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Representations of Japanese gardens in the West at the turn of the 20th Century: The case studies of Clingendael and Schönbrunn

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Table of contents

1. Introduction

The history of the Japanese garden in the West begins with the garden that was exhibited at the world exhibition that took place in Vienna in 1873 (Kuitert 2003:222). World fairs played an important role in the representation and political agenda of countries that took part. Accordingly, the Meiji Government went through great efforts to curate an image of Japan that would demonstrate its equal footing with Western nations during a time when the country was still subject to the unequal treaties signed upon the opening of the country (Tagsold 2017:51). In order to present the country at its best, all the objects chosen for the World Fair were gathered at a shrine in Tokyo, where foreigners working for the Japanese government inspected them (Tagsold 2017:51). The Meiji government's political intentions were also visible in Japan's program for the world fair, where, instead of describing the garden's uniqueness and aesthetics, the government emphasized its imperial context through Shintô or historical accounts (Tagsold 2017:56). Additionally, the representation of Japanese culture through the garden was shaped to advertise Japanese arts and crafts. For instance, bronze articles that were used as decoration for the Japanese garden were intended for sale and were promoted as export articles by the Meiji government (Tagsold 2017:56). It becomes clear, that next to a channel to pursue economic endeavours, the Japanese government saw the Japanese gardens mainly as "a highly charged propaganda tool", as Schöppler puts it (2021:102). Consequently, much attention was paid to conveying a specific image of the Japanese garden to the Western audience. Additionally, there were other factors such as the *Japonaiserie* trend and literature such as Josiah Conder's book on Japanese gardening that were form giving for a public discourse and the experience of the Japanese garden.

In this thesis, I will look at the intentions of the garden creators, how these intentions were put into practice, as well as how these gardens were consequently experienced by the public. In order to do this, I will look at important factors and the discourse that influenced and created the image of the Japanese garden in the West and look at how it was put into practice. I will discuss the influence of the world fairs, the *Japonaiserie* trend in the West as well as the influence of Josiah Conder's gardening manual. The two case studies that will be used for the analysis in context with the aforementioned aspects are represented by the Japanese garden in Clingendael in The Hague (Netherlands), as well as the Japanese garden at the palace garden in Schönbrunn in Vienna (Austria). Both were built in the early 1910's, making them two of the oldest existing Japanese gardens in Europe that were built during a time were Japanese gardens were in fashion. For my analysis, I will trace back the history of

the gardens, the intentions of their constructors, as well as the presentation of the gardens to the public in order to draw conclusions about the experience and image thereof. The main research question under which I am going to analyse the gardens is: What were the intentions of the garden's creators?

I will start by providing an overview of the history of how the Japanese garden was first introduced to western countries, by looking at the discourse that was formed around them. Then I will address factors that were influential on the discourse and the image of the gardens, namely the world exhibitions, the Japonaiserie trend and Josiah Conder's garden manual.

2. The Japanese garden in the West around the turn of the 20th Century

With the introduction of the Japanese garden in the West through the world exhibition in Vienna, in 1873, the public was exposed to something completely unknown that was hard for it to grasp. One thing that is mentioned by multiple authors about the first Japanese gardens in the West, is the struggle of the Western audience to "understand them" (Tagsold 2016:24). This need of wanting to understand the Japanese garden was met by newspaper articles introducing the principles of Japanese gardening to the public (Tagsold 2017:24, Kumakura 2021:31). One important book that is extensively mentioned in context with Japanese gardens in the West is Josiah Conder's *Landscape Gardening in Japan*. It was of great influence for the later endeavours of well-dressed Europeans in constructing their own private gardens and has been regarded as "an indispensable source for the study of the subject in the West for a long time", which was from 1893 when it was first published until after the end of World War II (Tagsold 2017:25).

Another work that has had great influence on the Western public was Basil Hall Chamberlain´s *Murray´s travel book for travellers in Japan*. The transformation of trade and the commodification of goods at the beginning of the 20th century led to the use of Japanese gardens as backgrounds or decorative theme for selling goods (Tagsold 2017:78). That is how the gardens and with that Japanese culture, were transformed into something purchasable just like any other item (Tagsold 2017:79). With this rise of consumerism spreading the Japanese garden as commercial good along with the improved accessibility of Japan for tourists, the construction of the Japanese gardens as travel souvenir came into fashion (Schöppler 2020:182). Even garden furniture companies used Japanese styles in their designs as their selling point in order to establish themselves on the newfound market (Schöppler 2020:197). What was important, was not that the Japanese gardens followed any gardening tradition. Rather, it was sufficient that they "look the part – Oriental, Chinese, Japanese – or all at the same time" (Schöppler 2020:140). At the beginning of the Japanese garden craze, importance was placed on the experience of something exotic, the creation of a space that would reflect the garden visitor´s idea of Japan. However, with the accumulation of private Japanese gardens in Western countries, media started to raise the question about their authenticity[1]. Newspapers like the *Times of London* began publishing articles about Japanese gardens in the West, where they questioned their authenticity and even referred to them as "mere freaks"

[1] I will discuss this point further in a following chapter.

(Tagsold 2017:85). When referring to "authentic" Japanese gardens in 1916, *The Times* claimed that: "we must not imitate them, for if we do, we shall merely parody them. Bamboos and stones and lanterns will not make a Japanese garden" (Tagsold 2017:85). This reflected the general discourse existing in garden journals and ideas coming from garden theoreticians, that Westerners were not able to understand the philosophy of the Japanese garden and would thus never be able to fully appreciate it. (Tagsold 2017:86).

Here we can observe a major paradigm shift in the public discourse about the Japanese garden in the West. While at the beginning, the emphasis was put on understanding the Japanese garden, different images of it in public and by experts, along with opinions about how Japanese gardens had or had not to look like, had formed. This can be explained with an observation by Tagsold, where he claims that the Japanese government ended up losing control over the image of the Japanese garden, as the government with their gardens at the World Fairs was not the only instance creating Japanese gardens anymore. Private persons started to build their own Japanese gardens according to their needs, and so different images of gardens started to run together in the minds of the public (Tagsold 2017:72). While the Japanese government was using the gardens solely as a means for self-representation without attributing further importance to the authenticity to them, the notion of authenticity seemed to be an important part in the experience of the Japanese garden for the Western public. With a canonical body of knowledge and critical works that had formed, the first vogue of Japanese gardens in the West ended in the 1930s because of the lack of financial resources during the great depression (Tagsold 2017:6). Thus, the period of the first wave of the Japanese garden trend can be set from approximately 1870 until 1930.

The following subchapters will illustrate what aspects were influential and form giving for the image of the Japanese garden in the West and the change thereof around the turn of the century.

2.1 *Japonaiserie* and *Japonisme*

Ono Ayako mentions that it has been long before the opening of Japan, starting from the 1850´s, that Japanese ceramics, fans, lacquerware and other products of Japanese craftmanship have been in circulation in Europe through their import by representatives of the Dutch East Indian Company through the Japanese island Deshima (Ono 2003:6). At the time of the first International exposition 1951 in London, Japanese crafts came into wider circulation amongst the well-dressed public in the West (Ono 2003:6). Interestingly, Ono

points out, that Japanese objects to be sent to the exhibitions were chosen by British merchants, with the criteria of showing typical Japanese design (Ono 2003:9). These objects were selected in regards of the suitability for their Western public, rather than their "authenticity". This means that long before the opening of Japan and the presence of the Japanese Government at the World Fairs, the Western public came into contact with pieces that were appropriated to suit its taste. This first contact is the forerunner for *Japonaiserie* trend of which the first wave started around the 1860s (Reed 2016:1). While the term *Japonisme* describes the mode of style that signifies the adaption of Japanese fashions, *Japonaiserie* points to (a) concrete object(s), adapted according to the fashion of *Japonisme*.

Japonisme is often referred to as the "influence of Japan on late 19th-century European art and life" (Chiba 2009:1). However, this kind of definition completely ignores the socio-political dynamics that come into play with the reception and interpretation of "things Japanese" as a stylistic mode. Chiba Yoko defines three different phases in the adaptation of Japanese style. The first phase began with the opening of Japan in 1854 and ended around 1867. The second phase began in 1868, during the first World Exposition in Paris and ended in 1883 when "things Japanese" were already in fashion all across Europe. Finally, the third phase ended with the outbreak of WWI when the image of Japan had shifted from the "nation of flower beauty" (Chiba 2009:3) to that of a military superpower upon the country's colonial endeavours in Taiwan, China and Korea.

There was no clear demarcation of the change in reception across the phases, which is why they are described as a shift "from exoticism, to imitation, to absorption" (Chiba 2009:3). This change of taste and perception can be seen in the discourse around Japanese gardens as well, as described in the previous subchapter.

Another simple explanation for the change of criteria for the incorporation of Japanese objects is that people became more familiar with Japanese culture due to the increased demand by consumers that had been built upon *Japonisme* (Peterson 2022:42). With the rise of consumerism that took place around the beginning of the 20th century, Japanese goods, became more accessible (Schöppler 2020:197). Along with the aforementioned facilitated mobility in tourism and the rise of the Japanese garden as a travel souvenir, the exposure to Japanese gardens increased, leading to an increased import of Japanese garden objects and the construction of numerous private gardens (Kumakura 2021:31). As a by-product of this, the image of the Japanese gardens also changed.

In the first part of the chapter, I have addressed the need for authenticity that became more prominent by the time, and was finally visible in the 1910's, when newspapers started criticizing Japanese gardens in the West for not being "authentic"[2].

2.2 The Role of the world expositions for the representation of the Japanese garden

The Great World Fair in London in 1851 is considered as the first big world fair by many scholars (MacLeod 2012:335). However, there had been international exhibitions in France dating back to as early as 1798. Likewise, agricultural shows and trade fairs have been organised in Britain annually by urban schools of design with the intention of educating personnel working in technical arts (MacLeod 2012:335). What made the world exhibition in 1851 different and more impactful than its predecessors was its scope and the structure of the Crystal Palace, constructed specifically for the event, that made the exhibition "Great" (MacLeod 2012:335). Furthermore, it was the first exhibition that gathered great attention by the media and the public world-wide (Leersen 2022:42). In the case of Japan, the world fair in London in 1851 is the first one that is of relevance as this is the approximate timing where the first Japanese objects were traded outside of Japan as mentioned in the previous chapter[3]. Thus, we can consider the first major world fair of 1851 for the purpose of this thesis as well. As for the present situation, world exhibitions are still being held to this day but have been replaced by newer media such as radio, film, television and the internet as more accessible platforms of global display culture (Storm, Leerssen 2022:7). This is why the focus here is placed on the world fairs around the turn of the 20th century. Furthermore, as the information presented here will be set in context with the Japanese gardens between 1870 until 1930, a discussion about present world fairs would not prove as relevant for the purpose of this project.

The world fairs were large scale spectacles, that attracted huge numbers of visitors and gathered the attention of all major newspapers and journals of the world. Illustrated magazines featured the expositions in entire issues, providing pictures of the most popular and curious exhibits, giving a glimpse into the atmosphere of the event (Storm, Leersen 2022:9). At the same time, there were two other parallel movements. The department store and the decorative arts and science museum were introduced around the same time as the

[2] p.6
[3] p.6

world exhibition. From the interaction between those three grew “new spectacles of display” (MacLeod 2012:353) that promoted the spread of cultural artifacts showcased.

This happened during a time of transformation of trade and commodification of goods which was earlier mentioned in the previous chapter[4]. This turned the fairs into the ideal platforms for the transnational construction of national identities. The general change in consumer culture further facilitated the adaptation and the spread of fashions that are presented from world fairs. On the other hand, this can be seen as an additional factor that increased the pressure on governments presenting themselves at those fairs, as they had to make sure to provide an experience that was suitable to the taste of a public audience. Consequently, the self-representations of countries participating in the fairs were highly influenced by transformations and “short-lived fashions” (Storm, Leersen 2022:11).

One of the requirements for a successful country representation from the aspect of the visitors’ experience was the notion of “authenticity”. However, I argue that this concept is in itself problematic, as it is very subjective. A discussion on this topic will follow in a later chapter. The world fairs were introduced during a time of trade internationalization when trademarks had begun to be used around the Great Exhibition in London 1851. By 1891, there was the first attempt to regulate their use by the Madrid Agreement Concerning the International Registration of Marks (Leersen 2022:48). Although nations do not fall under the category of trademarks, this can be seen as incentive for the sudden rise of the nation as “brand”. This is how labels such as “Made in Germany” or “Swiss Made” had come into wider use (Leersen 2022:44). The “placement” of natives that were present at their countries’ respective pavilions could be seen as one of the consequences of this desire for the “real experience” of a country.

Not only were the governments under pressure to suit the tastes of the wider public, there were structures, formats and requirements that needed to be followed in order to be able to place exhibits (Storm, Leersen 2022:17). In order to present themselves, non-western countries had to decide whether they wanted to hold on to their national culture or adopt an image that would show “their contribution to the progress of humankind” (Storm 2022:57). Additionally, they had to decide between focusing on either high or low culture, which would define the target group as either elite or popular (Storm 2022:57).

[4] p.5

TABLE 2.1 National pavilions

	Universal	National
High culture	Fashionable	Historical
Low culture	Commercial	Vernacular

Figure 1

Storm discerns four different kinds of national representation as illustrated in the table above (*Figure 1*). The "Universal Fashionable" approach engendered a representation of a country as contributing to "the advance of human civilization" by presenting the country's national identity in the form of the latest international fashions (Storm 2022:58). For example, the first universal fashion was Classicism, which led many countries to build their pavilions in that style (Storm 2022:58).

The "Universal Commercial" approach was one that was mostly chosen by host countries when building the exhibition hall, as they were supposed to be buildings which had to be economical and functional. Those were usually developed by engineers (Storm 2022:64).

The "National Historical" style was a reference to one of the country's historical architectural styles, "referring to a specific part of the national architectural patrimony" (Storm 2022:65). This is an approach that was adapted by Japan as well. For example, in 1915 at the Panama-Pacific International Exposition in San Francisco, Japan decided to participate with a copy of the Kinkaku temple, or Golden Pavilion, in Kyoto (Storm 2022:67).

Lastly, the "National Vernacular" style represented buildings that were constructed by artisans and peasants instead of professionals. These buildings could be replicas of rural buildings or even whole villages representing the nation by depicting glimpses of the everyday life of its citizens (Storm 2022:71). They were made to appear as "authentic" as possible (Storm 2022:72). One way to achieve this, was to include natives of the respective countries into the exhibition. For example, the inn keeper of the Japanese tea house at the 1867 exhibition in Paris received much attention by the French public and press. However, there are no sources about his identity, and the question remains whether he was one of the Japanese workers who had come to help with construction work on the fair, whether he had been sent to Paris to run the teahouse, or even whether he was an actor recruited in Paris (Demeulenaere-Douyere 2020:138). This shows how this perception of something as

"authentic" can be built on an illusion in the sense that something only has to fulfil certain criteria that the public has for a thing in order to be perceived as "authentic". This representation, however, does not need to correspond with reality. In the case of the inn keeper, his background was irrelevant as long as he conveyed the imagined image of a Japanese inn keeper. This illustrates how perception and reality can greatly differ from each other and finally makes one question the concept of authenticity altogether. This illusion or image of what consists of something authentically Japanese can be referred to as *Japanicity*, in analogy with a term ("Sinicity") coined by Roland Barthes. It signifies a certain idea of Japan rather than the country itself. This image is influenced by "a whole system of values, history, a geography, a morality, a zoology, a literature", and is as such not permanent but changes along with the aforementioned aspects (Barthes 1972:118). This notion of *Japanicity* is thus more of a certain image of reality rather than actual reality (Barthes 1972:119). This idea in combination with the aspects of the *Japonaiserie* trend, the World exhibitions and Josiah Conder's book are form-giving to the system that constructs the public's image of the Japanese garden of that specific time.

In his conclusion, Storm points out that he could identify different fashions and trends in the use of the different classes in this model, which changed over time. This most certainly also affected the representation of Japan on the world fairs and the depiction of the Japanese gardens that were represented. Japan has been named as a prime example of having "mastered the Western mode of exhibitionary practice in the grandiose world fair's imperial era" (Peterson 2020:40) all the while having adapted an approach that seemed to differ from the more common patterns. Storm points out at the beginning of his paper, that the participating countries usually had to choose between representing themselves as either traditional or as member of the "modern world" by adapting modern technology and fashions (Storm 2022:57). The approach that Japan went for from the beginning of its participation however, was to depict the country as modern nation, having adapted Western technology while holding on to its national identity (Peterson 2020:41). This image was achieved by backing up the country's imperial lineage through Shintô and historical accounts, as pointed out in the introduction[5].

In order to keep up with the formal requirements and the current trends, the government established the Japanese Bureau of Exhibition, dedicated to preparations for the

[5] p.3

participation at World Fairs. In 1872, it commissioned a large delegation to study the exhibitions in the West in order to create a report that would help with curating the image that the state would present at the World Fair in Vienna in 1873 (Oshikiri 2022:195). Furthermore, the country had to come up with a word for the Western concept of art, since there was no equivalent in the Japanese language. Furthermore, abstract concepts such as civilization, culture, nation, freedom and progress didn't have a Japanese equivalent. All of these concepts had to be adapted to and incorporated into the Japanese language and culture. The Japanese began by distinguishing fine arts from handicrafts for the world expositions (Storm, Leersen 2022:17). Even though it is often emphasised by authors such as Schöppler and Tagsold (2020:12; 2017:51), that the Japanese government played an active role in their self-representation of world fairs and thus assumed agency facing the West, it becomes clear that the Japanese state had to adjust themselves to Western nations in order to establish themselves as a major player in the modern world.

Not only did Japan adjust its PR strategy and image to be suitable to the formal requirements of the world fairs as well as the taste of the public, the influence of the political situation and changes in demands for goods on the market played a considerable role as well. The change in the political climate, when Japan claimed victory in their colonial endeavours against China (1895) and Russia (1905), asked for a different approach for the representation of Japan at the world fairs. The Meiji government had fallen out of favour of the Western public and was facing increasing unpopularity and anti-Japanese sentiments around the world (Oshikiri 2022:213). This new position on the political stage led the Japanese government to change their approach in representing the country in the Anglo-Japan Exhibition in 1910. The government decided to concentrate on the cultural and historical aspect of the country, represented by *chanoyu*[6] (Oshikiri 2022:210), although, ironically, *chanoyu* almost became extinct with the fall of the Tokugawa government, now that the samurai, the class which exercised it had been made obsolete (Tsunoda 2015:34).

The history of *chanoyu*, the cultural history of the consumption of *matcha* (powdered green tea) was depicted with the help of "twelve different tableaux representing the manners, customs, and attainments of the different periods in Japan's history" (Oshikiri 2022:211). The

[6] "[…] the whole set of customs related to drinking powdered green tea: organizing the space in which to socialize as well as to wine, dine and drink tea." (Oshikiri 2018:1)

history of the active practice was traced back to the Ashikaga[7] period and reached up to contemporary Japan. This depiction was very different from the one that could be previously found at fairs, where it was described as "a means of teaching etiquette to the young and providing lessons in simplicity, order, virtue, and concentration of mind" (Oshikiri 2022:211). Now, the focus had slightly shifted, and emphasis was put on showing the cultural continuity of the Japanese civilization through skill and discipline all the way from the fifteenth century to the present (Oshikiri 2022:211). Interestingly, the government left out some details in the depiction of the history of *chanoyu*, such as the link with Toyotomi Hideyoshi. Oshikiri explains his absence as being due to his "warlike reputation" (Oshikiri 2022:211). As the exhibition took place right before the annexation of Korea by Japan (1910), mentioning Hideyoshi could have caused associations that were unwished for as he was a prominent warrior, famous for his two failed attempts to invade Korea (Oshikiri 2022:212). As such, he is a symbol of Japan's imperial ambitions. It is obvious, that Japan intended to consolidate their image as a civic and traditional country through the example of *chanoyu* (Oshikiri 2022:212).

Despite *matcha* having a deeper cultural significance and having been consumed longer than leaf tea, the commercial focus before the fair in 1910 was set on *sencha*, green leaf tea. With the spread of a new manufacturing method of leaf tea all over Japan, its consumption became more current than that of *matcha*. Consequently, it became commercially viable and was represented more strongly on the international fairs (Oshikiri 2022:194). However, this focus changed starting from 1910. With the presence of the Formosa teahouse, Japan faced serious concurrence from its own colony Taiwan in terms of tea trade. Formosa produced oolong tea that was more successful on the international market than any Japanese leaf tea (Oshikiri 2022:212). The example of the Japanese government's strategy in depicting *chanoyu* on the Anglo-Japanese Fair in 1910 is a prime example of how impactful both, the political standing of Japan as a country, as well as the country's commercial goals were. Not only had the government changed the whole PR strategy in order to counter negative depictions that had established due to its imperial endeavours, it also adapted the products showcased to suit the demand of the international market.

[7] The Ashikaga period is the time of the rule of the thirteen shoguns of the Ashikaga line, spanning from 1336 until 1573. (Griffis 2015:193)

Regarding Japanese gardens on the world fairs, they entered the stage in 1873, 22 years after the first big international fair was held. This was the first world fair the Japanese Bureau of Exhibition, founded to prepare for the Japanese state's representation on the world fairs, was active for (Oshikiri 2022:195). At the same time, it was the first official presence of the Meiji government at a world fair, giving the gardens a symbolic role for the representation of the government at fairs from the beginning of the Meiji rule. The Tokugawa Shogunate had already made their efforts to represent the country successfully on earlier fairs. However, not much is known about the gardens presented at the fairs preceding the Vienna World Fair (Tagsold 2017:51).

Tagsold argues that the Japanese garden at the world exhibition in Vienna "might not have been particularly "Japanese"" (Tagsold 2017:49). The Japanese garden presented had a *torii*, a *Shintô* gate at its entrance. Furthermore, a *Shintô* shrine was showcased in the middle of the garden. However, in opposition to Buddhist temple grounds, *Shintô* shrines usually do not showcase gardens. Here, the government purposefully mixed parameters in order to suit its intentions. While Buddhism used to be the religious pillar for the Shogunate, the Meiji government concentrated on the promotion of the "state *Shintô*", a religious tool used for the legitimization of the imperial line, told to be descendant from the sun goddess *Amaterasu*. This focus on the representation on the state religion through the garden however stayed an exception to the Vienna World Fair (Tagsold 2017:55). Later exhibition gardens were modelled to resemble something that would be closer to a "typical Japanese garden". As such, they were inspired by Buddhism again (Tagsold 2017:51). At the World's Columbian Exposition in Chicago for example, the Japanese government built a replica of the Hôôden, the Phoenix Hall at the Byôdôin temple, an old Buddhist temple (Oshikiri 202:203). The garden itself was held in a similar style to those on Buddhist temple grounds, while it also resembled a tea garden (Schöppler 2021:111). Thus, the garden at this fair was visually and culturally closer to the way it would "typically" be found in Japan.

Three years later, at the Centennial Exposition in Philadelphia, the first world fair in the USA, another Japanese garden was presented to a Western public (Tagsold 2017:5). This garden was part of a whole Japanese bazaar, including a pavilion and a tea house. In the official catalogue, Japanese gardens were described as a "subspecies" of East Asian gardens, not differing greatly from Chinese ones (Tagsold 2017:55). Thus, the narrative that was spun around the Japanese garden was clearly different from the one promoted in Vienna. In Philadelphia, the historical part of the garden, having been imported from China through

Korea and the enormous size and refinement of the Imperial Gardens was emphasized (Tagsold 2017:55). Furthermore, some implications that nearly all Japanese have their own gardens, can be found (Tagsold 2017:55). It seems like showcasing the long history of the Japanese garden, its development and its widespread incorporation of this lasting tradition in modern Japanese society, replaced the presentation of the state Shintô for purposes of legitimisation of the Japanese state. With this new image, the Japanese garden at the world fairs became a tool for the legitimisation of the state and sign of cultural refinement in modernity at the same time, a strategy that has been used by Japan for its representation on world fairs as pointed out by Peterson (2022:41). Interestingly, the way the garden was described, and the elements it included, such as "jets d'eau and storks cast in bronze" were exhibiting a style that is pointing more to a European garden (Tagsold 2017:56). According to Tagsold, there were no ambitions or interpretations from the side of the Meiji government to promote the Japanese garden as something unique. Rather than that, they "stressed the imperial context either through Sintô or historical accounts" (Tagsold 2017:56), an argument which I have illustrated and extended on in the case of the Philadelphia exposition. Furthermore, the Japanese gardens were not yet referred to other counterparts in Japan (Tagsold 2017:57). Next to the fostering of a positive image of the country towards other nations (Schöppler 2020:107), the focus of the government was put on the commercial aspect, where the Japanese garden was used as a showroom to promote Japanese arts and crafts (Tagsold 2017:56). The strategy proved as successful, as the merchants present at the Japanese bazaar both in Vienna and in Philadelphia, ended up selling all of their goods (Tagsold 2017:56, Schöppler 2020:104).

However big the success of the Japanese government on the world fairs was, there still seemed to be no framework that could help with understanding Japanese gardens. It was only around 20 years later, in 1893, that the first systematic guide to Japanese gardening was published by Josiah Conder. In the meantime, a public discourse on Japanese gardens with books and newspaper articles on the topic had formed in the West (Tagsold 2017:58). Simultaneously, the first private and commercial gardens had been built, independent of the influences of the Meiji government (Tagsold 2017:58). This public discourse on the Japanese garden in the West probably gave the Meiji government a clearer image on how to present the Japanese garden more successfully (Tagsold 2017:58). In 1893 at the World's Columbian Exposition in Chicago, the government started to present the Japanese gardens alongside Japanese tea houses, which directly linked the representational and commercial endeavours of

the trade of green tea and *chanoyu* with the Japanese garden on the fairs. The Japanese garden on this fair was placed next to a tea house which was run by the Japanese Central Tea Association (Tagsold 2017:60). At this tea house the government organised a *chanoyu* performance, which should demonstrate the "cultural sophistication" of the country (Oshikiri 2022:204). At this fair, the government had started running three commercial tea houses where they sold *gyokuro* (high-grade green tea), *sencha* (middle-grade green tea) and *matcha* respectively (Oshikiri 2022:203). Additionally, the positioning of the Japanese pavilion that could be found next to the ones of the Western nations, however not yet part of the space that was exclusively reserved for them, showed that the county had moved up higher in the estimate of the Western nations, but was still not seen as completely equal (Tagsold 2017:60).

One year later, on the 1894 California Midwinter International Exposition in Golden Gate Park, the government was present with another tea garden, while there was a bigger Japanese village which was sponsored by an Australian entrepreneur. Despite it having received the backing of the fair's commission, the Japanese officials that were present were enraged as the workers pulling the rickshaws were Caucasians dressed in orientalist attire (Tagsold 2017:61). From that moment, there were more private projects, both Japanese and non-Japanese, that were present on world fairs, such as a Japanese pagoda on the 1900 Paris exhibition that was used as an advertisement of a Japanese travel company (Tagsold 2017:61).

Meanwhile, the political situation changed drastically, and it was two months before the purchase exposition of Louisiana in 1904, that Japan and Russia went to war (Tagsold 2017:63). It is probably due to its immense dimensions, that Gotô refers to the garden as "the first Japanese garden in the Western world" (Gotô 2007:244). Even though this claim is factually wrong, it underlines the immense dimensions, the significance, and the amount of work that had been put into the garden at this fair. Of all the other participating nations, Japan had the largest space for their self-representation (Gotô 2007:245). While Russia concentrated on the war and decided to not take place in the exposition, Japan claimed the place that was set aside for Russia and enlarged their exposure (Tagsold 2017:63). By then, the political power Japan was able to assume on the world stage was reflected on the fair, as reportedly, not only did Japan claim the space that was set out to Russia, but was also able to set back the Moroccan pavilion by 25 *shaku*[8] in order to be able to properly set up the Japanese garden (Gotô 2007:247). At this point, Japan had claimed the Japanese garden at the

[8] 757,5 centimetres

fair, built by the Imperial Household Ministry, as a cultural heritage that was unique to the country itself, without referring to its origin in China as done at the exhibition in Philadelphia in 1876 (Tagsold 2017:63). Of all the attractions, the Japanese garden attracted most of the attention of the American press (Gotô 2007:249). Accounts about the marvellous landscape art, which was a "result of many centuries of development" and the "flowers and vines and shrubbery" that helped "make perfect the reproduction of a Japanese garden" were to be found in newspaper articles (Gotô 2007:250). Additionally, visitors reporting about the Japanese garden they had seen on the fair, were marvelled about the level of sophistication the Japanese exhibited. One visitor wrote:

> "[…]their displays were of especial interest from the fact that unlike other civilized nations, their civilization was about on par with our own thought it had developed on different lines and entirely independent on us." (Gotô 2007:251)

Another visitor was in awe over "the novelty of taking green tea made by Japanese in native costume" at the Japanese garden (Gotô 2007:251), while yet another visitor admired the art of the Japanese garden that was showcased along the countries transportation models (Gotô 2007:251).

Peterson points out, that by 1915, the Japanese garden and the Japanese tea house had become defining for the county's own representation at the world fairs. The Japanese made use of this "intoxicating effect such gardens and tea houses would have […], particularly when populated with pretty Japanese girls in kimono", and used it to curate their national identity (Peterson 2022:42). Similar to the case of the representation of *chanoyu*, the Japanese government adapted the representation of the Japanese garden to political changes and the social climate. While the initial display of a Japanese garden along with a Shintô shrine seemed a bit forced and unseemly, the country's government subsequently tried to establish their national image with the help of more subtle means, such as the bridging between tradition and modernity by spinning a narrative that emphasizes the long history of cultural elements and practices such as the Japanese garden and *chanoyu*, along with explanations of how they are incorporated in modern day Japan and its values. This strategy proved to be a success considering the positive reactions of the visitors, as well as the commercial success on the fairs. Thus, the strategy that the Meiji government employed was the result of an approach, where Western fashions for things Japanese, socio-political circumstances, and a demonstration of national culture and values within modernity were considered.

Regarding Storm's classification system for the national pavilions, we can identify a focus on "high culture", with the presence of Japanese arts and crafts, *chanoyu*, the Japanese gardens, along with the showcasing of modern Japanese technology as mentioned by a visitor of the fair[9]. Additionally, Storm points out, that the first step was for a country to decide whether it wanted to hold on to their national culture, or showcase modern technologies and fashions that would identify them as a member of the "modern world" (Storm 2022:57). Thus, the Japanese government that combined tradition with modernity does not seem to strictly adhere to Storm's scheme. What also needs to be pointed out is that this strict juxtaposition of national identity versus modern technologies, which in this context means Western technologies, demonstrates an orientalist and western-centric viewpoint. This stance can, at best, be called logically flawed. The view of a country holding on to its national traditions as being in opposition to modernity implies that both cannot be combined. Furthermore, it demonstrates a colonialist viewpoint, as it suggests that a country's non-western traditions are backwards.

2.3 Josiah Conder

The book that has been most referred to as inspiration by scholars writing on Japanese gardens in the West is *Landscape Gardening in Japan*, written by Josiah Conder and published by the Anglo-Japanese publishing house Kelly and Walsh in Tokyo, in 1893. A revised vision of the original work was issued in 1912 (Tachibana, Daniels, Watkins 2003:371). Josiah Conder was a British architect who was appointed by the Japanese Government to educate Japanese students on architecture (Tagsold 2013:97). Conder was trained as an architect in London and, upon invitation of the Meiji government, became "the first Instructor of Architecture, and eventually Professor, in the Engineering Department of the new Imperial University" in 1877 (Tachibana, Daniels, Watkins 2003:371). As such, he was an *oyatoi*, a foreigner that was invited to Japan and employed by the government to teach Japanese students about his expertise (Schöppler 2021:157). Conder is credited for the introduction of Western style architecture in Japan and designed numerous institutional buildings, such as museums and clubs, as well as some private mansions in European styles (Tachibana, Daniels, Watkins 2003:371). Conder's works were heavily promoted by the Asiatic Society of Japan and the Japan Society of London, which solidified his standing as expert in his field (Tagsold 2013:156). Conder was very active writing about Japanese

[9] p.17

gardens. Other than *Landscape Gardening in Japan*, he wrote articles about Japanese gardens in the *Transactions of the Asiatic Society of Japan*, the journal issued by the Asiatic Society of Japan (Tachibana, Daniels, Watkins 2003:371).

Conder's work being of great influence in Great Britain is an argument that is supported by an article written by Setsu Tachibana, who has published various articles on the topic of Japanese gardens in Britain, Stephen Daniels, professor in Cultural Geography and Charles Watkins, professor in Geography. The authors argue that it were the articles of Josiah Conder and Reginald Farrer, a British rock garden enthusiast who had travelled to Japan in order to collect plants to incorporate at home, which "reformed the fashion for Japanese gardens in Edwardian Britain" (Tachibana, Daniels, Watkins 2003:371). In the article "Japanese Gardens in Edwardian Britain: Landscape and Transculturation", the authors demonstrate that Conder's text was influential for the layout of the Japanese gardens at Newstead Abbey and Cowden Castle in order to incorporate the "exotic style of Japanese gardens" in Britain (Tachibana, Daniels, Watkins 2003:365).

Tagsold describes *Landscape Gardening in Japan* as a work that classifies elements in Japanese gardens, such as stones, lanterns, bridges and fences to order them in a Linnaean classification system. This made it easier for amateurs to make sense of the structure of a Japanese garden. This strict and systematic classification turned the book into a handy manual for Western garden lovers to build their own Japanese gardens. Similar to Great Britain, the book was of great influence in Germany, although it arrived there with a delay (Tagsold 2013:97). For instance, the gardening expert Heinrich Henkel, who developed the Japanese garden in Mannheim in 1907 was influenced by Conder's book. Reportedly, in 1910 his brother Friedrich even shared plans for translating Conder's book into German. However, this project was never realized (Tagsold 2013:102). Next to Conder's work, the article "Gartenkunst in Japan" (Garden Art in Japan) by Heinrich Mayr, who was Professor in forestry at the University of Munich and later taught at the Academy for Agriculture and Forestry in Tokyo, was of great influence in Germany. Furthermore, he held various lectures about gardening in Japan. Tagsold sees Conder as having been the one to offer the base of knowledge about Japanese gardening, while Mayr provided additional information through his lectures (Tagsold 2013:103).

Conder's ideas also gained footing in the United States through the Japanese garden scholar Honda Kinkichirô (Tagsold 2017:67). In 1900, he wrote a paper for the American

Institute of Architects, in which he uses Conder's understanding of Linnean logic (Tagsold 2017:69).

Schöppler raises concerns about the quality of Conder's book, which was mainly based on "unreliable sources" that were spread by so called *niwashi* who were propagating contemporary styles during the 19th century. *Niwashi* were gardeners from Edo (presently Tokyo), that spread the "secrets of garden making" for financial profit by travelling the country (Schöppler 2021:160). As such, the texts they produced were seen in a critical light by Japanese garden masters because they spread late Edo and Meiji style gardens and with that removed the art from traditional practices (Schöppler 2021:160). In Schöppler's opinion, this spread of modern garden interpretations outside of Japan made Conder an English *niwashi* for spreading "unreliable sources and not Japanese traditional practices" (Schöppler 2021:160). The other sources which Conder used were two texts from the 17th and the 18th Century respectively, which are referred to as "secret texts" because they are held so vague in nature to "puzzle the uninitiated student" (Schöppler 2021:159). That it was risky to use these texts and even viewed as a "faux pas by Japanese garden master practitioners" has been pointed out by Conder himself (Schöppler 2021:159). However, Schöppler argues that there might be some value in including these highly complex texts, as they certainly offer insights for foreigners who are not familiar with Japanese garden art (Schöppler 2021:159). However, Schöppler's argumentation is highly flawed. While he points out that the "secret texts" which were difficult to understand might still offer insights (Schöppler 2021:159), he completely disregards any value that the newer texts written by *niwashi* could bring. The usage of both kinds of texts is said to be criticized by Japanese garden masters. The designation of the "secret texts" as insightful and the discreditation of the newer texts by the *niwashi* thus seems very arbitrary and not viable. Here, we can observe a bias against modern gardening styles and anything that is not "traditional". However, I would argue that the concept of traditionality is very flawed and subjective. A discussion on this topic will follow in a later chapter.

I also would like to note that it is hard to tell how many of the numerous Japanese gardens throughout Europe have been built with the help of Conder's manual, but from the knowledge that it has been the one garden manual that has been spread throughout the whole continent, we can only conclude that it is highly likely that the manual has been used for reference by a fair amount of Western garden lovers. Furthermore, it was the only detailed manual that was heavily promoted by the Asiatic Society of Japan and referenced by so many

garden experts of the time as discussed previously. This would have made the manual the most self-evident choice of reference.

2.4 Factors in the representation and reception of the Japanese garden

With the opening of Japan began the political and cultural exchange with the rest of the world. In order to keep up with Western nations that had dominated the political stage so far, Japan started their endeavour to adapt Western technologies and to spread their own national culture in order to gain political standing on the world stage. The newly established trade relations made Japanese objects and arts more accessible and stimulated the *Japonaiserie* trend that came up in the West around the 1850s. Japanese gardens were first showcased to an international public in 1873, at the world fair in Vienna. From then on, its presentation and image gradually evolved.

Generally, an increased public wish for "authenticity" could be identified as the *Japonaiserie* movement developed throughout the years. This tendency was also mirrored in how the Japanese garden trend developed in the West. Through the change of consumer culture, the commodification of goods, and the subsequent change in display, Japanese objects and gardens gained a lot of exposure. This, and the presence of the Japanese gardens at the world fairs created an ideal stage for the Japanese garden in the West. All of these factors influenced each other and were significant for the formation of the image of the Japanese garden in the West.

What is interesting is the function of the Japanese garden as stand-in for the country at the specific place where it has been built. Tagsold shows how Japanese gardens have been experienced as "metaphor of a short trip" to the country (Tagsold 2017:139). A comment about the New York Times on the Japanese garden in Brooklyn for example, reads:

> On entering one feels that one has left the Occident behind. […] The miniature garden in Brooklyn is not only a favorite haunt of the Japanese in this country, but also provides an opportunity for Americans who have not visited the Orient to see something of Japan. (Tagsold 2017:138)

Tagsold mentions, that in this point, Japanese gardens differ greatly from their European counterparts (Tagsold 2017:140). This was caused by the exotification of the country, which

was widely found in the public discourse at that time, as seen in the reception of the Japanese garden at the World Fairs.[10]

This apparent equation of garden and country persisted in the twentieth century. Vandalizations of Japanese gardens occurred during WWII in the US. Tagsold argues that the political situation between Japan and the US could not have been the reason for these acts of resentment, as the representative gardens of Italy and Germany were spared (Tagsold 2017:138). Nonetheless, a viable explanation for these vandalizations could have been the closer involvement between Japan and the US during WWII. Japan launched a two-day attack on Pearl Harbour in 1941. Two months after this, Japanese citizens and descendants of Japanese citizens were forcibly relocated to internment camps in the US. This could have caused for greater resentment against Japan and the Japanese in comparison to the other nations that were part of the Axis powers. Another element might also have been racism. Japan has proved itself as a superpower, and might have been able to discard of the myth of the superiority of white men, which could have fuelled previously present xenophobia and rage, instead of causing them to be seen as equal.

Within this chapter, I have summarised the most relevant aspects that played into the development regarding the intention in the representation of the Japanese garden by the Japanese government, as well as the resulting reception and image of the Japanese garden in the West around the turn of the 20th Century. In the following chapter, I am going to review some pieces from the academic discourse around the Japanese gardens in the West, before discussing the notion of "tradition" and "authenticity", which have been found to be of relevance for the formation of the image of the Japanese garden in the West.

[10] p.17

3. Literature Review: The academic discourse around the Japanese garden

The first and most relevant work for this thesis that needs to be addressed is the monography *Spaces in Translation: Japanese Gardens in the West* by Christian Tagsold. This book illustrates the history of the Japanese garden in the West, by showing how through the influence of the Japanese government and the reception of the Western public, the image of the Japanese garden in the West came to be. Tagsold concludes that it is not easy to find a solution for the Othering and simplistic dichotomizing between East and West, which he identified in the discourse around Japanese gardens. However, he suggests that "removing a few fences and some informational boards" would be a good start to encourage a more active involvement with the gardens and to encourage reappropriations such as the one he observed in the Japanese garden in Düsseldorf. Despite the authoritarian layout of the garden, cosplayers use it as a stage for their activities during their weekend, disrupting the austere atmosphere of the garden (Tagsold 2017:200). Here, Tagsold points to the translation theoretician Walter Benjamin, who sees a good translation as a text that "enriches a language with the strangeness of another" (Tagsold 2017:200). For Tagsold, the key seems to be to allow the garden to be in touch with and change with the environment. He emphasizes that it might be more productive to let go of the idea of the "original" Japanese garden and to see it as a concept that is in constant flow (Tagsold 2017:180). This idea of the original being an illusion will be relevant for a later chapter in this thesis, where I will discuss the notion of "authenticity" and "tradition".

In his PhD thesis, Luke Schöppler intends to explore the relationship between Great Britain and Japan around the turn of the 20th century in relation to garden and park design. He considers how both countries have influenced each other when it comes to the design of gardens. The new dimension that he wants to add is the consideration of public gardens as opposed to the common tendency of scholars to primarily examine aristocratic gardens (Schöppler 2021:8). What Schöppler argues, is that authenticity was unachievable in British-Japanese gardens, even though the creators put great efforts in the planning, such as among others hiring Japanese gardeners, into it (Schöppler 2021:8). I want to point out, that Schöppler is approaching the Japanese garden in a very essentialist way by assuming that there is such a thing as "the authentic Japanese garden". He also assumes that one way to make a Japanese garden more "authentic" is by hiring a Japanese gardener. This is in line with the in the 1900's commonly shared belief, that Westerners can never fully understand Japanese gardens and are thus not able to build them (Tagsold 2017:74). Tagsold explained,

that this completely excludes Western gardeners who have formally learned the art of Japanese garden design and at the same time creates the assumption that every Japanese person is able to create a Japanese garden regardless of their education (Tagsold 2017:75). Nevertheless, Schöppler's Thesis presents a valuable source for historical data, and is used extensively for this purpose in my thesis.

In chapter four of his book *Japanese Gardens and Landscapes, 1650-1950,* the landscape architect and scholar on Japanese gardens Wybe Kuitert elaborates on how garden and space were restructured on Western model with the modernization of the country. Along with the change in garden design, schools of horticulture based on the French model were established. This chapter contains a detailed description of how the political agenda of the Meiji government presented itself through the means of garden design and change in public representation and used it as a tool to consolidate its power. Efforts were made to spread a Western approach to landscapes by the Emperor in order to "elevate the native traditions to stand on equal footing with landscape design in the rest of the world" (Kuitert 2016:126).

Kuitert explains that there was confusion in the discourse about Japanese gardens around the turn of the 20th century, which stems from the fact that Japanese garden building does not have "a strong tradition of internal criticism or paradigm-building". (Kuitert 2016:158). For years, the Japanese garden was merely used as a tool to promote political agenda, and so, any kind of "promotion or propaganda of the trade" was accepted happily (Kuitert 2016:158). There was no one set example for the Japanese garden. This provoked scholars, authors and gardeners to trying to make sense of the Japanese garden and looking for its original meaning. This observation is interesting, as it illustrates how futile the discussion about "tradition" and "authenticity" of the Japanese garden is, since there have been competing images of it from its beginnings. Kuitert's work offers an approach to view Japanese gardens in relation to Western ones and thus seems to contribute to a practice which Tagsold would refer to as trying to unleash "the full potential of the Japanese garden". Instead of undertaking a quest after the origin of the Japanese garden, Kuitert intends to see the Japanese garden in both Japanese and Western terms, which broadens the perspective and also entails the idea of the translation as applied by Tagsold.

In "Maintenance and restoration of Japanese gardens in North America: a case study of Nitobe Memorial Garden", the garden scholar Seiko Gotô analyses the Nitobe Memorial Garden of the University of British Columbia in Vancouver and argues that improper

maintenance can also lead to misinterpretations of Japanese culture and "racial and community divides", such as in the case of the Nitobe Memorial Garden (Gotô:2009:304). Gotô takes a historical approach by considering the background of the gardener, its patron and the circumstances it was built in. Additionally, she considers the design of the garden to assess its "authenticity".

The Nitobe Memorial garden, constructed by Kannosuke Mori, was restored after it had been destroyed after World War II. It was intended to become a symbol of Canadian-Japanese friendship, which is why Mori wanted to transmit the knowledge of the proper maintenance of the garden to the local Japanese-Canadian community through workshops and lectures (Gotô 2009:305). During further restoration works of the garden in 1993, the wishes of the Japanese-Canadian Community were reportedly ignored by the university, even though they were in possession of Mori's old plans of the garden (Gotô 2009:308). Here, Gotô argues that the issue with the reconstruction is a "lack of understanding about the history of the Japanese gardens and racial issues in Canada" (Gotô 2009:308). According to her, the contribution of the Japanese community to the construction of the garden after World War II was so significant because it emphasized the role of the Japanese garden as a symbol of Canadian and Japanese friendship (Gotô 2009:308). In this article, I see a connection between the idea of the Japanese garden as a symbolic link between Japan and Canada and the idea of the Japanese garden as a space existing in between two cultures and not fully belonging to one as mentioned by Tagsold (2017:200), through the involvement of the Japanese-Canadian community. This thought is also represented in the article "The Japanese garden at Sonnenberg: the first traditional private Japanese garden in North America". In this garden which was designed by the lawyer and self-taught garden designer Kikujiro Wadamori and later extended by John Handrahan in 1915, Japanese, Chinese, and Western style elements come together. The authors conclude that a "Western flavor" was added to a garden "blending Japanese and Chinese elements" and that it might be far from being "authentic", but that it reveals a lot about how Japanese culture was viewed by the time of its construction (Gotô, Ristovska, Fujii 2014:309). Although the articles recognize the status of the Japanese garden as hybrid, as suggested by Tagsold, they fail to get away from the attribution of values regarding "authenticity".

4. Tradition and Authenticity

In the preceding chapters, I have mentioned the notion of authenticity as a criteria for a successful representation of the Japanese garden, which in turn, would be the prerequisite for a satisfactory experience of the Japanese garden in the West. This need for "authenticity" along with a discussion around "tradition" is still noticeable in the present academic discourse. Scholars such as Schöppler and Gotô seem to pay high importance to the concept of "tradition" and "authenticity", as already seen in the literature review. However, they are leaving the question of what consists those aspects mostly, if not completely, unaddressed. As of now, there is no established theory of tradition that provides us with a framework on how to discuss the matter. As James Alexander mentions in his article "A systematic Theory of Tradition", many authors seem to take tradition for granted and use the word without even questioning it because they "assume that in the postmodern condition everything is so malleable that all definitions and theories of tradition can so easily be countered by rival ones that there is no point asking ourselves what tradition is" (Alexander 2016:5). I agree that it is complicated to talk about tradition as there are a multitude of contextual aspects that one has to consider when addressing it, but we need to find a framework that we can apply when we talk about tradition in order to make discussions about it more productive and comprehensive.

Alexander argues that there are three elements to consider when talking about tradition: continuity, canon and core. The first and most fundamental one is continuity. It is the only element that is indispensable, and at the same time the only one that everyone agrees on is relevant in relation to tradition. The second element is the canon, which is according to James exclusive to written traditions. It embodies literary remains of the legacy defining the tradition and a "continuing set of beliefs in a canonized form that persists over time" (Alexander 2016:14). Thus, it is a set of texts that ensure the continuous transfer of the conventions or ideas within a given tradition. When applying it to the garden, it would be equivalent to Japanese gardens with all the necessary elements to be considered a "traditional" and "authentic" Japanese garden. The last element to consider is core. The core of a tradition according to Alexander, is a core of unchanging truth, the sense of an authority that cannot be questioned such as the word of God in Christianity (Alexander 2016:18). Here, Alexander argues that the element of the core is only relevant in religions. Thus, we only have continuous and canonical traditions if we do not believe in "such thing as the word of God" (Alexander 2016:20).

This theory of tradition, where traditions are continuous and can be exercised and adapted to present conditions, offers a more open approach to the topic. As I have pointed out during the discussion about Storm's classification system[11], a static view on traditions can lead to essentialism, and in this specific case, even to the validation of colonialist viewpoints. When applying Alexander's framework to this specific case, it would be harder to arrive at a framing of native traditions as opposed to modernity, and thus also as "backwards". The establishment of a proper theory of tradition would prevent this kind of conclusions as the discussion would be embedded in a logical framework. Arguably, many of the elements discussed within the framework would still be highly subjective, and it would be hard to come to definite conclusions. When it comes to the Japanese garden for instance, one can always argue about what the necessary elements are that are needed in order to build a Japanese garden. However, the discussions about the topic would be relatable in a framework that points out errors in reasoning, thus making them more tangible.

This malleability and everchanging perception of what is "traditional" and "authentic" can be seen in the reception and experience of the Japanese garden in the West, as I have established in preceding chapters.

If someone shows me a fake Prada bag, I can say that it is not real, but when it comes to artistic forms and concepts, the question about authenticity is not answerable by a simple yes or no. As far as I know, the Japanese garden is not a trademark. Thus, the idea that there is an "original Japanese garden" cannot be applied and points to Tagsold's conclusion, that the traditional Japanese garden is an illusion that we should let go of (Tagsold 2017:180). Interestingly, there was an aforementioned tendency to present the nation as a "brand" at World Fairs after 1891[12]. Countries being used as a kind of trademark to demonstrate some sense of quality or "authenticity" can still be seen in present days. Swiss and Belgian chocolate, for example, are widely perceived as being of especially high quality. This is an example, that shows how important specific associations are for the perception of a thing or product. Likewise, a Japanese garden should at least have some visual elements, however easily influenced by fashions and changes in conventions, that allow to make a connection to Japan and permit the gardens to be recognized as being Japanese. In the end, the Japanese garden originates from Japan and will thus always be bound to the place that is connoted with

[11] p.10
[12] p.9

Japanicity[13]. If the wider public looking at the garden cannot identify it as Japanese or related to Japanese gardens, the elements that have been chosen to construct it were inadequate.

The most important element to consider here, thus, are social and cultural conventions. In the preceding chapter, I have already analysed the most important factors that played a role in the framing and the image of the Japanese garden, as well as how they changed over time. In the following chapter, I am going to analyse how these factors are present in the Japanese gardens in Clingendael and the Japanese garden at Schloss Schönbrunn in Vienna.

[13] p.11

5. The Japanese garden in Clingendael[14]

The Japanese garden on the Clingendael estate has been built around 1915 after the estate owner, Baroness Van Brienen returned from a trip to Japan. It counts as one of the numerous Japonaiserie gardens that were constructed at the turn of the 20th century in Europe, and as the oldest Japanese garden in the Netherlands (Van der Eb 2011:7). With Japonaiserie gaining in popularity and the rising trend of constructing Japanese gardens as travel souvenirs (Schöppler 2020:182), the history of the origins of the garden is very similar to the one of many other Japonaiserie gardens in the West. However, what differentiates the baroness from many other enthusiasts for Japanese gardens is that her interest started long before the *Japonaiserie* craze for gardens began. I will be discussing this in the following sub-chapter which will be about the baroness' background and her relationship to Japan. After that, I am going to address the influential elements for the Japanese garden in Clingendael as well as the baroness' experience and intended representation of the garden, before addressing its' experience by the public at that time.

5.1. Baroness Van Brienen's background and link to Japan

Titia Van der Eb emphasizes that the baroness grew up in an environment that was already in contact with Japanese culture since the beginning of the 19th century. The public was able to admire Japanese artifacts in the Royal Cabinet of Curiosities which was established in 1814 in The Hague. Furthermore, Baroness Van Brienen's grandfather was the owner of a big collection of porcelain, and her father was part of the committee that received the first Japanese delegation to the Netherlands in 1862 (Van der Eb 2011:8). The baroness even named one of her most successful race horses after admiral Togo, who fought in the Japanese army during the Russian-Japanese war (Van Doorn 1982:20). Without a doubt, the family must have entertained a big interest in Japan, and Van Brienen's interest in Japan did not end with the decline of the Japonaiserie trend between the two World Wars. A plant catalogue from 1932/33 featuring Japanese plant seeds was among her possessions, indicating that the baroness continued her endeavours in studying Japanese gardens years after the *Japonaiserie* craze had ended (Van der Eb 2011:20).

[14] The most relevant literature that is dedicated to the Japanese garden in Clingendael is "Baroness Van Brienen´s Journey to Japan (Part 1 of Historical Notes on the Japanese Garden in Clingendael, The Hague, Holland)" and "Historical Notes on The Japanese Garden at Clingendael, The Hague, Holland Part 2: Baroness Van Brienen's Japanese garden" by Titia Van der Eb as well as Wybe Kuitert's article "Japonaiserie in London and The Hague: A History of the Japanese Gardens at Sheperd´s Bush (1910) and Clingendael (c. 1915)".

What seems to differentiate the baroness' garden from other Japonaiserie gardens constructed around the same time is that rather than reproducing certain ideal images on Japanese culture, she created the garden based on her personal experience. Her personal history with Japan which is marked by extensive studies about the culture, as well as the careful approach that she applied when choosing the elements for her garden, lead to this conclusion.

5.2. The forming elements for the Clingendael garden

Despite the baroness' great involvement with Japan, I need to mention that her sources of inspiration were no different from the ones that were used by the wider public. As discussed previously, the main elements that greatly influenced the image of the Japanese garden in the West were the *Japonaiserie* movement, the world exhibitions, the image that was conveyed through the world exhibitions, and literature about Japanese gardens, such as Conder's book and the selection of gardens from Chamberlain's travel book.

Van der Eb assumes that the baroness first came in contact with Japanese gardens during trips to England where she visited relatives and friends. With over 40 Japanese gardens built in the country between 1880 and 1920 (Van der Eb 2011:10), the baroness must have seen some of those that were not far away from the estates of her relatives. Furthermore, it is likely that she visited the Japanese-British trading exhibition near Sheperd's Bush in 1910. Van der Eb concludes, that the Japanese gardens she saw back then might have inspired the baroness to visit Japan and build her own Japanese garden in The Hague (Van der Eb 2011:16).

According to Van der Eb, Baroness Van Brienen was friends with the Du Cane sisters, who had visited her in Clingendael and had spent some time with the baroness (Van der Eb 2011:17). Ella Chrisitie Du Cane was in direct contact with Josiah Conder. She had previously asked him for advice on planning an own Japanese garden at home at Cowden Castle (Tachibana, Daniels, Watkins 2004:379). She ended up taking Conder's advice on the gardens in Japan that she could seek inspiration from, as well as applying parts of Conder's book (Tachibana, Daniels, Watkins 2004:379). We also know, that the sisters had a great interest in Japanese gardens, as they had written the book *Flowers and Garden of Japan*, which later also became an influential guide for building Japanese gardens in Europe (Van der Eb 2011:17).Thus, it is highly likely that the baroness must have been influenced by Conder's book. Although we do not have direct evidence for her use of it, the circumstances

as well as the fact that Conder's book was such an influential garden manual in the West during that time, make it highly likely. Regarding Basil Hall Chamberlain´s *Murray´s travel book for travellers in Japan*, Van der Eb explains that the baroness' itinerary during her trip to Japan in 1911 covered many of the places featured in the guide (2011:10).

5.3. The baroness' experience of the Japanese garden

Stemming from the Baroness' deep interest in Japanese culture, her garden was constructed with great attention to detail and with the ambition to "authentically" replicate real Japanese gardens she had seen, regardless of whether those could be called "authentic" or not. In this regard, her gardens might have differed from other *Japonaiserie* gardens of the time, as they were usually just constructed in response to a fashion of building Japanese gardens as travel souvenirs or status symbols (Schöppler 2020:182). The numerous photos she took of gardens during her trip in Japan in 1911, and the elements such as stone lanterns and stone bridges she brought home from her trip, demonstrate this. She chose the elements she would incorporate into her garden design with great care. This claim is further supported by both Kuitert, and Van der Eb who praise the Japanese garden in its original state for its high quality of spatial arrangements. Unfortunately, there are no notes or diaries of Baroness Van Brienen's trip to Japan left, but the pictures she took while in Japan must be able to tell us about her personal interests for gardens, as there are no pictures of city streets or any other things she might have seen. The photos that were taken always show very specific things. There are no pictures of mere landscapes. Instead, every picture showed one or more elements that were "inherently Japanese", such as Japanese garden bridges, or stone lanterns. Regarding the composition of the pictures, those elements were not always the object of attention. In other words, even though many pictures just showed a place or a garden landscape, there was a clear interest for including them in the pictures. They were important for the creation of the space that would represent Baroness Van Brienen's image of the Japanese garden. As I had assumed, the baroness' image of the Japanese garden does not differ from the one of the wider public. Pictures she took present elements that were deemed as "typically Japanese", such as the popular red bridge Mihashi in Nikkô, stone lanterns, Buddha statues and Japanese plants such as Bonsai and hanging Wisterias.

Stone lanterns are mentioned several times as representative element of Japanese garden culture in Europe by Schöppler, and even Van der Eb and Kuitert stress their

importance in the creation of the Western image of Japan[15]. Additionally to the lanterns, red bridges with the one in Nikkô being the most representative, were mentioned along with Japanese garden plants such as the Bonsai, as being important elements in order to evoke a sense of "Japaneseness" by all three of the authors.

5.3 The public experience of the Japanese garden in Clingendael

Van Doorn emphasised that, while the Van Brienens did not belong to the "crème de la crème" of Dutch nobility, they had a fairly high standing amongst the wealthy families (1982:22). The family originated from pharmacists in Amersfoort and was able to climb the social ladder through trade and investments (Van Doorn 1982:22). Considering that baroness Van Brienens's father, baron Arnout Nicolaas Justinus Maria van Brienen van de Groote Lindt, was the commissioner for the building that currently houses the *Hotel des Indes* at Lange Voorhout in The Hague, and that the family's racecourse for horse races was the centre of horse racing for 20 years, it is safe to say that they were influential members of The Hague's high society (Van Doorn 1982:23). From this, we can conclude that her Japanese garden must have been influential in how the public in The Hague perceived Japanese gardens, or even Japan in general.

In August 1918, the Baroness organised a party, where several scenes from Puccini's "Madame Butterfly" were performed in her Japanese garden (Van der Eb 2011b:18). In July 1921, another performance took place (Van der Eb 2011b:18). The profits from the first event were donated to the British Red Cross. The ones from the second event, to the Dutch Red Cross. The choice of this kind of spectacle as charity event with the goal to make as much profit for the cause as possible, shows how popular this kind of spectacle involving Japanese culture or Japanese gardens were at that time. Of course Baroness van Brienen's own interest in Japan also played a role, but the event would not have been chosen if it would not have been suitable for this kind of undertaking.

This is in line with Tagsold's statement that Japanese gardens widely became a stage for public spectacles during the commodification of trade (Tagsold 2017:76). Japanese garden parties and the act of building an own Japanese garden became a trend around the 1900's. It was not important whether those parties were very Japanese or not. For instance, the food that was served, was usually Chinese (Tagsold 2017:77). The gardens simply had to convey

[15] Schöppler illustrates the excessive use of the lanterns in creating a "Japanese" atmosphere by mentioning how the stone lanterns "were littered throughout" the Japanese garden at Lowther Caste (Schöppler 2020:182).

Japanicity. It was the socio-economic aspect, that made the garden interesting for the upper-class. With the Japanese garden coming into fashion through the World Fairs and being used as a background for all kinds of goods, it became a fashionable commodity that was available for purchase just like any other good (Tagsold 2017:79). With that status, they became a "means of distinction" that set "their owners apart from the less well-to-do" (Tagsold 2017:77). As such, the Japanese garden signified an attractive stage and attraction in itself, and was the ideal setting for social gatherings.

Figure 2

If we look at two drawings of the Japanese garden in Clingendael (Figure 2), made by Antoinette Agathe van Hoijtema, what is noticeable, is that the view chosen should evoke a "sense of Japaneseness" so that it creates a certain atmosphere. Just like the pictures the baroness took during her visit in Japan, Hoijtema's drawings simply seem to show the garden landscape, but regarding the layout, there was a clear interest for including Japanese elements such as the stone lantern, the red bridge and the tea house. Those elements create the space of the Japanese garden, and show the perception of it by the public. The pictures could also be read as creating the illusion of a physical presence in Japan. This alludes to the point Tagsold

makes about the garden representing a stand-in for the country as “metaphor of a short trip” (Tagsold 2017:139)[16].

When considering how the Japanese garden was created, as well as how it was perceived by the public, there are many parallels to be made to how the Japanese gardens were presented and experienced at the world fairs around the turn of the century. The baroness made use of the same sources that were spread during this time to construct the gardens and seek for inspiration. In that sense her garden was very similar to the commercial Japanese gardens. At the same time, the baroness had a very different experience of the Japanese garden when compared to the wider public. It was certainly her intent to create an “authentic” Japanese garden, representing her deep involvement with Japanese culture, as well as representing elements from some of the gardens she had seen on her trip. However, while the baroness’ experience might have been different in the sense that she had a more profound knowledge of Japan than the wider public, the elements that exposed her to Japanese culture and the Japanese gardens she saw, were the same as the ones perceived by the masses.

[16] p.21

6. The Japanese garden in Schönbrunn

The Japanese garden in the Schönbrunn palace garden was built in 1913 after a delegation of gardeners from the palace garden had visited the International Garden Exhibition in London in 1912 (Österreichische Bundesgärten 2022). After some time, the garden was forgotten and its maintenance neglected until it was "rediscovered" in 1996 by a Japanese woman living in Vienna (Japanische Botschaft Wien 1998:20).

6.1. The origins of the Japanese garden in Schönbrunn

If one looks at the history of the Japanese garden in Schönbrunn, it is clear that it was not intended to be a Japanese garden. It is known that the garden was built after a delegation of gardeners had seen the Japanese stone gardens at the British Garden Exhibition in London in 1912 (Japanische Botschaft Wien 1998:20). There are two records of articles by gardeners from the palace gardens in Schönbrunn. They both recount their observations at the Royal International Horticultural Exhibition in London in 1912. Anton Umlauft, the Imperial and Royal court garden director saw the English rock gardens as "[…] mix between our (Austrian) alpine rock gardens and Japanese miniature gardens." (Umlauft 1912:239). He describes that the presented gardens mainly have their use of flat and uneven stones, as well as the way those are placed, in common with the Japanese gardens (Umlauft 1912:240). Similarly, the court gardener Hefka described how the "cute images that were created in the stone- or rock gardens" in Great Britain were inspired from mountain rock formations combined with "individual motifs", as well as such from Japanese gardens (Hefka 1913:138). These stone gardens were placed next to other elements that would elevate them, such as rose pavilions or a Japanese tea house, providing a beautiful view of the rock gardens (Hefka 1912:139).

Even though there might have been a Japanese tea house that was placed next to the rock gardens, we cannot conclude that those gardens in Great Britain were intended to be somehow 'Japanese'. Additionally, they were not labelled as Japanese gardens, but merely as "stone gardens". It appears that the garden designers took inspiration from Japanese gardens, but calling them Japanese stone gardens would be a stretch.

After having seen the stone gardens at the British garden exhibition, the directorship of the court garden in Schönbrunn ordered the construction of a stone garden that would "show the public what a stone garden looks like" (Hefka 1912:140). According to their understanding, a stone garden had to be a garden with different kinds of alpine and non-

alpine plants, that would thrive in a rocky environment (Hefka 1912:140). Rather than reproducing the stone gardens as seen at the British exhibition, the gardeners of the court gardens wanted to demonstrate to a wider public that does not have the financial or material means to construct a luxurious home garden with a thriving flora, that stone gardens are a great alternative to conventional home gardens (Hefka 1912:140). While the stone gardens at the garden exhibition might have inspired the idea of constructing one in the gardens of the Schönbrunn palace, there were different motives for their construction. Besides that, the k.u.k. Monarchy[17] was known for its grandeur and love for showing off. If stone gardens were in fashion at that time, but not yet part of the Viennese landscape, that certainly would have been enough of an incentive to construct one. Since the Japanese garden in Schönbrunn was not intended to be read as a Japanese garden when it was constructed, it would be irrelevant to try to further analyse the reception and image of this specific garden. This is why the following subchapter will be dedicated to the perception of the Japanese garden after its renovation in 1996.

6.2. The "rediscovery" of the garden

As the years passed by, the stone garden was forgotten and not tended to by the gardeners. This was probably due the fact that it was initially designed to be a self-sufficient environment, not requiring any maintenance. When I talked to Günter Wimmerer, who is in charge of public relations at "Bundesgärten Österreich", he told me that the garden was not given much attention before its' renovation (Wimmerer, private conversation, <18.02.2022>). In 1996, a Japanese student living in Vienna suspected that the stone garden, which was by that time completely overgrown by ivy, must be a Japanese stone garden, judging from the placement of the stones (Fischer-Colbrie 1999:14). In autumn 1996, the Japanese Garden Association contacted the directorship of the garden at Schönbrunn palace to ask if they could examine the garden (Fischer-Colbrie 1999:14). When a Japanese delegation of seven people came to Vienna in May 1997, the visitors discovered that parts of the stone formation, as well as some plants and the water stream adhered to the formal guidelines of Japanese gardens (Fischer-Colbrie 1999:14). The delegation then offered to restore the garden at the cost of the Japan Gardening Association (Fischer-Colbrie 1999:14). After that, numerous Japanese news channels travelled to Vienna to cover the story. Upon the permission of the Federal Monuments Office, plans were made to also add new parts to what had become a Japanese

[17] K.u.k. stands for Königlich und Kaiserlich in German, meaning royal and imperial in English.

garden (Fischer-Colbrie 1999:14). It was reported how in 1998, restauration works began where "inadequate" plants were removed, and the rest of the plants were "suitably" trimmed (Fischer-Colbrie 1999:14). The stream along with the basin were restored as well and stone formations were "readjusted by professionals" (Fischer-Colbrie 1999:14).

The original stone garden in Schönbrunn could be seen as a *Japonisme*, as it might have had some kind of "Japaneseness" given that the gardeners built it right after visiting the fair in England and were probably not free of any influence from it. As seen in the previous section, the stone gardens at the British exhibition that the court gardeners visited reportedly had some Japanese style influence[18]. Additionally, *Japonaiserie* was a widely spread trend in European arts[19] and garden construction. This possible usage of Japanese elements as a mode of style might have contributed to a Japonesque appearance. However, it is clear from the historic sources, that the garden in Schönbrunn was not intended to be a Japanese garden. Nevertheless, the people involved in the restoration, as well as the media coverage on the "rediscovery" of the Japanese garden kept emphasizing the Japanese aspect. Furthermore, the extensive use of the word "rediscovery" means that something forgotten or lost has been found and recognised in its original state. One can deduct, that the image of the garden as it was originally built was completely changed by the renovation and its' subsequent depiction in public. The cause for the change of the narrative around the garden might thus have been the stylistic influence of Japanese elements in the original layout of the garden along with a general ignorance about the history of it. However, the records of the two court gardeners were easily accessible, and even mentioned in articles about the reconstruction of the Japanese garden (e.g. Fischer-Colbrie 1999). Upon closer reading and critical approach towards the events, it would have been clear, that the garden was not actually intended to be a Japanese garden, but at most a garden with Japanese style influences. In this case, the sudden discovery and the excitement on the part of the Japanese Garden Association as well as the Japanese media might have caused the people involved to ignore the evidence that the garden was not a Japanese one, whether this happened consciously or unconsciously. Some kind of wishful thinking from the side of the directorship might have played a role in this, in the sense that this "rediscovery" of the garden provided Austria with a retrospective opportunity to be part of the movement where Japanese gardens were increasingly built in the West around the turn of the 20th century. Without a doubt, however, the existing stone garden could

[18] p.35
[19] p.7

only be turned into a Japanese one by the association and the projection of a pre-existing image of Japanese gardens upon it. This image would have been changed or reinforced upon the change of narrative of the garden due to the whole staging of the rediscovery by the Japanese Garden Association and the media.

Conclusion

The two case studies presented in this thesis show how powerful associations are that are formed by social, historical, and commercial factors in the creation of images, in this case the image of the Japanese garden. In the case of Baroness van Brienen, she was very knowledgeable about Japan and went to full lengths to create a garden that would be as close as possible to the gardens she had seen on her trip, thus intending to build an "authentic" Japanese garden. Nevertheless, her garden bore many resemblances with the ones presented at the world fairs, and thus reflected the image of the Japanese garden held by the wider public. In that sense, the baroness' personal experience of the Japanese garden might have been different, but the image presented, the product of that personal experience, was the same as that of the public. This can be explained by the influence of the factors that exposed the wide public to things Japanese, namely the system as defined by Barthes referred to as *Japanicity* along with elements such as the world fairs, the *Japonaiserie* trend, and the book by Josiah Conder. Those factors all provided a mutually compatible experience of Japan and the Japanese garden, which would in turn be influential for the representation of personal images. Since we know that the baroness mainly consumed the same sources on Japanese gardens and was under influence of current social and cultural trends of her time, the representation of her perception of Japanese gardens would be very similar to the perception of the wider public.

In case of the Japanese garden in Schönbrunn, the idea of the Japanese garden was introduced by the person who discovered the garden, as well as the Japanese Garden Society that projected their perception of the Japanese garden onto the rock garden in Schönbrunn. The Austrian public and the administration of the palace garden in Schönbrunn had previously not made any associations between the rock garden and Japanese gardens at all. Rather, the "discovery" of the garden and the upheaval around it in the media seemed to have led to the construction or adaption of an image of the Japanese garden in the directorship and the Austrian public. Additionally, some wishful thinking might have played a role as well. I have previously mentioned that this was the chance for Austria to be part of the early European garden fashion around the beginning of the 20th century. Both case studies show how a pre-existing concept of *Japanicity* along with the influence of social and historical factors, such as the *Japonaiserie* trend or the influence of third parties such as the Japan Garden Society in the case of the garden in Schönbrunn garden, can play into perceived images of Japanese gardens in different ways. In the case of the baroness' garden, the garden

that was created very much resembled the image the wider public had of Japanese gardens. Here, a common representation of the idea of the Japanese garden of someone educated about Japanese culture, and the image thereof of the public was formed by a shared experience. In the case of Schönbrunn, a non-existing association with Japanese gardens had been formed by certain events and the introduction of a narrative, namely the "rediscovery" of the Japanese garden as well and the reconstruction of it by the people who were involved in the endeavour. This newly formed association was then applied to the stone garden and accepted by the wider public. In the case of the Japanese garden in Schönbrunn, the intended representation of the original garden built by court gardeners was overwritten by this new narrative of the Japanese garden. In the case of the baroness' garden, both intended representation as well as the image received by the wider public overlapped.

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Figures

Figure 1

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Figure 2

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