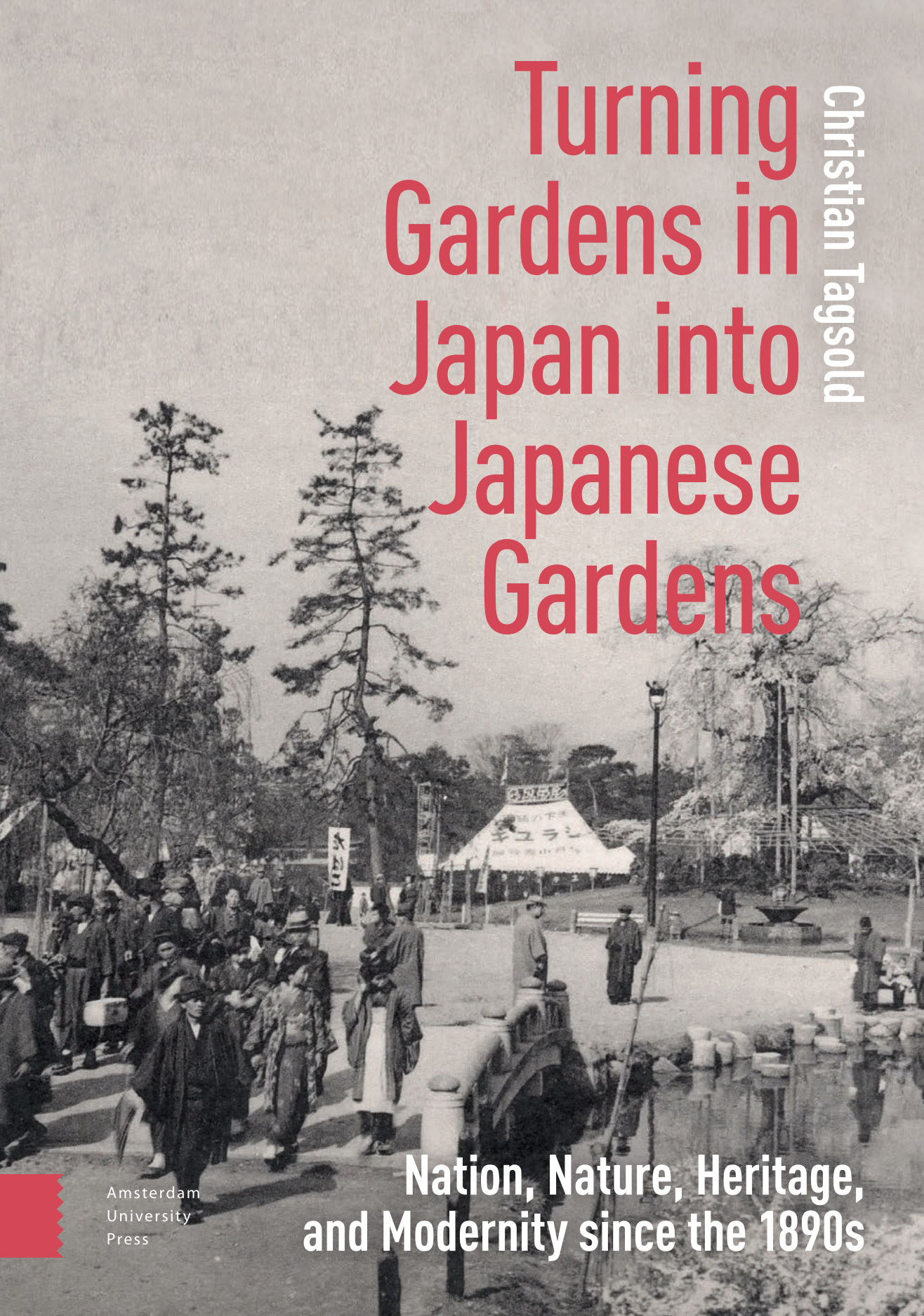

Turning Gardens in Japan into Japanese Gardens

Christian Tagsold

Nation, Nature, Heritage, and Modernity since the 1890s

Amsterdam University Press

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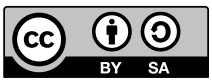

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Acknowledgments

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Katō Tomoki of the company Ueyakato Landscape (Kyoto) was one of the fascinating interview partners Suzuki-sensei introduced me to. Ueyakato Landscape currently runs Murin-an's daily affairs and ongoing cultivation in Kyoto. Katō-sensei's acumen, deep knowledge, and willingness to share his refreshing personal approach helped me better grasp Ogawa Jihei and how scholars and journalists have rediscovered him in recent decades.

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procedures for gardens, and was our key informant for the Tokyo section of our research project.

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Introduction

Tonogayato Garden (殿ヶ谷戸庭園 Tonogayato Teien) is a *traditional Japanese garden* located in Kokubunji, Tokyo.
English Wikipedia Entry Tonogayato Garden[1]

Originally built in the year Taishō 2 (1913), the Tonogayato estate was acquired by the Iwasaki family of the Mitsubishi zaibatsu in Shōwa 4 (1929) and developed into a *West-East-eclectic stroll garden*.
Kokubunji City Homepage[2]

I arrived at Kokubunji Station on a warm winter day in 2012. Unlike much of Tokyo's 23 inner wards, Kokubunji is hardly crowded or cramped. Yet it still feels like a real part of the metropolis, even though it is technically not part of Central Tokyo. I had initially come to Tokyo to finish researching the manuscript of my book *Spaces in Translation: Japanese Gardens and the West*, but I also wanted to visit some gardens in the East for a change. After visiting some of the classical gardens from the Edo period (1600–1868), I decided to seek out less frequented sites I was unfamiliar with and headed for Tonogayato Garden (see Figure 0.1). Once I arrived at Kokubunji Station, the garden was conveniently located only a few hundred meters away.

It was an early weekday afternoon when I went there, so only a few of people had paid the 150-yen fee to access the garden. Unlike more crowded tourist hotspots, such as the Edo-period Koishikawa Kōraku-en garden near the Tokyo Dome baseball stadium, the atmosphere here was rather calm and serene. The quiet garden was bathed in gentle sunlight, which proved ideal for a relaxing stroll. Initially, I was in awe of its sheer beauty, while the vastness of the parcel took me by surprise. I had read somewhere on the internet that Eguchi Teijō[3] had built the garden in 1913 for private purposes. At the time, Eguchi was the vice president of the South Manchuria Railway and thus one of the proponents of imperial Japan's expansion into China.

1 Wikipedia, emphasis added.

2 Kokubunji City, emphasis added.

3 Throughout the book, Japanese names will be given as the family name followed by the given name, as is usual in Japan.

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Figure 0.1. View of the pond in Tonogayato Garden. Photograph by the author.

In 1929, Iwasaki Hikoyata, the grandson of Mitsubishi's founder, Iwasaki Yatarō, purchased the garden and had it partly rebuilt to his own liking. Back then, the Iwasaki family still fully owned and operated the Mitsubishi *zaibatsu*, as the vast family-owned conglomerates were called. The *zaibatsu* were formed during the Meiji era (1868–1912) and largely controlled the Japanese economy until the end of World War II when the Allied occupation authorities forced them to dissolve. Iwasaki Hikoyata had ample means to develop the grounds further and turn them into a beautiful garden. Nonetheless, the Tonogayato Garden I visited felt more like a public park, given its size. Indeed, Tonogayato Garden is more extensive than several public parks in Tokyo Prefecture, though it can hardly compare to the larger ones.

A museum housed in a small villa onsite recounts the garden's history, and this small exhibition raised many questions for me. The exhibition panels on prewar history told a typical story of elites with a predilection for natural surroundings (see Figure 0.2). However, the postwar history of Tonogayato Garden turned out to be more controversial than I expected. In the 1960s, the local government planned to convert the garden into commercial real estate to build a shopping mall. The economic potential of a large strip of land just behind Kokubunji Station was attractive enough for developers to sacrifice a garden that was hardly 50 years old, regardless of its beauty. The Iwasaki family still owned Tonogayato Garden,

Figure 0.2. Panels and vitrines displaying old pamphlets at the museum of Tonogayato Garden. Photograph by the author.

but its patron, Iwasaki Hikoyata, had passed away in 1967. Stakeholders in the local economy wanted to expand into the area, and politicians in Kokubunji took their side.

However, as the exhibition at the small museum vividly showed, a citizen's movement formed in response to the plan and argued that Tonogayato Garden had to be saved. Since the residential area around the garden was rather upper middle class and home to many university professors, artists, and intellectuals, the movement quickly gained traction. Suddenly, influential intellectuals were opposing local economic interests and politicians. For example, the movement was actively supported by Irokawa Daikichi, one of the most famous history professors in Japan from the 1960s to 1980s, because he lived nearby.[4] The movement published a small journal, issues of which were exhibited at the museum. As far as I could tell from the displays, the movement mainly emphasized the garden's value for safeguarding nature in Kokubunji. I could find no mention of Tonogayato Garden being a traditional Japanese garden (*nihon teien*) or, by extension, a heritage site that needed to be protected against economic exploitation.

4 Sumiyoshi, 50.

Ultimately, the movement prevailed, and Tokyo Prefecture turned Tonogayato Garden into a public park in the mid-1970s. Many hotly debated social topics of the 1960s and 1970s resound in this struggle for the future of Tonogayato Garden. The late 1960s had witnessed a series of major environmental scandals in Japan, the most tragic being the mercury poisoning of local fishermen's families and their children in the bay of Minamata in Kumamoto Prefecture.[5] As a result, environmentalism was gaining traction in Japan, and it is not surprising that the Tonogayato Garden movement primarily argued for preserving nature.[6] The movement also plugged into broader civil society activities of the time that opposed the economy-centered policy in Japan.[7] In that period, Japan's national policy generally favored economic development, so it was logical for the city administration to back plans for converting the site into commercial land. The preservationists' victory, however, was partly due to a progressive Tokyo Metropolitan Government under the leadership of Governor Minobe Ryōkichi, who had an open ear for initiatives like the one in Kokubunji.[8]

After the small museum piqued my interest in the history of Tonogayato Garden, I decided to buy a book on it published by the Tokyo Metropolitan Park Association (*Tokyo-to Kōen Kyōkai*) in 2007.[9] The Association has produced a highly informative series on public parks and gardens in Tokyo, and the small volume on Tonogayato Garden is no exception. Its author Sumiyoshi Yasuo, the Association's executive director back then, vividly described the garden's history and focused on preservation struggles during the 1960s and 1970s in particular. His account confirmed my initial impression—the garden was primarily preserved for the sake of *shizen* (nature) and *en* (green). Only after it had become a public park in 1979 did thoughts about its status as a historical garden start to influence its presentation to the public.[10] This was one of the most puzzling questions that arose during my visit to the exhibition, since I assumed that Tonogayato Garden's historical value would have been a strong argument for its preservation from the onset of the movement.

The reason why the preservation movement did not invoke historical heritage in the case of Tonogayato Garden became much more apparent to me later on when I studied a couple of books about Ogawa Jihei, a now-famous landscape designer of the late Meiji (1868–1912) and Taishō (1912–1926) periods who was especially

5 On the history of environmental scandals in Japan, see Walker.

6 Interview Mamoru-kai, June 2017, Tonogayato Garden, Kokubunji, line 18. Avenell discusses the formation of environmentalist groups in the 1950s to 1970s; see Avenell, *Transnational Japan*, 43–45.

7 On these movements and the evolving civil society of the 1960s and 1970s, see Avenell, *Making Japanese Citizens*.

8 Sumiyoshi, 47–64; Interview Mamoru-kai, June 2017, Tonogayato Garden, Kokubunji, lines 48–60. See Rix for a contemporary discussion of Minobe's progressive approach and its limits.

9 Sumiyoshi.

10 Sumiyoshi, 63.

active in the decades spanning from 1890 to the 1920s. During my stay in Japan in 2012, I not only visited places like Tonogayato Garden but also bought books on Ogawa Jihei to find out how these sites evolved around 1900. Once again, I was surprised when I read Amasaki Hiromasa's *Nanadaime Ogawa Jihei: Sanshi suimei no miyako ni kahesaneba* (Seventh Generation Ogawa Jihei: When We Bring Back the Scenic Beauty of the Capital), which had just been published, and a little bit later Suzuki Hiroyuki's *Teishi Ogawa Jihei to sono jidai* (Garden Master Ogawa Jihei and His Times), which appeared in 2013, one year after my stay. Even though Ogawa had no connection to Tonogayato Garden, the way his contemporaries and later garden experts responded to his designs very much explained why a site like Tonogayato Garden was not discussed as a historical Japanese garden in the 1960s and 1970s. According to Suzuki in particular, many garden experts started denouncing Ogawa's gardens from the 1920s on, as Japanese garden history became increasingly patriotic and conservative. Dismayed by what they saw as Ogawa's mixture of Eastern and Western styles, they dismissed his gardens as eclectic—a charge that would continue well into the twenty-first century.[11]

A few days after visiting Tonogayato Garden, I went to the Former Furukawa Gardens (*Kyū Furukawa Teien*), another public park owned by Tokyo Prefecture. Baron Furukawa Toranosuke, the third head of another influential *zaibatsu* bearing his family name, had hired renowned English architect Josiah Conder to plan his mansion and Western-style gardens. Conder had been a professor at the University of Tokyo for over 30 years by that time and was seen as the father of modern architecture in the country given his role in educating a new generation of Japanese architects.[12] Nevertheless, when it came to the plan for a Japanese garden down the slope of his estate, Baron Furukawa did not commission Conder, even though the Englishman had penned a widely cited book on the Japanese garden tradition in 1893.[13] Instead, Furukawa brought in Ogawa.[14]

When planning my excursions, I naively took it for granted that Tonogayato Garden and Ogawa's garden at the former Furukawa estate were simply "Japanese gardens." It had not occurred to me that these sites could be anything else—an ironic oversight in retrospect, given that my book *Spaces in Translation* examines the very formation of the concept of a "Japanese garden" in the nineteenth century. There, I argued that the "Japanese garden" category only came into existence through garden presentations at world's fairs and an ongoing intellectual exchange with the West. There had been gardens in Japan long before the nineteenth century, of course, but

11 H. Suzuki, *Ogawa Jihei and His Times*, 236.
12 Fujimori, 14.
13 Conder, *Landscape Gardening in Japan*.
14 Kitamura, *Kyū Furukawa teien*, 57–58.

of a much wider variety, and no one filtered them through the lens of a national style. Only in the 1880s and 1890s was the category of "Japanese garden" established through displays at world's fairs and books like Josiah Conder's *Landscape Gardening in Japan*. With Tonogayato Garden and the Former Furukawa Gardens, however, I had assumed that both were simply built within the framework of this novel category. It did not occur to me that this category would be highly contentious in Japan—not just for the second half of the nineteenth century but for many decades thereafter. Reading Sumiyoshi, Amasaki, and Suzuki opened up an entirely different perspective for me. Those authors showed how the idea of what constituted a "Japanese garden" was actually heavily contested during the late Meiji and Taishō eras. For their rich owners, the gardens were supposed to blend modernity with a dose of tradition and, of course, nature. However, for pundits and garden experts, this mélange was seen as "West–East eclecticism," a term generally used in Japan to dismiss culturally impure art, as I will discuss in the upcoming chapters.

But the problem of categorizations and labels did not stop there, as I soon learned. When I widened the scope of my research and started taking other gardens from this epoch into account, I noticed that many of them had only become national heritage sites in the last two decades. In a twist of historical irony, many eclectic gardens are now advertised as prime examples of a genuinely Japanese path to modernity and are referred to as "Japanese gardens" within that perspective. The gardens are presented as an aesthetic bridge between the traditions of premodern Japan and Japanese modernity from 1868 on. The derogatory verdict of West–East eclecticism had become a positive attribute of the gardens, since they could be considered excellent examples of a reformed tradition. Both quotes on Tonogayato Garden at the beginning of this book show that the range of options for categorizing the garden persists. While the English Wikipedia describes it as a "traditional Japanese garden," the homepage of Kokubunji City labels it a "West–East-eclectic stroll garden." I emphasized both phrases in the epigraph to highlight the contradiction.

At that point, I decided to apply for a research grant to look deeper into this complex web of meanings around sites like Tonogayato Garden and the Former Furukawa Gardens. My basic questions were how and why such sites were first seen as eclectic, and from what point on were they incorporated into *Japanese* garden history. In this way, I hoped to expand my understanding of the category "Japanese garden" and its formation beyond the scope of Europe and North America, which I had already analyzed in my book *Spaces in Translation*. My main intention was to untangle the process of cultural translation between East and West that I had been dealing with in *Spaces* and to understand how it affected both ends of the conversation—that is, in the West as well as Japan. By tracing the fate of the gardens throughout the twentieth and early twenty-first centuries, I sought to understand the dynamism of the category "Japanese garden." Usually, writings on

the subject assume that we can define "Japanese gardens" and that their essence has not changed much throughout history.[15] However, the story of Tonogayato Garden and the Former Furukawa Gardens suggests that fundamental alterations to the category not only took place gradually over the centuries but also within the relatively short time span of a few decades. What had been dismissed as eclectic yesterday is now being marketed as the shining essence of Japan!

Fortunately, the German Research Foundation generously allowed me to work on these places for nearly two years with a research associate, Nils Dahl. While Nils went to Tokyo for six months and regularly inspected gardens in Kyoto and Osaka as well, I was able to do in-depth research in Kyoto and Tokyo for nearly a month. We initially decided to focus on five gardens. Our small sample tried to combine examples with different types of owners, in different regions, and by designers other than Ogawa Jihei, who clearly stands out in terms of his productivity and the literature produced about his work. Furthermore, we looked for prominent examples of the recent upsurge in converting such gardens into heritage sites. What we did not try was to achieve any kind of representativeness through our small sample. Instead, we selected the gardens with our research interest in mind to trigger new theories and insights that could lead us to other places. The five gardens we chose to launch our investigation were:

1. *Tonogayato Garden*, Kokubunji (Tokyo Prefecture): This garden was an obvious choice for inclusion. Well-documented in Sumiyoshi's book, the complex history of the struggle to preserve the garden made it all the more attractive for further research. Such conflicts are ideal for studying underlying values and assumptions, which actors involved would not clearly articulate otherwise. As we already know, Tokyo Prefecture preserved Tonogayato Garden. It became a prefectural heritage site in 1997 and eventually a national heritage site in 2011.[16]
2. *Former Furukawa Gardens*, Tokyo: Count Furukawa's garden is one of two gardens designed by Ogawa Jihei on our initial list of five examples. Most importantly, it serves as a perfect illustration of the way in which once eclectic gardens became prime examples of early Japanese modernity.
3. *Murin-an*, Kyoto: Murin-an, in the former capital of Kyoto, is the other Ogawa garden in our small sample. We included this one because it is one of the most famous and best-researched gardens of the late nineteenth century.[17]

15 For various attempts to define Japanese gardens, see Tagsold, *Spaces in Translation*, 126–39.

16 On turning the garden into a prefectural heritage site, see Sumiyoshi, *Tonogayato teien*, 104–5.

17 Notable publications discussing Murin-an are: Amasaki, *Nanadaime Ogawa Jihei*, 38–56; Goto; Imae; Katō, Shimizu and Sakaue; Kuitert, *Japanese Gardens and Landscapes*, 208–12; Shirahata, *Ueji*, 30–41; H. Suzuki, *Ogawa Jihei and His Times*, 65–102. The great-grandson of Ogawa has also published a fascinating book dealing with this garden, see J. Ogawa, 61–78.

Commissioned by former Prime Minister Yamagata Aritomo, one of the key politicians and military leaders of the Meiji era, Murin-an was also a good starting point to explore the many similar gardens built on the premises of the former Nanzen-ji Temple in Kyoto, an area symbolic for the late nineteenth and early twentieth-century renewal of the ancient city. Murin-an already became a national heritage site in 1951 and stands out in this respect—the reasons for this registration help clarify Japan's post-war heritage system.

4. *Sankei-en*, Yokohama: This is certainly the most flamboyant garden on the list. The silk trader Hara Tomitarō built a huge park on the outskirts of Yokohama, resembling an open-air exhibition of traditional Japanese architecture. The park was opened to the public early on in 1906. In 2007, it was designated a national heritage.
5. *Former Nishio Family Estate*, Suita (Osaka Prefecture): We only discovered that our final entry in the initial sample was somewhat ill-conceived after we visited the site. Yet it proved to be an extremely rich case once we started fieldwork. I found the former mansion of the Nishio family featured on the internet. Without having an opportunity to examine it first when writing my grant proposal, I included it to balance Kantō (Eastern Japan) with Kansai (Western Japan) and to examine another garden that Ogawa Jihei did not design. What slipped my attention was that the site's status as national heritage revolved mainly around the buildings and much less around the tiny tea garden, even though all had been designated as national heritage simultaneously in 2009. However, the process of saving the Former Nishio Family Estate from being converted into commercial land resembled the case of Tonogayato Garden. The various conflicts and battles fought by Suita's citizens to preserve the estate offered precious insights into the construction of the notion of heritage in the last two decades.

As we went into the field, our choice of these five gardens led to some irritated questions from our Japanese colleagues who expected that we would have chosen a much more coherent sample, such as nothing but Ogawa gardens or merely gardens in private hands, to allow immediate comparisons within the sample and to yield clean data.[18] Indeed, our selection did not conform to a more systematic approach. We devised this list of five sites to kick off our inquiries, and we considerably extended the scope during our research in Japan. We visited many different gardens and looked into archival sources beyond our initial case studies. In addition, we conducted qualitative interviews with experts in the field to understand how Meiji

18 Hirasawa Tsuyoshi from the Bunkachō was one of our expert interviewees who pointed out the shortcomings of our sample. See Interview Hirasawa, May 2017, Bunkachō, Tokyo, lines 316–21.

and Taishō gardens were designated as national heritage in the last two decades (and in the case of Murin-an much earlier). We aimed to widen our understanding of their relevance. We had no intention of gathering quantitatively structured data as some of our Japanese colleagues suggested we should.

Throughout our research, it became increasingly apparent that these gardens connect realms of nature, nation, heritage, and modernity in early modern as well as contemporary Japan, albeit in different ways. In general, Japanese gardens, as defined through world's fairs and the transnational discourse in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, signified the apparent Japanese love of nature and a refined sense of aestheticism, both of which were fundamental in building a unique Japanese identity in the Age of Imperialism. However, the new gardens such as Murin-an, the Furukawa Gardens, and Tonogayato Garden had a profoundly modern touch. Their patrons not only wanted to connect with the realm of tradition, which seemed to be endangered in this period, but also to express their worldviews in agreement with the fashion of the day—and they were not averse to cutting costs by applying modern landscaping techniques. The gardens looked and felt different from the Kyoto aesthetic; thus, garden historians such as Shigemori Mirei and Mori Osamu excluded them from the canon of Japanese garden culture they constructed at the time. In the last two decades, the interpretation of these gardens has undergone a fundamental shift such that nation, nature, and heritage have been newly aligned. The sites are now heavily marketed as Japanese gardens. To a large degree, our research and my book are about explaining this surprising shift from "eclectic" to "Japanese" gardens and situating it within the theoretical framework of studies of nationalism and heritage. Thus, I aim to make the history of these gardens more relevant for East Asian studies in general.

For a long time, research in East Asian Studies has mostly shunned Japanese gardens. Scholars seemed to assume that gardens were the realm of garden and art historians; however, these historians espoused rather essentialist views about them. In Germany, East Asian scholars sometimes even use the term "*Teegarten-Japanologie*" (tea-garden Japanology) to mock researchers with an interest in this area as hopelessly out of synch with our current dynamic understanding of culture. Yet many books have been written about Japanese gardens, spreading the gospel that they are highly symbolic and demonstrate the Japanese people's unique relationship to nature. Only recently have researchers such as Yamada Shōji, Inoue Shōichi, Wybe Kuitert, and Kendall H. Brown started deconstructing Japanese gardens and unveiling fascinating stories of how gardens were turned into a national symbol in the twentieth century.[19] My book *Spaces in Translation: Japanese Gardens and the*

19 Yamada; Inoue; K. Brown, *Japanese-Style Gardens*; K. Brown, *Quiet Beauty*; Kuitert, *Themes, Scenes and Taste*; Kuitert, *Japanese Gardens and Landscapes*.

West was heavily indebted to these four authors, and the current book also builds on their understanding of the art.

However, the sites I will analyze provide an opportunity to approach the question of "Japanese gardens" from a new angle. More than in my last book, and hopefully more than in current research, I will explore the dynamics of horticulture in Japan and connect them to a broader understanding of the relationship between nation, nature, heritage, and modernity, which I will elaborate on in the final chapter of the book. The story of the gardens in the past 120 years or so is an example of shifting interpretations of Japan's relation to the West and modernity. I am fully aware that modernity is a vast and potentially dangerous concept for analysis, as it has taken on many meanings in various contexts. For my purposes, I will follow the semantics of *kindai* (modernity) in Japanese as it appears in texts on art, horticulture, literature, and sociology. This *kindai* is inherently related to the West, and a pivotal question in discussing *kindaika* (modernization) in Japan since the nineteenth century has been to what degree Japan must embrace Westernization to achieve modernity and to what extent the Japanese nation can stay true to its cultural heritage. Consequently, the notion of the Japanese nation becomes a realm of contradictions. On the one hand, the nation is a modern Western concept that Japan must adopt to compete. On the other hand, the nation is intended to denote a timeless core of values and characteristics specific to Japan and the Japanese, diverging from the West and its modernity. This second interpretation of the nation only becomes relevant when viewed in contrast to the West as the significant other, perpetuating the quest for an authentic and untainted Japan.

Moreover, the timeless core is purely fictive, and patriotic discourses have even contradicted each other on crucial issues such as race. In the 1990s, Oguma Eiji in *A Genealogy of 'Japanese' Self-Images* compellingly illustrated that a multi-ethnic approach played a pivotal role in Japanese imperialism during the first half of the twentieth century, wherein Koreans, Taiwanese, and others were molded into subjects of the *tennō* (emperor). Following Japan's defeat in World War II, its national identity shifted dramatically. Ethnic homogeneity became a central argument for Japan's successful recovery, allowing the nation to overlook its recent colonial history. In this new narrative, Japan was portrayed as an isolated island inhabited by a homogeneous population with peaceful intentions and no aspirations of conquering other nations.

Considering these contradictions and dynamics, the concepts of modernity/*kindai* and the nation serving as a framework for modernity/*kindai* emerge as fluid notions signifying diverse social processes at varying times and for different individuals. Nevertheless, most Japanese texts have a shared element regarding these fluid concepts—the implicit consensus that modernity is of Western origin and an external imposition on Japan. While I cannot follow all ramifications of

modernity/*kindai* and the nation, I hope it will become clear that I must dive into this discussion to grasp the changing meaning of the gardens. As represented by Japanese gardens, nature played a vital role in this process. Nature was first the opposite of modernity/*kindai*. Societies developed through modernity/*kindai*, morphing into nation-states. By contrast, nature in this logic remained unchanged. However, Japanese intellectuals often claimed that these opposite characters of modernity/*kindai* and nature had led the West to distance itself from the latter and turned this point into a crucial argument for a Japanese identity, as Julia A. Thomas has argued.[20] The garden as a national symbol in that context bridged the gap between modernity and the alleged roots of Japan. Up to the end of World War II, only ancient gardens could serve this task. Modernization threatened to uproot Japan, but symbols such as gardens helped preserve a distinctly Japanese identity, reinforcing the nation's cultural difference from the West. They apparently proved that the Japanese had a unique relationship with nature, one that was refined through art. In contrast, the gardens I will discuss in the book were too new and differed too much from classic examples to become part of the canon of "Japanese gardens."

That said, *kindai* has taken on a new meaning in recent decades. When Japan became an economic superpower, a fresh interpretation of modernity emerged. The notion of genuinely Japanese roots of modernity appeared because concepts underlying the country's economic success suggested that Japan had added something of its own. For this approach to Japanese history, the Edo period evolved into a breeding ground for Japanese modernity/*kindai*, nurturing concepts that later played a crucial role in facilitating rapid modernization. Western intrusion and pressure were redefined as just one of several catalysts for continued progress. In this context, gardens like those I have researched in recent years took on a new meaning. They started to represent Japanese horticulture's path to modernity and thus shed the idea of eclecticism. Instead, these sites now appear as critical links in garden history, preserving the continuity of Japanese horticulture into the twentieth century. As I have said, I will end the book with a more elaborate discussion of this problem. Readers well acquainted with Japanese garden history in the twentieth century might even consider starting the book there to explore the more theoretical questions related to Meiji and Taishō horticulture.

Before I can discuss nation, nature, heritage, and modernity in the final chapter, I need to examine more closely the history and current status of sites such as Tonogayato Garden or the Former Furukawa Gardens, which brings me to the general layout of the book. First, I will focus on how the category of "Japanese gardens" initially came into being in the nineteenth century through a joint effort of

20 Thomas, X.

Western and Japanese experts and exhibitions at world's fairs and similar contexts. In Chapter 2, I will move on to Kyoto and Ogawa Jihei, who is now the most revered landscape designer of the era. I will also expand the scope to other garden designers and specify how the wealthy patrons used their gardens and how the public saw them. This helps explain why the verdict of eclecticism was relevant for Japan's gardens. In Chapter 3, I examine how contemporary Western experts viewed the new gardens. Unlike their Japanese colleagues, they had no problems categorizing them as "Japanese gardens." The reasons for this difference highlight the dynamic character of the category *Japanese garden*. While Western experts had little qualms in relating the new gardens to the newfound tradition of Japanese horticulture, Japanese experts wanted to construe a timeless notion of their gardens rooted in the past, as I will discuss in Chapter 4. The Japanese experts excluded inventive new gardens that deviated from those classic examples they used to construe a newly established garden history timeline. This chapter clarifies the entanglements and disentanglements between Western and Japanese discourses and sheds light on the construction of identity through aesthetics and an assumed special love of nature.

In Chapter 5, I show how these gardens had to adapt to a fresh era. After World War II, the gardens built in the Meiji and Taishō eras lost their original meaning. The former owners belonged to a past generation, and the social context the gardens were built for had all but disappeared. Some gardens remained in private hands; others became public property and were repurposed as public parks and recreational zones. This saved some of the gardens from being converted into commercial real estate in the post-war decades. Examples like Tonogayato Garden and the Former Furukawa Gardens demonstrate this transformation into public parks.

Once key Meiji and Taishō gardens escaped destruction, they became the focus of scholarly and bureaucratic attention as potential heritage sites. In the 1980s and 1990s, various groups pushed for designating more and more relics of modernity as national heritage, a development I discuss in Chapter 6. The gardens transformed into symbols of a genuinely Japanese modernity that reconciled nature, aesthetics, and progress as crucial ingredients for national identity. In Chapter 7, I scrutinize the consequences of designating the gardens as national heritage. One would assume that gardens are listed because they have historical significance. However, in practice, broad attention to historical significance is often a consequence of—and not a precondition for—turning gardens into heritage sites. This newly gained popularity leads to unfamiliar challenges. Maintaining the gardens is no trivial task, and they also have to cope with an upsurge in visitor numbers that comes with their upgraded status. In conclusion, as previously mentioned, I will contextualize my discoveries about the gardens within a broader framework of changing perspectives on modernity/*kindai*. This will allow me to provide a more comprehensive context for the recent heightened interest in these gardens.

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1. Defining Gardens in/for Japan—From the Edo Era to the Mid-Meiji Period

Abstract: The first chapter traces the development of the concept "Japanese garden" as a product of translational processes between the West and Japan. With the onset of a new era in Japan during the mid-19th century, gardens became less prominent as cultural and political spaces. In the Edo period, feudal lords built around 1,000 residences adorned by gardens in the shogunate's capital, Edo, to demonstrate their power. This garden culture faded, however, when Edo transitioned into the modern capital of Tokyo.
Meanwhile, the world's fairs sparked interest in Japanese gardens in the West and contributed to a renewed appreciation in Japan. Initially, these gardens served as simple settings for the Japanese pavilions, but they quickly caught the attention of visitors and pundits. The trend spread beyond the fairs when the rich in North America and Europe commissioned gardens for their estates. At the same time, Western scholars in Japan, such as Josiah Conder, wrote about Japanese gardens, establishing a Western discourse on the subject.

Keywords: world's fairs, *daimyō* gardens; Josiah Conder; Orientalism

The second half of the nineteenth century saw a significant restructuring of Japanese society with massive consequences for gardens in the country, even though horticulture was hardly the most critical issue facing Japanese people in this period. The political watershed known as the Meiji Restoration in 1868 ended the relatively gradual evolution of Edo-period gardens. Garden practices changed due to wholesale social and economic transformations following new trajectories. In the long run, the Meiji Restoration also brought about a new type of garden that is at the heart of this book. After two centuries of relative peace, Western powers increased their pressure to gain access to Japan. In the Edo period (1600–1868), the ruling shogunate had restricted interactions with the West out of fear of Christian missionaries and potential colonization. Only the Dutch East Indian Company (the VOC) was allowed to establish a permanent trading post on Deshima, an artificial

Tagsold, Christian. *Turning Gardens in Japan into Japanese Gardens: Nation, Nature, Heritage, and Modernity since the 1890s*. Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2025.
DOI: 10.5117/9789048563791_CH01

island in Nagasaki and therefore far away from the shogunate's capital Edo (the historical name for Tokyo) or the ancient capital Kyoto, where the *tennō* resided.

The Restoration swept away the old shogunate system. The restrictions placed on Western powers and traders were loosened considerably, and the country as a whole turned upside down. The age of the Tokugawa shogunate certainly was not as secluded and static as historians have claimed until a couple of decades ago. Japan was, in fact, considerably integrated into the global trade system via the Dutch and the Chinese, and to a lesser degree via Korea, the Ryūkyū Kingdom (today's Okinawa Prefecture), and the Ainu in the north.[1] These contacts brought knowledge of the world into the country, which in the Dutch case was called *rangaku* (Dutch Studies). *Rangaku* introduced Japanese intellectuals to the Western science of biology and Linné's system of classification for the first time.[2] At the same time, Chinese epistemology was introduced to Japan as *honzōgaku* and formed the basis for classifying minerals, plants, animals, and so on, as Federico Marcon has powerfully shown in his book *The Knowledge of Nature and the Nature of Knowledge in Early Modern Japan*. Japan's society and economy evolved not only due to international trade and these forms of imported knowledge but also according to their own dynamics. Even though its social and economic progress was slow, the Edo period was nonetheless dynamic and inventive. Consequently, modern historians now see the Edo period as an early stage of modernization in Japan instead of categorizing it as medieval as they did until the 1980s.

The process by which Japan restructured its contact with the West commenced in 1853/1854, when Commodore Matthew Calbraith Perry and his small fleet, which US President Millard Fillmore had sent out, arrived in the bay of Edo to demand an opening of the country to American ships and traders, not just the Dutch. The shogunate sensed that it could no longer uphold its restrictions in foreign relations and chose to sign treaties with the Americans, which were seen as unequal due to their terms largely favoring the US.[3] Shortly after that, political developments led to major upheaval and the subsequent fall of the shogunate. The *tennō* and a clique of young samurai who had prepared the Restoration with clandestine actions in the last years of the shogunate took over—a point to keep in mind, since these same samurai would later be the patrons of the new gardens. As a direct consequence of the Meiji Restoration, modernization was highly accelerated. The Western influx

1 Tashiro already deconstructed the notion of seclusion during the Edo period in the early 1980s and instead proposed the concept of various windows as metaphors for foreign contacts with the Dutch and the Chinese via Nagasaki, Korea via Tsushima, and the Ryūkyū Kingdom via Satsuma-*han*—later the Ainu via Matsumae-*han* have been added to this theory. See Tashiro, 284; see Roberts, 83–84 for an overview of the current interpretation of Tokugawa era foreign policies and trade.

2 Goodman, 136–37.

3 Auslin.

left its footprint in all areas of life, horticulture included. Traditional gardens essentially lost their functions and were supplanted by modern Western parks.[4] Only gradually did landscape architects and garden experts reconnect to the long and rich history of horticulture in Japan. However, not all aspects of the broad ancient garden culture garnered the same devotion. Large portions were forgotten if not actively suppressed.

Before moving on to the Meiji period, it is essential to discuss what was lost in the aftermath of the Restoration. This will shed light on how the subsequent social ruptures following the Restoration affected one of the traditional arts in Japan. More importantly, garden historians such as Shirahata Yōzaburō have recently pointed out the continuity in style and social use of the *daimyō* gardens of the Edo period and Ogawa Jihei's layouts.[5] Therefore, Edo gardening is relevant to understanding the discussion of the new gardens in the 1900s.

The Loss of a Garden Culture

Daimyō gardens had been the most dominant type of garden culture since the seventeenth century. As the shogunate started to firmly establish its political superiority in Edo, the *daimyō*—that is, the feudal lords ruling in most provinces of the country—became obliged to spend prolonged periods of time in the shogunate's capital. This so-called system of *sankin-kōtai*, known in English as alternate attendance, served various purposes, as Constantine Vaporis has shown. Formally, the *daimyō* provided military service to the shogun and therefore had to bring along their *bushi*, or warriors (also called samurai), with them to Edo. They also had to set up permanent residences in Edo to house their retainers and represent themselves politically. These expenditures drained their funds and made military uprisings unlikely.[6] *Sankin-kōtai* helped maintain peace in the shogunate era by weakening potentially rebellious *daimyō*. Furthermore, the *daimyō* families were obligated to stay in Edo as hostages when the *daimyō* himself returned to his domain, called *han* in Japanese.[7]

Apart from indirectly stabilizing the shogunate, another effect of *sankin-kōtai* was that high culture in Japan became increasingly uniform.[8] Edo's culture eventually surpassed Kyoto's court culture in terms of setting the standards of the time.

4 On the "birth" of parks, see Ono Ryōhei's fundamental *Kōen no tanjō*.

5 Shirahata, *Daimyo Gardens*, 191–93.

6 Vaporis has estimated that about 50–75% of a *han*'s expenditures were connected to *sankin-kōtai*. See Vaporis, 27.

7 Vaporis, 12–13.

8 Vaporis, 222–32.

Kyoto remained a cultural hub in its own right, while the imperial court, which stayed in the old capital, continued to preserve rituals and high culture. However, Edo began to grow rapidly after the first Tokugawa shogun—Ieyasu—decided to move his capital to the city. It developed a strong culture of its own that radiated outwards to the provinces, while the system of *sankin-kōtai* ensured that reverse flows of knowledge from the periphery constantly infused the city.[9] As a result, *daimyō* and *bushi* mingled with each other as well as with the direct retainers of the shogunate in the city of Edo. The many inns and entertainment quarters, like the famous Yoshiwara district, were frequented by provincial *bushi* as well as those of the shogunate. *Bushi* from all over Japan focused their tastes and spending on art and culture. In addition, wealthy merchants tried to raise their formally poor social standing by investing in art.

The *ukiyo-e* woodblock prints are undoubtedly the best-known example of the emerging mass culture popular with *bushi* and merchants. But gardens, too, formed an essential part of distinctive expenditure. The feudal lords of the provinces usually maintained more than one residence in the capital, as Shirahata Yōzaburō has discussed in his book on *Daimyo Gardens* (see Figure 1.1).[10] The principal residence was in the city center near Edo castle, the beacon of shogunate power, and acted as a base for the *daimyō*'s political and social activities. A second residence, which was farther removed, helped to house additional *bushi* and served as a retreat. In case of massive fires, which ravaged the city so often that they were euphemistically termed the "flowers of Edo," the *daimyō* and his family, retainers, and entourage were able to relocate to the second residence and still live in style.[11] Later, a third residence became a necessary indicator of the *daimyō*'s social status and served as an additional safe haven, typically constructed along the main routes connecting central Edo with the surrounding urban areas. Over time, these third residences evolved into the nuclei of Edo's expansion.[12]

Gardens surrounded all of these residences. The gardens were built in grand style, as they had to impress the shogun and fellow *daimyō* to solidify their owner's standing within Edo's complex web of power. The most spectacular gardens even tried to compete with the shogun's, whose splendor testified to his power.[13] The designs often integrated allusions to ancient poems or famous vistas in the Japanese archipelago, thus serving as a kind of intellectual riddle.[14] Being able to decode the allusions identified a guest as a person of culture and, at the same

9 Vaporis, 232–36.
10 Shirahata, *Daimyo Gardens*, 101.
11 Shirahata, *Daimyo Gardens*, 101.
12 Jinnai, 14.
13 On the shogun's gardens in Edo, see Hida, 33–86.
14 Kuitert, *Japanese Gardens and Landscapes*, 16.

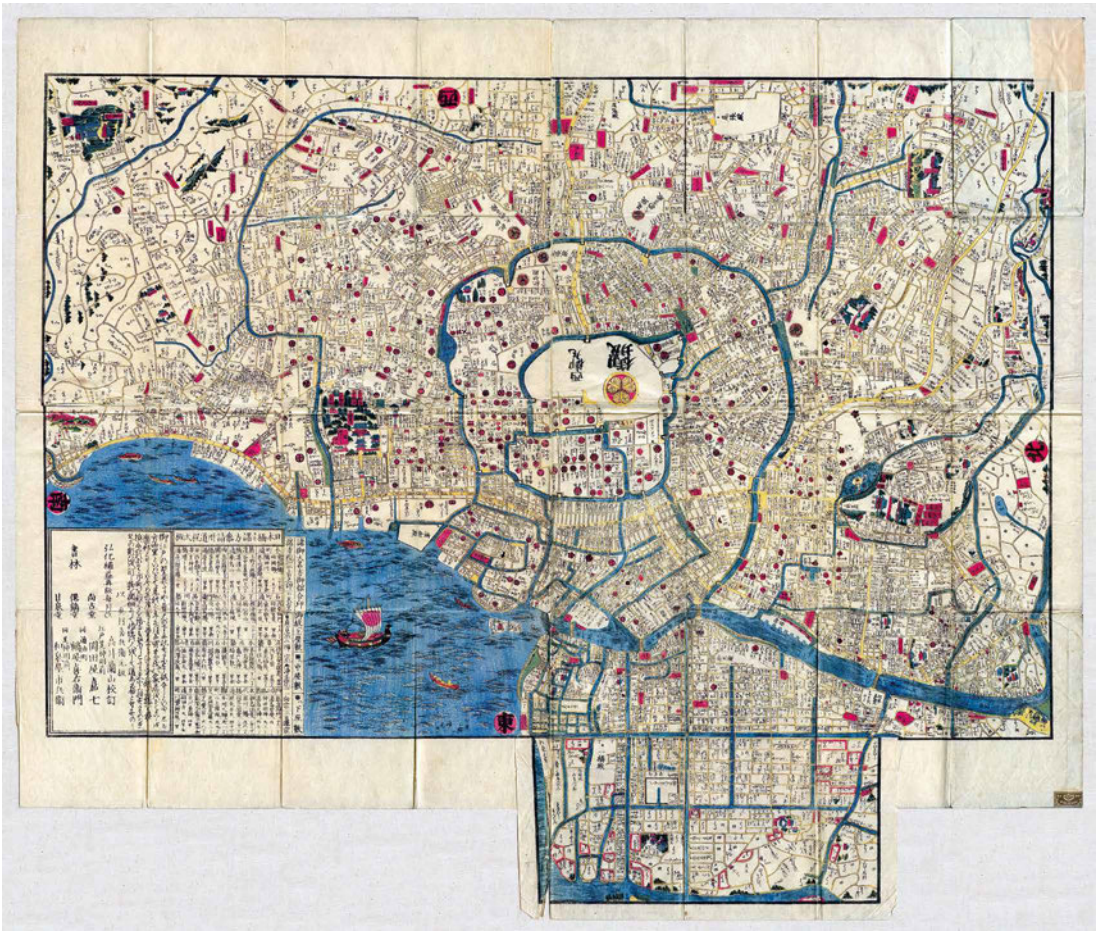

Figure 1.1. This map of Edo from the 1840s illustrates the numerous *daimyō* residences spread throughout the town. Around the shogun's castle, located in the center and marked by his family crest featuring three leaves of a Japanese mallow species in gold, many red dots indicate the locations of these residences. These dots are scattered across the entire map.

time, elevated the owner's status—if the application of riddles in the landscape was clever, at least.

While small groups of well-chosen friends and guests could enjoy this competition among connoisseurs, *daimyō* gardens also hosted large parties and festivities.[15] For these occasions, huts and even temporary villages were erected to please the guests with a variety of games, food, drinks, and entertainments.[16] In the third and farthest

15 Shirahata, *Daimyo Gardens*, 8–9. Kuitert, *Japanese Gardens and Landscapes*, 16.

16 Shirahata gives the example of the shogun's visit to a domainal garden in Edo. The host ordered the erection of a village with shops and teahouses to entertain his guest and entourage after a falcon hunt;

removed residences, hunting was a regular pastime. At the Hamarikyū Garden on the waterfront of Tokyo Bay—previously the Kōfu-Hama Yashiki and then Hama Goten Garden of the Tokugawa family— sheds for duck hunters dug into the terrain are still visible for today's tourists. Given the functions that *daimyō* gardens had to fulfill, large lawn areas were a common device.[17] They enabled the *daimyō* to flexibly turn their garden into areas for greeting guests and hosting huge parties, or for other functions. In addition, these lawns opened up pleasing vistas. Vistas were a practical requirement to prevent visitors from being overwhelmed or getting lost in the vast gardens.

Moreover, the gardens represented Confucian ideals of frugality. Tokugawa Mitsukuni became the second lord of the Mito domain in 1661, inheriting a large garden from his father in the shogunate's capital, Edo. He added rice paddies to the garden to remind visitors of the farmer's hardships and rebaptized the garden Kōraku-en with the teaching of the Chinese Confucian scholar Zhu Zhiyu in mind. Mitsukuni hired Zhu as a domain advisor and teacher when the latter came to Japan in the middle of the seventeenth century. Zhu proclaimed that a ruler should only seek pleasure after having dissolved the hardships of his people (*senyū kōraku*). Kōraku denotes the second part of this wisdom; thus, the garden was meant for pleasure afterward.[18] The garden is one of the few remaining today in Tokyo but now includes the name of the neighborhood Koishikawa to set it apart from the famous *daimyō* garden Kōraku-en in Okayama.

Regarding the Rikugi-en—one of the few remaining former *daimyō* gardens in Tokyo, along with Kōraku-en—Ono Sawako has demonstrated the garden's numerous functions that contributed to its frugality. Yanagisawa Nobutoki resided there from 1773 to 1792 after retiring as a *daimyō* (see Figure 1.2). His diary records him working the land with his family, harvesting vegetables, tea, and medicinal plants, and collecting mushrooms. These were consumed by him and sent to his family at the main residence. Additionally, the garden produced quality timber for building houses, a scarce resource in the Edo period. For Nobutoki, Rikugi-en served various social, dietary, and cultural purposes.[19]

After the Meiji Restoration, the *daimyō* gardens lost both their function and patrons. The *daimyō* were stripped of their domains, which were merged and

see Shirahata, *Daimyo Gardens*, 130–31. See also Kuitert, *Japanese Gardens and Landscapes*, 39–41 for a description of festivities at a *daimyō* garden.

17 Shirahata, *Daimyo Gardens*, 85.

18 See S. Ono, 208. Craig Clunas discussed how the Confucian ideal of frugality influenced gardens in China during the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. See Clunas, 16–59. His fascinating insights on the "fruitful sites" relate to recent research on *daimyō* gardens in Japan, such as Ono Sawako's book on the Rikugi-en.

19 In her fascinating book, Ono Sawako highlights many additional uses of the garden. She is among the first to go beyond the aesthetic dimensions of the *daimyō* gardens and the social aspects first broadly analyzed by Shirahata. Most notably, she succeeds in portraying Rikugi-en as a lived space for Nobutoki and his family.

Figure 1.2. A map of Rikugi-en dating from 1889.

converted into prefectures. The feudal system was abolished, which had provided the *daimyō* with their social rank and income. It was no longer necessary for *daimyō* to reside in Edo—now Tokyo—for alternate attendance to the shogun's court. *Bushi* retainers lost their status, were set free, and turned into simple imperial subjects—just like the members of all the other occupational casts of the Edo period. The *daimyō* residences and their gardens in Tokyo were dissolved. Likewise, many *daimyō* gardens in their provincial capitals fell into decay, though some of them survived as public areas and were converted into parks at some point.[20] Nonetheless, the vast majority of feudal gardens were completely abandoned. They were turned into land for construction in the growing capital of Tokyo as well as in many prefectural capitals, where the gardens had formerly served the same function for the *daimyō* and their *han*. As Jinnai Hidenobu has noted, the availability of building space on former *daimyō* gardens was crucial to the development of modern Tokyo. These sites provided the property needed for modern state institutions—including the military, universities, schools, and administrative bodies—to thrive.[21]

20 For an in-depth discussion of the afterlife of *daimyō* gardens see Y. Ono et al.

21 Jinnai, 22.

Figure 1.3. Koishikawa Kōraku-en is one of the few remaining *daimyō* gardens in Tokyo. Once located in a peripheral area of Edo, the shogunate's capital, it is now situated in the heart of the urban landscape. Photograph by the author.

We have to look at the numbers and typical size of the *daimyō* gardens to fully grasp the immense dimensions of this urban transformation and loss of landscape culture. As *daimyō* kept three residences on average, and more than 250 *han* existed, Edo was populated by roughly 750 residences and their respective gardens. Shirahata has even estimated the number of *daimyō* gardens to be as high as 1,000![22] It is much harder to estimate the size of all these gardens. The vast Koishikawa Kōraku-en situated next to the present-day Tokyo Dome has more than 70,000 square meters (see Figure 1.3); Hamarikyū Garden today extends over more than 250,000 square meters. Regardless of the individual size of these places, it is clear that a vast part of the city was occupied by gardens.

This is all the more so considering that the *daimyō* were not Edo's only (temporary) inhabitants to keep gardens. The *bushi* who served as the shogunate's retainers owned their own larger or smaller estates adorned with gardens. These plots of land not only served to distinguish and embellish their homes but also played an integral part in supporting the diets of samurai households.[23] The *bushi*

22 Jinnai, 101.

23 A. Brown, 202.

Figure 1.4. This *ukiyo-e* by Utagawa Kunimori II from the 1850s illustrates Edo as a "garden city." While the commoners' quarters in the center of the woodblock print are depicted as crowded, the top left and bottom show vast garden areas, adding greenery to the image.

lived on rice stipends, which were insufficient to pay for all the necessities of a distinguished life as a member of the warrior class. The *bushi*'s general predilection for expensive amusements like visiting *geisha* in Yoshiwara added to their chronic over-indebtedness. To overcome their debt, *bushi* and their families had to dedicate parts of their gardens to growing vegetables, fruit, and grain to bolster their diet. In doing so, they related again to the Confucian notion of gardens as first and foremost "fruitful" spaces.[24]

Altogether, the shogunate, *daimyō*, and *bushi* made up roughly half of Edo's population of one million people and occupied about two-thirds of the city's land. In addition, temples and shrines—usually embedded in gardens—covered over a tenth of Edo's surface. Therefore, it is safe to conclude that Edo was a garden metropolis with a strikingly green appearance—a city that Kawazoe Noboru, a leading proponent of the Metabolist movement in the 1960s, aptly referred to as "the world's largest garden city" as early as 1979 (see Figure 1.4).[25] To be sure, the gardens had many functions apart from pleasing the eye. In addition to serving as farmland, they also functioned as retreats when fires broke out, amongst other purposes.

24 Clunas.

25 Kawazoe, 17.

The loss of this elite garden culture, which had fundamentally shaped the character of Edo, had at least two dimensions. First of all, the cityscape was stripped of a defining feature. The modern metropolis quickly took over the plots once occupied by gardens. Only half a dozen of the former *daimyō* gardens were eventually preserved in Tokyo. Today, gardens like Koishikawa Kōraku-en or Rikugi-en are highly cherished relics of the Edo period within the urban fabric of Tokyo.

Meanwhile, other surviving relics of *daimyō* gardens testify to a rich horticultural past, such as a sunken pond on the campus of the University of Tokyo. It reminds visitors of the once-famous Ikutoku-en, a garden of the Maeda clan. Sometimes, informational boards set up by local citizens' historical groups in the middle of crowded neighborhoods tell the story of a renowned *daimyō* garden.[26] Unlike some of the *daimyō* gardens, however, the *bushi* gardens not only were razed entirely but are almost completely forgotten.

There is a second dimension entwined with this dramatic loss of historical gardens. For a long time, influential Japanese garden historians have mainly been disdainful of this interval in the history of Japanese horticulture. Renowned experts of the Shōwa period (1926–1989), such as Shigemori Mirei and Mori Osamu, generally interpreted the Edo period as an era of dramatic decline in Japanese garden art, and Western writers on Japanese horticulture echoed their verdict, as Shirahata has pointed out.[27] Shigemori and Mori decried the *daimyō* gardens as far too flamboyant and thus lacking the subtle symbolic qualities of Kyoto gardens. Underlying this critique was a general trend to diminish the Edo period as a dark era of Japanese history. Gardens of the medieval Heian (794–1185/1192) and Muromachi (1336–1573) periods garnered much more interest and were presented as archetypical examples of Japanese garden art. In that sense, the loss of Edo garden culture was twofold. Not only were the former gardens buried under the new modern cityscape; the memory of the rich social and aesthetic culture that unfolded in and through the gardens was also lost.

However, the perception of *daimyō* gardens has been shifting in the past two or three decades, largely thanks to cultural historian and garden expert Shirahata Yōzaburō. Shirahata is a professor (emeritus) at the International Research Center for Japanese Studies (Nichibunken) in Kyoto, close to the famous Katsura Imperial Villa (Katsura Rikyū).[28] His book *Daimyō no teien*, first published in 1997 and translated

26 Kumagai has penned a guidebook on sites of former temples and *daimyō* gardens, accompanied by a map.

27 Shirahata, *Daimyo Gardens*, 82.

28 The Nichibunken was initially founded in 1987. As Iida Yumiko has convincingly argued, Prime Minister Nakasone Yasuhiro sought to establish it as a beacon of culturalism. See Iida, 194–95.
The Nichibunken was only partly able to overcome the initial political expectations. In the field of Japanese garden history, many excellent, insightful, critical, and deconstructivist publications have been

into English by the Nichibunken in 2017, sheds fresh light on these gardens and, at the same time, draws a connection to Ogawa's endeavors in the middle Meiji period. As I will discuss later, Shirahata thus contributed to a fundamental change in the assessment of the new Meiji and Taishō gardens in Japan. Even more so, he has helped to reawaken an appreciation for *daimyō* gardens.

With the 1868 Meiji Restoration, the rich garden culture of the *daimyō* and *bushi* came to an end, and the feudal garden city of Edo morphed into the buzzing modern capital of Tokyo. Between 1868 and the 1890s, Japanese garden culture did evolve, but some of the most critical stimuli came from interactions with the West. World's fairs in the West led many Japanese to consider gardens as an ideal symbol of the recently established nation-state. Meanwhile, the Western discourse helped disseminate the freshly invented notion of "Japanese gardens." Around the same time, Japanese intellectuals began constructing a national garden history in an episteme obviously derived from Western art history. This was the source of the surprise that stimulated my research at the beginning of this project. As I wrote in the foreword, classifying the new gardens as "eclectic" initially puzzled me and piqued my curiosity. This categorization, however, required the opposite category, "Japanese garden," to make sense—otherwise, "eclectic" would not have contrasted with anything "pure." Through the world's fairs and novel discourses on the topic, "Japanese gardens" were defined and gradually canonized in a way that could not include the new gardens of the Meiji period.

Nationalizing and canonizing garden styles is not particular to Japan. As I will show at the end of this chapter, similar discussions took place in Europe about what style best signified the nation-state—and these ideas were rooted in an older European aristocratic pattern of classifying gardens according to national categories. The main difference in non-Western cases such as Japan, China, or India was that their national discussions were to some extent influenced by voices from the West. Asian intellectuals only had partial agency in the process of defining their own gardens.

World's Fairs and the Formation of the Category "Japanese Garden"

The first major global stages for Japanese gardeners to present their work and attract the attention of a broad international audience were world's fairs. Before discussing how the Japanese gardening canon was established, I would like to recap some of

published by professors of the Nichibunken such as Inoue Shōichi, Shirahata Yōzaburō, and Yamada Shōji as well as their disciples like Katahira Miyuki. Nevertheless, traces of *nihonjinron* reflections persist, as seen in Shirahata's *Daimyo Gardens*.

the points I made in *Spaces in Translation* because they are closely linked to the reception of the new gardens of the Meiji and Taishō eras.[29] The world's fairs led to a definition of the "Japanese garden" and subsequently to the development of social practices related to their appreciation, which had repercussions for the whole genre.

Since 1851, when the first world's fair opened its gates to the public in London, these events have had an inestimable impact on how people categorized the modern world and its industrial products. Countries were measured against each other in this arena according to their displays and then ranked in an imperialist tableau. The European states and the United States employed this mechanism of the world's fairs for their own purposes. They competed to host the largest of these mega events and to outdo each other with their grand showcases of progress. Robert W. Rydell was one of the first to argue that world's fairs educated the masses in comparing countries and their industrial output, whose displays of products were organized accordingly. Timothy Mitchell explicitly linked the commodification and exotification of the Orient—in his case Egypt—to this aspect of world's fairs. Since then, research on world's fairs and Orientalism has abounded, and Japan is certainly one case to strengthen this point.[30]

Japan was present in the early world's fairs, but not of its own accord initially. In 1862, the British consul in Japan, Rutherford Alcott, lent his collection of Japonica to the organizers of the second world's fair in London, officially named the London International Exhibition of Industry and Art, which was extremely popular with visitors.[31] At the subsequent 1867 world's fair in Paris, the Tokugawa government itself sent in a display. But things became more complicated when the Western domain of Satsuma also decided to participate with a presentation of its own, partly in an attempt to undermine the shogunate's legitimacy in the West.[32] After the Meiji Restoration, Japan's participation at world's fairs became a unified national venture with clear-cut goals. For Meiji Japan, these world's fairs were beneficial in several ways. First, they provided an excellent opportunity to learn about the most advanced technologies. Japanese diplomatic missions—most prominently the Iwakura Mission consisting of high-ranking government officials, experts, and students—had visited many Western countries from 1871 to 1873 to gather just such information at significant cost.[33] World's fairs made it easier to acquire such

29 Tagsold, *Spaces in Translation*, 46–64.

30 Mitchell.

31 Ōnuki, 202.

32 Satsuma took part via its rule over the Ryūkyū Kingdom, which still troubled the official Tokugawa delegation. The delegation intervened with the organizers and pressured Satsuma/Ryūkyū to declare itself a "gouvernement" and thus part of Japan; see Lockyer, 28–29, 39–41. Ericson concluded that in the end, the French appreciation of the *bakufu* as representing Japan did not suffer from this interlude.

33 See Nish.

information in a single place. One could even study the political systems and social progress of various nations based on their displays and the many accompanying congresses. At the same time, world's fairs offered Japan a splendid opportunity to present itself. The new leaders were painfully aware of Japan's uneasy international standing as a result of the unequal treaties of the 1850s. The Western powers had clearly signaled that, in their eyes, Japan was merely half-civilized at best. Indeed, the Iwakura Mission had initially set out to renegotiate the unequal treaties, but they found it impossible to convince European and American politicians of the need to do so. The new government then realized that the desired revision would need a long-term diplomatic strategy and that presentations of Japan's progress at world's fairs would help this cause tremendously.[34] Last but not least, participation in world's fairs helped to strengthen exports and increase the influx of Western currency, which Japan urgently needed to fuel its modernization.

The first opportunity to follow this strategy came with the 1873 world's fair in Vienna. European visitors and pundits were already somewhat familiar with Japan through the artistic tendency known as Japonisme. Since the early 1860s, Japan had become fashionable in intellectual circles throughout Europe's cultural centers, especially Paris, and it would become even more so with the subsequent world's fairs.[35] The Exposition Universelle of 1867 in Paris, in particular, seems to have ignited widespread enthusiasm for Japan. Since the signing of the unequal treaties, trade with Japan had taken off, and Western visitors could access the country. Both trade and early Western travels to Japan helped to bring *ukiyo-e* woodblock prints and other crafts to the attention of Western artists, who were fascinated by them.[36] Japan was slowly becoming en vogue, and the Japanese display at the Vienna world's fair only increased Western interest. The Japanese government spared no effort to make its participation a success.

The Japanese pavilion in Vienna was, in essence, a large Japanese garden.[37] Visitors entered through a Shintō gate and first encountered kiosks to their left and right, mainly selling craftwork (see Figure 1.5). The path led to a small Shintō shrine, which lay at the heart of the exhibition because the Meiji government sought to establish Shintō as the new national religion.[38] It was also a move to distance Japan from Buddhism, since Buddhists had supported the Tokugawa shogunate and the

34 See Auslin, 167, for Meiji leaders developing a long-term strategy.

35 Berger, 10–19; Miura, 26–27.

36 As Berger has aptly remarked, *ukiyo-e* had been known in Europe earlier but did not garner much attention before then: "European eyes had not yet sufficiently opened to accept impulses from the East." Only when Western artists faced a crisis in the mid- nineteenth century did they seek out alternative modes of drawing and come to appreciate the unique stylistic possibilities of *ukiyo-e*. See Berger, 3–4, 17.

37 Tagsold, *Spaces in Translation*, 51–54.

38 Hardacre, 27–32.

Figure 1.5. Stereo cards were a popular way to bring world's fairs to the public. This card depicts the Japanese bazaar at the 1873 Vienna World's Fair. A path leads to a Shintō shrine in the background, flanked by two structures selling items on either side. The small Japanese garden is also visible on the right, beside the shrine. Stereo card from the author's collection.

new government disdained the religion as a Chinese import. Thus, the Vienna world's fair pavilion was styled as a Shintō garden, although today we would be more likely to associate gardens with Buddhism. Despite this unfamiliar religious affiliation, the Japanese pavilion was a huge success with visitors and pundits, who were unlikely to notice such political dimensions anyway and merely saw the gate and shrine as typical Eastern architecture. The masses flocked to see the exotic displays and bought everything they could get their hands on. Even the garden itself was transferred to Alexandra Park in London.[39] By today's standards, this garden seems odd—and not just because of its connection with Shintō. The small landscape was overpopulated with huge stone lanterns and lacked overall balance (see Figure 1.6). This makes sense, however, considering that the garden primarily served as a retail area to present goods to buyers. Stone lanterns were an export product, and the sellers wanted to fit in as many as possible.

In any case, most visitors were setting their eyes on such a garden for the first time and were understandably impressed, even though we might doubt its qualities today. Furthermore, newspapers reported that Japanese gardeners and carpenters had set up the pavilion in Vienna in the weeks before the opening.[40] The site was therefore authenticated in the public eye. This popularity only increased when various European newspapers published reports about Empress Elisabeth and her husband, Emperor Franz, inspecting the garden before the fair opened. The pavilion

39 Hotta-Lister, 209–10; Schoppler, 103–6.

40 Tagsold, *Spaces in Translation*, 52.

Figure 1.6. Another collector card from 1873 depicts the crowded garden. Various lanterns and stones adorn the small patch of greenery, enclosed by a wooden fence. Collector card from the author's collection.

at the Vienna world's fair is often introduced as the first Japanese garden in the West. Yet Japan's agenda for the world's fair primarily determined the design. The garden was relatively low-cost compared to other lavish designs like the palace of the Egyptian viceroy exhibited nearby. It was a marketplace for goods and an object to be sold in itself. The Japanese commission did not stress its qualities as a Japanese garden, since the very category was yet to be defined. Historically speaking, this garden should thus only be seen as a first step toward defining the category in and for the West.

The second world's fair in which Japan participated shows how much the concept of "the Japanese garden" was still in the making in the West. For the 1876 Centennial Exhibition in Philadelphia, celebrating 100 years of the United States' Declaration of Independence, a garden was once again installed. From today's perspective, this one seems even more incongruous with the category "Japanese garden" than its predecessor in Vienna. Flowerbeds and wooden benches mixed with stone lanterns and bronze cranes in front of the Japanese Bazaar, as the pavilion was called, though there was probably a more restrained non-floral layout at the back of the bazaar too. Once again, the Japanese display was largely successful, drawing much attention and admiration. Some authors have even claimed that it sparked the initial American interest in Japanese products—even though it could be argued that Japanese crafts and goods had successfully entered the American market

much earlier.[41] Still, the Japanese commission was reluctant to purport that it was purely Japanese: "[the] peculiar style of gardening was originally introduced from Korea, and is apparently connected with the principles of ancient Chinese philosophy concerning the harmony of nature."[42] Japanese horticulture was indeed historically rooted in Chinese examples. Nevertheless, Japanese commissions would later suppress this point in publications about displays at future world's fairs. Instead, they quickly realized that these garden-style showrooms were hugely popular with the crowds and eventually decided that they should not market them as inspired by "Chinese philosophy concerning the harmony of nature" but rather as genuinely Japanese. Thus, the gardens at world's fairs proved to be seminal for the subsequent definition of the category "Japanese gardens." These gardens were nonetheless specifically designed to suit the conditions of the fairs and the predilections of Western customers while maintaining a favorable cost-benefit ratio.

A Garden Vogue in the West

These exhibitions at the world's fairs triggered a massive vogue for Japanese gardens in the West. Wealthy people started building Japanese gardens on their estates, thus setting a trend. Such private Japanese gardens would flourish in the US and the UK in particular. For example, property listings in the *London Times* prominently featured the Japanese Gardens on English estates that were up for sale.[43] The gardens seemed to have been a mark of modernity for these houses, since they were often accompanied by other luxury amenities like tennis courts, in line with a sportive and cosmopolitan lifestyle which more traditional estates did not emphasize in their advertisements.

Similarly, in North America, affluent families invested in Japanese gardens to add the latest fashion to their grounds and create some amusement for guests. Some of these still remain in good condition, like the Morris family's garden in Chestnut Hill, Philadelphia—a wealthy neighborhood that historically formed

41 In his groundbreaking book *The Japanese Influence in America*, published in 1963, Clay Lancaster describes the impact of the 1876 Centennial as such: "Visitors to the fair viewed the buildings and their contents with mixed feelings, but there were those among them who were smitten by the charm of things Japanese. Some of them went away greatly impressed by the directness of Japanese construction, others became avid collectors of Japanese wares, and still others became enthusiasts over Japanese gardens. The importance of the exhibits in introducing Americans to these phases of Japanese art cannot be overestimated." See Lancaster, 74.

42 Imperial Japanese Commission to the International Exhibition at Philadelphia, 114.

43 Tagsold, *Spaces in Translation*, 75–76.

Figure 1.7. The Nikkō Tōshō-gū, where Tokugawa Ieyasu is enshrined, was a popular destination for wealthy tourists around 1900. The famous Three Wise Monkeys are carved in wood there. Since the Japanese word for monkey (*saru*) can also be read as the negative form of a verb, they symbolize the three principles of not seeing evil, not hearing evil, and not speaking evil. In the context of Chestnut Hill in Philadelphia, they attest to the cosmopolitan knowledge of Lydia and John Morris. Photograph by the author.

part of Germantown.[44] Lydia and her brother John Morris inherited the site from their father, who had owned an iron and steel foundry. The vast grounds in Chestnut Hill allowed the siblings, neither of whom married, to build different garden types. Thus, the Japanese Overlook was created on one of the hills in 1912, displaying a relief with the three famous monkeys who see, hear, and say nothing (see Figure 1.7). The original monkeys are to be found at the Nikkō Tōshō-gū, the famous shrine consecrated to the first shogun Tokugawa Ieyasu, roughly 100 km north of contemporary Tokyo. In addition to the Japanese Overlook, the Morrises added another small Japanese hill-and-water garden in 1912.

But Japanese gardens were accessible not only to the rich. Some of the gardens at world's fairs remained after the end of the exposition and were open to the public, as in the case of the highly iconic garden in San Francisco, which had been laid out for the world's fair of 1894.[45] Moreover, public parks like the Brooklyn Botanic

44 Tagsold, *Spaces in Translation*, 46–48.

45 K. Brown, "Rashomon."

Garden added Japanese gardens to attract and educate visitors.[46] In other cases, Japanese gardens were built to add a touch of luxury. For instance, the Ritz-Carlton hotel in New York installed a Japanese garden on its rooftop. According to a hotel booklet from 1919, guests could enjoy luncheon or tea in this lavish setting, and it goes on to describe the site's exotic charm in some detail:

> Between the loggias is the garden itself, at one end of which is a great pagoda, and seated in front of it is Buddha smiling serenely. The loggias are latticed in bamboo with bamboo screens shading the tables, and in every possible manner proper native colors and tones are adhered to. Through the center of the garden a little stream gushes from the mouth of a grotesque mask on the base of the pedestal upon which Buddha is seated, and the banks of the stream are thick with tiny Japanese villages, quite perfect in every detail.[47]

The Ritz-Carlton's adaption of the genre shows how Japanese gardens had become part of popular culture by the early twentieth century.

By that point, the notion of the Japanese garden had left the realm of gardening in the strict sense and was taken up in many different and surprising contexts. A typical small patch invoking a Japanese garden at the Luna Park on Coney Island from around 1900 was still sufficiently connected to gardening but already hints at the concept's versatility. Here, the garden had been stripped of any deeper meanings it might have had and was utilized as a mere facade to attract and entertain guests—once again a function related to world's fairs. The theme of Japanese gardening proved to be useful in many contexts. For example, the Chicago Automobile Show of 1916 used Japanese garden sceneries all over the place.[48] Garden backdrops served to introduce and advertise automobiles while invoking a feeling of luxury that corresponded to the product. At that time, automobiles were still mainly manufactured for affluent customers, who would have cherished the exotic backdrop.

Furthermore, Japanese gardens appeared as stage settings in shows, theater plays, and vaudevilles.[49] In Germany, paper theater was a popular pastime for upper-middle-class children. J.F. Schreiber, a publisher from Southern Germany, distributed scores of plays along with all the props and sceneries needed to stage a paper play for friends and family. Most of them were adapted from classical German playwrights like Goethe and Schiller, an essential pillar of bourgeois education. Fairy tales sold well too. Eventually, J.F. Schreiber started offering exotic plays like *The*

46 K. Brown, "Rashomon," 141–42.
47 Ritz-Carlton, 9.
48 Tagsold, "Japanese Gardens Unleashed," 294–95.
49 Tagsold, *Spaces in Translation*, 78–79.

Figure 1.8. Paper theater was one of the transmedial devices introducing Japanese gardens to the masses. The German play *The Mikado or the Three Examinations* featured Japanese gardens as its stage settings. Photograph by the author.

Mikado or the Three Examinations, written in 1893.[50] One of the publisher's prolific writers had blended a Schiller play about a Chinese princess with the stage names of Gilbert and Sullivan's *The Mikado*, an operetta that had taken European stages by storm just a few years earlier.[51] Most of the scenes in this paper theater used a Japanese garden as a backdrop, which came in two versions: a mystic nighttime garden in the moonlight and a daytime one (see Figure 1.8). Since the "actors" of paper theater lacked expression and gestures, the plays were meant to entertain through quick changes of scenery and special effects. This one took about half an hour but had six changes of scenery, with the two Japanese gardens appearing three times in total. Since Japanese gardens had not yet been built in Germany, the publisher's set painters clearly drew their inspiration from the Japanese pavilion at the 1889 world's fair in Paris. The two Japanese garden scenes were lavish and rich in detail in any case.

Japanese gardens had infiltrated Western popular culture in many forms. These manifestations proved how well the category had been established by the early twentieth century. The inclusion of the "Japanese garden" in advertisements

50 Siewert.

51 Lee, 3–4; Pflüger and Herbst, 107

signaled that its significance had become well-established, now serving as a tool to enhance the image of a product. Setting cars within Japanese gardens signified that the product was connected to luxury and probably good design. In the West, the category "Japanese garden" thus took on a life of its own with a much broader meaning than it had in Japan. Many things could be included under this rubric, making it much easier for Westerners to accept the new gardens of the Meiji period as "Japanese." Their definition was far less rigorous than those of Japanese experts, considering that a garden at a world's fair, at the Morris estate, on the rooftop of a hotel, on Coney Island, or in the backdrop of a paper theater play could all be gathered under one rubric.

Defining the Japanese Garden for the West

Around the same time that world's fairs introduced Japan to the West, an academic discourse on this topic also took shape. However, the key English and Japanese publications on the gardens differed markedly and tackled different problems. For Western authors, the phenomenon of Japanese gardens had to be thoroughly grasped to begin with. Their style and underlying intentions were exotic and did not match the expectations of European garden history. The earliest Western writings tried to convey this idea to their readers. There was a strong implicit tendency of othering that rendered Japanese gardens as something exotic and totally different. This linguistic operation did not differ from other instances of othering in imperialist discourse. Through postcolonial studies, we have come to understand how the fundamental divide between the "West and the Rest" (Stuart Hall) was actively constructed in imperialist writings and not simply a given fact reflected in texts.[52] By establishing binaries between Western and Japanese landscaping, the latter was rendered exotic through textual strategies.

In the West, two books and one article appeared in short succession that defined Japanese gardens by relying on precisely such strategies of othering. First, Edward Morse published a book entitled *Japanese Homes and Their Surroundings* in 1885. The American Morse was called to Japan in 1877 as a foreign expert and taught zoology as a professor at the University of Tokyo. He had wide-ranging interests—even including folklore studies—which enabled him to write a book on architecture as a biologist. In his book, he aimed to explain Japanese vernacular architecture to his readers. Morse observed that the Japanese loved gardening and excelled at this art. His argument had a culturalist premise in assuming that all Japanese shared

52 On the formation and history of the term "othering" in post-colonial studies, see Thomas-Olalde and Velho.

common traits, such as their fondness for gardening, and that these characteristics set them apart from the West. He tried to speak in favor of their way of living, even though he argued that the Japanese style of housing and gardening was mainly due to the poverty of the country and its people.[53]

Josiah Conder took up this thread and, in 1886, penned a paper on "The Art of Landscape Gardening in Japan" in the journal *Transactions of the Asiatic Society of Japan*, which he expanded into his book *Landscape Gardening in Japan*, published in 1893. Conder's career was similar to Morse's. He taught architecture at the University of Tokyo and planned buildings and landscapes such as the Furukawa estate. His book was highly successful and defined Japanese gardens for a Western readership for the ensuing decades. In the introduction, Conder first explained that Japanese gardens were entirely different from what people in the West deemed important in landscaping. His method of othering reads as follows:

> Japanese landscape gardening may therefore be described as a representation of the natural scenery of the country as it appears to and impresses the Japanese themselves, in a manner consistent with the limitations of their arts. Transferred to a foreign climate where landscape presents itself in a different garb, and regarded by a people who interpret nature in another manner, these lovely gardens can hardly fail to appear as examples of a quaint and fanciful conceit.[54]

As with Morse, Conder's cultural relativism is quite patent. He presents differing ideas of nature as an outcome of different natural conditions on the one hand and art history on the other. What is natural for one man is "quaint" for another who lives in other parts of the world and whose country's art has evolved in another way. The term "quaint" was commonly used to label the unfamiliar other in imperialist discourses of the times. For good reasons, David A. Slawson has denounced this permanent "quaintification" of Japanese gardens.[55]

Surprisingly for current readers, Conder primarily focused on gardens in Tokyo and mostly neglected Kyoto. His main achievement was a Linnéan categorization of all the elements in Japanese gardens such as stones, lanterns, bridges, etc. Conder subdivided these families of garden accessories into various subcategories, which he meticulously enumerated. Consequently, his book enabled Western readers to get a thorough overview of the art, which apparently had been hard to achieve previously, and his taxonomy helped design Japanese gardens in the West.[56]

53 Morse, 46
54 Conder, *Landscape Gardening in Japan*, 22.
55 Slawson, 16.
56 Tachibana, Daniels, and Watkins 370; Fukuhara, 5.

Finally, the Greek-Irish journalist Lafcadio Hearn published the widely read article "In a Japanese Garden" in *The Atlantic Monthly*. Unlike Morse and Conder, Hearn had a far more romantic vision of Japanese gardens. He eschewed detailed analysis and relied instead on vivid descriptions of the scenery as a whole. His article was mainly driven by a nostalgic anxiety that modernity would stomp out Japanese gardens.

These three treatments spawned a Western discourse on Japanese gardens that matured into many more books, papers, and articles in subsequent years. All these texts helped define the topic, which had already become popular through the many gardens at world's fair and the practical adaptions of the genre they inspired. The publications and the factual gardens reinforced each other to create a clear-cut idea of what gardens looked like in Japan and how they expressed a unique Japanese proximity to nature as well as a refined sense of aesthetics, which the West had presumably lost.

The discussion of gardens fit well with the vogue for Japonisme, which had set in a couple of decades earlier. Western artists had come to admire *ukiyo-e* prints in particular, but they also thought highly of ceramics, lacquer, and other crafts such as *netsuke* (miniature sculptures). These *ukiyo-e* were a popular art form in the Edo period, and prints abounded. Some of them found their way to the US and Europe, where they impacted artists like Van Gogh, Monet, and Toulouse-Lautrec. The artists then started producing works in a new style summarized under the heading of Japonisme. Much like the broad enthusiasm for Japanese gardens, these works and their reception lived off the assumption that the Far East was superior in its aesthetics and appreciation of nature.[57] By tapping into the existing Japonisme, the discourse on Japanese gardens quickly gained traction and authority.

Early Japanese Historicization

Conder had some influence on the first Japanese books that brought Japanese landscape design into modernity. In the Edo period, many popular manuals decoding the art of gardening appeared. Conder mainly relied on these manuals for his research. This explains why he focused on gardens in Tokyo, which later fell out of fashion.[58] Through his first paper on Japanese gardens, Conder seems to have inspired the artist Honda Kinkichirō to write his book *Zukai teizōhō* (Illustrated Rules of Garden Landscape, 1890), which Suzuki Makoto has described as the "first

57 Berger, 2.

58 Katahira, 24.

book to adopt a modern perspective [on] landscape gardening in Japan."[59] As Wybe Kuitert has noted, Honda distilled the teachings of Edo manuals for modern readers just like Conder did.[60]

The apparent threat of vanishing gardens that had spurred Lafcadio Hearn was another driving force behind much scholarship in Japan. Around the same time that Morse, Conder, and Hearn kicked off an intensive Western discourse, Yokoi Tokifuyu and Ozawa Keijirō initiated a discussion of Japanese garden history that went far beyond a mere renewal of the Edo-manual style. In 1892, Yokoi published his book *Engeikō* (Thoughts on the Art of Gardening), which traced the history of Japanese gardens from their earliest beginnings up to the Meiji era. Yokoi was born into a samurai family of the Owari-*han* (in Nagoya) in 1860 and experienced Edo's gradual metamorphosis into Tokyo when he came to the new capital as a student. Although better known as an economic historian, he had a strong interest in gardens. Yokoi's book strung together gardens from various historical periods to suggest an unbroken line of tradition to his readers. Unlike Western art history, which thrived on a story of ruptures and revolutions driven by the genius of artists trying to create something never before seen, Japanese gardens seemed to evolve harmoniously. It was Yokoi who introduced the concept of artistic epochs into the Japanese historiography of horticulture (see Figure 1.9).[61]

A year later, Ozawa Keijirō published his own book on Japanese garden history. Ozawa was born in 1842, the son of a Kuwana-*han* doctor. He initially set out to become a doctor like his father but later decided to work as a teacher at the Yokohama Navy School. Alarmed by the loss of Japanese traditions, Ozawa turned to gardens in an effort to save them. To him, Japanese gardens were an art form endangered by modernity. In 1886, Ozawa quit his teaching job to commit himself to studying and writing about Japanese gardens. He even gave himself the pen name Suien (drunk on gardens).[62] Ozawa was particularly interested in old manuscripts on gardening, which the *daimyō* had either sold to antiquarians or had lost track of in the turmoil of the Meiji Restoration. Ozawa could buy some of these manuscripts from antiquarians for his collection while he manually copied those he uncovered in public collections. He was convinced that old sources were key to understanding Japanese gardening.

From 1890 to 1905, Ozawa wrote columns on various garden topics in the influential journal *Kokka*, published by the Asahi newspaper. Okakura Tenshin, who had co-founded the Tokyo Fine Arts School (*Tōkyō Bijutsu Gakkō*, now Tokyo University

59 M. Suzuki, "Afterword," 99.

60 Kuitert, *Japanese Gardens and Landscapes*, 131.

61 Scorus, 87–89.

62 Ozawa was famous for his alcohol consumption, and so he might have chosen his pen name as a form of self-mockery, as Uehara has suggested. See Uehara, 2.

Figure 1.9. A double page from Yokoi's *Engeikō* introduces readers to the concept of the *shinden-zukuri* architectural style. Tokifuyu Yokoi, *Engeikō* (Tokyo: Ōyamashima Gakkai, 1889).

of the Arts) in 1887, was one of the journal's founders. *Kokka* launched in 1889 on the occasion of the Exposition Universelle in Paris.[63] Okakura was well aware of Westerners' appraisal of Japan, and their growing interest in Japanese gardens might have been one of the reasons *Kokka* gave Ozawa ample space for his articles on old Japanese garden books. According to art historian Satō Dōshin, *Kokka* became one of the main pillars that supported the new notion of a national art history.[64] The journal set itself apart through extremely high-quality reproductions of artworks and by attracting prominent authors. It helped to spread a visual canon of national art and a strong sense of art history as a national endeavor among its readers. Through Ozawa's writings in *Kokka*, garden history was integrated into the newly constructed national art history. His discussions of important early treatises on gardening and the most prominent gardens introduced readers to a canon that went on to define garden history for the next generations. Even though Ozawa's reputation

63 Pai, 92.

64 D. Satō, 154.

was controversial due to his alcohol addiction, he still influenced aspiring gardeners and historians. In 1911, he was hired as a teacher at the Tokyo Metropolitan High School of Horticulture (*Tōkyō Furitsu Engei Gakkō*), where he had his students read the most essential historical manuscripts.[65] His role in spreading garden history thus became institutionalized.

Yokoi and Ozawa's writings on garden history led to a *ronsō*—a popular Japanese form of intellectual battle—which incited readers to engage in their arguments.[66] The *ronsō*, as usual, did not produce any clear winner and eventually fizzled out at some point. Nonetheless, it led to an ongoing discussion on horticultural history by the turn of the century. There seemed to be little disagreement that the art had developed relatively organically, and as a result gardens throughout the ages shared many characteristic features. Still, the episteme of Western art history, which defined progress in terms of epochs, was generally adopted and the Japanese eras of history, such as Heian (794–1185/1192) or Muromachi (1336–1573), became synonymous with certain garden styles. This led to heated debates about subtle points concerning timelines, garden masters, and authors of treatises and manuals. Within this early discourse, there was a general implicit agreement that horticulture in Japan was somehow unique. However, this axiom was rarely made explicit amongst peers in the early phases. Garden historians clashed on details but did not argue about the principal points. Through these discussions, a canonical understanding evolved about which types of places were relevant to the national garden history and which could be ignored.

Interestingly enough, Ozawa Keijirō not only wrote about gardens but also designed some. He had proposed a Japanese garden for the first modern Western-style park in Tokyo—Hibiya Park close to the Imperial Palace, inaugurated in 1903—but his suggestion was ultimately rejected.[67] Later, he was commissioned to plan one of the two Japanese gardens at the Japan–British Exhibition held in London in 1910; Honda Kinkichirō devised the other garden.[68] Finally, Ozawa undertook a fascinating project to reshape the Kyūka Park in Kuwana, Mie Prefecture. In 1928, Ozawa redesigned the green around the former castle and turned it into a space for the citizens of his hometown (see Figure 1.10). The park mixes Western-style elements, such as free space for visitors, and Japanese ones, such as lanterns. Obviously, Ozawa did not simply try to emulate old designs. Instead, his belief that public parks were for "common public enjoyment and recreation" determined the layout in Kuwana.[69] Since the Kyūka Park is not a

65 Koitabashi and Isoya.
66 O. Mori, *Nihon teien*, 4.
67 Shinji, 32.
68 Kuitert, "Japonaiserie," 223–25.
69 Ozawa, "Kōenron," 1.

Figure 1.10. This illustrated postcard highlights key structures and features of Ōzawa's design for Kyūka Park in Kuwana. Ōzawa preserved the moat of the former castle site and its shrine. The lantern with its two circles in the center is still visible in the park today. Postcard from the author's collection.

Japanese garden, it did not enter the heritage circuit like Ogawa Jihei's creations. To this day, it mainly functions as a public space for recreation in a small provincial town, which has lost the significance it once enjoyed as the capital of a mid-sized *han* in the Edo period.

Gardens and Nations around 1900—The Japanese Case

Around 1900, the discussion of garden styles as expressions of the nation was not limited to Japan. On the contrary, many Western countries witnessed a similar debate. Looking at how these discussions unfolded and the results they yielded will be beneficial for assessing just how much the Japanese case was typical as well as to what extent it differed.

The idea that garden styles connected to national rubrics had been around for a while, albeit in a much less definite sense. People talked about "French," "Italian," "English," or even "Dutch" gardens. Although these adjectives may now signal clear national styles to us, they did not consolidate until the mid-nineteenth century. As Chandra Mukerji has convincingly argued for the gardens of Versailles, "French" for Louis XIV and his contemporaries marked the territory of the state but did not denote a nation. Versailles, in this context, "demonstrated more than represented [...]

France as a territorial power."[70] The formation of the nation-state, which imposed an ideology of uniformity and shared origins onto the territory, was still about a century away. Aristocrats all over Europe competed for the most refined and up-to-date tastes in horticulture. However, no one imagined that these styles could express the mentality of a collective people bound by a sense of national belonging—it was purely about the design choices of a small stratum of nobility.[71]

Over the course of the nineteenth century, the semantics of adjectives like "French" or "English" started leaning towards a description of national identity in the context of gardens. As Anne Helmreich has hashed out in her fascinating book *The English Garden and National Identity*, not only had gardens in the late nineteenth century become a matter of national styles, but the garden for England had replaced other symbols like "roast beef" as one of the most eminent national icons.[72] However, a fierce debate unfolded about the actual symbolic content of the English garden: "But despite such agreement about the garden's significance, the form it would take was sharply contested."[73] Four main types were suggested as ideal English gardens: the wild or natural garden; the cottage garden; the formal garden; and some type of fusion between the formal and natural garden.[74] Eventually, garden history was able to find some middle ground between these contradictory claims and helped reconcile the positions of William Robinson, who had lobbied for the wild garden; Reginald Bloomfield, who argued for formal gardens; and the broad movement that supported cottage gardens as the real symbol of English horticulture.[75] In the context of Japanese garden history, it is fascinating to note that Helmreich discusses the English garden at the 1904 world's fair in St. Louis as a symbol of this reconciliation.[76] Even though world's fairs had a more minor impact on the English discussion, they still made a difference.

The case of the "German garden," as discussed by Joachim Wolschke-Bulmahn and Gert Gröning, is also telling since here, the attempt to invent a national garden style by and large failed.[77] With the nationalization of garden history, the question of why there was no German garden seemed to grow more pressing for some conservative intellectuals and garden lovers in Germany. The German nation-state had an entirely different evolution than in England or France. In Germany, small courts had ruled under the Holy Roman Empire, later with the addition "of the

70 Mukerji, 298.
71 Schweizer, "Japanisch," 233.
72 Helmreich, 8.
73 Helmreich, 31.
74 Helmreich, 11.
75 Helmreich, 146.
76 Helmreich, 225–30.
77 Wolschke-Bulmahn; Wolschke-Bulmahn and Gröning.

German Nation." The Kaiser's many relatively independent vassals had reigned over a multitude of semi-autonomous medium and small-sized territories. As a result, there was significantly less political and cultural unification than in France and England, which were still quite diverse compared to later nation-states. Regarding horticulture, the German sovereigns first sought to imitate Italy and then the French Sun King and his gardens from the seventeenth century onward. Therefore, no typical national horticultural style existed when the German nation-state achieved its political form in the late nineteenth century. Patriotic university professors, writers, and landscape architects tried to synthesize some sort of national style from Germanic sources—however sparse, vague, and inconsistent they were.[78] They strove to invoke a "specific Germanic relationship with nature"[79] that they could utilize for a general rejection of modernity in the name of nationalism. In that regard, their aspirations resembled those of their Japanese counterparts. However, these attempts in Germany did not yield convincing results, and rival internationalist approaches to landscaping were critical of this garden patriotism.[80] Only after the National Socialists came to power in 1933 did the patriotic urge for a German landscape gain traction, eventually leading to several projects that tried to implement such ideologies, as Wolschke-Bulmahn has shown.[81]

Overall, we can note that Japan's quest to define a national garden style was not unique. Similar projects were taking place in the West. While English intellectuals succeeded, their German counterparts lacked the historical material to cook up a modern national style. Here, the Japanese apparently had an edge. Kyoto's horticulture proved well suited for generating a convincing garden history, and practical examples at world's fairs played a significant part in the process. True enough, Ozawa Keijirō did bend tradition when designing his garden for the Japan-British Exhibition in 1910. However, this was to please the Western audience, not to question the idea of the Japanese garden itself.[82]

Still, we should not get too enthusiastic about the Japanese attempts to define a national style in the late Meiji era. Though Western writers after Morse and Conder liberally applied the term "Japanese garden" to any number of landscapes and had no reservations about comparing this style to French or English gardens, Japanese authors rarely used the equivalent *nihon teien*. They often wrote about *wareware no kuni no teien* (gardens in our country) or employed similar phrases, but it was decades before the term *nihon teien* entirely replaced these less definite formulations. This might seem a semantic trifle, but it was not until the 1930s that garden history evolved

78 Wolschke-Bulmahn, 193–98.
79 Wolschke-Bulmahn, 195.
80 Wolschke-Bulmahn and Gröning, 78.
81 Wolschke-Bulmahn, 198–218.
82 Kuitert, "Japonaiserie," 224–25.

into a more self-aware endeavor. *The Complete Database of Magazine and Periodicals from the Meiji Era to the Present* shows that mentions of *nihon teien* reached a first peak of up to 50 hits per year around the 1930s.[83] After the end of the war, magazines and journals again rarely discussed *nihon teien*. In our conversation, Yamada Shōji stated that the term *nihon teien* was only popularized through the 1970 Osaka Expo, where about one-quarter of the grounds were laid out as a Japanese garden. The database partly backs this claim, showing renewed interest in the term in 1970. Only from the 1990s onwards did *nihon teien* become a widespread topic with a regular output of more than 50 instances per year. The database of the liberal nationwide newspaper *Asahi Shimbun* yields similar results. From 1879, when the newspaper was founded, to 1999, *nihon teien* appeared only 151 times in newspaper texts, and the first instances before World War II nearly all revolved around Japanese gardens abroad. In the same period, *kōen* (park) found its way into the newspaper on nearly 28,000 occasions, and even *dōbutsuen* (zoo) had around 4,000 hits.

Discourses on Western and Japanese garden history differed in some fundamental ways. Of course, English and German garden specialists discussed their respective styles with an eye toward other nations and their achievements. Many of them wrote within a broad, preexisting international discourse on these topics. Nonetheless, in most European cases, historians, landscape architects, and other interested parties could decide for themselves which type of garden style best fit their quest for identity—even though such voices in Germany could not reach any consensus. For Japan, however, the formation of the discourse on national gardens differed in two regards. First, the Western appreciation for Japanese gardens at world's fairs stood at the beginning of the genre's formation. A national pavilion with a garden did not signal a final compromise on the contested definition of a national style, as Helmreich had concluded for England. Second, Western writings had a considerable influence on Japanese interpretations of their own gardens. Conder was an authority whose voice carried weight within Japan. Only in the 1930s would Japanese intellectuals start rejecting his conclusions, as I will show in Chapter 4. Up until then, agency in defining the Japanese garden did not rest with Japanese intellectuals alone. They had to overcome various interventions by Westerners that Edward Said would qualify as Orientalist. Western experts initially controlled the narrative of what constituted Japanese gardens, and their writings on Japanese horticulture framed the "East" through imperialist discourses. As Said has demonstrated, this was part of a much larger phenomenon that supported political imperialism by promoting the idea of Western cultural superiority.[84]

83 See https://zassaku-plus.com (the database is only accessible via an account often provided by public libraries).

84 Said.

Furthermore, the Western impact on Japanese discourse did not stop with books and articles—it had a very practical side, too. The Shinjuku Gyo-en comes to mind here. This park was originally a *daimyō* garden until 1879, when the Ministry of the Imperial Household took over and created the Shinjuku Imperial Botanical Garden in its place. The ministry appointed Fukuba Hayato as head of the garden in 1898. Fukuba had studied in France at the École nationale d'horticulture de Versailles, forming his outlook on parks.[85] Here, he met Henri Martinet, a professor at the school and director of the gardens in Versailles. Impressed with Martinet's teaching and work, both became friends, as the Frenchman noted in 1900 in a paper on "L'Horticulture au Japon" for the journal *Jardin*.[86]

As a result, in 1906, the Ministry of the Imperial Household commissioned Martinet to create a park. Japanese landscape architects still lacked experience with planning Western parks. Honda Seiroku, trained in Germany, had succeeded in designing and devising the Hibiya Park in 1903, but he had no prior experience in park planning, and the city of Tokyo had appointed him very abruptly for this task.[87] Fukuba had heavily criticized Tokyo's choice of Honda, whom he deemed incapable of creating a Western-style park.[88] Therefore, Fukuba relied on his French contact for the prestigious imperial project of Shinjuku. Kuitert has noted that Martinet proposed a *jardin mixte*, as fashionable French eclecticism back then was called.[89] Martinet combined three national garden styles: A geometric-formal French garden, an English landscape garden, and a Japanese garden based on the preceding *daimyō* garden. The Shinjuku Gyo-en thus anticipated the Furukawa Gardens' mixture of styles, but here, the park was open to the public and functioned as a public lesson in national garden styles. Such a clear-cut comparison could leave little doubt in garden historians' minds about Japan's distinctive identity within the international gardening landscape.

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85 Mizuma, 13–14.

86 Mizuma.

87 Shinji, 30.

88 Mizuma, 21.

89 Kuitert, *Japanese Gardens and Landscapes*, 120. For a detailed discussion on Martinet and his stylistic background, see Maki.

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2. Building New Gardens—The Meiji and Taishō Periods

Abstract: Chapter 2 looks at a garden style that emerged in Japan in the late 19th century when the new elites of the Meiji state began to show renewed interest in Japanese gardens. Kyoto, the former capital, had gradually modernized on the eastern side of the Kamo River, with the recently completed Lake Biwa Canal providing electric power and water to the Okazaki area. Landscape architect Ogawa Jihei used the canal's water to create a new garden style for his affluent clients. He focused on building economically while designing natural landscapes that met his clients' social and cultural preferences. While Ogawa is now widely recognized as a key landscape architect of the time, other contributors—though less known—also played a part in the revival of horticulture in Japan.

Keywords: Ogawa Jihei; Okazaki; Yamagata Aritomo; Lake Biwa Canal

While Japanese gardens drew visitors at world's fairs in the West and while Japanese and Western experts were carving out and creating their history, horticulture in Japan stagnated following the Meiji Restoration. Horticulturists faced dire times, as many of their typical customers had lost both their fortunes and their income as a result of the dissolution of the feudal system, causing their interest in the services of gardeners to wane. The former ruling strata struggled to find a new role in the Meiji period and often could not afford to indulge in garden projects because their sources of income had disappeared with the end of the feudal system. The gardening profession seemed on the edge of extinction, and many garden businesses had to close.

Fortunately for those who could carry on, gardening became popular again amongst wealthy and influential people in the 1880s and 1890s. Slowly but steadily, the new elite formed by the former young samurai who had backed the Meiji Restoration and transferred power from the shogunate to the emperor developed the means to express their cultural preferences. In the Meiji period, many samurai transitioned into high-ranking bureaucratic positions or entered government roles.

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The emperor bestowed aristocratic titles derived from Western nobility systems to the most successful under the new system of peerage (*kazoku*), which replaced the old feudal ranks. Others converted the state bonds they had received as a replacement for their feudal stipends into thriving economic enterprises and came to wealth, even though many failed miserably in this task and became impoverished.

Those who prospered in the new system soon felt the need to set themselves apart from the more common imperial subjects. They invested in culture as a marker of social distinction. Activities like tea ceremonies, collecting art, and commissioning gardens became trendy ways to connect with the past and showcase one's personal refinement. A new garden culture started to flourish, and sought-after landscape architects satisfied the needs of the affluent clientele of the new social strata. For this new elite, gardens were an exercise in *wakon yōsai*, a slogan originating in the late Meiji years meaning "Japanese spirit and Western technique." Commissioning gardens allowed the former samurai to signal a commitment to *wakon* while underlining their role in shaping Japan as a modern state alongside Western powers. Thus, the estates' outlay also accommodated their owners' modern needs. Western buildings were sometimes tucked away in some corners so as not to disturb the Japanese appearance but to still offer the comfort of *yōsai*. Sometimes, the main residence overlooking the garden represented a mélange of West and East or was distinctively modern. However, this mixing of the "East" (*wakon*/tradition) and the "West" (*yōsai*/modernity) on these estates was already a product of the times. These notions were rooted in the pursuit of a stable national identity, and the gardens served as one of the manifestations of this effort. As Suzuki Hiroyuki has put it, the wealthy patrons of the times established "tradition as an expression of the modern"—however paradoxical that may initially seem.[1] For those well-versed in Japanese gardens, the *wakon yōsai* of these sites often translated into a feeling of eclecticism, blending Japanese and Western elements. With Ogawa Jihei, Kyoto saw the emergence of a landscape designer who skillfully incorporated modern techniques and understood how to please his clients. Today, Ogawa's gardens are celebrated as examples of the new style developed around 1900.

Kyoto Turns Modern

Ogawa Jihei's gardens were first laid out against the backdrop of the modernizing capital of Kyoto. We have learned to see Kyoto as the cradle and storehouse of Japan's cultural tradition. A clear binary has been set up between Tokyo and Kyoto. Tokyo symbolically represents modern Japan, a high-tech country on the cusp of the

1 H. Suzuki, *Ogawa Jihei and His Times*, 197.

future. In contrast, Kyoto is marketed to Japanese and foreign tourists alike as old Japan, full of temples and gardens. Given the destruction of most *daimyō* gardens in Tokyo, this stereotypical assessment would seem to make much sense. Nonetheless, we should remember that this binary between the two cities only formed during the twentieth century.[2]

In *Modern Kyoto*, for example, Alice Y. Tseng powerfully demonstrates the ancient capital's efforts to modernize in the Meiji period. The relocation of the court and capital from Kyoto to Tokyo after 1868 symbolically downgraded the former capital and had immediate consequences for the local economy, which hit urban life hard. All the same, Kyoto's city fathers did their best to counter the city's decline using different strategies.[3] Tseng focuses on urban development and various events, such as large trade fairs, to analyze modern Kyoto. Many of these are closely linked to the new imperial nationalism of the Meiji era. Obviously, Kyoto had a strong historical connection to the imperial family, which weakened once the court relocated to Tokyo. Nevertheless, the imperial family's strong ties to Kyoto brought family members and the *tennō* himself back to the city on various occasions, such as state funerals, enthronements, or weddings, and the city made the best use of these opportunities. The *tennō* in the Meiji era symbolized modernity and progress, while state ideology also connected him to an unbroken family lineage that strung together past and present, utilizing a unified historical vision. Kyoto's strategic moves to harness imperial history and the present *tennō* thus went hand in hand with its emphasis on the city's modernization. In many instances, *tennō* nationalism easily stitched together tradition and progress.

Two measures to cope with modernity—one closely related to an industrial fair and subsequent urban development, the other to infrastructure in the same city area—demonstrate this trajectory. Kyoto set the stage for showcasing urban modernity to the east of the historic inner city. Across the river Kamo, which historically confined the inner city, most of the land had belonged to the Nanzen-ji Temple, one of the significant Zen temples in Kyoto, or was used for farming to feed the old capital's inhabitants.[4] After the Meiji Restoration, the government's anti-Buddhist stance forced Nanzen-ji to abandon many of its sub-temples and sell

2 Kuitert has argued that this dichotomy already existed by the end of the nineteenth century. However, following Pitelka and Tseng's volume on Kyoto around 1900, it seems that the former capital still aspired to move into modernity. Indeed, Kyoto did promote tourism, and events like exhibitions were part of this scheme, as Yagasaki has argued. Thus, modernity mixed with history was part of Kyoto's attraction for tourists. See Kuitert, *Japanese Gardens and Landscapes*, 193; Yagasaki, "Meiji-ki ni okeru," 53.

3 Tseng, *Modern Kyoto*. See also Pitelka and Tseng's edited volume *Kyoto Visual Culture in the Early Edo and Meiji Periods: The Arts of Reinvention* for the various initiatives the city undertook to make up for its loss of status.

4 Niglio and Inoue.

its land.[5] In 1888, the area, which up to then had been a village in its own right, was incorporated into Kyoto City.[6] The two projects that converted this rustic religious area into the hotbed of Kyoto's modernity were the construction of the Lake Biwa Canal in the 1880s and 1890s, and the Fourth National Industrial Fair in 1895. Okazaki, as the district was now called, started to attract many of modern Kyoto's cultural institutions and grew into a highly affluent residential area.[7] This last stage of the transformation was decisive for Ogawa Jihei's career, as he designed many gardens for these residences. In addition, he was awarded a number of commissions for the modern public infrastructure emerging in Okazaki and the planned gardens for shrines, libraries, and museums.

Architecture historian Suzuki Hiroyuki has discussed the construction of the Lake Biwa Canal in relation to Ogawa's career in depth in his 2013 book *Teishi Ogawa Jihei to sono jidai* which was translated into English as *Landscape Gardener Ogawa Jihei and His Times: A Profile of Modern Japan* (2018).[8] He has woven an artful text connecting state-of-the-art technology, city planning, the politics of the time, and the art of gardening. The canal from Lake Biwa to Kyoto was first planned to provide waterpower for factories. Its construction was a difficult project that proved how far Japanese engineers had come in just two and a half decades after the Meiji Restoration. The planning process was all the more impressive considering that Tanabe Sakurō, the engineer in charge, had only been born in 1861 and was surprisingly young for such a large-scale endeavor. He had submitted the plans for the canal as his thesis at the Imperial College of Engineering (*Kōbu Daigakkō*) and had also traveled to the US to inspect various canal systems for producing waterpower.[9] The canal connected Lake Biwa, the largest in Japan, to the south-eastern part of Kyoto. For most of its 20-km length, the water had to be channeled through tunnels dug into the ridge of the mountains separating Lake Biwa and Kyoto. The canal was the biggest construction project in Japan at the time and cost an enormous sum, which was paid for by the government, the emperor, and local taxes.

5 Immediately after the Restoration, the new government undertook anti-Buddhist measures. The new rulers wanted to rekindle the diverse Shintō cults and form them into a new State Shintō. They had studied Western nations and concluded that Christianity formed a critical backbone there as a state religion. To turn Buddhism into the new corresponding state religion was not a valid option for two reasons. First, Buddhism had served the disdained Tokugawa shogunate in various capacities, such as registering subjects. Second, Buddhism was seen as a Chinese religion imported to Japan and thus not feasible for forming a unique state religion. Temples like Nanzen-ji in Kyoto lost much status and had to shrink to secure their finances. See Ketelaar 1990.

6 Kobayashi, 4.

7 Yagasaki, "Kindai Kyoto."

8 H. Suzuki, *Ogawa Jihei and His Times*, 19–64.

9 Van Gasteren, 6; see H. Suzuki, *Ogawa Jihei and His Times*, 38–45, for Tanabe's itinerary in the US.

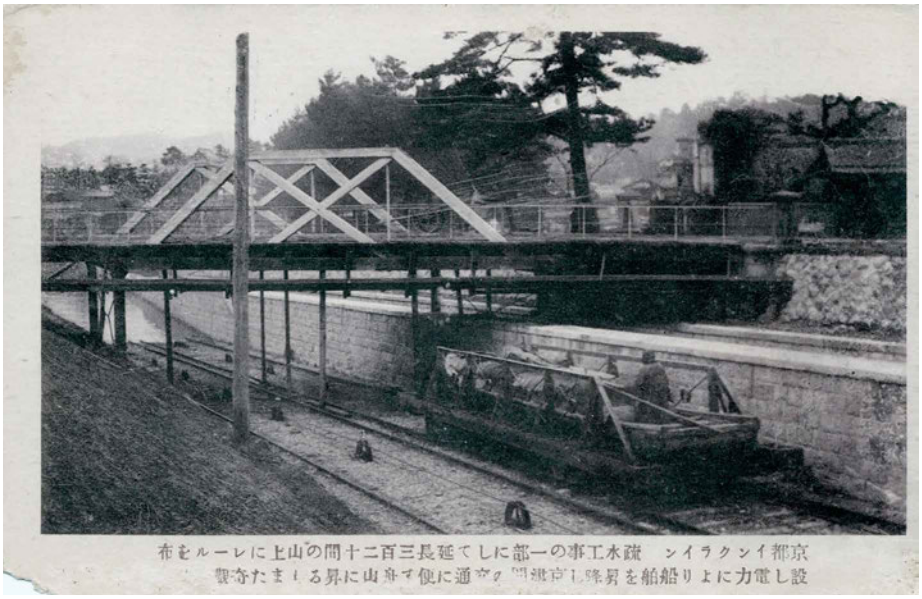

Figure 2.1. An image of the incline that helped lower ships entering Kyoto via the Lake Biwa Canal. As this historical postcard shows, the barges were placed on railway cars running on rails. Postcard from the author's collection.

Upon its inauguration in 1895, the canal was already outdated, considering its original intentions.[10] Factories no longer used waterpower to drive spinning wheels and other machinery. Instead, they employed electricity. Nonetheless, the canal still successfully served various needs and was certainly no failure. It helped irrigate rice paddies and ferried agricultural products into the city. Since the canal ended 35 meters above the level of the city, a so-called incline had to be built to lower the ships into the city's canal and river system (see Figure 2.1). The boats were transferred from the canal to freight cars and let down to the level of the city on rails over a few hundred meters.

Furthermore, the canal was an important water reservoir for fighting fires. Finally, the water supplied Japan's first hydroelectric power station, which powered Kyoto's tramway. The power station was set up in Keage and named after the neighborhood. Overall, the canal fulfilled its purpose of modernizing Kyoto, and it certainly was a landmark project that testified to the city's ambitions, even though it never ran factory machinery employing waterpower as initially planned. For Okazaki, this development meant the neighborhood could become an exclusively residential area instead of being transformed into an industrial zone.[11]

10 H. Suzuki, *Ogawa Jihei and His Times*, 47–48, 62.

11 Yagasaki has convincingly argued that it was not only the shift from water to electric power that made the area around the channel less attractive for factories. At the same time, the city's politicians

Figure 2.2. The aqueduct was necessary for the canal to bridge the area of the Nanzen-ji Temple. In recent years, it has become a popular tourist spot due to its scenic structure. Photograph by the author.

The canal's architecture powerfully emphasized this message of modernity, as Suzuki Hiroyuki has shown: The portals of the canal tunnels were designed in Western-style historicism embellished with poems by politicians and aristocrats who had supported the construction.[12] The Keage Power Station also brought contemporary Western architecture to the area. The aqueduct was the canal's most impressive structure (see Figure 2.2). It crosses the area of the Nanzen-ji Temple and is a popular spot for contemporary tourists, as the structure offers a pleasant contrast to the old temple surroundings. The Lake Biwa Canal not only altered the area's trajectory by redefining the landscape and producing electricity for the tramway but also added a fundamental resource that could be used in various ways—ways that Tanabe could scarcely imagine when he originally outlined his project. As we will see in the next section, the canal's water would feed the many gardens that came into being by Ogawa's designs.

became aware of Kyoto's "scenic beauty" as a defining trait needing preservation. See Yagasaki, "Kindai Kyoto," 214.

12 H. Suzuki, *Ogawa Jihei and His Times*, 48–54; for the list of all politicians and a translation of their poems, see van Gasteren, 7.

Yet the new canal was not the city's only testament to modernization. The Fourth National Industrial Fair of 1895 marked Okazaki as the district connecting the city to the new age. For some time, Kyoto had been using smaller exhibitions to showcase local products. However, the city had higher aspirations and wanted to stage the National Industrial Fair. Exhibitions had become very popular in Japan since the new Meiji government had decided to take part in the Vienna world's fair of 1873. To prepare the Japanese contribution for the exhibition in Vienna, all displays were first presented to the public at the hall of a former temple in Tokyo, Yushima Seidō.[13] The government quickly understood how exhibitions familiarized the people with modern machinery as well as taste, and according to the cultural sociologist Yoshimi Shunya's crucial book on world's fairs *Hakurankai no seijigaku: Manazashi no kindai* (The Politics of Fairs: The Contemporary Gaze), they installed a new gaze in visitors, one that was based on comparing products. Nevertheless, exhibitors and visitors in 1872 were primarily interested in a spectacle, as Angus Lockyer has remarked.[14] In response, the government initiated a series of National Industrial Exhibitions, hosting the first three editions in Tokyo's Ueno Park.

Kyoto's attempts to stage such an exhibition eventually came to fruition in 1895. The city utilized the celebration of its 1,100th anniversary of its founding in 794 to persuade the government. 1895, of course, was one year after the anniversary. Nevertheless, as Alice Y. Tseng has shown, various historical events were lumped together to justify the exhibition as a well-timed event celebrating 1,101 years of history.[15] The visible link to history was the new Heian Shrine, where the Kanmu *tennō*, who had moved his capital to Heian (Kyoto), was enshrined as tutelar deity. The exhibition grounds and buildings were laid out south of the shrine (see Figure 2.3). The National Industrial Fair drew more than 1.1 million visitors, a remarkable number for a city of roughly 320,000 at that time. The grounds of the 1895 fair were used for additional exhibitions in the ensuing years. Gradually, more lasting buildings for Kyoto's cultural life replaced the initial structures. The area had proven to be a worthy showcase of Kyoto's transformation, and the land was well-suited for various projects.

Amasaki, Suzuki, Kuitert, and Tseng have all elaborated on the various institutions that started to populate the Okazaki cultural zone. First, the Kyoto Municipal Zoo opened in 1903 next to one of the arms of the Lake Biwa Canal that led toward the Kamo River (see Figure 2.4). As Ian Jared Miller has discussed for the Zoo at Ueno Park in Tokyo, this type of institution was considered a mark of civilization in Japan. Zoos delineated civilized man from nature, while a state's ability to set

13 La Commission impériale japonaise, 63.

14 Lockyer, 88–89.

15 Tseng, *Modern Kyoto*, 52.

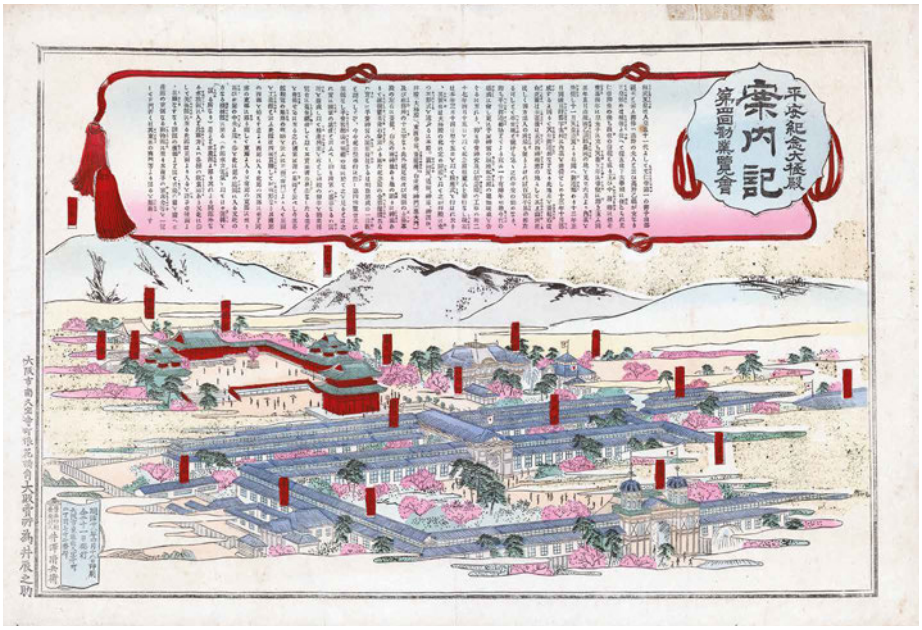

Figure 2.3. A print from the Fourth National Industrial Exhibition of 1895 in Kyoto depicts the grounds adjacent to the Lake Biwa Canal. Print from the author's collection.

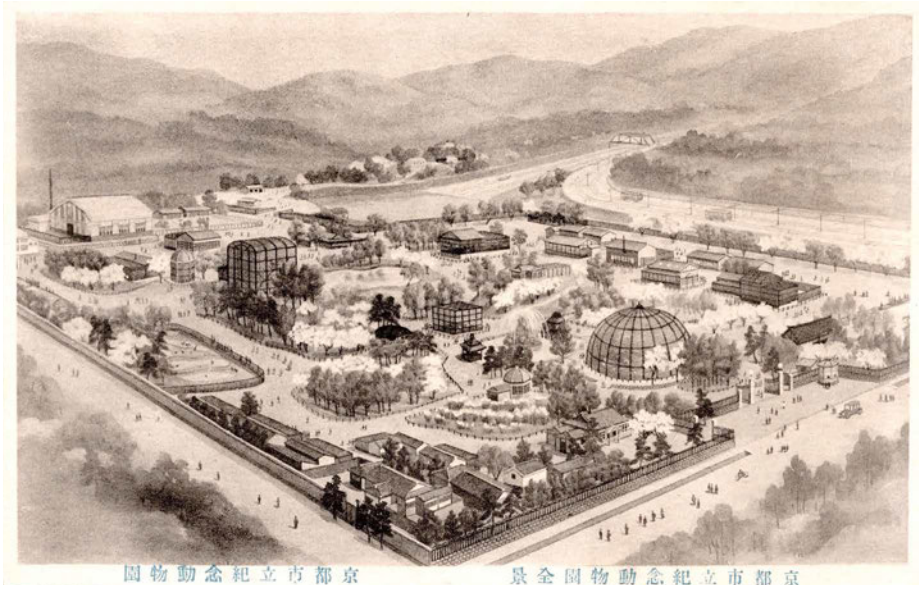

Figure 2.4. The historical postcard features a drawing of the zoo shortly after its opening. The zoo's structure and its surroundings are modern. A tramway is seen on the upper right, while a car appears to have stopped to drop off visitors at the gate on the lower right. In the background, the incline is visible, with a barge being lowered to the canal. Postcard from the author's collection.

up and maintain a zoological garden ranked it among the modern nations.[16] Next, Kyoto's new Prefectural Library building opened its gates to the public in 1909 in Okazaki. In the same year, the Kyoto Commercial Museum was inaugurated. And in 1928 the museum was replaced by the Showa Imperial Coronation Art Museum of Kyoto, which became Kyoto's Municipal Museum of Art in 1933. A city hall (1917) and the Municipal Mayor's Official Residence (1926) were among the other notable buildings and institutions built during this period. Besides these public edifices, other noteworthy buildings shaped the district's growth. The Miyako Hotel, the most famous and prestigious hotel of the prewar era, overlooked Okazaki from a slope close to the Keage Power Station. The hotel exposed Okazaki to international guests while exuding a cosmopolitan flair. The Yūrinkan, a private museum showcasing Fujii Zensuke's collection of ancient Chinese art, opened in 1926, and its exotic architecture added to the cosmopolitan atmosphere. Fujii had been a wealthy businessman and member of the Lower House. The museum has a decidedly Chinese outlook with its roof crowned by a Chinese octagonal hall in typical red paint.

In the same period, a string of exhibitions took place in Okazaki. There was the Kyoto Enthronement Commemoration Exhibition of 1915, the Great Kyoto Enthronement Exhibition of 1928 dedicated to Emperor Hirohito, and a few smaller events. Following the Great Kantō earthquake of 1923, Kyoto gained appeal as an exhibition venue, as Tokyo, the capital, was grappling with the aftermath of the catastrophe.[17] Of course, the size and importance of these exhibitions differed, but they all hint at the vibrancy of Okazaki before World War II.

Overall, the district of Okazaki stood in stark contrast to the more historically rich inner city located west of the Kamo River. The Heian Shrine and the public and private cultural institutions drew tourists and visitors who could conveniently use the tramway. High-class residences owned by influential political and economic leaders of the age framed the cultural zone. Though Okazaki was fundamentally modern, the architecture was mainly historicist and attempted to connect to ostensibly Japanese traditions. As Tseng has shown, the Heian Shrine and the Kyoto Municipal Museum of Art are two outstanding examples. The Shrine was built with Heian architecture in mind, though due to the lack of reliable historical sources, even Kigo Kiyoyoshi, the carpenter executing the plans, and Itō Chūta, the architect, had their doubts about the design's authenticity.[18] For the Municipal Museum of Art, architect Maeda Kenjirō employed a style that loosely referred to historical examples but was still modern in function (see Figure 2.5).[19] Okazaki was thus a fascinating laboratory for combining (invented) traditions with the requirements of

16 Miller, 2–4.
17 Kobayashi, 10.
18 Kobayashi, 56.
19 Kobayashi, 200–1.

Figure 2.5. The entrance of the Kyoto Municipal Museum of Art (now the Kyoto City KYOCERA Museum of Art) references various historical styles but is modern in function. Photograph by the author.

modernity. Finally, the area had a touch of imperial splendor, which pointed to the Japanese Empire's ambition to become the sole Asian nation that had successfully mastered modernity and was now on a par with the Western powers.

Ogawa Jihei's Gardens as Archetypes

The modernity of the cultural zone in Okazaki might seem to make it an unlikely setting for gardens. But as we have seen, history and identity played a vital role in shaping the area and its appearance. In addition, Okazaki's modernity allowed garden lovers and designers easy access to a critical resource: water. In a concrete sense, the Lake Biwa Canal gave birth to the design of many gardens. Up until that point, the city's location in a valley far from the sea and its resulting climate meant that water had been a scarce resource for gardens in Kyoto. Instead, garden masters had often used stones, pebbles, and sand to symbolize water, leading to the famed *karesansui* style, known as the dry landscape style in English.[20] Due to

20 J. Ogawa, 10–11.

its new canal, however, Okazaki became the perfect place to foster a fresh garden style, and Ogawa Jihei was the designer to make the best of this opportunity.

Ogawa Jihei was born in 1860 as Yamamoto Gennosuke in a village in current-day Kyoto Prefecture. At the age of 17, he was adopted into the Ogawa family and married one of the daughters—a typical move to safeguard the family lineage by bringing in a son from outside. The Ogawa family had been in the garden business for six generations. Yamamoto consequently became Ogawa Jihei VII when his adoptive father suddenly died, only two years after Gennosuke joined the family. For convenience, I will follow the practice of all biographic accounts on Ogawa Jihei VII and drop the successional denominator VII. The shop of the Ogawa family was and still is conveniently located in Okazaki, while its name Ueji has often been used to address Ogawa Jihei himself.[21] Ogawa did not excel in garden projects until the early 1890s. Generally speaking, the life of garden designers in Kyoto had not been easy from the Meiji Restoration. The trade had lost many traditional patrons, and projects were sparse. In 1893, the newly founded Association of Kyoto Garden Designers attempted to counter these developments by staging an exhibition.[22] While the Association partly attempted to mimic the ancient guild system, which had formerly organized trades like gardening, it took on modern Western methods of presenting itself, as the exhibition proved.

It was then that Ogawa's star started rising in Japanese horticulture. The first project to earn him a reputation was the garden for the cloisonné artist Namikawa Yasuyuki (see Figures 2.6 and 2.7).[23] Namikawa's art was highly successful at world's fairs and other exhibitions, where he regularly won prizes. His garden was the first to make use of the canal's water.[24] Namikawa's residential building and workshop were arranged around a little pond. The whole complex can still be seen today as the Namikawa Cloisonné Museum. Namikawa wanted this garden not merely for his own amusement but for greeting potential customers who often came from abroad and to lend a certain artistic vision to his residence plus workshop—Frederic Schneider and Kendall H. Brown have investigated how the gardens of many curio shops and craft artists' ateliers strategically served to attract foreign clients.[25] Since Ogawa was more or less his neighbor, Namikawa's choice might have been guided by sheer proximity. Nonetheless, the Namikawa garden boosted Ogawa's reputation in Okazaki.

21 Ueji (植治) is a shortened form of Uekiya Jihei, combining the first two *kanji* of *uekiya* (gardener) and Jihei.

22 Amasaki, *Nanadaime Ogawa Jihei*, 19–20.

23 On Ogawa's garden for Namikawa, see Amasaki, *Nanadaime Ogawa Jihei*, 30–38; Amasaki, "Teien no mizu"; Amasaki, "Teien no zumen"; K. Ogawa.

24 Amasaki, "Teien no mizu," 39.

25 Amasaki, *Nanadaime Ogawa Jihei,* 31–34; Schneider and Brown.

Figure 2.6. Ogawa's first major commission was the Namikawa Garden. This small, intimate garden is arranged around a pond. Photograph by the author.

Figure 2.7. The house of cloisonné artist Namikawa and the garden interact closely, helping to promote his work to guests. His workshop is also situated next to the garden. Photograph by the author.

Figure 2.8. Unlike many Japanese gardens, Yamagata's Murin-an is not arranged around a pond but instead draws its unique atmosphere from a small stream meandering through the garden. The stream adds both visual movement and an acoustic dimension with the sounds of flowing water. Photograph by the author.

Ogawa's major garden design was Murin-an, which started in 1894, and this endeavor would define his later career (see Figure 2.8). Murin-an was the pet project of Yamagata Aritomo, one of the most prominent politicians of the time. Yamagata's biography is typical of the new generation of leaders who formed the Meiji state after the Restoration. However, he was significantly more fortunate than any of his comrades. He was born into a poor *bushi* family in Chōshū-*han* on the very Western tip of Honshū, Japan's main island. The Chōshū domain sided with the Satsuma domain to overthrow the Tokugawa shogunate, and young, poor *bushi* like Yamagata were key players in this process. As a result, the young *bushi* from these two domains were able to occupy most of the crucial positions in the newly established government. This cohort formed a strong network for decades to come—the two former domains, Satsuma and Chōshū, often competed to stake out their respective zones of political influence while governing the country. Following the abolishment of former shogunate castes and ranks, the new Meiji government introduced a fresh aristocratic system copied from Western powers. Yamagata was first ennobled as a count in 1884 and eventually as a duke in 1907. His highly successful political career was already well-established by that time due to his exceptional military leadership. In December 1889, Yamagata became the third Japanese prime minister since the position's creation in 1885. He served until mid-1891 and occupied many significant positions after his resignation.

Most notably, in the context of Murin-an, Yamagata commanded the First Army during the Sino-Japanese War in 1894–1895. The Imperial Army defeated the Chinese Qing dynasty in the struggle for dominion over Korea. Following this major victory in Japan's first imperialist war, Yamagata was highly decorated by the *tennō* himself and received a monetary reward. He spent the sum to complete his garden in Kyoto, which he had started laying out before the war. As a leading member of the ruling class, Yamagata built several residences in Tokyo, the countryside, and Kyoto for his convenience. As Amasaki has noted, Yamagata's stylistic predilections differed from classical designs: He favored lawns instead of moss, and flowing water instead of ponds. Nor was he particularly interested in the highly symbolic style typical of Kyoto gardens and instead preferred a naturalistic appearance.[26] Yamagata thereby broke with the practice of referring to poems or famous spots (*meisho*), which had been the backbone of landscape design since Heian times. His approach, however, was deeply rooted in the Meiji era. Artists also had begun to draw landscapes without considering the old conventions regarding poems and *meisho* anymore.[27]

In the early 1890s, Yamagata had bought up a strip of land in Okazaki. After resigning as prime minister, he became the minister of finance and facilitated the financing of the Lake Biwa Canal in this capacity. One of the tunnels bore a poem of his. In 1895, Yamagata hired Ogawa and started working with him on the garden for his new residence. Yamagata christened it Murin-an, literally meaning retreat with no neighbors, though Okazaki's development soon contradicted the name. When the entrepreneur Fujii Zensuke opened his museum of East Asian art near Murin-an in 1926, he named it Yūrinkan, yūrin reading "having neighbors." Though the name officially refers to a text by Confucius about good neighbors, it can be easily read as a slightly ironic comment on Murin-an.

According to Amasaki and Suzuki, Yamagata was the leading force in deciding how the garden would look, and Ogawa's role was largely limited to realizing his patron's ideas.[28] Yamagata had a clear vision of how his garden should be and which typical stylistic choices he preferred to avoid:

> Kyoto gardens emphasize their retired and quiet nature, but they have none of the flavor of splendor or grandeur. They are talking about gardens made by this or that person or by Kobori Enshū, but most are just small-scale gardens in tea master taste and are really not that interesting. Therefore I decided to create a garden in my way.[29]

26 Amasaki has suggested that these stylistic choices were due to Yamagata's childhood in the countryside. See Amasaki, *Nanadaime Ogawa Jihei*, 50–52.

27 Shigeru Aoki, in his seminal work *Shizen o utsusu* from 1996, sees an essay by Koyama Shōtarō as the first treatise on landscape painting in Japan that distances itself from referring to poems, literature, and *meisho*. For the significance of *meisho* in the Edo period, see Goree.

28 See H. Suzuki, *Ogawa Jihei and His Times*, 89–100 for a detailed discussion.

29 Cit. op. Watanabe, "A Kyoto Garden Renewal," 167.

Kobori Enshū was a famed artist of the Edo period involved in creating the Katsura Imperial Villa, but Yamagata imagined Murin-an to be different. Yamagata's Murin-an did not precisely exude grandeur, though it certainly was not a small-scale tea garden either. Instead, a vista opened up to the hills in the East. This followed the *shakkei* principles, a technique for visually extending a garden into its surroundings by skillfully creating vistas onto hills or other landmarks. In the case of Murin-an, the Eastern Hills served as a backdrop for the rear part of the garden. Here, Ogawa employed some of his trademark elements, which he had already used in Namikawa's garden, such as ample use of the canal's water and a preference for tree species rarely planted in typical Kyoto gardens.

Nonetheless, it seems that Yamagata's taste largely helped to refine Ogawa's style, and the latter was a willing pupil eager to follow his prominent patron's wishes. While Namikawa's garden is closed off and feels like a small green oasis, Yamagata's Murin-an is far more vast, which was no doubt due to his budget. Moreover, while water in Namikawa's garden is present mainly as a pond, a small stream runs across Murin-an. Yamagata got the water from the canal under the pretext of fire prevention.[30] Of course, everyone likely understood why Yamagata needed the water, but the pretext of fire safety allowed those involved to save face.

Yamagata used Murin-an as a base in Kyoto for various purposes. He could freely follow his predilection for gardening there. The Japanese-style main building was perfect for serving guests tea and contemplating the garden. The parcel of Murin-an has a roughly triangular shape, with the main building occupying the baseline. From here, the vista opened up across a small stream and a lawn towards trees, delineating the estate and concealing its border from view. With Murin-an, Yamagata at once let his visitors know that he was firmly rooted in one of the typical Japanese traditions but also that he had added his own modern vision. Murin-an lacked many features typical of classical gardens in Kyoto, and Yamagata's strong involvement was crucial for this. I will return to this point later when discussing reactions to new gardens such as Murin-an.

Finally, Yamagata used Murin-an for political meetings. In a dark corner next to the Japanese main building, he set up a Western-style house, now serving as the estate's museum. It was solidly built, though, without many pretensions of impressing visitors. It was there that Yamagata would sleep and hold meetings during his stays. From 1901 onwards, Yamagata met with Itō Hirobumi, another influential politician of the time; Katsura Tarō, then Prime Minister; and Komura Jutarō, Minister of Foreign Affairs, to discuss the outlines of foreign policy. The most famous of these was the so-called Murin-an Conference in 1903. There, the participants developed the Japanese strategy for the upcoming war with Russia,

30 Amasaki, *Nanadaime Ogawa Jihei*, 44.

Figure 2.9. The postcard depicts one of Ogawa Jihei's gardens at the Heian Shrine. Postcard from the author's collection.

whereby the Imperial Army attacked Port Arthur in February 1904 without any prior declaration of war. Whether this tactic was due to the meetings in Murin-an or not, the war ended in a stunning victory for Japan, which astonished Western observers in particular. Japan became the first Asian country to defeat a Western nation and thus established its place among the imperial powers.

Yamagata's Murin-an was the launch pad not only for Ogawa's career but also for the profound reshaping of the land that formerly belonged to Nanzen-ji Temple. The investor Sakamoto Saburō had bought up considerable parts of the temple's land and began redeveloping it by building residences for the rich.[31] Ogawa designed many of the gardens for these residences, and his patrons included some of the most affluent business leaders of the time, such as Inabata Katsutarō and Nomura Tokushichi II.[32] Ogawa was also commissioned for gardens in public projects. The most famous is the Heian Shrine of 1895, for which Ogawa designed various gardens (see Figure 2.9). Here, Ogawa creatively used diverse materials like the stepping stones in one of the ponds recycled from the former piers of two famous Kyoto bridges. Furthermore, he designed the garden of the Kyoto Commercial Museum, which the Kyoto Municipal Museum of Art later replaced.

31 Amasaki, *Nanadaime Ogawa Jihei*, 10

32 For a list of Ogawa's projects in Okazaki, see H. Suzuki, *Ogawa Jihei and His Times*, 264.

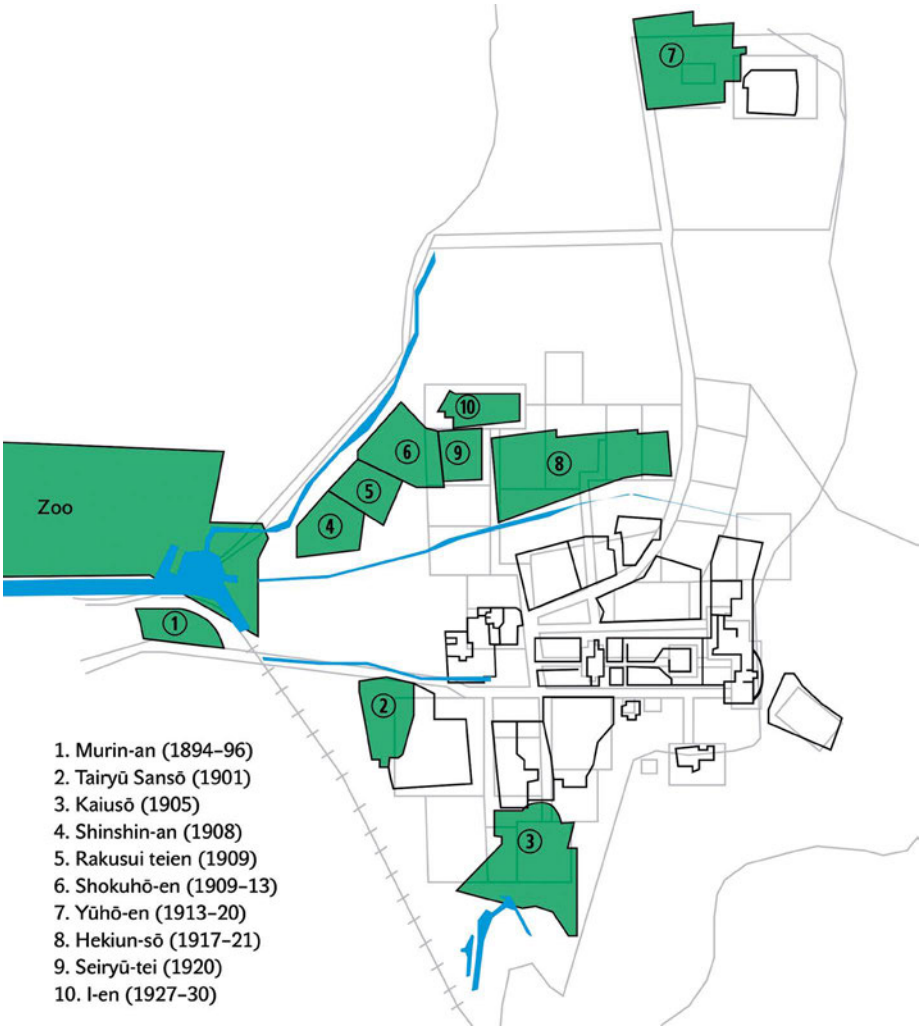

Figure 2.10. The map illustrates the "Ogawa-fication" of Okazaki. The dark lines represent the historical distribution of streets and plots, while the grey lines show the modern layout. In this area of Okazaki alone, Ogawa designed ten gardens. Graph by Andreas Steinbrecher.

Looking at all the gardens in Okazaki, one can rightfully speak of the area's "Ogawa-fication." (see Figure 2.10) Instead of the factories Tanabe originally envisioned, gardens were the primary beneficiaries of the canal's water. In addition, Ogawa employed the canal to transport large garden stones from the Lake Biwa area to Okazaki at low costs. Ogawa was popular among his patrons not only for his striking new style but also for his creativity in finding cost-cutting solutions, usually through the use of state-of-the-art technology. In that sense, his genius transcended mere design. Amasaki once called him a "general producer of modern gardens," which

well reflects Ogawa's capacity not just to plan landscapes but to implement his ideas with an eye towards expenditures and possibilities.[33]

Ogawa's activities were not confined to his immediate neighborhood of Okazaki. His collaboration with Yamagata had opened doors to high-society clients all over the country. In Kyoto, approximately one kilometer north of Okazaki but also on the east side of the Kamo River, Ogawa created a famous garden in 1914 for Saionji Kinmochi, a highly influential politician who served twice as prime minister. In Osaka, Sumitomo Tomoito, the fifteenth head of the Sumitomo family and thus the leader of the Sumitomo *zaibatsu* (one of the largest in Japan), commissioned the Keitaku-en garden for a family residence completed in 1918. The Sumitomo family donated the residence and garden to the city in 1926. Today, it is open to the public and lies next to the Osaka City Museum of Fine Arts.

The list could be easily extended with many other famous gardens for wealthy connoisseurs and public buildings. However, for the central argument about the afterlife of these gardens as monuments, one additional example in Tokyo is most relevant: the Furukawa Garden—or, as it is called today, the Former Furukawa Gardens. Soon enough, Ogawa was hired not only by patrons throughout the Kansai region but also in Kantō. In 1917, Baron Furukawa Toranosuke, who was the third head of the Furukawa *zaibatsu*, one of the largest financial and business conglomerates in the first half of the twentieth century, commissioned a unique residence in a northern district of the Tokyo metropolitan area. Josiah Conder designed the mansion.

Conder, whose book on gardens I introduced in the previous chapter, had come to Japan as a professor of architecture at the Imperial College of Engineering in 1877. He was one of many foreign experts hired in the early Meiji period to educate the next generation of Japanese specialists in various fields. Conder excelled at this task, as many of his former students became leading Japanese architects. Furthermore, Conder influenced Japanese architecture by planning and executing many high-profile buildings, the most famous being the Ueno Museum (1881, the later Imperial Museum and today's Tokyo National Museum) and the Rokumeikan (1883), a hall for high-society parties and lavish balls.[34] While the Home Ministry commissioned the museum and Foreign Minister Inoue Kaoru the Rokumeikan, in the early twentieth century, the government's interest in Conder's style waned. Conder then mainly worked for *zaibatsu* families, such as the Iwasaki (of the Mitsubishi *zaibatsu*) and the Furukawa. His Imperial Museum was severely damaged by the Great Kantō Earthquake of 1923 and was subsequently demolished and replaced. The Rokumeikan remained standing until 1941, when it was torn down.

33 Amasaki, *Ueji no niwa*, 13.

34 Watanabe, "Josiah Conder's Rokumeikan"; Tseng, "Styling Japan."

Figure 2.11. The main house, designed by Josiah Conder, overlooks the garden of the former Furukawa estate. Photograph by the Kikuchi Masayoshi.

Conder's work on the Furukawa residence was limited to the mansion and the surrounding European-style garden. The mansion was erected on top of a slope looking down onto the gardens and would have fit well in an English landscape. This typical positioning on a slope was something the Furukawa Gardens shared with other *zaibatsu* estates of the time, as Awano Takashi has pointed out.[35] This enabled the landscape designers to create two types of gardens, a Western one on the level of the house and a Japanese one lower down the slope, which were separated using natural devices, like in the Mitsui estate in Tsunamachi and the Former Iwasaki Residence and Garden (*Kyū Iwasaki-tei teien*), two other famous gardens built by owners of *zaibatsu*. This division even corresponded to the villa's interior at the Furukawa estate. The first floor was in Western style for the purpose of receiving guests. From there, one looked out on the French garden by the terrace (see Figure 2.11). In contrast, the rooms on the second floor were mainly laid out with *tatami* and allowed a glimpse of Ogawa's garden down the slope (see Figures 2.12 and 2.13).[36] Thus, the house's public spaces were geared towards international modernity, while the private ones embodied a Japanese lifestyle, and this bifurcation corresponded with views of different parts of the gardens.

35 Awano, 34.
36 Awano, 35.

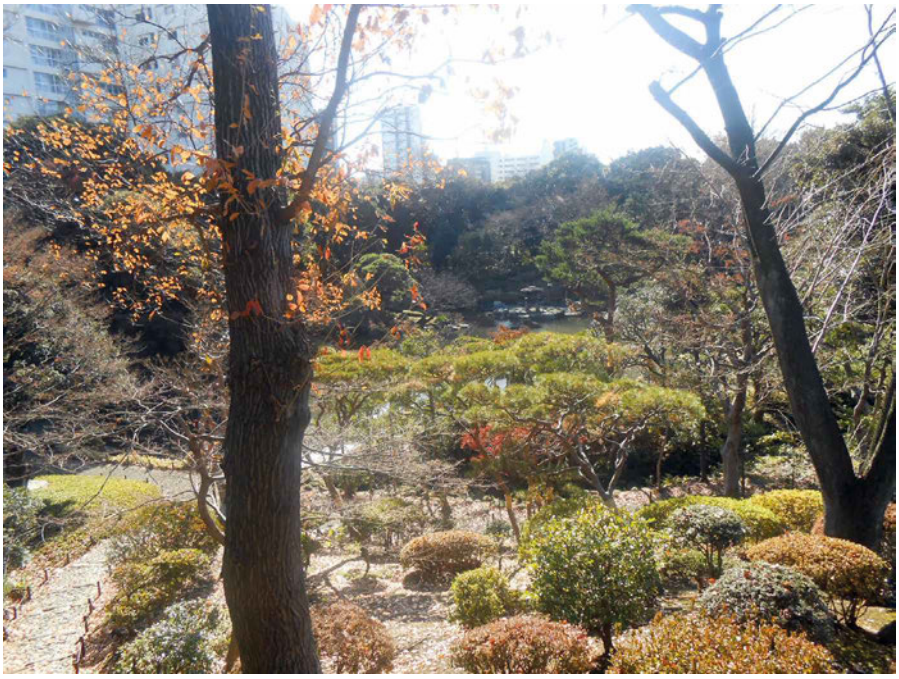

Figure 2.12. The slope beneath the house extends into Ogawa's Japanese garden. Photograph by the author.

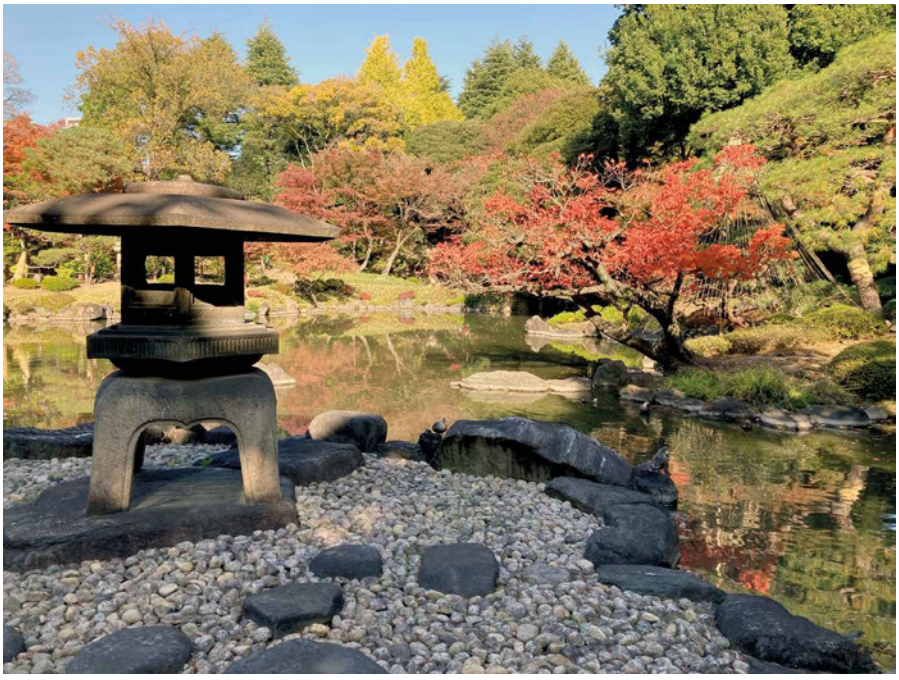

Figure 2.13. Ogawa's garden at the former Furukawa estate is centered around a pond, dominated by a massive lantern. Photograph by Kikuchi Masayoshi.

This division was also clearly manifested in the residence's garden. Conder had laid out a classic French-style garden below a terrace along the back of the house. To the left of the mansion, a simple lawn opened up with a path around it in a vaguely Italian style. Ogawa was called in two years later, in 1919, to put on the finishing touches. Down the slope, he developed a marvelous Japanese garden around a pond. The cumulative effect of the whole garden ensemble remains spectacular to this day. Upon arrival, the mansion and gardens exude a genuinely Western atmosphere, which must have seemed impressively modern to visitors back in Furukawa's days. The French garden at the rear section of the mansion, nowadays adorned with rose beds, initially attracts the eye. The flowerbeds are neatly arranged in geometric forms, allowing for strolling between them.

Only gradually does a view emerge onto the garden down the slope, which starkly contrasts the rose garden. A small viewing platform under a pavilion allows one to survey the pond from the level of the rose garden. Then, a massive lantern catches the eye. The considerable size of Ogawa's garden does not become apparent until one goes further down the slope. A couple of paths lead around the pond via a shady grove, and a small stream feeding the pond pleases visitors with trickling sounds of water. A small Japanese-style teahouse is placed on one side of the garden halfway down the slope, and a library building in the style of the mansion is located further up from there.

Kitamura has highlighted that the Japanese garden at the Furukawa estate differs in three regards from the typical designs of Ogawa.[37] Firstly, Ogawa could not incorporate the outside scenery through the device of *shakkei* as he had done, for example, at the Murin-an. Unlike many Kyoto sites, the Japanese garden lay down a slope and offered no mountain views. Ogawa opted to enclose the garden with trees along the border and slight elevations to obscure the fence. As a result, the garden does not rely on its surroundings and creates a very intimate atmosphere. The second distinction lies in Ogawa's approach to water usage compared to his other garden designs. A waterfall is the "main event" of the garden for Kitamura, but it is fed by a well with a pump, not water from the outside. Lastly, the garden's patron, Furukawa Toranosuke, favored lanterns, leading Ogawa to include more, notably a sizeable *yukimi*-type lantern by the pond.

For all their beauty, the Former Furukawa Gardens are also an occasion to discuss how all the money spent on landscaping in the Meiji era was being made, bringing us to some inherent contradictions. Ogawa's gardens were praised for their naturalness. Yet the money that paid for the Furukawa Gardens came from sources one would hardly describe as sustainable—a fact generously glossed over in most garden histories. The Furukawa *zaibatsu* had invested in the Ashio

37 Kitamura, *Kyū Furukawa teien, 59–60.*

Copper Mine in Tochigi Prefecture, close to the famous Nikkō Tōshō-gū, the shrine located roughly 100 kilometers north of Tokyo that was dedicated to the first Tokugawa shogun Ieyasu.[38] These mines had been exploited since the Edo period. With new mining techniques like smelting and the exploration of fresh veins, Furukawa was able to extract far more ore and money from the mountains than his predecessors. Around 1900, 40% of Japan's copper production stemmed from Ashio.

Furukawa's fortune came at a great cost to the local farmers. The mine's wastewater polluted rivers and rice paddies that depended on freshwater. Meanwhile, the mine's need for firewood led to severe deforestation. Yet all attempts to hold Furukawa responsible and to mitigate the pollution failed, since the Meiji oligarchy and bureaucracy valued industrialization over farming and profits over the fate of local communities.[39] *Zaibatsu* were the economic backbone of the emergent empire; farming was not. Ashio gained notoriety as the most severe environmental disaster in prewar Japan. Either way, the money raked in from an environmentally devastated area in Tochigi Prefecture created a wonderfully natural oasis in Tokyo. This connection between the Former Furukawa Gardens and the Ashio Copper Mine might be an extreme example of how the upper class managed to pay for such sites. Nevertheless, it remains an important reminder that the riches of the few in the Meiji and Taishō eras did not necessarily translate into the well-being of the many—as much as we might admire the gardens they enabled.

Nonetheless, these examples shed light on Ogawa's immense contribution to Japanese horticulture in the Meiji era. By now, Ogawa is generally recognized as one of the most essential garden masters in Japanese history. In Chapter 6, I dig deeper into Ogawa's posthumous rise to fame since the 1980s and use this story to explain why the new gardens of the Meiji era, especially those by Ogawa, have been included in national heritage lists.

On Forgotten Landscape Designers

Up to this point, I have followed a narrative of new gardens in Japan that was established in the past three or four decades. This narrative revolves around the designs of Ogawa Jihei as archetypical examples, and it sets out to explain how he

38 The history of the Ashio Copper Mine is very well-researched. However, Brett Walker's chapter in his book *Toxic Archipelago* and Robert Stolz's chapter in *Bad Water* are the most astute analyses of the environmental consequences of Furukawa's business. See Walker, 71–107; Stolz, 19–50.

39 Walker, 99–100.

laid out his gardens in and for the environment of modern Kyoto. From Kyoto, Ogawa expanded his work to Tokyo and other parts of Japan, while his landscapes lost their somewhat provincial association with the former capital. In moving beyond Kyoto, Ogawa joined the ranks of first-rate garden masters in Japanese history.

Amasaki Hiromasa and Suzuki Hiroyuki are two of the key researchers who helped draw public attention to Ogawa's gardens. Other authors have added to this story, and by now, it has become a standard gospel in the histories of modern Kyoto. However, concentrating exclusively on Ogawa's work would considerably limit our exploration of new gardens in Japan. This narrow focus would hinder our ability to address the question of how and why these new gardens were eventually categorized as either eclectic or Japanese. Garden historians often overlook sites like Tonogayato Garden mentioned in the introduction, Tokyo's old Shibusawa Garden, and Ōkuma Garden, all of which provide additional insights into these issues. These three examples in Japan's capital offer an overview of the typical characteristics of sites unrelated to Ogawa. They not only share owners with comparable biographical backgrounds but also showcase the same artistic style. In addition, these gardens have a similar appraisal and afterlife, and their status currently oscillates between "eclectic" and "Japanese garden."

If I were an art historian, I might be inclined to formulate enhanced and more insightful definitions to bridge the gap between "Japanese gardens" and "eclectic gardens." For instance, when discussing Japanese gardens on the American West Coast, Kendall H. Brown coined the term "Japanese-style gardens" to emphasize their aesthetic and functional distinctions from gardens in Japan.[40] Following Brown, one could argue that locations like Tonogayato or Ōkuma garden fall under the "Japanese-style" category, though distinct from more traditional examples in Kyoto. Another potential classification could be "Meiji-style Japanese gardens," aligning with historical eras. However, my book focuses on not creating new and refined garden categories. As a cultural historian and sociologist, my interest lies in examining existing definitions in the field. Therefore, I must ask for forgiveness from readers seeking improved terminology, as I do not feel equipped to propose such categories. While we will explore field definitions multiple times, I will refrain from proposing terminological solutions.

In the Tonogayato and Ōkuma gardens, the Japanese element dominated, although it remains up for debate whether both sites are Japanese gardens in the strict sense or eclectic—the definition of the "Japanese garden" will occupy us in the next chapter. In contrast to the other two, the Former Shibusawa Garden is more of a park with a Japanese garden in one part of the estate and thus resembles the Former Furukawa Gardens. All three sites were built for and owned by new

40 Brown, *Japanese-Style Gardens*, 10.

Meiji-era elites. In the case of Tonogayato Garden, Iwasaki Hikoyata was the leader of a *zaibatsu* and transformed his estate into a garden, as was typical of his time. Ōkuma Shigenobu, the owner of the eponymous garden, was a former samurai who had joined the ranks of the new governmental cohort that wrested power from the shogunate. Unlike Yamagata, Ōkuma was not from one of the key domains, namely Satsuma and Chōshū, that had fueled the Meiji Restoration in 1868. Samurai from those two domains largely monopolized essential offices in the new government. Still, *bushi* from other domains who had joined their movement were not forgotten. As a young *bushi,* Ōkuma actively helped overthrow the shogunate and was rewarded late in life with a high-ranking post in the Meiji administration. Ōkuma was even appointed prime minister in 1898, succeeding Itō Hirobumi. However, he only served in office for a couple of months before being replaced by Yamagata Aritomo, who then held the post for the second time. Nevertheless, Ōkuma was one of the leading politicians of his day and also founded one of Japan's most prestigious private universities, Waseda University, which he headed as president after ending his political career. Ōkuma's former estate is now part of Waseda's campus northwest of central Tokyo.

The biography of Shibusawa Eiichi, the owner of the third garden I mentioned above, had a slightly different trajectory. Shibusawa was born into a farmer family at the end of the Edo period.[41] As his family had gained considerable wealth by cultivating and selling indigo, Shibusawa's education resembled that of a samurai more than that of an average farmer's son. In the 1860s, the talented young man served as an administrative secretary for a side branch of the Tokugawa family, and in 1866, he joined the delegation of Tokugawa Akitake, the shogun's younger brother, to the world's fair in Paris the following year.[42] Having been abroad for nearly two years, Shibusawa gleaned many insights from the West, which he implemented over the course of a stellar business career. Though Shibusawa did not establish a *zaibatsu*— which would have been a conventional step given his wealth and his capacity as an industry founder—his involvement in important companies like the First National Bank, over which he presided for most of his life, made him one of the wealthiest people of his era. When Shibusawa built a new residence in Asukayama late in life, a Japanese garden was designed for one part of the park.[43] Much like Furukawa Toranosuke, Shibusawa's wealth was based on industrialization and imperialism. Shibusawa had even invested heavily in the Ashio Copper Mine, and

41 For an extensive biography of Shibusawa, see Shimada Masakazu's *The Entrepreneur Who Built Modern Japan: Shibusawa Eiichi*. Even though the book is rich in detail and is very helpful for this passage, it lacks critical distance to its subject.

42 Shimada, 14–22.

43 Kuitert, *Japanese Gardens and Landscapes*, 285–86.

thus the environmental disaster in the north also haunts his garden, even though the sources of his income were far more extensive.[44]

Hence, all three gardens discussed here were commissioned by the new upper class, and they were designed with similar ideas, including some "traditional" Japanese touches to the estate. Just like Yamagata Aritomo, the owners of Tonogayato Garden, Ōkuma Garden, and Shibusawa Garden cherished old Japan while also leveraging social practices that had been turned into traditions to convey a sense of classical habitus to their peers and, to a lesser extent, the public. Staging tea gatherings in their gardens was one way to use them for networking and for demonstrating cultural continuity, as Christine Guth has shown in her book *Art, Tea and Industry*. Shibusawa and Hara Tomitarō, who built the Sankei-en garden in Yokohama, were part of these tea circles, which helped to knit the web of politicians, industrialists, and businessmen in the Meiji and Taishō eras.[45] Yamagata refrained from participating in these circles, as argued by Suzuki Hiroyuki, citing one of Yamagata's letters expressing his aversion to traditional tea ceremonies.[46] Nevertheless, Inose Hiroyoshi has shown that *sencha* influenced Ogawa's designs for Yamagata. *Sencha* gained popularity among elites in the late Edo period, offering a competing way of enjoying tea to the more formalistic style of *matcha*. Fresh water and a naturalistic scenery characterized Ogawa's gardens, which aligned well with the *sencha* style.[47] However, irrespective of their specific taste in tea, the gardens of the new elite catered to their need to stage meetings and festivities on lawns. The owners often had extensive experience with the West, as demonstrated by the early biography of Shibusawa. Their taste reflected a bygone era and a desire to revive it through Japanese garden art or tea gatherings, while also responding to the Western admiration for Japanese gardens.

44 For Shibusawa's relationship with the Ashio Copper Mine, see Walker, 89.

45 For the Sankei-en as a stage for tea gatherings, see Guth, 157–60.

46 H. Suzuki, *Ogawa Jihei and His Times,* 69–70.

47 Inose. See also Amasaki, *Nanadaime Ogawa Jihei,* 49–50, for a discussion of the binary between *matcha* and *sencha* in the Meiji period. Amasaki argues that *sencha* was regarded as more natural and, therefore, fit Yamagata's character. As Kuitert has discussed, this bifurcation reaches back to the late Edo period; see Kuitert, *Japanese Gardens and Landscapes*, 93. Kuitert has even called Ogawa's designs "*sencha* [italics in original] landscape[s]." See Kuitert, *Japanese Gardens and Landscapes*, 229.
However, some caution is needed. Inose emphasized the absence of direct sources linking *sencha* and Ogawa. Amasaki referred to a *sencha* meeting at Murin-an in 1912 to argue that Yamagata was into this naturalistic style of serving tea instead of *matcha*. But basing his claim on one single meeting may not be entirely persuasive. In his paper based on a presentation at the conference of the North American Japanese Garden Association in 2018, Amasaki further phenomenologically identifies typical water-use devices in Ogawa's gardens as indicative of the *sencha* style. Once again, we lack historical sources to draw a definitive conclusion. Ogawa's incorporation of *sencha* elements could have been driven by artistic or practical considerations. See Amasaki, *Nanadaime Ogawa Jihei,* 49–50; Amasaki and Kato, "Japanese Gardens," 11.

The gardeners of the three sites were much less prominent than Ogawa Jihei. The Tonogayato estate already had a garden before Iwasaki Hikoyata acquired it from Eguchi Teijō. Eguchi had commissioned Sengoku Sōtarō to plan the landscape, and it seems he remained the gardener after Iwasaki became the new owner and transformed the site into a garden more to his liking.[48] However, Sengoku did not achieve fame, and no other significant projects of his are known today. Sasaki Kason was, if not the garden designer, at least a kind of producer for the other two gardens, as Katō Yumiko has discovered. Although Kuitert cites Iida Jūki as the actual designer of Shibusawa's garden, he does not reference historical sources to support his claim.[49] Sasaki's biography remains largely unknown, and Katō has convincingly argued that garden historians' focus on Ogawa Jihei in the last decades has been one reason for this, an assessment we might extend to Iida.

Today, all three gardens occupy something of a middle ground between being categorized as eclectic and being fully included in the historical canon of Japanese gardens. Unlike most of Ogawa's gardens, they are in limbo. I mentioned in the introduction how Tonogayato Garden is introduced to the public, and both Shibusawa's and Ōkuma's gardens are presented to visitors in a similar manner. The crucial difference for Shibusawa is that the garden has now fallen into severe disrepair. While the park and the estate are well-kept and open to the public as a museum, the Japanese part of the park has become a small patch of urban wilderness. The state of the lanterns makes for a bewildering yet picturesque image. Their remains and rubble are encaged in some shady corner of the park next to the house as if awaiting better days when their original habitat will be restored and the Japanese garden returns to its former splendor.

Many gardens in the periphery have also attracted significant local attention in the last decades. With the recent surge of interest in Ogawa's gardens, other post-Edo gardens were rediscovered or, if already well known, at the very least reevaluated as potential heritage sites and appreciated for their touristic value. Two such gardens were part of our initial research plan. Sankei-en in Yokohama, the garden of wealthy silk trader Hara Tomitarō, is an exceptional case in many regards. Named after Hara's tea name, Sankei, the garden is situated on a waterfront and is much larger than any of the others introduced so far (see Figure 2.14). Hara had a strong urge to collect and exhibit old Japanese houses—seemingly anticipating the loss of much of old Japan.[50] He assembled structures ranging from farmhouses

48 Sumiyoshi, 15.

49 Y. Katō, "Sasaki"; Kuitert, *Japanese Gardens and Landscapes*, 285. Kuitert refers to Iida as the apprentice of a larger garden company whose name he does not mention. Thus, Iida may have been employed by Sasaki.

50 K. Ono, "Sankei-en ni miru," 56–57.

Figure 2.14. The Sankei-en is a vast garden arranged around a large pond. Hara Sankei gathered many historical buildings and relocated them to his garden, such as the pagoda in the background overlooking the garden. Originally built in 1457, the pagoda is the oldest structure in the garden and was moved to its current location in 1914. Photograph by the author.

and various former *daimyō*'s buildings to historic temples and pagodas in his garden. Thus, the area feels like an open-air exhibition, while the garden links the various pieces and guarantees coherence. Unlike many other gardens in this book, Sankei-en was never entirely forgotten, nor did it ever fall into disrepair. Still, it took some time for it to be considered a potential heritage site. In other regards, however, Sankei-en fits well with the rest of the research sample. Once again, a wealthy industrialist was the patron.

The second garden outside of Tokyo to be mentioned here is part of the Former Nishio Family Estate, which lies in the city of Suita in Osaka Prefecture. At the end of the Edo period, the Nishio were higher-ranking samurai and heads of the village. They had become considerably wealthy through forestry and were the leading family in Suita in the Meiji era.[51] In 1893, the family started building an estate. Although it could hardly compete with those of the *zaibatsu* families in Tokyo, it was extensive and spoke vividly of the family's modern leanings. The

51 Adachi, 85.

city's first telephone was installed there, and the historic fuse box, which can still be seen in the house, shows how quickly electricity and other comforts were introduced.

The garden was built in 1906 in a Japanese style with a teahouse at its center under the guidance of Chikusui, tenth head of the Yabunouchi school of tea.[52] Nishio Yoemon, the head of the family during the Meiji years, was already interested in tea traditions in his youth, and with the new estate, he sought to blend a state-of-the-art interior with many traditional elements.[53] Though the Nishio family estate may seem modest compared to similar estates in Tokyo and Kyoto, it still stands as an impressive rural counterpart to those sites. Nishio's interest in tea also aligns well with the prevailing trends among the social classes that commissioned gardens during this period.

The landscaping of Sankei-en and the garden of the Nishio estate have not attracted much research to date.[54] Like the three sites in Tokyo, the history of Sankei-en's reception pales compared to Ogawa Jihei's gardens, though it is famous in its own right as an open-air museum. From the outset, Hara wanted it to be a public place with a pedagogic mission. The garden should remind visitors of the not-too-distant Japanese past. And yet, the garden itself has not drawn much scholarly attention. The same can be said of the Former Nishio Family Estate, which is currently cherished for the mansion with its exceptionally well-preserved Meiji and Taisho-period interior, but less so for the garden.

Up to this point, I have introduced gardens in the metropolitan areas of the Kantō and Kansai regions. However, the fresh garden style also spread to the periphery. Frequently, the new elites opted to commission gardens in the countryside as a retreat. Suzuki has discussed one of Ogawa Jihei's gardens for Saionji Kinmochi at his estate in Okitsu, which today is part of Shizuoka.[55] Many politicians and entrepreneurs owned vacation residences on the seashore stretching from Kamakura as far as Shizuoka. Nitta Chōjirō's estate is an example in the Kansai area, which extended the influence of the new garden culture to the periphery. Nitta's company produced the first driving belt in Japan in 1888. His fortune burgeoned in the late Meiji years, and Nitta became one of the business leaders of Japan despite not forming a *zaibatsu*. In the early Taishō era, Nitta

52 Naka, 160.

53 For Nishio's learnings in tea, see Nakamura, 143–44.

54 Ono Kenkichi wrote a paper on Sankei-en in 1990; see K. Ono, "Sankei-en ni miru." On the occasion of its 100th anniversary, the Association entrusted with the Sankei-en also published an informative book; see *Sankei-en Hoshōkai*. For the Former Nishio Family Estate, the City Museum of Suita has edited a comprehensive volume. See *Suita Shiritsu Hakubutsukan*.

55 H. Suzuki, *Ogawa Jihei and His Times,* 125–29.

decided to acquire land in Kainan City, Wakayama Prefecture. Over the following years, he built an estate with a vast garden, though the landscape designer's name has been forgotten.[56]

Local elites in the periphery also embraced the fresh garden style to underscore their adaptability to contemporary trends. The estate and garden of Saitō Kijurō IV is a typical case. Saitō belonged to one of the three most affluent local families in Niigata City, a regional hub facing the Sea of Japan and thus hard to access from Tokyo until the inauguration of the Jōetsu Shinkansen line in 1985. The Saitō family accumulated their wealth through sake brewing during the Edo period, diversifying into banking and maritime transport from the Meiji period until Saitō Kijurō IV established a local *zaibatsu* in Niigata.[57] In addition, he pursued a political career, serving as a member of the Lower House from 1915 onwards and ascending to the House of Peers in 1925.

In 1916, Saitō acquired the grounds for his future estate, which he started to develop in the ensuing year. To build the garden, Saitō enlisted the services of Matsumoto Kameyoshi, the younger brother and apprentice of Tokyo's landscape designer Matsumoto Ikujirō.[58] Matsumoto Kameyoshi designed the garden in the style of the times as a naturalistic site.[59] Although this estate was not Saitō's primary residence, it was by no means a private retreat. Saitō greeted numerous guests here, including national politicians, business leaders, and international figures such as Ludwig Aschoff, a leading German pathologist of that era whose Japanese students nearly monopolized the university chairs in pathology in Japan.[60] The garden shows how local elites embraced the fashion of their era and effectively utilized their site's representational ends, hinting at their ability to preserve tradition and showcase their modern mindset simultaneously. When plans to use the garden as commercial land threatened the garden in the early 2000s, Niigata citizens mobilized and collected more than 70,000 signatures to preserve the site. Consequently, in 2009, Niigata City acquired the garden and opened it to the public three years later (see Figures 2.15 and 2.16).[61]

56 Nara Bunkazai Kenkyūjo, 5–7.

57 For the biographical details on Saitō, see *Niigata Keizai Shimbun* and Tōkyō Nōgyō Daigaku Kokusai Nihon Teien Kenkyū Sentā, and Niigata-shi Kyōiku Iinkai (Niigata-shi Bunka Supōtsubu Rekishi Bunkaka), 20–24.

58 Tōkyō Nōgyō Daigaku Kokusai Nihon Teien Kenkyū Sentā, 6.

59 See Tōkyō Nōgyō Daigaku Kokusai Nihon Teien Kenkyū Sentā, and Niigata-shi Kyōiku Iinkai (Niigata-shi Bunka Supōtsubu Rekishi Bunkaka), 40 for an extensive discussion of the naturalistic qualities of the garden.

60 Tōkyō Nōgyō Daigaku Kokusai Nihon Teien Kenkyū Sentā, 6.

61 Donuma and Suzuki, 68–69.

Figure 2.15. During World War I, Saitō Kijurō IV built a prominent estate for himself in Niigata, a peripheral economic center on the Sea of Japan. Photograph by Luis Rodríguez.

Figure 2.16. The garden of the Saitō Villa in Niigata is a typical example of early twentieth-century estates in the periphery. Photograph by Luis Rodríguez.

Japanese Gardens?

Since prominent figures owned many of the gardens built during the late Meiji and Taishō periods, pundits often wrote about these sites even though most of them were not public, except for Sankei-en. These voices compared the new gardens to more classical examples and noted their differences, attributing these variations to Western influence. In 1900, Japan was no longer the same country it had been in 1850. The early Meiji government chose to learn from the West, sensing that any other path would have risked Japan's colonization. Many Asian countries such as India, Indonesia, and Vietnam had succumbed to this fate and found themselves under the rule of the English, the Dutch, or the French. China, the cultural hub of the Asian continent for thousands of years, had not been formally colonized except for coastal cities like Hongkong and Tsingtao. Still, the Opium Wars in the mid- nineteenth century—first against England and then against England and France—were driving the kingdom to the point of collapse. In 1844, the Japanese shogunate received a letter from Dutch King Willem II sent via Nagasaki informing the rulers of China's fate, and this knowledge influenced the shogunate's agreement to the unequal treaties with the Western powers.[62] The shogunate first concluded a major treaty with the US in 1858 and then with other Western powers. These treaties were highly unfavorable for Japan, but at the very least, Western traders were not allowed to import opium to Japan and sell it there.

Japan's subsequent modernization raised a serious question: How could the country and its people retain their identity under the onslaught of Western technology, science, and worldviews? In the final decades of the Edo period and in the Meiji era, several slogans were coined suggesting solutions to this threat. The one that dealt most clearly with the rift between Western modernity and the urge to maintain a Japanese identity was *wakon yōsai*, meaning "Japanese spirit and Western technique."[63] However, this simple slogan is somewhat misleading. It suggests that a Japanese spirit existed—one that had remained unchanged throughout modernization and directly connected contemporary Japanese to their ancestors. This was indeed how Meiji Japanese would have interpreted *wakon yōsai*. Yet this notion of a specific Japanese spirit was a product of the nation-building process itself, set in motion by the Meiji Restoration. In this context, *wakon* denoted the assumption that all Japanese shared the same mentality. To make this *wakon* a reality, it had to be cultivated through specific social practices and content. In the

62 For the letter, see Matsukata.

63 *Wakon yōsai* has often been attributed to Sakuma Shōzan, a politician and intellectual of the late Edo era. Kitahara Michio saw *wakon yōsai* as a "rationalization" of implementing Western knowledge into daily life in Japan. See M. Kitahara, "The Rise," 57–58.

early 1870s, Japan was far more diverse than *wakon* suggested. Without concrete social praxis, *wakon* would have remained merely an abstract idea that would have been difficult to communicate among the Japanese or to the West. Gardens evolved into just such a practice. However, the new landscapes built by Ogawa Jihei, Sasaki Kason, and others did not fit the needs of *wakon* in a way suitable for construing a new national identity as a counterpole to Western modernity.

Murin-an is the most prominent example of how and why the Meiji and Taishō gardens were deemed to be different. First, the patron Yamagata wanted the garden to stand out for its style. He compared his site to other classical Kyoto gardens and concluded that it exuded a freshness not to be found elsewhere. Two critical publications of the time confirmed Yamagata's judgement, as Mark Bourne has astutely pointed out.[64] First, in 1901, Kuroda Tengai wrote a guide entitled *Zoku kōko kaishinroku* (2nd Edition of the Record of Pleasant Scenes in and around the Capital). Kuroda was a journalist who had excellent access to both Yamagata and Ogawa and interviewed the two about their project. Amasaki has valued Kuroda's writings as an ideal source for garden history,[65] though Bourne critically observed that Kuroda simply echoed Yamagata's own characterization by writing the following: "In some way, there is a natural atmosphere that is different from other gardens, it is a garden that is in a class of its own."[66] Eight years later, Yumoto Fumihiko seconded Kuroda's assessment in his overview of historical and contemporary Kyoto gardens, *Keika rinsenchō* (Folding Book of the Splendid Gardens in the Capital). Yumoto was a historian born in 1843 on the coast of the Sea of Japan in Tottori. After the Meiji Restoration, he worked as a teacher in several schools on the Sea of Japan before moving to Kyoto. There, he began writing books on local history. His *Keika rinsenchō* gave an excellent overview of Kyoto gardens and their reception at the end of the Meiji era. After introducing classic imperial and temple sites, he described many contemporary private gardens, starting with Yamagata's Murin-an. Yumoto's take on this garden resembled Kuroda's and Yamagata's own understanding. Yumoto stressed its natural and thus new appearance when he wrote that it "abounded in natural scenic beauty."[67] The classic gardens artistically *represented* nature, but for Yumoto, Yamagata's design was "natural" in itself.

Thus, Murin-an functioned as an ideal status symbol for Yamagata because it merged relevant messages for him. First of all, the garden signified his modernity and inventiveness. Murin-an did not mimic classic examples but had its own

64 Bourne, 52.
65 Amasaki, *Nanadaime Ogawa Jihei*, 24–25.
66 Cit. op. Bourne, 52.
67 Yumoto, 45.

character. Yamagata emphasized this point in his writings, while Kuroda and Yumoto seemed to agree, thereby popularizing his interpretation.[68] However, they also included Murin-an in the Kyoto gardens canon, suggesting its rootedness in tradition. The site was not wholly unrelated to the long history of horticulture in Kyoto; it added a modern twist.

When discussing the historical judgments of Murin-an, recent writers like Amasaki and Suzuki often forget to mention a critical dimension of the garden in the Meiji era. For Yamagata's contemporaries, the site was not only a form of artistic expression that could either be deemed Japanese or eclectic. Yamagata lived at his estate whenever he came to Kyoto. National newspapers like the *Asahi Shimbun* (Osaka edition) and the *Yomiuri Shimbun* regularly reported when Yamagata stayed in the city at Murin-an. The garden thus had a political significance, not just an artistic one. This is most obvious with the aforementioned Murin-an Conference of 1903, where Yamagata and three fellow politicians decided on Japan's imperialist course against Russia, effectively preparing their war in the following year. This conference is usually discussed in political biographies of Yamagata and political history but is only mentioned in passing in garden histories. The underlying assumption of garden historians is that this important meeting is more or less extraneous to their professional concern, especially since it took place in a Western-style building tucked away in one corner of the garden.

However, a caricature published in the *Yomiuri Shimbun* in 1899 vividly illustrates how aesthetic and political dimensions were connected for contemporaries (see Figure 2.17).[69] We see Yamagata during his second tenure as prime minister from 1898 to 1900, clad in a kimono, sitting on the porch of the Japanese house of the garden. Behind him is the *tokonoma*, the space that defines the reception room's mood by displaying hanging scrolls and ikebana. On top of the *tokonoma*, "Murin-an" is written, situating Yamagata in the garden for those readers who did not immediately recognize the scenery. Yamagata dreams of railway expansion in China. The massive buildings in the thought bubble look like Beijing, and a steam locomotive passes from left to right in front of the city. While Murin-an is not drawn very elaborately in this caricature but is rather a generic image of a Japanese porch in a new garden of the time, the estate nevertheless helps convey a point to the reader. Yamagata is in his private surroundings, depicted at leisure in Japanese dress, sitting in his beloved garden. He is not a statesman at work here. Otherwise, he would have been dressed in a suit. Instead, he is in a relaxed mood, musing about imperialist possibilities on the mainland. The *Yomiuri Shimbun* had discussed the details of the Chinese railway problem in two articles a couple of days earlier, where they had

68 Bourne, 52.

69 *Yomiuri Shimbun*, "Murin-an."

Figure 2.17. In 1899, the newspaper *Yomiuri Shimbun* published this caricature of Yamagata Aritomo on the porch of the main building at Murin-an, contemplating railway expansion in China. *Yomiuri Shimbun*, "Murin-an," May 26, 1899.

not failed to mention that Yamagata was at Murin-an considering his strategy.[70] Regular newspaper readers were informed about Yamagata's stay at Murin-an and knew enough to contextualize the image. Murin-an was an apt setting for a scene related to Japanese imperialism in China. As readers were probably aware, Yamagata had used a reward earned as the general of the Japanese First Army during the Sino-Japanese War of 1894/95 to aggrandize the estate. The whole site partly owed

70 *Yomiuri Shimbun*, "Pekin tetsudō mondai: Shinkoku shodan"; *Yomiuri Shimbun*, "Pekin tetsudō mondai: Tomita."

its existence to this historical context, which the caricature evokes. Here, Prime Minister Yamagata is considering further political action, and Murin-an becomes the ideal stage for him to plan.

The caricature demonstrates how Murin-an's aesthetic and political dimensions were connected in the general perception and reinforced each other. The public perception of Murin-an was in no way restricted to stylistic distinctions between "Japanese" and "eclectic." Murin-an was instead a site that could arouse the public fantasy. Thanks to its owner, the garden was entangled with Japanese imperialism, which can no longer be entirely separated from its artistic value. Thus, reducing the contemporary discussion of Murin-an to a question of eclecticism misses essential points. Of course, not all of the new gardens had the same prominence as Murin-an, nor were all of them so closely involved with Japanese imperialism. Nonetheless, as a result of their owners and their style, gardens like Murin-an should not simply be seen as a formal étude in eclecticism. For Yamagata and in the public imagination, Murin-an exemplified a modern version of the timeless idea of gardens. It highlighted the dynamism of the new Japanese state, capable of extending railways across the Asian continent while simultaneously reflecting Japan's enduring identity rooted in arts and horticulture.

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3. Appreciating New Japanese Gardens in the West—From the Late Meiji to Early Shōwa Periods

Abstract: As the new garden style gained popularity in Japan, Western garden experts and tourists, who had been interested in Japanese gardens since the world's fairs, began to notice the revival of horticulture in the East. Writers such as Friedrich Hochberg and Florence Du Cane mentioned these new gardens in their travel books about Japan.
In 1935, the Garden Club of America visited Japan admist growing diplomatic tensions. The group was introduced to various historic sites and several of Ogawa's gardens. For the most part, Western authors and visitors referred to these locations as "Japanese gardens" without much further reflection.

Keywords: Florence Du Cane; Friedrich Hochberg; Garden Club of America; Lorraine Kuck

The Western interpretation of the new gardens in Japan was not as nuanced as the Japanese one. Western pundits and tourists subsumed a variety of places under the rubric "Japanese garden" without making finer distinctions. Since the gardens were situated in the Far East and looked nothing like their Western counterparts, there was no reason to assume otherwise. Early Western interest in Japanese gardens was in any case directed mainly at historical examples. Conder had initially focused on historical gardens in Tokyo, and attention only gradually shifted toward Kyoto. While the former *daimyō* gardens of Edo had to give way to the expanding capital, the old temple gardens of Kyoto survived and evolved into tourism hotspots.

The gardens of Ogawa and his colleagues did enter the Western field of vision in some contexts. Western experts and garden lovers stumbled upon them by chance, or they had social ties to garden owners who introduced them for a visit. As most of these gardens were not (yet) public, foreign tourists could only access them by invitation or insistence. Namikawa's garden stood out as an exception, as the cloisonné artist deliberately tailored the appearance of his atelier to appeal to

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Western clientele.[1] By 1900, Japan had become a favorite destination in some circles, although traveling to the Far East was by no means a low-budget trip. Even more so than the travel and accommodation costs, time was a crucial factor that kept most people from visiting the country. The journey by ship from Europe or North America took several weeks, and travelers tended to stay in Japan for prolonged periods to make up for the arduous voyage. Thus, it was up to the rich and noble to explore the Far East, and it was not uncommon for them to publish books or articles about their adventures upon their return. Gardens featured prominently in some of these accounts.

Discussing recent gardens signaled to readers that the author was up-to-date and able to judge how horticulture would evolve in future Japan. Some Westerners, like Morse, Conder, and Hearn, lived and worked in Japan for prolonged periods, and their accounts were prevalent on the book market. Many Western readers had a keen interest in learning about exotic countries during the age of imperialism, when traveling was still prohibitively expensive, although the world seemed to be shrinking. Japan was exciting, as it had rapidly achieved a level of modernization not found anywhere outside the West. Japan's victories in its wars against China (1894–1895) and Russia (1904–1905) increased the West's curiosity. The latter triumph in particular shocked the West, as it was the first time that a non-Western nation had won an imperial war against a European one.

Since Western and Japanese definitions of "Japanese gardens" were entangled and reinforced each other, it is essential to consider Western appreciation of the new gardens in a little more detail before discussing the developments in Japan. Although Western interpretations have no direct bearing on Ogawa and his colleagues' recent surge in heritage creation, the interactions between Western enthusiasts of Far Eastern horticulture and Japanese intellectuals certainly influenced the latter. When Americans, English, French, or Germans visited Japan to learn about Japanese gardens, their interest and judgments carried weight, and their hosts usually heeded their words. The visit of the Garden Club of America in 1935, for example, was a crucial moment in the East–West entanglements around new gardens. This chapter concludes with an analysis of that exchange. For the moment, though, I want to turn to a particular example of garden criticism in Europe that sheds light on the definition of Japanese gardens concerning the new designs from the Meiji era.

Unger and the ILA Garden

In 1909, the Japanese garden at the International Aviation Fair (*Internationale Luftschiffahrts-Ausstellung*, ILA) in Frankfurt sparked a heated debate. On one side,

1 Schneider and Brown, 47–48.

Alfred Unger, a German plant dealer who had lived in Yokohama for nearly 20 years, condemned the garden as a mere "crowd magnet" with hardly any authenticity.[2] Refuting him was Camillo Schneider, one of the most eminent German garden pundits and historians, who lauded its authentic qualities. This dispute is especially relevant for our discussion, since Unger used Count Ōkuma's contemporary garden in Tokyo as an instance of an authentic Japanese garden, a standard that the ILA garden struggled to match.[3]

Due to his prolonged stay in Japan, Alfred Unger was one of the Western experts with a profound knowledge of new Japanese gardens.[4] Unger had learned gardening at a nursery, and in 1889, the company sent him to Yokohama where he acted as liaison to a contractual partner, the German company L. Boehmer & Co. Ltd. Louis Boehmer had set up this nursery in 1882 to cater to rich Westerners' interest in Japanese gardening and plants, and in 1892 Boehmer succeeded in hiring Unger. Yokohama was the main port of entry into Japan, so most tourists and business travelers started exploring the country there. After visiting and admiring gardens on their journey, wealthy Westerners could order garden equipment for their projects and send it directly from Yokohama via ship before disembarking themselves. When Boehmer returned to Germany in 1894, Unger took over the business. At that point, Boehmer & Co. Ltd. was one of the two leading nurseries in the port city. The other was Yokohama Nursery Ltd., established by Suzuki Uhei, Boehmer's former employee. Both nurseries strongly impacted Japanese gardens in the West, as many of the plants, lanterns, bridges, and other elements that found their way to North America and Europe passed through these two dealers. However, in 1908, Unger sold his business to an American and returned to Germany to settle in Heidelberg. There, he built one of the country's earliest Japanese gardens and continued to import garden equipment and plants.[5] While companies like A.A. Vantine and Yamanaka & Co. in the US allowed customers who could not afford to travel to Japan to adorn their gardens with lanterns, bridges, or pagodas, Unger covered the German market. However, unlike A.A. Vantine and Yamanaka & Co., which offered Asian furniture for all parts of the house and garden, Unger specialized in garden-related items.[6] Moreover, Japanese gardens did not enjoy the same popularity in Germany as in other Western nations such as the US and the UK. The absence of world's fairs in the German Reich meant that the well-to-do lacked examples from which to draw inspiration.

Japanese gardens only took off in Germany in 1904 with the International Art and Great Horticulture Exhibition (*Internationale Kunst-Ausstellung und große*

2 Unger, 594.

3 Unger, 595.

4 On Unger's biography and the history of Boehmer's company, see Beuchert; Lepach.

5 On Unger's garden, see Lettow-Vorbeck, 24–26.

6 On A.A. Vantine and Yamanaka & Co., see Yamamori.

Gartenbau-Ausstellung) in Düsseldorf.[7] The popularity of Japanese gardens quickly surged as a result of this exhibition. Several aristocrats started laying out their own private ones, and garden exhibitions, which were popular in Germany, also had to feature them to keep up with the new fashion. Exhibitions entirely unrelated to horticulture exploited this fad to attract more visitors, and the 1909 ILA in Frankfurt is a case in point. Typical of its times, it showcased a voguish present-day wonder, namely aviation. Like the world's fairs, the ILA had to include an entertainment park to lure enough visitors to make the whole undertaking profitable. One might think that balloons, Zeppelins, and airplanes were fascinating enough, but visitors were not only expecting to be educated in modern technology. They came for entertainment, and the park at the ILA did not disappoint. Close to the entrance, a so-called Senegal Village (*Senegaldorf*) awaited them—a racist human zoo that was common at the time.[8] Senegalese people posed in straw huts to demonstrate Africans' supposedly authentic daily life. The village drew critical comments—not for its deep-rooted racism in support of imperialist ideology but for its repetitive character. The *Frankfurter Generalanzeiger*, the city's leading liberal newspaper, reviewed the village in the following manner:

> Which entertainment park would not have a Senegal Village? The black and brown loafers, whom inventive impresarios import to Europe, apparently to demonstrate 'homely customs, traditions and habits' to their much more cultured, lighter colored brothers, have practically started to get boring [...].[9]

In stark contrast, newspapers and journals highly praised the Japanese garden and teahouse for being much more authentic and novel. Journalists emphasized that the garden was a calm oasis within the buzzing fairgrounds, providing visitors with a tranquil moment of rest. One newspaper went so far as to call it the "masterpiece of the whole fair."[10]

The garden was secluded from the fairgrounds by high walls. Visitors entered through a straw-hatched gate. A wooden bridge over a small stream, many lanterns, and bronze animals transformed the place into an exotic experience. Gardeners commonly added bronze animals—cranes in the case of Frankfurt—to Japanese gardens at the time, although they would be deemed inauthentic today. The Japanese government strove to promote the export of bronze craft, so these animals were

7 Tagsold, *Japanische Gärten*, 51–55.

8 On the racism of human zoos (Völkerschauen) in Germany during this era, see Dreesbach. For human zoos at world's fairs, see Yoshimi, 184–86.

9 *Frankfurter Generalanzeiger*.

10 *Kleine Presse*.

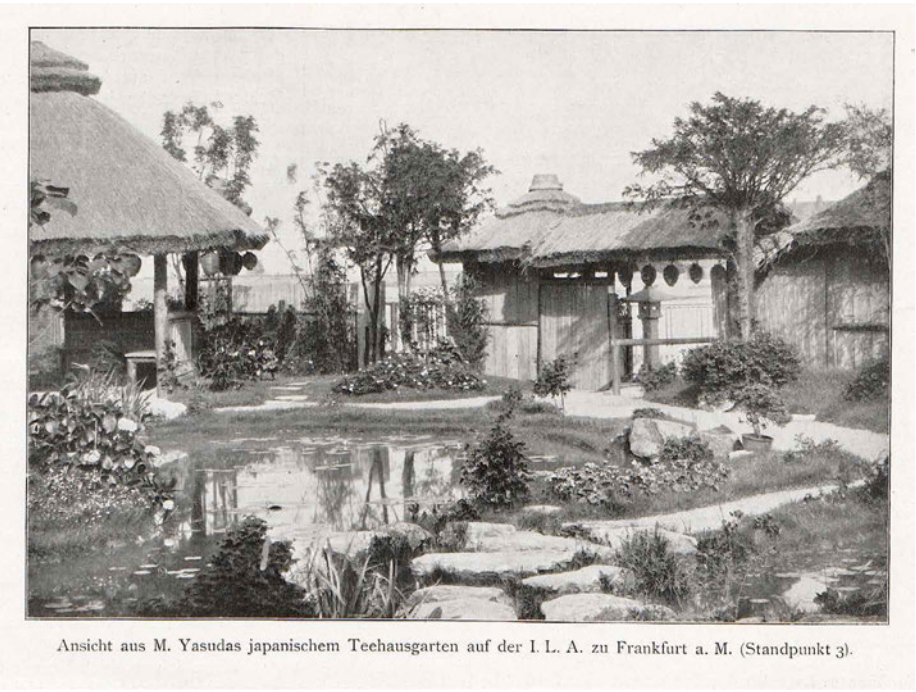

Figure 3.1. Yasuda Minori's garden was widely discussed in popular gardening journals. *Die Gartenkunst* depicted various images like this one showing the gate and one of the straw huts adorned with lanterns. The garden extended around a small pond. Camillo Schneider, "Über japanische Gartenkunst." *Die Gartenkunst* 12, no. 1 (1910).

often integrated into gardens presented abroad.[11] One more element in Frankfurt produced a unique scenery: A couple of round straw huts with lanterns dangling from the roof appeared like a clumsy emulation of huts in late-Edo *daimyō* gardens (see Figure 3.1). The garden's central piece was a large wooden teahouse, which looked more like a Jugendstil building than anything else. Nevertheless, this teahouse's offerings, served by Japanese servants, formed the financial backbone of the whole enterprise.

Friedrich Henkel, whose older brother owned a large garden company, had devised the plan for the plot of land at the exhibition.[12] Henkel already possessed experience bringing Japanese gardens to exhibitions and turning them into profitable ventures.[13] Still, he went to great lengths to make the presentation at the ILA special. For the

11 Earle, *Flower Bronzes*, 134–37; Earle, *Splendors*, 240.

12 Henkel, *Das Teehaus*.

13 Henkel had built the Japanese garden at the Anniversary Exhibition Mannheim 1907 (*Jubiläumsausstellung Mannheim*) and even received the Great Imperial Medal (*Große Kaisermedaille*) for it—the most prestigious award of the exhibition. See Schade; Walter and Schade, 181.

first time in the German Reich, Henkel employed a Japanese designer to plan and create a garden. With the assistance of Bavarian aristocrat Herrmann von Passavant, who served as Imperial Consul for Japan in Munich, Henkel established contact with Yasuda Minori.[14] In 1906, Yasuda went to Germany to study Western art at the Kunstakademie Munich on a Japanese state scholarship. He swiftly integrated into the high society of the Bavarian capital, which had developed a fondness for Japonism. For instance, Yasuda was the only Japanese lender to an exhibition titled "Japan and East Asia in the Arts" (*Japan und Ostasien in der Kunst*) held in Munich in 1909, the first display of its kind in the German Reich.[15] The commission of the Japanese garden for the ILA was another breakthrough for the talented young artist. Ironically, Yasuda had studied Western art; he had no credentials for planning Japanese gardens whatsoever. Still, Yasuda most likely had access to books like Josiah Conder's *Landscape Gardening in Japan* through Henkel, who around that time was trying to translate Conder into German.[16] We may assume that Yasuda's lack of experience might well have been a reason for the garden's unusual appearance. Henkel did not seem to mind and was happy enough to be able to hire someone Japanese at all.

Nonetheless, Yasuda painted a striking series of postcards of his garden at the ILA (see Figure 3.2). During his time in Munich, Yasuda soon realized that taking up Japonism would serve him far better than drawing in a contemporary Western style like his fellow artists at the Kunstakademie and in the Bavarian capital. Although Yasuda had some early training in Japanese painting, he mainly studied Western painting at the Tokyo Fine Arts School, then won a grant from the Ministry of Education to study in Munich and refine his style. In Munich, Yasuda developed a technique that resembled *ukiyo-e* woodblock prints and had some success with a portfolio he produced and had printed in a Western way.[17] The ILA postcards took advantage of both the Japanese style and subject, and they are outstanding examples of early German Japonism—except that a Japanese artist produced them.[18]

Unger had his qualms with Yasuda and Henkel's garden. He had foreseen that the garden would evolve into a "Zugstück," or a sort of crowd magnet at the ILA,

14 Schneider, 1.

15 Graf-Pfaff, 103.

16 Henkel, "Gartenkunst."

17 See Yasuda.

18 Yasuda could have drawn inspiration from artists like Nakazawa Hiromitsu, a fellow Tokyo Fine Arts School student, or Ichijo Narumi, who crafted strikingly similar postcards, blending Japanese painting styles with Western influences. Thus, Yasuda's style was typical of the late Meiji Art Noveau. On Yasuda's career, see Tagsold, *Japanische Gärten*, 100. For postcards as a medium used by Japanese artists in the late Meiji and Taishō periods, see Nishimura Morse; K. Brown "Postcards."

Figure 3.2. Yasuda Minori created a set of postcards promoting his garden at the ILA 1909. In this card, a couple stands at the entrance gate. The theme of aviation is depicted through three white flying objects in the blue sky at the upper right. Yasuda cleverly blends the fair's modernity with the ancient appearance of his garden. Postcard from the author's collection.

but this was not his main concern.[19] Pleasing visitors and profiting from exoticism was not what Unger critiqued in his short review published in the popular German garden journal *Die Gartenwelt*. Instead, Unger felt the need to inform his readers that this showcase did not accurately represent garden culture in Japan:

> I would like to seriously warn gardeners, landscape designers, and generally all who have seen this garden not to take this exhibition piece at face value and not to judge it as an example of a fine Japanese garden. This would bring forth grave errors. Even though its performance as the exhibition's main crowd magnet is

19 Unger, 594.

> very laudable, the plot relates to a fine Japanese garden to the same degree as a wooden rocking horse to a noble Arabian steed.
> To discuss the complex in detail is futile. In a certain sense, it is indeed a reproduction of a Japanese garden following the pattern in which Japanese children and women construct small boxed Japanese gardens (Japanese *hakuniwa* [sic]), employing little clay houses, bridges, figures, living twigs, and small plants as toys for the general amusement.[20]

In other words, Unger degraded Yasuda's achievements as a garden designer to that of a child. To back up his harsh verdict, Unger pointed out that he had lived in Japan for 19 years and subtly let slip that he was fluent in Japanese. On top of this, he referred to a friend in the article who had joined him on his second visit to the garden and had lived even longer in Japan. On his third visit, his Japanese servant accompanied Unger. Having legitimated himself thus, Unger advised his readers to explore Conder's book to gain a true sense of Japanese gardens. Finally, he referred to images of Count Ōkuma's garden accompanying the article:

> To present the readers of these lines with a fine Japanese garden, I have included two views from the garden of the famous garden lover Count Ōkuma, who resides in Waseda, Tokyo. These illustrate, without the need for many words, how such a site differs from the ILA garden.[21]

As discussed in Chapter 2, Sasaki Kason had built Ōkuma's garden, an influential designer of his time, although he is not so well known today. Unger's insistence on introducing it as a "fine Japanese garden" is telling. He must have known the garden well, since he had lived in the Kantō area for nearly two decades and must have been in contact with many influential people through his company. He regularly assisted Western aristocrats, not only advising them on garden styles and supplying them with everything needed to lay out a Japanese garden but also introducing them to garden owners. Therefore, it is likely that Unger had been to Ōkuma's garden himself on various occasions and did not simply pick this example based on hearsay or photographs. For Unger, this garden was a relatively fresh—and thus all the more legitimate—addition to Japanese horticulture. Unger invited his readers to compare the images of the Ōkuma garden with the actual ILA garden in Frankfurt and note the differences. Unger's status as an old hand of Japan must have been impressive enough to cast serious doubt on Yasuda's endeavors and, at the same time, elevate Ōkuma's garden to an archetype of the genre. In other words,

20 Unger, 594.
21 Unger, 594.

for Unger, the garden in Waseda was just as good as any other historical garden in Japan, or at least good enough to point out the ILA garden's shortcomings.

The landscape architect Camillo Schneider, however, did not buy Unger's argument and questioned the old hand's credentials, even though Schneider did not deny the status of the Ōkuma garden. He reacted to Unger's short note on the ILA garden with an article one year later in *Die Gartenkunst*, another popular German garden journal. Schneider was a successful landscape architect and prolific writer of his time whose word carried weight in garden circles. In his reply to Unger, Schneider once again assessed the value of the ILA garden for familiarizing fairgoers with Japanese gardens and came to a completely different conclusion. For Schneider, the garden was an outstanding example of Japanese horticulture. Unger's disdain was first of all exaggerated because Yasuda and Henkel had only six weeks to lay out the garden—"a noteworthy feat of gardening" in itself.[22] Worse yet, Unger had confused the categories in comparing the ILA garden to Ōkuma's:

> Certain voices have critiqued Mr. Yasuda's artistic performance as inferior and have introduced images of a Japanese private park to underline their snide remarks. One has to express objection to such a non-objective verdict because the garden at the ILA is a Japanese tea-house garden, not a private garden by a Japanese big shot. Aren't these two entirely different things?[23]

Obviously, Yasuda's endeavors did not qualify as an authentic Japanese tea garden—neither by the standards of 1909 nor today's. We might add that Schneider himself also mixed up the categories of garden and park, which are significantly differentiated in the Japanese context, as I will discuss in the next chapter. In German terminology, though, Ōkuma's large garden would qualify as a park. Nonetheless, it remained beyond question for Schneider that Ōkuma's garden was an excellent example of Japanese horticulture.

Unger's article is telling in the context of discussing new gardens. As we can see, even such a seasoned expert of Japanese garden art as Unger, who had lived in the country longer than nearly every other Westerner in the field, did not distinguish between new and old gardens in terms of their "Japaneseness." Unger did not just employ the term "Japanese" as a geographical attribute—he clearly sought to describe a stylistic coherence. Schneider went along with Unger on this point, though he rejected the latter's harsh criticism of the ILA garden.

As this example illustrates, Western experts subsumed the type of gardens that had evolved in Japan in the middle of the Meiji era under the familiar category

22 Schneider, 2.

23 Schneider, 2.

"Japanese." In contrast, their Japanese counterparts perceived these gardens as novel and distinct, if not entirely eclectic. The Western experts simply did not see any need for further distinctions and were happy to assume a historical–stylistic unity based merely on geographical distribution. The technical nuances between a garden like Ōkuma's and any other "Japanese garden" did not seem to merit creating a new category, and it is unlikely that the Western experts even noticed much of a difference in any case.

Kyoto Catches up with Tokyo

Unger was a professional garden expert who used his experience in Japan to legitimize his assessment of horticulture in the East. For the most part, however, the new gardens of the Meiji era were introduced to a broad Western readership through travel writing, a popular genre of the time. Members of the upper class who had the leisure and financial means to undertake voyages to the Far East wrote most of these books. The authors were usually well-connected and had good opportunities to interact with their Japanese counterparts, who took a keen interest in their guests. Consequently, the Western authors had access to the gardens of their Japanese hosts. Frederick Schneider and Kendall H. Brown have utilized many such travel books to analyze Japanese gardens at shops in Kyoto catering to such well-off tourists. I will focus on presenting two examples.

Friedrich Hochberg is a typical example of someone who made their way to Japan and managed to visit a private garden. Being a member of the high aristocracy in the German Reich, Hochberg was well embedded in a cosmopolitan network, which enabled him to access places not usually open to the public. Hochberg's older brother was the Prince of Pless, a territory in Silesia. As an owner of coal mines, he was one of the wealthiest and most influential aristocrats in the Reich. Hochberg himself had long preferred Florence as his residence, finding the Mediterranean climate much more beneficial for his chronic illness than Germany's. After finally recovering from this illness at the turn of the century, he moved to Schloss Halbau, a small palace in Silesia, which today is called Iłowa and belongs to Poland. Hochberg went to Japan for the first time in 1904 and was so taken by the country and its style that he brought back not only all sorts of arts and crafts for his palace at home but even a Japanese servant! Furthermore, he commissioned one of the early Japanese gardens in the Reich, probably finished in 1907 (see Figure 3.3).[24] In 1908, he came to Japan for the second time after traveling through Asia for more than half a year.

24 Tagsold, *Japanische Gärten*, 70–71.

Figure 3.3. Count Hochberg's Japanese garden at Iłowa (Halbau) has recently been restored and closely resembles its original 1904 appearance. Photograph by the author.

His journey of 1907/1908 went into a book penned in English under the title *An Eastern Voyage: A Journal of the Travels of Count Fritz Hochberg Through the British Empire in the East and Japan*, which was structured as a travel itinerary. Soon after arriving in Kyoto, he introduced the readers to "his" garden:

> ln the afternoon we drove to my garden, or rather l took them there, because it is not open to the public, and only my old friendship with the proprietor allows me to go there. I call it my garden because l always found it the prettiest garden of all the gardens in Kyoto, and it was touch and go then whether I bought it. l love that garden. [...] This garden has really been laid out for dreaming.[25]

The friendship facilitating his visit to the garden probably originated during Hochberg's first trip to Japan in 1904. Hochberg does not give any further details on the site; therefore, we do not know whether it was old or new. In any case, we can assume that personal connections opened doors to gardens, and Japanese owners were proud to show them off to Western guests of equal social standing.

25 Hochberg, 162.

Another text written shortly after Unger's criticism of the ILA garden in Frankfurt and Hochberg's travelogue shared the general admiration of the new gardens but added an interesting twist. *The Flowers and Gardens of Japan*, written by Florence and Ella Du Cane, was published in 1908 and turned out to be a successful book in the genre. The sisters were born in Hobart, Australia, as the daughters of Sir Charles Du Cane, Governor of Tasmania for the crown, and thus, they were members of the English upper class.[26] Ella, five years younger than Florence, was a self-taught painter who began to exhibit her works successfully in the 1890s, when even the queen acquired one of her paintings.[27] The sisters frequently traveled together and shared a love of gardens. Ella had illustrated a couple of books, some on gardens and one on Japan by John Finnemore, for which both sisters had visited the country. The sisters seemed to have enjoyed this trip to the Far East and made up their minds to return to Japan in 1907 for roughly one year to work on their first joint book, with Florence drafting the text and Ella preparing the illustrations.

Florence Du Cane wrote in a colloquial style typical of travel books. She had meticulously studied Conder's *Landscape Gardening in Japan*, as is evident from the numerous quotes. Just as Conder, Florence Du Cane mystified the Japanese garden. The book starts with the line: "It is safe to assert that no other country has such a distinctive form of landscape gardening as Japan."[28] She went on to stress that only the Japanese were capable of building gardens in this manner:

> [N]o Western gardener could ever hope to construct a garden representing a portion of the natural scenery of Japan—which is the aim and object of every good Japanese landscape garden, however small—because, however long he might study the original scene, he would never arrive at the Japanese conception of it, or realise what it conveyed to the mind of a Japanese.[29]

Besides these familiar strategies of othering, one early section of the book is pertinent for evaluating Florence Du Cane's perception of the newly constructed gardens. In the preface, she offers a brief introduction to the history of Japanese gardens, heavily relying on Conder. At the end of her overview, Du Cane laments that with the current decay of the *daimyō* gardens, landscape design culture had come to an end in Tokyo and was on the verge of disappearing entirely due to industrialization by the time of her visit:

26 For a biography of the Du Cane sisters, see Redfoot.
27 Redfoot, 31.
28 Du Cane and Du Cane, 1.
29 Du Cane and Du Cane, 2.

> Alas, how few [*daimyō* gardens] remain today in anything like their former splendour; the hand of the Goth has swept away most of the ancient glories of Yedo, and on the spot where these princely dwellings and gardens stood, today some great factory chimneys rise and belch forth columns of smoke.[30]

Newly built sites in Tokyo were deeply disappointing in Du Cane's eyes because "the rich" preferred Western-style gardens—"if you would see the making of a new garden it is to Kyoto you must wend your way."[31] As the remaining six pages of the preface suggest, the Du Cane sisters had, by chance, stumbled into such a novel garden just under construction. The garden was most likely located in Okazaki, since Florence Du Cane mentioned its stream would be fed by water from the Lake Biwa Canal once work had finished.[32] Though this feature immediately brings Ogawa Jihei to mind, it is difficult to guess which garden Du Cane was referring to. The Du Cane sisters had first visited Japan in 1904 for a short stint and then again in 1906 to illustrate Finnemore's book before eventually settling for a year there in 1907/1908.[33] Taking this time frame and Florence Du Cane's description of the garden pond into account, which had "an island consisting of just one bold rock,"[34] Tairyū Sansō is a likely candidate (see Figure 3.4).

Ijūin Kanetsune, an architect and head of various companies, initially built his estate at the end of the nineteenth century on former land of the Nanzen-ji Temple next to a small branch of the Lake Biwa Canal, only a few hundred meters away from Murin-an. In 1901, Ijūin sold his estate to Ichida Yaichirō, a kimono merchant in Tokyo who wanted to expand to Kyoto. From 1902 to 1905, Ichida had the garden—which Ijūin had designed by himself—reworked by Ogawa,[35] who by that time had already more or less monopolized the garden design market in Okazaki. Next, Ichida renamed the garden, combining one Chinese character from the mountain's name where the Nanzen-ji was located with the word "tai" (against) because the garden stood across this mountain.[36] If we assume that Du Cane actually wrote about Tairyū Sansō and her description of the pond was correct, she most likely visited the garden on her first voyage to Japan because by 1907, work at Tairyū Sansō was already completed. At that point, however, the garden pond was populated by more than the "one bold stone" in lieu of the islands that Du Cane

30 Du Cane and Du Cane, 12.
31 Du Cane and Du Cane, 13.
32 Du Cane and Du Cane, 16.
33 Redfoot, 59–63.
34 Du Cane and Du Cane, 15.
35 H. Suzuki, *Ogawa Jihei and His Times*, 135.
36 H. Suzuki, *Ogawa Jihei and His Times*, 137.

Figure 3.4. A 1935 image of Tairyū Sansō shows the garden stream channeling water from the Lake Biwa Canal into the pond. Tsuyoshi Tamura, *Art of the Landscape Garden in Japan* (Tokyo: Kokusai Bunka Shinkōkai, 1935).

had mentioned. All the same, Du Cane's description of 1907/1908 might have been based entirely on her memory of an earlier visit.

It is also possible that she visited the Waraku-an, which Inabata Katsutarō commissioned Ogawa to design in 1905. The garden was close to Tairyū Sansō and would fit Du Cane's assertion that the house was also newly built.[37] Inabata was an Osaka-based businessman who dyed uniforms for the army. He had studied in France, where one of his classmates was Auguste Lumière. Through this connection, Inabata acquired a cinematograph, which he introduced to Japan for the first time in 1896. However, Inabata was not interested in the film business and eventually sold his apparatus. As a highly successful industrialist with political ambitions that led him to become a member of the House of Peers from 1926 until 1947, Inabata's biography was typical of the new inhabitants of former grounds of the Nanzen-ji and thus of Ogawa's clients. His garden, Waraku-an, structurally resembled Tairyū Sansō, with an island and a couple of stones populating a pond that drew water from the Lake Biwa Canal.[38]

37 T. Katō, "Kaiusō teien," 24–25.

38 T. Katō, "Kaiusō teien," 27.

Based on Florence Du Cane's description alone, it is ultimately impossible to know which garden she inspected during its construction, though it was most likely one of these two. In any case, Du Cane's account is exciting because she was one of the few Westerners to see such a place in the making. Even more importantly, she contextualized her experience uniquely and placed it prominently in her account of Japanese gardens. Du Cane tied the garden to the long tradition of landscape design in Kyoto and compared the city's elite to those of Tokyo:

> I was glad to think that riches had not, as is too often the case, brought with it a love for foreign life and stamped out the true Japanese, and that here at least are left many who are content to spend their hours of leisure in the contemplation and in the repose of a true landscape garden.[39]

Like many authors before her, Du Cane worried that Japanese gardens would give way to Western modernity in time and was relieved to discover that Kyoto was an exception. Since she was inclined to interpret gardens such as Ogawa's as works of reinvigorated tradition, her preference for Kyoto made sense. Even though similar gardens were built in Tokyo, they were most visible in Okazaki around 1907/1908, since many new sites were just coming to life—in no small part due to Ogawa. In contrast, these types of gardens were much more dispersed in Tokyo. Instead, Hibiya Park, located in proximity to the emperor's palace and Tokyo Station, had just opened its gates in 1903 as the first Western park in Japan, followed by Martinet's Shinjuku Gyo-en three years later, apparently validating Du Cane's concerns about foreign influence encroaching on Far-Eastern horticulture.

In conclusion, Du Cane conveyed to her readers that garden tradition in Japan was not dead but had found an apt fresh expression. Du Cane did not introduce Ogawa explicitly, nor did she single out the neighborhood of Okazaki. Instead, she sought to sketch a general overview of horticulture without getting bogged down in the details. She assured her readership that Kyoto was the place that upheld Japanese traditions, while Western modernity had already conquered Tokyo. Her account invoked the binary between modern Tokyo and traditional Kyoto, which would only deepen in the following decades. The city fathers in Kyoto, however, tried to establish a more complex image of the ancient capital by quickly modernizing Kyoto while simultaneously using history to set it apart from other large towns in the country. The different understanding of Ogawa's gardens by Japanese and Western experts reflected this crucial difference in the interpretation of Kyoto. For Du Cane, these gardens were traditional; for her Japanese counterparts, they stood for a new naturalistic style.

39 Du Cane and Du Cane, 13.

The Garden Club of America in Japan

In 1935, the Garden Club of America came to Japan, and the new gardens were opened up to the Westerners, thus entering the limelight. Many scholars have recently analyzed this visit, as there were high stakes involved in terms of cultural diplomacy, and the opening up simultaneously shed light on the understanding of Japanese horticulture in transcultural terms.[40] On the occasion of the visit, the Japanese hosts produced high-quality brochures and books targeting their guests. Several other books also appeared aimed at a broader English-speaking readership that was drawn to the subject by the Garden Club's voyage.[41]

The American garden devotees group comprised around 90 members of various garden clubs around the country.[42] They all belonged to the Garden Club of America, founded in 1903. The delegation members were part of the upper class, and the newspaper *Asahi Shimbun* described them as "rich guests from the country of the dollar."[43] The significance of the visit for the Japanese side lay not in their guests' fortunes but in their social networks. Japanese officials hoped that instilling a feeling of goodwill for their country would help mitigate diplomatic friction. The US and Japan had entered a period of mutual distrust in the 1930s, mainly caused by the ongoing Japanese expansion into the Asian continent. The Imperial Army sought to create pretexts for further encroachments upon China. In 1931, it staged the so-called Mukden Incident, where two officers of the Imperial Army detonated light explosives on the rails of the Japanese state-owned South Manchurian Railway, then subsequently blamed Chinese warlords for sabotage. The Imperial Army took this "incident" as a pretext to occupy Manchuria and install a puppet state, which was not, however, internationally recognized. Japanese international relations had deteriorated from that moment, especially with the US.

While the group of the Garden Club was well-defined, an intricate web of institutions handled the organization on the Japanese side. At the heart of the efforts to ensure the visit's success in cultural diplomacy was the *Kokusai Bunka Shinkōkai*, the Association for the Promotion of International Culture.[44] With the backing of the Foreign Ministry, the Association was founded in 1934 as a private entity, one year before the Garden Club came to Japan. In 1933, Japan had withdrawn from the League of Nations in response to accusations from several states

40 See Katahira, 143–47; Kuitert, *Japanese Gardens and Landscapes*, 144–6; Pendleton "Submerged"; H. Suzuki, *Ogawa Jihei and His Times*, 219–35. Tagsold, *Spaces in Translation*, 36–38.

41 Kuck; Shiga et al.; Tamura.

42 Pendleton, "Submerged," 55.

43 *Asahi Shimbun*, "Doro no kuni."

44 Kuitert, *Japanese Gardens and Landscapes*, 144–45.

holding it responsible for the Mukden Incident.[45] The allegations were grounded on the findings of the Lytton Commission, which the League had dispatched to China to investigate the incident in 1931. Now, the Kokusai Bunka Shinkōkai aimed to enhance Japan's global reputation and tried to leverage the popularity of Japanese culture in the West for this purpose. Many of the Association's members were high-ranking politicians such as Count Konoe Fumimaro, who had served as President of the House of Peers since 1933 and would become prime minister in 1937. Along with Konoe, Tokugawa Iesato, the first post-Edo-period head of the former shogun family, greeted the members of the Garden Club as they disembarked the ship.[46] Tokugawa had initially invited the Garden Club in 1933 as president of the America-Japan Society.

The Kokusai Bunka Shinkōkai produced a lavish set of illustrated plates featuring the gardens the Club was to visit in Japan. The actual itinerary was more extensive in the end and included more items than the 21 plates of this book suggest. Several museum visits and receptions in the gardens of influential people were part of the program.[47] Nevertheless, the book remains fascinating, as it briefly describes the 21 gardens. More than half of the gardens on the list were built after 1868. Of the 21 sites, 15 were situated in Kyoto, among them many classic examples of the Muromachi period like the Daisen-in, the Silver Pavilion (*Gingaku-ji*), and the Ryōan-ji. The Rikugi-en was the only old *daimyō* garden in Tokyo included in the book.[48] Ogawa Jihei had designed four of the 11 modern gardens, all located in Kyoto. However, Murin-an was neither on the list of the Association's book nor part of the extra itinerary.[49]

Since the Japanese hosts saw the Club's visit as an opportunity to present their country in a positive light and convince their guests from the US of its peaceful intentions, they organized many garden parties, which offered abundant opportunities for introductions, chats, and polite discussions. These social and diplomatic functions favored the inclusion of the new gardens, since they were intentionally designed for such occasions and had owners who could easily host hundreds of guests. The Association's book introduced the classical gardens under the names of the associated temples or the proper terms for the places, like "Shugaku-in Imperial Garden." By contrast, the volume listed the new gardens according to their owners, regardless of the names they had been given. Thus, Tairyū Sansō, which Florence

45 On establishing the Kokusai Bunka Shinkōkai and its role in cultural diplomacy up to the end of World War II, see Abel, 81–106.

46 H. Suzuki, *Ogawa Jihei and His Times*, 219.

47 For the complete list of sites the Garden Club visited, see H. Suzuki, *Ogawa Jihei and His Times*, 222–23.

48 Kokusai Bunka Shinkōkai, plate 3.

49 H. Suzuki, *Ogawa Jihei and His Times*, 223.

Du Cane might have described two-and-a-half decades earlier, featured as "Plate XII: Mr. Ichida's Garden."

Another clue to understanding gardens throughout this booklet is the short introductions on the flip side of each plate and illustration. Here, the garden's name was given below the owner in brackets. A fact sheet concisely stated the location, the landscape architect, and the type and history of the garden before elaborating more details under the heading "Description." The first plate was dedicated to Mr. Hara's garden, one of three exceptions, where the table of contents added the proper name (Sankei-en). The book categorized it as a "Modern stroll landscape garden."[50] Most of the other post-Meiji gardens—though not all of them—were also subsumed under the category modern.

The visit by the Garden Club of America was not the diplomatic success that the Japanese had hoped for. American-Japanese relations could not be rectified so quickly, given Japan's aggressive imperialist foreign policy and the stationing of the Imperial Army on China's mainland. Only after World War II did the tour of 1935 indirectly help to deepen transpacific friendship. In 1960, on the 25th anniversary of their initial visit, the Japanese Consul General invited the Garden Club to come to Japan once again. In May 1961, 169 members flew to Tokyo for a two-week garden inspection tour.[51] The US and Japan were now allies in the Cold War, and the stakes for cultural diplomacy were considerably lower. Still, the Japanese hosts welcomed their guests hospitably and treated them to exceptional experiences, which proves that they did not take the tour lightly. The Crown Prince and his wife invited the club's members to the Imperial Gardens on May 11th and, on the following day, hosted a reception at the Imperial Palace featuring traditional court music. Former Prime Minister Yoshida Shigeru entertained the American guests in his personal garden. Furthermore, Prime Minister Ikeda Hayato hosted the final farewell party.[52] Yoshida Shigeru was the head of the welcome committee for the club, which underlined the importance of this occasion for Japanese foreign policy.[53] The Garden Club again visited Sankei-en, where an evening reception was held.[54] Unlike in 1935, the new itinerary focused much more on classical gardens. It did not include a single Ogawa garden. This reflected the dismissal of the Meiji and Taishō gardens in the post-war period, which I will discuss in more detail in the upcoming chapters. Nonetheless, the Garden Club's tour of 1961 is fascinating in its own right, even though most research has focused on the 1935 visit.

50 Kokusai Bunka Shinkōkai, plate 1.

51 See Pendleton, "The Creation" for a comprehensive account of the tour.

52 For the various events, see America–Japan Society.

53 America–Japan Society, 10.

54 *Yomiuri Shimbun*, "Sankei-en ni kaigai."

Books Accompanying the Garden Club's Visit

A couple of publications on Japanese gardens that had a lasting impact on framing the topic in the West accompanied the Garden Club of America tour. They not only transformed the Western notion of Japanese gardens; the Japanese discourse also adopted some of their main points—especially since most of the books were penned by Japanese authors. These authors knew the English discourse well and were aware that they had to deal with certain expectations from their readers. Most books written by Japanese authors rarely went beyond the Edo period in their discussion of garden history and thus did not mention the new gardens. The small booklet *Japanese Gardens,* which Tatsui Matsunosuke wrote for the *Tourist Library* series, is a clear example of this, even though it was published one year before the Garden Club of America came to Japan and was not directly related to the visit. The *Tourist Library* was a successful series that discussed supposedly traditional Japanese accomplishments specifically aimed at average anglophone readers. It was published by the Japan Travel Bureau, the state-run agency for tourism in Japan that worked to attract more foreigners. Volume 1 of the series dealt with the *Floral Art of Japan*, and one of the most eminent specialists in the field of *ikebana*, Nishikawa Issōtei, was its author. Tatsui's booklet was volume 5—volumes 2 to 4 were devoted to the art of Hiroshige, kimonos, and the tea ceremony.

Tatsui had a broad intellectual background, having studied literature, history, and architecture, and he regularly published on these subjects after graduating. In 1931, he became the head of the Tokyo High School for Landscape Architecture (*Tōkyō Kōtō Zōen Gakkō*), which was absorbed by the Tokyo University of Agriculture in 1942. In his booklet, Tatsui gave an overview of different periods up to the Edo era and the various elements that make up a Japanese garden but did not include contemporary garden art. It thus demonstrates the general tendencies in the Japanese discourse on garden history that emerged in the 1930s, which I will discuss in the next chapter. Furthermore, Tatsui favored earlier epochs over the Edo period. In the *Tourist Library* booklet, he focused on imperial villas of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, only briefly treating *daimyō* gardens. Ogawa's gardens were not discussed in detail. Murin-an merely made it into a long list of gardens in Kyoto without further explanation.[55] Sankei-en in Yokohama was not mentioned at all.

The most influential Western contribution to the ongoing discourse was doubtless Loraine Kuck's *One Hundred Kyoto Gardens*. Kuck had come to Japan in 1932 to learn about the famous gardens first-hand and lived in Kyoto until 1935. She penned a series of articles on famous Kyoto gardens for the *Japanese Advertiser*, which were edited into *One Hundred Kyoto Gardens* on the occasion of the Garden Club's visit.

55 Tatsui, 61.

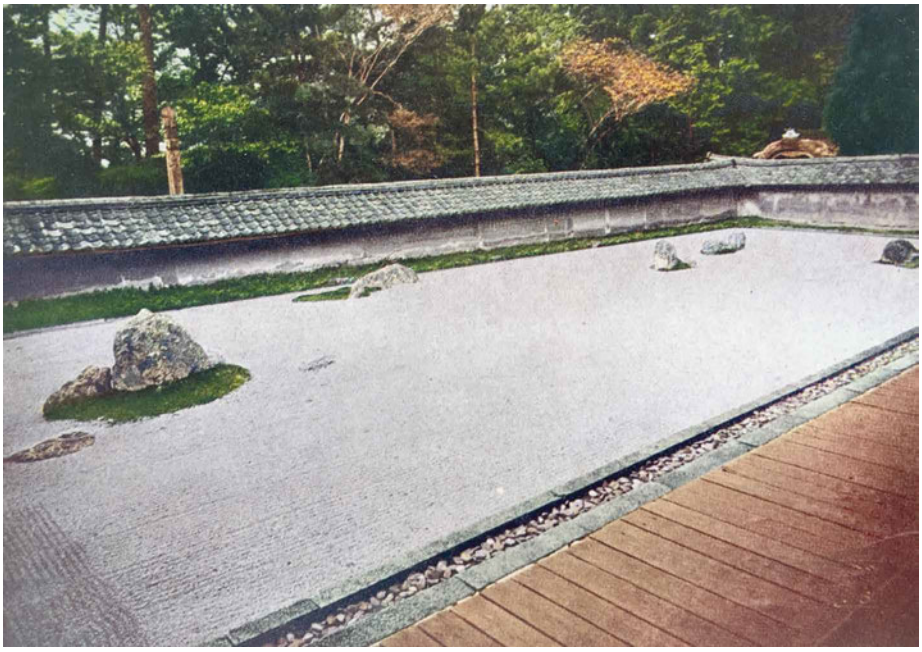

Figure 3.5. Kuck's 1935 book depicts the garden of Ryōan-ji Temple at the beginning of its global popularity. In the 1970s, the tile roof of the wall was replaced with shingles, considered to be more traditional. Loraine E. Kuck, *One Hundred Kyoto Gardens* (London: Kegan Paul, Trench, Trübner, 1935).

This book has been thoroughly analyzed in the last two decades, mainly because of its role in shaping the idea of Zen gardens (see Figure 3.5).[56] As Kuitert already showed in 1988, Kuck was one of the first to put forward the new interpretation that the stone garden of the Ryōan-ji Temple was a "Zen garden."[57] Kuck had been in contact with Suzuki Daisetsu, who strongly argued that Zen Buddhism was the foundation of Japanese culture.[58] Through Suzuki, whose theories Western scholars

56 Kuitert, *Themes, Scenes and Taste*, 150; Yamada, 202–3;

57 Kuitert, *Themes, Scenes and Taste*, 150.

58 Suzuki Daisetsu saw Zen Buddhism as a crucial force in forging Japanese aesthetics since the Muromachi period in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries. He had initially been sent to the West as a member of the Japanese delegation of the World's Parliament of Religions. This huge congress was part of the 1893 Columbian World's Fair of Chicago and sought to define the canon of world religions. As Judith Snodgrass has convincingly shown in her book *Presenting Japanese Buddhism to the West: Orientalism, Occidentalism, and the Columbian Exposition*, Japanese Buddhists took this conference as an opportunity to prove their importance in the Japanese religious landscape after the new Meiji government tried to suppress Buddhism in favor of the newly construed state religion Shintō. Suzuki stayed in the United States after the World Parliament ended. During his roughly 15 years in the West, Suzuki developed a fine sense of convincingly presenting his Zen brand to Western readers. His interpretation of Zen Buddhism became so predominant in the Western understanding that Imken Prohl coined the term "Suzuki-Zen."

widely accepted, Kuck concluded that the dominant historical interpretations of the Ryōan-ji's stone garden as a depiction of a Chinese legend were wrong. She did not believe that this stone garden was about a tiger mother carrying her cubs over a rough stream:

> Minds unable to grasp this inner meaning have invented a number of explanations. One of these is the tiger story, the legend that the sand represents a flowing river and the stones a mother tiger swimming it with her cubs. [...] But students of real understanding realize that the aim of the designer was something far more subtle and esoteric than any of these.[59]

The idea that Zen Buddhism inspired Japanese gardens had been in the air for some time, and Kuck widely popularized it. Suzuki Daisetsu's popularity after World War II notably did much to legitimize her claim. Gradually, the notion that Japanese gardens were about Zen and symbolism took over in the West and became the dominant interpretation of Japanese garden history after World War II.

Kuck did not just fundamentally change the general understanding of Japanese gardens in the West by inventing Zen gardens; she further introduced her readers to Ogawa Jihei. She established a different way of interpreting Ogawa that challenged the notion that he was not part of the development of the Japanese garden tradition. Unlike most Japanese garden historians and later Western experts on the topic who disconnected Ogawa and his contemporary garden designers from the historical narrative of Japanese gardens, Kuck judged him to be firmly embedded in tradition, though she admired his fresh approach to the old models:

> But there is no hint of foreign technique in the construction of these new gardens. They show their direct descent from their predecessors of the old palaces and temples. But the old pattern has been expanded and made flexible, as the new age has thrown off the stylized restraints of the Tokugawa age, while it clings still to the fundamental feeling for nature.[60]

This description of Ogawa and his contribution to landscape design came at the end of Kuck's general introduction to Japanese garden history. She thus presented Ogawa as the rightful heir of a long tradition—and as someone who continued it

Suzuki created a new form of Zen Buddhism, though he argued that his interpretation was firmly rooted in Zen history. In 1909, Suzuki returned to Japan and became a professor of philosophy at Kyoto's Buddhist Ōtani University in 1921. His writings on Zen Buddhism became foundational for a new interpretation of this Buddhist school and its relation to Japanese culture. See Prohl, 41–42.

59 Kuck, 111.

60 Kuck, 28.

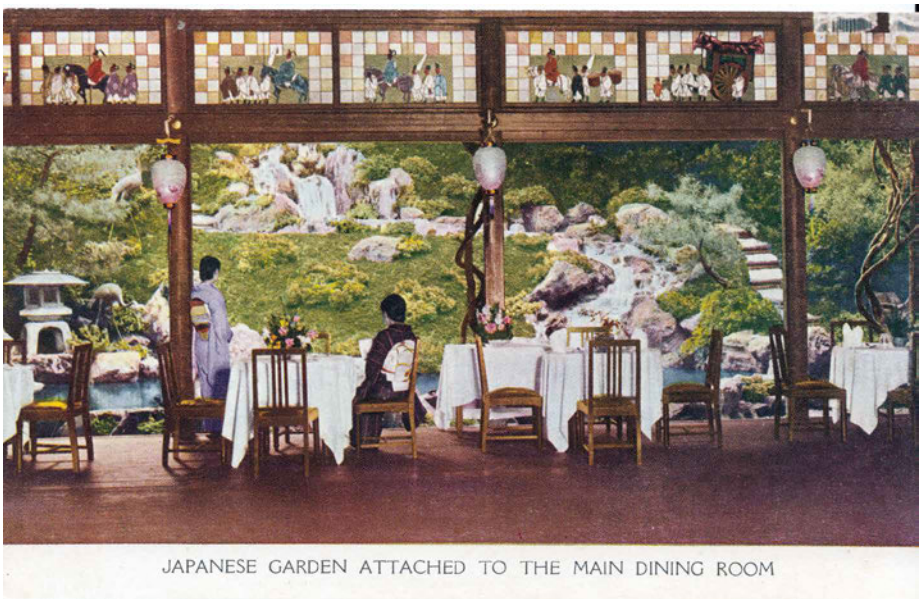

Figure 3.6. A rare image of the former garden at the Miyako Hotel, which overlooks Okazaki and was popular among foreigners visiting Kyoto. Guests could enjoy the view of a Japanese garden while sitting in the Western-style dining room. Postcard from the author's collection.

while introducing new techniques. As an example of his artistic expression, Kuck introduced a couple of gardens in Okazaki to her readers, starting with the one attached to the Miyako Hotel (see Figure 3.6). This garden was the first entry of chapter 3 on the area of the Nanzen-ji Temple. The garden at the Miyako Hotel was the first one that affluent foreign tourists would notice during their stay, since this hotel was a preferred venue for their ventures into the old capital:

> An excellent modern garden has recently been completed by this hotel. The last work of Jihei Ogawa, completed after his death, it embodies all the skill and experience of his long life of creative garden making.[61]

Here, categorizing the place as "modern" is noteworthy, since it seems to be at odds with the assumption that Ogawa was indeed a traditional Japanese landscape designer. However, for Kuck, the categories "modern" and "Japanese" were not mutually exclusive. Thus, she anticipated the reading that would become standard much later, which saw the Meiji and Taishō gardens as part of the emergence of a genuinely Japanese form of modernity. While Kuck's emphasis on Zen gardens and their symbolic heritage later worked against the appreciation of Ogawa as a

61 Kuck, 42.

Figure 3.7. A flamboyant garden designed by the owner himself. Tamura describes the Western-style building as "Tudor-Gothic." The garden seemingly blends various styles from Japanese and Korean history. Tsuyoshi Tamura, *Art of the Landscape Garden in Japan* (Tokyo: Kokusai Bunka Shinkōkai, 1935).

Japanese garden master, her discussion of him nonetheless included his work in the historical canon.

The Kokusai Bunka Shinkōkai also commissioned a book on Japanese gardens of its own accord for the upcoming Garden Club visit. Tamura Tsuyoshi authored this volume entitled *Art of the Landscape Garden in Japan*. Tamura had studied forestry at the Tokyo Imperial University (now University of Tokyo) in 1915, where he was appointed a lecturer four years later. From 1922 to 1924, he traveled through the West to study national parks, a field he would engage with throughout his career.[62] Besides introducing and promoting national parks in Japan, Tamura was also a key figure in the renewal of private gardens in the 1920s.[63] Unlike Tatsui, Tamura included many contemporary gardens in his book. After deliberating on the essence, history, and characteristics of Japanese gardens over roughly the first 80 pages, Tamura went on to portray many historical gardens. In the section on "Contemporary Gardens," he first introduced 15 parks and gardens in Tokyo plus Sankei-en in Yokohama, then another six in Kyoto (see Figure 3.7). His solid interest in these contemporary gardens was undoubtedly due to the fact that he himself had designed one of them in Tokyo.[64]

62 Havens, 56.
63 Ichikawa, 497.
64 Tamura, 182.

Nonetheless, Tamura presented a diverse range of gardens and landscape architects in Tokyo. In stark contrast, five of the six examples for Kyoto lay in Okazaki and were built by Ogawa Jihei. Here, Tamura stressed several times that the patrons decided on the landscape design, and Ogawa executed their wishes, as in the case of Murin-an: "The actual work was carried out by Gardener Uyeji (Mr. Jibei Ogawa) [sic], the predecessor of the current Uyeji, who well realized the high ideal of the master [Yamagata Aritomo]."[65] Still, Tamura's esteem for new gardens differed from that of many other Japanese authors of this era, as we will see in the next chapter. Tamura's prolonged stay in the West and his endeavors to renew gardens in Japan led him to insights that differed from his less open-minded colleagues.

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65 Tamura, 186.

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4. The Nation and Japanese Gardens—From the Taishō Period to the End of World War II

Abstract: Chapter 4 argues that a new approach to evaluating gardens took shape in Japan, distinct from that in the West. In the 1920s and 1930s, garden history started to emerge as an academic field, with the primary aim of challenging Western interpretations of Japanese horticulture that were often influenced by Orientalist attitudes. Instead, Japanese garden historians argued that these gardens could only be fully understood by the Japanese and that Western authors like Josiah Conder had frequently misread them. However, this discourse primarily centered on historic Kyoto gardens, with less attention given to the newer sites that Ogawa Jihei and his contemporaries designed. The most ancient gardens were included in national heritage lists to protect them, stressing their importance for constructing a national identity.

Keywords: Satō Akira; Harigaya Kanekichi; Sakuteiki; Tanimura Shōhei

During the first decades of the twentieth century, the interpretation of gardens in Japan followed a path that eventually excluded the designs of Ogawa and others from the pantheon of *real* Japanese gardens. While Yokoi and Ozawa still had a broad and inclusive understanding of horticulture, by the 1920s and 1930s, garden historians had grown increasingly hostile toward most gardens created after 1600. The *daimyō* and Meiji gardens did not fare well in their accounts of Japanese horticulture. Ogawa's naturalism clashed with their definition of the features that made Japanese gardens so unique. Instead, they acclaimed the earlier periods of Japanese history, notably the Heian and Muromachi eras, as the peak of garden evolution. Simple designs, such as the stone garden of Ryōan-ji or the gardens of the Katsura Imperial Villa—built in Kyoto during the early Edo period, yet under the patronage of the *tennō* family rather than a *daimyō*—now attracted the bulk of scholarly attention (see Figure 4.1). Even though a general wave of patriotism fueled this shift, the popularity of these two gardens was paradoxically also due to Western experts' interest in them.[1]

1 For Katsura, see Inoue; Yamada has discussed the rising interest in the stone garden of Ryōan-ji. See Yamada, 105–84.

Tagsold, Christian. *Turning Gardens in Japan into Japanese Gardens: Nation, Nature, Heritage, and Modernity since the 1890s*. Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2025.
DOI: 10.5117/9789048563791_CH04

Figure 4.1. A famous view of the gardens at Katsura Imperial Villa. The lantern in the foreground symbolizes a lighthouse. The buildings on the site do not dominate the garden but are tucked away among the trees in the background. Photograph by the author.

Nevertheless, these new historians and experts argued that Japanese gardens were essentially unintelligible to Westerners. According to them, the gardens' specific relation to nature and their subtle aesthetics reflected the character of the Japanese people and were thus opaque to Western expertise. The main point is that by rejecting authors like Conder, the Japanese garden historians ultimately created a space impervious to Orientalist reasoning and discourses. This strategic move helped the Japanese experts regain control over the horticulture discourse. To this end, they adopted a stance that was widely endorsed and propagated by intellectuals in the 1930s—one that was increasingly patriotic and critical of Western modernity. Harry D. Harootunian has vividly discussed how this patriotic stance manifested itself at the 1942 symposium *Kindai no chōkoku* (Overcome the Modern) held in Kyoto, a key example of this Japan-centric interpretation of East–West relations. Like the garden experts who rejected Western theories on what they considered to be "their" topic, the symposium's presenters expressed an anti-colonialist stance. Their sentiments, however, were also rooted in imperialist ideology and notions of Japanese superiority, eventually employed to rationalize countless atrocities in the Pacific War that cost the lives of millions. Discourses on Japanese cultural uniqueness in the realm of horticulture likewise followed this imperialist ideology and fueled ultra-patriotic feelings of superiority.

The anti-colonialist strategy was not only undermined by associations with a tragic historical outcome. The Japanese intellectuals were also trapped in a nationalist interpretation of horticulture that Western experts had heavily influenced. Therefore, Japanese experts inherited Western epistemes for garden history in constructing a garden genealogy. They found themselves able to fend off Western garden Orientalism solely through claims to authenticity, which ironically were substantiated by the Western logic of garden nationalism.

Garden History in Service of the State

The history of gardens in Japan only fully established itself in academic circles during the 1930s. Prior to that, garden history did not operate entirely in a scientific sense, nor was its goal to outline a specific *national* style. Although Ozawa Keijirō and Yokoi Tokifuyu were essential precursors in the 1890s, they were both pioneers in the field, and their horticulture studies could not turn to other contemporary authors. Instead, they relied on their own exegeses of written historical sources and visits to historical gardens. As Stefan Schweizer has shown, garden history in Europe also came into its own as a branch of art history quite late in the game and had to overcome many obstacles before being acknowledged as a worthwhile subfield.[2] Ozawa's long-running series in *Kokka* suggests Japanese garden history's proximity to art history. Yet unlike Germany, where art historians were among the first to discuss gardens and parks, most garden historians in Japan had a different background: they had studied landscape design and were thus well versed in Western landscape theory. Only rarely did art historians enter the field.

By the 1930s, universities and high schools had institutionalized landscape architecture as well as gardening through courses and degrees, and the grasp of history became more firm than before. Landscape designers educated in the new system started discussing gardening as specifically Japanese art, debating periodization and weighing periods of Japanese history against each other with a strong predilection for pre-Edo eras. As a result of their Western training, they clearly understood what it is that set gardening in Japan apart from its Western counterpart, carving out a discourse that became increasingly independent of Western insights. Although Conder's writings were still relevant, a corpus of books and articles with its own set of questions emerged. Still, the Western episteme of art and garden history—with its preference for timelines, genealogies, and epochs and its reverence for everything ancient—permeated the Japanese discourse.

A critical milestone for landscape architecture and garden history in Japan was the establishment of the Japanese Garden Society (*Nihon Teien Kyōkai*), which

2 Schweizer, *Die Erfindung*.

published the journal *Teien* from 1919 onwards.[3] The society helped solidify Japanese landscape designers' identity as a distinct group and further canonize their discourse. The most prominent of the society's founding members and editors was probably Honda Seiroku. Honda laid out the first Western park in Japan, Hibiya Park, near the Imperial Palace. He had studied forestry in Germany for one-and-a-half years, and this experience of Europe influenced his mapping of the park.[4] In 1915, he planned the Meiji Shrine with his students Hongo Takanori and Uehara Keiji—a significant feat, as this park would play a prominent role in defining the landscape of modern Tokyo. From 1916 onwards, Honda lectured on landscape design at the Tokyo University of Agriculture, while his former students Tamura Tsuyoshi, Hongo Takanori, and Uehara Keiji gave courses on horticultural history.[5] These three were also co-editors of *Teien,* along with several others.

Tamura Tsuyoshi, in particular, became the journal's primary author and had published 138 articles by 1945. The second most prolific author was Tatsui Matsunosuke. Although he was not part of the initial editorial team, he wrote 101 articles for the journal. Tatsui first studied history, literature, and architecture, then began specializing in gardens during his master's studies. As I have discussed in the previous chapter, both authors penned English books on Japanese gardens in the mid-1930s. In 1934, Tatsui was entrusted to write a book on *Japanese Gardens* to be translated and published in English, and the Kokusai Bunka Shinkōkai approached Tamura to write a book on the *Art of the Landscape Garden in Japan* for the visit of the Garden Club of America in 1935. By then, Tamura and Tatsui had already established themselves among the leading garden historians. As Kuitert has noted, Tatsui's educational background in historiography and literary studies gave him an especially firm grasp of historical sources.[6] Thus, *Teien*'s two principal authors were the ones to present Japan's garden history to an anglophone readership. As it came into its own, the Japanese discourse was not only able to integrate anglophone voices but also confidently challenge them where necessary.

Over the years, *Teien* became immersed in the evolving ultra-nationalism of the times. From the mid-1930s onwards, the term *nihon* (Japan, Japanese) appeared more frequently, and from 1941–1945 authors used it nearly three times as often as between 1919 and 1923.[7] In the same vein, *teien* (garden) progressively replaced *kōen*.[8] These

3 Baba and Suzuki.

4 Kuitert, *Japanese Gardens and Landscapes*, 255.

5 Baba and Suzuki, 39.

6 Kuitert, *Japanese Gardens and Landscape*, 140. Kuitert's assertion, however, that Tatsui was the first to introduce historical epochs into garden history seems to downplay Yokoi's much earlier work, which also categorized Japanese gardens according to historical epochs.

7 Baba and Suzuki, 41. In the late 1920s and early 1930s, authors used the term *nihon* less often than in the first phase, so the increased use after 1941 seems all the more striking.

8 Baba and Suzuki.

Figure 4.2. Yamate Park, referred to here as Yokohama Park, was built in 1870. The Western residents of the city desired a park next to their homes on the so-called Bluff. Japanese citizens soon came to appreciate the park as well, helping to introduce the concept of a park as a public sphere. Postcard from the author's collection.

two terms signified the difference between Japanese gardens (*teien*) and Western parks (*kōen*), although they did not necessarily correspond to differences in size, since several surviving *daimyō teien* are far more extensive than many *kōen*. Nor did the terms correspond to the differences between public and private use common in most Western languages. Instead, their crucial difference was one of style. The term *kōen* had come into use in the late Meiji era and semantically pointed towards the public (*kō*) through its first character—surprisingly, the term *teien* was not much older. In the mid-Meiji period, Ozawa Keijirō invented this word to discuss gardens in his essays.[9] The distinction between these two words did not lie in a long-standing etymology of *teien* compared to the newly coined *kōen* but in what both denoted. Parks catered more towards the masses in their layout than *teien,* but *teien* could be public too (see Figure 4.2). When the Meiji government created the first *kōen* in 1873, it was by transforming the gardens of Buddhist temples into public parks.[10] The fundamental difference between *teien* and *kōen* was that the

9 Inada, 82.

10 Ono Ryōhei has argued that the administration initially created *kōen* (public parks) in 1873 to help register former temple land whose ownership structure remained unclear after the Restoration. Although the new land tax reform was the primary context for clarifying land ownership, introducing the new term *kōen* also signaled that a new understanding of this land and its social function was taking shape. See R. Ono, 12–13.

former were laid out in Japanese style while the latter adhered to Western gardening. Their difference thus signified a cultural binary for extensive gardens and parks. In the case of small private gardens, *teien* remained the proper term, regardless of Japanese or Western style.

The shift of the journal *Teien* towards "Japanese" and "gardens" and away from "Western" and "parks" corresponded to a broader intellectual shift during the 1920s and 1930s. Patriotism superseded an open-minded outlook and interest in (Western) modernity in every field. Horticultural studies were no exception. On the contrary, they legitimized the sweeping ultra-nationalism that unfolded in the 1930s. Within this process, the Japanese garden historians sought to rid their discourse of Western interference and inoculate their field against Orientalist interventions.

Gardens as Anticolonial Spaces

Trained at Tokyo Imperial University in landscape design, Satō Akira was one of the early scholars to examine the Western appreciation of Japanese gardens deeply. The young scholar had just turned 30 when he published the paper "Japanese Gardens Seen by Foreigners" in 1933.[11] After graduation, he worked for Saga Prefecture and then went to China.[12] There, the puppet government hired Satō to work in Shinkyō (Changchun), the capital of Manchukuo, which the Japanese had set up as a supposedly independent state. In reality, Manchukuo was a tightly controlled satellite, and Satō's role in the administration was typical evidence of this. After the war, Satō became a well-known landscape architecture professor with excellent international connections. Perhaps precisely because of his excessive patriotism, his prewar writings served as one of the starting points in the attempt to define gardening as a practice that Westerners could never understand. In the introduction of his paper, Satō first enthusiastically praised Japanese gardens and expressed great confidence in the art:

> When Westerners visit Japan for the first time, they are always struck with admiration for its landscape. Hills, mountains, and rivers stretch across the country, and they praise Japanese culture. Here, the Japanese garden miniaturizes this beautiful scenery, embodying an infinite spirit within a confined space. The garden enhances the deep reverence for nature, and words cannot fully capture what can only be created by those nurtured in this breathtaking environment.[13]

11 A. Satō, "Gaikokujin."
12 A. Satō, *Hyakusaifu*, 194–202.
13 A. Satō, "Gaikokujin," 88–89.

According to Satō, Western observers were not only excited about Japanese gardens but also prone to misinterpret them.[14] To support his argument, Satō shifted his focus to the practical task of thoroughly reviewing every Western text on the subject that he could access. Satō wanted to analyze to what degree foreigners had been able to grasp the "essence" of Japanese gardens and where they misunderstood them. In the opening paragraph, Satō skimmed accounts of Western scholars and travelers during the Edo period. He started with Erasmus Francisci, a German scholar of the seventeenth century, although Francisci had only written about Chinese and Indian gardens—without ever having traveled to Asia.[15] The bulk of Satō's paper was concerned with modern authors who had been to Japan and explicitly wrote about Japanese gardens. Satō discussed well-known writers like the American Morse; the British Conder, Hearn, and the Du Cane sisters; as well as the German Marie Luise Gothein, whose all-encompassing *Geschichte der Gartenkunst* (History of Garden Art) had treated not only Western horticulture but also included India, China, and Japan.[16] Furthermore, Satō examined many lesser-known authors on the subject, most of whom have been practically forgotten today. For example, he had read the writings of German Fritz Ries, who built one of the earliest Japanese gardens in Germany for the Stadtgarten of Karlsruhe in 1913 and reflected on the subject in a book with Franz Sales Meyer.[17]

Overall, Satō's effort was surprisingly comprehensive for the time. He was able to identify many books that mentioned Japanese gardens, most likely with good advice from his teachers. In that regard, Satō's paper corresponded to what Conder had done for the Japanese garden: he gave a comprehensive overview of Western accounts of Japanese gardens. Instead of applying the Linnéan episteme derived from biology as Conder had done to classify every element of Japanese gardens, Satō followed a chronological genealogy. As a result, the paper becomes overly descriptive to the point of being dull, since it lacks a deeper theoretical discussion of the Western discourse. Nonetheless, it gave readers a broad overview of Western authors and their assessments. In this sense, Satō inverted the Orientalist gaze. Western authors who had objectified Japanese gardens to present a foreign and exotic culture were now turned into objects themselves.

Satō's main concern was a reckoning with Josiah Conder's *Landscape Gardening in Japan*, published 40 years before his paper. Satō freely admitted that Conder

14 A. Satō, "Gaikokujin," 89.

15 A. Satō, "Gaikokujin," 89–90.

16 Gothein, 345–62.

17 Sales Meyer and Ries, 39–42. As the authors admit in the preface of the revised edition of 1911, the first edition of their book in 1905 had been criticized for not including enough material on Japanese gardens. In 1911, however, Sales Meyer and Ries added more on Japan and included an image of Ozawa Keijirō's garden at the Japan–British Exhibition 1910. See Sales Meyer and Ries, 41. On Ries' garden in Karlsruhe, see Schmitt, 66–67.

had written the first scientific account on Japanese gardens and had developed exciting ideas, which explains why many of the other writers referenced him extensively.[18] However, as Katahira Miyuki has discussed, Satō ultimately rejected Conder's conclusions on the Japanese garden.[19] Satō mainly criticized Conder for basing his account on garden treatises from the Edo period. These treatises did not teach Japanese horticulture in a way Satō deemed agreeable. By the 1930s, Japanese scholars increasingly found fault with Edo horticulture and turned their attention to the Heian and Muromachi periods.[20] Therefore, Satō blamed Conder, in a sense, for not having foreseen this shift in garden-historical fashions some four decades earlier.

Satō's paper was merely the first step towards refuting Conder in Japan. In 1935, the then 29-year-old scholar Harigaya Kanekichi published his paper "Conder's View of Japanese Gardens" in *Teien*. After graduating from the Tokyo Imperial University, Harigaya taught Western garden history at the Tokyo Metropolitan High School of Horticulture between 1932 and 1940. In the post-war period, Harigaya would become a well-known garden historian. As Katahira has argued, Harigaya sharpened Satō's critique of Conder's reliance on Edo treatises,[21] whose misconceptions, Harigaya contended, led Conder to misapprehend the artistic value and essence of Japanese gardens. Harigaya thus implicitly signaled that it was up to Japanese scholars to rectify such misconceptions, which were highly influential in the Western discourse, thus undermining its findings.

As it were, the garden historians were emulating the strategy of Japanese art historians a couple of decades earlier. As Satō Dōshin and Inaga Shigemi have pointed out, in the second half of the Meiji era, Japanese art historians started to fend off Western appropriation of Japanese artists and artworks.[22] For the Japonistes in Paris, *ukiyo-e* prints were one of the most influential Japanese art forms. Since Paris was the cultural center of the West at the time, this preference radiated to the artistic periphery in Europe and North America. *Ukiyo-e* artists like Hokusai, and later on Hiroshige and Utamaro, became emblematic figures of Japanese art in the West. At the 1900 world's fair in Paris, however, the Japanese experts sought to redefine Japanese art and put Western colleagues in their place. The extensive official publication *Histoire de l'art du Japon* that accompanied the Japanese pavilion barely mentioned Hokusai or *ukiyo-e*. Instead, it focused on old aristocratic art and devoted a meager four pages to "École Ouki Yoé" of the Edo period.[23] *Ukiyo-e*

18 A. Satō, "Gaikokujin," 94.
19 Katahira, 37–39.
20 Katahira, 39.
21 Katahira, 38–39.
22 D. Satō, 153–60; Inaga, 2–3.
23 Tronquois et al., 207–11; see Inaga, 2–3 for a discussion of the *Histoire de l'art du Japon*.

had been for the masses: merchants, artisans, and samurai. Meiji art aficionados, however, looked down on them. Instead, they sought to define Japanese art via artworks made for aristocratic audiences. This led to a bifurcation between Western and Japanese interpretations of Japanese art history. As Satō Dōshin has pointed out, although *ukiyo-e* were quintessential for Western experts, their Eastern colleagues snubbed both the art and the Western connoisseurs.[24] At the same time, this dismissal allowed them to protect their own *genuine* and *authentic* discourse from Orientalist Western interpretations.

Three decades later, garden historians replicated this strategic move. Once again, they downgraded the artistic accomplishments of the Edo period, with the *daimyō* gardens suffering the same fate as *ukiyo-e*. Satō Akira, Harigaya Kanekichi, and their colleagues carved out a discursive space inaccessible to Western imperial knowledge. Compared to the art historian's emancipation from the West around 1900, the garden historian's strategy was more directly fueled by the widespread patriotism of the 1930s. Japan around 1900 was patriotic and on the verge of becoming a major imperialist power in the East. In the 1930s, this patriotism turned towards rejecting Western modernity even though modernist design persisted, for example, in crafts. Concurrently, discourses on art and gardens helped legitimize the Imperial Army's encroachments into mainland China.[25] Satō's and Harigaya's papers were not simply innocent scholarly texts but had a broader meaning in this context of reorienting Japanese garden history towards a rejection of the West.

The Japanese intellectuals' control over the discourse on horticulture in Japan extended into Western languages. In 1928, Harada Jirō published his book *Japanese Gardens,* which had initially appeared as a series of articles in the well-known English art journal *The Studio*.[26] As we have seen in the last chapter, Tatsui Matsunosuke, who had already published a couple of papers and a book on the topic in Japanese, published an English volume on *Japanese Gardens* in 1934. In 1935, Tamura Tsuyoshi penned *Art of the Landscape Garden in Japan* on the occasion of the Garden Club of America's visit to Japan. Finally, art historian Yoshida Tetsurō broadly discussed gardens in his 1935 German book *Das japanische Wohnhaus* (The Japanese Residential Building). In these publications, the authors likewise claimed that Japanese gardens were close to incomprehensible for foreigners. For example, Tamura introduced his book with this observation:

> Recently the Japanese garden has come to attract the serious attention of the world, and many foreign students, including the greatest of garden specialists,

24 D. Satō, 91.
25 D. Satō, 179.
26 Katahira, 79.

> come to this country to study it. We have, therefore, many opportunities now of hearing directly from these visitors what they think about our garden. It seems that their frank and almost unanimous opinion is that the Japanese garden is difficult to study. We also notice that most of the recent books on gardens, in whatever language they may be written, allot at least a chapter to the Japanese landscape art. But when we read through these, we cannot but have a feeling that few of them have, at least from the Japanese point of view, truly interpreted its spirit.[27]

Tamura then moves on to the fashion for Japanese gardens in the West, which was one of the main reasons for the Garden Club of America's visit to Japan. However, the Japanese gardens in the West did not please him at all. For Tamura, they betrayed a lack of understanding and were "wrong imitations or arbitrary adaptions" that had "something lacking."[28] This led Tamura to conclude "that after all this peculiar art of ours has not been rightly comprehended by Westerners."[29]

With the tide in Japan turning against Conder and the Western authors, as well as the harsh verdicts like Tamura's, Western dominance over the discourse was being overturned. By the 1920s and 1930s, Western authors had to compete with Japanese garden historians writing in English and German. It thus became increasingly necessary for them to legitimate their expertise—much more so than in the 1890s—and convince their readers that they were on equal standing with their Japanese colleagues. A brief visit to Japan hardly sufficed anymore. One had to have been there for a couple of years and, ideally, been in contact with a Japanese garden master. Sylvia and Samuel Newsom are typical examples of the new generation of Westerners studying gardens in Japan and the effort it now took to contribute to the discourse. The couple arrived in Japan in 1934 and stayed for five years.[30] Samuel Newsom published his book *Japanese Garden Construction* in 1939 and went on to become an influential voice in the discourse after World War II.

Although the garden discourse became increasingly professionalized in Japan and more self-confident in the face of Western accounts, the authors were yet to create an independent reasoning and language. A key element in legitimizing Japanese horticulture was setting up a proper timeline and genealogy of gardening. A long and unbroken history would make the gardens something unique worldwide, and the endeavor seemed promising, since many of them were of ancient provenance.

27 Tamura, 3. Tamura reiterated a similar critique in Japanese in 1937, see Katahira, 139–40.

28 Tamura, 3

29 Tamura.

30 Kuitert, *Japanese Gardens and Landscapes*, 146.

Turning Gardens into National Heritage

The formation of garden history and heritage politics went hand in hand. After the Meiji Restoration in 1868, the protection of historical monuments and artifacts commenced quickly. In 1871, the government issued the Protection of Antiquities Order, which listed 31 moveable objects and put them under special protection.[31] Next, in 1872, the government surveyed the historical treasures of shrines and temples. These early steps were mainly directed against Western interest in Japan's heritage. As a result of Japonism in Europe and North America, Japanese historical objects became attractive prizes for Western art dealers. Treasure hunters like the Parisian Michel Sichel traveled to Japan, cheaply bought up cultural artifacts, and then sold them with an exorbitant markup back home.[32] Meanwhile, former *daimyō* and *bushi* often had to sell off many of their belongings, since the Restoration had taken away their sources of income. The Protection of Antiquities Order was the first, albeit very limited, attempt to curb the exportation of precious artifacts.[33] As Christine Guth has pointed out, the 1872 listing of the religious treasures not only created an overview of the objects in possession of various institutions but also helped officials select objects for international displays like the world's fair of Vienna in 1873.[34] Besides, with the help of the list, the Ministry of Education was able to equip the Museum of the Ministry of Education (today's Tokyo National Museum)—the first and foremost of Japan's museums, which opened in 1872—with exhibition items now regarded as art.[35]

The example of the West, which began protecting its heritage in the nineteenth century, prompted Japanese governments to look deeper into these matters. A civilized nation needed to construe and anchor a national historical narrative in material heritage. Only then could imperial subjects and foreigners experience history. With the rapidly changing outlook of society, it soon became apparent that heritage protection could help to legitimate two inextricably linked pillars of national identity that the new government had identified: the *tennō* and the freshly instituted State Shintō, which heritage now revolved around. Ancient imperial tombs were a characteristic type of site that was quickly protected. Known as *kofun*, they had the shape of tumuli and testified to the early reign of the imperial family. The fear of tomb raiders destroying the *kofun* and desecrating the former emperors' graves was a trigger for early heritage legislation.[36]

31 Akagawa, 48.
32 On Sichel's endeavors in Japan, see Put.
33 Pai, 58.
34 Guth, 107.
35 Mitsui, 48.
36 Pai, 61–65.

Gradually, the law provided better protection for national heritage. In 1895, the politicians and citizens of Kyoto lobbied for the stricter protection of historic sites, obviously driven by the changing cityscape of the old capital itself.[37] In 1897, the Law for the Preservation of Ancient Shrines and Temples was enacted, probably inspired by Kyoto's example.[38] It protected the architectural structure of the shrines and temples and included the historical treasures in their possession. The law thus indirectly preserved the gardens of shrines and temples, too.[39] In 1919, the Law for the Preservation of Historic Sites, Places of Scenic Beauty, and Natural Monuments added natural sites to the heritage list. This law and the general focus of heritage preservation on the *tennō* family produced a category of profoundly ahistorical national heritage sites that seem to contradict our contemporary understanding of "heritage." Each major stop the Meiji *tennō* made on his travels throughout Japan transformed into a heritage site under the category "*Meiji tennō seiseki*" (sacred sites of the Meiji tennō).[40] Because in the early Meiji era, the *tennō* had traveled through every part of Japan to take possession of the country symbolically, the number of these places abounded. As a result, a pillar inscribed with the significance conferred by the *tennō*'s one-time visit decorated unremarkable inns, massive temples, and all sorts of spots (see Figure 4.3). They highlight the role of imperial patriotism in constructing heritage during the prewar decades. Some of the pillars even came to decorate historic Japanese gardens such as the Kyū Shiba Rikyū Garden in Tokyo, a former *daimyō* garden that the Ministry of the Imperial Household acquired in 1875, or in a rear part of the Byōdo-in temple garden in Uji, Kyōto Prefecture, which in 1994 became a World Heritage Site as part of the Historic Monuments of Ancient Kyoto.

More importantly for this book, gardens could now be preserved as heritage under the categories of 1919.[41] Many old gardens in Kyoto, especially those attached to temples, were soon registered. By 1930, more than ten gardens were designated as heritage sites in the old capital: about half of them from ancient periods and the rest from the Edo period. Almost 20 other places had been similarly preserved throughout the rest of Japan—again with a strong focus on the Edo period. Once again, heritage included sites that only tenuously linked to history. The category "natural site" allowed for the conservation of relatively new Meiji-era parks (*kōen*), which, as their name suggests, were subject to Western influence. Heritage lists, however, did not include these parks for their outstanding designs but for other

37 Tsuchikane, 128.

38 Mitsui, 41.

39 Hirasawa, 123.

40 On the Meiji tennō seiseki, see I. Kitahara, "Tōykō-fu ni okeru," and Ogasawara and Deshigawara, 18–20.

41 Hirasawa 121–23.

Figure 4.3. A pillar next to the entry gate of the Tōdai-ji temple in Nara commemorates the visit of the Meiji *tennō*. The inscription on the right indicates that the pillar was erected in 1933. Photograph by the author.

reasons. For example, Nara Park was only established in 1880 and was primarily listed because it connected many other heritage sites in the old capital. Furthermore, the famous population of deer had made it into a favorite tourist spot.[42] It was thus less about the park itself but its function as a natural corridor between the ancient temples and its picturesque touristic value.

By 1940, the number of protected gardens and parks had roughly doubled. Shiga Prefecture, next to Kyoto, became another critical area. Some temple gardens on Mount Hie were protected there, along with others on the banks of Lake Biwa. Although the focus in the period up to 1940 was mainly on temple gardens, some of

42 A Nara prefectural homepage claims that the classical collection of poems, *Man'yōshū*, mentions deer populating the site as early as the eighth century. See Nara-ken Sangyō-bu Kankō-kyoku Nara Kōen-shitsu. The deer might also be a possible allusion to the Mrigadava (Deer Park) in Sarnath, India, where Buddha gave his first sermon. However, excavations at Sarnath only began in the nineteenth century under English colonial rule, and it took several decades to establish the park's historicity. For more on the history of excavations in Sarnath, see Asher, pp. 21–41.

the most famous *daimyō* gardens, like the Koishikawa Kōraku-en in Tokyo and the Kōraku-en in Okayama, entered the list in the early 1920s. Furthermore, protection had spread throughout Japan by 1940, and nearly half of the 47 prefectures had at least one protected garden or park. Still, most sites remained concentrated around Kyoto, while the East lagged behind. In Tokyo, the Koishikawa Kōraku-en was the sole entry on the heritage list. In Kanagawa Prefecture, merely two temple gardens in Kamakura—the capital of the Kamakura shogunate from 1192 to 1333—had been selected. Naturally, the western regions of Kyoto and Osaka had been the cultural heart of Japan for centuries, home to numerous historic temples and aristocratic gardens. As we saw in the first chapter, the *daimyō* abandoned many gardens in Tokyo, which were turned into commercial real estate. It is only in the last three to four decades that the Eastern map has balanced out—except Kyoto and Shiga, which still boast the most heritage gardens by far, as we will see in the upcoming chapters.

Ogawa Jihei's gardens and those of his colleagues generally did not attain heritage status. Being barely a few decades old by 1940, their omission was not unexpected. Heritage conservation focused on older sites and did not consider fresh *private gardens* as needing protection. However, in contrast to Western heritage protection at that time, which typically considered sites and artifacts older than one century for protection, in Japan, even *public parks* laid out in the Meiji era were designated as heritage.[43] Thus Ogawa's Maruyama Park in Kyoto, an early work from 1886, already became a national heritage site in 1931 (see Figure 4.4). However, this park was not protected because of its horticultural value but as a natural site that was a popular and important spot for recreation in Kyoto.

Throughout her book *Heritage Management in Korea and Japan: The Politics of Antiquity and Identity*, Hyung Il Pai has stressed that tourism and early heritage protection reinforced each other. Major travel companies exploited the aura of national heritage to attract visitors to places that were in remote areas. Tourism agencies even advertised Japan's colonies such as Korea and Manchuria as worthwhile destinations for heritage tourism. National patriotic tourism further surged in the 1930s and culminated in celebrating the 2,600th anniversary of Japan's foundation in 1940. Prefectures such as Miyazaki sought to capitalize on the myths surrounding the first *tennō*, Jimmu—myths that in the 1930s were firmly interpreted as actual history to lure tourists from the urban centers to the periphery.[44] Gardens were also an enticing type of heritage site to promote tourism, offering a more tangible allure than the historical claims associated with the Jimmu *tennō*'s past. Kyoto had been a prominent destination for tourism before any gardens turned into heritage,

43 For the development of the French time horizon for protection, see Heinich, 94–95.

44 Ruoff, 85–97.

Figure 4.4. A postcard highlights in Japanese that Ogawa's Maruyama Park in Kyoto was a favorite spot for locals in all four seasons, called "Kyotoian" in the English caption. Postcard from the author's collection.

but for Shiga Prefecture or remote Fukui Prefecture, which by 1940 could boast of the third highest number of protected gardens, these sites certainly helped draw more domestic and international guests.

The impact of heritage legislation on garden history did not stop at the protection of sites. In 1936, the oldest extant manuscript of the *Sakuteiki* was declared to be a "national treasure." The *Sakuteiki* most likely stemmed from the end of the Heian period, making it the oldest known treatise on gardens worldwide. It was most likely penned by Tachibana Toshitsuna, a high-ranking aristocrat close to the court—or at least this is the theory that Ozawa Keijirō established, one that garden historians widely accept today.[45] Initially, aristocrats circulated the *Sakuteiki* through hand-written copies, and only a few readers knew it. In 1793, the shogun commissioned the *Gunsho ruijū*, a vast anthology of historical texts, including the *Sakuteiki*, which vastly increased its popularity. Ozawa, who knew the *Gunsho ruijū* version, tried to find the original manuscript that belonged to the Maeda clan of Kanazawa-*han*, but the custodians of the Maeda library had lost its tracks during the turmoil of the Meiji Restoration in 1868.[46] In the 1930s, however, Tanimura Shohei, an antiques dealer from Kanazawa, discovered the manuscript by chance

45 Ozawa, *Zōen*, 11–12.
46 Ozawa, *Zōen*, 11–12.

in Tokyo.[47] In May 1936, the Ministry of Education registered the Tanimura scrolls, as they were now called, as *kokuhō* (national treasure).

Given its ancient provenance, the manuscript anchored the genealogy of garden history and legitimized patriotic claims that horticulture in Japan had a long history of its own. Furthermore, the *Sakuteiki* helped to detach Japanese garden history from China's, since the experts claimed that the treatise proved an independent horticulture development in their country. True, Chinese cultural influence had sparked the interest in gardens, but then Japanese garden masters quickly elaborated their own style, as evidenced by the *Sakuteiki*. In that regard, the treatise assisted in claiming Japanese cultural superiority vis-à-vis China because it was older than any known Chinese garden text. Once again, garden history was harnessed to imperialist ideology—this time not as a shield against the West and its Orientalism but as legitimation for the Japanese role in China in the 1930s. As a consequence of studying and celebrating the *Sakuteiki*, the focus of experts and pundits shifted to eras even further back in the past. The relatively fresh gardens of the Meiji period seemed to merit little to no scholarly interest in the 1930s.

The Prewar Heritage of Assessing New Gardens

Garden historians had established the Japanese garden as an anti-colonial space deeply embedded in national history and even an icon of this glorious past. In turn, they were increasingly critical of the new gardens from the Meiji and Taishō periods. The places had lost their novelty and posed various problems for garden historians. First, the gardens did not seamlessly connect to ancient Kyoto horticulture and its potent symbolism.[48] Instead, they resembled *daimyō* gardens, which were becoming unpopular in the 1930s. After all, the Edo period had been a time when the *tennō* was stripped of political power—although in the larger context of Japanese history, the *tennō* were rarely strong political rulers. Garden historians unsurprisingly praised the imperial gardens of the Edo period such as the Katsura Imperial Villa and the Shugakuin Imperial Villa, both from the seventeenth century.[49] They turned those two estates—especially the Katsura Imperial Villa—into prime examples of a refined Japanese sense of aesthetics that did not rely on splendor but on reductionism and appealed very much to modern architects of the 1920s and 1930s. Even Bruno Taut, who fled to Japan when the National Socialists came

47 *Hokuriku Mainichi Shimbun*; Uehara, 3.

48 Watanabe points out the absence of symbolic elements like a heart-shaped pond (*shinjiike*) and rocks representing cranes or tortoises. He thus concludes that "What the viewer is confronted with is just a sheer accumulation of 'natural' landscape." See Watanabe, "A Kyoto Garden Renewal?," 166.

49 Inoue.

to power in 1933, greatly admired the Katsura Imperial Villa.[50] His high appraisal influenced young architects trying to break free from the older generation, which was more inclined towards an ornamental style, as Inoue Shōichi has shown.[51]

Indeed, the overall assessment of the new gardens declined in the 1920s and 1930s. A paper by Harigaya Kanekichi on the Western influence on Japanese gardens from 1934 included some interesting remarks on the new Japanese gardens, which connected them to eclecticism. Harigaya pointed out that, after the Meiji Restoration, the new aristocracy and nouveau riche took over gardening from the shogun and his retainers.[52] Some of these novel garden patrons had gone to the West or otherwise learned about the Western style and wanted to implement it. Harigaya divided the Meiji era into three periods that showed the different stages of adapting Western gardens to Japan. In the early Meiji years, Western gardens were superfluous and unintentionally eclectic—"primitive things," in his words.[53] Harigaya's middle period is particularly interesting because he introduces Count Ōkuma's garden in Waseda as one example, relying on a paper Ozawa Keijirō had written about it. Harigaya characterizes the site with the words, "This garden is another example of eclectic style," thereby contradicting Unger and the general notion in the West, which had categorized it as Japanese.[54] Much like Ozawa, the neatly cut lawn struck Harigaya most and dictated his categorization. Ōkuma's garden fit into his story of a gradual Westernization of the aristocracy's taste, which produced genuine Western gardens at the end of the Meiji period. By then, fountains and bowers had replaced lanterns and other Japanese ornaments, and this style was spreading to the middle class by the Taishō era.[55] Harigaya was thus able to distill an idealized development from failed copies through creolized designs up to genuine Western gardens in Japan. A garden like Ōkuma's in Waseda fell into the second category.

An excellent example of Ogawa Jihei's reception in this era can be found in Shigemori Mirei's work. Shigemori had initially studied traditional Japanese painting, but his interest in gardens and his networking acumen led him to compile a vast encyclopedia of historical Japanese gardens within only three years.[56] The *Nihon teienshi zukan* (Illustrated History of Japanese Gardens) appeared in 1936, spanned over 24 volumes, and treated hundreds of gardens from every epoch. Shigemori stuck to the timeline that Yokoi had established in the 1890s, using the eras of Japanese

50 Taut, 147.
51 Inoue.
52 Harigaya, "Meiji jidai," 93.
53 Here Harigaya uses the loanword "*purimithiwu*." See Harigaya, "Meiji jidai," 95.
54 Harigaya, "Meiji jidai," 98.
55 Harigaya, "Meiji jidai," 99.
56 Kuitert, *Japanese Gardens and Landscapes*, 141.

history as categories for horticulture.[57] The *Nihon teienshi zukan* was thus a perfect specimen of an encyclopedic approach to the history of Japanese horticulture based on a timeline. Shigemori grouped gardens of a specific epoch in history, assuming their style corresponded to their construction period. In that regard, he did not differ from Western garden history. In the last four volumes—excluding two supplementary volumes—Shigemori elaborated on gardens in the Meiji (1868–1912), Taishō (1912–1926), and Shōwa periods (1926–1989), thereby including examples from the very recent past—when the *Nihon teienshi zukan* appeared, the Shōwa period had hardly lasted twelve years.

Shigemori's treatment of Murin-an betrays his views of Ogawa's gardens in the context of a general garden history very well. First of all, Shigemori deemed this garden to be archetypical for Meiji horticulture.[58] As with each garden he included in his encyclopedia, Shigemori gave a detailed account of its history, patron, and garden master before assessing its style in categories he had established.[59] For Murin-an, Shigemori set out to judge Yamagata's and Ogawa's respective shares in the garden's design. He concluded that Ogawa must have lacked experience early in his career, and it was up to Yamagata to guide and educate him. Shigemori's discussion, however, seems to be biased. He overemphasizes Yamagata's contribution to the garden's style because Yamagata was one of the Meiji period's foundational statesmen, and his heroic commitment to the cause of the *tennō* and the new state perfectly matched the patriotic feelings of the 1930s. Indeed, Yamagata commissioned several gardens and was a patron of refined taste.[60] But Shigemori went much further when first praising Yamagata's sense for placing stones and concludes: "If the prince [Yamagata] had wanted to be a garden master, we'd have expected him to join the first rank of Japan's garden masters [...]."[61] Here, Shigemori likens Yamagata to old aristocrats, who had the leisure for gardens and, in fact, were among the most famous masters of the art. Yamagata did invest much time and money into his gardens, albeit without becoming more than an amateur in the long run.[62]

Still, Shigemori did not wholly repudiate Ogawa's role in building the garden. He spoke highly of his outstanding accomplishments in channeling water through the garden.[63] Nevertheless, for Shigemori, Ogawa's construction of the waterfall once

57 For a summary of Yokoi's examples of gardens from various epochs, see Scorus, 88.

58 Shigemori, *Nihon teienshi zukan*, 25.

59 Kuitert has criticized the terms that Shigemori invented and employed throughout *Nihon teienshi zukan* as "completely impractical." See Kuitert, *Japanese Gardens and Landscapes*, 141.

60 H. Suzuki, *Ogawa Jihei and His Times*, 86–89.

61 Shigemori, *Nihon teienshi zukan*, 27.

62 See Amasaki, *Nanadaime Ogawa Jihei*, 38–55, on Yamagata's predilection for horticulture and his gardens.

63 Amasaki, *Nanadaime Ogawa Jihei*, 26.

again betrayed his lack of experience. Overall, Shigemori more than once terms Murin-an "modern" (*kindaiteki*) and notes its naturalism (*shizenshugi*). For him, it was not a garden that impressed with innovative technique or art (*gijutsu*) but was still a remarkable and admirable accomplishment. Ultimately, for Shigemori, it was Yamagata who created the archetypical modern and naturalistic Meiji garden.

Shigemori's own garden projects in the 1930s, exemplified by the stone gardens at Tōfuku-ji and the adjacent Kōmyō-in, reflected his preferences in design. Opting for landscapes rich in symbolism reminiscent of stone gardens like Ryōan-ji, Shigemori's approach stood in stark contrast to Ogawa's. Overall, the late Taishō and early Shōwa periods witnessed a shift in Japanese landscape design, moving away from Ogawa-type gardens, and Shigemori's design was only one example. Tamura experimented with modernism, prioritizing functional aspects for recreation and health over aesthetics.[64]

The work of the architect Horiguchi Sutemi is another typical modernist expression. Horiguchi spent six months in Europe early in his career in 1923/1924, which had a lasting effect on his design philosophy. Upon his return, he undertook projects that intimately connected houses and surrounding gardens, akin to traditional teahouse architecture. The scale of his projects, such as the Koide House (1924) and the Kikkawa House (1930), was much smaller than the typical works of Ogawa and his colleagues, as Horiguchi's patrons came from different backgrounds.[65] Horiguchi also frequently built gardens for the wives of business leaders, resulting in more intimate settings. Unfortunately, most of his works no longer exist today, having either disappeared or been relocated to places like the Edo-Tokyo Open Air Architectural Museum.[66] This new modernism contributed to the reevaluation of Ogawa, who remained active until he died in 1933 but was no longer as avant-garde as he had been two or three decades earlier. Incorporating the new types of gardens from the 1920s and 1930s into my project would have been fascinating, but it would have blurred the project's focus stylistically and also with regard to heritage conservation. Furthermore, modernists like Horiguchi have not yet experienced a resurgence comparable to Ogawa's. Finally, unlike Ogawa's gardens, many of their works have been lost over time and have not been included in the canon of national heritage.

Suzuki Hiroyuki has claimed that Shigemori was one of the pundits responsible for Ogawa's low esteem in the Shōwa era.[67] Indeed, Shigemori's entry on Murin-an found some fault with Ogawa and suggested that Yamagata was the mastermind

64 Kuitert, *Japanese Gardens and Landscapes*, 277–79.

65 Ōshima, 97–103, 118; For the garden of the Kikkawa House, see Treib, 142–50.

66 The Tokyo Metropolitan Government has designated the Koide House as a Tangible Cultural Property at its new location in the Edo-Tokyo Open Air Architectural Museum.

67 H. Suzuki, *Ogawa Jihei and His Times*, 236.

behind this garden. All the same, Shigemori's review of the garden was generally balanced and emphasized some of its strong sides, such as the "beautiful" way the water flowed through the area. Shigemori's downplaying of Ogawa's share in the artistic invention stuck, and besides it is evident that he was lauding the statesman behind the garden as much as the site itself. Because *Nihon teienshi zukan* became a central reference work and Shigemori's importance as a garden critic only grew after the war, his assessment of Ogawa influenced further research in the postwar era. Ogawa fell out of fashion in the 1930s not only because of Shigemori but also due to the new modernist gardens. It took more than five decades until he, his artistic relationship with Yamagata, and his other gardens were reassessed.

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5. The Garden in Our Backyard—The Postwar Decades

Abstract: After World War II, the new gardens from the Meiji and Taishō periods faced challenges similar to those of the feudal lords' gardens a century earlier. The patrons who had commissioned these gardens had lost their political influence and often lacked the resources to maintain them.
Two case studies from Tokyo show how some gardens nevertheless managed to survive. In the 1950s, the Furukawa Gardens, initially built for a *zaibatsu* family, were preserved by the local Women's Association, which advocated for a public park for families in the area. Similarly, Tonogayato Garden, another *zaibatsu* estate, was supported by local citizens who highlighted its importance as a natural space within the city. Despite the efforts of these citizen groups, the gardens gained little recognition from garden historians.

Keywords: Former Furukawa Gardens; Women's Association; NGOs; Tonogayato Garden; Irokawa Daikichi

In the first two chapters, I described a fundamental social change in Japan that eventually brought forth a fresh garden style in the Meiji era. Of course, the 1868 Meiji Restoration was not mainly about horticulture but about transforming Japan's very social fabric by converting shogunate rule into a modern nation-state that could withstand the onslaught of Western imperialism. The end of the vibrant *daimyō* garden culture that had persisted for over two-and-a-half centuries, along with shogunate rule itself, was merely a byproduct of the changing times. The Restoration not only brought an end to *daimyō* culture but also reoriented the field of gardening in several ways. The Western concept of parks as public places where citizens could relax was introduced to Japan and incidentally helped preserve a handful of old gardens under the new category of *kōen*. The quick conversion of some old temple precincts into parks in 1873 kept them from being used as commercial real estate.[1] This model of embracing Western concepts (in this case, the idea of parks) and modernizing the

1 On the process of conversion, see R. Ono, 12.

Tagsold, Christian. *Turning Gardens in Japan into Japanese Gardens: Nation, Nature, Heritage, and Modernity since the 1890s*. Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2025.
DOI: 10.5117/9789048563791_CH05

country while at the same time reassembling and reusing older layers of social practice (the temple areas that had always served as communal space) was characteristic of that period and could be seen in many fields of society. Overall, Japan quickly developed from a potential victim of colonization to a powerful imperialist state that started conquering neighboring areas and establishing colonies of its own. However, the conversion into an imperialist power in its own right was too "successful," leading to an ultra-nationalist regime at home and oppressive rule in continental Asia.

Nonetheless, Japan collapsed in 1945, and in the famous Jewel Voice Broadcast of August that year the *tennō* urged his subjects to "bear the unbearable" as he announced unconditional surrender to the Allied powers.[2] Unlike Germany, Japan was not divided into occupational zones between the Allied powers. The US alone ruled the country's politics and society from 1945 to 1952 during a period known as the Occupation.[3] The social changes were once again fundamental, though perhaps not as profound as those of the Meiji Restoration. The Meiji Constitution of 1889 and, most notably, the so-called Taishō Democracy from the 1910s to 1920s had given Japan some experience in running a liberal civil society. Later, politicians and intellectuals would hark back to these structures and ideas in creating the democratic postwar state.

Horticulture was part of the postwar social change, and the gardens built in the Meiji and Taishō periods were deeply affected. The main reason for this was their loss of social context. Their patrons had been part of a wealthy elite deeply entangled with imperialism and militarism. Due to the actions of the US Occupation forces, which I will touch upon in the next section, these patrons lost much of their social, political, and economic influence although not all of their wealth. As a result, their gardens entered a new phase of uncertainty and vulnerability, just like the *daimyō* gardens did after 1868. In the following, I would like to illustrate the fate of such sites by discussing two cases: the Former Furukawa Gardens and Tonogayato Garden, both of which demonstrate how postwar social changes influenced horticulture. However, we also have to keep in mind that these two sites do not represent the full range of horticultural history since they were both preserved, unlike other sites from the early twentieth century. My two case studies have enjoyed a relatively good fate so far—something that cannot be said for all gardens in this era.

A Changing Social Environment for Gardens

Before looking at these two case studies, I want to elaborate on the social changes in the postwar era, as they form the context for the further development of horticulture

2 On the immediate impact of this speech in Japan, see Miyanaga.

3 For some background on the US's singular role in occupied Japan, see Schaller, 17–18.

and landscape planning in Japan. A couple of measures and decisions by the Supreme Commander for the Allied Powers (SCAP), in particular, affected sites such as the Former Furukawa Gardens and Tonogayato Garden. Even though the term SCAP formally points to all Allied powers, the occupation of Japan was implemented and controlled by the US Army under General Douglas MacArthur.[4] Therefore, SCAP broadly refers to the US occupation bureaucracy and MacArthur himself. The US forces diligently prepared for the Occupation period by seeking expert advice on Japan. The most famous outcome of these efforts is Ruth Benedict's book *The Chrysanthemum and the Sword*, which was based on her research for the US Army during the war. Benedict, a leading cultural anthropologist, wanted to find out how the Japanese population would react to defeat in war and to an occupation of their country.[5] Her main conclusion was that there would be no resistance to occupation and that the prewar ultra-nationalist system would collapse smoothly. Benedict proved right in her analysis; SCAP could carry out its occupational politics as planned. SCAP's main aims were to democratize, demilitarize, and decolonize Japan. To that end, the political system that had been based on the *tennō* was dismantled, even though the institution of the emperor itself was left intact. Furthermore, the *zaibatsu* had to be dissolved because SCAP identified the massive conglomerates—which to a large degree controlled the prewar economy—as a leading economic driver of ultra-nationalism.[6] The *zaibatsu* had been deeply intertwined with the imperialist system, funding—if not bribing—politicians and profiting immensely from militarism.

The fate of the *zaibatsu* significantly impacted horticulture. The Iwasaki family, who controlled the largest prewar *zaibatsu* of all—Mitsubishi—had acquired and built many famous gardens in Tokyo.[7] The *daimyō* garden Rikugi-en was primarily saved from being converted into commercial real estate because Mitsubishi's founder, Iwasaki Yatarō, bought it in 1878 and restored it.[8] That year, Iwasaki Yatarō also purchased Kiyosumi Garden, which had been built in the early eighteenth century by a prosperous merchant, and transformed it into a Meiji garden.[9] Josiah Conder designed a distinguished house for the estate, which was eventually destroyed by the Great Kantō earthquake in 1923.[10] In 1920, Mitsubishi commissioned Kawase

4 For an overview of the occupational period in Japan, see Schaller.

5 Benedict. Lummis has described the process of Benedict's research. Basically, Benedict had to rely on interviewing a few Japanese prisoners of war. For an astute discussion of Benedict's work in the context of cultural anthropology and the writing-culture debate, see Geertz.

6 Schaller, 25.

7 For a deeper analysis of the Iwasaki family's interest in gardens, see Muraoka.

8 M. Mori, *Rikugi-en*, 106–9.

9 Kitamura, *Kiyosumi teien*, 15–36.

10 Kitamura, *Kiyosumi teien*, 25–26.

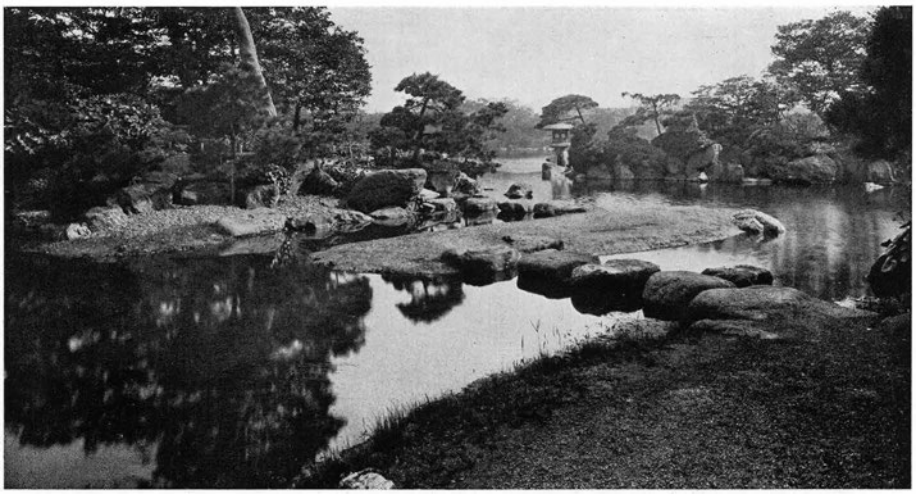

Figure 5.1. In 1878, Iwasaki Yatarō acquired Kiyosumi Garden, which had originally been part of a wealthy merchant's residence before being transformed into a *daimyō* garden in the eighteenth century. This image shows the garden in 1935. Tsuyoshi Tamura, *Art of the Landscape Garden in Japan* (Tokyo: Kokusai Bunka Shinkōkai, 1935).

Hasui via the woodblock print publisher Watanabe Shōzaburō to craft eight prints portraying the garden. Mitsubishi used these as gifts for overseas customers and business partners.[11] Tonogayato Garden, too, was connected to Mitsubishi and the Iwasaki family. Its initial patron, Eguchi, had started his career at Mitsubishi before becoming vice-president of the South Manchurian Railway, and then he sold the estate in Kokubunji to the family in 1929. Last, the Iwasaki family had a garden on its estate in the Taitō district near Ueno Park, for which Conder again built a distinguished house.

In the early Shōwa period, the Iwasaki family donated Kiyosumi Garden and Rikugi-en to the city of Tokyo and, in the 1960s, sold Tonogayato Garden to the city (Figure 5.1).[12] In contrast, the postwar history of the Former Iwasaki Residence and Garden was comparably complex. Shortly after the Japanese surrender, SCAP took over the estate and used it for the so-called Canon Unit in charge of intelligence. Meanwhile, the estate formally came into the possession of the Japanese government in 1947 as payment in kind for property tax, which, however, did not affect its continued use by the Canon Unit. After SCAP vacated the estate at the end of the Occupation in 1952, the site served various functions, and the state

11 K. Brown, *Kawase Hasui*, vol 1., 27. For the prints, see K. Brown, *Kawase Hasui*, vol. 2, 301–5.

12 In 1924, Iwasaki Hisaya, the third head of the Mitsubishi family, decided to donate Kiyosumi Garden to the City of Tokyo; see Kitamura, *Kiyosumi teien*, 42–43. Rikugi-en was handed over in 1938. See M. Mori, *Rikugi-en*, 109.

eventually handed it over to the city of Tokyo in 2001. Remarkably, four of the nine sites that are today considered Tokyo's major historical gardens have historical ties to the Iwasaki family.[13] Together with the Former Furukawa Gardens, five are *zaibatsu*-related, underscoring the conglomerates' colossal impact on horticulture in the prewar period.

The dissolution of the *zaibatsu* by SCAP uprooted the gardens. The Iwasaki family had already handed over two historic sites from the Edo period—Rikugi-en and Kiyosumi Garden—to the city. The three other *zaibatsu* gardens eventually lost their function, along with all the others that did not become municipal property or get registered as heritage. The *zaibatsu* split up into many independent companies, and the former vertical structure of the conglomerates was disentangled. Before the end of the war, the families leading the *zaibatsu* had owned and controlled companies in various fields and tied them together through a core of financial companies like banks and insurance agencies that handled all the transactions. Now, these ties were loosened, though they did not entirely break. SCAP's dissolution of the *zaibatsu* was incomplete because the US wanted to build up Japan as a reliable ally in Asia and had no interest in inflicting lasting harm on its economy.[14] The *zaibatsu* families remained rich, although the social context of their estates had largely disappeared. Social life no longer revolved around lavish parties that brought together politicians, high-ranking soldiers, the imperial court, and *zaibatsu* tycoons, with the latter lining the pockets of the former. The need for families to maintain estates with spacious gardens for hosting such gatherings diminished, while the site maintenance costs were prohibitively high. Furthermore, the massive inheritance tax on land in Japan called into question the tradition of maintaining huge gardens in the postwar decades.

Consequently, the former elites had to give up many gardens—just like the *daimyō* had to abandon their residences and gardens in Edo following the Meiji Restoration. Some gardens went straight into public hands, while others were built over and no longer exist. Many surviving sites were scaled down as peripheral property was developed, such as the Former Iwasaki Residence and Garden, which was partly reused as commercial real estate. Fortunately, Conder's house and the adjacent small garden have been splendidly preserved. In some cases, *zaibatsu* and elite gardens survived as parks, but not in their original form. On Shibusawa Eiichi's former estate, the Japanese garden is gone, and the area has been converted into a green space for the public. Caring for the gardens was far too laborious, and the main idea in any case was to use the sites for the citizens' recreational needs, which did not hinge on manicured trees and bushes from the Meiji and Taishō

13 Interview T., February 2017, Tonogayato Garden, Tokyo, line 36.

14 Schaller, 68, 93.

eras. When families abandoned their estates and gardens, converting them into public parks was the best chance for survival. Due to a lack of public funds and historical interest, the sites often deteriorated into mere green patches robbed of their unique artistic appearance.

Yet one of SCAP's main goals for Japan indirectly helped to preserve the gardens, if only as parks. With the democratization of Japanese society, new civic actors gained political influence, which promoted the conversion of former *zaibatsu* gardens into public spaces. Among these, women's groups deserve particular attention because they took a strong interest in parks as recreational zones for families and playgrounds for children in the postwar period. Feminism and women's political organizations had already sprung to life in Japan during the Meiji period. One particularity of the postwar groups was to identify as housewives. This acceptance of a stereotypical gender role may not seem too political or feminist by today's standards, but in the postwar period, many women felt the need to politicize their everyday experiences and work towards better living conditions for themselves and their children within the existing frameworks.[15] The Occupation promoted both women's rights and the formation of a democratic civil society, hence the activities of housewife groups that would play a considerable role in the political arena in the ensuing decades. These groups tended to work hard on local problems, and demanding the creation of more accessible green zones in major cities was one task with immediate positive consequences for the wives and their families.[16]

Last but not least, SCAP also influenced the fates of gardens by establishing new heritage policies. I will discuss this in the context of national heritage in Chapter 6 and extend my case studies accordingly.

Case 1: The Former Furukawa Gardens—A Park for the Citizens

The Former Furukawa Gardens exemplify the public interpretation of this type of site in the early postwar decades. This case illustrates how civil society efforts aimed to preserve these gardens as public parks. As seen in the second chapter, this estate belonged to the Furukawa family, which lent its name to one of the major prewar *zaibatsu*. In 1917, Furukawa Toranosuke commissioned Josiah Conder to design the English-style villa.[17] The architect had adorned the house with a small, symmetrical French-style garden layout on the terrace. Two years later, Furukawa brought in

15 Mackie, 123.

16 In 1976, Shirai described a typical example: the 1950s citizens' movement in Ube that lobbied for additional green spaces in the city. This movement was mainly spurred on by the interests and activities of the city's mothers. See Shirai, 23.

17 Kitamura, *Kyū Furukawa teien*, 37.

Ogawa Jihei to add a Japanese garden down the slope of the estate. The Furukawa *zaibatsu*, which indirectly paid for the estate, was founded in 1875 and mainly focused on mining, chemistry, and electronics. Shortly after the estate in the Nishigahara district was finished, poor investments significantly impacted the Furukawa *zaibatsu*, which slowed its expansion considerably.[18] The Furukawa *zaibatsu* was not one of the four major conglomerates of the time (Mitsubishi, Mitsui, Sumitomo, and Yasuda), but it remained among the 15 largest. It was deeply involved in the ultra-nationalist government's war efforts in the 1930s and managed to rebound from its 1920 crisis to become the seventh largest conglomerate with a 1.5% share of Japan's economy.[19]

Given Furukawa's role in wartime Japan, it came as little surprise that SCAP wanted to dissolve this *zaibatsu*.[20] Shortly after the war, the Furukawa *zaibatsu* faced many economic hardships: staff had to be laid off, SCAP limited its range of business, and tax liabilities piled up.[21] Due to the policy of the occupational forces, the Furukawa family was stripped of most of its income and, in 1947, had to hand over its estate to the Ministry of Finance as a payment in kind for income tax.[22] The formal dissolution of the Furukawa *zaibatsu* brought forth many new companies that tended to cooperate with each other, thus forming one of several well-integrated business groups known as *keiretsu*. While families controlled the *zaibatsu* top down, the *keiretsu* were organized horizontally as an interdependent web of companies. The families owning the former *zaibatsu* remained exceedingly rich but lost some economic and political influence. Despite these initial hardships, the Furukawa family quickly reconsolidated its financial situation.

The Occupation and the diminished role of the *zaibatsu* immediately impacted the use of the Furukawa Gardens. The British government had commandeered the estate and used it in lieu of an embassy until the end of the Allied Occupation. Its tenants' high status inadvertently saved the site from being transformed into something else. When the Occupation formally ended in 1952, there was suddenly a discussion about what to do with the Furukawa Gardens. The Ministry of Finance transferred administration to its Kantō branch, raising the pressing question of whether the estate should undergo liquidation. A fascinating debate unfolded about its future fate, which Kitamura Nobumasa has detailed in his 2010 book on the Former Furukawa Gardens.[23]

For starters, the Kantō Branch nearly sold the estate back to the Furukawa family, but the transaction initially stalled because the Furukawa could not transfer the

18 Takeda, 35–40.
19 Morck and Nakamura, 391.
20 Kitamura, *Kyū Furukawa teien*, 44–45.
21 Kitamura, *Kyū Furukawa teien,* 64–65.
22 Kitamura, *Kyū Furukawa teien,* 64–65.
23 Kitamura, *Kyū Furukawa teien*, 64–71.

money for the estate in time. Next, rumors spread that the Furukawa only wanted to buy the estate to resell it, and the transaction finally faltered.[24] One of the other early suggestions was to turn the house into a museum for a collection of French modern art.[25] Soon, however, the local branch of the Women's Association (*Fujinkai*)—a powerful nationwide NGO in the postwar decades—demanded the "opening" (*kaihō*) of the site as a park, supposedly freeing it from the Ministry of Finance's claws. Other NGOs joined in to support the Women's Association. According to the Tokyo section of the national newspaper *Asahi Shimbun*, the representative of the Women's Association in Kita Ward, where the gardens are situated, pointed out that "around here is an industrial area and there are no places for children to play. Because of that, [the Furukawa Gardens] should certainly be opened as a park."[26] Indeed, as an article in the Tokyo section of the widely read *Yomiuri Shimbun* remarked when summing up the local discussion, "Kita Ward lacks green in relation to its size and there is nearly no space for recreation and for ward residents to relax [...]."[27] An additional argument was that the area could help mitigate disasters as a potential base for emergency management. The Great Kantō earthquake of 1923 had taught Tokyo officials and citizens that open spaces such as parks were severely needed to evacuate the population and immediately reorder civilian life.[28] The Furukawa Gardens had served this purpose quite well in 1923 when victims and people in need gathered there to receive medical aid and were even housed in barracks on the grounds for a while.[29] The article in the *Asahi Shimbun* mentioned that the citizens of Kita Ward formed an Association for the Promotion of Opening the Former Furukawa Estate as a Park.[30] Thus, in the mid-1950s, civil society organized itself for this local purpose and exerted significant political pressure, eventually leading to success. The citizens prevailed against all other plans, and in 1956, the estate was finally opened as a public park run by the city of Tokyo.

The discussion reveals an interesting interpretation of the Former Furukawa Gardens, as the site was now called. Many arguments revolved around the term park—*kōen* in Japanese. As I discussed in the last chapter, the distinction between *teien* and *kōen* is binarist and denotes a Japanese (private) garden vs. a Western (public) park, though a *teien* can be open to the public, too. By design, the Former Furukawa Gardens were a mix of both. The Japanese part down the slope that Ogawa laid out was undoubtedly a *teien*. But the French and Italian gardens had not

24 Kitamura, *Kyū Furukawa teien*, 66.
25 *Asahi Shimbun*, "Furansu bijutsu."
26 *Asahi Shimbun*, "Furukawa-tei."
27 *Yomiuri Shimbun*, "To ni haraisage."
28 Kuitert, *Japanese Gardens and Landscapes*, 269.
29 Kitamura, *Kyū Furukawa teien*, 39–40.
30 *Asahi Shimbun*, "Furukawa-tei."

been planned for the public and were, in that regard, also more *teien* than *kōen* despite being Western. The private use overrode the Western style. Here, the Women's Association's demand to transform the Furukawa Gardens into a park (*kōen*) that would serve as a playground for children is the crucial point in my discussion. The NGO did not address the gardens as a *teien*, neither in their use of terms nor in the potential function ascribed to the place.

The estate's gardens had an unclear status at that point. Before opening the park, christened the Former Furukawa Gardens (*Kyū Furukawa Teien*), newspapers wrote about the "Furukawa-tei" (Residence of the Furukawa), thus circumventing any conflict regarding the terms *kōen* or *teien*. Moreover, since *teien* in Japanese can denote singular or plural, a Japanese not knowing any details about the Kyū Furukawa Teien would have expected to find a single (Japanese) garden at the place. By contrast, the English translation Former Furukawa Gardens suggests that this park is made up of not just one garden. Setting all these problems of proper definitions aside, the Women's Association wanted to transform the Furukawa-tei into a zone for public recreation that served the needs of local families, ideally with a playground. The Japanese garden within the Furukawa-tei received no specific consideration then, but neither did the other gardens.

In summary, transforming the Former Furukawa Gardens into a public park in 1956 points towards some public assumptions about these places at the time. These sites did not open up to the public for the sake of their historical value. Instead, the idea of recreation played a key role. Japanese society had democratized, and it was now up to the citizens to enjoy the former gardens of the *zaibatsu* elite, who could no longer maintain them. However, the citizens had different needs. They wanted to relax in the Former Furukawa Gardens and let their children run around, not stage prestigious parties for their peers. Nevertheless, it is important to recognize that sites associated with the former elite were typically preserved, regardless of their function. In the next chapter, I will revisit the Former Furukawa Gardens as a case study, tracing its history up to 2006 when it was designated a national heritage site, reconnecting it to its history as a *zaibatsu* ground.

Case 2: Tonogayato Garden—Two Types of Local Benefits

I have briefly introduced Tonogayato Garden in the foreword. Along with the Former Furukawa Gardens, it was one of the first to catch my attention and to prompt me to write this book, since the citizens of Kokubunji fought to preserve it in the late 1960s. In the case of Tonogayato Garden, the citizens changed their interpretation midway. Initially, they wanted to preserve Tonogayato Garden as a public park for recreation and protect the local abundance of species as well as the freshwater

from wells in the area.[31] Environmental conservation had become a critical topic in the 1960s, and civic activities plugged into this new discourse.[32] But following a decade of bitter struggle, Tonogayato Garden had been transformed in the activists' minds into something different, namely a *teien*, a Japanese garden.

Compared to the civic engagement for the Former Furukawa Gardens, the case of Tonogayato Garden demonstrates how citizens took the fight to preserve green space and create public space into the next decade. The struggle commenced when plans to scrap the estate were made public in the late 1960s. Iwasaki Hikoyata, who had rebuilt the garden after acquiring it from his former employee Eguchi, had passed away, and the family wanted to sell the grounds. In its place, a shopping mall was to be erected to boost the local economy. A civic action committee quickly banded together as the Tonogayato Park Preservation Society (*Tonogayato Kōen Mamoru-kai*, often shortened as Mamoru-kai in Japanese), which had robust backing.

At the time, primarily upper-middle-class members inhabited the residential areas near Kokubunji Station. In our group interview with two members of Mamoru-kai (who still help administer the garden) and Sumiyoshi Yasuo, the author of the Tokyo Metropolitan Park Association's book on *Tonogayato teien*, the interviewees recalled a couple of names still familiar today.[33] As many professors lived in the area at that time, famous academics like the historian Irokawa Daikichi—known for his study of *minshūshi* (people's history)—helped to organize the civic movement. At the same time, Ueno Naoteru, then director of the Tokyo University of the Arts, headed the Preservation Society. Quickly, the professors were joined by famous intellectuals and artists who also resided in the area. Among them were Ōgiya Shōzō, editor of the weekly magazine *Shūkan Asahi* with a print run exceeding one million; the widely read novelist Ōoka Shōhei; Kinoshita Junji, one of the most important postwar playwrights; and the actress Sawamura Sadako, who appeared in more than 140 films.[34] It goes without saying that the backers of the Preservation Society were exceptionally well-networked. Furthermore, NGOs like the Wild Bird Society of Japan, one of the country's largest and oldest environmental organizations, had also been active in Kokubunji. The Wild Bird Society helped organize the Mamoru-kai and spread its gospel.[35] Finally, professors from the Tokyo University of Agriculture and Technology (*Tōkyō Nōkō Daigaku*), which has a campus on the edge of Kokubunji, joined the cause.[36] Overall, Kokubunji was an extremely fertile milieu that helped the Mamoru-kai proliferate and exert political pressure in all directions.

31 Interview Mamoru-kai, June 2017, Tonogayato Garden, Kokubunji, line 72.
32 Interview Mamoru-kai, June 2017, Tonogayato Garden, Kokubunji, line 18.
33 Interview Mamoru-kai, June 2017, Tonogayato Garden, Kokubunji, lines 35–41.
34 Interview Mamoru-kai, June 2017, Tonogayato Garden, Kokubunji, lines 35–41.
35 Interview Mamoru-kai, June 2017, Tonogayato Garden, Kokubunji, line 17.
36 Interview T., February 2017, Tonogayato Garden, line 113.

As in the case of the Former Furukawa Gardens, the Preservation Society stressed the qualities of Tonogayato Garden as a *kōen*, a public park, and moreover included this term in its name.[37] The Mamoru-kai did not mention the term *teien* (Japanese) garden in its early years. Instead, the Preservation Society had high hopes for the future park's educational and moral properties. Guides and informational brochures were to brief the visitors on the value of the garden as a green oasis within the city. Its abundance of species was to teach citizens and pupils about nature. The Preservation Society even rejected the idea of installing benches and drinks machines, which are omnipresent in Japan, so as not to disturb the pastoral scenery.[38]

The shopping mall's backers vehemently argued that not going forward with their plans would be "economic suicide." They initially had Kokubunji's officials on their side.[39] Nonetheless, the project eventually ground to a halt. With the backing of Tokyo Governor Minobe Ryōkichi, whose progressive agenda favored civic movements and the preservation of green space, the Mamoru-kai was able to push through. After the Metropolitan Government of Tokyo bought Tonogayato Garden to transform it into a public park, the Preservation Society changed its goals. The struggle for preservation had lasted nearly a decade, and its objectives had started to shift during that time. Tonogayato Garden was still to serve as a public park, but the idea of a nature education center gave way to an interpretation that increasingly focused on the place's historical qualities. Suddenly, the term *nihon teien* started appearing frequently in the Preservation Society's memoranda and leaflets and eventually became a central.

This shift might have been partly due to the head of the Metropolitan Government's Park Commission, Satō Akira, whom we met in the last chapter. In the postwar period, Satō had become a professor at the Tokyo University of Agriculture and was appointed to oversee Tokyo's metropolitan landscape design. Due to his prewar record of urban park planning in Japan and China and his expertise in Japanese gardens, he was well-suited to act as the head of the commission. After the war's end, Satō had grown into one of the key landscape theoreticians, and it was quite natural that he would influence the capital's policy. However, Satō remained attached to the idea of Japanese gardens as a unique product of the Japanese race, as he had professed in his prewar writings. He certainly was not alone. Almost no one in the field of landscape studies questioned prewar patriotism in their writing. The central assumptions of the 1930s were carried over to the postwar period, while the terminology was toned down and adapted to the new democratic era.

With Satō's background, it seems likely that he played a part in changing the agenda for the future of Tonogayato Garden, which the Mamoru-kai had come to see

37 Sumiyoshi, 49.
38 Sumiyoshi, 70.
39 Sumiyoshi, 61–62.

Figure 5.2. The stone-paved path through Tonogayato Garden is a new addition, making the site appear more "traditional" than it actually is. Photograph by the author.

not only as a natural resource but as an accomplishment of Japanese culture. In any case, the Preservation Society now pleaded for "*nihon teien fusawashii michi*"—that is, "garden paths apt for a Japanese garden."[40] As a result, Tonogayato Garden was turned into a much more traditional Japanese garden than it had most likely ever been. Today's garden paths look like they were laid out for a far more historical place. Some are paved with irregular stones, though bamboo mats cover most, and both types exude an ancient atmosphere (see Figure 5.2). Interestingly, it was the bureaucracy at that point that curbed some of the Mamoru-kai's efforts. The Preservation Society wanted all concrete to be removed from Tonogayato Garden. But for the metropolitan officials, it was a *kōen* that had to adhere to specific standards of safety and accessibility.[41]

When Tokyo eventually designated Tonogayato Garden as a metropolitan monument in 2004, the experts again underscored the Japanese garden design.[42] In 2011, the status was raised to that of a national monument. Here, however, the

40 Sumiyoshi, 78.

41 Interview Mamoru-kai, June 2017, Tonogayato Garden, Kokubunji, line 132.

42 Sumiyoshi, 114.

interpretation of the garden was more nuanced. The official record speaks of a "*kindai bessō teien*," that is, a modern villa garden, which seems to be an apt description,[43] although, as I indicated in the first lines of this book, it was not always the case that the authorities formed such a balanced judgment. Generally speaking, Tonogayato Garden has either been categorized as Japanese or as an eclectic Western–Japanese one, and its historical context was somewhat lost in that discussion.

Gardens and Nation Revisited

Ultimately, the two examples of the Former Furukawa Gardens and Tonogayato Garden demonstrate the changing attitudes towards such sites. In the first postwar decades, some gardens were in danger of being transformed into public areas without any consideration of their history or even of being scrapped altogether. The main argument for preserving the Furukawa Gardens and Tonogayato Garden was their potential function as a public park and natural inner-city oasis. Their role as cultural assets was secondary. Only gradually did people come around to the idea that these sites needed preservation not just for their nature but also for their history. Obviously, in a megalopolis like Tokyo—where urban development had almost annihilated a rich and historic garden culture in the few decades following the Meiji Restoration—preserving such historic gardens was by no means a simple task. Tokyo had evolved into a city of seven million by 1955, thus returning to the prewar population level of 1935, and it grew by another two million in the following decade. Understandably, land was scarcer than ever.

At the same time, the postwar decades saw the rise of a consumer society with more leisure time than ever before. Even though it is often said that the Japanese are prone to overwork, families in the 1950s and 1960s had more free time to spend. However, nature was rare, and Tokyo had to expand its borders to accommodate a growing population. The existing green spots were popular for weekend recreation or after work and school. Urban planning since the Meiji period had stressed the value of parks for the population's physical and mental health.[44] With the influx of the rural population into the congested areas on the Pacific coast between Tokyo and Osaka, space became sparse and precious.[45] The 1950s and 1960s were especially marked by domestic migration towards the centers due to industrialization and strong economic growth. Only in the 1970s did the migration pressure start to relax somewhat.[46]

43 *Bunka Isan Onrain*, "Tonogayato teien."
44 R. Ono, 16–17.
45 Shirai, 22
46 Ishikawa; Shirai, 22.

The Tokyo Metropolitan Government had more than once tried to develop urban landscape plans that brought more green to inner-city Tokyo. The most ambitious schemes came after the Great Kantō earthquake of 1923, which, despite causing more than 140,000 deaths, also opened up a window of opportunity for reshaping the city.[47] Coping with disaster was an important line of reasoning here too, as parks could serve as evacuation zones—an argument that was used by those trying to preserve the Former Furukawa Gardens in the 1950s. Ultimately, there were not enough funds to realize these far-reaching plans from the 1920s.[48] In the postwar period, the Metropolitan Government went on to create new parks to make up for the missed opportunity. Three types of space were available for building parks. First, air raids had ravaged whole neighborhoods in many cities during the war, opening up space. Second, former Japanese army grounds not occupied by the US forces had become available immediately.[49] However, US forces took over some of these areas and only returned them later. The Tokyo Olympics in 1964 convinced the American side to relinquish control of Washington Heights, a vast housing complex of the US Army adjacent to the Meiji Shrine. Initially, the site functioned as the Olympic Village grounds, and following the games it was transformed into Yoyogi Park, a vast and popular recreational area for the inner city.[50] Beyond the city center, the Showa Commemorative Park opened in 1983 on the former Tachikawa Airfield site. As the largest park in Tokyo Prefecture, it features a diverse array of horticultural zones, including a Japanese garden. The fact that the US Army assumed control of certain areas likely proved beneficial. If all army grounds had been released simultaneously, Tokyo might have struggled to transform them into urban green spaces, with the risk of some being earmarked for development instead. Third, the Metropolitan Government was able to acquire private gardens such as the Former Furukawa Gardens and Tonogayato Garden and convert them into parks.

The threat to these gardens came from elsewhere. Academics had not yet reevaluated the Meiji and Taishō gardens, and key garden historians doubted their artistic and historical value. The two leading voices to disparage these gardens were Mori Osamu and Shigemori Mirei, as Shirahata Yōzaburō has pointed out. Both had delivered a harsh verdict on *daimyō* gardens, and their opinion extended to gardens built around 1900.[51] In the prewar edition of the *Nihon teienshi zukan* (Illustrated History of Japanese Gardens), Shigemori was still relatively objective in judging the newly built gardens by Ogawa Jihei and his colleagues, as we have seen. In the

47 Kuitert, *Japanese Gardens and Landscapes*, 269.
48 Kuitert, *Japanese Gardens and Landscapes*, 269.
49 Shirai, 22.
50 Tagsold, "Modernity," 294–95, 300.
51 Shirahata, *Daimyo Gardens,* 190.

largely rewritten edition *Nihon teienshi taikei* (Survey of the History of Japanese Gardens, co-authored with his son Kanto) published from 1971 to 1976, one year after Shigemori had passed away, this stance had given way to a rather critical view: "While the Japanese garden of the Former Furukawa Gardens adheres in part to tradition, new problems have emerged due to its flawed design, and it has unfortunately become a dull example of a Meiji garden."[52]

Murin-an does not fare better: "It is a dull garden without appeal. […] In the areas on the path around, there is no three-dimensional design."[53] Supposedly, walking around the garden did not yield any new perspectives since the surface was flat, and as a result, it had little to offer visitors.

Mori Osamu sang the same song about these gardens. He had published a crucial book on Japanese garden history in the last days of World War II, which had a significant impact on the topic in the first postwar decades.[54] In 1952, he moved to the newly founded Nara Research Institute for Cultural Properties (*Nara Bunkazai Kenkyūjo*) and did research for the National Commission for the Protection of Cultural Properties. In his new position, Mori Osamu excavated many gardens with a strong focus on the Heian era. From the 1970s on, he invested substantial energy in the old gardens of Hiraizumi in Northern Japan,[55] which in 2011 became part of the UNESCO World Heritage Site Hiraizumi – Temples, Gardens and Archaeological Sites Representing the Buddhist Pure Land. Mori firmly believed that the examples from the Heian period constituted the ideal Japanese garden. Their strong symbolic expression, however, was not to be found in the naturalistic designs of the Meiji and Taishō gardens, which made the latter seem lacking.

Tono Takuma was one of the few authors who held Meiji gardens—especially those Ogawa Jihei had designed—in high esteem, as Suzuki Hiroyuki has pointed out.[56] Suzuki suggests that Tono's education and experience in the US were one reason for his unique assessment in the postwar period. In 1916, at the age of 25, Tono went to the United States and five years later received a Master's in Landscape Design from Cornell University, where he then worked as an instructor.[57] In the postwar period, Tono became a professor at the Tokyo University of Agriculture, and in 1955, he wrote a small, lavishly illustrated book on *Japanese Gardens* for a series by the major publishing house Iwanami. Here, he presented Ogawa Jihei's designs (Nomura Residence, Heian Jingū, Murin-an, Maruyama Park) as examples of various garden styles, while the other sites he introduced were mostly essential

52 Shigemori, *Nihon teienshi taikei*, 54.
53 Shigemori, *Nihon teienshi taikei*, 72.
54 O. Mori, *Heian jidai*.
55 Mares.
56 H. Suzuki, *Ogawa Jihei and His Times*, 237–38.
57 M. Suzuki, "Tono Takuma," 291–92.

classics like the Katsura Imperial Villa and the Ryōan-ji stone garden.[58] Despite Suzuki's positive view of Tono, the latter did not mention Ogawa in his book and only referred to the gardens' patrons—although, to be fair, he did not introduce the designers of the classical gardens either. Most importantly, the images of Ogawa gardens were presented as equals alongside the classical examples, suggesting that the Meiji gardens blended into the stream of Japanese garden history without friction.

However, Shigemori and Mori's judgments carried more weight than Tono's, as both men stood at the center of Japanese garden history. Tono was more highly esteemed in the US, where he was commissioned to design Japanese gardens, including one in Portland, which eventually became one of the largest outside of Japan.[59] Due to their dismissal by Shigemori and Mori, places like Murin-an, the Former Furukawa Gardens, and Tonogayato Garden did not draw much academic attention in the 1950s and 1960s and mainly survived in their function as public parks. Only in the 1970s and 1980s did the tide begin to turn and these gardens suddenly rose to prominence—while Ogawa Jihei became something like a gardening pop star in the 1990s, as the next chapter will show.

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58 H. Suzuki, *Ogawa Jihei and His Times*, 237.

59 Tagsold, *Spaces in Translation*, 99–101.

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6. Gardens as National Heritage between Scholars and Bureaucrats—From the Postwar Era to the Heisei Period

Abstract: Chapter 6 follows the postwar history up to the present. Even up to the 1980s, new gardens and modern buildings were at risk of disappearing. Notable structures like Tokyo Station were not initially deemed worthy of preservation by the heritage authorities, as they were not considered to embody traditional "Japaneseness." However, over time, architects, historians, and concerned citizens began to protest against the demolition of historic modern structures, viewing them as vital to local identity. The preservation of Murin-an and the Former Furukawa Gardens illustrates how these movements helped new gardens gain recognition and become designated national heritage sites. In addition, Ogawa Jihei became one of the most revered garden masters since the 1980s, further bringing the gardens of the Meiji and Taishō periods into the limelight.

Keywords: Tokyo station; Murin-an; bubble economy; modern heritage; *nihonjinron*

The previous chapter marked the start of the second part of this book. In the current chapter, we gradually enter a period of renewed appreciation for the gardens. Experts and the broader public came to see them as expressive of their times and as a continuation of the national horticulture tradition. Up until the late 1980s, experts had generally deemed these as somehow deviating from tradition, if not outright eclectic—at times, they are still classified as such. Since the early 2000s, however, many of the Meiji and Taishō gardens have achieved national heritage status. Local communities and experts alike have come to cherish the gardens of the Meiji, Taishō, and early Shōwa periods as sites linked to a past that draws nostalgic yearnings. Once, these gardens had a fresh but not entirely Japanese appeal to onlookers. Now, they appear to be familiar and homely.

The decision to designate these gardens as national heritage was not isolated but linked to a general shift in the appreciation of modern sites and buildings. The

Tagsold, Christian. *Turning Gardens in Japan into Japanese Gardens: Nation, Nature, Heritage, and Modernity since the 1890s*. Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2025.
DOI: 10.5117/9789048563791_CH06

heritage landscape has changed, and the horizon for historical sites has widened considerably. This entailed the gardens turning "Japanese" and frequently shedding the "eclectic" label. The designation as national heritage also coincided with a newfound popularity. The administrators of the sites—mostly municipal departments or outsourced public companies as in the case of Tokyo Prefecture—nowadays seek to promote them for tourists and are relatively successful at it. I will look at these broader consequences of heritage inscription in the next chapter.

For the time being, we first need to understand how heritage policies developed and how their development affected the preservation of historic gardens. From this chapter until the end of the book, I will argue that the fundamental shift in the appreciation of the Meiji and Taishō gardens expressed by their inclusion into national heritage lists reflects a broader reevaluation of Japan's history. The country's economic success in the postwar era contributed to this changing paradigm, as the Japanese now grappled with the question of how they had been able to join the Western powerhouses. Historians and social scientists tried to invent a new idea of Japanese modernity that would explain how the society had become so successful precisely by *not* being Western. They conjectured that the roots of Japanese modernity were deeper than social theories had hitherto suggested. Early indications of progress could be discerned in the Edo period, which by then was not seen as medieval so much as pre-modern or even early modern, thereby laying the groundwork for coping with Western industrialization later.

In horticultural history, this new interpretation led to a renewed appreciation of *daimyō* gardens, recognizing them not merely as parks for the public but as vital elements of Japanese garden history and masterfully designed sites. Furthermore, Shirahata had previously argued that Meiji and Taishō gardens stylistically connected to the tradition of Edo horticulture and extended it into the twentieth century. Ogawa Jihei's reputation, in particular, rose spectacularly. In the early postwar decades, garden historians did not review his gardens. However, by the 1980s, Ogawa's reputation began to rise again, and by the 2000s, garden historians were heralding him as one of the most important garden masters in Japanese history.

The interaction of various developments culminated in the new status of the Meiji and Taishō gardens. Thus, we can approach the story from a variety of angles. One could start unraveling the threads by charting the changing heritage landscape, the new appreciation of the Edo period and its repercussions for the Meiji and Taishō gardens, or the re-emergence of Ogawa Jihei as a hero of horticulture in Japan. This chapter begins with the evolution of heritage in the postwar period, then moves on to Ogawa Jihei's fame, the broader context of which is discussed in the following two chapters. There are two main reasons for my approach. First, this was the path my own curiosity followed throughout this research project. I was initially startled by the fact that the Meiji and Taishō period gardens had

become national heritage sites as "Japanese gardens." Next, I learned about Ogawa Jihei's crucial role in elevating these gardens. Only later did it dawn on me that this fit with my ongoing research into the Edo boom since the 1980s and the general reinterpretation of national history in Japan. Second, I think it is easier to follow an inductive approach for the final three chapters. The gardens signal a more general shift—one that is by no means limited to horticulture. Last but not least, such an inductive approach fits with our observation that the actors in the field are rarely fully aware of being part of a more significant movement. It would not do them justice to merely regard them as jigsaw pieces of a bigger picture and undermine the legitimacy of their motives.

Re-establishing National Heritage after World War II

The notion of "heritage" in Japan has been shifting significantly in recent decades, not just for gardens. Consequently, the inclusion and exclusion of sites is constantly being negotiated. The postwar history of national heritage can be roughly divided into three phases. First, immediately after World War II, the focus of national heritage protection was forcibly transformed. SCAP severed the country's ties to the imperial household and State Shintō, which had been crucial for heritage until 1945. Still, in the second phase, after the end of the Occupation, heritage remained a conservative force in the development of national identity. This was mainly due to the genre of so-called *nihonjinron*, literally the "discourses on the Japanese" but maybe more fittingly the "discourses on Japaneseness." These discourses on culture had the effect of orienting heritage policies towards a generic interpretation of the past that served a strong identity. In the third phase, starting in the 1970s, the question of how to conceive Meiji and Taishō modernity led to a fresh take on history and national heritage. In a fascinating turn, *nihonjinron* was able to absorb this shock and implement it into the discourse. One key aspect of the ability of *nihonjinron* to adapt was the reinterpretation of modernity in general, which will be discussed in the upcoming chapters.

In line with their general aim of eradicating the *tennō* system and the State Shintō sustaining it, the US Occupation forces decided to comb through the heritage lists after World War II. Under pressure from SCAP, more than 350 heritage sites connected to the Meiji Emperor were removed from the list.[1] However, SCAP also played a considerable role in reestablishing national heritage protection when it prepared the Law for the Protection of Cultural Property, officially enacted by the Japanese government in 1950. It became the fundamental law for all efforts

1 I. Kitahara, "Tōkyō-fu ni okeru," 319–29; Akagawa, 51.

in the postwar era.[2] Two fire catastrophes prompted SCAP to elaborate a fresh approach.[3] First, in 1949, the Kondō main hall of the Hōryū-ji Temple in Nara Prefecture partially burned down, damaging many eighth-century mural paintings.[4] As the oldest wooden structure in Japan, its destruction caused an outcry across the country and alerted the American occupying forces to the necessity of preserving heritage. Then, in July 1950, a young monk set fire to the Golden Pavilion of Kinkaku-ji. This event—artfully transformed into the novel *The Temple of the Golden Pavilion* by Mishima Yukio in 1956—once again underscored the need to reinstate a law protecting monuments. The pavilion was restored, and today, many tourists scarcely imagine that what they see is merely a well-executed replica. The Cultural Property Law replaced the prewar heritage legislation.

In 1951, one year before the country regained its full sovereignty as a result of the San Francisco Peace Treaty, Japan joined UNESCO, the international organization tasked with overseeing the protection of (world) heritage, among other things.[5] Japan had been a beacon for heritage preservation in Asia before World War II, even though its policies were entangled with colonial rule in Korea and China.[6] Following its defeat in 1945 and decolonization, Japan focused on heritage at home and once again was very productive in this field. Especially in the 1980s and 1990s, Japan played a vital role in pushing world heritage to new heights due to a notable investment of diplomatic energy.[7]

Even though the new law of 1950 eliminated the predominantly patriotic focus of the prewar period, heritage conservation continued to have strong nationalist undertones. At least after the end of the US Occupation in 1952, the *tennō* and Shintō were no longer constantly invoked as the main rationales for conservation, as had been the case before 1945. Instead, a broader notion of Japaneseness replaced the blunt patriotism of the prewar period. During the second half of the twentieth century, *nihonjinron* gained notable traction and strongly influenced the notion of (national) heritage. Ever since contacts with the West intensified, Japanese intellectuals had felt an urgent need to construe a unique identity for their country. We have seen instances of this attitude in horticulture when looking at the anti-colonial stance that garden historians took in the 1930s. After all, the garden became a robust national symbol resulting from this urge. In the postwar era, *nihonjinron* emerged as a clear-cut discourse that, according to Harumi Befu, became pervasive and

2 Akagawa, 50–51.

3 Akagawa, 51; in addition to these two prominent temples, two castles in Ehime and Hokkaidō were partly lost to fire in 1950. See Mitsui, 104.

4 Jones.

5 Akagawa, 51.

6 Pai.

7 Akagawa.

hegemonic in media.[8] Countless books and articles appeared, and arguments stemming from these discourses aired widely via radio and TV discussions. In a nutshell, these *nihonjinron* theories worked on a limited set of assumptions about culture that were reiterated again and again.

None of these assumptions were particularly novel but stemmed from a nationalist desire—which had been spreading globally since the nineteenth century—to identify society's core values and root them in a timeless tradition and race. Thus, for Japan, *nihonjinron* took it for granted that all Japanese belong to the same race and share unique cultural values and practices that cannot be fully learned or understood by outsiders. As Oguma Eiji has argued, the assumption on race was in any case new. Prewar discourses on Japaneseness had emphasized the mixed ethnic background of the Japanese. That way, it was possible to incorporate people in the colonies—such as Taiwan and Korea—into the Japanese population. In practice, many of the Taiwanese, Koreans, and others suffered from severe discrimination. In theory, though, they were regarded as equal to all other imperial subjects.[9]

We have seen the stance on shared cultural values and understandings in prewar writings on gardens, notably in Tamura's book *Art of the Landscape Garden in Japan*, published on the occasion of the Garden Club of America's sojourn to Japan in 1935. Within *nihonjinron*, these assumptions were elaborated in greater detail and backed up by a dichotomous scheme. The discourses on Japaneseness tried to dichotomize Japan and the West—the most significant other in the modern era.[10] The theories of *nihonjinron* characterized the West as individualistic, rational, and cold, to name three very typical attributes, while Japan, by contrast, was depicted as groupist, emotional, and warm. The West's attributes led it to materialism, while the Japanese were spiritual and could grasp the essence of matters. Okakura Tenshin, a key figure in defining and discussing Japanese art in relation to the West during the Meiji period, articulated this dichotomy in his first book, *The Ideals of the East with Special References to the Art of Japan*.[11] Spirituality was a crucial concept in validating the notion of a unique Japanese relationship to nature because the Japanese were not attached to the "particular," which Okakura associates with the West, but instead embraced a grander universal vision.

A central tactic in the discourse was the notion that Japan could assimilate and learn the best of the West without sacrificing its own identity—an argument Tamura also made about horticulture in 1935. *Nihonjinron* thus claimed that rationality and emotions were not at odds in Japan, unlike in other countries, which all gravitated

8 Befu.
9 Oguma.
10 Sugimoto, 479.
11 Zachmann, 356.

to one end of the spectrum. In addition, the Japanese had a great understanding of nature while being great at modern technique; they had a unique and superior aesthetic sense while deploying cold, functional technology as modernity demanded. Gardens were but one expression of the supposedly innate spirituality, love of nature, and aesthetics of the Japanese.

Nihonjinron deeply impacted heritage preservation in Japan during the 1960s and 1970s, as Canadian sociologist Adolf Ehrentraut showed three decades ago in various papers.[12] Heritage institutions in the postwar era extended their interest to rural farms and the *minka*, the vernacular building style of the houses.[13] These *minka* supported the narrative of Japan as a fundamentally rural country living in harmony with nature. Never mind that such an assertion would be accurate enough for any premodern country. Heritage protection authorities nonetheless cultivated the impression that these historical roots had not been erased in Japan. Instead, these characteristic historical social traits had withstood industrialization, which had replaced farming as the primary source of income. In addition, the *minka* and the Japanese type of farming could easily be linked to some of the critical arguments of *nihonjinron*: Japan's alleged groupism—as opposed to its binary opposite, Western individualism—stemmed from rice farming, which was based on joint control of water to irrigate the paddies and necessitated harmony among villagers. In contrast, Western farming methods fostered individual reasoning and did not rely on a joint effort. The historian Amino Yoshihiko, a prolific figure, was among the first in the 1990s to reveal that historical reality was much more diverse for Japan. Previous assumptions by historians, based on rice as the predominant accounting currency, led to the misconception that most Japanese farmers primarily cultivated rice.[14] However, in actuality, many engaged in the cultivation of cash crops and the breeding of horses, or pursued alternative primary sources of income.[15] Despite this complexity, *nihonjinron* adhered to more simplistic narratives.

The discourses of Japaneseness firmly linked heritage to tourism, as Ehrentraut has shown.[16] There was money to be earned with heritage. The pervasiveness of *nihonjinron* brought city dwellers to the countryside, where they could connect to their alleged historical roots. In this context, a *minka* listed as a national heritage had the seal of authenticity and was much easier to promote to these guests.[17] However,

12 Ehrentraut, "The Visual Definition"; Ehrentraut, "Heritage Authenticity"; Ehrentraut, "The Ideological Commodification"; Ehrentraut "Cultural Nationalism."

13 Ehrentraut, "Heritage Authenticity," 264. For the focus on *minka* in heritage preservation, see also Mitsui, 159–203.

14 Amino, 10.

15 Amino, 43.

16 Ehrentraut, "Heritage Authenticity"; Ehrentraut, "The Ideological Commodification."

17 Ehrentraut, "Heritage Authenticity," 263.

the discourses of Japaneseness as the driving rationale for conservation largely ignored modernity and its leftovers. Early industrialism, with its factories, school buildings, grand department stores, and many infrastructural remains scarcely warranted attention. Until 1968, the Committee for the Protection of Cultural Properties (*Bunkasai Hogo Iinkai*) and the Ministry of Education (*Monbushō*) were responsible for heritage protection. The Monbushō, in particular, consistently promoted a conservative vision of Japanese culture, both in schoolbooks and heritage inscriptions, while the Committee itself did not make much of a difference. In 1968, the Monbushō set up the Agency for Cultural Affairs (*Bunkachō*) as an institution of the ministry tasked with safeguarding heritage, among other things.

Similarly, it was not until the 1960s that Europe and North America began preserving the structures of modernity.[18] In the West, however, heritage specialists could argue that preserving modern remains was to care for one's own path into the present. In Japan, by contrast, modern structures were seen as the West's imprint on the country and were thus fundamentally at odds with the orthodox discourses of Japaneseness. Nevertheless, a few initial buildings of the Meiji period and beyond were preserved in the 1960s on the occasion of the anniversary of the Meiji Restoration in 1968.[19] Furthermore, the president of the Nagoya Railroad (*Meitetsu*), Tsuchikawa Motoo and the architect Taniguchi Yoshirō devoted their efforts to preserving significant historical buildings, including Frank Lloyd Wright's main lobby of the Imperial Hotel. These structures found a home in Meiji Mura, an open-air architectural museum in Aichi Prefecture that opened its doors in 1965.[20]

Next, the so-called "bubble economy" of the 1980s, which saw Japan's financial system overheat before partly collapsing, brought about a more far-reaching change in approach and strongly accelerated the preservation of modern structures. As land prices soared in the big cities, construction companies scrapped old buildings in rapid succession, and Japan's metropolises—most of all Tokyo—started losing whatever historical remnants they still possessed. When the old building of the Tokyo Bankers Club fell in 1990, the Bunkachō began to revise its strategy for modern architecture.[21] The first examples of early modern architecture entered the national heritage lists in 1997.[22] Architecture historians, in particular, were key figures in the efforts to save these buildings.[23] Tokyo Station became one of the flagship projects for conserving an outstanding modern structure.[24]

18 Lowenthal, 387.
19 Mitsui, 182.
20 Mitsui, 183–85; Song, *Global Tokyo*, 68–72.
21 Song, "The Origin," 137–38.
22 Song, "The Origin," 141.
23 Interview Hirasawa, May 2017, Bunkachō, Tokyo, lines 133–36.
24 Mitsui 189–91; Nakai.

The evolving Western practices of protecting modern historical monuments also impacted Japan. As Lowenthal has discussed, modern architecture started drawing much attention in the 1970s and 1980s.[25] At that time, Japan made considerable efforts in cultural diplomacy by expanding its efforts within UNESCO's heritage branch. To support these efforts, it was necessary for Japanese heritage diplomacy to acknowledge the new Western standards and likewise back up its aspirations for a leading role within UNESCO through its endeavors at home. As we will see in the upcoming sections, this new focus on modernity soon affected the protection of gardens. Some of these gardens, however, had achieved protection much earlier, albeit for different reasons, as the case study of Murin-an shows.

Case 1: Murin-an—Preserving Political Heritage

Murin-an is a fascinating case for discussing early postwar heritage policy. The garden was turned into a national heritage site relatively early, in 1951. Murin-an's origins have already been discussed in the first chapter. Today, most people consider the garden to be Ogawa Jihei's first masterpiece. For most of the twentieth century, though, experts primarily credited the garden's patron, Yamagata Aritomo, for its appearance. As we have seen before, Shigemori Mirei argued that Ogawa was something like Yamagata's apprentice in the project, and the statesman's refined taste enabled Ogawa to hone his style, which had been unremarkable until then. In a later section, we will return to the changing assessment of the artistic relationship between Yamagata and Ogawa. When Yamagata died in 1922, Murin-an was handed over to a trust and then to the city of Kyoto.

Given Murin-an's prominence and public ownership, it seems logical that it was quickly recognized as a national heritage site in 1951. The official short statement on the inscription does not even mention Ogawa Jihei, only Yamagata:

> Murin-an was built around 1894/1895 as a secondary residence for Yamagata Aritomo. In its eastern part, a three-step waterfall trickles, a creek was built, and stepping stones for crossing the water were laid. Soon, the creek widens into a pond, creating tasteful scenery. It then turns into a creek again, which leads to the west in accordance with the current of the pond. The water flows gently and remains shallow, giving rise to abundant small ripples and, on two or three occasions, small steps of water. The lawn, together with the wide expanse of water, contributes to the garden's light and modern ambiance.[26]

25 Lowenthal, 387–88.

26 *Bunka Isan Onrain*, "Murin-an teien."

This almost poetic description of its natural appearance introduces Murin-an not as a traditional garden but as a modern one. The entry describes the landscape without explicitly pointing out why this should qualify the site as a national heritage, except for maybe concluding that it is a "modern garden." Its connection to Yamagata in the first sentence is perhaps the strongest indication that it is worthy of protection.

Murin-an's registration must be understood in a broader historical context where such gardens were not yet seen as worthy of protection unless they were linked to some important historical figure. Analyzing the case of Murin-an as an exception helps to understand better what characterizes the recent surge of designating gardens as a national heritage in contrast to this case. It was Yamagata Aritomo himself who first lobbied for his garden to be preserved. On several occasions, he expressed his explicit wish that Murin-an should outlive him and serve as a kind of monument to his life. Already in April 1905, Yamagata had started informing his visitors accordingly, as the *Asahi Shimbun* reported under the headline "Murin-an has to be Given to the City":

> Count Yamagata has told gentlemen of Kyoto City, who have visited him while he stayed in the area of the Nanzen-ji in Kyoto at Murin-an, that he thinks that after his death this estate should be handed over to the city and be preserved forever. He told them that a certain amount of money should be reserved for the costs of preservation.[27]

After Yamagata died in 1922, his wish for Murin-an was implemented. A trust administered by his heirs was set up and Murin-an opened to the public. However, the trust seems to have had problems maintaining Murin-an during the war. In 1940, the trust started negotiations with the city of Kyoto about handing over the estate.[28] On January 15, 1941, both sides signed a contract that specified which responsibilities now lay with the city and how the garden was to be protected.[29] The city had to keep the garden open to the public and ensure that specialists cared for it. The Yamagata family was thereby able to ensure that Murin-an continued to thrive despite wartime shortages, and in that sense, the arrangement fulfilled Yamagata's original wish from 1905.

As discussed in the previous section, the national heritage designation system was redesigned entirely in 1950 under the auspices of the US occupying forces. When the first national *bunkazai* (cultural assets) were approved in 1951, Murin-an was on the list. Another Ogawa garden also made it onto the list, namely Seifū-sō, which had been

27 *Asahi Shimbun*, "Murin-an o shi ni."
28 Kyoto Institute, Library and Archives.
29 Kyoto Institute, Library and Archives.

commissioned by Saionji Kinmochi, who had served as prime minister twice—once at the end of the Meiji era and again at the beginning of the Taishō era. In 1944, four years after Saionji had passed away, Kyoto Imperial University (now Kyoto University), whose campus lies nearby, east of the Kamo River and a few kilometers north of Okazaki, inherited the garden. Both sites were categorized as *meishō*, meaning a place of scenic beauty. Two factors made Murin-an and Seifū-sō stick out— both gardens were commissioned by former prime ministers with historical roles in shaping the Meiji and Taishō eras. In our interview, Hirasawa Tsuyoshi, in charge of horticulture at the Bunkachō, had an intriguing theory about why such sites were quickly designated as national heritage in 1951. As SCAP had just removed more than 350 sites connected to the Meiji *tennō* from the national heritage list, Japanese heritage authorities needed to replace them with monuments encouraging the public to identify with the new regime's ideals.[30] Though it is hard to prove Hirasawa's theory using archival material, his guess makes much sense. The two sites elevated to heritage status were connected to prime ministers appointed under the prewar constitution and thus to two historical figures of early democracy in Japan. Even though Yamagata was a military man, he still operated within a constitutional system.

Moreover, both gardens were under public ownership in 1951, facilitating the heritage creation process. As far as the archival material shows, there were no deliberations about the value of either garden as a historically significant example of a specific garden style.[31] Since they were classified as *meishō*, the main question was whether both gardens were visually pleasing. *Meishō* usually denotes a spot of scenic beauty, rare botany, or historical remains. The second kanji differs from *meisho*, the term formerly used for renowned places. In fact, most gardens are classified as *meishō,* and considerations of their historical significance are often secondary to those of their scenic beauty. Thus, modern parks like Nara Park were recognized early on as *meishō* within the old system of national monuments, and this classification was confirmed under the postwar system simply because of the gardens' scenic qualities. Furthermore, Murin-an and Seifū-sō had historically significant patrons. The horticultural value of both gardens only started being considered much later on.

Case 2: The Former Furukawa Gardens

While Murin-an and Seifū-sō were exceptional cases in the inscription of heritage gardens, the Former Furukawa Gardens are more in line with the trend of

30 Interview Hirasawa, May 2017, Bunkachō, Tokyo, lines 212–16.

31 Kyoto Institute, Library and Archives.

receiving national heritage designation. This shift in perception—recognizing the value of preserving modernity—has only emerged since the 1990s. The Bunkachō designated the Former Furukawa Gardens as national heritage in 2006, when these types of sites started drawing attention from the agency and the broader public. The Former Furukawa Gardens primarily stand out because the Bunkachō selected them quickly during this fresh wave of national heritage inscriptions. One of our interview partners suggested that the combined fame of Josiah Conder and Ogawa Jihei was a compelling argument for picking the Former Furukawa Gardens early on.[32] Additionally, the gardens were already under public ownership, and Tokyo Prefecture had invested a significant amount to restore the former estate.[33]

We have seen how a dedicated civil society movement in the 1950s helped to save the Furukawa estate from being sold off as commercial real estate or repurposed as a museum. Tokyo Prefecture opened the site in the mid-1950s as a public park. Entry into the gardens was cheap from 1951 to 1972, then free from 1972 until 1988. This strongly suggests that Tokyo Prefecture was primarily interested in the Former Furukawa Gardens as a recreational area and less concerned with its historical value.[34] Even though Tokyo Prefecture christened the site the "Former Furukawa Family Gardens" and would soon drop the "Family," it officially fared as a *kōen*, not a *teien*. One also must consider that the administration did not have a category for "gardens" open to the public. According to our interviewees, the gardens and the main house that Conder had built for the Furukawa family gradually fell into disrepair, if not ruin. One interviewee even spoke of holes and cracks (*ana*) opening in the house.[35] The gardens were poorly maintained, and the area was mainly important as a green space for Kita Ward, which lacked huge parks.

In the 1980s, the estate's fate took a different turn, as Tokyo Prefecture made a pivotal decision. Despite their lamentable state, the Former Furukawa Gardens attained prefectural heritage status in 1982. This upgraded status was a starting point for bringing the estate back to life—apparently, Tokyo Prefecture had changed its mind about the Former Furukawa Gardens and used the inscription as leverage to garner more attention and money for the site.[36] The prefecture restored Conder's house and established a separate museum focusing on the history of the building

32 Interview O., May 2017, Former Furukawa Gardens, Tokyo, line 264.

33 As Hirasawa pointed out in our interview, public entities owned all of the early Ogawa gardens listed as national heritage. Interview Hirasawa, May 2017, Bunkachō, Tokyo, line 116.

34 For O. especially, the free admission policy in 1972 signaled the prefecture's intention to run the Former Furukawa Gardens as a park, not as a historic garden. Interview O., May 2017, Former Furukawa Gardens, Tokyo, lines 208–9.

35 Interview F., February 2017, Former Furukawa Gardens, Tokyo, line 151.

36 Interview F., February 2017, Former Furukawa Gardens, Tokyo, line 114.

there.[37] In addition, it replanted the gardens and brought them into shape. Kitamura's book *Kyū Furukawa teien*, published in 1981 as part of the Tokyo Metropolitan Park Association's series on gardens, lent some impetus to this process and showed that the awareness of the historical dimension had considerably increased.

One of the new arrangements in the revamped garden had a long-lasting effect on its popularity, even though its value is questionable from the perspective of conservation. The terrace at the house facing the slope leading to Ogawa's Japanese garden below was reconstructed. Originally, Conder had planted a *parterre de broderie* that lent the terrace a French air. The most famous *parterres de broderie* were, of course, those at the Gardens of Versailles.[38] The *broderie*'s symmetry makes it a perfect expression of the French baroque garden. The original *broderie* at the Furukawa estate had severely deteriorated because of a lack of regular maintenance. The gardeners of Tokyo Prefecture decided to plant roses in a bed adorned with some low hedges, mimicking the symmetrical layout of the *broderie*. As one interviewee told us, these roses initially did not grow well, as the gardeners did not know precisely how to care for them.[39] Only when the Tokyo Metropolitan Park Association (*Tokyo-to Kōen Kyōkai*) took over the garden in 1997 did the flowers receive the attention they needed and start to blossom in full glory (see Figure 6.1). This rose bed is an excellent example of the ramifications that the registration of the Former Furukawa Gardens has had. The roses turned the Former Furukawa Gardens into a popular attraction in its own right. Rose lovers flocked to the terrace, and the Association started to celebrate rose festivities twice a year, in spring and autumn, to cater to the visitors.[40] This part of the estate was still called a French garden, although the name had partly lost meaning since the *broderie* was gone. At least the roses were symmetrically hedged so that their overall appearance still conveyed Conder's original intentions in some sense.

In the early 2000s, the Bunkachō started lobbying to designate more early twentieth-century gardens as national heritage, signaling a general reorientation towards the modern era. Besides Seifū-sō and Murin-an in Kyoto, few Meiji and Taishō era gardens had at that point been designated national heritage sites.[41]

37 The Ōtani Foundation administers the museum, which thus has no direct links to the garden administration.

38 Chandra Mukerji has discussed the complex significance of André Le Nôtre's *parterres de broderie* in Versailles. She highlights the fascinating symbolic links to fashion and military style that *broderie* evoked. This web of meanings was entirely lost in the adaptation in the Former Furukawa Gardens. See Mukerji, 124–34.

39 Interview O., May 2017, Former Furukawa Gardens, Tokyo, lines 216–17.

40 Interview O., May 2017, Former Furukawa Gardens, Tokyo; Tōkyō-to Kōen Kyōkai, "Kyū Furukawa teien."

41 Interview Hirasawa, May 2017, Bunkachō, Tokyo, lines 96–99.

Figure 6.1. The rose garden at the former Furukawa estate replaced the original broderie designed by Josiah Conder. It is highly popular with visitors today. Photograph by the author.

The Former Furukawa Gardens were among the first sites the Bunkachō selected following its new policy. By 2006, the prefecture had fully restored the estate, which was now in excellent condition. Even though the Tokyo Metropolitan Park Association handles the administration and maintenance, it was not involved in the inscription process. Tokyo Prefecture prepared all the documentation in consultation with the Bunkachō.

The registration as a national heritage under the category *meishō* (place of scenic beauty) had interesting consequences for the conservation of the Former Furukawa Gardens. According to the Law for the Protection of Cultural Property, the site has to be maintained in the condition it was in at the time of inscription. Alterations are only possible with the consent of the Bunkachō, which checks every year for unapproved changes.[42] Consequently, the anachronistic rose bed cannot be easily replaced with a historically accurate *broderie*. The Association does not want to alter this garden part, since the roses are still the main attraction. However, even if it opted to restore the terrace to its authentic condition, the Bunkachō would have to approve such plans. Thus, the rose bed will remain, and visitors will most likely assume that the Furukawa family and Josiah Conder had done well to plant such beautiful flowers, given that the information onsite does not suggest anything else.

42 Interview F., February 2017, Former Furukawa Gardens, Tokyo, line 127.

Modern Gardens as National Heritage

The story of the roses at the Former Furukawa Gardens sheds a curious light on heritage protection in Japan. In 1993, Sheena MacKellar Goulty posited that garden owners should try to restore historical planting schemes.[43] Her argument would seem to clash with Japanese heritage laws, which give preference to the garden's condition on the very date it is designated as a national heritage. All the same, heritage policies encounter inevitable contradictions in every country. Within the United States, the Historic American Landscape Survey (HALS) employs the concept of the "period of historic significance" to determine which phase of a site is most deserving of preservation. Even though this allows a more nuanced approach, it cannot overcome the inherent contradictions in preserving landscapes and gardens. In his book *The Afterlife of Gardens*, John Dixon Hunt is at odds with MacKellar Goulty and HALS. Hunt underscores that gardens are living spaces. He believes restoring them too meticulously is meaningless, since "we can never contrive the same mind sets" that brought about the original sites.[44] From that perspective, planting roses might have been a good choice, and the Bunkachō is right to insist on their conservation—even though this probably was not the agency's original intention. Since most Meiji and Taishō gardens have only recently been designated as national heritage, Hunt's prescription to develop the sites according to contemporary landscape wisdom to preserve their genius loci inadvertently ends up being followed, since all additions are kept in place after designation. Nonetheless, strict maintenance of the status quo can only lead to stagnation.

As Professor Awano explained in our interview, designating modern Japanese gardens as national heritage only came into full swing in 2006 when the Bunkachō changed its guidelines.[45] These guidelines were specified in further detail when, in 2012, the Bunkachō published the *Kindai no teien – kōentō ni kan suru chōsa kenkyū hōkokusho* (Report on Research and Surveys Regarding Modern Gardens and Parks). As mentioned earlier, a genuine interest in early modern architecture and a sense of nostalgia at home helped to change the Bunkachō's approach to protecting historical monuments. Hirasawa Tsuyoshi has shown how this paradigm shift affected the protection of Meiji and Taishō gardens, albeit with a certain lag.[46] The key date was 1994, when the Bunkachō set up the Conference of Collaborators in Investigating and Researching the Preservation and Practical Use of Modern

43 Goulty, 57.
44 Hunt, 53.
45 Interview Professor Awano, May 2017, Tokyo University of Agriculture, lines 20–31.
46 Hirasawa, 118–9.

Cultural Heritage—a genuinely daunting name for such a commission, though lengthy administrative descriptions are commonly used as titles in Japan.[47] This conference mostly assembled architectural historians at the forefront of preserving modernity. However, there was still a bias against the Meiji and Taishō sites. Even Hirasawa himself, who strongly argued for the preservation of these sites in a 2007 paper, thought the Meiji and Taishō gardens lacked quality compared with classical gardens:

> When we consider the value of gardens as cultural capital, if we judge from the point of view of artistic quality, the structure and technique of gardens since the modern era compare unfavorably to the many outstanding examples from the ancient period to the early modern period. The latter have skillfully taken up the essence of nature in Japan and have represented it in sophisticated ways, while the gardens of the modern era have a different essence in their conception stemming from the context of modern horticulture.[48]

At that time, Hirasawa's assessment was still tinged with the doubt cast on modern gardens by big names such as Mori Osamu and Shigemori Mirei. Nonetheless, the Bunkachō was already on the move and has rapidly declared modern gardens as national heritage since then.

The Bunkachō had designated 29 gardens and seven modern parks as national heritage (*shitei kinenbutsu*) by the time the report appeared in 2012 and registered a roughly similar number (*tōroku kinenbutsu*).[49] The latter registration system is a step towards full inscription but is less complicated to achieve.[50] In order to turn a garden into a national heritage site in the *meishō* (place of scenic beauty) category, the owner must present extensive documentation. Local authorities—and later on, the Bunkachō itself—usually assist in this process to ensure that it does not have to reject any proposal.[51] However, this process may be too protracted for endangered gardens, and registration is sufficient to preserve its present state and eventually upgrade it to full inscription later.

As Professor Awano outlined in our interview, the inscription process can be initiated by the garden's owner, a city preservationist, or an investigation by the Bunkachō.[52] For modern gardens, Hirasawa is most likely correct in claiming that

47 Kindai No Teien – Kōentō Ni Kan Suru Chōsa Tōkeikai, 3.

48 Hirasawa., 123.

49 Kindai No Teien – Kōentō Ni Kan Suru Chōsa Tōkeikai, 1.

50 For more on this system, see Interview Hirasawa, May 2017, Bunkachō, Tokyo, lines 50–52; Song, *Global Tokyo*, 139–40.

51 Interview Professor Awano, May 2017, Tokyo University of Agriculture, lines 156–62.

52 Interview Professor Awano, May 2017, Tokyo University of Agriculture, lines 81–84.

the Bunkachō usually singles out worthy objects and convinces owners to apply.[53] Owners rarely have any clue of how their garden ranks in terms of national cultural heritage and horticultural history. One of the gardens on our initial research agenda, the Former Nishio Family Estate, is one such case. Hirasawa recalled that the local NGO pressing for heritage inscription was mainly thinking about the estate's old buildings. The gardens were only included in the application on the Bunkachō's advice.[54] Sometimes, owners might not see the benefits of the system. The Bunkachō can subsidize the garden's upkeep once it is listed. Companies that have bought some Ogawa gardens in Okazaki might, however, need further persuasion, as they do not need subsidies and are averse to the Bunkachō's strict rules about making any changes to the site. Furthermore, companies rarely want to open the garden to the public and gain little—if anything—from the official seal of approval. As we will see in the next section, public interest in Ogawa Jihei has turned the tables in recent years. With the publicity generated by TV specials and the attention of Kyoto's citizens, applying for a national heritage status has become more attractive, while refusing to do so runs the risk of bad publicity.

The success of Bunkachō's campaign to include modern gardens in national heritage lists is absolutely remarkable. Within a few years, the number of designated modern gardens doubled. By 2000, 12 gardens had become national heritage, not many more than the ten gardens in 1980. Back then, inscribing modern gardens from the Meiji, Taishō, and Showa periods seemed like a way for peripheral prefectures to increase their number of national heritage sites. Barely three of these gardens were situated in Kyoto—in 1975, a third Ogawa garden was added when the Heian Shrine in Okazaki was listed. Most designated sites belong to the Edo period, as it always has, but recent epochs have made inroads.

The Hero of New Japanese Gardens

An important factor that helped bring gardens from the Meiji and Taishō eras into the limelight again is the recent fascination with Ogawa Jihei. In the 1980s, historians from various fields started reevaluating Ogawa. This created widespread interest in his oeuvre and eventually triggered some experts' interest in protecting the gardens. Ogawa's recent ascent to fame has been so overwhelming that some have lamented how he now overshadows other modern gardens and that his rediscovery has been a double-edged sword for the reception of the period.[55]

53 Interview Hirasawa, May 2017, Bunkachō, Tokyo, lines 141–45.

54 Interview Hirasawa, May 2017, Bunkachō, Tokyo, line 328.

55 Y. Katō, "Sasaki Kason," 379.

How did Ogawa turn into a garden-historical celebrity? Though he was well-known in his day, his gardens received mixed reviews after his death, as we have seen earlier. At the very least, their apparently eclectic style did not qualify them as glowing examples of a Meiji revival in Japanese horticulture. In 1965, Yamane Tokutarō penned a small book on Ogawa, partially based on interviews with people connected to him. However, this book seems to have been self-published and had no noteworthy impact. It was not until the 1980s that Ogawa started attracting more scholarly attention. Two main developments simultaneously led to his reappraisal. First, local garden historians in Kyoto started studying Ogawa, unearthing many facts about him and his gardens. Second, interest from architectural historian Suzuki Hiroyuki helped to clarify the connection between Yamagata Aritomo and Ogawa Jihei while lending a more general impetus to the interest in modern garden history. Suzuki brought Ogawa to the attention of historians in the field of architecture, who had lobbied for heritage protection of modern buildings early on. These two developments were accompanied by a general shift in Japanese garden history that led to an increasingly complex and balanced appreciation of Edo gardens and their influence on Meiji and Taishō gardens, which had all hitherto suffered from negative criticism.

The local reappreciation of Ogawa is connected mainly with Amasaki Hiromasa. Amasaki started researching Ogawa in the early 1980s and published his first paper on Ogawa's works in 1984.[56] Nevertheless, interest remained low. In the late 1980s, Amasaki pushed to establish a study group on garden history at the Kyoto University of Art and Design (*Kyōto Zōkei Gejutsu Daigaku*, now Kyoto University of the Arts), where he had been employed. We are particularly grateful to our interviewee Katō Tomoki, who was a member of this study group, for pointing out the significance of this career move. Back then, Amasaki was in his 40s and still had not been granted a professorship. He therefore brought together a group of students who eventually decided to continue researching Ogawa, since garden historians had already studied classic garden masters like Kobori Enshū from the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries in depth.[57] Taking up Ogawa, in contrast, promised to be more innovative and exciting. This study group began to generate a broader local interest in Ogawa's gardens throughout Okazaki. As Murin-an was in the custody of the city of Kyoto and generally in an acceptable albeit not perfect condition, it was easy to start from there and move forward to study other non-public gardens. In 1990, Amasaki released his book *Ueji no niwa: Ogawa Jihei no sekai* (The Gardens of Ueji: Ogawa Jihei's World) through Tankōsha, a publisher closely related to the Urasenke School of Tea but also actively editing

56 Amasaki, "Nanzenji."

57 Interview Katō and Professor Suzuki, June 2017, Murin-an, Kyoto, lines 7–9.

books on Kyoto's local history. Amasaki's volume on Ogawa was richly illustrated and spoke to lay readers.[58] When Kyoto University of Art and Design finally appointed Amasaki as a professor and head of the Center for Japanese Garden Studies, he found himself in a position where he could pursue not only his own interests but also political measures for the protection of Ogawa's gardens. As Katō Tomoki said in the interview, Ogawa became a "lifework for Amasaki."[59]

Katō Tomoki's membership in the study group and Amasaki's long-standing interest in Ogawa shaped his career. Katō became the eighth head of the well-established family-owned garden company Ueyakato in Kyoto. In 2016, the city of Kyoto entrusted Murin-an to Ueyakato's care. The city tasked the company with ensuring Murin-an's integrity while heightening its allure for tourists and locals alike. As one of his first moves, Katō reestablished one of Murin-an's key *shakkei*, a borrowed scenery.[60] Over the decades, trees had grown too large for this view, but the Ueyakato's gardeners cut them back. When looking over the garden from the second-floor balcony of the Japanese house, it appears as if Murin-an extends right to the mountains in the east of Kyoto, which, in reality, lie several hundreds of meters away (see Figure 6.2).

Amasaki was not the only researcher writing about Ogawa in the 1980s. One immediate link to the heritage field was Ono Kenkichi's activity. Ono graduated from Kyoto University's Department of Agriculture in the late 1970s and worked for the city of Kyoto from 1982 onwards. There, he oversaw heritage protection at the Department of Tourism until he left to pursue an academic career in 1987. Ono commenced his studies on modern gardens by publishing a short piece based on a presentation on Ogawa in 1983/1984 at the proceedings of the Kansai branch of the Japanese Institute of Landscape Architecture (*Nihon Zōen Gakkai*).[61] Soon, he began to write in more prominent journals about Ogawa and his gardens.[62] Ono's work extended beyond Ogawa Jihei, encompassing lesser-known modern garden architects such as the Kyoto painter-designer Kamisaka Sekka, who laid out the garden for the Ōhashi family in Kyoto's Fushimi Ward. Ono also authored a paper on Hara Sankei's vision for his Yokohama garden.[63]

While Amasaki—and to some degree Ono—promoted Ogawa in Kyoto and helped generate local interest in him, architecture historian Suzuki Hiroyuki from the University of Tokyo arrived at the garden master through his initial interest in

58 Amasaki, Ueji no niwa.

59 Interview Katō and Professor Suzuki, June 2017, Murin-an, Kyoto, line 42.

60 Interview Katō and Professor Suzuki, June 2017, Murin-an, Kyoto, lines 327–36. See also Katō, Shimizu, and Sakaue, 450.

61 K. Ono, "Ogawa Jihei no teien," parts one and two.

62 K. Ono, "Tairyū sansō."

63 K. Ono, "Kamisaka Sekka no sakutei;" K. Ono, "Sankei-en."

Figure 6.2. The Murin-an as seen from the second floor of the Japanese-style main building. The Eastern Hills are clearly visible through the trees and seem to extend the garden into the surrounding landscape. Photograph by the author.

Yamagata Aritomo, the patron of Murin-an.[64] In 1982, Suzuki wrote his first small paper on Ogawa for the *Journal of Architecture and Building Science*, in which he praised Ogawa's influence on Japanese gardening in multiple ways.[65] First, the paper's title—"Meiji kara shōwa ni itaru sukiya: Ueji no sekai." (Sukiya from Meiji to Shōwa: The World of Ueji)—indicated that, for Suzuki, Ogawa linked the Meiji era to the Shōwa era regarding garden style. In his words, Ogawa was a "keeper of modern Japanese culture taking place in Kyoto."[66] Suzuki suggested that the gardener created his oeuvre within the framework of Japanese tradition. Consequently, he wanted to focus on transitioning from symbolical garden styles to Ogawa's naturalism instead of discussing the difference between traditional Japanese and eclectic gardens. In summary, Suzuki emphasized Ogawa's role in the design of Murin-an and had little to say about Yamagata's influence as a patron. As a result, Ogawa was allowed to step out of his patron's shadow and enter the spotlight as a garden genius in his own

64 Interview Katō and Professor Suzuki, June 2017, Murin-an, Kyoto, lines 55–63.
65 M. Suzuki, "Meiji kara."
66 M. Suzuki, "Meiji kara," 10.

right. Although this first paper was relatively short and limited in scope, it raised many points that would prevail in the subsequent discourse on Ogawa. Suzuki's ongoing interest eventually led to his book *Teishi Ogawa Jihei to sono jidai* in 2013, which appeared in English translation as *Landscape Gardener Ogawa Jihei and His Times: A Profile of Modern Japan* in 2018. Suzuki primarily situated Ogawa in the emerging cultural and economic landscape of Meiji Japan and showed how he made the best use of new techniques and the Lake Biwa Canal, taking the opportunity to develop a fresh gardening style with the support of patrons who had recently come to power within the new political framework of the time.

As Ogawa's reputation surged during the next two to three decades, another general trend in garden history ensured his status. In 1982, Suzuki pointed out that open lawns were a typical element of Ogawa's designs and delineated how the garden master overcame the "feeling of tension" typical of Kyoto's classic, narrow, symbolically charged gardens.[67] Many later books and papers also emphasized the lawns as one of Ogawa's key characteristics. Next, Shirahata Yōzaburō, professor at the International Research Center for Japanese Studies (*Nichibunken*) in Kyoto, utilized the lawns to offer a new interpretation of Ogawa's links to the Japanese garden tradition. In his book *Daimyō teien* (Daimyo Gardens) from 1997, Shirahata set out to rehabilitate these gardens. Amongst other typical characteristics of *daimyō* gardens, Shirahata highlighted the open vistas created through lawns. The lawn not only enabled visual openness; it also served as a space for feudal festivities. Shirahata, however, did not end his story with the Meiji Restoration of 1868 and the rapid disappearance of *daimyō* gardens in modern Japan. Instead, he connected his observations to Ogawa Jihei: "Often counted among the greatest masterpieces of modern Japanese garden design, Ueji's gardens were the heirs to the daimyō garden tradition."[68] Shirahata's statement had more profound implications than contributing to Ogawa's renewed fame. For Shirahata, Ogawa did not sacrifice old Japanese horticulture to bring Western ideas into landscaping but preserved it by maintaining the style of *daimyō* gardens.[69] Other authors such as Hida Norio have continued this paradigm shift concerning *daimyō* gardens and Edo garden culture, and it thus had a sustained impact on Ogawa's status.[70] Shirahata spawned an alternative genealogy of garden history, turning it into a strong narrative that gradually replaced the older

67 M. Suzuki, "Meiji kara," 12.

68 Shirahata, *Daimyo Gardens*, 193.

69 The Nichibunken has traditionally held conservative views. Prime Minister Nakasone Yasuhiro envisioned the Nichibunken as a beacon for researching and promoting Japaneseness, and the Monbushō followed this agenda when establishing the research center in 1987 (see Iida, 194–95). Thus, Shirahata's efforts to rehabilitate the *daimyō* gardens as Japanese can be interpreted as a new *nihonjinron* on garden history.

70 Hida, *Edo no teien*.

one that had marginalized both *daimyō* gardens and Ueji. Shirahata's 2008 book on Ogawa cemented the garden master's new significance for Japanese horticultural history—not least because it appeared as the second installment in a series on historic Kyoto garden masters, the first being on Kobori Enshū.[71]

Making Eclecticism Japanese?

In the context of this new genealogy, the gardens of Ogawa and his colleagues took on a fresh meaning. It finally became natural to address them as "Japanese gardens," as they stylistically extended the tradition of the *daimyō* gardens into the modern Meiji era. The paradigm had shifted. However, if we examine the terminology used for these latest additions to the canon of "Japanese gardens" more closely, the semantic landscape reveals the ongoing intricacies of defining what such a garden is and what it is not. "Japanese gardens" are dynamic cultural entities, and modern sites underscore this fact. Linguistic practice still oscillates between subsuming modern gardens under the "Japanese garden" rubric and excluding them as "eclectic." Compromises have rarely been used and appear to have failed to persuade stakeholders in the field. Evidently, determining whether to designate a site as a "Japanese garden" seems to be a matter of either/or rather than a nuanced exploration of new terminology. In this respect, linguistic struggles mirror the problems of *nihonjinron* and other discourses on Japaneseness to accommodate various shades and forms of things "Japanese."

The discussion of Meiji and Taishō gardens in various arenas reveals a whole continuum of possible attributes between the two poles of "traditional Japanese," which denotes inclusion in the genealogy of Japanese gardens, and "West–East eclecticism," which points to exclusion. But all points on the continuum bring along new problems and, perhaps for this reason, have not led to a new standard in terminology. The English version of Murin-an's homepage features the headline "A Modern Japanese Garden Masterpiece" in the "About" section.[72] It remains unclear if the stress is on "modern" as a crucial modifier of the Japanese garden or if the term "Japanese" indicates that Murin-an is only a contemporary iteration of a genuinely traditional art. An informational board on the grounds of the Former Iwasaki Residence and Garden claims that the garden "blends Japanese and Western influences," which seems to match the definition of eclectic.

In contrast, tourists are led to Sankei-en by a board speaking of a "Japanese-style garden." Though the terminology initially sounds more embedded in the genealogy

71 Shirahata, *Ueji*.

72 Murin-an, "Murin-an: A Modern."

of national horticulture than in Iwasaki's case, the hyphenated "-style" makes it appear like an imitation or somehow only inauthentically "Japanese." Countless other examples from homepages, leaflets, informational boards, magazine articles, and popular books testify to this confusion about categories and styles. Each uses their own set of terms to approach the essence of the gardens they are trying to describe.

Until now, my examples stem from English texts. Japanese information on the gardens sometimes reveals subtle differences from the English versions, which are probably unintentional and the result of translation. The English phrasing "Japanese-style garden" used at Sankei-en still corresponds well with the original "*nihon-shiki teien*"—assuming that the Japanese text was the source for the translation into English and not the other way around. At the Former Iwasaki Residence and Garden, the Japanese text on the informational board provides more detail than the English "blend" of Japan and the West in the quotation above and speaks of the "lawn garden in Japanese–Western eclectic style." Here, the informational board eschews the more common *secchū* for eclectic and instead uses *heichi-shiki*, which sounds more like "putting things side by side" or even "juxtaposing." The "blend" is also substantiated in Japanese because the lawn is singled out as a Western element.

On the level of official heritage inscription, linguistic and semantic confusion is mainly avoided. Texts employ more refined terms to situate the gardens historically and sidestep simple categorizations. Nevertheless, some explanations remain puzzling. For example, the heritage files for the Former Furukawa Gardens from 2006 read:

> The site, which makes the best use of the terrain with a plateau, slope, and low ground typical of the capital, is a perfect example of a garden built in modern Tokyo. The landscape composition, consisting of three parts, is a first-rate representative example: a Western-style garden in the northern part of the estate next to the main building at the center of the plateau, a Japanese stroll garden down the slope on lower ground in the south of the estate, and a tea garden with a teahouse built in the eastern part. This demonstrates the harmony between Japan and the West, brought about by the reconciliation of traditional methods and modern techniques.

The passage seems to imply that Ogawa's Japanese stroll garden and the tea garden are exemplary instances of horticultural tradition, and the Western part of the plateau adds modern techniques. The last clause equates "Japan" with "traditional methods" and the "West" with "modern techniques." However, as mentioned earlier, Ogawa was known for taking advantage of "modern technology" and did not shy away from using contemporary machinery to cut costs. Admittedly, the "reconciliation"

does not necessarily imply a binary between Japan and the West. The meaning of this phrase is slightly vague in Japanese, and apart from the last clause, there is no pairing of Japan with tradition and the West with modernity. At the same time, the Former Furukawa Gardens lend themselves to such dichotomies because they contrast culturally distinct garden styles: French, Italian, and Japanese.

The entry for Tonogayato Garden (2011), on the other hand, demonstrates the neutralizing power of heritage language.[73] The text does not once refer to Japan or anything Japanese, but it characterizes the main building itself as eclectic and says nothing about the garden. Overall, the entry describes the location in detail, the geography of the area, and most of all, the history of the estate. As we saw in Chapter 5, however, the NGO responsible for the garden's preservation resorted to using the category "*nihon teien*" from the 1970s onwards and encouraged adding Japanese elements while lobbying to remove "un-Japanese" ones. Hence, the experience one has on site is paradoxical. The informational board at the entrance cites the entry for the heritage inscription, which has a neutral tone, while the garden itself has been progressively Japanized in the past decades.

This inherent contradiction at Tonogayato Garden symbolizes the current situation well. There, we see how different historical layers of interpretation struggle with each other. It is too simple to argue that the eclectic attribution is just the old interpretation and that the Japanese attribution is a current vogue that will ultimately prevail. As I argued in the opening chapters, each attribute has its own history. It seems we are in the middle of a dynamic process where conflicting claims about the gardens exist side by side. The ongoing translation of the gardens' statuses into English adds to the potential diversity of interpretations. It is tough to predict whether this discourse will canonize one interpretation over another in the near future. The integration of Ogawa's creations into the genealogy of Japanese gardens has progressed substantially in the last two decades. Yet many actors participate in this discourse. Currently, we see a spectrum of voices that include garden historians, local NGOs, preservationists, city officials, companies entrusted with administering the gardens, pundits, and travel bloggers, all offering different interpretations of the sites. It seems unimaginable that we will arrive at a consensus any time soon.

Once again, I could present terms and definitions delineating points from a "Japanese garden" to an "eclectic" one. However, my focus is not on resolving these issues but on mapping the continuum in its present state to learn more about the fluidity of gardens as a national emblem. Moreover, I doubt that any current intervention by a researcher like me can resolve the problem, given the multitude of definitions that have emerged and are likely to persist for the foreseeable future.

73 *Bunka Isan Onrain*, "Tonogayato teien."

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7. Turning Gardens into Attractions—The Present Landscape

Abstract: As Chapter 7 shows, designating the gardens as national heritage has made many of them favorite spots for locals and tourists. However, this increased attention also causes problems. As a case study in Osaka prefecture shows, NGOs vital for preserving the gardens are losing agency concerning their future, leading to frustration among the NGO members. Furthermore, some gardens face overuse, diminishing their value as recreation zones and places of historical learning. Some governing bodies even strive to create new events for the gardens, which endanger their historical integrity.

Keywords: Tourism; overuse; civil society; Suita

Thus far, we have seen how the gardens from the Meiji and Taishō periods attracted the interest of various actors in the last three decades. Local NGOs campaigned to preserve them, heritage organizations like the Bunkachō actively sought to designate them as historical sites, and garden historians rediscovered landscape designers like Ogawa Jihei. These efforts were transformative for the gardens, increasing public awareness. Visitor numbers have risen, and the newly prominent gardens are crowded on sunny weekends. The growing influx of visitors is not merely a historical coincidence. Garden administrators have established new objectives, and as one of the interviewees of my researcher associate Nils Dahl explained regarding Tonogayato Garden, attracting tourists is now a primary goal:

> Sure enough, it's about preserving the garden and putting it to use. These two pillars of activity are necessary. Speaking of that, at first, we put most of our energy into the preservation part. But at the same time, we also need to communicate the value of the garden while preserving it [...] including through tourism. That's why the head of the center has come up with several plans to help people appreciate the place. For example, we're showing visitors the historical origins of the garden. Well, that's what we're doing right now, and the number

Tagsold, Christian. *Turning Gardens in Japan into Japanese Gardens: Nation, Nature, Heritage, and Modernity since the 1890s*. Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2025.
DOI: 10.5117/9789048563791_CH07

> of visitors is steadily going up. We warmly welcome people while managing the flow—it's completely different from the time of [Governor] Minobe when entry was free.[1]

The reference to the 1970s, when Governor Minobe's administration scrapped entry fees, suggests how much the paradigm has shifted. When Tokyo Prefecture acquired Tonogayato Garden, it handled the site as a public park, or at least that is our interviewee's interpretation.[2] Now, however, visitors are made to pay for entry to a cultural site. The current administration measures its success in the number of guests it attracts.

Though our interviewee presents this change of paradigm as the result of a decision on the part of Tonogayato Garden's own administration, there is probably a broader consensus at work. Several cities have restructured the administration of their gardens with the aim of luring visitors and tourists. There are a couple of reasons behind these local actions. The gardens act as anchors for local identity and as potential magnets for outside guests in the eyes of wards and cities. At the same time, the new administrative organization is under pressure to deliver results, which leads to miscellaneous forms of events within the gardens for the sake of elevating their profile.

Cities and Heritage

Throughout our fieldwork, we were keen to understand how cities deal with their gardens, especially when they are promoted to national heritage status. We wanted to better understand the gardens as contemporary social and symbolic spaces shaped by expectations about history and identity. Different actors such as civil society groups, municipal administrations, and heritage conservationists all bring in their interpretation of the gardens and negotiate them with each other. Our choice of interviewees reflected this approach, as we attempted to talk to members of different groups and stakeholders. Altogether, we conducted 15 formal qualitative interviews in the field and numerous informal ones. Regardless of their affiliation, our interviewees did not need much encouragement to elaborate on this topic and usually pointed out on their own that these gardens were essential assets for the self-promotion of cities and municipal wards. The degree to which gardens form part of municipalities' local identity politics varies. For Kyoto, Murin-an is hardly the central tourist spot nor a major focus of local pride. The city has been drawing

1 Interview Mamoru-kai, June 2017, Tonogayato Garden, Kokubunji, lines 207–9.

2 Interview O., May 2017, Former Furukawa Gardens, Tokyo, 208–213.

visitors with its countless famous temples, shrines, palaces, and gardens ever since tourism took off in the nineteenth century.[3] Nonetheless, Murin-an does add cultural depth to the specific neighborhood of Okazaki. Undoubtedly, the Kyoto Zoo and Heian Shrine are the main tourist attractions, accompanied by various museums. However, Murin-an is the most important of the few well-kept Ogawa gardens accessible to tourists.[4] In addition, Katō Tomoki, the head of Ueyakato, tasked with the garden's maintenance and touristic development, initiated programs to enhance the site's appeal to visitors, which I will discuss further below. Therefore, the garden might even help to relieve tourism pressure on the more popular spots in the area. That said, local attractions like the Nanzen-ji Temple and the Heian Shrine are relatively spacious and can accommodate large numbers of tourists. Furthermore, Okazaki in general experiences less overcrowding compared to other parts of Kyoto.

In Tokyo, the gardens seem more significant since they help wards and cities carve out more of a local identity. On the local level, the Former Furukawa Gardens in Kita Ward and Tonogayato Garden in Kokubunji City do not have to compete with many other attractions, and on the prefectural level, they help define their area's identity in relation to the main sights in the metropolis. In Kokubunji, which attained city status in 1964, preparations for the 60th anniversary of its incorporation as a city had just begun when we interviewed a member of the municipal administration. He told us that the city planned to organize guided tours to local heritage monuments to strengthen citizens' sense of their hometown and draw more Tokyoites to it. With roughly 100,000 visitors a year, Tonogayato Garden was one of the critical sites under consideration for these tours and for the general marketing of Kokubunji's anniversary.[5] Likewise, Suita in Osaka Prefecture has primarily used the Former Nishio Family Estate to build up its local identity, as it is one of the city's only three national heritage sites.[6] As I will show in the upcoming case study, the estate is one of the historical anchors that make the city more attractive for its citizens and tourists.

These efforts are part of a broader trend in the last decades known as *machi-zukuri*. *Machi* denotes urban quarters or wards, and *zukuri* can be translated as making, so that *machi-zukuri* means "creating a neighborhood," even though Shigeru Satoh points out that the term is difficult to render into English due to its

3 See Tseng, "Urban parks."

4 Besides Murin-an, Namikawa Garden can be accessed through the Namikawa Cloisonné Museum, and the Ogawa gardens at the Heian Shrine are also open to the public. Other Ogawa gardens are much harder to access, as companies own them. Moreover, the Kyoto University owns Seifū-sō and is also reluctant to admit visitors.

5 Interview T., February 2017, Tonogayato Garden, line 46.

6 Interview N., June 2017, Suita, line 225.

nuances and semantics.[7] *Machi-zukuri* revolves around local identity and a vibrant civil society that enables citizens to cater to their own needs. In 1991, Jennifer Robertson presented early instances of *machi-zukuri*, which had its roots in civic activities of the 1970s, in her book *Native and Newcomer: Making and Remaking a Japanese City*.[8] Since then, the idea has gained traction, and local politicians all over Japan work hard on nudging their citizens to form durable bonds that enhance civil society—which has the added benefit of unburdening municipalities from work and costs. In that sense, *machi-zukuri* is a neoliberal project that emphasizes citizens' responsibility in coping with social problems and, in return, wants to reduce public expenditures to a minimum. However, it also has roots in left-wing intellectual circles that wanted to address the mismatch between centralized bureaucracy and citizens' interests. We have seen how NGOs were pivotal in saving gardens, and such activities are part of the ideal civil society that both municipal administrations trying to unburden themselves and social activists attempting to humanize the political arena want to achieve.

Gardens add history and recreational space to the *machi*, here referring to the ward or city—or at least that is the ostensible reason for doing *machi-zukuri*. Once designated a national heritage site, it is easy to communicate this ideal to citizens and potential visitors from abroad. Some gardens rely on volunteers to guide guests and stage events, thereby deepening their connections with their community, creating social capital for those involved, and cutting costs for the municipalities. At the Former Nishio Family Estate in Suita, nearly 40 volunteers have been recruited to present the buildings and garden to visitors. None of them receives any money or allowances to cover the costs of commuting or even lunch.[9] This is one downside to *machi-zukuri* that Ogawa Akihiro discusses in his book *The Failure of Civil Society?*: municipal governments draft volunteers in fields like welfare, lifelong learning, and heritage site management to "replace the government's provision of these services" and ultimately reduce costs.[10]

Another strategy to manage heritage gardens more profitably is separating their administration from the municipal bureaucracy and completely outsourcing it. Tokyo Prefecture is the most notable case of this. Here, the prefecture entrusted the Tokyo Metropolitan Park Association (*Tōkyō-to Kōen Kyōkai*) with caring for the famous historical gardens. The Association is a public-private organization owned and subsided by the prefecture—a form of legal entity used in Japan to outsource

7 Satoh, "Introduction to machizukuri," 3.

8 Robertson. For the history of the term *machi-zukuri*, see Satoh, "The First Generation." For developing ideas about civil society in Japan since the 1970s, see Avenell, *Making Japanese Citizens*, 195–238.

9 Interview A., April 2017, Former Nishio Family Estate, Suita, lines 157–59. See Donuma and Suzuki for a garden that renumerates volunteers' traveling expenses.

10 A. Ogawa, 94.

public duties without losing control. The Association was founded in 1948, and up until 1997 it mainly ran the kiosks in public parks and published an excellent book series on the capital's parks and gardens—the volumes on Tonogayato Garden and the Former Furukawa Gardens were beneficial for our research.[11] In 1997, the metropolitan government made the Tokyo Metropolitan Park Association fully responsible for administrating the city's parks, cemeteries, and the nine major historical gardens. In 2006, the prefecture reformed the system, and the Association now has to compete with private companies for separate groups of parks in Tokyo.[12] So far, it has won the bids for the public contract concerning the "Cultural Properties Gardens Group (9 Parks);" other groups of gardens are currently looked after by different organizations.[13] Among these nine gardens are the Former Furukawa Gardens and Tonogayato Garden, although the three *daimyō* gardens—Koishikawa Kōraku-en, Rikugi-en, and the Hamarikyū Garden—are the most famous and draw the bulk of tourists. Regardless, the Association markets all nine gardens together. Free leaflets on the Association's gardens in several languages are on display at all of its sites. The Association operates a website titled "Let's go to the gardens" in English ("*Kōen he ikō*" in Japanese), offering details on access, opening hours, attractions, and history, presented in multiple languages.[14] Overall, the Association consistently markets its gardens to potential visitors—probably more so than a municipal department could. Furthermore, the Association runs a library and educational center at Ueno Park with many historical sources and books on green spaces in the capital. Here, the Association is acting as a third-sector organization, since the library generates no profit yet serves the public interest of Tokyo.

This type of public outsourcing has been a common practice in numerous fields in recent decades. Cities and wards maintain indirect control over the administration, but such organizations have more freedom in managing day-to-day affairs and issues. Moreover, cities and wards aim to cut public expenditures with this strategy, as these organizations can generate revenue more efficiently and therefore cover some of their operational costs. These activities are labeled "third sector" in Japan, with the public and the private constituting the first and second sectors. NGOs and NPOs are subsumed under the third sector. In contrast to how the term "third sector" is employed in the US and the UK, which implies a certain degree of independence, Japanese third-sector organizations (including NPOs) can have close ties to the public sector.[15] Welfare is one of the main arenas for third-sector organizations in Japan, though the Tokyo Metropolitan Park Association also operates in many ways

11 Kitamura, *Kyū Furukawa teien*; Sumiyoshi.

12 Interview Ko., May 2017, Tokyo-to kōenkai, lines 14–30.

13 Tōkyō-to kensetsu kyoku.

14 Tokyo-to Kōen Kyōkai, "Kōen."

15 Yoshimoto, 140.

that are typical of the third sector. A similar third-sector organization, founded as early as 1953, administers Sankei-en in Yokohama.[16]

In the case of Murin-an in Kyoto, the city did not create a third-sector organization and instead contracted Ueyakato, a landscape company. As I mentioned in the last chapter, the head of Ueyakato, Katō Tomoki, was a member of Amasaki's study group on Ogawa Jihei at Kyoto University of Art and Design. Though Ueyakato is a company and therefore part of the second sector, Katō's longstanding interest in Ogawa suggests the kind of *machi-zukuri*-type spirit from the 1990s.

Case Study: Former Nishio Family Estate, Suita

The Former Nishio Family Estate (*Kyū Nishioke*) in Suita City provides an intriguing case for exploring the dimensions of gardens and buildings as modern heritage. This site brings to the forefront the typical challenges associated with collaborative endeavors between municipal administrations and non-governmental organizations run by volunteers. Admittedly, heritage preservation primarily emphasized the buildings' significance and interiors rather than the garden. Consequently, the Former Nishio Family Estate does not entirely align with my examination of the reception of gardens from the Meiji and Taishō periods. Nonetheless, the fundamental problems of this case are very informative in general.

Suita City lies in Osaka Prefecture, north of the city of Osaka. With 380,000 inhabitants, Suita is a commuter town for the nearby metropolis. As a result, apartment buildings dominate, many of which are located near the monorail built for the Expo '70, the first world's fair in Japan. This monorail now serves commuters traveling into Osaka. The Expo grounds still lure a significant number of tourists, but apart from that, Suita lacks attractions. Furthermore, the inhabitants' attachment to the city is weak, since many of them moved to Suita because of its convenient location along a major commuter artery. By contrast, the core inhabitants of Suita, who have been living there for some generations, tend to care more deeply about the city.

Two decades ago, though, a window of opportunity opened for tackling these problems when the Nishio family were forced to hand over their estate to the tax authorities after the head of the family died and there was not enough money to pay the inheritance tax (see Figure 7.1).[17] The Nishio had been one of the leading families in Suita since the Edo period, but the estate became too much of a burden to maintain. Having to part with family-owned land is not unusual in Japan, as the inheritance tax is high. When this happens, tax authorities are obliged to

16 Interview S., March 2017, Sankei-en, Yokohama, line 88.

17 Interview N., June 2017, Suita, lines 18–20.

Figure 7.1. A model at the exhibition of the Former Nishio Family Estate shows the estate's former condition. The main house on the left is surrounded by many more buildings, demonstrating the wealth of the Nishio family. Photograph by the Author.

tear down any buildings on the estate and sell the land. In the case of the Nishio estate, its attractive location between downtown Suita and the railway station serving Osaka meant that the estate would have undoubtedly been turned into apartment blocks. However, a citizens' action group quickly formed to prevent the estate's demolition and planned to utilize it as a meeting place for local events and a cultural hub. The case resembles the Former Furukawa Gardens and Tonogayato Garden, where NGOs were also pivotal in rescuing the sites.

The Nishio had been samurai until the Meiji Restoration and made a small fortune in forestry after 1868. They were thus able to build a distinguished estate between 1896 and 1905 that had many traditional elements but also included modern technology. The general appearance of the architecture and garden areas seems traditional at first glance—especially the tea garden next to the main building, which features a small teahouse (see Figure 7.2). The tea garden's existence was the result of a family member's personal fascination with tea culture, a preference that resonated with the elite tastes of the late Meiji period.[18]

18 Guth; Nakamura; Surak, 68–72.

Figure 7.2. At the small tea garden at the Nishio estate, a massive lantern is another centerpiece next to the teahouse. Photograph by the author.

The large main house itself looks antique from the outside. It is a massive wooden construction that recalls the well-to-do samurai of the Edo period. Upon closer examination, one notices numerous additions that must have been state-of-the-art when the family installed them. In the main house, an old-fashioned telephone in an antique version of a call box reveals a fascinating story about the Nishio family's unique and influential status in Suita. Since the Nishio were the first citizens in Suita who could afford such a novel gadget in the Meiji period, their telephone number was "1" and has stayed so ever since! Next to the phone, a massive fuse box from the beginning of domestic electricity dominates a whole wall in a large room. Surprisingly, these devices have been preserved for more than a hundred years. More mundane additions testify to how the Nishio family integrated modern facilities into daily life during the Meiji and Taishō eras. As in former times, the outside sliding walls are made of glass, not paper. Lights in the house have been electric from the beginning, and once again, the original lamps are well preserved.[19] The garden also has more to offer than a nod to tea ceremony. A huge greenhouse adorns the main house, and a rectangular pool sits in one corner of the estate.

19 Hara and Matsushima.

The citizens' action group's desire to safeguard the entire estate is highly understandable given that it was so well kept and tells the story of the early modernization of rural living conditions like few other places in the region. Moreover, the citizens saw a chance to host a wide range of events there to foster a stronger local identity. Jazz performances, chamber concerts, folkloristic performances, and presentations on heritage preservation all found a venue in that vast estate.[20] Sure enough, the tax authorities could not extend this temporary use forever and pressed for the estate's demolition. In the meantime, the citizens' action group started lobbying for its preservation.[21] As one of our interviewees told us, their cause was taken up by none other than the mayor of Suita, Sakaguchi Yoshio, in particular. The mayor had a socialist background and wanted to promote the city's civil society. In addition, the local media engaged with the story and put pressure on the tax authorities to find a compromise. After a constant struggle for one-and-a-half decades, the tax authorities leased the estate to the city.[22] The citizens' action group reestablished itself as an NGO. In order to hedge the estate against any future attempt to scrap it and sell the land, the city and the NGO pushed for its recognition as a historical monument. In 2009, the Bunkachō registered the estate's buildings as a national heritage, and the garden followed in 2013, albeit only under heritage registration, which had a lower status than the buildings themselves.[23]

Up to this point, the story of the Former Nishio Family Estate, as it is officially named today, sounds like an unambiguous success story for civil society and the preservation of monuments. However, the ensuing developments show that matters are more complicated and deeply frustrating. At present, the estate has morphed into a kind of open-air museum. The city has drafted volunteers to give guided tours through the buildings and the garden that last about one hour. Our interviewee described the aim of these guided tours as follows: "[…] today's children no longer even know about tatami. Normal houses today don't use tatami anymore. Since nobody lives like that anymore, children don't know about sliding doors either. Thus, this is not just an old house, but a Japanese one! Primary school pupils can look and learn a lot here."[24]

The interviewee's description testifies to a crucial shift in the estate's identity. It is no longer a communal place for staging events and learning about the local past. Since the estate has achieved national heritage status, it has shifted its focus to become a site of *Japanese* history. Now, the stress is less on early modernity in the Meiji period, which is documented in the fascinating fuse boxes and telephone,

20 Kyūshōya Yashiki Hozon Katsuyōkai.

21 Interview N., June 2017, Suita, lines 21–64.

22 Interview N., June 2017, Suita, lines 54–56.

23 Interview N., June 2017, Suita, lines 23, 132.

24 Interview A., April 2017, Former Nishio Family Estate, Suita, lines 308–10.

but purely on everyday Japanese culture like the use of *tatami*, the rice-straw mats covering the floor in old houses, and *fusuma*, the sliding doors. Pupils are not encouraged to learn how their city has transformed in the last one-and-a-half centuries or, for example, how electricity changed their ancestors' daily routines. Instead, guides lecture them on their pre-modern Japanese roots, as we learned through our interviews and through our observation during the tours. As with the gardens from 1900, the perception of the Kyū Nishioka Estate has fundamentally Japanized in the last decade. From the perspective of garden historians, the tea garden unfortunately reinforces this perception. To visitors, it seems highly traditional, exuding an aura of timeless Japan. Information about the garden's relatively recent history is limited and can be easily overlooked.

Heritage conservation rules have played a considerable role in this process. Since 2009, the city cannot alter the house because it has to keep it in the same condition as the year of inscription. The sole exception is for earthquake precautions; indeed, earthquake countermeasures soak up considerable sums from the city.[25] Furthermore, Bunkachō rules no longer allow the NGO to host events unrelated to the original owners' way of life and their time. Consequently, it is no longer possible to invite jazz musicians or stage chamber concerts as before. Instead, the NGO arranges exhibitions of traditional puppets and similar events under the new conservation regime. As one of the interviewees put it: "With these events, eh, that have been staged here until now, we restrict ourselves now. These events, eh, which do not fit so much into Japanese culture [...] we have stopped them. We now restrict ourselves to things that have a real connection to the Nishio Estate."[26] In a twist of historical irony, this new policy ignores how open the original owners were to novel cultural influences. Apart from all the technological innovations, there is, for example, a massive pool table in one of the side houses. One could thus argue that the integrity of the place might have been better served by continuing that "eclectic" tradition. Instead of showcasing an imaginary generic Japan, discussing the place's unique character might have been better. Of course, panels with historical explanations cover just this narrative. However, the Former Nishio Family Estate is disconnected from the community and the dynamics of culture all the same, and now it only persists as a fossilized vision of Japaneseness. The interviewee understood this all too well when pointing out that jazz concerts do not "fit into Japanese culture." The house is no longer meant to represent Suita; it is intended to represent Japan. Additionally, the partially Western atmosphere is now downplayed, emphasizing the site's contrast to Western-style living. Indeed, the volunteers who spoke with us seemed dissatisfied with the last decade's developments. They had a

25 Interview A., April 2017, Former Nishio Family Estate, Suita, lines 97–109.

26 Interview N., June 2017, Suita, lines 187–88.

Figure 7.3. The garden of the Hamayashiki History Culture Machi-zukuri Center. Photograph by the author.

strong feeling that although they had succeeded in preserving the estate, they had lost their original goal of building a community cultural center. The old socialist mayor was also gone, and they thus lacked an essential political advocate for their project.

The civic momentum that initially fueled the NGO eventually shifted to another site nearby, and it seems that local activists have learned some lessons from the case of the Former Nishio Family Estate. The Hamayashiki History Culture Machi-zukuri Center (*Hamayashiki Rekishi Bunka Machizukuri Sentā*), a ten-minute walk away, is an old samurai estate from the Edo period. In 2003, citizens refurbished the house and opened it to the public for various cultural events. The NGO running the estate invested some energy in having the place convey a sense of Japaneseness and therefore built a generic Japanese garden in the backyard—albeit without much consideration of the site or historical authenticity (see Figure 7.3). Diverse events and courses emphasize supposedly traditional Japanese arts and crafts. However, the Hamayashiki has deliberately *not* applied for national heritage status. Consequently, the NGO is more flexible in using the site to serve the local community's interests.

The Former Nishio Family Estate clearly illustrates the consequences of designating national heritage. Although one might think that the inclusion of such sites into the preservation agenda might add some variety, the focus on traditional

Japaneseness persists. Often enough, these relatively young objects are made to reinforce Japaneseness on two levels. First, the houses and gardens of the Former Nishio Family Estate are used to exemplify the core practices of a seemingly homogenous and timeless Japanese lifestyle. *Tatami* and the tea garden tell the story of upper-class rural life like any other old house does. Second, and more interestingly, modernity is even given a Japanese touch, as it appears to easily integrate into a traditional setting and blend in with it. The Former Nishio Family Estate does not communicate the interruptions and fundamental shifts that modernization caused but instead depicts a relatively seamless integration of fuse boxes, telephones, and lamps into the lives of former samurai.

The Eventization of Gardens

One sphere in which the Former Nishio Family Estate volunteers are heavily involved is the organization of events.[27] The aim in Suita shifted from drawing citizens to the estate with all sorts of local activities and performances towards a culturalist vision centered on promoting "authentic" Japanese culture. All the same, events remain the primary method of bringing the estate to the public's attention, and the basic strategy for raising visitor numbers has not changed. In contrast to the early years, the target audience is slightly different. Before the Former Nishio Family Estate received the seal of national heritage, the citizens' action group had their neighbors in mind and dreamed of establishing a cultural center. Now, the mission is to educate citizens about Japanese culture and bring tourists to the city. In 2017, the volunteers organized courses on the Important Cultural Properties of Japan (*jūyō bunkazai*)—which is the official category the estate belongs to as a heritage site—lectures on topics like the plants in the garden, concerts, traditional Japanese music, and an exhibition of Nō costumes and drums.[28] Many visitors come from out of town. The program at the Former Nishio Family Estate is typical of how the atmosphere and historical background of heritage sites are usually harnessed.

When we did our fieldwork, the event guide for Murin-an in Kyoto from 2017 had similar offers. Here, Yagasaki Zentarō, a well-known researcher on the Nanzen-ji Temple grounds and its modern gardens, gave so-called heritage lectures on the development of modern estates and gardens in the area, a topic he has published about in the past.[29] A lecture series presented two traditional Japanese arts, namely

27 Interview A., April 2017, Former Nishio Family Estate, Suita, line 232.

28 Interview A., April 2017, Former Nishio Family Estate, Suita, lines 233–49.

29 Yagasaki's contributions include his two papers "Meiji-ki ni okeru Nanzenji kinbō no bessō kaihatsu" (1989) and "Kindai Kyōto no higashi-yama chiiki ni okeru betteigun no shoki keisei jijō" (1998). Both deal with the estate in modern Kyoto's Higashiyama area.

tea ceremony and Nō theater. In addition, guests could taste green tea "at the beloved teahouse of Yamagata Aritomo" every day in June and July, though only in the mornings when the temperatures are still tolerable. The event program since then has not fundamentally changed, but some courses have been added such as one on the moss in the garden or a seminar with Kyoto City University of Arts students on how it would feel to live in Murin-an that includes fictitious ideas on how to renovate the place.[30]

The opportunities to experience Murin-an go even further. The entire garden is available for rent after it closes to the public (at 6 pm in the summer season and 5 pm in autumn) until 10 pm. This is hardly a cheap thrill at 300,000 yen (roughly 2,300 Euros), though such an exclusive event could be gratifying for a group.[31] Here, it seems the tradition of using Ogawa's gardens as a stage for parties has continued into the present, albeit not as an exclusive pleasure for the owners' aristocratic guests but as an exceptional treat for paying customers.

Like at the Former Nishio Family Estate, most events at Murin-an point towards Japanese tradition in general—except Yagasaki's lectures (which focused on the specific situation of the Meiji era), and the renting of the garden, which is probably a way to generate income. However, Nō theater and tea ceremonies are more closely linked to pre-Meiji eras than the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Such activities somehow fit with all Japanese gardens, but they certainly fit better with ancient ones than with sites like Murin-an, mainly because Yamagata Aritomo had expressed his aversion to formal tea ceremonies.[32] Garden-historical accuracy is rarely the main concern of the administrators of these gardens in their promotion efforts. Saitō Garden in Niigata provides another illustration of this. The garden's many special events like decorations for New Year's, *Hina matsuri* (a doll festival for girls celebrated in March), or various exhibitions only loosely connect to the garden's history but help to attract visitors and thus legitimize the expenses of maintaining the garden for Niigata City.[33] In the previous chapter, we saw how anachronistic rose beds became the main attraction at the Former Furukawa Gardens. We might discern a similar anachronism in the promotion of Japanese tradition. The Meiji and Taishō gardens display various traditional arts and crafts, much like Japanese gardens in the West, where they often function as cultural hubs for Japan in toto and not just events related to horticulture.[34]

Nevertheless, the Ueyakato gardening company that runs the daily affairs at Murin-an invests much effort into lectures, symposia, and public handouts that

30 Murin-an, "Moshimo."

31 Murin-an, "Meishō Murin-an yakan."

32 H. Suzuki, *Ogawa Jihei and His Times*, 70.

33 See Donuma and Suzuki for a discussion of visitor numbers and events at the garden.

34 Tagsold, *Spaces in Translation*, 152–56.

discuss Yamagata and Ogawa's intentions for the estate. The 2017 informational leaflet titled "Annual Fostering Techniques of Existing Plants of Murin-an Garden as a National Place of Scenic Beauty: For Preserving the Spatial Characteristics of Original Sensitivity of Aritomo Yamagata" dealt extensively with historical vistas in the garden. Ueyakato's head, Katō Tomoki, had just unearthed old photographs from the archives and was studying them for restoration purposes.[35] The leaflet explaining the "Annual Fostering" brought these fresh insights as well as the consequences for garden maintenance to the public's attention. Ueyakato even had the Japanese text translated into English to reach a broader readership. As Katō explains in a joint paper with his former professor Amasaki for the *Journal of the North American Garden Association*, "fostering" is a crucial concept for him, encapsulating his mission for Murin-an. Katō's objective extends beyond maintaining the current state of the site. He argues, "Fostering, however, means investing the same love into a garden as when it was first created and nurturing its scenery in the same way that one would raise a child."[36]

The events and initiatives at Murin-an demonstrate the dilemma facing gardens designated as national heritage. On one hand, municipalities outsource administration and maintenance to save costs, enabling public–private companies to manage the sites and increase visitor numbers and revenue. In our interview with a member of Kokubunji's municipal administration, our interviewee voiced the city's expectation that Tonogayato Garden should support PR—and he was delighted with how the garden's administration contributed to this goal through its events and activities.[37] On the other hand, the gardens' integrity has to be preserved, given their status as monuments, and questions of stewardship of the past arise. For those in charge who are trying to reconcile both requirements, one key notion that recurred in our interviews was the simple term "*rekishi*" (history). The history of the ward or city connects to the gardens' "historical value" (*rekishiteki na kachi*), which in turn attracts anyone interested in history to the site. These terms and rationales popped up in the majority of our interviews. As simple and logical as this reasoning seems, it situates the gardens as expressions of the local past and identity while downplaying their value as zones for recreation and learning about nature.

Furthermore, the gardens are the vestiges of a particular lifestyle. Only aristocrats and the wealthy could afford to build or maintain them. Therefore, the *rekishi* of the sites does not link up so seamlessly with the interpretations of those in charge as it may seem. Instead, it could even serve as the basis for discussing the social rifts and inequalities that existed in Japan a century ago. However, the notion

35 Katō, Suzuki, and Sakaue, "Yamagata Aritomo kinenkan shozō."

36 Amasaki and Katō, 14.

37 Interview Kb., March 2017, City Hall, Kokubunji.

of national heritage restricts any public discussion, since it needs to subsume preserving history and attracting visitors under the same enterprise. *Rekishi* is thus rendered as a general and generic space that does not allow for anything that might contradict the desired outcomes.

The Problems of Overuse

By now, garden administrations have become highly professionalized due to outsourcing and learning from each other. The promotion of the sites has improved, and with the recent upsurge in public interest, visitor numbers are on the rise. The notion of history mediates between the goals of attracting guests and preservation. Nonetheless, the imperative to preserve the gardens limits the volume of visitors the sites can sustainably accommodate, leading to the problem of "overuse." A first step to curb the number of visitors has been the introduction of entry fees. These have been discussed ever since the gardens were repurposed as public parks in the 1950s. In the 1970s, most gardens were free to visit, as they functioned as recreation zones and not as much as historical sites. Nowadays, though, public parks routinely charge their visitors a small amount to enter the grounds. First, this money helps with maintenance, though it hardly covers all the costs. Second, ticket sales affect both the quantity and quality of visitors. Without such measures, parks tended to be extremely crowded, which led to several problems. Plants suffer from too many visitors, and keeping the facilities clean can become quite a task. The Komazawa Olympic Park, established in 1964 as one of the venues for the games, is one of the major metropolitan parks in Tokyo that does not charge any entry fees. However, with more than two million people already flocking to the area in the late 1970s, dealing with waste and keeping lavatories and paths clean became a major burden and has been ever since.[38]

The Meiji and Taishō gardens faced similar problems after opening their doors to the public, albeit on a much smaller scale. Unlike Komazawa Olympic Park, which was designed for large numbers of visitors from the outset, the gardens accommodate more sensitive plants like moss. For the gardens under consideration here, overuse on the scale of the Komazawa Olympic Park is unlikely to occur anytime soon. Nonetheless, overuse was a critical topic in several of our interviews. On the one hand, there is the imperative to keep the gardens open to educate as many visitors as possible and serve the community as leisure grounds. On the other hand, charging entrance fees filters the types of visitors that come. When parks and gardens are free, many people with no interest in culture, plants, or even

38 Mitsuhashi, 81.

history visit, but when guests have to pay a fee, those willing to spend money on it tend to behave more carefully.

Our interviewee at the Former Furukawa Gardens was outspoken in his worries about overstraining the site. Here, the daily visitor numbers can be pretty high, something which our interviewee welcomed very much per se. Nevertheless, these numbers also bring maintenance problems with them:

> On some days, nearly 10,000 visitors come to the Former Furukawa Gardens. We can put up with the appreciation, but if we take the stance of perfectly preserving the site as a garden and cultural heritage, then I think the overuse problem is something we will have to consider thoroughly. Well, it hurts our institution the more the garden gets used. We currently have five gardeners at the Former Furukawa Gardens.[39]

For a site like the Former Furukawa Gardens, a couple of thousand visitors on a nice day during the main season is undoubtedly enormous. In relation to size, this matches the 30,000 of the nearby *daimyō* garden Rikugi-en, which is roughly three times larger. Visitors can buy combo tickets to access both. However, Rikugi-en has always been popular with tourists and is mostly flat. The hillside location of the Former Furukawa Gardens, by contrast, makes it considerably harder to absorb these crowds, as there are fewer spots for people to gather—the plateau with its rose garden is highly popular, as is the bank of the pond in the Japanese garden down the slope. In addition, the limited number of staff makes it difficult to repair things like torn-down fences or paths in need of care.

The overuse has another dimension that is ultimately self-defeating. As our interviewee explained, the garden loses its magnetism when it gets too crowded. Sites like the Former Furukawa Gardens were not built for meditation—even the so-called Zen gardens were not. The idea that Japanese gardens can only be thoroughly cherished when the atmosphere is calm and serene is a twentieth-century invention.[40] Still, the Former Furukawa Gardens are far more enchanting when the visitors are not trampling each other. I first went to the garden on a gentle weekday morning in mid-December. The sun stood low, and maintenance staff had covered the trees in Ogawa's garden down the slope with nets to save them from frost. There were maybe five to ten other visitors dispersed across the grounds. My subsequent impression that this garden was something of an insider tip could not have been more naive, as I discovered during my next visit on a hot but agreeable Sunday afternoon in June—in many regards, a much better time for citizens to enjoy themselves in

39 Interview O., May 2017, Former Furukawa Gardens, Tokyo, lines 47–49.

40 Tagsold, *Spaces in Translation*, 78.

the garden. The terrace behind Conder's building had now transformed into a cafe, and visitors occupied all seats. Despite the heat, many guests strolled the paths, and the shady Japanese garden was trendy. Some of the less compelling spots in the woods were still quiet, but the same could hardly be said of the area around the pond. Overall, the garden was still a splendid sight and definitely worth the visit, but the atmosphere paled in comparison to my first time there.

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8. A Past Modernity as Heritage?

Abstract: The final chapter explores the Meiji and Taishō gardens from a more theoretical perspective. It examines why these gardens were long excluded from national heritage lists but have recently been embraced with enthusiasm. The Agency for Cultural Affairs, which oversees heritage, has developed a new narrative that frames modernity as part of Japan's cultural heritage. This approach allows modern buildings and sites to be integrated into redefined concepts of Japaneseness. A key focus is the portrayal of Japan as the origin of a unique, non-Western form of modernity, a narrative that has been applied to the gardens.

Keywords: Modernity; Japaneseness; Agency of Cultural Affairs; commodification

Throughout the book, I have argued that the perception of the gardens built by Japan's new political and economic leaders underwent a significant transformation in the last century. This transformation—from eclectic to Japanese—has been complex and heterogeneous. A couple of gardens, especially those designed by Ogawa Jihei, are now ranked among the classic examples of traditional art. Others are firmly placed in the eclectic category, such as the Ōkuma garden in Waseda. In some cases, the reevaluation process is ongoing and probably always will be.

In this final chapter, I will relate this narrative of the gardens as eclectic and/or national monuments to the context in which it has unfolded: the construction of the nation, nature, heritage, and modernity in Japan. My point is to show how the reassessment of the gardens was embedded in a widespread rereading of modernity in Japan in recent decades. My interpretation is somewhat rudimentary here, as a comprehensive examination of such a profound ideological shift cannot be adequately addressed within a few pages. Nor do the Meiji and Taishō gardens offer a sufficient basis for extrapolating and explaining all the far-reaching ramifications of interpreting modernity in Japan. Still, I am convinced that we need to see the example of these gardens in an expanded context to grasp their implications fully. At the same time, analyzing the gardens' evolution within this context will also provide insights into how perceptions of modernity have changed on a larger scale.

Tagsold, Christian. *Turning Gardens in Japan into Japanese Gardens: Nation, Nature, Heritage, and Modernity since the 1890s*. Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2025.
DOI: 10.5117/9789048563791_CH08

My general argument is that the renewed assessment of these gardens indicates a crucial shift in the way Japan makes sense of its past. The concept of modernity played a key role in this. By reassessing the meaning of modernity in Japan's history, Japanese scholars reframed their conception of the nation, nature, and heritage. Modernity was gradually stripped of its categorically Western connotations, and the historical discourse asserted that there were also genuinely Japanese roots to this key twentieth-century concept. The Meiji and Taishō gardens took on a fresh meaning within that framework. Instead of indicating a dilution of tradition—expressed through the term eclecticism—they are increasingly understood as evidence of how *Japanese tradition* evolved into *Japanese modernity*. This only became possible when modernity was no longer seen as essentially Western in the general discourse of history and society.

Modernity and Japan

At the risk of oversimplification, one can say that at least two major historical narratives about Japan's modernization have emerged in the last 150 years. One narrative claims that Japan's modernity started with the Meiji Restoration in 1868 and fundamentally transformed the country. This largely dominant approach declared pre-Meiji Japan to be feudal and medieval. Many scholars and pundits—though not all—see this pre-Meiji era as a dark period whose end was hastened when Japan decided to accelerate its process of learning from the West after 1868. Due to the economic and social catch-up process, Japan was able to join the ranks of Western nations in the long run.

The other line of thought argues that the Edo period laid the groundwork for Japanese modernity. While Western influence is not entirely negated, this approach identifies native roots for Japan's modernization. For some scholars, the Edo period serves as a vast repository of Japaneseness that can be harnessed to help solve current adversities and add deeper meaning to the country's condition.[1] Several Western and Japanese scholars have argued in this way, including the renowned sociologist of religion, Robert N. Bellah. In his work *Tokugawa Religion* (1957), Bellah explored Ishida Baigan's religious movement known as Shingaku as a trigger for the onset of capitalism in Japan in a manner reminiscent of Max Weber's classic study of the Protestant ethic in Europe. In the 1980s and 1990s, adherents of this argument went further and asserted that Japanese modernity and even postmodernity were deeply rooted in the Edo period, which was not actually a dark period at all but surprisingly

1 Gluck.

ahead of its time.[2] We need to analyze and compare these two approaches to understand their impact on interpreting the Meiji and Taishō gardens.

Underlying these two lines of interpretation has been the uneasy relationship between Japanese identity and modernity—and this is a crucial point in understanding how the Meiji and Taishō gardens fit into these discourses. In the middle of the nineteenth century, Japanese politicians and intellectuals faced a decision that would prove decisive for the country's fate, both on a political level and on an everyday level: Japan could either hold on to its traditions and try to fend off the West's imperialist encroachments or accommodate the Westerners and risk Japan's integrity. At the time, the risk of Western colonization was genuine. However, a young and fresh strata of leaders who would later commission the gardens decided to learn from the West and quickly modernize the country. In this sense, historians and others can discuss Japanese history as a successful adaptation that prevented the country's passive subjugation to the West. If one follows this narrative, the question of how Japan could stay true to itself arises. Modernity was a precondition for maintaining sovereignty and simultaneously posed a dangerous threat to preserving Japanese identity.

In the last three or four decades, there has been a divergent interpretation of this colonial and post-colonial process—one that offers a different and remarkable solution. This historical analysis relocates the roots of Japanese modernity to the Edo period and subsequently addresses the era as an early modern period instead of seeing it as the late Middle Ages. As Carol Gluck and Mike Featherstone have discussed, a vast "Edo boom" among historians attracted the attention of many readers in the ever-popular Japanese market for history books and shifted the notion of modernity.[3] The Edo boom largely played out in popular culture and the media, though many professional historians have also revised their views. History has always been a favorite pastime in Japan. Television series dramatizing various historical feats and heroes have fueled popular demand alongside countless historical novels.[4] As Gluck wrote of the Edo boom:

> The civilization theorists of the 1990s found in Edo a modernity not only for Japan but for the world. Was Edo a dream? No, it was "a kind of socialist paradise" based on policies of economic equality. Did Tokugawa Japan lag behind the West? Not

2 Gluck, 283.

3 Gluck published her paper "Invention of Edo" in Stephen Vlastos' volume on invented traditions in Japan in 1998. Featherstone builds on her work to discuss modernity in the Far East. See Featherstone, 140–46.

4 On the samurai Sakamoto Ryōma as an example of this popular historical discourse, see Tagsold, "Popular Realms."

> a bit: in seclusion it experienced an "industrious revolution" of its own, gave up the gun, and lived peaceably in Asia while Europe tore itself apart.[5]

Historians concluded that Edo intellectuals were not as secluded from the outside world as previously claimed. The mediation of the Dutch—the sole European nation allowed by the Tokugawa shogunate to come into direct contact with the Japanese in the port of Nagasaki—facilitated the spread of an early understanding of progress in the West.[6]

Japan's share in creating a modern nation with innovative technology is stressed to a more considerable degree in this discourse than in the old one. In the new discourse, these adaptations were possible precisely because Japan had prepared itself for modernity throughout the Edo period. Many other signs pointed towards a social shift indicative of the seeds of modernity. Trade had replaced the subsistence economy and had integrated the country on a national level. Trading routes spanned from the periphery, where farmers cultivated cash crops like tobacco and dye alongside rice, to the urban centers, where culture and consumption blossomed. With Edo and Osaka as prime examples, urbanization made giant strides and helped create an intellectual climate of innovation. The economic and social texture of the country had become dynamic and was ripe for far-reaching changes at the beginning of the nineteenth century.

However, Gluck does not take her stimulating analysis of the Edo boom as far as it can go. She convincingly dissected the boom but neglected the larger context that spurred Japanese historians and the public to renegotiate the past. There is a deeper reason why historians and social scientists began reconsidering modernity in the 1980s and 1990s. The country's massive economic success in this era ignited interest in Japanese modernity. Further below, I will discuss how the Edo boom relates to economic success and the emergence of *nihonjinron*.

Gardens and Modernity

For now, I want to situate the story of gardens within this shifting framework of interpretation. At first, it may seem like gardens would fall outside the scope of any discussion of modernity. However, the notion of a "Japanese garden" itself is a product of the social processes following the Meiji Restoration, which required forming a national identity. First and foremost, gardens supposedly symbolized Japan's uniquely deep understanding of nature and refined sense of aesthetics.

5 Gluck, 276.

6 For more information on Dutch–Japanese relations in the Edo period, see Goodman.

The green oases anchored the self within the vortex of Western modernity that threatened to erase the sense of Japanese identity. As detailed in Chapter 1, showcasing Japanese gardens at world's fairs swiftly elevated them to internationally recognized achievements of Japanese culture. Although the Japanese commissions for world's fairs conceived early garden exhibits as a cheap and easy way to create a rustic showroom for displaying and selling goods, they eventually became Japan's trademark, and many copies were built in the West.

Gardens were ideal for defining a Japanese identity perceived as being under threat. They expressed traits that could set the Japanese apart from the West and help to overcome the dilemma of modernity—employing Western technology while trying to stay true to a putative Japanese tradition. Gardens consequently evolved into one of the emblematic symbols of the popular Meiji era slogan of *wakon yōsai* (Japanese spirit, Western technique), even though one could also argue, as Amasaki has proposed, that "only that which is creative becomes tradition."[7] In any case, turning gardens into a national symbol helped to tackle a further conundrum of becoming increasingly modern: modernization was understood as a commitment to rationality and individuality. These two critical concepts defined modernity but led to what the German sociologist Max Weber vividly described in his writings as an "iron cage"—and Weber was popular in Japan.[8] When societies passed into a modern condition, scientific rationality robbed them of their magic, leaving their worlds cold and disenchanted. On the social level, people lost their primordial ties to families and villages as they moved to the ever-growing cities, while a rationalistic outlook weakened traditional beliefs. Nature stood for the old world prior to the ascension of technology. As Julia A. Thomas has argued, many Western theorists such as Max Weber and Émile Durkheim saw liberation from nature as a prerequisite for embracing modernity.[9]

In German imperialist ideology, nations were either a *Kulturvolk* (people of culture) or a *Naturvolk* (people of nature), with the former dominating the latter, whose extinction was ultimately justified by theories of social Darwinism.[10] This view was generally foundational to the project of Western imperialism. The West legitimized its imperialist expansion with a supposed civilizing mission to enlighten the so-called children of nature, or primitives. In practice, this mission confronted

7 Amasaki and Katō, 8. Cultural anthropologist Marshall Sahlins adopted a similiar perspective when he lauded the inventiveness of traditions in criticizing one paper in Vlastos' volume on invented traditions in Japan. However, even acknowledging the personal creative genius of Ogawa and others, gardens have transcended the realm of individual merit to become a national symbol for Japan. See Sahlins, 408–10.

8 Schwentker.

9 Thomas, X.

10 Steinmetz, 50 (fn 29).

non-Westerners with a simple ultimatum: integrate into the framework of Western modernity or perish.

Japanese leaders and intellectuals were hardly averse to imperialism and the underlying ideology of social Darwinism.[11] On the contrary, these ideologies opened up unforeseen possibilities for the country. For the Japanese, emulating many aspects of Western modernity hastened the way towards their independence and even their own colonial empire. Social Darwinism, which ranked nations according to their progress, could also be read as a novel program for freedom as long as society was rigorously reformed. Nonetheless, the ideology of modernity coupled with social Darwinism introduced fresh problems and contradictions. If the Japanese people started seeing themselves as individualist and rationalist, it would not only be more challenging to instill patriotism in their minds, but the nation would also drift further towards the West and risk losing its own identity.

The young samurai who seized power after the Meiji Restoration looked westwards and studied European and North American state systems to carve out a novel Japanese state ideology capable of tackling these problems and contradictions. They came up with the idea of not just placing the *tennō* at the center of state symbolism—which they had already done in the Meiji Restoration—but also constructing a state religion out of diverse local cults and rituals that would shore up the emperor's position. Shintō was synthesized into precisely this state religion.[12] An essential move here was using eighth-century annals to anchor the emperor and State Shintō in the distant past, thereby establishing a claimed historical continuity spanning more than 2,500 years—far older than the Christian culture of Europe. This enabled nature to be enshrined at the heart of Shintō. Although this strategy might seem like a strangely atavistic move to Western observers, i.e., rebranding oneself as *Naturvolk*,[13] Japanese statesmen and intellectuals managed to convey an altogether different message: Japan was the only nation to succeed in harmonizing technology and nature, progress and tradition, and this success was due in no small part to Japan's unique traditions and the state religion of Shintō.[14] What might seem paradoxical in the West was no contradiction in the East. According to the increasingly shrill ideology that led up to the ultra-nationalism of the 1930s, the Japanese nation was superior because it functioned as an ideal family-state in unblemished agreement with nature while also adapting modernity and state-of-the-art technology. Gardens were ideally suited to symbolize one pole of this Japanese identity: harmony with nature. Even though this may sound

11 Julia A. Thomas extensively discusses social Darwinism as a crucial philosophy of the Meiji era in her book *Reconfiguring Modernity: Concepts of Nature in Japanese Political Ideology*.

12 Hardacre.

13 Tagsold, *Spaces in Translation*, 33–34.

14 Thomas. For a "genealogy" of the alleged Japanese harmony with nature, see also Rots, 54–59.

obvious, gardens could be many other things as well—think of Versailles, which one would hardly call natural at all. In the case of Japanese gardens, however, all human intervention followed the principle—or was at least assumed to follow the principle—of fulfilling nature's design.

The Meiji and Taishō gardens only partly fit this picture. Gardeners built them using modern techniques, and thus the gardens already aligned with modernity in some sense, even though the idea of "Japanese gardens" was to represent only the "nature and tradition" side of the binary. In addition, pundits often described the Meiji and Taishō gardens as "naturalistic," a term strongly connoted with Western art. Once again, it may seem paradoxical that naturalistic gardens were not necessarily seen as expressions of the archetypically Japanese love of nature. At the time, however, naturalism was a fad in the literary circles of the late Meiji and Taishō eras, where it denoted a realism exemplified by authors like the French Émile Zola, who wrote about the social environment in a realistic way that revealed underlying tensions and modernity's dark side. Another question is whether literary circles in Japan fully understood the concept of naturalism in the West. Sibley was skeptical in his classic paper on naturalism in Japan, though he also points out that the term itself was not clearly defined in the West.[15]

Furthermore, we must consider that *shizen* did not simply denote the Western concept of nature around 1900. Even though authors had started using the term as a translation for the English and French *nature*, the Dutch *natuur*, or the German *Natur*, *shizen* had an older meaning deriving from its Chinese characters, Chinese philosophy, and Buddhism. As Yanabu Akira pointed out in his seminal work on *Honyaku no shisō: "Shizen" to Nature* (The Idea of Translation: "Shizen" and Nature), both the old and the new semantics clashed. Originally, *shizen* (also read *jinnen*) stood for something happening on its own accord (*onozukara*) and was often grammatically an adjective or adverb, not a noun. However, the English adjective "naturally" links to a noun, and Western readers know that things do not happen on their own accord when occurring naturally but because of the underlying principle of nature.[16] Following Yanabu, then, categorizing Ogawa's garden as "naturalistic" was at least ambiguous. Did pundits mean that everything in these gardens happened on its own accord, or did they think Ogawa made them look like "nature"?

Although there are hardly any concrete stylistic links between the naturalism attributed to designers like Ogawa and the literary tendency, one can assume

15 Sibley, 58–60. Wybe Kuitert has contributed stimulating thoughts on the Meiji novelist Kunikida Doppo and his writings on the Musashino Plain near Tokyo concerning the changing perception of landscape in Japan; see Kuitert, *Japanese Gardens and Landscapes*, 174–79. Jordan Sand has recounted a similar story about the novelist Roka (Tokutomi Kenjirō) and his experiences living and farming on the Musashino Plain. See Sand.

16 Yanabu, 27–28, 87.

that using the term *shizenshugi* (naturalistic) for both was likely to make contemporaries suspect that there were. At the time, *shizenshugi* was being widely discussed in Japan, while a broad spectrum of authors and artists had identified themselves as naturalists.[17] At the same time, the evolution of Meiji and Taishō gardens paralleled similar tendencies in the art of landscape painting in Japan. Artists found new ways to relate to the outside world through the influence of Western styles.[18] Since artists often switched to oil painting, even onlookers unfamiliar with the genre immediately understood that something new and entirely different was occurring. In addition, painters shed the conventions of referring to classic poems, literature, and famous spots (*meisho*), as Aoki Shigeru has outlined in his book *Shizen o utsusu* (Reproducing Nature) on changing notions of landscape painting in Japan.

Most importantly, labeling Ogawa's gardens as naturalistic immediately associated him with the West. Whatever *shizen* denoted following Yanabu's discussion was not so important as its Western connotations for readers. Debates about *shizen* are linked to Western concepts, whether fully understood or not. As Yanabu noted, *shizen* referred to something special and Western, and as such was a word that fascinated thinkers and readers even if they did not fully grasp its implications.[19] Furthermore, the nature of naturalistic gardens differed substantially from that of the old gardens in Kyoto, which rose to prominence as *the* Japanese gardens. Those "classic" sites emulated nature on a symbolic level. Like painters, garden artists reproduced famous landscapes from around the country to the delight of aristocrats, who no longer had to leave the empire's cultured center to marvel at such sights. Similarly, poems praising nature acted as references for the gardens. All in all, the classic Kyoto gardens enacted a "secondary nature," as Shirane Haruo has astutely termed the aristocratic reading of the environment in the Heian era.[20] These representations reflected a privileged understanding of nature—hardly that of the majority for whom "nature" was not a romantic realm but rather one that could be quite menacing. It was this symbolic secondary nature of Kyoto's aristocracy that Meiji leaders and intellectuals invoked to prove their claims about the essentially Japanese love of nature. The comparably rougher and far less symbolic "nature" of naturalism had no place in this argument. Indeed, prewar garden historians and critics rarely regarded contemporary gardens as valuable examples of Japanese horticulture. Similarly, new plein air oil landscape painting sparked a conservative

17 For naturalism in art, see D. Satō, 250–1; in literature, see Sibley; in painting, S. Aoki gives some examples.

18 S. Aoki, 37–55.

19 Yanabu, 93–94.

20 Shirane, 4.

backlash.[21] The bastion of Japanese identity and nature was firmly situated in Kyoto, where gardens from the Heian and Muromachi eras dominated.

Japanese gardens at the world's fairs first construed and then consolidated this interpretation of garden history. Given their international appreciation, gardening soon emerged as a full-fledged "tradition" within the framework of national identity. This undergirded the general strategy of the new Meiji political strata and intellectuals. Of course, they stressed their own role in breaking with the dark past of Tokugawa rule in the Edo period to legitimize their position. All the same, inventing a cherished canon of traditions helped them ground Japanese identity. The Edo period was poorly suited to this task, since it was directly connected with Tokugawa rule. Instead, Meiji politicians and intellectuals sought to root their (new) traditions in earlier periods, such as the Muromachi era in the case of gardens or the Nara period (710–794), while they purported that the *tennō*'s lineage stretched back to mythical ancient times. Japanese tradition and national characteristics were established as timeless essential traits that persisted throughout history. This emphasis on continuity allowed Meiji politicians and scholars to sidestep some of the more pressing contradictions between modernization and maintaining the past. One could be modern *and* Japanese, and it was precisely this successful combination that helped the nation to avert the shortcomings of Western modernity. In Japan, rational thought did not erase emotions, nor did technology erase traditions. Instead, they lived happily side-by-side, unlike anywhere else in the world.[22]

Constructing the Novel Japaneseness of Gardens

The hybrid gardens from the first phase of modernization initially had no place in this logic of stitching together the indigenous past and Western modernity. Something else needed to happen before they could be rehabilitated. Only with the "Edo boom" of the last decades did the Meiji and Taishō gardens start making their way into the canon of classic sites. To understand how Ogawa and others' designs profited from the changing interpretation of history, we must assess *nihonjinron*—the discourses of Japaneseness—and how they evolved. It is precisely the Edo boom that opened up a fresh understanding of horticultural history and an alternative chronology of landscape design in Japan.

21 Notably, American art historian Ernest Fenellosa, who had come to Japan as a professor at Tokyo Imperial University in the early 1880s, took a strong stance against the Western influence on Japanese art; see Sullivan, 126; S. Aoki, 40.

22 Thomas, X.

In the postwar era, issues concerning modernity, Western influence, and forging a distinct Japanese identity persisted, but Japan's defeat in World War II meant that different approaches were needed to address these issues. After Japan's capitulation in August 1945, the prewar version of the *tennō* became obsolete. Under pressure from American Occupation forces, Japan relinquished State Shintō. Among the Japanese, there was also a growing awareness of the inherent problems of prewar patriotism and the *tennō* system as intellectuals like the eminent political scientist Maruyama Masao sought to understand the origins of Japanese fascism. In the immediate postwar era, these discourses first tried to pinpoint the causes of the ultranationalist aberration and how they led to the country's catastrophic defeat in World War II. They identified crucial shortcomings of the Japanese trajectory towards modernity, which had resulted in an autocratic state system divested of all moral constraints, culminating in a cruel war waged on the Asian mainland.[23] For instance, Maruyama argued that a "system of irresponsibilities"—led by the *tennō* as an irrefutable yet non-accountable centerpiece (because decisions were made by others in his name but not by him)—had obscured individuals' responsibility for their role in supporting fascism.[24] However, the idea of a unique Japanese relationship to nature remained untouched and informed the evolving discourses on Japaneseness. One can even argue that Japanese intellectuals relied on apparently innocent concepts like nature in the concluding days of World War II as a stable anchor for Japanese identity in the anticipated tumultuous future. While most authors in this debate were Japanese, some of the key texts in this initial phase of *nihonjinron* came from outside, the most famous being Ruth Benedict's previously mentioned book, *The Chrysanthemum and the Sword*.

By the 1960s, however, the discourses on Japaneseness grew increasingly self-confident and entered a new phase.[25] Countless books and articles appeared that attempted to explain how Japan's characteristics were ideally suited to producing an economic miracle. In the 1970s and 1980s, the tone grew even more optimistic if not triumphant. The patriotic prewar conception of Japan as a national family headed by the emperor who was every citizen's symbolic father gave way to a more generic explanation, namely that the Japanese were more group-oriented than the individualistic Western societies because the culture of rice farming fostered a stronger sense of community.[26] Watering rice paddies required the consensus of the whole village and did not allow for the individualistic farming strategies that wheat culture enabled in the West.[27]

23 T. Aoki, 41–48.

24 Maruyama, 124–25, 128.

25 T. Aoki, 61.

26 Befu, 19–23.

27 For a discussion of the significance of rice in construing Japanese culture, see Ohnuki-Tierny.

Many traits touted as uniquely Japanese could easily be found in other East Asian countries, but this fact was hardly any obstacle to *nihonjinron*'s drive for self-exoticization. These discourses saw Japan as fundamentally different from the rest of the world—which, in this case, meant the West. Once again, the notion of modernity as a specifically Western experience that had spilled over to Japan stood at the heart of the discussion, though more often implicitly than explicitly. Among the various binaries set up through the discourses, one of the most prevalent was the idea of the Japanese living in harmony with nature while the Westerners technocratically subjugated it. Furthermore, authors of *nihonjinron* saw Western domination of nature as rooted in the Bible. To construe Japan as the pole opposite, the discourses on Japaneseness ignored the recent course of Japanese history. Concrete had long outstripped wood as the preferred building material, and various environmental scandals started drawing widespread public attention from the 1950s on, while others had been ongoing since the Edo period.[28] The apologists of *nihonjinron* preferred to overlook such inconvenient details or, at most, to see them as a consequence of Western influence. In any case, they were largely viewed as extraneous to Japan's unique path to modernization.

In the 1960s, garden historians picked up on this dichotomy. They compared Versailles with gardens like the Katsura Imperial Villa to demonstrate the Japanese love of nature in the realm of horticulture.[29] Here, Versailles was emblematic of the Western inclination to dominate nature, while Katsura embodied Japanese harmony. Indeed, Versailles was built on the assumption that the absolute sovereign Louis XIV could subjugate plants and landscapes to his vision and wishes.[30] However, the Japanese tendency to equate horticulture in the West with Versailles exaggerates this garden paradise's role in Europe. It was widely copied as a canonic example among the aristocratic circles of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, or at least among those who could afford it. Nonetheless, the royal garden belonged to a specific era with a specific ideology of state and society. It hardly stood for European horticulture in toto. This oversight points to one essential characteristic of the discourses on Japaneseness: the way they ignored cultural dynamics. Indeed, the point was to demonstrate a timeless Japanese identity that had survived the appropriations of Chinese culture and Western modernity. Little thought was given to how much fashions and mentalities change.

By the 1970s and 1980s, the discourses on Japaneseness were hegemonic and all-pervasive, as Befu has pointed out. Books of the genre regularly became bestsellers.[31]

28 For various environmental problems in the Edo period, see Walker.

29 See, for example, Tanaka Masahiro, who opened his book *Nihon no teien* (*Japanese Gardens*, 1968) with a comparison between Versailles and Japanese horticulture. See Tanaka, 1.

30 However, Mukerji has shown that landscape design in Versailles did not simply signify Louis XIV's ability to control nature. The geometric layout mirrored the inherent regularity of god's creation, which extended into the realm of men through the gardens of Versailles. See Mukerji, 250.

31 Befu, 49–52.

Figure 8.1. The medieval section of the Japanese Garden at today's Expo '70 Commemorative Park features a dry garden with a stream running through it. Some patches of grass and large stones enhance the scenery. Photograph by the author.

Discovering and dissecting aspects that differentiated Japan from the rest of the world had become a national pastime. Gardens were one of the nation's cultural assets whose style set Japan apart from the West. Therefore, it is hardly surprising that gardens featured prominently in the postwar world's fairs. Both Expos held in Japan—one in 1970 in Osaka and the other in 2005 in Aichi Prefecture, near Nagoya—lured visitors with massive Japanese gardens. In Osaka, the "*Nihon teien*" (Japanese garden) display staged Japanese garden history.[32] The landscape guided visitors through the evolution of styles (see Figures 8.1 and 8.2). Compact historical gardens were embedded in an immense panorama, which assured that although one passed through different times, the impression conveyed was one of all styles being permeated by an overarching, timeless ideal. One might argue that this expansive garden also narrated a tale of creative adaptation, bridging classical garden styles with highly modern iterations. Nevertheless, it remains uncertain whether visitors to an overcrowded Expo in 1970 could appreciate such subtle nuances in the presentation.

32 Tagsold, *Spaces in Translation*, 186–90.

Figure 8.2. The Edo section is termed "Modern Garden" on the accompanying informational board and is the largest of the various displays. From the terrace of the main building in the whole garden, the vista opens up onto a large pond with lanterns and a waterfall. Photograph by the author.

By the 1980s, the Japanese economy had become so globally dominant that the discourses on Japaneseness had to take a new turn. In the earlier decades, authors tried to explain how Japan could modernize without losing itself. How had Japanese society been able to join the ranks of the Western nations without becoming Western? The *nihonjinron* practitioners were not alone in asking this question. After all, modernization theory mostly assumed that a specific mindset was part of the modernity initially developed in the West. Japan was an odd case, since modernization there had not been forced on it by Western colonization but was pursued on its own terms. As the Japanese economy started to seem like it might even threaten that of the US, this question grew even more pressing. Without a doubt, Western media vastly exaggerated fears of Japan overtaking the US economy in the 1980s, and the type of Western Japan bashing that arose in this context was indeed an overreaction.[33]

All the same, the question was no longer just how Japan managed to modernize but how it had transformed into an economic superpower. By the 1980s, it scarcely

33 For an astute discussion of Japan bashing, see McKevitt, 21–45.

seemed like Japan needed to copy Western examples of modernization. On the contrary, its economy was so innovative that it outpaced its North American and European competitors in many fields, and Japanese companies developed video technology, the Walkman, and the most advanced computers. The classic assumption of modernization theory had been that non-Western countries would eventually adopt the examples of so-called "developed" countries and close the gap, while the price to be paid for catching up was inevitable "Westernization." Japan, however, apparently managed to catch up to the developed Western countries without having to adapt completely. Instead, the roots of this progress were found in specific aspects of Japanese culture. To some extent, it seemed like the flow of innovation had reversed. Western managers were now taking lessons in Toyota's lean production and admiring the consensus-driven Japanese approach that equated companies with large families. Japanese and Western authors have debunked many of these "essentially Japanese" values and critically dissected the genre of *nihonjinron*.[34] Japanese companies merely seemed like large families because they had been hiring white-collar workers for life since the 1920s, offering bonuses and good long-term prospects due to the shortage in skilled labor.[35] Those decisions were not the result of tradition but rather of cool economic calculation. The same can be said for the innovative Toyota-type production methods, which had deep roots in American Taylorism.[36]

In the 1980s, the *nihonjinron* precepts were yet to be demystified. Furthermore, the authors of the time would not have accepted deconstructive explanations pointing toward specific historical conditions and the socioeconomic dynamics of modernization. Instead, they set their sights on Edo for a possible explanation, and the Edo boom ensued. Since the discourses of Japaneseness had reached a critical juncture in their ability to explain the country in culturalist terms, the boom offered a way out of fresh problems. At the same time, the country had fundamentally transformed through modernization. Japan of the 1980s was no longer that of the 1920s, let alone the 1870s. Moreover, various environmental scandals that emerged since the end of World War II highlighted the shortcomings of modernization.

The Edo period offered a solution to all these frictions. New historical accounts depicted the 1600s to the 1860s as both the cradle of Japan's modernity and a period when the country was still entirely Japanese, peaceful, and in complete harmony with nature. Environmental problems caused by growing cash crops were brushed

34 See T. Aoki, Befu, Minami, and Yoshino for some of the most fundamental critiques of *nihonjinron*.

35 Matanle, 58. Furthermore, Yashiro Naohiro has pointed out the high social costs of lifelong employment, which became increasingly apparent when the Japanese economy entered a phase of relative stagnation in the 1990s.

36 For an extended discussion of these American roots, see Tsutsui's *Manufacturing Ideology: Scientific Management in Twentieth-Century Japan*.

aside.[37] Edo transformed into the perfect homeland in its most ideal form. The Edo way of life was introduced as fully sustainable and an example to learn from globally. Azby Brown's *Just Enough: Lessons in Living Green From Traditional Japan*, first published in Japanese and then translated into English after the Fukushima disaster, is a recent prime example of romanticizing the Edo period. Brown depicts an entirely sustainable lifestyle that could serve as a role model for reforming current societies in the East and the West. The reality was, however, that people during the Edo period could not afford to waste anything. Their ingenuity in reusing everything was born out of bitter necessity in a world of severe shortage, not a deeper understanding of nature.

We can situate the appreciation of *daimyō* gardens within this context. Shirahata's work on these gardens appeared at the height of the Edo boom and considerably impacted academic circles and the broader public history arena. After a short introduction to the topic entitled *Edo no daimyō teien: Kyōen no tame no sōchi* (The Daimyō Gardens of Edo: Stage Settings for Feasts, 1994), Shirahata himself penned not just his *Daimyō no teien: Edo no kyōen* (1997, translated as Daimyo Gardens in 2016) but followed up with the richly illustrated book *Daimyō teien: Buke no biishiki koko ni ari* (Daimyō Gardens: Here Is the Aesthetic Sense of the Warriors, 2013) on the topic released by Heibonsha, a major national publishing house. *Daimyo Gardens* bears many marks of the discourses on Japaneseness and a particular fondness for ruling-class tastes and social practices in the Edo period. For instance, Shirahata compares the *daimyō* gardens to Western garden models, with Versailles as the prime example.[38] All the same, Shirahata's reevaluation of *daimyō* gardens allowed the Meiji and Taishō gardens to be connected to the evolution of the Japanese tradition of horticulture. By then, the once-complex term *shizenshugi* (naturalism) had long lost its uneasy connotation of being a Western fad. Nowadays, the term suggests more of a closeness to nature rather than a distance from it.

The way the Meiji and Taishō gardens exuded a subtle air of modernity while continuing the Edo gardening tradition came to speak in their favor. Ogawa and his lesser-known colleagues were no longer seen as breaking with Japanese horticulture but instead as extending this tradition into the twentieth century by carefully and cleverly adapting to the times. Their designs inadvertently became emblematic of the new reading of Japanese history: Edo traditions enabled Japan to create its own vision of modernity. The gardens' inclusion in the historical canon strengthened this argument. Only then were they helpful in decoupling the West from modernity to establish a proper Japanese version of the latter.

37 Walker's discussion of the "wild boar famine" in the Hachinoe domain (1749) exemplifies such destructive practices. See Walker, 39–41.

38 Shirahata, *Daimyo Gardens*, 1–16.

This understanding fits well with an old argument within the discourses of Japaneseness. The proponents of *nihonjinron* nourish a trope of stitching together various, sometimes contradicting pieces of the narrative on apparently "traditional" Japanese gardens. The ability of "the Japanese" to learn from outsiders is crucial here. The discourses on Japaneseness stress that the Japanese do not simply replace old knowledge with newer, better knowledge, as that would undermine the integrity of Japanese identity. Instead, they blend their own findings with well-chosen gems from the outside world to generate a better worldview. This claim is vital in the field of horticulture. Japanese garden art has been deeply influenced by Chinese horticulture throughout the centuries, just like most other art forms. However, *nihonjinron* would argue that Japanese gardeners refined Chinese horticulture's gist and refined it enough to establish a subtle aesthetic garden tradition of their own—i.e., Japanese horticulture. China only gave the stimuli, but garden masters in Japan carefully selected what to adopt or discard, then mixed those elements with their own unique and unparalleled sense of natural harmony. In a fresh reading, the same logic could be applied to horticulture since the Meiji period. Landscape designers like Ogawa Jihei did employ some Western techniques, but their style and aesthetic choices stayed true to the Japanese traditions of the Edo period, in other words, the ideal of the *daimyō* gardens. Viewed in this way, the sites symbolized successful symbiosis and Japanese ingenuity in taking the best of various worlds and melting them into the perfect expression of modern Japan.

Heritage, Ideology, and Commodification

Including the designs from around 1900 in the canon of Japanese gardens led to another phenomenon. One effect of heritage designation is that national monuments help generate tourism. This is a considerable incentive for sites to apply for national heritage inscription, as tourism usually yields income to help maintain the gardens. For cities, adding national monuments to their portfolio helps boost tourism in general, as we saw in the last chapter. Kenneth Ruoff and Hyung Il Pai used historical examples to show the extent to which heritage protection and tourism are linked. Ruoff analyzed sites related to the history of the ancient *tennō* in the lead-up to the Imperial Year 1940. According to the mythic annals, the first Jimmu *tennō* founded the country in 660 BC. This date was not merely viewed as legendary; it was acknowledged as accurate, indicating actual historical events within the ideological framework of prewar Japan. Archeologists and local tourism managers tried to single out those sites that the legends of Jimmu referred to—for the sake of patriotism and to promote travels to these places.[39] In other words,

39 Ruoff, 82–105.

even festivities celebrated in order to strengthen the people's patriotism and their support for the imperial war efforts in Asia were eventually commodified for the sake of income. The meaning of heritage oscillated between the sacred sphere of imperial worship and the profane world of profit.

Pai has a similar story about research on heritage in the newly acquired colony of Korea. Officially, Japanese archeologists mapped the country to link its history to Japan and thus legitimize colonial rule. However, soon enough, travel companies started offering packages for Japanese tourists to discover these newly unearthed places.[40] Once again, an ideologically driven endeavor was commodified, with Japanese tourists paying for tours to explore ancient spots on the Korean peninsula. Commodification and ideology reinforced each other in these two examples. Generating income and educating people about national history went hand in hand.

Postwar heritage policies had similar objectives. Even though patriotism was less outspoken, they were still embedded in a soft narrative of Japaneseness. The official focus on rural Japan, its farms, and *minka* and *mingei* (living folk arts) effectively strengthened identity and drew tourists.[41] During the peak of industrialization in the 1960s and 1970s, migration to the urban centers accelerated, leaving the countryside behind. Japan's economy had fully transitioned from the primary sector of farming and fishing to the second sector of industrial manufacturing. In the 1980s and 1990s, the final transformation to a third-sector service economy took place. As the traditional income sources in the countryside became less and less relevant to the national economy, the peripheral regions were forced to redefine their identity. Tourism offered one remedy for the rural exodus and the impoverishment of the countryside.

Advocating for the designation of heritage sites to enhance their appeal to city dwellers became a crucial tourism strategy. At the same time, these sites reinforced a central narrative of Japaneseness. They vividly depicted the rural origins of Japanese people and their close connection with rice farming, along with all pre-modern production practices now classified as "traditional crafts." Many heritage sites indeed tell a very idealized story of this past. The hardships of farming and the restrictive conditions of villages are rendered pastoral, while the promise of community and a sustainable, simple life seem very attractive to modern Japanese living in places such as Tokyo or Osaka. In 1995, Marilyn Ivy wrote her widely acclaimed book entitled *Discourses of the Vanishing*, which assessed the various attempts to

40 Pai, 142–163.

41 Unlike *minka*, which heritage conservation discovered in the post-war period, the popularity of *mingei* has its roots in the prewar decades. Yanagi Muneyoshi developed the concept in the 1920s and popularized it. Parallel to the *minka*, *mingei* experienced a boom in the 1960s and 1970s. Brian Moeran has discussed the problems and paradoxes of the *mingei* movement in his book *Folk Art Potters of Japan: Beyond an Anthropology of Aesthetics*. For the *mingei* boom, see Moeran, 27.

recover a lost soul in rural Japan. Ivy marked a point in time when the countryside became "exotic" and had to be "discovered," as two promotional tourism campaigns by Japan Railways advertised.[42]

The Meiji and Taishō gardens fit into this trend of constant commodification. They add a touristic selling point for cities. However, unlike the cherished heritage sites of postwar Japan, they do not refer to the countryside or any quasi-timeless realm of harmonious and sustainable living in rural Japan. Most are situated in Japan's urban centers. Nature is still the center of attention, but it is staged differently. The gardens emphasize an aesthetic relation to nature. In addition—and this is a key difference—they show modernity as something Japanese rather than a Western intrusion that threatens to destroy an established and well-functioning lifestyle. As an extension of *daimyō* horticulture, the designs are rooted in the Edo period. Meanwhile, their patrons who came from the new elite of politicians and businessmen strongly connected them to the Meiji era. Ogawa cleverly employed the possibilities for modernizing Japan available to him as a landscape designer. He not only branched water off from the Lake Biwa Canal for irrigation and water features but also used the canal to transport stones from the countryside cheaply.

In the previous chapter, we saw that this hybrid quality has not always been at the core of heritage conservation or even a relevant talking point in presenting the sites to visitors. Both poles of the continuum—Japanese "tradition" or Meiji/Taishō modernity—are invoked depending on who speaks. The crucial difference lies in the possibilities the hybrid status offers. In former times, "eclectic" was primarily a negative—or, at best, ambivalent—designation in the context of horticultural history. The gardens had a split identity, neither entirely Japanese nor Western, which purist garden historians held against them—albeit with a few notable exceptions like Tono Takuma. The current hybrid interpretation revalues this in-between situation as something positive that encompasses both sides.

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42 Ivy, 34–54.

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Conclusion

There is a well-known thought experiment by Tanizaki Jun'ichirō. In his widely read 1933 essay *In Praise of Shadows*, the celebrity novelist of the late Meiji, Taishō, and early Shōwa periods attempted to formulate a core Japanese identity distinct from the West. Shadow was the metaphor he used to contrast both. While the West favored clear light—it was no coincidence that Western modernity took off with the Enlightenment—Japan's appreciation of the world leaned toward the beauty found in semi-darkness. Tanizaki believed that the aesthetics of the in-between, the hidden, and the subtle defined the Eastern philosophy of art and architecture—qualities that the West, in his view, failed to grasp fully.

At one point in the essay, Tanizaki laments that the Japanese could not create a modernity of their own accord, one rooted in the graded continuum of shadows that could have matched the Western quest for progress and innovation. As a metaphor for all the possibilities such an endeavor would have opened up, he compares a fountain pen with a writing brush:

> To take a trivial example near at hand: I wrote a magazine article recently comparing the writing brush with the fountain pen, and in the course of it I remarked that if the device had been invented by the ancient Chinese or Japanese it would surely have had a tufted end like our writing brush. The ink would not have been this bluish color but rather black, something like India ink, and it would have been made to seep down from the handle into the brush. And since we would have then found it inconvenient to write on Western paper, something near Japanese paper—even under mass production, if you will—would have been most in demand. Foreign ink and pen would not be as popular as they are; the talk of discarding our system of writing for Roman letters would be less noisy; people would still feel an affection for the old system. But more than that: our thought and our literature might not be imitating the West as they are, but might have pushed forward into new regions quite on their own. An insignificant little piece of writing equipment, when one thinks of it, has had a vast, almost boundless, influence on our culture.[1]

1 Tanizaki, 7–8.

Tagsold, Christian. *Turning Gardens in Japan into Japanese Gardens: Nation, Nature, Heritage, and Modernity since the 1890s*. Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2025.
DOI: 10.5117/9789048563791_CONC

Tanizaki's mass-produced "fountain brush," with all its consequences for ink and paper, signified the possibility of genuine Japanese modernity. But in the following sentence, Tanizaki concludes that these are "empty dreams of a novelist, and that having come this far we cannot turn back." However, in the 1930s, ultra-nationalism prompted intellectuals like Tanizaki to thoroughly consider the feasibility of non-Western modernity, as Harry Harootunian has shown in his book *Overcome by Modernity: History, Culture and Community in Interwar Japan*. In the end, these efforts were not crowned by groundbreaking intellectual success. Instead, the vision of a genuine Japanese path to modernity ended on the continental Asian and Pacific island battlefields. Vain dreams of Japanese modernity did not emancipate Asia from the West but plunged it into terror and war crimes.[2] In the postwar decades, the early proponents of *nihonjinron* mourned Japan's inability to become modern in a Western sense, assuming catastrophe could have been avoided. It took several decades for the idea of Japanese modernity to resurface within *nihonjinron* again.

The discourse on gardens of the Meiji and Taishō periods is one example of the quest to make Tanizaki's "empty dream" a valid observation of history. Pundits and garden historians once interpreted these gardens as strange things that did not quite fit with Japanese horticulture, but the tides have since turned. Now, some of them are designated as national heritage and tell the story of an authentic modern Japanese horticultural tradition. According to the reformed reading of these sites, Ogawa Jihei took up the tradition of the Edo gardens and refined it to make it compatible with modernity. While many *daimyō* gardens have disappeared, *modern Japanese* gardens emerged, and heritage conservation now preserves tradition's path to modernity. By selective retrospection, it seems as if Tanizaki's "fountain brush" has always been there, right before our eyes, albeit in the form of gardens.

In the winter of 2012, I could not imagine where my journey would take me. All I saw were two very appealing sites, Tonogayato Garden and the Former Furukawa Gardens, which I enjoyed very much. Even with all the research I have done on these sites, I still enjoy them. I very much look forward to returning to Tokyo to sip a coffee on the terrace of the Former Furukawa Gardens and then walk down the slope to the pond of Ogawa's garden on the estate. I now know that these gardens were partly built on dirty money earned through environmentally disastrous mining in Ashio. However, I also know that the local branch of the Women's Association fought to preserve this green oasis in Kita Ward. To a certain degree, the complex story of the Meiji and Taishō gardens faded in significance within garden history. Authors have focused on Ogawa Jihei but have neglected the "afterlife of gardens," which became the title and subject of John Dixon Hunt's book asserting the need to

2 As Harootunian remarks, the ongoing war remained a blind spot of the symposium. See Harootunian, 94–95.

look into the evolution of sites. Gardens are ever-growing and changing and as such are very well suited for answering questions about processes extending over time. Each generation of gardeners and administrators leaves new traces in the landscape. As a result, my study cannot give final answers. By now, Tonogayato Garden and the Former Furukawa Gardens seem to resemble the "fountain brush." Other sites, such as the Ōkuma Garden, are still presented as "fountain pens"—though made in Japan, they are not fully included in the new mainstream of garden history. Nonetheless, the field keeps evolving, and if I can return to Japan soon, it will not just be to enjoy the gardens but also to research them further.

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Index

As Japan rapidly modernized in the mid-nineteenth century, garden building fell out of favor. Only around 1900 did a new class of political and business leaders revive interest in horticulture—though their gardens deliberately broke with established patterns.

Early Japanese garden historians long overlooked these modern gardens and excluded them from the canon they helped establish. In recent years, however, scholars and the public have begun to reexamine and appreciate these sites. Now recognized as part of Japan's national heritage, these gardens are being reintegrated into the history of Japanese horticulture.

Turning Gardens in Japan into Japanese Gardens explores this rediscovery, tracing how modern gardens help illuminate the evolving dynamics of nation, nature, heritage, and modernity in Japan.

Christian Tagsold is Professor of Modern Japanese Studies at Heinrich Heine University Düsseldorf, Germany. Since 2006, his research has focused on Japanese gardens in Japan, Europe, and the United States. His book *Spaces in Translation: Japanese Gardens and the West* received the Abbott Lowell Cummings Prize from the Vernacular Architecture Forum in 2019.

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