



STIFTUNG
PREUSSISCHE SCHLÖSSER UND GÄRTEN
BERLIN-BRANDENBURG

O-TON TRANSCRIPTION

HELMUT BÖRSCH-SUPAN, RECORDED IN THE WHITE HALL AT CHARLOTTENBURG PALACE, 22 JUNE 2020

What we are dealing with here in the palace is history. This is a historical monument, and the White Hall in particular had a connection with war: it was built when Frederick was engaged in the First Silesian War, and it constituted a sort of counter-weight to the experience of war. Frederick naturally internalized that. And the subject of the original ceiling painting, the Marriage of Peleus and Thetis, that sounds so innocuous. But it led to the Trojan War. And Pesne's picture showed Eris [goddess of Discord] throwing the apple among the rivals for who was the most beautiful among them. And the three women of course immediately started quarrelling and retreated in a fury. And then Paris came along and gave the apple to Venus, and you know the rest of the story. That's the background to the wedding of Peleus and Thetis: war. But in the case of Frederick, the young Frederick, this was then mixed with the experience of winning the war in Silesia, as a prelude to the brilliant flowering of Prussian culture.