

Impact of "Far East Countries" on Garden Architecture in Croatia

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Abstract: Influence of the East to the West, and today vice versa, has also left traces in garden art. Croatia, as a country at the East and West crossroads, was marked in the history by many tumultuous events that have marked it as a country with a rich past. In the garden architecture of the past period a part pertaining to the period of Turkish rule which has significantly altered the shape of the garden architecture is also met here. Namely, it took over floristic and architectural features of the Eastern cultures in garden raising. Although the introduction of plant species from the East mostly occurred within the Roman rule, in all the centuries following, these areas are known by the plant material arrived in our gardens as an ornamental element or as a condiment. This paper deals with the plant species list native to the East, their time of introduction and examples of Chinese and Japanese garden architecture shape present within our park units.

Keywords: architecture, gardens of the East, influence, landscape

INTRODUCTION

Although always in the conflict of opinion and influence, East and West are intertwined historically by many events, primarily wars and conquests. In the history one civilization has always affected the other one and brought changes being sometimes good and sometimes not. Thus, it is also visible today, both in architecture and garden architecture in Croatia. While the West pays more attention to facilities and material staff in terms of building facilities and landscaping, always putting the building as a priority, the East favors spiritual side of the universe, putting a human being in the center of nature as a part of the whole. Observing floristic composition of Croatia, it can be concluded that it was a place of the crossroads where major armies (Romans, Venetians and Turks) have left their mark in shaping not only the urban but natural landscapes as well. So scrolling historical layers, some interesting remnants of distant cultures that have left their mark everywhere around us have been met here. Rose (*Rosa canina*), for example, originated from Persia has been accustomed so much in Croatia that no type of landscape can be imagined without its natural habitat, or even dominance.

As for the park units, the impact of the East has also left important features. Thus, many gardens in Croatia retained either typical formal elements of the East, or are known for the plants from this region which remained dominant within the classical design of the garden. This paper aims to stress the close relation between Eastern and Western culture which has left significant values in the garden art as evidenced by many plant species and forms of public green plantations, especially parks in Croatia.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

The study of historical archives in Osijek, Rijeka and Zagreb, recording and reporting on the ground, studying of literature and written materials via the Internet as well as making the tour of private and public green plantations throughout Croatia.

The researches of historical archives in Osijek, Rijeka and Zagreb were based upon the original projects of the landscape architects and comparison of the present field status. Inventory of the plant materials as well as historical lists were later analyzed aiming to get the exact list of the introduced species from the Far East which exist in the parks and gardens of Croatia. Data were displayed in WORD 2011.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

Art of gardening is considered by the Chinese as one of the most perfect heritage of their distant and rich history. Their design of parks and gardens is based primarily on philosophy i.e. religion. There are several types of gardens in Japan and China, varying by their form and purpose. They are located in Croatia by such a division, embedded within the record of landscape type European park architecture. We distinguish:

Landscape gardens - which are the oldest and have been incurred on the model of "borrowed landscape" i.e., by taking from the wild plants and planting them in the nearest vicinity of residences. They began to develop during the Shang Dynasty when the principle of feng shui, the ancient Chinese culture that follows the relationship between wind and water (feng-wind, Shui-water) and coordinates the energy flow, was applied. Feng Shui combines indoor and outdoor spaces, creating a balanced and positive energy flow and putting a man as part of the whole nature and the universe in general (Waldman *et al.* 2004). *Gardens in the backyard* occurred from the late 7th century were named as 'assimilation with nature'. They were first reported in Japan as a part of a free nature in the 4th century. The 12th century is known by adding an element of rock and water whereas so-called phase "reflecting nature" accomplished by the mirrors was used in the garden aiming to enlarge it visually. 'Interpretation of nature', the last phase of an update and redesign home garden was developed in the 14th century. Apart from man and nature merging the result of the garden are fountains called tsukubai, mostly located mostly in the eastern and southern part of the garden. They, in the presence of fire, marked the tumultuous emotions and persistence.

Sacred Gardens that were created according to the effect of different religions in the Han Dynasty period in China. These gardens are known for the most commonly used religious symbols prevailing spirituality, tranquility and emotion. Christianity, a religion in Japan which has left significant changes within the garden architecture in terms of the garden simplicity and enclosure obtaining peace and tranquility required for meditation, developed a special style of garden design in the 14th century.

Zen gardens which emerge as a new style of garden architecture in the 12th century by the Buddhist trend of a new direction in Japan. The style forms a small amount of water, free of rocks with many plant species (Waldman *et al.* 2004).

Ceremonial gardens that are used at various events, ceremonies, such as tea ceremony (Chaniwa or tea garden) (www.gardenvisit.com 2008). These gardens can be called the first home gardens dating from the 8th century. They are characterized by the harmony being more important than artistic creations. Camellia (*Camellia japonica*) was a plant firstly appeared there and primarily used as a tea. It was introduced in Europe in the 12th century, also as a tea, and later as ornamental species (www.gardenvisit.com 2008).

Natural gardens or Tsukiyama gardens (gardens of the mountain and the moon) represent the small size nature. The Japanese garden was created 1,500 years ago and the Japanese persistence to show all less than in nature does not derive from lack of space (island country), but this is their way of experiencing life and emphasizing the important and primary.

Dry gardens are known as the *Karesansui* (rocks garden). It is a garden without flowers, water, trees and shrubbery. It is a garden of symbols created only from rocks, small and coarse pebbles and sand, imitating nature experiences and serve only for meditation and prayer (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Japanese_rock_garden,2012).

Influence of Far East countries landscape architecture described on Croatia consisted firstly of the Catholic culture formation on the one hand, and Orthodox and Islamic culture on the other hand, which primarily resulted in the adoption of many plant species from the East (the Romans, the Crusade wars, Napoleon, the Turkish conquests, etc.). Although Dr. Obad Šćitaroci (1996) said that the impact of the East is sporadic and discontinuous, i.e. peripheral and today recognized only in the details, still we note a significant impact of the East in selection of plant species, quantity of plant species native to the East within the unique park unit compared to domestic plants. Also, certain forms related to the previously described landscape gardens of China and Japan can be noticed within the historical structure review and older gardens design, particularly from the beginning and end of the 19th century.

As for the landscape works in Croatia, maybe the most important data on a large collection of camellias is in the Prandau- Mailath gardening in Donji Miholjac from 1877 (Turalija *et al.* 2009).

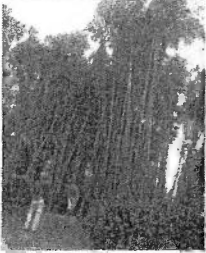



As the list of species is extremely important, it was processed within the scientific work *Camellia sorts in Prandau Mailath* by Turalija Alka *et al.* (2009) in Donji Miholjac in 1877 (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Japanese_rock_garden,2012) and all of the old camellia varieties mentioned in the list were determined. Hundred and three varieties of camellias have been determined within the list being a unique collection of camellias in Europe from that time. The park Prandau Mailath is also characterized by many other plant species brought from the East, and the nursery, which has successfully cultivated them for commercial purposes (Turalija and Šetić, 2006). The list of all nursery commercial species is contained in the document Valuation of nursery from 1877 where the plant species exchanged or sold over the monarchy and worldwide are stated. It contains 70 species of palm trees, 118 varieties of azalea, 60 *Rhododendron* varieties and over 20 varieties of *Agaves* and *Yucca*.

A number of trees and shrubs brought from the Far East such as *Chaenomeles japonica* (Japanese quince) or *Acer palmatum* (Japanese maple) and many other plant species are also mentioned.

Gardens and private gardens are abundant with numerous plant species native to China, Japan and other Far East countries. Some have been so domesticated that they are highlighted in the literature as an indigenous plant species, since during the time they experienced genetic and habitual changes of the new species which are now characteristic for our region such as *Rosa canina* or *Iris Croatica*. Others species (*Thuja orientalis*, *Sophora japonica*, *Acer palmatum*, *Prunus serrulata*, *Magnolia liliflora*, *Ginkgo biloba*, *Abies koreana*, *Syringa x kinensis*) are still so popular that gardens and public parks are literally full of them.

Back a hundred years ago the bamboo park units have been ranked very high and there are areas by the stone or walkways planted by this plant species within the park units (Fig. 1, a bamboo promenade in St. Jacob garden in Opatija). Within the same park there are examples of the oldest camellias in Croatia (Fig. 2, camellias, enclosed by a fence aiming to

protect them from visitors and low temperatures damage). Also, within the park, there are garden-related technical elements built by the East architecture pattern. Thus, within the Strossmayer park in Đakovo there was the Japanese Pavilion, which has unfortunately disappeared, but will be restored soon (Fig. 3). There is the bridge, within the Arboretum Opeka in Vinica, built over an artificial lake in the Chinese style (Fig. 4).

			
<p>Fig. 1. Promenade bordered by <i>bamboo</i>, St. Jacob park, Opatija Photo: Alka Turalija, 2012</p>	<p>Figure 2. The oldest <i>camellias</i> in the St.. Jacob park in Opatija Photo: Alka Turalija, 2012</p>	<p>Figure 3. Japanese Pavilion from the 19th century within the JJStrossmayer park in Djakovo, doesn't exist today</p>	<p>Figure 4. The small bridge over the artificial pond in the Arboretum Opeka in Vinica</p>

The influence of the East can also be seen in the oldest botanical garden of Lokrum in Croatia. Oriental plant species have been brought here by the Crusaders in the 12th century. The most famous park in Croatia, which in its formal sequence combines several styles of garden art, is the park of Queen Jelena Madijevka in Zadar set out in 1829. The garden consists of a coffee room built in pseudo-Moorish style with a small Chinese pagoda (Fig. 5) constructed in its eastern part. Influence of the Far East countries is seen in the garden architecture of Pula. Four, out of fourteen major parks, have elements of Korean and Japanese garden or a collection of plants such as Lebanese and Himalayan cedars and evergreen species from China and Korea. Francis Joseph I Park of 8000 m² was designed by the mixed garden style of Japan and China as well as plant species from the Canary Islands. Especially beautiful examples of exotic species *Cephalotaxus drupacea*, originating from China, are found here.

The next valuable share of the East within the Pula park is Tito's Park planted only by oriental flora (Croatian forests, 2005) (Fig. 6). Valeria's park planted the 1890 is known by many plants obtained by crossing Croatian indigenous species to species from China and Japan (Fig. 7). Monte Zaro is the largest park in Pula occupying 29000 m² and having the observatory located in the park on a hill. The park is rich in plant species from Korea, China and Japan, particularly in the old cedars.

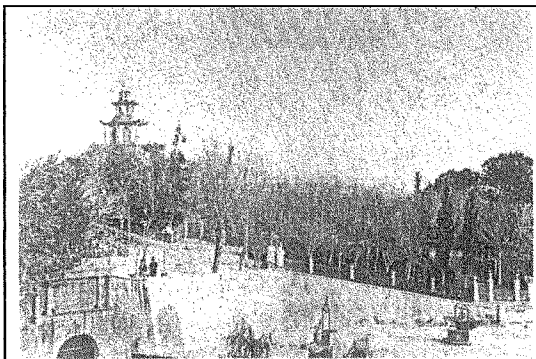


Fig. 5. Jelena Madijevka park in Zadar with Chinese pagoda
Source: Zadar gardens and parks ;Mirna Petricioli

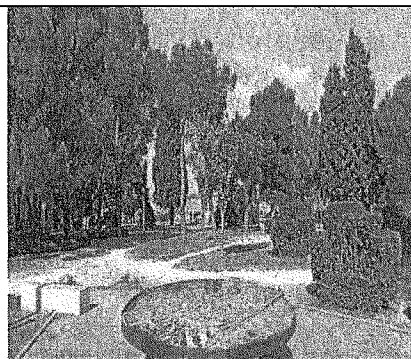


Fig. 6. Tito's Park in Pula built in 40s of 20th century. It is the only park in Pula planted only by plant species from China and Japan

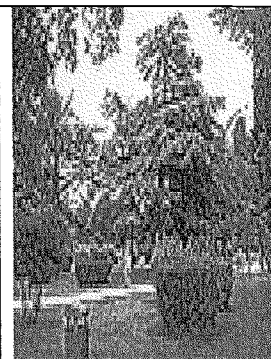


Fig. 7. Valerija's Park in Pula built around 1890 known for its crossed plant species of indigenous sorts from Croatia and plant species from China and Japan

The newest and first Japanese garden in Croatia was set out in Rijeka as a part of the project among Elementary school Vežica, the Rotary Club of Rijeka and Tokyo. The designer of the garden is a famous Japanese landscape architect Isoa Hayato. The garden will occupy an area in front of the school building and will be intended for relaxation and meditation. A part of the work has already been done and the rest is to be continued in autumn (Fig. 8).

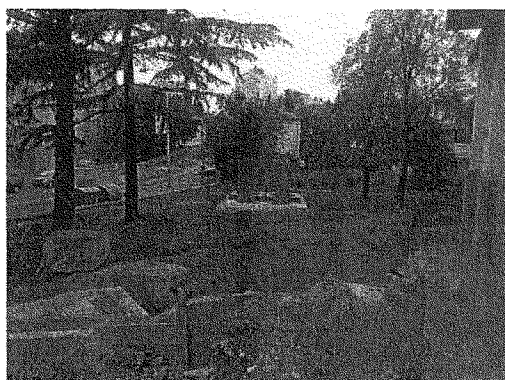


Fig. 8. Beginning of building Japanese garden in Rijeka
Photo: Alka Turalija, 2012.

CONCLUSION

Gardens of the East were transmitted to the West for centuries and occurred within the various historical, cultural and political events. Remains of Eastern culture in the architecture and garden architecture in Croatia prove that Eastern culture had powerful and continuous impact on the West culture. China and Japan have succeeded to preserve their styles of design and art and impose it as the uniqueness to other cultures. Diversity is richness of each country, and Croatia, regardless its tradition succeeded to form a certain value beyond its traditional one by introducing other people values, including people originating from the East. Not only Croatia, but also the whole of Europe strives for diversity. Gardens of the East have significantly affected the design of the gardens of the West by their exotic plants, form and spirituality. The combination of two cultures can and should be the basis for forming skill of

building gardens and parks. It is not only because Croatia is at the crossroads, but also because the spread of one culture cannot be stopped by the other one. On the contrary, one has to learn from each other and take the best from it. This paper shows how the design of the East gardens had influence on gardens forming in Croatia whose traditional culture of the green areas design accepted a part of the East culture design in terms of the plant species structure, garden related technical elements and recently even the entire park areas.

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