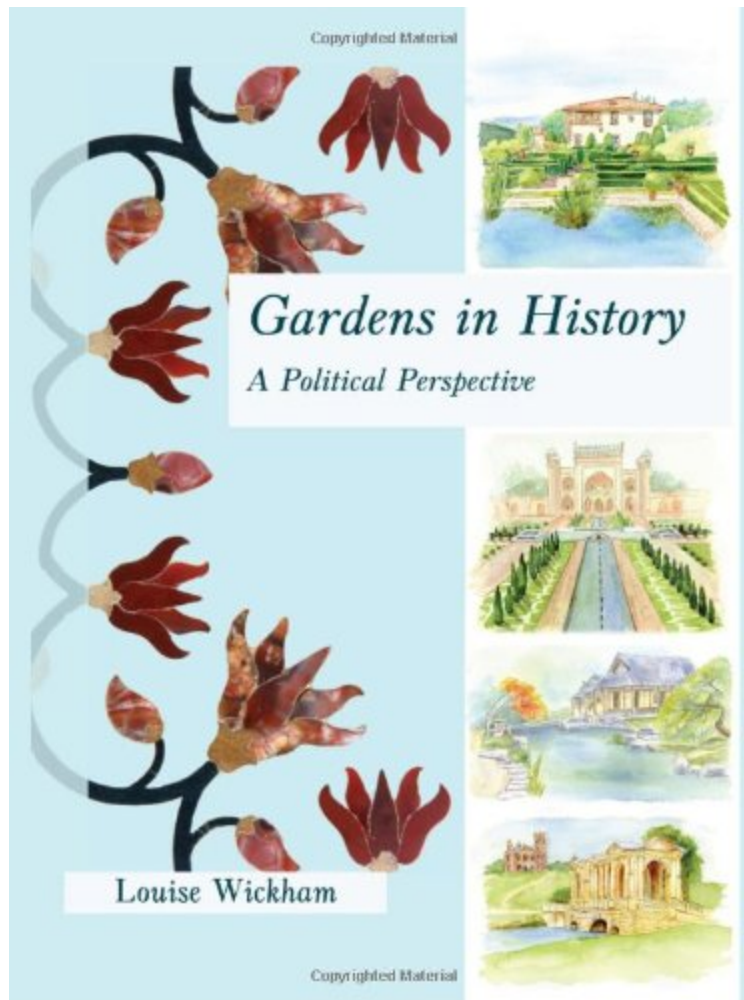


Gardens in History: A Political Perspective

Louise Wickham

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Louise Wickham : Gardens in History: A Political Perspective before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Gardens in History: A Political Perspective:

Over the past 50 years, the subject of garden history has been firmly established as an academic discipline. While many have explored what was created in gardens throughout history, the reasons as to why they were created has naturally been more diverse. Depending on the background of the author, the ideas have ranged from aesthetic values deriving from art, philosophical thoughts and ideas, social and even economic forces. Occasionally some thought has been given to the influence of political ideology such as the development of the English landscape garden in the first half of the 18th century. Gardens in History: A Political Perspective looks at the creation of gardens elsewhere through

a similar political 'lens' in order to move debate away from portraying the motivation behind 'garden-making' merely as painting a picture with plants and buildings. Gardens are looked at in relation to not only how they are influenced by the political ideas of their creators but also how the gardens themselves provide support and legitimacy to those in government, either covertly or directly. Each chapter explores in depth one particular garden that demonstrates the ideas put forward. Topics covered include ancient gardens as political expressions of power, with the case study of Hadrian's Villa at Tivoli, Renaissance Italian gardens and political ideology, demonstrated by Villa Pratolino, Florence and absolutism and diplomacy in the French formal garden using Versailles, Paris. Other overseas gardens examined are Taj Mahal, Agra and Katsura Rikyu, Koyoto. British gardens also reveal much about the effects of politics on their creation; case studies here are Stowe, Buckinghamshire, looking at the landscape garden as a political tool for Whig England; Hackfall, Yorkshire and picturesque debate as a political metaphor; Birkenhead Park, Merseyside and 19th century public parks in British Reform politics; Royal Botanic Gardens Kew and the politics of Empire; and moving into the 20th century, Painshill, Surrey and socialist politics and conservation.

"[Wickham's] book provides a useful general account of a neglected aspect of [garden history]." (Gillian Mawrey *Historic Gardens*, Issue 28, March 2013)"This is a fascinating book looking at garden history from an unusual angle...Louise Wickham has written an important book on garden history which everyone interested in it should read." (John R. Borron *Trafodion Occasional writings for the Welsh Historic Gardens Trust*)"It is fascinating to discover the multifarious ends to which gardens have been exploited...Although much of the material is familiar, the story is clearly traced and Wickham provides detailed references, ensuring the book will be useful to garden history students as well as general readers." (Katie Campbell *Garden Design Journal*)"This is a work of particular value to those of us coming to the subject of garden history as a means of developing our understanding of the gardens we work in, work on and visit and how the styles we adopt and admire came to exist in the first place." - see the full review here: <http://thinkinggardens.co.uk/reviews/gardens-in-history-by-louise-wickham-reviewed-by-tristan-gregory/> (Tristan Gregory thinkinggardens.co.uk)"Once you have read chapter nine, your perspective on Japanese gardens are likely to have changed...if your interest in gardens is much wider, much more global, then this volume will provide an excellent introduction to the various garden styles covered and you will find yourself turning to it time and time again." (Shakkei, *The Journal of The Japanese Garden Society*, vol 19, no 2, Autumn 2012)remarkably well illustrated in colour for an academic work such as this, and refreshingly free of the tortured prose that sometimes passes for scholarship. (*Australian Garden History*, 26(2), 2014)