



CHAPTER 4

BEYOND THE TEA CEREMONY: THE EARLY HISTORY OF DAIMYO GARDENS

In 1590, after a prolonged struggle to unify the numerous principalities that had been constantly fighting for hegemony under ambitious warlords for two hundred years, Toyotomi Hideyoshi defeated the Hōjō 北条 clan in the battle of Odawara 小田原. As a reward for this important victory, Hideyoshi granted his leading general, Tokugawa Ieyasu 徳川家康 (1543–1616), lordship over the “eight provinces of Kantō” (Kan Hasshū 関八州; present-day Tokyo and its surrounding prefectures).

The new domain was valued at 2.4 billion *koku* and was certainly a generous reward, but at the same time Ieyasu was forced to give up his former territories in Suruga, Mikawa, Tōtōmi, Kai, and Shinano (in the present-day prefectures of Shizuoka, Aichi, Yamanashi, and Nagano). Later scholars have argued convincingly that Hideyoshi sought to contain Ieyasu’s might by thus uprooting him and his retainers from their home base. Ieyasu’s retainers strongly objected to the move, showing that they also interpreted the transfer, ostensibly the exchange of one domain for another, as an attempt to curb their lord’s power.

Ieyasu established the city of Edo as his new headquarters and relocated there with his entire band of retainers on the first day of the eighth month, a month following the Hōjō defeat. Accounts differ, however; some claim that Ieyasu himself chose to live in Edo, while others assert that he went there on Hideyoshi’s suggestion, abandoning his initial plans to rebuild war-ravaged Odawara. While each view can be argued, probably no one story completely explains the enormous impact of the changes made in the political map of Japan as a result.

Hideyoshi died in 1598, eight years after Ieyasu commenced construction of Edo. In 1600, when opposing forces met in the battle of Sekigahara 関ヶ原 to determine who would control Japan after Hideyoshi, Ieyasu emerged victorious and became the *de facto* ruler of the country. After being appointed to the rank of shogun by the emperor in 1603, Ieyasu officially designated Edo his capital in a decision that was to have a momentous bearing on the future course of Japanese history. Much more than the simple transfer of the country’s political center from its traditional location in Kyoto and Osaka in western Japan to Edo in the east, the event had repercussions that extended far beyond politics into realms as diverse as transportation, the economy, urban design, and popular lifestyles, not to mention art and culture—and gardens.

A New Center of Influence

The establishment of the Tokugawa shogunate in Edo signified the emergence of a new center of influence for the world of garden design, which until then had been dominated by Kyoto. The surrounding open Musashino 武蔵野 plain and the Sumida river delta region to the east provided a fertile setting for

the development of both the city and its many fine daimyo residences and landscape gardens.

On the broad plain where Edo was built, there were few towns or samurai dwellings at the time of Ieyasu's arrival. The greater availability of land allowed gardens to assume a much larger scale than had ever been possible in Kyoto, a city hemmed in by mountains. Each daimyo received spacious tracts endowed with natural scenic beauty. Even after they had built their residential complexes, much of the land remained in its natural state. Efforts to take advantage of the terrain were to inspire a new kind of garden that would come to be known as the daimyo garden.

Gardens Flourish as the City Grows. After settling in Edo castle, Ieyasu assigned property to his closest advisers and retainers in such a way as to ensure defense. Retainers from his traditional home ground in Mikawa and Suruga were placed closest to the castle. The lowest ranking of these vassals were positioned immediately next to the castle, while those of higher rank were assigned successively farther away. Since the initial size of the city was rather limited, however, even those farthest away still remained well within the core section of Edo, close to what is now the imperial palace. With only a few exceptions, Ieyasu thus adhered to the principle of keeping those he most trusted closest to him.

Luxurious samurai residences soon began to appear, rapidly transforming Edo from a simple castle town into the seat of the shogunate and center of the entire country (Figure 4-1). *Keichō kenmon shū* 慶長見聞集 (1614), a rather poetic account of the early years of the Edo shogunate, describes the structures that were found:

The residences of the lords and samurai loom like hills across the landscape. Among the shining gables, cloud-riding dragons send up plumes of seawater, and peacocks and phoenixes perch gracefully. One can hardly make out their shapes, however, so brilliant is the glitter of the sun. The images of prowling tigers and growling lions around the eaves and gates look so real one shivers and hesitates to approach for fear they will spring suddenly to life . . .¹

Even taking into account the exaggerations typical of such descriptions, we can safely conclude that the samurai residences of the time were quite impressive. One can only imagine what it must have been like when the ornate features of the architecture of the previous Momoyama period were transplanted to the still barely settled city of Edo.

Yet from what we can observe in historical sources, the gardens of these residences did not necessarily match the size and elegance of the architecture. This was true even of the residences of the daimyo, let alone samurai of lower rank.

Early Appurtenances: The Formal Greeting Area. On the thirteenth day of the second month of 1623, Ieyasu's successor, Hidetada 秀忠 (1579–1632), visited the Edo residence of Tokugawa Yoshinao 義直 (1601–1650), the lord of the Nagoya 名古屋 domain (in present-day Aichi prefecture) and head of the Owari branch of the Tokugawa clan.

¹ *Keichō kenmon shū*, vol. 7, p. 582.

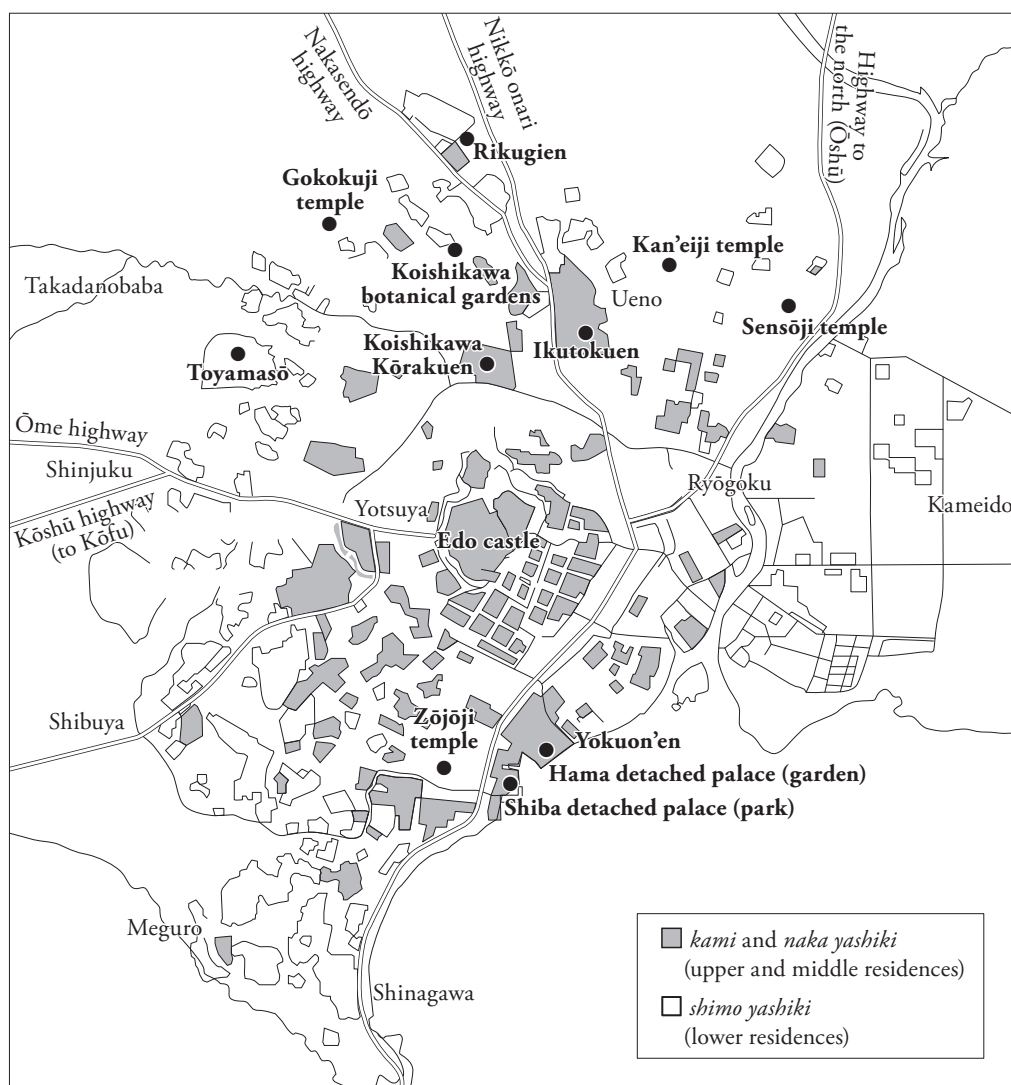


Figure 4-1. Distribution of major daimyo estates in the city of Edo (Tokyo). Reproduced by Shirahata Yōzaburō after Tamai Tetsuo.

According to *Tōbu jitsuroku* 東武実録,² the shogun was accompanied on this visit by the powerful retainer Tōdō Takatora 藤堂高虎 (1556–1630) and by Tokugawa Yorinobu 頼宣 (1602–1671) and Tokugawa Yorifusa 頼房 (1603–1661), respectively, the lords of the Kii 紀伊 and Mito Tokugawa branches (which together with Owari would later become known as the Gosanke 御三家, or the “three Tokugawa families”). By dawn, the three had already gathered in the *sute roji* 捨露地 (formal greeting area outside the fence around the garden) of the Yoshinao residence to await the shogun. Yoshinao, the host, had begun his day even earlier, betaking himself to the Nishi no maru 西ノ丸 west keep of Edo castle before daybreak, probably to convey a message of welcome, before returning to prepare for his guests.

Hidetada arrived “in the middle of the Hour of the Rabbit,” or about six in the morning. Yorinobu, Yorifusa, and Takatora greeted him outside the *sute roji*. The shogun’s palanquin was led inside the *sute roji* to the *okutsurogedokoro* 御くつろげ所 (resting area), where Hidetada alighted. Walking along the garden pathway (*uchi roji* 内露地) to the *sukiya* 数奇屋, Hidetada viewed hanging scrolls and other artwork prior to being served with food and drink. After three servings of sake and some hot water, the shogun went out to the *oyasumidokoro* 休息所 (arbor) in the garden.

The use of terms like *oyasumidokoro*, *sute roji*, and *uchi roji* suggest that this residence had something akin to a tea garden. The *sute roji* was probably a relatively open space, since it had room enough to accommodate the shogun’s palanquin. The *uchi roji*, or garden pathway, must have been comparatively smaller. It is not clear from the text whether the *okutsurogedokoro* in the *sute roji* was the same as the *oyasumidokoro* cited later. It may have been similar to the roofed arbors with benches found in Japanese gardens today. Certainly it must have been simpler than the *sukiya*, noted separately as a place where the shogun was served with food, sake, and tea. The *sukiya*’s scale is unknown, but can be guessed from what would have been needed to serve a tea meal at the time. The size of the garden was probably matched to the buildings it housed, so we can make some conjecture about its proportions, namely that it was nowhere as large as the spacious stroll-style gardens that became prevalent among the later daimyo.

After resting at the *oyasumidokoro*, Hidetada returned to the *sukiya* to be served tea. He then proceeded to the *onari shoin* 御成書院 (visitation hall; a pavilion for formal entertainment of the shogun) where there was more ceremony, followed by a *sarugaku* 猿楽 performance and refreshments. The succession of ceremonies attests to the intricacy of the political and social protocol of the early Edo period as well as to the important place it held in the society of the time. Hidetada’s visit was followed five days later by another from his second son, Iemitsu, who a few months later succeeded his father to become the third shogun.

The Yoshinao residence visit was the last that Hidetada made to the dwelling of a vassal during his reign as shogun. Indeed, it was the only one he ever paid to the residence of a *shinpan* 親藩 (Tokugawa branch house). The elaborateness of the visit and the detail of the record suggest the event’s import in shogunal affairs. From Iemitsu’s visit only five days later, we can conclude that the event was related

2 Record of the achievements of second shogun Tokugawa Hidetada covering the period 1616 to 1632.

to the upcoming succession; quite possibly the participants discussed the succession during their time together. Gardens, along with their tea houses, halls for official entertainment of visitors, and other structures, were requisite parts of daimyo and samurai residences, where they provided venues for ceremonial and social activities including some of a politically confidential nature.

The Tea Ceremony

Shogunal visits became closely associated with tea-ceremony events during Hidetada's reign, when *suki no onari* 数寄の御成 (shogunal tea visits) of the kind described above became established practice.³ Daimyo who were in a position to receive visits from the shogun *had* to maintain venues for hosting tea ceremonies, and in due course the tea garden developed into an indispensable amenity of a daimyo residence. Accounts of third shogun Iemitsu's visits to the residences of his retainers provide glimpses into the evolution of daimyo gardens in this early part of the Edo period.

In 1624, Iemitsu visited the Edo residence of Gamō Tadasato 蒲生忠郷 (1602–1627), the lord of Wakamatsu 若松 castle in what is now Fukushima prefecture. The story goes that the new gate Tadasato built for the occasion was so grand that crowds later flocked day and night to catch a glimpse of it, inspiring the nickname “Higurashi no mon” 日暮しの門 (day-long gate); at the time, a gate was considered one of the most important of the structures that were built expressly to welcome a visiting shogun.

According to the official shogunate history *Tokugawa jikki*:

The day was sunny. The rooms, seats, screens, curtains, and brocades [set up for the visit] amazed one and all. In particular, the calligraphy, paintings, documents, and tea utensils on display represented the wonders of past and present, including a painting of a hawk by Emperor Hui-zong 徽宗 [1082–1135] of the Song dynasty and a calligraphy scroll of Bodhidharma 達磨.⁴

Most of the appointments, including the Hui-zong scroll, were appropriate to a lavish tea ceremony. To continue the story:

Deeply impressed, all agreed it was only natural that Tadasato should own such remarkable treasures from Japan and China, considering that his grandfather Ujisato 氏郷 [1556–1595], the powerful ruler of a one-million-koku domain and a son-in-law of Oda Nobunaga, had been a patron of poetry and tea who was renowned for his taste. A famed incense named Shibafune 柴舟 [“brushwood boat”] smoldered in a kylin-shaped copper burner on the floor.⁵

Tadasato had thus mustered the treasures amassed by his grandfather, revealing again that the daimyo gardens of the time were designed chiefly as settings for shogunal visits centered on the tea ceremony.

3 Satō 1980–1986.

4 *Daiyūin dono gojikki*, p. 321.

5 *Daiyūin dono gojikki*, p. 321.

Contrived Pleasures in a Natural Setting. Iemitsu was first entertained with food and drink, as prescribed by protocol. The meal offered “the delicacies of land and sea,” according to the record.⁶ Afterward the shogun entered the garden. The cherry trees were still in bloom, and a seat had been set up under their canopy for the shogun to sit on while enjoying the view:

The stream was fed with water from the Tama 玉 river and was so wide as to seem a great river. A rough woodsman’s path marked with deer footprints wound through the hills, evoking the secluded air of forested mountains. In the midst of the trees stood a temporarily erected tea house with bamboo posts and cedar shingles. The aroma of a famed incense named Hototogisu no hatsune 時鳥の初音 [“first cry of the cuckoo”] rose from a vessel in the shape of a Chinese lion.⁷

No doubt the account reflects the usual exaggeration, but the presence of a stream “so wide as to seem a great river” suggests that the garden was not an intimate *roji* tea garden but a more spacious expanse with a large body of water. It must have been a garden with hills, valleys, and ponds, not one laid out on level ground.

The diversion that was planned for Iemitsu when he paused at the tea house was again quite clever:

The apparent keeper of the tea house, a young child wearing a *bentetsu* 褌綴 half-coat, lay by the window sound asleep. Pleased with the rustic atmosphere, the shogun called out for some tea, whereupon the child jumped up, grabbed a gourd from where it hung on a post, rushed down to the ravine to fetch some water, and prepared tea for his guest. But once the shogun drank his tea and prepared to leave, the child pulled on his sleeve and began repeatedly demanding his fee. Amused even more, the shogun rewarded the child with a bag of coins taken from his waist.⁸

The passage well illustrates that daimyo gardens were used to entertain guests by producing the right atmosphere for their visits, sometimes through dramatic effects like the ones that were devised for Keishōin when she visited Rikugien (see pp. 1–3).

Iemitsu was next welcomed into the *sukiya* for tea, as in his father’s visit to the Tokugawa Yoshinao residence. Tea, in this case, also included a light meal. The shogun then viewed a *sarugaku* performance while his attendants were served with refreshments. The entertainments lasted all day until dark, and, according to the account, the fires that lit the shogun’s way home made the path seem as bright as day, underscoring the grandness of the event.

We have already seen from sources concerning Hidetada’s 1623 visit that the early daimyo residence gardens were not very large. Most likely they were similar to what we would today call tea gardens. By contrast, the garden Iemitsu saw in 1624 at the Gamō Tadasato residence would seem almost comparable in scale to later daimyo gardens.

6 *Daiyūin dono gojikki*, p. 321.

7 *Daiyūin dono gojikki*, p. 321.

8 *Daiyūin dono gojikki*, p. 321.

As the years progressed, both Edo gardens and the residences for which they were built grew larger in scope, no doubt reflecting the increasing stability of the Tokugawa regime as well as the vigor of the ever-growing city of Edo. But no daimyo garden, no matter how spacious, ever did away with the tea house. The tea ceremony always remained an important consideration, although its significance proportionately decreased as other social and entertainment activities such as *noh* or *gagaku* performances, feasts, falconing, duck hunting, and fishing entered into the picture. As gardens initially devoted primarily to the tea ceremony assumed increasingly diverse roles, so Edo gardens gradually developed from merely emulating Kyoto examples to assuming their own style.

Links to Kyoto

Daimyo gardens cannot be considered separately from aristocratic Kyoto gardens, despite their origins among the samurai class in Edo. The emphasis on the tea ceremony in early daimyo gardens was influenced by the flowering of the so-called “*Kan’ei culture*,” a salon culture patronized by Retired Emperor Go-Mizuno’o and other Kyoto aristocrats who were devoted to architectural, artistic, and literary social pursuits, all centered on the tea ceremony. The construction of early daimyo gardens coincided with the spread of a new trend in garden making among the Kyoto aristocracy, of which the gardens of the Katsura and Shūgakuin detached palaces are leading examples.

Garden historians frequently lionize these two imperial retreats as the flowers of aristocratic court culture. Few, however, have paid heed to how the gardens evolved in connection to the “rough” samurai culture of eastern Japan. There has been no acknowledgment that the daimyo gardens of Edo, not gardens in Kyoto, inherited the legacy of Katsura and Shūgakuin and brought their potential to full fruition. Indeed, daimyo gardens have hardly ever been discussed in relationship to the worlds of the tea ceremony, imperial salons, and Kyoto garden tradition. But in truth, all were inextricably related.

Katsura Detached Palace. The garden and complex of structures at what is now Katsura detached palace were built in the early Edo period on the former property of Furuta Oribe, the famed general and tea master. (The name “Katsura detached palace” was adopted much later after management of the property was transferred to the Imperial Household Ministry [*Kunaishō* 宮内省] in 1883.)

The backdrop to the creation of the Katsura villa evokes less the elegance belonging to a garden of an imperial courtier as the bloody realities of medieval-age politics. In the Ōsaka Natsu no Jin 大坂夏の陣 of the fourth month of 1615, Tokugawa forces besieged Toyotomi Hideyoshi’s heir, Hideyori 秀頼 (1593–1615), defeating and driving to suicide Hideyori and his mother, Yodo-gimi 淀君 (1569?–1615). The following month, Oribe, too, was forced to commit suicide after being suspected by the Tokugawa of having communicated with the enemy. Oribe’s Katsura property passed into the hands of Prince Hachijō no miya Toshihito, who soon began to plan the villa that is now Katsura detached palace.

Toshihito was the sixth child of Emperor Ōgimachi’s 正親町 (1517–1593) eldest son, Yōkōin Sanehito 陽光院誠仁 (1552–1586). Toshihito’s eldest brother was Katahito 周仁 (previously Kazuhito 和仁; 1571–1617), who succeeded to the throne in 1586 to become Emperor Goyōzei 後陽成. In

1588, Toshihito was adopted into the family of Toyotomi Hideyoshi, who was then without a child of his own. A son having been born to him in 1590, however, Hideyoshi moved Toshihito out of his household and installed him as head of the newly established Hachijō no miya (later Katsura no miya 桂宮) imperial family. From a young age, therefore, Toshihito was made a pawn in the stratagems and intrigues between the warlords and the aristocracy. In 1598, an attempt by Goyōzei to abdicate in favor of Toshihito was thwarted by Tokugawa Ieyasu, who had taken control of the country after Hideyoshi.

These experiences, it is often argued, turned the prince against politics, causing him to pursue learning and the arts instead. His distaste for worldly matters, the argument further runs, motivated him to indulge in poetry and build the aesthetic masterpiece that is Katsura detached palace. While the hypothesis cannot be discounted entirely, it is nonetheless not so convincing as to make all other views seem impossible.

After all, being embroiled in struggles between the samurai and the aristocracy might equally plausibly arouse someone to plunge into politics and scramble for power at the expense of academic or artistic pursuits. I am inclined to think that the prince's motives in building the retreat lay less in rejection of power games than in a straightforward interest in the management of estates in an aesthetically pleasing manner. Such a concern for estate management was common among both the samurai and aristocracy at the end of the sixteenth century. The gardens that were developed in the suburban villas of Kyoto and on Edo daimyo estates arose contemporaneously and were indeed very much alike. Those similarities can be explained through a look at the spirit and tastes of the times as exemplified by Katsura detached palace (Figure 4-2) on one hand and the daimyo gardens of Edo on the other.

How Katsura Was Used. Like the early daimyo gardens discussed previously in the chapter, the villa at Katsura (or Shimokatsura 下桂, as it was called in Toshihito's time) was above all focused on the tea ceremony. In 1616, Toshihito celebrated the completion of his first tea room with a banquet. According to his journal:

Twenty-seventh day of sixth month: *Urimi* 瓜見 [melon viewing] at Senshōji 川勝寺 followed by boating along the Katsura river, accompanied by friends from the court, renga associates, and dancers (*ranbushū* 乱舞衆).⁹

The banks of the Katsura river were known for producing fine melons (*uri* 瓜), which thrive on level ground (such as along riversides) with plenty of sunlight. Thus, first on the agenda was “melon viewing,” or a visit to melon fields just then approaching harvest at Senshōji, a village on the east bank of the Katsura river. Of course, the distinguished guests did much more than gaze appreciatively at the fruit. On this hot day in the height of summer, they no doubt also cooled themselves in the river breezes, admiring the surrounding scenery and enjoying melons that had been chilled in the stream. In short, melon viewing was an outdoor recreational event providing relief and diversion from the summer heat.

9 *Toshihito shinnō gonenreki*. Hisatsune 1962, p. 70.

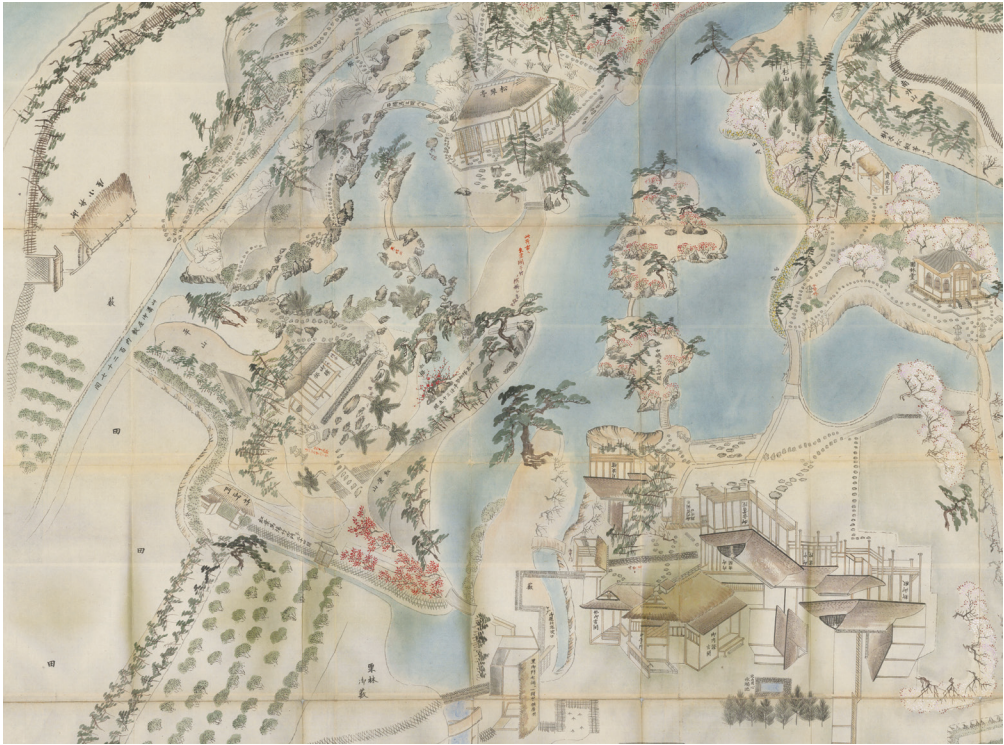


Figure 4-2. Bird's-eye view of Katsura detached palace and garden. Detail from *Katsura no miya go-bessō zenzu* 桂宮御別荘全図, 1888. Source: National Diet Library Digital Collection.

Afterward the prince and his entourage headed by boat to the villa, which lay on the other shore. It is unknown whether they disembarked and walked upon reaching the opposite side, or boated from the river directly into the waters of the garden. The garden was built along the river's floodplain, and, in the early seventeenth century, there was nothing to impede the way from the palace to the river and vice versa. Today the palace grounds and the river are separated by a high levee, making it hard even to imagine that the garden pond could once be reached directly from the river by boat.

Ceremony and Entertainment. All early Edo-period villa gardens in Kyoto, not only Katsura, must be considered in light of the two facets of ceremony (ritual) and entertainment (informal negotiation). Inasmuch as ceremony is a function of politics, gardens may also be characterized as simultaneously devoted to both business and pleasure—that is, to formal social intercourse, which incorporates the two into one. The journal entry indicates that renga poets and professional dancers were also on hand for the melon viewing. “Tea” at Katsura was therefore not stiffly ceremonious, but could have been quite festive and even noisy. Such occasions, while centered on the tea ceremony, might also offer opportunities for discreet discussions of a political nature.

A Genna 4 (1618) letter by Toshihito that is thought to have been addressed to the tea master Ishikawa Sōrin 石川宗林 (?–1625) refers to one of the villa tea houses (and, by extension, the entire villa) as a “little melon patch tea house” (*urihata no karoki chaya* 瓜畠のかろき茶や):

Yōmei will visit my little melon patch tea house in the village of Shimokatsura on the fourth day of the next month . . .¹⁰

The prince may well have called his tea house “little” out of modesty, but his choice of words seems most of all to reflect a deliberate playfulness, a conscious declaration that his tea ceremonies and gatherings were intended to be occasions not merely of ceremony but also of entertainment and socializing.

The Changing Garden. Set on an attractive, mostly level landscape, Katsura detached palace incorporates a number of tea houses and complex waterways. New buildings were added to the villa over the years, and in that process the design of the garden gradually changed. Today, the villa maintains a number of structures, including the main complex—comprising the Koshoin 古書院 (old shoin), Naka shoin 中書院 (middle shoin), and Shin goten 新御殿 (new palace)—as well as the Gepparō 月波楼, Shōkintei 松琴亭, Shōiken 笑意軒, and Shōkatei 賞花亭 tea houses. But few of them were part of the villa’s initial construction. At the outset, the garden was probably quite simple in design, and therefore very similar to the early gardens built by the daimyo.

An 18.6.Genna 6 (1622) entry in *Toshihito shinnō gonenreki* 智仁親王御年曆 reads, “The new imperial consort (*nyōgo* 女御) has arrived at the palace. Construction proceeds on a tea house at Shimokatsura; many visitors.”¹¹

Construction apparently did not prevent Toshihito from inviting frequent guests. Gardens are never finished; they are always in transition and always require maintenance. The prince added new tea houses throughout his life, and maintenance and work on the garden continued after his death in 1629. Toshihito’s eldest son, Toshitada 智忠 (1619–1662), although too young to engage in garden making at the time of his father’s death, later devoted much care to the property.

Mitate as Point of Departure. In addition to the Katsura villa, Toshihito owned property in nearby Kaiden 開田, Misasagi 御陵 (now called Goryō), and Takagamine 鷹峯. Together, the estates encompassed the village of Shimokatsura (where the Katsura villa was located) and five others on the opposite side of the river—Senshōji, Tokudaiji 徳大寺, Shuku 夙, Misasagi, and Kaiden.

The Kaiden villa stood on what is now the grounds of Nagaoka Tenmangū 長岡天満宮 shrine, where a large reservoir pond named Hachijōgaike 八条ヶ池 dominates the scenery to this day. The Misasagi villa is situated higher up in the hills than either Katsura or Nagaoka Tenmangū and was doubtless designed to take advantage of the excellent view, which stretches past the Yodo 淀 river and the peaks of Otokoyama 男山 and Tennōzan 天王山 in southern Kyoto prefecture all the way to the cities of Kuzuha 樟葉 and Hirakata 枚方 in Osaka.

10 Yōmei was Konoe Nobuhiro 近衛信尋 (1599–1649), Emperor Goyōzei’s fourth son and a nephew of Toshihito. *Keikōin dono on-shorui* 桂光院殿御書類 (Collection of Imperial Archives, Imperial Household Agency 宮内庁書陵部). Hisatsune 1962, p. 84.

11 *Toshihito shinnō gonenreki*. Hisatsune 1962, p. 95. “Imperial consort” refers to shogun Hidetada’s daughter Masako 和子, who on that day entered the palace to marry Emperor Go-Mizuno’o.

The Misasagi villa was perhaps not as intensively designed as we today might think a garden should be, but the people of the time probably regarded it as one. In Toshihito's time, villa and garden construction primarily entailed selecting a particularly scenic spot from among one's estates with ample water and plenty of trees, and building a tea house there. A beautiful view and the pleasures of boating, drinking tea, feasting, and dancing in the out-of-doors were all that was required. In that regard, even a simple arbor erected at a scenic spot could make a landscape into a "garden."

The practice of transforming parts of the natural landscape into a garden is a form of analogy, or *mitate* 見立て. *Mitate* is a basic concept behind the daimyo garden—indeed, one fundamental to the Japanese garden tradition itself. Katsura detached palace improved on the basic act of setting a tea house within a carefully selected landscape by taking the additional step of shaping the surrounding scenery into an integrated whole. In that way, it offers an important key to understanding the evolution of the daimyo garden.

The Building of a Daimyo Garden

Let us consider how a leading daimyo garden was built, taking as an example the Mito domain's Kōrakuen garden, part of which survives today in Koishikawa, Tokyo.¹² The story of Kōrakuen begins in 1629, when Tokugawa Yorifusa, the first lord of the Mito domain, received land in Koishikawa from shogun Iemitsu to build a new Edo residence. At the time the property covered an area of a little more than 250,000 square meters.

This garden project of the Mito Tokugawa clan, which, as a member of the Gosanke, was one of the core figures of the Edo shogunate, was not merely a private undertaking. It represented a systematic attempt to establish standardized venues for social interaction among the shogun, daimyo, and other members of the samurai class, venues that were moreover not rooted only in samurai society but were linked to the culture of the Kyoto aristocracy as well.

Tokudaiji Sahei. According to *Kōrakuen kiji* 後樂園紀事 (1736), which records the first century of the garden's history, Yorifusa determined to build a garden on his new property because he was "fond of gardens" (*sansui o konomase tamaite* 山水を好ませ給ひて).¹³ While this hardly seems a sufficient explanation, given that most daimyo residences had one kind of garden or other, it must in any case be some reflection of his particular love of them.

The passage explains that Yorifusa, "being fond of gardens, had desired to maintain a garden in Edo from the time he was at Daikanchō 代官町," suggesting that he initially attempted to build a garden inside his earlier residence at Matsubara kōji 松原小路 (also called Daikanchō) near Edo castle before receiving his new property in Koishikawa and beginning his efforts in earnest. The account continues as follows:

12 Not to be mistaken for the Kōrakuen in Okayama prefecture, which took this name in 1871. Although the Tokyo garden thus has a much earlier claim to the name Kōrakuen, it is today more commonly called Koishikawa Kōrakuen, after its locale, to avoid confusion.

13 *Kōrakuen kiji*, p. 129.

[The lord] commissioned Tokudaiji Sahei 徳大寺左兵衛 to find a suitable site, whereupon Tokudaiji reported that the lands of the Honmyōji 本妙寺 and Kisshōji 吉祥寺 temples in Koishikawa were appropriate for garden making. The lord requested [these lands] of the shogun, and in due course the shogun ordered Honmyōji to relocate to Maruyama 丸山 and Kisshōji to Komagome 駒込, and [the properties] became the residence of our domain.¹⁴

The knowledge that Yorifusa might have gone to the lengths of having several temples moved to obtain the land he desired is somewhat startling. It should perhaps be taken as a reflection of the prerogatives exercised by the Mito Tokugawa family as a member of the Gosanke.

Every aspect of Kōrakuen's creation, from selection of the site to the details of construction, was entrusted to Tokudaiji Sahei (dates unknown). Few records remain regarding this individual, and only the passage in *Kōrakuen kiji* referring to him as “one of the *kōke* 高家”¹⁵ gives any indication of his identity. The same passage asserts that Tokudaiji worked on Kōrakuen under direct orders from shogun Iemitsu.

Clearly the shogun was deeply involved in Kōrakuen's construction, considering that he arranged for two temples to be moved and the land turned over to the Mito domain—all on the recommendation of Tokudaiji Sahei, evidently an individual of considerable influence. Both the shogun's active intervention in the project and the participation of Tokudaiji Sahei signal that the construction of daimyo gardens involved much more than simply beautifying individual daimyo property.

From Kyoto to Edo. In the year that Tokugawa Yorifusa received the property on which he would build Kōrakuen, Iemitsu was working on a “new country-style tea garden” (*shin yamazato roji* 新山里露地) of his own in the Nishi no maru west keep of Edo castle. The garden's designer was Kobori Enshū, who had been tea master to the Tokugawa shoguns from the time of Iemitsu's father, Hidetada. Enshū was then in the midst of planning and building two gardens at Nanzenji 南禅寺 temple in Kyoto, the first in the main *hōjō* 方丈 and the second in the Konchiin 金地院 subtemple. Shuttling back and forth between Kyoto and Edo while overseeing his various projects would have made Enshū familiar with garden making in both regions. Quite possibly Tokudaiji Sahei had connections with Enshū as well.

Under these circumstances, it was only natural that Kyoto garden design styles spread in Edo. The gardens of the early Edo-period samurai residences, including Iemitsu's Nishi no maru garden, were all centered on the tea ceremony. Likewise, tea was the central theme of the Katsura villa garden, which was initially complete by about 1624.

We have seen that the garden and structures of the Katsura villa were sometimes collectively referred to as the “little melon patch tea house.” The site was much more open and spacious than what

14 *Kōrakuen kiji*, pp. 129–30.

15 *Kōrakuen kiji*, p. 129. The word *kōke*, which itself existed from much earlier in history, was used in the Edo shogunate to denote a family placed in charge of matters of ceremony and protocol. Aside from making proxy visits to Ise 伊勢 and Nikkō Tōshōgū 日光東照宮 shrines, the *kōke* were primarily responsible for managing ceremonial exchanges between the shogunate and the imperial court, including the reception of imperial delegates and messengers.

is usually termed a tea garden, but it nevertheless was one in the sense that it contained tea houses and arbors (*koshikake chaya* 腰掛茶屋). The garden and its paths tied together the tea houses, for drinking tea in one another's company, and the *shoin* 書院, for performing more formal ceremonial functions. The daimyo gardens of Edo, particularly the early ones, possessed similar attributes.

A Tozama Daimyo Garden: Ikutokuen

During the early days of the Tokugawa shogunate, the daimyo typically maintained a single residence in Edo, but by the Kan'ei 寛永 era (1624–1645), some possessed two or more. This was the time when the Tokugawa government enforced the strictures of the alternate attendance (*sankin kōtai* 参勤交代) system, by which lords proved their loyalty to the shogun by leaving their families in Edo and attending at the castle during fixed periods.

In the course of its efforts to solidify its power base, the bakufu disciplined lords who proved fractious, and as a result ownership of properties in Edo was still subject to frequent change: if their domain was abolished, or they were transferred to serve in another domain, lords and their families might be forced to move from one residence to another on short notice. Residence finally began to stabilize around the Kanbun 寛文 era (1661–1673), and by the Genroku era, most daimyo had come to maintain a main headquarters (*kami yashiki* 上屋敷, or upper residence) near the castle, and middle (*naka* 中) and lower (*shimo* 下) residences scattered about what is the Yamanote 山手 area of Tokyo today.

The practice of keeping multiple residences spread after the great Meireki fire (*Meireki no taika* 明暦の大火) of Meireki 3 (1657), which raged for three days, burning through 800 neighborhoods and claiming well over 100,000 lives. The fire devastated the main keep of Edo castle, as well as many daimyo mansions. As part of its efforts to maintain power, the shogunate needed to help the lords secure their living quarters in Edo, and for this purpose it allotted them land to build additional residences to which they could evacuate in an emergency. Maintaining upper, middle, and lower residences became more or less required.

The newly built daimyo residences were furnished with many gardens, large and small. The lower residences, in particular, were often equipped with spacious gardens that could be used for training in the martial arts as well as for pleasure. The stabilization of the Tokugawa regime allowed domains to continue investing resources in their estate gardens, leading to the birth of numerous famous sites. Supposing that the upper, middle, and lower Edo residences of every one of the few hundred domains of Japan at the time had a garden, there must easily have been more than a thousand gardens packed into the city.

One such garden was Ikutokuen 育徳園 in the upper Edo residence of the Kaga 加賀 domain (present-day Ishikawa prefecture). In the years following the 1868 Meiji Restoration, the government appropriated the estate and made it into the grounds of Tokyo University (now the Hongō 本郷 campus of the University of Tokyo). Today, the university's Sanshirōike 三少郎池 pond still retains faint traces of the spacious garden that once encircled its waters (see photograph on p. 90).

The residence originally stood in a hilly, scarcely populated area. According to *Mitsubo ki* 三壺記:

The property extended from the neighborhood of Hongō on one side to Shinobazu no ike 不忍池 pond on the other. The land was overgrown with thickets of bamboo grass and was full of hills and valleys. Only the houses of a few lowly commoners dotted the area. Tea fields lay here and there inside the residence grounds.¹⁶

Azuma yashiki enkaku zufu 東邸沿革図譜 (a comparison and compilation of accounts regarding the Kaga domain's Edo residences) notes that although the domain acquired the Hongō property by at least 1616 or 1617, full-scale development did not begin until roughly 1626 during the time of third lord Maeda Toshitsune 前田利常 (1594–1658). The garden is thought to have gained its name somewhat later, during the rule of Maeda Tsunanori 綱紀 (also Shōunkō 松雲公; 1643–1724), who became the fifth lord in 1645. *Ikutokuen ki* 育徳園記 attributes the name to the expression *ikutoku* 育徳 (“cultivation of virtue”) in the Chinese astrology text *Zhou yi* 周易: “This garden containing eight excellent landscapes and eight beautiful sights was given the name ‘garden of virtue cultivation,’ based on the passage in *Zhou yi* stating that a ruler should be as an example to others in his efforts to cultivate virtue.”¹⁷

Behind the decision to develop the property was the need to build accommodations for the lord's family in connection with their *sankin kōtai* duties. To return to *Mitsubo ki*:

First, a fence was erected on the four sides of the property, and the residence was constructed. A separate complex was built for Jufukuin 寿福院 [Lady Obata 小幡, Toshitsune's mother], in addition to those for the princes, Senkatsu 千勝 [Toshitsune's second son, Toshitsugu 利次], and Miyamatsu 宮松 [third son Toshiharu 利治]. One by one the lord's children traveled from Kanazawa to move into their new apartments.¹⁸

Farmers from the domain territories were brought to Edo to provide the necessary labor for the project:

There had not been a day of rain during Kan'ei 3 [1626] from the beginning of the fourth month to the end of the eighth, resulting in a great drought and much suffering for the people of the land. . . . Desiring to ease their plight, the lord called many to Edo as day laborers, and from autumn of the same year had them build the lower residence in Kanda 神田.¹⁹

Azuma yashiki enkaku zufu is more specific, stating that the laborers were from “the three provinces” (*sanshū* 三州; i.e., the Maeda lands in Kaga, Noto 能登, and Etchū 越中). In short, the scenario is one of a lord who, concerned that his people should be forced by drought to abandon their farms and indenture themselves or otherwise seek employment, attempts to save them by bringing them to Edo and having them work on his residence.

16 *Mitsubo ki*, p. 237. The *Mitsubo ki* is a 14-volume history of the Kaga domain compiled between 1704 and 1711.

17 *Ikutokuen ki*, p. 253.

18 *Mitsubo ki*, p. 237.

19 *Mitsubo ki*, p. 237.

This version of the story conveniently portrays Toshitsune as a virtuous ruler, but it is equally possible that the farmers were mustered more to speed up construction than to give them any economic rescue. Indeed, the visits a scant three years later by shoguns Hidetada and Iemitsu, which occurred only days apart during the fourth month, lead us to suspect that the decision to mobilize the farmers, ostensibly a benevolent policy doing full justice to the garden's name of "cultivation of virtue," was in truth driven by the need to quickly prepare the residence for these and other important ceremonial occasions.

Chronology of the Kaga Residences. The description of the Hongō property as a "lower residence" (*shimo yashiki*) in the above passage may be confusing, given that the estate is well known to have been the Kaga domain *upper* residence at the time it was confiscated by the Meiji government. This reference in *Mitsubo ki* (and in *Azuma yashiki enkaku zufu*) is not a mistake, but reflects the possibility that the Hongō property had *started out* as a lower residence.

In the early seventeenth century, the Kaga domain's upper residence was located in Tatsunokuchi 辰口 immediately outside the Ōtemon 大手門 gate of Edo castle. The property was granted by first shogun Ieyasu to Toshitsune's predecessor, Toshinaga 利長 (1562–1614), in 1600 when Toshitsune sent his mother, Hōshun'in 芳春院 (1547–1617), to Edo as a gesture of his fealty to the Tokugawa. In 1605, the site was officially designated the upper residence. Given that it was deemed fit to host a visit by Ieyasu's successor, Hidetada, in the fifth month of 1617, this residence apparently also had a rudimentary garden.

The Tatsunokuchi residence burned down in 1632 and was rebuilt a year later. It was destroyed again in the great Meireki fire, at which time the property was returned to the shogunate. A new estate near Sujikaibashi 筋違橋 bridge in the Kanda area of Edo served as the upper residence until 1682, when its functions were assumed by the Hongō property.

Visits from Shoguns. The garden of the Hongō residence makes its first appearance in historical sources during the Kan'ei era. *Tōbu jitsuroku* records a visit to Maeda Toshitsune's "lower residence" by Iemitsu on the twenty-sixth day of the fourth month of 1629, detailing the gifts that were exchanged on this occasion. "After [the exchange of gifts], the shogun proceeded to the great hall (*hiroma* 広間), where he viewed a *sarugaku* performance," according to the account. "Following the third program, he went outside to rest, at which time he piled five hundred *kan* of coins on the stage and bestowed *kosode* 小袖 robes on the *tayū* 太夫 [lead] and other actors."²⁰ The passage reveals that the residence had a great hall as well as a *noh* stage, but what of its garden? A later reference to hanging scrolls, water jars, tea caddies, incense burners, and other tea-related appointments indicate that a tea ceremony inside a *sukiya* had also been part of the day's events. Additional descriptions of the appointments laid out in the *shoin* suggest, moreover, that the visit had been a highly formal affair of the kind described as *suki no onari* (shogunal tea visits) in the previous pages. It follows that the residence must have had a tea garden of some sort.

20 *Tōbu jitsuroku*.

More explicit references to a garden are to be found in *Tōbu jitsuroku*'s account of a visit by Iemitsu's father, Hidetada, three days later:

Twenty-ninth day [of the fourth month of Kan'ei 6]: His Lordship [Hidetada] visited the separate residence (*bessho* 別墅) of Matsudaira Hizen no kami Toshitsune 松平肥前守利常 [Maeda Toshitsune]. Mito Kōmon Yorifusa 水戸黄門頼房 [Tokugawa Yorifusa], Tōdō Izumi no kami Takatora 藤堂和泉守高虎, and Tachibana Hida no kami Muneshige 立花飛騨守宗茂 went to Toshitsune's residence at dawn to await His Lordship inside the outer *roji* (*soto roji* 外露路), having been informed on the previous day of his wish to have them accompany him. His Lordship arrived at the Hour of the Rabbit [about six in the morning]. The accompanying guests greeted him before the hall (*dō* 堂) in the outer *roji* before ushering him into the *sukiya*. The tea utensils in the *sukiya* and other appointments were the same as during the visit by the shogun on the twenty-sixth day.²¹

The words “outer roji” is evidence that a garden indeed existed within the property. The garden probably functioned in much the same way during Iemitsu's visit as it had during Hidetada's, given that the tea utensils and appointments were also identical.

Later in the same account:

His Lordship entered the *sukiya* and viewed scrolls, then sat down for refreshments. Following the meal, he went outside. He rested awhile in an arbor (*koshikake* 腰掛) and returned to the *sukiya*, where he arranged flowers before inviting Lord Yorifusa to share with him some tea.²²

Undoubtedly Hidetada took time to appreciate the garden while outside resting. The occasion comprised a great number of other activities, including flower arrangement, a *sarugaku* performance inside the *onari shoin* 御成書院 (visitation hall), and an elaborate meal laid out on three footed trays called *honzen*, *ni no zen*, and *san no zen*, each carrying seven, five, and three dishes, respectively, suggesting the lavishness of the “tea visits” hosted inside daimyo residences and their gardens.

Modern archaeological evidence also attests to the extravagance and mass consumption involved in occasions of the kind. During 1984 renovations at the University of Tokyo, an enormous number of banquet utensils were unearthed from the former site of the Daishōji 大聖寺 domain residence, which stood in a section of the Hongō property. The relics, including unglazed sake cups (*kawarake* かわらけ), wooden place settings (*orishiki* 折敷), and bentwood-craft utensils (*magemono* 曲物), were discovered in the garden pond into which they had all been discarded following the feast. Apparently the utensils were for one-time use only—proof of the great expense entailed in hosting shogunal visits.²³

21 *Tōbu jitsuroku*.

22 *Tōbu jitsuroku*.

23 Fujimoto 1990.

Edo zu byōbu Screen. Even more helpful than archaeological relics and written records in mentally reconstructing the Hongō residence garden is *Edo zu byōbu* 江戸図屏風 (“maps of Edo” screen), which dates from the Kan’ei era.

The screen’s depiction of the garden is labeled the “lower residence of Kaga Hizen no kami 加賀肥前守” (Figure 4-3). An arched sod bridge crosses over a large pond with an intricate shoreline. The landscape contains a thatched-roof arbor, arrangements of giant boulders, waterfalls, shapely pines, and flowering vegetation; dense groves of trees stand along the fence bordering the property. The garden appears remarkably well-maintained overall. But did such an attractively designed garden really exist as early as the time the screen was painted?

Edo zu byōbu depicts other daimyo residence gardens as well. They are all beautifully portrayed, not in a uniform style but each with a distinctive landscape, evidence of the work’s objective reliability. Turning to historical sources for further corroboration, we find that Iemitsu visited the residence again in 1638, nine years after his and his father’s earlier visits:



Figure 4-3. Lower residence of Kaga Hizen no kami. Detail from *Edo zu byōbu*, ca. 17th century. Courtesy of National Museum of Japanese History.

Notice of the visit was given during the previous year, and Ibaraki Ogyōbu 茨木小刑部 was placed in charge of garden construction. The pond, stone arrangements, and artificial hills were created, and new structures were built including the Fujimitei 富士見亭, Asagitei 麻木亭, Darumatei 達磨亭, Karakasatei 唐笠亭, Sankakutei 三角亭, and Kyūtei 鳩亭 tea houses.²⁴

Azuma yashiki enkaku zufu is not a primary source and is thus admittedly not always reliable. But the description largely corresponds to the portrayal in *Edo zu byōbu*, making it likely that the “pond, stone arrangements, and artificial hills,” as well as tea houses, were all in place by the Kan’ei era. True, the passage lists more than six tea houses, whereas *Edo zu byōbu* shows only one. Quite possibly the writer exaggerated the number out of the temptation to idealize the past. But given that *byōbu* screens conventionally use gold cloud motifs to abbreviate and simplify images, the likelihood of exaggeration by one (the history) must be balanced against that of abbreviation in the other (the picture screen). Comparative analysis of both sources should yield a view fairly close to reality.

Edo o-kami yashiki sō no goezu 江戸御上屋敷惣御絵図 (Figure 4-4) depicts the Hongō residence as it appeared during the late Edo period. In this map-like drawing, the garden takes up only a small portion of the total grounds. Much more conspicuous are the residential structures as well as the *okashi koya* 御貸小屋 (rental houses) for the domain retainers surrounding them. The *Edo zu*



Figure 4-4. Hongō Ikutokuen, as depicted in *Edo o-kami yashiki sō no goezu*. Courtesy of the Kanazawa City Library.

²⁴ *Azuma yashiki enkaku zufu*, p. 245.

byōbu garden seems much more spacious by comparison. The proportion of the residence allotted to dwellings may well have increased over the years.

That the property was marked by hilly terrain is obvious even from looking at the area around Sanshirōike pond today. *Edo o-kami yashiki sō no goezu*, too, shows thickly wooded hills around the pond. The garden must have appeared equally secluded in its early days. Such considerations make the depiction in *Edo zu byōbu* seem all the more accurate.

Neither Ikutokuen, which was built by a *tozama* 外様 daimyo (a daimyo outside the core group of original Tokugawa vassals), nor Kōrakuen, which belonged to the insider Mito domain, were initially much more than simple gardens devoted to the tea ceremony. They exhibited little of the free sense of play shown in later years by shogun's favorite Yanagisawa Yoshiyasu in building Rikugien, for example. Gardens with the free and open atmosphere that truly distinguished Edo daimyo gardens from other Japanese garden styles were not to appear for some time to come.