

“Luxury” and “the Surprising” in Sir William Chambers’ *Dissertation on Oriental Gardening (1772): Commercial Society and Burke’s Sublime-Effect*

Yue Zhuang, University of Exeter

Chinese gardens fascinated the English and British elite in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. This fascination was not mere exoticism but was associated with the moral political discourse within which the English landscape movement evolved.¹ In seventeenth and eighteenth-century Europe, China enjoyed a considerable reputation for its civility and moral government.² In Britain, the Chinese garden, known for its irregularity and its capacity to please the senses and imagination, was evoked by various people, including Sir William Temple (1628–1699) and Joseph Addison (1672–1719), in order to articulate and legitimate their own interests and pursuits in society.³ In the late eighteenth century, a book entitled *Dissertation on Oriental Gardening (1772)*⁴ by Sir William Chambers (1723–1796),⁵ an architect to King George III (r. 1760–1801), marked yet a new representation of Chinese gardens. Contrary to previous representations of the irregular Chinese style by Temple and Addison, Chambers’ gardens were not enemies of “the regular,” which had become associated with the tyrannical state.⁶ Cultivating an air of sensationalism,⁷ Chambers’ Chinese gardens consisted of scenes of the pleasing, the terrible, and the surprising, which, he emphasised, were capable of exciting opposite and violent sensations (*DG*, 28, 64); whereas the English style, typically represented in Lancelot “Capability” Brown’s (1716–1783) “naturalistic” gardening, which Chambers criticized, was a mere imitation of nature.⁸ The English style was monotonous, insipid, and demonstrated a languor of the mind (*DG*, 33).

Although attacked by “Old Corps” Whigs as a “Tory landscape,”⁹ the *Dissertation* won support from other Whig politicians like Edmund Burke (1729–1797), who called himself a “Chamberist.”¹⁰ Burke’s showing favour to the *Dissertation* was not mere coincidence. In fact, the contrast between the two mental states—languor and violent sensations—which Chambers proposed in the *Dissertation*, resonated deeply with the effect of the beautiful and the sublime as described by Edmund Burke in his *Philosophical Enquiry*

into the *Origin of Our Ideas of the Sublime and Beautiful* (1757), which Chambers had carefully studied.¹¹

The Burkean sublime-effect and the *Dissertation on Oriental Gardening*

As Richard Bourke has suggested, Burke’s *Enquiry* was an investigation into training imaginative sensibilities.¹² Terms like sensibility, imagination, and taste, in eighteenth-century Britain, were as political as they were psychological or moral. An important background to this phenomenon lies in the nature of the constitutional government of Britain. After the Glorious Revolution of 1688, political authority no longer rested upon the monarch’s prerogatives. The morals or virtues of Englishmen were seen to include the very protection of English liberty and constitutional government.¹³ This English concept of virtue was inherited from the Roman *virtus*, which referred to martial values like courage, self-restraint, and strength.¹⁴ As Philip Ayres discusses, following the Revolution the newly empowered English aristocrats used Roman-republican constitutional liberty as their model of governance.¹⁵ The aristocrats identified martial values as constituting the core values of an Englishmen’s virtues. According to the Stoic philosopher Seneca, the greatest enemy of *virtus* was *fortuna*—that is, wealth or luxury.¹⁶ The Stoic’s teaching was close to British hearts and was reflected in the anxiety about the corruption of morals by commerce that was constantly on display in different representations of the time including, for example, the famous pamphlet, *Estimate of the Manners and Principles of the Times* (1757) written by the ardent Whig, the Reverend John Brown (1715–1766). Whilst traditional minds condemned commerce as sinful, Scottish Enlightenment thinkers like Adam Smith (1723–1790) considered commercial society as the final stage in the development of society, naturally succeeding that of agriculture.¹⁷ In this final stage, the aesthetic qualities of commodities satisfied “the nicety and delicacy of our taste,”¹⁸ which signalled progress; however, Smith also noted the emasculating effect of excessive luxury. In his *Theory of Moral Sentiments* (1759) he commented that “perhaps the delicate sensibility required in civilized nations sometimes destroys the masculine firmness of character.”¹⁹ The refined material culture of commercial society, which enhanced sensitivity to the pleasures of liberty and commerce (i.e. liberal or civilian virtues), also undermined martial values. To counteract the negative effect of commerce Adam Smith and many other liberal thinkers suggested military strategies to revive the languishing martial spirits of Britons and the nation.²⁰ Chambers, of Scots descent, emphasised this Scottish Enlightenment discourse.²¹ But as an architect he took up a sensationalist approach and, following Burke’s theory of the sublime, introduced the theory that moulding citizens’ martial virtues could be achieved through city landscaping; he disguised this theory in the garb of Chinese gardens.

Chambers confessed in personal correspondence to his friend, the famous Swedish naval architect, Frederick Chapman (1721–1808), that his account of Chinese gardens was not authentic. But rather, as Chambers wrote, “it is a system of my own which as it was a bold attempt of which the Success was very uncertain, I fathered it upon the Chinese who I thought lived far enough off to be out of reach of Critical Abuse.”²² The *Dissertation* therefore may be read as an allegorical text that talked about English landscape gardening through a Chinese garb—a literary technique that was not uncommon during Chambers’ time.²³ Allegorical Chinese images were often adopted by European authors in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries because of the general model-effect or cultural superiority that China enjoyed at the time.²⁴ As previous scholars have noted, the Chinese models adopted by Europeans functioned as mirrors or disguises for certain values that were inherent in the Western non-orthodox tradition. As models, the Chinese subjects served as a justification for those Western values.²⁵

In the case of the *Dissertation*, the decision to introduce the Chinese garden to Europe was made because, as Chambers proposed, Chinese gardeners were “not only Botanists, but painters and philosophers, having a thorough knowledge of the human mind, and of the arts by which its strongest feelings are excited” (*DG*, 11). These “Chinese” philosopher-gardeners may be seen as mirrors of both those contemporary French architects in the Academy of Architecture who emphasised the impact of architecture on sensations, such as Germain Boffrand (1667–1754) and Jacques-Francois Blondel (1705–1774) with whom Chambers studied;²⁶ and British philosophers (e.g. Edmund Burke and Lord Kames [Henry Home, 1696–1782]) whose works on aesthetics were written from the perspective of the operation of the senses.²⁷ For example, beauty, as Burke defined it, “was some quality in bodies, acting mechanically upon the human mind by the intervention of the senses” (*PE*, 112). In his *Elements of Criticism* (1762), Lord Kames stated: “architecture [and gardening] cannot otherwise entertain the mind, but by raising certain agreeable emotions or feelings.”²⁸ These ideas influenced Chambers’ exploration of the art of landscape gardening. As he declared at the beginning of the Preface to the *Dissertation* in reference to gardening, compared with buildings and other arts “its dominion is general; its effects upon the human mind certain and invariable” (*DG*, v).

These architects and philosophers’ sensationalist notes deviated from the authority of Lockean associationism and the popular concept of the dominating role of “reason in producing our passions.” The sensationalist notes were underpinned, as recent scholarship has revealed, by eighteenth-century physiology.²⁹ Developed from Thomas Willis’ *Anatomy of the Brain*

(1664), major teachers at the Edinburgh Medical School, such as William Cullen (1710–1790), emphasised the nervous system as the structural basis for the total integration of body function and the perceptive capacity or sensibility of the organism.³⁰ The sensibility of the nerves, they assumed, depended not on the faculty of reason but on the quality of received perceptions. Hence, the Edinburgh medical school held that “all man’s higher attributes—taste, imagination, and indeed the capacity to reason—would, in the last analysis, depend on his condition of existence, diet, weather, labour and so forth... Sensibility [was] in the end related to the individual’s mode of life and should, in the healthy state, be properly adjusted to it.”³¹ This physiological account of the nervous system, combined with a new interest in the environment as a determinant of man’s nature and of civilization generally,³² directly influenced the discourse of imagination, aesthetics, and philosophy. “The beautiful” and “the sublime,” or buildings and gardens, were not valued as mere aesthetic objects but as constituting the living environment that played an important role in shaping the human imagination. As Burke made plain, his *Enquiry* was “to find whether there are any principles, on which the imagination is affected, so common to all, so grounded and certain, as to supply the means of reasoning satisfactorily about them.”³³ Lord Kames also claimed that a built environment reflected the moral worth of its proprietors: “a house and garden surrounded with pleasant fields, all in good order, bestow greater lustre upon the owner than at first will be imagined. The beauties of the former are, by intimacy of connection, readily communicated to the latter.”³⁴ It is upon such an integrated psycho-physiological and moral discourse that Chambers built and envisioned his sensationalist landscape theory, emphasising the effect of the art of landscape gardening on shaping the imagination.

With scenes of “the terrible” and “the surprising”—howling jackals, gibbets, apparatus of torture, and shocks of electrical impulses (*DG*, 27–9), Chambers’ descriptions differed radically from Addison’s earlier account of Chinese gardens as a source of the pleasures of the imagination; however, it was still firmly in accordance with Burke’s concept of the sublime.³⁵ Whilst for Addison the beautiful evoked the soul or senses’ highest gratification (or a perfect state of perception), for Burke the sublime elicited a more superior, intensified experience. Burke’s definition of the sublime, as Aris Sarafianos suggests, was designed to be compatible with the physiologists’ theory of the contractility of the nerves.³⁶ From the physiologists’ view, the rational “soul” as the vital force was not a speculative form of mechanical fluidism but rather an innate “force in the fibres themselves, a life which makes them contract.”³⁷ A healthy condition was obtained when fibres were in “continuous oscillation, in constant movement as an expression of the *vis vitalis*.”³⁸ Whilst Burke connected the beautiful with pleasures (relaxation), his definition of

the sublime was affected in terms of “pain or danger” or of “sickness, and death” (heightened instances of tension). The most intensified, lifting emotion, according to Burke, therefore, could not be the pleasures evoked by the beautiful, wherein the fibres are in constant rest or trapped in an unchanging movement, but rather that great emotion of “delightful horror” caused by the sublime, which occurred at the point of a baffling, contradictory, but clearly physiological threshold where “a change as produces a relaxation should immediately produce a sudden convulsion,” and “a violent pulling of the fibres” (*PE*, 132). The sublime was thus positioned by Burke against the beautiful as an antidote against the languid, for it intensified vitality through “an exertion of the contracting power of the muscles” (*PE*, 173), keeping the organism in an active, healthy condition. As Suzanne Guerlac suggests, the tension of the sublime functioned as a kind of homeostatic device, or constancy mechanism, ensuring against the risk of the dangerous reduction of tension induced through pleasure.³⁹ The sublime thus had the effect of curing weakness.

Congruent with Burke’s theory of the beautiful and the sublime, Chambers orchestrated oriental scenes of luxury and the surprising where the passenger’s “attention is constantly to be kept up,” and his mind led through a “quick successions of opposite and violent sensations” (*DG*, 64, 28). For this scenic dyad of luxury and the surprising, Chambers used an ambivalent image of the Chinese garb as a narrative model with which to refer to the British reality. The refined summer scenes of the Chinese gardens, as I will show, are not a mere backdrop for an oriental paradise but a mirror of British commercial hedonistic gardens like the Vauxhall Gardens in London. Reflecting the urban commercial exuberance from colonial trade, the luxury gardens signalled a refined sensibility to the pleasures of liberty, commerce, and the arts, which marked out a higher commercial civilization. However, the excessive luxury of the summer scenes, projected through the effeminacy and decadence of the Chinese princes, alerted the British elite to their own potential corruption by way of material comforts. The scenes of the surprising, on the other hand, are appropriations from both the Jesuits’ accounts of the Emperor Kangxi’s (r. 1661–1722) annual autumn hunts in Mulan, a vast area of mountains and forests in Inner Mongolia,⁴⁰ and the underground Renaissance humanist practices of initiation rites.⁴¹ The Manchu strategy of sustaining military vigour in its army, intermingled with Hermetic-Neoplatonic tenets of spiritual regeneration, was transplanted into the British discourse of rejuvenating the nation’s military spirit and martial values. Pseudo-military journeys through “Chinese” gardens, when further applied to visionary national transportation networks, would have functioned as vehicles of the sublime-effect for Chambers, the Comptroller

of the King's Works. Landscape, in Chambers' vision, was not a mere object catering to the landowners' aesthetic gaze. Rather, embedded in living environments, landscape was a site for moulding British citizens' sensations, and it was expected to counteract the emasculating effect of the excessive commodities produced by commercial society.

Luxury: visions of a commercial society

The 1760–70s were a time in which Britain experienced economic prosperity as the Peace of Paris (1763) secured great imperial gains. Under the conditions associated with the new commercial society, national anxiety about moral corruption became particularly pertinent. As John Brown observed about civil life in his *Estimate of the Manners and Principles of the Times* (1757):

Every house of fashion is now crowded with porcelain trees and birds, porcelain men and beasts, crossed legged mandarins and Brahmins, perpendicular Lines and stiff right Angles: every gaudy Chinese Crudity, either in Colour, Form, Attitude, or Grouping, is adopted into fashionable Use, and has become the Standard of Taste and Elegance... There is hardly a corner of the kingdom, where a summer scene of public dissipation is not now established.⁴²

The greatest worry concerning the new economy was that the rich English middle class who had made quick fortunes in the colonies were not only bringing back habits of luxurious consumption, but also of oriental corruption. These "nabobs" openly competed for political power with the landed aristocracy in Parliament and elsewhere, by means of bribery. As the historian and Whig politician, Horace Walpole querulously asked in 1773:

What is England now? A sink of Indian wealth, filled by nabobs and emptied by Maccaronis! A senate sold and despised! A country overrun by horse-races! A gaming, robbing, wrangling, railing nation without principles, genius, character, or allies.⁴³

Chambers' "Chinese" summer scene—a landscape of luxury—precisely responds to these social reflections. It is worth noting that in his representation the landscape of luxury has an ambivalent effect encompassing both civility and effeminacy. This ambivalent image not only reflected Chambers' own identity—a patriotic politician from a mercantilist background—but it also aligned him with his companion Scottish liberal thinkers who not only saw the

necessity of global trade to make Britain a great nation but were also aware of commercialism's fatal side-effect—effeminacy.

(A) Luxury as civility

In contrast to the conservative moralist presentation of chinoiserie as “foreignness” and grotesque, Chambers welcomed and even celebrated oriental luxury as a scene of civility. He presented them all in detail: the plentiful waterworks, the rich plantations, the exotic animals and birds, the sophisticated tree-lined walks; the “cabinets of verdure” and the grottos adorned with “incrustations of coral shells, ores, gems and christolisations [sic]”; the elegant pavilions with sophisticated names (e.g. *Miao Ting*), the finishings of marble, “inlaid precious woods, ivory, silver, gold, and mother of pearl”; the splendid and spacious buildings, furnished with “pictures, sculptures, embroideries, trinkets, and pieces of clock-work of great value,” “enriched with ornaments of gold, intermixed with pearls, diamonds, rubies, emeralds, and other gems” (*DG*, 20–23).

In the Chinese gardens, all senses were satisfied. As Chambers related, smell was pleased by aromatic herbs and flowers, as well as fragrant, artificial breezes; taste was aroused by sweet-scented water; hearing was entertained by melodious birds and murmuring fountains; And there were many objects that pleased the sense of sight and stimulated the imagination: the finest verdure, the most brilliant, harmonious colouring imaginable; the most colourful birds, such as gold and silver pheasants and pea-fowls; painted glass that fitted in windows, which tinted the light and gave a glow to objects; and the tinted-glass skylights in the Halls of the Moon, which filled the interiors with the pleasing gloom of a fine summer's night.

In this way, Chambers showed himself to be a follower of the new evaluation of luxury that was put forward by liberal thinkers like David Hume and Adam Smith. Hume and Smith did not consider luxury items as being associated with the excess and ostentation of the older elite consumption, nor did they consider that foreign imports harmed the domestic economy. Instead they suggested that these imports expressed civility, comfort, fashion, taste, and moderation. Hume, for example, identified “luxury” with the invention and production of manufactured goods designed for the “gratification of the senses.”⁴⁴ Thus luxury functioned as an incentive for individual and social-economic improvement.

As Maxine Berg points out, the emerging higher way of life and the new capitalistic economic order in Europe had drawn inspiration from the growing

trade with Asia since the seventeenth century.⁴⁵ The Asian craft objects of luxury in Chambers’ scenes, therefore, represented for Europeans a whole new category of what Berg calls “an economy of quality and delight,” which stimulated new ways of thinking about a more civilized way of life and undermined the existing system of feudalism. Monarchs and politicians skilfully used Asiatic luxury to promote this new liberal political-economic order to aid their own interests. Frederick Louis, Prince of Wales (1707–1751), Chambers’ royal patron, was one such example. Frederick sponsored the famous Vauxhall Gardens (1732), a popular pleasure garden displaying oriental tastes and entertainment. Vauxhall was a key site of “the new capitalists’ cultural enterprise” in London.⁴⁶ For Frederick, who brought reformation to the British economic-political system,⁴⁷ to patronize the luxury hedonistic garden was not only an effective way to distinguish him from the old feudal political-economic order and monarchical tradition; it was also an effective way of bringing down that order and of promoting the new order of free trade that had won him tremendous support from the mercantile middle class. The “Chinese” scenes of luxury, with their obvious parallels with this hedonistic garden, may be seen as homage by the Scottish merchant’s son to the Hanoverian prince who, by promoting Asiatic luxury gardens, had initiated the reform of foreign and commercial policies in favour of the overseas trading community and had facilitated the establishment of a liberal, civil, and commercial society.

(B) Luxury as effeminacy

However, the scenes of luxury in oriental gardens had another aspect in that luxury objects were marked with the character of femininity: sweet and scented vegetables, “clumps of rose trees” and “lofty flowering shrubs” made up “a wilderness of sweets adorned with all sorts of fragrant and gaudy productions.” (*DG*, 20) Birds were chosen for their beautiful colours and melodious songs; animals for their mild and obedient nature—deer, antelopes, spotted buffaloes, and sheep; there were “murmuring fountains, sleeping nymphs”; water gave sweet scent, breezes were fragrant and artificial; music was soft; the books in the library were for entertainment; and the paintings were amorous. (*DG*, 21) The feminine character of objects was virtually expressed in human figures—eunuchs, women servants, and concubines—who were either indulging in all sorts of entertainment: dining, conversation, music, and playing games or waiting in secret recesses for their visiting patrons. The only male characters, Chinese princes, as represented by Chambers, were engaged with nothing in particular, instead preferring to “retire with their favourite women” to pavilions, “whenever the heat and intense light of the summer’s day becomes disagreeable to them; and here they feast, and give loose to every sort of voluptuous pleasure” (*DG*, 23–24).

In describing it thus, Chambers echoed a predominant view in the minds of the eighteenth-century British elite: Asia, like India and China, epitomised the evil union of luxury and effeminacy. The seventeenth and eighteenth-century British readers were familiar with the conquest of the Ming Empire by the Manchus through works like the Jesuit Martin Martini's *Bellum Tartaricum* (London 1654) and Elkanah Settle's play *The Conquest of China by the Tartars* (London 1676). These descriptions perpetuated what would become a familiar binary in the eighteenth century of the sensual, effeminate Southern Chinese and their antithesis in the hardy masculine Northern Tartars (Manchus)⁴⁸ who in time would be softened and feminized by those they had conquered, the Han Chinese. For eighteenth-century British audiences, such representations dovetailed with warnings about the potential effeminisation of Britain through the import and consumption of luxury items, which would emasculate the masculinity and virility of their *virtus*.

In the early eighteenth century, in his *Characteristics of Men, Manners, Opinions, Times* (1711), Anthony Ashley Cooper (1671–1713), the third Earl of Shaftesbury, had already warned of the negative effects of commercial luxury and effeminacy.⁴⁹ It was therefore widely recognized by the mid-eighteenth century that commercial society inevitably brought with it luxury consumption and effeminate masculinity. As mentioned above, aristocratic men's public virtues were seen to include the very protection of liberty and national freedom. In commercial society, martial values were seen as being undermined by refined living. As Adam Smith recognized, the outcome of an increasingly commercial and liberal order produced "weak men."⁵⁰ Adam Ferguson described the upper class of Britons in the following way: "The Hearts of our People are not Steel, they are softened by a Disuse of Arms, by Security, and pacific Employments."⁵¹ Lord Kames also noted that "where arts, manufactures, and commerce, have arrived at perfection, a pacific spirit prevails universally."⁵² He saw this "pacific spirit" as a danger on the grounds that now "not a spark of military ardour" remains, "nor will any man be a soldier."⁵³ The anxiety of decline resulting from excessive commerce was prevalent. In his highly popular *History of Europe*, first published in 1786, William Russell warned:

So great an influx of wealth, without any extraordinary expenditure, or call to bold enterprise, must soon have produced a total dissolution of manners; and the British nation, overwhelmed with luxury and effeminacy, might have sunk into an early decline.⁵⁴

The task, therefore, as Adam Ferguson, among others, saw it, was to find a way "to mix the military Spirit with our civil and commercial Policy."⁵⁵ War,

military exercises, militias, and a standing army, were among various means proposed by Scottish liberal thinkers⁵⁶ to stir up the military spirit. Chambers was familiar with this discourse. As he wrote in his correspondence, "Our gardeners, and I fear our Connoisseurs too, are such tame animals, that much sparring is necessary to keep them properly on their haunches."⁵⁷

The 1760–70s was a period that witnessed continued and extensive militia agitation in Britain. The British navy, benefiting from the "blue water" tradition,⁵⁸ grew at a greater rate than the army, and at immense expense. Naval reviews and exercises were also intensified during George III's reign (1760–1820).⁵⁹ These social phenomena were reflected in the scenes in the *Dissertation*, for example, "They observe, that the different aquatic sports of rowing, sailing, swimming, fishing, hunting and combating, are an inexhaustible fund of amusement"; "sea-ports with fleets of vessels lying before them, forts with flags flying, and batteries of cannon"; "upon their lakes, the Chinese frequently exhibit sea-fights, processions, and ship-races" (*DG*, 47–8).

For Chambers, such active scenes of military exercises became an integral part of urban scenes, emphasizing masculinity and virility and transferring their resultant virtue "or moral stiffening" to citizens.⁶⁰ But these virtue-inducing military spectacles had to be moderated in accord with the time and place in the city or country. To engage with a larger polity, Chambers instead orchestrated a pseudo-military journey through a landscape containing scenes of the surprising, in which citizens were not merely spectators but became travellers on a journey, like a Manchu-Roman soldier on a campaign.

The Surprising: making the martial self

As Chambers described in the surprising scenes:

His way now lies through dark passages cut in the rocks, on the side of which are recesses, filled with colossal figures of dragons, infernal fiends, and other horror forms, which hold in their monstrous talons, mysterious, cabalistical [sic] sentences, inscribed on tables of brass; with preparations that yield a constant flame; serving at once to guide and to astonish the passenger: from time to time he is surprised with repeated shocks of electrical impulse, with showers of artificial rain, or sudden violent gusts of wind, and instantaneous explosions of fire; the earth trembles under him, by the power of confined air; and his ears are successively struck with many different sounds, produced by the same means; some resembling the cries of men in torment; others the roaring

of bulls, and howl of ferocious animals, with the yell of hounds, and the voices of hunters; others are like the mixed croaking of ravenous birds; and others imitate thunder, the raging of the sea, the explosion of cannon, the sound of trumpets, and all the noise of war.

For Chambers' contemporary British readers, such descriptions might not have been as whimsical as they now appear. They might have reminded them of the Manchu Emperor Kangxi's hunts, which were vividly described by the Jesuit Ferdinand Verbiest (1623–1688) who attended the Emperor on occasions in 1682 and 1683. These accounts were included in John Lockman's *Travels of the Jesuits, into various parts of the world* (London, 1743),⁶¹ a significant work of its type, which can be found in the public and private library catalogues of many elite of the time.⁶²

As we read in Verbiest's letter: "The emperor's troops marching in high mountains and dark forests"; "Trumpets sounding and Drums beating all the way"; exposure to "the scorching Sun-Beams," to the rain, and to other clemencies of the weather; experiences of extreme fatigue; "Cannon discharged, from time to time, in the Vallies—purposely that the Noise and Fire issuing from the Mouths of the Dragons, with which they are adorned, might spread Terror around."⁶³

It is not difficult to trace the parallels between Verbiest's account of the Manchu emperor's hunts and Chambers' fantastical description of the Chinese gardens.⁶⁴ As previous scholars have revealed, Chambers did indeed use Jesuits' accounts, including Jean Denis Attiret's (1702–1768) recently published letters on Yuanming Yuan, to create his *Dissertation*.⁶⁵ But what is important to note is that Chambers' imitation was not born of mere curiosity. Just as the luxury of his Chinese gardens reflected British commercial exuberance and frivolous effeminacy, the pseudo-military journey in the scenes of the surprising might well have referred to the Scottish thinkers' debate on how to maintain British aristocrat men's virility, for which the Qing emperor's hunts might have served as a model.

As a minor ethnic group ruling a Chinese Empire with vast territories, the Manchurian imperial project rested on a strong military ethos. Aware of the Chinese traditional paradigm of civilian and military virtues of rulership, the Manchu emperors considered the military a more adequate foundation than civilian culture for their extensive and powerful empire. For the emperors, maintaining martial prowess would fend off what they clearly perceived as a profound threat to Manchu identity after assimilating the Chinese civilization.⁶⁷ During the early and mid-Qing Dynasty (1683–1820), imperial hunts were

frequently held in the area of Mulan. In their letters and reports missionaries, who were often obliged to join these hunts, unequivocally presented these hunts as a major strategy used by the Kangxi emperor to strengthen military spirit among his own soldiers. For example, Verbiest reported in his letter: “The Emperor, whose chief Design by this Progress was to keep his Troops in Exercise, succeeded in that Respect to the utmost of his Wishes,” which, as the Jesuit goes on to explain, was “to prevent the Luxury which prevails in China and a too long Inactivity, from enervating their Courage, and lessening their former Valour.”⁶⁸

The Manchurian experience of balancing between the civilian and the military in their governance would have been of great interest for those British readers who saw themselves in similar situations. Thus, beneath Chambers’ scenes of the surprising a programme of landscape experience as pseudo-military training can be discerned, one which echoed those military schemes proposed by Adam Smith and other Scottish thinkers in order to reinforce British citizens’ martial virtues amidst commercialization. By way of the missionaries’ representations, the Qing imperial strategy therefore, became engaged in the reformation of governance technologies in Britain, which was transforming into an empire amidst their eighteenth-century global expansion.

However, it would be over-simplifying to consider the Jesuits’ descriptions as the sole source for Chambers’ ideas, which were also imbued with Western symbolism. For example, the narrative of the surprising scenes taking form in a journey as a trial of elements demonstrates the influences of Hermetic-Neoplatonic doctrines and a strong underground source of Renaissance humanism.⁶⁹ In Hermetic-Neoplatonic philosophies, the human being is a microcosm of the universe, and his interior relations and movements are connected to cosmic relations and movements.⁷⁰ As *Corpus Hermetica* relates, in an initiatory journey the neophyte, by “experiencing all sensations of everything created, fire and water, dry and moist” and embracing in his thought “all things at once, times, places, substances, qualities,” “may understand God.”⁷¹ Associated with the practice of Hermetism-Neoplatonism in the Renaissance academies, a variety of initiatory rituals or ritualized “games” were reinvented from Greek and Roman mythologies, whilst landscapes and gardens were often employed as the sites for the initiation of the imagination.⁷² For example, Malaspini in one of his *Novella*, recorded a ritualistic event that took place in the private garden of the Rucellai family of Florence in 1536. Members of the party from the Orti Oricellai School were systemically subjected to sights, sounds, and odours that confused their senses.⁷³ Similar stories recurred in a quasi-historical novel *Séthos* (Paris, 1731) by the French Abbé Jean Terrasson.⁷⁴ The novel proposed an initiatory journey through its

description of the trials of Séthos, following in the steps of Orpheus through the underworld, who was subjected to three trials by fire, water, and air, before being admitted into the temple precinct.⁷⁵ The resemblance between the continental examples and Chambers' scenes of the surprising reflected the continuing Hermetic-Neoplatonic tradition in Britain.

In the emerging British Empire, Hermetic-Neoplatonic philosophies were fostered along with the growth of Freemasonry. The Neoplatonic-Masonic ideal⁷⁶ claimed a dominant presence in the ideology of key British social and cultural establishments, such as the Society of Dilettanti, the Royal Academy, and the Hanoverian royal family,⁷⁷ and they had a considerable effect on the art and architecture of eighteenth-century Britain.⁷⁸ A founder of the Royal Academy and patronized by the monarchs, Chambers was committed to making his architecture and landscape design engage with the public interest. The trial of "the elements" in the surprising scenes: Fire, rain, wind, electricity, and earthquakes, drawing from facets of Masonic folklore and Neoplatonic symbolism, were not for mere entertainment. Fused with elements from the battlefields, the "sounds of trumpets, cries of men in torment, explosions of cannon, and all the noises of war"—reminders of the Seven Years War of 1756–64—the surprising scenes were intended to form an initiatory passage reinvented in an age of burgeoning commercial capitalism. These disturbing physical experiences embodied Burke's sublime-effect as a kind of mental or sensory exercise or labour, "an exertion of the contracting power of the muscles," which "as such resembles pain, which consists in tension or contraction, in everything but degree" (*PE*, 35). By increasing the tension of the body, putting the body on the verge of pain and exciting the strongest opposite sensations, the mock-trial experiences functioned as a kind of constancy mechanism, as if to expose the body of British subjects through the purification of war, to create a new martial identity.

"One magnificent garden": the *Dissertation* as a sensationalist landscape theory

As the architect for Princess Augusta's Kew Gardens between 1757 and 1763, Chambers had already experimented with his sensationalist landscape embodying the Burkean sublime-effect at Kew Gardens. Comprising twenty-three buildings, all freely laid out around irregular routes, Chambers' Kew Gardens was not only "a designed emblem of British government,"⁷⁹ as Richard Quaintance suggests, but may also be understood as an instrument designed to shape visitors' sensations and virtue.

The drawing of *A View of the Menagerie, and its Pavillion* [sic] in Chambers'

Plans, Elevations, Sections and Perspective Views of the Gardens and Buildings at Kew in Surry (1763) (Fig. 1) is a good example. The delicate and exotic Chinese pavilion, the pond of goldfish, and the runways and cages for Chinese pheasants, anticipated the summer scenes of luxury in the *Dissertation* nine years later. In contrast to the fragility and femininity of the wood structure to the engraving’s left, is the sturdiness of a stone building, the Temple of Bellona (the ancient Roman goddess of war), dedicated to those who served in the Seven Years War (1756–1763). Thus the sublime of the bellicose goddess—the associations with military vigour would be evoked in the visitor’s mind—would counteract the softening effect of oriental luxury.

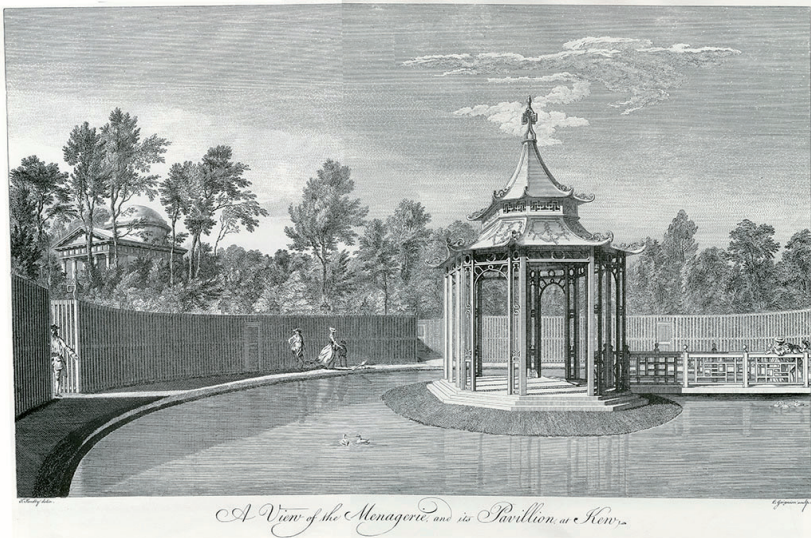


Fig. 1: The sublime-effect is embodied in the contrast between the fragility and femininity of the wood pavilion and the sturdiness of the stone building of the Temple of Bellona, the Ancient Roman Goddess of war:

Chambers’ design of the menagerie at Kew gardens, in Plans, elevations, sections and Perspective Views of the Gardens and Buildings of Kew in Surry (London, 1763)

A further example is shown in *A View of the Ruin in Chambers’ Plans*. (Fig. 2) A passenger approaching the ruinous Arch from the south would note how the arch twists the path to focus a northward gaze through its arch towards the gleaming Temple of Victory crowning the hilltop. Richard Quaintance comments how a generalized “melancholy” seems an irrelevant self-indulgence to one’s experience on the walk with its vista of a military

monument beyond.⁸⁰ According to the Burkean sublime-effect discussed above, this spatial-emotional effect may be understood as an embodiment of the sublime-effect. The tension between the Roman ruin and the Temple of Victory, for Chambers, would prevent the passenger's imagination from sinking into melancholic reflection on the Roman past. Rather, at the sight of the monument to the British victory in the Seven Years War, his passion would be "shaken and worked to a proper degree." Thus the viewer's confidence would be cultivated in terms of British martial valour as a contemporary form of Roman *virtus*.



Fig. 2: The sublime-effect is embodied in the tension between the sunlit columns of the Temple of Victory and the dark-shaded stones of the Roman ruin.

Chambers' design of a triumphal arch at Kew gardens, in *Plans, elevations, sections and Perspective Views of the Gardens and Buildings of Kew at Surry* (London, 1763)

Equipped with the methods of shaping human sensations using the sublime-effect, Chambers in his *Dissertation*, was able to imagine beyond the boundary of a landscape garden like Kew to the whole "kingdom as one such magnificent vast garden."⁸¹ In about two thirds of Chambers' *Dissertation*, he laid out in detail the "Chinese" methods of constructing roads, canals, bridges, and plantations, envisioning a scheme of "city landscaping." If Burke, the political theorist, wished to affect citizens' minds by aesthetic-psychological training, Chambers, the architect, proposed an ambitious project of making the

garden city itself into an instrument of education and an experimental site for moulding citizens’ martial virtues.⁸²

In Chambers’ vision, the Chinese roads, with various arrangements, could produce all kinds of different effect—the pleasing, the terrible, and the surprising. As he related a most striking effect was obtained by those spacious roads “planted on each side with lofty trees, and stretching in a direct line, beyond the reach of the eye.” Likewise, when the roads turned at certain points where some new or uncommon objects suddenly appeared, those objects would occupy the mind agreeably, “their abrupt appearance occasions surprise; which, when the extent is vast, and the repetitions frequent, swells into astonishment and admiration” (*DG*, 33). Still more exciting feelings were perhaps aroused when the roads were constructed in natural wonders. He imagined,

in some places, these roads are carried, by lofty vaulted passages, through the rocks and mountains; or, upon causeways and bridges, over lakes, torrents, and arms of the sea; and in others, they are supported, between the precipices, upon chains of iron, or upon pillars, and many tire of arcades, over villages, pagodas, and cities (*DG*, 38).

Chambers emphasised that the experiences of “the incertitude of the mind” and “the anxiety” that they arouse in the mind were likewise “very strong impressions, preventing that state of languor into which the mind naturally sinks by dwelling long on the same objects” (*DG*, 33).

Applying the antithetical scenes as an emotional adventure in city landscaping, Chambers showed that by careful control of the urban landscape, the everyday travelling experience—an interplay between the senses and the landscape—could become a forum of pseudo-military training. The irregular, uncertain, and adventurous experiences that the traveller experienced would awaken his senses from the drunkenness of the pleasures of entertainment and the enjoyment of luxury, from the soft feelings of love and grief, from what Burke described as “that sink, that melting, that languor” effect of the beautiful and of the excessive commodities produced by commercial society. In these experiences of horror, fear, and sudden astonishment on their travels, the British elite would build their mind in the mould of a *virtus*, a stoic soldier who learned to withstand the adversities and reversals of fortune. Roads and rivers might become a substitute for what Adam Smith proposed as military education and provide “the best schools for forming every man to this hardiness and firmness of temper” and for “curing him of the opposite weakness.”⁸³ In this way, the city, or the country per se, built as the landscape garden Chambers envisioned, would function as a

Burkean homeostatic device or constancy mechanism. It came to act as a kind of displacement of the rigors of military experience whereby the moral effects of the latter were translated into the context of the modern commercial state. Chambers' grand vision of the sensationalist landscape city might have been influenced by the Chinese landscape tradition in which imperial gardens were constructed as integral to the city and the city was built as a landscape garden.⁸⁴ By the time of the Eastern Han dynasty (25–220 CE), the Chinese construction of cities, systems of transportation, irrigation, water conservation, and city landscaping were already being combined to achieve an integrated effect on both moral cultivation and political economy.⁸⁵ This tradition was significantly elaborated by the early Qing emperors.⁸⁶ Through a number of letters, engravings, and publications contributed by missionaries and merchants, which had been circulating in Europe since the seventeenth century,⁸⁷ the image of Chinese landscape cities impressed the European audience. The reception of imagery of China in Europe, however, was not simply a bilateral process. As discussed, in the case of Chambers' *Dissertation on Oriental Gardening* the Chinese gardens were interpreted under overlapping intellectual frameworks of Scottish physiology, the Roman republican concept of *virtus*, as well as the initiatory journeys in the Hermetic-Neoplatonic tradition. Therefore, not only was the Chinese garden labelled as the psychological-physiological antitheses of the pleasing and the surprising or the relaxation and contraction of the nerves, but it was also associated with social and moral oppositions such as civility (regeneration) and degeneration, effeminacy and masculinity, which were central to British imperial anxieties.

In Chambers' *Dissertation*, among the often confusing images of the Chinese garden, a masculine Manchurian empire, and an effeminate oriental civilization entangled with European traditions of making the *virtus*, are found encoded the British statesmen's imaginings of an empire regenerated in an age of commercialization. Exploiting this *double-entendre* model, Chambers envisioned British landscape cities as sites of not only burgeoning commerce and refined taste, but also of pseudo-military training. Applying the sublime-effect to the design and construction of British cities, for Chambers, would ensure the British Empire's stability and global dominance not only in terms of economic development but also in strengthening its military might and ethos. Chambers' approach to landscape gardening differed from that of progressive Whigs like Horace Walpole who yoked landscape gardening to the idea of "liberty." Nor can Chamber's theory be simply labelled a "Tory landscape," asserting the absolute right of the king.⁸⁸ Chamber's theory rather embodied the ideology of classical republicanism (as held by Rockingham Whigs such as Edmund Burke), for whom virtue was the foundation of good government and society. China, viewed as a model of a moral society and

politics in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, was evoked in order to mask Chambers' politicized aesthetics of landscape theory. The *Dissertation on Oriental Gardening* provided a powerful and highly significant example of how European–Asian contact, in both its reality and imaginary dimensions, shaped discourses on the building of Britain's identity in the second half of the eighteenth century.

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1 The literature on these subjects is considerable. Some key texts on the English landscape garden and its relation to China include Rudolf Wittkower, "English Neo-Palladianism, the Landscape Garden, China and the Enlightenment," *L'Arte*, no. 6 (1969): 177–190. On English landscape gardens as a political discourse, see Stephen Bending, "A Natural Revolution? Garden in Eighteenth-Century England," in *Refiguring Revolutions: Aesthetics and Politics from the English Revolution to the Romantic Revolution*, ed. Kevin Sharpe and Steven N. Zwicker (Berkeley etc: University of California Press, 1998), 241–66.

2 On this subject, see Gregory Blue, "China and Western Social Thought in the Modern Period," in *China and Historical Capitalism: Genealogies of Sinological Knowledge*, ed. Timothy Brook and Gregory Blue (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), 57–110, esp. 67–75.

3 Sir William Temple, an English diplomat and essayist, wrote about Chinese gardens in his *Upon the Gardens of Epicurus; or Of Gardening, in the year 1685*, when he retired to Sherry. He praised the "wholly irregular" Chinese gardens which, for him, resembled a Platonic moral political order with virtue as the criterion. Joseph Addison's famous essay in the *Spectator*, June 1712, evoked the "judicious wildness" of Chinese gardens to legitimize the emerging naturalistic English landscape gardening serving the interests of a new middle class. The naturalness of the English style in Addison's vision, as Carole Fabricant suggests, represents a bourgeois ideology in the eighteenth-century—essential egalitarian or liberal-democratic assumptions about the natural individual right to property. See William Temple, *The Works of Sir William Temple* (New York: 1968); Carole Fabricant, "The Aesthetics and Politics of Landscape in the Eighteenth Century," in *Studies in Eighteenth-Century British Art and Aesthetics*, ed. Ralph Cohen (Berkeley: Univ. of California, 1985).

Temple's reference of the Chinese irregular gardens, or "beauty without order," was treated by Arthur Lovejoy and Yu Liu as the origin of a revolution of European landscape gardening shifting from the regular to the irregular style. See Arthur Lovejoy, "The Chinese Origin of a Romanticism," *The Journal of English and German Philology* 32, no. 1 (Jan, 1933): 1–20. Yu Liu, *Seeds of a Different Eden: Chi-*

nese Gardening Ideas and a New English Aesthetic Ideal (Columbia, S.C.: University of South Carolina Press; London: Eurospan [distributor], 2008). Lovejoy and Liu's treatment overlooks the fact that English landscape gardens developed from the existing European gardening tradition, which included "the irregular," as revealed by garden historians such as John Dixon Hunt in *Garden and Grove: The Italian Renaissance Garden and the English Imagination, 1600–1750* (London: Dent, 1986). Lovejoy and Liu's treatment also neglects the European discourse on the effects of contrary landscapes and gardens on the human imagination, a theme which is discussed, for example, by K. Claire Pace, "'Strong Contraries...Happy Discord': Some Eighteenth-Century Discussions about Landscape," *Journal of the History of Ideas* 40, no. 1 (Jan.–Mar., 1979):141–155. My paper further notes that the Enlightenment discourse of psychology evolved with those of morality and physiology. This is a theme that is receiving increasing attention in the contemporary scholarship on the discourse of sensibility, e.g. Richard Bourke, "Pity and Fear: Providential Sociability in Burke's *Philosophical Enquiry*," in *The Science of Sensibility: Reading Burke's Philosophical Enquiry*, ed. Koen Vermeir and Michael Funk Deckard (Dordrecht, London: Springer, 2012), and Aris Sarafianos, "The Contractuality of Burke's Sublime and Heterodoxies in Medicine and Art," *Journal of the History of Ideas* 69, no. 1 (2008). Also cf. note 7.

4 Sir William Chambers, *A Dissertation on Oriental Gardening ... To Which Is Added, an Heroic Epistle [by William Mason], in Answer to Sir William Chambers ... The Eleventh Edition* (Dublin: W. Wilson, 1773). Hereafter cited as *DG*.

5 Sir William Chambers (1726–1796) was born in Gothenburg, Sweden to a Scottish merchant family under the royal patronage of the Swedish East India Company. He was a visitor to both China and India while he served in the Company during his youth. Settling in London in 1755, he was appointed architectural tutor to the Prince of Wales (the future George III) and then a distinguished official architect (e.g. a Joint Architect to King George III from 1761; a founder of the Royal Academy of Arts in 1768; Comptroller of the King's Works from 1769–1782, and Surveyor-General and Comptroller from 1782 until his death). He built many landmark public and private buildings, including Somerset House and Princess Augusta's Kew Gardens.

6 This idea first materialized in James Thomson's poem entitled *Liberty*, published in the mid-1730s. The poet relates that France, suppressed by a tyrannical government, forced Nature into a formal strait-jacket. See Wittkower, "English Neo-Palladianism, the Landscape Garden, China and the Enlightenment," 183.

7 The term "sensationalism" here refers to its literary meaning, i.e. "making impressions on the senses." On sensationalism, Chambers was in line with those theorists and architects of the Academy of Architecture in France, such as Germain Boffrand (1667–1754), Jacques-Francois Blondel (1705–1774) and Julien David Le Roy (1724–1803). They held a sensationalist perspective that the common purpose of architecture is expression, and that poetic and psychological effects should play a role in the creation and appreciation of architecture. For example, Germain Boffrand in his *Livre d'architecture* (1745) stated: "An edifice, by its composition, expresses as on a stage that the scene is pastoral or tragic, that it is a temple or a palace, a public building destined to a specific use, or a private house. These different edifices, through their disposition, their structure, and the manner in which they are decorated, should announce their purpose to the spectator." Germain Boffrand, *Livre d'architecture* (Paris, 1745), 16. Jacques-Francois Blondel, with whom Chambers studied architecture in Paris from 1749–50, in his *Cours d'architecture* [(Paris, 1771) 389–90] restated Boffrand's idea and dealt more specifically than Boffrand with emotion, or the emotionally felt qualities of buildings. See G. L. Hersey, "Associationism and Sensibility in Eighteenth-Century Architecture," *Eighteenth-Century Studies* 4, no. 1 (1970): 71–89; David Watkin, *Sir John Soane: Enlightenment Thought and the Royal Academy Lectures* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 185. The sensationalism of the Academy of Architecture in France is connected to the discourse of sensibility in Britain in the second half of the century. See note 26.

8 The controversy between Chambers and Lancelot Brown over the subject of naturalistic gardening style has been much discussed. A popular view that Chambers' criticism of Brown was caused by his

jealousy of Brown's gaining more royal projects neglects the fact that their debate was underlined by the moral sensationalist discourse which Chambers endorsed. Nikolaus Pevsner has rightly observed that Chambers objects to the evenness of Brown's style, his "eternal, uniform, undulating lines," not only because of their dullness, but also because they can express only one set of sentiments. See Nikolaus Pevsner, "The Other Chambers," *Architecture Review*, 101 (1947): 195–98.

9 In the 1760–70s, British politics was dominated by constitutional quarrels between Old Corps Whigs and the so-called Tory establishment, each defending democracy and the king's royal power respectively. Whilst the English garden was firmly yoked to the Whig ideology of "liberty," criticism of the English garden was often associated with Toryism and an assault on the English constitution. In a famous satire, *A Heroic Epistle to Sir William Chambers*, by the "old Whig" poet William Mason (1724–1797), Chambers, with his close relations to the unpopular Scottish politician, John Stuart, 3rd Earl of Bute (1713–1792), and George III, was presented as a star figure of the Tory establishment. Accordingly, the scenes of the terrible and the surprising in his *Dissertation* were lampooned as "Tory landscape," an assertion of the king's independence from the Parliament and the use of royal prerogatives. For an analysis of the political drive of Mason's *Epistle*, see Bending, "A Natural Revolution? Garden in Eighteenth-Century England," 241–66.

10 Burke called himself a "Chamberist" as opposed to Chambers' rival, Lancelot Brown. Burke also encouraged Oliver Goldsmith (1730–1774) to launch a counter-attack against *A Heroic Epistle*. See Oliver Goldsmith's letter to William Chambers, BM ADD. MS 41134, 21bv, 21c, 21d. Cited in Eileen Harris, "Designs of Chinese Buildings and the *Dissertation on Oriental Gardening*," in *Sir William Chambers: Knight of the Polar Star*, Studies in Architecture Vol.9, ed. John Harris, J. Mordaunt Crook, and Eileen Harris (London: Zwemmer, 1970), 161.

11 On this subject, see Eileen Harris, „Burke and Chambers on the Sublime and Beautiful,“ in *Essays in the History of Architecture Presented to Rudolf Wittkower*, ed. Douglas Fraser et al. (London: Phaidon, 1967), 207–13. Burke's sublime is not the final source for Chambers' sensational scenes of "Chinese gardens." Chambers had already written of "scenes of horror" in an essay called "The Art of Laying Out Gardens," which was included in his *Designs of Chinese Buildings* (London, 1757). In fact both Chambers' and Burke's sublime belonged to the Virgilian Arcadian tradition, which was revived in the Arcadian classicism of the Renaissance and was very much active in European artists' imaginations. See Liliana Barroero and Stefano Susinno, "Arcadian Rome, Universal Capital of the Arts," in *Art in Rome in the Eighteenth Century*, eds. Edgar Peters Bowron and Joseph Rishel (Philadelphia: Philadelphia Museum of Art in association with Merrell, 2000), 47–75; Gustavo Costa, "Longinus's Treatise on the Sublime in the Age of Arcadia," *Nouvelles de la République des Lettres* no. 1 (1981): 65–86; Yue Zhuang, "Et in Arcadia Ego: Landscape Theory and the Funereal Imagination in 18th-Century Britain" (University of Edinburgh, 2013), 105–6. Also see note 35.

12 Bourke, "Pity and Fear: Providential Sociability in Burke's *Philosophical Enquiry*." 157–75.

13 David Kuchta, *The Three-Piece Suit and Modern Masculinity: England, 1550–1850* (Berkeley and Los Angeles, California; London: University of California Press, 2002), 112.

14 Myles Anthony McDonnell, *Roman Manliness: Virtus and the Roman Republic* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 50–51.

15 Philip Ayres, *Classical Culture and the Idea of Rome in Eighteenth-Century England* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 1.

16 The struggle between *virtus* and *fortuna* is central to Seneca's thoughts. Seneca, *Moral Essays* 1, trans. John W. Basore, 3 vols. (Cambridge, Mass.; London, 1958), 4–6, 27–8. Cf. Neal Wood,

“Some Common Aspects of the Thought of Seneca and Machiavelli,” *Renaissance Quarterly* 21, no. 1 (Spring, 1968): 11–23.

17 Adam Smith, *Lectures on Jurisprudence*, eds. R. Meek, D. Raphael and P. Stein (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1978), 149–50.

18 *Ibid.*, 209.

19 Adam Smith, *The Theory of Moral Sentiments*, eds. D. Raphael, and A. L. Macfie (Indianapolis, Indiana: Liberty Press, 1982), 245–6.

20 For a detailed discussion, see Mark Neocleous, „‘O Effeminacy! Effeminacy!’ War, Masculinity and the Myth of Liberal Peace,” *European Journal of International Relations* (November, 2011): 1–21.

21 Chambers maintained a persistent interest in absorbing Enlightenment thoughts. He was a reader of both David Hume and François-Marie Arouet de Voltaire and to the latter he sent a copy of his *Dissertation*. Through his connection with Lord Bute, with whom many Scottish liberal thinkers such as Adam Ferguson and Adam Smith were related or in correspondence, Chambers would also have had first-hand knowledge of the latest Scottish liberalism thoughts.

22 Chambers’ letter to Frederick Chapman in Stockholm, dated 28 July 1772. BM Add. MS 41133, 78. Cited in Harris, Crook, and Harris, *Sir William Chambers: Knight of the Polar Star*, 158.

23 As examples, both Jonathan Swift’s *Gulliver’s Travels* (1726) and *The Citizen of the World* (1760) by Oliver Goldsmith, Chambers’ close friend, are such allegorical narratives.

24 See Gregory Blue, “China and Western Social Thought in the Modern Period,” 57–110, esp. 67–75.

25 *Ibid.*, 72–3. It should be noted, though, that the use of “China” as an allegory is not univocal for its general model effect, but is comingled with other forms of narratives. As I discuss in the following pages, the effeminate image of China was used in the *Dissertation* to criticize the effeminacy emerging in British society. Also, see David Porter’s discussion of the *Dissertation* in terms of its “*chinoiserie*” as “an aesthetic of the ineluctably foreign, a glamorization of the unknown and unknowable for its own sake.” David Porter, “Chinoiserie and the Aesthetics of Illegitimacy,” *Studies in Eighteenth Century Culture* 28 (1999): 27–54; and his “Beyond the Bounds of Truth: Cultural Translation and William Chambers’ Chinese Garden,” *Mosaic* 37, no.2 (2004): 41–58.

26 See note 7. Chambers’ *Dissertation* received a favourable review from the Academy of Architecture the same year it was published: see *Procès-verbaux de l’Académie Royale d’Architecture*, ed. Henry Lemonnier (Paris, 1911–1926), VIII: 139–141, 16 Nov. 1772, and 1 Dec. 1772. The similar emphasis of Chambers’ Chinese gardens and Étienne-Louis Boullée’s (1728–1799) idea of “L’architecture terrible” on producing many varied emotions was discussed by Dora Wiebenson, “L’Architecture Terrible’ and the ‘Jardin Anglo Chinois,’” *Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians* 27, no. 2 (1968): 136–139. Studies of eighteenth-century works by the Academy of Architecture and *Jardin Anglo-Chinois* as a sensationalist discourse entailing psychology and morality include, for example, Anthony Vidler and Claude Nicolas Ledoux, *Claude-Nicolas Ledoux: Architecture and Utopia in the Era of the French Revolution*, [English ed.]. ed. (Basel: Birkhäuser-Publishers for Architecture, 2006). Remy G. Saisse-lin, “Architecture and Language: The Sensationalism of Le Camus De Mezieres,” *The British journal of Aesthetics* 15, no. 3 (Summer 1975): 239–54. Chambers’ *Dissertation* has largely been overlooked from this perspective.

27 See Harris, “Burke and Chambers on the Sublime and Beautiful,” 207–213.

28 Henry Home (Lord Kames), *Elements of Criticism*, 2 vols. (Dublin: printed for Sarah Cotter, 1762), 1: 431–32.

29 Jody McNabb, “A Physiology of the Imagination: Anatomical Faculties and Philosophical Designs” (ETD Collection for McMaster University, January 1, 2011). Aris Sarafianos, “The Contractility of Burke’s Sublime and Heterodoxies in Medicine and Art,” 23–48.

30 Christopher Lawrence, “The Nervous System and Society in the Scottish Enlightenment,” in *Natural Order: Historical Studies of Scientific Culture*, eds. Barry Barnes and Steven Shapin (London: Sage Publications, 1979), 19–40.

31 *Ibid.*, 25.

32 Glacken, C.J. *Traces on the Rhodian Shore: Nature and Culture in Western Thought from Ancient Times to the End of the Eighteenth Century* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1967), 551–622. Cited in *ibid.*, 24.

33 See Edmund Burke and J. T. Boulton, *A Philosophical Enquiry into the Origin of Our Ideas of the Sublime and Beautiful* (London, 1958), 13. (Hereafter cited as *PE*)

34 Lord Kames, *Elements of Criticism*, 2:70.

35 As mentioned earlier, Burke and Chambers’ idea of the sublime followed the Virgilian Arcadian tradition. With its prevalent violent emotional oppositions, such as love and frustration, and pleasure and pain, the Virgilian Arcadia provided a model for a site of emotions that expressed some key values (e.g. vice and virtue, freedom and restraint) of Roman moral philosophy or “Natural Law,” which was influential among many eighteenth-century British thinkers like Burke and Hume. This moral background built on “Natural Law,” which underpinned Burke and Chambers’ sublime, was missing from the Addisonian concept of beautiful. The “unbounded views” and “spacious horizon” that Addison considered as the source of “delightful Stillness and Amazement in the Soul,” as Richard Bourke discussed, is not only admiration of the greatness of Nature, but also the mind’s delights in its own limitless “Liberty” or expansiveness. See Bourke, “Pity and Fear: Providential Sociability in Burke’s *Philosophical Enquiry*.” For the idea of “Natural Law” underpinning Burke’s philosophy and world view, see John Attarian, “Edmund Burke: Champion of Ordered Liberty,” *The Intercollegiate Review* (Fall 1997): 37–43.

36 Sarafianos, “The Contractility of Burke’s Sublime and Heterodoxies in Medicine and Art,” 23–48.

37 Hubert Steinke, *Irritating Experiments: Haller’s Concepts and the European Controversy on Irritability and Sensibility, 1750–1790* (Amsterdam, N.Y.: Rodopi, 2005), 37. Cited in *ibid.*, 26.

38 *Ibid.*

39 Suzanne Guerlac, “Delights of Grotesque and Sublime (Book Review),” *Diacritics* 15, no. 3 (1985, Fall): 46–53.

40 Imperial hunts were a useful strategy for the early Qing emperors to consolidate their rule in China. See Michael G. Chang, *A Court on Horseback: Imperial Touring & the Construction of Qing Rule, 1680–1785* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Asia Center, 2007). Also see note 60.

41 See note 72–73.

42 John Brown, *An Estimate of the Manners and Principles of the Times*, Fourth edition. ed. (London,

1757), 47. The book ran to seven editions and had been extracted in journals like *The Gentleman's Magazine* and *London Magazine*.

43 Horace Walpole's *Correspondence*, ed. Wilmarth S. Lewis (New Haven, 1937–83), XXIII: 498.

44 David Hume, *Essays Moral, Political, and Literary*, ed. E. Miller (Indianapolis: Liberty Classics, 1985), 268. Cited in Anthony Brewer, "Luxury and Economic Development: David Hume and Adam Smith," *Scottish Journal of Political Economy* 45, no. 1 (February 1998): 78–98.

45 Maxine Berg, *Luxury and Pleasure in Eighteenth-Century Britain* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005), 20.

46 On Vauxhall gardens in relation to eighteenth-century British material culture, see David E. Coke, Alan Borg, *Vauxhall Gardens: A History* (New Haven: Published for The Paul Mellon Centre for Studies in British Art by Yale University Press, 2011); Miles Ogborn, "Locating the Macaroni: Luxury, Sexuality and Vision in Vauxhall Gardens," *RTPR* 11, no. 3 (1997): 445–61.

47 See Nebahat Avcioglu, *Turquerie and the Politics of Representation, 1728–1876* (Farnham: Ashgate, 2011), 97–124.

48 According to Pamela Kyle Crossley, "Tartar" was originally a linguistic not an ethnic category, the name of a Turkic-speaking medieval people of Central Eurasia. This people became a significant element in early Mongol federations of the twelfth century, and the name became commonly applied to the Mongol peoples as a whole. Pamela Kyle Crossley, *The Manchus* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1979), 1–4. The Manchus were a very distinct people from both the original Tartars and the Mongols, although their histories were often conflated. By the seventeenth century they were, no longer nomadic horsemen like the Mongols, but a stable farming, hunting, and fishing people. However, in the Orientalizing imagination of the West in the early modern period the tendency to discriminate between Tartars and Chinese and to homogenize a vast array of people and cultures under the term "Tartar" prevailed. See Peter J. Kitson, "Tartars, Monguls, Manchus, and Chinese" in Peter J. Kitson, *Romantic Literature, Race, and Colonial Encounter, Nineteenth-Century Major Lives and Letters* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007), 182

49 Anthony Ashley Cooper Shaftesbury and J. M. Robertson, *Characteristics of Men, Manners, Opinions, Times* (Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill, 1964), 2: 16, 35, 88.

50 Adam Smith, *The Theory of Moral Sentiments*, 117.

51 Adam L. L. D. Ferguson, *Reflections Previous to the Establishment of a Militia* (London: R. & J. Dodsley, 1756), 15.

52 Henry Home (Lord Kames), *Sketches of the History of Man* (Edinburgh, 1774), II: 493.

53 *Ibid.*, 520.

54 William Russell, *The History of Modern Europe* (London, 1786), II: 468.

55 Ferguson, *Reflections Previous to the Establishment of a Militia*, 3.

56 Neocleous, "'O Effeminacy! Effeminacy!' War, Masculinity and the Myth of Liberal Peace," 1–21.

57 Letter of Sir William Chambers to a Gentleman who had objected to certain parts of his *Dissertation on Oriental Gardening*. Library of the College of Architecture, Cornell University. Bound in a copy of

Chambers’ *Dissertation on Oriental Gardening*, 2nd edition, 1713. Cited in Harris, Crook, and Harris, *Sir William Chambers: Knight of the Polar Star*, 192.

58 “Blue water” policy refers to the distinctive system of national security that was available in Britain from about 1650 to 1920. The essence was the establishment of naval supremacy and the retention of a European ally or allies to divert the resources of France towards an expensive European campaign. See John Brewer, *The Sinews of Power: War, Money, and the English State, 1688–1783* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1989), 175.

59 *Ibid.*, 33–4.

60 On how military exercises were used as spectacles to strengthen citizens’ military spirit and patriotism during George III’s reign, see Scott Hughes Myerly, *British military spectacle: from the Napoleonic Wars through the Crimea* (Cambridge, Mass.; London: Harvard University Press, 1996), 9, 33–35.

61 According to John Lockman’s annotations, Ferdinand Verbiest’s letters were written originally in Latin. They were dedicated to Louis XIV and were printed at Paris by Étienne Michallet, Rue St. Jacques, 1685. In *Travels of the Jesuits*, Verbiest’s letters appear under the title “A journey undertaken by the emperor of China into Western Tartary, Anno 1683.” See John Lockman, *Travels of the Jesuits, into various parts of the world. compiled from their letters; now first attempted in English; intermix’d with an account of the manners, government, religion, &c. of the several nations visited by those fathers; with extracts from other travellers, and miscellaneous notes, by Mr. Lockman.* London. 1743, 140–160.

62 Such catalogues include S. Baker and G. Leigh, *A catalogue of several libraries and parcels of books lately purchased* (London, 1767); William Cater, *A catalogue of valuable and elegant books, being several Libraries, lately purchased* (London, 1768); William Otridge, *A catalogue of above fifteen thousand volumes: in which are included the library of the Rev. Mr. Chalmers, of Eglin, in Scotland* (London, 1770). Lockman’s *Travels* is also cited in contemporary intellectuals’ works, including John Brown’s *A general history of the Christian church* (Edinburgh, 1771), ix.

63 Lockman, *Travels of the Jesuits*, 141–2.

64 Of Chambers’ library, there remains no full catalogue, only a sale catalogue from the three-day auction held at Christie’s during July 16, 18 and 19, 1796. Lockman’s *Travels* is not included in this sale catalogue, which contains 151 out of 264 books in Chambers’ library that were auctioned. See A. N. L. Munby (Gen. Ed), *Sale Catalogues of Libraries of Eminent Persons, vol. 4, Architects* ed. D. J. Watkin (London: Mansell with Sotheby Parke-Bernet Publications, 1972). Given the parallels between his depiction of the surprising scenes and the account in Lockman’s *Travels*, it may be assumed that Chambers re-enacted Verbiest’s account in Lockman’s book. Further research is required to demonstrate Chambers’ access to Lockman’s *Travels*.

65 Attiret’s exclusive account of Yuanmingyuan, published in the *Lettres Edifiantes* of 1749 and translated into English by Joseph Spense (under the pseudonym of Sir Harry Beaumont) in 1752, was one of Europe’s main sources of information on Chinese gardens. Jean Denis Attiret, *Lettres Edifiantes et Curieuses* (Paris 1749), 1–61. English translations also appeared in periodicals such as the *Monthly Review*, VII (1752), 421–6; *Scots Magazine*, XIV (1752), 589–93. Chambers not only made a reference to Attiret in the *Dissertation*, but also appropriated the Jesuit’s description in many other places in the book. See Harris, Crook, and Harris, *Sir William Chambers: Knight of the Polar Star*, 149–50.

66 For the Qing emperors, Tang emperor Taizong (r. 626–649) was an ideal embodiment of combined civil and military virtue. Cited in Joanna Waley-Cohen, “Commemorating War in Eighteenth-Century China,” *Modern Asian Studies* 30, no. 4 (1996): 869–99. On Tang Taizong, see Howard Wechsler, “Tai-tung (reign 626–649) The Consolidator,” in *The Cambridge History of China*, vol. 3, Sui and Tang,

581-906, Part I, edited by Denis Twitchett (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1978), 188–241, especially 239–41.

67 Joanna Waley-Cohen, “Commemorating War in Eighteenth-Century China,” 873. Also see Pamela Kyle Crossley, “The Rulerships of China,” *American Historical Review* 97, no. 5 (December 1992): 1468–84.

68 Lockman, *Travels of the Jesuits*, 142.

69 For a canonical study on the subjects of Hermeticism and Neoplatonism in the Renaissance, see Frances Amelia Yates, *Giordano Bruno and the Hermetic Tradition* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1964).

70 John Hendrix, “Neoplatonism in the Design of Baroque Architecture,” in *Neoplatonism and Western Aesthetics*, eds. Aphrodite Alexandrakis and Nicholas J. Moutafakis (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2002), 117.

71 “The Mind to Hermes,” in *Corpus Hermeticum XI*; optimist gnosis. Cited in Yates, *Giordano Bruno and the Hermetic Tradition*, 33–4. Translated by Marsilio Ficino (1433–1499), *Corpus Hermeticum*, as a major text of Hermeticism-Neoplatonism, was an important source of Renaissance humanist strength.

72 Italian late Renaissance and Baroque gardens such as Bomarzo, Pratolino, and Castello were examples of gardens used for initiatory journeys. See Mario Praz, *Il giardino dei sensi* (Milano: A. Mondadori, 1975). Giovanna Ragionieri, *Il giardino storico italiano* (Siena: Olschki, 1978). David R. Coffin, *The Italian Garden* (Washington: Dumbarton Oaks, 1972).

73 Malaspini’s story (Novella 24, vol.2, 1599) was cited from Luciano Berti, *Il Principe dello Studiolo. Francesco I dei Medici e la fine del Rinascimento fiorentino* (Florence: Editrice Edam, 1967), 144–66 in Zakiyah Hanafi, *The Monster in the Machine: Explorations of Monstrosity in Early Modern Italy* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2001), 16–19.

74 Jean Terrasson, *Séthos, ou vie tirée des monuments anecdotes de l’ancienne Egypte* (Paris, 1731). This influential work was translated into English in 1731 and into German in 1737; it was printed in Paris in 1767. Cf. Anthony Vidler, *The Writing of the Walls: Architectural Theory in the Late Enlightenment* (London: Butterworth Architecture, 1989), 98, 210.

75 *Ibid.*, 98.

76 Many members of eighteenth-century British Freemasonry were from the conservative elite class, who drew their ideals from classical republicanism and Enlightenment philosophes. The conservative elite envisioned a utopian British Empire as a regenerated Roman republic under the reign of Emperor Augustus. For classical republicanism in Freemasonry ideologies, see Margaret C. Jacob, *Living the Enlightenment: Freemasonry and Politics in Eighteenth-Century Europe* (New York; Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1991), 204–20. Cf. Ayres, *Classical Culture and the Idea of Rome in Eighteenth-Century England*. For Freemasonry’s imperialist commitment, see Jessica Harland-Jacobs, *Builders of Empire: Freemasons and British Imperialism, 1717–1927* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2007).

77 The references on the prevalence of Freemasonry memberships in the Society of Dilettanti, the Royal Academy and the Hanoverian royal family, are respectively, Jason M. Kelly, *The Society of Dilettanti: Archaeology and Identity in the British Enlightenment* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2009), 17–8. David Watkin, “Freemasonry and Sir John Soane,” *Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians* 54, no. 4 (1995): 402–17. “A Library and Museum of Freemasonry Information Leaf-

let: English Royal Freemasons,” <http://freemasonry.london.museum/os/wp-content/uploads/2010/08/English-Royal-Freemasons.pdf> (accessed on 12-04-11)

78 For a detailed account on this subject, see James Stevens Curl, *The Art and Architecture of Freemasonry* (London: Batsford, 1991).

79 See Richard Quaintance, “Kew Gardens, 1731–1778: Can we look at both sides now?” in *Kew Gardens: A controversial Georgian landscape*, ed. Patrick Eyres (Special Issue of *New Arcadian Journal* no. 51/51 [2001]): 14–51.

80 Richard Quaintance, “Toward Distinguishing among Theme Park Publics: William Chambers’s Landscape Theory Vs. His Kew Practice,” in *Theme Park Landscapes: Antecedents and Variations*, eds. Terence Young and Robert Riley (Washington, D.C.: Dumbarton Oaks Research Library and Collection, 2002), 25–47.

81 William Chambers, *A Dissertation on Oriental Gardening: The Second Edition, with Additions, to Which Is Annexed, an Explanatory Discourse by Tan Chet-Qua, of Quang-Chew-Fu*, Gent., 2nd ed. (London: printed by W. Griffin, 1773), 133.

82 The Western perception of the integrated effects of the Chinese landscape city was commingled with the Hermetic-Neoplatonic tradition, in which cities were a key site of shaping citizens’ morals. Supposedly founded by Hermes Trismegistus, the Egyptian city of Adocentyn described in *Picatrix* is a prototype of the ideal republic, ruled by a combination of rational laws and magical, natural religions. *Picatrix*, Lib. IV, cap. 3. Cited in Yates, *Giordano Bruno and the Hermetic Tradition*, 58. This vision of an ideal city was realized in Augustan Rome and revived in the Renaissance. Representations of this hermetic utopia were, among others, Tomasso Campanella’s *City of the Sun* (1623), Nicolas Poussin’s *Landscape with a city*, and Giovanni Battista Piranesi’s *Campo Marzio* (The Field of Mars) (1762)—a scheme of city planning for urban regeneration. Chambers neighbored with Piranesi in 1753–54 during his five-year stay in Rome and may well have been influenced by him. This utopian city tradition was re-imagined by Englishmen through pastoral settings, not without Chinese influences. Robert Castell (d. 1729), author of *The Villas of the Ancients Illustrated* (1728), first theorized the “City as forest,” which was then followed by Abbé Laugier’s famous principle of gardening as city planning. Chambers was receptive to both of these ideas.

83 Adam Smith, *The Theory of Moral Sentiments*, 244. 246.

84 Qiheng Wang, Changming Yang, and Li Qin, “Qingdai huangjia yuanlin yanjiu de ruogan wenti [清代皇家园林研究的若干问题 Some issues in Qing imperial garden studies],” *Jianzhushi [Architects]*, no.6 (1995): 47–50.

85 For a general discussion on this subject, see Qiheng Wang, *Fengshui Lilun Yanjiu [风水理论研究 Study of the Fengshui Theory]* 2nd ed. (Tianjin: Tianjin University Press, 2003). For a case study of Suzhou city on this topic, see Yinong Xu, *The Chinese City in Space and Time: The Development of Urban Form in Suzhou* (Honolulu: University of Hawai‘i Press, 2000), 40–52.

86 Qiheng Wang and Yi Su, “Pingdi qi pengying, Chengshi er linhe: Qingyiyuan yu qingdai Beijing chengshi shengtai jianshe” [平地起蓬瀛，城市而林壑：清漪园与清代北京城市生态建设 Erecting Peng-ying Islands from the Plain, Constructing the City as Forest: Qingyi Garden and the Qing Eco-Construction of Beijing] in *Zhongguo Zijin Cheng xuehui lunwenji [中国紫禁城学会论文集(第三辑) Proceedings of the Forbidden City Society]* vol. 3 (Beijing: Zijin Cheng chubanshe, 2000).

87 One of the earliest disseminations in Europe of images of actual Chinese cityscapes and landscape views was Johan Nieuhof’s *Het gezantschap der Neêrlandsche Oost-Indische Compagnie, aan den*

grooten Tartarischen Cham, Den tegenwoordigen keizer van China, first published in Amsterdam in 1665 and containing 150 plates. The account documents the first Dutch embassy to China that was undertaken from 1655–57. It was translated and published in French, German, Latin, and English in the 1660s. The earliest English version is Johannes Nieuhof and John Ogilby, *An Embassy from the East-India Company of the United Provinces to the Grand Tartar Cham Emperour of China* (London: J. Macock, 1669). Another early attempt to disseminate images of actual Chinese gardens in England is *The Emperor of China's Palace at Peking; and His Principal Gardens, as Well in Tartary as at Peking, Gehol, and the Adjacent Countries; with an Elevation of the Great Mogul's Throne* (London: 1753). This book comprised twenty engravings, most of which were based on the engravings by Matteo Ripa during 1711–13 of the Kangxi Emperor's summer palace at Chengde.

88 See note 9.

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