

THE 200-YEAR CRAFTSMAN -

Preserving Cultural Heritage and Garden
Craftsmanship in Kyoto, Japan.

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Uppsats för avläggande av filosofie kandidatexamen med huvudområdet kulturvård med inriktning mot Trädgård
2020, 180 hp
Grundnivå

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Kandidatuppsats, 15 hp
Trädgårdens och Landskapsvårdens hantverk, inriktning Trädgård

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Bachelor of Science in Conservation, with major in Garden and Landscape Crafts, 180 hec
Graduating thesis, 2020

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Title in original language: *The 200-year Craftsman - Preserving Cultural Heritage and Garden Craftsmanship in Kyoto, Japan.*

Language of text: English

Number of pages: 33

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ABSTRACT

This thesis cover the process and results of a case study that was made in Kyoto, Japan in 2019. The intention is to produce an example of how cultural heritage preservation in a culturally important garden might be conducted, with focus on knowledge preserving and sharing. Research on cultural heritage in gardens is a relatively new field, and material accessible in English on Japanese preservation efforts is especially scarce. This thesis aims to aid in this issue. The study was conducted with the assistance of Kyoto-based garden landscaping company Ueyakato Landscape Co., LTD., and covers the work that they do at the National Place of Scenic Beauty-garden Murin-an. Ueyakato Landscape has multiple ongoing cultural preservation works and have over their almost 200-year history as a company developed certain methods to preserve their craftsmanship and knowledge.

The survey was done through a combination of literal studies, participation-based research where the author took part in a three-day work experience at Murin-an, as well as interviews with the CEO of Ueyakato Landscape and the head gardener of Murin-an. The thesis concludes with a discussion of the researched methods, and brings to light some of the similarities and differences between Ueyakato's approach and the historical preservation that is carried out in Sweden. The thesis highlights and presents multiple elaborate and extensive systems that are in place to share and develop knowledge of garden crafts at Ueyakato and Murin-an Garden, and reflects on the logistics and background on said systems. While many of the efforts are carried out by Ueyakato, it is also revealed that there is an intricate ongoing triangular relationship between the Cultural ministry of Japan, Kyoto City and Ueyakato Landscape that deeply affects Murin-an garden and the efforts that are done there to bring public awareness of its historical values.

Keywords: Garden Craftsmanship, Knowledge Preservation, Japanese Garden, Japan, Kyoto, Murin-an, Ueyakato Landscape, Place of Scenic Beauty, Participant Observation.

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Preface

This thesis constitutes the final completion of my studies at the University of Gothenburg for my Bachelor of Science in Conservation, with a major in Garden and Landscape Crafts. The support from the University of Gothenburg gave me the opportunity to travel to Kyoto, Japan, during the summer of 2018 through the course *Survey in Cultural Environment*, to study cultural preservation in Japanese Gardens. I am eternally grateful to Mr. Tomoki Kato, CEO at Ueyakato Landscape LTD and everyone else at Ueyakato for showing interest in my survey and allowing me to take part in their company's daily life and work at Murin-an Garden. My outmost gratitude to Kenta Deguchi, for his patience and kindness. Without Ueyakato, this thesis would not have been possible.

I am also very grateful to Mr. Masaru Okagaki, the technical section manager at Kyoto Botanical Gardens, and Mr. Shinichi Sano, President of the landscaping company Uetoh Zohen CO., LTD. While the interviews with these individuals did not directly make an obvious appearance in this particular thesis, the information that was shared with me have been indispensable to the understanding of the subject.

I'd also like to express my outmost gratitude to Helge Ax:son Johnsons foundation for aiding me financially with the survey that was done for this thesis.

Finally, many thanks to my mentor Inger Olausson for her indispensable support and wonderful enthusiasm throughout this project.

Fabian Gunnarsson
March, 2020

1. Introduction

This thesis originated from a long lasting interest for Japanese gardens. When I first visited the city of Kyoto in Japan in 2016, I noticed an incredible attention to all things traditional, specifically so when it came to gardens and gardening. Many of the temples have gardens and architecture preserved from as far back as the 15th century, some even older.¹ Old techniques such as the *san-mata*² (figure 1) or the needle-plucking of pine trees are still widely used by modern gardeners. Even older traditions, such as the tea ceremony³ is still present in many of the gardens. It made me wonder: how is this possible? Where does this interest for tradition and gardens come from? Who, or what kind of company is behind the gardening in all these temples? The knowledge of the principles of the gardens and the craftsmanship had to be widely documented and worked with, would it not?

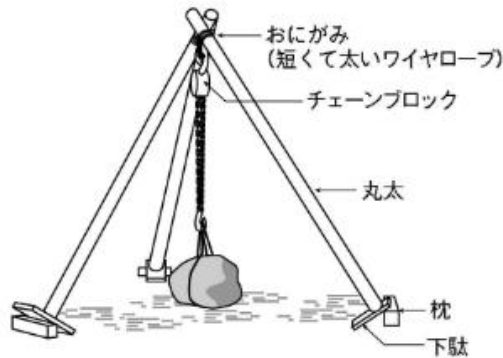
When I got back to Sweden, I tried to learn more, but quickly came to the realization that there were barely any research accessible in neither Swedish nor English to be found on the work that was done in the gardens of Kyoto. My intent with this project is to answer some of the above questions. To do this, I knew I had to return to Kyoto. I came to the conclusion that the best way to understand the traditional caretaking of the gardens in Kyoto was to, in fact, study one. Ueyakato Landscape is one of the biggest gardening companies in Kyoto City, and they work closely in correlation with Kyoto City, the Japanese Ministry of Cultural affairs, as well as Kyoto University of Arts. One of the gardens they are taking care of is Murin-An, the garden villa of the famous political and military leader Yamagata Aritomo. A National Place of Scenic Beauty⁴, constructed by famous garden designer Ogawa Jihei between 1894 and 1896. Ueyakato Landscape has multiple ongoing cultural preservation works and have over their almost 200-year history as a company developed certain methods to preserve their craftsmanship and knowledge. Some of which this thesis will aim to present.

¹ Kinkaku-ji (1398), Ginkaku-ji (1482), Saiho-ji (Originally Nara period 710-794, restored in 1339), Tenryu-ji (1339), Ryoan-ji (1450-1500) Preservation of Cultural Properties Section, Kyoto City (n. d.)

² A sanmata (or tripod) is a three-pronged structure with three logs or iron bars that are banded together at the top and spread out in three directions at the bottom. A chain pulley is dangled from the top and used to move stones short distances within a worksite. (An Index of Man-powered Transport and Assembly Methods for Construction, 2017)

³ Ceremonial tea drinking has been practiced since at least the Kamakura era (1192-1333) in Japan. (Encyclopedia Britannica, 2020)

⁴ Properties that are considered especially culturally important are designated by the Japanese government as Historic Sites, Places of Scenic Beauty, and Natural Monuments. (*Cultural Properties for Future Generations – Outline of the Cultural Administration of Japan*, Agency for Cultural Affairs (2017))



三又とチェーンブロックで樹木を吊って移動する作業。

Figure 1. The sanmata. (Source: *Jinriki ni yoru unpan kumitate kōhō no sakuin* (An Index of Man-powered Transport and Assembly Methods for Construction), 2017)

1.1. Background

Cultural conservation work in Japan today is unique and widespread, especially so in the city of Kyoto. There are several reasons for this. One of them is, put simply, Japan's history in of itself. For over a thousand years, Kyoto was Japan's capital, before Tokyo took over the title (then Edo) during the Meiji Restoration in 1868.⁵ The new government worked extensively with the preservation of cultural heritage as it considered it to be an important part of the country's identity. As early as 1871, the "Proclamation for the Protection of Antiques and Old Properties" (or plan for the Preservation of Ancient Artifacts) was introduced, the purpose of which was to compile and categorize objects of cultural and historical importance. The Meiji government continued with a variety of similar works and restorations during its era right up to World War II.⁶ The modern Japanese government has since then kept establishing new amendments to add to their protection of cultural properties, such as the system for protection of intangible cultural properties and buried cultural properties during the 1950's, among others.

Something else that is quite unique for Kyoto is that it was more or less spared from aerial bombings during the Second World War. One of the reasons for this was that the US government was afraid of the political repercussions, and they were worried that the people of Japan might rally out of resentment rather than surrender. Kyoto was also one of the main targets for the atomic bombings, but was ultimately spared for the above reasons as well as

⁵ *Meiji Restoration*, Encyclopedia Britannica, (2020)

⁶ *Cultural Properties for Future Generations – Outline of the Cultural Administration of Japan*, Agency for Cultural Affairs (2017)

the intervention that came from a US secretary called Henry Stimson.⁷ Apparently, when considering the city for bombing, Stimson fondly remembered his earlier visits to Kyoto, and deemed it far too valuable to destroy.⁸ This example shows not only an early appreciation of the city as a cultural heritage nationally, but also internationally. It further displays the historic value of Kyoto City as a whole, as a broad range of both architecture and gardens are uniquely well-preserved to this very day.

Since the post-war era, Japan has developed economically very quickly. After the war, the country focused on development and modernization, and initially the former cultural-historical work in preservation was somewhat forgotten with the focus elsewhere. With the development of modern society and its accompanying changes, the population grew a certain fear of losing their identity, history and culture.⁹ This, on the other hand, led to a growing interest among local people for cultural heritage, which in turn has led to companies and industries being able to find economic benefits in bringing cultural-historical interests into their work. This is also something that has, without a doubt, added to the list of arguments for the proposal-based cultural garden care that is prevalent in many of the gardens in Kyoto today.¹⁰ Society has thus been able to develop together with its cultural heritage and their historic gardens. In Sweden it is only quite recently, partly because of the great demolitions during the 1960's and the establishing of the Florence charter on historic gardens, that cultural care has begun to be recognized by the general public.¹¹¹² While this in no way means that cultural conservation have not been researched or worked with in Sweden, it does show a certain dissonance with the general public interest in this certain area.

All of these examples show why Japan is a country of particular interest – especially Kyoto – when it comes to the study of cultural preservation. Historically, as we have gone over, Japan has placed great importance on the care of intangible and tangible cultural heritage, and this work has yielded results, not just physically, but also with society's view of cultural conservation, especially when it comes to historical gardens. In the urban area of Kyoto alone there are as many as 17 designated World Heritage sites (UNESCO, u.å.), all of which have some kind of garden, and many thousands of visitors annually. Kyoto is also considered the cultural center of Japan,¹³ and a relocation of most departments of the Agency for cultural affairs is currently ongoing.¹⁴ In addition, Kyoto was the successor as the Japanese capital after the city of Nara, which is located in the neighboring prefecture of Nara. This is also the place where the Nara conference was held and the document of authenticity of 1994 was drafted¹⁵ on the initiative of the Japanese government in correlation with the organizations: *United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization* (UNESCO), *International Council on Monuments and Sites* (ICOMOS), and the *International Centre for the Study of*

⁷*The man who saved Kyoto from the atomic bomb*, BBC (2015)

⁸ *Henry L. Stimson*, Encyclopedia Britannica (2020)

⁹ *Cultural heritage protection system in Japan: current issues and prospects for the future*, Kakiuchi, E. (2014)

¹⁰ (Sakaue; Kato, 2015) Since 2007, instead of going for the lowest bid (as is traditionally customary) the choice is now based on quality of work: something that has given a big boost to many gardens popularity.

¹¹ Swedish National Heritage Board (2020)

¹² *The Florence Charter on Historic Gardens*, ICOMOS (1982)

¹³ *Kyoto*, Encyclopedia Britannica (2020)

¹⁴ *Organization of the Agency for Cultural Affairs* (Agency for Cultural Affairs, Japan)

¹⁵ *Nara document on authenticity* is a document concerning cultural heritage that "builds on and extends the *Charter of Venice* (1964) in the expanding scope of cultural heritage and interests in our contemporary world" (Nara document on authenticity, 1994)

the Preservation and Restoration of Cultural Property (ICCROM), something that further reflects the importance of the area, and Japan, within cultural heritage.

The aim of this study is to find out more about the cultural care and garden craftsmanship in Japan and hopefully be able to adapt some of these lessons to the preservation of traditional gardening and cultural-historical gardens in Sweden, but also to spread knowledge and draw attention to the importance of cultural heritage internationally.

The garden of Murin-an in Kyoto is one of the gardens that is currently maintained on the basis of the previously mentioned quality-proposal. The caretakers of this specific garden is a company called Ueyakato Landscape Co., LTD. and the work they are doing at Murin-an is the major source of inspiration for this project.

1.2. Existing research

One of the reasons this study is of particular interest is for the very reason that there is not a very big amount of research on the subject, at least not in the western world. There has been extensive research on the cultural heritage preservation work in Japan, but not as much in correlational between garden craftsmanship, and a lot of it is in only available in Japanese. The reason for this is assumed not to be because there are no correlation to be found, the cultural preservation work in gardens, as presented in the previous chapter, is obviously very wide-spread in Japan. The reason is more likely to be that gardening and its cultural significance are simply somewhat underrepresented in research as a whole. In Sweden, scientific cultural heritage research on garden crafts is relatively new,¹⁶ and as such, there is not much material to be found on other cultures' or nations' work with garden cultural heritage, as local cultural preservation work naturally has been prioritized. However, the importance of acknowledging cultural preservation properly, especially in its correlation with the management of historical gardens through the use of traditional crafts, is something that Joakim Seiler does investigate more thoroughly in his dissertation *Management Regimes for Lawns and Hedges in Historic Gardens* (2020).

Language is also believed to be one of the big reasons there is a lack of accessible research in English or Swedish on Japanese cultural heritage preservation. According to a study done by Rakuten Research in 2016, almost 70 percent of the respondents believed their knowledge of the English language to be "poor/very poor".¹⁷ This, while in no way a conclusive study, might give an indication as to why it can be difficult to find research in English done by Japanese researchers. As such, my time with Ueyakato Landscape hopefully gives my project a unique insight into the type of work that might be carried out in Kyoto and Japan.

1.3. Purpose and goals

The following chapter deals with the study's intent, and its expected impact. The main issues to be researched are also presented in further detail.

Purpose

The purpose of this project is to develop an example of how traditional garden craftsmanship can be passed on and preserved in Kyoto, Japan in contemporary times, and its correlation

¹⁶ Almevik, (2017)

¹⁷ *Survey on attitudes towards English*, Rakuten Insight Inc., (2016)

with cultural heritage work. The study will be based on a specific company, Ueyakato Landscape, and their work in the historic garden Murin-an, but will also draw information from other companies and individuals through interviews. While carried out by Ueyakato, the work that is done in the garden is done in communication with Kyoto City as well as the Japanese Government, and how this relationship affects the cultural preservation in Murin-an will also be shown. However, this study is not meant as a conclusive study, rather its purpose is to give a thorough example of how knowledge sharing and cultural preservation *might* be carried out in this specific setting, by this specific company.

Issues

This research questions that will be investigated in this thesis are the following:

- How is garden craftsmanship and knowledge passed on and preserved at Ueyakato Landscape?
- What methods are used to preserve the core historic values of the garden Murin-an?
- How does the relationship between the Ministry of Cultural Affairs, Kyoto City and the garden company Ueyakato Landscape affect the caretaking of the historic garden Murin-an?

Expected results/impact

My hope with this study is first and foremost to gain a broader understanding and a deeper insight into the art of Japanese gardening, in relation to the history of the country and the city of Kyoto, and its correlation with cultural conservation. There has been a growing concern concerning our intangible and tangible cultural heritage, something that is reflected in the Nara document on Authenticity¹⁸, mostly due to the rapid development of the modern world, not only in Sweden and Japan, but also globally, which means that research like this becomes particularly relevant. It is of the study's interest to compare the different approaches Sweden respectively Japan might use when it comes to cultural preservation in gardens, to see what we might learn from one another. The hope of this survey is also that it might establish cooperation and communication between Gothenburg and Kyoto, and their respective universities.

1.4. Method

The project began during the autumn of 2018. The first step was multiple studies in the form of preparation for the trip to Kyoto and Ueyakato in June, 2019. From the beginning of the project, I decided that interviews and questionnaires were the most appropriate methods to gather information. That way, I could with the help of an interpreter bypass certain language barriers. The interviews were to be done with pre-determined questions, and planned for roughly an hour, with space for a couple of open follow-up questions. This early in the project, I was not yet entirely certain whether I would research the garden craft itself, or the underlying systems for knowledge and preservation of craftsmanship, which was one of the reasons the interviews had to be somewhat flexible. In addition, since I knew so little about the gardening in Kyoto, and there was so little to be found in western literature, an on-hand

¹⁸ *Nara document on Authenticity*, preamble: point 4, (1994)

experience in combination with personal meetings also felt like one of the best ways to gain as much as possible in the relatively short time that I would spend in Japan.

The roughly six months before the journey was then spent establishing contacts in Kyoto, conducting literature studies, preparing question materials and any questionnaires before the interviews, as well as general preparations for the trip. I also began studying Japanese to gain a somewhat deeper insight into my actual visit to Kyoto. I also began researching in the shape of literary studies of Kyoto as a city and its different gardens as well as its history. This was done to gain a broader insight into the background of Japanese culture and traditions, something that was considered important to correctly understand the knowledge that was to be gathered during the study.

To establish contact with individuals and garden companies mainly e-mail was used, but also phone calls. Ueyakato Landscape Co., LTD., which will from now on be referred to as simply *Ueyakato*, was one of the companies that showed interest in my project. In correlation with Ueyakato it was decided that interviews and a brief practical work experience in Murin-an was appropriate. I spent three full days of working in two of the gardens that Ueyakato maintain, two of them in Murin-an, to end with a concluding interview from Mr. Kenta Deguchi – head gardener at Murin-an garden – and Mr. Tomoki Kato Ph.D., President of Ueyakato and Professor at Kyoto University of Art and Design. Kenta Deguchi has been a gardener at Ueyakato Landscape for nine years and he is the head gardener for Murin-an for four years and holds the Japanese qualifications of arborist, Class 1 Landscape Technician, and Class 1 Landscape Gardening Execution Management Engineer.

Tomoki Kato has been the President of Ueyakato since 2005, and in addition to his many public talks and lectures not only in Japan but also internationally¹⁹ he is since 2018 also the recipient of the Japan ICOMOS Award,²⁰ which was granted to him for “*his lifework and raising public awareness and educating about the activities of preserving Japanese gardens.*”²¹

For my time spent in Murin-an together with Ueyakato garden craftsmen, my approach drew inspiration from the method of research through participant observation as can be seen in Figure 2. This approach is something that the Swedish researcher Tina Westerlund endorses in her doctoral thesis *Trädgårdsmästarens förökningsmetoder. Dokumentation av hantverkarskunskap* (2017). Apart from Ueyakato, I also got in touch with another garden company, *Uetoh Zohen*, another local several-generation landscaping company, as well as the Botanic Garden of Kyoto. The interviews that were conducted with these respective representatives might be referred to in the *Conclusions* section of this thesis, but will not be presented to the same extent as my study of Ueyakato. All interviews were conducted with the help of the respective companies own interpreters and said interviews were recorded for further analyzing back in Sweden. In addition, Ueyakato provided me with multiple sources of information in the form of documentation, photos, studies and presentations, most of which in one form or the other will be presented in the thesis. I have since my trip also been in contact with certain representatives at Ueyakato through email, whom has continued to provide answers to many of my questions.

¹⁹ *The Spirit of Kyoto Garden Craftsman*, North American Japanese Garden Association (NAJGA) Conference keynote speech, T. Kato, (2014)

²⁰ The Japan ICOMOS Award was founded in 2014 by the Japan ICOMOS National Committee to recognize those who have made outstanding contributions to the advancement of principles, activities and projects for the preservation and utilization of cultural heritage sites. (Source: Ueyakato Landscape website, news section, (2018))

²¹ Personal Interview with Mr. Kato, question 10., (2019)



Figure 2. Mr. Kenta Deguchi instructing me at Murin-an Garden. (Source: ©Ueyakato Landscape LTD., (2019) with permission.)

2. Results

In the following section, the company Ueyakato and the work that is done in the Murin-an garden in correlation with Kyoto City, is described in greater detail. Emphasis lies on knowledge sharing and cultural preservation in this specific setting. Any factual statements in the “results”-section that are not marked with a specific source, is drawn from one of the two interviews that was made during the study. If there is specific importance on clarifying whether the statement comes from Kato or Deguchi, the source will specifically be named in that instance.

Besides the interviews, the data presented comes from the authors personal work experience in the shape of participant observation²² in Murin-an garden, literature studies of official documents, Ueyakato documentation, further e-mail-based interviews in correspondence with Ueyakato, and scientific research. However, in contrast to the physical interviews that was done on-site, these other sources will always be presented with their respective source. The on-site interviews were conducted at the end of the study of Murin-an, at the very end of the authors visit to the company. As previously mentioned, the data from these interviews will be presented in running text, starting with an brief overview of the company, followed by an introduction into Murin-an Garden, and ending with an extensive deep-dive into the company Ueyakato and their practices and methods.

²² Participant observation is a form of qualitative research method where the aim is to gain a deeper knowledge of a subject through intimate involvement with a specific community, individual, or group of people in the shape of field studies. The experience is often documented through photographs, video, and/or notes of the researcher’s personal reflections, impressions and feelings. In this particular project, the form of documentation that was mainly used was personal notes during and after each day of work, and impulsive questions as well as physical observation of the craftsmen during their work.

2.1. Ueyakato Landscape

Ueyakato (Figure 3.) is a Japanese garden company located in the city of Kyoto and is the designated manager of Murin-an. Ueyakato is the largest garden company in the area, with 120 employees, something that is quite unique for a Japanese garden company. The company was founded in 1848, by the at that time exclusive gardener of Nanzenji Temple in Kyoto, Kichibei Kato, and has since then been passed down through generations under the family name. What is particularly unique, besides the size of the company and the almost 200-year history, is that Ueyakato not only have gardeners and/or garden designers, they also have their own researchers, marketing, tour guides etc. They have employees not only for the gardens, but also in every surrounding aspect of them. From their own company policy:

One core principle of the company is using traditional Japanese garden fostering techniques to nurture new scenery that will last for generations to come.

...

Kyoto's Gardeners have long engaged with nature, thoroughly observing its changes and characteristics down to the finest detail, and reflecting them in their expression of space.

(Ueyakato Landscape, Company Profile – Philosophy, 2019)

These are just a part of Ueyakato's wider policy, yet the core principles that are shown such as engaging with nature, using history and the traditional to further the future and bringing people together through the gardens, are something that seem to run through the company's work in all their tasks. These principles seem potent in everything Ueyakato do, if it is team-building, sharing of knowledge, dealing with new tasks or doing garden work and research. Throughout history, Kyoto gardeners have worked closely in tradition with nature and the Japanese culture, and they still do to this very day. This is reflected in the above quote from the company's policy, but is also something that again and again is shown in general when it comes to Japanese gardens. The very essence of a Japanese garden is that the garden (or the scenery) is supposed to be a reflection of nature, a sort of miniature natural landscape²³.

Ueyakato's work in the garden of Murin-an is especially interesting as it not only shows this connection with nature in the borrowed landscape of the Higashiyama Mountains, or through its importance being a designated National Place of Scenic Beauty, but it also shows how important it is to connect with people. The garden is a popular place to visit among both locals and tourists. It is one of few gardens in Kyoto that have its own English-speaking guided tours and special events in the form of for example miniature moss-gardening courses, pruning seminars or tea ceremonies. This connection to nature, the bringing awareness to gardening and cultural values and bringing people together through activities surrounding the garden is something Kato seem to highly value. This is further shown in this part of Ueyakato's company policy:

Scenery is created by the natural environment, human activity, and the society that surrounds both of them. By incorporating into today's society the techniques that have been used to tend to gardens for centuries, we can also nurture an enriched scenery for the future.

In addition to garden creation and management, we are devoted to utilizing gardens in accordance with their surrounding social environment.

²³ See *Sakuteiki – Visions of the Japanese Garden*, J. Takei & M. P. Keane, (2008). Chapter – Nature.

At Murin-an, Ueyakato is part of a triangular relationship between the owner and the designator, whom, in that order respectively, is Kyoto City and the national government (Agency for Cultural Affairs). The management of Murin-an is based on a four-year proposal from Ueyakato. Kyoto City recently changed its approach for Murin-an with respect to proposals for its care-taking. It is only since 2007 that Kyoto City has had this system in place²⁴, prior to this system was a competitive bidding system where the lowest bidding company was selected for management. Due to the change the garden have seen a major surge in popularity and quality.²⁵

In addition, Mr. Kato is also a Professor at Kyoto University of Art and Design, where he regularly holds courses and lectures.

All of these reasons, the relationship with the agency for cultural affairs, the government, the city, as well as Kyoto University and the public awareness talks and efforts that Mr. Tomoki Kato, President of Ueyakato, does, are some of the motivation that Ueyakato and specifically their work at Murin-an are used as an example for this study.



Figure 3. Some of the employees of Ueyakato, with Mr. Tomoki Kato in the darker robe up front. (Source: ©Ueyakato Landscape LTD., [2014] with permission.)

2.2. Murin-an Garden

In this chapter the Murin-an Garden will be presented, its background and how the work is structured in correlation with the Japanese Government and Kyoto City. This is done to give a further understanding of the cultural preservation and the relationship between the three organizations. Below, in figure 4, there is a photograph of the garden depicting Mr. Yamagata's villa and the view from the entrance of the garden.

²⁴ *Garden Lawn Fostering that utilizes wildflowers as intrinsic value at Murin-an Garden, a National Place of Scenic Beauty*, S. Handa, T. Sakaue & T. Kato, (2017)

²⁵ *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*, T. Sakaue & T. Kato, (2015).

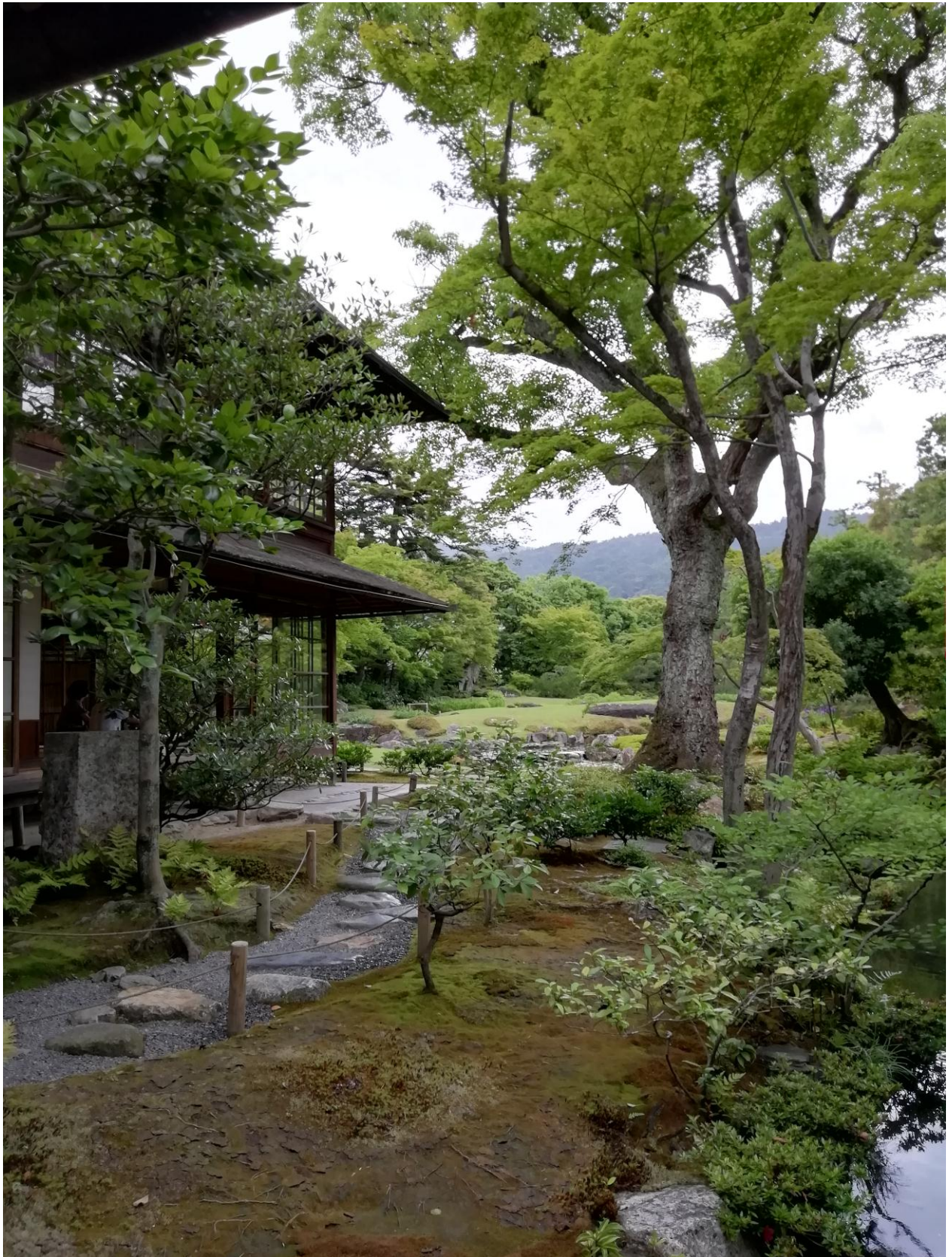


Figure 4. View from the entrance of Murin-an Garden, Kyoto, with the villa clearly visible on the left.
(Source: Gunnarsson F., 2019)

2.2.1. Background

Murin-an garden was constructed between 1894 and 1896 in the Okazaki and Nanzenji neighborhood in the Sakyo Ward of Kyoto City, see Figure 5. It was designed and built by the garden craftsman Ogawa Jihei the 7th on the instructions of the military politician Aritomo Yamagata. The garden was to be the garden of Yamagata's personal villa. In 1890 the area was supposed to be built into an industrial zone. However, as Kyoto city instead introduced hydroelectric power into the nearby canal²⁶, the surroundings was preserved and developed as a place of scenic beauty where you could enjoy the aesthetic view of the much appreciated Higashiyama Mountains. It was designated a National Place of Scenic Beauty (NPSB from now on) by the Japanese government in 1951, due to its shallow water “*that flows beautifully with a full ripple*” and that “*has two or three places that water falls down from,*” “*a lawn that helps create a “bright modern landscape,”*” and “*the peaks of the Higashiyama Mountains above its forest that act as borrowed scenery.*” These reasons lie at the foundation of Ueyakato's management activities in the garden today.²⁷

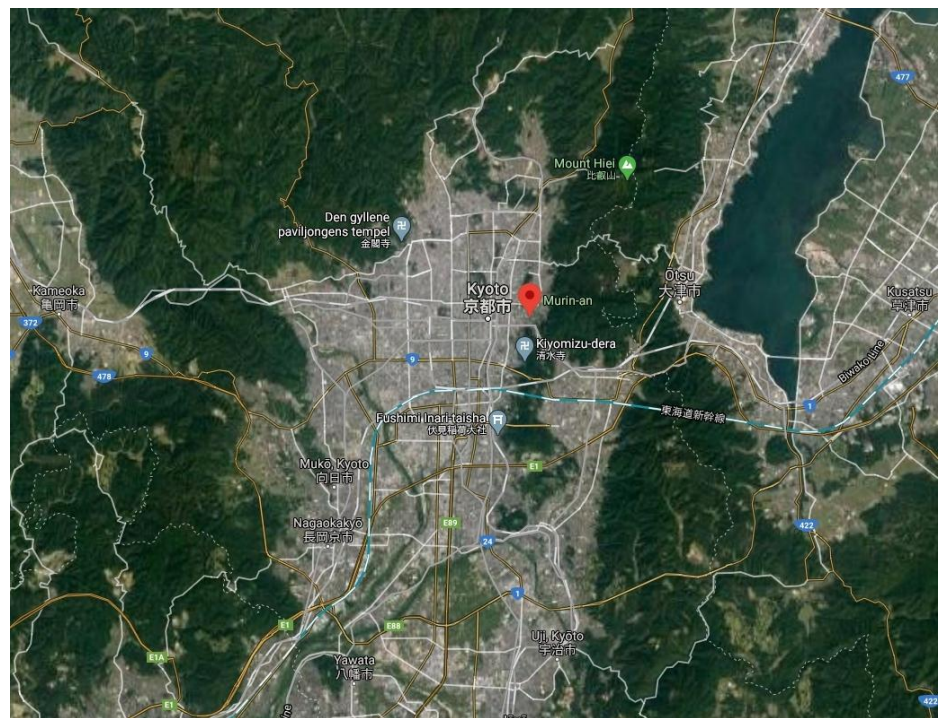


Figure 5. Location of Murin-an in relation to Kyoto City.
(Source: Google Maps, taken 02-26-2020)

Murin-an was one of the first villas in this so-called scenic style, where the surrounding landscape is used as a viewpoint in the garden, and was one of the pioneers of the modern naturalistic garden style, a style that draws certain similarities to the western naturalistic woodland style. In Murin-an, some of the influence or similarities can be found especially in the meadow and the lawn area of the garden, something that is not usually common in a traditional Japanese garden. Figure 6 shows the *borrowed landscape*-technique of Murin-an.

²⁶ The Lake Biwa Canal was constructed in 1890 to draw water from the nearby lake Biwa. The canal supplied Kyoto with water for purposes such as irrigation, firefighting, and for powering Japan's first hydroelectric power station.

²⁷ Email interview, Department of Heritage and Garden Artistry, Ueyakato Landscape Co., Ltd., (2019)

The mountains above the red line are the Higashiyama Mountains, and the mountain range is used in this way to further enhance the scenery of the garden.²⁸ Figure 7 shows the scenic view from within the villa of Yamagata, the design of a certain viewpoint from the respective house on site is something that is often typical for many Japanese gardens. However, Yamagata created Murin-an with a vision of *an unprecedented garden with my own style* because gardens in Kyoto *lacked both dynamism and grandeur in any sense*.²⁹ One of the key elements of the garden is the grass lawn, which was, especially at the time, considered an exotic addition to a traditional Japanese garden. Something that further shows the sense of grandeur that Yamagata possessed.



Figure 6. Photograph showing the *borrowed landscape*-technique of Murin-an. (Source: ©Ueyakato Landscape LTD., from *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*, T. Sakaue & T. Kato, (2015)).

²⁸ *Shakkei*, or *borrowed scenery* is a Japanese garden technique where the surrounding landscape is used to add or complement the overall scenery or impression of the garden (Niwaki, Hobson, J., (2007)).

²⁹ *Garden Lawn Fostering that utilizes wildflowers as intrinsic value at Murin-an Garden, a National Place of Scenic Beauty*, S. Handa, T. Sakaue & T. Kato, (2017)



Figure 7. The view from within the Yamagata-villa. (Source: Gunnarsson, F., (2019))

2.2.2. Caretaking of the garden and Ueyakato's relationship with Kyoto City and the Government of Japan.

The caretaking of Murin-an Garden, because it is a NPSB, is decided through a committee, consisting of Kyoto City representatives, government representatives from the Agency for Cultural Affairs, researchers and other experts, and finally the company that is the designated manager of the garden. This committee decides on the cultural values of the garden and the approach towards the restoration or the cultural preservation of the selected gardens.

Ueyakato was chosen as Murin-an's designated manager through a system of proposal-based offers to Kyoto City. These proposals are something that any garden company can send in, and last for approximately four years. The company that is deemed the most fitting to act according to the ascertained policy of the garden are then chosen to be its caretakers. The latest proposal from Ueyakato was from 2016 to 2018,³⁰ and the new proposal for 2019 and ahead needed to be prepared years in advance in order to prepare the management for another four years. Essentially, what this means, is that everything is decided upon in communication with Kyoto City and the designated committee of Murin-an. However, this is mainly the principles and the general policy of the garden that is decided upon. While permission is needed from the Agency for Cultural Affairs on any major changes to the garden, Ueyakato can conduct daily management, as long as it is within the proposal that they have earlier established and the policy of the garden. What is especially interesting in this case is that Ueyakato themselves, as a garden company, have their own researchers, and are therefore involved in deciding the very policy of the preservation of the garden.

³⁰ The same year that Kyoto City implemented a *property management selection system* which, in essence, meant that designated companies was to provide both property and garden management collectively. Source: *Garden Lawn Fostering that utilizes wildflowers as intrinsic value at Murin-an Garden, a National Place of Scenic Beauty*, S. Handa, T. Sakaue & T. Kato, (2017)

Perhaps the most fascinating aspect of the management of Murin-an is how the proposal not only concerns the gardening itself, but also all the surrounding features of the garden, according to the property management system. The guided tours of the garden, the seminars and events, general admission, everything is managed by Ueyakato and their own employees, not by the committee or the government, as one might expect in a setting like this. However, while interesting, it is important to note that:

*Japan's Law for the Protection of Cultural Properties stipulates that the essential value of cultural properties is not only to be preserved but actively used by the public. This means there are concrete guidelines that govern how its essential value is to be preserved for the future.*³¹

So even though the activities are clearly admirable, the initiative itself is a joint effort between the organizations. However, as Mr. Kato himself stated in the interview, he personally believes that the most important and effective way of preserving traditional gardening and/or gardens is to educate and raise public awareness.

2.3. Methods and policies of Ueyakato

The following chapter on methods and policies that are presented below functions to give a broader understanding of Ueyakato's approach to sharing knowledge and preserving cultural values.

2.3.1. Learn from tradition, learn from the team

According to Mr. Kato, the most important thing for a true garden craftsman is to *Learn from tradition, learn from the team*. One of the reasons this is so highly valued stems from one of his philosophies concerning gardening: *The 200 years theory of garden craftsman*. This theory originates from Kato's beliefs that the subject of (Japanese) garden is too complex and too big for any one person to understand in their limited lifetime. His answer from the interview on the subject:

...in Japanese gardens, not only do you need to cover a broad field, but also learn deeply about said broad field. Particularly in Kyoto we are looking on a history of 1200 years, and during this the way Japanese gardens have dealt and integrated with nature has changed. For example, according to Prof. Amasaki, you could divide garden history broadly into three eras, the era of learning from nature, era of designing nature, era of returning to nature. Even in these 1200 years, there is much and rich and vast knowledge. So you need to learn from these traditions, but on the other hand the understanding of the current time to even learn in depth about that you profit by learning and sharing with the team.

In essence, what this means is that you need, according to his theory, at *least* 200 years of experience to call yourself a true garden craftsman. Since no one can live 200 years, we have to learn from tradition. However, through our teammates it is also possible to share knowledge and experience with each other, which helps us transcend the 200-year old limit of

³¹ Email interview, Department of Heritage and Garden Artistry, Ueyakato Landscape Co., Ltd., (2019)

our own personal life-span.³² This ties in with Ueyakato's approach when it comes to cultural care in the gardens as well. Since it is impossible for us in contemporary time to know what the original intent of the garden was, we can only guess. The landscape surrounding the garden and the ecological conditions might have changed over the years as well. The only way to honor the old garden masters is to study old records. This can be in the shape of old landscape paintings or for example by studying old literature³³ or the writings of Yamagata himself³⁴. Another famous example of old literature is the *Sakuteiki* from the 11th century. The *Sakuteiki* is the oldest known gardening manual, and many companies and gardeners still use it as reference or inspiration to this very day³⁵.

2.3.2. Fostering versus maintenance

One very fascinating core principle of Mr. Kato is his stance on garden maintenance. In Japanese gardening, nature's course is of essential value³⁶. Moss growth is encouraged rather than seen as a weed, the tear from wind and rain on rocks and stones are even sometimes manually assisted, to give an impression of natural aging. With this in mind, garden *maintenance* is not a term that fully encompasses the kind of work that Ueyakato do in their gardens. One of Kato's examples of this is to see the garden in the same way you would see a child. A child is not something you simply *maintain*, you *foster* it. Fostering means taking care of something (or someone) daily, tending to their needs with love and care. A new garden needs to be raised in order to grow into fine aged scenery. It is a living thing that constantly changes. Something that also is emphasized is that the construction of the garden is less important than the maintenance, or – in this case – fostering. This is also reflected in the traditional principle amongst Kyoto gardeners, the 40/60-principle, which – in essence – means that the building of a garden is 40 percent construction, 60 percent maintenance.³⁷ Fostering is much more important than the building of a garden, since the garden will last for many hundred years with proper fostering yet fall to ruin in the absence of it. It is, after all, a living thing.

2.3.3. Garden fostering plan – true value and present value

In western cultural care you often discuss what type of care you will be doing in a certain area or with a certain historical object. Historically, in western philosophy, there have been two major areas of cultural restoration: *Style*, according to Eugène Viollet-le-Duc where the intent is to recreate what *might* once have been, and *Care*, which is John Ruskin's theory that restoration is in essence impossible, since the cultural value of an object correlates with the passage of time.³⁸ In Japan, as previously mentioned, there is a system in place for

³² *The Spirit of Kyoto Garden Craftsman*, North American Japanese Garden Association (NAJGA) Conference keynote speech, T. Kato, (2014)

³³ *Garden Lawn Fostering that utilizes wildflowers as intrinsic value at Murin-an Garden, a National Place of Scenic Beauty*, S. Handa, T. Sakaue & T. Kato, (2017)

³⁴ Aritomo Yamagata, the original owner of Murin-an, frequently wrote poems about the garden and its scenic views. One of these poems was immortalized in the garden 1901 in the shape of the *Onshi Chisho-no-Ki*: the monument stone. T. Sakaue & T. Kato (2015)

³⁵ See *Sakuteiki – Visions of the Japanese Garden*, J. Takei & M. P. Keane, (2008).

³⁶ Personal Interview with Mr. Kato, question 12., (2019)

³⁷ NAJGA keynote speech, T. Kato, (2014)

³⁸ *Contemporary Theory of Conservation*, S. Munoz-Vinas, Chapter 4, (2012)

particularly important or beautiful historical gardens. These gardens are categorized as *National place of Scenic Beauty*. There are currently 226 of these gardens in Japan, 51 of which is located in Kyoto alone. These NPSB's are all under the jurisdiction of the Agency for Cultural Affairs.³⁹ For each of these gardens, the Agency installs committees consisting of researchers, technicians and owners. The style of restoration that is appropriate for each of these NPSB's depends on whatever the committees decide upon. There is not a specific separation between the different restorative methods; instead it is decided upon a case-by-case basis. One famous example is the Saihoji-temple, or Koke-dera, the moss temple. Originally, Saihoji was a *kare-sansui*, a dry rock garden, but after it was left to its own development for a long time the committees made the decision to keep the moss that had festered in the garden.⁴⁰ Quote from the interview with Mr. Kato:

So in this case they went with care restoration, but it depends on the garden and how they decide to accept nature's course. These particular categories are not categories the Japanese are particularly aware of, dividing them like that. It is up to the committees in a case-by-case basis. It is always highly discussed by the researchers.

However, as Kato points out in his NAJGA-presentation, with that in mind, there is also the *true value* and the *present value* of the garden to consider upon entering a restorative project. The fostering plan for a garden is ultimately made from analyzing both past and present conditions. The true values include the garden's history from the birth of the garden to contemporary times, its function, and the intentions of the owner. The present value on the other hand includes how the environment might have affected the current state of garden as well as the ecological factor, and the present goals of the garden.⁴¹ These two values form the basis for when Ueyakato develops a fostering plan for a historical garden.

2.3.4. Implicit knowledge and explicit knowledge

At first glance one might draw the conclusion that *ku den* (oral tradition) and *anmoku chi* (the secret teachings) is similar to what we in the west would refer to as explicit and tacit knowledge. However, the concepts of *ku den* and *anmoku chi* both refer to the way you share implicit knowledge. The difference to western philosophy is that implicit knowledge is further separated in Japan in these two concepts, *oral tradition* and *secret teachings* (which is how they will be referred to from now on). Skills that might be explained and taught through words fall into the oral tradition-category, while the second concept of the secret teachings is more about the sensitive, difficult to explain, sense of aesthetics, methods or knowledge that are all very difficult to explain, similar to what we usually refer to as tacit knowledge. According to Mr. Kato, these secret teachings are the most important forms of knowledge that needs to be preserved⁴².

Generally in Kyoto, the only assumed way to fully understand the secret teachings is through passing on the teachings of a parent or a teacher to a child or a student through a combination of personal oral tradition and practical experience⁴³. It is a very intimate process, and at its core: very limiting. There is, for example, a common bias that you can only have a maximum

³⁹ (Cultural Properties for Future Generations – Outline of the Cultural Administration of Japan, Agency for Cultural Affairs (2017))

⁴⁰ Personal Interview with Mr. Kato, question 11., (2019)

⁴¹ NAJGA keynote speech, minute 21. T. Kato, (2014)

⁴² NAJGA keynote speech, minute 73. T. Kato, (2014)

⁴³ See *Sakuteiki – Visions of the Japanese Garden*. p. 162.

of 10-20 gardeners work under a master gardener, because the implicit knowledge can only be shared in this personal kind of setting.⁴⁴ This concept is something that Ueyakato challenges since that type of approach and bias is simply not viable for them. Considering the size of the company it would not be ideal to follow this old concept. According to Mr. Kato, it is important that we try to share and pass on these secret teachings, and not keep them to ourselves or limit who gets to learn⁴⁵. This is something that Ueyakato is quite radical in challenging that traditional idea. From the interview with Mr. Kato:

We are very unique in that way, since there are no other garden company with 120 employees, commonly there is this bias where you have one gardener and the maximum amount of people that can work there are 10-20 people. Because of this implicit knowledge that can ONLY be shared in that setting. But we have created a different organization and therefore the knowledge is differently handled.

As such, to “counter-act” this old sort of bias, they use two main methods:

- Brother and Sister system

The brother and sister system is a system that was developed mainly to challenge the way knowledge was traditionally handled. What this means is that you have “siblings” and you have tutors (or *parents*). The siblings are younger, less experienced employees while the tutors are the more experienced or advanced employees of the company. Each tutor is assigned a younger student. This system is in place not only for the gardeners, but also within the other areas such as design or garden heritage. In essence, the tutors work together in order to figure out the most effective way to share their knowledge and look after their young, with regular meetings among themselves. The brothers and sisters, on their end, also have regular meetings with each other, once a month, where they discuss their growth. To aid this work, the siblings use questionnaires to evaluate their fellow students.

- Monthly quality checks in the different gardens they care for, done by the CEO (Mr. Kato) and three or four of the most advanced garden craftsmen.

These kinds of “quality checks” are done at each garden site in correlation with the appropriate brothers and sisters. They usually take up to an hour or two to go over the garden, and discuss what needs to be done or change. These meetings are always done on site.

2.3.5. Documentation

While at its core being fairly traditional, Ueyakato is very motivated to keep up with the times, and use the techniques and tools that are available to aid in their work. As previously presented in the earlier chapter 2.1., learning from the team is something that is vital to the way Ueyakato conduct their work. Besides their regular meetings and their cooperation, they also have a couple of different, more modern approaches:

- LINE, which is a message application for mobile smartphones. Each garden and each team have their own LINE-group, where they share live-updates concerning the gardens and the work that is done every day. It is great for showing immediate

⁴⁴ Personal Interview with Mr. Kato, question 1., (2019)

⁴⁵ NAJGA keynote speech, T. Kato, (2014)

changes that might need to be done in the garden, and it is very simple to show how, for example, a specific shrub or a tree needs to be pruned from a specific angle or viewpoint.

- Photography in the form of traditional photography, drone photography, orthophotography and VR photography. The shape of these photographs vary depending on the purpose. What affects the methods of photography, or the level of detail, is not dependent on the work itself, rather the scale, importance and rarity of it. This is done on a case-by-case basis, what is recorded is what is deemed necessary to be recorded in any given situation.⁴⁶ These photographs are generally taken by the respective garden craftsman on site, as the people who understand the work that is done are deemed the most fitting to do so. Examples of different types of documentation can be seen in Figure 8 and 9, respectively.
- 3D data
- Physical Experience on site
- Oral discussion

While using all these methods, according to Mr. Kato's beliefs, there are still certain things you simply cannot learn or understand unless you take part in the physical experience. From the interview with Mr. Kato:

First, video, audio, data, has radically changed the way we can record. Instead of only having a text written on for example pruning, we can now video record that, audio record that, and make it even more visible than only what you can reach through only the written method. Now you can convey even more, however, you always leave behind a certain part that you can only learn by being at the site itself. The raw experience will always be left, even in video/audio/data.

However, what is important to note is that Mr. Kato and Ueyakato are not doing this only for themselves. They are recording and documenting with the intention to nurture and foster future generations of gardeners. One of the reasons it is so difficult caring for historical gardens is that many of the gardens in Kyoto are incredibly old,⁴⁷ and there is scarce amount of documentation to be found.⁴⁸ With the assistance of these intricate and detailed modern forms of documentation, Ueyakato can help future generations from facing the same difficulties they have had when trying to understand and learn about the garden and the work that is – or has been – done there.



Figure 8. Example of detailed documentation of a specific task/craft skill
(Source: ©Ueyakato Landscape LTD., (2019), with permission)

⁴⁶ Email interview, Department of Heritage and Garden Artistry, Ueyakato Landscape Co., Ltd., (2020)

⁴⁷ Kinkaku-ji (1398), Ginkaku-ji (1482), Saiho-ji (Originally Nara period 710-794, restored in 1339), Tenryu-ji (1339), Ryoan-ji (1450-1500) Preservation of Cultural Properties Section, Kyoto City (n. d.)

⁴⁸ Personal Interview with Mr. Kato, question 4., (2019)



Figure 9. Example of documentation in before-and-after format of a specific area
(Source: ©Ueyakato Landscape LTD., (2019), with permission)

2.3.6. Organization

As Ueyakato is such a big company, it is obviously vital for them to structure and organize their work-flow as efficient as possible. However, something that stood out was how interconnected the different branches of the company was. Each morning, at least one representative from each section attended the so called *morning assembly*. At this meeting, each representative called out what they did the day before, as well as announced their plans or tasks for today. So all the different branches is very involved with each other.

Besides these meetings, the regular meetings among the brothers and sisters and the tutors within the sibling system are another form of structured meetings.

There are regular meetings on-site in the gardens with the veteran garden craftsmen or with Mr. Kato himself, where they discuss the essential value of the gardens. Since every garden has their own essential value, it is of outmost importance to share this knowledge between the different teams. This is part of Ueyakato's work culture, to share knowledge, to ask and to question, and Kato tries to nurture it in as many ways as possible.⁴⁹

Ueyakato also hold specific in-house lectures, where they might discuss the things they have learned in field.⁵⁰

Specifically at Murin-an, another example of the incredible structure and attention to detail is their work with the wildflowers in the garden. Yamagata preferred a natural scenic garden over the more traditional Japanese garden style. As such, instead of weeding out all the naturally grown wildflowers in the lawn as is usually customary in a Japanese garden, Ueyakato work extensively to honor Yamagatas original intentions. Since 2007 there has been surveys on the wildflowers in the lawn, but since 2015 there has been research, in-depth observation and fostering.⁵¹ The task is a very big undertaking, and shows the length Ueyakato goes to preserve the garden's proper historic value. Roughly 50 plants was confirmed to grow in the lawn, and about 35 of these was properly identified. All of these 35 plants was recorded in a summary that includes taxon, scientific name, range, budding period, blooming period, plant height, life cycle, breeding ecology, fecundity, flower characteristics, native or adventive, ease of weeding, growing location in Murin-an as well as the visitors

⁴⁹ Personal Interview with Mr. Kato, question 6., (2019)

⁵⁰ *The Spirit of Kyoto Garden Craftsman*, North American Japanese Garden Association (NAJGA) Conference keynote speech, T. Kato, (2014)

⁵¹ *Garden Lawn Fostering that utilizes wildflowers as intrinsic value at Murin-an Garden, a National Place of Scenic Beauty*, S. Handa, T. Sakaue & T. Kato, (2017)

reaction to the plants. Some of the flowers are removed, while others are left to seed. These are all maintained by hand.⁵²

3. Discussion with conclusions

3.1. Ueyakato Landscape

From the results of this survey, it is quite apparent that garden craftsmanship and the knowledge behind it is something that Ueyakato work extensively with as a company. What became especially surprising to me was perhaps not the incredible structure or attention to detail, but rather how inter-connected every aspect of the company was: The joint meetings where every different discipline got together to give an update on their current and past situation; how Ueyakato as a garden and landscaping company deals not only with the aspect of the gardening itself but also with the administration, cultural research and public activity at Murin-an; and last, as shown in their brother- and sister-system and the Learn from tradition – Learn from the team-philosophy, how important it is to learn and connect – to share knowledge – with your fellow craftsmen. A valuable idea that we would do well to encourage.

In order to preserve our traditional culture and crafts in this modern era, it is especially important to share our knowledge with each other, and not be too bound by traditional policies, biases or inclinations no longer applicable that keeps us from doing so. In this day and age, the importance of our culture and our traditions, and the vast cultural value that resides within traditional craftsmanship, are often forgotten or its value even neglected. Getting the public more involved, by, for instance, taking inspiration from the efforts that Ueyakato do, can be a most effective tool to preserve our respective cultures.

The sibling system shares many of its benefits with the structural meetings that Ueyakato engages in. The meetings between veterans and younger employees and the meetings between different disciplines: they all provide a sense of community within the company. This, in turn, encourages a work-culture of openness, of sharing and discussing with each other without a less palatable fear that your opinion might have less value than someone else's. Something that Richard Sennet in his book *The Craftsman*⁵³ speaks of is a sort of bias that older craftsmen are hesitant or skeptical of opening up and sharing their knowledge with younger students. This bias seems, to me, much less apparent at Ueyakato, where even the older craftsmen seemed to possess no apparent aversion towards taking part in the younger craftsmen's activities. Activities that could be seen as *lesser* activities, for instance cleaning the street or clearing the trash off wall tiles, were done by everyone involved, and it was not considered a hassle or being below the head gardener to do them.⁵⁴

The kind of extensive documentation that Ueyakato engage in is unprecedented by anything I have previously encountered. While being a traditional company at heart, Ueyakato seems to embrace modern technology and fully acknowledge its capabilities for preservation of knowledge. The LINE-system is especially interesting. This sort of immediate response-

⁵² As can be seen in the video by Ueyakato: *A Traditional Kyoto Gardener Demonstrates How to Foster a Kyoto Garden: At Murin-an Garden – Fostering Murin-an: Wildflowers*, (2020)

⁵³ *The Craftsman*, R. Sennet, (2008)

⁵⁴ Source: participant observation and personal communication., (2019)

system for communicating what is going on in the garden is surely a powerful tool, perhaps more so from the visitor's point of view. It enables a fairly straight-forward method to discuss the garden in the moment. If you are conducting maintenance in the garden and notice something that needs a simple action, it is easy to ask for guidance from the different gardeners or to receive approval from the CEO. However, the rules concerning the use of smartphones during work hours was not something that this survey investigated, and while an effective tool, the smartphone can also prove a distraction. It would be interesting to know more on how Ueyakato approach this certain issue and what limitations might be in place. Also, since Ueyakato is such a big company with over 120 employees, it could also prove to be quite expensive to provide everyone with smartphones for this purpose.

From this survey, it is clear that Ueyakato highly values documentation, not only in the form of oral or physical experiences, but also by photograph and video. Not only that, but also incredibly sophisticated technology such as 3D, VR, ortophotography and even drone photography. While surely effective methods for capturing details of the garden, and mapping out areas, this type of technology is usually not available (and therefore not really applicable) for a smaller garden company. The use of virtual reality for garden photography is something that would be truly fascinating to learn more about, but there was no room to investigate that aspect further at this time.

While some things might seem different when comparing the work that Ueyakato do at Murin-an to a typical western garden company, there are also many similarities. The sibling system share after all many characteristics with Sweden's earlier gesäll-system (journeyman). Historically, there have been a greater importance of the kind of master-apprentice relationship between craftsmen of different level of skill. Before the industrial revolution, when it was much more important as a craftsman to pass on their techniques in order to not lose them, these relationships bore a stronger hold in society than it does today. Japan, as a country known for their appreciation of culture and the traditional, seems to have better managed, to a certain extent, preserving this tradition. While on the subject of culture and religion, these aspects and how they may or may not affect Ueyakato or the view on gardens and gardening in general in Kyoto, would be a theme to surely spend many hours of research in of itself. Japanese religion has traditionally held great value in a spiritual connection with nature and the harmony of the physical and spiritual world. It is almost impossible to avoid at least pondering the connections this might have to Ueyakato's gardening policies and the work that they do. How nature's course in the gardens is encouraged rather than opposed is very likely to stem from the religious or cultural believes. Fluidity and the natural changeability of things are valued in many aspects of Japanese lives, most apparent in the typical example of the Ise-Jingu Shrine which is dismantled and rebuilt every 20 years.⁵⁵

3.2. Kyoto City and the Government

The relationship between Ueyakato Landscape and the committee of Murin-an does directly affect Ueyakato's work in the garden. However, while of course greatly important in the background, and its impact not to be disregarded in any form, the results from the interview and my own personal experience seemed to indicated that after the proposal from Ueyakato

⁵⁵ The *Shikinen Sengu* is a ritual that originates from year 690 that continues to this very day. During a period of up to eight years, the buildings of Ise-Jingu shrine are dismantled and remade, together with most of its sacred artifacts. It takes place every 20 years, the latest one in 2013. (Source: Ise-Jingu phamplet, Jingushicho (Jingu Administration Office), 2020)

was accepted, the company was more or less left to their own devices with respect to daily management. The role of the local and national government is first and foremost to decide upon the garden's cultural value, and through a garden-specific policy, present how best to preserve said value. With the essential value of the garden in mind, the proposal-based system is where the garden landscaping-companies get their chance at showing how able they are to work within these parameters. The specific details and the efforts after that, are up to the specific company chosen to be in charge of any future management and care of the garden. However, what is important to mention is that at this time, it is difficult to discuss the proper extent of the cooperation, since this thesis mainly received the information concerning this triangular relationship – Garden company/Kyoto City/The Japanese Government – from the interpreted interviews and some of the documents that Ueyakato provided.

3.3. Final notes

Language in itself proved to be more of an issue than originally expected generally in the project. Early in the project's planning, the intent was also to visit many other gardens for interviewing, to add more quantitative data to the study. However, for every successful telephone call there was five less successful ones, mostly due to communication issues. This was one of the reasons the project evolved into a qualitative case study instead. The data and information that was in fact gathered during this study is important to reflect upon as well. The interviews were, after all, done with the help of an in-house interpreter. While there is no reason to doubt neither the competence nor intent of the interpreter, there may still be certain things that are naturally lost in translation.

3.4. Future prospects

This thesis has shown an example of the extensive work that might be carried out in a Japanese Garden in the area of Kyoto, and the ideas and policies that are the foundation for it. I hope that this study can somehow further the research on cultural preservation not just in Japan but also in Sweden. I firmly believe there is much to learn from one another, and that the data this thesis presents is barely the tip of the iceberg. The University of Gothenburg and Kyoto University of Arts' goals and values for preservation of garden crafts seem almost eerily similar, and I believe it could prove very beneficial to further our cooperation in our respective research on cultural heritage conservation in gardens.

4. Summary (Sammanfattning)

Uppsatsen täcker processen och resultaten från en fallstudie som gjordes i Kyoto, Japan 2019, i trädgården Murin-an tillsammans med dess vårdare, trädgårdsföretaget Ueyakato Landscape. Dess utgångspunkt ligger i en frågeställning om tre frågor:

- På vilka olika sätt överför och bevarar Ueyakato sina kunskaper inom trädgård?
- Vilka metoder och ramverk finns på plats för att bevara de viktigaste kulturella värdena i trädgården Murin-an?
- Hur påverkar förhållandet mellan det japanska kulturministeriet, staden Kyoto och Ueyakato Landscape vårdandet av trädgården och dess kulturhistoriska värden?

Syftet med projektet är att ge ett exempel på hur traditionellt trädgårdshantverk utförs i en modern kulturhistorisk situation i Kyoto, Japan. Det finns idag begränsat med vetenskaplig

forskning inom vårdandet av kulturhistoriska trädgårdar, i synnerhet japanska, och uppsatsen ämnar att brygga denna brist.

Genom att besvara frågorna ovan visar resultatet ett exempel på hur bevarandet av kulturarvet i en kulturellt betydelsefull trädgård kan bedrivas, med fokus på kunskapsbevarandet och överföringen av denna kunskap. Studien visar några av de olika metoder som Ueyakato använder för att bevara sitt trädgårdshantverk men också hur de arbetar med Kyoto stad och den japanska regeringen med syfte att lyfta fram och visa Murin-ans kulturella värde inför allmänheten. Uppsatsen presenterar även vikten av kulturbevarande i Kyoto och den historiska bakgrund som staden innehar.

Projektet visar vidare hur Ueyakato som företag påverkas av den lokala kulturen samt stadens kulturhistoria, och vikten av att engagera allmänheten och av offentlig utbildning inom de kulturhistoriska värden som kan finnas i en trädgård, eller det trädgårdshantverk som bedrivs där. Uppsatsen diskuterar flera av de utarbetade och omfattande system som finns för att dela och utveckla kunskap om trädgårdshantverk vid Ueyakato och trädgården Murin-an, och reflekterar vidare över logistiken och bakgrunden för nämnda system. Även om mycket av det som diskuteras, i synnerhet dokumentationen, kulturvården samt kunskapsöverföringen, vid en första anblick kan verka relativt unikt och nästan ofattbart detaljerat, reflekterar uppsatsen över hur mycket av det som är möjligt på grund utav just den specifika miljön och företagets storlek och historia.

Medan många av arbetena i och omkring trädgården utförs av Ueyakato, uppmärksammas det också att det finns ett intrikat pågående triangulärt förhållande mellan kulturministeriet i Japan, Kyoto stad och Ueyakato Landscape som djupt påverkar trädgården Murin-an och de ansträngningar som bedrivs där för att öka allmänhetens medvetenhet kring dess historiska värden.

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