de Corny sent by Stanislas Leszczynski that inspired Frederick’s design, *Friedrich als Bauherr*, p. 117.

⁷⁰ John Harris, *Sir William Chambers, Architect to George III*, John Harris and Michael Snodin (Eds.), Yale University Press, New Haven, 1997, p. 4.

⁷¹ William Chambers, *Designs of Chinese Buildings, Furniture, Dresses, Machines and Utensils*, London, 1757.

Dowager to landscape the gardens at Kew. For this project he designed a series of exotic buildings. This collection became his second publication entitled *Plans, Elevations, Sections and Perspective Views of the Gardens and Buildings at Kew in Surrey*, 1763.⁷²

Manger's assessment of the Tea House challenges the descriptions of Chinese architecture found on Chinese porcelain, lacquer ware, and in a variety of published documents. What was known about Cathay's buildings at the time of the construction of the Tea House was based on information that had been disseminated all over Europe. It was found in a variety of non-illustrated and illustrated travel accounts published since the medieval period. Some Europeans may have been skeptical about the validity of these reports but most were willing to accept the descriptions of the Far East found in these publications, and they had a profound impact on the Western perception of this distant land.

Among the earliest accounts was Marco Polo's record of his travels in Asia during the years of 1275-1292. He provided descriptions of the Chinese emperor's palaces. His account may have been questioned at the time because his tale was so incredible. But there were few in the thirteenth century who had been to China and were able to refute his claims.⁷³ *The Voyages and Travels of Sir*

⁷² Chambers designed a Pagoda, Moorish Pavilion, an Aviary and a Pheasantry. See William Chambers, *Plans, Elevations, Sections and Perspective Views of the Gardens and Buildings at Kew in Surrey*, London, 1763.

⁷³ Marco Polo *The Book of Ser Marco Polo, the Venetian, Concerning the Kingdoms and Marvels of the East*. Translated and edited with notes by Colonel Sir Henry Yule, Revised by Henri Cordier, Third Edition, John Murray, London, 1929, 3 Vols; The validity of his tale is still being questioned. Frances Wood questions the account because, among other discrepancies in his account, she notes that Polo neglected to mention what would obviously have impressed a visitor from a foreign land, such as the habit of drinking tea, foot binding, and the Great Wall of China.

John Mandeville was one of the most popular accounts. The book was originally published in Lyons in 1480, and subsequently translated from Anglo-Norman French into ten other languages. According to William Appleton this volume enjoyed the success of numerous editions and was considered the authoritative account of the Orient for two hundred years.⁷⁴ As Donald Lach writes, it is likely that Mandeville's book was more popular in the German states than elsewhere, since of the three hundred extant manuscripts, sixty-five of them are written in German.⁷⁵ The *Travels* has since been proven a complete fabrication.⁷⁶

Information recorded and illustrated by the Dutch embassy of John Nieuhoff some two hundred years later was based on actual experience and was highly influential. Nieuhoff had been to China in 1656 and had made drawings of the Porcelain Pagoda of Nanking and the Pagoda of Sinkecien and the Imperial Palace at Peking (figs. 12, 13, 14). Other early modern sources were the reports of the Jesuit Fathers, Athanasius Kircher (1601-1680) and Jean-Baptiste Du Halde (1674-1743). They had never been to China. Kircher published *La Chine Illustrée* in 1670 with images of Chinese life, based on information gleaned from the Jesuit

Did Marco Polo Go to China? Westview Press, Boulder Colorado, 1996, pp. 71, 72, 96.

⁷⁴ Sir John Mandeville, *The Voyages and Travels of Sir John Mandevile, Knight: Wherein is set down the way to the Holy Land, and to Hierusalem as also to the lands of the Great Caan, and of Prestor John; to India, and divers other countries: together with many and strange marvels therein*, printed for R. Chiswell, B. Walford, M. Wotton, and G. Conyers, London, 1705, see William Appleton, *A Cycle of Cathay*, Columbia University Press, New York, 1951, p. 6.

⁷⁵ Donald F. Lach, *Asia in the Making of Europe*, University of Chicago Press, Chicago, 1977, Vol. II, Book II, p. 330.

⁷⁶ *The Travels* was discovered to have been written by Jean d'Outremeuse some five hundred years after its reported publication, see Honour, *Chinoiserie*, pp. 13-15.

archives in Rome, and his conversations with missionaries who were either on their way to, or from, the Far East (fig. 15).⁷⁷ Jean-Baptiste Du Halde published a four volume general history of China in 1735, based on the reports of twenty-seven missionaries who had spent years in the Far East (figs. 16, 17, 18).⁷⁸ Both these publications included images of Chinese architecture.

The written descriptions and the illustrations published in these works were likely considered authentic in their time and as reliable as Chambers' volumes published years later. These images were used as reference for architects like Johann Bernhard Fischer von Erlach (1656-1723) who included several of the structures illustrated by Nieuhoff in his *History of World Architecture* as well as others commissioned to design exotic pavilions for the gardens of the nobility (figs. 21, 22).⁷⁹ The pagods and palm trees that Manger mentions are found in the illustrations of these publications, as are the dragons, monkeys, bells, and the rippling roof.

These superficial ornaments should be recognized as a vocabulary of design elements that was representative of Cathay and intrinsic with Chinoiserie

⁷⁷ Athanasius Kircher, *La Chine Illustrée*, 1670; Lothar Ledderose, "Chinese Influence on European Art," *China and Europe*, Thomas H. C. Lee, (Ed.) The Chinese University Press, 1991, p. 224.

⁷⁸ Jean-Baptiste Du Halde, *The General History of China. Containing a Geographical, Historical, Chronological, Political and Physical Description of the Empire of China, Chinese-Tartary, Corea and Tibet. Including an Exact and Particular Account of their Customs, Religion, Arts and Sciences. Adorn'd with Curious Maps and Copper Plates*, 4 vols., Trans. by Richard Brookes, London, 1736.

⁷⁹ Johann Bernhard Fischer von Erlach used Nieuhoff's illustrations of the Pagoda at Sinkicien and the Porcelain Pagoda at Nanking as inspiration for his own illustrations prepared for his history of architecture. It was first published in German as *Entwurf Einer Historischen Architectur*, Vienna, 1721, and as *History of World Architecture*, Trans. By Thomas Lediard, London, 1730.

architecture. They were parts of a language understood by the exclusive eighteenth-century society of Frederick and his intimates, and were used in the design and décor of his pavilion. Its comprehension attests to the familiarity of the king with the literature, written and illustrated, published on the subject of the Far East, its people, gardens and architecture. It also confirms Frederick's knowledge of the abundance of pattern books inspired by the Celestial Kingdom which reinforced this vocabulary with illustrations for architecture, furnishings, ornaments for the interior, exterior, and the garden using these same elements. Manger himself used these ornaments as the basis for his criticism of the pavilion.

It is also important to note that patrons who commissioned pavilions in *la façon de la Chine* did not necessarily desire what Manger considered an “authentic” Chinese garden structure. They wanted buildings that would be perceived as exotic by their contemporaries who were familiar with these images, and who recognized the ornamentation as part of this compendium of design elements that referred to Cathay. This may explain why the ornamental details on the Tea House could include any number of exotic elements besides those which were obviously “Chinese,” such as the Asian figures, palm trees, monkeys and birds. There were Turkish elements: for instance, the cushion of the seated mandarin, the tent-like roof and the dangling tassels. There were even the heads of Amerindians in relief.

According to Eleanor Consten von Erdberg, these elements do not really resemble those that are used in architecture by the Chinese, yet they embodied

everything that the European imagined as exotic from this foreign land.⁸⁰ This was the nature of a construction *à la Chinoise*. This general grouping of characteristics was called any number of names that expressed this phenomenon, such as *à l'Indienne*, *le goût Chinois*, *la façon de la Chine*, *chinesiche Geschmack* and the “Chinese taste.” These terms do not necessarily illustrate a lack of geographical knowledge, but a willingness to conflate foreign peoples with a vocabulary of design elements that expressed “exoticism.”⁸¹

Edward Said would take exception to Erdberg’s indiscriminate view of the countries and the peoples to the East of Europe. In his book *Orientalism*, he argues that the West has made no effort to differentiate the nations of the Orient, their people or their cultures. For Said the “Orient” is a construct of the “West” and it is his opinion that the relationship between the Occident and the Orient is one of power, domination and of varying degrees of hegemony.⁸² It should be emphasized, however that Said, in the introduction to his publication, makes it clear that his discussion refers specifically to the late eighteenth and the nineteenth century during a period of imperial expansion into the Middle East by England and France, at least forty years after the construction of the Tea House.

⁸⁰ Erdberg, *Chinese Influence*, p. 71.

⁸¹ Ibid., pp. 11, 84. Even in the history of the Tea House this confusion applies. It has been known as both the “Japanese” and the “Chinese” Tea House. Erdberg refers to Frederick’s Chinese Tea House as the Japanese House throughout her book. Contemporary illustrations by I. D. Schleuen, 1770, Andreas Ludwig Kruger, 1781, and Johann Friedrich Nagel, 1790, refer to the house as Japanese. Frederick referred to the house as Chinese, see de Catt, Vol. 1 pp. 67-68.

⁸² Edward Said, *Orientalism*, Vintage Books, New York, 1979, pp. 5, 7.

In response, I suggest that Frederick the Great was cognizant of the distinctions between the Middle and Far East. The differentiation is illustrated by the organization of the publications on the literature and geography of the Orient found in Frederick's library inventory.⁸³ He had no stake in imperial expansion into the East, and China was not colonized during the eighteenth century.⁸⁴ Frederick enjoyed limited trade opportunities with China for a very short period of time through The Prussian Asiatic Trading Company. The Prussian company was only in existence during the period of 1751-1756. In comparison with the

⁸³ Frederick's inventory of titles on the Near and Far East are listed in his inventory in Bogdan Krieger, "Lektüre und Bibliotheken Friedrichs des Grossen," *Hohenzollern Jahrbuch*, Vol. 15, 1911 p. 204, under the heading IVb Geschichte des Ostens einschliesslich der Türkei: Abulgasi-Bayadur-Chan, *histoire généalogique des Tatars*, traduite du manuscrit tartare et enrichie d'un grand nombre de remarques authentiques et très-curieuses sur le veritable estat present de l'Asie septentrionale avec les cartes géographiques nécessaires par D**, Leyde 1726; Cantimir, Demetrius, *Histoire de l'empire Othoman*; Ali Cherefeddin, *Histoire de Timur-Bec, connu sur le Nom de Tamerlan, Empereur des Mongoles et Tartares*, Vols I-IV, Delf, 1723; Clerc, *Yu le Grand et Confucius. Histoire Chinoise*, Vols. I-III, Soissons, 1769; Constantinople, *Histoire de Constantinople depuis le règne de l'ancien Justin jusqu'à la fin de l'empire*. Traduire sur les originaux grecs par M. Cousin. I-X, Paris 1685; Gentschiscan, *Histoire de Gentschiscan et de Toute La Dinastie des Mongous, ses Successeurs, Conquête de la Chine*, Tirée de l'Histoire Chinoise et Traduite par le R. P. Gaubil, Paris, 1739; Du Halde, J. B., *Description géographique, historique etc. de la Chine*, siehe unter Länder-und Völkerunde. Engelbert Kaempfer, *Histoire Naturelle, Civile et Ecclesiastique de l'Empire du Japon*, Composée en Allmand par E. Kaempfer, Vols. I-III. Amsterdam, 1723; Memnon, *Histoire Orientale*, Londres 1747; Rollin, *Histoire Moderne des Chinois, Japonais, des Indiens, des Persans, des Turcs, des Russiens etc.* pour servir de suite à l'histoire ancienne de M. Rollin. Nouv. Éd. Vols. I-VIII, Paris, 1755/1760; Vojeu de Bunem, *Histoire de la Conquête de la Chine par les Tartares Mancheoux à laquelle on a Join un Accord Chronologique des Annales de la Monarchie Chinoise Sacrée et Profane Depuis le Deluge Jusqu'à Jesus Christ*, Vols. I-III, Lyon, 1754. In Vol. 17, p. 144, under the listing of XIII. Orientalische und chinesische Literatur, Kien-Long, *Eloge de la ville de Moukden et ses Environs, Poème Composé par Kien-Long, Empereur de la Chine et de la Tartarie, Actuellement régnant. On y ajoit un piece des vers sur le thé, compose par le meme empereur. Trad en François par Amiot, missionare à Peking et publié par Deguignes*, Paris, 1770; *Mille et une nuit, Contes arabes, traduit en françois par m. Galland*. I-XI. A la Haye 1730; (Moclez, *Le Dervis*) *Les mille et un jour, contes persans, trad. En François par m. Petis de la Croix*. I-IV

⁸⁴ Frederick William, the Great Elector, created the Brandenburgisch-Africanische Compagnie in 1682. It established a small West-African colony consisting of two Gold Coast settlements which were abandoned in 1716. It also occupied a small area of the Caribbean Island of St. Thomas to sell slaves. Adam Jones "Archival Materials on the Brandenburg African Company (1682-1721)," *History in Africa*, Vol. 11, 1984, p. 370.

English and the Dutch companies established in the early seventeenth century, Brandenburg-Prussia's trading opportunities were negligible.⁸⁵

There was little possibility that Central Europe was unaware of the Ottoman Turks. The Ottoman Empire had been an especially powerful and dangerous neighbour to the Central European countries until their expulsion at the siege of Vienna in 1683. Alexandrine St. Claire notes that the image of the Turk as a terrifying warrior dominated the European concept of the Ottoman Empire from the time of its conquest of Istanbul and the Byzantine Empire in 1453 until its demise in 1699.⁸⁶

Turkey had also been an object of fascination. The Sultan was acknowledged as one of the great sovereigns of the world. The inclusion of Turkish design elements became part of the language of exoticism. People dressed in Turkish garb. Coffee drinking was an accepted pastime in coffee houses established throughout Europe.⁸⁷ The influence of this habit was discernable in the production of porcelain coffee pots and cups designed and made in Europe after Turkish models. But as Peter Hughes writes in his publication *Eighteenth-Century France and the East*, La Turquerie lacked the more "fantastic aspects" of

⁸⁵ Sixteen ships of the Prussian Asiatic Company were successful in reaching Canton. A second company was established to trade with India. The operations of the Bengalische Handgesellschaft were never fully developed. Florian Schui, "Prussia's 'Trans-Oceanic Moment': The Creation of the Prussian Asiatic Trade Company in 1750," *The Historical Journal*, 49, 1, 2006, pp. 143-160.

⁸⁶ The image of the Turk in Europe was the subject of an exhibition held at the Metropolitan Museum of Art. It explored the less hostile characteristics of the Turk focusing on the exoticisms of Turkish life that fascinated Europeans and impacted their lives. Alexandrine St. Clair, *The Image of the Turk in Europe*, The Metropolitan Museum of Fine Art, New York, 1973, p. 7.

⁸⁷ St. Clair, *The Image of the Turk*, p. 7.

Chinoiserie, and Turkey aroused less philosophical admiration than China. This was because there was considerable knowledge of the Turk, and the appeal of la Turquerie was not sustained because of the more exotic quantities of luxury imports coming from China.⁸⁸

As David Porter writes, traders and missionaries, during the pre-colonialist period, were unsuccessful in their attempts to achieve some measure of influence over Chinese religious and economic policies.⁸⁹ The Manchu Emperor Shuh Chih of the Qing Dynasty prepared the following mandate for the Dutch Embassy of 1656 where John Nieuhoff was employed as a steward:

The distance that divides Holland from China is so great that regular intercourse between the two countries is hardly practicable. Indeed there is no record of any previous Dutch Embassy. Aware of the long and arduous journey of the present Ambassadors, WE were happy to give them audience and receive their tribute-presents. In earnest of our good-will WE returned them gifts of suitable value. But when WE think of the danger of storm and shipwrecks that besets the passage hither, WE are too solicitous of the welfare of the Dutch people to do more than permit them to send ships to China once in eight years, what time they may sell of four cargoes and bring presents to OUR COURT.⁹⁰

This quotation gives a clear indication of the Emperor's disinterest in establishing

⁸⁸ Hughes, *Eighteenth-Century France*, p. 12; David Porter expresses a similar idea, making reference to knowledge of the Turks being perceived as exotic in *Ideographia: The Chinese Cipher in Early Modern Europe*, Stanford University Press, Stanford, 2001, p. 3.

⁸⁹ Porter, *Ideographia*, p. 2.

⁹⁰ The quotation provides a very clear example of the limitations imposed by the Emperor. It appears without citation in, Jacobson, *Chinoiserie*, p. 19, and Honour, *Chinoiserie*, p. 15; The Emperor Chien Lung (reigned from 1735-1799) tolerated the Jesuits at court because he appreciated their skills as astronomers, interpreters, map-makers, architects and scientists. Yet he persecuted Christians throughout the Empire. See Gianni Guadalupe, *China Revealed: The West Encounters the Celestial Empire*, White Star Publishers, Vercelli, 2003, pp. 149-153.

regular trade relations with the West, and that he believed he was in complete control of European access to China.

Jonathan Spence has addressed the Western perception of China in the introduction to his book *The Chan's Great Continent: China in Western Minds*. He suggests that during the last seven hundred years the West has been capable only of what he calls "sightings," fleeting or intermittent views of China.⁹¹ It can be reasoned that distance and limited accessibility to the Celestial Kingdom, provide reasonable explanations for a limited knowledge of the vast Eastern Empire, and encouraged a nebulous geographical and social reality. This coupled with the restrictions imposed by the Emperor likely participated in the development of the "fantasy" of Cathay, the taste for everything Chinese, and the emergence of what came to be known as Chinoiserie.

Chinoiserie as Cultural Exchange

The development of the style that came to be known as Chinoiserie can be ascribed to interactions between the East and the West.⁹² This can be attributed in part to the cultural encounters that occurred over hundreds of years, and thousands of miles along the Silk Road.⁹³ The trade routes that brought exotic

⁹¹ Jonathan D. Spence, *The Chan's Great Continent, China in Western Minds*, W. W. Norton & Company, New York and London, 1998, pp. xi-xii.

⁹² This was one area covered by a major exhibition held at the Victoria and Albert Museum. See Part Three "Exchanges," in Anna Jackson and Amin Jaffer (Eds.) *Encounters: The Meeting of Asia and Europe 1500-1800*, V&A Publications, London, 2004.

⁹³ The term "Silk Road" was coined in the nineteenth century by the German geographer, Baron von Richthofen. The trade routes date to at least 200 BC. Judy Bornavia, *The Silk Road*, Chartwell Books, Inc., Seacaucus, New Jersey, 1988, p. 15.

goods from the Far East through the Middle East to Europe also encouraged cultural exchange as a natural result of interaction between the Arabs and the Chinese traders. This is apparent in the study of porcelain and in architecture. John Carswell brings forward some interesting ideas about our perceptions of China and the influences of Chinese trade goods on the “Chinese taste.” What is known as the “signature” blue and white porcelain of China that made its way West during the Yuan period (1279-1368) may have been a product of these encounters. Middle Eastern cobalt has been found in Chinese porcelain as early as 1351. It has been suggested that it may have been the only source of cobalt available until one was discovered in China in the fifteenth century.⁹⁴ Carswell has put forward the possibility that blue and white porcelain may have been produced specifically for export. This may explain the ten thousand pieces in the collection of the Topkapi Saray in Turkey. He proposes that this type of porcelain had little attraction for the Chinese, making reference to a Chinese text that comments on the vulgarity of coloured porcelain.⁹⁵

A Turkish miniature from the fifteenth century illustrates the meeting and exchange of Chinese porcelain and Middle Eastern brass goods along the Silk Road among Chinese, Arab, African and one Caucasian figure. One may assume from this illustration that cultural exchange would have been an impetus to successful trade relations (fig. 23). According to Margaret Medley the precise

⁹⁴ Harry Garner, “The Use of Imported and Native Cobalt in Chinese Blue and White,” *Oriental Art*, N. S. 2, No. 2, 1956, p. 48.

⁹⁵ John Carswell, “China and the Middle East,” *Oriental Art*, Vol. 45, No. 1, 1999, pp. 6, 8-9.

designs painted on the surfaces of Chinese porcelain were typical of Islamic metal work and the massive size of some dishes reflected communal dining habits in Muslim countries.⁹⁶ Influence of the Middle East is also found in floral designs of indigenous tulips, pinks, and roses and even Arabic script found on Chinese porcelain.⁹⁷

This type of cultural exchange also occurred with the establishment of the regular trade with the West via the East India Companies. From the middle of the sixteenth century the Chinese in the city of Jingdezhen had been producing wares specifically for the Western market. This practice began with the Portuguese and continued with the East India companies well into the eighteenth century, even after the establishment of the Meissen Porcelain Manufactory in 1710, and European porcelain manufactories mid-century. Western ideas about the Far East were formed from images found on these objects. They portrayed a land hidden behind misted mountains, of palm trees and exotic flowers, of enchanting pagodas, and mystical dragons. They described the riches and exoticism of all aspects of Oriental life. Westerners assumed that Chinese life was as charming as what appeared on these objects and romanticized images found their way onto European porcelain. However, these images were not necessarily original to

⁹⁶ Margaret Medley, "Chinese Ceramics and Islamic Design," *The Westward Influence of the Chinese Arts from the 14th to the 18th Century*, Colloquies on Art and Archaeology in Asia, No. 3, University of London, June 1972, p. 3; Julie Emerson, Jennifer Chen, and Mimi Gardner Gates, *Porcelain Stories from China to Europe*, Seattle Art Museum, University of Washington Press, Seattle and London, 2000, p. 23.

⁹⁷ Rudolf Schnyder, "The Influence of Turkey and the Near East on 18th Century European Ceramics," *International Ceramics Fair and Seminar*, London, 1990, p. 26.

Chinese porcelain. (fig. 24 a, b).⁹⁸ They were compilations of perceptions that were motivated by Chinese trade and European taste.

Encounters along the Silk Road may also explain the similarities in designs of garden pavilions found at the Turkish and the Chinese Imperial Palaces. Nebahat Avcioglu has suggested that Le Trèfle, Bâtiment Chinois, the prototype for the Chinese Tea House, was in fact Turkish in orientation and reminiscent of the type of garden pavilion found at the Topkapi Palace.⁹⁹ She contends that in the eighteenth century this “conflation between China and Turkey was not at all an aberration or simply an Enlightenment trend; it occurs repeatedly in travelers’ accounts of Turkish architecture.”¹⁰⁰ She reinforces this statement by referring to Joseph Piton de Tournefort’s description of the kiosks at Topkapi in 1741 when he wrote, “a Man may perceive he is moving from Italy, and approaching towards Persia, nay China itself.”¹⁰¹ de Tournefort’s description of the transition from country to country illustrates his familiarity with the geography. She reinforces her argument with a poem written by Voltaire who commented on the Turkish Kiosk, another of Stanislas’ exotic structures:

⁹⁸ Emerson, Chen, and Gardner Gates, *Porcelain Stories*, p. 136.

⁹⁹ Stanislas was familiar with Turkish architecture. He had spent time in Turkey and his pavilions exhibit the influence of his experiences. Héré de Corny’s interpretation of Le Bâtiment Chinois may have been inspired by Stanislas’ experience and did represent an authentic exoticism according to Nebahat Avcioglu in “A Palace of One’s Own: Stanislas I’s Kiosks and the Idea of Self-Representation,” *The Art Bulletin*, Vol. 85, No. 4, December 2003, pp. 665-667.

¹⁰⁰ Ibid., p. 670.

¹⁰¹ Avcioglu quotes Joseph Piton de Tournefort, *A Voyage into the Levant: Perform’d by the Command of the Late French King, Containing the Ancient and Modern State of the Islands of the Archipelago; as also of Constantinople ...* London, 1741, p. 181; “A Palace,” pp. 670, 683, n. 21.

Jai vu ce salon magnifique,
Moitié turk moitié chinois,
Où le goût moderne et antique
Sans se nuire ont uni leur lois.¹⁰²

I saw this magnificent salon,
Half Turkish half Chinese,
Where the modern and antique taste
Have united their laws without harming each other.

Voltaire's poem demonstrates that he was conscious of geography and recognized that culturally appropriate design elements merge harmoniously in this structure, as they do, in and on, Frederick's pavilion.

Avcioglu argues that this hybridity, where a pagoda is associated with the Turks, may be difficult for the modern mind to understand. She suggests that the relative alienation of the "other" comprehends the possibility of movement between cultures as opposed to the total alienation that has been shaped by the processes of European cultural imperialism that now determines our idea of style in general.¹⁰³

Cultural exchange was also encouraged by the Jesuit presence in China.¹⁰⁴ They were disseminators of images of the Celestial Kingdom and their illustrated publications also influenced the development of Chinoiserie. Kircher's *La Chine Illustrée* is considered by Porter to have been a major source of inspiration for its

¹⁰² This poem is quoted from Friedrich Baldensberger, "Le Kiosque de Stanislas à Lunéville: Décor et Suggestion d'Orient," *Revue de Littérature Comparée*, Vol. 14, 1934, p. 185; cited in Avcioglu, "A Palace," pp. 670, 683, n. 41.

¹⁰³ Avcioglu, "A Palace," p. 670.

¹⁰⁴ The Roman Catholic Society of Jesus was founded by St. Ignatius of Loyola in 1540. The Jesuits were educators, scholars and missionaries. *The New Encyclopedia Britannica*, Chicago, 15th edition, 1989, Vol. 6, p. 541.

creators while Du Halde's *General History* was also a mine of information on a myriad of topics.¹⁰⁵ It provided descriptions and images of Chinese life upon which to base European interpretations of architecture, gardens, music and Chinese costume (figs. 16, 17, 18, 19, 20).¹⁰⁶

The Jesuits played an important role as intermediaries between the cultures of both East and West.¹⁰⁷ The Emperor Chien Lung's commission in 1747 for the European Palaces of Yüan Ming Yüan from Father Giuseppe Castiglione (1688-1766) and the European water works designed by Father Michel Benoist (1717-1774) for the Imperial palace gardens demonstrates the interest of the Emperor in Western architecture (fig. 25 a, b).¹⁰⁸ These projects

¹⁰⁵ Porter, *Ideographia*, p. 145.

¹⁰⁶ Images of Chinese life are illustrated in Du Halde's history; *The Procession of the Viceroy*, Vol. 2, p. 46, *The Procession of a Chinese Wedding*, Vol. 2, p. 202, and *A Chinese Funeral*, Vol. 2 p. 217, in which there are examples of architecture, landscape and plant life. Other illustrations provide images of costume in *The Habits of the Chinese and Tartars*, Vol. 2, p. 139, boats, p. 277, currency as coinage pp. 288 and 290, and paper money, p. 292, silk production, p. 989, language, 412-413, numbers 413, and music in Vol. 3, pp. 66 and 67.

¹⁰⁷ Examples of the transmission of Western technical knowledge during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries are proof of a cultural exchange between the two nations. Father Sabatino de Ursis (1575-1620) wrote a book in Chinese on Western hydraulics. He also translated *Euclid's Elements* into Chinese. Father Adam Schall von Bell arrived in China in 1622. He introduced the new astronomy of Galileo and the telescope to China. He also participated in the development of the Chinese calendar. Ferdinand Verbiest (1623-1688) earned the respect of the Emperor Kang Hsi (reigned from 1662-1722) by teaching him mathematics and astronomy. He became director of the Astronomical Bureau and designed six large astronomical instruments that are still housed at the Ancient Observatory in Beijing. Yoke Ho Peng, "China and Europe: Scientific and Technological Exchanges from the Sixteenth to Eighteenth Centuries," *China and Europe, Images and Influences in Sixteenth to Eighteenth Centuries*, Thomas H. C. Lee (Ed.) The Chinese University Press, 1991, pp. 193-195. Dirk Bodde gives a list of Chinese material goods, inventions and discoveries from which the West has benefited, such as silk, tea, porcelain, lacquer, wall paper, paper, printing, gunpowder, the compass, medicines, plants, kites and playing cards, the folding umbrella and the sedan chair. "China's Gifts to the West," *Asiatic Studies in American Education, No. 1*, American Council on Education, Washington, D.C., 1942, p. 4.

¹⁰⁸ When Chien Lung ascended the throne in 1735 there were already more than two hundred buildings in the Imperial Palace complex set into the Royal Garden spread over a circumference of twenty kilometers. He added European palaces, bridges, kiosks, gateways, a reservoir, gazebos,

were contemporary with the European fashion for constructing exotic buildings in palace gardens. They should be seen as the Emperor's attempt to create exotic European architecture in the same vein as the pavilions in *la façon de la Chine*.¹⁰⁹

Clay Lancaster considers them unique because they were the only attempt in China to imitate Western architecture prior to recent times.¹¹⁰ According to Régine Thiriez, the Emperor did not live in the European palaces; they were only used to house his large collection of European furniture and artifacts.¹¹¹ Paintings of the members of the Imperial court belie this statement. Father Castiglione's images of the *Ladies in Waiting in the Yüan-Ming-Yüan* show several Chinese women in European dress playing Chinese checkers in the European interior of one of palaces (fig. 26). Paintings also show the Chinese Emperor depicted in Western dress (fig. 27).

The European palaces were Western-style buildings constructed by Europeans from brick, stucco, glazed tiles and marble. They had marble balustrades and curving parapets, but as Lancaster relates, the method of construction was Chinese. He describes the exteriors as plastered brick walls painted vermilion, with roof tiles of red, royal yellow, green, violet and blue, and

and a labyrinth. Clay Lancaster, "The "European Palaces" of Yüan Ming Yüan" *Gazette des Beaux Arts*, October 1948, pp. 263, 286.

¹⁰⁹ Lancaster uses the term "Europeanoiserie" style for the style of Castiglione's commissions for the Imperial Palace complex. These structures were destroyed in 1860 by Anglo-French forces. "European Palaces," p. 262.

¹¹⁰ Ibid., p. 261.

¹¹¹ Régine Thiriez, *Barbarian Lens: Western Photographers of the Qianlong Emperor's European Palaces*, Routledge, 1998, pp. 50-53.

ornaments of gilded bronze and porcelain.¹¹² It appears that in the description of what he calls “Europeanoiserie,” the colourful exterior and the superficial ornamentation of a ceramic material also suggested the exotic for the architect commissioned to design the Emperor’s diversions (fig. 25 b).

Chinoiserie as Superficial Ornamentation

The emphasis art historians have placed on the plethora of design elements has obscured the perception of Frederick’s Tea House as a thematically integrated structure, unified by its form, function, style, and iconography.¹¹³ The following quotation from a recent publication on Chinoiserie underscores these associations.

Bernd Dams and Andrew Zega write:

Chinoiserie rarely if ever rose above decoration: its underlying attraction – the call of another richer world—was subsumed in frivolity, and the style was employed indiscriminately to add pictorial charm to a landscape. While foreign forms were often employed, architects and builders, ignorant of the rules that underpinned them, could happily indulge in the picturesque pastiche, and so chinoiserie came to be defined as the unexpected, the grotesque and the bizarre – an outgrowth of the light-hearted theatricality of the Rococo ...¹¹⁴

Dams and Zega have perpetuated the negative association of Chinoiserie, and have aligned the style with the Rococo, ornament, and frivolity. This had also been the basis of Honour’s commentary on the Tea House. He classified

¹¹² Lancaster, “European Palaces,” pp. 264, 266.

¹¹³ Honour, *Chinoiserie*, p. 113; Impey, *Chinoiserie*, p. 149.

¹¹⁴ Bernd Dams and Andrew Zega, *Chinoiseries*, Rizzoli, New York, 2008, pp. 60-61.

Frederick's structure as German Rococo Chinoiserie and considered it both "fantastic" and "bizarre."¹¹⁵ These characteristics were predominant features in the discussion of the Rococo, and have been refuted by a number of recent authors whose works suggest a re-examination of this eighteenth-century style, in relation to French painting and the French interior.¹¹⁶

In the German states, however, the Rococo was defined by characteristics that were applicable to the description of the Chinese Tea House. The use of ornament on the exterior of the structure as well the interior was representative of Frederick's thematically integrated structure. It has also been acknowledged that European perceptions of China and the development of Chinese motifs provided inspiration. The application of exotic ornaments allowed for a freer interpretation of design elements especially suited to the fantasy of *le goût Chinois*. These structures were constructed as a foray into another world, as a respite from the stricter conventions of court life, or as a representation of personal interests.¹¹⁷

The development of the Rococo style happened to coincide with that of eighteenth-century porcelain. The production at Meissen and the Rococo peaked mid-century during the planning stages of the Tea House. I argue that these events influenced the design of the Tea House. The novel treatment of plastic and spatial forms is discernable in the design of Frederick's trefoil pavilion with its flowing

¹¹⁵ Honour, *Chinoiserie*, p. 113.

¹¹⁶ See pp. 16-17, n. 31.

¹¹⁷ Kimball, *Rococo*, pp. 3, 138-140, 151, 152, 172, 194, 228.

form and open and closed spaces suggest the fluid forms of Rococo sculpture.¹¹⁸

It is also exhibited by an iconography shared by both art forms. The use of the celadon colour, golden reliefs and painted surfaces on the exterior and interior are established characteristics identifiable with porcelain. Their use exemplifies a type of structure where the architecture is inseparable from the decoration.¹¹⁹

It is interesting to note that in discussions of the Tea House this has not been acknowledged. The focus has been on the ornamentation of the structure. It has defined the structure as exotic and has encouraged its classification as a folly.

The Folly

Eye-catcher, usually a building in a contrived landscape, often otherwise useless. It might be in the form of a sham ruin, a Classical temple, oriental tent, Chinoiserie pagoda, or other charming fabrique set in a Picturesque garden. It can also provide seats and shelter from which an agreeable view can be enjoyed, but more often it simply demands attention and gives pleasure by its eccentricity.¹²⁰

James Stevens Curl

Although Curl's definition describes a folly as "useless" his own description of its purpose, by contrast, suggests that it provides a worthwhile function even if it is only for "pleasure." The "contrived landscape" suggests that an effort was made either to co-ordinate the building with its surroundings, or to situate the structure

¹¹⁸ Kimball, *Rococo*, p. 3; Hitchcock, *Rococo*, p. 1; Blunt, *Baroque and Rococo*, pp. 17-18.

¹¹⁹ Blunt, *Baroque and Rococo*, pp. 17, 19.

¹²⁰ Curl, *Dictionary of Architecture*, p. 250.

in order to offer the most advantageous view of the site. The “eccentricity” of the edifice offers diversion. One would assume that to construct a building simply to provide pleasure for Europe’s nobility would, from their perspective, justify the effort.¹²¹

Cyril Connolly and Jerome Zerbe contradict Curl’s definition of the term. They write that the word “folly” is derived from the French word *feuillée* or *feuillie*, a leafy arbour or a branch house which originated in Medieval Latin *foleia* where there is no connotation of uselessness.¹²² In the German states, these buildings were known as *maisons de plaisance* or *Lustgebäude* (pleasure palaces), which defines their functions as places for pleasurable diversion. The number of such buildings commissioned for Europe’s wealthy nobles, the accomplished architects chosen to create the extraordinary designs belie the useless nature of the structures. These pavilions were used to break with court formality. The day excursion making the suggestion of a voyage to a distant land, where the activities enjoyed could include dining, musical and theatrical entertainment, and intellectual pastimes.¹²³

The Chinese prototype for European garden structures according to Osvald Siren was not merely to be appreciated from the exterior or to be used as a

¹²¹ Dale Harris acknowledges the unique and extraordinary qualities of these structures in his introduction to Aall’s publication on follies. See *Follies and Fantasies*,” p. 9; The combined efforts of Barlow, Knox, and Hughes have concentrated on illustrating the wealth and exuberance of an art form that reflects and celebrates the individuals for whom these types of structures were created such as Frederick and his Chinese Tea House at Sanssouci, in *Follies of Europe*, p. 6.

¹²² Cyril Connolly and Jerome Zerbe, *Les Pavillons*, The MacMillan Co., New York, 1962, p. 1.

¹²³ The eighteenth-century use of exotic garden pavilions will be discussed in greater depth in Chapter Two.

temporary resting place. They were to be used by poets, artists, and philosophers, who would from their pavilions, contemplate the beauty and meaning of nature in tranquility. They were designated for particular activities such as to study, enjoy music, play chess or write poetry.¹²⁴ This has been corroborated by the travel report of Père Gerbillon in Volume II of Du Halde's dictionary. He recounts his visit to a small pleasure palace of the Emperor where he and his fellow Jesuits instructed the Son of Heaven, as the Emperor of the Celestial Empire was known, in geometry and logarithms.¹²⁵ Gerbillon's account designates the Emperor's garden pavilion as a place for intellectual pursuits while refuting the idea that these structures were merely useless "fancies."

The Vocabulary of Exoticism

The design elements that ornament the Tea House were visual symbols of communication that performed inter-related functions. They were integral to the design of the structure. They performed as architectural elements. They defined the structure as Chinese and its function as a place for the pleasurable activities of entertainment, socializing, and diversion. The design elements also served to create a thematically integrated structure. They were not unique to Frederick's pavilion, but in their manipulation they resulted in a structure of original design.

¹²⁴ Osvald Siren, *The Gardens of China*, Ronald Press Co., New York, 1949, p. 18, and Connor, *Oriental Architecture*, p. 26.

¹²⁵ Père Gerbillon found the garden surrounding the structure pleasing and commented that the Chinese were fond of "little Arbors and Parterres, enclosed with green Hedges which form little Walks." The description of the elements in the Emperor's garden are also found interpreted by Frederick's gardeners in the area surrounding the Tea House illustrating that the garden design was indeed considered authentic. Du Halde, *General History*, Vol. 2, p. 326.

These design elements were not limited to Chinoiserie architecture, they were also found on porcelain.

Colour

John Nieuhoff's description of the Pagoda at Nanking established a relationship with colour on the exterior of the structure, porcelain and Chinese architecture (fig. 13 a, b).¹²⁶ His perception that the pagoda was made of porcelain suggested that this rare, valuable and fragile material could be used as a construction medium. The celadon exterior of Frederick's pavilion makes this same association and invokes the image of a porcelain centerpiece set into its parterre setting (fig. 1). During the Medieval period celadon was the colour of rarer porcelains that came West along the Silk Road. During the eighteenth century it was also particularly fashionable in France for Chinese and European celadon porcelains to be set into flowing gilt bronze bases as part of the decoration of the Rococo interior.¹²⁷

Gold as Architectural and Design Element

The use of gold was a characteristic of Oriental structures described in the writings of Polo, Mandeville and Nieuhoff. Polo had described its liberal use on one of the Khaan's palaces in the park at Chandu where the columns are made of gold, and another palace made of cane that was "gilt all over" and "... stayed on gilt and lacquered columns."¹²⁸ Mandeville describes the Emperors palace with

¹²⁶ Nieuhoff, *An Embassy*, p. 84.

¹²⁷ Watson, in Gillian Wilson, *Mounted Porcelain*, p. 17.

¹²⁸ Sir Henry Yule, *The Book of Ser Marco Polo*, Revised by Henri Cordier, Third Edition, John

pillars of gold.¹²⁹ Nieuhoff ‘s observations of the buildings in the Imperial Gardens of Peking also describe an abundant use of gold, “All the Edifices, which are so many, are most richly adorned with gilt Galleries, Balconies, and carved Imagery, to the admiration of all that ever saw them.”¹³⁰ His description brings to mind the architectural features and the sculpted figures of Frederick’s structure while conjuring up the image of the Chinese Emperor’s garden. For Europeans, gold suggested the wealth of the patron, the exclusivity of the building, and a material as appropriate for the noble personage of the King of Prussia, as it was for the Emperor.

Gold and silver-gilt has also been associated with the mounting of porcelain from the medieval period when these metals were used to assimilate rare pieces into the European treasure collections. Golden bronze was also used well into the eighteenth century to integrate Chinese and European porcelain into the Rococo interior.¹³¹ Gold was used to enhance Meissen porcelain throughout its history.¹³²

Palm Trees

The decorative elements of the exterior of the building proclaim the exotic

Murray, London, 1929, Vol 1. p. 299.

¹²⁹ Mandeville, *The Voyages*, p. 159.

¹³⁰ Nieuhoff, *An Embassy*, p. 129.

¹³¹ Hughes, *Eighteenth-Century France*, pp. 20-21.

¹³² The Meissen Manufactory was officially established in 1710. The Böttger period was between the years of 1710 until his death in 1719. K. Berling, (Ed.) *Meissen China: An Illustrated History*, Dover Publications, New York, 1972, p. 4.

nature of the structure. Manger had written that palm trees were appropriate symbols of the Chinese landscape and suggest the southern climate.¹³³ They were found in Nieuhoff's and Kircher's illustrations and became a fanciful symbol for Western imagery painted on porcelain and produced as porcelain sculpture (fig. 28). The Oriental interpretation of a Corinthian column with the use of palm fronds as substitutes for the acanthus leaves of the capital make the appropriate reference to the king. The twelve gilded palm tree columns were sculpted of sandstone by Melchior Kambly and Matthias Müller and were integral to the architecture and design of the building, serving both a useful and decorative purpose. The plant motif relates the structure to its garden setting (fig. 29).

Golden Figures

The golden figures may be understood as representing several distinct functions of the Tea House. They reinforce the exotic nature of the structure. They suggest the purpose of the house as a place for pleasant social activities. They align the house with intellectual pursuits, Frederick's philosophical interests, and the style of his reign. They make reference to Frederick the musician and composer.

The bearded mandarin on the Tea House roof is positioned to face Northward and designates the Northern entryway as the main entrance. He faces the opening in the hedge marked by a marble plinth on the East-West axis of the garden. The mandarin leans slightly forward and faces downward to acknowledge

¹³³ Manger, *Baugeschichte*, Vol. 1, p. 237.

the arrival of visitors to the Chinese pavilion. In his left hand the mandarin holds a caduceus, which he proffers toward the arriving guests (fig. 30).¹³⁴ The presence of a figure on the roof was not an unusual design element. Athanasius Kircher had placed a seated figure on the top of the structure in his illustration of a Chinese Pagoda in 1667 and described the sculpture as an idol made of gilded copper (fig. 15).¹³⁵ Kircher's image appears to be the first instance when this element appears and was often used thereafter. A Chinese figure was seated on the roof under an umbrella of La Maison Sans Gêne constructed in the park of Schloss Augustusburg in Brühl in 1750.¹³⁶ Prince Henry, Frederick's brother also used it at a later date for his exotic garden pavilion at Rheinsberg.

The identity of the figure and the meaning of the caduceus has been the subject of several theories. Saskia Hüneke comments that the caduceus refers to the gift of a magic wand from Apollo to Mercury in recognition of his invention of the flute, Frederick's favourite instrument. According to Hüneke, the caduceus reveals the meaning of the building, since the mandarin holds it like a key that provides entry into the fantasy world, offered by the pavilion's fantastic material and symbolic conceits.¹³⁷

The caduceus also refers to harmony and balance, and for Frederick this could allude to the struggle between the responsibilities of the monarchy and his

¹³⁴ The mandarin was sculpted by Benjamin Giese and cast by the coppersmith Friedrich Jury, Hüneke, "Die Sculpturen," p. 55.

¹³⁵ Kircher, *La Chine*, p. 135.

¹³⁶ Honour, *Chinoiserie*, p. 112; Aall, *Follies*, p. 27; Erdberg, *Chinese Influence*, pp. 65, 187.

¹³⁷ Hüneke, "Die Sculpturen," p. 61.

artistic inclinations. An identification of the mandarin with Frederick, then, might have been associated with the high value ascribed to harmony in the Chinese culture. Harmony is the most cherished ideal according to Chenyang Li, which extends not only to music, but also in the personal, social, and political realms.¹³⁸ The mandarin could therefore suggest that those who come to the Tea House should enter with this in mind.

The parasol in the mandarin's right hand shades him from the burning sun. The parasol was a common design element found in tapestries, paintings and engravings where it was used as a symbol of respect and esteem to shade an Asian potentate. Nieuhoff writes in his account that in China men of law were honoured by umbrellas that were held over their heads as a symbol of dignity.¹³⁹ It is also found in illustrations by Antoine Watteau and François Boucher where it provides a fashionable and exotic note (fig. 35). So popular was this element that the umbrella often appeared without the necessary figure to support it (fig. 31).¹⁴⁰

It has been suggested by Gerd-Helge Vogel that the figure of the elderly mandarin is a representation of Confucius (551 or 552-479 BCE), and his image could be interpreted as having some resemblance to the image found in Du Halde's dictionary.¹⁴¹ There appears to be no precedent for Confucius' placement

¹³⁸ Chenyang Li, "The Confucian Ideal of Harmony," *Philosophy East and West*, Vol. 56, No. 4, October 2006, pp. 583-586.

¹³⁹ Nieuhoff, *An Embassy*, p. 1.

¹⁴⁰ See Charles Over, *Ornamental Architecture in the Gothic, Chinese, and Modern Taste, Being Above Fifty Intire New Designs of Plans, Sections, Elevations, &c.* Robert Sayer, London, 1758, Plate 37.

¹⁴¹ Gerd-Helge Vogel "Konfuzianismus und Chinoise Architekturen im Zeitalter der Aufklärung,"

on the roof, under a parasol, holding a caduceus, and seated on a cushion. One potential association between Confucius and Frederick is the notion of the “sage king.” Confucius held a belief, common in his time, that China had in the past enjoyed almost utopian periods of peace and prosperity under the rule of “sage kings” who were able to govern primarily by moral superiority, rather than through military power. Confucian ideas suggest that a ruler should learn self-discipline, should govern his subjects by his own example, and should treat them with love and concern. He should also occupy himself with acquisition of knowledge, and with art and poetry.¹⁴² Confucius was also known as the musician-philosopher and this would have been an appropriate allusion to Frederick the musician, poet, and Philosopher King.¹⁴³

There are two programs of figures that surround the Tea House. An orchestra with a conductor standing on pedestals against the walls interspersed between the windows of the chambers, alternating with the groups of men and women under the palm trees at the entryways (fig. 32 a, b).¹⁴⁴ Although Patrick Connor has recognized only one program of figures, there are in fact two.¹⁴⁵ This

Die Gartenkunst, Vol. 8, No. 2, 1996, p. 189.

¹⁴² Jeffrey Riegel, “Confucius,” *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (Fall 2006 Edition), Edward N. Zalta (Ed.).

¹⁴³ Guadalupe, *China Revealed*, p. 153.

¹⁴⁴ The figures surrounding the structure were sculpted by Johann Peter Benckert and Johann Gottlieb Heymüller, Hüneke, “Die Sculpturen,” pp. 54-61.

¹⁴⁵ Connor identified one program but there are in fact two separate programs of figures around the structure: an orchestra with a conductor standing on pedestals against the walls interspersed between the windows of the chambers, alternating with the groups of men and women under the palm trees at the entryway, *Oriental Architecture*, p. 24; Krause lists the groups of figures at the base of the palm trees by their activities, and the instruments of each member of the orchestra, The

combination of programs provides a frame for the Tea House as a place for socialising, taking refreshment, and enjoying musical entertainment; activities that were typical functions of garden pavilions in the West and the East. They designate this little tempietto, constructed in the Chinese style and placed in an appropriate garden setting dedicated to the fleeting pleasures of summer.

Nieuhoff's account describes musical entertainment as commonplace at several Ambassadorial dinners he attended in the Celestial Kingdom. In the presence of the Vice-Roys in the city of Canton. He reports that "Musick entertained us all through Dinnertime, as well as Vocal, as Instrumental, much ravishing the Ear."¹⁴⁶ In the city of Namhun he wrote, "During the Feast there was both Vocal and Instrumental Musick entertaining the Ears of the Invited with much satisfaction."¹⁴⁷ Nieuhoff's description validates the placement of the Chinese orchestra around the pavilion. It reinforces the idea that music was as commonplace at official Chinese functions in the presence of the nobility and distinguished guests, as it was for the guests of Frederick at his nightly concert.

Inspiration for the orchestra could also have been found in Du Halde's history. He published several pages of Chinese music and the illustration of the Chinese Wedding provides examples of Chinese instruments. (figs. 16, 20).¹⁴⁸

eleven musicians play the tuba (male), harp (female), triangle (female), cymbal and bells (male), castanets (female) violinist (female), horn (female) clarinet (female), lute (male) cymbal (female), in *Das Chinesische Tee Haus*, pp. 30-33.

¹⁴⁶ Nieuhoff, *An Embassy*, pp. 40-41.

¹⁴⁷ Ibid., p. 56.

¹⁴⁸ Du Halde, *General History*, Vol. 3, pp. 66-67 provides sheet music, and Vol. 2, p. 202, shows the procession of musicians at a Chinese Wedding.

Images of Chinese musicians were also commonly found on porcelain. They often formed happy groupings enclosed in cartouches that offered a glimpse into a foreign world similar to that of the Tea House enclosed by the wall of greenery. The figures of the musicians are moving in the rhythm of the music. The king, a musician and composer, could have imagined the sound of the foreign melody issuing from these instruments. The placement of the orchestra outside allowed the hedge-enclosed garden to function as an outdoor concert hall.

The orchestra entertains the six groups of men and women who are clustered at the bases of the palm trees at each of the three entryways (fig. 33).¹⁴⁹ The Chinese figures define the Oriental nature of the structure and its purpose. Significantly, these iconographic and narrative elements operate as threshold figures. They connect the structure with both the garden and the building's interior space. These figures are in the process of eating and drinking, conversing and socializing, each group of three involved within the dynamics of its own exotic activity. These were typical activities for garden pavilions and indeed Frederick hosted intimate dinners with the members of his court in the Tea House (fig. 93).¹⁵⁰ Erdberg suggests that the figures around the Tea House could have been influenced by those found on plate 17 of Halfpenny's book of designs *Rural*

¹⁴⁹ They have been named by their activities, as the melon eaters, the pineapple eaters, the tea and coffee drinkers, the group with a falcon and the group preparing tea. The pipe of one of the male figure has since disappeared as a result of vandalism. The pipe reappears in the hand of the painted mandarin inside who looks down from the balcony into the space below. Krause, *Das Chinesische Tee Haus*, pp. 30-31.

¹⁵⁰ The dining table was not a permanent feature of a room. The table was set up before, and taken away, after meals. The Tea House inventory makes note of fourteen chairs original to the structure. See Nicht, "Die Ausstattung," p. 95.

Architecture in the Chinese Taste.¹⁵¹ However, Halfpenny's figures do not appear Chinese; do not interact; and they are not participating in activities that were understood as Oriental pastimes (fig. 34).

One could be critical of the depiction of the Chinese that figure prominently in the design of the Tea House. However, the golden Chinese persons that surround the pavilion and those painted on the surface of the interior are not images of a dominated and marginalized people. They are life-sized, in rich costume, and involved in their own activities separate from the concerns of the king and eighteenth-century Europeans. They are the permanent residents of the kiosk (figs. 11, 41).

The lack of accuracy in the portrayal of the Asian physiognomy can be attributed to the fact, as Erdberg has noted, that few Europeans had ever come in contact with a Chinese person.¹⁵² The images of Asians found on Chinese porcelain made to order for the European market did not necessarily portray the Chinese accurately. Father Louis LeComte made note of this in his report: "Without doubt you have taken notice of the figures that are painted upon the dishes and cabinets that come from China; our pictures do not always flatter us but those of China make them maimed and ridiculous. They are not so ill-favoured as they make themselves ... Their flowers are pretty but their human beings are monstrous, which disgrace them among strangers who imagine, that they are in effect as monstrous in their shape, as they appear in their pictures; yet

¹⁵¹ Erdberg, *Chinese Influence*, p. 69.

¹⁵² Erdberg, *Chinese Influence*, p. 11.

those are their usual ornaments.”¹⁵³

The life-size figures that play such a prominent role in creating this world of sociability and entertainment were simply culturally determined interpretations and comply with Western perceptions of Cathay. They were taken from illustrations found in the publications by Kircher or Du Halde. According to Willy Kurth, as noted earlier, they epitomise the type of pleasurable and flirtatious interaction found in the works of Antoine Watteau and François Boucher, Nicolas Lancret, and François Detroy.¹⁵⁴ Similarities in the design of Boucher’s tapestries for the *Deuxième Teinture Chinoise* and the ceiling painting are notable (figs. 34, 43).

These artists concerned themselves with images of people in charming landscapes that encouraged a particular view of China that had less to do with reality and everything to do with the perception of life in Cathay. Engraved copies of paintings by these artists were also amassed by the porcelain manufactories. They are typical of *Chinoiserie* scenes initially painted on porcelain, and later produced as sculptures by the Meissen manufactory during this same period.¹⁵⁵

The inspiration for these sculptures that appear animated might also have

¹⁵³ Louis Le Comte, *A Compleat History of the Empire of China: Being the Observations of Above Ten Years Travels Through That Country: Containing Memoirs and Remarks ... Written by the learned Lewis Le Comte, ...* A new translation from the best Paris edition, and adorn’d with copper-plates, printed for James Hodges, London, 1739, pp. 123-124, 153.

¹⁵⁴ Kurth writes that the golden figures appear to be made of porcelain, *Sanssouci*, p. 66.

¹⁵⁵ The use of gold on *Chinoiseries* on German porcelain of this period is well documented in Hans Syz, “Some Oriental Aspects of European Ceramic Decoration,” Part II, “*Chinoiseries* in Gold on German Porcelain of the Eighteenth Century,” *Antiques*, July, 1969, pp. 91-99.

come from the type of moving figures known as *les automates*.¹⁵⁶ These figures were given motion, sound, music and even speech by various types of waterpower, clockwork and music box mechanisms. They were produced in various sizes for decoration and entertainment. Some, made of valuable metals and adorned with precious jewels, were amassed as novelties and placed in the princely treasure chambers. Some were almost life size, like the inventions of the famous scientist Jacques de Vaucanson, whom Frederick had invited to Prussia to take a place at the Berlin Academy of Sciences.¹⁵⁷ Among the automated figures he created was a flute player and a drummer that moved and made music. These figures toured Europe in 1739 and played to enraptured audiences. According to Gaby Wood they were seen as emblems of the Enlightenment, full of instructive clockwork and covered with gold.¹⁵⁸

Others were large enough to be used as garden sculptures like those found in Stanislas Leszczynski's automated village called Le Rocher, where eighty-two life-size figures of men motivated by waterpower sang, hammered, carved wood, and played pipes in sight of Le Trèfle, Bâtiment Chinois. These *automates* had

¹⁵⁶ A comprehensive history of mechanical figures, toys, clocks, music boxes and androids is found in Alfred Chapuis and Edouard Gélis, *Le Monde des Automates: Etude Historique et Technique*, 2 Vols., Paris, 1928.

¹⁵⁷ Frederick II King of Prussia, *Correspondence, Charlottenburg, June 27, 1740, Letters between Frederick II and M. de Voltaire*. Trans. from the French by Thomas Holcroft, Vol. 2, London, p. 119.

¹⁵⁸ Gaby Wood, *Edison's Eve: A Magical History of the Quest for Mechanical Life*, Alfred A. Knopf, New York, 2002, pp. 17-31. Frederick had knowledge and experience with mechanical life. Wolfgang von Kempelen's Turk, a machine, had beaten him at chess, Jessica Riskin, "The Defecating Duck, or, the Ambiguous Origins of Artificial Life," *Critical Inquiry*, Vol. 29, No. 4 (Summer, 2003), p. 620.

been created for Stanislas by his gifted clockmaker François Richard (fig. 36).¹⁵⁹ Many more, used to decorate the tabletop as ornament, diversion and entertainment, were eventually replaced by porcelain as the fashion for this medium developed. Chinese figures playing exotic instruments were painted on porcelain in the early years of the Meissen manufactory and sculpted figures were produced as early as 1735.¹⁶⁰

Sybille Harksen has likened the scene of the Tea House and its surrounding figures to a carousel and has convincingly written that the undulating roofline with the painted stripes gives the impression of rotation. Unfortunately, her own research also discovered that the earliest eighteenth-century Chinoiserie Carousel was only constructed in France in 1773, almost twenty years after the Tea House was built. It was commissioned by the Duc de Chartres for the park in the village of Monceau. There the gentlemen rode on dragons and the ladies sat on pillows held by Chinese figures. No Chinese carousel was built from which the Tea House might have been modeled at the time of its construction in 1754.¹⁶¹ However, an impression of movement is integral to the structure and is perceptible in the animated poses of the sandstone musicians through both their rhythmic gestures and also those depicted serving, eating and drinking food and beverages.

¹⁵⁹ Eleanor P. DeLorme, *Garden Pavilions and the 18th Century French Court*, Antique Collectors' Club, Suffolk, 1996, pp. 115-116. The plans for Le Rocher are found in Héré de Corny, *Recueil des plans*, Planches 19 & 20.

¹⁶⁰ Walcha, *Meissen*, p. 112.

¹⁶¹ Harksen, "Chinoiserie," p. 50.

The Roof

The coloured, rippling roof of the Tea House has largely been disregarded as a design motif. The roof, with its painted swirls of pink, turquoise and gold, can be seen either from some distance away or from above the structure. It is clearly visible presently because the original eighteenth-century garden with its covered pathways, bosquets of imported trees, foreign plants and high circular hedge has been removed. The prototype for this roof may have been a drawing in Father Jean Baptiste Du Halde's *General History of China*, where the Royal procession files past a cluster of small pagodas with variations of this feature (figs. 37, 18).¹⁶²

According to contemporary engravings by Andreas Ludwig Kruger, 1781 and Johann Friedrich Nagel, 1790, dragon heads were placed at intervals along the roof.¹⁶³ Their presence was consistent with images found on Chinese porcelain, lacquer and silks. This mythical creature was used as a symbol for the Emperor in Chinese culture and symbolized potent and auspicious powers.¹⁶⁴ It was not interpreted as such in the West and it was placed on many buildings that alluded to the Chinese taste. They were also the work of sculptor Benjamin Giese but have since disappeared, their positions marked by round plaques (fig. 38).

Another explanation for this feature is an interpretation of the type of architectural table ornament used as a centerpiece. The placement of an open

¹⁶² Du Halde, *General History*, Vol. 2, p. 47.

¹⁶³ Krause, *Das Chinesische Tee Haus*, p. 19.

¹⁶⁴ Jessica Rawson, *Chinese Ornament: The Lotus and the Dragon*, British Museum, London, 1984, p. 95.

pavilion at the centre of the table did not obstruct the view, rendered the structure, including the roof, visible in its entirety from the vantage point of every guest around the table. Such structures were enameled and glazed, and ornamented with gold. They were placed in a suitable garden setting, with the appropriate elements and figures to create a specific ambience, and to impart an idea relevant to the particular interests, or the political or social agenda of the host.

Other Elements

The arched doors and windows are crowned by alternating reliefs of dragons and Chinese heads, surrounded by heraldic accessories. What Impey has determined as fanciful surface decoration makes the association with what was perceived as exoticism.¹⁶⁵ Father Louis Le Comte describes a temple with varnished yellow and green tiles on the roof, dragons of the same colours shooting out of the corners and many curious figures at every side.¹⁶⁶ Exotic masks with the feathered heads of Amerindians look out between the rising volutes which frame the windows of the tambour and vines decorate the spaces between them.¹⁶⁷ These are variations of a window design found in Du Halde's engraving of a Chinese Wedding (fig. 39).¹⁶⁸

¹⁶⁵ Impey, *Chinoiserie*, 1977, p. 149.

¹⁶⁶ Le Comte, *A Compleat History*, p. 63.

¹⁶⁷ It is possible that the Amerindian heads make reference to England's acquisition of Canada secured by Frederick's participation in the Seven Years War.

¹⁶⁸ Du Halde, *General History*, Vol. 2, p. 202. Halfpenny's plan for a Temple in the Chinese Taste, Plate 9, published mid-century uses a similar design for treatment of scrolls and heads that are used around the windows of the tambour of Frederick's Tea House. H. Vogel, "Der Chinesische Geschmack in der Deutschen Gartenarchitektur des 18 Jahrhunderts und Seine Englischen Vorbilder," *Zeitschrift für Kunstgeschichte*, 1932, Vol. 1, No. 5/6, p. 322.

A frieze of golden acanthus leaves surrounds the base of the structure, bead and band work surround the top and vines are interspersed between the windows of the tambour. Similar types of appliquéd relief work of plants and flowers found on Chinese porcelain. This was also the type of work commonly done by the court gold and silversmiths who were enlisted by Meissen in the early years of the manufactory. They transposed this type of work generally made from precious metals into the new medium of porcelain.¹⁶⁹

Admittance to the pavilion was made under the painted roof of the entryway where painted birds flit and monkeys play in an illusionary space with a balustrade and open sky (fig. 40). They serve to draw the visitors to the pavilion to an interior where the theme of entertainment and sociability is reinterpreted.

The Interior

Büding was initially responsible for the design of the interior of the salon that was supposed to have been in the Chinese style, but was preoccupied with the construction of Frederick's art gallery and so was late with his plan.¹⁷⁰ The king

¹⁶⁹ Walcha, *Meissen*, p. 35.

¹⁷⁰ The discussion of the interior is limited to a description of the structure and its attached elements; the wall paintings and reliefs, lighting fixtures, the porcelain collection and its supporting consoles. Much of the original furnishings were displaced after Frederick's death, what could be found was returned after the 1993 restoration. Other objects were lost after the Second World War. What is presently in the structure represents an idea of what was original to the Tea House. The building plans supply some information related to costs. They mention two sofas and a couch, without description. The oldest inventory of furnishings Plankammer Akte 5, Folio 35 dated 1786 enumerates eighteen wall sconces, eighteen porcelain consoles, four statues and fourteen wicker chairs without details. An inventory of 1796 gives more information. It mentions twenty-one lights for the main chandelier, four candles for each of the sconces. The porcelain consoles supported six pagods on the upper level and twelve vases with multicoloured flowers and leaves in relief on the lower level. The fourteen wicker chairs with red leather seats were typical of those used in the Potsdam palaces. They have been reproduced. These were used and removed for the dinners. The table was brought in and set up, as was the custom for eighteenth century dining.

accepted the sketch presented by Matthias Müller, which has since been criticized for its lack of Oriental décor.¹⁷¹ The subtlety of his design, however, may have been lost on the critic who fails to note the integration of the exterior with the interior space with similar finishes of gold, the celadon colour of porcelain, design elements of plant motifs, exotic birds, monkeys and dragons, columns and tent like appendages. The theme of socializing and entertainment was also carried into the interior space (fig. 41).

The area used by Frederick and his guests comprised the central circular salon and the three *Kabinette*. The circular salon was stuccoed by the master K. J. Sartori and painted a marbled celadon green. The circular form was repeated in the white marble floor laid by the Calame brothers (fig. 42).¹⁷² According to F. Laske the use of rounded forms or “Chinese corners” rather than the use of right angles for the interior chambers emphasizes the exotic nature of the structure. He notes that the rounded forms were used for interior décor such as wall panels and moldings to create an exotic air.¹⁷³ This is the only reference for this structural

One of the four sculptures, a boy lying down was removed in 1836. The Eastern and Western cabinets each housed three white lacquered sofas. The Western cabinet also had a stove and a grey carpet. In the Southern cabinet, used by the king there was a standing clock and a writing table, a porcelain service for tea, coffee and chocolate made by the Berlin Manufactory. Some information was published in Manger, *Baugeschichte*, p. 340. The inventories are published Friedrich Nicolai, *Beschreibung der Königlichen Residenzstädte Berlin und Potsdam und aller daselbst befindlicher Merkwürdigkeiten*, Berlin, 1769, p. 529; and *Beschreibung der Königlichen Residenzstädte Berlin und Potsdam und aller daselbst befindlicher Merkwürdigkeiten und der umliegenden Gegend*, 4 bde. dritte völlig umgearbeitete Aufl., Berlin 1786, p. 1228; See Nicht, “Die Ausstattung,” pp. 92-99.

¹⁷¹ Nicht, “Die Ausstattung,” p. 94.

¹⁷² Krause, *Das Chinesische Tee Haus*, p. 21.

¹⁷³ F. Laske, *Der ostasiatische Einfluss auf die Baukunst des Abendlandes vornehmlich Deutschlands im 18. Jahrhundert*, Verlag von Wilhelm Ernst & Sohn, Berlin, 1909,

form as exotic, and it may clarify the use of the flowing form for Héré's and subsequently Frederick's exotic building.

However, Frederick was partial to the rounded form and the temple-like structure for his garden architecture.¹⁷⁴ His first commission from Knobelsdorff had been the small round Temple of Amalthea at Ruppin, followed by the Temple of Apollo constructed at Rheinsberg. At Sanssouci he commissioned the Antiquity Temple to house his collection of antiquities, and the Friendship Temple, a memorial to his sister Wilhelmina. The libraries at Rheinsberg, Sanssouci and the Potsdam Palace were also designed in the round and suggest that the form of this structure made the connection with Frederick's scholarly interests. The rounded form was not limited to garden structures or even his private spaces. Thomas DaCosta Kaufmann notes that Frederick was involved in the design of the Catholic Cathedral St. Hedwigs, begun 1747, which was based on the Pantheon.¹⁷⁵

Like the figures placed on the flowing periphery of the exterior, the citizens of the Celestial Kingdom on the interior of the Tea House are permanent occupants of the structure. The painted residents of Cathay were relegated to their

p. 33.

¹⁷⁴ Impey had commented on the pavilion as the dressing of a Neoclassical building with superficial ornamentation in *Chinoiserie*, p. 149.

¹⁷⁵ Thomas DaCosta Kaufmann, *Court, Cloister & City: The Art and Culture of Central Europe 1450-1800*, Weidenfeld & Nicolson, London, 1995, p. 403. Frederick had a collection of architectural plans in his library. Listed under section XX "Antike Bauwerke und Archeologie," and section XXI, "Neuere Bauwerke und Architektur." Palladio, Vitruvius, and Piranesi were among the architects listed. Bogdan Kreiger, "Lektüre und Bibliotheken Friedrichs des Grossen," *Hohenzollern Jahrbuch*, Vol. 17, 1913, p. 152.

space above the golden frieze that surrounds the circular central salon (fig. 41). The painted scene on the ceiling depicts the citizens of Cathay in the throes of a tea party. The men and women carry on behind the balustrade under tent-like appendages and between painted columns in front of a hazy Chinese landscape with palm trees and pagodas in the distance. Two painted balconies jut out over the entryways and into the king's chamber. The men and women of the Celestial Kingdom peer down to survey the scene below. A mandarin leans over the balustrade, teacup in right hand, pipe in left, above the Southern chamber (fig. 45). The corresponding balcony over the Northern entry is inhabited by another mandarin who investigates the scene beneath him. It appears that the arrival of Frederick and his intimates to the interior salon disturb the party in session above. The inhabitants of the Tea House look across the balustrade that separates the two worlds and down at the king. It is Frederick who is the object of scrutiny (fig. 43, 44, 45).¹⁷⁶

This type of illusionary architecture was a characteristic of the period. I suggest that it serves to integrate the fantasy of Cathay and the reality of the eighteenth century of Frederick and his guests in the intimacy of this little

¹⁷⁶ The paintings on the ceiling of the *Vorhallen* and in the Salon were the work of painter Thomas Huber. His design for the interior wall painting was based on two pen and wash drawings which are said to have been prepared for the Tea House by Blaise Nicolas Le Sueur (1700-1779), a French artist employed as a drawing instructor at the Berlin Academy of the Art. Gert Streidt, *Potsdam: Die Schösser und Gärten der Hohenzollern*, Könemann Verlagsgesellschaft mbH, Köln, 1996, p. 83. The drawings were not signed by Le Sueur but by A. Hildebrand who acted as Castellan at the Palace. The drawings did not fit the space and Huber had to reorganise the elements. Krause, *Das Chinesische Tee Haus*, p. 20. The sketches: Blaise Nicolas Le Sueur, *Chinesische Haus*, Entwurf sur Malerie im unteren Ring der Saaldecke, vor 1756, Lavierte Federzeichnung, 28.5 x 76 cm, Märkisches Museum, Berlin, Inv.-Nr. 24922; Blaise Nicolas LuSueur, *Chinesisches Haus*, Entwurf zur Malerei im Tambour und im Plafond des Saales, vor 1756, Lavierte Federzeichnung, 45 x 53.5 cm, Märkisches Museum, Berlin, Inv.-Nr. 24923.

pavilion. Here the king and the members of his intellectual circle participate in the “idea” of *la Chine*. The play between the interior and exterior of the structure is repeated here, and suggests another world behind the balustrade. It is also suggestive of the type of table ornament produced at Meissen where an architectural model was placed in an appropriate garden setting on the tabletop. Frederick’s eighteenth-century salon beneath the golden frieze was ornamented like the exterior, with gold on the door and window surrounds, lattice-work windows above the doorways, and the reliefs of Asian heads, monkeys and musical instruments.

The porcelain collection placed on eighteen golden brackets in the circular salon belonged to the king and was originally comprised of Meissen pieces.¹⁷⁷ The six consoles on the upper level supported male and female pagods. The lower consoles held vases decorated with reliefs of flowers and leaves. This was an appropriate ornamentation for the exotic structure that displayed Frederick’s connoisseurship. It reinforced the association of the pavilion with China, and porcelain, Europe’s most sought after commodity. It also made reference to the success of the eighteenth-century porcelain industry and the highly valued objects it produced. The European preoccupation with China is reiterated by the production of objects in the “Chinese taste.” The collection was lit from below by

¹⁷⁷ The inventory of 1796 listed the pieces as Chinese. An addendum of 1918 attributed the collection to Meissen which Nicht suggests were taken as spoils of the war with Saxony. Nicht, “Die Ausstattung,” p. 95; Only four of the six porcelain pagodas are original. Twelve flowered vases were not returned from the Soviet Union after their removal in 1946. The pieces presently displayed in the Tea House are European and Chinese. See Komander *Das Chinesische Haus*, 1994, pp. 9-10, 18.

the eighteen golden wall sconces (fig. 47).¹⁷⁸

The gilt bronze chandelier, more than two hundred centimeters tall and two hundred centimeters wide hangs down into the circular salon suspended from the centre of the painted cupola.¹⁷⁹ Elements of the exterior ornamentation are also found within its twenty-one golden branches. The gilt mandarin seated on the cupola of the Tea House under his golden parasol reappears to oversee the king and his intimates from its boughs. The frieze of acanthus leaves that surrounds the structure holds the candles, a pineapple hangs from the base. The exotic birds painted on the ceiling of the entryways flit into the central salon and up into the ceiling of the tambour painted by Johann Gottlieb Rauch. Some join the painted citizens of Cathay while others come to rest in the gilded branches of the chandelier (fig. 46).

The three small kidney shaped rooms off the main salon follow the flowing form of the exterior. The interior décor served to connect the interior to the exterior and reinforce the nature of a garden pavilion limited for use only during the summer months. The floors were oak parquet to associate the rooms with the wooded areas visible through the windows. The walls were covered in Pekings, a type of painted silk wall covering produced in Berlin under Frederick's

¹⁷⁸ The wall sconces were made in 1775 by Schwerdtfeger Zange, Komander, *Das Chinesische Haus*, 1994, pp. 15-17.

¹⁷⁹ The chandelier was made of fire-gilded bronze. It was designed by the sculptor M. Müller, created by the chiseler S. Geoffroy and the gilders Jean Audibert and Nicholas Morel. Käthe Klapperbach, "Der Bronzekronleuchter," *Das Chinesische Haus im Park von Sanssouci*, Herausgegeben von der Stiftung Schlösser und Gärten Potsdam-Sanssouci, 1993, pp. 108-112; Komander, *Das Chinesische Haus*, 1994, p. 16.

patronage.¹⁸⁰ The designs of flowers and birds were chosen to make the transition between the small rooms of the pavilion and the views of the garden (fig. 48). Subtle variations existed in the floral motifs of the Eastern and Western chambers.

A more intricate floral design of red and green fabric was used for the Southern Chamber. The special finishing of painted wooden moldings on the interior walls, the view from the windows to a conspicuously more elaborate garden and the existence of a writing desk noted in the inventory of 1796 support the hypothesis that the Southern *Kabinette* was designed specifically for Frederick.¹⁸¹ He was known to work there at times and records show that he stayed in the house in 1763 to make room at Sanssouci for the visit of his sister, the Countess of Schwedt.¹⁸² The house was used for intimate dinners. In Frederick's later years he would walk to the pavilion to dine with his old friend the Maréchal Keith when he was no longer able to make the distance from his home on the Sanssouci grounds to join Frederick at the Palace. The house was seldom used after Keith's death in 1778.¹⁸³

¹⁸⁰ The art of silk weaving was established by Frederick William I. This industry was supported by Frederick the Great. To protect his interests and those of his silk producers he placed a ban on the importation of textiles from the Far East as of 1755. Petra Wesch, *Sanssouci: The Summer Residence of Frederick the Great*, Prestel Verlag, Munich, Berlin London, New York, 2003, pp. 42-43.

¹⁸¹ An inventory of 1796 lists the subtle differences of the wall coverings for each room. The Eastern chamber was covered with a white atlas with painted green flowers. The Western chamber was covered with a white atlas upon which various flowers were painted. Karola Paepke, "Die Wandspannung," *Das Chinesische Haus im Park von Sanssouci*, Herausgegeben von der Stiftung Schlösser und Gärten Potsdam-Sanssouci, 1993, p. 82.

¹⁸² Dorst, "Die schöne," p. 28. Huth writes that Frederick moved out of Sanssouci and into the Tea House to make room for the visit of his sister the Countess of Schwedt 1763. Hans Huth, "Die Wohnungen Friedrichs der Grossen," *Pheobus*, II, 1949, p. 108.

¹⁸³ Nicht, "Die Ausstattung," p. 97, and MacDonogh, *Frederick the Great*, p. 334.

The exterior was incorporated into the interior décor. The many windows of the cupola, the bedrooms, the circular salon and the three French doors filled the structure with light streaming in through gilded arched doors and windows, framing the view of golden figures, flowers, orange trees in gilded pots and porcelain vases tucked into niches carved in the hedge, integrating this little pavilion with the garden setting.

Considering the numerous exotic buildings already constructed, the countless rooms decorated in *le goût Chinois*, and the abundance of published portfolios of architectural designs disseminated across Europe mid-century, there existed ample sources from which an architect could take inspiration. Buring also had access to Frederick's palaces, and many of the elements used on the Tea House were found in rooms already decorated in *la façon de la chine*. The Voltairezimmer decorated for Frederick's famous guest in 1752-1753 is in *le goût Chinois*, decorated with garlands of flowers and fruits, birds, monkeys and tent-like appendages that framed the mirrors. The room just preceded the construction of the Tea House and many of these same elements were used in the garden pavilion (fig. 49).

The Total Work of Art

The initial commentary made by Manger and the art historians who have placed the emphasis on the design elements have distracted the observer from perceiving the building as an integrated structure. Arno Krause and Hans-

Joachim Giersberg have written that the Chinese pavilion is a *Gesamtkunstwerk* in that the building is a combination of architecture, painting, and sculpture.

Giersberg further reinforces this idea by noting that the structure appears to be an inseparable whole of content and form that makes the pavilion appear to be in one piece.¹⁸⁴ Although their description is of a Rococo Chinoiserie structure, these characteristics also describe the type of ornament used to decorate the eighteenth century table of the nobility that I argue influenced the interpretation of Frederick's garden pavilion. Centerpieces were also complex structures that combined architecture, painting and sculpture in the medium of porcelain.

My suggestion that the Tea House is porcelain in essence also embraces the intermediality of porcelain that I suggest influenced the design and décor of the garden pavilion. This is illustrated by the vocabulary of design elements found on the Tea House and porcelain, developed from travel accounts and Jesuit reports, images on porcelain and the works of artists preoccupied with *le goût Chinois*. Like the centerpiece, Frederick's exotic pavilion provided pleasure and diversion for his guests. It also functioned as a vehicle to display the king's interests and attributes as an architect, philosopher, musician and patron of a porcelain manufactory.

¹⁸⁴ Krause, *Das Chinesische Tee Haus*, p. 8, and Giersberg, *Das Chinesische Tee Haus*, p. 9.

CHAPTER TWO

FREDERICK THE GREAT: ARCHITECT, PHILOSOPHER, MUSICIAN AND PORCELAIN PATRON

Frederick the Great's design and commission for the Chinese Tea House was a representation of Frederick's captivation, like that of his noble contemporaries with the Celestial Kingdom, its trade goods, its architecture and its philosophy. The scope of Frederick's interests and his involvement with projects related to the Far East from the time of his ascension in 1740 until well into the mid-century provide an idea of how wide-ranging an impact European perceptions of the Celestial Kingdom had on Frederick.

He had already decorated several rooms in his palaces in *la façon de la Chine*. He invited Europe's leading intellectual and sinophile, François-Marie Arouet de Voltaire, to join the group of intellectuals who made up the court of Sanssouci. He established two East India trading companies in 1751 hoping to share in the lucrative trade opportunities with the Far East. Frederick also placed his support behind the establishment of the Berlin Porcelain Manufactory.¹⁸⁵ The discussions that had been underway regarding the construction of an Oriental

¹⁸⁵ I am relating a European company founded in 1750, producing objects within the eighteenth-century culture of porcelain with the Chinese product. I suggest that it was impossible at that time to separate European porcelain completely from that of the Chinese for the following reasons: the value placed on porcelain in the West was embedded in European perceptions of Chinese porcelain. The design of some eighteenth century European porcelain was (and continues to be) produced within the Chinese idiom. The East India companies continued to import Chinese porcelain even though there were many European manufactories established mid-century. Frederick also imported Chinese porcelain through his own Prussian Asiatic Company. Some Chinese porcelain was made in the European style in order to continue to trade with the West after the European discovery of the porcelain recipe. For the development of trade with the East see Schui, "Prussia's 'Trans-Oceanic Moment,'" pp. 143-160.

garden pavilion in the deer park were realized with the erection of the Tea House in 1754.

Frederick's involvement in his architectural projects was not limited to the instigation or initiation of the creative act that resulted in a tangible product of his influence. As with the Tea House, Frederick was often the author of their origination. His commissions were highly personal, he remained intimately involved in their evolution, and he was keenly aware of the impact of these activities on his image.¹⁸⁶ This chapter examines Frederick's patronage, interests and accomplishments in architecture, philosophy, music, and porcelain that I argue influenced, and were integrated into the design, form, and content of the Chinese Tea House. I suggest that the garden pavilion was a vehicle to display his princely attributes and to demonstrate the importance of the Far East in methods of self-representation that were aligned with Enlightenment ideals.

¹⁸⁶ An image of a monarch can be perceived in his patronage, and for the King who was loath to have his likeness painted, it can be found in his accomplishments. In a letter to d'Alembert dated December 14, 1774, Frederick acknowledged that he had "concealed his face from the brush as much as he could." *Posthumous works of Frederic II. King of Prussia*, Trans. by Thomas Holcroft, printed for G. G. J. and J. Robinson, London, 1789, Vol. 11, p. 424. Frederick as Crown Prince only sat for Antoine Pesne and George Wenzeslaus von Knobelsdorff. After his ascension he generally refused the requests of all painters although he allowed his brother-in-law the Duke of Brunswick's court painter Johann George Ziesensis to paint a quick oil sketch. Daniel Chodowiecki and Anton Graff made sketches of the king while he was out on parade. Frederick allowed Anna Dorothea Therbusch to sculpt a bust that was used as a model for the Berlin porcelain works. MacDonogh, pp. 119, 184, 355. Well known images of Frederick, *The Dinner Conversation (Die Tafelrunde)*, 1850, and *The Flute Recital (Das Flötenkonzert Friedrichs des Grossen)*, 1852, were painted by Adolph Menzel a century after Frederick's ascension. He produced wood engravings for the centenary publications of Franz Kugler's *Geschichte des Friedrichs des Grossen*, Weber, Leipzig, 1842, and J. D. E. Preuss, (Ed.) *Oeuvres de Frédéric le Grand*, 30 Vols., Berlin, 1846-1857.

Frederick and Architecture

I am a child on this subject. These are
play things with which I divert myself.¹⁸⁷
Frederick II, King of Prussia

Frederick Hohenzollern (1712-1786) was the first surviving son of Frederick William I (1688-1740) and Sophia Dorothea of Hanover (1687-1757). He assumed the throne on the death of his Father, as Elector of Brandenburg and King in Prussia in May 1740. Part of Frederick's education to prepare him for this role had been to study the archives and the history of Brandenburg.¹⁸⁸ He was aware that a program of court spectacle and display was visible proof of kingship and that he could create a positive image with a building program in Berlin and Potsdam that would show the wealth and power of the monarchy and reflect his reign (fig. 50).¹⁸⁹

His grandfather, Frederick I (1657-1713), was known for his grandiose building program that made Berlin second only to Dresden in magnificence. He built elegant palaces and broad boulevards named in honour of the new dynasty.

¹⁸⁷ Frederick II, King of Prussia, *Correspondence, Letters between Frederick and M. Jordan*, Trans. from the French by Thomas Holcroft, London, 1789, letter of October 25, 1742, p. 235. Frederick's letter, expressing the importance of his architectural projects suggested the title of this thesis.

¹⁸⁸ Gaxotte writes that the outline for Frederick's education was based on an established code for a gentleman. One of the necessary attributes was that he should be a good judge of works of culture, *Frederick the Great*, p. 7.

¹⁸⁹ MacDonogh, *Frederick the Great*, pp. 137-139.

He constructed more than twenty summer palaces in vicinities outside Berlin; and within the city, the Hohenzollern Castle was transformed into a remarkable and imposing Baroque palace.¹⁹⁰ The court of this first King in Prussia had been sumptuous and brilliant, French in taste, manners, and speech.¹⁹¹ Frederick I established the Academy of Arts in 1696, hired the painter Antoine Pesne, the architect Andreas Schlüter, and the gardener André Le Nôtre to enhance his properties. He commissioned an Opera House and a small court theatre, established an orchestra, hired singers and actors. His wife, the Electress and Queen, Sophie Charlotte of Hanover (1668-1705), Frederick's grandmother, passed her time in the company of artists and musicians, participated in ballets and comedies, and conversed with leading intellectuals, including the greatest German scholar and sinophile of the time, Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz (1646-

¹⁹⁰ MacDonogh, *Frederick the Great*, pp. 13-15.

¹⁹¹ After the disastrous results of the Thirty Years War the German princes looked to France as the epitome of culture and attempted to mimic the court of Louis XIV. This included a program of architectural development, see A. Fauchier Magnan, *The Small German Courts of the Eighteenth Century*, Methuen Co. Ltd., London, 1958, pp. 30-51. Robert W. Berger addresses the concept of Louis XIV as *le Roi Architect* and his participation in an architectural program to enhance his image. He refers to Jean-Baptist Colbert's letter of 1663 to Louis in which he writes "your Majesty knows that in lieu of dazzling actions in war, nothing indicates better the greatness and spirit of princes than buildings; and all posterity measures them by the standard of these superb buildings that they have erected during their lives." He also quotes the Bishop of Meaux, Jacques-Bénigne Bossuet, who wrote "the expenditures for magnificence and dignity are not less necessary, in their own way, to sustain majesty in the eyes of the people and of foreigners." Bossuet then goes on to describe the luxuries and riches of the palace of King Solomon, in *Politics Derived from the Words of Holy Scripture*, written from 1677-1679 and published posthumously in 1703, in *A Royal Passion: Louis XIV as Patron of Architecture*, Cambridge University Press, New York, 1994, pp. 6, 184.

1716), whom she had encouraged to establish an Academy of Sciences in Berlin in 1700.¹⁹²

Frederick William succeeded Frederick I in 1713. He began his reign by selling the luxurious trappings of his father's court. He dismissed the servants and courtiers, closed the theatre, fired the orchestra and eschewed the royal palaces. He filled the coffers of the Royal Treasury by pinching pennies, and he doubled the standing army from forty to eighty thousand soldiers.¹⁹³ His greatest source of pleasure had nothing to do with art and culture; he wrote:

My father found joy in splendid buildings, huge
Quantities of jewels, silver, gold and furnishings;
in magnificent show. You will allow me to have
my own pleasures, and that consists in all of
having a sizeable Body of good troops.¹⁹⁴

It was his belief that behind the brilliant exterior of his father's court, the state was on the verge of bankruptcy, and was militarily vulnerable. To establish long-term stability, his duty was to practice fiscal responsibility. Frederick William had an aversion to the pomp and magnificence with which his father was enamoured, and the education and culture that was so appreciated by his mother. His two passions from his youth had been the love of soldiers and economy.¹⁹⁵ His rule

¹⁹² MacDonogh, *Frederick the Great*, p. 77, and Winfried Baer and Ilse Baer (Eds.), *Charlottenburg Palace Berlin*, Trans. by Margaret Clarke, Museen Schlösser und Denkmäler in Deutschland, Fonds Mercator Paribas, 1995, p. 13.

¹⁹³ MacDonogh, *Frederick the Great*, pp. 17-21.

¹⁹⁴ This quotation translated from Gerhard Oestreich, *Friedrich Wilhelm I: Preussischer Absolutismus, Merkantilismus, Militarismus*, Göttingen, Zurich, Frankfurt am Main, 1977, p. 44, in MacDonogh, *Frederick the Great*, p. 21.

¹⁹⁵ Franz Kugler, *Life of Frederick the Great*, G. Routledge, New York, London, Manchester, publication date unknown, pp. 18-20.

was marked by an atmosphere of Spartan economy and a lack of cultural and artistic patronage.¹⁹⁶

As Frederick matured he developed a natural predilection for the arts, music, and philosophy.¹⁹⁷ Frederick's tutor, contrary to the directives of Frederick William, encouraged him to pursue his interests. Jacques Egide Duhan de Jandun arranged to have a secret library set up for the Crown Prince in a house across from the Berlin Palace. The catalogue that the adolescent wrote out for himself listed more than three thousand volumes that exhibited the breadth of his interests. They included memoirs, atlases, biographies, tales of travel, manuals of poetry, style, and conversation, books on the fine arts and music, dictionaries and grammars in English, French, Spanish and Italian, political theory, and a short history of Brandenburg in French. Here Frederick escaped to read Machiavelli, Bayle, Locke, Descartes and Voltaire.¹⁹⁸ The young Prince declared himself transformed into "*Frédéric le philosophe*" (Frederick the philosopher).¹⁹⁹

¹⁹⁶ Edward Vehse, *Memoirs of the Court of Prussia*, Trans. by Franz C. F. Demmler, T. Nelson and Sons, London, 1854, pp. 19-22, and Kaufman, *Court, Cloister & City*, p. 396.

¹⁹⁷ Frederick William had a pronounced aversion to his son's intellectual and artistic leanings. He attempted to impose his ideas on the young prince and enforced restrictions to curtail his interests, supplanting them with the study of the history of the House of Hohenzollern, the examination of the Royal archives, the acquisition of knowledge about the territories he would govern, the practice of fiscal responsibility, and the maintenance of military strength. MacDonogh, *Frederick the Great*, pp. 31-36.

¹⁹⁸ Gaxotte, *Frederick the Great*, p. 24.

¹⁹⁹ A letter sent to his sister Wilhelmina from Dresden dated January 16, 1728, was signed Frederick the Philosopher, MacDonogh, *Frederick the Great*, p. 37.

Crown Prince Frederick's first architectural project was a small structure, called the Temple of Amalthea, commissioned in 1732, from George Wenzeslas von Knobelsdorff. It adorned the garden of the modest house he inhabited while sequestered with his regiment at Ruppín during the years of 1730-1734. In recognition of his arranged marriage in 1733 to Elizabeth Christine, Princess of Brunswick-Bevern (1715-1797), Frederick was given the small, outdated country palace of Rheinsberg to establish his own household. His father Frederick William allowed him to renovate, as he desired.²⁰⁰ The Crown Prince commissioned Knobelsdorff to modernize the palace and the court painter Antoine Pesne to ornament the interiors. Frederick, Elizabeth and her attendants moved into the unfinished palace in 1736; their home was completed in 1739.²⁰¹

Frederick used this newfound independence to establish a court where he could indulge in his many interests. He played the flute, composed music, and accompanied his small court orchestra. Frederick participated in comedies and tragedies, held masquerades and balls. He wrote poetry and prose and his first political treatise.²⁰² He also planned his gardens and built glass houses to cultivate the fruits he loved.²⁰³

²⁰⁰ Heinrich Hamann, "Die Gartenkunst in Potsdam unter Friedrich dem Grossen," *Potsdam Schlösser und Gärten. Bau-und Gartenkunst vom 17. bis 20 Jahrhundert*, Stiftung Schlösser und Gärten Potsdam Sanssouci, Potsdamer Verlagsbuchhandlung, Potsdam, 1993, p. 32.

²⁰¹ Gaxotte, *Frederick the Great*, pp. 121 -123.

²⁰² Frederick II, King of Prussia, *Anti-Machiavel: or, an examination of Machiavel's Prince*. With notes historical and political. Published by Mr. de Voltaire, London, 1741.

²⁰³ Gaxotte, pp. 131-133, and MacDonogh, pp. 109, 124.

The paintings that Frederick collected and displayed at Rheinsberg reflected the lifestyle that the Crown Prince aspired to establish at his country palace. This was the world of *les fêtes galantes*, a mix of fantasy and reality, love and flirtation, often taking place in an idealized garden setting. It was found in the collected canvases of Frederick's favourite artist Antoine Watteau (1684-1721), and his pupils Nicolas Lancret (1690-1745) and Jean-Baptiste Pater (1695-1736).²⁰⁴

The Prince also surrounded himself with a close circle of friends who shared his interests, had been close to him in his youth, or whose company and conversation he enjoyed. They included Pesne, Knobelsdorff, and the musicians, Joseph Joachim Quantz, Carl Philippe Emanuel Bach, and the brothers Johann George and Franz Benda, Carl Heinrich and Johann Gottlieb Graun. Others included his secretary, Charles Etienne Jordan, Lt. Count von Keyserlingk, his former governor, and the intellectual and author, Francesco Algarotti.²⁰⁵

Royal Ascension and Architectural Expansion

Frederick's ascension in 1740 marked a new beginning for Brandenburg-Prussia with a program of architectural expansion. This required the services of

²⁰⁴ Baer and Baer (Eds.), *Charlottenburg Palace*, p. 39. The collection of Watteau's paintings included *L'Embarquement pour Cythère*, *La Leçon d'Amour* and *L'Enseigne de Gersaint*. These masterpieces remain as treasures of the Berlin collection. Kaufman, *Court, Cloister & City*, p. 397.

²⁰⁵ Kugler, *Life of Frederick*, p. 117; Gaxotte, *Frederick the Great*, pp. 124-126.

artisans who had all but disappeared from the kingdom due to the lack of commissions during Frederick William's reign. Frederick was obliged to place notices in newspapers in foreign cities requesting artists to undertake his projects in Berlin and Potsdam.²⁰⁶

Knobelsdorff was chosen to redesign and enlarge the palaces that had been neglected by Frederick William. A new wing was added to the palace of Charlottenburg from 1740-1743, and was decorated in the new Rococo fashion. This was to remain Frederick's preferred style and it has come to be known a Frederician Rococo.²⁰⁷ Frederick also added a new wing to Sophia Dorothea's palace of Monbijou and demolished any buildings that marred its beauty during the years of 1740-1742. The Berlin palace was to be refitted with a new suite of rooms that included a circular library. Niederschönhausen Palace was to be redecorated for his wife Elizabeth, and her small court. He also remodeled the Potsdam City Palace from 1744-1751, creating more sumptuous Rococo interiors.²⁰⁸

A temporary theatre was constructed until the Berlin Opera House would be completed in 1743. Frederick also commissioned the Hedwigskirche, the Catholic Cathedral in Berlin, constructed from 1747-1773, and the Dom im Lustgarten, (Church in the Pleasure Garden) which was completed in 1747. The

²⁰⁶ Baer and Baer (Eds.), *Charlottenburg Palace*, p. 43.

²⁰⁷ Kaufmann, *Court, Cloister & City*, p. 398.

²⁰⁸ Hamann, "Die Gartenkunst," p. 35; Curl, *Dictionary of Architecture*, p. 362; MacDonogh, *Frederick the Great*, pp. 137-138.

Tiergarten (the royal hunting grounds) was to be relandscaped for use as a public park.²⁰⁹ The Royal Library at Berlin was constructed from 1774-1780.

Frederick also drew a plan for a small summer palace in Potsdam and Knobelsdorff was again commissioned to carry out the King's design. Building commenced on Sanssouci April 14, 1745. The exterior was finished on November 8, 1747, but it was already too late in the year for Frederick to enjoy his new summer home. He moved into the palace May 19, 1748, although the interiors were only completed in July of that year.²¹⁰ He spent every summer there until his death in 1786.

The King continued his architectural projects on the grounds of Sanssouci. He commissioned a marble colonnade in 1750, the Chinese Tea House in 1754, a new art gallery in 1755, the Chinese Kitchen and the Dragonhouse in 1763. After the success of the Seven Years War he commissioned the Neues Palais (New Palace). It was begun in 1763 and completed in 1766. He also commissioned the Antikentempel (Antiquity Temple) to house his collection of antiquities, and the Freundschaftstempel (Temple of Friendship) to commemorate his favourite sister Wilhelmina who had died in 1758.²¹¹

Frederick sketched his ideas for many of the important buildings constructed during his reign, although only a few of his drawings survive. He had

²⁰⁹ MacDonogh, *Frederick the Great*, pp. 137-138.

²¹⁰ MacDonogh, *Frederick the Great*, p. 189.

²¹¹ *Ibid.*, p. 352.

made designs for the Church in the Pleasure Garden, the Hedwigs Church and the Opera House in Berlin. At Potsdam he designed the summer palace, the Chinese Tea House and the New Palace. He also planned some bourgeois housing in Potsdam. Frederick's three drawings of Sanssouci disappeared after 1945. The drawing of the Tea House disappeared at the time of its construction.²¹²

It was not an unusual occurrence at this time for a ruler to involve himself in the planning and execution of architectural projects. This ability was considered one of the necessary accomplishments of a prince. Frederick had expressed his appreciation of these capabilities in a letter written to Voltaire dated February 1737, praising the many accomplishments of Czar Peter I of Russia. Frederick wrote:

He was not only the legislator of his country,
he was perfectly acquainted with Maritime
affairs. He was architect, anatomist and surgeon...
an expert soldier and consummate economist.²¹³

Evidence of Frederick's own interest and involvement in his commissions during the early period of architectural expansion is found in his correspondence. While away from Berlin during the first Silesian War, Frederick requested news of his

²¹² Komander notes that the drawing of the Tea House did not survive, *Das Chinesische Haus im Park von Sanssouci*, 1994, p. 2; The drawing for the Palace of Sanssouci and the terrace layout have been missing since 1945. Hans-Joachim Giersberg, "An Architectural Partnership," p. 7; Illustrations of Frederick's drawings of a Bacchus Temple 1740; Sanssouci and Terraces, 1744, Eastern Part of the Pleasure Garden, Facade of Prince Henry's Palace, Berlin, Houses on Breite Strasse 1749, City Palace, Potsdam 1751, Wall Decoration for Voltaire's Bedroom, are reproduced in Giersberg, "Friedrich der Grosse als Baumeister," *Potsdamer Schlösser und Gärten. Bau und Gartenkunst vom 17. bis 20. Jahrhundert*, Stiftung Schlösser und Gärten Potsdam-Sanssouci, Potsdamer Verlagsbuchhandlung, 1993, pp. 66-71.

²¹³ Frederick II, King of Prussia. *Correspondence. Letters between Frederic II. and M. de Voltaire*. Translated from the French by Thomas Holcroft. Vol. 1, London, 1789, p. 73.

many projects from his secretary and privy counselor Charles Etienne Jordan. On April 3, 1742 Frederick wrote:

Tell Knobelsdorff that he must write concerning my buildings, furniture, gardens and opera house to afford me some amusement.²¹⁴

On May 8, 1742, he wrote:

I have received a letter from Knobelsdorff with Which I am tolerably well satisfied; but it is too dry, not sufficiently circumstantial. I wish that the description of each moulding of the palace of Charlottenburg should contain four pages in quarto for this would give me great amusement.²¹⁵

On May 20 his letter ended with:

Bid Knobelsdorff prepare my dear Charlottenburg, and finish my opera house.²¹⁶

On October 25, the King complained that the architect Knobelsdorff had not provided enough details of the renovations of the Charlottenburg Palace, writing:

Desire fat Knobelsdorff to write me word how Charlottenburg, my opera house and my gardens behave. I am a child on this subject. These are play things with which I divert myself.²¹⁷

These excerpts provide an idea of how much pleasure and diversion Frederick obtained from his commissions, and that their progress was of consuming interest

²¹⁴ Frederick II, King of Prussia, *Correspondence, Letters between Frederick and M. Jordan*, Trans. from the French by Thomas Holcroft, London, 1789, Letter of April 3, 1742, p. 176.

²¹⁵ Frederick II, King of Prussia, *Correspondence, M. Jordan*, Letter of May 8, 1742, p. 216.

²¹⁶ Frederick II, King of Prussia, *Correspondence, M. Jordan*, Letter of May 20, 1742, p. 232.

²¹⁷ Frederick II, King of Prussia, *Correspondence, M. Jordan*, Letter of October 25, 1742, p. 235.

for him even while he was preoccupied with his military campaigns.

The Chinese Taste: The Fashion for Oriental Garden Pavilions

Frederick's interest and involvement with the *le goût Chinois* was manifested soon after his ascension with numerous projects of interior design. He enlarged his Mother, Sophia Dorothea's porcelain room at Monbijou when he ascended the throne. He also redecorated Charlottenburg, adding a room in *la façon de la Chine* in the Queen's chambers in the new wing he commissioned from Knobelsdorff. In one of the concert rooms at the Potsdam Palace designed in 1744, a bronze sculpture of a seated Chinese person disguised a stove, and Chinese figures and scenery enhanced the walls. The first guest room of Sanssouci had gilded Chinoiserie on the walls and the furnishings, as well as a porcelain *garniture de cheminée* on the mantelpiece.²¹⁸ He also commissioned a bedroom in the Chinese style for Voltaire at Sanssouci (fig. 49).

Frederick's infatuation with the "Chinese taste" was not limited to the interior of his palaces however; the design and commission for the Chinese Tea House is emblematic of his preoccupation with Oriental architecture. It was followed by the construction of a Chinese kitchen, a bridge and a pagoda. This was not a novel architectural concept. The trend to construct Oriental garden pavilions had begun in the late seventeenth century in France with the erection of

²¹⁸ The "*garniture*" usually consisted of an odd number, three, five, and sometimes seven, alternating open and covered porcelain vases of a matched pattern for use on the mantelpiece.

Le Petit Trianon de Porcelaine in 1670. It reached a peak in the German states mid-eighteenth century when Frederick, like many of the German nobility, as well as members of his own family involved themselves in the fashion to erect exotic garden structures. These edifices participated in the taste for what was perceived as the exoticism of the Far East, its trade goods and its architecture. They also recalled the myriad of descriptions and images of structures that had been disseminated throughout Europe since the thirteenth century, from the works of Polo and Mandeville to the illustrated travel accounts of Nieuhoff and the Jesuit reports of Fathers Kircher and Du Halde. Of course, images of Chinese architecture had been painted on the millions of pieces of imported, and later, domestic porcelain objects found in the collections of European nobility.

The popularity of these structures was legitimized by the publication of Johann Bernhard Fischer von Erlach's history of architecture. It compiled an exact and extensive survey of architectural plans of Asian monuments: many of which had never been available in Europe before. Drawings of Chinese structures attested to his familiarity with images of the Porcelain Pagoda at Nanking, and the Pagoda at Sinkicien from Nieuhoff's report (figs. 21, 22). The use of Nieuhoff's illustrations as a source demonstrated Fischer von Erlach's confidence in the accuracy of the Dutchman's representations.

It is Erdberg's opinion that, even though Fischer von Erlach devoted a complete chapter to Asian architecture in his history, there was in fact no real understanding of Oriental architecture at the time. Nor, according to her, did its inclusion mean that he approved of it artistically. She believes that this chapter

only served to show how important a part the Orient played in the interests of the educated classes.²¹⁹ What is important here is how these images would have validated what was perceived as authentic Chinese architecture, making the illustrations valuable sources of inspiration for architects who were commissioned to design the ubiquitous garden pavilions. This is brought forward through a consideration of the architectural vocabulary, motifs, and design elements that are used in various combinations that came to represent the charming and exotic Cathay. Such elements are the columns that support the upturned roof, the two-storied tambour with windows to light the interior, and the hexagonal ground plan of the Pagoda at Sinkicien, as well as the bells suspended from the roof line, and the crowning ornament found on the Porcelain Pagoda of Nanking.

Fischer von Erlach's inclusion of *The Codex Montenuovo* in his history further encouraged architectural innovation. This was a pattern book for recreational buildings with plans for garden palaces or pleasure palaces listed under the heading of *Lustgebäude*, that he had designed in the last decade of the seventeenth century. Here, he speculated about ideal ground plans for small garden pavilions using unusual forms (fig. 51).²²⁰ Although these were not designs for exotic structures, many of the ground plans were later used for Chinese pavilions. This may have been reinforced by the hexagonal groundplan of the Pagoda of Sinkincien.

²¹⁹ Erdberg, *Chinese Influence*, p. 20.

²²⁰ It is Aurenhammer's opinion that Fischer von Erlach was at his most original in this collection and his ideas most vividly expressed in this series of drawings, see Hans Aurenhammer, *J. B. Fischer von Erlach*, Harvard University Press, Cambridge, 1973, pp. 95-98.

Frederick's interest in architecture and his knowledge of the exotic structures commissioned by his noble contemporaries may have encouraged his participation in this trend. These structures had unusual ground plans and/or ornamental design elements of the type used on Frederick's Tea House. Many of them used colour on the exterior, which was likely associated with Nieuhoff's description of the Porcelain Pagoda at Nanking, drawing attention to the use of porcelain and a colourful exterior to make the association with China (fig. 13 a, b).²²¹

Maximilian Emmanuel, the Elector of Bavaria commissioned a small Chinese garden pavilion on the grounds of his summer palace Nymphenburg, shortly after his return from exile in France. Pagodenburg, designed by Josef Effner and constructed from 1716-1719, is believed to have been the first small exotic garden pavilion constructed in the German states. The blue and white first floor interior of the small octagonal structure is thought to have been directly influenced by Le Petit Trianon de Porcelaine.²²² Augustus the Strong, Elector of Saxony and King of Poland, had commissioned two Asian pleasure palaces: The Japanese Palace (1717-1719), had Chinese carytids in the courtyard and a slightly spreading concave roof; The Indian Palace at Pillnitz (1720-1732) had a frieze of Chinese figures on its exterior and a more pronounced Chinese roof design (figs.

²²¹ Nieuhoff, *An Embassy*, p. 84.

²²² Heinrich Kreisel, *Farbiges Nymphenburg*, Verlag F. Bruckmann, München, 1944, p. 26-39; Luisa Hager, *Nymphenburg*, Hirmer Verlag, München, 1955, pp. 30-34; and Connor, *Oriental Architecture*, p. 21.

81, 83).²²³

A Japanese House was designed by François de Cuvilliés and constructed at Wilhelmstal in 1747 for the Landgrave William VIII of Hesse-Kassel (1682-1760). Although a sketch is all that is left of this structure, which was demolished at the end of the eighteenth century, it exhibits some of the characteristics that were used soon after on Frederick's Chinese Tea House, such as the colourful exterior, palm trees on the façade, and dragons on the roofline.²²⁴

Clemens August, Prince Bishop of Cologne and the son of Max Emmanuel, commissioned La Maison Sans Gêne from his architect François Girard in 1750 after a visit to Wilhelmstal. It was constructed in the park of Schloss Augustusburg in Brühl, near Cologne. Unfortunately the exotic pavilion exists only in contemporary illustrations (fig. 52). It consisted of a double-storey central block linked by galleries to a pair of smaller pavilions and was set into a formal garden. The middle pavilion was red and pink, the side pavilions red and blue. Green pagoda roofs with gold decorations and hanging bells capped the structure.²²⁵ The images also show a fountain in the guise of a mandarin holding a very small umbrella. He is seated on a dragon, spurting water from his mouth. The fountain was placed beneath the double staircase leading up to the main pavilion of the pleasure palace (it has since been placed in the hall of Schloss

²²³ Connor, *Oriental Architecture*, p. 21

²²⁴ Gerd-Helge Vogel, "Konfuzianismus und chinoise Architekturen im Zeitalter der Aufklärung," *Die Gartenkunst*, Vol. 8, No. 2, 1996, p. 197.

²²⁵ Aall, *Follies*, p. 27.

Brühl).²²⁶ Here, as well, palm trees were used as supports and dragons were placed on the roof, along with a Chinese figure holding an umbrella similar to the one placed on the roof of the Tea House. Clearly this was a crucial source for Frederick, but its reuse should not be understood as a copy, but as evidence of a network of structures in which shared perceptions of an idealized East have been translated into visual forms. That these were pavilions for European monarchs attests to the politics of the investment both in pleasure and global trade.

The number of principalities in the German states where such structures were built, the close personal relationship between the persons who commissioned these buildings, and the desire to participate in the trend obviously had an impact on the popularity of the fashion. Frederick had seen Augustus the Strong's two pavilions during his state visit in 1728. Although it cannot be corroborated, Manger suggests that the king visited the Japanese House at Wilhelmstal in 1755.²²⁷ His siblings also communicated with him on the subjects of their own exotic salons and pavilions. Frederick's interest in the East as a source of design and decoration was therefore already well established before he drew the sketch for the Chinese Tea House and commissioned Büring to construct the pavilion in the park at Sanssouci.

Johann Gottfried Büring

Johann Gottfried Büring (1723-after 1788?) was the son of the court

²²⁶ Ibid. See also Honour, *Chinoiserie*, p. 112.

²²⁷ Manger, *Baugeschichte*, Vol. 1, p. 209.

carpenter Johann Adam Buring. He had received training in architecture from members of Frederick's building office. He also had some years experience working under the direction of Knobelsdorff at the Potsdam City Palace and at Sanssouci. In 1748 he was sent to Italy to study architecture, and he settled in Hamburg after his return. Frederick specifically requested Buring's return to assume the role of court architect after the death of Knobelsdorff. Most of Buring's time was spent on commissions in Berlin and Potsdam where he was involved in a number of projects. He designed the Grosse Bildergalerie (the large art gallery), the oldest free standing art museum in Germany. It was constructed at Sanssouci from 1755-1763 on the Eastern side of the palace as a pendant to Knobelsdorff's Orangerie situated on the West side of the palace. This project was concurrent with the building of the Tea House. Buring was responsible for renovations at Charlottenburg in 1760, and acted as building manager of the Hedwigskirche in Berlin. He was also involved in the design of several residential structures and factory buildings in Potsdam. The Neues Palais constructed from 1763-1768, however, is considered Buring's major architectural accomplishment. Buring left Potsdam during the construction of the Palace after a disagreement with Frederick, never to return.²²⁸

It is Hermann Heckmann's opinion that Buring had an affinity for exotic ornamentation, and for this reason he was commissioned for several more

²²⁸ Hermann Heckmann, *Baumeister des Barock und Rokoko in Brandenburg Preussen*, Verlag für Bauwesen, Berlin, 1998, pp. 400-407.

structures, although he did not complete all the projects.²²⁹ Frederick requested the Chinesische Küche (Chinese Kitchen) from Büring to service the Tea House in 1763 to alleviate the problem of the food arriving cold on the long distance from the palace kitchens. Unfortunately, no floor plans or building documents have survived, but the pavilion still exists in an altered form. What is known of the original building was recorded by Heinrich Ludwig Manger in 1789.²³⁰

The kitchen was approximately nine meters long by five meters deep. It was constructed on the other side of the canal and was accessible by a bridge. On the roof were five sheet metal pagods whose heads moved in the same fashion as the porcelain models. The chimney was covered with a cap in the shape of a dragon. Nine pillars decorated the façade with painted snakes winding downwards and flowers climbing upwards. Although it still exists, it has been completely altered since its conception. Only the hexagonal shuttered windows still suggest its earlier exotic design.²³¹

A sketch by Büring dated 1765 also exists for the Drachenhäus, (Dragon House) a seven-storied pagoda named for the dragons that ornamented the roofs (fig. 53). The pagoda is said to have been influenced by Sir William Chambers' plans of the Pagoda at Kew published in 1763. It was constructed by Karl von Gontard in 1770, after Büring had left Potsdam. He reduced the building to four

²²⁹ Ibid., p. 407.

²³⁰ Manger, *Baugeschichte*, Vol. 2, pp. 266-267.

²³¹ Manger, *Baugeschichte*, Vol. 2, pp. 266-267. This description is also cited in Komander, *Das Chinesische Haus*, 1994, p. 22; and Dorst, "Die schöne," p. 36.

stories and gave the first floor a proportionally larger octagonal shape than the upper three. According to Marion Dreger, Gontard attempted to design the building to suit the structures already erected by Büring. His plan for the structure is lost.²³² The building was painted green and the façade was richly decorated with pilasters painted ochre, with garlands of flowers similar to those on the Chinese kitchen. The arches of the windows were painted with Chinese heads that also matched those on the kitchen. Lattice-work with flowers filled the balustrade, and the wooden ceilings were painted with a starry sky. Each level was covered by a concave and curved roof. The first and second were ornamented with multicoloured and golden dragons, the third and fourth were hung with gilded tassels like those of the Tea House.²³³ Although the design was altered by Gontard, it remains as an example of Büring's collection of Chinoiserie buildings and his ability to design structures within this idiom.

The Familial Connection with Exotic Architecture

Frederick's own family is an example of the extent to which the fashion for Oriental garden pavilions was established. Frederick's sisters, Louisa Ulrica, Queen of Sweden (1720-1782), and Wilhelmina, Margravine of Bayreuth, (1709-1758) as well as his brother, Prince Henry (1726-1802) commissioned Chinese pavilions for their palace gardens. Louisa Ulrica's first exotic structure preceeded

²³² Marion Dreger, "Das Drachenhaus," *Potsdamer Schlösser und Gärten. Bau und Gartenkunst vom 17 bis 20 Jahrhundert*, Stiftung Schlösser und Gärten Potsdam-Sanssouci, Potsdamer Verlagsbuchhandlung, 1993, p. 144.

²³³ Dreger, "Das Drachenhaus," pp. 144-145.

that of her brother Frederick, and may have provided the motivation for the design and construction of his kiosk. A description of the interior of Kina Slott was furnished by the queen herself. In a letter to her Mother, Sophia Dorothea, she expresses her delight in receiving a Chinese pavilion as a surprise gift for her thirty-fourth birthday from her husband King Gustav II. On July 27, 1753 she wrote:

If I was amazed at the exterior of the building, I was no less so at the interior. Everything was characteristic of the magnificence and good taste of the donor. A splendid room hung with the most beautiful oriental fabrics, great porcelain jars in the four corners. The adjoining cabinets are panelled with old Japanese lacquer and furnished with settees covered in oriental fabrics, everything in perfect taste. A bedchamber likewise, with the same material for the bed, and the wall panels decorated with the loveliest porcelain, pagodas, vases and birds. An old Japanese lacquer chest of drawers was filled with many wonderful things, among them textiles woven in China. In the pavilions, the tables were laid, one with a magnificent Dresden porcelain and the other with an oriental service.²³⁴

Her account provides an idea of the type of furnishings and décor that were considered appropriate for this thematically integrated garden structure. Lacquer ware paneling, oriental fabrics, and porcelain provided the Chinese ambience. The queen's description underscores the extent of the porcelain that was used to create the exotic interior. The inclusion of the "magnificent Dresden porcelain" was considered a suitable addition, and when displayed beside the "Oriental service,"

²³⁴ Ake Setterwall, Stig Fogelmarck, and Bo Gyllensvärd, *The Chinese Pavilion at Drottningholm*, Allhelms Förlag Malmö, 1974, p. 44. The letter is also reproduced in Impey, *Chinoiserie*, p. 9; and Jacobson, *Chinoiserie*, p. 94.

was considered equally valuable.

As with other structures constructed in *la façon de la Chine*, there were similar design elements used to define its exotic nature, and here as well, the colour of the exterior was important in declaring the pavilion as Chinese. Ake Setterwall describes the exterior of the house as made of wood, with the lower paneling painted gray, the upper latticework red, and at the corners of the house were green and silver palm trees. The roof was tin, covered by a yellow tent looped up with *agrémens* and large tassels (fig. 54).²³⁵

Cadet P. M. Adlerfelt participated in the birthday celebration when the Queen was presented with her gift. His report demonstrates the effort made to create a Chinese atmosphere. He recalled that everyone was in Chinese dress. The soldiers had practiced a Chinese drill since the early hours of the morning in preparation to greet the Queen; the orchestra played Chinese music; and the Crown Prince, dressed as a Mandarin, spoke words of welcome in Chinese before handing the keys of the pavilion to his Mother.²³⁶ His account illustrates that music, costume, entertainment, and an exotic ambience played an important role in the enjoyment of the structure. It also underlines the importance of the Far East among the educated and the nobility, and illustrates that information was available to the Swedish court from which knowledge of language, costume, and the

²³⁵ Setterwall, Fogelmarck, and Gyllensvärd, *Drottningholm*, p. 48.

²³⁶ Setterwall, Fogelmarck, and Gyllensvärd, *Drottningholm*, p. 23.

Chinese arts could be gathered (figs. 16, 19, 20).²³⁷

This first pavilion was built of wood and without fireplaces, and as beautiful as the interior decoration in *la façon de la Chine* was, the structure was subject to decay. A second more permanent building of stone was designed by Carl Fredrik Adelcrantz and constructed from 1763-1769. This structure still exists. The interior of this pavilion was also decorated in a *la façon de la Chine* with imported silk and paper wall coverings, lacquered furniture, paintings, and porcelain.

According to Osvald Siren, the Chinese house fulfilled a desire that was inspired by Louisa Ulrica's youth spent in the Chinoiserie rooms of her Mother's palace of Monbijou, in Berlin.²³⁸ Kina was used as a "solitude," the term used at the time for a place where the family could be themselves and pursue their own interests. The memoirs of Adolf Ludwig Hamilton, a chamberlain in the service of Crown Prince Gustav, recorded the day's activities in his memoirs:

The Royal Family, with a few chosen members of the Court went every morning to the Chinese Pavilion, a little pleasure house close by... The King worked at his lathe, the Queen listened to her reader, the Crown Prince drew in the same room. The Princesses made lace, Prince Carl sailed his frigate, Prince Fredrik ran

²³⁷ The information necessary to prepare for this event could have been provided by Du Halde's *General History*. Illustrations provided images of costume, language, music and musical instruments; see p. 48, n. 104. The library of Frederick I, Louisa Ulrica's grandfather, was reported to have a collection of four hundred books on China. See Nicht, "Die Ausstattung," p. 92.

²³⁸ Osvald Siren, *China and the Gardens of Europe of the Eighteenth Century*, Dumbarton Oaks, New York, 1950, p. 171. A description of the porcelain room of Sophia Dorothea's palace, Monbijou, is found in Laske, *Der ostasiatische Einfluss*, pp. 66-68, illustrations 61-63. He also refers to a description of rooms in Monbijou with exotic ornamentation published by J. D. F. Rumpf, in *Berlin and Potsdam*, Berlin, 1804, Vol. 1.

about on the grass....²³⁹

The Queen created a retreat where routine and etiquette could be forgotten with a voyage to an imaginary world of make-believe.²⁴⁰ The enthusiasm for all things Chinese, however, was not limited strictly to the construction of a garden pavilion for entertainment and relaxation. There was a genuine curiosity about China amongst the educated. Louisa Ulrica's interest in the Far East, like Frederick's, was well documented by the existence of books on the subject in the Library at Drottningholm, and by her success at cultivating silkworms on the Palace grounds in a charming little village appropriately named Kanton.²⁴¹

Kina was, in fact, a European structure with Chinoiserie details, built as a Rococo creation modeled after other stylistically related buildings on the Continent. This was to be just the beginning. Several sets of drawings exist for pagodas which were to be erected near the China House but were never undertaken. Knowing of her brother's love of architecture, Louisa happily sent Frederick the plans for Kina to add to his collection, and these were found in the library of the Potsdam Palace (fig. 55).²⁴²

²³⁹ The quotation is found in Setterwall, Fogelmarck, and Gyllensvärd, *Drottningholm*, pp. 27-28. A paraphrased version is found in Jacobson, *Chinoiserie*, p. 95.

²⁴⁰ Setterwall, Fogelmarck, and Gyllensvärd, *Drottningholm*, p. 24.

²⁴¹ Peter Thornton, *Baroque and Rococo Silks*, Faber and Faber, London, 1965, p. 72. Du Halde's *General History*, Vol. 2, p. 361-388, describes silk production, and illustrations of silk production on p. 989 (out of numerical sequence).

²⁴² The plans by Carl Fredrik Adelcrantz dated 1763 can be found in the Staatliche Museen zu Berlin, Kunstbibliothek. They are also published in Setterwall, Fogelmarck, and Gyllensvärd, *Drottningholm*, pp. 53-60.

The house continued to play an important role in the life of the Swedish Royal Family well into the late eighteenth century. Significantly, the daily itinerary for Louisa's son Gustav III's "*Séjour de Drottningholm*" in 1777 includes a reference to a visit to the Chinese House where the trip to Kina was described as "going to China."

A Deux heures moins un Quart, on trouvera sur
la grande terrasse du Château, des Calèches, des
Vourstes et les autres Voitures pour aller à la Chine.²⁴³

At quarter to two, one will find carriages and other
means of conveyance on the grand terrace of the
Château to go to China.

This is followed by a detailed schedule for meals and the return trip at the end of the day:

à Minuit les Voitures du Matin reconduiront toute la
Société au Château.²⁴⁴

At midnight the vehicles from the morning will return everyone to the Château.

The day's excursion was, as in his Mother's time, a voyage to a distant land where the exotic experience was conjured by its distance and décor.

The taste for Chinese architecture and design was shared by Frederick's favourite sister Wilhelmina.²⁴⁵ She also commissioned an exotic garden pavilion

²⁴³ This quotation is taken from a facsimile of *Séjour de Drottningholm*, reproduced in Setterwall, Fogelmarck, and Gyllensvärd, *Drottningholm*, p. 29.

²⁴⁴ Ibid.

²⁴⁵ Wilhelmina's palace, Schloss Eremitage also displayed *le goût Chinois*. The drawing room was filled with Chinese figures, *singeries*, butterflies, and flowers. The *pièce de résistance* was a room done up in the colour of Imperial China. The broken yellow wooden panels are inlaid with oddly shaped pieces of mirrors and horizontally and vertically shaped frames that enclose raised Chinoiserie. She was so taken with this room that she had another reproduced at her villa, the

called the Chinese Sallet, which is no longer extant. The pavilion was built over a grotto of artificial rocks in the gardens of the Schloss Eremitage between 1760 and 1770. The building consisted of a metal roof supported by eight green and silver columns, and was decorated with dragons, a jar with flowers, and an interior ornamented with painted exotic birds.²⁴⁶

Yet another example of the family's obsession is the little Chinese House commissioned by their brother Prince Henry at Rheinsberg in 1765, soon after Fredrick had completed the Chinese Tea House. This was the first of several buildings he had constructed in the castle park. Unfortunately, the building is known only from a watercolour dated 1795. Though they share some features, such as the colourful exterior and gilded ornaments, they are significantly different.²⁴⁷ The ground plan of Prince Henry's Chinese House, was an octagon without side cabinets.²⁴⁸ The exterior walls were white with pale blue moldings near the doors, the decorative plants were green, and the roof was yellow with green and red crossed stripes (fig. 56).

Similarities to Frederick's Chinese Tea House are found in the decorative

Schloss Favorite near Baden-Baden. Jacobson, *Chinoiserie*, pp. 97-98.

²⁴⁶ Erdberg, *Chinese Influence*, p. 159.

²⁴⁷ Erdberg has suggested that this garden pavilion is a smaller and simpler version of the Chinese Tea House at Sanssouci, *Chinese Influence*, pp. 73-74.

²⁴⁸ The octagonal ground plan is found in Part 1, 1750, Plate 10, "A Summer House Upon a Rock," in William Halfpenny, *New Designs for Chinese Temples, Triumphal Arches, Garden Seats, Palings &c*, Part 1, 1750, and Plate 44, "The Plan and Elevation of a House on Tarras," described on page 6 as An Octagon Summer House in the Chinese Manner, in William and John Halfpenny, *New Designs for Chinese Doors, Windows, Piers, Pilasters, Garden Seat, Green Houses, Summer Houses, &c*, 1751, *Rural Architecture in the Chinese Taste*, London, 1755, Benjamin Blom, New York, London, 1968.

elements. A golden Chinese man holding a parasol is seated on a cushion on the roof. Oval windows in the tambour light the interior. Four tall French windows alternated with four niches, each housing a figure of a Chinese person, although they do not appear animated like those of Frederick's pavilion. A bird of paradise swings overhead in a ring, similar to those found in the Chinese Tea House. Other elements at Rheinsberg may have been drawn from his sister Louisa's second Chinese pavilion built between 1763 and 1769, such as the eight gilded dragons on the corners that leaned over the edge of the roof holding bells in their mouths, and the eight palm trees that supported the roof at the corners, which were set into the walls like three-quarter columns (fig. 55).

These similar design elements reflect a common vocabulary for Chinese garden structures that I argue declares the exotic nature of the structures. For Kina Slott, the Chinese Tea House at Sanssouci, The Chinese Sallet, and Prince Henry's *Lusthaus* at Rheinsberg, the colours of the exterior played an important role in identifying the house as Chinese. This characteristic may be associated with Nieuhoff's description of the Porcelain Pagoda at Nanking, drawing attention to the use of porcelain in its construction and the colours of the exterior. The French gazette and literary magazine, *Nouveau Mercure Gallant* in 1678 also described the Porcelain Pagoda at Nanking as:

of real porcelain at an inestimable price ... All the porcelain of the tower is green, red and yellow, there is very little blue. When the sun shines upon the porcelain, it gleams by itself so much that you may barely behold it.²⁴⁹

²⁴⁹ *Nouveau Mercure Gallant*, July 8, 1678.

This quotation confirms the persistence of the association of porcelain, colour and Chinese architecture. The interest in the Far East, as evidenced by the preoccupations of the royal family in their architectural projects, was not limited to the construction of garden pavilions. Their pastimes and library inventories suggest that a structure that made an association with porcelain, also made reference to broader issues and concerns.

Frederick: The Philosopher of Sanssouci

...to render a people happy either a King must be a
Philosopher or a Philosopher a King.²⁵⁰

Christian Freiherr von Wolff

The Chinese Tea House is tangible evidence of Frederick the Great's interests in the Celestial Kingdom and in architecture. Less visible but equally important in a discussion of the garden pavilion is the importance of the Far East in the thinking of the educated in the eighteenth century and the impact it had on Europe's philosophers.²⁵¹ François-Marie Arouet de Voltaire (1694-1778), writer, philosopher, the leading sinophile of the period held positive views of China. Theodore Besterman has suggested that Voltaire's ideas influenced Frederick's

²⁵⁰ Christian Freiherr von Wolff, *The Real Happiness of a People Under a Philosophical King Demonstrated*. Printed for M. Cooper, London, 1750, pp. 9-10.

²⁵¹ The eighteenth century definition of a philosopher was a person who concerns himself with philosophy: the love of wisdom, the knowledge or study of nature or morality founded on reason or experience. See Nathan Bailey. *Dictionarium Britannicum: or a more compleat universal etymological English dictionary than any extant. Containing words from the antient*, London, 1736, p. 611.

thinking on his role as an enlightenment ruler.²⁵² These, I suggest, were expressed in his style of government, in his written works, and in the design of his Chinese Tea House.

While still an adolescent under the tutelage of Jacques Egide Duhan de Jandun, Frederick had declared himself transformed by his education into a philosopher. Of the many authors that Frederick had amassed in his secret library, he held the genius of Voltaire in especially high esteem. In preparation for his ascension to the Electorate of Brandenburg and the throne of Prussia, Frederick had spent hours of his day in the little round library at Rheinsberg studying and developing a philosophy that was to set the character of his reign. A portrait of Voltaire was placed above the bookcase where Frederick housed his collected works.²⁵³

Frederick initiated a relationship with Voltaire, while he was still the Crown Prince. On August 8, 1736, Frederick wrote from Rheinsberg:

The kindness with which you regard, and the support you afford to, all men who devote themselves to arts and sciences, lead me to hope that you will not exclude me from the number of persons whom you shall deem worthy of receiving your instruction.²⁵⁴

To which Voltaire replied August 26, 1736:

Permit me to say, there is not a man on earth who is not indebted to the care by which you apply

²⁵² Theodore Besterman, *Voltaire*, Longmans, London, 1969, p. 266.

²⁵³ The works of Voltaire make up the largest part of Frederick's library inventory see Krieger, Vol. 17, pp. 137-142.

²⁵⁴ Frederick II, King of Prussia, *Posthumous works of Frederic II. King of Prussia*. Translated by Thomas Holcroft, printed for G. G. J. and J. Robinson, London, 1789, Vol. 6, p. 3.

yourself to cultivate, by sound philosophy, a mind
born to command. Be assured there have never
been any truly good kings, except such who, like
you, began by acquiring knowledge, by studying man,
by the love of truth, by the detestation of persecution
and superstition. There is no monarch who, thinking
thus, might not restore the golden age to his dominions.
How does it happen that so few kings seek this advantage?
You are sensible of it, sir: others think more of royalty
Than of humanity; you do exactly the reverse.²⁵⁵

It appears from this communication that Frederick's many and varied interests in the arts and sciences were shared with the intellectual, and that Frederick's reputation as an enlightened prince and philosopher had already been acknowledged throughout Europe.

Voltaire visited Frederick after his ascension to the Prussian throne in 1740 and 1743. He also spent the years of 1750-1753 at Frederick's court.²⁵⁶ These were opportunities for the exchange of ideas on their many interests and may have provided an opportunity to discuss the merits of the Chinese government, and the responsible and paternalistic role of the Emperor. Frederick's ideas on his role as a monarch had first been penned in the Rheinsberg library while he was still the Crown Prince.²⁵⁷ It was published as *Anti-Machiavel* in 1741 with the support and encouragement of Voltaire.²⁵⁸ Frederick wrote:

²⁵⁵ Frederick II, King of Prussia, *Posthumous works*, Vol. 6, p. 8.

²⁵⁶ Frederick's letter of November 21, 1740 from Rheinsberg to Algarotti at Berlin notes that he and Voltaire were philosophizing. Thomas Carlyle, *History of Frederick the Great*, Chapman and Hall Limited, London, 1897, Vol. III, p. 401.

²⁵⁷ Carlyle, *History*, Vol. III, p. 224.

²⁵⁸ In the letter of November 5, 1739 Frederick discussed *Anti-Machiavel*, his work in progress, Frederick II, King of Prussia, *Correspondence. Letters between Frederic II. and M. de Voltaire*.

A Sovereign ...was originally designed for the Good of the People; this is therefore what the Prince ought to prefer to Every other Consideration; and Justice alone ought to be the Guide of all his Actions. What becomes then of all those Notions of Self-Interest, Grandeur, Ambition and Despotism; When it appears that the Sovereign, far from being the absolute Master of his People, is nothing more than their chief Servant.²⁵⁹

This excerpt suggests the style of Frederick's reign. The good of his subjects was to be placed above his own self-interest. This became a recurring theme in Frederick's correspondence with Voltaire. Upon his ascension in 1740 he wrote this poem to the philosopher:

From bowers of Remusberg no more I write;
Much lov'd and much regretted haunts!
Poet and king confus'd,
Co-mingled are; nor can the troubled mind,
By thoughts o'er-peopled, order reinstate.
Sweet dreams of poetry, delusions bright,
Avaunt! Henceforth a nation's wants
Me claim. Self-doom'd were I, by self accus'd,
Did claims so strong with equal strength not bind.
On me what burdens hast thou laid, of Fate!
Arts, pleasures, friendship I discard;
Yes, even thee, Voltaire!
Nor dare to murmur, dare to grieve.
Duty's my deity. My peoples good,
Well understood, Must be my care:
But this perform'd with lightning speed will I,
To th' open arms of friendship fly,
Thy lessons to receive;
Lessons which thou'lt delight to give
While I from thee shall learn to govern and to live.²⁶⁰

Translated from the French by Thomas Holcroft, London, 1789. Vol. 2, pp. 27-29. Letter XCVI, from M. de Voltaire, Brussels, 1739, Frederick II, King of Prussia, *Correspondence. M. de Voltaire*. Translated from the French by Thomas Holcroft, Vol. 1, London 1789, pp. 530-531.

²⁵⁹ Frederick II, King of Prussia, *Anti-Machiavel*, p. 3.

²⁶⁰ Frederick II, King of Prussia, *Correspondence... M. de Voltaire*. Vol. 2, Letter of June 12, 1740 from Charlottenburg, pp. 110-111.

It demonstrates his preoccupations with his country and his subjects, and his regard for Voltaire as his mentor.

Frederick's ascension was manifested by immediate change. Frederick wrote again to Voltaire on June 27, 1740, only one month after his father's death:

I feel that since losing my father I owe myself wholly to my country. With this view I have worked to the limit of my capacity to make the promptest arrangements and those most suitable to the public good ...²⁶¹

Frederick began by opening the storehouses of grain for the poor after a particularly long and hard winter. He established spinning houses to employ destitute women in Berlin. He abolished torture as a means of judicial inquiry, censorship of the press, and religious discrimination. He initiated the first codified German law. He also enforced general education in advance of other countries. Frederick renewed the commitment to the arts and culture and took steps to move the country forward scientifically, technologically, culturally and artistically.²⁶² He implemented a program to endow the city of Berlin with new public buildings and institutions consonant with its status as the *Residenzstadt*. He re-established the almost defunct Academies of the Sciences and the Arts. In this same letter he

²⁶¹ Frederick II, King of Prussia, *Correspondence... M. de Voltaire*, Vol. 2, Letter of June 27, 1740 from Charlottenburg, p. 120.

²⁶² He reinstituted the Prussian Academy of Science which had been founded by his grandfather and instituted by Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz. He recalled exiled intellectuals and foreign scientists and artists, Carlyle, *History*, Vol. III, pp. 284-293. Mitford, p. 13, and A. Fauchier-Magnan, *The Small German Courts of the Eighteenth Century*, Methuen and Co., Ltd, London, 1958. p. 31.

wrote:

I have laid the foundations of our new Academy
and have acquired Wolff, Maupertuis, and
Algarotti. I am waiting the answers of s'Gravesande,
Vaucanson, and Euler. I have established a new
college for commerce and manufactures; I am
engaging painters and sculptors...²⁶³

These undertakings were manifestations of Frederick's role and were carried out
within the public sphere to create an image of the King as an Enlightened
Monarch.²⁶⁴

Frederick suggests that even his architectural projects were undertaken
with the public good in mind. Henri de Catt quoted the king in his memoirs:

I love to build and to decorate, I confess, but I do it
on my savings, and the State does not suffer for it.
By building I give work to men, which is a great point
in a state; nothing is more fatal than to permit idleness
and to feed useless people. The State suffers more on
this account than I can tell you. The money I distribute

²⁶³ Frederick II, King of Prussia, *Correspondence... M. de Voltaire., Charlottenburg, June 27, 1740*, Vol. 2, London, p. 120. The persons he recalled were Christian Wolff (1679-1754) a German philosopher and professor of mathematics. He was expelled from the University of Halle by Frederick William I on November 8, 1723, and was recalled by Frederick in 1740. He became Chancellor of University of Halle in 1743, see Matt Hettche, "Christian Wolff," *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, Edward N. Zalta (Ed.), Fall 2006 Edition; Pierre-Louis Moreau de Maupertuis (1698-1759) was a French mathematician, philosopher and man of letters, chosen president of Prussian Academy of Sciences 1746 see "Pierre-Louis Moreau de Maupertuis," *Encyclopædia Britannica*. 2008. *Encyclopædia Britannica Online*, 01 July. 2008; Count Francesco Algarotti, Italian philosopher, art critic and writer. Frederick made him a Prussian count in 1740 and court chamberlain in 1747, Curl, *Dictionary of Architecture*, p. 15; Willem Jacob s'Gravesande (1688-1742) was a Dutch philosopher and mathematician, was invited by Frederick to join the Berlin Academy in 1737, see A.R. Hall, "s'Gravesande, Willem Jacob," *Dictionary of Scientific Biography*, Vol. V; New York, 1972, pp. 509-511; Jacques de Vaucanson (1709-1782) was a creator of automats. He refused Frederick's invitation to join the court, see Wood, *Edison's Eve*, pp. 30-31; Leonhard Paul Euler (1701-1783), Swiss mathematician and physicist, joined the Berlin Academy of Science at Frederick's invitation in 1741, see "Leonhard Euler," *Encyclopædia Britannica Online*. 01 July 2008.

²⁶⁴ William Allan, "Fredericus Rex: The Image of a King," *Connoisseur*, Vol. 195, May 1977, p. 5.

for my buildings remains in my country, circulates in it, and yet that is another advantage I get from my way of building ... I should always regret the expenditure on pictures, on statues, on antiques, on colonnades, on gardens, if, as I told you, I had not done it all on my savings.²⁶⁵

Here he justifies the expense of his architectural projects by demonstrating that his own interests and diversions were not detrimental to the well-being of the state.

The Jesuit Influence

Voltaire was among the intellectuals influenced by the European perceptions of the Far East. He was educated by the Jesuits who were responsible for the dissemination of ideas that led Europeans to view the celestial Kingdom in a positive light. They were the most successful at establishing good relations with the Chinese because they managed to learn to speak the language of the people.²⁶⁶ According to Colin Mackerras, these learned men were responsible for the first detailed understanding of the thought and culture of the East. The information they sent back to Europe had a profound influence on the attitudes of the Enlightenment era. But it was through their desire to convert the souls of the heathens to the true faith that the real effort to open up and explore the mind of the East began. They had a high regard for Chinese civilization, its Confucian philosophy, its literature and institutions, and their writings created an image of a

²⁶⁵ de Catt, *Frederick the Great*: Vol. 1, p. 67.

²⁶⁶ Adolf Reichwein, *China and Europe: Intellectual and Artistic Contacts in the Eighteenth Century*, Trans. by J. C. Powell, Kegan Paul, Trench, Trubner Co., Ltd., London & Alfred A. Knopf, New York, 1925. n., p. 21.

Chinese Utopia. They sent back detailed and sympathetic accounts of the beliefs and the practices of the people they wished to convert. Their publications had a major impact on Europe, and as a result they have been considered the fathers of Western sinology.²⁶⁷

Among the influential accounts of the Society of Jesus was that of Louis Daniel Le Comte (1656-1729). *Nouveaux Mémoires sur la Chine* was published in Paris in 1696, was immediately translated and widely read. Le Comte wrote:

as though God himself had founded their Empire,
the plan of their government was not a whit less
perfect in its cradle than it is now after the
experience and trial of four thousand years.²⁶⁸

The publication formed a very positive view of Chinese government and law.

Joachim Bouvet (1656-1730) declared that as different as China may be from Europe, the magnificence of the Emperor and his court was somewhat akin to that of his King and patron Louis XIV:

...ont été étonnez de trouver aux extremités de la
terre, ce qu'-on n'avait point vû jusques-là hors de la
France, c'est à dire, un Prince, qui comme Vous, Sire,
joint à un génie aussi sublime que Solide, un cœur
encore plus digne de l'Empire; qui est maître de lui-
même comme de ses sujets, également adoré de ses
peuples, et respecté de ses voisins; qui tout glorieux
qu'il est dans ses grandes entreprises, a plus encore
de valeur et de conduite, que de bonheur: Un Prince
en un mot, qui réunissant dans la personne la plupart

²⁶⁷ Colin Mackerras, *Western Images of China*, Oxford University Press, Oxford, 1989, pp. 35-36.

²⁶⁸ Louis Daniel Le Comte, *Memoirs and Remarks Geographical, Historical, and Ecclesiastical, Made in Above Ten Years Travels Through the Empire of China: Written by the Learned Lewis le Comte, Jesuit; A New Translation from the Best Paris Edition, and Adorn'd with Copper-plates*, printed by J. Hughs. For Olive Payne; W. Shropshire; E. Commins; and W. Smith, London, 1737, p. 248.

des plus grandes qualitez, qui formes les Héros, feroit
le plus accompli Monarque, qui ait regné sur la terre,
si son regne ne concouroit point avec celui de votre
Majesté.²⁶⁹

I was surprised to find a Prince at the other end of
the Earth, the like of which has not been found
outside of France, until now, who, like you, Sire,
combines a genius, as sublime as it is solid, a heart
most worthy of an Empire; who is master of himself as
he is of his subjects, equally adored by his people, and
respected by his neighbours; as glorious as he is in his
accomplishments, whose actions are worth more than
his own happiness, A Prince, who unites in one person
most of the qualities that Heros are made of, who would
make the most accomplished Monarch that rules on this
Earth, if his reign not been concurrent with your Majesty's.

Bouvet established the idea that there was a parallel world in this far-off exotic
place.

In 1687, Philippe Couplet (1623-1693) leading a group of Jesuits
(Prospero Intorcetta, Christian Herdritch, and François de Rougemont), published
the first known Western translation of a Chinese literary work: *Confucius
Sinarum Philosophus* (Confucius, Philosopher of the Chinese) and dedicated it to
his patron Louis XIV. The preface to the translation highly praised the works of
Confucius. Father Couplet wrote, "One might say that the moral system of this
philosopher is infinitely sublime, but that it is at the same time simple, sensible
and drawn from the purest sources of natural reason ... Never has Reason,
deprived of Divine Revelation, appeared so well developed nor with so much

²⁶⁹ Joachim Bouvet, *Portrait Historique de L'Empereur de Chine Présenté au Roy*, Chez Estienne Michallet premier Imprimeur du Roy, Paris, 1697, p. 5.

power.”²⁷⁰

Confucius (551 BCE - 479 BCE) was a Chinese thinker and social philosopher, whose teachings have deeply influenced Asian thought and life. His political philosophy emphasized personal and governmental morality, correctness of social relationships, justice and sincerity. It was his belief that a ruler should learn self-discipline and govern his subjects by his own example, and that his people should be treated with love and concern.²⁷¹

Jean-Baptiste Du Halde (1674-1743) was a French Jesuit historian specializing in China. Du Halde’s *General History*, is the largest and most comprehensive single product of Jesuit scholarship on China. The work provides a comprehensive view of the Celestial kingdom offering information on subjects as varied as Chinese government, architecture, gardens, medicine, music, theatre, and the works of Confucius. Mackerras writes that Du Halde’s book is a crucial source of Western images of China of its day because of his balanced view. Although Du Halde, believed that China was well governed and prosperous, he was also aware of the poverty caused by the Empire’s overpopulation. His publication was highly regarded, as Mackerras observes, and greatly influenced the thinking of Voltaire.²⁷²

According to Jonathan D. Spence, Voltaire pursued his positive thoughts

²⁷⁰ Philippe Couplet, *Confucius Sinarum Philosophus, Sive Scientia Sinensis Latine Exposita*, Paris, 1687.

²⁷¹ Jeffrey Riegel, “Confucius,” *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, Edward N. Zalta (Ed.), Fall 2006 Edition.

²⁷² Mackerras, *Western Images*, pp. 35-37

on China from the fields of history and drama.²⁷³ Voltaire was so impressed with China and its accomplishments that he began his *Universal History* with this nation. In the first chapter he cites the developments in agriculture, printing, silk cultivation, paper, porcelain and lacquer, astronomy and chemistry, that had been made in advance of Europe, and the four thousand years of uninterrupted history of China's civilization that made the country worthy of admiration. He found the organization of the country similar to that of a family with the Emperor in a paternalistic and responsible role. Voltaire also found China morally superior to the West and worthy of emulation.²⁷⁴ Voltaire writes in his *Universal History*:

What they seem to understand best and to have
Most improved, is morality and the laws. The respect
which children bear to their parents, is the foundation
of the Chinese government ... The learned Mandarins
are considered as fathers of the towns and Provinces,
and the king as father of the Empire:²⁷⁵

The first Chinese play known in Europe as *L'Orphelin de la Maison de Tchao, Tragédie Chinoise* was translated by Father Prémare and was included in Du Halde's history. Voltaire was inspired to produce his own version of *L'Orphelin de la Chine* in 1755, with the sub-title of *Les Morales de Confucius en*

²⁷³ Jonathan D. Spence, *The Chan's Great Continent: China in Western Minds*, W. W. Norton and Company, New York, 1998, pp. 95-96.

²⁷⁴ Voltaire, *An Essay on Universal History, the Manners, and Spirit of Nations, from the Reign of Charlemaign to the Age of Lewis XIV* ... Translated into English, with additional notes and chronological tables, by Mr. Nugent. The third edition, revised, and considerably improved by the author, Dublin, 1759, Vol. 1, pp. 10-29. Dirk Bodde gives a list of material goods, inventions and discoveries from which the West has benefited, such as silk, tea, porcelain, lacquer, wall paper, paper, printing, gunpowder, the compass, medicines, plants, kites and playing cards, the folding umbrella and the sedan chair. "China's Gifts to the West," *Asiatic Studies in American Education*, No. 1, American Council on Education, Washington, D.C., 1942, p. 4.

²⁷⁵ Voltaire, *Universal History*, Vol. 1, p. 20.

Cinq Actes, to be held on the Paris stage. He used the play as a means of showing the superiority of Chinese moral values against those of the Genghis Khan, the Mongol leader, an analogy for Voltaire's own criticism of absolute rule. This was a method for Voltaire to be critical of the French government and to make his views known to a wide audience.²⁷⁶ China served as a vehicle for both Voltaire and Frederick to be critical of European conventions. Frederick, took on the personage of Phihihu, an ambassador of China to criticize the Catholic Church.²⁷⁷

Arnold Rowbotham has emphasized the impact of the Jesuits on Voltaire's thinking and writing in his article, *Voltaire, Sinophile*. The philosopher vented his disapproval of European religious and governmental systems by drawing comparisons based on his impressions of the Jesuit perceptions. Rowbotham draws attention to the intellectual's admiration of China, his perception of the influence of Confucianism on the order of Chinese society, and the morality of its Emperors.²⁷⁸ It was Voltaire's opinion that China's governance was worthy of imitating because it was based on morals and law, and the respect of political

²⁷⁶ Spence, *The Chan's*, pp. 95-96.

²⁷⁷ This alternate personality afforded Frederick the distance from his own society to be critical of the Catholic Church, see *Relation de Phihihu: Emissaire de L'Empereur de la Chine en Europe*. Chez Pierre Marteau, Cologne, 1760. This work is thought to have been inspired by the king's protégé Jean Baptiste, Marquis d'Argens, who wrote, *Lettres Chinoises; ou Correspondance Philosophique, Historique & Critique, Entre un Chinois Voyageur & Ses Correspondans à la Chine, en Moscovie & au Japon*. nouvelle edition augmenté de nouvelles lettres & de quantité de remarques. 6 vols., Chez Pierre Paupie, A La Haye, 1755. The first edition of this work of fiction appeared in 5 vols. in 1739, its German translation in Berlin in 1768. Other works in this tradition are *Les Lettres Persanes* by Charles-Louis de Secondat, baron de la Brède et de Montesquieu (1689-1755), published from 1711-1720, which Frederick had in his library; *The Citizen of the World: or Letters from a Chinese Philosopher, Residing in London, to His Friends in the East*, by Oliver Goldsmith (1728 or 1730-1774), which were published in *The Public Ledger* from 1760.

²⁷⁸ Arnold H. Rowbotham, "Voltaire, Sinophile," *PMLA*, Vol. 47, No. 4, December 1932, pp. 1050-1065.

leaders for the populace.²⁷⁹ He also praised the secular nature of Confucianism considering the Chinese philosopher a magistrate that taught old laws. He accorded Confucius a place of honour, and found that he could identify with his rationality, humanism and common sense. Voltaire believed that the lofty morality of the ancient Chinese sage was mirrored in the responsible classes of the population.

Voltaire's arrival in Brandenburg for an extended stay was the highlight of the fifth decade for Frederick. He was to join the group of intellectuals the King had already gathered to meet at the *Tafelrunde* (round table) of Sanssouci (fig. 57).²⁸⁰ Frederick acknowledged the association of the distinguished author with his admiration for the Celestial Kingdom. In August 1750, one month after Voltaire's arrival at Potsdam, the King held a "carousel" in honor of his distinguished guest, where forty-six thousand Chinese lanterns were lit.²⁸¹

Frederick later commissioned a bedroom for Voltaire in the Sanssouci palace in the Chinese style. The *Voltairezimmer*, situated next to Frederick's own

²⁷⁹ Voltaire, *Universal History*, Vol. 1, p. 20.

²⁸⁰ The group included Frederick, Jullian Offraye de La Mettrie, the Royal reader, physician and author; Count Francesco Algarotti, author and cosmopolitan; Pierre Louis Moreau de Maupertuis, head of the newly reinstituted Academy of Science; Karl Ludwig Baron von Pöllnitz, Master of Ceremonies; authors Darget, Jean-Baptist Boyer d'Argens, François-Thomas-Marie de Baculard d'Arnaud, and François-Marie Arouet de Voltaire. The most illustrious of the group was captured in a painting entitled *Tafelrunde* by Adolph Menzel, 1852. It showed Voltaire, D'Argens, Algarotti, La Mettrie, the Keiths, Rothenburg and Stille. The painting was destroyed in 1945. MacDonogh, p. 200.

²⁸¹ Gaxotte, *Frederick the Great*, p. 146; A Festival of Lanterns was reported by the Jesuit Jean Denis Attiret, in *A Particular Account of the Emperor of China's Gardens Near Peking: in a Letter from F. Attiret, a French Missionary, Now Employ'd by that Emperor to Paint the Apartments in those Gardens, to His Friend at Paris*. Translated from the French by Sir Harry Beaumont, Printed for R. Dodsley, London, 1752, p. 32.

at Sanssouci, was designed by J. C. Hoppenhaupt and A. Dubuisson and was constructed between 1752-1753. The room was Chinese Imperial Yellow, and was ornamented with garlands of flowers, trophies of monkeys and birds, and hanging tent-like appendages with tassels over the mirrors (fig. 49). Many of these same elements were used at the Tea House, revealing a relationship between the two architectural projects and suggesting a philosophical association as well.

It may be determined that the king's intellectual nature and the influence of Voltaire participated in establishing the style of Frederick's reign. It suggests that a parallel can be found in Voltaire's perception of Chinese rule with that of the Prussian monarch. It seems likely that Voltaire's positive attitude toward China influenced the King's decision to construct an exotic pavilion. Moreover the investment of both men in the values they perceived in Chinese culture suggests the project was a serious one, since this type of structure was also used for cerebral pursuits.

The Chinese Tea House then functioned as an analogy for Frederick's knowledge of the Far East, his philosophical association with Voltaire, as well as the intellectual's admiration for China and its Emperor. The King wished to be associated with the positive characteristics attributed to the Chinese monarch and his government as evidenced by the many changes he wrought on Brandenburg-Prussian society.

Frederick and Music

The placement of the Chinese orchestra around the Tea House suggests

the function of Frederick's garden pavilion as a place for entertainment and diversion. For the king, however, music was more than amusement; it was an essential part of Frederick's life, and was integral to his daily activities. It was exhibited in his architectural program for the city of Berlin, and in the design and décor of his private spaces. Each of his palaces was enhanced with a music salon and many of his paintings reflected this theme.

Frederick was an accomplished musician and composer, and music remained a life-long passion. It provided him with pleasure and solace, and part of every day was relegated to practicing and playing the flute. Each evening he held a concert in the palace where he resided. The flute even accompanied him to the battlefield, and when possible, he was joined there by the members of his court orchestra.²⁸²

Frederick's musical ability was due to his almost life-long devotion to this art, and his achievements were attestations to his dedication to its study and practice. Frederick began music lessons at the age of five, learning to play the piano, the violin, and the flute. At seven he was taught musical composition and the clavier by the Cathedral organist Gottlieb Hayne, and the flute by his tutor Duhan de Jandun.²⁸³ The state visit of Frederick William and the Crown Prince to the court of Dresden in 1728 exposed the sixteen-year old Frederick to music, opera, dance, theatre and ballet, and the accomplished flautist Joseph Joachim

²⁸² MacDonogh, *Frederick the Great*, p. 355.

²⁸³ Ernest Eugene Helm, *Music at the Court of Frederick the Great*, Norman, University of Oklahoma Press, 1960, p. 5.

Quantz. The return visit of Augustus the Strong to the court of Berlin shortly thereafter was an event of great excitement for the royal family. With him came Quantz, whom Sophia Dorothea engaged to visit Berlin twice a year as music teacher for Frederick and his older sister Wilhelmina.²⁸⁴

While sequestered with his regiment in Ruppin from 1730-1734, Frederick had the freedom to indulge in his musical interests. The Crown Prince secretly began recruiting musicians for a small court orchestra. His marriage with Elizabeth Christine in 1733 brought the tenor, composer, and violinist, Carl Heinrich Graun as part of his wife's dowry. His equally talented brother, Johann Gottlieb Graun, later joined the ensemble.²⁸⁵ He engaged the violinist Franz Benda in 1734. He employed Carl Philippe Emanuel Bach (1714-1788), son of Johann Sebastian Bach, in 1738.²⁸⁶ The growing orchestra consisted of Klaus Benda, first violin, Johann George Benda, violist, Michael Gabriel Fredersdorf, flautist, as well as a harpist, two more violins, another viola, a cellist, and a horn player.²⁸⁷ It was only at the time of his accession that he could afford to pay a

²⁸⁴ Helm, *Music*, p. 9; Charles Burney, *The Present State of Music in Germany, the Netherlands, and United Provinces. Or the Journal of a Tour Through Those Countries Undertaken to Collect Materials for a General History of Music*, Vol. 2, printed for T. Becket. J. Robson and G. Robinson, London, 1775, p. 144.

²⁸⁵ Franz Lorenz recounts this anecdote from the autobiography of Franz Benda in *Die Musikerfamilie Benda: Franz Benda und seine Nachkommen*, Berlin 1967, p. 14.

²⁸⁶ William S. Newman, "Emanuel Bach's Autobiography," *The Musical Quarterly*, Vol. 51, No. 2., April 1965, pp. 364, 366, 371.

²⁸⁷ Helm, *Music*, p. 112.

salary sufficient for a man of Quantz's talent. He summoned the flautist from Dresden in 1740, and he remained in the King's service until his death in 1773.²⁸⁸

Not surprisingly, his architectural projects included the commission of a new opera house shortly after his ascension to the throne. Designed by Knobelsdorff, the building was given primary importance on Unter den Linden as part of the Forum Fredericianum. It was inaugurated in 1742 on the birthday of the Queen Mother.²⁸⁹ Voltaire acknowledged the impact of the structure on the capital and on the cultural life of Berlin:

Now he turned his attention to embellishing the
City of Berlin and building one of the loveliest opera
houses in Europe and to bringing in artists of every
Sort.²⁹⁰

The King took on the expense of the production of each opera. The first row of boxes was reserved for the Royal Family and the nobility, the second and third rows were designated for the ministers of state, foreign ministers, and persons of rank. Admission was free to the public as long as they were appropriately attired.²⁹¹

²⁸⁸ John P. Harthan, "Eighteenth Century Flute Music," *Music and Letters*, Vol. 24, No. 1, 1943, p. 37.

²⁸⁹ Burney, *The State of Music*, Vol. 2, p. 101.

²⁹⁰ Voltaire, *Memoirs of the Life of Voltaire, Written by Himself*. Translated from the French, Printed for G. Robinson, London, 1784, p. 68.

²⁹¹ Burney, *The State of Music*, Vol. 2, pp. 99-100.

Frederick also cultivated an intellectual and creative atmosphere for his musicians. The British writer and historian Charles Burney described Berlin in his history of music as a place:

where both the theory and practice of music had been more profoundly treated than elsewhere by professors of real and acknowledged abilities who are still living; and who have published as a result of their long experience and superior skill on treatises which are regarded throughout Germany as classical. Among these *The Art of Playing the Flute*, by Quantz; *The Art of Playing Upon Keyed Instruments*, by C. P. E. Bach...²⁹²

The king encouraged his musicians to write and teach. Under Frederick's patronage Quantz composed over three hundred concertos and two hundred sonatas for flute. Carl Heinrich Graun wrote twenty-seven operas between 1747 and 1756 that were performed under his direction at the Berlin Opera House. Bach composed dozens of *sinfonias*, thirty trios for the clavier, eighteen solos for various instruments, and forty-nine concertos. Frederick himself participated with Graun in the writing of three operas, *Méropé*, *Montezuma*, and *Phaeton*. The king also composed one hundred twenty-two sonatas for flute, four concertos that are considered among the finest works of an amateur, four symphonies, as well as *der Mollwitzer* and *der Hohenfriedberger* marches.

His support for the arts was not limited to the talented musicians of his court orchestra. Significantly Frederick's musical pursuits were applied to the education of his subjects. He passed a law in 1746 declaring that all children in

²⁹² Ibid., pp. 88-89.

the public schools and the gymnasiums should have singing lessons three times a week.²⁹³

Frederick's interest in music was not relegated to the solitary activities of practice and composition or to the public display of his proficiency at the evening concert (fig. 58).²⁹⁴ The plan for Frederick's palaces was as dependent on his love for music as it was on his love for the arts and architecture. According to Helmut Börsch-Supan, the inclusion of the type of concert room illustrated in Adolph Menzel's engraving *The Flute Concert*, was a particular feature of the palaces designed or renovated by Frederick, and was not typical of Prussian palaces (fig. 59). The incorporation of a music salon of this style and size lay somewhere between the intimacy of the private rooms and the splendour of those used for social activities.²⁹⁵ The décor of the music room at Sanssouci was particularly spectacular with wood panels of motifs of musical instruments of the type that were also used on the Chinese Tea House.

²⁹³ Helm, *Music*, p. 112.

²⁹⁴ Burney was present at one of Frederick's evening concerts at Sanssouci and was impressed with the quality of Frederick's performance. Frederick's proficiency was commented upon by Charles Burney, *The Present State*, Vol. 2, pp. 152-153. A painting of Frederick at the evening ritual of the nightly concert in the music room at Sanssouci was interpreted by Adolph Menzel (1815-1905) in 1852. It shows the King with his flute in hand, amongst the members of his orchestra ready to receive his cue. C. P. E. Bach is at the harpsichord. A small group of invited guests are in attendance. Although there has been no corroboration of the guests present in Menzel's painting, *The Flute Concert*, Helm lists the persons whom he believes were present. From the left is Baron Jakob Friedrich von Bielfield; Count Gustav Adolf von Gotter; Pierre de Maupertuis, the Queen Mother, Sophia Dorothea (?), Frederick's sister Amalia, K. H. Graun, Frederick's favourite sister Wilhelmina seated on the sofa, the Countess Sophia Caroline von Camas, Chevalier Chasot, C. P. E. Bach, J. G. Graun (?); Anton Hock (?); Hans Jurgen Steffani (?); Franz Benda and J. J. Quantz, p. 125.

²⁹⁵ Helmut Börsch-Supan, "Music in Painting: A Theme in Frederick the Great's Collection," *Connoisseur*, Volume 195, No. 783, May 1977, p. 31.

Helmut Borsch-Supan has noted that the paintings Frederick chose for the decoration of the palaces also displayed musical themes.²⁹⁶ The majority of paintings acquired for the palace at Rheinsberg were by Antoine Watteau and his followers that depicted *les fêtes galantes*: images filled with music, dance, and the beauty of nature.²⁹⁷ *The Dance in the Garden Hall*, circa 1720 by Nicolas Lancret depicts the relaxed atmosphere associated with garden pavilions and the architecture typical of these buildings (fig. 60). Like Frederick's Tea House, the windows and doors of the round structure open directly onto the garden. This building was dedicated to the joys of music, with trophies of instruments and statues of putti playing the flute, while the guests enjoy dancing, flirtation, and conviviality away from the formality of the palace. These canvases seem to represent the transitory joys of love and laughter, the ephemeral beauty of summer, and the sounds of music. Many of these same ideas are represented in the design the Chinese Tea House.

Frederick and Porcelain

The construction of Frederick's Tea House with its celadon colour, painted surfaces, and golden figures, invokes the material qualities of porcelain. This structure made reference to the coveted Far Eastern material that traveled Westward along the Silk Road, that filled the ships of the East India companies,

²⁹⁶ Ibid.

²⁹⁷ According to Börsch-Supan, Frederick owned the most comprehensive collection of Lancret's and Paters ever compiled. "Music in Painting," p. 37.

and was amassed in the collections of European princes.²⁹⁸ It also made reference to the European culture of porcelain that signified scientific expertise, technological achievement, and the production of high art. Porcelain and *le style Chinois* continued to be of interest in the decoration of the royal palaces and in the construction of garden pavilions throughout the eighteenth century.

Frederick grew up in an environment where the display of Asian porcelain played a major role in the decoration of the palaces of Charlottenburg, Monbijou, and Potsdam, as well as in the manor houses of Caputh, Malchow and Shönhausen.²⁹⁹ This had been the result of the infatuation of the Brandenburg Electors with this exotic material. Rare porcelain objects had been a valuable part of the early collections established by the Elector Joachim II who reigned 1535-1571. These treasures were placed in the Electoral treasure chamber housed in the Berlin Schloss. Subsequent Electors listed porcelain among the thousands of items in their burgeoning collections, with many documented as purchases made from the Dutch East India Company.³⁰⁰

The largest influx of porcelain to the House of Hohenzollern had come with the marriage of Frederick's great-grandfather, Frederick William the Great Elector, (1620-1688) to the Dutch Princess Louise Henriette (1627-1667), in 1646. She brought with her a vast amount of porcelain and the collection formed

²⁹⁹ Krause, *Das Chinesische Tee Haus*, p. 8; Honour, *Chinoiserie*, p. 113.

³⁰⁰ Christian Theuerkauff, *The Brandenburg Kunstkammer in Berlin*, Oliver Impey and Arthur MacGregor (Eds.), *The Origins of Museums, The Cabinet of Curiosities in Sixteenth- and Seventeenth-Century Europe*, Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1985, pp. 110-114.

the basis of two porcelain rooms that were commissioned by their son, Frederick I. The first was constructed for the Oranienburg Palace *circa* 1695. A second more lavish room was created for the Charlottenburg Palace by Swedish architect, Johann Friedrich d'Eosander (known as Göthe, 1669-1729), that was completed in 1706. This second porcelain room was specifically designed for the display of a massive collection that was the most opulent and valuable in Europe at the time of its completion.³⁰¹

The acquisition of porcelain continued to be of importance for the Hohenzollern court well into the eighteenth century. Frederick acquired the palace of Charlottenburg in 1740 when he ascended the throne. He chose to live there instead of the Berlin Palace. Even though there was no shortage of porcelain, and pieces were liberally displayed on tabletops, mantelpieces, and lacquer commodes, Frederick added to the collection. He brought the six gilded *étagères* filled with Chinese and Japanese porcelain that were original to the Oranienburg Palace, and had them placed in the Japanese Gallery, situated just outside the Charlottenburg Porcelain Room. Frederick also imported porcelain through the Prussian Asiatic Company he founded in 1751. He acquired large quantities of Meissen during the Silesian and Seven Years War.

Frederick also remodeled and enlarged his Mother's porcelain room in her little palace of Monbijou when he became King. The inventory of her collection listed more than six thousand pieces, and she had agents who were constantly on

³⁰¹ Baer and Baer (Eds.), *Charlottenburg Palace*, p. 30.

the look out for more.³⁰² Augustus the Strong had added to her collection by sending a piece created by the Meissen manufactory after the state visit of 1728. The covered cup designed by Johann Gottlieb Kirchner, was surmounted with a figure of Minerva and painted with Chinoiserie scenes where the sturdy Prussian Queen is depicted as a slender Chinese Princess.³⁰³

At the time of Frederick's commission for the Tea House the European porcelain industry had been well established. Meissen had been producing porcelain objects that were appreciated as an important art form for over four decades. Meissen produced a repertoire of objects designed to sell to a large client base to benefit the economy of the Saxon state, and lavish enough to participate in court spectacle. Augustus's role in the organization of the company as director, and the products Meissen produced under his patronage, became models for the manufactories established in Austria and the German states mid-eighteenth century under princely patronage and direction.³⁰⁴

³⁰² The palace of Monbijou is no longer extant. Wilhelmina von Hohenzollern, makes mention of the superb porcelain-gallery of Monbijou in her autobiography, *Memoirs of Frederica Sophia Wilhelmina, Princess Royal of Prussia, Margravine of Baireuth, Sister of Frederick the Great*, James R. Osgood and Company, Boston, 1877, p. 55., and Laske, *Der Ostasiatische Einfluss*, describes the room on p. 64, and provides illustrations of the porcelain rooms at Monbijou, p. 66, figs. 61, 62, and p. 68, fig. 63. Chilton notes that Sophia Dorothea's Dutch kitchen at Monbijou housed another seven hundred thirty pieces of her collection in "Rooms of Porcelain," p. 27, which she quotes from L. Reidemeister, *Die Porzellankabinette der Brandenburgisch-Preuzischen Kunstsammlungen*, Vol. 55, 1934, p. 54.

³⁰³ Claire Le Corbeiller, "German Porcelain of the Eighteenth Century," *Metropolitan Museum of Art Bulletin*, No. 47, 1989-1990, p. 12.

³⁰⁴ This is only a partial listing of the companies established by the German nobility taken from John P. Cushion, *Pottery and Porcelain Tablewares*, Studio Vista, London, 1976, pp. 39-46; and Jerry E. Patterson, *Porcelain*, Cooper-Hewitt, Smithsonian Institution, 1979, pp. 46-52; The Austrian company was established by Claudius Innocentius Du Paquier in Vienna 1717. It was taken over by the state in 1744. The Fürstenburg Manufactory was established in Brunswick 1747, for Duke Karl of Wolfenbütel. The factory continues to the present day. The Nymphenburg

Frederick coveted the success of the Meissen manufactory. MacDonogh has suggested that Frederick the Great never forgave Augustus the Strong for allowing the alchemist Johann Böttger to escape from Brandenburg-Prussia to the sanctuary of Saxony in 1701, thereby cheating the state out of the possibility of discovering the arcanum for porcelain.³⁰⁵ This theory is hardly plausible. Frederick I, Frederick the Great's grandfather, had made every attempt possible short of war, to have Böttger returned to Berlin, but the search for the recipe for porcelain would not have been his primary motivation for Böttger's return at that time. The incentive was to have the young alchemist produce gold to fill the coffers of the Brandenburg court and the charlatan probably would likely have been put to death for his chicanery. The intellectual and scientific atmosphere of Berlin during the reign of Frederick William I, his father, would not have been a suitable environment for the discovery of porcelain. He had disbanded the Academy of Science and dismissed the director, leaving no infrastructure to participate in scientific experimentation. The Academy of the Arts was barely viable, and court expenditures would not have been designated for artistic pursuits. Frederick William had little interest in porcelain. He traded away part of the valuable porcelain collection of Charlottenburg to satisfy Augustus the

manufactory was established in Bavaria under the direction of Elector Joseph Maximilian III, 1753 and is still in production. Frankenthal opened in 1755 and was purchased by the Elector Palatine, Carl Theodor in 1762. The factory closed in 1800; Prince Carl Eugen, Duke of Württemberg, suffered from a serious case of the porcelain *maladie*, his factory, Ludwigsburg was in production from 1758-1824. Ansbach was established 1758 for Margrave Karl Alexander. It closed in 1806. Koster-Veilsdorf was established in 1760 and until 1797 was under the direction of Prince Friedrich Wilhelm Eugen von Hildburghausen.

³⁰⁵ MacDonogh, *Frederick the Great*, p. 237.

Strong's "china mania" in exchange for six hundred tall soldiers to strengthen his army and assuage his own obsession.³⁰⁶

It is likely that Frederick the Great's brutal attacks on the Meissen porcelain manufactory were initiated by his interest in the development of industries that would support the economy of Brandenburg-Prussia. He was aware of the economic benefits this commodity offered the state, and the value of porcelain as an art form. He twice made a point of plundering the manufactory. During the second Silesian War he attacked the cities of Dresden and Meissen. The manufactory protected itself by destroying the kilns and hiding the porcelain paste.³⁰⁷ Frederick's architect Knobelsdorff was given the responsibility of organizing an inventory of the porcelain left in the manufactory so that the king could take as much porcelain out of Saxony as possible. Fifty-two cases containing one hundred twenty table services, seventy-four breakfast sets, sixty-one sculptures of birds, and numerous other articles were sent to Berlin during the month of December 1745.³⁰⁸

Frederick's surprise attack on Saxony in 1756 at the outbreak of the Seven Year's War, and the occupation of the town for its duration again allowed him to decimate the Meissen works. The King seized and sold off the contents of the three porcelain depots located in the cities of Dresden, Leipzig and Meissen to

³⁰⁶ Peter Wilhelm Meister and Horst Reber, *European Porcelain of the 18th Century*, Trans. by Ewald Osers, Cornell University Press, Ithaca, New York, 1983. p. 18.

³⁰⁷ Walcha, *Meissen*, pp. 128-129.

³⁰⁸ Paul Atterbury, (Ed.), *The History of Porcelain*, William Morrow and Company Inc., New York, 1982, p. 89.

secure finances to support the war.³⁰⁹ On September 16, the Prussian soldiers dispatched thirty boxes of porcelain to the King from the Meissen warehouse. When Saxony surrendered in October of that year the Prussians thought the manufactory would be easy prey but they found that the workers had again destroyed many of the kilns and the arcanists fled to Frankfort-am-Main.³¹⁰

The King made every effort to move the established Meissen works to Berlin and set up the manufactory in Brandenburg but he was unsuccessful in accomplishing this goal. He had to be content with taking crates of porcelain back to Berlin as spoils of war, and demanding financial subsidies from the company in the form of rent.³¹¹ The manufactory managed to survive with its few remaining artists coerced into producing table services for the King, of which at least six, were designed by Frederick himself.³¹²

A Prussian porcelain manufactory had been established in Berlin in 1751 by a wool merchant named Wilhelm Kaspar Wegely. Frederick encouraged Wegely and his new enterprise by giving the company economic privileges and large premises in which to work. The clay was similar to that of the Saxon manufactory and produced a very white, and hard porcelain. Watteau scenes of *les*

³⁰⁹ Walcha, *Meissen*, p. 144.

³¹⁰ Ibid.

³¹¹ William B. Honey, *Dresden China*, Tudor Publishing Company, New York, 1946, pp. 123-130; and George W. Ware, *German and Austrian Porcelain*, Crown Publishers Inc., New York, 1963, p. 67; Walcha, *Meissen*, pp. 144-145.

³¹² Johann Joachim Kaendler, master sculptor and director of the Meissen works wrote a detailed report on Frederick's commissions, which included a Japanese Service. Dresden State Archives, Loc. 1344/XVII/519ff, Walcha, *Meissen*, p. 448, n. 77.

fêtes galantes and Chinoiserie, landscapes and *Deutsche Blumen* (German flowers) in dark red and purple were the most often used designs on coloured pieces. Frederick assumed that the products would be of the same quality of the Dresden works, but he was not satisfied with the results. The objects produced could not compete with the artistry of Meissen and he withdrew his support. The company closed in 1757.³¹³ Prussian financier Johann Ernst Gotzkowsky reopened the Berlin manufactory in 1761. He was supported by workers who defected from Meissen during the Seven Years War. The success of the company was impeded by the on-going war and it went into bankruptcy.³¹⁴

With the peace of 1763 Frederick returned home and bought the Berlin manufactory from the financially depleted Gotzkowsky. The King assumed responsibility for the Berlin works, acting as patron, manager, and artistic director. According to Paul Atterbury the best pieces were produced during the period of 1763 until Frederick's death in 1786.³¹⁵ He encouraged experimentation to improve the quality of the porcelain, and searched for a better source of porcelain clay, which was discovered near the city of Halle in 1771. He retained the workers from the two previous Berlin factories making his manufactory one of the most technically superior. The company employed four hundred workers and twelve ovens to produce a porcelain that Frederick hoped would surpass that of

³¹³ Ware, *German and Austrian Porcelain*, p. 69.

³¹⁴ Ibid., p. 67.

³¹⁵ Atterbury, (Ed.), *The History of Porcelain*, pp. 123-124.

the Saxon works.³¹⁶ In order to ensure the financial success of his own manufactory and limit competition, Frederick disallowed the importation of Meissen pieces into Berlin and prevented the passage of their goods through Prussian territories.³¹⁷

The factory became best known for the table services that were beautifully modeled and painted. Frederick ordered twenty-four large sets for his palaces at Potsdam and Breslau from the Berlin company during these years. Included in this group was a service that was used in the Chinese Tea House, which shows the repetition of some of the design elements found on the garden pavilion (fig. 61).³¹⁸

Edward Vehse writes that the manufactory was most useful to Frederick. It supplied him with gifts that were inexpensive to him but priceless to the recipient, and the quality of Frederick's porcelain was greatly appreciated.³¹⁹ Upon receipt of a tea service from the King on November 13, 1772, Voltaire wrote:

...this morning I drank my coffee in a cup such as is not made in the dominions of your brother Kienlong the emperor of China. The tea set is of perfect beauty. I knew that Frederick the Great was a better poet than the good Kienlong; but I knew not that he amused himself in causing porcelain to be fabricated at Berlin, which is much superior to that of Kiengtsin, that of

³¹⁶ Ware, *German and Austrian Porcelain*, p. 68.

³¹⁷ Ibid., and MacDonogh, *Frederick The Great*, pp. 354-355.

³¹⁸ Siegfried Ducret, *The Colour Treasury of Eighteenth-Century Porcelain*, Trans. by Christine Friedlander, Elsevier-Phaidon, Oxford, 1976, p. 59; Komander corroborates that the Japanese table service produced by the Berlin factory was used at the Chinese Tea House in *Das Chinesische Haus im Park von Sanssouci*, Stiftung Schlösser und Gärten Potsdam-Sanssouci, 1994, p. 22.

³¹⁹ Vehse, *Memoirs*, p. 193.

Dresden, or that made at Sèvres.³²⁰

Voltaire's comment on the superiority of the Berlin product over that of the Chinese, the Saxon works, and the French company of Sèvres reinforces Frederick's role as owner and artistic director of the works.

A letter from John Moore M.D. on his voyage through Europe in 1780 comments:

I believe I neglected to mention in any one of my letters from Berlin, that when I visited the manufactory of porcelain, I was so much struck with the beauty of some of it that I ordered a small box for you ... I did not imagine that this manufactory had arrived at such a degree of perfection as in several places in Germany ... The parcel I have ordered for you is thought equal to the finest made at Dresden.³²¹

Moore's letter also acknowledges that the quality of the products of the Berlin Porcelain Manufactory were equal to that of Meissen.

The manufactory advertised the technical proficiency of Brandenburg-Prussia. The ownership and direction of the Berlin works displayed Frederick's capabilities as a patron in the production of this important art form that he and his family promoted through the sustained use of the material in the decoration and commissions with which they surrounded themselves. The manufactory provided another example of his princely attributes, and the objects participated directly in

³²⁰ Frederick II King of Prussia, Letter CCCLXIV, from M. de Voltaire, *Posthumous Works of Frederic II. King of Prussia*, Trans. by Thomas Holcroft, Vol. 8, printed for G. G. J. and J. Robinson, London, 1789, p. 227.

³²¹ John Moore M.D., Letter LXXIX from Dresden, *A View of Society and Manners in France, Switzerland and Germany, with Anecdotes Relating to Some Eminent Characters*, Dublin, 1780, Vol. 2, p. 188.

courtly display. The repertoire of products of the manufactory was not limited simply to sculptural ornaments or services designed for the table.

The King commissioned special pieces to use as a medium for international diplomacy. One such ensemble was a complex dessert service for Catherine the Great representing the *Glorification of the Tsarina* produced from 1770-1772. Frederick commissioned this service to mark the 1769 renewal for another ten years of their defensive alliance just after the outbreak of the Russo-Turkish War.³²² The dishes were decorated with battle scenes and the sculptured table centerpiece portrays the Empress enthroned and surrounded by virtues and deities. A second row of figures representing the estates of Russian society encircle the deities, and then scattered about the table are representatives of the different nationalities of the Russian Empire, allegorical figures emblematic of the liberal arts and manacled Turks (fig. 62).³²³

By the 1770's the golden age of porcelain was fading. The German manufacturers were no longer at the forefront, and Frederick was directly responsible for the loss of their position of dominance. The interruption of Meissen's production by the Seven Years War allowed the French manufacturer Royale de Sèvres to assume a position of dominance in form, design, and colour. The style was drifting slowly toward a new classicism while the German porcelain manufactories were still mainly immersed in the Rococo movement.

³²² Jerry E. Patterson, *Porcelain*, Cooper Hewitt Museum, The Smithsonian Institution, Washington DC, 1979, p. 53.

³²³ Meister and Reber, *European Porcelain*, p. 113.

The creations of the princely porcelain-makers were no longer considered extraordinary, and the nobility was saturated with vast porcelain collections by this date. For the manufactories to survive, it was necessary to produce goods that would appeal to a broader spectrum of consumers. Porcelain was still expensive, but was made affordable for the wealthy middle class consumer by companies who wished to cater to a new clientele. In no way were these products of the unique artistic quality of the pieces commissioned for princely collections or as diplomatic gifts. Porcelain was a commodity and its production had become an applied art.³²⁴ Frederick's manufactory, the Königliche Porzellan Manufaktur (KPM), has remained state property and remains in production today producing a wide range of objects of the highest quality.³²⁵

Frederick's interests and attributes are found in the form and content of his exotic pavilion. The over-whelming impression of this structure however, is that of porcelain. The relationship with this material and its influences on interior décor and architecture originated from Western perceptions of the Asian commodity. It was further explored through the European commodity and art form. Frederick's pavilion can be seen as the culmination of these influences.

³²⁴ Meister and Reber, *European Porcelain*, pp. 44-46.

³²⁵ Cleo Scott and G. Ryland Scott Jr., *Antique Pocerlain Digest*, The Ceramic Book Company, Newport, 1961, pp. 50-51.

CHAPTER THREE

THE ORIGINS AND EVOLUTION OF A PORCELAIN PAVILION: COMMODITY, FETISH, INTERIOR DÉCOR AND ARCHITECTURE

The first pieces of Chinese porcelain arrived in Europe via the Silk Road in the thirteenth century. These objects were made of a material that was light, translucent, resonant, white-bodied and highly coloured. They had characteristics unlike any material known in the West. Europeans perceived these articles as rare and valuable, mysterious and magical. They were considered worthy of placement in royal treasure chambers where their exotic characteristics increasingly came to influence interior décor. The discovery of a sea route to the Far East in the sixteenth century, and the establishment of East India trading companies in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries brought more of this substance to the porcelain-obsessed nobility of Europe, encouraging massed displays of this coveted material in rooms expressly designed for its exhibition.

Porcelain also inspired the design and construction of Oriental pleasure palaces. John Nieuhoff's perception that the Pagoda of Nanking was made of coloured porcelain established a firm relationship between porcelain and architecture. His observation may have initiated the erection of Le Petit Trianon de Porcelaine, which laid the foundation for the construction of exotic architecture in which porcelain was integral to its design and décor. From the thirteenth to the eighteenth centuries porcelain acquired multiple meanings for Europeans coming

to symbolize China, exoticism, treasure, wealth, power and royalty.

This chapter examines the European perceptions of Asian porcelain that established its desirability. I investigate the impact of this commodity on interior décor and architecture, and suggest that the desirable components of this material: its colour, surface texture, and the images painted on it, became powerful influences in the decoration and design of porcelain rooms and garden pavilions. Frederick and his architect drew upon these qualities and characteristics when designing and constructing the Tea House. The building made of sandstone and stucco was designed to symbolize porcelain, and hence to express its many meanings.

Cultural Perceptions: Asian Porcelain and the West

O'er dessert sands, o'er gulf and bay,
O'er Ganges and o'er Himalay
Bird-like I fly, and flying sing.
To flowery kingdoms of Cathay,
A bird-like poise on balanced wing
Above the town of King-te-tching,
A burning town, or seeming so,-
Three thousand furnaces that glow
Incessantly and fill the air
With smoke uprising, gyre on gyre,
And painted by the lurid glare
Of jets and flashes of red fire.³²⁶

Henry Wadsworth Longfellow

Porcelain was invented by the Chinese during the period of the Tang

³²⁶ Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, *Keramos and Other Poems*, George Routledge and Sons, London, 1878, pp. 27-28.

Dynasty (A. D. 618-907).³²⁷ We know that the town of Jingdezhen in China was producing white and green wares as early as the tenth century.³²⁸ In the fourteenth century blue and white porcelain was introduced, and the city's reputation grew to become world-renowned. This type of porcelain dominated the international market for the next four hundred years becoming China's signature porcelain.³²⁹ During the reign of the Emperor Kangxi (1662-1722) Chinese porcelain acquired a delicacy and bright colour that was never seen before and the European elites collected it with fervour. The European market greatly admired the whiteness of the "body" of the most commonly exported pieces that set off the brilliant greens, red, and yellow of the *famille verte* and *famille rose* patterns, and the familiar pieces of white with blue underglaze.³³⁰

Chinese porcelain trickled West during the Middle Ages through the Near

³²⁷ The Tang was followed by the Sung which reigned from 969-1279, the Yuan Dynasty reigned from 1279-1368, the Ming from 1368-1644, the Qing (the Manchu) from 1644-1911.

³²⁸ Jingdezhen, also written Ching-Te-Chen, was named after Ching-Te, Emperor of the Sung Dynasty. He patronized the city and gave it his name. During the Ming period the Imperial kilns on Jewel Hill were founded to supply the court. At the time of the publication in 1712 and 1722, of Père d'Entrecolles letters on porcelain production there were over a million people in the city and at least three thousand kilns that fired throughout the night. The glare from the furnaces could be seen from miles around. Savage, *Porcelain Through the Ages*, p. 61. Much of this information was gleaned from the letters of Jesuit Père d'Entrecolles. The first letter from Père d'Entrecolles was sent on September 1, 1712 from Raozhou in Jiangxi province, to Father Orry of the Company of Jesus. The second letter was sent January 25, 1722 from the city of Jingdezhen. Père d'Entrecolles' entire career and stay in China was within the reign period of the Kangxi emperor (1662-1722), early in the Qing dynasty. See Robert Tichane, *Ching-Te-Chen: Views of a Porcelain City*, The New York State Institute for Glaze Research, New York, 1983, pp. 51-128. By the time these letters were published, the porcelain recipe had already been discovered in Saxony. This information proved valuable for those German states that had not as yet established their own porcelain manufactories.

³²⁹ Emerson, Chen, and Gardner Gates, *Porcelain Stories*, p. 88.

³³⁰ Rollo Charles, *Continental Porcelain of the Eighteenth Century*, London, 1964, p. 17; Howard Coutts, *The Art of Ceramics: European Ceramic Design, 1500-1830*, The Bard Graduate Center for Study in the Decorative Arts, Yale University Press, New Haven and London, 2001, p. 73.

East via the overland trade routes of the Silk Road. The few pieces that did sporadically find their way to Europe as expensive trade goods or diplomatic gifts came by way of Arab or Persian travelers, or were exported to Europe from Mamluk Egypt, which was the main terminal for trade from Asia. These were mainly blue and white pieces from Jingdezhen, although celadon pieces from this period have also been found in the West.³³¹

Despite sporadic access to porcelain, Europeans remained technologically incapable of producing a substance like Chinese porcelain, that shimmered, was lightweight and translucent, resonant, and brilliantly coloured. Knowledge of the material and the details of the process for producing porcelain eluded even those who had traveled to the Far East. This was because they had contact mainly with pieces that were already glazed and fired. There was no actual knowledge of the technical aspects of production because foreign access to the porcelain manufactories was forbidden. Even in China, information about the method of producing porcelain was kept secret, and only handed down from father to son.³³²

The first European to write about porcelain was Marco Polo (1254-1324). He lived in China for seventeen years acting as an ambassador for the Mongol court of Kublai Khan. Marco Polo left China in 1292 arriving back in Venice in 1295. It is from his written account of his experiences that the term “porcelain” was derived. He mentions the brilliant white surface of Chinese ceramics and

³³¹ John Ayers, Oliver Impey, and J. V. G. Mallet, *Porcelain for Palaces: The Fashion for Japan in Europe, 1650-1750*, Oriental Ceramic Society, London, 1990, p. 15.

³³² Nieuhoff, *An Embassy*, p. 88; Emerson, Chen, and Gardner Gates, *Porcelain Stories*, p. 82.

compares them to the marine snail *porcella*.³³³ From the limited exposure he had with porcelain production, he documented what he thought would be pertinent information for manufacturing the cups, bowls and dishes that he saw in the city of Tin-gui. Polo wrote:

They collect a certain kind of earth, as it were, from a mine, and laying it in a great heap, suffer it to be exposed to the wind, the rain, and the sun, for thirty or forty years, during which time it is never disturbed. By this it becomes refined and fit for being wrought into the vessels above mentioned. Such colours as may be thought proper are then laid on, and the ware is afterwards baked in ovens or furnaces. Those persons, therefore, who cause the earth to be dug, collect it for their children and grandchildren.³³⁴

Marco Polo's description of the process could only have added to the value and mystery associated with the material.

Further investigations borrowed heavily from Polo. Writing in the sixteenth century, an Italian lawyer named Guido Panciroli (1523-1599) described porcelain as:

a substance made of chalk, pounded with egg, and shells of sea locusts, pressed together with other similar things and hidden underground by the maker, who tells none of his children and grandchildren where it is. And they, eighty years later dig it out and shape it into beautiful vases, adorning it with many different colours ...³³⁵

³³³ Meister and Reber, *European Porcelain*, p. 7.

³³⁴ Marco Polo, *The Travels*, Trans. by William Marsden, 1818, Revised by Thomas Wright, 1854, Könemann, 1996, p. 232.

³³⁵ Guido Panciroli, *The History of Many Memorable Things in Use Among the Ancients, But Now Lost. And an Account of Many Excellent Discoveries Made By and Now in Use Among the*

His commentary illustrates that three centuries after Polo's description Europeans were no further ahead in understanding how porcelain was made, the elusive recipe remained a mystery.

The English physician, philosopher and encyclopedist, Sir Thomas Browne (1605-1682) wrote in 1646:

We are not thorowly resolved concerning Porcellane or Chyna dishes, that according to common belief they are made of earth which lyeth in preparation about one hundred yeeres under-ground, for the relations thereof are not only divers, but contrary, and Authors agree not herein.³³⁶

His observations acknowledge inconsistencies in the theories on the production of porcelain.

John Nieuhoff reported in 1756, that he was told by the people of the city of Kiotang that the secret of porcelain lay in the quality of the clay, the water, the wood, the method of painting the pots, the temperature of the fire, how the kiln was loaded, and the time it took to fire the clay.³³⁷ His account offers some practical information but nothing concrete upon which to establish a basis for scientific experimentation that would lead to the discovery of the porcelain recipe. Until the eighteenth century, the inability of Europeans to comprehend or produce

Moderns, Translated from the original of Guido Pancirollus, printed for A. Ward and C. Davis, London, 1727, Vol. 2, p. 281. Also cited without reference in Mina Bacci, *European Porcelain*, Trans. by Adeline Hartcup, Paul Hamlyn, London, 1969, p. 23; and Chilton, "Technical Masterpieces," p. 21.

³³⁶ Thomas Browne, *Pseudoxia Epidemica, or Enquiries into Very Many Received Tenets*, London, 1672, Book 2, Chapter 5. Cited without reference in Gleeson, p. 39.

³³⁷ John Nieuhoff, *An Embassy*, pp. 70-71.

this highly desirable material encouraged its collection.

From Commodity to Fetish: Porcelain as Treasure

The Western perception of porcelain as a rare, valuable, mysterious, magical, and unfathomable material, established the criteria for its collection and display. Porcelain objects circulated in an atmosphere of privilege. They were used as diplomatic gifts of the highest order and were placed in the princely treasure chambers of Europe's nobility until the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries when the lucrative Western market for exotic trade goods acquired massive quantities imported by the East India companies. I suggest that the appreciation of porcelain as treasure, and its association with monarchy, provided a foundation for the design and décor of the Tea House. The value of this material was inherent in the display of porcelain in the interior, and the suggestion of porcelain as the structure itself.

Porcelain was so rare that only a few pieces found in Europe date from before 1500.³³⁸ A small white vase is thought to have come back from China with Marco Polo in 1295. It is now housed in the treasury of San Marco in Venice. Although this fact cannot be verified, if true, it would be the earliest surviving piece of porcelain in the West.³³⁹ The Fonthill vase arrived in the West at about

³³⁸ John Ayers, "The Early China Trade," Oliver Impey and Arthur MacGregor (Eds), *The Origin of Museums: The Cabinet of Curiosities in Sixteenth- and Seventeenth-Century Europe*, Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1985, pp. 259-266.

³³⁹ Ibid., p. 260; Ayers has also noted that this type of *blanc-de-chine* porcelain from Dehua is now often referred to as Marco Polo ware in "Blanc-de-Chine: Some Reflections," *Transactions of the Oriental Ceramic Society*, 1987, Vol. 51, 1986-87, p. 17.

the same time as Marco Polo returned from the East at the end of the thirteenth century. This celadon vase was listed in a European inventory of 1382. It was mounted as a jug and given as a gift from Ladislav I, King of Hungary, to Charles III of Durazzo on his ascent to the throne of Naples 1381. The piece was rediscovered in the National Museum of Ireland, Dublin in 1959 without its mounts (fig. 63 a, b).³⁴⁰ The Katzenelnbogen Bowl listed in the inventory of the Landgrave of Hessen-Kassel was found to date from the thirteenth century. This celadon bowl was brought from the East by Philip of Katzenelnbogen in 1433 and mounted sometime before 1453 in European silver-gilt that bear his arms.³⁴¹ According to Francis Watson it is the only porcelain object to bear its original mounts.³⁴² The Sultan of Egypt, Qu it Bay presented Lorenzo de Medici (1449-1492) with several large porcelain vessels of exceptional workmanship in 1487. One such piece, the Longquan celadon dish is housed at the Museo degli Argenti at the Pitti Palace in Florence.³⁴³ Germany's oldest collection belonged to the Archduke Ferdinand II of the Tyrol (1529-1595). He used the entire first floor of the Schloss Ambras as a *Schatzkammer* to house twenty thousand objects of curiosity which included two hundred and thirty-three pieces of Chinese

³⁴⁰ See Arthur Lane, "The Gaignières-Fonthill Vase: A Chinese Porcelain of About 1300," *Burlington Magazine*, Vol. 103, 1961, pp. 124-132.

³⁴¹ Franz Adrian Dreir, "The Kustkammer of the Hessian Landgraves in Kassel," Oliver Impey and Arthur MacGregor (Eds), *The Origin of Museums: The Cabinet of Curiosities in Sixteenth- and Seventeenth-Century Europe*, Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1985, pp. 102-109.

³⁴² Watson, in Wilson, *Mounted Oriental Porcelain*, p. 4.

³⁴³ Emerson, Chen, and Gardner Gates, *Porcelain Stories*, pp. 25-26.

Porcelain.³⁴⁴

The Brandenburg collection of the House of Hohenzollern was established by the Elector Joachim II who reigned from 1535-1571. He was the first to have had curiosities created or purchased for him abroad to fill his treasure chambers, and subsequent electors added to the collection. Frederick William, the Great Elector, who reigned from 1640-1688, re-established the Electoral treasure chamber after the Thirty Years War. His inventory mentions a wide range of objects that included roman artifacts, coins, gems, bronze figures, *naturalia*, Indian manuscripts, Oriental weapons, and vessels of glass and porcelain.³⁴⁵

Studies in material culture have addressed the complexities of this type of object, what it meant and how it functioned in complex societies like the Hohenzollern court. Igor Kopytoff has provided a framework with which to examine commodities, suggesting that their importance is culturally determined, and they, like people, have complex biographies.³⁴⁶ Porcelain provides an interesting test case for Kopytoff's theory. Objects made of this material were clearly defined as commodities, not least because of the supply of the material from China and the demand of the Western market. They also functioned in numerous other capacities that were expanded as contact with porcelain increased. Porcelain functioned as treasure, gift, and purveyor of exoticism. It is in relation

³⁴⁴ Chilton, "Rooms of Porcelain," p. 24. and Harry Garner, "Chinese Export Art in Schloss Ambras," *Oriental Ceramic Society*, London, June 5, 1975, pp. 1-2.

³⁴⁵ Christian Theuerkauff, "The Brandenburg *Kunstammer*," pp. 110-111.

³⁴⁶ Kopytoff, "The Cultural Biography of Things," p. 68.

to this dynamic that the complexities of porcelain and its role in European court culture are briefly explored below.

Porcelain objects were mounted in silver-gilt or gold to attest to their value.³⁴⁷ The mounting helped to display and incorporate the object into the collection, and the precious metal enhanced the value of the porcelain object. Its status as treasure may have been expedited by the valuable mountings, yet they altered and sometimes destroyed the nature, and the original function of the piece.

What is particularly interesting is that these items were not the finest pieces of porcelain produced in Jingdezhen. Those were reserved for the Chinese Imperial household. The majority of pieces the Chinese exported were ordinary porcelain tablewares, but to Europeans these pieces acquired great significance. The appropriation of value provides an excellent example of the divergent perceptions of a commodity across cultural boundaries. The European perception of porcelain established a biography different from the one intended for the common Chinese cups, bowls and plates once they were imported into Europe. From another point of view it acknowledges that, as Kopytoff has pointed out, that what is significant is not the fact that alien objects are adopted, but rather the way they are culturally redefined and put to use.³⁴⁸ These treasures were integrated into the complex culture of the Hohenzollern court.

One method of their integration was via the tradition of the diplomatic gift. This brings to light the importance of the complex social and political

³⁴⁷ Watson, in Gillian Wilson, *Mounted Oriental Porcelain*, p. 1.

³⁴⁸ Kopytoff, "The Cultural Biography of Things," p. 67.

interactions of European monarchy and illustrates the value that porcelain acquired within this tradition. This is the subject of *Fragile Diplomacy: Meissen Porcelain for European Courts ca. 1710-63*, a recent publication that focuses on the tradition of the diplomatic gift. It deals with the history of diplomacy, and the intricacies involved in the giving and receiving of appropriate gifts, in particular porcelain, among the European courts. This work brings forward such issues as the value of the objects exchanged, their exclusivity, methods of their display, and the powerful relationships they brokered. Although this publication is concerned with Meissen porcelain, this tradition was in fact well established with other objects long before the arrival of porcelain from the Far East.³⁴⁹

The allure of porcelain was in the European perception of these foreign objects. The application of less tangible characteristics to porcelain established the material as both mysterious and magical.³⁵⁰ The attribution of these qualities and the obsessive attraction of Europeans to this substance provided the foundation for the porcelain “fetish.”³⁵¹

In an article on the presence of porcelain in Western painting, Arthur Spriggs has attempted to categorize and identify the types depicted in European

³⁴⁹ Maureen Cassidy-Geiger (Ed.), *Fragile Diplomacy: Meissen Porcelain for European Courts ca. 1710-63*, The Bard Graduate Center for Studies in the Decorative Arts, Design, and Culture, Yale University Press, New Haven and London, 2007.

³⁵⁰ The magical properties of porcelain were previously noted on p. 3, n. 5.

³⁵¹ Hal Foster discusses the fetish in relation to the Dutch still life that depicts trade goods and commodities. “The Art of Fetishism: Notes on a Dutch Still Life,” *Fetish, The Princeton Architectural Journal*, Volume 4, 1992.

works dating from 1400-1700.³⁵² From the point of view of trade in commodities, the classification of porcelain objects is useful in establishing the type and origin of the pieces that reached Europe, and provides a record of their whereabouts. Interestingly, the classification also demonstrates a change in the perception and depiction of porcelain in art works, and what meanings they accrued. This was in part due to the availability of the commodity in the European market.

Dutch artists included valuable Chinese porcelain in the still-life paintings that came into vogue at the beginning of the seventeenth century. A still-life painting by Willem Kalf (1622-1693), known for an exacting portrayal of Dutch material culture illustrates the vast array of exotic goods, including porcelain, traded by the Dutch East India Company. Works by Kalf advertised the affluence of the burghers who commissioned them as much as the objects he meticulously portrayed in his paintings.

Spriggs identifies an unusual covered bowl of the Wan-li period appearing in several paintings by Kalf. In one such painting *Still Life with Nautilus Cup* dated 1662, the qualities of the objects captured by the artist are admirable. The silver spoon in the bowl illustrates that the porcelain object has been culturally redefined and integrated into the privileged life of its Dutch owner. The depiction of the object in the painting is worthy of Kalf's commission for a work of art. But it is the life-like figures on the surface of the bowl that are arresting (figs. 64, 65). The paired figures appear to be moving away from the surface of the vessel to

³⁵² Arthur Spriggs, "Oriental Porcelain in Western Painting 1400-1700," *Transactions of the Oriental Ceramic Society*, Vol., 36, 1964-1966, pp. 73-87.

which they are attached. Although enclosed within the canvas frame, they are animate within their own environment suggesting life within the still-life.

Hal Foster has initiated an interesting discussion of this quality within the Dutch still-life. Although he makes reference to the qualities of “life” that exude from the objects in the paintings he discusses, it is the presence of the porcelain bowl in Kalf’s painting that I suggest exhibits the qualities that Hal Foster defines as characteristic of the fetish.³⁵³ This feature is shared by the porcelain figures of the Chinese pavilion, who are also involved in the activities of their own reality, separated from Frederick’s world by the gardens and a high wall of greenery, involved in their own “lives” within the confines of the Tea House structure. The figures’ lack of interaction with the viewer reinforces the idea of China as a world apart, a distance that reinforces the fantasy that is associated with Cathay. The interpretation of porcelain through paint on the canvas parallels my interpretation of the Tea House and its decorative elements as porcelain.

The East India Companies and the Porcelain Trade

The voyages of exploration had resulted in a major increase in the availability of porcelain for European treasure chambers. Vasco da Gama’s discovery of the sea route from Lisbon to India around the Cape of Good Hope in 1497-1499 allowed Portugal to establish and control trading relations with the Far East. The Portuguese were the first to establish a foothold in Goa in 1510 and had

³⁵³ Hal Foster defines the fetish in the anthropological sense as mystical, in the Marxian sense as denoting life to inanimate objects, and in the Freudian sense as an over-valuation in “The Art of Fetishism,” p. 6.

encountered Chinese traders at the port of Malacca on the Malay Peninsula, although an embassy sent to Canton in 1517 was unsuccessful. Eventually the Chinese allowed them to rent the town and harbour of Macao and to establish a base for trade with the Chinese and Japanese. It is no wonder that the French poet Paul Scarron wrote about the exotic treasures available in Portugal:

Menez-moi chez les Portugais
Nous y verrons à peu de frais
Les marchandises de la Chine
Nous y verrons l'ambre gris
De beaux ouvrages de vernis
Et de la porcelaine fine
De cette contrée divine
Ou plutôt de ce paradis.³⁵⁴

Take me to the Portuguese
We will see there for a small price
Merchandise from China
We will see some ambergris
Beautiful lacquer works
And some porcelain fine
From this country divine
Or rather from this paradise.

The quantity and variety of goods made available to Europeans through the Portuguese were incentives for other countries to share in the Eastern market.

Profits from porcelain, tea, spices, silks, ebony and other goods made Portugal rich and Lisbon one of the greatest cities of Europe.³⁵⁵ By the middle of the sixteenth century the Chinese city of Jingdezhen was producing porcelain made to order specifically for the Portuguese market. By 1580 there were six

³⁵⁴ Paul Scarron, *Les Oeuvres du Scarron*, Amsterdam, 1695; quoted by Honour in *Chinoiserie*, p. 40.

³⁵⁵ Jacobson, *Chinoiserie*, p. 17.

shops selling porcelain on the Rua Nova des Mercadores in Lisbon.³⁵⁶ In spite of the hazards of shipwreck and piracy, the Portuguese managed to control Eastern trade until the beginning of the seventeenth century, importing more than ten million pieces of porcelain into Europe.³⁵⁷ Portuguese trade provided more of this rare and valuable commodity for wealthy and privileged collectors, but knowledge of the trade routes made this same exotic product available to other countries.

The Dutch reached Canton by 1600 and two years later, in 1602 established the Veerenigde Oost-Indianische Compagnie (Dutch East India Company) with bases in the Pescadores and later in Formosa. The major coup of the Company was to establish trading relations with Japan creating a monopoly for the importation of Japanese porcelain and lacquer imported into Europe during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Following the collapse of the Ming dynasty in 1644 the Dutch were also the first of the Western powers to attempt to establish relations with the new Manchu dynasty. Although the embassy was initially less than successful, it afforded the opportunity for Nieuhoff to record his observations of China and through his perceptions establish the relationship of porcelain and architecture.³⁵⁸

Records show that between 1604 and 1657 more than three million pieces

³⁵⁶ Emerson, Chen, and Gardner Gates, *Porcelain Stories*, p. 136.

³⁵⁷ Meister and Reber, *European Porcelain*, p. 18.

³⁵⁸ Jacobson, *Chinoiserie*, p. 20.

were shipped to Holland in an attempt to satisfy the wealthy and the nobility.³⁵⁹ Considering the fragility of the product and the potential for breakage the quantities imported were astounding, especially since spices were the main import and bulkier items like porcelain afforded a smaller profit margin.³⁶⁰ For the Dutch East India Company this was a valuable commodity, carried aboard their ships for quick sale to agents in the employ of Europe's nobility charged with acquiring this fragile material for their porcelain-obsessed patrons.

The potential for financial gain was not lost on the rest of the Continent, and other countries also established trading companies to share in the wealth. England established its company in 1600. France established the *Compagnie des Indes Orientales* in 1664 in order to share in the market for Asian trade goods. Although Adolf Reichwein writes that the amount of goods imported by France was almost negligible in comparison to Holland, the almost ten million pieces recorded have to be seen as considerable since France began trading so much later.³⁶¹ Sweden established a company in 1731, and by 1733, Frederick's sister, Queen Louisa Ulrica, the royal family, and the nobility acquired millions of pieces of lacquer ware, silks, wallpaper, furniture, and porcelain. Some of these may be seen at Kina Slott at Drottningholm. Twenty million pieces of porcelain

³⁵⁹ T. Volker, *Porcelain and the Dutch East India Company*, Leiden, 1954, p. 59.

³⁶⁰ C. R. Boxer, *The Portuguese Seaborne Empire*, London, 1969, cited in Ayers, Impey, and Mallet, *Porcelain for Palaces*, p. 16.

³⁶¹ Reichwein, *China and Europe*, pp. 16-21.

alone were imported by Sweden between the years of 1766-1786.³⁶²

Frederick the Great established his own Prussian Asiatic Trading Company, September 1st, 1750, in order have a stake in lucrative Eastern trade. Within two years two ships had sailed for the East. The *King of Prussia*, sailed February 17, 1752, and it was followed by the *Town of Embden* on September 19, 1752. Both managed to reach Canton and return safely with full cargoes. A second company was established on January 24, 1753 to trade with India but its operations never fully developed.³⁶³ These Prussian companies were founded very late, especially in comparison to the English, Dutch, and French enterprises, and they ceased trading in 1756, but their existence exemplifies the continued interest in Eastern trade goods and the expected economic benefits that would result. The quantities imported by the East India companies did not saturate the European market with Asian porcelain thereby decreasing its value. It encouraged the development of personal collections which, within the context of the value placed on porcelain, enhanced the image of their owners and the interiors of their palaces.

³⁶² Meister and Reber, *European Porcelain*, p. 18. and Bo Gylensvärd, "The Chinese Pavilion at Drottningholm," *The Westward Influence of the Chinese Arts*, Colloquies on Art and Archaeology in Asia No. 3, London, 1972, p. 56.

³⁶³ Carlyle, *History* Vol. 5, p. 305; E. H. Pritchard, "The Struggle for Control of the China Trade During the Eighteenth Century," *The Pacific Historical Review*, Vol. 3, No. 3, September 1934, pp. 280-295; Schui writes that the Prussian Asiatic Company successfully sent sixteen ships to Canton during those years. A second company was established, to trade with India in 1753 but was not fully developed before the Seven Years War ended trade. "Prussia's 'Trans-Oceanic Moment,'" pp. 152, 156.

Porcelain for Display: The Influence of Porcelain on Interior Décor

The success of Portugal's Eastern trading ventures is illustrated by one of the earliest and most unusual, extant displays of porcelain and it exemplifies the extraordinary impact of this commodity on interior décor. This type of arrangement draws attention to the amassing of porcelain as a collection, and its exhibition in rooms designed specifically for that purpose, which I argue was motivated by the availability of porcelain, and the value associated with the commodity. This room, I suggest was an example from which all porcelain rooms originated; not in its style but in its concept, and therefore influenced the use of porcelain as part of the Tea House décor.

The pyramidal ceiling of the Casa das Porcelanos in the Santos Palace, Lisbon, is covered by two hundred and sixty porcelain dishes held in place by a wooden framework (fig. 66). It is presumed that the ceiling was set into its still existing arrangement sometime before 1680, and left untouched until the pieces were removed, photographed, and catalogued in 1981.³⁶⁴ The majority of the pieces are Ming blue-and-white wares dating from the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, although a few replacement pieces date from the eighteenth century. Unfortunately there is no information about the person who designed the ceiling and set it in place, or if porcelain was displayed elsewhere in the room. Nor is it known what the room was used for, what furnishings were in the room, or what

³⁶⁴ Daisy Lion-Goldschmidt, "Les Porcelaines Chinoises de Palais de Santos," *Arts Asiatiques*, 25, 1984, pp. 6-7.

type of decoration was on the walls.³⁶⁵

The ceiling is thought to be the first major display of porcelain, however, and appears to be the only one of its kind. It does signal a change in the use of porcelain amassed for exhibit as a major feature of room décor while also displaying the wealth, prestige and connoisseurship of its owner. One can only assume that the collection was considered of great value, given the effort made to suspend the hundreds of pieces from the wooden brackets in the ceiling.

The later lucrative trade arrangements with the Dutch East India Company and the Far East were responsible for the use of porcelain in massed displays during the late seventeenth and early eighteenth century.³⁶⁶ This was particularly so in the last quarter of the seventeenth century when the predilection for porcelain rooms was initiated in Holland and spread to the German states via the marriages of the Dutch princesses, where the porcelain room became a requisite form of courtly display.

Initially the display of porcelain was dependant on the contemporary style of interior decoration. Because room furnishings were sparse in the seventeenth century, porcelain was exhibited by placing it on heavy Baroque moldings, cornices over doors, and large mantelpieces.³⁶⁷ This type of display was short-lived, and soon interiors were specifically designed to incorporate what were often large collections of porcelain.

³⁶⁵ Ayers, Impey, and Mallet, *Porcelain for Palaces*, pp. 57-58.

³⁶⁶ Chilton, "Rooms of Porcelain," p. 24.

³⁶⁷ Cocks, "The Nonfunctional Use of Ceramics," p.195.

The earliest documented rooms specifically designed for porcelain display are associated with women of the Dutch royal Family. Amalia von Solms (1602-1675) the wife of Fredrik Hendrik, Prince of Orange was known to have an extensive and valuable collection. Peter Thornton writes that the value she placed on her porcelain can be discerned from its position on an inventory of her goods. It lists the pieces directly after her gold and silver plate, and before rock crystal, amber, and semiprecious stones.³⁶⁸

The union of Amalia's daughter, Louise Henriëtte with Frederick William, the Great Elector of Brandenburg-Prussia in 1646, created one of the largest collections in Europe and the first display of its kind in the German states.³⁶⁹ She brought her collection of porcelain as well as painters and architects to create the first documented porcelain room in Germany. It was commissioned for the palace of Oranienburg from 1662-1663 by the Dutch architect Johann Gregor Memhardt.³⁷⁰ Although there are no visual records of Louise Henriëtte's porcelain cabinet she was known to be obsessed with her porcelain collection. As Frederick William wrote, "My wife says she is frightened that if there were a fire, the servants would remove the furniture, etc., whereas she is more concerned about the porcelain."³⁷¹

³⁶⁸ Peter Thornton, *Seventeenth-Century Interior Decoration in England France and Holland*, Yale University Press, New Haven, 1978, p. 249.

³⁶⁹ Chilton, "Rooms of Porcelain," p. 24.

³⁷⁰ Markus Völkel, "The Margravate of Brandenburg and the Kingdom of Prussia: The Hohenzollern Court 1535-1740," *The Princely Courts of Europe, 1500-1750*, John Adamson (Ed.), Seven Dials, Cassell & Co., London, 2000, pp. 216-217.

³⁷¹ Phillip Allen, "Porcelain in the Clouds: Oriental Ceramics Depicted on the Ceilings at

In 1677 William of Orange, the nephew of Louise Henriëtte married his cousin, fifteen-year old Princess Mary Stuart, daughter of James II of England. From the time of her marriage until her death in 1694 at the age of thirty-two, she amassed a collection of several thousand pieces of porcelain and Delftware made to resemble Chinese porcelain.³⁷² Part of the collection was displayed in a porcelain chamber at her country palace at Honselaarsdijk, near the Hague, and part at the palace of Het Loo in Gelderland. The room at Honselaarsdijk may well have been designed by Daniel Marot, a Huguenot refugee who had left France in 1684.³⁷³ He had been trained at the atelier of his father, the architect Jean Marot, and had come under the influence of both Jean LePautre (1618-1682) a recorder and disseminator of le Style Louis XIV of the 1660's and 1670's, and of Jean Berain who was *chef de menus-plaisirs* and second only to Charles LeBrun in the hierarchy of artists at Versailles.³⁷⁴ Here Marot was likely exposed to the work in progress for the Petite Galerie of Louis XIV, where gemstone vessels were arranged on brackets in front of mirrors.³⁷⁵ The technique of using mirrors was widely used at Versailles, most notably in the Galerie des Glaces, and from it

Charlottenburg," *The Oriental Ceramic Society Newsletter*, Vol. 5, January, 1997, p. 18.

³⁷² Linda Rosenfeld Shulsky, "Queen Mary's Collection of Porcelain and Delft and its Display at Kensington Palace," *American Ceramic Circle Journal*, Vol. VIII, p. 51.

³⁷³ Chilton, "Rooms of Porcelain," p. 27.

³⁷⁴ Jean LePautre is considered the father of the Rococo. Kimball, *Rococo*, p. 89, Thornton, *Seventeenth-Century Interior Decoration*, p. 50.

³⁷⁵ Kimball, *Rococo*, p. 54, Peter Thornton, *Authentic Decor*, Viking Press, New York, 1984. 1981, p. 249, Rosenfeld Shulsky, "Queen Mary's Collection," p. 54, and Chilton, "Rooms of Porcelain," p. 26.

evolved the revolutionary technique for displaying valuable objects.³⁷⁶ Marot brought this type of display with him to Holland and after his arrival porcelain was placed on brackets in front of mirrors at the Dutch royal palaces of Het Loo and Honselaarsdijk.³⁷⁷

Peter Thornton has suggested that Marot was the first architect in Holland who attempted to co-ordinate all the decorative elements of a room in a manner similar to that of Louis Le Vau at Le Petit Trianon de Porcelaine.³⁷⁸ Meredith Chilton proposes that this lead to the development of thematic and integrated interior décor incorporating porcelain, which was to have a major impact on the decoration of rooms in *le goût Chinois*.³⁷⁹ This type of design was to have an impact on the German porcelain rooms and can be seen to have influenced the design and décor of Frederick's Chinese pavilion in its use of Asian motifs, the characteristics of porcelain and the use of porcelain for display.

Marot took out his first patent for an edition of engravings in 1687 at the Hague and continued to publish for the following fifteen years.³⁸⁰ An engraving of a China closet by Marot from *Nouveaux Livres de Partements*, published 1700-1701, provides an example of the design for the placement of porcelain in just such a cabinet (fig. 67). This room is thought to be the audience chamber he

³⁷⁶ Chilton, "Rooms of Porcelain," p. 26.

³⁷⁷ Rosenfeld Shulsky, "Queen Mary's Collection," p. 51.

³⁷⁸ Thornton, *Authentic Decor*, p. 50.

³⁷⁹ Chilton, "Rooms of Porcelain," p. 25.

³⁸⁰ Rosenfeld Shulsky, "Queen Mary's Collection," p. 52.

designed for Mary in 1686 at Honselaarsdijk and seems to fit the description published by Nicodemis Tessin in 1687:

The chamber was richly decorated with Chinese work and pictures. The ceiling was covered in mirrors so that the perspective was extended endlessly. The chimney piece was full of precious porcelain, part standing half inside it, and so fitted together that one piece supported the other.³⁸¹

The account demonstrates Marot's method of integrating the elements with the use of disassembled lacquer screens to panel the walls, the artful design of brackets to support the porcelain, the suitable placement of the pieces, and the use of mirrors to enhance the collection.

Frederick the Elector and later the first king "in" Prussia, the grandfather of Frederick the Great, inherited the collection of his Mother, Louise Henriëtte. It formed the basis of two porcelain rooms that he commissioned. The rooms demonstrate the importance of porcelain in Germany, its evolving meaning in room décor and its integration into court spectacle. Frederick commissioned Christof Pitzler, a student of Marot, to create a new porcelain room at Oranienburg. This later room, constructed from 1688 to 1695, is known to us by the engraving by Jean Baptiste Broebes published in *Vues des Palais et Maisons de Plaisance de Sa Majesté le Roy de Prusse*, 1733 (fig. 68). The room was nine by twelve meters, and the walls, pillars, pilasters and cornices are covered with line upon line of plates, dishes and saucers.³⁸² This chamber was limited to blue

³⁸¹ Quoted by Rosenfeld Shulsky in "Queen Mary's Collection," p. 54.

³⁸² Ayers, Impey, and Mallet, *Porcelain for Palaces*, p. 60.

and white pieces, like Queen Mary's at Honselaarsdijk. The creation of a porcelain cabinet specifically designed to display a lavish porcelain collection like the one established at Oranienburg, and the later one at Charlottenburg, is thought to have been influenced by the work of Marot. Sophie-Charlotte and Mary were friends and Frederick and Sophie-Charlotte had visited William and Mary at the Hague in 1688.³⁸³

An account dated 1695 shows that little cups were fixed in the flutes of the Corinthian columns from floor to ceiling, and five pyramid shaped pedestals placed in front of mirrored walls carried vases.³⁸⁴ These eight-tiered, gilded *étagères* were designed to double the effect of more than one hundred pieces of Chinese blue and white jars and vases and Japanese Imari *jardinières* that were displayed on each.³⁸⁵ Augustus Terwestin was commissioned to paint a ceiling fresco in 1697 to complete the décor. He designed an allegory of porcelain's introduction into Europe that showed objects similar to the type placed in the room (fig. 69).³⁸⁶

The second porcelain room was commissioned for the summer palace of

³⁸³ Hamish Hamilton, *William's Mary*, London, 1972, p. 203.

³⁸⁴ Arthur Lane, "Queen Mary II's Porcelain Collection at Hampton Court," *Transactions of the Oriental Ceramics Society*, Vol. 25, 1949-50, p. 25.

³⁸⁵ The six *étagères* and the porcelain can now be found in the Japanese Gallery, also known as the Porcelain Gallery at Charlottenburg. They were brought there by Frederick II after 1740. See, Baer and Baer (Eds.), *Charlottenburg Palace*, pp. 30, 33; Giersberg (Ed), *Royal Palaces in Berlin and Brandenburg*, pp. 11-12

³⁸⁶ Joan Wilson, "A Phenomenon of Taste, The China Ware of Queen Mary II," *Apollo*, Vol. 96, August, 1972, p. 119.

Charlottenburg (fig. 70). It was designed for Frederick I, the newly crowned King “in” Prussia in 1701 and his Queen, Sophie-Charlotte by Friedrich Johann Eosander (known as Göthe 1669-1728). The room was completed in 1706. It appears to have a similar type of supports and brackets on the walls and placement of porcelain that Marot used in the porcelain room at Honselaarsdijk.³⁸⁷ The room originally contained over three thousand pieces of Chinese and Japanese porcelain dating from the second half of the seventeenth century making it the oldest and largest collection of its kind in Germany at the time of its completion.³⁸⁸ The walls themselves were transformed into a decorative mass of varying shapes and sizes of predominately blue and white porcelain bowls, vases, figures, cups and saucers held by wooden brackets of ingenious design (fig. 71).

The architect converted these pieces into a priceless form of decoration with the intention of overwhelming the visitor with the lavishness of the collection multiplied many times over in the mirrored walls. The mirrors also brought images of the outside in through the windows reflecting the light and the gardens, dissolving the solid structure of the walls and encouraging the perception that they were made of porcelain. The cups and saucers, bowls and vases, when transposed into the magnificence of the Brandenburg porcelain room displayed the connoisseurship of its owner and signified the wealth and power of the

³⁸⁷ Meister and Reber, *European Porcelain*, p. 18.

³⁸⁸ The Porcelain Room of Charlottenburg was badly damaged during the Second World War and the present collection is made up of pieces donated by galleries and collectors after major restorations were completed.

monarchy.³⁸⁹

The porcelain display in the Charlottenburg Room porcelain was clearly intended to make a political statement. Its importance demonstrated by its position as the first of the enfilade. The ceiling painting by Anthonie Coxie (1650-1720) signaled the change in the relationship of porcelain and its new association with power and court spectacle. It illustrated the glorious kingship of this first monarch in Prussia. The image above the gleaming porcelain-lined walls was of Aurora the Goddess of Dawn in her seven-horsed chariot chasing away Night and clearing the way for the Sun-God Apollo, who approaches in his chariot in a blaze of light. Hovering overhead, Mercury heralds the arrival of the life-giving god and Saturn ushers in the Golden Age with his scythe.³⁹⁰ The images of the Four Continents as well as the Four Seasons produced for the glorification of the monarch were familiar allusions to political power and these metaphors were put in place to bear witness to the greatness of Frederick I.

It is significant that the ceiling of the porcelain room carried the metaphors of power: here was the meaning of porcelain writ large in its design.

Robert Finlay describes the breadth of this political function:

From the kings of Portugal to the Tsars of Russia, the Princes of Europe collected porcelain. Like palaces and ermine robes, massed displays of the ceramic functioned as assertions of power and magnificence. Porcelain became the currency of social

³⁸⁹ Chilton writes that the amassing of porcelain and the assembling of porcelain rooms had been associated with females, but at the beginning of the eighteenth century their husbands and sons became involved signaling a change in the appreciation of this commodity. "Rooms of Porcelain," p. 30.

³⁹⁰ Baer and Baer (Eds.), *Charlottenburg Palace*, pp. 28, 30.

emulation among the aristocracy of every nation...³⁹¹

Le Petit Trianon de Porcelaine: The Influence of porcelain on Architecture

The Thematically Integrated Pleasure Palace

Le Petit Trianon de Porcelaine established the relationship between porcelain, architecture, and interior décor in the West, and from this point of departure one can understand more fully the impact of this medium on Frederick's Chinese Tea House and its design as a thematically integrated structure.

Le Petit Trianon de Porcelaine was constructed at the northern end of the grand canal on the grounds of Versailles. Louis XIV commissioned the little palace from his architect Louis le Vau for his mistress Madame de Montespan in 1670.³⁹² It was to be used as a pleasure palace to escape the suffocating formality of the court. It was hardly surprising that the King chose to construct the little palace *à la Chinoise*. Louis XIV had firsthand experience with the images and ideas that emanated from the Orient. It was during his reign that the Jesuits were sent to China. France supported the missionary effort and as a result received a constant influx of information in their accounts. Images of Oriental pavilions and pagodas had appeared in France for some time from Jesuits who were admitted to

³⁹¹ Finlay, "The Pilgrim Art," p. 172.

³⁹² The plans for Le Petit Trianon are lost. Engravings of the entrance façade showing the side pavilions and the view of the gardens are by from Perelle, Bibliothèque de l'Art et Archeologie. A reconstitution of the pavilion is by Robert Danis, *La Première Maison Royale de Trianon 1670-1687*, Editions Albert Morancé, Paris, c. 1926.

the Emperor of China's court. Nieuhoff's popular illustrated account had also been translated into French in 1665, with engravings by Peter de Geyer and Jacob de Keyzer taken from his more than one hundred and fifty drawings of life in China.

Louis was said to have been fascinated by the Far East and its trade goods and he collected Chinese porcelain with enthusiasm. His minister Jean-Baptiste Colbert (1619-1683) had established the French East India Company in 1664 and the importation of porcelain objects numbered in the millions. The more interesting pieces were added to the collection that had already been amassed by the royal family.³⁹³ The inventories of the Mobilier de la Couronne show that Louis XIV possessed six hundred and ninety five pieces of *porcelaine fine* and *porcelaine* in 1673. By 1681 the collection had grown to more than one thousand pieces, and he had placed an order for a table service numbering more than one thousand pieces through the Compagnie des Indes for Versailles.³⁹⁴ This collection was again increased in 1686 when the Ambassadors from the King of

³⁹³ Louis inherited porcelain from his grandparents. His grandfather, Henri IV (1558-1610), had bought a porcelain dinner service in the first decade of the seventeenth century. His grandmother Maria de Medici (1573-1642) was given a service by the Dutch in 1638. She also owned a collection of several hundred pieces of porcelain, which may have included the Medici porcelain produced by her father Francesco. Francesco I de Medici (1541-1587), was among the first to produce a type of soft paste porcelain in Europe. Assisted by the court artist Buontalenti, and a potter from Urbino, he produced a translucent white ware that was manufactured from 1575 until his death in 1587. It was produced in the court workshops in Florence for his personal use and as diplomatic gifts. This was the only manufactory to successfully produce soft paste porcelain before the French at Rouen and St. Cloud in the late seventeenth century. The repertoire of forms was taken from Chinese pieces in the collection, contemporary silverware and majolica. The decoration was blue on white inspired by Chinese and Isnik wares. Emerson, Chen and Gardner Gates, *Porcelain Stories*, pp. 25-26. Louis was also bequeathed the porcelain collection of his Godfather, Cardinal Mazarin (1602-1661), Finlay, "The Pilgrim Art," p. 173.

³⁹⁴ Lane, "Queen Mary II's Porcelain Collection," p. 23.

Siam brought great quantities of Chinese and Japanese porcelain as gifts to Louis and his court. According to Finlay, Louis was regularly dining off porcelain dishes by this time.³⁹⁵ The King had more than enough pieces to produce a grandiose porcelain room at Versailles had he so desired, yet there was none commissioned for the palace. One can only assume that his decision to construct a little porcelain pleasure palace was to rival any porcelain cabinet yet produced, and that he was aware of the association of porcelain and Chinese architecture established by Nieuhoff's report.

Le Petit Trianon de Porcelaine was a Baroque structure. It consisted of one large, and four smaller single-story structures built around an oval court. The building was heavily decorated in blue and white faience. Vases of this material were placed on the roofs of the main building, the two side pavilions, and on the steps which led down to the canal. There was no Chinese influence on the roof design itself; instead this is found in the use of the ornaments and tiles on the roof. Charles LeBrun's theory of unified design in which the individual elements or work of art is lost in the complete decorative ensemble, was clearly established.³⁹⁶

What made the structure exceptional was the integration of its design and décor. Blue and white faience emulated porcelain on the exterior, and fabrics and furnishings in the signature colours of Chinese porcelain were used on the

³⁹⁵ Finlay, "The Pilgrim Art," p. 173.

³⁹⁶ Descriptions of this building appear in Gothein, *Garden Art*, pp. 84-86; Erdberg, *Chinese Influence*, pp. 59-61; Honour, *Chinoiserie*, pp. 53-57; Connor, *Oriental Architecture*, p. 20-21; Jacobson, *Chinoiserie*, pp. 35-36; Dams and Zega, *Chinoiseries*, p. 30.

interior. Although there was no lack of porcelain at Louis' court, one can assume the preciousness of the collection would have dissuaded him from using it on the exterior of the structure. Whether the faïence was, as Marie Luise Gothein suggests, produced at a factory newly founded at the construction site, or as Hugh Honour proposes, imported from the potteries of Delft, Rouen, Nevers and Lisieux, a large collection of blue and white vases and urns ornamented the exterior.³⁹⁷ It was described by André Félibien:

Sur l'entablement il y a une balustrade chargée de quantité de vases, & toute la couverture forme une espece d'amortissement, dont le bas est orné de jeunes Amours armez de dards & de flèches, qui chassent après des Animaux. Au-dessus il y a plusieurs vases de porcelaine disposez de degré en degré jusques au faiste du bastiment, avec différens oiseaux représentez au naturel. Les Pavillons qui accompagnent le principal corps de logis, sont embelis de la mesme maniere & ont rapport au dessein qu'on a eu de faire un petit Palais d'une construction extraordinaire.³⁹⁸

On the entablature the balustrade was laden with vases and the entire roofline forms a kind of finial where the base is ornamented with cupids armed with bows and arrows, pursuing animals. Above these are numerous porcelain vases arranged in rows up the ridge of the roof along with various life-like birds. The pavilions that are attached to the principal structure are embellished in the same manner, and manage to create a little palace of extraordinary design.

His description confirms that the urns and vases on the exterior were perceived as

³⁹⁷ Gothein, *Garden Art*, pp. 84-85, and Honour, *Chinoiserie*, p. 54.

³⁹⁸ André Félibien's written description is found in *Description Sommaire du Château de Versailles*, Paris, 1674, p. 20.

real porcelain and that this material created a building of exceptional design.

The little palace demanded the admiration of all who saw it. The poet Remy

Denis writes:

Considérons un peu ce chateau de plaisance
Voyez-vous comme il est tout couvert de faïence
D'urnes de porcelaine et de vases diverses
Qui le font éclater aux yeux de l'univers.³⁹⁹

Let us consider a little this pleasure palace
Do you see how it is all covered in faïence
With porcelain urns and vases diverse
The sight of which astonishes the universe.

Denis' commentary reinforces the idea that it was the porcelain and pseudo-porcelain ornamentation that made the pavilion stand out.

Robert Denis, Architecte en Chef des Palais Nationaux et des Monuments Historiques interpreted the façade of the porcelain pavilion in La Première Maison Royale du Trianon after these descriptions (fig.72).⁴⁰⁰ Denis writes that the Trianon was considered by all who saw it to have been constructed *à la Chinoise*. The building has a similarity to the engravings made from the descriptions of Far Eastern subjects by travelers sold at Jollain in 1690. Denis refers to the illustrations of Le Grand Roy Tartare de la Chine pictured in a balcony supporting porcelain vases. He also makes reference to an image of La Reine de la Chine in front of the Imperial Palace at Peking with somewhat the

³⁹⁹ Quoted in Denis, *La Première Maison*, p. 23.

⁴⁰⁰ Denis, *La Première Maison*, Figs. I, XIII.

same disposition of the Le Petit Trianon.⁴⁰¹

It is Oliver Impey's opinion that the idea for the Trianon probably came from the engravings by Perelle that were taken from illustrations in Nieuhoff's book. The end result, he writes, was a combination of the Imperial Palace at Peking and of the Porcelain Pagoda at Nanking.⁴⁰² Impey may have meant that the structure of the Trianon was of a similar disposition to the Imperial Palace, and that the surface was made of porcelain like the Porcelain Pagoda, for Le Petit Trianon de Porcelaine was only a single-storied structure. Another explanation for this confusion may be found in the use of the term *pagoda*, for it was also used for the smaller type of garden structure, like the Pagoda at Sinkicien. Patrick Connor assumes that the inspiration came from Nieuhoff's written description of the Porcelain Pagoda at Nanking which describes the use of porcelain on the surface of the structure and not the illustration that bears no resemblance to the exotic structure in the park of Versailles.⁴⁰³

The interior colour scheme was inspired by the signature colours of the most commonly imported porcelain and this was carried throughout the little palace. The one large room in the middle was in white with blue figures as ornament and the floor was paved with faïence tiles. At each side of this main room was a separate apartment with a small cabinet. The Chambre de Diane was situated to the left of the courtyard entrance and the Chambre des Amours to the

⁴⁰¹ Danis, *La Première Maison*, p. 25.

⁴⁰² Impey, *Chinoiserie*, p. 147.

⁴⁰³ Connor, *Oriental Architecture*, p. 20.

right (fig. 73). It contained a luxurious bed designed by Nicodemus Tessin, the Younger (1654-1728) and two *guéridons* that were painted gold, blue and white. One of the *cabinets* is said to have contained a day-bed and indeed a gouache on vellum from the French School, dated 1670, sold in London 1987, is now thought to be of Madame de Montespan reclining on this piece of furniture placed in the little room off the *Chambre des Amours*.⁴⁰⁴ All the doors, windows and shutters were painted blue and white. A semicircular aviary was attached to the side-walls and each *cabinet* had windows that looked onto the gardens.

This little pleasure palace was surrounded by a formal French garden designed by the king's gardener Michel Le Bouteux with many intricately designed flowerbeds and fountains.⁴⁰⁵ The flowers chosen for the garden terraces had to be brilliant in colour for they had to suit the pottery, the metal flower boxes and the garden seats that were also painted blue and white to imitate porcelain.

Félibien also described the scene of the pavilion in its garden setting:

Ce palais fut regardé d'abord de tout le monde comme un enchantement; Car n'ayant esté commencé qu'à la fin de l'Hy ver, il se trouva fait au Printemps, comme s'il fust sorty de terre avec les fleurs des Jardins qui l'accompagnent & qui, en mesme temps parurent disposez tels qu'ils sont aujourd'huy, & remplis de toutes sortes de Fleurs, d'Orangers et d'arbriseaux verts.⁴⁰⁶

⁴⁰⁴ Pamela Cowan, "A Glimpse Inside the Trianon de Porcelaine?" *Furniture History Society*, No. 106, May 1992, pp. 6-8.

⁴⁰⁵ Bernd H. Dams and Andrew Zega, *Pleasure Pavilions and Follies in the Gardens of the Ancien Régime*, Flammarion, Paris, 1995, p.156, and Pierre de Nolhac, *Trianon*, Paris, 1927, p. 286.

⁴⁰⁶ Félibien, *Description Sommaire*, p. 104.

It was regarded by everyone as a marvel for it was only started at the end of winter, and by the spring there it stood, as though it had grown out of the earth with all the flowers about it, it appears the same today filled with all kinds of flowers, orange trees and green shrubs.

His description illustrates that the pavilion, the blue and white interior and the suitably landscaped garden were designed to enhance the porcelain nature of the structure. The published reports on the building may have set a precedent for the integration of an exotic structure within its garden setting. Several of the Oriental garden pavilions constructed in the German states appear to have followed this model.

Because the faïence was completely unsuitable for the climate the Trianon de Porcelaine was demolished in 1687. A new Trianon, designed by Mansart for a new mistress took its place in 1688. This new construction had no relationship with the Chinese pavilion that came before it, except for a few rooms in the interior decorated *à la Chinoise*.

Le Trianon de Porcelaine is always classified as the first Chinese building to have been constructed in Europe and then critiqued as having absolutely no Chinese architectural reference. Erdberg considers it incorrect to call such a building Chinese because, according to her, there is not one Asiatic architectural form used. Indeed, there was not enough knowledge of China to influence, or inspire architects. What was produced she considers an ornamentation that corresponded with the European conception of the Chinese style. This was mainly the scroll design and the use of the faïence tiles that gave the illusion of

porcelain.⁴⁰⁷ Impey writes that the only real Chinese architecture that was seen in the West was depicted on porcelain or lacquer ware, while the rest was a frivolous outcome of seventeenth-century decorative features, and was strictly ornamental.⁴⁰⁸ I suggest that Le Vau's interpretation of the exterior and interior of the structure was to use materials with the characteristics of porcelain to make the association with Cathay. This concept was appropriated in the subsequent design of Frederick's pavilion.

Le Petit Trianon de Porcelaine was said to have become an object of desire. In 1674 the French gazette and literary magazine *Mercure Gallant* reported that:

Le Trianon de Versailles avoit fait naistre à tous les
Particuliers le désir d'en avoir; que presque tous les
grands Seigneurs qui avoient fait bastir dans leur Parcs ...⁴⁰⁹

The Trianon de Versailles created the desire for almost
All the Nobility to construct similar structures in their
Parks ...

Although the magazine wrote that numerous exotic pavilions sprang up all over France, there appears to be no record of these structures. Considering that Louis XIV and his court were regarded as arbiters of fashion, it is curious that there

⁴⁰⁷ Erdberg, *Chinese Influence*, pp. 59-60.

⁴⁰⁸ Impey, *Chinoiserie*, p. 143.

⁴⁰⁹ *Mercure Gallant*, 1674, Vol. 4. p.111, cited in Erdberg, *Chinese Influence*, p. 61. Honour also makes note, without date or reference of the publication, to the effect of this construction.

were not buildings in France that followed the example at Versailles.⁴¹⁰ The fashion did take hold in Germany, where the numerous princes admiring of the French king and his penchant for architecture erected exotic pavilions in their parks.

Pagodenburg

The Elector Maximilian Emmanuel of Bavaria was exiled in France from 1705-1715. His commission for Pagodenburg upon his return is responsible for the fashion for small exotic garden structures spreading East ward. He is credited with building the first in *le goût Chinois* in the German states. The construction of this structure may have encouraged Frederick's decision to design a small exotic garden pavilion for the garden of his own summer palace.

Pagodenburg was constructed between 1716 and 1719 on the grounds of Nymphenburg, Max Emmanuel's summer palace just outside of Munich. The small pavilion was designed by the Elector and commissioned from Joseph Effner, a Bavarian architect who had studied in Paris. It can be assumed that Max Emmanuel had heard about Le Petit Trianon de Porcelaine during the ten years he spent abroad. The design of the little pleasure palace and the use of porcelain for ornamentation had made a considerable impact, and there were written

⁴¹⁰ For the next forty years Chinoiserie in France would be concerned with interior decoration until the twice-deposed King of Poland, and father-in-law of Louis XV, Stanislas Leszczynski constructed two Oriental pavilions on the grounds of his palace in Lunéville, France in 1738, see Héré de Corny, *Recueil des plans*, Le Kiosque, Planches 14, 15, and Le Trèfle Bâtiment Chinois, Planches 16-18.

descriptions and illustrations of this pavilion.⁴¹¹

The theme of the first floor was carried out with the use of blue and white tiles, painted ceiling, wall panels, furnishings and the chandelier. The painted panels that enliven the walls of the entryway and three cabinets off the main salon are typical of scenes from the works of Watteau and Boucher. The blue and white images painted on the ceiling representing an allegory of the four Continents made the connection with porcelain, global trade, power and monarchical spectacle (fig. 74). Although not all the images were in *la façon de la Chine* the colour scheme was enough to invoke China and porcelain. The blue and white theme was carried to the upper floor by a continuation of the tiled walls. The second floor consists of three small rooms with a program of Chinese decoration utilising Holland's trade goods of lacquer, painted wallpapers, and silks.⁴¹²

Like the Trianon de Porcelaine the little kiosk was a place to relax after partaking of summer activities in the park and garden. A contemporary account describes how "This Indian building is a place where the lords and ladies rest after the exertions of a round of 'Mailspiel'"⁴¹³ a game similar to golf. It was also used for relaxation after the hunt, and for rest and refreshments for the actors and spectators Max Emmanuel invited to the garden theatre he had erected at the back

⁴¹¹ Klaus G. Förg, "Pagodenburg," *Schloss Nymphenburg*, 2002, p. 87.

⁴¹² Connor, *Oriental Architecture*, p. 21.

⁴¹³ Elmar D. Schmid, *Nymphenburg*, Bavarian Administration of State Castles and Palaces, Prestel, Munich, London, New York, p. 38.

of the structure.⁴¹⁴

Inspiration may have come from Le Petit Trianon, but it was the use of the characteristics of porcelain and China's trade goods that proclaimed its exoticism and exemplified the use of porcelain for interior décor.

Frederick's pavilion can be seen as a result of the European perceptions that found Chinese porcelain worthy of collection and display in treasure chambers and porcelain rooms. It is also a result of the thematically integrated structure designed by Le Vau for Le Petit Trianon de Porcelaine where fabrics, tiles, and furnishings for the interior and exterior mimicked the signature porcelain of China.

The small structure erected by Maximilian Emmanuel in the park of Nymphenburg brought the style for small exotic garden buildings to the German states. His little pavilion was situated within a garden setting where entertainment and diversion were to be enjoyed within the environs of Pagodenburg. These events should be seen as important as they provided examples for the design and décor of the numerous structures constructed in the parks of the German nobility that would include the pavilion designed by Frederick the Great.

The arcanum for European porcelain was discovered under the patronage of Augustus the Strong while the Bavarian Elector was in exile. It provided the opportunity to explore the relationship of porcelain and architecture further with the development of the European product.

⁴¹⁴ Gothein, *Garden Art*, p. 140, and Aall, p. 77.

CHAPTER FOUR

PORCELAIN IN ARCHITECTURE AND ARCHITECTURE IN PORCELAIN

The Chinese Tea House at Sanssouci is made of sandstone and stucco but is porcelain in essence. The celadon colour, the painted surfaces, and the golden figures, exhibit the characteristics of one of the most important discoveries, and one of the most important art forms of the eighteenth century. Although there is no porcelain architectural model from which Frederick's structure is derived, I argue that the design of Frederick's Tea House is reminiscent of the type of ornament designed to decorate the eighteenth-century table.

This chapter establishes a correspondence with the king's garden pavilion and the commissions of Augustus the Strong's porcelain manufactory. It draws parallels between the development of working processes, the influences of unrelated media, and the repertoire of objects produced by Meissen, with the Tea House design. It also explores the relationship of European porcelain, interior décor, and architecture carried out by Augustus and his artists, in large and small-scale commissions, and on the surface of the table. In particular, I draw attention to the similarities of Frederick's Tea House to the type of ornament designed to decorate the eighteenth century table. These complex centerpieces combined architecture, painting, and sculpture. They functioned within court culture as spectacle and display, as vehicles of self-representation, and are examples of

porcelain in architecture and architecture in porcelain. They are also illustrations of the concept of the *Gesamtkunstwerk* and the intermediality of porcelain.

Augustus the Strong and the Porcelain Obsession

The desire of the European nobility for porcelain approached obsession. In fact there were several names coined to describe this overwhelming desire for porcelain. Samuel Johnson called it “china fancy,” others referred to it as “china mania,” or the *maladie de porcelaine*.⁴¹⁵ The German term was *Porzellankrankheit* and Augustus the Strong suffered from the most extreme form of the illness. His insatiable demand for porcelain, however, fueled the experimentation for one of the most important scientific and artistic discoveries of the century.

Augustus II (1670-1733) assumed the Electorship of Saxony in 1693 and the throne of Poland in 1697. Under his leadership, Saxony and its capital city, Dresden, achieved their greatest prominence. Augustus began a program of development to convert the city into one of the most beautiful in Europe and his court into one of the most elegant and sophisticated in Germany. Like many European monarchs, the elector and king was an aficionado of the study of architecture and to some degree trained as an architect. He usually provided the initial design for projects, which he would autograph with “Done according to His

⁴¹⁵ Samuel Johnson, *Letters To and From the Late Samuel Johnson, LL.D. To which are added some poems never before printed. Published from the original MSS.*, London, 1788. Vol. 1, p. 380.

Majesty's own design." He then supervised their development and closely followed their construction.⁴¹⁶

Two of Augustus' commissions were particularly notable because they were specifically related to his obsession with porcelain. The Japanese Palace was organized to house and display the world's largest collection of Asian and European porcelain, while the Indian Pleasure Palace at Pillnitz would show Europeans that Augustus had succeeded, as Nieuhoff had described in his account, in using porcelain as a construction medium. These structures were conceived of as vehicles to advertise the capabilities of the first European porcelain manufactory to manipulate this new material as they explored the relationship of porcelain with interior décor and architecture. This exploration was not limited to large-scale commissions; it was also played out in the development of figure studies and table ornaments.

Augustus was known as an admirer of exquisite things and objects of great refinement, and like his illustrious forbears, a collector on a grand scale. Although his fascination with beautiful women, the excesses of his love-life, and his physical strength led to the superlative of "the Strong" to be added to his name, it is Augustus' grand passion for porcelain and the discovery of the arcanum for

⁴¹⁶ The greatest architectural influence on the city was during the first half of the eighteenth century when the character and personality of the Elector and King put an indelible mark on the city with such commissions as the Augustus Bridge, the Church of Our Lady the Catholic Court Church, the Moritzburg Hunting Lodge and the Zwinger. The Zwinger was a complex of pavilions and galleries and housed several museums. The courtyard was used for festivities, spectacles and fireworks. The structure was built between 1710 and 1732 after a design by Matthäus Daniel Pöppelmann in collaboration with sculptor Balthasar Permoser. Harald Marx, "Dresden, Images of a City," *The Splendours of Dresden: Five Centuries of Collecting*, Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1978, pp. 59-60.

which he is best remembered (fig. 75).⁴¹⁷

History does not reveal the initial motivation behind Augustus' obsession, but there were numerous instances when his interest in porcelain could have been aroused. Certainly the presence of Ming dynasty porcelain in the electoral collections could have initiated his fixation.⁴¹⁸ Augustus had also spent time at the court of Louis XIV on his *Kavalierstour* (Grand Tour) from 1687 to 1689.⁴¹⁹ He may have admired the French king's massive porcelain collection and remarked on its use at the royal table.⁴²⁰ The sight of Le Petit Trianon de Porcelaine in the park at Versailles with its pseudo-porcelain ornamented exterior, and interior décor of blue and white, may also have piqued his interest. The remarkable amount of one hundred thousand Thalers⁴²¹ spent in 1697 to add to the Royal porcelain collection was proof that his infatuation with porcelain, contrary to the view of some historians, established itself long before 1709 when he visited Charlottenburg's porcelain room, or in 1715 when he bought a selection of pieces from his Prime Minister and Field Marshall, Count Fleming.⁴²² These events only

⁴¹⁷ Gleeson, *Arcanum*, p. 48.

⁴¹⁸ The Grand Duke Ferdinand of Tuscany presented the Christian I Elector of Saxony with sixteen pieces of Ming Dynasty porcelain, see Maureen Cassidy-Geiger, "Porcelain and Prestige: Princely Gifts and "White Gold" from Meissen," *Fragile Diplomacy*, pp. 3, 4.

⁴¹⁹ Maureen Cassidy-Geiger writes that Augustus saw Le Petit Trianon de Porcelaine one year before its demolition. "The Japanese Palace Collections and their Impact at Meissen," *The International Ceramics Fair and Seminar*, London, June 1995, p. 11.

⁴²⁰ Fifteen hundred pieces of porcelain were brought by the visiting Siamese Ambassadors to the court of Versailles in 1686, Erdberg, p. 8; Cassidy-Geiger, "Porcelain and Prestige," p. 3.

⁴²¹ Basing the rate of exchange on Gleeson's model in the *Arcanum*, p. 11, 100,000 Thalers would equal approximately \$16,250,000 at today's rate of exchange.

⁴²² Chilton, "Rooms of Porcelain," p. 30; Baer and Baer (Eds.), *Charlottenburg Palace*, p. 30.

encouraged Augustus to exhibit the objects he already had in his vast collection of Asian and Meissen porcelain in an even more grandiose and overwhelming display. The exchange in 1718 with Frederick William I of Prussia, of one hundred fifty-one porcelain vessels from the Charlottenburg collection for six hundred exceedingly tall dragoon soldiers did not initiate his fascination.⁴²³ It was an opportunity to add a significant number of pieces to his burgeoning collection and could be simply explained as a manifestation of his mania.

Art, Science and Technology

Augustus also had a keen interest in the sciences, and like his predecessors created an environment that encouraged the leading scientists and technicians of the time to exchange ideas and to promote the establishment of new enterprises, always with the intention of supporting the economy of the state. From the reign of the first Elector named Augustus (1513-1586), economic independence had been the primary goal of the Saxon rulers. Saxony had been successful because the atmosphere had been conducive to scientific discovery, the appreciation of the arts, and the development of new industry.⁴²⁴

⁴²³ Meister and Reber, *European Porcelain*, p. 18; Gleeson, *Arcanum*, pp. 126-127.

⁴²⁴ Augustus, the first Elector of Saxony ruled 1518-1536. He was an outstanding economist whose main interest was in the development of Saxony. The arts and crafts flourished under his reign because he supported every aspect of their endeavours. Metalworkers, iron founders, goldsmiths, gun smiths, clock makers, workers in glass, earthenware and stone, achieved a high level of artistic accomplishment by means of the newly developed sciences and technologies, and the results achieved were of a precision of execution and functional quality previously unknown in Saxony. The Dresden *Kunstammer* he founded in 1560 was a type of university of technology. In a period of twenty-five years he amassed a collection of more than ten thousand items. This universal museum housed the fine arts, which were still considered another industrial activity, the

It was with this philosophy in mind that in 1696, Augustus commissioned his economic advisor Ehrenfried Walter von Tschirnhaus (1651-1708) to study the natural resources of Saxony, and to investigate the possibilities of establishing new manufactories that would produce exportable goods from domestic raw materials. During this time Tschirnhaus developed an interest in finding the arcanum for porcelain, the discovery of which would not only satisfy the necessary requirements for the economy of the state but would also stem the flow of money out of Saxony to pay for Augustus' passion.⁴²⁵

Tschirnhaus visited the city of Delft in 1698 to learn about faïence and how a kiln was made. He studied the production of frit-porcelain at the manufactory of St. Cloud and mastered its production.⁴²⁶ Based on this information he produced some beads of a material that looked like porcelain but proved to be white glass. Tschirnhaus' mistake was his assumption that hard-paste porcelain was of the same chemical composition as that produced by Francesco I Medici, who believed that the translucence of porcelain was similar to that of

decorative arts, and objects of historical, ethnographic, and geographic significance. Technological objects predominated and the museum contained the most comprehensive collection of tools and scientific instruments in the world. These objects were borrowed by cartographers, mathematicians, architects and artists to aid them in their work. Joachim Menzhausen, "The Electoral Kunstkammer," *The Splendours of Dresden: Five Centuries of Collecting*, Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1978, p. 76.

⁴²⁵ Helen Watanabe-O'Kelly, *Court Culture in Dresden: From Renaissance to Baroque*, Palgrave, New York, 2002, p. 223.

⁴²⁶ Faience is tin-glazed earthenware. Frit is a flux (a substance which lowers the vitrification temperature of the porcelain body, glaze or enamel colours), consisting of half-fused siliceous material that is used in the preparation of glaze and soft-paste porcelain, also known as frit-porcelain, Walcha, *Meissen*, p. 502; Robert E. Röntgen, *The Book of Meissen*, Schiffer Publishing Ltd., Atglen, Pennsylvania, 1996, p. 26.

glass, and had added sand, glass and powdered rock crystal to the clay.⁴²⁷

Such great amounts of money were spent on Augustus' obsession that he was seriously jeopardizing the finances of the state and Tschirnhaus continually referred to China as the "bleeding bowl of Saxony."⁴²⁸ The establishment of a state-owned porcelain manufactory could meet the needs of Augustus' demands for ever more of this wondrous substance, all the while producing a highly marketable product that no other European ceramic manufacturer was yet able to replicate. Saxony, if successful in finding the elusive recipe, would have complete control of an industry of inestimable value if one based its worth solely on the amount of money paid to Augustus' agents on the lookout for porcelain objects to satisfy the King's obsession.⁴²⁹

The Discovery of the Arcanum and Böttger Porcelain

The invention of it is owing to an Alchemyst, or one that pretended to be such; who had persuaded a great many people he cou'd make gold. The King of Poland believ'd it as well as others, and to make sure of his Person, caus'd him to be committed to the Castle of Königstein three miles from Dresden. There instead of making gold, that solid precious Metal, which puts mankind on committing many Follies, he invented brittle Porcellane; by which in one sense he made Gold,

⁴²⁷ Gleeson, *Arcanum*, p. 50.

⁴²⁸ Robert Schmidt, *Porcelain as an Art and Mirror of Fashion*, Trans. by W. A. Thorpe, George G. Harrap & Co., Ltd, London, Bombay, Sydney, 1932, p. 62; Honour, *Chinoiserie*, p. 103; Gleeson, *Arcanum*, p. 48.

⁴²⁹ Walcha, *Meissen*, p. 15.

because the great vent of that ware brings a great deal
of Money into the country.⁴³⁰

Karl Ludwig Freiherr von Pöllnitz

The discovery of porcelain in the Saxon state was the result of a propitious series of events. Johann Friedrich Böttger (1682-1719), a young alchemist deceived Frederick I of Prussia and his court into thinking that he had performed the transmutation of base metals into gold. Böttger knew his performance was a sham and his life in peril. He fled Berlin under cover of darkness and escaped into the town of Wittenberg in Saxon territory. There he registered at the University as a medical student where he could continue his experiments undetected. His whereabouts did not long remain a secret and Frederick I, desperate for gold to finance his extravagant lifestyle was anxious for Böttger's return. When information was revealed that the student had supposedly discovered the philosopher's stone he was secretly escorted into Dresden on November 28, 1701.⁴³¹ He was detained by Augustus in the fortress of Albrechtsburg at Meissen, and ordered to produce gold. With no yellow gold forthcoming Böttger was put to work discovering the arcanum for porcelain, the commodity known as "white gold."⁴³² The change in the nature of his research was noted by the inscription of this sign on his door:

Gott unser Schöpfer

⁴³⁰ Karl Ludwig Freiherr von Pöllnitz, *The Memoirs of Charles-Lewis, Baron de Pöllnitz, Being the observations he made in his late travels ... In letters to his friend.* ... Trans by Stephen Whately, printed by S. Powell, for G. Faulkner, C. Wynne, C. Connor, and Oli Nelson, Dublin, 1738, Vol. 1, p. 92.

⁴³¹ Walcha, *Meissen*, p. 16.

⁴³² Le Corbeiller, "German Porcelain," p. 6.

hat gemacht
Aus einem Goldmacher
einen Töpfer.⁴³³

God, our Creator, has turned
a goldmaker into a potter.

The Development of the Working Process

Böttger, with the help of scientists, mining technicians, and artists was responsible for the discovery of the porcelain recipe and the development of working processes in the early years of the porcelain manufactory. The results of their inter-related activities are illustrated by the early products of the establishment. Frederick's pavilion can be seen as an example of the combined and concerted effort of these endeavours. The application of techniques unrelated to ceramic production, and the finishes that emulate other materials, set a precedent for the interpretation and perception of Frederick's sandstone and stucco structure as porcelain.

Böttger was to be assisted by Tschirnhaus and the experienced and knowledgeable members of the department of mines.⁴³⁴ Böttger's first success came in 1706 with the production of red stoneware, which closely resembled the Chinese tea wares from Yi Hsing, which were shipped in great quantity to Europe.⁴³⁵ Augustus made his vast Chinese and Japanese porcelain collection

⁴³³ The inscription was quoted and translated by Savage, in *Porcelain Through the Ages*, p. 105. It also appears in Honour, *Chinoiserie*, p. 104.

⁴³⁴ K. Berling (Ed.), *Meissen China: An Illustrated History*, Dover Publications Inc., New York, 1972, p. 2.

available to the manufactory for use as reference and he enlisted the court artists to aid in the development of techniques for handling this new material. Sculptors Balthasar Permoser (1651-1732), Paul Heermann (1673-1732), and Benjamin Thomae (1682-1751), as well as the silversmith Johann Jacob Irminger (1635-1724) applied their skills to manipulate the new substance. Permoser was valuable because he had experience working on large-scale architectural and garden sculpture as well as on the smaller more intimate medium of ivory.⁴³⁶ Irminger was important because he was able to apply his trade, modeling and embossing the surface of Böttger's stoneware teapots, tea caddies, coffee pots, vases, tureens, and bowls with ornament.⁴³⁷

Saxon stoneware was very fine, hard, and exceedingly versatile, and the unusual colour encouraged experimentation. Under Böttger's direction the craftsmen mixed red clays of slightly differing compositions producing a streaky marbled effect that resembled stone. With Irminger's experience the surfaces were cut, engraved, polished with facets and contrasting areas of matte and shiny surfaces, and studded with gems (fig. 76). They were also painted and embellished with applied acanthus motif, vines, beading, masks and heads that came from the metal smith's repertoire.⁴³⁸ These were the types of motifs applied to the surfaces of Frederick's Tea House (fig. 77). Böttger also involved himself with the discovery of enamel paints and a method to apply gilding on his

⁴³⁶ Le Corbeiller, "Porcelain as Sculpture," p. 22.

⁴³⁷ Walcha, *Meissen*, p. 35.

⁴³⁸ Ibid.

stoneware.⁴³⁹ His experiments with glazes produced colours and finishes that emulated black lacquer, gold, and wooden vessels.⁴⁴⁰

As early as 1712 Augustus requested from Irminger items suitable for “the enhancement and beautifying of the *Lustgebäude*.”⁴⁴¹ This demand illustrates that Augustus, at this early date in the establishment of the manufactory, was already encouraging his artists to push the creative limits of the material for use in original ways.⁴⁴² Indeed he was thinking about manipulating the material for architectural ends. This is confirmed by Böttger’s report of January 1712, in which he inventories a large variety of items that could be made without difficulty from his red stoneware: stoves, fireplaces, cabinets, tabletops, columns and pillars, doorposts, antique urns, and slabs for covering floors.⁴⁴³ It is important to note that the use of large pieces of porcelain for interior décor and architecture was particular to the European style. Thus the application of these techniques for the architectural design of Frederick’s pavilion would not have appeared unusual among his contemporaries.

⁴³⁹ Ibid., p. 37.

⁴⁴⁰ Indeed the characteristics of porcelain were alluded to frequently by other materials. Blue and white paneling, fabrics, tiles, and furnishings emulated the signature porcelain of China, while a white lacquer cembalo found in the palace of Charlottenburg was decorated with coloured images, Chinese persons, and flowers in the manner of porcelain.

⁴⁴¹ Walcha, *Meissen*, p. 34.

⁴⁴² Walcha refers to Böttger’s report of January 1712, *Meissen*, p. 34. The report, WA I A P2/155 is published on p. 455, n. 23.

⁴⁴³ Ibid., pp. 34, 443, n. 23.

Hard Paste Porcelain

The main thrust of Böttger's experiments was to discover the recipe for true hard-paste porcelain. Numerous technical difficulties had to be resolved, and as Nieuhoff had described in his account, experiments in the right formulations of the clay, kiln design, heating temperatures and times had to be researched. All the ingredients were kept secret and each formula compounded in small quantities. Böttger discovered the recipe after years of trial and error. Notes of his experiments show that true hard-paste porcelain was successfully produced on January 15, 1708.⁴⁴⁴ Augustus delayed the announcement of the discovery until Böttger had perfected his red stoneware, successfully produced a glaze for the coveted white porcelain, and an appropriate factory could be constructed. The founding of the porcelain manufactory was announced to the world on January

⁴⁴⁴ Hard-paste porcelain is produced by firing two ingredients, china clay and china stone, suitably prepared in the right proportions, fired at the right temperature, at the correct temperature, for the right length of time. The white clay, or china clay, known as kaolin, comes from the weathering of rocks containing feldspar, an aluminum silica compound. It takes its name from the Chinese word Kao-ling, a place twenty miles northeast of the famous porcelain kilns of Jingdezhen (Ching-te-chen) in Central China where the material was found. Kaolin is a greasy and malleable material that does not fuse under heat. The plasticity of this material prevents the article from losing its shape or splitting during firing when dehydration causes ten percent shrinkage. The second essential ingredient is china stone, also known as petuntse, the French derivative taken from the Chinese. It is a feldspathic clay, a mineral resembling kaolin but of a glassy nature which is considered the flesh of the porcelain. Before it can be used it has to be pulverised, washed, and strained, and after being combined with kaolin it must be left to mature. These may have been the heaps of earth that Marco Polo had seen left to the elements. The matured mixture is then combined with water to be shaped in molds, by hand, or on the wheel. At approximately 1300 to 1400 degrees centigrade the petuntse fuses in the kiln and provides cohesion and translucency. The fired porcelain becomes vitrified and impermeable. See Patterson, *Porcelain*, pp. 11-12; The porcelain recipe discovered in Europe is somewhat different from that of China. Chinese porcelain is made from twenty to thirty percent kaolin which makes the product softer than Meissen's, which uses fifty to fifty-five percent. Subtle variations exist between most European porcelain centres because of the mineral content in the clay. These differences affect the colour and clarity of the finished article and the way it behaves when fired. Meister and Reber, *European Porcelain*, p. 13.

23, 1710.⁴⁴⁵

The Meissen Porcelain Manufactory: The Eighteenth-Century Culture of
Porcelain

In order to preserve this art as much as possible
a secret, the fabric at Meissen is rendered
impenetrable to any but those who are immediately
employed about the work, and the secret of mixing
and preparing the metal is known to very few of
them.⁴⁴⁶

Jonas Hanway

Within twenty-five years of the discovery of the arcanum and the founding of the Meissen Manufactory, Europe was overtaken by an enthusiasm for this new commodity and art form that amounted to an international “culture” of porcelain. The European porcelain objects were made in a material in which their producers had no previous experience, developed by court artists who applied their skills from media unrelated to porcelain production. Consequently, these artists manipulated the material in ways that were unique and original to Meissen. The products were initially copies of Far Eastern porcelain, but as the company and its repertoire of products developed, objects were designed to reflect the interests of Augustus and his court.

⁴⁴⁵ Walcha, *Meissen*, pp. 19, 21; Rollo Charles, *Continental Porcelain of the Eighteenth Century*, Ernest Benn Ltd., London, 1964, pp. 24-25.

⁴⁴⁶ Jonas Hanway, *An Historical Account of the British Trade Over the Caspian Sea: With a Journal of Travels from London Through Russia into Persia; and Back Again through Russia, Germany and Holland. To Which are Added, the Revolutions of Persia During the Present Century*, London, 1753, Vol. 2, p. 228.

Augustus assumed the positions of patron, artistic director, and advisor in the newly formed manufactory, and his involvement in the organization of the factory established a model for porcelain companies, like Frederick's, founded thereafter.⁴⁴⁷ Once the white body could be reliably produced it was Augustus who insisted colour be applied. This was in part because the embossed designs did not show up as well on the white surface of porcelain as it did on Böttger's red stoneware, and coloured porcelain offered a wider scope for the decorator. It was, after all, the blue and white, the celadon, the highly coloured Chinese *Famille Rose* and *Famille Verte*, the red, blue and gold of Japanese Imari pieces that were irresistible to Augustus.⁴⁴⁸

The creative potential of this material seemed almost limitless, and inspiration came from every possible medium. Porcelain lent itself to intermediality; small ivory, marble, and sugar sculptures, lacquer ware, gold work, and bronze provided impetus to the manufactory workers. Volumes of published engravings suggested themes for the painting and sculpture of porcelain. Court interests in the theatre, opera, architecture, literature, portraiture, and the hunt also became sources of inspiration that encouraged the development of a repertoire of sculptures, dining services, and magnificent centerpieces. The court, therefore, provided the impetus for the creation of porcelain works and also occasions for their use.⁴⁴⁹

⁴⁴⁷ See p. 126, n. 301.

⁴⁴⁸ Walcha, *Meissen*, p. 39.

⁴⁴⁹ Charles, *Continental Porcelain*, p. 18.

It had always been Augustus' intention that the manufactory should produce a wide variety of products to appeal to a large consumer base. He was aware of the demand for porcelain and that it could be used as a commodity to provide an income to the state. Meissen produced items as diverse as cutlery and cane handles, thimbles, ink stands, snuff boxes, tankards, clock stands, tea caddies, cups and saucers, tea, coffee and chocolate pots, to sell at home and abroad.⁴⁵⁰ Many of these items previously made of wood, metal or bone were successfully translated into porcelain (fig. 78).

In the first half of the eighteenth century, Meissen porcelain was exported to all the countries of Europe, Russia and the Near East, including those where the East India Companies were already established. Meissen pieces were sold at a greater cost than those of the Chinese imports.⁴⁵¹ The European style of porcelain had come to dominate the market. Ultimately, for the Oriental trade to continue to prosper, Asian firms now had to copy the Meissen designs in order to maintain their position in the lucrative export market to the West.⁴⁵²

As the repertoire of objects was developed the expertise of the factory also improved.⁴⁵³ Thomas Nugent the traveler and author wrote acknowledging the quality and artistry of the Meissen products:

The manufacture of Porcelane surpasses that of

⁴⁵⁰ Hugo Morley-Fletcher, *Meissen*, Barrie and Jenkins, London, 1971, p. 97.

⁴⁵¹ Gleeson, *Arcanum*, p. 182.

⁴⁵² Morley-Fletcher, *Meissen*, pp. 10-11.

⁴⁵³ Gleeson, *Arcanum*, p. 182.

China because of the beauty of the paintings, in which there is great order and proportion. The gold is used with great taste, and the painters are such as excel at their profession, being chosen by the king, to whom the fabric belongs.⁴⁵⁴

To ensure Meissen's continued success and dominance in this new field, the arcanum and kiln design had to remain secret. The employees at the manufactory were under oath and bound for life to reveal nothing that could be used to further the development of porcelain elsewhere. Unfortunately for Augustus, the secret was too valuable, and two employees, Conrad C. Hunger and Samuel Stolzel, escaped to Vienna with the arcanum in 1719. From there it was disseminated to the rest of Europe by the Viennese kiln-hand Johann Josef Ringler. He left the factory at Vienna in 1750, and from there took the arcanum to Höchst, Strasbourg, Frankenthal, Nymphenburg, Memmingen, Ellwangen and finally Ludwigsburg, where Ringler acted as director until his death in 1804.⁴⁵⁵ Even though the secret of the porcelain recipe had made its way to Austria and to several of the German states, Meissen remained the most advanced, setting the precedent for the repertoires of objects from all other manufactories.

Wholesale copying of Meissen works was a continual occurrence as numerous factories were established in the middle of the century. There were no

⁴⁵⁴ Thomas Nugent, *The Grand Tour; or, a Journey Through the Netherlands, Germany, Italy, and France. Containing, I. A Description of the Principal Cities and Towns, ... II. The Public Edifices, ... III. The Produce of the Countries, ... IV. An Exact List of the Post-routes, ...* The third edition, corrected, and considerably improved. To which is now added, the European itinerary. London, 1778, Vol. 2, p. 260.

⁴⁵⁵ Ware, *German and Austrian Porcelain*, pp. 17-18.

copyright regulations and it was impossible to prevent rival companies from purchasing objects for the specific purpose of making molds. The copying of pieces from the Meissen manufactory, which was the arbiter of taste and had set the standard, assured their success.⁴⁵⁶ Augustus and the creative employees of his manufactory were responsible for the establishment of the European porcelain industry and the artistic development of these manufactories was initially based upon the Saxon style.⁴⁵⁷ Most of these manufactories, like the Berlin company, were only established mid-century while Meissen was enjoying its golden age.

Augustus was the driving force behind the company, and motivated his artists to create ever more complex and innovative pieces to display the artistry and capabilities of his manufactory. Meissen's accomplishments were dependant on the artists involved. Under Böttger's tenure the innovative procedures of the court artists provided the basis for ceramic innovation. After his death two men were responsible for the continuing growth of the Meissen porcelain works and its culture. Their achievements are discussed here because they show the direction and the progress of the art form in both painted surface and in sculptural form. More importantly, the application of these developments can also be discerned in the interpretation of Frederick's Tea House in terms of the painted surfaces of the

⁴⁵⁶ Schmidt devotes a chapter "Sources of Design in Porcelain Figures," to this issue in, *Porcelain as an Art*, pp. 303-310; The sources for porcelain sculptures was the focus of an exhibition, see Julia Poole, *Plagiarism Personified?* Fitzwilliam Museum, Cambridge, 1986; Sheila Tabakoff has also discussed this issue in relation to an exhibition of porcelain figures "Imitation or Invention: Sources for Eighteenth Century Porcelain Figures," *Figures From Life, Porcelain Sculpture from the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York ca. 1740-1780*, Museum of Fine Arts, St. Petersburg, Florida, 1992, pp. 12-20.

⁴⁵⁷ Walcha, *Meissen*, p. 160.

exterior and interior, the sculptured figures, and the flowing form of the structure.

Johann Gregorius Höroldt

Johann Gregorius Höroldt (1696 -1775) came to the Meissen manufactory from Vienna in 1720 at the age of twenty-four as a painter of Chinoiserie scenes, wallpapers, miniatures, and porcelain. It was in the area of surface decoration on the porcelain body that he excelled. He was appointed court painter in 1724 and produced some major innovations in the artistic and technical aspects of porcelain painting and production.⁴⁵⁸

Augustus recognized Höroldt's talent and he was appointed the director of the painters at the Meissen works in 1731. He provided the creative impetus at the manufactory by inspiring the painting shop to produce a repertoire of images to enhance the valuable porcelain objects. Some of these images were derived from two-dimensional works that were copied onto the surfaces of the porcelain.⁴⁵⁹ It was common for the manufactories to amass collections of works on paper to serve as reference for the painters. Published volumes of engravings after paintings by well-known artists such as Antoine Watteau and François Boucher provided sources for European and Chinoiserie scenes that decorated porcelain

⁴⁵⁸ He produced sixteen new glaze colours from 1723-1733. These included pea green, egg yolk yellow, aquamarine, claret, lilac, turquoise and red. Walcha, *Meissen*, p. 57; Gleeson, *Arcanum*, p. 179. Höroldt also designed the muffle kiln which protected the coloured glazes from direct heat and damage from dust and particles. He also established European porcelain's first proper decorative vocabulary. The table service as we know it was designed during this artist's tenure. Walcha, *Meissen*, pp. 50-53.

⁴⁵⁹ Meister and Reber, *European Porcelain*, pp. 145-149.

objects, and they eventually served as models for figural studies as well.⁴⁶⁰

Many of the earliest designs in *le goût Chinois* at Meissen were interpretations produced by Höroldt. This master decorator and painter prepared a sketchbook known as the *Schultz Codex* that was used as a reference in the manufactory for over twenty years (fig.79). The *Codex* contained images of richly attired Chinese-figures that were similar to the sculptures and painted images at the Tea House. They are depicted drinking tea, playing unusual musical instruments, and dancing in exotic landscapes, dotted with pagodas and enormous flowers, while giant birds and butterflies flutter overhead silhouetted against the white glazed porcelain. Höroldt framed these whimsical images in elaborate cartouches, accentuated the images with gold to attest to the preciousness of the material they enhanced, and set them against his brightly coloured enamels.⁴⁶¹ Höroldt painted them on the repertoire of dinner services developed under his tenure, and the assorted vessels for serving and drinking coffee, tea, and chocolate.⁴⁶²

⁴⁶⁰ See Len and Yvonne Adams, *Meissen Portrait Figures*, Barrie & Jenkins, London, Melbourne, Auckland, Johannesburg, 1987; Julia Poole, *Plagiarism Personified? European Pottery and Porcelain Figures*, Fitzwilliam Museum, Cambridge, 1986, and Tabakoff, "Imitation or Invention," pp. 12-20.

⁴⁶¹ Le Corbeiller, "German Porcelain of the Eighteenth Century," p. 21; and Gleeson, *Arcanum*, p. 164.

⁴⁶² For a history of the consumption of hot beverages in England and their supposed medicinal properties, see Peter Brown, *In Praise of Hot Liquors: The Study of Chocolate, Coffee and Tea-Drinking 1600-1850*, Fairfax House, York, 1995; The coffee house was also a site for the exchange of philosophical ideas in eighteenth century Europe. Brian Cowan, *The Social Life of Coffee: The Emergence of the British Coffeehouse*, Yale University Press, New Haven and London, 2005. Tea became known in Germany about 1670. Schmidt, *Porcelain as an Art*, p. 50; Coffee houses had spread across Europe. They were established in Paris in 1643, London, in 1652, Hamburg in 1671, and Vienna in 1683, just after the last siege of Vienna by the Ottoman Empire.

Large quantities of gold Chinoiserie were also produced at the Meissen factory. Under Böttger and Höroldt the manufactory produced a compendium of porcelain objects where gold enhanced the images of Chinese in their fanciful landscapes that have some semblance to images of the golden sculptures surrounding the Tea House set against the celadon background (fig. 80). Hans Syz points out that this was a distinctly European style since there was little gold work used at this time on Chinese porcelain.⁴⁶³ The association of porcelain with precious metals had been well established in the medieval period when porcelain objects were mounted in silver-gilt for display in princely treasure chambers.⁴⁶⁴ Porcelain as already noted, was known as “white gold.”⁴⁶⁵ Gold was also the most valuable material known at that time and was fitting ornamentation for such a valuable commodity and art form as porcelain.⁴⁶⁶ Besides the gilding done under Höroldt’s direction, Meissen established a relationship with the goldsmiths in the city of Augsburg. Their work is characterized by the fine engraving of details on the gold figures with a dry point technique that served to animate the

The greatest concentration of this type of establishment occurred in Germany. Coutts, *The Art of Ceramics*, p. 85.

⁴⁶³ Hans Syz, “Some Oriental Aspects of European Ceramic Decoration,” *Antiques*, July 1969, p. 91.

⁴⁶⁴ Hughes, *Eighteenth-Century France*, pp. 20-21.

⁴⁶⁵ Walcha, *Meissen*, p. 30.

⁴⁶⁶ Gilding required a considerable amount of gold because the paint contained forty to sixty percent precious metal. Gold leaf was ground into honey, painted on porcelain with a brush, fired lightly, then burnished. Röntgen, *The Book of Meissen*, p. 205; Charles, *Continental Porcelain*, p. 28.

surface of the porcelain body (fig. 80).⁴⁶⁷

Porcelain for Interior Décor and Architecture

Frederick's exotic pavilion is a thematically integrated structure. The celadon colour, golden finishings, and painted surfaces were applied on the exterior and interior of the structure. A porcelain collection displayed on the interior reinforced the exotic nature of the décor, and although the pieces were Meissen, they were stylistically Chinese. Frederick's building is an example of the relationship of porcelain, interior décor and architecture that emulated the architectural projects that were related to developments in the manufactory.

I suggest that Augustus' commissions for The Japanese Palace and The Indian Palace were further developments of the seventeenth and early eighteenth-century use of Asian porcelain for interior décor and architecture. The idea for the Japanese Palace originated in the acquisition and display of Oriental porcelain for European treasure chambers and porcelain rooms. The Indian Palace is a further development of Nieuhoff's perception that a structure could be made of porcelain. Both of these commissions demonstrate the concept of the thematically integrated structure exemplified by Le Petit Trianon de Porcelaine. These commissions are however uniquely European in their interpretation of these earlier models. They also suggest the design and decor Frederick's Chinese Tea House.

Johann Joachim Kaendler

⁴⁶⁷ Hans Syz, "Some Oriental Aspects of European Ceramic Decoration, Part II, Chinoiserie in Gold on German Porcelain of the Eighteenth-Century," *Antiques*, July 1969, pp. 91-93, and Emerson, Chen, and Gardener Gates, *Porcelain Stories*, p. 199.

...anything can be made of porcelain; whatever one desires; if it is too big, make it in two pieces, which no-one can understand as well as he who makes the molds ... In this way everything even the impossible can be done in its own way...⁴⁶⁸

J. J. Kaendler, 1739

The development of the porcelain sculpture and the repertoire of objects produced by Johann Joachim Kaendler (1706-1775) translated Höroldt's painted world into a sculptural reality. Kaendler had already been appointed court sculptor when he was summoned to the porcelain works in 1731 to help create the birds and animal figures commissioned by Augustus for the Japanese Palace. He stayed until his death, producing an outstanding *oeuvre* of work in his forty-four years at the manufactory, that in quality and subject range is unequalled by any other eighteenth-century sculptor.⁴⁶⁹ An examination of Kaendler's works shows that as

⁴⁶⁸ J. J. Kaendler, report presented to the Meissen commission 1739, as quoted without reference in Gleeson, *Arcanum*, p. 207.

⁴⁶⁹ Röntgen, *The Book of Meissen*, p. 153. As *Modelmeister* it was Kaendler's responsibility to sculpt the work in wet clay, wax, or wood. The master plaster mold was taken from this model. Oftentimes it was necessary to cut the model into segments from which the master casts were made. It was possible that as many as eight molds would be used for a single anatomical part like a head, see W. David Kingery and Pamela P. Vandiver, *Ceramic Masterpieces: Art, Structure, Technology*, The Free Press, Macmillan Inc, New York and London, 1986, p. 187. Most figures were made by rolling porcelain paste to a desired thickness on a damp piece of calfskin and then carefully pressing it into the mold with a damp sponge and the fingers. The uniform thickness was continually verified by the use of small needles. The edges of each section were then scored, covered in a diluted porcelain paste called 'slip' and pressed together. The plaster absorbs moisture from the wet clay body which shrinks slightly away from the master mold as it does so. The pieces are then removed from the mold and joined to make the figure. The *Bossierer* or repairer assembles the pieces and adds any hand made elements like flowers or incised decoration. Although sculptures are reproduced many times over, it is the repairer who gives each piece its sculptured individuality. In essence no two sculptures are identical because of the involvement of the individual who does the finishing. Chilton, "Technical Masterpieces," p. 26.

a court sculptor he was capable of manipulating the material to produce a variety of three-dimensional works in both large and small scale. The formulation of these projects underscores two principles that suggest the Chinese Tea House at Sanssouci: the use of one material to suggest another, especially porcelain, and the interplay of porcelain with interior décor and architecture. These were two important attributes of porcelain in the eighteenth century. Kaendler's belief that anything could be made from this medium encouraged the manipulation of this material and the integration of porcelain in architecture and architecture in porcelain.

Kaendler was integral to the development of Augustus' two architectural projects that furthered this relationship. Asian porcelain collections had been exhibited in accordance with the European perception of the material, as precious articles worthy of display. This had resulted in the magnificence of the porcelain room at Charlottenburg. Yet the objects exhibited in this space remained bowls, cups and saucers, and vases, however ingeniously they were mounted and displayed (fig. 71). Aside from the exhibition of Augustus' massive Asian collection, it was the display of European porcelain that provided the impetus for the interior of two of Augustus' architectural commissions. They were European objects commissioned specifically to promote and exhibit the extent to which the European material could be manipulated.

The Japanese Palace: A Palace for Porcelain

Augustus commissioned an Oriental palace to display the largest porcelain collection in the world and to exhibit the capabilities of the first European porcelain manufactory.⁴⁷⁰ The Japanese Palace served as a precedent in the German states for the construction of a building, not just a room, with the singular purpose of displaying a massive porcelain collection. The richness of the collection was captured by Karl Ludwig Freiherr von Pollnitz's description of the Palace:

All the rooms of this Palace, which consists of three stories, are so many closets of *Japan* and *China* wares. I don't believe that all the Warehouses in Amsterdam

⁴⁷⁰ The Holländisches Palais (The Dutch Palace), bought by Augustus, renovated, enlarged, and renamed the Japanische Palais (Japanese Palace) was thought, until recently, to have been built by Prime Minister and Field Marshal Count Fleming in 1715 and then rented to the Dutch Ambassador Harsolde van Craneborg for one year, thereby giving the structure its original name. However, Cassidy-Geiger argues that it is more likely that the Count built the palace at the request of the Elector and King who was preoccupied with other building projects. Augustus then bought the Dutch palace from Fleming. It is her opinion that the name came from the fact that most of Augustus' early porcelain collection was acquired from Holland, where Augustus employed agents to procure the best pieces imported by the Dutch East India Company. Cassidy-Geiger suggests that it was renamed the Japanese Palace to shift the emphasis from Holland to the Far East in order to signify the provenance of the porcelain that Meissen first copied. Cassidy-Geiger, "The Japanese Palace Collections and their Impact at Meissen," p. 10; Two sets of plans were designed by the architects. Matthäus Daniel Pöppelmann was in charge of the first phase of alterations from 1717-1719, and was responsible for the renovation and enlargement of the existing structure. The original three-winged building underwent a complete change with the enclosure of a central courtyard by the addition of a fourth wing. An attempt was also made to give the building characteristics that would be explicitly associated with the Far East as well as declare the intention of the building. There was the addition of a slightly concave roof line to invoke Chinese architecture and the substitution of Chinese caryatids or herms for the pilasters of the main courtyard. A frieze of Asian figures offering porcelain to Dresden was carved into the pediment over the main entrance, Erdberg, *Chinese Influence*, p. 63. The relief suggests the purpose of the building. The countries where porcelain was manufactured are shown bringing their treasures to the enthroned "Saxonia" to be displayed in this palace dedicated to porcelain, Ingelore Menzhausen, "The Porcelain Collection," *The Splendour of Dresden*, Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1978, p. 169. A more detailed series of plans were submitted by Zaccharias Longuelune for the later phase of development from 1722-1728 for the interior, which had to house the more than twenty thousand pieces of Asian and the growing collection of domestic porcelain. Longuelune was also commissioned to set the tone of the Palace with plans for porcelain displays and interior décor, Walcha, *Meissen*, p. 77.

put together, are capable of furnishing such a quantity
of old Porcelane, as to be found here.⁴⁷¹

Indeed, Augustus' collection numbered more than seventy thousand pieces of Chinese, Japanese, and Meissen porcelain.

The building was to be a thematically integrated structure. An attempt was made to give the exterior of the building characteristics that would be explicitly associated with the Orient and porcelain (fig. 81). There was the addition of a slightly concave roofline to invoke Chinese architecture, the substitution of Chinese caryatids or herms for the pilasters of the main courtyard, and a frieze of Asian figures offering porcelain to Dresden in the pediment over the main entrance.⁴⁷² The relief suggests the purpose of the building. The countries where porcelain was manufactured are shown bringing their treasures to the enthroned "Saxonia" to be displayed in this palace dedicated to porcelain.⁴⁷³ For the interior Augustus stipulated that each room was to have its own type of porcelain and colour scheme; the porcelain was to be set off against a background of silks and papers of Eastern designs, and the furnishings were to complement the décor.⁴⁷⁴

⁴⁷¹ Freiherr von Pöllnitz, *Memoirs*, Vol. 1, p. 93.

⁴⁷² Erdberg, *Chinese Influences*, p. 63.

⁴⁷³ Ingelore Menzhausen, "The Porcelain Collection," p. 169.

⁴⁷⁴ Augustus the Strong is credited with assisting the development of the modern idea of specialised museums with the division of the objects from the *Kunstammer* into artistic, scientific and technological fields. The classification of these objects is explained as a rational structuring according to the modern spirit of the Age of Enlightenment. This scheme still determines the organisation of museums. The collection of prints and drawings from the *Kunstammer* were placed in the *Kupferstickabinett*. Other parts of this collection were housed in the Pavilions of the Zwinger complex. The German Pavilion, to the left of the Stadtpavilion or Glockenspiel pavilion, since the recent installation of the Carillon, is named for the paintings that were once housed there. The similar building to the right, the Zoological Pavilion, which now houses the Porcelain collection, had a collection of exotic animals. The Mathematical-Physical Pavilion housed the

The Palace was not meant to be a residential palace, but a showplace to overwhelm the visitor with the taste, prestige, and wealth of Saxony.⁴⁷⁵ One cannot help but assume that part of Augustus' motivation for the construction of this new palace was specifically to surpass the Charlottenburg Porcelain Room of the Prussian King, which had been the oldest, largest and most valuable of its kind until the construction of the Japanese Palace.

The porcelain collection was to be divided into three parts: the Far Eastern porcelains, the Meissen interpretations of these pieces as well as the large animal sculptures. The last section was to be made of architectural and functional pieces.⁴⁷⁶ His special commissions would demonstrate the artistic and technological capabilities of the Meissen manufactory in producing objects made from porcelain that had never been attempted before. Each presented challenges that had to be resolved with experimentation and innovation.

Augustus commissioned a porcelain zoo of large animal studies for the palace. Kaendler used the menagerie at the Zwinger and the zoological drawings in Augustus' collection as his primary sources of reference. The large, in some cases life-size studies of the animals and birds presented technical problems for

finest collection of globes, telescopes, scales, clocks and other scientifically oriented devices. In 1723 the *Grünes Gewölbe*, or the Green Vault in the Residenzschloss was enlarged to become the first museum for the decorative arts. In it Augustus combined the most precious contents of the *Kunstammer*, the *Silberkammer* and the Secret Storage Vault that had already existed in the Palace. John Man, *Travel and Landmarks, Zwinger Palace, Dresden*, London, 1990. p. 63.

⁴⁷⁵ Walcha, *Meissen*, p. 76

⁴⁷⁶ The breakdown of the collection is found in Walcha, *Meissen*, p. 77. The first inventory of pieces produced by Meissen and shipped to the Dutch Palace in November 1731, illustrates the variety of objects commissioned by Augustus is also found in Walcha, *Meissen*, p. 444, n. 39.

the factory staff. New methods of drying and firing were tried but still cracks appeared in the sculptures.⁴⁷⁷ These pieces Kaendler chose to leave unpainted reinforcing the idea of a formal and conceptual equivalence between biscuit porcelain and the architectural stone decoration that he was originally trained to sculpt. The lack of colour drew attention to the superior technique of his carving skills and the naturalism of the pieces (fig. 82).⁴⁷⁸

Augustus also requested porcelain furnishings for the Japanese Palace which were intended to be standard life size. A carillon, (with a mechanism by Hähnel, the master organ builder) was installed in the Japanese Palace in 1736, and a porcelain chapel with an altar, a pulpit and twelve life-sized figures of the apostles were planned. There was to be an audience room with a porcelain canopy and a throne.⁴⁷⁹ Zacharius Longuelune also made sketches for porcelain chimneypieces and doorposts.⁴⁸⁰ Johann Friedrich Eberlein joined the manufactory on April 18, 1735, as Kaendler's assistant. His work notes of 1736 and 1737 confirm that the porcelain doorposts and chimneypieces designed by Longuelune for the Japanese Palace were successfully completed.⁴⁸¹

Johann George Keyssler, a contemporary of Longuelune visited Dresden

⁴⁷⁷ Morley-Fletcher, *Meissen*, p. 11.

⁴⁷⁸ Walcha, *Meissen*, p. 60.

⁴⁷⁹ Only two of the figures were completed, Ingelore Menzhausen, "The Porcelain Collection," *The Splendour of Dresden*, p. 169.

⁴⁸⁰ Walcha, *Meissen*, p. 109; Chilton, "Rooms of Porcelain," p. 30.

⁴⁸¹ These architectural elements were later installed at Hubertusberg, the favourite palace of Frederick Augustus, the son of Augustus the Strong, known as Augustus III. Walcha, *Meissen*, p. 110.

in 1730, and described the palace from the architect's drawings:

The rooms on the ground floor will be decorated with Chinese and Japanese porcelain. In the rooms of the second floor will be placed nothing but Meissen porcelain, and the first room will contain all types of native and foreign birds and animals in their natural size and their colours. The pieces that are already finished cannot be admired enough for their art and beauty. However, so that pieces will always remain rare and costly, their molds are to be broken. The second room is to be occupied by all kinds of porcelain of celadon colour and gold, and the walls lined with mirrors and other ornaments. The third room will be furnished with yellow porcelain with gold decoration. The fourth is a hall where dark blue porcelain decorated with gold will take its bow. The fifth room will have porcelain of a purple colour.⁴⁸²

Keyssler provides a valuable description of the projected systematic organization of The Japanese Palace displays and the integrated nature of the structure. His commentary regarding the destruction of the animal sculpture molds illustrates that it was Augustus' intention that the pieces he commissioned for his museum were to be limited and exclusive. By rendering them scarce he determined that these highly experimental and technically challenging pieces would be valuable works of art. Although Augustus died in 1733, work on the collections continued and several thousand more pieces were produced for display. The palace, was however, never completed.

⁴⁸² Johann George Keyssler, *Travels Through Germany, Bohemia, Hungary, Switzerland, Italy, and Lorrain. Giving a true and just description of the present state of those countries, carefully translated from the second edition of the German*. Printed for A. Linde and T. Field, London, Vol. 4, 1757, p. 122.

The Indian Pleasure Palace at Pillnitz: A Palace of Porcelain

The Indian Pleasure Palace at Pillnitz was constructed from 1720 to 1732 down river from the city of Dresden. The palace was also to be a thematically integrated structure. The Asiatic appearance of the building was expressed on the exterior in the decoration of the columns and the portico, the concave cornice painted with Chinoiserie figures, and a doubly concave roof (fig. 83).⁴⁸³

Pillnitz was designed to show that it was indeed possible to use porcelain as an architectural material. Augustus had planned to actually make the walls, ceilings and floors of this material. Significantly, this was the first time that porcelain was considered for use as a building material for the interior of a structure.⁴⁸⁴ The description by Count A. Christoph Wackerbarth, the Governor of Dresden, suggests that Augustus had succeeded in his aims. Wackerbarth writes that the “walls, ceilings, window recesses, and the like were paneled with porcelain.”⁴⁸⁵ Although there are no further references to this project, similar commissions were eventually carried out by porcelain manufactories that had

⁴⁸³ Erdberg writes that this architectural element is considered to be one of the first genuine features in Chinoiserie architecture even though it was constructed with the angles of the Mansard roof on a neo-classical building. The concave curve and the protruding eaves had become characteristic of the Asiatic roof and at least one of these two qualities became indispensable to the future construction of Chinese style structures, *Chinese Influence*, p. 53; According to Connor, the origin of the device of deep eaves curving up to meet a similarly concave roof, conspicuously displayed at Pillnitz indirectly followed the publication of Fischer von Erlach's *History of Architecture* where he included a reproduction of Nieuhoff's illustration of the Porcelain Pagoda at Nanking. See *Oriental Architecture*, p. 22.

⁴⁸⁴ Honour mentions the plans for this palace but without reference, *Chinoiserie*, p. 112; Meister and Reber, *European Porcelain*, p. 8.

⁴⁸⁵ Reichwein quotes Count Wackerbarth's description of Pillnitz taken from Paul Schumann, *Barock und Rokoko Beiträge zur Geschichte*, p. 51, in *China and Europe*, p. 27.

some association with the Meissen manufactory and/or Augustus.⁴⁸⁶

The Japanese and Indian palaces were Augustus the Strong's two most demanding projects. They had challenged the artists' abilities to manipulate the material in a manner that had no precedent in application or scale. Both structures were left incomplete at the time of Augustus' death. His son and heir, Augustus III had other interests and left the direction of the manufactory to Count Heinrich Graff von Brühl, whose involvement was focused on the development of dinner services and centerpieces for which Kaendler's expertise as a sculptor proved essential.

Kaendler's Repertoire

The repertoire of porcelain objects designed by Kaendler is representative of his interests in sculptural form, his ability to manipulate the material, and his awareness of the relationship between porcelain, interior décor and architecture.

⁴⁸⁶ The Du Paquier Porcelain Manufactory created the Dubsky room for Count Markus Czabor of Szent-Mihaly's Dubsky Palace at Brünn, Moravia c. 1725-30. This room is presently housed in the Austrian Museum in Vienna (MAK). The company had the help of C. C. Hunger and S. Stolz, arcanist and decorator who defected from Meissen in 1717 and 1719. The room houses porcelain jars, plaques, fireplace and wall ornaments, a chandelier and inlaid furniture. See Honour, *Chinoiserie* p. 116 and Chilton, "Rooms of Porcelain," p. 32; Charles IV, King of the Two Sicilies established the Capodimonte Porcelain Manufactory. It produced the Sallotino of Maria Amalia in the Portici Palace from 1757-1759 for the Queen, Augustus the Strong's granddaughter. The little room had a chandelier, wall sconces, walls and a floor of porcelain. The design was of white porcelain slabs set into the walls and overlaid with coloured ornaments of Chinese figures, birds, monkeys, flowers, branches, scrolls, swags, and ribbons. Honour, *Chinoiserie*, pp. 123, 245 and Plumb, "The Royal Porcelain Craze," p. 58, mention this commission; Alice Wilson Frothingham, gives a detailed description of the porcelain rooms of Naples and Spain in *Capodimonte and Buen Retiro Porcelains*, The Hispanic Society of America, New York, 1955, pp 17-24. It is also mentioned in Charles, *Continental Porcelain* p. 181. When Charles IV became King of Spain in 1759 he established The Buen Retiro Company in Madrid. It produced a copy of the Portici porcelain room. Cleo M. Scott and G. Ryland Scott, *Antique Porcelain Digest*, The Ceramic Book Company, Newport, U.S.A., 1961, p. 61. A third room was designed for the Royal Palace at Madrid in the Neoclassical style, see Frothingham, *Capodimonte*, pp. 24-27, 33, 34-36.

These pieces were inspired by a range of sources in different media, and by the characteristics of other materials that were applied to the porcelain technique.

These characteristics may also be discerned in the interpretation of Frederick's garden pavilion. Indeed, the porcelain nature of his structure may be seen to have originated in the repertoire of Kaendler's sculptures in terms of scale, the animation of the figures, and the application of motifs that ornament the structure. Frederick's fascination with the Far East was represented by the figures integrated in the Oriental design of his structure. They allude to interests in Far Eastern trade, exotic goods and the admiration for China espoused by Voltaire. Those of Meissen made specific reference to the interests, diversions, diplomatic relations and the spectacles of the Saxon court.

The equestrian statue of Augustus III was to be made in white unpainted porcelain, rather than in bronze. It was to be well over three meters high. The statue proved to be one of Kaendler's greatest challenges and was never completed. A small study model at 1.4 meters tall produced in 1753 can be viewed at the Zwinger where the Dresden porcelain collection is housed. The statue would have been displayed in the town square or palace forecourt (fig. 84).

The *Trumeau* was produced in 1745-50 as a wedding gift to the Dauphine of France; the granddaughter of Augustus the Strong was the most elaborate work of this period. The ornamental mirror frame, which under normal circumstances would have been made from carved wood, was three meters high. It was produced by applying and rearranging sculptural elements into a completely new ensemble. The large oval mirror and the console table are entirely composed of *rocaille*

ornament, flower garlands, shell motifs and figures that were fused into a functional whole that could be inserted into the palace décor. Unfortunately this piece was lost during the French Revolution, although a similar model survived until the Second World War.

By far the largest number of works; however, were small figural studies of approximately 25 cm (10”) in height. It is estimated that Kaendler produced more than two thousand such pieces that illustrated a variety of aspects of eighteenth-century life, concentrating in particular on the interests of the court and its diversions: the hunt, music and theatre, opera, and the allegorical figures that also participated in the grand spectacles.⁴⁸⁷ These sculptures were used as room decoration, as table decorations, and components of complex centerpieces. Many of these pieces were also integrated with interior décor and architecture.

Studies of the characters of the *Commedia del'Arte*, the opera, or the members of an orchestra, directly invoked the stage and the theatre. Because the figures from the opera and theatre were ordinarily seen from the audience's perspective, the pieces, although finished in the round, were to be viewed frontally along a horizontal plane, as they would be seen on the stage.⁴⁸⁸ Kaendler

⁴⁸⁷ The inspiration for the *Commedia del Arte* figures can be found in the nineteen plates engraved by François Joullain in Luigi Riccoboni's *Histoire du théâtre italien* (1728); figures from the world of entertainment were derived from illustrations of the French ballet, theatre, opera, and costume. Turkish figures were copied from the Comte de Férriol's *Recueil de cent estampes représentant différentes nations du Levant*, which served as the source for the series of *Levantines* produced by Kaendler and Reinicke at Meissen and were among the most plagiarised figures produced by the manufactory. Poole, *Plagiarism Personified*, pp. 44, 45. Tabakoff has noted the source for *The Handkiss, one of the Crinoline Groups*, as an engraving by Laurent Cars after François Boucher, published in *Oeuvres de Molière* dated 1734. Tabakoff, "Imitation or Invention," p. 18.

⁴⁸⁸ Meister and Reber, *European Porcelain*, p. 206.

produced these characters as sets, which could number from twelve to twenty-four studies, produced as single sculptures, parts of organized groups like the musicians of the Monkey Band or the Miners Band for example, or integrated within the design of a complex centerpiece.

Entertainment and spectacle were the inspiration for allegorical figures like the *Four Continents* and the *Four Seasons* that appeared in the court festivals. Figures representing the peoples of the world were produced after Augustus initiated an African Expedition. While costumed figures of Persians, Germanic Tribesmen, American Indians, Turks and Chinese paraded for Augustus' magnificent festivals and pageants that took place at the Zwinger complex.

The Crinoline Groups -- female figural studies dressed in voluminous eighteenth-century gowns -- were placed in situations with furnishings and props that were intended to convey subtly an idea of an interior living space in which the figures might display the appropriate social behaviour as suggested by their gestures. The sculptures provide an insight into the fashions and interior furnishings of the period.

By the manipulation of the molds, different coloured glazes, and the addition of figures it was possible to create different porcelain studies that were vignettes of eighteenth-century deportment. It was also with these smaller studies that Kaendler defined the sense of intimacy often associated with the Rococo age: the manners and comportment, social interaction, love and romance, that were associated with the interior space or the garden. Architectural ruins and Rococo

bowers were ideal places to shield lovers in clandestine rendezvous (fig. 85).⁴⁸⁹

These sculptures were well suited as décor for the smaller, more intimate and less formal eighteenth-century interior.⁴⁹⁰ They were also suitable as decoration for the grand arrangements set out upon the table, or as components of the complex centerpieces that combined painting, sculpture and architecture that were the focal point of the dessert.

Sugar Sculptures and Table Ornaments

The practice of decorating the table with complex arrangements is thought to have originated in the Near East in the eleventh century. Descriptions of elaborate and expensive table ornaments of sugar sculptures made in the form of architectural models to decorate the table during Feast Day celebrations attest to their importance and appreciation as a valuable art form.⁴⁹¹ This form of artistry seems to have spread to Europe through Italy via traveling confectioners and wayfarers during the fourteenth century who left behind numerous recipes for the

⁴⁸⁹ Meister and Reiber, *European Porcelain*, pp. 205, 206.

⁴⁹⁰ These sculptures have become the subjects of numerous articles and museum exhibitions which have examined their artistic, social, and historical value. See the exhibition catalogue *Figures From Life: Porcelain Sculpture From the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York ca. 1740-1780*, Museum of Fine Arts St. Petersburg, Florida, 1992.

⁴⁹¹ Contemporary accounts report the use of architectural models and figures for the table. Decorations for the feast day celebrations of the Egyptian Caliph al-Zaire (reigned ca.1021-1037), for example, are described as art works from the bakers that included one hundred fifty-seven figures and seven table-sized palaces made of sugar. A guest at a celebration of 1412 described a sugar mosque fashioned to decorate the table. Sidney W. Mintz, *Sweetness and Power: The Place of Sugar in Modern History*, Viking, New York, 1985, p. 88; and Le Corbeiller, "Figures to Adorn the Middle of the Desert," p. 9.

production of sugar confections.⁴⁹² Combining sugar with various ingredients such as almond oil, scented waters, gums or ground almonds (marzipan), resulted in a thick paste or clay-like substance that one could mold or model, bake to harden, gild and paint for table decorations. Some examples of molds for these sugar sculptures can still be found, although the sugar pieces no longer exist; these were typically eaten or given to the ladies of the court at the end of the evening as favors.⁴⁹³ By the thirteenth century the use of March pane (marzipan) was a common practice at English feasts where the sculpted displays were known as “subtleties.” At French banquets they were known as *entremets* and served to mark the intervals between courses. After each service the table was cleared and reset with a clean cloth and an entirely different repertoire of foods. Between each service these “subtleties” or *entremets*, entertainment or amusements would occur to while away the time. These diversions could entail short distractions such as a group of musicians or jugglers or a more lengthy entertainment such as a play. Eventually these events evolved into a program of sugar table decorations such as the figures of the musicians and actors that provided diversion for the diners.⁴⁹⁴

For example, at the marriage of Henry IV and Joan of Navarre in 1403, the “subtleties” were in the form of animals, objects and buildings, and because sugar

⁴⁹² Recipes can be found in Mintz, *Sweetness and Power*, pp. 91-92; and Sara Paston-Williams, *The Art of Dining: A History of Cooking and Eating*, The National Trust, London, 1993, p. 122. An illustration of a mold for sugar sculptures can be found in Peter Brown, *Pyramids of Pleasure: Eating and Dining in 18th Century England*, York Civic Trust, 1990, p. 26.

⁴⁹³ Mintz, *Sweetness and Power*, p. 88.

⁴⁹⁴ See Terence Scully for a history of the Mediaeval French *entremets* as documented in four collections of French culinary recipes, “The Medieval French *Entremets*,” *Petits Propos Culinaires*, Vol. 17, 1984, pp. 44-56.

was both a desirable and expensive commodity they were admired by the guests and then eaten.⁴⁹⁵ The Medici court sculptors Giambologna and Pietro Tacca were responsible for the *trionfi* produced for the wedding banquet held at the Palazzo Vecchio on October 5, 1600, celebrating the marriage by proxy of Maria de Medici and Henry IV of France. Among the constantly changing repertoire of table decorations were almost life-size sugar statues of the couple. They included an equestrian statue of Henry IV, which is thought to have been made from the cast of a Giambologna bronze.⁴⁹⁶

Porcelain was the natural replacement for sugar decorations. Besides the association of white sugar with white porcelain, the method of producing sculptures was similar, using molds, heating the material to harden it, painting and gilding the object for aesthetic appeal. The subject matter was easily transferred from one material to another, and porcelain was far more practical because the sculptures could be used again. Porcelain, like sugar, was expensive, and attainable only by a select few. Therefore porcelain table decorations fulfilled the same role and circulated within this same atmosphere of wealth and privilege.

The complexity of the table decorations and the numbers of pieces necessary for creating a suitable setting illustrate the important role they played and the significance that was placed upon them by both host and guests. In 1753, for example, the inventory of Saxony's prime minister, Heinrich Count von

⁴⁹⁵ Mintz, *Sweetness and Power*, p. 89.

⁴⁹⁶ Katharine J. Watson, "Sugar Sculpture for Grand Ducal Weddings from the Giambologna Workshop," *Connoisseur*, Vol. 199, 1978, pp. 20-26.

Brühl's pantry listed two thousand six hundred and seventy-six figures and groups, organized by categories such as gods and goddesses, allegories, personifications, courtiers, soldiers, Orientals, and tradesmen. Eight hundred and sixty-eight pieces were listed as table adornment, and six hundred twenty three pieces as tableware.⁴⁹⁷

Dinner and Diplomacy

Porcelain dinner and dessert services and accompanying table decorations were a subtle form of propaganda and diplomacy and, like the festivals that played a significant part in the history of Saxony, they were a meaningful part of court culture and display.⁴⁹⁸ The use of porcelain on the table illustrates that this medium had become a significant element in the language of the court and the state and the following example illustrates how easily porcelain was able to assume this role.

The Festival of Saturn, held on September 26, 1719, had been the culmination of the month-long festivities to celebrate the marriage of Augustus the Strong's son and heir, to Maria Josepha, elder daughter of Emperor Joseph I. This event was captured in a series of prints by Carl Heinrich Jacob Fehling. It paid homage to the mining industry that had figured so prominently in the history of the Saxon economy. Hundreds of costumed miners participated in the festival

⁴⁹⁷ Jean Louis Sponsel, *Kabinetstücke der Meissner Porzellanmanufaktur von Johann Joachim Kändler*, Leipzig, 1900, p. 137, as cited in Le Corbeiller, "Figures to Adorn," p. 10, and Röntgen, *The Book of Meissen*, p. 117. The list of Brühl's porcelain table decorations also appears in Carolin C. Young, *Apples of Gold in Settings of Silver: Stories of Dinner as a Work of Art*, Simon and Schuster, New York, 2002, p. 151.

⁴⁹⁸ Le Corbeiller, "Figures to Adorn," p. 9.

held at the *Erzegebirge* demonstrating every aspect of their profession, even carrying in a working model of a mine. The display showed what raw materials the mines and quarries in Saxony produced, the specialised techniques, the tools needed to extract the materials, and the related metallurgical and chemical industries produced from them.⁴⁹⁹ At the Banquet which followed the festival, the table was set along the length with sugar mountains interspersed with models of machines and figures of miners and workers (figs. 86, 87).⁵⁰⁰

The first series of porcelain figure sculptures to pay homage to the industry were of musician-miners produced at Meissen in 1725. In 1752 Kaendler recognised the continuing importance of this industry to the Saxon economy by designing a large complex centerpiece called the *Plauenschen Grund*. It was made of an ensemble of figures that represented the Superintendent of Mines and individual figures of labourers involved in various mining processes (fig. 88).

Mining was an example of an industry that served both the economic needs of the state by exporting raw materials to its neighbours and the artistic requirements of the court by supplying the raw materials for the silversmiths and jewellers commissioned to produce marvelous creations for Augustus' Green Vaults where he stored his treasures. It had played a vital role since the twelfth century when silver was found in the mountains in the south and had continued to do so with the subsequent discoveries of tin, copper, iron, semi precious stones,

⁴⁹⁹ Watanabe O'Kelly, *Court Culture in Dresden*, pp. 225-229.

⁵⁰⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 229.

cobalt, sulphur, marble and bismuth.⁵⁰¹

The mining industry had also played an important role in the development of the porcelain industry with the discoveries of china clays necessary for the production of Böttger's red stoneware and hard-paste porcelain. Members of the department of mines also participated in glaze research.⁵⁰² The success of porcelain also reiterated the scientific expertise and technological advancement of the state. The resulting table ornament is an example of how porcelain was representative of the material as both commodity and art form. It also illustrates that a product of the manufactory functioned as a valuable work of art, and was politically significant. In its various roles it participated in court spectacle and display.

The importance and the seriousness of undertaking the table decoration is exemplified by the specialists involved in their preparation, the number of manuals published to offer advice, the vocabulary established for the variety of decorations and the number of pieces that made up the repertoire of elements to present a suitable social and/or political message.

Because table arrangements were complex artistic achievements the kitchen employed persons specifically for the purpose of preparing a table for an evening's dining pleasure around a specific theme. In Germany the table decorations and figures known as *Schau-essen* were under the jurisdiction of the

⁵⁰¹ Joachim Menzhausen, "Five Centuries of Art Collecting in Dresden," *The Splendour of Dresden*, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, 1978, pp. 15-16.

⁵⁰² Richards, *Eighteenth-Century Ceramics*, p. 17.

Hofkonditor and stored in the kitchen pantry where the food and the dessert courses were prepared. Meissen pieces designated as table decorations were assigned to the pantry by the painted mark *K(önigliche) H(of) C(onditorei)*.⁵⁰³

The significance of decorating the table can be determined by the number of volumes published in Europe offering advice and plans for table arrangements, decorations and centerpieces. The court of Stanislas Leszcynski at Lunéville was fortunate that Monsieur S. Gilliers, *Chef d'Office et Distillateur de sa Majesté le Roi de Pologne, Duc de Lorraine et de Bar*, prepared a book of designs for the table which included the use of sugar sculptures. Published in 1751 and 1768, *Le Cannaméliste Français* documents plans for dessert tables that were laid out like gardens with buildings, vases, flowers, trees, and figures.⁵⁰⁴ By mid-century there were numerous porcelain manufactories on the continent. An anonymous author published *Les Souper de la Cour ou l'Art de Travailler Toutes Sortes d'Alimens pour Servir les Meilleurs Tables* suggesting the use of either sugar or the new porcelain figures as table ornament.⁵⁰⁵ A German manual published in 1785 gives instructions for the arrangements of table decorations for the dessert service while acknowledging the special qualifications of the *Hofkonditor*:

At the table during great ceremonies the dessert is frequently accompanied by allegorical and figural representations, in the proper arrangement of

⁵⁰³ Le Corbeiller, "Figures to Adorn," p. 10.

⁵⁰⁴ S. Gilliers, *Le Cannaméliste Français*, Abel-Cusson, Nancy, 1751, 1768.

⁵⁰⁵ Alain-Charles Gruber, cites this anonymous publication in "Les Décors de Table Ephémères aux XVIIe et XVIIIe Siècles," *Gazette des Beaux Arts*, 83, mai-juin 1974, p. 292, as does Le Corbeiller in "Porcelain as Sculpture," p. 24.

which considerable knowledge of History, Poetry and Mythology, likewise Architecture and Perspective, is called for. The easiest representations at great desserts are pleasure-gardens, with promenades, *parterres*, vases and statues, of which last the porcelain factories make the prettiest and most decorative pieces and ensembles imaginable, thus saving the confectioner much work⁵⁰⁶

This quotation draws clear parallels between porcelain table decorations, garden art and architecture. The description suggests some of the characteristics of Frederick's and Büring's design for the Tea House laid out in its garden setting. It illustrates a necessary knowledge base as the stylistic point of departure from which the *Hofkonditor*, like Frederick could draw inspiration for his creation. The use of allegory and metaphor were valuable media of communication. It also brings forward the use of centerpieces as vehicles for self-representation or political propaganda.

Perhaps unsurprisingly then, a specific vocabulary was developed to define the variation in the design of table ornaments. The *sur tout*, was a large centerpiece, often of fruit in pyramidal form, towering over the table and demanding a great deal of space. This was accomplished by the use of a two or three-tiered fruit stand of porcelain, silver, silver gilt or glass known as an *assiette montée*, *girandole* or *assiette étagère*. In England this item was called an *épergne*. The term is thought to be a corruption of the French *épargne*, or treasury, because the fruits which were too rare and beautiful, and therefore costly, were displayed

⁵⁰⁶ Quoted without reference in Robert Charleston, *Meissen and other European Porcelain*, Published for the National Trust by Office du Livre, London and Fribourg, 1971, p. 17.

simply for decorative value and the visual enjoyment of the guests.⁵⁰⁷ The *platménagement* was decorative and useful and was composed of vessels on a tray that held the necessary condiments of sugar, salt, pepper, oil and vinegar. The *dormant* was intended to stay the entire evening and could comprise any type of large centerpiece; for instance, it could be an architectural or sculptural arrangement like a tureen, or a *Temple of Honour* (fig. 92).⁵⁰⁸

The low centerpiece, *plateau* or *parterre*, which I suggest initiated Frederick's design was often a large flat tray which took up the centre of the table's surface and came equipped with a miniature garden that conformed to the fashion of the time, with buildings, hedges, walks, mirror ponds, trees, vases of flowers, animals and figures. Architectural features could include any type of building that suited the planned program like Greek temples and Chinese pagodas, or the houses of Dresden.⁵⁰⁹

⁵⁰⁷ The dessert course included fruits of the garden that were sometimes used simply as part of the decoration and not to be eaten. Voltaire scoffed at this ridiculous convention after being chastised for his breach of etiquette by choosing a fruit that demolished the centerpiece. He wrote to M. le Comte d'Autry, dated September 6, 1765 that it there was a new kind of *surtout* where you were forbidden to eat the fruit and how uncivil it is to put food before a guest that was not to be eaten. See Paston-Williams, *The Art of Dining*, p. 135.

⁵⁰⁸ A detailed description of types of centerpieces is found in Georgiana Reynolds Smith, *Table Decoration, Yesterday, Today and Tomorrow*, Charles E. Tuttle Company, Rutland, and Tokyo, 1968, an abbreviated description is found in Margaret Visser, *The Rituals of Dinner*, Harper Collins Publishers Ltd, 1991, pp. 161-162.

⁵⁰⁹ Reynolds Smith, *Table Decoration*, pp. 147-156.

Porcelain and Politics on the Table Top

...jellies, biscuits, sugar plumbs, and creams have long given way to harlequins, gondoliers, Turks, Chinese and shepherdesses of Saxon china ... by degrees whole meadows of cattle of the same brittle materials, spread themselves over the whole table; cottages rose in sugar, and temples in barley sugar; pygmy Neptunes in cars of cockle-shells triumphed over oceans of looking-glass or seas of silver tissue and at length the whole system of Ovid's metamorphosis was succeeded to all transformations ...⁵¹⁰

Horace Walpole

Kaendler's repertoire of sculptures was used on the surface of the table where dinner services, combinations of figure studies, and architectural models played a role in court spectacle. The concept of eating from a matched set of the porcelain dishes did not exist until the eighteenth century. The table service emulated that which had been well established at the seventeenth and eighteenth-century court of Versailles. It consisted of several courses of many different sized silver and gold serving dishes placed on the table in a pleasing arrangement from which guests could choose from a variety of foods.⁵¹¹

Claire Le Corbeiller suggests that the importation of masses of porcelain for use as room decoration and as tablewares accustomed Europeans to the use and visual effect of porcelain. Pieces were not actually matched, but unified by a particular palette – like blue and white – and these combined with the many

⁵¹⁰ Horace Walpole, "The World, February 8, 1753, by Adam Fitz-Adam," *The Works of Horatio Walpole, Earl of Orford*, Printed for G. G. and J Robinson, and J. Edwards, London, 1798, Vol. 1, pp. 149.

⁵¹¹ Le Corbeiller, "German Porcelain of the Eighteenth Century," pp. 7-9.

different sizes and types of metal dishes placed on the table gave rise to the idea of the porcelain service.⁵¹² The production began with a set of matched cups and saucers and vessels for the drinking of hot beverages in the second decade of the eighteenth century, and was followed by the production of dishes that became the basis for the magnificent table services produced in the third decade of the century.⁵¹³ According to Le Corbeiller “it was the table service that came to represent the epitome of princely display or presentation.”⁵¹⁴ Within this medium the centerpieces provided a focal point on the table. These objects combined beauty, form, and function in objects that were creations of architecture, sculpture, and painting.

This form of entertainment and diversion was developed during the reign of Augustus III and his minister, Count Heinrich Graf von Brühl (1700-1763), supervisor of the Meissen Manufactory in 1733, and its director in 1736.⁵¹⁵ As director, the king granted him the privilege of commissioning anything from the factory he desired. Brühl commissioned the table service that was to become the most extensive and complete service ever created. It consisted of a large dinner service and a dessert service of two thousand two hundred pieces, thirty different

⁵¹² Ibid., p. 7.

⁵¹³ Ibid.

⁵¹⁴ Ibid., p. 24.

⁵¹⁵ A short biography of Count Heinrich Graff von Brühl and his extravagant lifestyle and use of porcelain table settings and ornaments appears in Chapter Seven, “Insatiable Gluttony,” Young, *Apples of Gold in Settings of Silver*, pp. 138-161.

forms, and even included porcelain handles for cutlery.⁵¹⁶ The Swan Service was begun in 1737 and completed in 1741. The magnitude and complexity of the ensemble made it necessary to employ the court sculptors to help Kaendler complete the set. It exemplifies the inspiration for porcelain from nature and printed material, and the interplay of the interior and exterior that is also found at the Tea House.

Kaendler once again returned to the Natural History Museum to do research and spent three days drawing shells.⁵¹⁷ The white plates are seashells embossed with a design of flying herons and swans swimming among the reeds from which the service gets its name.⁵¹⁸ The vessels are covered with a relief decoration on the theme of water with figures drawn from flora, fauna and mythology. The inclusion of nature as the thematic concept brought the outdoors onto the dining table.⁵¹⁹ The interplay of interior and exterior space was carried out on the tabletop with buildings, gardens, flowers and trees. This alternate reality was also experienced in the landscapes on the interior painted surfaces of Frederick's pavilion where pagodas were visible in the hazy landscape behind the balustrade.

⁵¹⁶ The Swan Service is still made to order with an approximate waiting period of two years.

⁵¹⁷ Morley-Fletcher, *Meissen*, p. 65.

⁵¹⁸ Description of plate design taken from Kaendler's work notes in Walcha, *Meissen*, p. 445, n. 53. The image of the swans has been traced to an engraving by Wenceslas Hollar, done in 1654, after Francis Barlow (1626-1702), see Maureen Cassidy-Geiger, "From Barlow to Buggel: A New Source for the Swan Service," *Keramos*, Vol. 119, 1988, pp. 64-68; and Le Corbeiller, "German Porcelain," p. 27.

⁵¹⁹ Walcha, *Meissen*, pp. 485, 486.

This idea was to be expanded further for the service for dessert. The sculptural forms of the vessels and the subtlety of the embossed designs of the dishes took precedence over the painting, and the pieces were left white with minimal gilding on the edges and only small sprigs of flowers and coloured accents. Each piece bears the Coat of Arms of the Count and his wife, Countess Franziska Kolovrat-Krakoski to further display the prestige of the host and hostess and the exclusivity of the table setting.

In actual fact it was the dessert service or *Konfekt* course that Count Brühl had commissioned first. Kaendler produced an ensemble of pieces that combined art, entertainment, and function in the form of candelabrum, sweetmeat containers, platters, and tureens (fig. 89). The massive tureens, especially, show Kaendler's affinity for sculpture. They combine the figures that he was so adept at producing, with animal and plant forms as one artistic and functional unit. Kaendler's description of the concept for the dessert service written in his work notes of December 1737 illustrates a clear idea of what he was designing and how the pieces were to be placed to decorate the surface of the table:

...the idea is taken from seashells and marine creatures. The main piece stands in the middle of the table. We see four Tritons riding on sea horses, supporting Neptune, who stands on shells into which you can put sweets. In addition there is another work composed of shells on which there are female figures and dolphins, which support shells for sweets. There is also a glaucos, who sits in a shell and supports on his head other shells for sweets. On each corner of the table we see a swimming swan, with wings so formed that many sweets can be

placed on them.⁵²⁰

The tureen was not removed in preparation for the dessert service. The *Konfekt* course was arranged around this central unit and because the theme was continued throughout the entire service, the central vessel was the focal point. Needless to say, the size of the piece and the fact that there are sculpted figures placed on the rounded form were integrated into its design made it an interesting and pleasing diversion from any side of the table.

This piece illustrates the relationship between porcelain table sculpture and the design of Frederick's Tea House in the rounded form and the use of animated figures integrated within the design of the piece. It also illustrates an exchange of material -- porcelain as shells, sandstone and stucco as porcelain, and inspiration from printed material, that exemplifies the intermediality of the medium. Most importantly it brings forward the conceptualization of ideas represented in the ensemble of ornaments that parallels Frederick's structure.

This complex arrangement of porcelain sculptures devised upon a thematic concept served a useful purpose while contributing to the beauty of the table and the prestige of the host. According to Ulrich Pietsch:

The Swan Service with its luxurious design marks the artistic and stylistic high point in the development of the baroque dining services. As the main work by the brilliant modeler Kaendler it embodies at the same time the perfection of all sculptural means of expression in porcelain and it was one of the status symbols reflecting the power and political ascendancy of the Count of Brühl.⁵²¹

⁵²⁰ Kaendler's description is found in his work report dated December 1737, WA WS I A a24b/114, published in Walcha, *Meissen*, p. 445, n. 52.

⁵²¹ Ulrich Pietsch, in Anette Loesch, Ulrich Pietsch and Friedrich Reichel, *Porcelain Collection in*

The development of Kaendler's repertoire of figures reinforced the success of his patron's political agenda and attested to Bruhl's wealth, prestige, and connoisseurship. The valuable products of Meissen provided entertainment and diversion to the Count's guests while participating in a program of self-representation.

Architecture for the Table

Porcelain architectural models figured prominently in the repertoire of table decorations designed by Kaendler and his assistants. These commissions reinforce my argument that Frederick's Tea House was interpreted through the European culture of porcelain. Kaendler's work notes of 1737 state that he was in the process of creating a centerpiece for Count Brühl composed of porcelain houses that were actual copies of buildings in Dresden. These were to be arranged in street-like rows along the tabletop. Peter Reinicke, Kaendler's assistant was assigned to work on this commission.⁵²² His work report dated June 1743 mentions the completion of one study. It reads as follows:

Fashioned in clay for Count von Brühl: a pleasure House thirty centimeters high, twenty centimeters wide and twenty centimeters long. It is three stories high, with a broken-tile roof. In front and behind are pediments and balconies. There are windows on all

the Dresden Zwinger, Trans. by Ulrich Holtz and Richard Gary Hooton, Staatliche Kunstsammlungen Dresden, 1998, p.182.

⁵²² Walcha, *Meissen*, pp. 106, 119.

sides ...⁵²³

The inventory taken at the time of Brühl's death in 1763 listed sixty-seven such structures in his possession (fig. 90).⁵²⁴ The number may be seen as evidence of his domination of political power in the capital of Saxony. This commission represents the interpretation of actual structures transposed into porcelain for the table. This was not a unique architectural interpretation for the tabletop.

Charles Hanbury-Williams was invited to attend a banquet at the residence of Count Brühl. He could only elicit an expression of wonder at the magnificence of the table and the complexity of the porcelain decorations "I thought it the most wonderful I ever beheld. I fancy'd myself either in a garden or at an Opera, but I could not imagine that I was at dinner...."⁵²⁵ In his correspondence to a friend in England he later wrote, "In the middle of the table was the Fountain of the Piazza Navona at Rome, at least eight foot high, which ran all the while with Rose-water ..."⁵²⁶ Reinicke's notes refer to this sculpture as Brühl's cascade and was in actuality a porcelain copy of a fountain in his garden at Ostra, erected by court architect Longuelune, who had designed the interiors of the Japanese Palace, and court sculptor Mattielli, who had sculpted the figures in the Dresden Cathedral.⁵²⁷ These architectural ornaments were self-referential and displayed his

⁵²³ Walcha, *Meissen*, p. 446, n. 60.

⁵²⁴ Ibid., pp. 106, 119.

⁵²⁵ The quotation by Charles Hanbury-Williams is without citation, see Charleston, *Meissen*, p. 17.

⁵²⁶ Ibid., p. 17.

⁵²⁷ Walcha, *Meissen*, p. 133, 446-447, n. 66.

importance and power.

The merging of architecture and porcelain proved to be popular. There were numerous very large architectural models made as table centerpieces during this period. The largest produced by the Meissen works was a *Temple of Honour* made for Augustus III in 1748 which was to be placed on the royal table March 5, 1749. It was more than three meters tall and assembled with wooden supports between the layers. Kaendler produced drawings for the ground plan. The temple was likely inspired by the spire of the Catholic Cathedral of Dresden commissioned by the king, whose conversion to Catholicism was a necessary conciliation to ascend the Polish throne (fig. 91).

The *Temple* was a popular model, and smaller versions were produced as centerpieces after 1750. The *Temple of Honour* in the Dresden Collection is seventy-five centimeters tall, and seventy-five centimeters wide (fig. 92). It is constructed of twenty-four vine entwined Corinthian columns supporting double-curved *rocaille* arches. It combined architecture and figure sculpture. Eight cherubim seated on the ledge above the columns are thought to represent the Seasons. A Fame hangs from a ribbon suspended from the centre of the balustrade.⁵²⁸ The temple was a particularly suitable architectural study for the centerpiece. The circular form made the view similar from all perspectives and the open structure did not obstruct the view across, or isolate the guests on either side of the table. Any type of garden building, like Chinese pavilions, ruins, and

⁵²⁸ Loesch, Pietsch, and Reichel, *Porcelain Collection in the Dresden Zwinger*, p. 187.

bowers made a suitable focal point around which to prepare a thematic table presentation.

The Chinese pagoda and its accompanying figures never lost their appeal. Chinoiserie designs had been in vogue since the inception of the manufactory during Böttger's tenure and have persisted throughout its history. Chinese people in gardens with pavilions were painted on porcelain dishes in the early years of the Meissen manufactory and were in fashion with the development of Kaendler's figural studies. The vogue for the Anglo-Chinese garden brought Chinoiserie subjects in style for the tabletop.⁵²⁹

At the Meissen manufactory one can find the correspondence between sculpture for the dining table and any type of sculpture produced for the garden. This was because the court sculptors worked on both large and small-scale commissions. There was a shared iconography in the thematic programs of statuary, garden festivals, and table decorations, porcelain and the design and ornamentation of the Tea House. The size and complexity of the centerpiece was in direct proportion to the affluence and social position of the host. Although not all the *parterre* type of centerpieces would have been as complex and as large as Count Brühl's they could nevertheless mirror the pageantry of court fêtes. This might which have entailed musical entertainment, ballets and theatrical performances, which could have been performed either indoors or in the garden, or in close proximity to a garden pavilion. These diversions are exemplified by

⁵²⁹ Gilliers's book of table plans shows Chinese figures in *Planche 5* relaxing on the surface of the *parterre*, and *planche 13 plan a et b* illustrates two *dormants* as garden settings with Chinese figures, fountains and garden pavilions.

the Chinese orchestra surrounding Frederick's Tea House.

With the development of complex centerpieces, porcelain sculpture functioned as vessel, ornament, and diversion. As massive sculptural objects placed in the center of the table they also functioned as architecture. Some were in fact architectural studies, and their interpretation analogous with that of Frederick's Chinese pavilion. These complex centerpieces composed of architecture, sculpture, and painting, reflect the concept of the *Gesamtkunstwerk*. The sources of their interpretation and inspiration illustrate the intermediality of porcelain.

The relationship of porcelain, interior décor, and architecture initiated with Chinese porcelain in treasure chambers and porcelain rooms, and the thematically integrated Trianon de Porcelaine, is reflected in the design and décor of the Tea House. This association was further explored through the eighteenth-century culture of porcelain by the artists of the Meissen manufactory. Their products illustrate the importance of porcelain as a medium for court culture and display. The interpretation of Frederick's exotic pavilion should be seen as a result of the history of the relationship of Asian porcelain and architecture and its interpretation through the eighteenth-century culture of this material.

CONCLUSION

My first visit to the Chinese Tea House, glowing golden and green in the October sun of 2002, solidified my impression of the structure as a porcelain pavilion. This perception, developed from illustrations in the few publications dedicated to the structure, was not supported by the literature on the garden pavilion, nor acknowledged in the numerous publications on eighteenth-century porcelain. Visiting the pavilion several times, traveling to many of the extant porcelain rooms, touring pavilions in the Chinese taste, and visiting porcelain manufactories and museums, I attempted to come as close as possible to experiencing the Tea House within its historical context. My conception of the Tea House evolved from these visits.

The influence of porcelain on architecture was gleaned from a number of primary and secondary sources. These texts illustrated that porcelain did indeed influence interior décor and architecture from the medieval period until the later years of the eighteenth century. The interpretation of the pavilion through the eighteenth-century culture of porcelain acknowledges the material as one of the most important technological and artistic discoveries of the century, and aligns the pavilion with the type of ornament Meissen designed to ornament the table of the nobility. The intermediality of porcelain makes reference to the myriad influences that impacted the design and décor of this thematically integrated structure. My perception of the Tea House is the result of the complex cultural exchanges and diverse forms of cultural appropriation that situate the building and its porcelain

characteristics within the studies of visual, material, and cultural history.

Recognizing the role of porcelain in the conception of Frederick's building represents a new approach in the study of this structure. It demonstrates the complex historical relationship of porcelain and architecture and illustrates the extent to which this material overlapped with contemporary social interests.

Acknowledging the influence of this material on architecture adds to the understanding of the complex role of porcelain in the eighteenth-century, and joins recent publications that recognize the importance of this substance as sculpture, historical document, and as diplomatic gift.

The classification of Frederick's Tea House as Rococo, Chinoiserie and a folly, has discouraged a discussion of the structure within traditional architectural history. The literature on Chinoiserie is generally formulated as compilations of the decorative arts and architecture impacted by the Western fascination of the East. As such, these publications illustrate the broad spectrum of this style's influence, but their superficial examination of Frederick's structure have encouraged a limited understanding of the building and have discouraged an appreciation of the unique qualities of the Chinese Tea House.⁵³⁰ The classification of the building as a folly in particular has aligned the structure with uselessness.⁵³¹ These categorizations have precluded an appreciation of the influence of porcelain on the design and décor of Frederick's structure.

⁵³⁰ See Honour, *Chinoiserie*; Impey, *Chinoiserie*; Jarry, *Chinoiserie*; and Jacobson, *Chinoiserie*.

⁵³¹ Refer to the discussion of follies in Barlow, Knox and Hughes, *Follies*, p. 6; and pp. 52-56 of this thesis.

Perceptions of the East and the discourses of Orientalism, Post Colonialism and Imperialism have influenced the perceptions of such structures and the persons who inhabited them. I suggest that these theories are inappropriate in the discussions of the Tea House but are appropriate in discussions of the exotic pavilions commissioned for the Great Exhibitions and World Fairs of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Indeed Zeynep Çelik has written on such structures in her book *Displaying the Orient: Architecture of Islam at Nineteenth Century World Fairs*.⁵³² Exotic structures like Frederick's may be seen as precursors to World Fair architecture but differ in their social, political, and historical context. This is especially relevant due to the perceptions of Europe's leading intellectual and sinophile Voltaire, who found China morally and politically superior, and worthy of European admiration and emulation.

Frederick's pavilion is a European construction of the pre-colonial period during an era of cultural exchange encouraged by the Jesuit presence at the court of Peking. The Chinese Tea House is a result of China's wide-ranging influences, impacting interior design, garden design, architecture, the decorative arts, and political philosophy. Western influences were also manifested in Chinese interpretations of European architecture and garden design. The Chinese Emperor Chien Lung commissioned the European palaces of Yüan Ming Yüan and fountains from the Jesuit Fathers Castiglione and Benoist for the Imperial Palace complex. The Jesuits were also disseminators of Western science, mathematics

⁵³² Zeynep Çelik, *Displaying the Orient: Architecture of Islam at Nineteenth Century World's Fairs*, University of California Press, Berkeley, 1992.

and astronomy.⁵³³

The literature published on the Rococo denigrates the style, finding it frivolous, derivative, and related to the feminine. These ideas are the result of a superficial understanding of the French Rococo movement that originated in the later years of the eighteenth century. They have been refuted since the mid-twentieth century by historians Fiske Kimball, Henry Russell Hitchcock, Anthony Blunt, and others who have challenged the negative associations of *le goût pittoresque* and the art forms of the period.⁵³⁴ Indeed, Blunt acknowledges the original contribution of German architects and designers to the Rococo of central Europe.⁵³⁵ Kimball described the movement as manifested in ornament.⁵³⁶ I suggest that the vocabulary of design elements that decorate the exterior of the pavilion perform as architecture, define the structure as Chinese, and identify it as a place for diversion. The fact that these ornaments are also found on porcelain associates the pavilion with this highly valued commodity and art form.

The use of celadon, gold, and the painted surfaces on the exterior of Frederick's pavilion are synonymous with the finishes commonly used for the interior of Rococo structures. These are the characteristics of porcelain and suggest the type of ornament designed to decorate the table of the nobility. They also reinforce the perception of a porcelain structure in the seamless blending of

⁵³³ See p. 48 n.107 for a detailed description of the transmission of Western technical and scientific information.

⁵³⁴ Kimball, *Rococo*, pp. 3-5; Blunt, *Baroque and Rococo*, p. 19.

⁵³⁵ Blunt, *Baroque and Rococo*, p. 17.

⁵³⁶ Kimball, *Rococo*, p. 3.

architecture and ornament that is representative of products of the Meissen porcelain manufactory. These characteristics align the structure with the type of porcelain architectural models set out in a parterre setting on the surface of a table. Their use illustrates the interplay of interior and exterior space that was a feature of garden pavilions and centerpieces. The fact that they are also found on the interior bring to light the original use of design elements and porcelain characteristics to create a thematically integrated structure. They are examples of architecture in porcelain and porcelain in architecture.

The influence of porcelain on interior décor and architecture in the German states refutes the feminine connotation of the Rococo. As Meredith Chilton has noted, the amassing of porcelain was initially a feminine occupation but in the early eighteenth century their husbands and sons became involved and initiated a number of porcelain rooms.⁵³⁷ The collection of porcelain inherited by the King of Prussia was transformed into a vehicle of the crown to demonstrate the power of the monarchy.

Indeed, porcelain gained importance within the masculine domain with discovery of the arcanum for European porcelain under the auspices of Augustus the Strong. His role as patron, director, and artistic advisor of the manufactory established a system of organization emulated by his royal contemporaries who established their own manufactories throughout the German states. The ownership of a porcelain manufactory became, as the Carl Eugen noted, “a necessary

⁵³⁷ Chilton, *Rooms of Porcelain*, p. 28.

attribute to the glory and dignity of a prince.”⁵³⁸

The presence of raw materials necessary for the manufacture of porcelain attested to the state’s wealth of natural resources. The technology and expertise used in the development of the new material advertised its proficiency. The porcelain paste, manipulated by the princely manufactories, was made to conform to the needs and desires of its noble owners and patrons. The valuable objects produced, were tangible expressions of personal and courtly interests, and their display and use were constant reminders of the power of the head of state.

Augustus did not live to see his plans for the porcelain interiors of Pillnitz realized. Three such rooms were constructed by the rival porcelain manufactories of Capodimonte and Buen Retiro.⁵³⁹ No architect or porcelain manufactory attempted to use porcelain as a construction material after the mid- eighteenth century, nor were they motivated to experiment with the material to the degree Augustus intended in the early years of porcelain manufacture. Indeed much of Meissen’s repertoire remains in the eighteenth-century style and consists of dining services and figure sculptures. The material’s classification as an applied or decorative art in the later years of the century does not provide an explanation for the lack of innovation in the use of porcelain in architecture since the eighteenth century.

⁵³⁸ See p. 5, n. 8.

⁵³⁹ Frothingham gives a detailed description of the porcelain rooms of Naples and Spain in *Capodimonte and Buen Retiro Porcelains*, pp. 17-24.

The use of unconventional materials, or the use of conventional materials in non-traditional ways, encourage creative architectural design. The use of glass, a respected art form and a material as fragile as porcelain, has transcended conventional uses for glazing and household use.⁵⁴⁰ The glass and steel Crystal Palace designed by Joseph Paxton for the London Exhibition of 1851, the glass and concrete Glass Pavilion designed by Bruno Taut for the Cologne Deutscher Werkbund Exhibition of 1914, and the steel and glass skyscrapers developed in the twentieth century prove that innovation is necessary for the reinterpretation of conventional materials for exceptional architecture.

The idea of the intermediality of porcelain is seen in the influence of porcelain on architecture. It is also representative of the influence of this medium on other art forms in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. The appropriation of the colours, designs and forms taken from Chinese porcelain is most obviously represented by interpretations of Chinese porcelain within the European ceramic tradition. A wide variety of faïence objects in blue and white, the signature colours of Chinese porcelain, produced in the regions of Delft, Rouen and Nevers were made to mimic the dishes, cups, and bowls of imported Asian wares.⁵⁴¹ The use of faïence vases and urns to ornament the exterior of Le Petit Trianon de Porcelaine was a notable feature of its design. Although Eleanor Consten von

⁵⁴⁰ See Catherine Slessor for a discussion of the evolution of glass in architecture. "Glass Evolution," *The Architectural Review*, May 1998, vol. 203, pp. 4-5.

⁵⁴¹ The city of Delft in Holland remains renowned for the production of faïence in this idiom. See Charleston, Robert J., (Ed.), *World Ceramics*, The Hamlyn Publishing Group, London, 1968, pp. 166-172.

Erdberg considered the building an attempt to represent Chinese architecture in Europe, it was the pseudo-porcelain exterior ornamentation, not the structure that established an association with China.⁵⁴²

The notion of intermediality is extended by the application of the characteristics of porcelain. The use of blue and white, transposed onto fabric, tiles, and painted metal garden furnishings was used to decorate the interior and the exterior of the porcelain palace at Versailles. Blue and white tiles, painted ceiling, wall panels, chandelier, wooden furnishings and fabrics decorate the central salon of Pagodenburg at Nymphenburg. The fact that not all the images were Chinoiserie in interpretation did not prevent the transmission of the idea of *la Chine*.

The adoption of the imagery of porcelain suggests another type of intermediality. Images of Chinese figures, architecture, and garden design gleaned from the surface of Chinese dishes were interpreted in the paintings, engravings, and tapestries of Rococo artist François Boucher. They were printed on fabric and wall paper designs of Toile de Jouy established in France by Christophe Charles Oberkamp in 1760. Monochromatic vignettes gleaned from pattern books illustrated the pleasurable pastimes and lifestyles of the citizens of the Celestial Kingdom.⁵⁴³ The images of pagodas in their garden settings may be seen as examples that influenced the interpretations of Chinoiserie structures and the European garden design that came to be known as the Anglo-Chinese Garden.

⁵⁴³ See Birgitta Schmedding, "A Chinese Arcadia of European Design," *Rotunda*, Vol. 19, No. 3, 1986-87, pp. 46-50.

The most important influence of Asian porcelain was in the development of European porcelain “in the Chinese taste” produced by Meissen. Augustus’ massive collection provided creative impetus and examples for the court artists charged with establishing a repertoire of objects that would satisfy the aesthetic taste of his fellow collectors. The objects produced provided an alternative source for European nobles who suffered from the same *porcelain maladie* as the patron and director of the Saxon works. Perceived to be as valuable as the Far Eastern models, and appreciated for their artistry, European interpretations in the *chinesische Geschmack* eventually overtook their Chinese competitors in the European market.

The intermediality of porcelain is also found in the influence of European art forms on the production of European porcelain. Court sculptors, metalsmiths, and jewellers employed by the Meissen Porcelain Manufactory during its developmental phase applied the working processes of their *métiers* to the new material. Ivory, marble and most notably, sugar sculptures as table ornaments influenced porcelain design. Collections of engravings and printed works amassed by the manufactories were used for reference in the production of figure sculpture. Art forms such as the theatre, opera, and dance inspired a repertoire of objects, dining services, figure sculptures and centerpieces.

Recognizable structures like the buildings of Dresden, the spire of the Catholic Cathedral of Dresden, and the fountain at Ostra provided impetus for architectural studies used as table ornaments. Experiments with porcelain also succeeded in replacing conventional materials like wood and metal for a variety

of objects.

The notion of intermediality is reflected in the description of the Tea House as a *Gesamtkunstwerk*. Historians Arno Krause and Hans-Joachim Giersberg describe the structure as a total work of art, combining architecture, painting and sculpture: thus, it is intermedial by its definition.⁵⁴⁴ My interpretation of the structure as a total work of art includes porcelain as both a form of high art, and as a medium unto itself. Perceived as porcelain because of the characteristics that emulate this material, the Tea House acts as a repository for the history of this material and its relationship with architecture. As an object of eighteenth-century porcelain manufacture it reflects the broad range of influences that impacted its interpretation.

The Chinese Tea House although unique in its design and interpretation is but one of the network of structures commissioned by the king, his contemporaries and his family members, that demonstrate the characteristics of porcelain in architecture. For Frederick who designed his pavilion, and by his own words found pleasure and diversion in his architectural projects, the Tea House provided a vehicle to display his princely attributes and interests in architecture, philosophy, music and in porcelain that are exhibited in the form, design, and content of his Tea House. This places Frederick's structure within a framework of political aspirations, intellectual associations, cultural implications and architectural exploration that encompass European perceptions of the Celestial

⁵⁴⁴ Krause, *Das Chinesische Teehaus*, pp. 5-8; and Giersberg, *Das Chinesische Haus*, p. 9.

Kingdom.

Frederick's intimates, invited to travel along the serpentine paths, through the covered pathways, the bosquets of trees and foreign plants to discover the little pavilion behind its wall of greenery would have recognized the structure as porcelain. They would have appreciated it as an art form and a valuable commodity. They would have understood the Chinese Tea House to be porcelain in essence.

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