

DESIGNERS, MAKERS, INFLUENCERS: THE CONTRIBUTION OF  
WILLIAM HALFPENNY AND THOMAS CHIPPENDALE TO THE  
DEVELOPMENT ENGLISH CHINOISERIE FURNITURE DESIGN

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**Abstract**

The term Chinoiserie, i.e. the tendency to incorporate elements of Chinese culture into European art and architecture, redefined the concept of style in seventeenth-century France and influenced the aesthetic formation of European arts and design in the century that followed. The term became particularly popular in England, as it was also associated with the need for renewal after the excessive ornamentation, elaborate symbolism and intense theatricality of Baroque, as well as the aesthetic and ideological perfection of Classicism. As early as the first half of the eighteenth century, the architect and designer William Halfpenny (unknown date of birth; professionally active 1723-1755) showed a keen interest and skill in the transition from classical design to the mysterious Chinese motifs, contributing thus to the stylistic formation of English Chinoiserie, especially in the field of architecture and by extension furniture design. His experimentally pioneering approach through his publications was the beginning of a new aesthetic and ideological era that had a catalytic effect on the shaping of the design concept, taste and construction techniques of the equally important English furniture designer, Thomas Chippendale (1718-1779).

This research aims to highlight the establishment of Chinese culture and aesthetics, known as Chinoiserie, in the eighteenth-century England, as regards the formation of furniture design, through the pattern books and design experimentation of William Halfpenny, as well as the inspired publications and the manufacturing mastery of Thomas Chippendale.

**Keywords:** Chinese culture, publications, design, furnishings, eighteenth century, England

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## Introduction

Chinoiserie was the cradle of an inordinate desire for novelty and distinctness in European design, which for centuries had been stuck in the inflexible rules of Baroque and Classicism.<sup>1</sup> Asian cultures such as the Chinese, Japanese, and Indian, already known since the Renaissance especially for textiles such as expensive silk and fine cotton, lacquered wood or bamboo furniture and porcelain wares, seemed to be rediscovered by during the seventeenth century in Europe and the USA, but mainly during the first half of the eighteenth century when there was a sharp increase in trade with China and other countries in eastern Asia.<sup>2</sup> It should be noted that China in particular was the most important trade and cultural partner of the Europeans and Americans, and that is why Chinese culture was the most dominant of all at that time: soon everything Chinese, either utilitarian objects or works of art, began to be the focus of a consuming frenzy that swept the circles of high social stratification. Understandably, as Chinese products became strongly associated with economic affluence, luxury, and rarity, only the financially powerful could afford genuine, imported goods. But even then, most of their users did not have a clear understanding of East Asia and its cultures, as everything looked to their inexperienced eyes equally complex and composite, and therefore almost identical. According to Bertram the European interpretation of the Asian civilization was a colorful tangle of forms, colors and compositions, as it combined Chinese and Japanese products under the general term 'Indian art', tending to confuse basic motifs of each culture, such as the blue and white Japanese patterns of porcelain objects with scenes taken from the daily life of the Chinese royal court and exotic symbolism, such as tropical animals and plants.<sup>3</sup> It was also broadly believed that the elegance and the technical perfection of Chinese goods rivaled the rarity, refinement and high aesthetics of the objects that decorated the Palace of Versailles, which is why they succumbed to their exotic charm.<sup>4</sup> The stately palaces, the rich mansions and the opulent grand city houses used to have a specially designed room where specially made showcases hosted expensive, fine Chinese porcelain ware. Even their gardens were laid out according to the Chinese gardening values and aesthetics. All these constituted the 'passport' of wealthy consumers to the high circles of the new aesthetic order imposed by the mysterious, as well as charming, Chinese culture.<sup>5</sup>

However, it should be noted that the lower socio-economic classes did not have easy access to authentic goods and were satisfied only with cheap imitations of products, especially made in Europe and China, which included, inter alia, traditional motifs such as pagodas, dragons, birds, fish and plants rendered, in this case, only through the imagination of the ambitious manufacturers. Nevertheless, it was these rather peculiar mixtures of European and Chinese styles that formed what we all recognize today as Chinoiserie, rather than the genuine Chinese objects.

The term Chinoiserie was coined in France and came to epitomize fashion and high taste in both objects and interiors modeled after the

Chinese culture of the time. While Europeans' desire for Chinese goods began to increase as trade with China increased, Chinoiserie peaked in popularity in French architecture when King Louis XIV built the famous Trianon de Porcelaine (1670-1671). This building was the first in Europe to have visible external and internal structural and aesthetic elements of Chinese culture and was one of the architectural gems in the broader area of the Palace of Versailles.<sup>6 7</sup>

The emergence of the fanciful, ornately flamboyant Rococo style in France in the early eighteenth century, the first European decorative style to combine the elements of lightness, asymmetry, disorder and unevenness, seemed to provide fertile ground for the flourishing of Chinoiserie and it would favor both its smooth adaptation to the European taste, but also its further autonomous evolution. Thus the initial interest in any type of Chinese art quickly turned into a particularly popular fashion that flourished within the wider context of French Rococo by Louis 15th, whose love of Chinese tradition, philosophy and aesthetics was commonly known.<sup>8</sup>

By the end of the eighteenth century, European traditions in the decorative and applied arts, architecture and the concept of taste in general had already shown a noticeable influence from Chinese art which still constituted the epitome of exoticism and luxury. This was not at all unexpected as at that time Chinoiserie constituted the attraction exerted by the concepts of the unknown and the exotic, stimulating thus the curiosity and the imagination of the majority, as few had the opportunity to travel to China and to get to know its wonders up close. This exact situation prevailed during the eighteenth century in England as well, as China was for its inhabitants an oriental, mysterious, remote and at the same time attractive place. Thus, although trade between the two countries experienced a significant increase during the seventeenth and especially during the eighteenth century, access to distant China was still very limited. However, Chinoiserie was already known in England as a particularly elegant form of fashion with unusual, exotic patterns originating from France. Thus, it did not take long to become the new shopping craze of English consumers who were thirsty for innovation and renewal, constituting a new attractive source of ideas for English designers and manufacturers. The first English architects and designers of objects, mainly of furniture that formed the most important part of interior design decoration, initially borrowed many ideas from French Chinoiserie.<sup>9</sup> However, they very quickly managed to invent, with their rich imagination, the corresponding English Chinoiserie style which initially shaped the taste of wealthy consumers, as it was gradually associated with opulence, exoticism and high class excellence, and then of the lower social classes.

In these unprecedented circumstances for the classic design history of English furniture, the visions, ideas, designs and goals of one of the pioneering English architects and designers, William Halfpenny, were born. But, in what way did his furniture design ideas contribute, along with other art forms of the time, such as visual arts, music, literature and

poetry, to the formation of ‘a historical moment for the exploration and establishment of British attitudes towards China’, as Mengmeng Yan claims?<sup>10</sup> How did Halfpenny’s pioneering design proposals, mainly through his publications, influence the ideological and aesthetic formation of British furniture design? How did Chippendale’s manufacturing prowess and design genius complement Halfpenny’s inspired design mastery, and contributed to the formation of this new, non-western design trend? All these questions will be answered extensively and documented with corresponding examples in the following chapters, shedding light on unknown and unexplored aspects of the presence of English Chinoiserie in the eighteenth century furniture design.

### **William Halfpenny: English furniture design introduction to Chinoiserie style**

Despite the fact that Chinese culture had already constituted since the late seventeenth century an inexhaustible source of inspiration in most fields of the applied and decorative arts in Europe, the creative and imaginative architect and designer William Halfpenny had not dealt with China at all, as not only had he not been intimately acquainted with its culture, but it is not at all certain whether he had seen or studied any genuine Chinese objects. Nevertheless, he was bold enough to experiment with the new, interesting oriental aesthetic proposals that the new fashion imposed on architecture and design by breaking the vulnerable, predictable and therefore dull stereotypes of Classicism. The aura of the mystical East, the deeply appealing Chinese philosophy, the quirky motifs, the innovative forms and the rich thematology of Chinese art enabled him to make the transition from the classical designs and architecture to designs distinguished for their charming, exotic origin.<sup>11</sup> More specifically, his inspiration was very likely drawn from the products of travel and trade which the enterprise of the East India Company would massively import at that time.<sup>12</sup> Experimenting in a particularly dashing way, Halfpenny would design and make some early Chinoiserie buildings and objects, trying thus to discover the combinations between decoration, form and functionality. In contrast to the purely structural, rather pretentious work of the silverwork designer and cabinet maker John Linnell (1729-1796), who had realized the high significance of Chinoiserie, but remained attached exclusively to the stylized construction of objects such as beds, chairs, settees, but also domestic interiors, Halfpenny soon realized the value of manuals and pattern books.<sup>13</sup> After all, his creative imagination and deep technical knowledge could not be productive and useful except through their ‘recording’ in a series of pattern books which would constitute, as a whole, the English Chinoiserie bible for his peers, but also for the subsequent designers of his country. Through this important publication work he invented and analyzed ideas that promoted the Chinese design style predominantly in architecture, but also in furniture design. But what he must be credited with is that he managed to highlight Chinese culture beyond its predictable classic image that mainly

concerned traditional temples and pagodas, as he focused his design interest on garden pavilions,<sup>14</sup> farmhouses, garden decoration, bridges, and garden furniture.<sup>15</sup> His particularly affordable pattern books, many of which he completed with the contribution of his son John, included not only aesthetic, but also technical information, constituted important reference manuals and enjoyed great popularity in furniture draftsmen circles in the mid-1700s. But it should be emphasized that due to his strong interest in garden architecture, his relationship with furniture design was rather secondary as it had only a supporting role in his architectural designs. The two main types of furniture he designed, garden seats and chairs, had a specific type of structure, both in terms of construction and materials, so that they could withstand the idiosyncrasies of the British climate because of their long outdoors use, without however being at the expense of their orientalist aesthetics or functionality. It should also be noted that the practical information provided by these detailed engravings on cooper plates, such as dimensions, estimates and materials, were more useful to a furniture maker than to a designer. It was no coincidence then that his publications quickly became an alternative to the very expensive, classic pattern books of famous English architects and designers such as James Gibbs and Colen Campbell.<sup>16</sup> With this broad design mastery Halfpenny redefined the aesthetics of the traditional English garden, architecture and furniture according to the latest fashion dictated by the Chinese culture, while giving the opportunity to well-known and unknown furniture designers to adopt his innovative ideas. His first pattern book, a four volume publication titled *New Designs for Chinese Temples*, (1750–1752) included a series of engravings of garden architecture, details of small structural and decorative elements, such as pilasters, balustrades, chimneys, windows, doors etc., and outdoor seating with strong influences exclusively from Chinese architectural tradition and art.<sup>17</sup> This work was rich in information and ambitious enough in terms of introducing and disseminating traditional Chinese design aesthetics and received an immediate and warm response and was soon recognized as a significant textbook in shaping British furniture design, opening a new chapter in its long history. With this publication alone, Halfpenny made it clear to everyone that Chinese taste had already found fertile ground to grow in the field of hitherto rigid, classic British design.<sup>18</sup>

A typical example is the garden seat, plate N<sup>o</sup> XCIX, from the second edition of volume III, 1755, which bears almost intact decorative motifs and elements mainly of the Chinese architectural tradition, with helpful notes for readers, such as the following: ‘*14 Feet long, and Feet 8 Inches high, proper for the 5 Termination of a Jong, Walk or Avenue*’ (Fig. 1).<sup>19 20</sup>

First of all, it is important to stress that the design of this object is not identified with the idea of the original Chinese garden or court seats which were different types of porcelain or wooden barrel-shaped stools decorated with fanciful colors and symbols borrowed from the Chinese tradition.<sup>21</sup> In this case, though, Halfpenny tried to invent the idea of a

Chinese garden seat combining both the typical English frame of an outdoor bench decorated with Chinese architectural elements, such as the wooden sharp, x-like, horizontal and vertical fretwork of the back and the decorative rail in winding snake shapes, the mythical symbol of longevity, luck and authority, on the top of the seat. The small, but impressive wooden sculptures of a Chinese mythical beast, possibly a Suanni<sup>22</sup>, between the handles and the legs of the seat simply verify the oriental influence on the object.

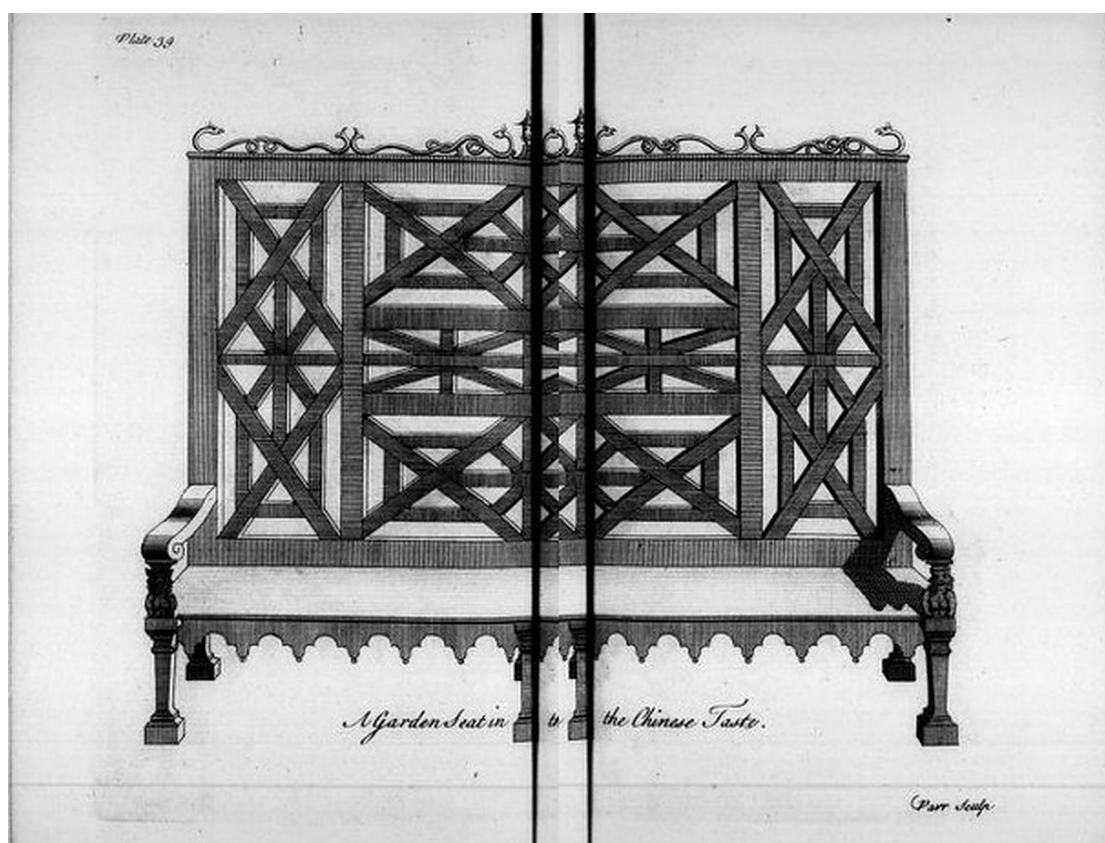


Fig. 1. William Halfpenny: Chinese style garden seat, plate N° XCIX. Source: *New Designs for Chinese Temples*, second edition, volume III, 1755.

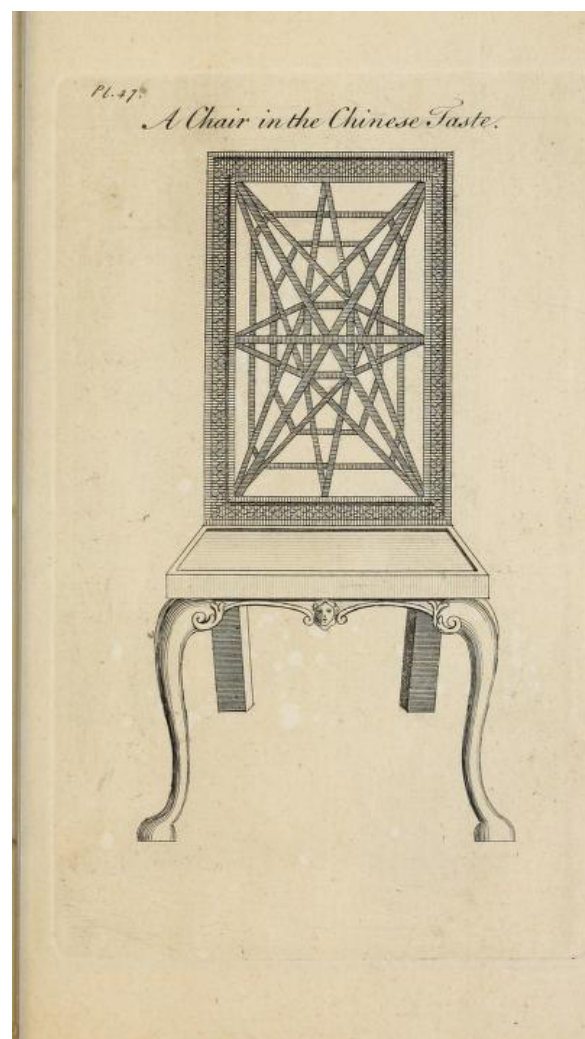
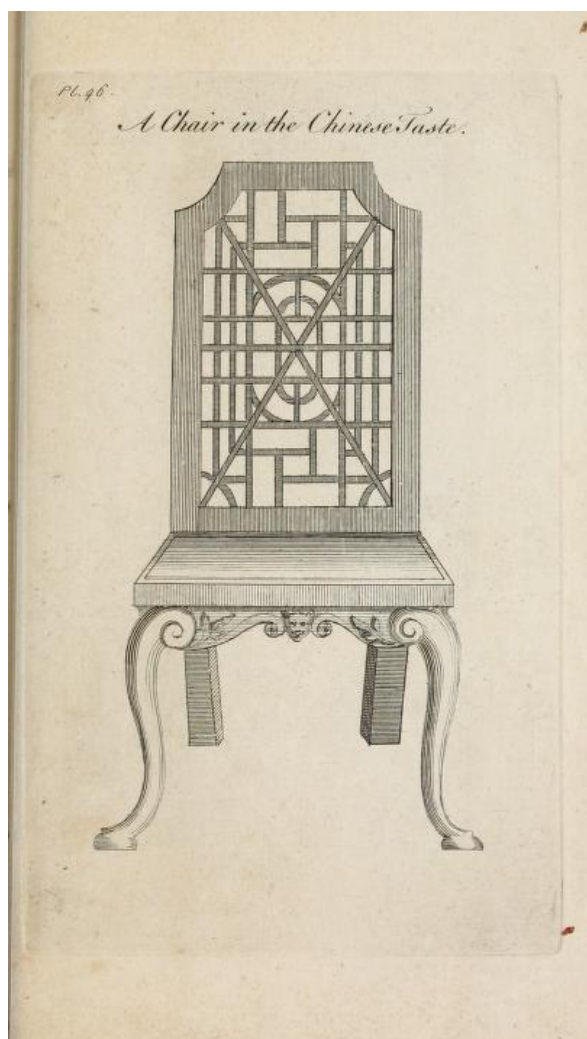
His most popular pattern book titled *Rural Architecture in the Chinese Taste*<sup>23</sup> (1752) included sixty copper plates with designs for the decoration of mostly gardens, parks, groves and domestic interiors as well as a detailed design for a Chinese-style staircase. In this publication, Halfpenny, along with his son, would present, inter alia, a more extensive range of garden seats, some of which resembled small architectural marvels, as they bore the pompous structural aesthetic characteristics of traditional Chinese royal architecture.

An illustrative example of this influential relationship can be found in plate N° XLVIII, and specifically in figure i where a flamboyant garden seat, covered with a Chinese coved canopy is depicted (Fig. 2.). The seat seems to borrow many decorative elements from Asian garden architecture and is pretentiously portrayed in combination with figure ii, an intricate fence or palisade design made of wood or iron, as if it

constitutes a part of a carefully thought garden architecture composition.<sup>24</sup> The back of the seat looks like a part of a heavily decorated pagoda, but it also recalls the structure of an antique Chinese iron garden lantern. In stark contrast to these oriental features come the stylized curved arms, but also the cabriole legs of the magnificent seat, characteristic features of Queen Anne Style furniture (1712-1760),<sup>25</sup> enhancing thus the new hybrid style Chinoiserie signified.



Fig. 2. William Halfpenny: Garden seat and palisades in Chinese style, plate N° XLVIII. Source: *Rural Architecture in the Chinese Taste*, first edition, 1752.



Figs. 3 & 4. William Halfpenny: Two popular Chinese taste garden chairs, plates N° XLVI and N° XLVII. Source: *Rural Architecture in the Chinese Taste*, first edition, 1752.

Of particular interest are the two garden chairs in plates N° XLVI and N° XLVII, accordingly.<sup>26</sup> With fewer references to Chinese architecture and an emphasis on the geometric motifs found in decorative patterns, symbols and in the traditional iconography elements, these chairs constitute another example of the hybrid relationship between Chinese tradition and classic English furniture design. The striking high backs of both chairs ornated with latticework in bold geometric shapes and forms stand out for the contrasting relationship they develop with the two high front Rococo cabriole legs, but also with the two solid, unadorned rear legs, features that until then can be found in indoor seating only. Both garden chairs reveal Halfpenny's design ingenuity and further highlight his intention to establish the Chinoiserie aesthetic in English furniture (Fig. 3 & 4).

Despite the fact that most William and John Halfpenny's publications were not based on research and scientific observation, but on



imagination and experimentation, creating an unaffected new style that met the demands of European fashion, it was neither considered contemptuous nor of secondary importance; on the contrary, it remained distinct and original. Having been published a few years before similar manuals by Thomas Chippendale and Sir Thomas Chambers, Halfpenny's pattern books formed the basis for their own ideas, dispelling, at the same time, the myth that these two furniture designers were the first to have introduced the taste of Chinese culture to eighteenth-century England.<sup>27</sup>

### **Thomas Chippendale's popular furniture in Chinese taste**

In the early 1750s Chippendale was not a simple, humble maker of furniture, but a successful entrepreneur, an active member of a thriving furniture industry which could supply a vast variety of types to the British audience who were thirsty for change and innovation in interior design.<sup>28</sup> In sharp contrast to Halfpenny's interest in architecture design as a principal field of research, Chippendale had focused on designing and manufacturing just furniture. The majority of his work included a wealth of structural types of chairs, benches, sofas, clocks, beds, cabinets, dressers, fire screens, bookcases, escritaires, desks, railings and cabinets. Quite known as one of the most prolific furniture draftsmen of his time he set up, along with his son Thomas Chippendale Junior (1749–1823), his workshops and showroom in St. Martin's Lane, London after having moved from nearby Northumberland Court in 1754. In St. Martin's Lane, Chippendale joined a large community of cabinetmakers, wood carvers, and other artists, many of whom had already begun to realize the potential of exploiting their design ideas through publishing.<sup>29</sup> The very same year he published his most renowned and influential pattern book *The Gentleman and Cabinet-Maker's Director*, the illustrations of which made the 'Chippendale Style' of furniture famous worldwide. The publication was not only a simple illustrated pattern book, but also a brief set of 'instructions' or 'orders' addressed to furniture draftsmen and cabinet makers, that is quite the same as Halfpenny's works. The book is thought to have contributed not only to the formation of the eighteenth century English furniture, but also to the general configuration of English upper, but principally middle-class domestic interiors.<sup>30</sup>

Having already been deeply inspired by Halfpenny's extraordinary publications, he designed a set of objects in a variety of styles and degrees of elaboration that his clients could choose from or, adapt to suit their own taste. *The Director* effectively promoted new fashions in design to a growing middle class market, contrasting again Halfpenny's luxurious garden architecture and furniture design ideas which were primarily addressed to the upper social classes. It was a marketing strategy and in this sense Chippendale was proved to be a pioneer in the emergence of design as a distinct aspect of the manufacture of furniture. We can now compare his design, manufacture and marketing strategies as particularly advanced for his time as *The Director* started a

trail that would eventually lead to the Habitat and IKEA catalogues today.<sup>31</sup>

Some characteristic forms, ornaments and distinct lacquer decorations of his works in the 1750s are clearly attributed to the Chinese influence on the design of English furniture. To finish these pieces of furniture Chippendale thought that only genuine Chinese and Japanese varnishes should be applied, materials already known in England as they had begun to be imported in the seventeenth century.<sup>32</sup> Many of these ideas were included in *The Director*. It should be noted, though, that the book contained many more historical, cultural, aesthetic and artistic influences that differentiated it quite a bit from the two aforementioned Halfpenny publications that were based exclusively on Chinese culture. Therefore, in addition to the Chinese influence, a strong interest in the French Rococo style furniture or modern style as it is mentioned in the book, which was the epitome of fashion and finesse throughout Europe, is particularly evident. In this way Chippendale attempted to make relatively affordable types of furniture that had until then only been enjoyed by the great royal courts, accessible to the wider English audience and this was a solid reason for the enormous commercial success of his book.<sup>33</sup> Also, his strong attraction to the aesthetics of the Middle Ages and in particular to the Gothic style, turned his interest to borrowing structural and ornamental elements from the English Gothic era, for the design of new furniture of various types. The book, often taken as an imaginative catalogue, also contained practical information for the making of the furniture pieces, as was the case with Halfpenny's pattern books. However, we can detect interesting decoration proposals, but also personal opinions and views which could be particularly helpful for users.

We can now discuss some specific examples from *The Director* and realize the magnitude of Chippendale's contribution to the formation of Chinoiserie in English furniture. Amongst the different types, indoor seating, such as chairs and sofas, constitute the majority, as opposed to Halfpenny's garden seating. Plates Nos XXIII, XXIV and XXV show nine similar types of chairs about which Chippendale mentions:

ARE nine Chairs in the present Chinese manner, which I hope will improve that taste, or manner of work ; it having yet never arrived to any perfection; doubtless it might be lost without feeling its beauty: as it admits of the areatest variety, I think it the most useful of any other. The sizes are all specified on the designs. The three last (No. XXV.) I hope will be well received, as there has been none like them yet made. <sup>34</sup> (Fig. 5)

The oriental taste is obvious on this variety of chairs which seem to be quite functional along with being aesthetically appealing and are intended to be placed in the living and dining room of a middle or even upper class house. Specifically, the elaborated fretwork back design which is on a balanced accordance with the legs, makes the chairs transparent and light. On top of that, their clean, almost geometrical lines, and wide,

plain seats make them smart and comfortable, enhancing at the same time the sweeping Chinoiserie fashion in England.

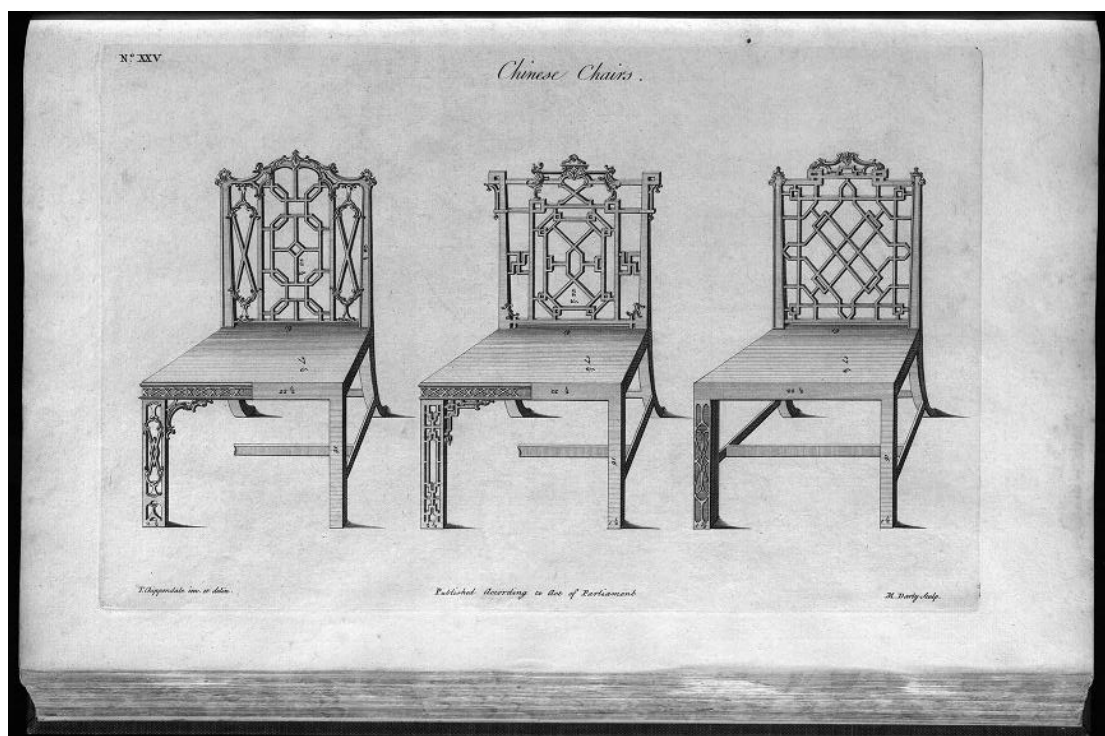


Fig. 5. Thomas Chippendale: Three Chinese style indoor chairs, plate N° XXV. Source: *The Gentleman and Cabinet-Maker's Director*, first edition, 1754.

Nevertheless, many of these chair designs changed in their final implementation. A year after the publishing of *The Director*, the chair backrest acquired its final shape as it took the form of a traditional ribbon ornament, giving the piece of furniture a lightness that was a fundamental value in the new English furniture vocabulary. By the years, along with Chinoiserie, there were many more changes such as the Rococo cabriole legs and the distinctive shell motifs, the faux bamboo frame, the seat floral upholstery etc., suggesting thus a more flexible, European seating style. (Fig. 6.)

For the plate N° XXXII which shows a bed in Chinese manner, he states:

Is a Chinese Bed, the curtains and vallens are tied up in drapery, the tester is canted at each corner, which makes a sort of an elliptical ornament or arch, and if well executed will look very well'.<sup>35</sup> (Fig. 7.)

It is true that this cleverly intricate bed design formed the basis on which most Chippendale Chinoiserie beds would be made in the decades that followed, with several variations, however, mainly in the qualities of the wooden lacquered frame and the fabrics of the dome canopy, but also of those around the base of the mattress. The influence of the classical pagoda is evident in the shape of the canopy, particularly in its four

complex pediments, while the wood-carved details of Chinese stylized motifs on the pilasters and on the canopy sides and façade are impressive.



Fig. 6. Thomas Chippendale: Armchair with fine Chinese decorations and upholstered, 1770. Source: Anboise Antiques.

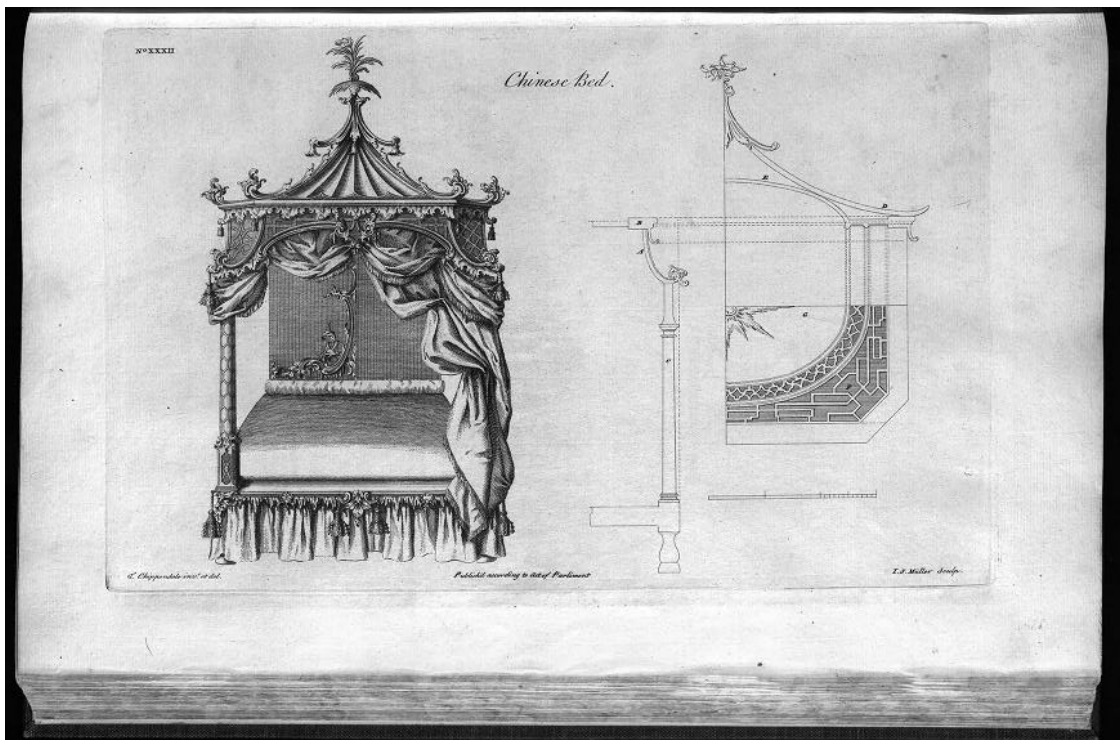


Fig. 7. Thomas Chippendale: Engraving of an amazing Chinese style bed, plate N° XXXII. Source: *The Gentleman and Cabinet-Maker's Director*, first edition, 1754.

As for some of his most representative works, cabinets, he would state on the occasion of plate N<sup>o</sup> XCIII:

Is a Chinese Cabinet with drawers in the middle part, and two different forts of doors at each end. The bottom drawer is intended to be all in one ; the dimensions and mouldings are all fixed to the design. This Cabinet, finifried according to the drawing, and by a good workman, will, I am confident, be very genteel'.<sup>36</sup> (Fig. 8)

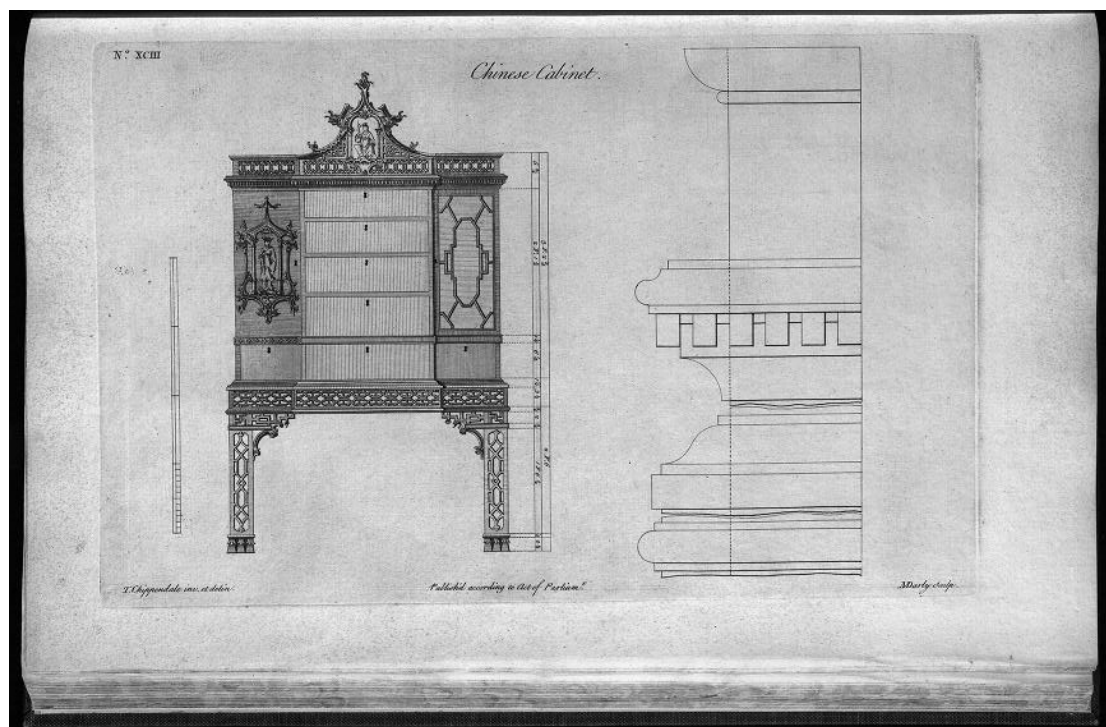


Fig. 8. Thomas Chippendale: Engraving of a typical Chinese style cabinet, No XCIII. Source: *The Gentleman and Cabinet-Maker's Director*, first edition, 1754.

Undoubtedly confident for this type of furniture Chippendale would 'invest' on cabinets of any size and style, as they seem to bear the most distinctive features of Chinese culture: strong pagoda-like shapes and moulded pediments, traditional Chinese figures and motifs, oriental-style lacquered woodwork, fretwork base and legs, that is features reminiscent of classical Chinese architecture. His Chinoiserie type display or store cabinets, would remain particularly popular until the beginning of the twentieth century, having, however, undergone significant changes and additions such as wide or small glass windows and shelves in a plethora of fretwork designs, mirrors, intense wooden lattice ornaments, foliate finials, arches, brass or copper ecutcheons, long and short doors, curved high or low legs finishing to ball-and-claw feet, C-scroll supports etc. (Fig. 9).

In 1754, the same year in which *The Director* was completed, a book titled *A New Book of Chinese Designs*, by the naturalist and ornithologist George Edwards (1694-1773) and the caricaturist and engraver Matthew Darly (1720-1780) would be published, with a big number of engravings of Chinoiserie design. In 1757 the famous architect Sir William Chambers, influenced both by Halfpenny and Chippendale would also publish a book titled *Designs of Chinese Buildings, Furniture, Dresses, Machines and Utensils* in which he described and explained how the buildings, furniture and interiors were used in China, and analyzed the nature of Chinese taste, mainly as regards garden planning and architecture.<sup>37</sup> The years that followed until the late 1760's many more similar, but of lesser importance, publications came out, enhancing thus the Chinoiserie taste in English furniture design.



Fig. 9. Thomas Chippendale: Impressive Chinoiserie style cabinet with gilt details. Source: Christie's 2023.

## Conclusion

Chinoiserie in eighteenth-century English furniture followed the French craze for Chinese goods and was an outgrowth of the new bourgeoisie garden architecture pioneered by Halfpenny. His inventive pattern books offered breakthrough ideas for extending the style beyond pagodas and temples, and made Chinese ornamental and decorative forms be equally useful in other fields of applied arts such as tapestry and wall paper with light, stylized patterns and designs, all being easy on the eye. However, as regards furniture design according to Chinese taste, it was limited to only a peripheral role of supporting value, namely to garden furniture, and indeed to a rather limited number and types. It is worth noting that despite his bold experimentation and his clever, pioneering ideas which undoubtedly had a great impact on the way of thinking of other designers and furniture makers of his time, Halfpenny's work did not gain the fame it deserved, while even today it is not as renowned as the work of Thomas Chippendale or his contemporary Sir William Chambers.

A major reason why this happened is that it was soon eclipsed by *The Director* which was a one-of-a-kind illustrated catalogue aimed only at furniture designers and makers and which soon achieved rapid and wide circulation throughout Britain. This resulted in it soon becoming the most important and reliable source of Chinoiserie style designs, despite the fact that it also contained many ideas and designs inspired by other historical and artistic sources.<sup>38</sup> Its influence on other craftsmen of his time, but also much later, was nothing less than catalytic, triggering, at the same time, the rapid popularization of Chinoiserie furniture in a broad range of fashionable furniture types especially for the middle class. In addition, the combination of many different styles contributed to the further creation of the famous English Rococo style in furniture and domestic interiors which thrived in Britain for a long time.

## NOTES

<sup>1</sup> Aldous Bertram, *Dragons & Pagodas: A Celebration of Chinoiserie* (London: Vendome Press, 2021), 25.

<sup>2</sup> David Beevers, *Chinese Whispers: Chinoiserie in Britain, 1650–1930* (Brighton: Royal Pavilion & Museums, 2009), 19.

<sup>3</sup> Bertram, *Dragons & Pagodas*, 12.

<sup>4</sup> Hyatt A. Mayor, "Chinoiserie," *The Metropolitan Museum of Art Bulletin* 36, no.5 (1941), 111.

<sup>5</sup> Chinasage, "The Chinoiserie style which swept Europe and America," <https://www.chinasage.info/chinoiserie.htm>

<sup>6</sup> The building consisted of five impressive pavilions decorated with a wide array of ceramic faience tiles in the classic Asian colors of blue and white. Many more parts of its interior decoration such as wall surfaces, furniture, and other wooden objects were decorated in the same style.

<sup>7</sup> Andrew Zega and Bernd H. Dams, "La Ménagerie de Versailles et le Trianon de Porcelaine : Un passé restitué," *Versalia. Revue de la Société des Amis de Versailles*, no. 2 (1999), 69-71.

<sup>8</sup> After the warm reception and application of Chinoiserie in the shaping of the interiors of Versailles, the fashion spread to other European countries, mainly England, Germany, Spain and Italy. Chinese interior decoration included tapestries, porcelain objects, textiles as well as Chinese-style panels, screens and paintings. The contribution of Portuguese travelers, sailors and merchants in China, to the

introduction of Chinoiserie in Europe is also important as in their effort to establish new trade routes and intense diplomatic contacts, they became pioneers in the process of dissemination of the cultural diversity of the Chinese culture and taste in a global context.

<sup>9</sup> Paul F. Hsai, "Chinoiserie in Eighteenth Century England," *American Journal of Chinese Studies* 4, no. 2 (1997): 238.

<sup>10</sup> Mengmeng Yan, "Foreignness and Selfhood: Reflections of China in Eighteenth-Century English Literature" (PhD diss., Durham University, 2018).

<sup>11</sup> The Garden's Trust, "A Halfpenny-worth of Chinese," <https://thegardenstrust.blog/2016/10/15/a-halfpenny-worth-of-chinese/>

<sup>12</sup> Charles Saumarez Smith, *Eighteenth-Century Decoration: Design and the Domestic Interior in England* (New York: Abrams, 1993), 132.

<sup>13</sup> Helena Hayward and Pat Kirkham, *William and John Linnell: Eighteenth Century London Furniture Makers* (Vol. I) (New York: Rizzoli, 1980), 37.

<sup>14</sup> The Chinese garden played an important role in the development of European landscape architecture, especially during the 18th century. The structural, ideological, symbolic and artistic features of the Chinese garden, of different historical periods found not only in the layout of the garden itself, but also in the pavilions, small bridges and teahouses themselves – were fundamental sources of culture and education in the daily life of English people. The specially designed furniture was of similar value.

<sup>15</sup> Albert Fekete and Peter Gyor, "Chinese pavilions in the early landscape gardens of Europe," *Scientific Journal of Latvia University of Life Sciences and Technologies Landscape Architecture and Art* 18, no. 18 (2021): 78.

<sup>16</sup> Daniel D. Reiff, *Houses from Books: Treatises, Pattern Books, and Catalogs in American Architecture, 1738-1950: A History and Guide* (Pennsylvania: Penn State Press, 2010), 21.

<sup>17</sup> Two of the most important publications that followed, among several others, were *The Chinese and Gothic architecture properly ornamented* (1752) and *Rural architecture in the Gothic taste* (1752) which dealt with the hybrid relationship between Chinese culture and the Gothic traditional architecture.

<sup>18</sup> Hugh Chisholm, "Halfpenny, William," *Encyclopædia Britannica* 12 (11th ed.) (Cambridge: University Press, 1911), 836.

<sup>19</sup> William Halfpenny and John Halfpenny, *New designs for Chinese bridges, temples, triumphal arches, garden seats, palings, obelisks, termini's, &c.* (2nd edition) (London: Robert Sayer Print House, 1755), 3.

<sup>20</sup> This engraving, together with some others, was republished in the first edition of the *Rural architecture in the Chinese taste* (1752).

<sup>21</sup> Jessica Harrison-Hall, *Catalogue of Late Yuan and Ming Ceramics in the British Museum* (London: British Museum Publications, 2001), 32.

<sup>22</sup> Beast of Chinese mythology, one of the nine sons of the dragon, which had the hybrid body of a lion and a dragon.

<sup>23</sup> The complete title of the third edition of the book is: *Rural architecture in the Chinese taste: being designs entirely new for the decoration of gardens, parks, forrests, insides of houses, & c., on sixty copper plates, with full instructions for workmen : also a near estimate of the charge, and hints where proper to be erected.*

<sup>24</sup> William Halfpenny and John Halfpenny, *Rural architecture in the Chinese taste* (London: Robert Sayer Print House, 1752) 128.

<sup>25</sup> Joseph T. Butler, Kathleen Eagen Johnson and Ray Skibinski, *Field Guide to American Antique Furniture: A Unique Visual System for Identifying the Style of Virtually Any Piece of American Antique Furniture* (New York: Macmillan, 1986), 29.

<sup>26</sup> Halfpenny and Halfpenny, *Rural architecture in the Chinese taste*, 124;126.

<sup>27</sup> Hugh Chisholm, *The Encyclopaedia Britannica, A Dictionary of Arts, Sciences, Literature and General Information* (11<sup>th</sup> Edition, Vol. XII, Slice VII) (Gyantse to Hallel), <https://www.gutenberg.org/files/38401/38401-h/38401-h.htm>

<sup>28</sup> Saumarez Smith, *Eighteenth-Century Decoration*, 132.

<sup>29</sup> Christopher Gilbert, *The Life and Work of Thomas Chippendale* (London: Tabard Press 1978), 48–51.

<sup>30</sup> James Ayres, *Domestic Interiors: The British Tradition 1500 – 1850* (New Haven, Connecticut; London: Yale University Press, 2003), 34.

<sup>31</sup> Deyan Sudjic, *The Language of Things* (London: Penguin, 2008), 64.

<sup>32</sup> Jerzy Smardzewski, *Furniture Design* (New York: Springer, 2015), 30-31, <https://link.springer.com/book/10.1007/978-3-319-19533-9>.



<sup>33</sup> The success of *The Director* was in large part due to Chippendale's collaboration with the entrepreneurial caricaturist, teacher, print-maker and artist Matthew Darly. We also cannot exclude the possibility that Chippendale, with his ambitious idea for a book of furniture designs in mind, sought out Darly directly for his experience in printing and publishing.

<sup>34</sup> Thomas Chippendale, *The Gentleman and Cabinet-Maker's Director* (London: Thomas Osborne Publications, 1754), 8.

<sup>35</sup> Chippendale, *The Gentleman and Cabinet-Maker's Director*, 10.

<sup>36</sup> Chippendale, *The Gentleman and Cabinet-Maker's Director*, 19.

<sup>37</sup> Albert Kozik, "William Chambers "Designs of Chinese, Buildings, Furniture, Dresses, Machines, And Utensils" in Context: An Authoritative. Guide To Chinese Visual Culture," *Biuletyn Historii Sztuki* LXXXIV, no.3 (2022): 580.

<sup>38</sup> Margot Finn, Kate Smith, *The East India Company at Home, 1757-1857* (London: UCL Press, 2018), 312.

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