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**Japanese/American Architecture:  
A Century of Cultural Exchange**

**Myungkee Min**

**A Dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment of the  
requirements for the degree of**

**Doctor of Philosophy**

**University of Washington**

**1999**

**Program Authorized to Offer Degree: DEPARTMENT OF ART HISTORY**

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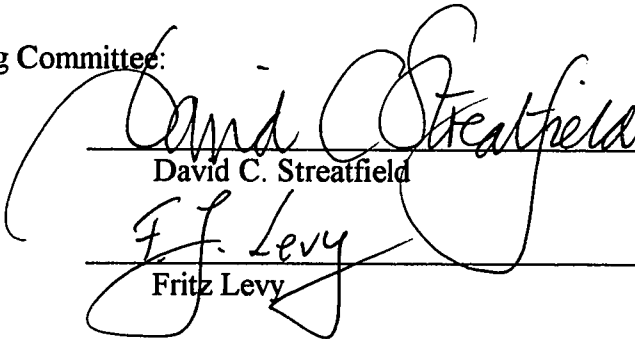
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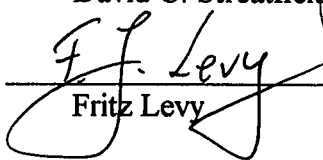
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Abstract

Japanese/American Architecture:  
A Century of Cultural Exchange

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Traditional Japanese architecture has had a significant impact on the development of both the physical forms and the underlying principles of American design. Much has been written about this Japanese influence, but only in passing in the general histories of American art and architecture, or in relationship to individual American architects such as Frank Lloyd Wright or Greene and Greene. It has not been discussed in a broader context. In addition, most studies of Japanese influence in American architecture have depended upon superficial visual resemblance and neglected seriously exploring the historical roads of migration, transmission, and dissemination of traditional Japanese forms and principles into American design.

The primary aim of my dissertation is to analyze the specific nature of the Japanese impact on American architecture, and how it changed from 1854, when Japan opened its door to America, up to the present. Japanese impact on American landscape architecture will be analyzed in a limited scope, however, mainly focusing on the close relationship between the house and its surrounding gardens.

During the given period, when American architects sought some external reference to solve their own vexing design problems, they selected certain Japanese forms and

principles such as horizontality, plain walls, modular organization, built-in furniture, visible framed structure, open planning with movable partitions, interaction of house and garden, frank exploitation of wood, deep-overhanging eaves with exposed rafters, shoji-like grid and effect of shadows and diffused light. As their problems differed through the time, so were the ways they perceived Japanese architecture. These various perspectives are evident when one reads literature written by American critics on traditional Japanese architecture and when one investigates buildings built by American architects.

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## INTRODUCTION

Finally, I came to the conclusion that *the practical work and researches of an author* even on the most abstract of subjects *are based entirely on his leading idea*. Even in dealing with a subject in many volumes, it seems impossible to exhaust all its possibilities. *There must always be selection*. And that selection, as to material, methods and terms of reference, will be fixed by the point of view taken by the scholar. Looking back over my own work, it seemed to me that I had only tried to draw water out of the ocean by means of a cup; and now I became painfully conscious of smallness of this cup. Would not *this work seem one-sided, especially to the eyes of the Japanese*, possibly even narrow-minded in its European systematic analysis? (my italics)

Bruno Taut, *House and People of Japan*, 1937, p. 252.

History is never itself, is never said or read (articulated, expressed, discoursed) innocently, but that it is always for someone.

Keith Jenkins, *Rethinking History*, 1991, p. 71.

The idea that traditional Japanese architecture played a major role in the development of American architecture, and by extension Western architecture at large, has aroused considerable scholarly interest in the past. Much has been written about this Japanese influence, but only in passing in the general histories of American art and architecture, or in relationship to individual American architects such as Frank Lloyd Wright or Greene and Greene. It has not been discussed in a broader context. In addition, most studies of Japanese influence in American architecture have depended upon superficial visual resemblance and neglected seriously exploring the “historical roads of migration, transmission, and dissemination” of traditional Japanese forms and principles into American design.<sup>1</sup> What is thus needed is to pull all the research together and to examine

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<sup>1</sup>As Rudolf Wittkower pointed out, in dealing with cultural exchanges between the East and the West, one of the most important is to explore “the proof of the existence of historical roads of migration, transmission, and dissemination” of the forms and principles in question [see Wittkower, *Selected Lectures of Rudolf Wittkower: The Impact of Non-European Civilizations on the Art of the West*, Donald Martin Reynold ed. (New York and Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), p.6].

There are two theories to explain apparent similarities in forms and principles between buildings, which are located in the distance geographically and/or chronologically. One theory treats the similarities as the result of ‘unconnected parallelism,’ which refers to the appearance of similarities in two different cultures, though the two cultures in question have had no mutual contact. The other theory considers the similarities as the result of influence of one upon another. To substantiate the influence, Wittkower emphasized the importance of exploring the “historical roads” mentioned above. Following Wittkower’s method, Anthony

the influence of traditional Japanese architecture on the development of American architecture as a whole. Also, the historical paths of transmission of Japanese influence need to be mapped out everywhere in the history of American architecture.

The primary aim of my dissertation is to analyze the specific nature of the Japanese impact on American architecture, and how it changed from 1854, when Japan opened its door to America, up to the present. Japanese impact on American landscape architecture will be analyzed in a limited scope, however, mainly focusing on the close relationship between the house and its surrounding gardens. In doing so, we will better understand how crucial traditional Japanese concept of space between house and garden as being “parts of a single organism” has been to the dissolution of the “ancient boundary between architecture and landscape architecture” in American design.<sup>2</sup> These analyses should enrich our understanding of American architecture as a whole and, by extension the significant influence of traditional Japanese architecture in the overall development of

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Alofsin investigated currently some of the historical roads in the field of Japanese influences in Wright's architecture [see Alofsin, *Frank Lloyd Wright: The Lost Years, 1910-1922, A Study of Influence* (Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press, 1993), especially “Introduction,” pp. 1-8]. This theory of influence includes two effective ways of investigating cultural exchange. First, one way of discussing influences holds that the affinities between two buildings are the result of the diffusion of ideas from a common source. Dell Upton adopted this method in his article, “Toward a Performance Theory of Vernacular Architecture: Early Tidewater Virginia as a Case Study.” The second method holds ‘cultural syncretism’ which signifies that the affinities between the buildings result from a synthesis of many separate, independent inventions of a similar form, rather than of the diffusion of ideas from a common source. For example, discussing the origins of the Louisiana Creole houses, Jay Edward suggested more than five prototypes which had contributed for the development of the houses [see Edward, “The Origins of the Louisiana Creole Cottage,” in Michael Roark ed., *French and Germans in the Mississippi Valley: Landscape and Cultural Traditions* (Missouri: Center for Regional History and Cultural Heritage Southeast Missouri State University, 1988), p. 54].

<sup>2</sup>Joseph Hudnut, “The Modern Garden,” in Christopher Tunnard, *Gardens in the Modern Landscape* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1948), p. 178. Hudnut's short article was included in Tunnard's second and revised edition of *Gardens in the Modern Landscape* which was first published in 1938. In his article, Hudnut suggested that “the new vision [in our design] has dissolved the ancient boundary between architecture and landscape architecture ... The garden flows into and over the house ... The house reaches out into the garden with walls and terraced enclosures that continue its rhythms and share its grace. The concordant factor is the new quality given to space.” Tunnard suggested in the book that the new quality

modern architecture throughout the West. Moreover, recognizing when, why and how American architects selected certain features of traditional Japanese architecture for their own use over the course of years will shed light on the process by which external or foreign contacts serve as catalysts for stylistic revolution and change in American architecture.

Most of the literature dealing with Japanese influence in American architecture has highly focused on individual architects such as Wright and has not discussed the topic in a broader context.<sup>3</sup> In contrast, Clay Lancaster's *Japanese Influences in America*, published in 1963, enlarged the scope of the discussion and attempted to deal with the Japanese influences overall on American art, architecture, and landscape architecture. Useful as it is, Lancaster's study has major limitations. Firstly, his main interest was in the influence of Japan resulting from American exposure to Japanese art and architecture at international exhibitions. Secondly, although Lancaster's text remains a major resource, it is dated, as much new research has emerged since its publication more than 30 years ago. Thirdly, it focused mainly on the period between 1876 and 1915, when international expositions had a major impact on American architecture, and slighted the period after 1915, the time when modern architecture in the West began to be formalized. Finally and most importantly, it also does not address the issue of changing attitudes of

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was given to American landscape architecture by Japanese landscape gardening (pp. 88-92). This will be further discussed in chapter IV.

<sup>3</sup>There are many articles dealing with Japanese influences in individual American architects such as Wright and Greene and Greene. However, Kevin Nute's *Frank Lloyd Wright and Japan: The Role of Traditional Japanese Art and Architecture in the Work of Frank Lloyd Wright*, which was published in 1993, is the only book-length treatment of the subject. For major contributions and problems of Nute's book, see Don Choi's critical review of the book, "The Influence of Japan on Frank Lloyd Wright," *Design Book Review* 39 (1997): 25-26.

American architects toward Japanese architecture, an issue that is critical in understanding the ebb and flow of Japanese influences throughout the years.

Since 1854, when Japan reopened its door to the West after two centuries of isolation from the West,<sup>4</sup> American architects have been intrigued by traditional Japanese architecture. They have admired it sometimes for its exotic beauty, and other times for its structural and functional qualities. At the turn of the century, American architects such as Wright and the Greenes sought to create a uniquely American architecture which they felt should be distinctly different from that of Europe. Such architects found in traditional Japanese architecture, primarily of wood, an alternative to the European-derived, classical Beaux-Arts tradition of building in masonry, which prevailed at the time both in Europe and the U.S.<sup>5</sup> The specific focus of their interest in traditional Japanese architecture, however, shifted over the years. There were several reasons for this. One was that American values changed, so that sometimes they were in great sympathy with Japanese architecture, other times less so. Another reason was that sometimes interest focused on one aspect of traditional Japanese architecture, at other times on a different aspect of it. For example, in 1882 the English ornamentalist Christopher Dresser published *Japan: Its Architecture, Art, and Art Manufacturers* which was favorably reviewed in American publications such as the *New York Times*. Dresser's admiration for the beauty of the

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<sup>4</sup>W. Scott Morton, *Japan: Its History and Culture* (New York: McGraw-Hill, Inc., 1994), p. 126

<sup>5</sup>For example, Charles Greene suggested that American architects should build in a uniquely American style: "I am an American ... The old things [such as the Paris Opera house or a Greek temple] are good, they are noble in their place; then let our perverted fingers leave them there. Let us begin all over again" (a full statement cited in chapter II, p. 99). Ironically, however, in order to create a uniquely American style the Greenes found in traditional Japanese architecture an alternative to the Beaux-Arts style. It is a paradox of American architecture at the turn of the century. Similarly, in 1904 Boston architect Robert Andrews pointed out that "[American architects of the turn of the century tried] to get a style by avoiding a style--that

ornate, brilliantly colored, and gilded early seventeenth-century mausoleum of Shogun Tokugawa Ieyasu in Nikko reflected contemporary Western tastes in heavily ornamented Victorian architecture. But, in 1905, mirroring the values of the Arts and Crafts Movement popularized around the turn of the century, the prominent American architect Ralph Adams Cram was less interested in the ornate Japanese architectural forms of the seventeenth century. Instead he valued the simpler, straightforward structure of older Japanese buildings such as the Hō-ō-dō, or the Phoenix Hall at the Byodo-in Temple, near Kyoto, completed in 1053. In short, what Americans sought in exotic, non-European architecture changed as American aesthetic values changed. These shifts in interest were represented not only in publications by American writers on Japanese architecture (or publications by Europeans which influenced American readers), but also were mirrored in American buildings that incorporated characteristic elements of traditional Japanese design.

Changing attitudes were also affected to a surprising degree by non-architectural factors: American curiosity for things Japanese during the early years of American contact with Japan; a sudden increase in respect for Japanese culture as a result of Japan's unexpected victory over Russia in 1905; American spiritual disheartenment in the wake of Hiroshima after World War II; and American absorption in Eastern philosophies, especially Zen. Prior to the Russo-Japanese War, as an editor of *American Historical Review* noted in 1911, "the Far East was regarded by the nations of European blood as a

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is the paradox of American architecture." Andrews, Boston Architectural Club, Catalogue, 1904, quoted in Richard Longstreth, *On the Edge of the World* (Cambridge: The MIT Press, 1983), p. 9.

prey, a spoil, ripe for division.”<sup>6</sup> Just as the American public considered Japan as a basically small and remote country, interesting but of little consequence, American architects before the war generally regarded Japanese architecture as having a merely exotic, primitive beauty, but one that for the most part was foreign and inapplicable to American buildings. In his *Japanese Homes and Their Surroundings* first published in 1885,<sup>7</sup> for example, although Edward S. Morse applauded fine craftsmanship and picturesque appearance of traditional Japanese dwellings, he considered the fragile wooden structure of Japanese houses as an absurd model for American houses. But after Japan’s victory over Russia, Western attitudes toward Japan changed. This in turn affected Western interest in Japanese architecture. For instance, American architects began to consider Japanese structure as something that could apply to their houses, and something from which they could learn. These changing attitudes, attitudes that were affected by political shifts of wind as well as changing architectural tastes, need to be analyzed. An analysis of these changing attitudes would throw new light upon the overall changes and development of American architecture, particularly in the twentieth century.

In my dissertation, I attempt to answer three key questions: 1) Why were American architects drawn to traditional Japanese architecture and landscape gardening, and what in particular interested them? 2) How did these specific interests change? 3) How did exposure to traditional Japanese architecture affect their design philosophy and their

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<sup>6</sup>An editor, “The Literature of the Russo-Japanese War, I,” *American Historical Review*, 16 (April 1911): 509.

<sup>7</sup>Morse, *Japanese Homes and Their Surroundings* (New York: Harper & Brothers Franklin Square, 1904), p. 347. Most literature indicated that Morse’s book was first published in 1886. However, this 1904 edition shows “Copyright, 1885, By Edward S. Morse” on its title page. Morse’s book was first published in 1885 by the Peabody Academy of Science in Salem and a year later in 1886 it was published commercially by the Boston publisher Tichnor and Co.

work? In answering these questions, I will divide the scope of my study into four parts representing different phases in American attitudes toward Japan. Chapter I covers the period between 1854 and 1896; chapter II, from 1897 before World War I; chapter III, between the two world wars; chapter IV, from after World War II to the present. My study focuses mainly on the work of the West Coast; that is where the strongest Japanese influence occurred because of commonalties of topography and climatic conditions with Japan. As the California architect Clarence Mayhew pointed out, because of the commonalties, it “seems quite logical that [between traditional Japanese and West Coast architectures and gardens] there should be similar architectural conclusions and a borrowing of ideas of design and materials.”<sup>8</sup> But, I also discuss the work of East Coast and Mid-Western architects such as Mies van der Rohe, Wright, and Bruce Goff, and landscape designers such as James Rose and Hideo Sasaki. This will provide a means of articulating regional differences among architects who worked under different climatic or cultural conditions.

In chapter I, I examine the influence of the authentic Japanese buildings exhibited in the International Expositions such as the 1876 Philadelphia Centennial Exposition and the 1893 Chicago Columbian Exposition. Then, I discuss the admiration late-nineteenth century American architects had for what they considered picturesque qualities of Japanese homes and the fine craftsmanship, for example, as illustrated in Edward Morse’s *Japanese Homes and Their Surroundings* (1885). What they learned from the Japanese features, I argue, would prove to be very useful, in terms of their awareness of “a sense of

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<sup>8</sup>Clarence Mayhew, “The Japanese Influence,” in *Domestic Architecture of the San Francisco Bay Region*, (San Francisco: The Museum of Modern Art, San Francisco, 1949), no page numbers.

the sanctity of wood and the beauty of fine workmanship” and their use of picturesque features such as asymmetrical massing or deep-overhanging eaves.<sup>9</sup> Their learning began to be formalized at the turn of the century, especially in the works of American architects such as Ralph Adams Cram, the Greenes and Bernard Maybeck. I also discuss how and why American architects of the 1880s found Japanese *irimoya* roofs, *ramma* and *kamoi* motifs interesting and adopted them both in East and West Coast houses built for their wealthy clients. I also confirm that Josiah Conder’s *Landscape Gardening in Japan* (1893) guided American garden designers’ attitude toward traditional Japanese landscape gardening.

Chapter II covers the time between 1897 and the advent of World War I. I propose that during this period, the interest of American architects turned to simplicity in construction and rejection of all unnecessary ornamentation, reflecting the principles of the Arts and Crafts Movement. At this time we begin to see architects such as Maybeck, the Greenes, and Christian Mullgardt of the West Coast, deliberately and unabashedly incorporating Japanese features like exposed rafters under the deep eaves, heavy timberwork, or fine carpentry in their buildings. In the realm of landscape architecture, I contend, Gustav Stickley was the one of the main advocates of traditional Japanese gardens during the first decade of the twentieth century. Japanese garden paraphernalia such as stone lanterns and stepping stones began to be widely used especially in small gardens and the Japanese hill garden style was favored in large estate gardens of wealthy clients such as the

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<sup>9</sup>Ralph Adams Cram, “An Architectural Experiment,” *Architectural Record* VIII (July-September 1898): 85.

Rockerfellers. I also discuss how the Russo-Japanese War stirred American interest in Japan and its architecture.

Chapter III argues that between the two world wars, American architects such as Richard Neutra began to be aware of the structural and functional affinities between traditional Japanese architecture and modern Western architecture. Their awareness of the affinities, I argue, was partly promoted by the political motivations of the Japanese military government which was eager to promote modern qualities of traditional Japanese architecture and, by extension, an image of Japanese modernity to the West. For example, *Kokusai Bunka Shinkokai* or the Society for International Cultural Relationship, an institution financed by the Japanese government, published many books on Japanese art and architecture and encouraged Japanese scholars like Jiro Harada to teach abroad. As a result, West Coast architects such as Pietro Belluschi and Harwell Hamilton Harris learned about the Japanese subtle use of wood, interrelation between house and garden, and open planning through Harada's books and lectures. I thus discuss how their work reflected those lessons. During the 1930s, architects such as Neutra and Harris began to dissolve in their designs the ancient boundary between architecture and landscape architecture by means of wide areas of clear glass or shoji screens. The Japanese idea of the harmony between house and garden was also transmitted into America through Christopher Tunnard's *Gardens in the Modern Landscape* (1938). As a result, I argue, American designers of the 1930s began to change their approach to traditional Japanese garden. Rather than faithfully copying Japanese gardens in the traditional manner or

simply adopting garden paraphernalia, they began to incorporate Japanese garden principles into their work.

In chapter IV, I contend that during World War II, American interest in Japanese architecture diminished as patriotic American architects were reluctant to deal with things Japanese during the conflict against Japan. After the war, however, Americans felt remorse over the cruel effects of dropping atomic bombs and helped postwar reconstruction of Japan. Under the changed circumstances, American architectural proponents of two opposed factions, regionalists like Lewis Mumford and Internationalists like Philip Johnson, both began to be strongly interested in traditional Japanese architecture. Mumford spoke of Japanese qualities such as the use of natural wood and harmony of the house with its surroundings in the Bay Region architecture. At the same time, Johnson and Arthur Drexler championed such Japanese features as spatial flexibility with the use of movable interior walls in a highly influential Museum of Modern Art exhibition of Japanese architecture in 1954-55. I suggest that both Mumford and the exhibition sponsors saw the Japanese *shoin*-style house, which had both Miesian abstractness and organic naturalness, as a means of legitimizing and humanizing the machine-oriented, European vision, then under attack by anti-Miesian critics for its inhumane, industrial character. Likewise, American landscape architects such as Hideo Sasaki provided a warm and deeply-moving feeling of traditional Japanese gardens to the cold and geometrically-oriented rectangular office buildings. In domestic buildings, as in traditional Japanese houses, American designers such as James Rose, Pierre Koenig, and

Fay Jones designed the house “as part of the landscape rather than permit it to be imposed on the site.”<sup>10</sup>

In the final chapter, I summarize these findings, draw conclusions, and point out the significance of the study.

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<sup>10</sup>James C. Rose, *Creative Gardens* (New York: Reinhold Publishing Corporation, 1958), p. 108.

## Chapter 1. Early Influences: Japanese Exhibition Buildings in International Expositions (1854-1896)

It is generally accepted that the earliest signs of Japanese influence in American architecture appeared in the wake of the 1876 Philadelphia Centennial Exposition where two Japanese buildings, which were built for the first time in America by Japanese craftsmen in a genuine Japanese style, were exhibited. In fact, influences of the exhibition buildings were immediately seen in the work of such East Coast architects as McKim,

Mead, and White or Bruce Price from the early 1880s.<sup>1</sup>



**Figure 1- 1. Alexander Downing, An Example of Board and Batten Siding, 1841**

The most overwhelming evidence of Japanese influence on American architecture comes from the exposition buildings. However, a few scholars have speculated the possibility of an earlier influence. As Vincent Scully has pointed out, a Japanese

feature that seems to have been transmitted into American architecture before the 1876 Philadelphia Exposition is the vertically boarded and battened wall. Discussing the possible sources of the battened wall illustrated in American pattern books (Figure 1-1) published by Alexander Jackson Davis and Andrew Jackson Downing from the 1840s on,

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<sup>1</sup>This was discussed by Clay Lancaster in his major study, *Japanese Influence in America* (New York: W.H. Rawls, 1963), where he dealt with the Japanese influences in American art, decorative art, architecture, landscape architecture, etc. And one still sees some shadows of Lancaster's book in many books and writings currently published on the relationships between Japanese and American arts and architecture. See, for example, Kevin Nute, *Frank Lloyd Wright and Japan* (New York: Van Norstrand Reinhold, 1993), etc.

Scully conjectured that “the vertically boarded and battened wall” might have been “derived in some fashion from Japan.” If this was the case, he continued, “it would represent the first American assimilation of Japanese sensitivity to skeletal structure in wooden architecture, which was later, in the seventies and eighties, to exert a profound influence [on Stick-style buildings].”<sup>2</sup> But Scully’s comment on a Japanese origin of the siding was purely conjecture, made only in passing. He did not pursue the issue, nor ask, for example, how might the vertical board and batten, assuming it were of Japanese origin, have been transmitted into America. Scully has only pointed out the fact that Davis was the first American architect who used the board and batten siding: “Nowhere



**Figure 1- 2. Japanese use of Board and Batten Siding, 1895**

before Davis [illustrated the siding in his *Rural Residences* published in 1837,] a clearly vertically battened wall [was] used as the siding for a whole structure in America.”<sup>3</sup>

The Japanese had commonly used vertical siding for centuries in the walls of ordinary houses, as described

and illustrated in Morse’s *Japanese Homes* (Figure 1-2) or in larger houses like in the Yoshimura house (Figure 1-3) built in the Takawashi village near Osaka sometime in the

<sup>2</sup>Scully’s conjecture is the only one I know which suggests possible Japanese influence on American architecture before the 1876 Exposition. See Vincent J. Scully, Jr., “Romantic Rationalism and the Expression of Structure in Wood: Downing, Wheeler, Gardner, and the ‘Stick Style,’ 1840-1876,” *Art Bulletin* 35 (June 1953): 134.

<sup>3</sup>Scully, op. cit., p. xlv.

sixteenth to seventeenth century.<sup>4</sup> Thus, Westerners including Americans,<sup>5</sup> who visited Japan before Davis illustrated the board and batten siding in 1837, would likely have seen it and might well have picked up the motif for their own use, although there is no documentary evidence to support this supposition.<sup>6</sup>

### Philadelphia Centennial Exposition

The earliest verified sources of Japanese influences in American Architecture were two Japanese exhibition buildings at the Philadelphia Centennial Exposition in 1876: the Japanese Dwelling, and the Japanese bazaar with a garden. The Centennial Exposition was a world's fair to

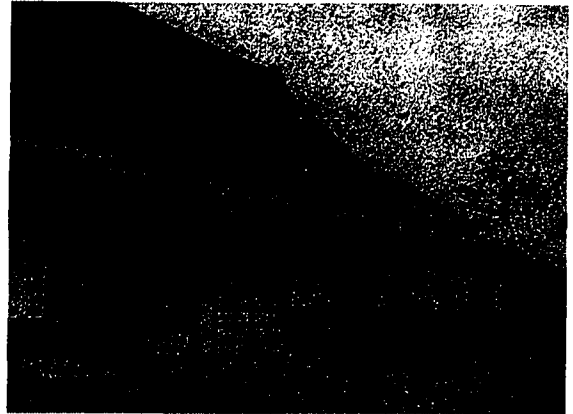


Figure 1- 3. Yoshimura House, Osaka, 16<sup>th</sup> century

commemorate the hundredth anniversary of the signing of the Declaration of Independence. Japan was one of the fifty-eight countries participating in the fair. This fair

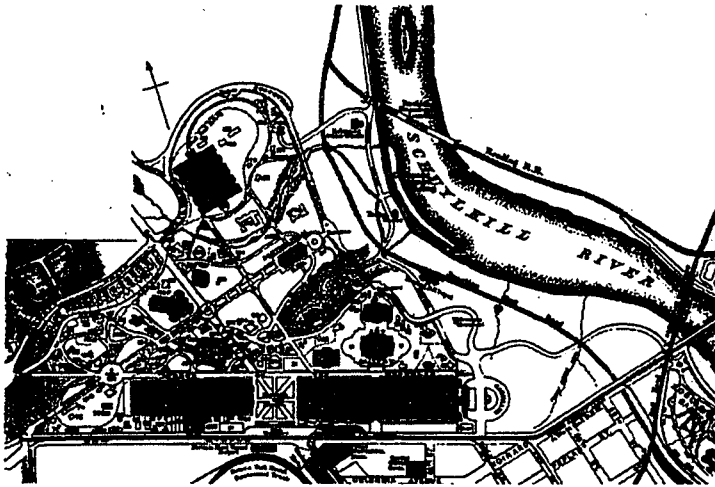
<sup>4</sup>Describing the board and batten siding, Morse wrote that “the walls of the house are outwardly composed of broad thin boards, put on vertically, and having strips of wood to cover the joints” in Morse, op. cit., p.55.

<sup>5</sup>During the period between 1639 and 1853, in case that the Dutch ships were not available, the Dutch East India Company chartered ships from other countries like the USA to go to Japan for trade. For a discussion of some early contact between Japan and America, see Shunzo Sakamaki, “Japan and the United States 1790-1853,” *Transactions of the Asiatic Society of Japan*, 2nd ser., XVIII (December 1939): 1-204.

<sup>6</sup>Westerners could have obtained the idea of the board and batten siding from the books on Japan which were published in the West before 1837. There are some books included illustrations showing board and batten very similar to it. For example, Engelbert Kaempfer's *History of Japan* published in 1727 in London included an illustration (Figure 130, v. 3) of the “Daibods temple at Miako [now Kyoto]” where the upper part of the front gate wall had features like the board and batten siding [Kaempfer, *The History of Japan : Together with a Description of the Kingdom of Siam 1690-92* (Glasgow: James MacLehose and Sons, 1906, first published in London in 1727), vols. 1, 2 & 3]. In reality, the board and batten siding was not used in such a temple wall. It was open wall space with wooden bars. However, the drawing itself, of which the original was in Sir Hans Sloan's collection in London in the 1720s, would have looked like the board and batten siding to the Western readers because with the hard line technique of the wood engravings it was difficult to differentiate the boarded area from open wall. Thus, Westerners would have mistakenly gotten the idea of the siding from such engravings.

was the second one to which the Japanese government sent an official exhibit following the 1873 Vienna Exposition. The Japanese Ministry of the Interior sent materials and labor for the construction of the two exhibition buildings which would be built in one of

the most prominent locations of the Centennial grounds in Fairmont Park, Philadelphia.



**Figure 1- 4. Plan of the Centennial Exposition, 1876**

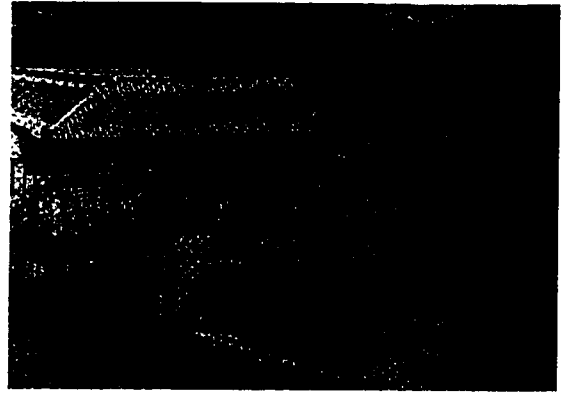
The Japanese buildings were located very close to the main entrance of the exposition. As soon as the visitor passed the main entrance, which is followed by a fountain, s/he

would easily find the Japanese buildings (Figure 1-4, 32-A & B) along with the 'Pennsylvania Rail Road Ticket Office' and the 'Judges' Hall.' The reason why the Japanese buildings were placed in such a prominent location is not completely clear, but it could have been resulted from the huge amount of money which Japanese government paid for their exhibition. Following Germany, the Japanese government paid the second largest amount among the participating foreign governments for the use of exhibition ground.<sup>7</sup>

<sup>7</sup>For the list of the amount of money paid by foreign countries, see John Maass, *The Glorious Enterprise: The Centennial Exhibition of 1876* and H.J. Schwartzman, *Architect-in-Chief* (New York: American Life Foundation, 1973).



**Figure 1- 5. Japanese Dwelling at the Philadelphia Centennial Exposition, 1876.**



**Figure 1- 6. Japanese Bazaar at the Philadelphia Centennial Exposition, 1876.**

The two-story ‘dwelling’ (Figure 1-5) was a timber framed structure with overhanging eaves and glistening black-tiled hipped roofs, with a projecting porch in front.<sup>8</sup> The similarly constructed ‘bazaar (a store)’ with a partial gallery (Figure 1-6) was a one-story building with a little garden surrounded by a fence.<sup>9</sup> Even before their completion, the buildings attracted public interest because of the strange building operations and “remarkable” tools used by the Japanese workmen. As an article published in the *Philadelphia Times* recorded, the public was attracted by ink-pad cases for making an ink line instead of a chalk line, or a cylindrical iron hammer weighing three hundred pounds

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<sup>8</sup>*American Architects and Building News* included an article about the Japanese dwelling. In it, the editor emphasized the openness of the Japanese house: “It is a two-storey house, built mainly of cedar, and without a nail or pain of glass in it. The sides may all be opened by shoving back the walls, which are really shutters. A lattice of lath-work covers the lower storey ...” (in *American Architects*, April 22, 1876: 76).

<sup>9</sup>The gallery adopted in the bazaar, which is a kind of sale house, though it is not an encircling one, reminds one of the gallery used in the Dutch sale house in Dejima, or the gallery of a store Commodore Perry observed in 1854. Thus, the use of gallery in the Japanese bazaar confirms that the use of the gallery in the sale houses in Japan is common. This bazaar was presented to the city of Philadelphia after the exposition (see *American Architects and Building News*, November 18, 1876: 376).

for driving piles.<sup>10</sup> Thanks to such interest and their convenient location to public access in the exposition, the two buildings undoubtedly attracted many visitors' attention.

This exposition was pivotal in two ways in terms of Japanese influence on American architecture. First, it led Americans to change their previous views of Japan. In 1876, critic James D. McCabe observed:

The visitor who makes even a hasty inspection of the display of which we have given but a mere outline must amend his ideas of Japan. We have been accustomed to regard that country as uncivilized, or half-civilized at the best, but we find here abundant evidences that it outshines the most cultivated nations of Europe in arts which are their pride and glory, and which are regarded as among the proudest tokens of their high civilization.<sup>11</sup>

Second, just as the introduction of Japanese wood-block prints spurred *Japonisme* in Europe after the 1850s,<sup>12</sup> the buildings, the garden, and the Japanese wares sold at the bazaar started the "Japanese craze" in America. The European *Japonisme* was reflected in

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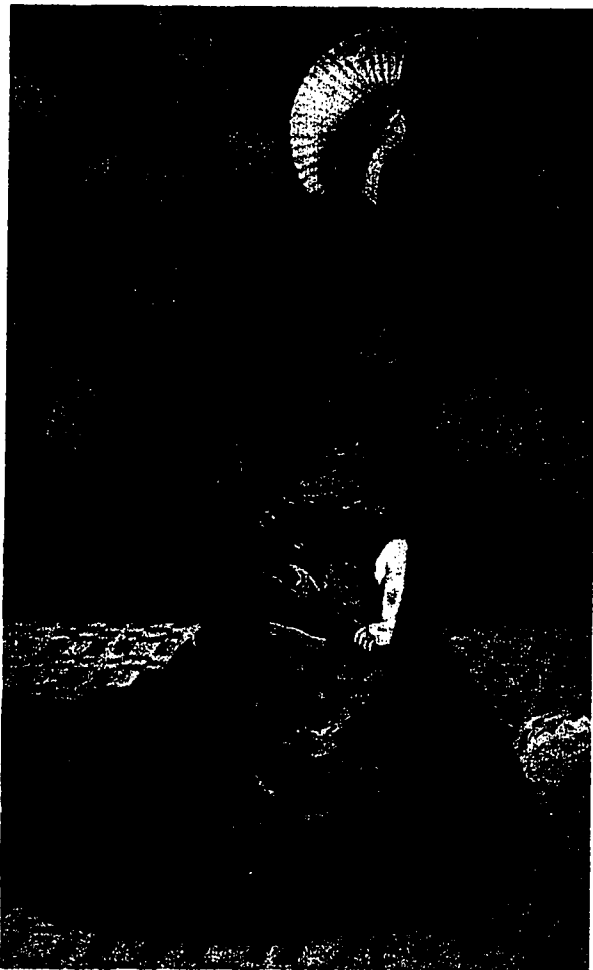
<sup>10</sup>The article regarding the operation was published in the newspaper, and then reproduced in *The American Architects and Building News* (February 12, 1876): 55-56. Also, from the illustration published in Norton's *Illustrated Historical Register of the Centennial Exhibition*, (New York: 1897), one can judge the public's interest in exotic Japanese buildings and their building methods. For an illustration, see Lancaster, figure 32.

The article also included an interesting fact concerning Americans' common knowledge of Japanese houses. According to the article, "the primers" of American children included "the picture of Japanese houses" whose general appearance was similar to those of the exhibition houses. What that house in the primers exactly looked like is not known to me.

<sup>11</sup>James D. McCabe, *The Illustrated History of the Centennial Exhibition* (Philadelphia: National Publishing, 1876), p.417.

Of special interest regarding McCabe's view is that it reminds one of an English view of Japan published two centuries earlier. In his book, *A Treatise of Japanning and Varnishing* of 1688, John Stalker wrote, "Let not the Europeans any longer flatter themselves with the empty notions of having surpassed all the world beside in stately Palaces, costly Temples, and sumptuous Fabricks; Ancient and modern Rome must now give place: The glory of one Country, Japan alone, has exceeded in beauty and magnificence all the pride of the Vatican at this time, and Phantheon heretofore..." (Stalker, op. cit., p.xv).

<sup>12</sup>The French term, *Japonisme*, was first used in 1872 by the French art critic Philippe Burty (1830-90), and defines the late 19th-century Western vogue for things Japanese. With Japan's opening to the West, such Japanese objects as wood-block prints and ceramics were introduced to Europe. The influence of the prints on such painters as Manet, Whistler, Lautrec, Degas, Cassatt or Gogh were marked distinctively in these artists' paintings and posters. The major lessons from Japanese prints were, among others, as follows: curvilinear forms used in natural objects like flowers, fishes, or animals; empty spaces and asymmetry; and two-dimensional flatness. For further discussion on the subject, see G.P. Weisberg, "Japonisme: Early



**Figure 1- 7. Claude Monet, *La Japonaise*, 1876**

multiplied, especially books on decorative art.<sup>14</sup>

The initial impact of the Japanese buildings at the Centennial led not only to proliferation of books on Japanese decorative art and architecture, but also an increase in interior designs in a Japanese manner. One can see Japanese influences in American architecture immediately after the Centennial both in articles dealing with Japanese

Claude Monet's painting, *La Japonaise* (Figure 1-7) which was painted in the same year as the Philadelphia Centennial. In it, Camille Monet's *kimono* and a fan behind her illustrate "the fashion for japonaiserie then at its height."<sup>13</sup> In the year of the Centennial, the zoologist Edward Sylvester Morse, among others, felt the similar craze in America:

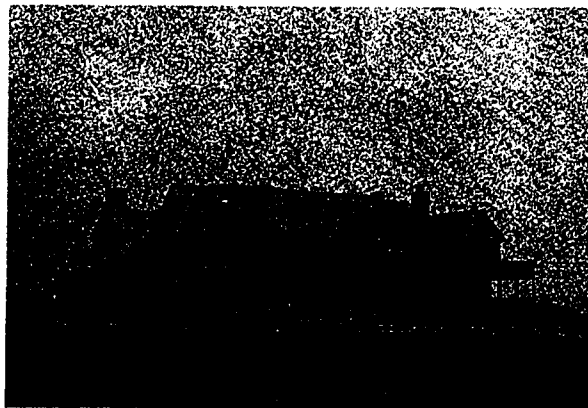
The Japanese exhibit at the Centennial exposition in Philadelphia came to us as a new revelation; and the charming onslaught of the unrivalled display completed the victory. It was then that Japanese craze took firm hold of us. Books on Japan rapidly

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Sources and the French Printmaker 1854-1882," in *Japonisme: Japanese Influence on French Art 1854-1910*, (New York: Charles Tuttle Company, 1975), pp. 1-19.

<sup>13</sup>Michael Sullivan, *The Meeting of Eastern and Western Art from the sixteenth Century to the Present Day* (New York: New York Graphic Society, 1973), p. 117.

architecture published in major architectural journals like *American Architect and Building News*, and in practice in the interiors of some East Coast vacation houses.



**Figure 1- 8. McKim, Mead and White,  
Exterior of the Newcomb house, New Jersey,  
1881.**

Some of the earliest signs of the influence in practice are seen in McKim, Mead, and White's use of Japanese

decorative panels in the Newport Casino built in 1879-81 in Rhode Island, the Victor Newcomb house constructed in 1880-81 in New Jersey, and the Tilton House Hall built in 1881-82 in Rhode Island, among other house interiors.<sup>15</sup> The Newcomb House represented the architects' amalgamation of the two different traditions --the English Queen Anne exterior and Japanese *shoin*-style interior-- which began to be imported into the United States mainly through the 1876 Exposition. On the one hand, exterior features of the house (Figure 1-8) such as the Shavian clustering of windows, entrance porch and the high brick chimney were derived from the English Queen Anne tradition, typical examples of which were exhibited in the British Executive Commissioner and Delegates'

<sup>14</sup>Edward S. Morse, *Japanese Homes and their surroundings* (New York: Harper & Brothers, Franklin Square, 1885), p. xiii.

<sup>15</sup>Other houses which had the *ramma* (wood panel between the ceiling and the transom) or *kamoi* (transom) are as follows: the living room of the Issac Bell house, Newport, R. I., by McKim, Mead and White; the Kingscote Dining room by Stanford White, Newport, R.I., 1880-81; the Charles A Potter house, Chesnut Hill, Pennsylvania, by Wilson Eyre, c. 1881-82; and probably the Barn House Hall by Arthur Little, Massachusetts, c. 1883. All the illustrations except the Potter house are in Scully, *The Shingle Style*, figures 75, 123, and 125. For Potter house, see Scully's description of it (p.122).

Residence and the Staff Office for the 1876 Exposition.<sup>16</sup> On the other hand, the grilled



Figure 1- 9. McKim, Mead and White, Interior of the Newcomb house, New Jersey, 1881.

panels and lattice work screen in the Newcomb house interior (Figure 1-9) represented the architects' adoption of Japanese architectural elements such as *ramma* and *Kamo*. The Japanese

features appeared in traditional Japanese architecture when the

interior space started to be divided into several rooms by the *ramma*, *kamo* and *shoji*

(Figure 1-10). The new style called the *shoin*--literally means "writing hall"--style of

residential architecture gradually

developed during the Muromachi

Period (1338-1573). The interior of

the *shoin* style houses consists of

the *tokonoma*, or decorative alcove

within which art objects such as

scroll paintings or flower

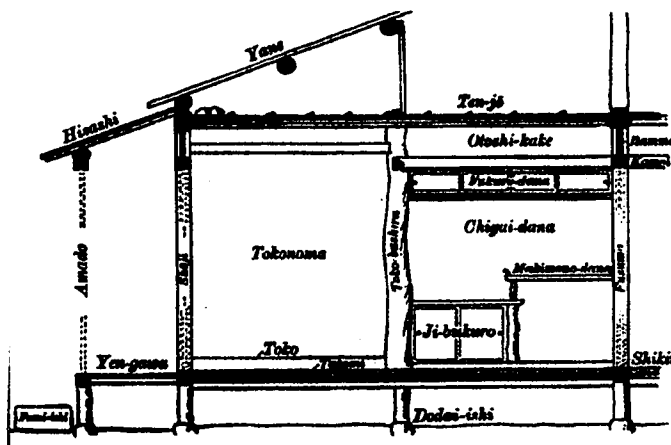


Figure 1- 10. Section of a *Shoin* Style house.

<sup>16</sup>Although the importation of Queen Anne style was earlier than the exposition, it was after the exposition that the style was actively followed by American architects.

Here of special interest is that the horizontal window bands in the exterior walls of the Queen Anne buildings and their Mondrianesque composition made with white stucco and black timbers recall the same Japanese wall composition. In fact, many scholars comment on Japanese influences in the Queen Anne style and Norman Shaw. For example, see Andrew Saint, *Richard Norman Shaw* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1976), pp. 18, 21, 48-50, 276, and 445. Most writings, however, focus on Japanese influences in Shaw's decorative design.

arrangement are usually placed; the *chigaidana*, or staggered shelves; the *chodaigamae*, or decorative doors; the *tsukeshoin*, or built-in writing desk which protrudes into the verandah; the *jodan*, or the raised area in front of the *tokonoma*; the *tatami* mats over the

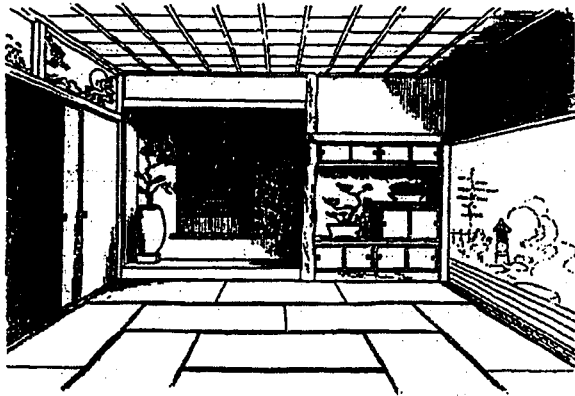


Figure 1- 11. Japanese use of *ramma* and *kamoi*

entire floor; the sliding *shoji* screens, or screens made of white translucent papers reinforced with a wooden lattice; the *ramma* and *kamoi* above the *shoji* screens and under the ceilings.<sup>17</sup>

The last feature, *ramma* or open ornamental work over the screens is a panel fitted between the ceiling and the deeply grooved, continuous wooded beam or transom (*kamoi*) above the partitions of the rooms (Figure 1-11). Sometimes the *ramma* was carved and often fretted for ventilation. Other times it was made to slide open and shut. McKim, Mead, and White's adoption of the Japanese features contributed not only to enhance an esthetic effect of the interior decoration but more importantly to open the interior space. For example, in the Newcomb house, the lattice work screens placed in between the ceiling and the continuous moldings are the only structures which separate different functional spaces such as the living room, dining room, and other rooms. Under the screens, as in Japanese houses, there are no fixed walls, doors, or windows, so that the living room is open to the other rooms. The

<sup>17</sup>For a concise description of the development of Japanese residential architectural style, see Kazuo Nishi and Kazuo Hozumi. *What is Japanese Architecture?* (Tokyo: Kodansha International, 1983), pp. 53-87 (ample illustrations).

fact that American architects began to use the grilled panel right after the exposition evinces its Japanese source, although the panel had been in use for centuries in other Asian buildings such as Chinese and Korean.

McKim, Mead, and White did not use the Japanese features extensively, but adopted them only in a few houses designed between the late 1870s and early 80s. The firm's short-lived use of the feature in only a few vacation houses and casinos resulted partly from the architects' transitory zeal for exotic decorative motifs like *ramma* and *kamoi* that they learned around 1876 and partly from the fact that they may have felt comfortable for vacation houses to incorporate the exotic features, unlike for formal residences. Soon, however, they went back to their favorite style, the Beaux-Arts architecture. Therefore, one had to wait to see deliberate and extensive use of these features in American architecture until Frank Lloyd Wright used them as a means of opening up the compact and closed interior space.

McKim, Mead and White may have learned of these Japanese features from the Japanese buildings at the Centennial and/or from the articles on Japanese architecture which were published in architectural literature after the Exposition.<sup>18</sup> In addition, there were also other possible sources for their acquisition of such Japanese features. First, a detailed description of the features were already shown even before the exhibition in the January 1876 issue of the architectural journal, *American Architects and Building News*:

The partition [between the rooms] are of movable screens [or *fushuma*] covered with paper or matting. These screens are about six feet high, ... From the level of the top of

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<sup>18</sup>In an article about the Japanese dwelling exhibited in the exposition, for example, an anonymous writer wrote of the *ramma*, "A bird [birds and plants] is harmoniously carved in bas-relief on the wooden panel between the top of the front door and the overhanging porch." "Japanese Building at the Centennial," *American Architects and Building News* (hereafter refers to as AABN), I (1876), p.136.

the screen to the ceiling is a fixed frame or upper partition; ...The frames or partition-tops over the screens [or *ramma*] are plastered in the poorer houses; but in the better are filled with wood carved, often very richly, in open work, and sometimes of various kinds and colors.<sup>19</sup>

Although the idea of using *ramma* and *kamoi* was then new to America, that of using movable screens or partitions between the rooms was not new to American architects by

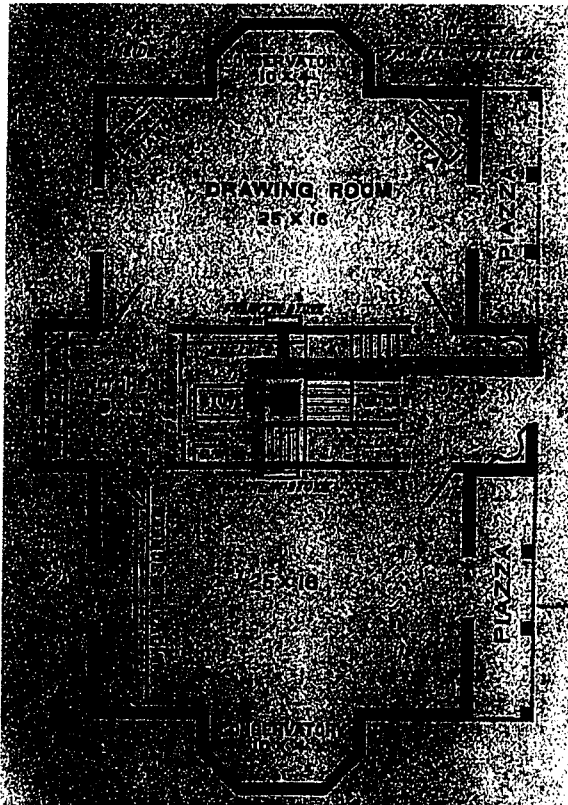


Figure 1- 12. Catherine Beecher's Use of a Movable Screen, 1869.

1870s. In 1846, for example, Catherine Beecher recommended American women to incorporate “folding-doors,” instead of fixed walls, between two parlors to make the space flexible.<sup>20</sup> Again in 1869 in her *American Woman's Home: or, Principles of Domestic Science*, Beecher suggested that a large room in a house can “serve the purpose of several rooms by means of a movable screen.”<sup>21</sup> Like in Japanese *shoin* style houses, when it is needed, the screen can be placed to the appropriate location of the room to make the large room into

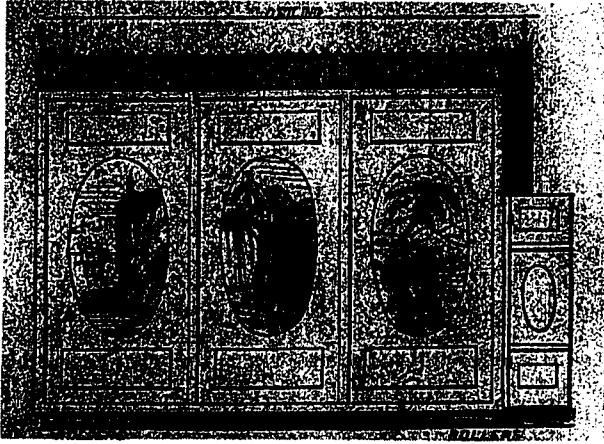
smaller two rooms; when one needs a large space, one can put the screen aside (figure 1-

<sup>19</sup>Anonymous, “Japanese Houses,” *American Architects and Building News*, 22 January 1876.

<sup>20</sup>Catherine Beecher, *A Treatise on Domestic Economy for the use of Young Ladies at Home and at School* (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1846), p. 272, see x on figure 32. Here, Beecher did not describe the folding-doors in detail.

<sup>21</sup>Catherine Beecher, *American Woman's Home: or, Principles of Domestic Science; being A Guide to the Formation and Maintenance of Economical, healthful, Beautiful, and Christian Homes* (New York: J.B. Ford and Company, 1869), pp. 27-29, figures 1, 4 & 5.

12). However, unlike Japanese *fusuma*, or sliding screens between rooms, Beecher's screen functions as a movable drawer (Figure 1-13) as well as a movable screen with



**Figure 1- 13. Catherine Beecher's Design of a Movable Screen, 1869.**

rollers beneath. Apparently, Beecher's use of the screen represented an important fact that American architects had been interested in designing a flexible space even before the Japanese methods were introduced to America. Such an interest might have stimulated American architects, such as McKim,

Mead and White, to incorporate Japanese *ramma* and *kamoi* features when they found the Japanese features either in the exhibition buildings or in the descriptions of traditional Japanese architecture.

Another possible path through which McKim, Mead, and White, or specifically Stanford White, learned of the *ramma* and *kamoi* features was the artist John La Farge. It is because, first, some interior works executed by White himself, such as the "Kingscote" dining room in Newport, Rhode Island of 1880-81, employed the Japanese features.<sup>22</sup> Second, La Farge was one of the earliest American artists who was interested in and had contact with Japanese wood block prints and other art work from Japan.<sup>23</sup> He was also a

<sup>22</sup>The "Kingscote" was built in 1841 by Richard Upjohn, and its dining room was remodeled by White in 1880-81. As Scully described, the "continuous plate rail of the dining room passes across the glass block, and knits the space of the room together." For an illustration and detailed description, see Scully, *The Stick Style*, p. 137.

<sup>23</sup>See Henry Adams, "John La Farge's Discovery of Japanese Art: A New Perspective on the Origins of Japonisme," *Art Bulletin* 67 (September 1985): 449-485. La Farge also went to Japan in 1886. Based on his travel, he published his impression of Japanese culture, *An Artist's Letter from Japan* in 1897.

close friend of White's father, Richard Grant White, among others like Richard Morris Hunt and Frederick Law Olmsted. Stanford White seemed to be very close to La Farge. For example, White asked La Farge for advice when he considered becoming a painter in 1871. La Farge told him that "painting is a risky proposition," and partly because of his advice White decided to become an architect instead.<sup>24</sup> In any case, during the late 1870s, while White worked for Henry Hobson Richardson's office, both White and La Farge worked on the murals of the Trinity Church in Boston, Massachusetts between 1876 and 1877. It was probably at this time or a little later that White was introduced to the books on Japan through La Farge because the Japanese features first appeared in White's work around 1879.<sup>25</sup> Of special interest here is White's possible knowledge of the English diplomat Rutherford Alcock's book, *Capital of the Tycoon* which La Farge had kept in his library certainly by 1870.<sup>26</sup> The book has many illustrations of Japanese buildings, some of which clearly represented the *ramma* and *kamoi*. Since the features were also described with some memorable episodes, if White had read the book it is likely that he could have been interested in the features. One of the episodes reads that

Some elaborate, but rather coarse carving filled up certain spaces running around one side of the room, between the ceiling and the tops of the sliding panels, which are seldom higher than six feet from the ground, as tall Saxons and Celts have found their cost many times. When Admiral Hope was at the Legation I was always in anxiety for his head, and

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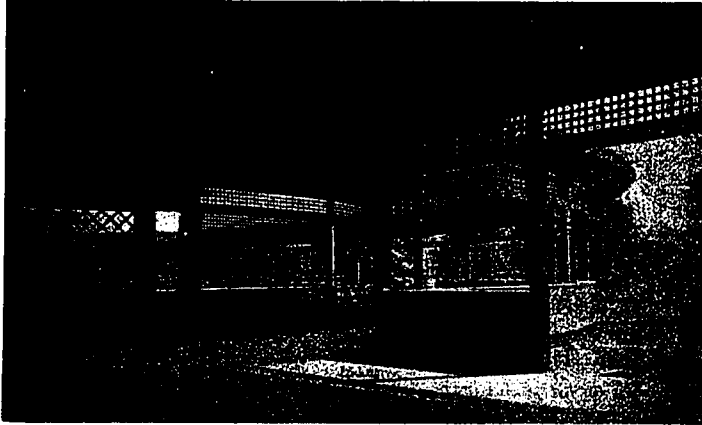
<sup>24</sup>Leland M. Roth, *McKim, Mead and White Architects* (New York: Harper & Row Publishers, 1983), p. 28.

<sup>25</sup>By this time, La Farge began to devote his life to interior decoration as well as watercolor. White's glass work in the dining room of the Kingscote house, Newport, R.I., built in 1880-81, seemed to represent White's incorporation of La Farge's glass work and Japanese *ramma* and *kamoi*.

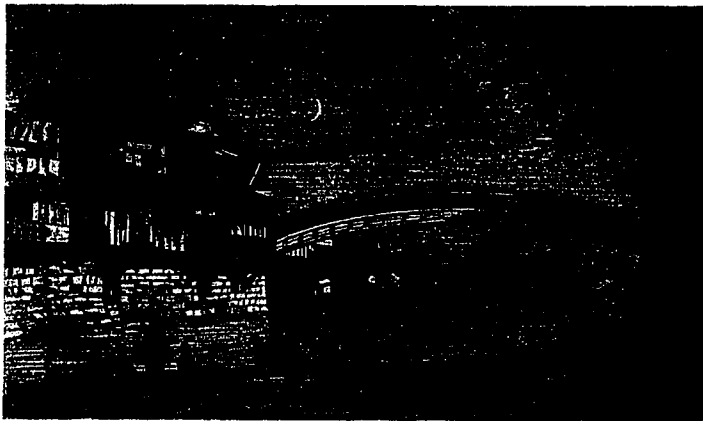
<sup>26</sup>Joan Patricia Lefor, *John La Forge and Japan: An Instance of Oriental Influence in American Art*, Ph.D dissertation, 1978, pp. 39-40. For other books listed, see Lefor, op. cit., and Henry Adams, op. cit. p. 482.

Sir Rutherford Alcock, *The Capital of the Tycoon: A Narrative of a Three Years' Residence in Japan* (New York: Harper & Brothers, Publishers, 1863). Alcock lived in Japan for several years as British

H.M.'s Consul at Kanagawa fairly tried the strength of his skull against the sharp edge of the transversing beam [kamoi], and measured his length backward on the ground under a blow that might have killed a weaker man.<sup>27</sup>



**Figure 1- 14. McKim, Mead and White, the Newport Casino, New Jersey, 1881.**



**Figure 1- 15. A View of Osaka, Alcock's illustration, 1853.**

Furthermore, a curved beam shown in an interior view of a Japanese kitchen in Alcock's book recalls the similarly curved beam in the living room of the Newcomb house (Figure 1-9).<sup>28</sup>

Also, McKim, Mead and White's tripartite wall treatment in the restaurant of the Newport Casino (Figure 1-14) as base, opening, and grilled panel at the top reminds one of the same wall treatment in Japanese houses illustrated in Alcock's book.<sup>29</sup>

Illustration of "Sulphur Baths at Urisino" and "View of Osaka" (Figure 1-15) also

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Consul-General, and the book above was a first-hand account of life during the final years of the Tokugawa Shogunate.

<sup>27</sup> Alcock, *op. cit.*, v. 1, p. 335.

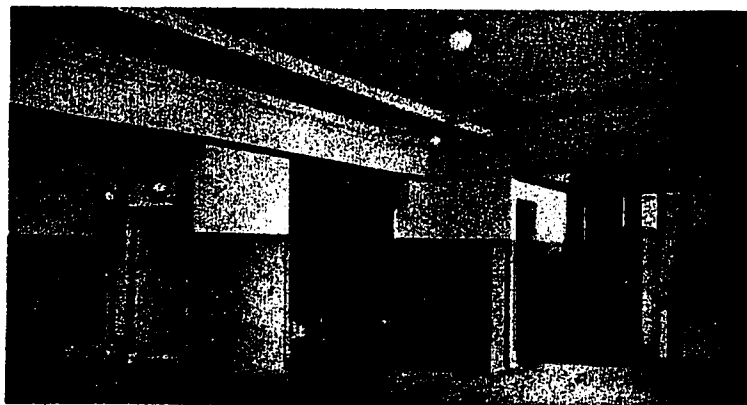
<sup>28</sup> For the illustration of a Japanese kitchen, see a figure in p. 347, volume I.

The circular aperture at the New Port Casino wall (Figure 1-14) looks non-Western, probably Chinese, which has been used for centuries for the "moon gates" in Chinese, Japanese, and Korean architecture.

<sup>29</sup> A circular aperture used here could be non-Western, although it is also found in Western architecture such as those in gables of Catholic churches or Italian palazzos. It reminds one of Chinese "moon gates" which have been used in the garden walls placed in between two gardens.

represented a house with the base, open middle-part, and plain or X-shaped panels at the top.

The next stage of the Japanese influence on American architecture appeared in more



**Figure 1- 16. Frank Lloyd Wright, Wright house and Studio, Oak Park, Illinois, 1889.**

refined form in Frank Lloyd

Wright's treatment of the

interior openings. In his own

house (Figure 1-16) built in 1889 in Oak Park, Illinois,

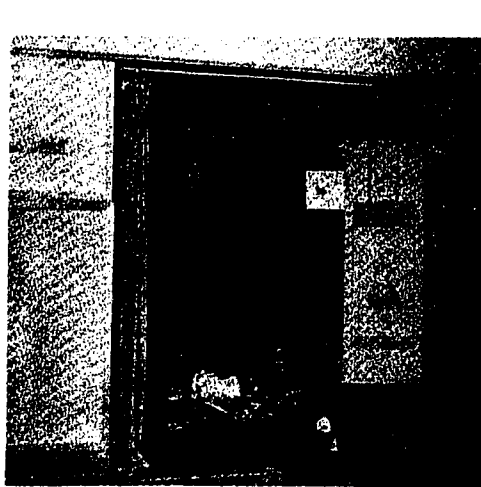
Wright opened up the interior

space by eliminating walls

and doors between the living

room, dining room and entry hall. As the illustration of the empty living room clearly

shows, the division between the rooms is only marked by the panels running between the



**Figure 1- 17. Wright, Wright house, Interior, 1889.**

ceiling and the transom in a way similar to

Japanese interiors with the *ramma* and *kamoi*. The

sliding curtains in Wright's house (Figure 1-17)

also functions like the *fusuma*, or sliding screen

covered with decorated on both sides, between

rooms in the *shoin* style houses. In both cases, the

curtains and the screens can be opened when it is

needed. Since his first use of the motifs in his own

house, he continued to use them in his later Prairie houses and even in public buildings

like the bedrooms of the Imperial Hotel constructed in 1916-23 in Tokyo, Japan (discussed in chapter II). If Wright's new treatment of interior space could have been influenced by Japanese use of the interior features such as the *ramma* and *kamoi*, how would Wright have known of the Japanese features?

Wright's first contact with Japanese art and architecture occurred at the earliest in 1876 at the Philadelphia Centennial Exposition, or at the latest in 1887 at the home of Lyman Silsbee, to whom Wright was apprenticed at the time.<sup>30</sup> However, according to Wright who would be also an active dealer in Japanese prints in later years, his real interest in Japanese art began with his fascination for Japanese wood-block prints later in 1890 or 1892.<sup>31</sup> This point was reinforced by Wright himself as he stated in *An Autobiography*,

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<sup>30</sup>Wright wrote in *An Autobiography* that his mother attended the Centennial Exposition in 1876 and purchased for him Froebel educational gifts to which Wright attributed his early grasp of geometry (*An Autobiography*, 1943, p.13). Based on this, it is possible to assume that Wright, then a nine-year-old boy, also attended the Exposition and saw the Japanese Dwelling and Bazaar. For a discussion on this assumption, see Kevin Nute, *Frank Lloyd Wright and Japan* (New York: Van Nostrand Reinhold, 1993), p.16. However, in Wright's story, it is not clear that his mother attended the Centennial with him or without him. If Wright's mother did not accompany him to the Exposition, his next possible contact with Japanese art was at Silsbee's house "which was filled with the sort of Orientalia that 'advanced' people were beginning, in the 1880s, to collect in response to the stimulation filtering in from England and France, where the cult of Japanism had been launched by men like Whistler and the Brothers deGoncour [sic]." This citation from Grant Manson gives a brief description of Japanism in the 1880s and 1890s when all the architects under discussion got their first contact with Japanese architecture, and when they began their own practice. See Grant Manson, *Frank Lloyd Wright to 1910: The First Golden Age* (New York: Reinhold Publishing Corporation, 1958), p.35.

Silsbee's interest in Japanese art seemed to be inspired by his cousin, Ernest Fenollosa, a famous Boston Orientalist and curator at Museum of Fine Arts, Boston. Furthermore, considering the fact that Fenollosa and Morse had been known each other, it is likely that in Silsbee's library Wright found Morse's *Japanese Homes and their Surroundings* where Wright possibly picked up the *kamoi* motif. According to Manson, "While he [Wright] was with Silsbee, [he began] to make a serious study of books on architecture and to learn something of its history [such as *Grammar of Ornament* by Owen Jones and the *Dictionnaire Raisonne* of Viollet-le-Duc]. See Manson, 1958, p.21.

<sup>31</sup>By 1906 after his trip to Japan in 1905, Wright amassed a sizable Japanese art collection. He exhibited the prints by Hiroshige in 1906 at the Art Institute of Chicago. In 1912, Ralph F. Seymour published Wright's talk at the Institute as a book "The Japanese Prints: An Interpretation." About Wright and Japanese prints, see Julia Meech-Pekarik, "Frank Lloyd Wright and Japanese prints," *Metropolitan Museum of Art bulletin*, v. 40, no. 2. Also see Joan Mirviss, *The Frank Lloyd Wright Collection of Sirimono* (Phoenix: The Phoenix Art Museum, 1995).

During the years at the Oak Park workshop, Japanese prints intrigued me and taught me much. The elimination of the insignificant, a process of simplification in art in which I was engaged, beginning with my twenty-third year [1890 or 1892], found evidence in the print. And ever since I discovered the print, Japan had appealed to me as the most romantic, artistic, native-inspired country on the earth. Later I found that Japanese art and architecture really did have organic character. Their art was nearer to the earth and a more indigenous product of native conditions of life and work, therefore more modern as I saw it, than any other European civilization alive or dead.<sup>32</sup>

This passages provide us with two important points. First, Wright's perspective on Japanese art and architecture as "a more indigenous product of native conditions of life and work" implies that principles of his 'organic architecture' are closely related to those of Japanese architecture.<sup>33</sup> Secondly, Wright had been fascinated by Japanese prints since 1890, but it was not until 1893 that we know he saw actual Japanese buildings in the Chicago World's Columbian Exposition, although Nute suggests that Wright saw Japanese buildings for the first time

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<sup>32</sup>Wright, *An Autobiography*, p.194. From his statement cited above and his birth date (throughout most of his adult life, he contended that he was born 8 June 1869), his twenty-third year was 1892, a year before the Chicago Fair. However, his real birth year was 1867. Henry-Russell Hitchcock first posed a question on the date, then Thomas Hines confirmed Wright's birth year as 1867 based on such records as the United States Census of Madison for 1880 lists and Wright's parent's divorce proceedings. Then, Wright's twenty-third year should be 1890, a year after he opened his Oak Park workshop. In any case, Wright was interested in Japanese print first and then had contact with its architecture. See T. Hines, "Frank Lloyd Wright-The Madison Years: Records versus Recollections," *JSAH*, XXVI (December 1967), pp.227-33.

<sup>33</sup>One can suspect that Wright is here using "exotic" Japanese architecture to support his own architecture, as a form of rhetoric. However, Wright consistently praised superior qualities of Japanese architecture and he collected Japanese prints during his life time. For example, he wrote that "The Japanese house was an ideal house for the Japanese. ... the finest example of organic architecture in the world; the most perfect thing in the art of architecture has produced... We would do well to study Japanese domestic architecture..." See Wright, *At Taliesin*, 1936, quoted in Jacobs, *Building with Frank Lloyd Wright*. (Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 1978), p. 23.

According to Wright, he also learned from Sullivan about the principles of organic architecture. Discussing his learning from Japanese principles of organic art, he also mentioned Sullivan's influence on him. After seven years of working under Sullivan, Wright carried into "the field of domestic architecture the battle they [Adler and Sullivan] had begun in commercial building." In other words, Wright applied his learning of organic principles, which Sullivan adopted in commercial buildings, to his domestic designs. See Wright, "In the Cause of Architecture," *Architectural Record* XXIII (March 1908).



**Figure 1- 18. Arthur Little, Barn house, New Jersey, 1884.**

not seen any real Japanese buildings with the *ramma* and *kamoi* prior to designing his own house in 1889. If this was the case, possible paths through which Wright learned the motif are twofold. First, he could have learned it from the use of the Japanese motif by East Coast architects such as McKim, Mead, and White or Arthur Little, because interior views of their houses with the motifs were widely published. For example, Little's Barn house (Figure 1-18) adopted a motif similar to the *ramma* and *kamoi*, and it was illustrated in *American Architects and Building News* in 1884.<sup>35</sup> Second, Wright appeared to learn about Japanese use of the motif from reading books on Japanese architecture.

probably at the Centennial Exposition in 1876.<sup>34</sup> Even so, the Japanese pavilions at the 1893 Chicago Fair, which will be discussed shortly, were the first ones that Wright saw as an adult (26 years old). It seems

clear, then, that Wright had

<sup>34</sup>Nute, op. cit., p. 16.

## Early Books on Japanese Architecture

The English ornamentalist Christopher Dresser's *Japan: Its Architecture, Art, and Art Manufacturers*, published in London in 1882, was one of the earliest books on Japanese architecture written in English.<sup>36</sup> His book was based on his stay in Japan for four months immediately after he attended the Exposition in 1876. It was widely noticed by both the American and English media, as Dresser was by then well-known to and highly respected by the American public.<sup>37</sup> An article in the *New York Times* of 1882 gave the book a favorable review:

Accordingly, although every part of his book is valuable, the architectural chapter of it, and especially the illustrations they contain, are inestimable. Japanese architecture is scarcely understood at all in Europe as yet ...<sup>38</sup>

As the *New York Times* article pointed out, Dresser's book encouraged British and American scholars to change their views on Japanese architecture which had been "scarcely understood" in both countries. For example, Rutherford Alcock (1809-1897) had written in 1863 that "the Japanese have no architecture [in a Western perspective] ... These [temples] furnish the only specimens of Japanese architecture."<sup>39</sup> The authority of

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<sup>35</sup>Pencil sketches of Little's Barn and River houses, Manchester-by-the-Sea, Massachusetts, designed in 1883, drawn by an artist, E. Eldon Deane, were published in 1884. It was included in Scully, op. cit., figure 75.

<sup>36</sup>There had been many books and articles dealing with the subject of Japan and its culture since Arnoldus Montanus' *Atlas Japannensis* of 1669. However, Dresser's was the first book in which Japanese art and architecture were the main subjects. Dresser's book provided chapters on not only Japanese architecture but also ornament, pottery, calligraphy, drawing, lacquerware, metalware, textiles, religious symbols, etc.

<sup>37</sup>For example, an editor of *American Architects and Buildings News* wrote that "Dr. Dresser of London, whom the [Philadelphia] press rashly styles the first designer in England, is now on his way to Japan in behalf of some of the English manufacturers to get specimens of Japanese decorative work for their use and imitation" (in *American Architects and Buildings News*, November 4, 1876: 353-54). From this, it can be said that Dresser had been known to the American press and treated as "the first designer in England."

<sup>38</sup>*New York Times*, 17 December 1882, p.6.

<sup>39</sup>Alcock, *The Capital of the Tycoon: A Narrative of a Three Years' Residence in Japan* (New York: Harper & Brothers, Publishers, 1868), v.II, pp.240-43. Volume I of this book was published in 1863 by the same publisher. In it, he attributed the reason for "no existence of architecture in Japan" to such natural

such a view remained in England at least until 1896 when Walter Crane repeated Alcock's evaluation of Japanese architecture. Commenting on Japanese influences in the field of book illustration in the West in *The Decorative Illustration of Books*, Crane reiterated that "the Japanese artists are not safe guides as designers," because of "the absence of any really noble architecture or substantial constructive sense" in Japanese art.<sup>40</sup> The statement was in the same vein as William Morris's statement that "the Japanese have no architectural, and therefore no decorative instinct."<sup>41</sup> Here it is of special interest to notice the two different groups of artists in England during the second half of the nineteenth century. While Morris and Crane looked to the arts and crafts of the Middle Ages for inspiration, Dresser was inspired by Japanese cultures.<sup>42</sup>

In America, James Jackson Jarves expressed the same view as the English men did on Japanese architecture. In *A Glimpse at the Art of Japan* published in 1876, Jarves wrote that,

Architecture, in its noblest condition, is equally unknown in Japan. There is shown no elaborate attempt to develop it, either in intellectual or spiritual shapes. Instead they erect temporary homes or shrines, tent-like in principle, bizarre in construction, mostly of wood

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conditions as lack of stable foundation or earthquakes. He wrote that "As to the size and value of private or of public buildings, it would go hard with the Japanese if their civilization, either mental or moral, are to be judged by such a test [by comparison with other Western cultures]. They have no architecture. They live on a volcanic soil, the surface of which is affected with a tertian ague, thus denying the first conditions of the builder, a stable foundation, and imposing a law of construction fatal to all architectural pretensions or excellence...The temples are more ambitious, and, moreover, afford safer ground for architectural experiments or pretensions, as people do not usually live under their roofs."

<sup>40</sup> Walter Crane, *The Decorative Illustration of Books* (London: G. Bells & Sons, 1896), reprinted by Studio Editions Ltd., 1994, pp. 133-34.

<sup>41</sup>The statement by Morris was cited in Widar Halen, *Christopher Dresser* (London: Phaidon Press, 1990), p. 279. In terms of a transmitter of Japanese influences into American art and architecture, Dresser's book had been overlooked by other critics until Halen's book was published. For example, Clay Lancaster did not mention the book when he dealt with Japanese influences in America.

<sup>42</sup>There were many differences between Morris and Dresser other than those mentioned here. For example, see Widar Halen, p.29.

... Whatever was built had to be either extremely broad, low, ... or structures of wood, light and open, with paper or mat partitions...<sup>43</sup>

In addition to this misunderstanding derived from cultural, aesthetic, structural differences, another reason for a poor reception of Japanese architecture by the Westerners during the time undoubtedly derived from the lack of information on the architecture of the remote and secluded country. For example, an entry on “Japanese houses” in the 1854 *A Dictionary of Architecture* was composed of only 93 words most of which were devoted to contrasting Japanese houses to the houses of other countries such as Egypt.<sup>44</sup> Also later in 1876 when the foremost architectural historian of nineteenth-century England, James Fergusson published his *History of Indian and Eastern Architecture*, he wrote, “Of Japan we know almost nothing except from photographs, without plans, dimensions, or dates.” Therefore, he could not include a section on Japanese architecture.<sup>45</sup>

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<sup>43</sup>James Jackson Jarves, *A Glimpse at the Art of Japan* (Rutland, Vermont: Charles E. Tuttle Company, 1984, first published in 1876). It is interesting to compare Jarves’ view with later ones such as expressed by Gropius or Mies who praised the openness, lightness, and wooden construction of Japanese architecture (see chapter IV).

<sup>44</sup>Robert Stuart, *A Dictionary of Architecture; Historical, Descriptive, Topographical, Decorative, Theoretical, and Mechanical* (Philadelphia: A. Hart, late Carey & Hart, 1854), p.127. The whole entry reads that “Japanese houses (says a late traveler) are the antipodes of those of the ancient Egyptians, and the inhabitants of the Hauran. While the latter, always aiming at massiveness, constructed their houses of huge stones, and roofed them with the same materials, you here see, upon the green knolls that skirt the road, little delicate habitations of fine wood, or even of paper. But their light and graceful structure, and their gilded ornaments, glittering in the sun, give them the air of fairy dwellings, which the very breath of heaven might dissolve.”

<sup>45</sup>James Fergusson, *History of Indian and Eastern Architecture* (Delhi: Munshiram Manoharlal Oriental Publishers, 1910), preface, viii. In that 1910 revised edition, published after Fergusson’s death, R. Phené Spiers added a new chapter on the architecture of Japan.

In his book which was first published in 1882, Dresser focused especially on a Japanese shrine and its ornaments. In Dresser's eyes, the heavily ornamented shrines at the Nikko (Figure 1-19), completed in 1636 as a mausoleum for Shogun Tokugawa Iyeyasu, were examples of the greatest and indescribably beautiful architectural structure in Japan.

Dresser expressed his reaction as follows:

I feel that any words that I can use must fail to convey any adequate idea of the conscientiousness of the work, the loveliness of the compositions, the harmoniousness of the colors, and the beauty of the surroundings here before me; and yet the adjectives which I have tried to heap one upon another, in the hope of conveying to the reader what I -an architect and ornamentist- feel --- must appear ... altogether unreasonable.<sup>46</sup>



Figure 1- 19. the Yomeimon, Nikko, 1636.

Reflecting the contemporary trend of ornament-oriented Victorian architecture as well as highlighting the author's profession, Dresser's praise for Nikko was significant because it gave Western travelers and architectural

scholars an idea of Japan's greatest architecture. Without knowing or disregarding the fact that the architectural style adopted in the Nikko is not a Japanese one, but Chinese Song Dynasty-inspired curvilinear style known as *Zenshuuyo*, Westerners as well as

<sup>46</sup>Christopher Dresser, *Traditional Arts and Crafts of Japan (originally, Japan: Its Architecture, art, and Art Manufacturers)* (New York: Dover Edition, 1994), p.209.

Dresser's contemporary Isabella Bird also expressed in 1881 the same impression of Nikko. In her *Unbeaten Tracks in Japan*, she wrote that "the Yomei gate [of Nikko], whose splendor I contemplated day after day with increasing astonishment" [Isabella Bird, *Unbeaten Tracks in Japan: An Account of Travels*

Japanese regarded the Nikko as “the most valuable” example of Japanese architecture during the last quarter of the nineteenth century.<sup>47</sup> For example, in one of the few articles published on Japanese architecture during the time, the American architect C.T. Mathews’s article of 1894, “A Temple of the Tokugawa at Nikko,” began with the phrase that “Do not use the word *magnificent* until you have seen Nikko.” Another American architect, Ralph Adams Cram also stated about the same American attitude toward Japanese architecture in 1898 that “To the Western travelers, it [Japanese architecture] seems only fanciful and frail, ... the shrine of Nikko are assumed [by the travelers of the time] to be the highest point attained.”<sup>48</sup>

Since Dresser focused mainly on the shrines and temples, however, we cannot conclude that Wright’s knowledge of the *ramma* and *kamoi* came from Dresser,<sup>49</sup> but probably from another book published three years later in 1885: Edward Morse’s *Japanese Homes and Their Surroundings*. Morse’s book, which has been regarded as the first major study on Japanese residential architecture in English, was very influential in introducing

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*on Horseback in the Interior including visits to the aborigines of Yezo and the shrines of Nikko and Ise* (New York: G.P. Putnam’s Sons, 1881), p. 114.]

<sup>47</sup>As Taut’s view on history writing, which was quoted at the beginning of the present essay, pointed out, Western concepts on “Japaneseness represented in Japanese buildings” were “entirely based on [the Westerner’s] leading idea” and accordingly have changed from time to time. This point will be discussed in the text whenever necessary.

For the Chinese-inspired feature, see William Coaldrake. *Architecture and Authority in Japan*. (London and New York: Routledge, 1996), p. 169. For political agenda hidden in the construction of the shrine, see also Coaldrake, op. cit., pp. 163-192. Japanese scholars were also influenced by the Western view toward the Nikko. For example, Professor Chudai Ito, one of the foremost Japanese Architectural historians of the 1930s stated in 1936 that “Fifty years ago Europeans came and told us, “Nikko is the most valuable,” and we thought so too.” [Quoted in Bruno Taut. *Fundamentals of Japanese Architecture* (Tokyo: Kokusai Bunka Shinkokai, 1936), p.6]. This point will be further discussed in chapter III.

<sup>48</sup>C.T. Mathews, “A Temple of the Tokugawa at Nikko,” *Architectural Record* IV (October-December 1894): 191; and R.A. Cram, “The early architecture of Japan,” *The Architectural Review* V (1898): 54.

<sup>49</sup>Scully commented once that Wright’s use of the *ramma* and *kamoi* was inspired by Dresser’s *Japan* and Morse’s *Japanese Homes*, but there are no descriptions on and illustrations of the motifs in Dresser’s. Scully, *The Shingle Style*, p. 135, note 14.

Japanese domestic architecture to prominent American architects like Wright and Greene and Greene.

Morse went to Japan as a research scientist in 1877, and later accepted the Chair of Zoology at the newly established Tokyo Imperial University. Interestingly, a fortunate result of his stay in Japan during 1877 to 1883 was not a book on a zoological subject, but his publication of *Japanese Homes* in 1885.<sup>50</sup> While in Japan, his friend Dr. William Sturgis Bigelow told Morse that “For the next generation the Japanese [houses] we knew will be as extinct as Belemnites [a conical fossil shell of an extinct cephalopod],”<sup>51</sup> so Morse decided to write a book on Japanese homes. In *Japanese Homes*, his descriptions of Japanese dwellings were written from a neutral or even Japanese point of view rather than from a Western-oriented viewpoint.<sup>52</sup> The book included all the salient features of Japanese domestic architecture that would influence the work of American architects: open planning, modular design, fine craftsmanship, picturesque beauty derived from the thatched roofs with deep overhanging eaves and a strong interrelationship between house and garden, to name a few.

Morse’s focus, however, was on the fine craftsmanship of Japanese builders and the picturesque appearance of Japanese homes.<sup>53</sup> Reflecting the views of his contemporary

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<sup>50</sup>Lancaster, op. cit., p.66.

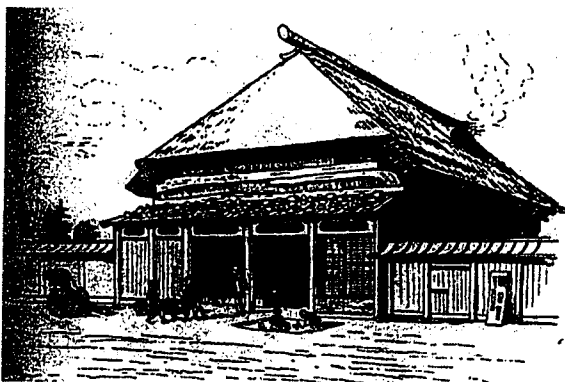
<sup>51</sup>Quoted in Clay Lancaster’s preface to Dover Edition of Morse’s *Japanese Homes* (New York: Dover Publications Inc., 1961), p. vii.

For the atmosphere of Boston and Tokyo in which Morse and the Boston orientalists such as Ernest F. Fenollosa, Arthur W. Dow, Bigelow, and Kakuzo Okakura worked at the turn of the century, see Nute, op. cit., especially chapter 1.

<sup>52</sup>Taut pointed out the point in his *Houses and People of Japan* that “[the book was] animated by deep friendship for Japan (p. 251)” and dedicated it to his Japanese friends.

<sup>53</sup>Although the picturesque quality of Japanese homes discussed in Morse’s book was determined by his own viewpoint, it was generally accepted view during the last quarter of the nineteenth century. The Japanese residents living in the houses might not have felt the same way as the foreigners. Again, Taut’s statement is relevant here. Stating a possible “one-sided” or Western-oriented view of the Westerners like

William Morris, Morse lamented the lack of fine craftsmanship in American architecture: “It is a very serious fact that now-a-days no one in our country is acquiring faithfully the carpenter’s trade. Much of this lamentable condition of things is no doubt due to the fact that machine-work has supplanted the hand-work of former times.” Then he praised “the



**Figure 1-20. A Northern Japanese house, in Morse’s book.**

good and serviceable carpentry, the perfect joint” of Japanese carpenters.<sup>54</sup> In addition, for Morse, the most impressive yet enduring aspects of Japanese homes appeared to be their picturesque quality.

Morse’s use of the term “picturesque” appeared to be similar to the American architect, Andrew J. Downing’s use of it.

Commenting on Northern Japanese houses (Figure 1-20), Morse wrote of the picturesque qualities:

In the northern part of Japan, houses are often seen which possess features suggestive of the picturesque architecture of Switzerland,—the gable ends showing, in their exterior, massive timbers roughly hewn, with all the irregularities of the tree-trunk preserved ... The eaves are widely overhanging, with projecting rafters. As a still further suggestion of this resemblance, the main roof, if shingled, as well as the roof that shelters the verandah, is weighted with stones of various sizes to prevent its being blown away by the high wind...<sup>55</sup>

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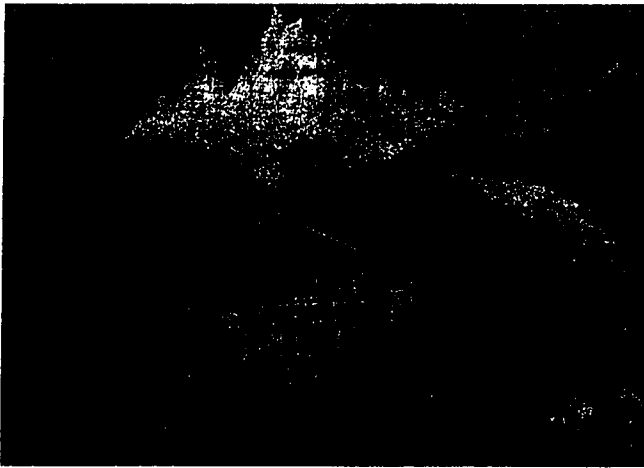
himself, he wrote that “I was particularly worried by the thought that I might hurt the feelings of kind Japanese friends, who had taken so warm-hearted an interest in my researches, and I was even afraid of arousing ill-feeling and disappointment” (Taut, *op. cit.*, 252).

<sup>54</sup>Morse, *Japanese Homes*, p. 36.

<sup>55</sup>Among the adjectives he used in the book to describe Japanese houses and their surroundings, “picturesque” was one of the most frequently used words. The quotation above appeared in p. 57. For the other examples, see Morse, *op. cit.*, pp. 9, 77, 105, 275 and so on.

Downing also found in the old English and the Swiss cottages the same type of picturesque qualities such as bold projections, irregularities, or deep shadows. In his *Treatise on the Theory and Practice of Landscape Gardening Adopted to North America* which was published in 1841 and had sixteen issues of eight editions by 1879, he stated that;

the architecture which belongs to the picturesque landscape, is the Gothic mansion, the old English or the Swiss cottage, or some other striking forms, with bold projections, deep shadows, and irregular outlines.<sup>56</sup>



**Figure 1-21. P. Robinson, A Swiss Cottage, 1823.  
An Example of Japanese *ramma* and *kamoi*, in  
Morse's book.**

For example, as a design for a Swiss Cottage (Figure 1-21) by the English Architect Peter Robinson showed in 1823,<sup>57</sup> the cottage appears to be as picturesque in its contemporary meaning as the Japanese house illustrated by Morse in that both included the low-pitched roof, exposed timber structure, deep over-

<sup>56</sup>In the popular *A Treatise on the Theory and Practice of Landscape Gardening Adopted to North America*, Downing compared "the beautiful" to "the picturesque." Synthesizing theories of English predecessors like Repton, Price, or Gilpin, he defined "the picturesque" as "nature or art obeying the same laws [the universal laws of perfect existence] rudely, violently, irregularly, and often displaying power only." [in Downing, *A Treatise on the Theory and Practice of Landscape Gardening Adopted to North America* (New York: Moore Co., 1859), pp. 53 & 60].

<sup>57</sup>Peter Robinson published a house-pattern book entitled *Rural Architecture* in London in 1823 and among other English pattern books, this was one of the books that influenced Downing's pattern books. For more pattern book designs, see Clay Lancaster, *The American Bungalow: 1880-1930* (New York: Dover Publications, Inc., 1985), pp. 30-32.

hanging eaves and bold projections and deep shadows. Therefore, it can be said that Morse's view of Japanese homes as having picturesque qualities was in accordance with general views of his contemporary American architects.

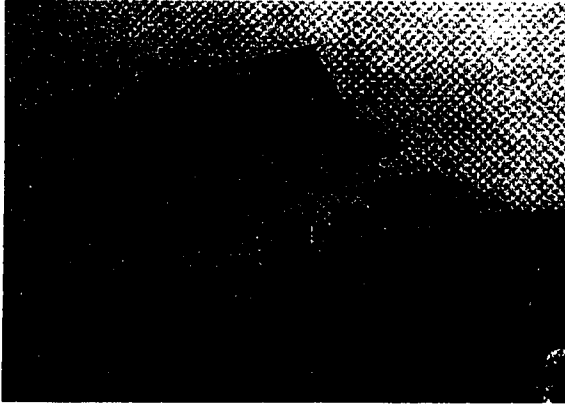
For Morse, fine craftsmanship and picturesque appearance--not structure--were the lessons to be learned from Japanese architecture. Other than the fine craftsmanship and picturesqueness, Morse wrote that there were "many features not to my liking, and in the ordinary language of travelers I [Morse] might speak of these houses as hut and hovels, cold and cheerless." In his conclusion, Morse thus wrote that "it would be obviously absurd to suggest as a model for our own houses such a structure as a Japanese house" due to the different climatic and cultural conditions.<sup>58</sup> Thus, although Morse dealt with Japanese houses and their surroundings "in a spirit of sympathy,"<sup>59</sup> he did not regard Japanese houses--especially because of their fragile structure-- as models American architects could adopt for their work.

However, the two aspects Morse stressed (i.e., fine craftsmanship and picturesque qualities of Japanese dwellings) made a considerable impact on American architecture, especially in the work of West Coast architects such as Greene and Greene during the early years of the twentieth century. Another impact of Japanese architecture transmitted through Morse's book was manifested in the work of Wright. Morse's book described Japanese *ramma* and *kamoi* in detail and provided several illustrations (Figure 1-11). In the light of recent study, it is very likely that Wright personally knew Morse and was

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<sup>58</sup>Ibid., 347.

<sup>59</sup>Morse emphasized that an architectural critic must have an unprejudiced mind, saying that "In the study of another people one should if possible look through colorless glasses ... such investigation must be



**Figure 1-22. Ralph Cram, the Knapp house, Fall River, Massachusetts, 1895-98.**

familiar with his *Japanese Homes and Their Surroundings*.<sup>60</sup> Thus, Wright appeared to learn about the Japanese *kamoi* from Morse's book and subsequently incorporated it in his own house in 1889

(Figure 1-16).

The impact of the Centennial buildings and of books on Japanese architecture like Morse's can also be detected in the Knapp house and Tea house in Fall River, Massachusetts (1895-1898, Figure 1-22) designed by Ralph Adams Cram. Arthur Knapp, a Unitarian missionary who had recently returned from Japan, wanted to build a Japanese house to store Japanese objects like bronzes, lacquers, porcelains, embroideries, and other art objects. Cram wrote of his experience in designing this house in "An Architectural Experiment," published in the *Architectural Record* in 1898. According to him, although all the exterior and interior details were "to be studied faithfully from Japanese examples," the house was to be "absolutely



**Figure 1-23. Ralph Cram, the Knapp Tea house, Fall River, Massachusetts, 1895-98.**

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approached in a spirit of sympathy, ... not with the eye of mere curiosity, or the cold rigid standard of an alien school." Morse, op. cit., pp. xxxii-xxxiii.

<sup>60</sup>Kevin Nute, *Frank Lloyd Wright and Japan*, pp. 36-46. As Nute convincingly suggested, Wright was acquainted with Boston Orientalists such as Morse, Fenellosa, and Bigelow through Joseph Silsbee who was Fenellosa's cousin, and for whom Wright worked as a draughtman in 1887.

Western” in plan and construction. Although the exterior of the house had some Japanese motifs such as *irimoya* roofs of which eaves were flared at the corners, a projected porch above the main entrance, and the exposed wooden members, the dormer windows on the roof and brick chimneys were wholly Western.

However, the tea house and garden were built in a genuine Japanese fashion. An interior view (Figure 1-23) published in the article shows movable sliding doors, *ramma* and *kamoi*, and *tatami* mats. The most conspicuous Japanese feature adopted by Cram in this house was, however according to him, “the varied effect which were obtained by the use of many woods [twenty different kinds] in a natural state.”<sup>61</sup> This use of natural woods in the Japanese houses was acknowledged by many writers like Morse, but Cram seemed to be one of the earliest to adopt the feature in practice. As Cram commented, “a sense of the sanctity of wood and the beauty of fine workmanship,”<sup>62</sup> were the most



Figure 1-24. Cram, the Knapp house, Parlor, Fall River, Massachusetts, 1895-98.

valuable lessons American architects of the time could learn from Japanese architecture. These lessons would be very beneficial during the first decade of the twentieth century especially for the West Coast architects such as the Greene Brothers and Maybeck.

Where then did Cram learn the Japanese features he used for the tea house? First of all, the client Knapp, who had lived in Japan

<sup>61</sup>Cram, “An Architectural Experiment,” *Architectural Record* VIII (July-September 1898): 85.

<sup>62</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 91.



Figure 1-25. A Japanese Guest Room, in Morse's book.

for years, might have provided him with first-hand knowledge on Japanese houses. Secondly, from evidence provided recently,<sup>63</sup> it is likely that Cram studied Morse's book when he designed the Knapp house. For instance, the parlor

in the Knapp house (Figure 1-24) shows close resemblance to a Japanese guest room illustrated in Morse's book (Figure 1-25). In both interiors, the *tokonoma*, or decorative alcove is at right angles with the *chigaidana*, or staggered shelves. Next to the *chigaidana* is a row of deep cupboards enclosed by a set of sliding screens and above the cupboards is a broad shelf.<sup>64</sup> Furthermore, Cram's 1901 entry, "Japan, architecture of," in *Dictionary of Architecture and Building*, in which he cited Morse's book, proves that Cram knew of Morse's work.<sup>65</sup>

Morse's and Cram's emphasis on the fine craftsmanship and picturesqueness of traditional Japanese architecture reflected a common attitude among American architects who were interested in Japanese architecture during the last quarter of the nineteenth century. For example, in the 1876 Philadelphia Centennial Exposition, the judges' report

<sup>63</sup>D. Shand-Tucci, *Boston Bohemia 1881-1900, Ralph Adams Cram: Life and Architecture* (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1995), pp.195-96. This is an extensive biography of Cram in which Shand-Tucci writes of the Morse and Cram connection.

<sup>64</sup>Both rooms represent Japanese *sukiya* style interior arrangement. Unlike in the *shoin* interior where the *tokonoma* and the *chigaidana* are side by side, the arrangement in the *sukiya* rooms is much freer.

<sup>65</sup>Along with Morse's, Cram's bibliographic citations included Daly, "Les Temples Japonais" in *Revue de l'Architecture*, Vol. 43, 1886, and Vol.44, 1887; *Japan Society, Transactions and Proceedings*; Anderson, *Pictorial Arts of Japan*; Conder, *Landscape Gardening in Japan*; Conder, "Domestic Architecture in Japan" and "Further Notes on Japanese Architecture," printed in *Transactions of the Royal Institute of British Architects*, 1886-87; McClatchie, "The Feudal Mansions of Yedo," Vol. VII., Pt. III., *Royal Asiatic Transactions*.

on the Japanese Dwelling and Bazaar was similar to both Morse's and Cram's views towards Japanese houses. The report reads:

Commended for the beautiful treatment of wood and admirable joinery in the erection of these buildings, in the graceful lines of roofs and porches, the perfect tile work upon the same, and the rich ornamental carving, altogether offering a capital and most improving study to the careless and slipshod joiners of the Western world.<sup>66</sup>

This view was reiterated in a statement written ten years later by a reviewer of Morse's *Japanese Houses* published in *American Architects and Building News*. Concerning some lessons that American architects could learn from Japanese architecture, the reviewer, H.V.B. suggested that "our own builders might study with profit the precision and neatness of their joinery, their judicious economy in the use of material ... their thatched roofs are always picturesque and often beautiful."<sup>67</sup>

Such a common view towards Japanese architecture resulted on the one hand from the fact that it mirrored contemporary main trends in Western architecture--ornament-oriented Victorian architecture, its stress on picturesque qualities of the Gothic Revival movement and its emphasis on fine craftsmanship in the early phase of the Arts and Crafts Movement. On the other hand, the common view derived from the fact that the books and articles on Japanese architecture published during these early years frequently referred to each other and repeated the same information. Edward Said discussed that point in his *Orientalism* published in 1979. As Said pointed out about general characteristics of 'Orientalism,' or the study of oriental culture, "Orientalism is after all a

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<sup>66</sup>Quoted in John Maass, *The Glorious Enterprise: The Centennial Exhibition of 1876 and H. J. Schwartzmann, Architect-in-Chief* (New York: American Life Foundation, 1973), p.69.

system for citing works and authors,”<sup>68</sup> partly because Oriental countries like Japan were not easily accessible to many scholars during the last quarter of the nineteenth century. Similarly, Morse also wrote in 1886 that “in response to the popular demand, book after book [on Japanese culture] appeared; but with some noteworthy exceptions they repeated the same information.”<sup>69</sup> As a result, many books on Japanese culture used the same illustrations, and if the first author made a wrong statement, it would be repeated again and again without question or correction.<sup>70</sup> Even Morse, who recognized this phenomenon of uncritical repetition, made the same mistakes others did. For example, regarding the origins of the Korean heating system, Morse and later C.T. Matthew repeated Perceval Lowell’s false information. In 1885, Lowell incorrectly wrote of the Korean heating system as being derived from China in the early eighteenth century. This heating system, however, had already been in use for centuries in Korea, and it was already known to the West in 1668. Reporting the existence of this heating system, Hammel, a Dutch shipwrecker, wrote in 1668 about his experiences in Korea after he returned to the Netherlands. And this fact was overlooked by Lowell first, then Morse and Matthew, both of whom unscrupulously repeated the mistaken information.<sup>71</sup>

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<sup>67</sup>H.V.B., “Japanese Homes and Their Surroundings,” *American Architects and Building News* (2 January 1886): 3-4. This journal published two reviews of Morse’s book. The first one was published in the December 19, 1885 issue: 2.

<sup>68</sup>Edward Said, *Orientalism* (New York: Vintage Books, 1979), p. 23. Said mainly focused on Orientalism on “Near East,” but it can be applied equally to Japan.

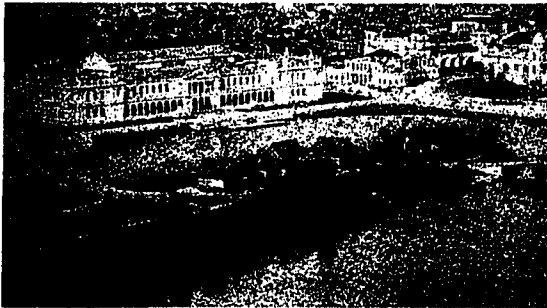
<sup>69</sup>Morse, *Japanese Homes*, p. xxx.

<sup>70</sup>Among many others, a comparison of the illustrations included Alcock’s *The Capital of the Tycoon* (1854) and Jarves’ *A Glimpse at the Art of Japan* (1876), will show that the same pictures that they copied from Japanese original drawings represented in such books as Hokusai’s sketch books, *Manga* which were to have “so decisive an influence on the direction taken by [the] French [Impressionist and Post-Impressionist ] painting” (Sullivan, op. cit., p. 197).

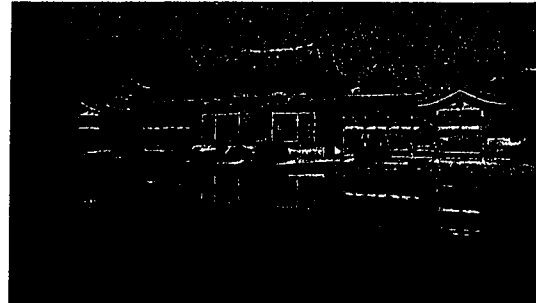
<sup>71</sup>Perceval Lowell, *Chosun*, p. 272. And also see Morse, *Japanese Homes*, p.344, and also Matthew, “Eastern Asia; or China, Corea and Japan,” *Architectural Record* 5 (March 1896): 288-297.

## The Chicago Columbian Exposition

American architects' understanding and knowledge of Japanese architecture was further reinforced by Japanese buildings that appeared in the Chicago World's Columbian Exposition in 1893. The exposition, celebrating the 400th anniversary of the discovery of America, marked a significant stage in the course of American architectural history. At the fair, the monumental Beaux-Arts classical buildings designed by American architects such as McKim, Mead, and White stimulated the culmination of the American Renaissance. Equally significant was the impact the Japanese buildings had on the development of American domestic architecture. One of the Japanese pavilions at the



**Figure 1-26. The Ho-o-den, Chicago, Illinois, 1893.**



**Figure 1-27. The Ho-o-do at Byodo-in, near Kyoto, completed in 1053.**

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Most Northern Chinese houses had adopted a similar heating system to the Korean one. It is called "*Kang*," or bench of stone masonry, beneath which is a mending flue from the kitchen fireplace. Unlike in the Korean one, it occupies only a part of the rooms, like a bed of the Western houses. Matthews wrote that "the whole affair of an invention of the Chinese, and being introduced into [Korea] about 1736 A.D." (Matthews, op. cit.: 296). Furthermore, a Chinese envoy to Korea in 1124 saw the Ondol and commented the uniqueness of the heating system (see Sunwhabongsa Koryodokyung (1124), v. 28, p. 101, reprinted in 1971 by Taiwan Business Books).

With Professors Meredith Clausen and Dean Heerwagen, I presented a paper on the relationship between Korean underfloor heating and Wright's radiant heating in 1993. "Radiant Floor Heat: The Usonian Dream," at the Society of Architectural Historians 46th Annual Meeting, Charleston, South Carolina, April 14-18, 1993.

Chicago Fair was called the Ho-o-den (Figure 1-26), or the Phoenix hall. The pavilion was essentially a replica of the Hō-ō-dō or Phoenix Hall (Figure 1-27) at the Byodo-in at Uji, near Kyoto. The Hō-ō-dō was completed in 1053 by the Imperial regent Yorimichi Fujiwara as “a three-dimensional representation of the *Visualization Sutra*.”<sup>72</sup> In its “extremely unusual plan,” the Phoenix Hall at the Byodo-in consists of a one-story center chapel with flanking, L-shaped open two-story arcades and a long tail-like enclosed corridor at the back.<sup>73</sup> The Ho-o-den at Chicago, however, was somewhat smaller in size



**Figure 1-28. Exterior of the Ho-o-den, Chicago, Illinois, 1893.**

<sup>72</sup>Mimi Hall Yiengpruksawan, “The Phoenix Hall at Uji and the Symmetries of Replication,” *Art Bulletin* 77 (December 1995): 649. *Visualization Sutra* is “a sermon directed by the Buddha to a woman, the virtuous Idaike ... who has implored him for rebirth in a pure land to escape her travails” in this evil world. The sutra were often translated into two-dimensional plane of paintings. However, Yorimichi’s three-dimensional translation of the sutra was the unprecedented “spatiotemporal transformation of the sutra” (pp. 647-49).

<sup>73</sup>Quoted in Yiengpruksawan, *op. cit.*, p. 655.

and modified for secular uses, such as housing many fine-art exhibits. Unlike the Hō-ō-



**Figure 1-29. Interior of the Ho-o-den, the center Wing, Chicago, Illinois, 1893.**

dō, the tail wing behind the central pavilion was omitted in the Chicago Ho-o-den and the main hall was divided into rooms. The side pavilions of the Chicago building were enclosed, and the gallery was left out. This pavilion thus consisted of three units: a main central hall, a north wing and a south

wing. Among the main features of the exterior (Figure 1-28), its *irimoya* roofs with deep overhanging eaves, the exposed wooden post and beams which revealed their natural colors and grains, the wall composition made by unpainted plaster walls and exposed supporting wooden members, and the exquisite wood works in the horizontally-arranged rails were of particular interest to American architects.

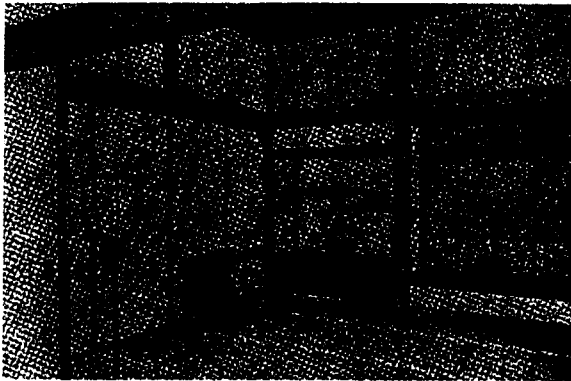
Unlike the interiors of the Hō-ō-dō which reflected the *shinden* or aristocratic residential style of the Fujiwara period (894-1195),<sup>74</sup> the Ho-o-den interiors in each wing were based on three different interior arrangement of three different periods. The interior of the central hall (Figure 1-29) was arranged in the opulent *shoin* style of the Edo period (1603-1868), as in the *Ohiroma*, or Audience Hall at the Ninomaru Palace of Nijo Castle built in Kyoto in 1626. In this wing, most of the characteristic elements of the *shoin* style houses were represented.<sup>75</sup> While the interior of the north wing was based on elements

<sup>74</sup>For an illustration of the *shinden* style house, see Figure 2-31. From the *shinden* (literally means hall for sleeping) style houses, the *shoin* style residences were developed. See Kazuo Nishi and Kazuo Hozumi, op. cit, pp. 64-65.

<sup>75</sup>For my description of the *shoin* style interior, see p. 18.

from the Hō-ō-dō, that of the south wing was based on the interior of the *Ginkaku*, or Silver Pavilion of the Muromachi period (1333-1573), which consisted of similar interior elements to that of the *shoin* style houses, but in a much simpler form (Figure 1-30). Here, the American public had a chance to see the interiors of “what Westerners [in general] called the Japanese house.”<sup>76</sup> As Nute pointed out, Wright and other American architects might “well have taken a particular interest in these spaces since they were quite close in appearance to the ordinary [Japanese] domestic interior of the modern era” which the architects would “have recognized from Morse’s *Japanese Homes*.”<sup>77</sup>

The Japanese Government’s selection of a version of the Hō-ō-dō, which was derived from a Chinese prototype such as the T’ang Dynasty palace style, as an exposition



**Figure 1-30. Interior of the Ho-o-den, the South Wing, Chicago, Illinois, 1893.**

building is of special interest. According to a report prepared by the Japanese Chicago Exposition Office in 1893, Japanese exposition buildings in international Expositions had not been built until then in a genuine Japanese style which could represent Japan the country with dignity. In contrast, the report reads, the 1893 Ho-o-

<sup>76</sup>It appears that in general, American architects as well as the public were not keenly aware of different historic styles of Japanese dwellings. The *shoin* style house has been generally considered as “the Japanese house” by Westerners mainly because by the late-sixteen and early-seventeenth century when Westerners began to contact with Japan, the style was established and most Japanese houses were built in the style. See William Alex, *Japanese Architecture* (New York: George Braziller, 1963), p. 32.

<sup>77</sup>Nute, op. cit., p. 57.

den was designed “to show to the world the real state of Japan as one great empire.”<sup>78</sup>  
From this, one can conclude that the Japanese Government regarded the Ho-o-den, which is a version of the Chinese-inspired Hō-ō-dō, as a genuine Japanese building. This point is not without significance. The Japanese attitude toward the Hō-ō-dō and the Ho-o-den seems to explain why American architects like Ralph Adams Cram regarded the Hō-ō-dō as “the culmination of Japanese architecture” at the turn of the century.<sup>79</sup>

The impact of these exposition buildings appears to have been wide-spread, particularly from the Mid-West to the West Coast during the last decade of the nineteenth century. Many prominent American architects such as Wright, the Greene Brothers, and Maybeck attended the exposition and saw the Japanese buildings. However, with few exceptions,<sup>80</sup> the impact was not immediately recognizable in the work of those architects and others but would appear in the work designed in the early years of the next century. Thus, the influence of the Japanese exhibition buildings of the 1893 Chicago Exposition will be discussed in chapter II.

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<sup>78</sup>I am grateful to Professor Fujioka of the Tokyo Institute of Technology for sending me a copy of his article. Quoted in Hiroyasu Fujioka and Yasuo Fukagai, “On the Japanese-style Design of the Japanese Pavilions for the International Expositions before World War II,” *Journal of Architecture, Planning, and Engineering* (January 1991): 100.

<sup>79</sup>Cram, *Impressions of Japanese Architecture* (New York: Dover Publications, Inc., 1966), p. 50, first published in 1905. Cram met in 1899 in Japan with Kakuzo Okakura, who had been in part responsible for selecting and designing the Ho-o-den for the 1893 Chicago Exposition. Cram might learn of the Hō-ō-dō through this encounter.

The Japanese Government's view of the Ho-o-do as a genuine Japanese building was also represented by the fact that it selected the Ho-o-do for the nation's coin design (10 yen).

<sup>80</sup>A few of Wright's houses designed before the turn of the century such as C. Williams house in River Forest, Illinois built in 1895, showed some Japanese influences. This will be discussed in chapter II.

## Early Japanese Gardens in America

Only a few Japanese gardens created in the United States before the turn of the century have been recorded. One of them is the garden in the Arthur Knapp house and Tea house (1895-98) built in Fall River, Massachusetts. Around the tea house, Cram arranged a Japanese garden (Figure 1-31) “with its miniature mountains, valleys and plains, its lake and cataract, its forest of dwarf trees.”<sup>81</sup> From Cram’s description and accompanying illustration, one can recognize that the garden was in a Japanese style of “Hill Garden.”

Japanese gardens can be classified largely into two general types according to the character of the ground: *tsuki-yama* (artificial hill gardens) and *hira-niwa* (flat or level gardens). Like the garden in the Knapp house, a hill garden has such features as artificial hills, stone paths, lakes, bridges, cascades, upright or grotesque dwarf trees, and stone lanterns. Japanese hill gardens in practice are rendered in three forms of *shin*, *gyo* and *so* according to the degree of elaboration. For example, the *shin* represents the most

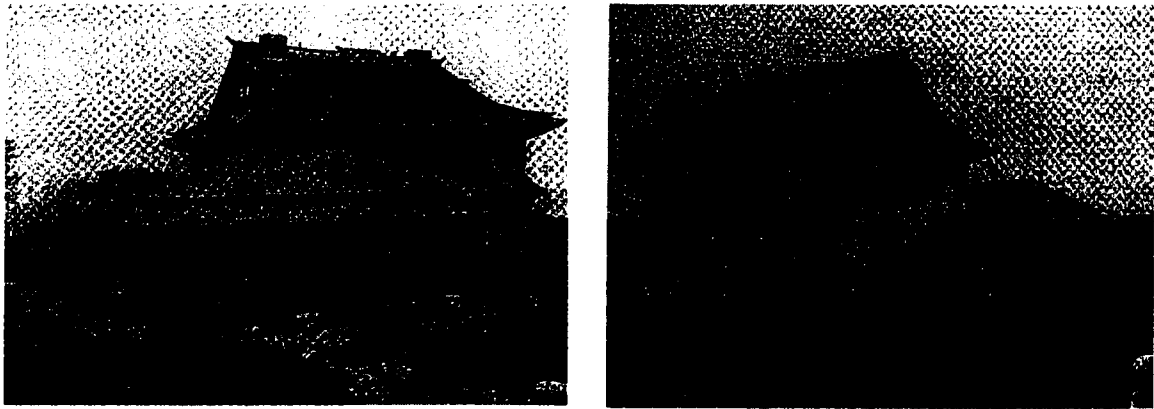


Figure 1-31. Cram, the Knapp house and Garden, Fall River, Massachusetts, 1895-98.

elaborate or finished, *gyo* the intermediary, and *so* the rough or much abbreviated. Given

<sup>81</sup>Cram, “An Architectural Experience,” p. 85.

the simple and modest forms of the Knapp tea house garden, it seemed likely that it was rendered in a *so* style (Figure 1-32).

Cram could have learned of such a Japanese garden either from Knapp's experience of it in Japan or from such books available at the time as Morse's *Japanese Homes and Their Surroundings* (1885), F.T. Piggott's *Garden of Japan* (1892), Lafcadio Hearn's article in *Atlantic Monthly* (1892) or Joshua Conder's *Landscape Gardening in Japan* (1893). Among them, both Morse's and Conder's book were likely influential in the creation of the Knapp house garden. They were not only published before the garden was



**Figure 1-32. A Japanese Hill Garden in a Rough Style**

created, but also were included in Cram's bibliography published along with his entry, "Japanese architecture," in the 1901 *Dictionary of Architecture and Building*.<sup>82</sup> In addition, there are some similarities in garden arrangement between the Knapp garden and some illustrations represented in these books.

For example, the *tori* gate of the garden entrance at the Knapp house recalls the similar gate and ornamented fences shown in Morse's book (figures 248 and 258, Figure 1-33),<sup>83</sup> and the general layout of the *so* style of the Knapp garden is also similar to the one illustrated in Conder's book (Figure 1-32).

<sup>82</sup>Conder's book was also recommended by Basil Hall Chamberlain as an authority on Japanese garden [see Chamberlain, *Things Japanese being Notes on various subjects connected with Japan for the use of travellers and others* (London: John Murray, 1905), p. 208].

Other Japanese gardens created in America before the twentieth century were shown in several International Fair grounds. One of the first such gardens was at the Philadelphia Exposition in 1876. The garden was rendered in a trapezoidal lot placed in front of the

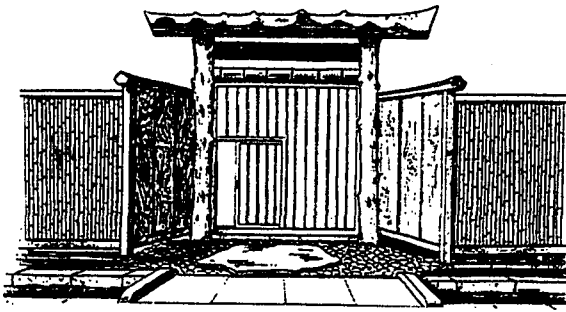


Figure 1-33. Japanese Garden Elements, in Morese's book.

Bazaar and Tea house (Figure 1-6). It was not an elaborated type of garden, but was simply created in a *so* style of flat garden with a garden pagoda, a few stone lanterns, hurdle and bent-branch screen fences which bordered the front yard of the Bazaar and the garden.<sup>84</sup>

More elaborate Japanese gardens were also created later in Chicago and San Francisco. The 1893 Chicago Fair included the Nippon Tea house (Figure 1-34) which was located

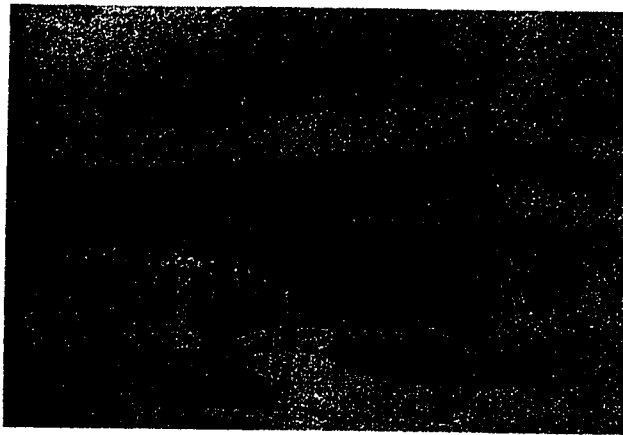
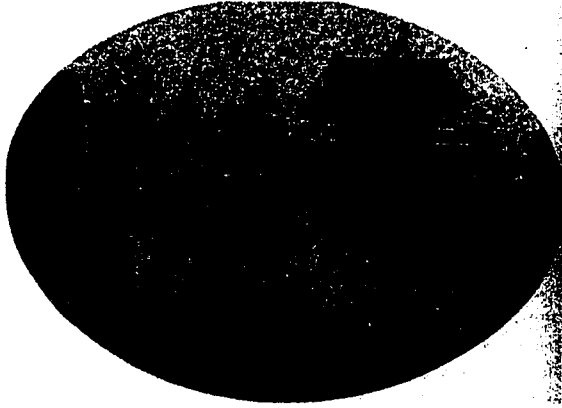


Figure 1-34. The Nippon Tea house at the Chicago Columbian Exposition, Chicago, 1893.

across the lagoon from the wooded island and designed for public refreshment. Around the Tea house built with a low-pitched double roof, the garden was rendered with a big stone lantern, bamboo fences, and dwarf trees. The most influential garden

<sup>83</sup>Such a rustic *tori* gate would be extensively adopted later in the West Coast houses designed by the Greene and Greene during the first decade of the twentieth century.

<sup>84</sup>For an illustration of *So* style flat garden, see Conder, *Landscape Gardening in Japan*, page between 143-44. But, from the illustrations of the garden at the Fair, one can not see any stepping stones which are one of the very characteristic Japanese garden features. It probably resulted from the consideration that since the garden was located in the entrance of the Bazaar, the existence of stepping stones could get in the way of visitors.



**Figure 1-35. Japanese Garden at the Mid Winter Exposition, San Francisco, 1894.**

before the turn of the century, however, was created at the West Coast for the California Midwinter International Exposition, held in San Francisco in 1894. The buildings and gardens created for the Japanese Village (Figure 1-35) attracted many visitors including the Greenes and Maybeck. The garden in the finished hill garden style

included rustic pavilions, a lotus pond, staggered stone bridges, and meandering paths. The Greene brothers later stated that they admired the Japanese village because of “the way they [the buildings] tied in with the landscape.”<sup>85</sup>

Before the turn of the century, the contribution of Japanese gardens to the development of American garden design appeared to be generally confined to such minor features as an occasional use of stone lanterns, bronze figures, or bamboo fences in American gardens. More prominent were loose interpretation of Italian garden features. For example, a New York banker, De Witt Clinton Blair made a Japanese garden at Blair Eyrie, Maine, in 1888. Although it was called a Japanese garden, it was essentially an Italian garden “with a Japanese bronze dragon coiled up on the fountain in the middle.”<sup>86</sup> Also in the West Coast, Page Brown and Joseph Worcester built the Church of the New Jerusalem in San Francisco, California in 1894. While the exterior of this small church recalls California missions and its simple interior and use of natural red wood represents Arts and Crafts

<sup>85</sup>Lancaster, “My Interviews with Greene and Greene,” *AIA Journal* (July 1957): 205.

touches,<sup>87</sup> its walled garden that Bruce Porter designed is done somewhat in Japanese manner with “a bronze Japanese bell” and “flowering plum and crab apple trees.”<sup>88</sup>

In America, before the turn of the century, there seemed to be very few private gardens that adopted a genuine Japanese garden style as in the garden of the Knapp house. The paucity derived partly from the absence of skilled garden designers and practitioners who could make Japanese gardens. To observe more extensive use of Japanese garden ideas in American garden design, one has to wait until the first decade of the twentieth century.

In sum, during the period between Commodore Perry’s visit to Japan in 1853 and the 1876 Philadelphia Centennial Exposition, where Americans first saw real Japanese buildings built in America, Japanese architecture had been known to American public only through books and articles on Japan and its culture. Alcock’s *The Capital of the Tycoon* included many illustrations of Japanese buildings, and American children saw pictures of Japanese houses in their primers. However, American architects’ first documented use of Japanese architectural forms began to appear not until after the 1876 Exposition. Looking at the Japanese exhibition buildings and reading books and articles about Japanese architecture which “rapidly multiplied” after the exposition, American architects incorporated some Japanese elements into their buildings. The first such

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<sup>86</sup>Mac Griswold and Eleanor Weller, *The Golden Age of American Gardens: Proud Owners, Private Estates, 1890-1940* (New York: Harry N. Abrams, Inc., 1991), p. 35.

<sup>87</sup>For the detailed research on the church, see Edward R. Bosley, “A.C. Schweinfurth,” in Robert Winter ed., *Toward a Simpler Way of Life: The Arts and Crafts Architecture of California* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1997), pp. 11-22, and for Arts and Crafts characteristics of its interior, see Charles Keeler, *San Francisco and Thereabout* (San Francisco: California Promotion Committee, 1903), pp. 41-42.

<sup>88</sup>Leslie M. Freudenheim and E. Sussman, *Building with Nature: Roots of the San Francisco Bay Region Tradition* (Santa Barbara and Salt Lake City: Peregrine Smith Inc., 1974), p.25, this shows an illustration of the garden.

The adaptation of Japanese garden features into a church garden seems to be appropriate to create a place for contemplation or prayer. This will appear later in the work of Pietro Belluschi (See chapter IV).

elements were the Japanese *ramma* and *kamoi*. McKim, Mead and White were the first architects who incorporated the features into their interior during the early 1880s and later, in 1889, Wright also adopted them in his own house. Among the books on Japanese architecture published after the Philadelphia Exposition, Dresser's, Morse's, and Conder's books were pivotal in educating American architects about the fine craftsmanship, picturesque quality of Japanese architecture, and characteristics of Japanese gardens. The lessons would be beneficial especially to West Coast architects such as Maybeck and Greene and Greene during the first decade of the twentieth century. Also influential Japanese buildings built in America were exhibition buildings at the 1893 Chicago Columbian Exposition and Cram's Knapp house and Tea Garden built in 1895-98. Many American architects such as Wright, Greene and Greene and Maybeck saw the exhibition buildings, and some aspects of the Japanese buildings would be reflected in their works at the turn of the century. The Japanese tea garden created at the Knapp house appeared to be influenced by Morse's *Japanese Homes* and Conder's *Landscape Gardening in Japan*. Along with the Japanese exhibition buildings and gardens, the two books would remain as the most important sources on Japanese architecture and gardening for American architects at the turn of the century and beyond.<sup>89</sup>

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<sup>89</sup>Influences of the two books with black and white illustrations appeared to decline after World War II when many books on the topic with color illustrations were published and when many Americans began to experience Japanese houses and gardens in Japan. This will be further discussed later.

## Chapter II. From the first Arts and Crafts Exhibition to the Advent of the World War One, 1897-1914

During the period between the first Arts and Crafts Exhibition held in America in 1897 and the advent of World War I in 1914, Japanese influence in American architecture entered a new phase. As discussed in chapter I, interest in Japanese architecture during the previous phase had focused on its splendid ornamentation and romantic picturesqueness. At the turn of the century, however, advocates of the Arts and Crafts movement such as Frank Lloyd Wright and Ralph Adams Cram began to recognize in traditional Japanese architecture a simplicity that resonated with their own architectural principles. The new phase was initiated by this recognition of Japanese simplicity, the formal qualities that American architects saw and admired in Japanese architecture. It was then accelerated by increasing interests in Japan provoked in part by a non-architectural event, the Russo-Japanese war of 1904-1905. During the war and after Japan's unexpected victory over Russia, Western attitudes toward Japan changed; this in turn affected Western interests in Japanese architecture, as exemplified in articles published in major architectural journals such as *Architectural Record*. Before the Russo-Japanese war, Japanese architecture had been generally regarded by American architects as having an exotic, primitive beauty, but one that for the most part was foreign and inapplicable to American buildings, just as the American public considered Japan as a small and remote country, that was curious but of little concern. After the war, however, American architects began to consider Japan as a powerful country, and Japanese architecture as something that could apply to their own buildings, something from which they could learn. These changing attitudes on the part of American architects and subsequently the

American public, which were affected by political shifts of wind as well as changing architectural tastes, led more American tourists to visit Japan.<sup>1</sup> The ever-increasing number of Americans, who had direct contact with Japan and its architecture, appeared to stimulate Americans' interest in acquiring Japanese architectural features for their homes as well as Japanese artifacts like ceramics or wood-block prints. This phase came to an end with the beginning of the World War I in 1914, which was "a turning point" in Western attitudes, aesthetic as well as political.<sup>2</sup>

### **Japanese Architecture and the Arts and Crafts Movement in America**

The origins of the Arts and Crafts Movement go back to England in the 1860s when William Morris and his colleagues founded the firm of Morris, Marshall and Faulkner, Fine Art Workmen in Painting, Carving, Furniture and the Metals. Morris's initial focus was to fight against the lowering of standards that had been brought about when the market was flooded with poorly designed, cheap machine-produced objects for the home. The polemicists of the movement such as John Ruskin, Thomas Carlyle and Morris advocated "a search for a way of life that was true" and "motifs derived from nature, a concern with simple form and complex details, a glorification of medieval art and society, and the exaltation of the vernacular [not some imported style]."<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>For the increasing interest in Japan on the part of the American public, see note 34 of this chapter.

<sup>2</sup>Jack J. Roth termed World War I as "a turning point in modern history ... from the standpoint of international politics and also from the point of view of European values and institutions" in Roth, "The First World War as a Turning Point," in Jack J. Roth ed., *World War I: A Turning Point in Modern History* (New York: Alfred Knopf, 1967), p.82. An impact of the war on American architects' view toward Japanese architecture will be discussed in chapter III.

<sup>3</sup>Richard Guy Wilson, "Divine Excellence: The Arts and Crafts Life in California," in Kenneth R. Trapp ed., *The Arts and Crafts Movement in California: Living the good Life* (New York: Abbeville Press Publishers, 1993), p. 17.

On April 5-16, 1897, the first U.S. exhibition of the Arts and Crafts was held in Boston. The influence of the exhibition was so great that as Beverly Brandt has pointed out, it “initiated a movement which spread throughout the United States at a rapid pace.”<sup>4</sup> The initial outcome was the founding of the Boston Society of Arts and Crafts in June 28 of the same year, which was patterned upon the Arts and Crafts Exhibition Society founded in London in 1888. Following the model established by the Boston Society, by 1904 similar societies “had been organized even in small villages” all over the States.<sup>5</sup> Founding members of Arts and Crafts societies such as Cram in Boston, Wright in Chicago and Maybeck in San Francisco held a common attitude toward Japanese architecture: they all favored both ‘Japanese forms and principles’ and ‘Gothic forms and spirits’ over ‘Renaissance forms and principles.’ These architects thus challenged the traditional academic values which had prevailed throughout the architectural milieu after the 1893 Chicago Fair. The prevailing style at the turn of the century represented in the work of Charles Follen McKim, Arthur Peabody or Thomas Hastings was based on Renaissance forms that they had learned at the *École des Beaux-Arts* in Paris. Maybeck was also trained at the French school. However, while he was there, unlike other American students in the school, he became more interested in Gothic forms than Classical ones. This was possible because before Maybeck began to study there in 1882, the classicists of the *École* added the study of Gothic forms to their traditional training in the Classical orders as a result of the battle of the style between the Classicists and

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<sup>4</sup>Beverly Brandt, “The Essential Link: Boston Architects and the Society of Arts and Crafts,” *Tiller* 2 (September-October 1983): 15.

<sup>5</sup>Max West, “The Revival of Handicraft in America,” U.S. Bureau of Labor, *Bulletin* 55 (November 1904), pp. 1597-98. Quoted in Wendy Kaplan, “Spreading the Crafts: The Role of the Schools,” in Wendy Kaplan

Gothicists. After leaving the school, Maybeck began to work for the office of Carrère and Hastings who had studied at the *École* with Maybeck. But, Maybeck's preference for Gothic forms led him to depart from his former roommate, who favored Renaissance forms.<sup>6</sup>

Like Maybeck, Cram also favored Gothic forms over Renaissance ones, especially the ones used in English Gothic churches built by architects such as Sir George Gilbert Scott or Henry Vaughan which were "Gothic in spirit and in truth."<sup>7</sup> Wright was also a strong supporter of the revival of "Gothic spirit," and rejected the inorganicism of the Renaissance. According to him, the Renaissance architecture is not organic because of its

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ed., *The Art that is Life: The Arts and Crafts Movement in America, 1875-1920* (Boston: Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, 1987), pp. 299-300.

<sup>6</sup>During the 1850s and 60s, the battle of the style between the Classicists and Gothicists had simmered at the *École*, and it peaked with the resignation of the romantic Gothicist Viollet-le-Duc in 1867. As a result of the battle, the *École* added the study of Gothic structure to their training.

Thus, when Maybeck entered the *École* in 1882, he was trained in not only Renaissance forms but Gothic ones as well. In fact, Maybeck was more interested in Gothic forms than Renaissance ones while he was in the school from 1882 to 1886, and it was the decisive factor when he left the architectural firm, Carrere & Hastings who preferred Renaissance forms and rejected Gothic forms. See Kenneth Cardwell, *Bernard Maybeck: Artisan, Architect, Artist* (Santa Barbara and Salt Lake City: Peregrine Smith, Inc., 1977), p. 17 and 25.

<sup>7</sup>Ralph Adams Cram, *My Life in Architecture* (Boston: Little, Brown, and Company, 1936), p. 38.

According to Cram, during the period between 1890 and 1900, three different architectural styles were prominent: Richardsonian Romanesque; Renaissance style of McKim, Carrère and Hastings; and Henry Vaughan's English Gothic. Among the three, Cram "turned [to those English masters like Pearson, Street, or Sir George Scott] for leadership and guidance, with Vaughan, of course, as the local mentor." (Ibid, p. 39).

Cram's Anglophile character was also considered by Shand-Tucci who discussed the founding members of the Boston Society. In *Boston Bohemia: 1881-1900, Ralph Adams Cram: Life and Architecture*, he compared Anglophile characteristics of the Arts and Crafts architects with Francophile characteristics of other conservative architects who were trained at the *Ecoles des Beaux-Arts* and favored Renaissance forms (Douglass Shand-Tucci, op. cit., pp. 298-300). For example, C. Sturgis, who helped Cram secure his first church job, was one of the organizers of the new Boston Architectural Club, and a great lover of English church art in general. Other members were also Anglophiles: the first president of the Society, Charles Eliot Norton; Cram's partner Goodhue; the stained glass designer Sarah Whiteman; and the president of the trustees of the Boston art museum Joseph Lindon Smith.

“attempt to use forms borrowed from other times and conditions...with total loss of inherent relation to the soul life of the people.”<sup>8</sup> Wright wrote in 1910 that

The ideal of the Renaissance will not [bring order out of chaos], for the Renaissance was inorganic. [Thus, ...] A revival of the Gothic spirit is needed in the art and architecture of modern life; Reviving the Gothic spirit does not mean using the forms of Gothic architecture handed down from the Middle Ages ... The spirit that fixed those forms [of the twelfth century] is the spirit that will fix the new forms [of the twentieth century]. Classicists and schools will deny the new forms, and find no “Gothic” in them ... Study of the great architecture of the world solely regard to the spirit that found expression in the forms should go with this. But before all should come the study of the nature of materials, the *nature* of the tools and possesses at command, and the *nature* of the thing they are to be called upon to do. A training of this sort was accorded the great artists of Japan.<sup>9</sup>

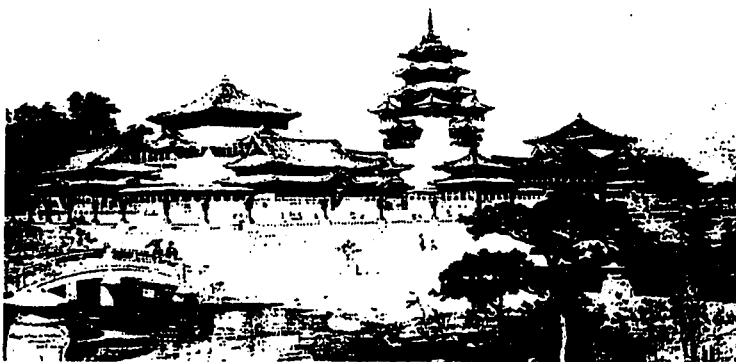


Figure 2-1. Cram, A Project for the Parliament House in Tokyo, Japan, 1898.

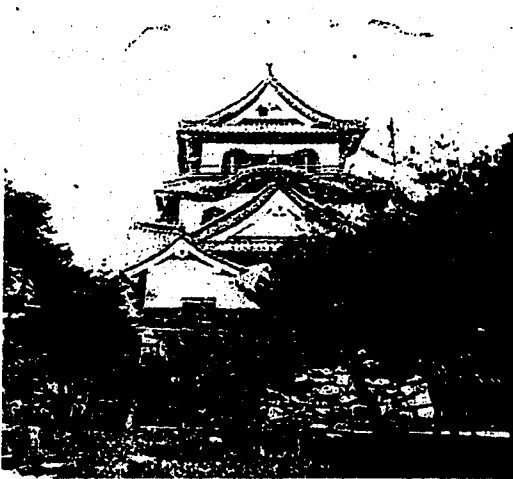
In short, the “Gothic spirit” meant, according to Wright, that architects should design buildings following organic principles like the Japanese artists did. These challengers, Maybeck, Cram and Wright,

<sup>8</sup>Wright, *Drawings and Plans of Frank Lloyd Wright: The Early Period (1893-1909)* (New York: Dover Publications, Inc., 1983), preface to his 1910 Wasmuth Portfolio.

<sup>9</sup>Ibid. He also praised Japanese artists’ knowledge of organic nature: “A knowledge of cause and effect in line, color and form, as found in organic nature, furnishes guide lines within which an artist may sift materials, test motives and direct aims, thus roughly blocking out, at least, the rational basis of his ideas and ideals. what is of great value to the artist in research of [organic nature] is knowledge of those facts of relation, those qualities of line, form and color which are themselves a language of sentiment, and characterize the pine as a pine as distinguished from those determining the willow as willow; those characteristic traits which the Japanese seize graphically and unerringly reduce to simple geometry; the graphic soul of the thing, as seen in the geometrical analysis of Hokusai. Korin was the conscious master of the essential in whatever he rendered, and his work stands as a convincing revelation of the soul of the thing he portrayed.”

For discussion of this topic, see also Richards Guy Wilson, “American Arts and Crafts Architecture: Radical though Dedicated to the Cause Conservative,” in Wendy Kaplan ed., *The Art that is Life* (Boston: Museum of Fine Arts, 1987): 101-131.

were known as “Gothicists” or “Romanticists” at the turn of the century in contradistinction to the Classicists who supported the Renaissance and academic Beaux-Arts designs.<sup>10</sup> It was thus natural for such Romanticists as Wright and Cram to find simple and organic qualities in Japanese architecture which were not only appealing but also lent authority to their support of the Arts and Crafts principles.



**Figure 2-2. Hikone Castle and Yashiki Gates, in Cram’s article 1898.**

Cram was an exemplary Gothicist who admired both Japanese architecture and Arts and Crafts principles. Not only was he a founding member of the Boston Arts and Crafts Society, but also built a Japanese-style house for the Reverend Knapp, as discussed in chapter I. He was also one of the earliest prominent American architects who visited Japan. In 1898, a year after the Arts and Crafts exhibition in Boston, he

went to Japan to present a project (Figure 2-1) for the new Parliament House in Tokyo that the Japanese government was then planning to build. The project drawn by Cram and his partner Bertram Goodhue appeared to be based on Japanese prototypes built in the early Edo period such as the Hikone Castle and some *Yashiki* gates (Figure 2-2) that Cram would illustrate in his article he published in the *Architectural Review* in 1898 right

<sup>10</sup>The definition of “Gothicist” made by Bertram Grosvener Goodhue, who was one of the founding members of the Boston Arts and Crafts Society and Cram’s partner, is in the same vein. In his article published in the *Craftsman* magazine, Goodhue wrote that “We are all divided, broadly speaking, in two categories: Conservative and Radical; Reactionary and Revolutionist; the Satisfied and the Unsatisfied - if you like, Classicist and Gothicist - though Romanticist seems to me a better and more exact characterization than Gothicist,” [Goodhue, “The Romanticist Point of View,” *Craftsman* VIII (June 1905): 332].

after his trip to Japan.<sup>11</sup> The castle in the center and extensive use of upturned, or *karahafu* entrance eaves on the series of double-story buildings show Cram's dependence on these Japanese prototypes. Then, where did Cram and Goodhue learn about the Japanese features? As discussed in chapter I, Cram probably learned of Japanese architecture through his client Reverend Knapp as well as Morse's *Japanese Homes and Their Surroundings* while he was designing the Knapp house. In addition, as Cram recollected in 1930 in his autobiography, Cram and Goodhue learned of some other "works of Japanese architecture" while they "studied intensively for a few weeks to draw plans" for the Parliament Houses in Tokyo in 1898.<sup>12</sup> Although it is not known about the "other works" they studied, it appears that the other works might have included illustrations of Japanese castles and other buildings with the *karahafu* motifs because Morse's book did not include such Japanese features in detail. In the "other works," they selected the Japanese motifs used in their project as the representative Japanese features that would be appropriate to the new Parliament project. However, according to Cram's recollection made in 1930, his design philosophy for the project was to erect a modernized Japanese building which was "based on the indigenous architecture of the Ashikaga [or Muromachi period, 1394-1572] and Fujiwara periods [or late Heian period, 898-1185], but sufficiently adapted to modern conditions."<sup>13</sup> He did not mention about the early Edo period or exterior features like the *karahafu* eaves. Interestingly, Cram's recollection appeared to be colored with his attitude toward Japanese architecture he had

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<sup>11</sup>Cram, "The Later Architecture of Japan," *Architectural Review* V (1898), 79.

*Yashiki* is the term refers to an enclosure for a Daimyo's residence.

<sup>12</sup>Cram, *My Life in Architecture*, pp. 98-99.

established during his trip to Japan after finishing the project. In other words, before he had gone to Japan, Cram favored the Edo building features such as *karahafu* eaves used in the Himeji Castle or the Hakone Castle, but after the trip he became to regard the similarly ornamented *karahafu* used in Nikko of the Edo period as the one that “burst into a riot of unparalleled decoration.”<sup>14</sup>

Apparently, the changing attitude resulted from his new recognition of Japanese “simplicity” through his direct contact with Japan. Although his project was not finally selected, his trip to Japan was pivotal in reinforcing his design preference for “simplicity” which was one of the most important aims of the Arts and Crafts architects. As a result of the trip, Cram found in Japanese domestic architecture something “which is good apart from its perfect adaptation to oriental conditions, something that could be advantageously adopted in western building [a quality which is] ... certainly simplicity.”<sup>15</sup> As he stated in his autobiography, *My Life in Architecture*, his direct contact with Japanese architecture and his finding “simplicity” in it made on him so deep an impression that he wrote many articles and lectured on Japanese architecture after the trip. Later in 1905 he included the articles and the lecture manuscripts in his *Impressions of Japanese Architecture*.<sup>16</sup>

Here, it is important to note the timing of publication of Cram’s book *Impressions of Japanese Architecture*, published in December 1905. While what Cram learned on his trip to Japan in 1898 was a stimulus for him to write the articles on Japanese architecture,

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<sup>13</sup>Cram, *My Life in Architecture*, p. 98. Cram’s strong interests in the architecture of the Fujiwara was reflected in his *Impressions of Japanese Architecture*, especially when he championed the Ho-o-do, which was built in the Fujiwara period, as the culmination of Japanese architecture (Cram, op. cit., p. 50).

<sup>14</sup>Cram, “The Later Architecture of Japan,” 78.

<sup>15</sup>Cram, “An Architectural Experiment,” *Architectural Record* VIII (July-September 1898), 85.

the Russo-Japanese war was also a strong catalyst to write more about it. Commenting on his “enthusiasm” which led him to write articles on Japanese architecture published in *Impressions of Japanese Architecture* of 1905, Cram remarked in 1930 that

They [the articles] were written under the influence of great and, I still think, justifiable enthusiasm. The land and the people were indeed a real revelation ... The various articles were actually written, the most of them, *during the Russo-Japanese War when again my enthusiasm for Japan was at a high pitch* (my italics)<sup>17</sup>

The publication of Cram’s book in 1905, whether it was intended or not, was timely because Japan’s victory in the Russo-Japanese war in the same year was one of the most decisive factors in stimulating Westerners’ interest in the magnificent Japanese culture as well as its military power. The war was of particular interest for Westerners because the war was, as an editor of *American Historical Review* noted in 1911, “a real landmark in history, perhaps even a watershed the elevation of which forces into fresh directions the rivers and streams of international life.”<sup>18</sup> The editor continues:

Prior to it [the war], the Far East was regarded by the nations of European blood as a prey, a spoil, ripe for division. The eagles had gathered from afar and had already fixed their talons on the carcass. The *banzais* of the Mikado’s victorious soldiers disturbed these would-be feasters and indefinitely postponed their dream of a rich banquet. For the first time since Mahomet II converted the church of St. Sophia into a Mahomedan

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<sup>16</sup>Cram at least once read a paper about Japanese architecture before the Boston Arts and Crafts Society, and then included the paper in his 1905 book. See “Author’s Note” in his 1905 edition of *Impressions of Japanese Architecture*.

<sup>17</sup>Ralph Adams Cram, *Impressions of Japanese Architecture and the allied arts* (New York: Dover Publications Inc., 1966), p. 22. This passage was not included in the first edition published in 1905 by The Baker & Taylor Company of New York. Later in its 1930 edition, the passage was added to its Introduction.

That the Russo-Japanese War was a catalyst for writing the articles included in his *Impressions* was also stated in Cram’s conclusion of the 1930 edition: “As I already have said, these impressions were gathered just after the war with China [Sino-Japanese War of 1894-95] and during the Spanish-American War. Most of the papers were written during the contest between Russia and Japan with the resulting victorious war” (p. 224). Thus, it is clear that the wars stimulated his interests in Japan and its architecture.

<sup>18</sup>Anonymous, “The Literature of the Russo-Japanese War, I,” *American Historical Review*, 16 (April 1911), 509.

mosque the armies of the East had repulsed decisively the armies of the West, and Christians have fallen back before the unbaptized.<sup>19</sup>

Along with their winning the war, the architecture of “Mikado’s victorious soldiers” also captured the Westerners’ interests. In her introduction to the article, “Japanese Houses,” published shortly after the war in the *Architectural Record* of 1906, Katharine Budd wrote of the wonder that contemporary Westerners felt regarding Japan: “The eyes of the whole world are directed towards Japan at this moment. We are filled with wonder as we watch the persevering little men overcoming one difficulty after another [one war after another] in the face of formidable obstacles.”<sup>20</sup>

The war led American architects not only to a greater understanding of Japan and its cultural heritage, but also to change their views on Japanese architecture. During the last quarter of the nineteenth century, structures used in Japanese houses did not provide a kind of lesson from which American architects could learn. But the Japanese structure became a valuable and practical lesson for American architects of the first decade of the twentieth century. A comparison between Morse’s and Budd’s views on the same topic highlights this difference. Morse stated at the conclusion of his book, *Japanese Homes and Their Surroundings* of 1885, that

It would be obviously absurd to suggest as a model for our own houses such a structure as a Japanese house. Leaving out the fact that it is not adapted to the rigor of our climate or to the habits of our people its fragile and delicate fittings if adopted by us, would be reduced to a mass of kindlings in a week ...<sup>21</sup>

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<sup>19</sup>Ibidem.

<sup>20</sup>Katharine C. Budd, “Japanese Houses,” *Architectural Record* 19 (January 1906): 3-26. She did not explain the content of the “difficulty.” But, from the year the article was written, it is probable that “one difficulty after another” meant that as soon as they overcame the Sino-Japanese War (1894-95), they faced the Russo-Japanese War (1904-05).

<sup>21</sup>Morse, op. cit., 347-48.

For Morse, the Bostonian, Japanese houses built for a temperate climate were not an appropriate model for the houses of the East Coast region with its climatic extremes. In contrast to Morse's view on Japanese houses, however, for Budd it was not absurd to recommend the structural methods of Japanese houses for American country houses. In 1906, Budd suggested exposed structural elements and natural use of wood and the massive roof of Japanese houses as some adaptable models for American houses:

The great fault of these [Japanese] houses is their icy coolness in winter ... We may well study them [Japanese houses] in order to put some of their good points into execution in our own country houses. .. there is no reason why we cannot take some of their ideas and have them carried out by our own artisans ... Let us try to avoid shams in constructing our buildings; the frame should be of heavy timbers, left, if possible, without concealment, the woodwork throughout selected for beauty of grain and simply rubbed to a dull polish, the roof should be covered with permanent material and be massive and weather tight.<sup>22</sup>

Although Budd is still concerned about the ineffectiveness of Japanese houses in winter, her positive attitude towards Japanese structure differed greatly from Morse's relative lack of interest. This suggests that around the end of the Russo-Japanese War, there was a shift of American architects' attitudes toward Japanese architecture and its adaptability for American buildings.

Budd was not alone at the time in holding these views. Her interest to "avoid shams in constructing buildings" was in the same vein as the architectural honesty or simplicity preached by the advocates of the Arts and Crafts Movement. The movement was

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<sup>22</sup>Katharine C. Budd, "Japanese Houses," *Architectural Record* 19 (January 1906): 3-26. Budd was active during the early twentieth century in writing articles on Asian architecture. For example, she also published an article on a type of architecture derived from Indian architecture, "The Bungalow in America," in the *Architectural Review* XI (December 1904): 221-24.

Unlike my analysis in chapter I, however, she did not relate American bungalows to a Japanese prototype, but to the Indian ones which was and has been a generally accepted view.

promoted by supporters like Wright, the Greenes, Cram and Gustav Stickley who began to publish the *Craftsman Magazine* in 1901. Stickley dedicated its first issue to William Morris, thus positioning the publication as the voice of the American Arts and Crafts movement. The magazine was issued from October 1901 through December 1916, and then, due to bankruptcy, merged with *Art World* in January 1917. During the sixteen years of its publication, it frequently included articles on various aspects of Japanese art and architecture such as gardens, bronze, box, prints, and book illustration.<sup>23</sup> Among the articles, highly germane to the present topic was “Japanese Architecture and its Relation to the Coming American Style.” In this 1906 article, an editor --probably Stickley-- favorably reviewed Cram’s book, *Impressions of Japanese Architecture*. In the review, the author identified “the fundamental principles of architecture” which are common to both the Arts and Crafts architecture and traditional Japanese architecture:

... a return to honesty and simplicity in construction, rejection of all false ornamentation and the meeting of all actual requirements in the simplest and most direct way. [That is,] the architectural gospel preached by *The Craftsman* ever since the issue of its first number is here [in Cram’s description of Japanese architecture] echoed in no uncertain tones, and from the other side of the world [from Japan].<sup>24</sup>

As the editor of the *Craftsman* recognized, at the beginning of the 20th-century, the structural “honesty and simplicity” in Japanese architecture was perfectly matched with

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<sup>23</sup>G. Stickley was first and foremost a builder of furniture. By the early 20th-century his furniture company had turned to the craftsman type from eclectic furniture during the 1890’s. From 1901 to 1916 he edited and published the monthly magazine, *The Craftsman* until 1916.

<sup>24</sup>Anonymous, “Japanese Architecture and its Relation to the Coming American Style,” *The Craftsman* 10 (April 1906), 192-212. This was the first article concerning Japanese architecture published in the magazine, although at least 11 articles on Japanese art such as gardening, Ukiyo-e painting, or decorative art were published before 1906.

This article represented the same arguments on ornamentation that Wright and Cram had supported. Commenting on a lesson he learned from Japanese art in his early career, Wright recollected in 1954 that

the gospels of the Arts and Crafts Movement preached by the *Craftsman* magazine, and thus provided external points of reference with which to reinforce the principles of the new movement then spread-out in America.

In 1907, the *Craftsman* magazine published Henrietta Keith's article, "The Trail of Japanese Influence in our Modern Domestic Architecture." In it, in terms of the adaptability of Japanese architecture on American soil, Keith stated a similar view to the one published by Budd earlier in the 1906 issue of the *Architectural Record*:

While the mere draughtsman, wedded to conventional forms and accustomed methods, would find Japanese architecture only absurd and impracticable, there are architects who are artists as well, and who find in these [Japanese] sources a delightfully suggestive and enriching field of study.<sup>25</sup>

Keith featured Greene and Greene of Pasadena, California as exemplary architects who are also artists, and illustrated their Theodore Irwin house built in Pasadena in 1906. In the article, she attributed the Greenes' use of bracketing, graceful curves of the roofs, and the treatment of the chimneys and windows to Japanese architectural features which I will discuss shortly.

One can thus observe a distinctive shift of American architects' attitudes both in theory and practice toward Japanese architecture and its adaptability for American buildings during the first decade of the twentieth century. Cram was an important contributor who invigorated such a shift. Unlike the Victorian ornamentist Dresser who regarded the shrines of Nikko and its splendid ornaments as the culmination of Japanese architecture

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"A lesson in elimination of the insignificant and in the beauty of the natural use of materials [*The Natural House*, reprinted ed. (London: Pitman and Sons, 1971), p. 18.

<sup>25</sup>Henrietta P. Keith, "The Trail of Japanese Influences in Our Modern Domestic Architecture," *Craftsman* XII (July 1907): 446-51.

in 1882, Cram, who was the founding member of the Boston Society of Arts and Craft,<sup>26</sup> considered as early as in 1898 the less embellished and simpler Hō-ō-dō (Figure 1-27) as the greatest architecture in Japan. It appeared that Cram learned of the greatness of the Hō-ō-dō through his personal contacts with Ernest Fenollosa and Kakuzo Okakura he had met during his trip to Japan in 1898.<sup>27</sup> In the trip, Cram was much intrigued by the Hō-ō-dō and thus championed it first in “The Early Architecture of Japan,” published immediately after his return from Japan in 1898 and then in his *Impressions of Japanese Architecture* in 1905. In these articles, Cram compared the architectural value of the heavily ornamented Nikko with the simpler Hō-ō-dō :

To the Western traveler it [Japanese architecture] seems only fanciful and frail, a thing unworthy of study; the shrines of Nikko are assumed to be the highest point attained ... the Hō-ō-dō of Byodo-in, are completely ignored, ...This is unjust and absurd. No description and no photograph can give any idea of the almost inconceivable grace and dignity of this unique building ... In delicacy of proportion and refinement of composition it [the Hō-ō-dō] marks the culmination of Japanese architecture;<sup>28</sup>

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<sup>26</sup>It is interesting to note Wright, Greene & Greene, and Cram's common interest or shared ideas in both Japanese architecture and the Arts and Crafts Movement. For Cram and Wright, see D. Shand-Tucci, *Boston Bohemia 1881-1900, Ralph Adams Cram: Life and Architecture* (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1995), pp. 195-6, 316, 409-10, and Cram's role in the Boston Society, pp. 298-300. For Greene & Greene, see Makinson, *passim*, especially, p.58.

<sup>27</sup>Evidently, although he had some knowledge of Japanese architecture even before his trip to Japan, it was right after the trip that Cram began to write about the Hō-ō-dō. By 1898 when he went to Japan, although its replica was exhibited in the 1893 Chicago Fair, the importance of the Hō-ō-dō was not much known to neither Cram nor other American architects. Thus, it was during his trip to Japan that Cram learned of the Hō-ō-dō perhaps from Fenollosa or his close friend Okakura who was not only a specialist in Japanese art and architecture, but more importantly who was responsible for the reproduction of the Hō-ō-dō into the Ho-o-den which was the exhibition house at the Chicago Fair.

For Okakura's critical role in the Fair, see Nute, *op. cit.*, chapter 3, especially p.50. Fenollosa, in his speech delivered at the opening of the Chicago Fair, mentioned of Okakura's role that “The wise touch of his [Okakura's] is everywhere felt, from the architectural casket which reproduces the interesting proportions and decorations of the Biodoin temple at Uji, founded in the eleventh century, to the new departures in shape and glaze of the humblest pottery.”

<sup>28</sup>Cram, *Japanese Architecture*, p. 36, 50. From Cram's statement, it is not obvious that the Ho-o-do was ignored by both Japanese and the Westerners or by only the Westerners. He wrote that In nearly every instance those who have written most intelligently of Japan and of her art have shown no rudimentary appreciation of her architecture: it is dismissed with a sentence. To the Western traveler... (p. 36).”

For Cram, as for the contemporary European architect Adolph Loos ornaments were the crime,<sup>29</sup> the dramatic and pictorial effects of the colored and carved ornaments in Nikko were “unhealthy, exotic, [and] decadent,” and its decoration was “beauty gone mad, and bursting beyond all bounds.”<sup>30</sup> Cram then continued to attack Victorian ornamentation, saying that “it was precisely what was happening in the West, [where] luxury [was] sucking the heart out of art ... the glory was unspeakable, but the ashes that remained were dry and dead.”<sup>31</sup> Cram’s appreciation of the Hō-ō-dō was noted in a book written by Okakura Kakuzo from whom Cram learned of the importance of the Hō-ō-dō. In *The Book of Tea* published in 1906, Okakura called Cram the first Westerner to recognize “the remarkable perfection of Japan’s great temples [such as the Hō-ō-dō].”<sup>32</sup>

In sum, such a preference of Cram for the “simple, honest” Hō-ō-dō over the “ornate, exotic” Nikko reflected a significant change in the attitude of contemporary American (largely Western) architects towards Japanese architecture. The changing attitude resulted first from their changing values in their own architectural principles, i.e., from the

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However, if one consider Okakura’s statement quoted in the note 32 of this chapter, it appears that Cram meant the Westerners’ view.

It is fun to compare the phrases Dresser used for the *indescribable* Nikko to those Cram applied for the *inconceivable* Ho-o-do, which is cited above. Describing the beauty of the Nikko, Dresser wrote, “I feel that any words that I can use must fail to convey any adequate idea of the conscientiousness of the work, the loveliness of the composition ... (see chapter I, p. 29).

<sup>29</sup>Adolph Loos, *Ornament and Crime*, 1908. Loos wrote in it that “the evolution of culture marches with the elimination of ornament from useful objects.”

<sup>30</sup>Cram, 1905, p. 106.

<sup>31</sup>Ibid.

<sup>32</sup>Kakuzo Okakura, *The Book of Tea* (Rutland and Tokyo: Charles E. Tuttle Company, 1956), pp. 53-4. The book was first published in 1906. It is notable in that it introduced Lao-tze’s idea of void or spatial concept of architecture to the Western architects like Wright: According to Lao-tze, “the reality of a room, for instance, was to be found in the vacant space enclosed by the roof and walls, not the roof and walls themselves” (Okakura, p.45). After reading this passage in Okakura’s book, Wright wrote of the affinities between his spatial concept and oriental one: “For a long time, I thought I had ‘discovered’ it, only to find after all that this idea of the interior space being the reality of the building was ancient and

heavily-ornamented Victorian to the simple Arts and Crafts. Second, it derived from their new views on Japan as a result of the Russo-Japanese war, i.e., from considering Japan as an exotic, remote country to a modern country of military and cultural power. In other words, by the turn of the century, American architects, who supported the Arts and Crafts movement, needed a fresh but respected source as an alternative to the prevailing Victorian and the academic Beaux-Arts architecture. Accordingly, they found the inspiration, which would lend authority to their principles, in such past or foreign architectures as California Mission style or Japanese architecture which had been successfully validated in practice for centuries. These architectures were newly appreciated and incorporated into American architecture as they became an inspiration for the Arts and Crafts architecture.<sup>33</sup>

The period of 1897-1914 was a most prolific period for American Gothicist, or Arts and Crafts architects, who had been influenced more or less by Japanese architecture. The success of the Japanese-influenced architects during the first decade of the twentieth century was partly due to the increasing interest in Japan and its architecture. As discussed earlier, the interest was spurred by Japanese buildings built in the exposition

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oriental...Reading it [*the Book of Tea*], I came across this sentence[one cited above].” Wright, *The Natural House*, (New York: Mentor Books, 1954), p.222-23.

<sup>33</sup>While in the mid-19th century, William Morris and John Ruskin looked to the medieval arts and crafts guilds for inspiration, at the turn of the century, many homes and furniture published by the *Craftsman Magazine* were inspired by California Mission and Japanese architecture. The California Mission Style refers to the building style of the California mission complexes built from 1769 when Spanish military and missionary forces from Mexico advanced into California. They consisted of a *presidio* (a fortified walled enclosure), a mission, and a *pueblo* (a cluster of adobe or thatched huts). In his article “A Craftsman House Founded on the California Mission Style” published in *Craftsman Home* in 1909, Stickley enumerated the features of the Mission architecture: “...the low broad proportions of the building and the use of shallow, ...the thick cement walls are left rough ....the roof, which is low pitched and has a fairly strong projection...simplicity of buildings materials, employment of constructive features as the only decoration, and the recognition of the color element which is so necessary in bringing about the necessary harmony

sites and Japanese houses and temples published in the books and articles. It was also stimulated by ever-increasing direct contacts of American tourists with Japanese art and architecture in Japan. For example, during the early twentieth century, especially after the Russo-Japanese War, one-half of the total foreign tourists to Japan was American,<sup>34</sup> among whom were Wright and his former clients the Willitts.<sup>35</sup> Wright and his contemporaries such as Cram, the Greenes, Maybeck, Purcell and Elmslie, and Louis Christian Mullgardt, all incorporated Japanese features into their architectural forms and succeeded in creating their own individual styles at the turn of the century. But after around 1914 their architecture was not favorably received by the new generation of clients of the new America which was “fully industrialized, purse-proud and insecure.”<sup>36</sup> Accordingly, American architects became less interested in both Japanese and the Arts and Crafts characteristics, but more focused on academic correctness or studied picturesqueness. This shift will be discussed in chapter III.

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between the house and its surroundings” in Stickley, *Craftsman Home* (New York: Random House: 1995), p. 9-11 (a facsimile version of the 1909 edition).

<sup>34</sup>In an article written in 1914 concerning hotels in Japan, Aisaku Hayashi, the directing manager of the Imperial Hotel, Tokyo, Japan, wrote that “In Japanese hotels American influence is great, which may be justified by the fact that fifty per cent of our visitors are Americans.” In Hayashi, “Hotels in Japan,” *Japan Magazine* (May 1914):37-40.

According to an article regarding the history of the Imperial Hotel, after or even during the Russo-Japanese war, the hotel “was suddenly filled with foreign visitors,” Imperial Hotel, *The Imperial Hotel, 1890-1990: 100th Anniversary* (Tokyo: Imperial Hotel Advertisement Department, 1990), p. 13.

<sup>35</sup>The Wrights visited Japan in 1905 with the Willitts for whom Wright built the Willitt house, in Highland Park, Illinois in 1902.

<sup>36</sup>Vincent Scully, *Modern Architecture: The Architecture of Democracy*, (New York: George Braziller, 1984), first published in 1961, P. 29.

## Works

In the Knapp house (Figure 1-22) built in 1895-98 in Fall River, Massachusetts, Cram incorporated Japanese features such as *irimoya* roofs or flaring eaves, which were “studied faithfully from Japanese examples” represented in Morse’s *Japanese Homes and Their Surroundings*. Its tea house was also built “absolutely Japanese in design, construction and finishing.”<sup>37</sup> Other than the Knapp house and its tea house, only a few more houses designed by Cram represented Japanese influences. In Cram’s Gale house (Figure 2-3) built in Williamstown, Massachusetts in 1890, Ann Miner Daniel observed some Japanese influences: “the windows of [the house] have a Japanese quality in their simple, sleek setting in dark

frames ... The curve of the dormer roofs owes also to Oriental influence.”<sup>38</sup> Overall the house shows features such as shingled exterior, large grid windows, an open loggia or verandah, a

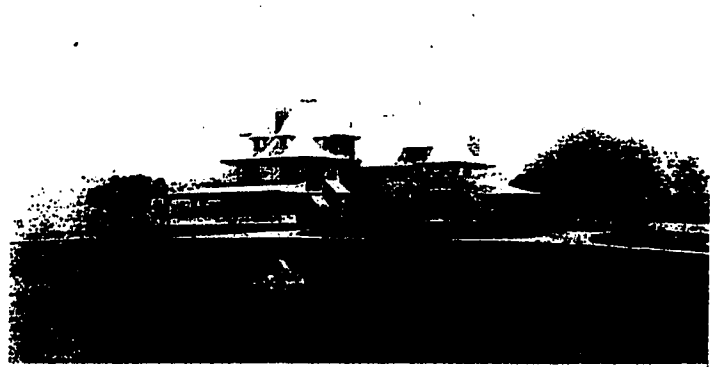
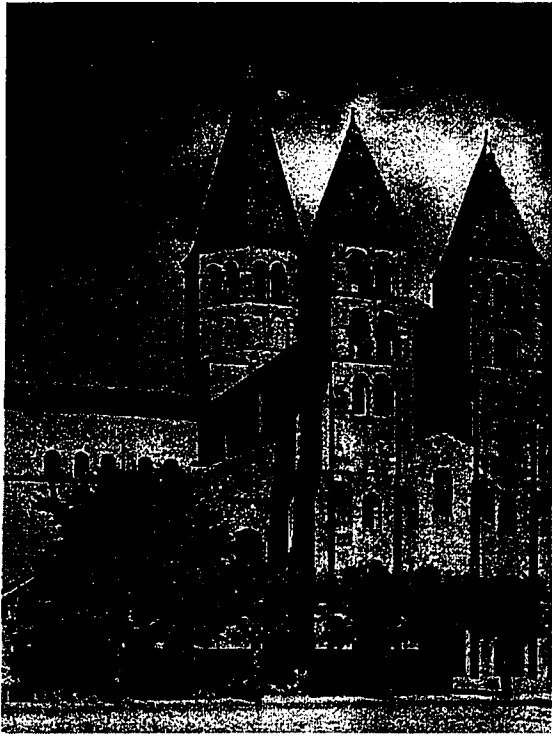


Figure 2- 3. Cram, the Gale house, Williamstown, Massachusetts, 1890.

winding carriage drive and Gothic chimneys. While most of these features were common in the contemporary Shingle-Style houses, the “curve of the dormer roofs” was not an ordinary Shingle-Style feature. The roof lines appeared to have been derived from

<sup>37</sup>Cram, “An Architectural Experiment,” *Architectural Record* VIII (July-September 1898): 83 and 85. The house was discussed in chapter II.

<sup>38</sup>Ann Miner Daniel, “The Early Architecture of Ralph Adams Cram, 1889-1902,” (Ph.D dissertation, University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill, 1978), pp. 42-43.



**Figure 2-4. The Paray-le-Monial, Saone et Loire, France, 12th-century.**

Japanese and/or Romanesque prototypes. Cram could have learned of the curvilinear line of the roof from a similar Japanese roof type illustrated in Morse's *Japanese Homes* in 1886. Or he could have learned of the flaring curve form at the end of the roof from the medieval polygonal spire. The flaring roofs of octagonal or pyramidal spires over towers had been used in French Romanesque churches such as Paray-le-Monial (Figure 2-4) built in Saone et Loire or St. Austremoine of Orcval both built in the

early twelfth century. The same type of spires had often been adopted in American domestic architecture designed in the early 1870s, like Henry Hobson Richardson's F.W. Andrew house built in Newport, Rhode Island in 1872 as well as public buildings like the West End Hotel built in Bar Harbor, Maine in 1878-79.<sup>39</sup>

Shortly after being so impressed with the Hō-ō-dō, Cram and his partner Goodhue designed the Richmond Court Apartment (Figure 2-5) in Brooklyn, Massachusetts in 1899. Cram was apparently influenced by English Tudor and Elizabethan country houses

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The caption on a picture of this house in Shand-Tucci's *Boston Bohemia* (figure 32, p. 98) reads "[the house] discloses the house's curiously modern and almost Japanese feeling." He, however, offers no further discussion on what he means by an "almost Japanese feeling" of the house.

<sup>39</sup>Hotel Thorndike, built in Jamestown, Rhode Island c. 1885, also had the same type of roofs. For the illustrations, see Scully, *op. cit.*, figures 4, 5, 39, and 85.

for the E-shaped plan, considering Cram's Anglophile character.<sup>40</sup> Although it is less likely, Cram's plan for the apartment could be derived in part from that of the Hō-ō-dō, (Figure 1-27). Both plans represented horseshoe-type plans and consisted of three wings with open courts between the central wing and the two side wings projected forward. Considering that the Richmond Court was "one of the first of the open court type in the United States"<sup>41</sup> and Cram praised the Hō-ō-dō, as "the culmination of Japanese architecture" in terms of its "delicacy of proportion and refinement of composition,"<sup>42</sup> it is likely that he incorporated the Japanese horseshoe plan for his apartment house he designed right after the trip to Japan. In other words, the E-shaped or horseshoe plan was not a unique Japanese feature, it had been frequently used both in Western and Oriental architecture.<sup>43</sup> However, among other possible sources, the horseshoe plan of the Hō-ō-dō is a possible source for the Richmond Court because Cram used the plan right after his trip to Japan for the first time in his career.

In light of Cram's enthusiasm for Japanese architecture, it is a surprising that he held to Gothic forms and structure and did not incorporate any distinctive Japanese features into his work designed after the trip, except, perhaps, the Richmond Court of 1899. It can be partly explained by the fact that he was basically a church architect, and his use of Gothic forms might be a result of the building type--church, and of his materials--stone, not

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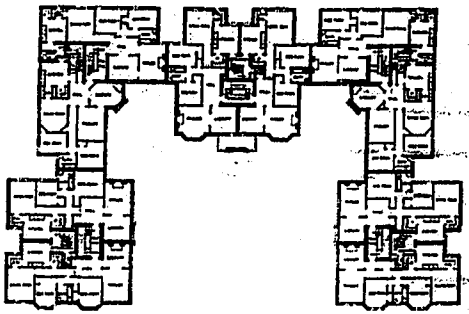
<sup>40</sup>I am grateful to Professors Fred Levy and David Streatfield for drawing my attention to these English prototypes. For Cram's Anglophile character, see my note 7 of this chapter.

<sup>41</sup>Shand-Tucci, *Boston Bohemia*, p. 320.

<sup>42</sup>Cram, *Impressions*, p. 50. This article was originally published in the *Architectural Review* in 1889.

Both plans are also different in many aspects. While the central wing of the Ho-o-do has a rear wing which is a long, enclosed corridor, that of the Richmond Court does not have a rear wing.

<sup>43</sup>In Oriental architecture, it is well known that the horseshoe planning of the Japanese *Shinden* style houses was derived from the Chinese T'ang Dynasty palace architecture.



**Figure 2- 5. Cram & Googhue, the Richmond Court Apartment, Massachusetts, 1899.**

wood as in Japanese architecture.<sup>44</sup> Since the 1880s when he “became so very ‘Gothic,’” his admiration of Japanese architecture appeared to result from the similarities between Japanese and Gothic architecture.<sup>45</sup> Comparing the similar structures used in both architectures, Cram wrote that “[Japanese native architecture] is the perfect style in wood, as Gothic may be called the perfect style in stone.”<sup>46</sup>

Cram’s view on the structural similarities between Gothic and Japanese architecture was further developed by his friend and foremost architectural critic of the time, Russell Sturgis. In a chapter devoted to “Japan[ese architecture]” in *A History of Architecture* published in 1909, Sturgis made an interesting comparison between ‘framed wall structures’ used in both Japanese and Gothic architecture:

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Interestingly enough, like Cram might do, Wright also adopted similar type of horseshoe plan after his trip to Japan in 1905. It will be discussed shortly.

<sup>44</sup>During his career, he and his firm designed more than 60 church in the Gothic style such as St. Thomas church in New York City, East Liberty Presbyterian church in Pittsburgh and the Cathedral church of St. John the Divine in New York City. For a complete list of the churches designed by the firm, see Douglass Shand Tucci, *Ralph Adams Cram: American Medievalist* (Boston: Boston Public Library, 1975), pp. 43-44.

<sup>45</sup>Cram, *My Life in Architecture*, 1936, p. 35 & 102. According to Cram, during the 1880s, he “became so very ‘Gothic.’” And even after his trip to Japan, he held onto Gothic principles. He wrote of his life-long avowed principles that “[in 1900] ...Naturally the question was: Should the new buildings follow the lead of very conspicuous, cream-colored classical innovations, or should these be resolutely ignored and a return made to the “Gothic” precedent? There were fewer then who practiced along these latter lines than there are now [1930s], moreover our churches had got to be rather well known, and so, in order that the forthcoming ‘battle of the styles’ should be well balanced, we were included in the list, it being assumed that we should hold to our avowed principles.”

<sup>46</sup>Cram, *Impressions*, p. 123. Cram did not specify what kind of native Japanese architecture or Gothic architecture. He referred to general building materials of both architectures.

In many of these peculiarities of Japanese decorative building [such as the open spaces in a timber-framed wall which may be filled with bas-reliefs] the resemblance to the ways of the Gothic work is curiously close. The Gothic architects also have a structure made up of slender uprights with great spaces between them, which spaces are filled with light walls, stone or glass, mere screens against the weather, without constructional value. In Gothic architecture, too, the designer does not seek for the appearance of ponderous dignity. He is more concerned with the expression of the construction, which alone suffices for his inspiration.<sup>47</sup>

Sturgis quoted Cram's views on Japanese architecture twice in the chapter on Japanese architecture included in *A History* of 1909.<sup>48</sup> In the meantime, Cram wrote an article on "Japanese architecture" in the 1901 *Dictionary of Architecture and Building* of which Sturgis was the general editor. From this relationship, it appeared that Sturgis's interest in and knowledge of Japanese architecture and its similarities to Gothic structure brought about by Cram's.<sup>49</sup> The structural characteristics of Japanese architecture, i.e., framed and expressed structure, which were similar to those of Gothic in principle, were among the most attractive features to the American 'Japonophile-Gothicists' at the turn of the century.<sup>50</sup> As Walter Gropius was later to comment, the same Japanese features were also influential in the formation of European modern architecture in the first decade of the twentieth century.<sup>51</sup> However, although Cram and Sturgis found the structural qualities in

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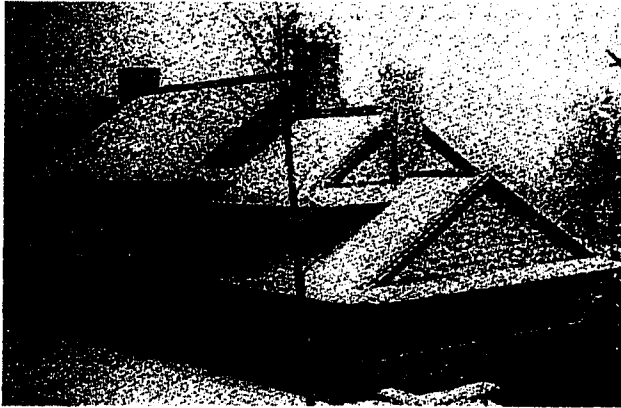
<sup>47</sup>Russell Sturgis, *A History of Architecture* (New York and London: The Baker & Taylor Company, 1909), p. 52. Chapter III is allotted to the architecture of Japan.

<sup>48</sup>Sturgis cited some paragraphs from Cram's book: to describe the Pagoda at Yakushiji in Nara (p. 44); and to explain some differences between Korean and Japanese roofs (p. 45).

<sup>49</sup>Sturgis also knew Cram's *Impressions of Japanese Architecture*, thus when he talked shortly about Japanese architecture in his book *History of Architecture* in 1909, he quoted Cram's book at least twice. See Russell Sturgis, *A History of Architecture* (New York and London: The Baker & Taylor Company, 1909), pp.45-46.

<sup>50</sup>The term, Japonophile-Gothicist, defines Gothicist architects who were also interested in both Arts and Crafts and Japanese architecture.

<sup>51</sup>Gropius wrote that "From my early beginnings as an architect, I was greatly intrigued and attracted by the Japanese houses. Its lightness, its flexibility and pleasing lines impressed me deeply." Cited in Ryuichi Hamaguchi, "Japanese Architecture and The West," *Architectural Forum* (January 1953): 148.



**Figure 2-6. Bruce Price, Addison Canmack Cottage, New York, 1898.**

Japanese architecture earlier at the turn of the century, concrete evidence of American architects' actually adopting Japanese structure did not come about until the 1930s when the International Style architecture began to be transplanted in this country.

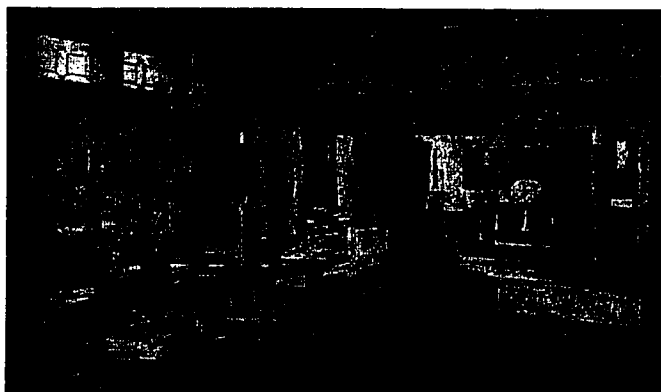
More discernible Japanese features adopted into American buildings during the given period (1897-1914) were distinctive exterior forms such as *irimoya* or hip and gabled roof types, exposed rafters, or double eaves. Since the Philadelphia Centennial of 1876, such Japanese exterior forms had been in use by some East Coast architects such as McKim, Mead and White, and Bruce Price. In 1898, Price built a Japanese pavilion (Figure 2-6) in Tuxedo Park, New York. The *irimoya* roofs, flaring eaves at the end, projecting porch, and the exposed wooden members with plaster walls of the pavilion shows a clear influence of the exposition buildings. However, the Japanese forms were rarely adopted in the work of Mid-West and West Coast architects until the Chicago Fair of 1893 where the Japanese Ho-o-den represented such exterior forms. One can identify prominently

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According to Sturgis, Western architects of the Orient, such as probably Cram and Sturgis himself, suggested in 1909 that "the Japanese system of building might be transferred from wood to metal with less risk of the loss of natural charm, than if the indigenous building were abandoned altogether for a stone and brick construction" (Sturgis, op. cit., p. 44). I suspect that his statement regarding the use of metal predicted that the Japanese post and beam structure would be one of the sources for the same structural method of the Western modern architects such as Gropius and Mies. In any case, it is interesting to compare his statement with Wright's regarding the similar topic. Commenting on the Imperial Hotel he designed in Tokyo, Japan, Wright wrote that "In short, [in the hotel design,] it was my desire to help Japan make the transition from wood to masonry and from her knees to her feet without too great loss of her great accomplishments in civilization" [Wright, *An Autobiography* (New York: Longmans, Green and Company, 1932), pp. 224-25]. Wright also commented the transition of the buildings materials, but suggested a different one, the masonry.

Japanese-influenced features such as *irimoya* roofs in the work of Wright and his West Coast contemporaries such as the Greene brothers, Maybeck, or Mullgardt at the turn of the century. Although these architects worked during the same period but in different regions, their work reflected in common a strong Japanese influence. Despite their mutual interest in Japanese art and architecture, however, Wright's impact on West Coast architects such as Maybeck or Greene & Greene, if any, seemed minimal. Maybeck's or the Greenes' impact on Wright was not significant, either. Rather, all the architects under discussion became interested in Japanese art and architecture independently. Their interest in the subject probably originated first from their viewing of Japanese buildings at the Chicago World's Columbian Exposition in 1893. Then at the turn of the century, Wright's and the Greenes' shared fascination in Japanese architecture was reinforced by their mutual interest in the Arts and Crafts Movement, which had principles that were similar to Japanese architecture.

As discussed in chapter I, although Wright had been fascinated with Japanese prints earlier in the late 1880s, interestingly enough, it was not until 1893 that he and all the architects under discussion saw actual Japanese buildings at the Chicago World's Columbian Exposition.<sup>52</sup> Although Wright never mentioned having attended the 1893 Chicago Fair, it is known that he did see the Japanese buildings built for the Fair for two reasons: firstly because Wright had worked on an exhibition building for the Fair, the Transportation Building, while working as a draftsman in Adler and Sullivan's office (1887-93); and secondly because the fair was so popular among the Chicagoans at the time.



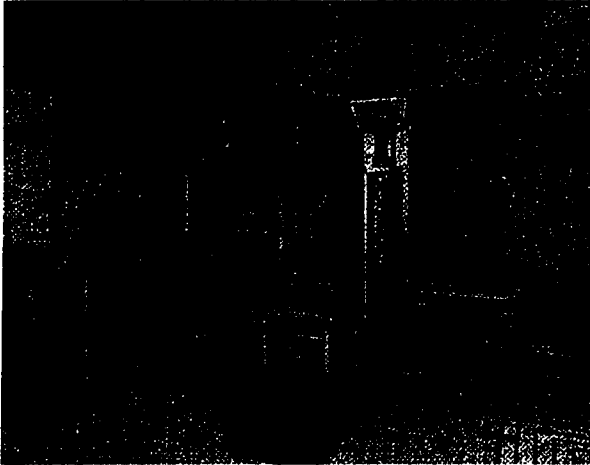
**Figure 2-7. Wright, the Heath house, River Forest, Illinois, 1908.**

At the turn of the century, Japanese influences in Wright's architecture appeared sporadically in his early houses. As it was discussed in chapter I, Wright used Japanese *ramma* and *kamoi* first in his own house in Oak Park, Illinois, in 1889.

More frequent and integral use of these Japanese features in Wright's work began to appear after 1900 in his Prairie houses. For example, he incorporated these Japanese features in the Edward C. Waller dining room, River Forest, Illinois, built in 1899; in most Prairie house living rooms such as the W.R. Heath house, Buffalo, New York, built in 1905 and the Isabell Roberts house, River Forest, Illinois, built in 1908. He also used these features later in the Usonian houses such as at the living room of the Lloyd Lewis house, Libertyville, Illinois, built in 1940. As shown in the Heath house (Figure 2-7), the panels hung from the ceiling are the Wrightian equivalent of the *ramma*. Some panels work as spatial dividers between the living room and the dining room, while other panels on the exterior walls function as clerestorey windows. Just as the Japanese *rammas* are either plain or decorated panels made of different materials such as wood or plaster,<sup>53</sup> so the panels in the prairie houses

<sup>52</sup>For the exhibition buildings, such as the Ho-o-den and others, see chapter I.

<sup>53</sup>The *rammas* are usually made of wood and sometimes of plaster, as was noted in Morse's book. When Morse was writing his *Japanese Homes* in the early 1880s, American architects had already used *ramma*-like panels in their houses. According to Morse (p. 169), "This space [ramma] may be occupied simply by a closed plastered partition, just as in our houses we invariably fill up a similar space which comes over wide folding doors between a suite of rooms." But, he did not talk about whether the feature was derived from Japan or elsewhere. Like the fret-work *ramma*-like panels used by McKim, Mead and White and Arthur



**Figure 2-8. Wright, the guestrooms, the Imperial Hotel, Tokyo, Japan, 1916-23.**

were plain plaster panels or ones decorated with stained-glass windows.<sup>54</sup>

The *kamo*, a deeply grooved, upper wooden beam which holds a sliding partition, was also used for the same purpose in Wright's house to hold

movable screens and doors between the living and dining rooms. However, Wright

adjusted the Japanese features to Western living. Instead of Japanese *shoji* screens, Wright used glass and fabric for the doors and screens in the prairie house. He also employed the *ramma* and *kamo* in the guest rooms of the Imperial Hotel (Figure 2-8) built in Tokyo, Japan in 1913-23 where Wright and his clients wanted "to see erected a building that would be worthy of Japan's artistic tradition."<sup>55</sup> It is worth noting that Wright used the Japanese motifs in the Japanese hotel where he tried to integrate Japanese domestic features and Western comfort.<sup>56</sup> His use of the features in the

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Little, which were derived from Japan as discussed in chapter II, the plain plaster panels could have been derived also from Japan. Later in 1889 in his own house and then in many Prairie houses in the 1900s, Wright would use similar plaster panels, but without wide folding doors beneath.

<sup>54</sup>Wright called the *ramma*-like plaster bands "the horizontal broad bands of plaster on the walls" [see Wright *An Autobiography* (New York: Duell, Sloan and Pearce, 1943), p. 143.

<sup>55</sup>A statement made by Aisaku Hayashi, the directing manager of the Imperial Hotel, Tokyo, Japan [see Antonin Raymond, *An Autobiography* (New York: Charles E. Tuttle, 1973), p.251]. In the hotel, Wright also wanted to incorporate traditional Japanese features. For example, Wright wrote that "[in designing the hotel] in short, it was my desire to help Japan make the transition from wood to masonry and from her knees to her feet without too great loss of her great accomplishments in civilization" [*An Autobiography* (New York: Longmans, Green and Company, 1932), pp. 224-25].

<sup>56</sup>More Japanese sources incorporated in the hotel, see my thesis, *Frank Lloyd Wright's Imperial Hotel, Tokyo, Japan: Its Sources*, Master's Thesis, University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, 1992.

Japanese hotel appeared to support my argument that Wright learned of using the space-dividing panels under the ceiling from Japanese use of the *ramma* and *kamoi*.

Regarding the Japanese features in Wright's work, it is interesting to note that Henry-Russell Hitchcock, one of the prominent early scholars who had researched Wright's architecture, did not mention any Japanese influence in Wright's use of the features. Commenting on Wright's use of the same features in his own house of 1889, he acknowledged Wright's "treatment of the openings without architrave beneath a continuous string course" to be "new and personal to Wright."<sup>57</sup> However, describing an illustration of Wright's living room without furniture (Figure 1-16), he added that "[the empty room] shows clearly the open planning in the Queen Anne tradition."<sup>58</sup> Wright's use of the Japanese motifs *ramma* and *kamoi* in 1889 for his own house was without a doubt "new ... to Wright." However, the motifs were not quite "new" in the history of American architecture for it had been already used, as has been pointed out, by McKim, Mead and White and others since the early 1880s. Hitchcock's lack of awareness of Japanese influence on Wright regarding the *ramma* and *kamoi* is not surprising because he was "usually the stand-out" in the question of Wright's indebtedness to Japanese architecture.<sup>59</sup> As Wright often did, however, Hitchcock also pointed out some influence

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<sup>57</sup>Hitchcock, *In the Nature of Materials: The Buildings of Frank Lloyd Wright 1887-1941* (New York: Hawthorn Books, 1942), p. 18 and the caption for figure 13.

<sup>58</sup>Hitchcock, op. cit., in the caption for Figure 13.

<sup>59</sup>Grant Manson, *Frank Lloyd Wright to 1910: The First Golden Age* (New York: Reinhold Publishing Corporation, 1955), p.37.

Hitchcock's statements shown in his *In the Nature of Materials* exemplify his negative views on Japanese influences in Wright's work: "The Ho Ho Den, the Japanese Pavilion at the World's Fair, had had, contrary to generally accepted theory, almost no immediate effect on Wright (p. 26); Wright's brief trip to Japan in 1905 had not broken the homogeneity of the work of the decade before 1910; and if he was little or not at all influenced by travel in a country whose art had long been particularly sympathetic to him, it was not to be expected that even a longer stay in Europe, chiefly Renaissance Florence, would affect him directly. Nor

of Japanese art--not Japanese architecture--on Wright's work.<sup>60</sup> Hitchcock found the first "influence of Japanese art" in Wright's work in a less important element. Hitchcock saw a Japanese influence in Wright's "use of rough stone" in both the entrance terrace and base of the wall at the C. Williams house in River Forest, Illinois built in 1895 (Figure 2-9). It



**Figure 2-9. Wright, the Williams house, River Forest, Illinois, 1895.**

reminds one of the feature that Greene and Greene would incorporate into their California bungalows, such as the Neill house built in Pasadena in 1906 and the Pratt house in Ojai, California built in 1909.<sup>61</sup>

However, Wright's use of

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did it do so. (p. 59); So much too much has been made of Japanese influence upon Wright's work ... (p. 70)".

Hitchcock's statement that Wright's stay in Europe had no influence on his work (p. 59) was challenged by Alofsin. See Alofsin, *Frank Lloyd Wright, The Lost Years, 1910-1922: A Study of Influence* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1993).

In addition, Hitchcock seemed to be reluctant to accept Japanese influence in the open planning, which would be one of the decisive factors in the development of modern architecture. In other words, he did not want to accept such an important oriental influence in the work of *the genuine American architect*, who succeeded the traditions of Henry Hobson Richardson and Louis Sullivan in the history of American architecture. This subject is beyond the scope of the present dissertation, but deserves to be further pursued in another place.

<sup>60</sup>In his letter to Charles Ashbee, Wright wrote that "Do not say that I deny my love for Japanese art has influenced me--I admit that it has but claim to have digested it--Do not accuse me of trying to 'adopt Japanese forms,' however. That is a false accusation and against my very religion" in Wright to Ashbee, 26 September 1910. Quoted in Nute, op. cit., p. 3. For Hitchcock's, see the text above.

<sup>61</sup>Ibid., p. 26 and in the caption of figure 30.

For the illustration of the Pratt house, see Bruce Smith. *Greene and Greene Master Works* (San Francisco: Chronicle Books, 1998), pp. 28-29. In addition the Pratt house and the Neill house, there are many more houses designed by Greene and Greene that have the same features: the James Culbertson house of 1902, the White house of 1903, Jennie Reeve house of 1904, the Henry Greene house of 1904, the James Garfield

the boulders was quite different from the Greens' use of the materials. The Greene's use appeared to be influenced by Japanese use of rough stones and boulders in a high retaining wall for their castles built above, such as the Hikone Castle (Figure 2-2) built in the seventeenth century.<sup>62</sup> For example, the Greens used the stones and boulders from the nearby Arroyo in his Neill house not only to establish a sense of the region, but also to afford a greater sense of security and protection. Charles Greene explained of his use of the materials in 1908 that "[the wall with boulders] is too heavy for the house but it affords the much needed privacy to the little garden overlooking the street," as the Japanese use of the stonewall provides protection.<sup>63</sup> In contrast, Wright used the boulders in the Williams house differently. The boulders appeared to function non-structurally. Indeed, as Grant Manson pointed out, the use of rough stone in the Williams house was "prompted by sentimentality ... to symbolize the Illinois prairie's era of glaciation" rather than derived from a Japanese prototype.<sup>64</sup>

Another Japanese feature Wright adopted in his early houses was the *irimoya*-roof form. As Robert Twombly and Nute pointed out, Wright's Harry Goodrich house built in 1896 in Oak Park, Illinois, S.A. Foster house built in 1900 in Chicago, Illinois, and Arthur Heurtley summer house (Figure 2-10) built in 1902 in Marquette Island, Michigan,

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house, 1904, the S. Halsted house of 1905, the Theodore Irwin house of 1906, and the Gamble house of 1908 to name a few.

<sup>62</sup>As it was discussed earlier, the Greens appeared to see books on Japanese temples and castles that Bentz brought from Japan in 1902.

<sup>63</sup>Quoted in Bruce Smith, *op. cit.*, p. 122.

<sup>64</sup>Grant Carpenter Manson, *Frank Lloyd Wright to 1910: The First Golden Age* (New York: Reinhold, 1958), p. 72. The full story reads that "The boulders were gathered on summer weekends by the Wrights, the Williamses [the clients of the house] and the Wallers from the bed of the Desplains River, and they were incorporated into the Williams house to symbolize the Illinois prairie's era of glaciations--a fact which furnishes an insight into the youthful enthusiasm of these people for a new, indigenous architecture growing from the native landscape and expressing its innermost meaning."



**Figure 2-10. Wright, Arthur Heurtley Summer house, Marquette Island, Michigan, 1902.**

all adopted the *irimoya* roof evidently inspired by the Ho-o-den of the 1893 Chicago Fair.<sup>65</sup>

Here, it is of special interest to notice that among Japanese architectural characteristics, Japanese roofs were one of the most, if not the most appealing features for American architects of the late nineteenth and

early twentieth century. For example, in 1876, an editor of *American Architect and Building News* praised Japanese roofs as “the one substantial part of a Japanese house.”<sup>66</sup> The architect C.T. Matthews also commented in 1894 on “a pleasing combination of straight and curved lines” in Japanese roofs as “the real touch of genius.”<sup>67</sup> Also in practice, in addition to the possibly Japanese *irimoya* roofs incorporated in the earlier Creole houses,<sup>68</sup> some East Coast architects such as Price began to adopt Japanese roof types in their buildings right after the 1876 Philadelphia Centennial Exposition. Thus, most early Japanese-influenced American buildings can be identified by their adoption of such Japanese roofs as *irimoya* roofs, hipped or gabled roofs with deep over-hanging eaves. Apparently, American architects’ use of the Japanese *irimoya* roofs at the turn of the century resulted from the picturesque and exotic qualities of the roofs. That the

<sup>65</sup>Concerning the Foster house, see Robert Twombly, *Frank Lloyd Wright: His Life and His Architecture* (New York: John Wiley & sons, 1979), p. 61-62. For Goodrich and Heurtley house, see Nute, op. cit., p. 65. Both include illustrations.

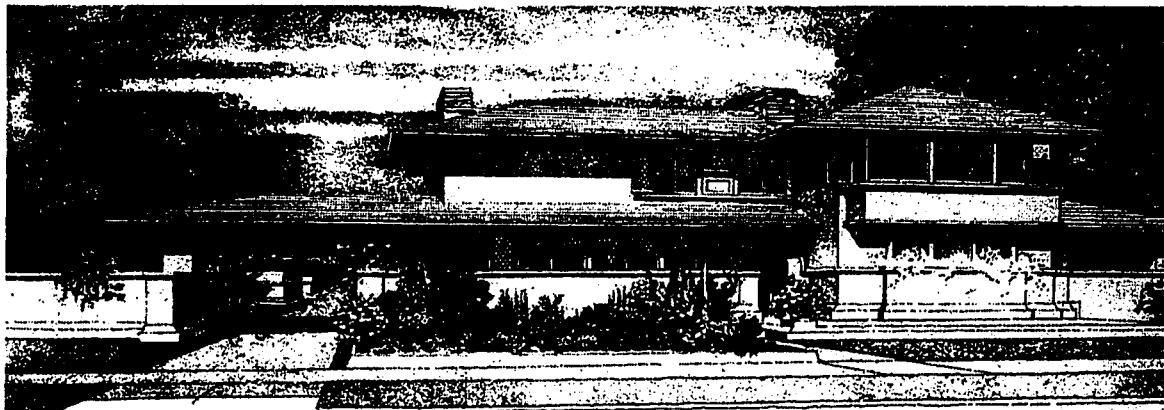


Figure 2-11. Wright, A Home in a Prairie Town, the Ladies Home Journal Project, 1901.

*irimoya* roofs were mainly adopted in vacation houses probably evinces this supposition.

However, American

architects adopted more freely the low-pitched hip roofs and the gabled roofs. Wright incorporated extensively both roof types in his Prairie houses: the low-pitched hip roofs

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<sup>66</sup> An Editor, "Japanese Houses," *American Architect and Building News* January 22, 1876: 26-27.

<sup>67</sup> C.T. Matthews, "Temple of the Tokugawa at Nikko," *Architectural Record* IV (October-December 1894):191-209.

For Morse, as discussed in chapter II, picturesque quality and fine craftsmanship were the most attractive qualities of the Japanese homes. The picturesqueness, he claimed, derived especially from their roofs. He wrote that "The great elaboration and variety in the form and structure of the house-roof almost merits the dignity of a separate section. For it is mainly to the roof that the Japanese house owes its picturesque appearance" (*Japanese Homes*, p. 77). In 1901, Cram wrote of the Japanese roof as "one of the greatest triumphs of architecture," Cram, *A Dictionary of Architecture and Building* (New York: Macmillan Company, 1901), s.v. Japan, architecture of.

Japanese architectural historians also regarded the roofs and eaves as one of the most important features in Japanese architecture. Jiro Harada wrote in 1936 that "the [Japanese] roof plays a part of such great importance in Japanese architecture that it is often said that the beauty of Japanese houses is in their roofs, which present a pleasing combination of light and curved lines...." Harada, *The Lesson of Japanese Architecture* (New York: Dover Publications Inc., 1985), p.45.

<sup>68</sup> Although there are no documentary evidence, the *irimoya* type roofs, encircling galleries, wooden posts supporting the deeply overhanging eaves, stone plinths on which the wooden posts rest, and overall wood-framed structure of the Creole house type, are all similar features to those of a traditional Japanese sale-house type. I presented about this topic at the 16th Annual Southeast Chapter Conference of the Society of Architectural Historians, held on November 11-14, 1998 in Fayetteville, Arkansas. I am grateful to the participants of the meeting, especially Professor Phillippe Osuscik who was the moderator of the section, for giving me valuable comments and suggestions.

which were “heaped together in pyramidal fashion, or presenting quiet, unbroken skyline”; and “the low roofs with simple pediments countering on long ridges.”<sup>69</sup>

Wright’s incorporation of other Japanese architectural principles and forms into the Prairie houses is also noticeable. In 1900, the *Ladies Home Journal* commissioned Wright to design two model house projects, and published them along with Wright’s descriptions: “A Home in a Prairie Town (Figure 2-11)” in January, and “A Small House with ‘Lots of Rooms in It’” in the July issue of 1901. In his descriptions of the two projects, Wright emphasized his concern that a building should be “firmly and broadly associated with the site”--- in this case with the broad plains of the American Midwest. As he stated later in 1908, Wright had learned such design principles of organic architecture from both Louis Sullivan and Japanese art which was “nearer to the earth and a more indigenous product of native conditions of life and work...”<sup>70</sup>

In the two *Ladies Home Journal* projects which have been considered as the first of his series of Prairie houses, Wright sought such organic qualities found in Japanese houses and in Sullivan’s theories. By extending the lines of the house into the landscape with terraces, pergolas, and covered porches, he designed the house “to associate with the

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<sup>69</sup>Wright, “In the Cause of Architecture,” *Architectural Record* 23 (March 1908), reprinted under same title by Frederick Gutheim, *In the Cause of Architecture: Frank Lloyd Wright* (New York: Architectural Record Books, 1975), p. 57.

<sup>70</sup>Wright wrote that “A sense of the organic is indispensable to an architect; where can he develop it so surely as in this school [Nature]? ...Where can he find the pertinent object lessons Nature so readily furnishes?...Japanese art knows this more intimately than that of any people...the architect must learn to think in such terms...” Wright, “In the Cause of Architecture,” *Architectural Record* 23 (March 1908), reprinted, pp. 53-54.

Wright related the principles of his organic architecture with Japanese art and architecture many times, and the statement cited above appeared in Wright, *An Autobiography* (New York: Duell, Sloan and Pierce, 1943), p. 194.

ground and become natural to its prairie site.”<sup>71</sup> The common characteristics in both Japanese and Wright’s prairie houses were noticed by critics as early as 1914. Commenting on Wright’s public and domestic buildings exhibited at the Art Institute of Chicago in 1914, Harriet Monroe pointed out the low lines, deep eaves and horizontal lines in Wright’s work as Japanese influenced features. In her article, “The Orient: an Influence on the Architecture of Wright,” Monroe wrote that

Mr. Wright’s first hint comes from the orient, or, more specifically, from Japan. In Mr. Wright’s houses, as in the oriental, lowness is emphasized; there are no curved roofs [unlike in Japanese architecture], but there is a strong repetition of horizontal lines, which are drawn out over long courts or wide eaves beyond the main structure.<sup>72</sup>

In addition to his integration of Japanese or Sullivanesque organic characteristics, other Japanese qualities in the two *Ladies Home Journal* projects were the low, horizontally spreading hipped roofs in the first project and the gabled roofs with deep overhanging eaves in the second, which would be adopted in most Prairie houses.<sup>73</sup> These Japanese influenced features began to be adopted in a number of Mid-West houses by Wright’s disciples such as

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<sup>71</sup>Wright, “A Home in a Prairie Town,” *Ladies Home Journal* (January 1901), p.17, and “A Small House ‘Lots of Room in it,’” (July 1901), p.16.

<sup>72</sup>Harriet Monroe, “The Orient an Influence on the Architecture of Wright,” *Chicago Tribune* (12 April 1914): VIII, 5. The exhibition was held at the Chicago Art Institute as an Annual Exhibition of the Chicago Architectural Club in April-May 1914. This exhibition was the third one at which Wright’s work was exhibited in an individual room, following 1902 and 1907.

Wright also exhibited Japanese prints at the Art Institute of Chicago during this time, both in 1906 (one-man exhibition of Hiroshige prints) and 1908 (woodblock prints with Frederick Gookin).

<sup>73</sup>Wright, *In the Cause.*, p.57. Wright divided the Prairie houses into three groups according to their roof types “having a family resemblance; the low-pitched roofs, heaped together in pyramidal fashion, or presenting quiet, unbroken skylines (the first project above belongs to this); the low roofs with simple pediments counting on ridges (second project); and those topped with a simple slab.

Walter Burley Griffin or Purcell and Elmslie.<sup>74</sup> Their influence also “spread [beyond the Mid-West] via the *Ladies Home Journal*” or through Robert Spencer’s 17-page article on Wright’s work published in the *Architectural Review* of 1900.<sup>75</sup>

Wright’s use of a horseshoe plan in his Horseshoe Inn (Figure 2-12), a project for Willard Ashton in the mountains of Colorado at Estes Park in 1908 appeared to be

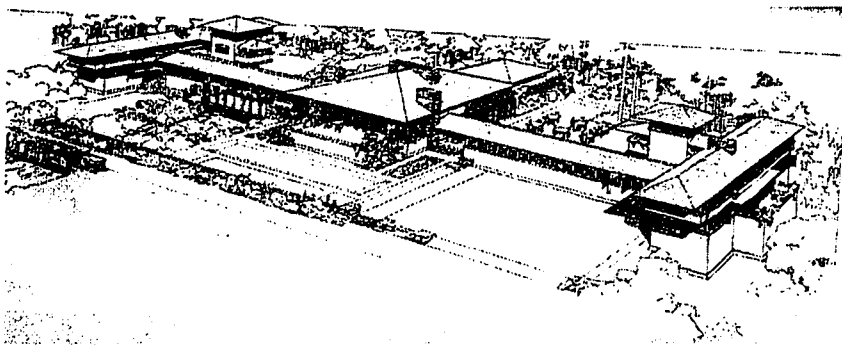


Figure 2-12. Wright, the Horseshoe Inn project, Estes Park, Colorado, 1908.

derived from the similar plan adopted in the Ho-o-do. Similar to the inn, the low, spread-out, and symmetrically-planned

temple consists basically of a broad central wing, with a narrow tail-like part behind it, and two side wings connected by covered corridors to the central wing. The two towers on where the two side wings unite in the Phoenix Hall remind one of the inn’s observation towers, in spite of their different location. The lotus pond under the tail-like part of the central pavilion in the Hō-ō-dō also echoes a stream that runs under the inn’s left wing. Interestingly, some early Japanese picture scrolls (Figure 2-13) depict the typical *Shinden* style house from which the plan of the Hō-ō-dō was derived. It shows a stream located in the exact same position as the stream shown in the inn. Whether Wright

<sup>74</sup>For example, among many others, Griffin’s F.B. Carter house, Evanston, Illinois, 1910 or Purcell and Elmslie’s Edward Decker house, Lake Minnetonka, Minnesota, 1912-13 shows the influences. For the illustrations, see Allen Brooks, *Frank Lloyd Wright and the Prairie School* (New York: George Braziller, 1984), figures 45 and 49.

<sup>75</sup>Spencer’s article was the first serious one on Wright’s work ever published in a major architectural journal. Spencer, “The Work of Frank Lloyd Wright,” *Architectural Review* VII (June 1900). Also, for the

saw one of the scrolls before 1908 or not, both plans of the Hō-ō-dō and the inn resemble the form of a phoenix that is spreading its wings for a flying off the lake-side of a mountain. That Wright actually went to see the Hō-ō-dō on his 1905 trip is probable, not only because he visited the Kyoto area during that trip, but also because of the popularity of the Hō-ō-den at the Chicago Fair of 1893, his curiosity in that type of building would

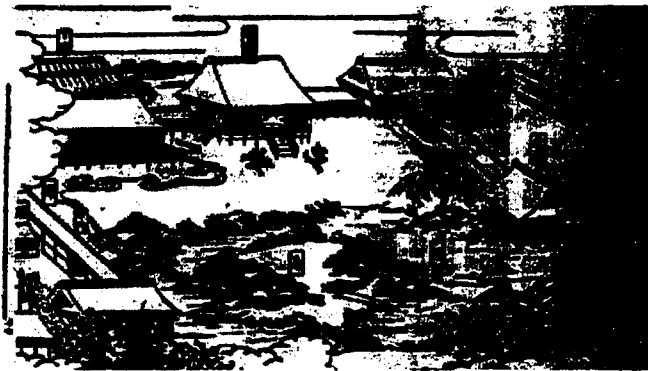


Figure 2- 13. A Japanese Scroll Painting showing the typical Shinden-zukuri, 12th-c.

have been presumably aroused.<sup>76</sup> As

Wright recollected in his *Autobiography*, in his trip to Japan in 1905, “the Japanese house naturally fascinated [Wright] and [he] would spend hours taking it all to pieces and putting it together again.”<sup>77</sup> If so,

the Horseshoe inn could be a product of Wright’s process of ‘taking the Ho-o-do all to pieces and putting it together again.’

Like Wright, Charles Summer Greene and Henry Mather Greene, also visited the Chicago Columbian Exposition in 1893 on their way to Pasadena, California where they opened their office in 1894. In an interview with Clay Lancaster in 1954, they stated that

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role of the *Ladies Home Journal* in spreading Wright’s work to the East and the West Coast, see Hitchcock, *In the Nature*, p.33.

<sup>76</sup>More discussion on the Japanese sources for the Horseshoe Inn and consequently for the Imperial Hotel, see my thesis on the topic. Myungkee Min, *Frank Lloyd Wright’s Imperial Hotel, Tokyo, Japan: Its Sources*, Master’s Thesis at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, 1992.

For Wright’s first trip to Japan in 1905 and his itinerary, see Margo Stipe, “Wright’s First Trip to Japan,” in *Frank Lloyd Wright Quarterly* (Spring 1995): 21. According to Stipe, she found that Wright went to Nagoya, Kyoto, Osaka, Nara, and Kobe. Although her research did not give an answer for the present question whether he went to see the Ho-o-do or not, it supports the possibility that he saw the Phoenix Hall which is located near Kyoto.

<sup>77</sup>Wright, *An Autobiography*, 1943, p. 196.

they “admired the Japanese buildings at both fairs the Chicago Fair and the Mid-Winter Exposition of 1894 held in San Francisco where the Japanese village was exhibited] for the way they tied in with the landscape.”<sup>78</sup> In addition to the harmony of the buildings with their surroundings, the Greenes were also intrigued by the structure of the buildings and by the Japanese use of wood. The Japanese buildings at the fairs were built primarily of unpainted wood and plaster, which would later become favorite materials for the Greenes. Also interesting for the Greenes was the use of heavy timbers in the Japanese buildings and their exposed fine joinery,<sup>79</sup> not to mention the low hip roofs and exposed

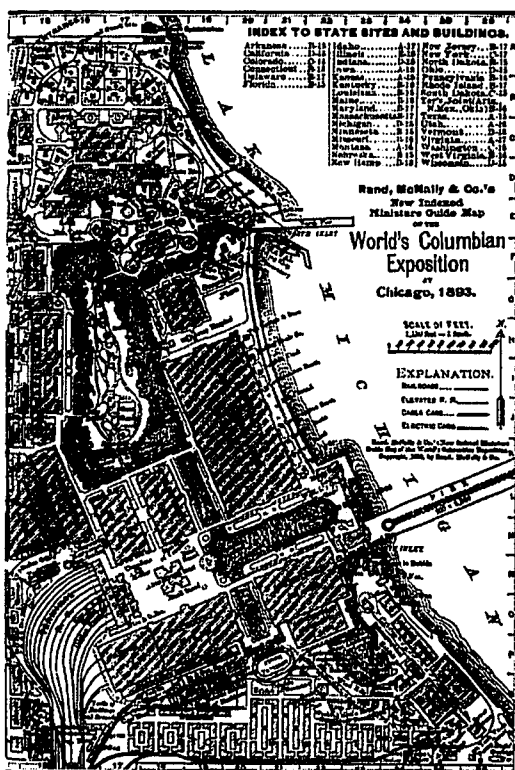


Figure 2-14. A map of the 1893 Chicago Columbian Exposition, 1893.

rafters with deep overhangs. Except for the *irimoya*-type roof, Japanese influence on the Greenes’ work, however, did not appear until 1902 when their admiration for Japanese architecture was spurred by other factors of which I will discuss shortly.

Like Wright and the Greenes, Maybeck may have attended the Chicago Fair, and like the Greenes, Maybeck also saw the Japanese village at the Mid-Winter Exposition. Since 1891, Maybeck had worked for A. Page Brown’s office. In 1892 and 1893, Brown’s office won

<sup>78</sup>Clay Lancaster, “My Interviews with Greene and Greene,” *AIA Journal* (July 1957), P.205.

<sup>79</sup>Randell L. Makinson, *Greene & Greene: Architectures as a Fine Art* (Salt Lake City: Peregrine Smith Books, 1977), P.32. Bruce Smith’s book included many color illustrations of Greene and Greene’s houses. Smith, op., cit.

two important architectural competitions: one for the California Building at the Chicago Fair of 1893; the other for a building for the California Midwinter Exposition of 1894. Because Maybeck was sent to Chicago to supervise the construction of the California Building in the Chicago Fair,<sup>80</sup> and also because the California Building was located close to the Japanese buildings, as shown in a map of the fair (Figure 2-14, California building is in D-15; Japanese pavilion, in F-16), it is little doubt that Maybeck saw the Japanese exhibition buildings.

Influences from Maybeck's initial experience of authentic Japanese buildings at both fairs appeared immediately in his Charles Keeler house which was built in Berkeley, California in 1894--the same year when the Midwinter Fair was held. Like Maybeck, his client, Keeler was also deeply interested in the Japanese buildings shown at the 1894 Fair, and Keeler himself drew sketches of the Japanese village for his book, *San Francisco and Thereabouts* published in 1902.<sup>81</sup> Keeler would later be a founder of the Berkeley Handicraft Guild in 1898, only a year after the establishment of the Chicago Arts and



**Figure 2-15. Bernard Maybeck, the Keeler house, Berkeley, California, 1894.**

Crafts Society. Later in 1904, Keeler also published *The Simple Home*, in which he advocated a simple life in a simple home, and

<sup>80</sup>Kenneth H. Cardwell, *Bernard Maybeck: Artisan, Architect, Artist* (Santa Barbara & Salt Lake City: Peregrine Smith, Inc., 1977), P. 30-31. The California Building in the Chicago Fair was built in a Mission style with "a central and dominating" dome, a feature to which Maybeck contributed.

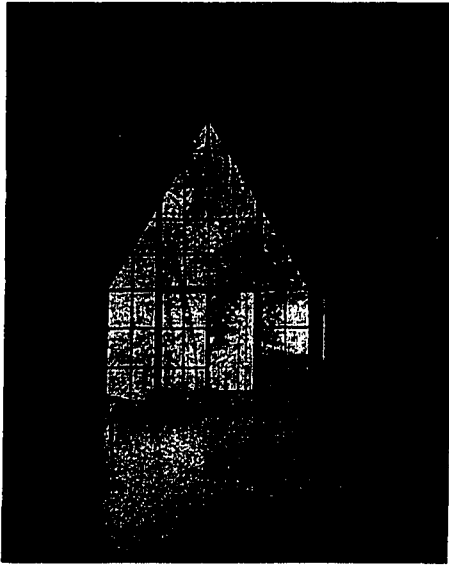
<sup>81</sup>Charles Keeler, *San Francisco and Thereabouts* (San Francisco: The California Promotion Committee, 1902).

dedicated it to Maybeck. In it, reflecting the theory of William Morris, Keeler wrote a polemic against the architectural sham of the Victorian age. Both client's and the architect's mutual interest in the Arts and Crafts and Japanese architecture culminated in the Keeler house design. A prominent Japanese feature in the Keeler house (Figure 2-15) was their use of natural wood and exposed structural members, as Keeler recollected later in 1908. In his "A Retrospection," he stated about Japanese characteristics on the Keeler house that Keeler and Maybeck picked up through the 1894 Mid-Winter exposition: "The result was a house of redwood within and without, with all the construction exposed, left in the natural mill-surface finish on the inside and shingled on the outside."<sup>82</sup> The upward curve at the ends of the shingle roofs is also Japanese. As Dimitri Shipounoff pointed out, while the three steep-hipped peaks of the roofs resemble to the those of the Eastern European farm houses, their "curving at the eaves [are] in subtle mimicry of the pagoda [and] reminded of a similar roof line in the Japanese Tea House [of the 1894 Mid-Winter Exposition]."<sup>83</sup> In contrast, Richard Longstreth suggested German Gothic houses, where Maybeck's parents were raised, as a plausible source for the steep, flared roofs and small, banded casement windows of the Keeler house.<sup>84</sup> As many of his contemporary architects such as the Greenes would do, Maybeck's houses were a conflation of many different sources.

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<sup>82</sup>Keeler, "A Retrospection," p. 2. An invocation to the Berkeley Hillside Club Yearbook, 1907-08, quoted in Shipounoff's "Introduction" in Charles Keeler, *The Simple Homes* (Santa Barbara and Salt Lake City: Peregrine Smith, 1979), p. xxi.

<sup>83</sup>Ibid. Richard Longstreth suggested, on the other hand, a different source for the steep, flared roofs and small, banded casement windows of the Keeler house: German Gothic houses. See Longstreth, *On the Edge of the World: Four Architects in San Francisco at the Turn of the Century* (Cambridge: The MIT Press, 1983), pp. 318-19, figure 246.



**Figure 2- 16. Maybeck, the Keeler house living room and the Grill work, 1894.**

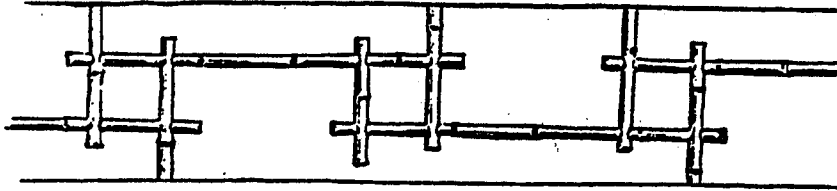
Unlike Wright's use of low-pitched horizontal hipped roofs or gabled ones, Maybeck used high-pitched hipped roofs with curves at the end on the Keeler house. The reason for this was partly because of different climatic and topographical conditions between the Midwestern prairie and the hilly Berkeley, and partly because Maybeck preferred a Gothic verticality to the Japanese horizontally.<sup>85</sup> For example, commenting on the advantages of locating the bedrooms high above the ground in a hillside

house, Maybeck wrote in his 1904 *Architectural Review* article that "if the building had been only one or two stories high, it would have looked like a hovel in the hillside."<sup>86</sup> In the living room of the Keeler house, wooden dividing screens with lattice grillwork edging at the top appears to be also Japanese (Figure 2-16). At this time, American architects' use of the Japanese fret-work panels was not rare because they were imported from Japan by 1886. Morse wrote in his *Japanese homes and their surroundings* (1886) that "Fret-work panels are very often used in the decoration of the *ramma* [in Japanese domestic architecture], of designs similar to the panels now imported from Japan [and

<sup>84</sup>See Longstreth, *On the Edge of the World: Four Architects in San Francisco at the Turn of the Century* (Cambridge: The MIT Press, 1983), pp. 318-19, figure 246. I am grateful to Professor Streatfield for drawing attention to this book.

<sup>85</sup>However, Keeler focused more on a human temperamental reason rather than a climatic reason for the differences between the horizontality and the verticality in house designs. In his *Simple Home* published in 1904, he compared the two that "the horizontal line suggests repose; the vertical line, action. If the Gothic spirit is to be introduced and perpetuated in California, it will have a temperamental rather than a climatic rationale" (Keeler, *op. cit.*, p. 25-26).

adopted in



American

homes].”<sup>87</sup> In

fact, the bamboo

*ramma*

Figure 2- 17. An illustration of a Japanese *ramma*, in Morse, 1885.

illustrated in Morse’s book (Figure 2-17) is similar to the lattice panel in the Keeler House. Also notable was Maybeck’s use of unpainted redwood which revealed its natural grain and color. Maybeck’s fascination for unpainted redwood was not derived entirely from Japanese architects’ use of natural wood, but came partly from a tradition of the San Francisco Bay area architects like Joseph Worcester. Among others, Worcester’s own house, built in Piedmont, California in 1876-78 was an important influence on Maybeck.

Keeler wrote in “Friends Bearing Torches” that

There came to Mr. Maybeck in his early California days [around 1889] an experience that profoundly affected his whole artistic outlook... Looking into Mr. Worcester’s windows he [Maybeck] saw the interior of the cottage was all of unpainted redwood boards. It was a revelation.<sup>88</sup>

The use of natural wood in the interior of the big residences began to be popular at the turn of the century, as in the Greenes’s bungalows built in the 1900s. However, in the early 1890s when Maybeck saw the unpainted interiors in Worcester’s cottage, unpainted redwood interiors were very “exceptional in dwellings inhabited by those of the Reverend

<sup>86</sup>Maybeck, “House of Mrs. Phoebe A. Hearst in Siskiyou Co., Cal.,” *Architectural Review (Boston)* (January 1904): 64-66.

<sup>87</sup>Morse, *Japanese Homes*, p. 170.

<sup>88</sup>Cited in Leslie Mandeson Freudeheim and Elisabeth Sussman, *Building with Nature: Roots of the San Francisco Bay Region Tradition* (Santa Barbara and Salt Lake City: Peregrine Smith, Inc., 1974), P.12.

Worcester's social status."<sup>89</sup> Thus, it can be inferred that in 1894 after he was impressed by the unpainted interiors he saw in both Worcester's cottage and the Japanese village at



**Figure 2-18. Maybeck, the Hearst Country house, Siskiyou County, California, 1903.**

the Mid-Winter Fair, Maybeck adopted it in the Keeler house.<sup>90</sup>

Other features, which were concurrently derived from both American vernacular tradition and Japanese architecture, were also found in the works of Maybeck and Wright. Here, it is interesting to compare Maybeck and Wright. The two architects were dissimilar in

that they incorporated different Japanese features such as roof forms into their buildings

according to particular climatic or topographical conditions. However, they had many similarities in what they perceived to be the proper use of building materials and on what constituted a building's harmonization with its surroundings. To illustrate, we can compare their descriptions on the material and the harmony:

A house should fit into the landscape as if it were a part of it (Maybeck)

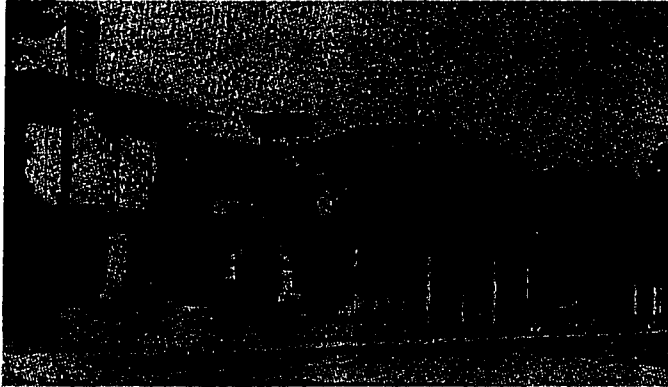
A building should appear to grow easily from its site and be shaped to harmonize with its surroundings...(Wright)

<sup>89</sup>Sally Woodbridge, *Bernard Maybeck: Visionary Architect* (New York: Abbeville Press Publishers, 1992), p. 25.

<sup>90</sup>The unpainted interiors of Worcester's cottage may have been partly derived from American vernacular tradition such as miners' shanties (see Freudeheim and Sussman, op. cit., p. 11). Also interesting is that Worcester was additionally influenced by Japanese architecture and gardening. Worcester used some Japanese garden features in the Church of the New Jerusalem built in 1894 in San Francisco (see also Freudeheim, p. 24).

The design [of the Keeler house] was in large measure determined by the materials of which the structure was to be built. If wood was to be used then it should look like a wooden house. (Maybeck)

I now learned to see wood as wood... Each material demanded different handling



**Figure 2-19. Maybeck, the First Church of Christ, Scientist, Berkeley, California, 1910.**

and had possibilities of use peculiar to its own nature. (Wright)<sup>91</sup>

Maybeck himself seemed to notice such similarities between himself and Wright. He once talked about

Wright as “that draftsman of his [Sullivan’s]- what’s his name?

Frank Lloyd Wright. He’s a marvel. We’re both Greeks, Wright and I.”<sup>92</sup> Considering Maybeck and Keeler regarded Berkeley as the “new Athens” and advocated Greek cultures such as classical poems or out-door living, it is likely that Maybeck’s calling Wright as Greek implied more than Maybeck’s knowledge of his name. Their affinities in terms of the proper use of wood and harmony of a building with its site appeared to have origins in American vernacular tradition. From Andrew Jackson Downing’s theories to the Stick and the Shingle style, the tradition should have contributed to the development of architectural vocabularies of the architects under discussion. This vernacular tradition

<sup>91</sup>For Maybeck’s descriptions, see *Building with Nature*, p.48. For Wright’s claims, see “In the Cause of Architecture,” 1908, 1975, p.55, and *An Autobiography*, 1943, p.148.

<sup>92</sup>Esther McCoy, *Five California Architects* (New York: Reinhold Publishing Inc., 1960), p.4.

Here, Maybeck championed Sullivan and called Wright “his draftsman.” Interestingly enough, Cram also championed Sullivan as a genius or “essentially the most Gothic of all” and called Wright a “less responsible genius” (Cram, “Ecclesiastical Architecture,” *Brickbuilder* XIV (August 1905), and *My Life*, p. 169. Such an evaluation of Sullivan as genius, which was common in both Maybeck and Cram, may be somewhat expected in the sense that both architects were Gothicists.

was, in turn, reinforced by the similar idioms of Japanese architecture in the work of American architects at the turn of the century.<sup>93</sup>

Maybeck's Phoebe Hearst country estate (Figure 2-18) built in Siskiyou County, California in 1902-03 also represents some Japanese-inspired features. Especially in the kitchen wing, which is shown in the left portion of the Figure 2-18, the combination of the double-pitched roof and half-timbering of the wall looks unmistakably Japanese, although it is also likely that the features were derived from other sources such as those of the English Tudor vernacular buildings. Besides the Hearst house, other notable Japanese features in Maybeck's work appeared in the First Church of Christ, Scientist (Figure 2-19) built in Berkeley, California in 1910. Overall, the low angle of the double-roofs, in which one roof covers a part of another roof below, a *tori*-like structure at the entrance portico, heavy wood posts, exposed beams and rafters, and use of natural red wood are



**Figure 2-20. Maybeck, the First Church, the Auditorium, 1910.**

evidently both Japanese and Arts and Crafts features. More salient Japanese features were, however, found in the auditorium which is the main worship space in the Christian Science church. In the auditorium (Figure 2-20), post and beam structural composition allows natural light to flood the nave through large windows just as wooden

<sup>93</sup>The influence of the vernacular architecture on Wright and his California contemporaries, see Vincent Scully, Jr., *The Shingle Style and the Stick Style: Architectural Theory and Design from Downing to the Origins of Wright* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1955, 1977).

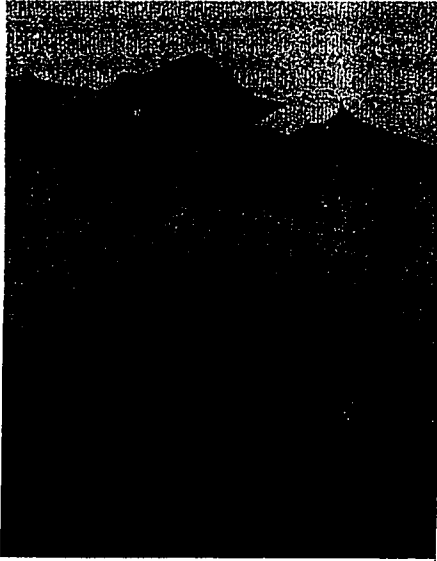


Figure 2- 21. The Greenes, the Longley house, Pasadena, California, 1897.

posts and *ramma* function in Japanese houses and also as slender reinforced concrete columns would perform in August Perret's Church of Notre Dame du Raincy in 1924. Also the steel sash windows filled with art glass are the Maybeckian equivalent of Japanese *shoji* screens in terms of their grid and function. Such screens were shown both in the Japanese pavilion of the 1893 Chicago Fair (see Figure 1-28) and in the Japanese Village at the Mid-Winter Exposition. This last feature would be also used later in Belluschi's

church windows built in late 1940s and 1950s.<sup>94</sup> After the First Church of Christ, Scientist, Maybeck rarely used literal Japanese motifs in his work, likely because he began to find inspirations for his designs from such past Western architecture as Roman or Spanish Gothic, and because he was "not [anymore] a proponent of a craft revival."<sup>95</sup> In other words, as Kenneth Cardwell pointed out, it seemed to be a result of his architectural philosophy that "when he felt a need to add enrichment he drew inspiration from past architectures [especially Gothic, like Cram], not from nature." This varied sharply from Wright's and the Greenes's beliefs.<sup>96</sup>

As in Maybeck's work, Japanese influence on the Greenes' work also began to appear immediately after they saw the Japanese exhibition buildings at both the 1893 Chicago Fair and the 1894 Mid-Winter Exposition. Beginning with a *irimoya*-like roof used for

<sup>94</sup>This will be discussed in chapter IV.

<sup>95</sup>Cardwell, *Maybeck*, p.83

the dormer window of the Robert Allen house built in Pasadena, California in 1895, similar roofs above the dormers were adopted in the Howard Longley house (Figure 2-21), built in Pasadena in 1897, and the J. Smith house and the Charles Hollister house both built in Pasadena in 1899.<sup>97</sup> As shown in the Longley house, Greene and Greene's earlier work was highly eclectic and used a number of styles, such as the front porch roof of French Empire design and the dormer roof of Japanese type. The roofs that the Greens used in these houses seem apparently Japanese, but in reality they are somewhat different from the Japanese prototype. While the eaves of Japanese roofs are pitched, the roofs of the Greens' dormers sit not on slant rafters but on flat ones.<sup>98</sup> Thus, it was not until the Culbertson house built in Pasadena, California in 1902 that the Greens began to incorporate literal Japanese motifs in their architecture. The exterior of the Culbertson house (Figure 2-22) represents mainly English Tudor characteristics with its half-timber structure. As scholars suggest in common, Charles Greene learned from Tudor country houses he saw in his trip to England in 1901 with his newly



**Figure 2- 22. The Greens, the Culbertson house, exterior, Pasadena, California, 1902.**

<sup>96</sup>Ibid.

<sup>97</sup>For illustrations, see Makinson, *op. cit.*, pp. 52 and 53.

<sup>98</sup>The dormers take a form of a triangular gable projected above the broad hipped roof. Similar dormer roofs were also used in Wright's Googrich house, Oak Park, Illinois, built in 1896. Thus, it appeared that such roofs were not rare at the turn of the century.

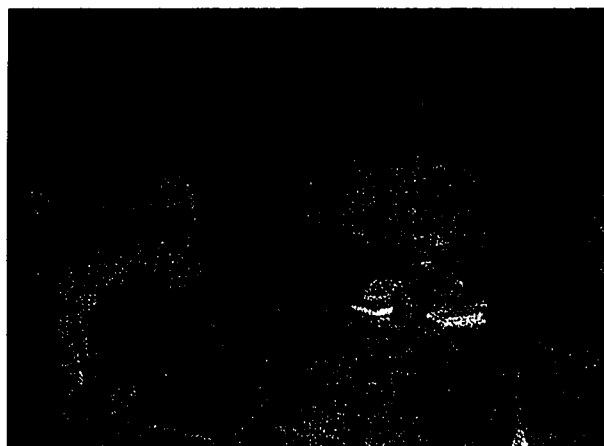
married wife.<sup>99</sup> The half-timber structure exposed rafters, L-shaped plan and leaded window pattern show similar features used in a Tudor hunting lodge built in 1542.<sup>100</sup>



**Figure 2-23. The Queen Elizabeth's Hunting Lodge, 1542.**

Although it is not known that they visited the Queen Elizabeth's Hunting Lodge (Figure 2-23) located in Chingford, Essex, it is clear that Charles saw similar Tudor buildings in his trip. As Maybeck did, the Greenes also turned to divergent ideas for inspiration. To these features of the Tudor country houses, the Greenes incorporated Japanese-inspired elements: exposed rafters under deep eaves, a *tori*-like gate in the garden and the *kamoi* and *ramma* motifs in the

living room (Figure 2-24). The *kamoi* and *ramma* motifs on the walls and ceiling trim show clear Japanese influences.<sup>101</sup> The Greenes' use of the Japanese motifs probably came from reading books on Japanese architecture and/or from seeing the Japanese



**Figure 2- 24. The Greenes, the Culbertson house interior, 1902, Pasadena, California.**

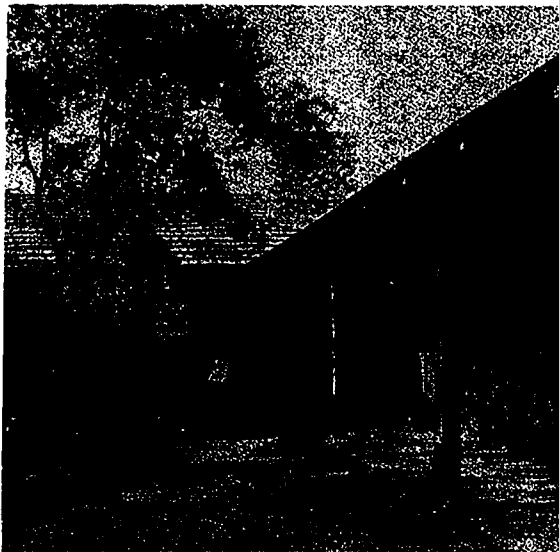
<sup>99</sup>See Makinson, op. cit., pp. 58 & 65, and Bruce Smith, *Greene & Greene: Master Works* (San Francisco: Chronicle Books, 1998), p. 59.

<sup>100</sup>Originally in 1542, there were no windows in the lodge and the patterned leaded windows were added later. See Simon Thurley, *The Royal Palaces of Tudor England: Architecture and Court Life 1460-1547* (New Haven: the Yale University Press, 1993), p. 192.

<sup>101</sup>Bruce Smith also pointed out a visible Japanese influence in the chimney breast of the Culbertson house. See Smith, op. cit., p. 59.

buildings at both fairs. One of their friends and clients, John Bentz, who was a prominent dealer in oriental antiques, recollected in 1958 that

when I made my first trip to Japan in 1901 I brought back numerous little old books [nearly all of which concerned the temples]--- mostly second hand and a number of prints, all of which he [Charles Greene] loved, and I gave him many of them ... He [Charles] liked the heavy timber work in their [the temples'] construction.<sup>102</sup>



**Figure 2- 25. The Greenes, the Bandini house, Pasadena, California, 1903.**

Thus, it is likely that the Greenes picked up the motifs from the books which Bentz brought from Japan and other books including Morse's *Japanese Homes* which the Greenes obtained in 1902.<sup>103</sup> For example, let us consider their use of foundation stones, upon which wooden square posts rested, which first appeared in the Bandini house in Pasadena, built in 1903 (Figure 2-25) and which were repeated later

<sup>102</sup>Letter from Bentz to Makinson, November 30, 1958. Cited in Makinson, 1977, p.55.

<sup>103</sup>According to Bruce Smith and Edward Bosley, Morse's *Japanese Houses and Their Surroundings* was "inscribed by him [Charles Greene] in 1902." See Smith, op. cit., p. 59, and also from my phone interview with Mr. Bosley who is the director of the Gamble house, to whom I am grateful.

Also, in an interview with Mr. Yost, Charles Greene stated the means through which he contacted Japanese architecture: an itinerant bookseller "had a set of books on travel. Idly Charles Greene leafed through the pages until his attention was arrested by pictures of Japanese homes and gardens. This is what he had been seeking. Here is the post and beam and garden as one, an informal yet carefully conceived whole ... No detail could be seen in the chalk and charcoal engravings of the time. But there was enough to start the flame of creation" (L. Morgan Yost, "Greene and Greene of Pasadena," *AIA Journal* (September 1950): 123.



**Figure 2-26. Japanese use of foundation stones, in Morse's book, 1885.**



**Figure 2-27. The Greenes, the Culbertson house living room, Pasadena, California, 1902.**

in the Hollister house built in Hollywood in 1904.<sup>104</sup>

They may have seen this motif in Morse's *Japanese Homes* where an illustration and descriptions of the founding stone were shown (Figure 2-26).<sup>105</sup> There is more evidence for their learning about Japanese features from Morse's book: the Greenes' use of a cloud pattern on the *ramma*, mantel-roof, and mantelpiece in the Culbertson house living room (Figure 2-27), remodeled in 1906, matches a conventional Japanese cloud pattern shown in Morse's figure 118; their use of an outside brace in the Blacker house (Figure 2-28) built in Pasadena in 1907 corresponds with Morse's illustrations of the same kind (Figure 2-29); and the use of outside bracket under the beam can be also found in both Morse's book and their houses such as the Blacker house.<sup>106</sup> In the Blacker house as well as the Pratt house of 1909, the Greenes used the brace to

<sup>104</sup>Also in the Hollister house, the Greenes raised the floor of the house above the ground as in the Japanese houses. For an illustration, see Makinson, op. cit., p. 89.

<sup>105</sup>See Morse, op. cit., figure 6. It is also likely that they got the idea from a similar use of the post in the Mexican houses of California built in the first half of the nineteenth century. But, in the Mexican houses, the posts sit on directly upon the floor, not on a stone like in Japanese houses. For the illustrations of the Mexican-style houses built in California that adopted such posts, see Harold Kirker. *California's Architectural Frontier: Style and Tradition in the Nineteenth Century* (Salt Lake City: Peregrine Smith Books, 1986), Figures 4 & 5.

<sup>106</sup>See Morse's figures 13, 257, 271. The Greenes also could have seen an illustration showing exactly the same type of Japanese brace as the one they used in the Blacker house. For example, the Ninnaji Temple in Kyoto used the same braces, and the Greenes could have seen them in the books Bentz brought from Japan



Figure 2-28. The Greeneres, the Blacker house, Pasadena, California, 1907.

support the frame, and it was held in place by wooden pins, as used in Japanese houses that Morse illustrated. In addition, Morse's description of a Japanese house reminds one of that of the Greenes' bungalows: "In the northern part

of Japan, houses are often seen [as having the features such as] massive timbers roughly hewn,... the eaves are widely overhanging, with projecting rafters ..."<sup>107</sup>

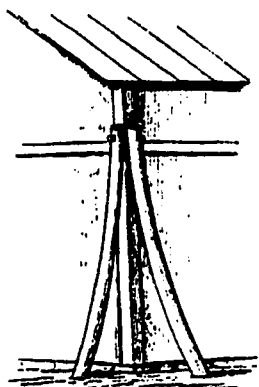


Figure 2-29. Japanese use of outside brace, in Morse's, 1885.

The influence of Japanese architecture on the Greenes' work appeared more prominently in the Tichenor house in Long Beach, California, built in 1904-05. In this house (Figure 2-30), the *irimoya* roof over the main wing is obviously a Japanese-inspired feature.<sup>108</sup> In addition, the horse shoe plan with a Japanese arched-bridge in front closely reflected that of Japanese *Shinden Zukuri* style houses (Figure 2-31).<sup>109</sup> More important use of Japanese

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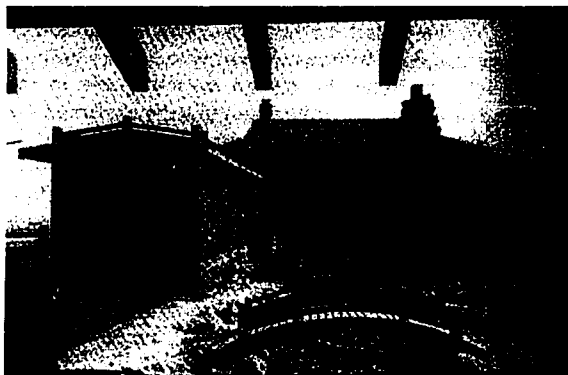
or from the books they bought from an itinerant bookseller. For an illustration of the kind used in the temple, see Harada, *The Lesson of Japanese Architecture*, p. 34.

For the outside bracket under the beam, see Morse figures 14 & 15.

<sup>107</sup>Morse, op. cit., p. 57.

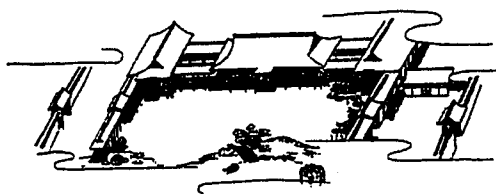
<sup>108</sup>The Greenes' use of the roof is similar to Wright's early *irimoya*-roofed houses built in 1897-1902 and it differs from the Greenes' earlier use of it in the roofs over the dormer windows.

<sup>109</sup>Kevin Nute once compared the Greenes' and Wright's attitude towards Japanese elements: "Wright's own approach to Japanese built-forms would appear to have been quite distinct from that of the Greenes--- and indeed from that of most of his other American and European contemporaries-- in apparently being much more concerned with general underlying forms than with specific surface details." Nute, *Frank Lloyd Wright and Japan* (New York: Van Nostrand Reinhold, 1993), p. 19. Nute's comment seems to be only partly right. For example, Wright also used the Japanese type of *irimoya* roof in at least three houses.



**Figure 2-30 & 32. The Greenes, the Tichnor house, Pasadena, California, 1905.**

the handrail.<sup>110</sup> In contrast, in the Tichnor house designed in 1904, the Greenes began to



**Figure 2-31. A typical Japanese Shinden style house.**

use horizontal planks and boards for railing the stairs and porches (Figure 2-32). Unlike those used on their earlier houses such as the B. Fay house (Figure 2-33) built in Pasadena in 1898, the balustrades on the Tichnor house represent Japanese-type railing. Like in China and Korea, Japanese builders had adopted horizontal boards and planks for the balustrades on their buildings for centuries whether they were temples, shrines or domestic houses. The Greenes' use of the Oriental motif appears to be derived from Japanese sources because both

features in the house was Japanese use of horizontal bars and planks for the balustrade. In most American houses designed before the turn of the century, whether the balustrades were placed on the porch, balcony or in the roof, the balustrades composed of vertical posts or balusters under

use horizontal planks and boards for railing the stairs and porches (Figure 2-32). Unlike those used on their earlier houses such as the B. Fay house (Figure 2-33) built in Pasadena in 1898, the balustrades on the Tichnor house represent

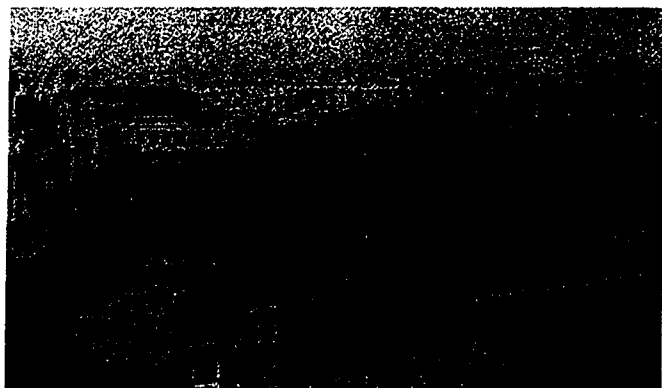
Japan-



**Figure 2-33. The Greenes, balustrades in the Fay house, Pasadena, California, 1898.**

<sup>110</sup>For the examples of such balustrades, Virginia and Lee McAlester. *A Field Guide to American Houses* (New York: Knopf, 1997), passim.

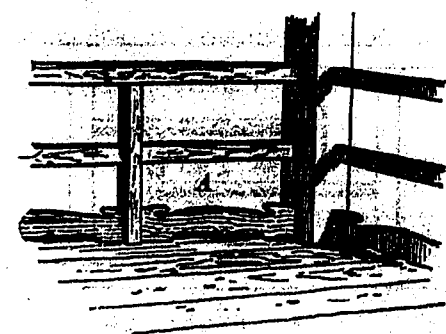
the architects and the clients were most interested in Japanese architecture by 1904. For example, when Charles Greene was just beginning the design of the house, the client, Adelaide Tichnor visited the Japanese Pavilions at the Louisiana Purchase International Exposition held in 1904, and asked Charles Greene to visit the exposition buildings



**Figure 2- 34. Japanese Pavilion at the Louisiana Purchase Exposition, Saint Louis, 1903.**

because Mrs. Tichnor was “anxious to have [the architect] use the knowledge [he] may gain here [in the Japanese exposition buildings] on [her] house.”<sup>111</sup> It appears that both the architect and the client saw the horizontal planks adopted on the

balustrades of the main Pavilion and the Golden Pavilion (Figure 2-34) that were built on the exhibition ground. It is also likely that the Greenes saw the Japanese features in



**Figure 2-35. Japanese use of horizontal form of railing, in Morse's book, 1885.**

Morse's book and incorporated it to the Tichnor house, because the feature was illustrated in the book. Morse's illustrations (Figure 2-35) show also similar railings to those of the Tichnor house balustrade with a combination of narrow and broad planks.<sup>112</sup> Then, they used the Japanese feature more extensively in the Robinson house built in

<sup>111</sup> Adelaide Tichnor's letter to Charles Greene, cited in R. Makinson, "Charles and Henry Greene," in Robert Winter *Toward a Simpler Way of Life: The Arts and Crafts Architecture of California* ed., (Berkeley: The University of California Press, 1997), p. 124.

<sup>112</sup> See also Morse's illustrations of the feature, Figures 228-232.

Pasadena in 1905. For both the porch balustrade and the stairways running from the living room to the second floor show the same type of balustrades employed in the Tichnor house a year before.<sup>113</sup> This Japanese feature would become a typical motif of the Greene's bungalow houses such as the Irwin house of 1906 and the Gamble house of 1908. The most important and enduring Japanese influence on their work was, however, the fine craftsmanship of Japanese builders. Such craftsmanship, which was expressed in fine joinery in their buildings and their use of unpainted wood, reached their zenith later in large bungalow houses like the Gamble house in Pasadena in 1908.

As we have seen, although the Greenes were exposed to Japanese architecture in 1893, they did not incorporate literal Japanese motifs until 1902. The question remains why didn't they adopt these motifs earlier? The reason they began to adopt these motifs in 1902 is that, as discussed above, the Greenes were inspired around that time by the Japanese books, most of which concerned Japanese temples, which Bentz brought over from Japan in 1901. It was also in 1902 that the Greenes found the features of Japanese houses in Morse's *Japanese Houses and Their Surroundings*. More importantly, by the time the Greenes designed the Culbertson house in 1902, their interest in Japanese principles and forms, which arose through Japanese books, was enhanced by reading such contemporary popular journals as *The Craftsman*, *Ladies Home Journal* or *House Beautiful*.<sup>114</sup> The concepts they learned especially from *The Craftsman* were harmony with surrounding nature, simplicity in buildings and furniture, design philosophy of

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<sup>113</sup>For illustrations, see Smith, *op. cit.*

<sup>114</sup>Makinson, *The Greene & Greene*, pp. 60-61. According to Makinson, the Greenes were influenced by two publications around 1901: Will Bradley's articles in the *Ladies Home Journal*; and Gustav Stickley's

designing and producing items of the highest quality and workmanship and total architecture where the architect is involved with all aspects of the design. All of these were concepts they also found in their study of Japanese architecture. Interestingly enough, as previously quoted, these similarities would be noted later in 1906 by a *Craftsman's* editor who wrote of the similar architectural principles between the Japanese and the Arts and Crafts architecture. In other words, the characteristics of the Greenes' work were achieved through their integration of both Japanese architectural vocabularies and the Arts and Crafts ideas which they regarded as sharing basic similarities. Such characteristics represented in California bungalows were noted by C. David in 1906. In his "An Architect of Bungalows in California," where he dealt only with the Greenes' bungalows, he stated that:

We are aware that the American bungalows derives more of its characteristics from Japanese models than it does from buildings erected in tropical countries, ... Their [Japanese] houses are open and airy ... The climate of California [unlike in the Northern and Eastern States]... is peculiarly adapted to a low, spacious, airy house, of light frame construction...They [the rooms] should be finished in wood simply designed and stained so as to keep so far as possible its natural texture and hue... It [the exterior] should sink, so far as possible, its architectural individuality and tend to disappear in its natural background. Its aesthetic character will necessarily be wholly picturesque... A bungalow, designed in the manner described above, ... is most completely and happily fulfilled in the houses of Messrs. Greene & Greene, which we publish herewith.<sup>115</sup>

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*The Craftsman*. From Bradley, they learned about the idea that "architects could design and build furniture expressly related to their interior designs." From the *Craftsman*, they learned about "simplicity."

<sup>115</sup>C. David, "An Architect of Bungalow in California," *Architectural Record* (October 1906), pp.309-10. Here, David discussed the Greenes' houses such as the Tichenor house, the Hollister house, the Willett house, the Libby house, the Claypole house, and the Bandini house.

Clay Lancaster also mentioned about Japanese influences on California bungalow designed by the Greenes. In his book, he enumerated sources of Japanese features the Greenes used in the bungalows such

David also considered the “most prominent architectural member [of the American bungalow]” as “its roof ... [whose] aesthetic character will be wholly picturesque.”<sup>116</sup>

David’s view of American bungalow roofs corresponds to Morse’s enthusiasm for the Japanese roofs, which give the houses their picturesqueness, and further proves that Japanese architecture served as a prototype for the Greenes’ bungalows.<sup>117</sup> Also notably Japanese-inspired features in the Greenes’ bungalows are their bold use of heavy timbers and projecting rafters, the ends of which were gently rounded.



**Figure 2-36. The Greenes, the Gamble house exterior, Pasadena, California, 1908.**

Relying solely on Lancaster, Anthony King has also pointed out the importance of Japanese influences, though in passing, in shaping the bungalows in *The Bungalow: The Production of a Global Culture*.<sup>118</sup> However, he focused mainly on the general economic, social and cultural forces that bore upon the bungalows, not tracking sources of the

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as the exposition buildings and Morse’s *Japanese homes* and so on. See *American Bungalow: 1880-1930* (New York: Dover Publications, 1985), p. 122.

<sup>116</sup>Ibid.

<sup>117</sup>Morse, *Japanese Homes*, p. 77. As quoted, Morse wrote that “it is mainly to the roof that a Japanese house owes its picturesque appearance,” and he continued, “it is the roof which gives to the houses that novelty and variety which is so noticeable...”

<sup>118</sup>Referring to Lancaster’s *Japanese Influence in America*, King mentioned about the Japanese influences in only one sentence: “Given the basic economic, social and cultural conditions, the actual shape of the bungalow drew on many sources: in its more sophisticated ‘high-style’ form, Japanese influences were important [Anthony King, *The Bungalow: The Production of a Global Culture* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995), p. 154].

formal features. According to him, the common forces contributed to forming the bungalows of the Greene brothers as well as Wright were

the arcadian dream, a commitment to the expansion of suburbs and a deep-seated belief in the institutions of both the family and of private property which, as part of a long-established, single-family house. [Also] the expanding capitalist industrial economy of late-nineteenth-century America [which had] encouraged both the widespread adoption of these aspirations as well as the socialistic revolt against the bourgeois, industrial urban system itself.<sup>119</sup>

All the features discussed earlier, the low, horizontal lines, the emphasis on natural texture of wood, the idea of total architecture, or the close relationship between house and landscape in the Greenes' work were preserved best in their Gamble house (Figure 2-36). The house's low profile and harmonious relationship to the rolling site was achieved through strong horizontals in its roof lines, broad bands of casement windows, outdoor terraces horizontally stretched from the house, and a little Japanese *torii* gate which is the entrance to the dining yard. The Greenes' concern for the total design was prominent in the interior. In it, all the furniture, lamps, stained glass windows are simple and in harmony with each other. As in their previous houses, such as the Culbertson house, the Greenes also incorporated Japanese *ramma* and *kamoi* motifs in the Gamble house. Compared to interiors of Wright's Prairie houses where Wright also adopted the *ramma* and *kamoi*, however, those of the Gamble house are still contained and consist of separate spaces. Wright's use of the Japanese motifs provided the interiors of the Prairie houses with open and interpenetrating space, making the interiors spatially adventurous. In the

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<sup>119</sup>King, op. cit., p. 155.

Gamble house, the living, dining room, and kitchen are treated as separate spaces.<sup>120</sup> Japanese details are also noticeable in the entrance hall and living room. One can see the *karahafu*-eaves motif which had been repeatedly used in their works in both exterior and interior, in the *ramma* which defines the inglenook (Figure 2-37). The motif appears to be one of the favorite Japanese forms Greene and Greene incorporated in their work. The Japanese curved eave line was adopted for many different objects such as the lantern



**Figure 2-37. The Greenes, the Gamble house interior, Pasadena, California, 1908.**

cover, the *ramma*, and the base board of the fireplaces.<sup>121</sup> The squared ceiling pattern recalls the coffered ceiling pattern of Japanese *shoin* interiors, which was used in the central pavilion of the Ho-o-den in 1893, and the lighting fixtures like lanterns also represent Japanese in style.

Those Japanese qualities existed so markedly in both the Greenes' and Wright's works that they were immediately obvious to many contemporaries. For instance, after visiting

<sup>120</sup>Considering that both Wright and Greene and Greene experienced of real Japanese interiors in the expositions at Philadelphia, Chicago and Saint Louis, it is interesting to think about their different incorporation of their learning into their works.

For the Greenes' visit to the 1903 Louisiana Purchase Exposition and its influence on the Tichnor house of 1905, see Randell Makinson, "Charles and Henry Greene," in Robert Winter. *Toward a Simpler Way of Life: The Arts and Crafts Architects of California* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1997), pp. 123-136.

<sup>121</sup>For a base board patterned with rolling wave, see the fireplace in one of the upstairs bedrooms (for illustration, see Bruce Smith, op. cit., p. 132; the lantern was used in the entrance hall of the Gamble house; the form also can be easily found in many Greene and Greene's exterior features.

both Wright in Chicago and the Greenes's Gamble house in 1909, the English Arts and Crafts architect, Charles Robert Ashbee wrote that

I think C. Summer Greene's work beautiful; among the best there is in this country. Like Lloyd Wright [sic] the spell of Japan is on him, he feels the beauty and makes magic out of the horizontal line, but there is in his work more tenderness, more subtlety, more self-effacement than in Wright's work. It is more refined and has more repose. Perhaps it loses in strength, perhaps it is California that speaks rather than Illinois, anyway as work it is, so far as the interiors go, more sympathetic to me.<sup>122</sup>

In the Greenes' workshop, Ashbee saw "the best and most characteristic furniture in the country" and acclaimed that "the art and craft that all the others are screaming and hustling about, are here actually being produced by a young architect [Charles Greene]."<sup>123</sup> Ashbee's admiration of the Greenes' work was natural. It was probably because both Ashbee and the Greenes were disciples of William Morris in that they preferred handicraft to the machine work, unlike Wright who advocated more machine aesthetics than handicraft. In 1901, Wright addressed the Chicago Arts and Crafts Society at Hull House with "The Art and Craft of the Machine." In it, he said that "in the Machine lies the only future of art and craft ... the machine is capable of carrying to fruition high ideals in art--higher than the world has yet seen!"<sup>124</sup> However, as David Hanks pointed

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<sup>122</sup>Charles Robert Ashbee, *Memoirs* (London: Victoria and Albert Museum). Cited in Robert Judson Clark, *The Arts and Crafts Movement in America 1876-1916* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1972), p.83. Ashbee was Wright's close friend and wrote his "Introduction" to Wright's *Wasmuth Portfolio* in 1911. Ashbee's comment on regional differences between California and Illinois is convincing.

<sup>123</sup>Makinson, p.168.

<sup>124</sup>Wright, "The Art and Craft of the Machine," reprinted in Edgar Kaufmann and Ben Raeburn, *Frank Lloyd Wright: Writings and Buildings* (New York: A Meridian Book, 1960), p. 55. It was addressed to the Chicago Arts and Crafts Society, at Hull House, March 6, and to the Western Society of Engineers, March 20, 1901. This speech was later published in *Modern Architecture*, Wright's Princeton lectures in 1930.

out, the machine-aesthetic was mainly suggested by Wright in principle, not in practice.<sup>125</sup>

The subtle quality of the Greenes' woodwork partly resulted from their skills in carpentry which they obtained from their early training in the Manual Training High School. Instead of the normal high school of the day, they attended the technical school operated by Washington University in Saint Louis. In the school, each student was required to spend two hours a day on carpentry, working with and understanding the inherent nature of wood. Their skills in carpentry and understanding the nature of wood began to blossom when they were exposed to both Japanese and Arts and Crafts architecture around 1902. Just as Ashbee was fascinated by the Greenes' work, Wright admired their craftsmanship which had more tenderness and more subtlety than his. Sometime after 1915 when he met the Greenes, Wright said to him that "Mr. Greene, I do not know how you do it" - probably a reference to the high standards of craftsmanship achieved, as Randell Makinson suggested.<sup>126</sup> Judging from Wright's statement, one can infer that Wright's admiration of Japanese craftsmanship was further deepened or expanded by his contact with the Greenes' work.<sup>127</sup>

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<sup>125</sup>Davis Hanks, "Chicago and the Midwest," in Robert Judson Clark ed., *The Arts and Crafts Movement in America* (New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1972), p. 68.

<sup>126</sup>Interviews by Makinson with Mrs. Charles Greene. Cited in Makinson, p.212.

<sup>127</sup>It has been known that Wright made several unsuccessful attempts to meet Charles Greene probably from 1905 until 1915 (Clark, *The Arts and Crafts in America*, p.83). Wright could have visited the West Coast first in 1905 on his way to Japan, and could have seen the Greenes' work. However, it is not clear that he actually visited California in 1905. Although San Francisco was the most popular port from which Americans embarked for their trip to Japan, Wright embarked from Vancouver on February 21, 1905 aboard the Canadian steamship, *Empress of China*, and also from Vancouver in his second trip in 1913 [see Kathryn Smith, "Frank Lloyd Wright's Imperial Hotel: A Postscript," *Art Bulletin* LXVII (June 1985): 298]. After 1905, Wright's next eye-contact with West Coast architecture was in 1909 when he designed George C. Stewart house in Montecito, California, the first Wright house built in California.

In addition to the affinities between Wright's and the Greenes' works during the 1900s which derived mainly from their mutual interest in both Japanese architecture and the Arts and Crafts architecture, the similarities can also be explained by their clients who tended to be drawn to a free, simple, and practical life style, a life style that would accept more willingly new forms such as Japanese for their homes. The clients of the Greenes were once characterized by James M. Fitch as

...usually wealthy midwesterners of liberal Protestant or Quaker background. They belonged to that segment of opinion which supported national parks, women's suffrage, progressive education, factory reform. They were involved in new theories of love and marriage, of birth control and child care, of diet and hygiene...<sup>128</sup>

Similarly, according to the survey by L. Eaton and E. Streich, Wright's clients for the Prairie houses were also mostly Midwesterners of "upper-middle-class" families... [who were] more independent-minded than the average person." Further, they were clients who "still enjoyed the freedom of frontier pragmatism, or matter-of-factness, that allowed them to shun certain cultural constraint."<sup>129</sup> Such a preference for freedom from past cultural constraint might be mutual between the architects and their clients. Charles Greene wrote as early as 1907:

I am an American. ... Is the Paris opera house built onto the front of a railway station or a Greek temple plastered over the entrance to an office building good art? ... The old things

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<sup>128</sup>In Reyner Banham's "Introduction," of Makinson, 1977, p.16.

However, as David Streatfield suggested, compared to the Maybeck's clients at a college town Berkeley who were mostly academics and artists that was more experimental and adventurous, the Greenes' clients at Pasadena seemed to be more conservative.

<sup>129</sup>Leonard K. Eaton, *Two Chicago Architects and their Clients: Frank Lloyd Wright and Howard van Doren Shaw* (Cambridge, 1969), and Eugene R. Streich, "An Original-Owner Interviews Survey of Frank Lloyd Wright's Residential Architecture." Cited in H. Allen Brooks, *Frank Lloyd Wright and the Prairie School* (New York: George Braziller, 1984), p.12.

are good, they are noble in their place; then let our perverted fingers leave them there. Let us begin all over again.<sup>130</sup>

The statement of Charles Greene is reminiscent of the similar principles of Wright's organic architecture. Wright wrote in 1908 that

There should be as many kinds (styles) of houses as there are kinds (styles) of people and as many differentiation as there are different individuals. A man who has individuality (and what man lacks it?) has a right to its expression in his own environment ... A building should appear to grow easily from its site and be shaped to harmonize with its surroundings if Nature is manifest there, and if not try to make it as quiet, substantial and organic as She would have been were the opportunity Hers.<sup>131</sup>

Both architects, the one with his Prairie houses, the two brother with their California bungalows, rejected the inorganic Victorian and academic Beaux-Arts architecture. Their houses were revolutionary in the way that the simplicity of their design departed from the redundancy of Victorian ornamentation.<sup>132</sup> They were also different from Beaux-Arts architects. While academic architecture was based on the use of historical--especially Renaissance--models, the Arts and Crafts architects found their models in what they regarded as organic Japanese prototypes and in Gothic architecture.

Louis Christian Mullgardt (1866-1942) also incorporated some Japanese-inspired features in his buildings. After a brief study at Harvard, Mullgardt worked in Chicago as a chief designer in the office of Henry Ives Cobb from 1891 to 1893. In the office, he was responsible for the detailing of the Fisheries Building exhibited at the 1893 Chicago

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<sup>130</sup>Quoted in Makinson, op. cit., p. 160.

<sup>131</sup>Wright, "In the Cause of Architecture," *Architectural Record* XXIII (March 1908).

<sup>132</sup>Such a departure was clearly illustrated in Stickley's comparison of Craftsman living room interiors with Victorian interiors (Figure 3-37). As Stickley pointed out, the most conspicuous differences between the two living rooms were that while the Craftsman living room represented "cohesion and harmony as the result of simplicity," the Victorian one showed "complexity, confusion, [and] chaos [see Stickley, "From Ugliness to Beauty," *Craftsman* VII (December 1904): 310-21].

Fair.<sup>133</sup> The Fisheries Building was built across the water from the Japanese buildings (see for a map, Figure 3-14). Given the interests in Japanese architecture already prevailing at the time, there is little doubt that Mullgardt also attended the Fair and saw the Japanese pavilion, as Wright, Maybeck, and the Greenes did. The influence of Japanese buildings was reflected in his houses built in Bay Area during the period 1905-10. The houses represented features quite unlike those he had done before or would do later. The Japanese features represented in his houses were noted by Cram in 1913. Commenting on the “California style” which the Greenes and Mullgardt set forth, Cram wrote that

one must see the real and revolutionary thing in its native haunts of Berkeley and Pasadena to appreciate it [the California style] in all its varied charm and its striking beauty. ... There are things in it Japanese... It is a wooden style built woodenly, and it has the force and the integrity of Japanese architecture.<sup>134</sup>

Although Cram was not specific about the “things Japanese” in their buildings, he might have mentioned such Japanese features as the low hipped roof, deep eaves, exposed rafters, half-timbering and double roofs. The last feature might have been derived from the similar feature of the Japanese pavilion at the Chicago Fair.<sup>135</sup> All the Japanese features were commonly seen in Mullgardt’s domestic buildings during the period including a residence (Figure 2-38) on Dormidera Avenue, Piedmont,

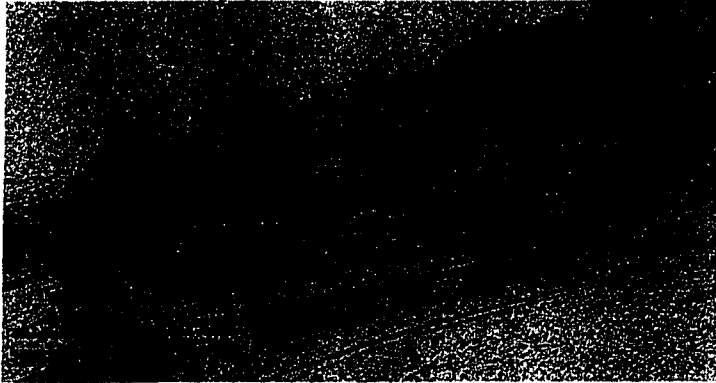
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<sup>133</sup>Robert Judson Clark, *Louis Christian Mullgardt, 1866-1942* (Santa Barbara: Art Galleries, University of California, 1966), p. 8.

<sup>134</sup>Cram’s preface in *American Country House of Today* (New York: Architectural Book Publishing Inc., 1913), pp. iv-v.

<sup>135</sup>Most features were also in common in the houses designed by Wright, R. D.Griffin, or the Greenes. In particular, the double roofs or eaves were shown in Wright’s typical Prairie houses such as the Harley Bradley house, Kankakee, Illinois of 1900, Griffin’s own house in Edwardsville, Illinois and the Greenes’s bungalows such as the Gamble house. A possible source of the double eaves was those of the Ho-o-den in

California; the Henry Taylor house, Berkeley; a cottage on Santa Ray Ave., Piedmont; and a bungalow for Mrs. Mullgardt, all built in 1908-10.<sup>136</sup> Illustrating his debt to



**Figure 2-38. Christian Mullgardt, A Residence on Dormidera Ave., 1907.**

Japanese architecture, a Mullgardt's design of the California residence (Figure 2-38) published in 1913 in *The American Country House of Today* showed at

the left-hand corner a boy carrying vegetable baskets

on his shoulder in a Japanese manner. Mullgardt might have known to the Japanese



**Figure 2- 39. Mullgardt, the Evance house, Marine County, California, 1907.**

way of carrying baskets because the basket carriers had been illustrated many times in books on Japan and its culture such as James Jackson Jarves's *A Glimpse at the Art of Japan* or Morse's *Japanese Homes*.<sup>137</sup>

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the 1893 Chicago Fair which all the architects mentioned here saw. Maybeck's First Church of Christ, Scientist also displays these features.

<sup>136</sup>For illustration of the houses, see Wendy Kaplan, *The Art that is Life: The Arts and Crafts Movement in America, 1875-1920* (Boston: Museum of Fine Art, 1987), figure 77 for the Taylor house; for others, see *American Country House of Today of 1913*.

<sup>137</sup>Similar illustrations of Japanese way of carrying objects like foods or merchandise can be seen, among others, in James Jackson Jarves's *A Glimpse at the Art of Japan* (Rutland, Vermont & Tokyo: Charles Tuttle Company, 1984), figure V and XVI (first published in 1876), and in Alcock's *Capital of Tycoon*: illustrations in v. I., p. 389 & 399. In Morse's, see figures 35, 44, and 59.

Most prominent Japanese-influenced house designed by Mullgardt was, however, the Evans house in Marine County, California in 1907. As Robert Judson Clark suggested, the gentle upturn of the ridges and the handsome grillage of the kitchen entrance (Figure 2-39) are noticeably Japanese-inspired.<sup>138</sup> However, the overall exterior appearance of the house also appears to be Japanese-inspired features. Indeed, the combination of the shingled ground floor wall and the white plastered upper story, the loophole-like small window openings, the slanted wall, all these features recalls those of Japanese castles. Considering that the client of the house, Letitia Evans had visited Japan in around 1900 and kept a brochure of the Japanese castle, *Our Matsuyama Castle* (Figure 2-40), until her death in 1969, it is likely that the Japanese castle-like features of the house resulted from the client' and the architect's common design philosophy.<sup>139</sup>

### Japanese gardens in America

#### between 1897 and 1914



Figure 2-40. Matsuyama Castle, rebuilt in 1854.

During the first decade of the twentieth century, an increasing number of American tourists to Japan led Americans to obtain more knowledge of Japanese gardens. Their knowledge was also deepened by increasing contact with Japanese-inspired gardens created in America. At the

<sup>138</sup>Clark, "Louis Christian Mullgardt," in Robert Winter ed., *Toward a Simpler Way of Life* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1997), p.44.

<sup>139</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 50, n. 8.

time, many private gardens began to be created in big estates by Japanese gardeners who were brought to America, and accordingly books or articles published in journals such as *The Craftsman* or *House Beautiful* began to frequently deal with Japanese-style gardens.

First of all, if Morse's *Japanese Homes and Their Surroundings* was the most influential book on Japanese domestic architecture at the turn of the century, Conder's *Landscape Gardening in Japan* and its *Supplement to Landscape Gardening in Japan*, both published in 1893 were the most influential books written in English on Japanese gardening at the time. The books were noted in Cram's article in the 1901 *Dictionary of Architecture and Building*. Florence du Cane and Basil Taylor acknowledged their indebtedness to Conder's pioneering books in the prefaces of their books, *The Flowers and Gardens of Japan* (1908) and *Japanese Gardens* (1912) both published in London.<sup>140</sup> Of the two, the latter was available to American landscape architects during the first decade of the twentieth century. For example, the 1915 bibliography on landscape architecture, which was given out by Professor Henry Hubbard for his class at the Harvard University, listed Taylor's book. The *Japanese Gardens* was the only book on Japanese landscape architecture listed in the bibliography and received the following review in the bibliography reprinted in the 1915 issue of *Landscape Architecture* by Theodora Kimball: "an available book, based on somewhat on Conder, the authority, now almost unobtainable."<sup>141</sup>

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<sup>140</sup>Florence du Cane, *The Flowers and Gardens of Japan* (London: Adam & Charles Black, 1908), and Basil Taylor, *Japanese Gardens* (London: Methuen & Co. Ltd, 1912). His authority remained for a long time. For example, in 1925, Henrietta Pope referred to Conder in her article as "a recognized authority on the subject [of Japanese gardens]" [Pope, "A Japanese Garden," *House Beautiful* 58 (October 1925): 398].

<sup>141</sup>Theodora Kimball, "Books on Landscape Architecture," *Landscape Architecture* VI (October, 1915, to July, 1916): 87-94. Taylor's book was only one book on Japanese landscape architecture listed here. The list was "reprinted with minor corrections from that given out recently by Professor Henry V. Hubbard for

Following Conder's books, one of the most influential books on Japanese gardening for American architects was *European and Japanese Gardens* which was edited in 1902 for the American Institute of Architects by its Secretary Glenn Brown. The book was the result of 34th Annual Convention of the A.I.A. held in Washington D.C. in 1900 where the subject of gardens was one of the principal topics of consideration. As the editor of this book pointed out, the presentations, which had been read at the Conference, "produced such a favorable impression" to the A.I.A. members, they were printed as articles with illustrations "so that their influence would be of a more permanent value."<sup>142</sup> This book included articles on "the Italian Formal Garden," "English Gardens," "French Gardening and Its Master," and two articles on Japanese gardens. The first article was "Japanese Gardens" written by Japanese landscape architect K. Honda. In it, Honda summarized some parts of Conder's *Landscape Gardening in Japan* using the same illustrations as those used in Conder's book.<sup>143</sup> The other was "Note on A Japanese Garden in California" by C.H. Townsend. In it, Townsend wrote of the Japanese garden exhibited at the Mid-Winter Fair in California in 1894. His comment on the garden is important to understand the status of Japanese gardens and their possible influences in America at the time:

This garden is probably the only important one of its kind in this country, but its accessibility to the public has been the means of attracting considerable attention to the methods of the Japanese gardener... While it is true that most of the visitors regard it [the garden] as merely a novelty, it is nevertheless one of a type that would be most

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his class at Harvard University, in response to a request from the students for a list from which to buy toward a working library as opportunity offered."

<sup>142</sup>*European and Japanese Gardens* (Philadelphia: Henry T. Coates & Co., 1902), ed. by G. Brown, Editor's Introduction.

<sup>143</sup>Most illustrations and content of the article were exactly same as those used in Conder's 1893 book and its supplement.

satisfactory if adopted generally in this country. Its various features remain attractive throughout the year and afford opportunities for continuous development<sup>144</sup>

Townsend's statement of the rarity of good Japanese gardens in America and the adaptability of Japanese gardening in American soil are worth noting because his statements suggested an adaptability of Japanese gardens for American soil. Furthermore, the article was published in a book sponsored by the American Institute of Architects. During the 1900s, American architects' interests in landscape gardening were high, and *European and Japanese Gardens* was one of the important sources on Japanese gardening.<sup>145</sup> For example, in 1904 when Stickley discussed a Japanese garden in Minneapolis, he used the *European and Japanese Gardens* as a source for his knowledge of Japanese gardening. In his article, "A Garden Fountain," published in October 1904 issue of *The Craftsman* magazine, Stickley not only quoted some passages from the book, but also used identical terms such as Japanese "Hill garden in rough style" which he learned from Honda's article, "Japanese Landscape Gardening."<sup>146</sup>

Besides the books or articles mentioned above, Mortimer Menpes' book *Japan*, published in 1901, included a chapter on gardens, and was a source quoted by Stickley in his article on a Japanese garden.<sup>147</sup> The *Craftsman* magazine frequently published articles on Japanese gardening as well as architecture, as did *House Beautiful*, *House and*

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<sup>144</sup>Townsend, "Note on A Japanese Garden in California," in Brown, op. cit., ed., p. 160.

<sup>145</sup>In the "Introduction" of *European and Japanese Garden*, the editor wrote that "Only within a very recent period have architects of the United States appreciated the fact that the garden should be designed in connection with the house. To encourage and popularize this fact the Committee of Arrangements for the Thirty-fourth Annual Convention [of 1900] of the American Institute of Architects determined to make the subject of Gardens one of the principal topics of consideration."

<sup>146</sup>G. Stickley, "A Garden Fountain," *Craftsman* VII (October 1904): 69-75.

<sup>147</sup>*Ibid.*

*Garden, The Garden, and the Ladies Home Journal*.<sup>148</sup> In 1909, Stickley wrote of Japanese influences in American landscape gardening in his article “What may be done with water and rocks in a little garden” published in *Craftsman Home*. He wrote that “We have to acknowledge our indebtedness to the Japanese for more inspiration in matters of art and architecture ... [and] the arrangement of our gardens.”<sup>149</sup>

Gardens created during the given period (1897-1914), in which Japanese garden features or principles were adopted, can be divided into two categories: Japanese gardens erected in many large estates and small gardens arranged in small lots. The Japanese



**Figure 2-41. A Japanese Garden at Sonnenberg, Sonnenberg, New York, 1906.**

gardens arranged on large estates were usually created by Japanese gardeners who were brought to the U.S. by well-to-do clients, and the gardens were faithful transplantation of famous Japanese gardens. Also, on most large estates the Japanese gardens were arranged alongside other European gardens. One of the prominent gardens of this kind was a Japanese garden built in the garden of ‘Sonnenberg,’ which means

sunny-hill, at Canandaigua, New York in 1906. Sonnenberg was begun in 1863 by Mr.

<sup>148</sup>During the period, many new periodicals began to be published. *House Beautiful* published in Chicago from 1896; *House and Garden*, in Philadelphia, from 1901; *The Ladies Home Journal*, Philadelphia, 1900; *Country Life in America*, New York, 1901. As Kornwolf pointed out, many of the magazines were inspired by the English magazines *The Studio* (London, 1893) and *Country Life* (London, 1898). See James Kornwolf, “Sources and Characteristics of American Arts and Crafts Architecture,” in Janet Kardon, *The Ideal Home: 1900-1920* (New York: Harry N. Abrams, Inc., 1993), p. 111, note. 1.

<sup>149</sup>Gustav Stickley, *Craftsman Homes: Architecture and Furnishings of the American Arts and Crafts Movement* (New York: Dover Publications, Inc., 1979), p. 119. This was originally published by the Craftsman Publishing Company, New York, in 1909.

and Mrs. F. Thompson. They created many different gardens such the Italian or the Rose garden on this estate, and the Japanese garden (Figure 2-41) was another type. Around a Japanese Tea House, a Japanese designer K. Wadamori was brought in to design the garden, and with his seven crew members he transformed a smooth sloping lawn into a little valley, which dropped by pools and cascades through the garden. A view of the garden shows a very elaborate hill garden (Hill garden in “finished” style). Unlike the Knapp house garden or ones in the Fair grounds which were arranged in “rough” style, this garden showed elaborate features such as a large-scale lake, an elaborate bridge, different arrangements of rocks and different shapes of stone lanterns.<sup>150</sup> Another example of this kind was created at John D. Rockefeller’s estate. In 1902, Rockefeller



**Figure 2-42. A Japanese Garden at the Rockefeller Estate, New York, 1902.**

built a neoclassical summerhouse in his 4,180-acre estate, “Kykuit,” which means a lookout hill in Dutch. The garden included a Japanese tea garden and an Italian garden with marble statues, urns, steps and balustrades (Figure 2-42).<sup>151</sup>

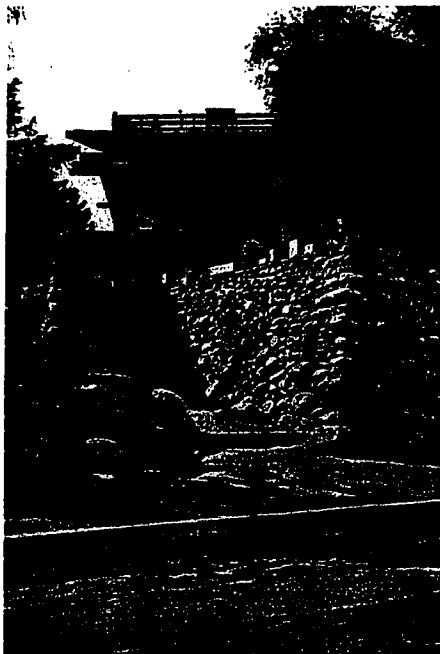
Following other precedent of estate gardens, Rockefeller also brought a

Japanese master to lay-out the Japanese garden.

<sup>150</sup>In the figure illustrated here, it is not obvious. For more information on the garden, see Mac Griswold and E. Weller, *The Golden Age of American Gardens* (New York: Harry N. Abrams, Inc., 1991), p. 89.

<sup>151</sup>*Ibid.*, p.77. Also Clive Aslet, *American Country House* (New Heaven: Yale University Press, 1990), pp. 49-59.

In addition to the Japanese gardens created on large estates, some architects created gardens in Japanese style or applied some Japanese gardening features to the small lots of small houses. As Florence Dixon pointed out in her *Craftsman* article in 1910, unlike European gardens which require large lots to express “some definite landscape effect,” “the special value of the Japanese garden” arranged in America lay in “its availability for small areas.”<sup>152</sup> According to Dixon, Japanese gardens can express the same landscape effect even in a small lot. Such small Japanese gardens were arranged all over the country, although it was more favored in the West Coast than in the East Coast region partly because of its similar climatic conditions as Japan’s and partly because of the proximity of California to the Far East and its large Asian population.<sup>153</sup>



**Figure 2-43. The Greenes, the Martin house, Pasadena, California, 1906.**

In his *Simple Home*, Keeler suggested “a compromise between the natural [Japanese] and formal [Italian]” gardens in California:

My desire in calling especial attention to these two types of gardens developed by races as widely sundered as the Italian and the Japanese, is not that we in California should imitate either, or a vulgar mixture of the two, but, rather, by a careful study of both, *to select those features which can be best adapted to our own life and landscape*, so that a new and distinctive type of garden may be evolved here, based upon the best examples of foreign lands... a compromise in which the carefully studied

<sup>152</sup>Florence Dixon, “Japanese Effects for Small Gardens,” *The Craftsman* XVIII (September 1910): 631-637.

<sup>153</sup>David Streatfield, “The Evolution of the California Landscape,” *Landscape Architecture* (May 1977): 235.

plan is concealed by a touch of careless grace that makes it appear as if nature had unconsciously made bowers and paths and sheltering hedges (my emphasis).<sup>154</sup>



**Figure 2-44. Garden at the Bradstreet house, Minnesota, ca. 1909.**

As Japanese garden features that Californians could select and adapt, Keeler enumerated carved gates, patterned bamboo fences, stone lanterns, thatched summer houses, retired nooks, out-of-door rooms, and

artificial watercourses.<sup>155</sup> All these features appeared to be found in the Japanese gardens in the 1894 Mid-Winter Exposition (Figure 2-35). His advocacy of Japanese garden elements for California gardens was also supported by Eugene Murmann's book *California Garden* published in 1914. In the book, Murmann advocated a variety of



**Figure 2- 45. The Greenes, the Blacker house garden, Pasadena, California, 1907.**

<sup>154</sup>Keeler, *The Simple Home*, p. 15.

<sup>155</sup>*Ibid.*, pp. 14-15.

different styles from formal gardens to Japanese hill gardens.<sup>156</sup>

On the West Coast, the most notable of the Japanese-influenced gardens were those gardens created by the Greens. Many articles published in the *Craftsman* pointed out Japanese qualities in the Greene's gardens. Especially in his *Craftsman Home* of 1909, Stickley wrote of Japanese influences in the West Coast gardens as well as East Coast ones. He found Japanese qualities in the West Coast gardens such as Greens' "effective use of cobblestones" in the Theodore Martin house (Figure 2-43) of 1906, and "hooded gateways and fences" in the Gamble house of 1908.<sup>157</sup> Stickley also observed Japanese features adopted by other landscape architects such as the quaint bridges, fountains, dwarf trees, bamboo screens or stone lanterns in the Bradstreet house (Figure 2-44) in Minneapolis.<sup>158</sup> The gardens created by the Greens' showed not exact copies of Japanese prototypes, but, as David Streatfield has pointed out, they were rather gardens "in which the arrangement of plant material and rock and the way in which one moved through the landscape evoked Japanese qualities."<sup>159</sup> The Blacker house garden (Figure 2-45) created by Greene and Greene in 1907 shows a typical example of the type. As many observers of

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<sup>156</sup>Murmann himself published the book, *California Gardens* in 1914 and it plan no. 17 shows the Japanese hill garden.

<sup>157</sup>Stickley, "The Effective Use of Cobblestones as a Link between House and Landscape," "Beautiful Garden Gates: The Charm that is always found in an interesting approach to an enclosure," and "What may be done with water and rocks in a little garden" in *Craftsman Home*, 1909.

As discussed earlier, this use of cobblestones occurred in many Greene and Greene designs such as the Gamble house, Neill house, Irwin house, and Duncan house.

<sup>158</sup>Stickley, "The Effective Use of Cobblestones as a Link between House and Landscape," "Beautiful Garden Gates: The Charm that is always found in an interesting approach to an enclosure," and "What may be done with water and rocks in a little garden" in *Craftsman Home*, 1909.

<sup>159</sup>Streatfield, "The Evolution of the California Landscape," *Landscape Architecture* (May 1977): 234. Also see Streatfield's "The Arts and Crafts Garden in California," in Kenneth Trapp ed., *The Arts and Crafts Movement in California* (New York: The Abbeville Press, 1993), 46, reads that the Greene Brothers' use of Japanese garden forms was "evocative and not derivative."

the garden called it “Japanese garden and pond,”<sup>160</sup> a rock arrangement, meandering water, gentle slope to the pool, and pergolas are Japanese-inspired features. However, as in their bungalows, one can frequently find conflated elements from several sources in their gardens.<sup>161</sup> For example, the Greenes’ use of tropical plants such as pineapple trees at the edge of the pond and water lilies in the pond represent their adaptation of Japanese plants for the California garden.

Wright’s use of Japanese-inspired garden arrangement appeared in 1902 in the Arthur Heurtley summer house at Marquette Island, Michigan (Figure



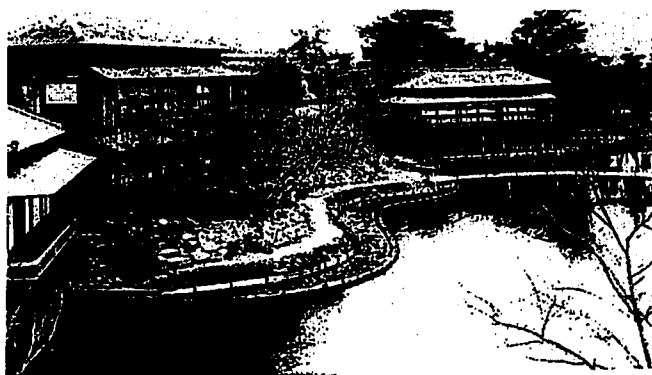
**Figure 2- 46. Japanese Gardens at the 1894 Mid-winter Exposition, San Francisco, California.**

2-10). This summer house not only represented the Japanese style of

boulder arrangement, but also showed Japanese *irimoya* roof with gallery. Here, the series of rocks arranged along the approach road were reminiscent of the same arrangement of rocks in the gardens of the Japanese Village which was built in 1894 in the Mid-Winter Exposition ground (Figure 2-46) in San Francisco. Some illustrations of the 1894 garden were published in the book *European and Japanese Gardens* published by the American Institute of Architects in 1902, the same year as the Heurtley summer house was built. In addition, Wright could have known of such features through his reading Conder’s

<sup>160</sup>See A. W. Alley, “A House in Japanese Style,” *House Beautiful* 25 (March 1909), 76 and Bruce Smith, *op. cit.*, p. 126, to name a few.

<sup>161</sup>See Streatfield, “The Arts and Crafts Garden,” p. 46.



**Figure 2-47. A Japanese Tea house garden, in Conder's book, 1893.**

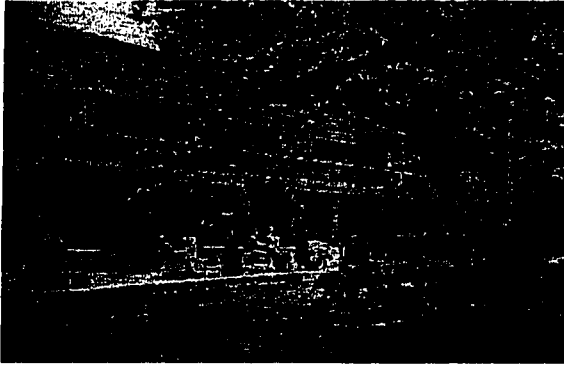
Among the gardens Wright designed, the most prominently Japanese-inspired ones were no doubt the gardens at the Imperial Hotel, Tokyo, Japan, built between 1916 and 1922. Particularly, in the tea terrace of the hotel, which was located on both sides of the main dining room, such Japanese features as banks with rocks, pools of water, dwarf trees and stone lanterns (Figure 2-48) made the garden seem Japanese-inspired. However, in most gardens Wright designed in America, unlike the Greenes and many other contemporaries, he did not use Japanese garden paraphernalia such as stone lanterns, bamboo screens or *torii* gates. Although the staggered planning of his own house, the Taliesin (Figure 2-49) built in Springfield, Wisconsin in 1911, appeared to be Japanese-inspired, in the garden of the house historians see different sources. On the one hand, as Neil Levine suggested, it is a formal garden, which seemed to be modeled on the Italian

<sup>162</sup>Conder, *Supplement to Landscape Gardening in Japan* (Tokio: Kelly and Walsh, limited, 1893), plate XXX. This book was a supplement of Coner's *Landscape Gardening in Japan*. This book included photographs of Japanese gardens, supplementing the drawings published in the main book.

*giardino segreto*.<sup>163</sup> On the other hand, however, it appears to be inspired by Japanese sources such as the gardens of the Shugaku-in. Wright once told the Taliesin Fellowship:

The greatest evidence and instance of (supplementing nature, rather than imitating nature) is in Japan in the great garden of the emperor there, called the Shugaku-in, where you see the row of mountains and the streams and the rocks and nature in splendid profusion

gradually working down into the house of the town and village, gradually becoming entirely artificial out of the extraordinary richness of nature and it's beautiful all the way."<sup>164</sup>



**Figure 2- 48. Wright, the Imperial Hotel garden, Tokyo, Japan, 1916-23.**

As Stipe pointed out, Wright's own description of the Japanese garden, which he visited in 1905, coincides perfectly with the siting and landscaping of Taliesin.

Again, as Maybeck' and the Greenes' works did, Wright's garden also represents conflated elements from several sources.

To recapitulate, in the wake of the 1893 Chicago Fair, the centers of Japanese influences in America had moved from the East, or Philadelphia,



**Figure 2-49. Wright, Taliesin I garden, Spring Greene, Wisconsin, 1911.**

<sup>163</sup>Neil Levine, *The Architecture of Frank Lloyd Wright* (New Jersey: The Princeton University Press, 1996), p. 90.

<sup>164</sup>Quoted in Margo Stipe, "Wright's First Trip to Japan," p. 22.

home of the 1876 Philadelphia Exposition, to the Mid-West and the West Coast. Wright, Maybeck, the Greenes, Mullgardt, and the Prairie School architects such as Griffin all came in contact with authentic Japanese architecture at the Chicago World's Columbian Exposition in 1893. Influences of the Japanese exhibition houses began to appear right after the fair in the works of the architects mentioned above. During the period between 1897 and 1914, American architects who supported the Arts and Crafts movement needed a fresh but respected source to counter the prevailing Victorian and the academic Beaux-Arts architecture. They saw Japanese architecture as rejecting false ornament in favor of honest and simple structure as well as the fine craftsmanship and picturesque qualities, the characteristics that resonated with those of the Arts and Crafts architecture. They found such an inspiration through the Japanese exhibition buildings as well as books on Japanese architecture such as Cram's *Impressions* of 1905 and articles published in the *Craftsman* magazine. As a result of their learning, at the turn of the century, American architects boldly began to use Japanese exterior features such as Japanese *irimoya* roofs, deep eaves, or exposed rafters as well as interior features such as *ramma* and *kamoi*. In the realm of gardening, some large estate owners brought Japanese garden masters and arranged typical Japanese designs in their gardens which also usually included European types. Other Japanese-style gardens were laid out in small lots where American architects did not copy typical Japanese gardens but adopted some features or principles of Japanese garden art.

### Chapter III: Between the Two Wars: 1914-1941

The advocates of the Arts and Crafts Movement such as Cram, Wright, and the Greens found in traditional Japanese architecture architectural forms and principles that resonated with their own, and they incorporated the forms and principles into their works. However, around the mid-1910s, Arts and Crafts architecture began to wane on the American architectural scene and so too did the influences of the Japanese. However, American architects' interest in Japanese architecture revived again in the early 1930s when both Western and Japanese architects began to be aware of the parallels between the then blossoming International Style and traditional Japanese architecture. During the World War II, the interest in Japanese architecture became latent again because the United States fought against Japan. In this chapter, I examine why and how American architects' interests in Japanese architecture fluctuated during the period between the two world wars, and how the interest was reflected in their works.

#### The Pivotal Year, 1914

Concerning Japanese influences in American architecture, the year 1914 was pivotal partly because it marked, as Vincent Scully pointed out in his *Modern Architecture*, a borderline "between two very different Americas, the old one with a few roots in the earth, tough and inventive, the new one fully industrialized, purse-proud and insecure."<sup>1</sup> It was also partly because World War I, which would transform American life socially, politically and economically, started that year.<sup>2</sup> First, I will examine Scully's discussion

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<sup>1</sup>Scully, *Modern Architecture* (New York: George Braziller, 1984, first published in 1961), p. 29.

<sup>2</sup>Charles Hirschfeld, "The Transformation of American Life," in Jack Roth ed., *World War I: A Turning Point in Modern History* (New York: Alfred A Knopf, 1967), pp. 63-81.

of the year 1914, which sheds light on the issue of Japanese influence in American architecture. In his *Modern Architecture*, Scully saw in the history of modern architecture a dialectical development between “Romantic-Classicism” and “Romantic-Naturalism.”<sup>3</sup> For him, the works of the Neo-Classicist architects such as Ledoux or Jefferson, and of European Modernists like Mies and Gropius, and the early work of Le Corbusier belonged to the “Romantic-Classicism.” In contrast, the works of the Rococo architects, of Art Nouveau architects such as Victor Horta, and of American architects such as Wright, Greene and Greene, and Harwell Hamilton Harris, are all the “products of the ‘romantic-naturalist’ mode.”<sup>4</sup> The mode had developed from the works and theories of the English landscape architects of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century such as Richard Payne Knight or Sir Uvedale Price to the “light, highly articulated wooden houses” of Downing, the American Stick Style, and the Greenes.<sup>5</sup> The “Romantic-Naturalist” to “Romantic-Classicist” shift occurred, for example, in “the period beginning roughly 1914” and it marked “a decisive break ... in American culture as a whole.”<sup>6</sup> It was the period when “Wright’s inventive contemporaries in Chicago and California [such Romantic-Naturalists as Purcell and Elmslie, Greene and Greene,

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<sup>3</sup>Scully, *Modern Architecture*, pp. 14-15. Each movement was “romantic,” according to Scully, because “it focused with exaggerated emotional intensity upon a single, restricted aspect of human experience.” However, the two were different in that while “the former concentrated upon the creation of clear geometric order, the latter “insisted upon freedom and upon an escape from the harsh rigor of the intellect into a world of intuition and “natural” values.”

<sup>4</sup>Ibid., p. 15. For example, the natural forms and “whip-lash” curves, which European painters found in Japanese prints at the turn of the century, helped stimulating the *Art Nouveau* movement in painting, poster, typography, furniture, and architecture.

<sup>5</sup>For the Romantic-Naturalist mode in the works of Downing, the Stick Style, and the Greenes, see Scully, *The Shingle Style and the Stick Style* and also *Modern Architecture*, p. 15. For the theories of Knight and Price, see Knight, “An Analytical Inquiry into the Principles of Taste (1805)” and Price, “An Essay on the Picturesque (1794),” in John Dixon Hunt and Peter Willis ed., *The Genius of Place: The English Landscape Garden 1620-1820* (Massachusetts: The MIT Press, 1993).

<sup>6</sup>Ibid., p. 22.

Maybeck, ...] were effectively finished by the shift [from Romanticism to Classicism].”<sup>7</sup>

Although Japanese influence was not an issue in Scully’s discussion,<sup>8</sup> it is interesting to note that the Romantic-Naturalist architects mentioned above were those who advocated both the Arts and Crafts style and Japanese architecture at the turn of the century and incorporated forms and principles of both architectures into their works. It is thus natural to infer that when the stars of the Romantic-Naturalist architects began to fade about 1914, Japanese influences in American architecture also began to wane.

Indications of the waning interest in Japanese architecture were first detected in the decreasing number of publications on Japanese architecture published in the period between 1914 and the early 1930s. For example, during the given period, major architectural journals such as *Architectural Review* or *Architectural Record* rarely published articles on Japanese architecture. The former published only one article, “Architecture in Japan” written by W.G. Murdock in 1921; the latter published none. Compared to the number of published articles in the two architectural journals during the previous two decades or so, five in *Architectural Record* and two in the *Review*, the number was obviously decreasing.<sup>9</sup> Michael Hugo-Brunt compiled *Bibliography on Japan: Architecture, Planning and Landscape Architecture* in 1972 for his students’ use

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<sup>7</sup>Ibid., p. 29.

<sup>8</sup>Scully, literally starting his *Modern Architecture* with the statement, “Modern architecture is a product of Western civilization,” excluded Japanese contribution in shaping Modern architecture. Concerning Japanese influence in Western modern architecture, he only mentioned in passing the influence of the Ho-o-den in Wright’s architecture (p. 21).

<sup>9</sup>Articles published in the *Architectural Record*: C.T. Mathews, “Eastern Asia or China, Korea and Japan,” V (1896); Mathews, “Japanese Architecture,” V (1896); Cram, “Architectural Experiment,” VIII (July/September 1898), concerning Cram’s Japanese style Knapp house discussed in previous chapters; Russell Sturgis, “The Famous Japanese Room in the Marquand House,” XVIII (September 1905); Katharine C. Budd, “Japanese Houses,” XIX (January 1906). Articles shown in the *Architectural Review*: C.T. Mathews, “A Temple of the Tokugawa at Nikko,” IV (October 1894); Cram, “The Early Architecture of Japan,” V (1898).

and published it in the Council of Planning Librarians Exchange Bibliography #539. It also shows the diminishing number of publications during the given period. According to the bibliography, during the period between 1915 and 1930, only nine books or articles--mostly secondary sources--on Japanese architecture were published in western languages.<sup>10</sup> Compared to the books and articles published during the first 15 years of this century, it was a dramatic decrease given that the *Craftsman* alone published more than seven articles on Japanese architecture or related topics before 1914.<sup>11</sup> However, the *Craftsman* magazine, which had been a vigorous vehicle to introduce Japanese architecture to America, ceased publication in 1917. The discontinuation of the magazine, which had been a major proponent of the Arts and Crafts Movement as well as Japanese art and architecture, also evinced the decreasing favor of the Arts and Crafts as well as

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<sup>10</sup>Michael Hugo-Brunt, *Bibliography on Japan--Architecture, Planning and Landscape Architecture*, in *Council of Planning Librarians Exchange Bibliography #539*. The ten articles or books, among which most are the secondary sources for Japanese architecture, are as follows: E.W. Clement, *A Short History of Japan* (Chicago, 1915); K. Asakawa, "Some aspects of Japanese Feudal Institutions," *Transactions of the Asiatic Society of Japan*, XLVI (Tokyo, 1918); K. Hara, *An Introduction to the History of Japan* (New York, 1920); W.G.B. Murdoch, "Architecture in Japan," *Architectural Review* 49 (1921); E. Dillon *The Arts of Japan* (London, 1922); J. Murdoch, *A History of Japan*, v. 3, *The Tokugawa Epoch 1652* (London, 1926); J. Nakayama, "Contribution a l'etude de la civilisation neolitique du Japon," *Revue des arts asiatique* (Paris), v. 6 (1929-30); R. A. Cram, *Impressions of Japanese Architecture* (Boston 1930, first published in 1905); Y. Takakoshi, *The Economic Aspects of the History of the Civilization of Japan* (New York, 1930).

Apparently, the bibliography was not quite inclusive as the compiler wrote that "since this is an interim bibliography for students use the compiler would appreciate his attention being drawn to any omissions or errors." The bibliography did not include any articles published either in the *Craftsman* (for its list, see note 11) or *House Beautiful* which had included articles on Japanese gardens or architecture such as A.W. Alley, "A House in Japanese Style," XXV (March 1909); H. Stoll, "Japanese Gardens," XXXVI (July 1914) or H. Bogan, "The Japanese Garden in America: Is it a possibility?," XLIV (August 1918). However, the bibliography gives at least some sense of the few number of publications.

<sup>11</sup>The articles on Japanese architecture published in the *Craftsman* are: G. Stickley, "A Garden Fountain," VII (October 1904); Anonymous, "Japanese Architecture and Its Relation to the Coming American Style," X (April 1906); M. Glover, "Simple Life in Japan--Achieved by Contentment of Spirit and a True Knowledge of Art," (May 1906); H. Keith, "The Trail of Japanese Influences in Our Modern Domestic Architecture," XII (July 1907); Una Hopkins, "The Development of Domestic Architecture on the Pacific Coast," XIII (January 1908); Anonymous, "California's Contribution to a National Architecture: Its Significance and Beauty as Shown in the Work of Greene and Greene," (January 1908); F. Dixon, "Japanese Effects for Small Gardens," XVIII (September 1910); and many others on Japanese art or related topics.

Japanese architecture among American architects around the middle of the 1910s. This diminished enthusiasm occurred in part because the clients and architects around 1914 favored a clear geometric order and an ideal, timeless abstraction of the Romantic-Classicism over an asymmetrical picturesque planning, use of rustic materials and suburban orientation of Romantic-Naturalist architects. Therefore, as the Romantic-Classical architects such as Daniel H. Burnham or Charles F. McKim championed the Neo-classical architecture at the 1893 Chicago Columbian Exposition over other architecture like Sullivan's, so their fellow Classicists like Willis Polk and W.B. Faville at the 1915 San Francisco Panama-Pacific Exposition again glorified the same classical style.<sup>12</sup> Evidently, the fact that the classical style was then prevailing negatively impacted American architects' attitude toward Japanese architecture. Thus, it appeared that by 1914 Japanese influence in American architecture was waning. For example, the Greenes, who had incorporated successfully Japanese forms and principles into their work, had a severely depleted practice after 1914. The Greenes had built in the Pasadena area many suburban bungalows in which many contemporary critics found Japanese influences.<sup>13</sup>

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<sup>12</sup>Like the 1893 Chicago Fair, the 1915 fair was also supervised by Classicist architects. Polk, Faville and Clarence Ward were appointed an architectural council to supervise the design for the Panama-Pacific Exposition. Polk was with Burnham for some years; Faville was in McKim, Mead and White's office in his early days. This shows that the Classicist faction in American architecture was still in power.

At the 1915 Panama-Pacific International Exposition, even the architects who had supported the Arts and Crafts Movement adopted classic motifs. For his Palace of Fine Arts built for Panama-Pacific International Exposition, the Gothicist Maybeck adopted the neo-classical style rather than Gothic. So did another architect who had favored Japanese forms. Christian Mullgardt's work in the same exposition, Court of the Ages, reflected such a changing taste and was done in "Roman scale as well as detail" (See *Mullgardt: 1866-1942*, p. 10). As Streatfield has pointed out, this change suggests that the architects used the classical style for different circumstances, for example, public vs. domestic or urban vs. suburban.

<sup>13</sup>As discussed in chapter II, C. David was one of the first who found Japanese influences in the Greenes' work [see David, "An Architect of Bungalow in California," *Architectural Record* (October 1906)]. Many articles regarding the topic began to be published in the *Craftsman* and *House Beautiful*. A selected list is as follows: A.W. Alley, "A House in Japanese Style," *House Beautiful* XXV (March 1909); H. Keith, "The Trail of Japanese Influences in Our Modern Domestic Architecture," *Craftsman* XII (July 1907); Una

But, they began to get fewer commissions in 1914. On the one hand, it was because the Arts and Crafts Movement began to lose favor to “a more ornate and theatrical period revivalism [of Classicist style],” a trend which “was given impetus by the 1915 [Panama-Pacific] exposition.”<sup>14</sup> On the other hand, it was because “the golden era of Pasadena was drawing quickly to a close [and] the city was changing from its earlier quiet resort atmosphere to a rapidly growing metropolis.”<sup>15</sup> In other words, Japanese-influenced houses designed by the Romantic-Naturalist architects such as Wright, the Greenes or Hamilton were in general “the art of the suburbs,” not of the cities.<sup>16</sup> The bungalows designed by the Greenes in the 1900s were no longer suited to the changed atmosphere in the middle of the teens, of which the growing metropolis of Pasadena served as an example.

Another important fact concerning the decrease of Japanese influences in American architecture was that after 1915, Japanese architecture began to lose its important showcase opportunities--international expositions--through which it could be exposed to American architects and prospective clients. As Clay Lancaster convincingly discussed in

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Hopkins, “The Development of Domestic Architecture on the Pacific Coast,” *Craftsman* XIII (January 1908); Anonymous, “California’s Contribution to a National Architecture: Its significance and Beauty as Shown in the Work of Greene and Greene,” *Craftsman* (January 1908). Then, Cram’s preface in *American Country House of Today* New York: Architectural Book Publishing Company Inc., 1913, reinforced the observation of Japanese influence in the Greenes’ work.

<sup>14</sup>Makinson, “Greene and Greene,” in Ester McCoy ed., *Five California Architects* (New York: Reinhold Publishing Corporation, 1961), p. 138.

Robert Winter also commented on the importance of the year 1914 in California architecture: “Historians generally agree that intellectually and aesthetically 1914 rather than 1901 marks the real beginning of the twentieth century ... Southern California provides an especially fertile ground for exploring the nature of such changes in the built environment... How did changes in building technology, such as the widespread acceptance of reinforced concrete structural system, affect design?...” (in the *Newsletter of JSAH*, XLI (April 1997), n. 2.

<sup>15</sup>Makinson, op. cit., p. 138.

<sup>16</sup>Scully, *Modern Architecture*, p. 15. He did not relate the phrase to Japanese-influenced houses, but to the general designs of the Romantic-Naturalist architects.

his *Japanese Influence in America* in 1963, such expositions as Philadelphia Centennial Exposition of 1876, Chicago Columbian Exposition of 1893, California Mid-Winter Exposition of 1894, and Louisiana Purchase Exposition of 1903 were the principal arenas in which Japanese architecture had been introduced to American architects.<sup>17</sup> Wright, Maybeck, the Greenes and Mullgardt as well as many prospective clients like Adelaide Tichenor, for whom the Greenes designed a Japanese-influenced house in 1904, were all exposed to Japanese architecture largely through the expositions.<sup>18</sup> But, after the 1915 Panama-Pacific International Expositions held in San Diego and San Francisco, such large-scale international expositions were not held in America until the 1930s, for example, A Century of Progress Exposition in 1933 at Chicago and the International Expositions in 1939 at New York and San Francisco.<sup>19</sup> The temporary disappearance of the expositions resulted not only from the contemporary situation that many countries were involved in the war during the late teens, but also from the nationalistic trend which

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<sup>17</sup>Other International Expositions held in the States after the Chicago Fair and before the Panama-Pacific Expo were Centennial Exhibition in Nashville, Tennessee in 1898; the Trans-Mississippi and International Exposition in Omaha, Nebraska in 1898; the Pan-American Exposition in Buffalo, New York in 1901; the Louisiana Purchase Exposition in Saint Louis in 1903; the Alaska-Yukon-Pacific Exposition in Seattle, Washington in 1909; the Panama-Pacific International Exposition in San Francisco in 1915; the Panama-California Exposition in San Diego in 1915. Some of the expositions also included Japanese buildings. For their impact, see Lancaster, *op. cit.*

<sup>18</sup>Mrs. Tichenor attended the Louisiana Exposition in 1904 and suggested that Charles Greene go there, too. One of their correspondences read that “[at the Expo] you will be able to get so many ideas of *woods* ... It will be impossible for me to describe to you the effect of the *woods*.” From the result of the Tichenor design, Mrs. Tichenor appeared to be impressed by Japanese use of the woods. See McKinson, *Greene and Greene*, p. 98.

<sup>19</sup>A Century of Progress Exposition was covered in two special issues of the *Architectural Forum*, 59 (July 1933): 1-70, and 61 (July 1934): 1-34. In the publications on the exposition, the Japanese exposition building by Iwakichi Miyamoto was not discussed. From an illustration published in page 34 of the latter issue, one sees that the Japanese building was a modern version of Japanese traditional building the style of which was then popular in Japan.

The two 1939 international fairs were also covered in special issues of *the Architectural Review* (August 1939) and *Architectural Forum* (June 1939). In both articles, Japanese pavilions appeared to get favorable attention. Concerning the Japanese pavilion at the San Francisco Fair, an editor of the *Architectural Forum*

became popular in America with the advent of World War I. As the historian Charles Hirschfield stated, during the war “a new American nation came into being...The intense experience greatly furthered the nationalization of American life and gave the American people a real sense of unity.”<sup>20</sup>

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wrote that “As in New York, the Japanese pavilion is in the traditional style. While the exhibits are uninspired, the building itself is interestingly planned and beautifully landscaped.”

<sup>20</sup>Hirschfield, “The Transformation of American Life,” in Jack Roth ed., *World War I: A Turning Point in Modern History* (New York: Alfred A Knopf, 1967), p. 74. Hirschfield also stated that the situation before 1914 was quite different from that after 1914: “For almost a century before 1914, American society had been kept in a state of flux by the rapid, wasteful exploitation of the country’s natural resources, by the west-ward movement, and by the waves of immigrants that inundated its shores. Not until the twentieth century had there been a perceptible mitigation of the intensity of these disruptive forces. And World War I was a decisive step in the restoration of stability, national unity, and even a measure of *gemeinschaft* (pp.74-75).

The impact of the war on American and European culture was great. For example, commenting on the impact of the World War I upon the artistic community in France, the French art critic Camille Mauclair wrote in 1918 that “the war has figuratively but powerfully dug a trench between yesterday’s ideas and those of today ... We have all been thrown outside ourselves by a tremendous shock” [Mauclair, *L’Avenir de France* Paris, 1918, cited in Kenneth Silver’s *Esprit de Corps: The Art of the Parisian Avant-Garde and the First World War, 1914-1925* (New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1989), p. 27]. Evidently, the war had affected every aspect of European culture including arts and architecture, economy, morality, or philosophy. In examining such impacts, Paul Fussell’s method adopted in his *The Great War and Modern Memory* is worth noting. Discussing the impacts of the war on English literature, Fussell focused on “places and situations where literary tradition and real life notably transact, and in doing so [he has] tried to understand something of *the simultaneous and reciprocal process* by which life feeds materials to literature while literature returns the favor by conferring forms upon life (my italics) [see Fussell, *The Great War and Modern Memory* (London: Oxford University Press, 1975, preface)]. As a result, he noted significant changes in the language of English literature during and after the war (pp.21-22). Such a “simultaneous and reciprocal process” between the life in war and cultural phenomena was also examined in Kenneth Silver’s *Esprit de Corps: The Art of the Parisian Avant-Garde and the First World War, 1914-1925* in which he delineated the impact of the war on Parisian avant-garde artists such as Pablo Picasso and Henry Matisse during and after the war. In it, Silver showed how art was interwoven with non-artistic phenomena such as politics or nationalistic propaganda, and how the artists referred in their works, consciously or not, to the war and its aftermath. As we shall see, similar phenomena occurred in the course of American architects’ way of interpreting Japanese architecture.

Given such impact of the war on the world of literature and art, it is no wonder that the war affected in the realm of architecture. The Viennese-born American architect Richard Schindler once commented on the impact of the war on European architecture. Concerning the architecture of De Stijl and the Bauhaus, Schindler commented that their works were “an expression of the minds of a people who had lived through the First World War, clad in uniforms, housed in dugouts, forced into utmost efficiency and meager sustenance, with no thought for joy, charm, warmth” [cited in Ester McCoy, *Five California Architects* (New York: Reinhold Publishing Co., 1960), p. 153]. Evidently, one can find prototypical elements of De Stijl or the Bauhaus such as calculated non-symmetry, being structural rather than decorative, or rectilinear rather than curvilinear characters in the early paintings by Cubist or Constructivist painters who began to work in 1906, well before the war [for example, see Alfred Barr, Jr., *Cubism and Abstract Art* (Cambridge: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1986), first published in 1936 by the Museum of Modern Art, especially pp. 19 and 29]. However, Schindler’s statement is understandable in that the abstract

### **The Hey Day of Japanese Influence in America: 1930's**

However, Japanese architecture began to draw American architects' attention again in the 1930s and many books on Japanese architecture were published during the mid-thirties. The widespread interest and the publication of the books were stimulated by two facts: first, Western architects found in Japanese architecture some effective lessons, and second, a Japanese institution called *Kokusai Bunka Shinkokai* (the Society for International Cultural Relations) promoted Westerners' interest in Japan and its art. First of all, as a reviewer of Jiro Harada's *The Lessons of Japanese Architecture* pointed out in 1936, American architects' interests in Japanese architecture in the thirties resulted from their finding in Japanese architecture "solutions of some of the most vexing problems" of Western architecture:

The recent widespread interest in the architecture of Japan, evinced by the publication of a number of excellent books, is not coincident. It is the result of the growth of the modern movement and of a corresponding realization on the part of Occidental architects that in the traditional domestic architecture of Japan are to be found solutions of some of the most vexing problems in design which face the architect of the present day [such as standardization, variety in unity, conformity to a mode of living, connection with nature, simplicity and, of course, usefulness to purpose].<sup>21</sup>

Western modern architects not only found solutions for their vexing problems in Japanese architecture, but also were aware of similarities between their architectural forms and

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characteristics had been much developed in such an "efficiency- and sustenance-oriented" environment during the war.

Interestingly enough, such an "efficiency"- and "sustenance"-oriented environment in Europe during the war, which partly contributed to the formation of De Stijl and the Bauhaus, appeared to be very similar to the American architectural scene of 1914, as Vincent Scully discussed.

<sup>21</sup>Anonymous, "The Lesson of Japanese Architecture," *Architectural Forum* 65 (November 1936): 22 and 66. For the examples of the "vexing problems" listed in the brackets above, see the Editor's preface published in Harada's *The Lesson of Japanese Architecture*, which reads that "The lesson of Japanese architecture for the Western world may be summarized briefly as standardization, variety in unity ..." (p. 9).

principles and those of Japanese architecture.<sup>22</sup> During the 1930s, beginning with Richard Neutra, who was one of the first prominent modern American architects--if not the first--to visit Japan after Wright had left the country in 1922, many American and European architects found similarities between their own architectural principles and traditional Japanese ones.<sup>23</sup> In 1930, Neutra visited Japan at the invitation of the *Kokusai Kenchiku Kyokai* (International Association of Architecture), which would also invite Bruno Taut later in 1933. In Japan, Neutra saw an architectural brotherhood between “Japanese lightweight wooden houses” and the houses he designed in America:

[in the Japanese lightweight houses,] the rich and poor, the urban wealthy and the peasant, all had the same standard of dimensions, from *tatami* mats, sliding door panels, to *tansu*, built-in drawer sets. Detailing and finishing were as simple and normalized as they were superbly neat. I had been striving for all that [before I visited Japan], and *I was no longer alone....* [Japanese publishers] recognize our natural kinship, without thinking of my being at all imitative (my italics).<sup>24</sup>

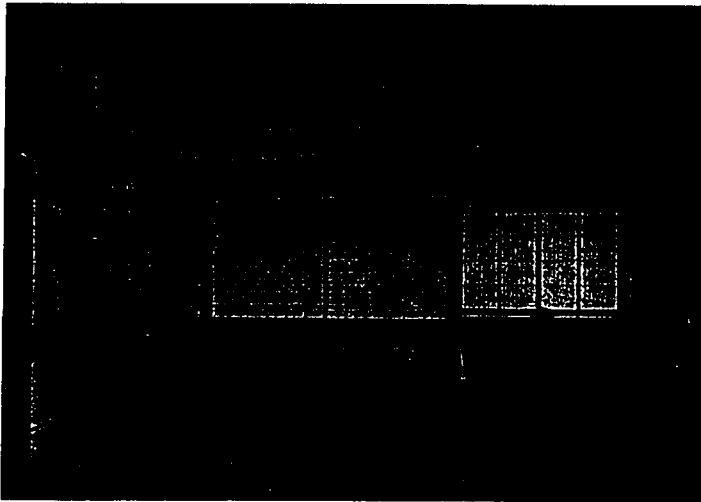
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<sup>22</sup>In a sense, such a realization of similarities was already expected because during the formalizing periods of the European Modern architecture, the founding fathers of the new and revolutionary style such as Gropius or Gerrit Rietvelt of De Stijl appeared to be much intrigued by Japanese architecture (for Gropius, see my chapter IV and for Japanese influence on De Stijl architecture, see Paul Overy, *De Stijl* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1991), especially p. 83, 113. and William Curtis, *Modern Architecture Since 1900* (New York: Prentice Hall, 1987), p.98, where he briefly mentions the influence of Japanese simplicity on Wright and eventually on De Stijl. For example, Rietvelt designed in 1923 the Berlin Chair and End Table which represented the simplicity, balanced asymmetry, cantilevered construction, use of color or rectilinear planes, the features that would be also used in his Schroder house of the following year. The similarities between the principles of De Stijl and those of Japanese architecture were noticed in 1923 by a contemporary Dutch critic. Especially concerning the End Table, A. Boeken compared it to the “clear architectonic of Japanese buildings and interiors, typewriters and motor cars” [Quoted in Paul Overy, *De Stijl* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1991), p. 83, originally, in A Boeken, “Bij een paar afbeeldingen van werk van G. Rietvelt,” *Bouwkundig Weekblad*, 27 (September 1924), XLV, 39, p. 382]. Besides the features, in the Schroder house, the sliding doors and folding screens were also reminiscent of those in Japanese traditional architecture.

<sup>23</sup>Antonin Raymond, who was born in Czechoslovakia and stayed briefly in the U.S. before World War II, is also important in this context. He accompanied Wright to Japan in 1919 and worked on the Imperial Hotel, Tokyo, Japan. Raymond left Wright in 1922, and set up his own office in Tokyo. He remained in Japan for most of his career and published some books on Japanese-influenced modern features in his work, which made, in turn, some impact on American architects such as Pietro Belluschi during the 1930s. This influence will be discussed shortly.

<sup>24</sup>Richard Neutra, *Life and Shape* (New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts, 1962), p. 228.

Neutra published his impressions on Japanese architecture in his article, "*Japanische Wohnung. Ableitung. Schwierigkeiten* (Japanese Dwellings, Diversions, Difficulties)," published in the influential German magazine *Die Form* in 1931. It included some



**Figure 3- 1. Examples of *kamaoi* and *ramma*, in Neutra's article, 1930.**

illustrations showing efficient use of space with built-in furniture such as cloth cupboards, standardization of construction with *tatami* mats, and open planning with sliding doors, *ramma* and *kamaoi* (Figure 3-1).<sup>25</sup>

This awareness by American architects such as Neutra (note his statement, "*I was no longer alone*") of the similarities between their own and Japanese architecture was a major catalyst for the publication of a number of books on Japanese architecture in the 1930s. The revised edition of Cram's *Impressions of Japanese Architecture* was published in 1930.<sup>26</sup> Following Cram's new edition, *Das Japanische Wohnhaus (the Japanese Houses)* was published in 1935 by Tetsuro Yoshida, the Japanese architect who visited Berlin on the course of his study-tour

<sup>25</sup>Neutra, "*Japanische Wohnung. Ableitung. Schwierigkeiten*," *Die Form* March 15, 1931. Especially the figures published in pp. 94-95 showed Japanese interior features mentioned above. Of special interest is that Neutra used an interior of the house designed by T. Yoshida who would publish his *The Japanese Houses* in 1935 in German.

<sup>26</sup>Cram, *Impressions of Japanese Architecture*. Boston: Marshall Jones Company, 1930. Cram's revised edition was favorably reviewed in various journals like *The American Architect* 139 (March 1931): 78, *American Magazine of Art* 22 (May 1931): 417, or *Studio* 102 (October 1931): 280.

In 1929, Hitchcock published his *Modern Architecture: Romanticism and Reintegration*. In it, he did not mention any Japanese influences in the formation of Western modern architecture except its influence on Wright in passing [Henry-Russell Hitchcock, *Modern Architecture: Romanticism and Reintegration* (New York: Payson & Clarke, Ltd., 1929), p. 117]. Hitchcock wrote that "In spite of his denials Wright is

in Europe. The book was widely known to architects both in Europe and the United States. Although it was a superlative study of Japanese houses, as an American book reviewer pointed out, it drew “less attention in America than it deserved, because its German text was unintelligible to many.”<sup>27</sup> However, the book was remarkable in terms that it was the first book in a Western language to illustrate the Katsura Detached Palace



**Figure 3- 2. The *shoin* buildings at Katsura, near Kyoto, mid-17th century.**

(Figure 3-2). The appearance of Katsura on the world architectural scene is important because the palace would be later regarded as the highest culmination of Japanese architecture by both Western and Japanese architects such as Bruno Taut, Gropius, and Kenzo Tange, and accordingly, would

become highly influential to American architects.<sup>28</sup>

The next important book to be published on Japanese architecture after the hiatus in the 1920s was *Fundamentals of Japanese Architecture* written by German architect Bruno Taut and published in both English and German in 1936.<sup>29</sup> In it, Taut praised superior modern qualities of two Japanese buildings: the shrine in Ise Prefecture and the Katsura

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unquestionably eclectic in style and his eclecticism in opposition to the revival of European styles by his contemporaries in America has thrown him back consciously or unconsciously on the Far East, ...”

<sup>27</sup> Anonymous, “Book Review,” *Architectural Forum* 65 (January 1936).

<sup>28</sup> Their eulogy of Katsura will be discussed shortly. Taut had seen the palace in 1933 two years before Yoshida published *The Japanese House* in 1935. Yoshida’s inclusion of the palace could be influenced by Taut’s admiration of the palace which would be later included in his *Fundamentals of Japanese Architecture* of 1936.

<sup>29</sup> The book, *Fundamentals of Japanese Architecture*, was the record of a lecture delivered by Taut on October 30, 1935 at the Peers’ Club as part of the “Lecture Series on Japanese Culture” sponsored by The Society for International Cultural Relations. The institution, which was supported by the Japanese government, played an important role in the 1930s in advertising Japanese cultural superiority to the world. This will be discussed shortly.

Palace in Kyoto. Among Taut's achievements in the book, peculiarly important is his "discovery" of the modern qualities in Katsura. Before Taut, the splendid beauties of the gardens in Katsura had been relatively well-known to the Westerners, but little was known about the buildings themselves.<sup>30</sup> Taut found in Katsura architectural principles which are "absolutely modern and of complete validity for any contemporary architecture."<sup>31</sup> In fact, Katsura represented similarities to modern architectural principles in terms of visible framed structure (post and beam), plain wall, open planning with movable partitions, built-in furniture, and the integration of house and garden. Like Neutra did in 1930, Taut also found similarities between his architecture and that of Japan. His statement published in *Houses and People of Japan* in 1937 reminds one of Neutra's 1930 statements, "I was no longer alone":

The entire arrangement [of the Katsura Palace], from whichever side one might care to look at it, followed always elasticity in all its divisions the purpose which each one of the parts as well as the whole had to accomplish, the aim being that of common and normal utility, or the necessity of dignified representation, or that of lofty, philosophical spirituality. And the great mystery was that all three purposes had been united into a whole and that their boundaries had been effaced. I have stated on former occasions that the most important basis for the further development of modern architecture lies in function. My sentence, "all that works well looks well," has been misunderstood, and at times misinterpreted as referring only to utilitarian necessities and actual functions. In Katsura I found in an ancient building the absolute proof of my theory, which I regarded as a valid base for modern architecture.<sup>32</sup>

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<sup>30</sup>The gardens of Katsura will be discussed in a later part of this chapter.

<sup>31</sup>Bruno Taut, *Fundamentals of Japanese Architecture*, p. 20.

<sup>32</sup>Bruno Taut, *Houses and People of Japan* (London: John Gifford Ltd., 1937), p. 291. Taut was one of the first Western modern architects who regarded Japanese architecture as one similar to his own. After him, however, it was not rare to think in that way. For example, after his trip to Japan in 1954, Walter Gropius declared that "For the first time in my life I felt myself with the majority [when he found similar elements to his in Japanese architecture]." "Three levers of Walter Gropius," *Architectural Forum* 112 (May 1960), p.210.

Before Taut came to Japan, he was one of the leading European Modern architects and his *Hufeisen Siedlung* of 1926-27 (Figure 3-3) showed a clear departure from the characteristic features of traditional buildings such as ornament, moldings or sloping roofs. That is, reflecting contemporary *Zeitgeist*, in the eyes of Taut the European Modern architect, the most valuable Japanese architecture was without a doubt 'simple barn-like' Ise and Katsura, just like heavily ornamented Nikko was the most valuable for his fellow



**Figure 3- 3. Bruno Taut, the Hufeisen Siedlung, Germany, 1927.**

German art historian Justus Brinkmann half a century before.<sup>33</sup> Here, we recognize a shift in Westerners' attitude toward Japanese architecture.

To examine the shift, it is useful to compare Taut's view on the Ise shrines to earlier observers' views on the same

shrines. Ise was known to the Westerners since it had been first mentioned in Kaempfer's *History of Japan* of 1727: "This Temple [Temple of Isje in Kaempfer] ... is seated in a large plain, and is a sorry low building of wood, cover'd with a low, falttish [sic], thatch'd roof."<sup>34</sup> Then, in 1881, Isabella Bird wrote of Ise in her *Unbeaten Tracks in Japan: An Account of Travels on horseback in the Interior including Visits to the Aborigines of Yezo and the Shrines of Nikko and Ise* that "[The visitor] .. is stricken with

<sup>33</sup>Taut mentioned of such a changing attitude of Westerners toward Japanese art and architecture. In his introduction to the *Fundamentals of Japanese Architecture*, he compared old views such as Brinkmann's or Morse's to his contemporaries'. Brinkmann published in 1889 *Kunst und Handwerk in Japan* (Arts and Crafts in Japan) and Morse published *Japanese Homes* in 1886. According to Taut, while Brinckmann and Morse were more focused on "the interesting decorative side" of Japanese architecture, a well-known German novelist compared certain [Japanese] buildings to barns, the opinion that was for Taut "at present considered best because of their classic simplicity" (p. 6).

a feeling of disappointment, for he is suddenly brought up ... [by a building of which] the only ornament are bamboo receptacles on each post ...”<sup>35</sup> In 1905, some thirty years before Taut’s book was published, Cram wrote about the Ise Shrine:

When Buddhism came to Japan, bringing a highly developed style of architecture, it found the racial religion [Shinto] housing itself in huts barbarous in their nature and differing but slightly from the rough dwellings of the people; walls of post and planks formed the enclosure, and this was roofed with sloping poles forming a steep gable and projecting through the heavy thatch in X form. The ridge was kept in place by transverse logs of unhewn timber, and this was, so far as we know, absolutely all. The temples of Ise, the most holy of the Shinto shrines, are supposed to be exact copies of originals built long before the Christian era, but as the Shinto law is that these same temples must be razed and reconstructed every twenty years, it is quite possible that modifications may have occurred. *In any case they are sufficiently ugly and barbarous* (my italics).<sup>36</sup>

While the earlier observers commonly evaluated the Ise Shrines negatively such as “a sorry low building” (Kaempfer in 1727), with “a feeling of disappointment” (Bird in 1881) or “ugly and barbarous” (Cram in 1905), Taut in the 1930s considered the same Japanese shrines “purely architectonic” and “artistic.” Taut stated the artistic features of Ise in his *Fundamentals of Japanese Architecture* in 1936:

the Ise Shrines have not taken over any elements of Buddhist architecture--disregarding the very unimportant balustrade motif on the staircase. They are therefore absolutely Japanese, more so than any other things in Japan. And what are their most important characteristics? For one, they have absolutely nothing which could be called a caprice or in contradiction to common sense. Their construction is simple and yet logical in itself... [In the Ise,] the human spirit has created the purist architectonic form. Everything in Ise is

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<sup>34</sup>Kaempfer, *History of Japan*, v. 2., p. 34.

<sup>35</sup>Isabella L. Bird, *Unbeaten Tracks in Japan* (New York: Putnam’s Sons, 1881), v. 2, p. 281. She wrote that “The Ise shrines were unknown to Europeans till 1872, when the Government very liberally gave Mr. Satow and a small party of foreigners the opportunity of visiting them (p. 284).” But, they had been known since at the latest 1690 when Kaempfer was in Japan.

In contrast, an illustration of the Yomeimon at Nikko was used as a frontispiece in the Bird’s book, v.1.

<sup>36</sup>Ralph Adams Cram, *Impressions of Japanese Architecture* (New York: The Baker & Taylor Company, 1905), pp. 85-86.

artistic, nothing is artificial. There are no peculiarities: the natural wood is faultless ...equally faultless is the joining of the wood ...there is no ornament which is not integral to the architectonic character.<sup>37</sup>

A comparison of Cram's to Taut's view on Ise leads us to be aware of a shift in the Western architects' attitude toward Japanese architecture in the 1930s. At the turn of the century, the Buddhist-influenced Hō-ō-dō was regarded as the culmination of Japanese architecture for the Arts and Crafts architect Cram. The Hō-ō-dō was a much less ornamented building than the shrines of Nikko which had been assumed by American architects before Cram to be the highest point attained. Again in the 1930s, for Taut, the most laudable Japanese architecture was "the purist architectonic form" of the Ise Shrine and "a valid base for modern architecture" in Katsura, the qualities of which had not been known to earlier observers.

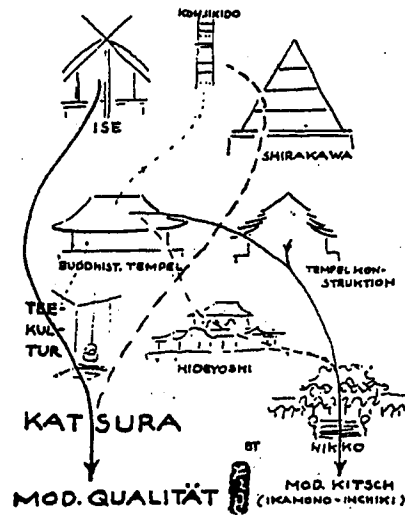
Not only did Taut depart from such older negative views on the Ise Shrine, in his *Fundamentals of Japanese Architecture* Taut's perspective is also quite different from earlier ones in terms of the way he described Japanese architectural history. Unlike earlier authors of Japanese architecture such as Cram or Yoshida, who were mainly interested in a formalistic analysis of Japanese architecture, Taut was strongly interested in a more contextual, especially political or social, analysis of the architecture. In Yoshida's book published a year before, Ise and Katsura were given short and merely formalistic descriptions. In it, Ise was described as "a structure with a number of independent one-roomed halls which had been developed from the primitive house with raised floor," and Katsura as "the most beautiful and important Japanese secular building

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<sup>37</sup>Bruno Taut, *Fundamentals of Japanese Architecture* (Tokyo: Kokusai Bunka Shinkokai, 1936), pp. 15-

... [which was] influenced by the tea-room.”<sup>38</sup> In

contrast, Taut divided the development of Japanese architecture into two distinctive lines: “the positive line” which started from Ise and reached its zenith in Katsura; and “the negative line” in which “the degeneration of construction into decoration was intensified by the rulers’ orders for ornamentation, [and which] comes from the Buddhist temple” (Figure 3-



1. The positive line, which began in the last Shintō, was not derived in essence of Buddhist influences; but the principle of ornamental ornamentation as represented in Shirakawa was later derived. Buildings - particularly Zen-constructed in the Ten Chōmei a typical example which for the second time (that is after Ise) brought Japanese architecture to a crisis in the Palace and garden of Katsura.  
The negative line, in which the degeneration of ornamentation into decoration was accelerated by the rulers' orders for ornamentation, comes from the Buddhist temple.

4).<sup>39</sup> In other words, one was the architecture designed for Emperors such as Katsura and Ise, and the other was the Shogunate architecture created by the shoguns’ orders such as the shrines at Nikko (Figure 3-5). For

Taut, only the former was laudable because it represented “the free art of free geniuses,” while the latter showed “a dictated accumulation which can never become architecture.”<sup>40</sup>

Taut’s eulogy of Japanese Imperial architecture appeared not to be “innocent.” As Keith Jenkins pointed out, a “history is never itself, is never said or read innocently, but that *it is always for someone* (my italics).”<sup>41</sup> If so, who was the “someone” in Taut’s history?

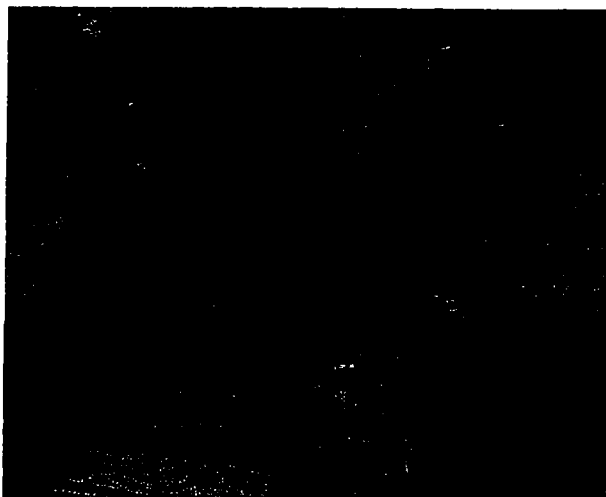
Was Taut’s history deliberately planned to praise the authority of the Imperial Japanese

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<sup>38</sup>Tetsuro Yoshida, *The Japanese House and Garden* (New York: Praeger, 1955), p. 16. This book was an English version translated by Marcus Sims of *Das Japonische Wohnhaus* (Berlin: Verlag Ernst Wasmuth, 1935). The original comment on Katsura is short: “Einer der schönsten und bedeutendsten Profanbauten Japans, der Kaiserliche Katsura-Palast, Kyoto (1589-1643), stammt aus jeuner Zeit.” [the Katsura Detached Palace, Kyoto (1589-1643), one of the most beautiful and important Japanese secular buildings was derived from that period].

<sup>39</sup>Taut, *Fundamentals*, p. 25.

<sup>40</sup>Taut, *Fundamentals*, p. 20.



**Figure 3- 5. The Yomeimon at Nikko, 1643.**

government?<sup>42</sup> Such an assumption is likely when one considers the contemporary political situation in Japan coupled with the circumstances under which Taut visited the Katsura Palace. As early as 1932, the Japanese Imperial government's attack on Shanghai had been recorded "on the spot by newsreel cameramen, shocking the world and

turning [the West's] opinion against Japan.<sup>43</sup> Facing a war against other countries, the Imperial government thus needed to legitimate its Imperialism domestically and provide an image of Japan as a nation of high culture internationally. As a part of the means to fulfill both needs, it can be conjectured that Taut was invited by the Japan International Association of Architecture. The institution had invited Neutra in 1930 and had succeeded in advertising Japanese architecture in Europe and America through a foreign authority's voice, i.e., Neutra's publications. The assumption can be strengthened by considering the fact that Taut visited Katsura "without a pause for rest after the two months of traveling [from Germany to Japan] on May 4 [1933], the day after his arrival."

<sup>41</sup>Keith Jenkins, *Re-thinking History* (London and New York: Routledge, 1992), p. 71, note 1.

<sup>42</sup>A understanding of historical background surrounding the Katsura Palace clarifies the implication: The creators of the Katsura villa, the Imperial Princes Toshihito and Noritada, "having lost their ancient authority, were in secret revolt against the despotism of the ruling Tokugawa shogunate," and the villas were "tangible expressions of an attempt by court nobles to keep alive the tranquil, elegant cultural tradition of the [Imperial] Heian period" [Tadashi Ishikawa, *Imperial Villas of Kyoto* (Tokyo: Kodansha International Ltd., 1970), p. 7].

<sup>43</sup>David B. Stewart, *The Making of A Modern Japanese Architecture: 1868 to the present* (Tokyo and New York: Kodansha International, 1987), p. 107.

*Without time to rest, Taut had the privilege of visiting Katsura* which was an Imperial villa ordinary people were not permitted to visit in those days, and which was very little known to even Japanese architectural historians (my italics).<sup>44</sup> It is thus highly likely that one of the main purposes of the Japanese institution for inviting Taut was to show him the Katsura villa. Right after this visit, Taut wrote an essay entitled “An Eternal Thing: The Katsura Imperial Villa” and later wrote in the *Fundamentals of Japanese Architecture* about the clear-cut division in Japanese architecture, the Shogunate (foreign/Buddhist) architecture versus Imperial (purely Japanese/Shinto) architecture. For Taut, the Imperial architecture of Ise, was “absolutely Japanese” without “any elements of Buddhist [foreign] architecture.” In contrast, according to Taut, the Shogunate architecture of Nikko has “nothing of that which at Ise is purely architectonic.”<sup>45</sup> To continue his comparison between Imperial architecture and Shogunate architecture, Taut stated that “Japan’s architectural arts could not rise higher than Katsura, nor sink lower than Nikko; for Nikko was undigested importation, but Katsura was an intellectual assimilation of existing influences.”<sup>46</sup> Taut’s division of two architectural lines (Figure 3-4), and his nationalistic emphasis on indigenous architecture seemed to clearly satisfy his Japanese hosts. As a result, Taut’s view was very influential in Japan. Professor C. Ito, who was then one of the “most famous Japanese authorities on Oriental architecture,” wrote in 1935 of Taut’s impact on what the Japanese judge to be valuable:

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<sup>44</sup>Teiji Ito, “Interpretations Vary; Katsura remains,” in T. Ito ed., *Katsura* (Tokyo: Shinkenchiku-sha, 1983), p.4-6. Here, Ito did not overtly suggest the possible political implication in Taut’s book. And also see, Ishikawa, op. cit., p. 36. Even today, visitors must get special permission from the Imperial Household Agency to visit Katsura.

<sup>45</sup>Taut, *Fundamentals*, p.18. It is important to know that in Japan the Shinto religion, which is worshipped in the shrines of Ise, is regarded as the one closely related to Emperor worship.

<sup>46</sup>Taut, *Fundamentals*, p.18.

Fifty years ago Europeans came and told us, "Nikko is the most valuable," and we thought so too; now Bruno Taut has come and told us, "it is Ise and Katsura which are the most valuable," and again we believe.<sup>47</sup>

As Ito remarked, Taut's influence was immediate. Taut's statement on the modern qualities of traditional Japanese architecture was immediately quoted in 1935 by Professor Hideo Kishida of Tokyo University. Kishida, an "internationally known authority on Japanese architecture," published *Japanese Architecture* which was geared to give the foreign readers "some insight into the unique culture that has developed in this country [Japan] throughout the ages."<sup>48</sup> In it, he quoted Taut's statements:

I should like to quote here for my foreign readers the following words from the essay by Prof. Bruno Taut, the world-famed German architect, who understands Japanese architecture perfectly. "None can reproduce its beauty in any picture, and to it ought all the world's architecture to make a pilgrimage ... [Ise] is the Shrine of [world] Architecture..." Ise and Katsura are the two greatest masterpieces of Japanese architecture. Compare Katsura and Nikko, then you can distinguish clearly what is pure Japanese and what is not Japanese. The comparison is so striking that it offers the student of Japanese architecture an ideal contrast.<sup>49</sup>

Taut's emphasis on the "pure Japanese" features was in accord with a contemporary cultural awakening of Japanese intellectuals and their "reaction against the intoxication of the [Japanese] people in things Western."<sup>50</sup> During the 1930s, many Japanese critics such

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<sup>47</sup>Cited in Taut, 1936, p.6. It was originally published in a Japanese technical magazine, according to Taut. Professor Ito was an author of many books on Japanese architecture such as *Nippon Kenchiku no kenkyu* (A study of Japanese architecture, 1936) and *Horyuji* (Architectural History of Horyuji temple, 1940).

<sup>48</sup>This book was published as the 6th book of the Tourist Library series sponsored by Japan Travel Bureau. Kishida was a Professor of Tokyo University, and published many books such as *Nippon Kenchiku Shi* (History of Japanese architecture, 1932) and *Nippon Kenchiku no Tokusei* (Characteristics of Japanese Architecture, 1937).

<sup>49</sup>Hideo Kishida, *Japanese Architecture* (Tokyo: Maruzen Company, 1935), p. 38 & 95.

<sup>50</sup>Concerning commercial advertising, Jiro Harada wrote that "In order to attract the attention of the Japanese public to-day the first, though by no means the entire, essential element in commercial art is to use something exotic, something different from the traditional form ... However, as there is a certain reaction against the intoxication of the people in things Western, some of the artists are trying hard to develop

as Harada or Junichiro Tanizaki warned of such westernization and emphasized a revitalization of traditional Japanese forms in art, architecture, or commercial advertising. Tanizaki, an eminent Japanese novelist, for example, warned of too much “brightly lit” Japanese houses in the American fashion and praised the “shadows” in traditional Japanese houses.<sup>51</sup>

Taut was not alone either in his politically oriented evaluation of Japanese architecture during the 1930s. Jiro Harada’s *The Lessons of Japanese Architecture* published in 1936 also showed a similar perspective. In his book, Harada divided Japanese architectural history into seven periods: 1. “the Pre-Buddhist period,” 2. “First period of Chinese Influence,” 3. “Period of first *nationalization*,” 4. “Second period of Chinese influence,” 5. “Second *nationalization*,” 6. “Period of Western influence,” and 7. “Present: third *nationalization* (my italics).”<sup>52</sup> His history adopted a Hegelian dialectic, *thesis-antithesis-synthesis*, by which he showed how Japanese fought against the foreign [Buddhist or Western] architectural influences and how they absorbed the influences into their own architecture. That is, as the publisher of 1985 Dover edition of Harada’s book noted, this book is “tinged here and there with that special insularity fostered by the leaders of Japan during the period of military expansion.”<sup>53</sup>

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something new out of the traditional method, to infuse a new life into the old form.” In Harada, “A Japanese Looks at His Country’s Advertising: Jiro Harada of Tokyo criticizes the new force in the Orient,” *Commercial Art* 8 (June 1930): 266-71.

<sup>51</sup>Junichiro Tanizaki, *In Praise of Shadows*. (Connecticut: Leete’s Island Books, 1977), passim, see especially 17-20 & 37, it was first written in by 1932. His comparison of Japanese roofs with Western roofs are interesting: “If the roof of a Japanese house is a parasol, the roof of a Western house is no more than a cap, with as small a visor as possible so as to allow the sunlight to penetrate directly beneath the eaves.” *In Praise of Shadow* was influential to American architects such as Charles Moore. One of English edition of Tanizaki’s book was forwarded by Charles Moore in 1977. Japanese influence on Moore will be discussed in the chapter V.

<sup>52</sup>Jiro Harada, *The Lessons of Japanese architecture*, (New York: Dover edition, 1985), pp. 13-20.

<sup>53</sup>Anonymous publisher’s note in Harada, op. cit.

Here it is important to note that both Taut and Harada had a close connection with a government-supported civilian organization, the *Kokusai Bunka Shinkokai* (the Society for International Cultural Relationship). It was founded on April 11, 1934 “with the moral and financial support of the Parliament, the Government, businessmen, scholars, and representatives of the art and literary world [of Japan].”<sup>54</sup> According to its advertising material, the purpose of the institution was

to provide adequate means for the exchange of cultural information and materials with other nations. Basing its activities upon the ideal of promoting international understanding and goodwill through cultural relations, the Society seeks to encourage interest in Japanese studies and maintains contacts with individuals and organizations motivated by analogous aims and ideals.<sup>55</sup>

Serving the purpose, the institution not only published Taut’s *Fundamentals of Japanese Architecture* (1936) and many other books on Japanese culture but also sent Harada to the University of Oregon in Eugene, Oregon, in the autumn of 1935 as a visiting lecturer to foster international relations through promoting Americans’ interest in Japanese art and architecture.<sup>56</sup> Harada had come to the U.S. earlier in the late 1900s to study at the University of California. After he returned to Japan, he taught at several colleges until 1916. After that he worked for the Japanese government at the Imperial Museum in Tokyo and in 1914, he was sent by the government as one of His Majesty’s

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<sup>54</sup>*Catalogue of K.B.S. Publications: September 1938* (Tokyo: Kokusai Bunka Shinkokai, 1938), p.2.

<sup>55</sup>*Ibidem*.

<sup>56</sup>Concerning the situation surrounding Harada’s lectureship at the University of Oregon, see Harada, *A Glimpse of Japanese Ideals: Lectures on Japanese Art and Culture* (Tokyo: Kokusai Bunka Shinkokai, 1937), pp. v-viii, and also *Catalogue of K.B.S. Publications*, pp. 8-9.

According to the 1938 edition of the K.B.S. catalogue, Kokusai Bunka Shinkokai published many books on Japanese culture by 1938. Some of the lists of the books are as follows: *A Guide to Japanese Studies*, *A Short Bibliography of English Books on Japan*, *Gardens of Japan*, *Japanese Architecture*, *Art of the Landscape Garden in Japan*, *Human Elements in Ceramic Art*, *Japanese Music*, *The Noh Drama*, to name a few.

commissioners to the Panama-Pacific International Exposition. Also, from 1911, he had been corresponding editor for the London publisher, *Studio*, where he published his *Gardens of Japan* in 1928 and *The Lessons of Japanese Architecture* in 1936. In September of 1935, he was sent to the University of Oregon.

While in Eugene, Harada gave a regular course of lectures during the fall and winter quarters of 1935. From the spring of 1936, he gave lectures at many universities and institutions on the Pacific Coast as well as the East Coast such as the Boston Museum of Fine Art (on “Certain Ideals and Characteristics of Japanese Art”), the Chicago Art Institute (“the Shoshoin, or Imperial repository at Nara”), the Seattle Art Museum (“Japanese architecture”); the Oregon State Agricultural College (“Japanese gardens”), and at his *alma mater*, the University of California, Berkeley (“Some Characteristics of the Japanese which have influenced their art”).<sup>57</sup> All these lectures were later compiled in his *A Glimpse of Japanese Ideals: Lectures on Japanese Art and Culture* and published by the *Kokusai Bunka Shinkokusai* in 1937. Therefore it can be safely said that the institution, which was financed by the Japanese government and parliament, played an important role in promoting information about and stimulating Westerners’ interest in Japanese architecture.<sup>58</sup> In other words, Japan’s political desire to *advertise* its cultural achievement led the institution to publish many books such as Taut’s and to send scholars like Harada to America to teach about Japanese cultural achievements.<sup>59</sup> Such a

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<sup>57</sup>For Harada’s American connection and a complete list of the lectures, see note 98.

<sup>58</sup>As a result, many books published around this period, though they were not published by the institution, acknowledged their indebtedness to the Society. For example, see Noridake Tsuda in his *Handbook of Japanese Art* (Tokyo: Sanseido Co. Ltd., 1935), preface.

<sup>59</sup>This desire for national propaganda of the Japanese government was also noticed in a different circumstance by an editor of *Architectural Review*. Commenting on the Japanese pavilion at the New York International Exposition in 1939, an editor wrote that “[in the Japanese pavilion,] interior display [was]

promotion was one of the causes for the publication of many books on Japanese architecture in the 1930s, coupled with Western architects' realization of the affinities between Japanese traditional architecture and European modern architecture.

Among the books published in the 1930s, curiously enough, Taut's *Fundamentals of Japanese Architecture* of 1936 and *Houses and People of Japan* of 1937, did not get much attention from American reviewers during the 1930s and had to wait until the 1950s to be discovered.<sup>60</sup> Even Niklaus Pevsner, who wrote in 1941 of modern Japanese houses built in Japan by Taut, did not mention his books.<sup>61</sup> Considering that during the mid-1930s, American architects' interests in Japanese architecture was widespread, it is curious that Taut's books were not welcomed in American architectural journals. To examine the cause, it is useful to compare Harada's *The Lesson* to Taut's. Unlike Taut's book, Harada's book was reviewed by several architectural journals like *Architectural Forum*. In one review of the book, it was recommended that American architects who wish to select one book on Japanese architecture should read this one.<sup>62</sup>

Such a favorable review was expected in the sense that its publication was timely in America. By 1936, American architects had been well exposed to the International style architecture partly through the 1932 Museum of Modern Art Exhibition, *The*

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largely devoted to national propaganda..." in "New York World's Fair," *Architectural Review* (August 1939). This issue was a special issue wholly devoted to the Fair of 1939.

<sup>60</sup>Reyner Banham, "The Japonization of World Architecture," in Hiroyuki Suzuki ed., *Contemporary Architecture of Japan 1958-1984* (New York: Rizzoli, 1985), p. 16. Banham wrote that "Katsura-no-Rikyu -- the Detached Palace -- and Junzo Sakakura's pavilion at the Paris Expo of 1936 seemed to be the only two Japanese buildings that Western architects showed much interest in around 1950. If pressed conversationally, they might also recall a house by Antonin Raymond (but only because Le Corbusier had accused him of plagiarism) and some of them had discovered Bruno Taut's book, *House and People of Japan*, and therefore, had some knowledge of the vernacular tradition of domestic building."

<sup>61</sup>Niklaus Pevsner, "Bruno Taut's Japanese modern," *Architectural Review* 89 (June 1941), pp. 134-35.

<sup>62</sup>Anonymous, *Architectural Forum* 65 (November 1936), p. 22 and 66.

*International Style: Architecture since 1922*. However, almost at the same time, some architectural critics like Lewis Mumford disliked the universality of the International style architecture and advocated Wright's more regional "organic architecture."<sup>63</sup> In the same vein, the editor of Harada's *The Lesson of Japanese Architecture* criticized the "aggressiveness" of the International style architecture and suggested that architects learn from Japanese architecture:

Here and there, perhaps, our eye will light on a "modern" house, a cube with horizontal windows, sharp corners and flat roof. We may be inclined to feel that this is the real form of architecture for modern life in its simplicity, its ample windows, etc., but at the same time the eye is offended and dissatisfied with the *aggressiveness* of the shape, with a sort of uncompromising bleakness which seems to decree that it is and always will be a stranger in the place where it finds itself. ... In this matter we have much to learn from the tradition of Japan where nature comes first...(my italics)<sup>64</sup>

This resistance to European machine aesthetics led American architects to devalue Taut's books on Japanese architecture. In his article in "The Japanese House" published in 1941, the American architect Ralph Walker criticized Taut who "too often saw architecture in the limited view of German material functionalism."<sup>65</sup> For Walker, regionalism "helps to make creative cultures," but universalism like that of the International style architect Taut's "leads either to chaos or its contrary, standardization--and to [cultural] imperialism," partly because architectural simplicity "is not an abstraction but part of

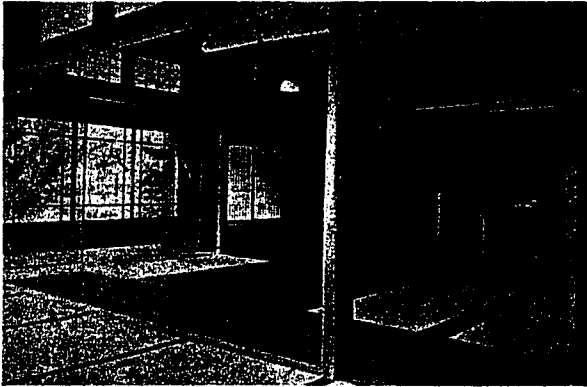
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<sup>63</sup>Mumford's article published in 1932 expressed his dislike for the universal characteristics of the International style and advocated Wright's term "organic" architecture: "I prefer Mr. Wright's term "organic" to the more current adjectives, "modern" or "international"; and this organic architecture is not merely a matter of using new materials and techniques or of conceiving new forms for their effective employment; it is a matter of relating air, sunlight, space, gardens, outlook, social intercourse, economic activity, in search of a fashion as to form a concrete whole." in "The Sky Line: Organic Architecture," *New Yorker* 8 (27 February 1932), 46.

<sup>64</sup>Jiro Harada, *The Lessons of Japanese Architecture* (London: The Studio Ltd., 1936), the editor's preface.

<sup>65</sup>Ralph Walker, "The Japanese House," *Pencil Points* 21 (June 1940): 337.

moving life.”<sup>66</sup> Walker’s view of “simplicity” published in “A Question of Simplicity” in



**Figure 3- 6. Walker’s use of an illustration excerpted from Harada’s *The Lesson of Japanese Architecture*, 1936.**

1937 was in accordance with that of the editor of Harada’s *The Lesson*.

Furthermore, in his article, Walker chose an illustration (Figure 3-6) from Harada’s book as “being an especially good accompaniment” to his article, “A Question of Simplicity.”<sup>67</sup> That is,

Walker’s articles support the conjecture that American architects by and large favored Harada over Taut in the 1930s.<sup>68</sup> As a matter of fact, Harada’s *The Lesson of Japanese Architecture* is known to have been influential in the work of American architects from the time it was published onward. Pietro Belluschi, for example, whose early work in the 1930s bears a pronounced Japanese influence, is known to have had a first edition in his

<sup>66</sup>Walker thus criticized Taut for his “prejudiced advice [to Japanese] ... to consciously make a return to the primitive tribal architecture of early Japan for inspiration.” According to Walker, Taut “has done much harm [to the Japanese] because he ... forgot that two thousand years of tradition separate the adult mind of today from the child-like ancients. And [he] even read his theories [of simplicity] into as complex and sophisticated a structure as the Katsura Palace at Kyoto” (p. 337).

<sup>67</sup>R. Walker, “A Question of Simplicity,” *Pencil Points* 18 (July 1937): 457-58.

Interestingly, Walker’s criticism of Taut reminds one of Robert Venturi’s criticism in the 1960s of Mies van der Rohe-- “less is a bore”: “It might be said that simplicity may only be arrived at through a thorough knowledge of complexity. For simplicity without a basis of complex form or manners achieves nothing but monotony” [see Robert Venturi, *Complexity and Contradiction in Architecture* (New York: The Museum of Modern Art, 1966), p. 17].

<sup>68</sup>I do not have much evidence to support the conjecture. However, it is likely that before 1950s when Taut’s books on Japanese architecture were discovered by the supporters of the International style architecture, only a faction of American architects, who supported organic architectural principles, were interested in Japanese architecture and favored Harada’s book because Taut was working on the International style formulas. The different reception of the two factions will be discussed in chapter IV.

library, along with Yoshida's *Das Japonnische Wohnhaus* (1935) and Samuel Newsom's *Japanese Garden Construction* (1939).<sup>69</sup>

## Works

Reflecting the aforementioned changing architectural tastes of American architects for Japanese architecture, Japanese influences in American architecture in practice were not obvious during the period between 1914 and 1930s.<sup>70</sup> Only a few architects continued to



**Figure 3- 7. Aeroplane Bungalow, Deluxe Company, 1919.**

adopt Japanese architectural features in their house designs, especially in bungalows which continued the existing features of the Japanese-influenced California bungalows such as the Greenes' of the 1900s. For example, as published in the *Bungalow Magazine* in

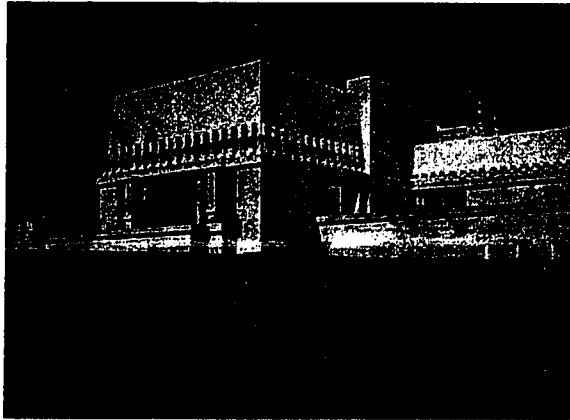
1916, "Aeroplane" bungalow (Figure 3-7) built by the De Luxe Building Company in Los Angeles showed "Japanese architectural details" such as flying rooflines and cobblestone walls.<sup>71</sup> The cobblestone walls of the bungalows were evidently derived from those used

<sup>69</sup>Meredith Clausen, *Pietro Belluschi* (Massachusetts: M.I.T. Press, 1996), p. 430, note. 30.

<sup>70</sup>Also in Clay Lancaster's *Japanese Influence in America*, Japanese-influenced buildings built during the period between 1915-30 were rarely, if not at all, discussed, although he wrote that "Influences from the Far East played as much of a role in American architecture during the two decades following World War I as it had during the same period preceding" (p. 159). After this statement, he moved to discuss Wright's work of the mid-1930s.

<sup>71</sup>"Japanese Architectural Detail Copied in Aeroplain Bungalow Built at Los Angeles, California," *Bungalow Magazine* (August 1916): 489-491. Many other bungalows adopted such a roof type. For illustrations of other bungalows, Robert Winter, *The California Bungalow* (Los Angeles: Hennessey & Ingalls, Inc, 1980), p. 35, 79, and 81. See also Lancaster, *The American Bungalow: 1880-1930* New York: Dover Publications Inc., 1985, pp. 145-46. In fact, traditional Japanese houses do not use cobblestones in their chimneys. Or more correctly, traditional Japanese houses do not employ chimneys. The reason why contemporary critics related the use of cobblestones in California bungalows to Japanese use of it was

in the previous California bungalows such as the Culbertson house or Blacker house



**Figure 3-8. Wright, the Hollyhock house, Los Angeles, California, 1921.**

designed by the Greenes. As discussed in chapter II, the Greenes' bungalows were the most identifiable American houses in which their architects incorporated Japanese architectural forms and principles during the first decade of the twentieth century, along with Wright's Prairie houses. After

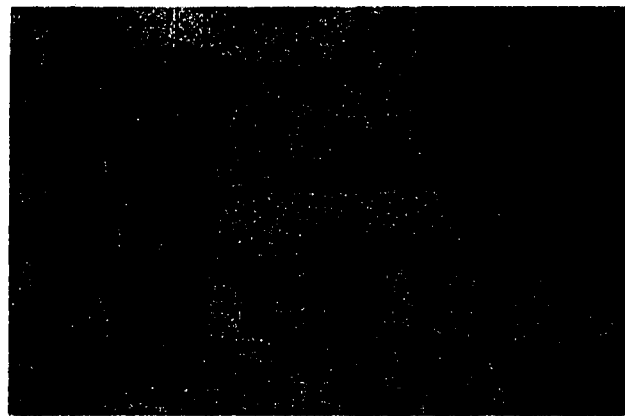
World War I, the Greenes became largely

inactive, only leaving their footprints of Japanese influences in later bungalows.

Wright was still active, however, in the West Coast during the first half of the 1920s.

Wright worked during the period not in the Mid-West, but mainly in Los Angeles, where Japanese architecture was more easily embraced because of similar climatic or geographic

conditions. Wright saw more Japanese architecture than ever while in Japan between 1916-22, when he worked on the Imperial Hotel in Tokyo. As a result, his experience of Japanese architecture was reflected immediately

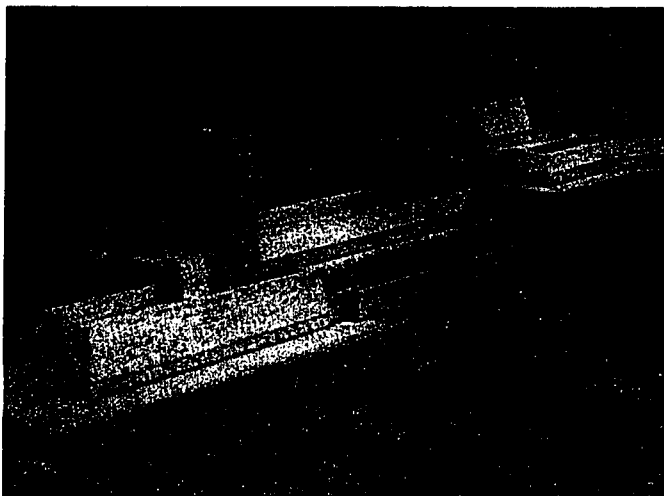


**Figure 3-9. the Temple of Sun, Palenque, Mexico.**

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probably because of the Japanese use of the material in the high retaining walls like used in the Nagoya Castle. Stickly attributed the Greenes' use of cobblestones in "high retaining wall" and their "use of cobblestones and boulders in combination with brick" to Japanese features in his *Craftsman Homes: Architecture and Furnishings of the American Arts and Crafts Movement* (New York: Dover Publishing Company, 1979), pp. 104 & 108, this was first published in 1909.

in the work designed during the 1920s. However, Wright no longer simply adopted in his work Japanese exterior forms such as the *irimoya* roof or the gabled roof with deep eaves as he did at the turn of the century. Rather, he began not only to incorporate structural or mechanical features of Japanese architecture, but also to add culturally-loaded meanings to the Japanese features he incorporated into his work. For example, in the Hollyhock house built in Los Angeles in 1920-21, Wright used a canted or inclined roof form which was inspired both from a Japanese and a Mayan roof type as a tribute to the original culture of America. In other words, it has been suggested that the canted roof form of the California house (Figure 3-8) was inspired by similar roof forms of Mayan temples.



**Figure 3-10. Wright, the Tazaemon Yamamura house, 1918.**

Dimitri Tselos suggested that the “truncated pyramid or a simplified mansard roof” was inspired by that of “the Temple of the Tigers at Chichen Itza,” and Anthony Alofsin suggested as a prototype the roof of the Temple of the Sun at Palenque (Figure 3-9) photographs of which were published in the *Art and*

*Architecture* in 1914 and elsewhere.<sup>72</sup> However, the canted roof form of the Hollyhock house is not just Mayan as it has been generally accepted, but also Japanese. A

<sup>72</sup>Dimitri Tselos, “Exotic Influences in the Architecture of Frank Lloyd Wright,” *Magazine of Art* 47 (April 1953): 166. Also see Anthony Alofsin, *Frank Lloyd Wright: The Lost Years, 1919-1922* (Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press, 1993), p. 254. Alofsin suggested that “Wright might have known [the palace] from Desire Charnay’s *Ancient Cities of the New World* published in 1885, or from

comparison of the Hollyhock house to its contemporaneous house designed by Wright lends weight to the suggestion. As Alofsin points out, the canted roof of the Tazaemon Yamamura house (Figure 3-10) Wright designed in Japan in 1918 was inspired by the same Mayan roof form used in the Hollyhock house.

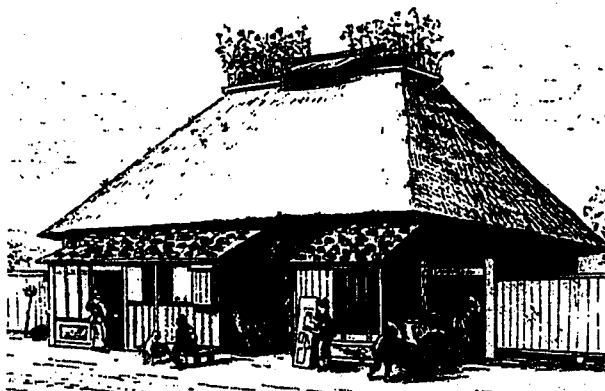


Figure 3-11. A Japanese house, in Morse's *Japanese Homes*, 1885.

Wright considered “the Maya as the mother civilization of Mesoamerica [so] he brought the symbols of the originary culture of the Americas as a tribute to the originary culture of Japan.”<sup>73</sup> More importantly, however, Alofsin inferred, the roof form of the Yamamura house is also Japanese because it “resembles thatched forms [of Japanese folk architecture] Wright would have known from houses seen during the travels he made in the countryside or from houses illustrated in Morse’s pioneering and well-known *Japanese Homes and Surroundings* (Figure 3-11).”<sup>74</sup> In addition, the roof form may have been also inspired by a Japanese roof form represented in a Japanese wood-block print by Ichiyusai Kuniyoshi. In the print (Figure 3-12), a house--probably a *kura* or storehouse--on the right shows a simplified canted roof with a highly projected cornice.<sup>75</sup> The roof with the projected cornice, which was represented in the print, is more similar to that of the Hollyhock house than it is to the canted roof with a slightly projected cornice, which

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images of Temple I, photographed by Maudslay in the 1880s and published by [Teobert] Maler and A.M. Tozzer in 1911” (also see p. 369, note 76).

<sup>73</sup>Alofsin, op. cit., p. 254.

<sup>74</sup>Ibidem.

is illustrated in Morse's book. Considering that Wright had been ardent in collecting prints during his time in Japan, it is possible that he saw the print and was inspired by the roof type represented in the print.

Wright's incorporation of Mayan and Japanese features for the same building did not appear for the first time in the Yamamura house, but had been already used in the Imperial Hotel. Wright and his client Aisaku Hayashi named the pattern bricks they produced for the hotel "Fujiwara," "Genji," and "Genroku."<sup>76</sup> The first two names are related to the arts and architecture of the Japanese Heian period (794-1185): Fujiwara usually recalls the Fujiwara period (898-1185), and family who built in the Shinden style palace during the late Heian period; Genji is the name of principal figure from the novel *Tale of Genji*, which is about the Heian court life. The Genroku also refers to a period of Japanese history (1688-1703) and an embroidery pattern which was in vogue during the period. Wright surely knew this embroidery pattern by 1911 when he established "the Taliesin library of Genroku embroidery and antique colored wood-block prints" as he wrote in his *Autobiography*.<sup>77</sup> Without a doubt, given the naming of the pattern bricks, both client and architect desired to reclaim the cultural achievements of the old Japan in the hotel. At the same time, according to Masami Tanigawa, Wright stated that "Japanese art and architecture are respectable as presented, therefore I decorated the Imperial Hotel

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<sup>75</sup>The shadows and perspective adopted in the print represent Kuniyoshi working in a "Western influenced" style.

<sup>76</sup>Wright, "In the Cause of Architecture," *Western Architect* 32 (November 1923). According to Wright, the Fujiwara was used for ventilation screens and as screens for lights for the hotel, while the Genji and Genroku were used as string-courses.

<sup>77</sup>Wright, *An Autobiography*, 1943, p. 174.



Figure 3-12. Kuniyoshi, *The Night Attack*, 1826.

with ancient American art and Mayan decoration.”<sup>78</sup> Thus, the Imperial Hotel, or at least its decoration, was Mayan as well as Japanese.

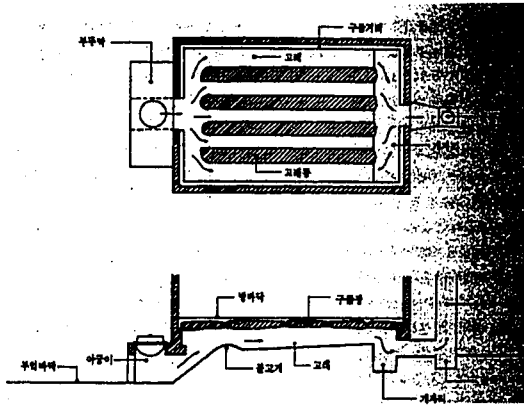
Going back to the Hollyhock house, it appeared that Wright incorporated a Japanese roof form into the Mayan roof form of the California house “as a

tribute to the original culture of America” as he, in turn, brought the symbols of the original culture of the Americas as a tribute to the original culture of Japan for the Yamamura house. It is likely because the Yamamura house, the roof of which was inspired by Japanese and Mayan architectures, was contemporaneous to the Hollyhock house, and the roof forms of both houses are analogous. The fact that the Hollyhock house roof is not only Mayan but also Japanese is also supported by the observation that Wright tended to mix Japanese with Mayan features during the 1910s and 20s to express his homage to the two cultures.<sup>79</sup> Or, as Professor Streatfield suggested, since Wright was so adamant about Mayan architecture as the original American architecture, the roof form of the Hollyhock house might be a poetic reinterpretation of primitive Japanese architecture.<sup>80</sup>

<sup>78</sup>Masami Tanigawa, “Frank Lloyd Wright, Master Living in Legend,” in Sakae Ohmi and Terunobu Fujinori, ed., *Unusual Modern Architects* (Tokyo: Asahi Newspaper Publishers, 1984), p. 175 (quoted in Alofsin, op. cit., p. 254).

<sup>79</sup>A paper on the topic, “Radiant Floor Heat: The Usonian Dream,” was read by Professors Meredith Clausen, Dean Heerwagen and myself in 1993 at the Society of Architectural Historians 46th Annual Meeting, Charleston, South Carolina, April 14-18.

<sup>80</sup>The author’s interview with Professor Streatfield on September 17, 1999.



**Figure 3-13. Korean Underfloor Heating System**

Another lesson Wright learned from Japan while he was working on the Imperial Hotel was the Korean under-floor heating system (Figure 3-13). Although it is not a Japanese architectural feature, since Wright experienced it first in his Japanese client's house in Tokyo and used the heating system

in the bathrooms of the Imperial Hotel guest rooms and elsewhere, I will discuss it here.

Wright wrote about the circumstances concerning his discovery of the heating system in his *Autobiography*:

In Japan to commence building the new Imperial Hotel, winter of 1914, we were invited to dine with Baron Okura [the Chair of the Imperial Hotel Building Board], one of my patrons ... As expected, the dining room was so cold that I couldn't eat ... After dinner the Baron led the way below to the "Korean Room," as it was called ... We were soon warm and happy again--kneeling there on the floor, an indescribable warmth. No heating was visible nor was it felt directly as such. It was really a matter not of heating at all but an affair of climate ... the Korean room meant a room heated under the floor. The heat of a fire outside at one corner of the floor drawn back and forth underneath the floor in and between tile ducks, the floor forming the top of the flues (or ducts), made by partitions, the smoke and heat going up and out of a tall chimney at the corner opposite the corner where the fire was burning. The indescribable comfort of being warmed from below was a discovery. I immediately arranged for electric heating elements beneath the bathrooms in the Imperial Hotel.<sup>81</sup>

<sup>81</sup>Wright, *An Autobiography* (New York: Duell, Sloan and Pearce, 1943), pp. 494-95. Wright's use of the heating system in the hotel was confirmed by Louis Sullivan, "Concerning the Imperial Hotel," *Architectural Record* LIII (April 1923): 349. However, the system was not so efficient, according to Raymond and Shindo Akashi who studied the hotel building just before its demolition in 1967 (see Raymond, *An Autobiography* (New York: Charles E. Tuttle, 1973), p. 71 and Akashi, *The Imperial Hotel* (Tokyo: Dongmundang, 1972), p. 406.

Upon his return to the United States in 1922, Wright had hoped to try the Korean under-floor heating system, *Ondol*, in his project for the Nakoma Country Club in Madison, Wisconsin in 1924. He planned to use the Korean heating system in the project in the

form of polished stone floors heated by pipes underneath.<sup>82</sup>

However, since it was not built, one has to wait until the 1930s to see Wright's use of the heating system in his Usonian

houses.

Another feature of Japanese



**Figure 3- 14. The Horiyu-ji Pagoda, Horiyu-ji Temple, Nara, Japan**

architecture Wright

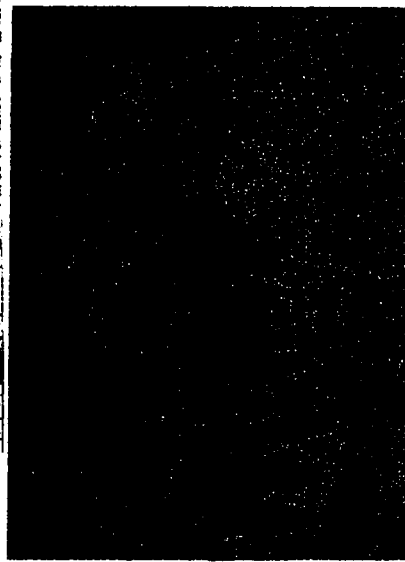
incorporated during the period was found in Wright's

use of "rigid-core high-rise structures" in the work

such as the National Life Insurance Company project of 1924, the St. Mark's Tower

project of 1929 (Figure 3-17) and the Johnson Wax Research Tower built in Racine,

Wisconsin in 1946-7. Wright's use of such a structural member in his high-rise buildings



**Figure 3-15. A Section of Yakushi-ji Temple Pagoda, Nara, Japan.**



**Figure 3- 16. Pagoda in Nikko, 17th-century**

<sup>82</sup>"Unique Lodge, Plan in Nakoma: Series of Wigwarms to be constructed on Hilltop" *Wisconsin State Journal*, 4 August 1924. It reads that "The floors will be of polished stone. A new heating system provides

as a Japanese-inspired feature has been often noted. For example, Jonathan Lipman and M.F. Hearn suggested that the Japanese pagoda in the Horyu-ji Temple near Nara was an inspiration for Wright's rigid-core high-rise structures.<sup>83</sup> The Japanese pagoda (Figure 3-14) has a single massive column which runs through the center of the pagoda from uppermost roof to base as used in Wright's towers. However, Lancaster and Nute suggested a different Japanese pagoda, the one in the Yakushi-ji (Figure 3-15) as an inspiration because its staggered section represent a closer similarity than the Horyu-ji Pagoda's pyramidal form.<sup>84</sup> Indeed, while the roof size of the latter gradually decreases toward the top, that of the former represents a staggered form that resulted from the smaller pent roofs placed between the main roofs. Although both parties (Hearn and Nute) did not provide concrete evidence that Wright saw a certain pagoda, it is likely that he saw at least one of them for both the Horyu-ji and Yakushi-ji pagodas were well-known to the Westerners. Furthermore, from hotel register entries from the Kanaya Hotel in Nikko, we know he visited Nikko.<sup>85</sup> Wright thus appeared to see at least the pagoda in Nikko (Figure 3-16) and others plenty of which were found in the Buddhist temples in Japan. As it was also pointed out by the critics above, although the pagodas look like a tree with many branches jutting out of a tree trunk, the central pillar in Japanese pagodas

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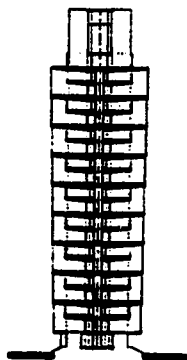
for steam heating with the pipes laid under the floors. When heat is required, the stone floor will be warmed and will radiate heat."

<sup>83</sup>Lipman, *Frank Lloyd Wright and the Johnson Wax Buildings* (New York: Rizzoli International, 1986), pp. 130-31 where he made a comparison between the pagoda and Wright's Johnson Wax Research Tower; M.F. Hearn, "A Japanese Inspiration for Frank Lloyd Wright's Rigid-Core High-Rise Structures," *JSAH L* (March 1991): 68-71 where he discussed the pagoda as an inspiration for the National Life Insurance Company.

<sup>84</sup>Nute, *op. cit.*, pp. 148-49 and 172-74 in which the Yakushiji pagoda was discussed as an inspiration for the St. Mark's Tower and Johnson Wax Research Tower; Lancaster, *Japanese Influences in America*, p. 162, where he compared the structure of Yakushi-ji pagoda to that of Johnson Wax Research Tower.

<sup>85</sup>Stipe, *op. cit.*, p. 23. The Wrightian scholar, Masami Tanigawa found this.

is in reality standing free from the succession of roofs. Unlike the pagodas, however, Wright's buildings comprise a series of cantilevered projections jutting out from a central spine like in a tree (Figure 3-17). Interestingly enough, Wright also recognized this analogy between tree, pagoda and his rigid-core high-rise buildings.



**Figure 3- 17.**  
Wright, the  
Saint Mark's  
Tower project,  
New York, 1929.

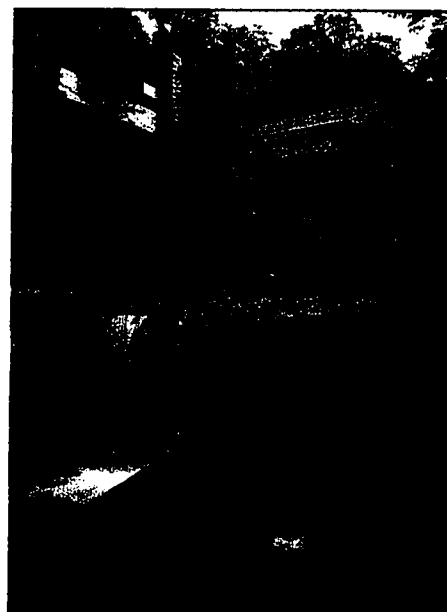
In *The Future of Architecture* of 1953, he wrote that "we have seen how the pagoda of the Orientals grew to resemble the fir trees, and how their shrines harmonized with the pines around them."<sup>86</sup> Also in *A Testament* of 1959, discussing

the Price Tower built in

Bartlesville, Oklahoma in 1953-56, he made an analogy between tree and "sheltered-glass towers" such as the National Life Insurance Company project of 1924 or the St. Mark's Tower project of 1929:

"[The Price Tower is just like] the tree that escaped the crowded forest ... this type of sheltered-glass

tower I first designed in 1924 for Chicago and in 1929 for St. Mark's-in-the-Bouwerie in New



**Figure 3- 18.** Wright, Falling  
Water, Bearrun, Pennsylvania,  
1936.

<sup>86</sup>Wright, *The Future of Architecture* (New York: Horizon Press, 1953), p. 54.

Nute quoted Wright's statement that "The pagodas of China and Japan definitely resemble the pines with which they were associated" [see Wright, *The Future of Architecture* (New York: Meridian, 1970), p. 45]. Nute's quotation is somewhat different from mine quoted from the 1st edition of 1953.



Figure 3- 19. Hokusai, Ono Falls.

York.”<sup>87</sup> Therefore, from the three-way analogy between tree, Japanese pagoda and his towers, it appeared that Wright incorporated the structure of Japanese pagodas into his sheltered-glass towers.<sup>88</sup>

Wright’s work designed during the 1930s also represented Japanese-inspired features. Many architectural historians such as Lancaster and Mark Girouard discussed visual similarities between Falling Water (Figure 3-18) built in Ohiopyle, Pennsylvania in 1936 and Japanese buildings or ones depicted in wood-block prints.<sup>89</sup> For example, Girouard pointed out that “in China and Japan, unlike Europe, houses were frequently built in natural settings next to waterfalls ... [these houses] were depicted in Chinese and Japanese prints and drawings that Wright both knew of and owned.”<sup>90</sup> He then showed a Japanese print, “Ono Falls (Figure 3-19)” by Hokusai which was formerly in Wright’s collection. The site planning of Fallingwater could be inspired by that depicted in the prints. However, a Korean pavilion built next to

<sup>87</sup>Wright, *A Testament* (New York: Horizon Press, 1959), p. 196.

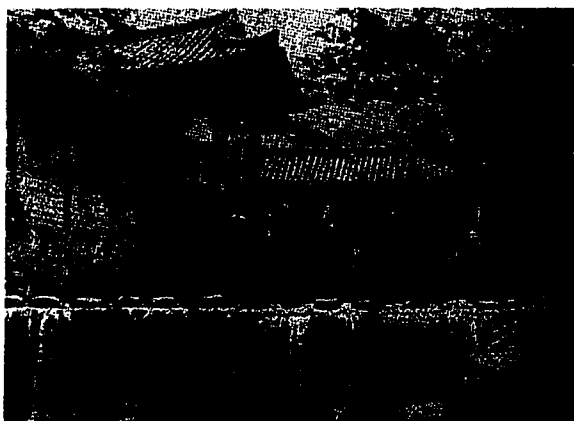
<sup>88</sup>It is also interesting to note that in his *Testament*, Wright warned of scholarly views on Japanese influences on his work: “Resemblances are mistaken for influences. Comparisons have been made odious where comparison should, except as insult, hardly exist,” (Wright, *A Testament*, p. 204).

<sup>89</sup>See Lancaster, *op. cit.*, pp. 158-161 and Nute, *op. cit.*, pp.114-16. Lancaster compared the Falling Water to a “House of a Chinese merchant near Canton” and the “Entrance hall of Hiunkaku, Kyoto.” He did that, as usual, without any supporting documents revealing the circumstances under which Wright came into contact with those buildings or at least with illustrations of those buildings.

Nute also compared only visual similarities between the Japanese shinto shrine next to the famous Ono waterfall depicted in a woodblock print (Ando Hiroshige’s “Agematsu” of 1838) and Wright’s building.

a small waterfall shows closer similarities, at least visually, than any other Japanese buildings. This is the Deep-Valley Pavilion (Figure 3-20) in the Song-kwang Temple built in Yi Dynasty (first built in 1197 and rebuilt in 1660-1720) in Jeon-nam Province, Korea. The pavilion was very well-known to the Japanese during the 1910s and 20s when Wright was in Japan, because Japan ruled Korea from 1910-45. However, it is not known whether Wright had seen a picture of the pavilion before he designed the Falling Water.

More prominent Japanese influences in Wright's architecture were shown, however, in



**Figure 3- 20. Depp Valley Pavilion, Jeon-nam Province, Korea.**

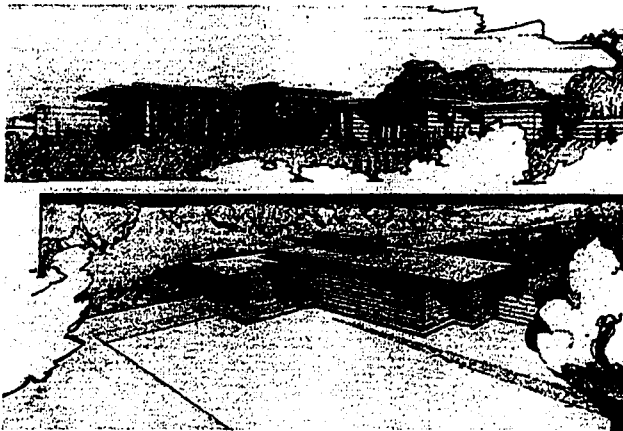
his Usonian houses. Like the Prairie houses, the Usonian houses were a new prototype of the single-family residence of average income. The first Usonian house, the Herbert Jacobs house (Figure 3-21), built in Madison, Wisconsin in 1936-37, adopted several Japanese influenced-features: a floor heating system and inverted site

planning, which will be discussed shortly.<sup>91</sup> In the Jacobs house, Wright introduced the Korean type of under-floor heating system to the U.S.<sup>92</sup> Of special interest here is the

<sup>90</sup>Mark Girouard, "The House and the Natural Landscape: A Prelude to Fallingwater," in Edgar Kaufmann, Jr., *Fallingwater: A Frank Lloyd Wright Country House* (New York: Abbeville Press Publishers, 1986), p. 23.

<sup>91</sup>In addition, Wright used in the Jacobs house a two-by-four-foot horizontal module in the entire plan. Coincidentally, the Japanese modular system (approximately 3x6 feet) was well-known as a very important lesson of Japanese architecture to Western architects around the 1930s. For example, the editor of Harada's *Lessons of Japanese Architecture* wrote in 1936 that "[In Japanese architecture] the unit [for standardization] is the mat, a certain number of which cover the floor, and thus the number of mats governs the size of the room and so the size of the whole house according to a known and fixed measurement" (p.11).

inverted planning. In its site planning, unlike the usual domestic planning where the façade is set back from the street and places the lawn between the street and the façade, the Jacobs house turned its back to the street and thus increased the depth of the privacy and of the garden behind it (Figure 3-21 & 22). This planning, “the backward house” in Wright’s term, was described by the client, Herbert Jacobs:



**Figure 3- 21 & 22. Wright, the Jacobs house, Madison, Wisconsin, 1937. Wright, the Jacobs house, garden side view, 1937.**

What a break with tradition!  
Instead of an imposing façade with elaborate entrance...no sacrifice of lot space to a large front lawn...Instead of designed to impress the neighbors, it would be arranged to make life pleasant, and private, for the occupants.<sup>93</sup>

To prevent from potential overlooking from the street which could be expected

in the backward house, Wright placed only narrow clerestory windows on top of the street-side wall just under the roof.

Mies van der Rohe and Richard Neutra also used similar site planning of “the backward house,” or “inverted site planning” in their earlier designs, but theirs were different from Wright’s. Both Neutra’s Lovell house built in Los Angeles in 1927-29 and Mies’ Tugendhat house completed in 1930 were built on sites that stood at the crest of a slope

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For the Korean heating system, on which Professors Clausen, Heerwagon, and I presented a paper (see note 79 of this chapter), adopted in the Jacobs house, see Herbert Jacobs, *Building with Frank Lloyd Wright*. (Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 1978), p. 27.

<sup>92</sup> Jacobs, op. cit., p. 27.

<sup>93</sup>Ibid., p. 11.

and offered good views over the landscape. Both architects chose inverted site planning to take advantage of the sloping-site. This closed character of the houses to the public street and their openness to the private sloping side are not different from the site planning used in Wright's much earlier houses such as the Hardy house built in 1905 in Racine, Wisconsin, and the McCormick project of 1907, both of which were published and exhibited in Berlin in 1911.<sup>94</sup> However, before the Jacobs house Wright and others did not use the inverted planning in a flat corner lot.

The inverted site planning used in the Jacobs house appeared to be inspired by the same arrangement of Japanese city residences which has been in use there for centuries. In ordinary Japanese city residences, their street-side is closed either by a fence or a wall of the house with little openings, and their garden-side rooms are widely open to the garden. Wright probably learned about this type of planning through his several visits to Japan and/or his reading of Morse's *Japanese Homes and Their Surroundings*. Commenting on Japanese city dwellings, Morse wrote that "Whatever is commonplace in the appearance of the house is towards the street, while the artistic and picturesque face is turned towards

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<sup>94</sup>Wright's drawing for the Hardy house has been noted for its similarity to Japanese prints in that it leaves considerable space empty [see An editor, "Frank Lloyd Wright and Japan," *Frank Lloyd Wright Quarterly* 6 (Spring 1995): 4 and also see Nute, op. cit., p. 96].

Wright's drawings of the Hardy house and the McCormick project were published in 1910 in the Wasmuth Portfolio and exhibited in 1911 in Berlin. Mies saw the exhibition. Mies recollected the occasion in 1940: "We young architects found ourselves in painful inner discord ... at this moment, so critical for us, the exhibition of the work of Frank Lloyd Wright came to Berlin. The work of this great master presented an architectural world of unexpected force, clarity of language, and disconcerting richness of form... Here again, at long last, genuine organic architecture flowered... So after this first encounter we followed the development of this rare man with wakeful hearts," (Mies, an appreciation written in 1940 for the unpublished catalog of the Frank Lloyd Wright exhibition held at the Museum of Modern Art, New York; Mies Archive; and quoted in Franz Schulze, *Mies van der Rohe*, p. 68).

Mies' Riehl house of 1907 was also built in a sloping site, but its front yard had a formal rose garden. Thus it was not a backward house. But, the house is interesting in that it has Japanese *ramma* and *kamoi* motif in its hall, as discussed in chapter III.

the garden, which may be at one side or in the rear of the house, --usually in the rear,"<sup>95</sup> and in other part of the book, he illustrated the type (Morse's figures 37-38, Figure 3-23).<sup>96</sup> Another supporting piece of evidence of Japanese influence in the Jacobs house is Wright's lecture to the Taliesin Fellowship. Explaining the essence of the Jacobs house to the Fellowship in 1936, Wright referred to the Japanese house. His lecture, published in the bulletin of the Fellowship *At Taliesin*, reads:

The Japanese house was an ideal house for the Japanese. It is slight, low in cost; the finest example of organic architecture in the world: the most perfect thing in the art of architecture has produced. I should say: one of architecture's great achievements. We would do well to study Japanese domestic architecture, not to copy it but to learn how a true pattern for living develops always by way of creative culture, not by borrowing pattern.<sup>97</sup>

Wright did not spell out the lessons he had in mind he wanted student to learn from

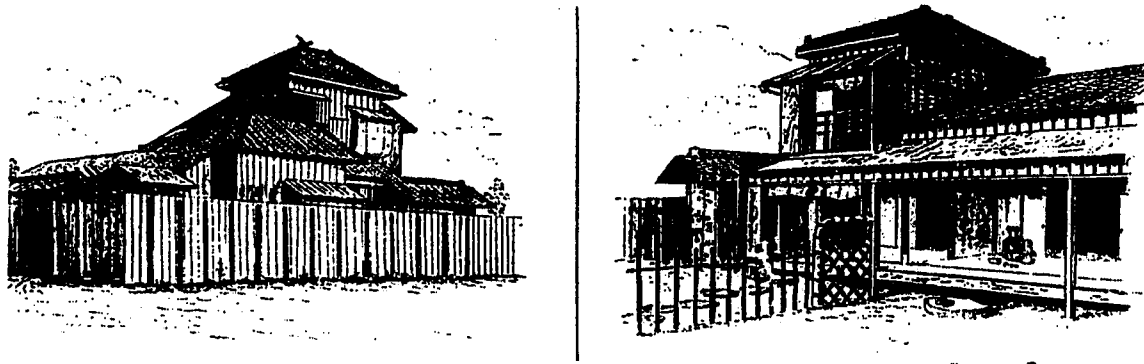


Figure 3-23. Japanese city dwelling, in Morse's *Japanese Homes*, 1885.

<sup>95</sup>Morse, *Japanese Homes and Their Surroundings* (New York: Dover Publications Inc., 1961), p.9.

<sup>96</sup>Nute also noticed this feature and commented in passing. See Nute, op. cit., pp. 40-41.

<sup>97</sup>*At Taliesin*, 1936, quoted in Jacobs, *Building with Frank Lloyd Wright* (Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 1978), p. 23.

Japanese architecture. But, one can assume that by doing so Wright implied his debt to Japanese domestic architecture.

In addition to the backward design, the ideas of the indirect approach to the entrance and of the hidden entrance adopted in the Jacobs house are also Japanese in principle. In the house, as shown in its plan (Figure 3-22) the main entrance is located inside the carport and it is “plain, without the ‘dressing up’ of a fanlight, little side windows, or

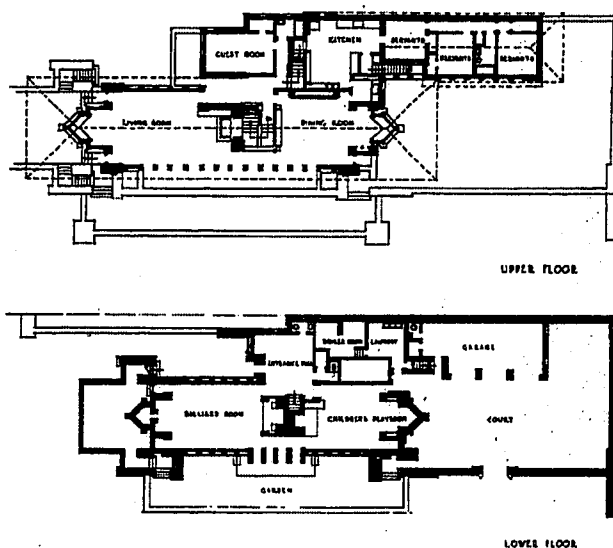


Figure 3- 24. Wright, the Robie house, Chicago, Illinois, 1909.

expensive paneling.”<sup>98</sup> This hidden characteristic of the main entrance was not new in Wright’s architecture. He adopted it often in his previous domestic or public designs such as the Larkin Company Administration Building, Buffalo, New York of 1904, and the Robie house (Figure 3-24) in

Chicago completed in 1909. In the houses or buildings, like in Jacobs house, the entrances were not only small in their dimension, but also generally not placed in front of the buildings and often vaguely defined. Such a vaguely-defined character of Wright’s facade and front entrances was noticed by Grant Manson. Discussing the non-existence of a magnificent facade in the Larkin Building built in 1904 in New York, he acclaimed it as “revolutionary concept of architectural expression for which Wright could have found no

<sup>98</sup>Ibid., p. 13.

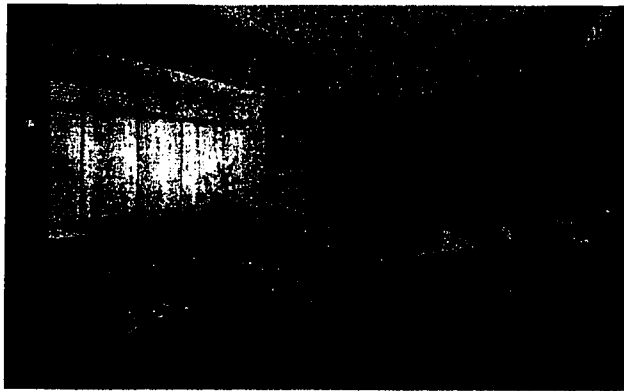
precedent in 1904.”<sup>99</sup> However, Wright could have found some precedents in Japanese houses in reading Morse’s *Japanese Homes*. In comparing a Japanese facade with that of America, Morse wrote:

With us [Americans] the commonest house in the city or country will have a definite front door, and almost always one with some embellishment, in the shape of heavy panels, ....; in the ordinary Japanese house, on the contrary, this entrance is ... of the most indefinite character ... the entrance is often vaguely defined; one may enter the house by way of the garden and make his salutations on the verandah, or he may pass into the house by an ill-defined boundary near the kitchen, -- a sort of back-door on the front side.”<sup>100</sup>

Wright was reported to have stated that the front entrance of the Jacobs house is “plain, without the ‘dressing up’ of a fanlight, little side windows, or expensive paneling,” as quoted above.<sup>101</sup> Wright’s statement about the front door of the Jacobs house is the same

in principle as Morse’s statement about the front door of Japanese houses.

Japanese characteristics in Wright’s architecture during the 1930s obviously inspired other architects on the West Coast. During the 1930s and early 1940s, one can notice a group of architects in the region who were not



**Figure 3- 25. Pietro Belluschi, the Council Crest house, exterior and living room, Portland, Oregon, 1937.**

only deeply impressed by Wright’s architecture, but also inspired by Japanese architecture and/or wood buildings in the West Coast designed by Maybeck, the Greene Brothers, and

<sup>99</sup>Manson, op. cit., p. 148.

<sup>100</sup>Morse, op. cit., pp. 234-35.

<sup>101</sup>Herbert Jacobs with Catherine Jacobs, *Building with Frank Lloyd Wright* (Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 1978), p. 13.

others two decades before. Prominent architects who had incorporated the three inspirations together into their work were Pietro Belluschi in the Pacific Northwest, Gardner Dailey in the Bay Area, and Harwell Hamilton Harris, Lloyd Wright and Neutra in the Los Angeles Area.

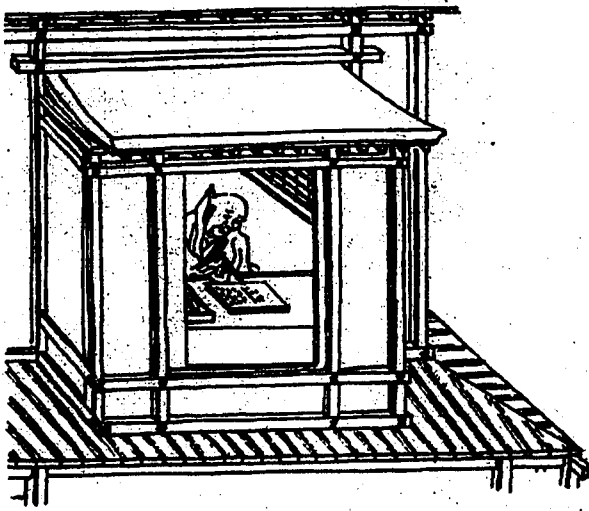


Figure 3- 26. Japanese built-in Desk

Belluschi began his career as an architect in 1925 in Albert E. Doyle's office in Portland, Oregon. The first identifiable sign of Japanese-influenced characteristics in Belluschi's

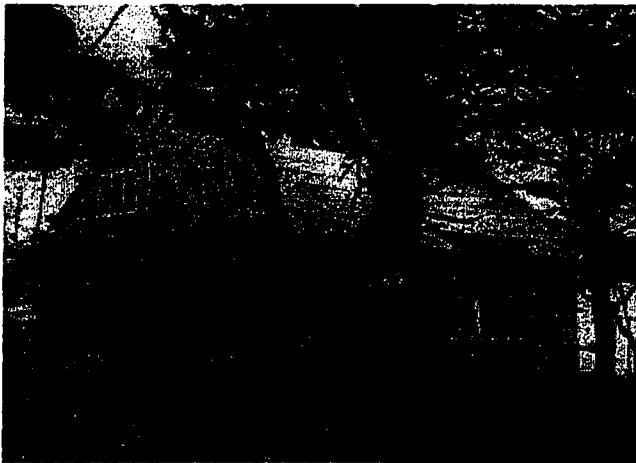
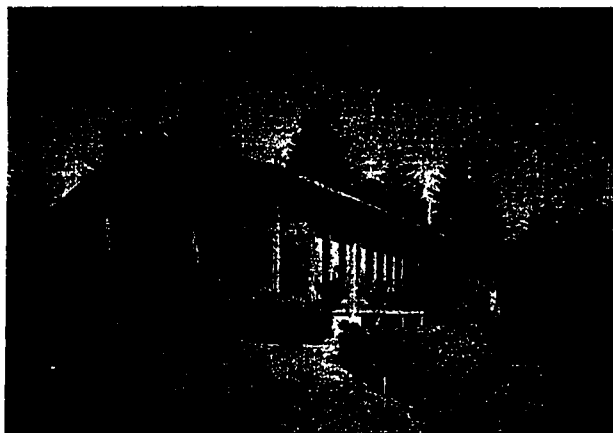


Figure 3-27. A.E. Doyle, the Wentz Cottage, Neakanie, Oregon, 1916.

Trained as an engineer at Rome, Italy, Belluschi began his career as an architect in 1925 in Albert E. Doyle's office in Portland, Oregon. The first identifiable sign of Japanese-influenced characteristics in Belluschi's work appeared in his own house, Council Crest house built in Portland in 1936-37. The house (Figure 3-25) had a low-pitched *irimoya* roof with deep overhanging eaves and was arranged as a series of loose wings wrapped around an open courtyard. This latter feature was similar to Wright's Taliesin East which was not



**Figure 3- 28. Belluschi, the Jennings Sutor house, Portland, Oregon, 1938.**

only Japanese in its staggered arrangement of wings, but also was a building with which Belluschi was familiar.<sup>102</sup> In its interior, the Council Crest house also shows a Japanese-inspired feature. The living room window placed above a built-in

bookshelf and desk protruded into the terrace. It resembles Japanese built-in desk alcove (Figure 3-26) in the *shoin* style houses which usually protrudes into the verandah.

The *irimoya* roof form of the Council Crest house derived from the Wentz Cottage (Figure 3-27) built in Neahkanie, Oregon in 1916 by Doyle where Belluschi spent weekends and vacations. Also as Clausen has pointed out, “the deliberately framed views” of coastline and a lone cypress tree seen through the window frames of the cottage reflected its owner’s interest in Japanese art.<sup>103</sup> Through the cottage, Belluschi not only learned of some Maybeckian features such as the profile of the balustrade or broken eaves above the window to allow light, but also experienced the way Arts and Crafts architects such as the Greenes or Maybeck, whom Doyle clearly drew on here, dealt with wood.<sup>104</sup>

<sup>102</sup>According to Professor Clausen, the arrangement of the house indicated “Belluschi’s familiarity with the work of Wright, especially the buildings at Taliesin, Spring Green” [see Meredith Clausen, *Pietro Belluschi* (Cambridge: The MIT Press, 1995), p. 88]. For the Japanese characters incorporated in Taliesin, see chapter II.

<sup>103</sup>Ibid, p. 49.

<sup>104</sup>Maybeck’s drawings had been featured in a Portland Architectural Club Exhibition the year the cottage was begun (Ibidem).

Some examples of Maybeck’s use of the balustrade appear in his Albert Schneider house built in Berkeley in 1907 [for an illustration, see Sally Woodbridge, *Bernard Maybeck: Visionary Architect* (New York:

During his early career, Belluschi had mainly worked in formal academic architecture in masonry. However, coupled with his familiarity with Wright's emphasis on Japanese architecture in wood,<sup>105</sup> Belluschi's experience of natural wood which he had seen successfully used in both the Wentz cottage and the Watzek house built in 1936-37 in Portland by his friend John Yeon,<sup>106</sup> led him to turn from historicism in masonry to the Japanese for design precedents in wood during the late 1930s.

Such a turn was stirred up by Jiro Harada's lectures on Japanese architecture given at the Portland Art Museum and by books on Japanese architecture such as *The Lesson* by Harada whose connection with the West Coast was deeply rooted. Belluschi evidently attended Harada's lecture delivered at the Portland Art Museum.<sup>107</sup> In his lectures, Harada talked about the lessons which Western architects could learn from Japan.

The lessons that Belluschi learned from Japanese architecture in the late 1930s, such as the intimate connection of house with nature or special appreciation for the natural grain of wood, its texture and color were immediately reflected in his Jennings Sutor house (Figure 3-28) built in Portland in 1937-38.<sup>108</sup> The house in natural wood was planned to be nestled into the surrounding landscape. Not only was its low-pitched gabled roof with deep overhanging eaves Japanese-inspired, but also its entrance hall, which was "like the

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Abbeville Press, 1992), pp. 57 & 63]. Also see the illustration of the Leon Roos house, which was built in San Francisco in 1909, for his use of broken eaves in McCoy, *Five California Architects*, p. 17.

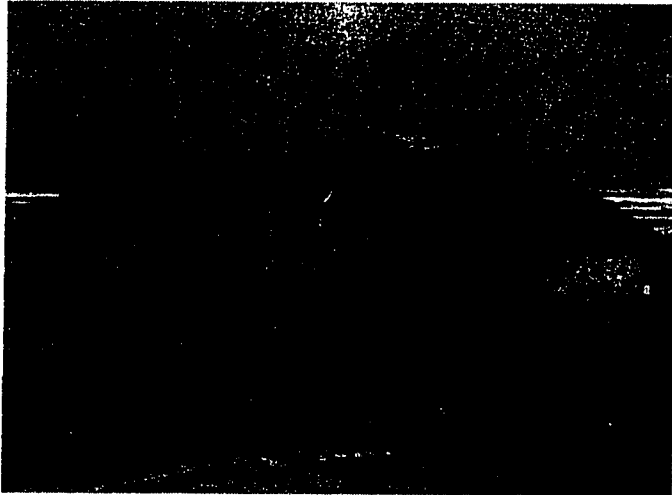
<sup>105</sup>Wright's article on the material, wood, was published in *Architectural Record* in 1928, and it was well known to the Portland architectural community. See Wright, "In the Cause of Architecture: IV. The Meaning of Materials--Wood," *Architectural Record* (May 1928). This will be discussed shortly.

<sup>106</sup>For the Watzek house, see Clausen's description of the house (Clausen, op. cit., pp. 90-97).

<sup>107</sup>Some of Harada's lectures would be soon represented in his *The Lessons of Japanese Architecture* in 1936 and also would be included a year later in 1937 in *A Glimpse of Japanese Ideals*.

<sup>108</sup>Harada claimed that "...the above mentioned traditional attitude toward the plain surface of wood is a manifestation of the love of nature so strong in the Japanese. It reveals a phase of our national characteristics, which is the keynote in our architectural system" (Harada, *Glimpse*, p. 68, which he

vestibule of a Japanese pavilion, with modular full-length plate glass windows, mat floors, and a ceiling of woven fir slats.”<sup>109</sup>



**Figure 3- 29. Belluschi, the Peter Kerr house, Gearhart, Oregon, 1941.**

Kerr vacation house (Figure 3-29) built at Gearhart, Oregon in 1941, he incorporated unpainted wood for exterior walls, a low-pitched and deep-eaved roof with exposed rafters that were Japanese-inspired. Especially an unfinished tree trunk supporting the long verandah roof represented a Japanese “Zen touch fully in keeping with the character of the wild

After his use of the *irimoya* roof in his own house in 1936, Belluschi used the same type of roof again in a Model house designed for the Northwest Home Show of 1939.<sup>110</sup> Another house designed before

World War II also retained Japanese-inspired characteristics. In the Peter



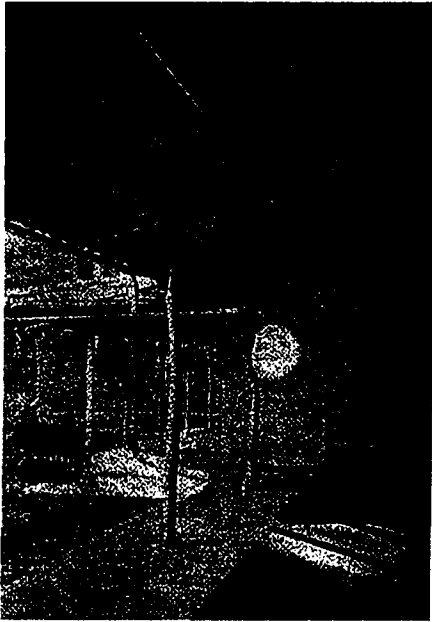
**Figure 3- 30. Daniel Wadsworth, a Summer Cottage, Hartford, Connecticut, before 1846, in Beecher’s *A Treatise on Domestic Economy*, 1846.**

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delivered at the Seattle Art Museum). It is almost same as the content reprinted in the *Lesson* in 1936 and could have been the same as the one given at the Portland Art Museum.

<sup>109</sup>Clausen, *Pietro Belluschi*, p. 99.

<sup>110</sup>For an illustration, *Ibid.*, p. 101.



**Figure 3- 31. An Exmample of Japanese use of natural pillar, in Harada's *The Lesson of Japanese Architecture*, 1936.**

dunes.”<sup>111</sup> Before Belluschi, other American architects also incorporated natural pillars in their homes. In 1846, for instance, Catherine Beecher recommended American women to incorporate into their home natural pillars (Figure 3-30) “made simply of the trunks of small trees [which] give a beautiful rural finish ... [and cheap].”<sup>112</sup> However, it is more likely that Belluschi was inspired to utilize the Japanese features through reading the Harada’s book for the same combination of Japanese *irimoya* roofs with deep overhanging eaves and “natural pillars” supporting

verandah roofs in Japanese houses were illustrated in Harada’s *The Lessons* (Figure 3-31).<sup>113</sup>



**Figure 3- 32. Richard Neutra, the Lovell house, Los Angeles, California, 1929.**

Like Belluschi in the Pacific Northwest, in the 1930s and early 1940s many architects in Southern California and in the Bay Area were inspired by Japanese architecture, as well as by Wright’s Prairie houses and the California vernacular

<sup>111</sup>Ibid., p. 110.

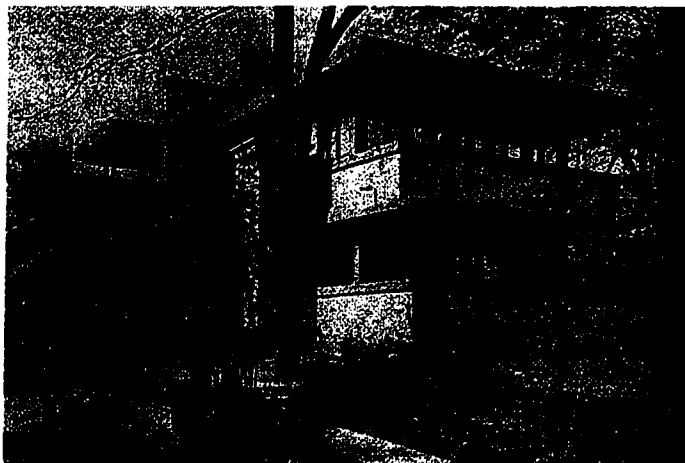
<sup>112</sup>Catherine Beecher, *A Treatise on Domestic Economy* (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1846), p. 273.

<sup>113</sup>Harada, *The Lesson*, an illustration in p. 130. Antonin Raymond’s work published in *Architectural Details* of 1937 was also a source through which Belluschi was introduced to Japanese or Raymondian Japanese architecture. For example, Belluschi used the same motif such as a form of fireplace in his Joss house built in Portland in 1940-42 as the one published in Raymond’s book. See Clausen, op. cit, p. 105.

tradition in wood in the work of the Greenes and Maybeck. Neutra and Harwell Hamilton Harris were prominent among these architects. Neutra had trained in Vienna as an architect and in 1919 worked briefly in Switzerland for the noted landscape architect Gustav Amman. It was there under Amman's tutelage that Neutra developed "an interest and facility in botany, landscaping, and site planning that would serve him well the rest of his life."<sup>114</sup> Then, he moved to Germany and worked for Erich Mendelsohn's Berlin office for three years from 1921. Neutra came to the United States in 1923 at the age of thirty-three. He worked briefly at Taliesin with Wright and in 1925 moved to California where he initially worked with his old friend Rudolph Schindler on Wright's Hollyhock house. Then, he established his own practice. Right after he completed the Lovell house (Figure 3-32) built in Los Angeles in 1927-29, he visited Japan in 1930. He recollected his experience of the trip to Japan in 1962 in his *Life and Shape*. According to him, looking at the "Japanese lightweight house" while traveling "from Kamakura to Nara," and Kyoto which was then "almost untouched in its antiquity," Neutra found "natural kinship" between the Japanese houses and his own work. All he saw "was so unbelievably different from [his] own background, and yet so close to [his] feelings of *treating space and nature* or giving emphasis often only by *surrounding restraint* (my emphasis)." Such a feeling of intimacy led him to be "no longer alone."<sup>115</sup> As a matter of fact, there are affinities between his and Japanese ways of "treating space and nature," such as creating an intimate interrelationship between house and garden and in open planning evidenced by the Lovell house. Yet in spite of such affinities in principle, the

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<sup>114</sup>Thomas Hines, *Richard Neutra and the Search for Modern Architecture: A Biography and History* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1982), p. 27.



**Figure 3- 33. Wright, the Gale house, Oak Park, Illinois, 1909.**

main characteristics of the Lovell house--the long horizontal parapet, the ribbon window, the overhanging roof with deep eaves, the thin wall plane, and the skeleton structure<sup>116</sup>-- appeared to be derived not directly from Japan, but had been transmitted through Wright's use of Japanese features

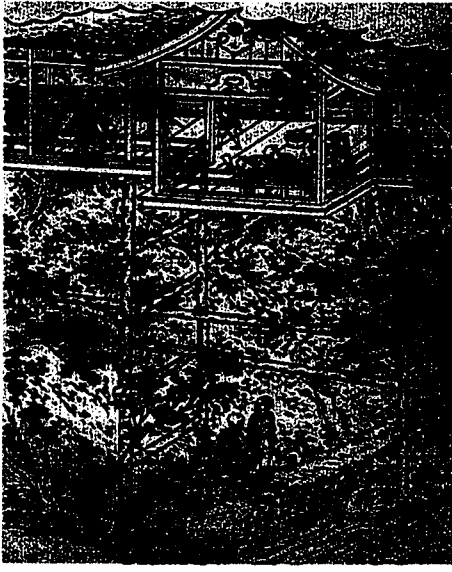
in his Prairie houses. Wright's Prairie houses, such as the Mrs. Thomas Gale house (Figure 3-33) built in Oak Park in 1909, show similar features that were used in Neutra's Lovell house. In addition to the harmony of house with surroundings, common features to both houses were the preference for horizontals expressed by the long parapets and series of windows and the cantilevered deep overhanging roofs. Neutra recognized and wrote about Wright's influence on his architecture in his *Life and Shape*, writing that when he saw Wright's drawings of the Prairie houses published in the Wasmuth Portfolio in 1911 in Berlin, he immediately fell in love with them:

There was another man who influenced me deeply ...He [Frank Lloyd Wright] was very different from Loos...The beautifully printed pages of this magnificent volume [of Wasmuth Portfolio] seemed to reveal to me the fantastic living culture of some unknown people...*These houses really had no walls; rooms opened up in any direction...Wright was creating low buildings with tremendous shading roofs and long window ribbons,*

<sup>115</sup>Neutra, *Life and Shape* (New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts, 1962), pp. 227-28.

<sup>116</sup>Drexler once listed the main characteristics of the Lovell house in a way quoted above [see Arthur Drexler and Thomas Hines, *The Architecture of Richard Neutra* (New York: The Museum of Modern Art, 1982), p. 50].

...This miracle man instilled in me the conviction that ...I have to go to the places where he walked and worked (my emphasis).<sup>117</sup>



**Figure 3- 34. A Japanese Hillside Pavilion, in Josiah Conder's *Landscape Gardening in Japan* 1893**

Thus, Neutra came to the U.S. in 1924 and visited Wright and his houses. Since Neutra admired Wright's Prairie houses, and the Lovell house was designed a few years after Neutra had left Wright's Taliesin, it can safely be suggested that he learned those features from Wright. As a result, although the Lovell house was the first "mature example in the U.S. of the International Style,"<sup>118</sup> unlike other European prototypes, it did not dominate the site, but was perched harmoniously on a steep hillside site.

Interestingly, Wright's Hardy house built in Racine, Wisconsin in 1905 and Japanese temples or hillside pavilions, such as Sambutsuji Temple built in the twelfth century and a pavilion (Figure 3-34) that was illustrated in Conder's *Landscape Gardening in Japan*, were also built on a similar hillside site.

After his trip to Japan, Neutra's treatment of nature became more integrated, as in the Japanese houses. In his houses designed during the 1930s and 1940s, such as the Beard house built in Altadena, California in 1934 or the Miller house (Figure 3-35) built in Palm Springs, California in 1937, large casement windows or sliding glass door-walls integrated indoors and out, just like the *shoji* screens do in the Japanese houses. Neutra

<sup>117</sup>Neutra, op. cit., p. 171-73.

called this as a “friendly opening to the out-of-doors” and related it to the Japanese architectural tradition such as the *shoin* houses.<sup>119</sup> Thomas Hines also regarded Neutra’s treatment of space as unique in his *Richard Neutra and the Search for Modern Architecture: A Biography and History*, though he did not relate it to Japanese influence:

Like Wright’s Prairie houses, most of Neutra’s buildings had a strong horizontal orientation. While the buildings of Le Corbusier usually seemed to “stand” on the land,



Figure 3- 35. Neutra, the Miller house, Palm Springs, California, 1937.

Neutra’s tended to “sit” or to “lie” there. As compared, moreover, with those of most of his modernists contemporaries, Neutra’s buildings--in verdant California--reached out to embrace and intermingle with nature.<sup>120</sup>

Neutra’s buildings were thus “quintessential machines in the garden”<sup>121</sup> rather than “machines to

live in” mainly because he incorporated a Wrightian version of Japanese treatment of nature into his California modern houses. The characteristic integration of house with

<sup>118</sup>Thomas Hines, “Richard Neutra: A Chronology,” in Arthur Drexler and Hines, *The Architecture of Richard Neutra: From International Style To California Modern* (New York: The Museum of Modern Art, 1982), p. 8. The house was also the first documented steel-framed house in America.

<sup>119</sup>Neutra, *Richard Neutra on Building: Mystery and Realities of the Site* (New York: Scarsdale, 1951), pp. 55-60. Criticizing “revivalism” and advocating “a return to natural wholesomeness,” he wrote that “Only a few of us in these United States live in the neighborhoods of true architectural tradition, as people commonly do in Japan or Spain or in a small English town...” (p. 60). This will be pursued more in chapter V when I discuss this topic in depth.

Again, as it has been usual among American architects, Neutra did not specify any particular Japanese style. However, one can suggest that he meant the *shoin* style because most illustrations he published in the *Form* in 1930 were in that style.

<sup>120</sup>Hines, *Richard Neutra and the Search for Modern Architecture: A Biography and History* (Berkeley, Los Angeles and London: University of California Press, 1982), p. 109.

landscape would be much more harmonious in Neutra's houses built in the late 1940s such as the Edgar Kaufmann house built in Palm Springs, California in 1947. In the house, Neutra took advantage of steel frame construction that led modern houses to open the whole side of the room to the surrounding garden. It was thus possible for him to unite the house and garden as in Japanese houses.<sup>122</sup>

Harwell Hamilton Harris was also one of the prominent American architects who incorporated Japanese-inspired features in his work. Harris began his artistic career as a sculptor. As Harris wrote later in a letter to a friend, Jan-Anne Strand, it was the Japanese architecture that "made [Harris] want to be an architect more than a sculptor."<sup>123</sup> In the same letter, Harris also pointed out that the most important lesson of Japanese architecture was to shape space, not mass:

I liked the clear shapes and clean spaces of the Japanese house. I enjoyed its equal concern with indoors and outdoors. I applauded its harmonizing of natural and geometric forms, playing up the superficial similarities. Stone sculpture most satisfied my liking for mass. The Japanese house most satisfied my liking for immaterial form--space. It did not displace space; it marked space, it shaped space. And the materials of the Japanese building--hardly more than thin lines and flat planes--were arranged to effect rhythm, rhythm without mass...I still love mass but never find it satisfying in a building as in stone sculpture.<sup>124</sup>

In his early career as an architect, like his mentor Neutra, Harris was greatly impressed by such Wright houses as the Hollyhock house and the Prairie houses as well as Japanese

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<sup>121</sup>Ibid.

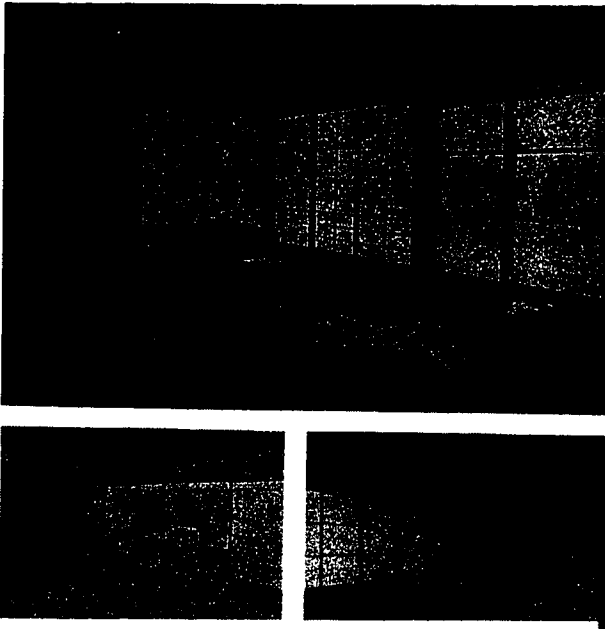
<sup>122</sup>Christopher Tunnard commented in 1938 on the Japanese unity between the house and garden that can be achieved in modern Western houses. I will discuss about this shortly.

<sup>123</sup>Harwell Hamilton Harris Letter to Jan Strand, September, 14, 1975, POAA, pp. 99-101, Quoted in Lisa Germany, *Harwell Hamilton Harris* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1991), p. 45. Jan Strand, who was a docent of the Gamble House and Harris's friend inquired about the influence of the Orient on him, and this letter was his response to the inquiry.

<sup>124</sup>Germany, op. cit., p. 45.

houses. In 1925, being impressed by the Hollyhock house, Harris looked for books on Wright's architecture at the Los Angeles Public Library and found Wright's drawings published in the Wasmuth Portfolio. The characteristics of the Prairie houses published in it such as "the deep eaves, hipped roofs, [and] ground-hugging horizontals" led Harris to admire Wright.<sup>125</sup> These features, which are Wrightian and Japanese at the same time, would be a guiding light for Harris's whole career.

Harris's Pauline Lowe house built in Altadena, California in 1933-34 was the first house into which Harris incorporated Japanese features. Before and during the design of



the house, Harris frequently visited his artist friend Carl Anderson's house. According to Harris, the house was remodeled by Anderson and it was this house which "sparked Harris's enthusiasm for Japanese architecture."<sup>126</sup> In the Lowe house (Figure 3-36), the Japanese features--two *tokonomas* flanking a Western fireplace, *ramma* and *kamoi*, and sliding

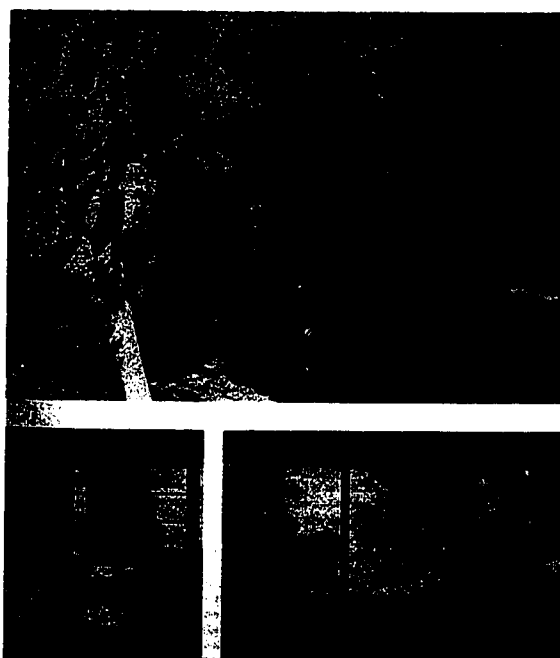
Figure 3- 36. Harwell Hamilton Harris, the Lowe house, Altadena, California, 1934.

<sup>125</sup>Ibid., pp. 23-24. Harris continued that "I have never escaped the influence of the Wasmuth Folio plans ... wings, one-room-and-a corridor wide, all walls and floors in unit dimensions rather than feet and inches."

<sup>126</sup>Harris's letter to Germany. See Germany, op. cit., p. 43. Carl Anderson was a furniture designer and his remodelled house was strongly influenced by Japanese designs. But illustrations of the house have not survived.

*shoji* screens-- were adapted well to an American home.<sup>127</sup> While the Lowe house was influenced by his friend Anderson's version of Japanese architecture, Harris's design for the Edward De Steiguer house was mainly inspired by Wrightian interpretation of Japanese architecture.<sup>128</sup> In this house, built in Pasadena in 1936, the deep overhanging eaves, gently hipped roofs, ground-hugging horizontals were unmistakably Wrightian as well as Japanese. Harris not only continued to use the features in his own house, the Fellowship Park house built in Los Angeles

in 1935, but also added more Japanese architectural features. In this house (Figure 3-37),<sup>129</sup> Harris raised the floor from the ground, just as in Japanese houses, and arranged stepping logs in place of stone steps in Japanese prototypes. Like Neutra's, Harris's house "sits" or "lies" in the natural surroundings. Also Japanese are Harris's use of *shoji*-like glass sliding doors on



**Figure 3- 37. Harris, the Fellowship Park house exterior, Los Angeles, California, 1935.**

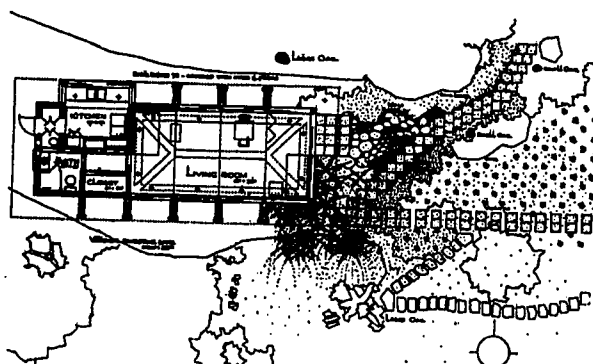
three-side of the house (see plan, Figure 3-38 could be totally removed when needed. He als

<sup>127</sup>Around 1934 when the Lowe house was built, it is not known that Harris knew any books on Japanese. However, "as early as 1936 he had become acquainted with Jiro Harada's *The Lesson of Japanese Architecture* and [Kakuzo] Okura's *Book of Tea*" and he "purchased Edward Morse's *Japanese Homes and Their Surroundings* in Seattle in 1945" in Germany, op. cit., pp. 43 & 211 (note 7).

<sup>128</sup>By the word, "interpretation," I refer to Wrightian reconstruction of Japanese houses. For example, in his *An Autobiography*, Wright wrote that "Japanese house naturally fascinated me and I would spend hours taking it all to pieces and putting it together again" (Wright, *Autobiography*, 1943, p. 196).

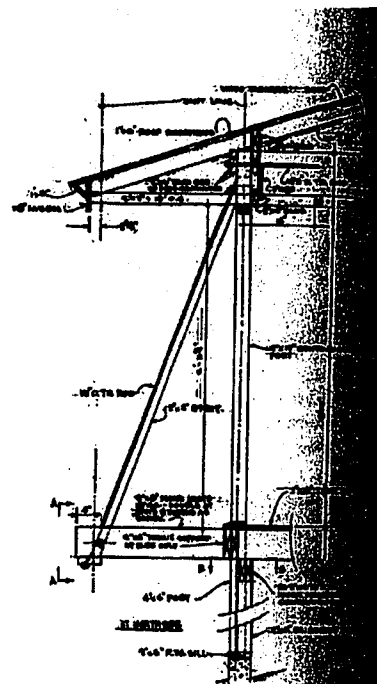
<sup>129</sup>The Fellowship Park house won the 1937 *House Beautiful* Small House Competition and first prize in the Pittsburgh Glass Institute Competition for a house under \$12,000.

doors black, according to Lisa Germany, “to effect a more Japanese appearance,” as he did in the Lowe house and would do later in the George Bauer house built in Glendale, California in 1938.<sup>130</sup> However, it is not known where Harris had learned about Japanese features. Lancaster, one of



**Figure 3- 38. Harris, the Fellowship Park house, plan, Los Angeles, California, 1935.**

a few scholars who discussed Japanese influence in Harris’s architecture, suggested that Harris could have known Morse’s *Japanese Homes* because outside buttresses Harris used in the Fellowship Park house (Figure 3-39) were similar to those illustrated in the book.<sup>131</sup> However, a recent study reveals that Harris purchased Morse’s book in 1945 in Seattle, and was acquainted with Harada’s *The Lesson* as early as 1936.<sup>132</sup> Thus, apparently he learned these Japanese features, through his mentor Neutra and/or his articles published in *Die Form* in 1931 which included some illustrations of Japanese interiors similar to those used in both Harris’s



**Figure 3- 39. Harris, the Fellowship Park house, outside buttress, Los**

<sup>130</sup>Germany, op. cit., p. 69.

<sup>131</sup>Lacaster, op. cit, p. 179. Wright’s influence in Harris has often been discussed, but not much on Japanese influences in Harris’s architecture. For example, Germany commented on Harris’s “Japanese forms (p. 115)” or “Japanese sensibility (p. 194),” but did not pursue the origins of the forms or sensibility.

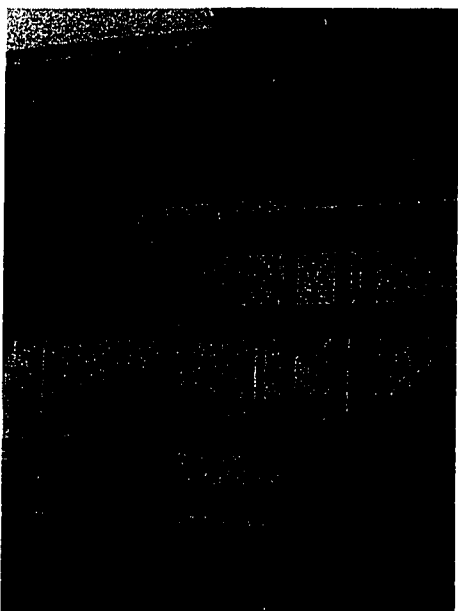
<sup>132</sup>See note 127.

Lowe house and his Fellowship Park house.<sup>133</sup>

Harris's writings also support the similarities between his and Japanese architecture in their principles. Harris published "In Designing the Small House" in the *California Arts and Architecture* in 1935. In it, he listed nine dos and don'ts. Among them, of special interests are the following:

Make one whole wall of the room of glass and open the room into a garden...the garden then becomes the outer portion of the room, separated from the inner portion by a removable glass screen. If possible, project the roof three feet or more beyond the screen and bring the eaves down to the very top of the opening. Board-in the under side of the eaves so that there is a low, horizontal ceiling just outside the opening...Keep the furniture line low and the pieces of furniture few, light, and movable.<sup>134</sup>

These principles--interrelationship between indoor and outdoor, deep projecting eaves,



**Figure 3- 40. Mayhew, the Manor house, Soule Tract, California, 1937**

horizontalities or a few number of light furniture--were obviously inspired by Wright's work and Japanese architecture. They were adopted in most of Harris' small houses such as the Greta Granstedt house built in Hollywood, California in 1938 and in the large houses like the Lee Blair house built in Los Angeles in 1939.

Like Harris, Clarence Mayhew also incorporated the Japanese principles of flexible indoor/outdoor space in his work during the 1930s, a prominent

<sup>133</sup>Or he saw the Japanese features in other places because in the West Coast region there were many Japanese houses with the features used in the Fellowship Park house. For example, the Japanese Village of the Mid-Winter Fair was still standing.

<sup>134</sup>Harris, "In Designing the Small House," *California Arts and Architecture*, 47 (January 1935): 20.

example of which was the Manor house (Figure 3-40) built in 1937 at Soule Tract, California. According to Mayhew, the clients, Mr. and Mrs. Manor wanted a house that “would open up to the garden and bring the garden into the house.”<sup>135</sup> To meet the requirements of the program, Mayhew incorporated Japanese principles and thus established a type of house representing “country living in California better than any style”:

In general, the house has a Japanese character in both plan and elevation. Although I did not copy any Japanese details, I did copy the underlying principle. I feel that this type of house represent country living in California better than any style I know. It is certainly a relic after playing Rancho or Spanish Don.<sup>136</sup>

As David Gebhard pointed out, Mayhew’s Manor house captured especially in the solarium “California’s ability to wed indoors and outdoors ... with its glass roof, sliding glass walls, and the adjacent sliding glass walls of the living room.”<sup>137</sup> Also Japanese were the use of natural red wood for the building structure, the *tatami*-like mats on the living room floor, the shoji-like grid of the glass roof and the removable glass doors between the rooms.

In summary, on the West Coast a number of architects such as Belluschi, Neutra and Harris incorporated Japanese principles and form into their own work, and created unique modern buildings. They learned about the Japanese features, which they held in common, through both once-filtered Japanese characteristics in Wright’s architecture and by reading books on Japanese architecture and/or their direct experience of Japanese

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<sup>135</sup>Clarence Mayhew, “House for Harold V. Manor, Soule Tract, Calif.,” *Architectural Forum* 71 (July 1939): 9-11.

<sup>136</sup>Ibidem.

buildings. Also common among these West Coast architects was the fact that they all put a heavy emphasis in their practice on the harmony between the buildings and their surroundings. Such an emphasis on harmony with nature was one of the most prominent differences which characterized the work of the West Coast architects from that of the East Coast architects who would focus more on the structural clarity of Japanese architecture later in the 1940s and onwards.

Mies van der Rohe, an architect reflecting a wholly different sensibility, on the other hand, lauded the Japanese wooden buildings for their structural clarity. In his inaugural address as Director of Architecture at the Armour Institute of Technology in 1938, Mies declared that architecture students, including him, have to learn from the Japanese architectural tradition:

Where can we find greater structural clarity than in the wooden buildings of the old [Japan]? Where else can we find such unity of material, construction and form?<sup>138</sup>

Although he did not specify so, it is highly likely that “the old” meant traditional Japan. The conjecture was once confirmed by the editor of the *Architectural Forum* who interpreted Mies’ passage quoted above as a statement related to Japanese architecture. The editor included Mies’ passage among many statements on Japanese architecture made by American architects such as Gropius, I. M. Pei, and Marcel Breuer.<sup>139</sup> Also, during the late 1920s and 1930s, American architects regarded Japanese wooden buildings as the ones having superior qualities. In his “In the Cause of Architecture,”

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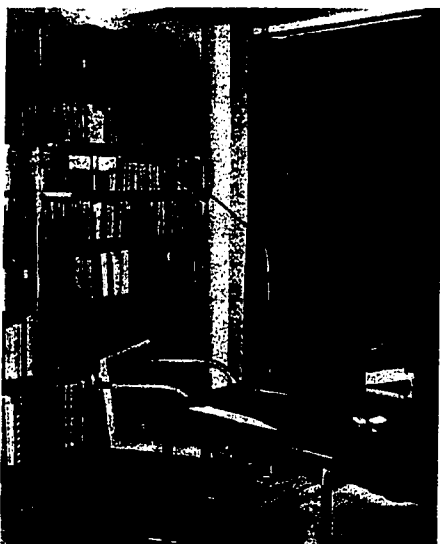
<sup>137</sup>David Gebbard, “William Wurster and his California Contemporaries,” in Marc Treib ed., *An Everyday Modernism: The Houses of William Wurster* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1995), p. 175.

<sup>138</sup>Mies van der Rohe, “Inaugural address,” published in Philip Johnson, *Mies van der Rohe* (New York: The Museum of Modern Art, 1947), p. 197.

<sup>139</sup>See Editor, “Japanese architecture and the West,” *Architectural Forum* (January 1953), p.143.

published in 1928, Wright stated that Japanese use of wood in their construction was the “best”:

Wood is universally beautiful to Man. And yet, among higher civilizations, the Japanese understood it best...Whether pole, beam, plank, board, slat or rod, the Japanese architect got the forms and treatments of his architecture out of tree-nature, wood-wise, and



**Figure 3- 41. Mies van der Rohe, An Apartment Study, New York, 1930.**

heightened the natural beauty of the material by cunning peculiar to himself...*No western peoples ever used wood with such understanding as the Japanese did in their construction--where wood always came up and came out as nobly beautiful (my emphasis).*<sup>140</sup>

In addition to the structural and aesthetic factors, as Professor Clausen has pointed out, American architects of the 1930s appeared to be interested in Japanese use of wood because of its economic factor.<sup>141</sup> During the period of the depression, wood appealed to American architects partly because the

cost of the material was cheap, and partly because the cost of labor was cheaper to use the material. In general, compared to the costly masons such as brick layers or stone carvers, ordinary carpenters or unskilled builders can easily deal with it.

American architects of the 1930s also noticed Japanese influences on Mies’s architecture. In 1937, a year before Mies’ inaugural address, the American architect Ralph Walker wrote of Japanese influences on Mies. Commenting on the “meeting of the East

<sup>140</sup>Wright, “In the Cause of Architecture: IV. The Meaning of Materials--Wood,” *Architectural Record* (May 1928).

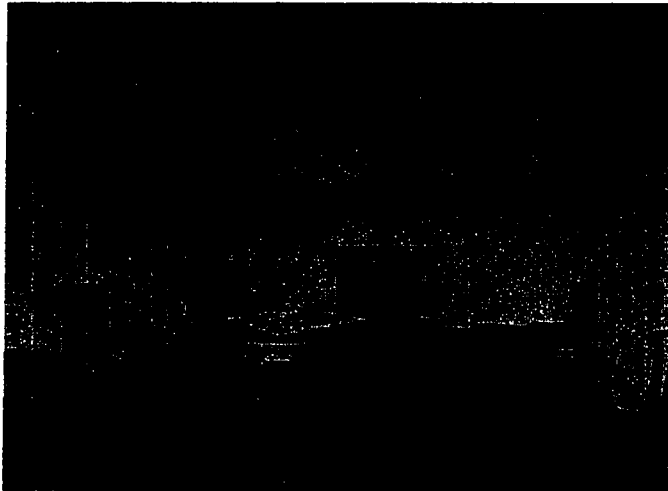
<sup>141</sup>In an interview with the author on August 21, 1999.

and the West,” he stated that “simplicity” of the Japanese house is the most important lesson Western architects such as Mies learned from Japan:

*One of the more recent influences has been the great force exerted by the Japanese house on the modern architectural mind. This has been as true of the work of Frank Lloyd Wright as it is of that of Mies Van der Rohe and most of their followers. (my emphasis).*

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In the 1937 article published in *Pencil Points*, Walker did not deal with Japanese influences on Mies’ architecture in detail. However, considering his phrases like “more recent influences ... on the work of Mies van der Rohe,” he appeared to comment on



**Figure 3- 42. Mies, the Riehl house hall, Germany, 1907.**

Mies’ incorporation of Japanese simplicity in his recently designed buildings such as the Tugendhat house built in Bruno, Czechoslovakia in 1928-30 or in the Barcelona Pavilion of 1929.<sup>143</sup>

These buildings made their initial public appearance in America in the 1932 International Style exhibition

held in the Museum of Modern Art in New York and later on they were enthusiastically

<sup>142</sup>Ralph Walker, “A Question of Simplicity,” *Pencil Points* 18 (July 1937): 457.

<sup>143</sup>In the Tugendhat house, Mies’s use of the space-defining wall and black or white velvet curtains on chrome rails to separate the rooms, if needed, are reminiscent of the similar usage of sliding screens in Japanese architecture. Mies also completely opened two side of the living room from ceiling to floor toward the winter garden by means of large plates of glass, like in Japanese houses where removable *shojis* can be removed if needed. It is not known through what channel he was introduced to the Japanese features. It is beyond the scope of this dissertation. However, Mies could have been known to the features through *De Stijl* architecture. As William Curtis suggested in passing, it is likely that Japanese simplicity influenced

imitated by American architects. Among the work illustrated in the *International Style* which was published as the exhibition catalogue, of special interest is the New York apartment Mies designed in 1930 for Philip Johnson who organized the exhibition with Henry-Russel Hitchcock. In it, straw matting on the floor (Figure 3-41) could be indicative of Mies's knowledge of the Japanese *tatami* mat. In any case, during the 1930s, there were only a few Americans to point out Japanese influence on Mies. Walker was one of the first American architects to comment on Japanese influence on Mies. But, later from 1950s on, major critics of Mies' architecture, such as Werner Blaser and Franz Schultz frequently discussed the subject.<sup>144</sup> From their discussions, it is certain that Mies was intrigued by Japanese architecture in his early career. For example, in 1907 Mies got his first commission as an architect from the philosophy professor Alois Riehl to build a house in the upper-class Berlin suburbs of Neubabelsberg. The exterior of the Riehl house represented a conservative look in keeping with the tradition of eighteenth-century small villas common to the area.<sup>145</sup> However, in its interior, especially in the large *Halle* (great room, Figure 3-42), Franz Schulze saw one of the earliest Japanese influences in Mies' architecture. The blank plaster frieze and the wall paneling with slender wooden lattice represented Japanese "use of a slender wooden lattice known as a *shoji*."<sup>146</sup> In addition, the continuous string course above the doors and wooden panels under the ceiling are also

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Rietveld's early furniture design and it in turn influenced Mies [see Curtis, *Modern Architecture Since 1900* (New York: Prentice Hall, 1987), p. 98].

<sup>144</sup>This will be discussed in chapter IV.

<sup>145</sup>Franz Schulze, *Mies van der Rohe: A Critical Biography* Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1985, p. 24.

<sup>146</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 28.

the same Japanese features such as *ramma* and *kamoi* used in Wright's early houses.<sup>147</sup>

How then was Mies inspired by Japanese architecture? Although the channels through which Mies was introduced to Japanese architecture are not known, Mies's German contemporary, Walter Gropius's recollection concerning the atmosphere of German architectural circles during the early decades of this century is suggestive. In the 1950s, Gropius recalled the atmosphere:

From my early beginnings as an architect, *I was greatly intrigued and attracted by the Japanese house. Its lightness, its flexibility and pleasing lines impressed me deeply. The restrained order of its standardized building parts* appealed to me as the hallmark of a deeply rooted culture adaptable to any new development. The elements for today's industrial prefabrication seem to be inherent in this ancient modular conception which simultaneously left freedom for a great variety of compositions, avoiding monotony (my emphasis).<sup>148</sup>

The lightness, flexibility, pleasing lines of the Japanese houses and especially the restrained order of its standardized building parts could also have attracted Mies. These Japanese features, however, would begin to be incorporated in Mies's American work after World War II and will be discussed in the next chapter.

## **Gardens**

By 1915, walking through or reading about Japanese gardens for the American public was not a rare experience. Especially in California, there were many public places as well as private estates with Japanese gardens, which were faithful copies of gardens in Japan.

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<sup>147</sup>Unlike Schulz, Drexler attributed the features to English Edwardian architecture. See Drexler, *Richard Neutra* New York: Museum of Modern Art,

Although Wright used the same Japanese features as early as 1889 in his own house, his use of the Japanese features are different from Mies'. Wright used them to break the boxes, but Mies did not go that far.

<sup>148</sup>Quoted in Gropius, "Japanese Architecture and the West," *Architectural Forum* (January 1953): 148.

Not counting the earlier gardens, such as the one in the Golden Gate Park built for the Midwinter Fair of 1894, there were several Japanese gardens open to the public including a quaint Japanese garden overlooking Monterey Bay at the Hotel del Coronado and one built for the Panama-Pacific International Exposition of 1915.<sup>149</sup> As a result, writing about “The Japanese Garden in America,” Helen Bogan declared in 1918 that “The appearance of the Japanese garden is too well known [to American readers] to require much description.”<sup>150</sup>

By 1925, Henrietta Pope examined the present status of Japanese gardens in America in her “A Japanese Garden: Designed and Built in America in the Traditional Manner.” In the article published in the popular *House Beautiful* magazine, she stated that “There are many gardens in America that purport to be Japanese because they contain, perhaps, a stone lantern, a pagoda, a basin, or some other feature borrowed from Japan, but a real Japanese garden in this country is rare.”<sup>151</sup> For her, the garden at Shrewsbury, Massachusetts, on the estate of Dr. and Mrs. Homer Gage was the notable example of the real Japanese garden. The garden, as the private Japanese gardens designed and built on large estate gardens at the turn of the century and in the teens, covered a large lot and was

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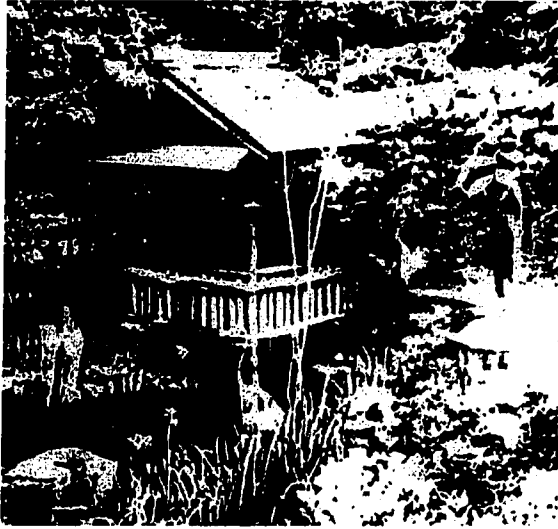
<sup>149</sup>See Horatio S. Stoll, “Japanese Gardens,” *The House Beautiful* XXXVI (July 1914): 43-45.

In the article, Stoll pointed out an important emotional response of Americans to Japanese gardens around 1914: “But the best feature of all is that the garden [at the Panama-Pacific Fair ground] will be a permanent attraction to the Presidio--a gift from the Mikado expressing the poetic romance of Japan and contrasting strongly with the constant reminders of warfare which one meets at every turn in Uncle Sam’s military reservation (p. 45).” This passage may explain the reduced popularity of Japanese architecture than before during WWI and 1920s among Americans because Japanese architecture and gardens were regarded as the ones appropriate to “a dream of fairyland” not to a military mind.

<sup>150</sup>Helen Dean Bogan, “The Japanese Garden in America: Is it a possibility?,” *House Beautiful* XLIV (August 1918): 126.

<sup>151</sup>Henrietta Marquis Pope, “A Japanese Garden: Designed and Built in America in the Traditional Manner,” *House Beautiful* 58 (October 1925): 366.

designed by a Japanese in the traditional Japanese manner.<sup>152</sup> Also, in a Japanese garden on the Estate of P.D. Saklatvala in New Jersey, published in *House and Garden* of 1918,



**Figure 3- 43. The Saklatvala garden, New Jersey, before 1918.**

the iris tea house, a little fish pond, or wisteria-covered pergola (Figure 3-43) were built in the traditional Japanese manner in a large lot, as were the garden of the Gages.<sup>153</sup>

In case of Japanese gardens built in small lots, as Pope pointed out, it was rare to find them designed in a traditional Japanese manner, but most small gardens simply included in their gardens Japanese garden paraphernalia such as stone lanterns or

pagodas to add some Japanese colors.

However, by the 1930s, American architects and landscape architects began to change their approach to Japanese gardening. Rather than faithfully copying Japanese gardens in the traditional manner or simply using Japanese garden paraphernalia in their American gardens, they began to incorporate Japanese gardening principles into their work. In theory, this tendency was represented in 1938 in Christopher Tunnard's *Gardens in the Modern Landscape*, which appeared originally as an article in the *Architectural Review*

<sup>152</sup>Ibidem. It covered about a quarter of an acre of ground and was designed and built by the Japanese landscape architect, Kiota. For Japanese gardens built on large estates during the first decade, see chapter II.

<sup>153</sup>There were many other examples of such estate gardens and they were published often in such popular magazines as *the House Beautiful* or *House and Garden*. For example, Eugene de Sabla's garden at San Mateo, California, "the most extensive Japanese garden in the state," in *the House Beautiful* XXXVI (July 1914); and a Japanese garden on the Morris estate, regarded as one of the finest in America by Bogan in *the House Beautiful* XLIV (August 1918).

and which was widely and favorably reviewed. Tunnard proposed Japanese influence as one of the three inspirations which had formulated modern Western landscape architecture.<sup>154</sup> He wrote that “three sources of inspiration the modern [landscape] designer has at his disposal” are “those of functionalism, the oriental influence and modern art.”<sup>155</sup> For the Asian influence, Tunnard specifically pinpointed the influence of the Japanese garden, “the old gardens which developed round the capital of [Japanese] Heian [period],” not the influences of the gardens of Near East or China.”<sup>156</sup> For Tunnard as for his contemporary architects,<sup>157</sup> the most important lesson the West could learn from Japanese gardening was “the unity of the habitation within its environment.” To take advantage of this lesson, he suggested that instead of borrowing the superficial style of Japanese gardening, the Western architects should understand “the principle which lies behind it [individual Japanese garden]”<sup>158</sup>:

Who is not familiar with enthusiastically conceived imitations of the tea-garden, with their ubiquitous stone lanterns, torii, shrines, and summer-houses? ... When the sentimental, superficial approach to this Oriental art through its merely decorative aspects has been abandoned by the Western mind it will be discovered that the underlying principles may very well serve as part of the basis for a modern technique.<sup>159</sup>

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<sup>154</sup>His book was reviewed in many journals. Among them, to name a few, were *Architectural Forum* 70 (February 1939): 22; *Architectural Review* 85 (March 1939): 151-2; *Architectural Record* 87 (March 1940): 92.

<sup>155</sup>Christopher Tunnard, *Gardens in the Modern Landscape* London: The Architectural Press, 1938, p. 69.

<sup>156</sup>Tunnard, op. cit., p. 88.

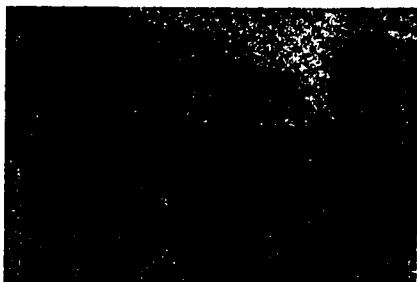
<sup>157</sup>An Editor of Harada's *The Lesson of Japanese Architecture*, published in 1936, also pointed out the same point: “...In this matter we have much to learn from the tradition Japan where nature comes first: and the architect does not set out to dominate or destroy the surroundings of the house, but to render homage to them.

Also an interesting commonality represented in American architects' way of thought concerning Japanese architecture during the 1930s is that as Tunnard did, many of them suggested that ‘do not copy Japanese architecture but learn its principle.’ For example, commenting on the organic quality of Japanese architecture, Wright wrote in 1936 that “we would well study Japanese domestic architecture, not to copy it but to learn ...” quoted in Herbert Jacobs, op. cit., p. 23.

<sup>158</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 88.

<sup>159</sup>*Ibid.*, pp. 89.

His illustration clearly represented his argument. He contrasted an exact copy of a Japanese garden to the one which adopted an aesthetic principle from the Japanese (Figure 3-44). The latter, a design for garden in Leicestershire does not borrow any stone lanterns or pagodas, but in it “water, stone, and planting are linked intelligibly to the small pavilion.”<sup>160</sup>



**Figure 3- 44. Tunnard, A Comparison between two Gardens, 1938.**

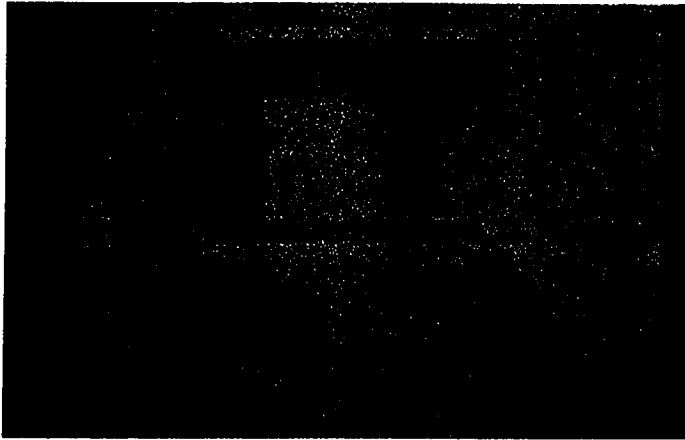
According to Tunnard, with the advent of steel frame construction, it had been possible for Western architects

to build houses in accordance with the Japanese principles. The Japanese unity between the house and garden can be in part achieved by opening the whole side of the room in the modern houses. In addition to the structural development, he proposed that we “absorb the Oriental aesthetic” which is the foundation of the

virtuosity of Japanese gardening such as “the Japanese appreciation of form and texture,” “the Japanese grasp of rhythm and accent in plant arrangements,” and “the marshaling of detail into significant and relevant patterns.”<sup>161</sup> As exemplary works, he illustrated gardens in modern Japanese houses like the garden in Antonin Raymond’s house in Tokyo, Japan, which was published in Raymond’s *Architectural Details* of 1937 and one

<sup>160</sup>Ibid., p. 93.

<sup>161</sup>Ibid., p. 93.



**Figure 3- 45. Horiguchi, Okada house garden, Tokyo, Japan, 1934.**

in the Sutemi Horiguchi's house-- probably Okada house in Tokyo, Japan (Figure 3-45).<sup>162</sup> His use of Raymond and Horiguchi's works indicates that Raymond's book was one of the important channels through which Japanese influences were transmitted into the American architecture and landscape

architecture during the 1930s.<sup>163</sup> In fact, as Professor Clausen has pointed out, Raymond's 1937 book, where he included his work designed in a Japanese style, was influential in Belluschi's early work like the Joss house.<sup>164</sup> Concerning American examples of modern landscape gardens, Tunnard did not illustrate any American gardens in his first edition of 1938, though in his 1948 edition he included Wright's Taliesin West of 1938, Thomas Church's Garden at the San Francisco World Fair of 1939 and his own garden work in the new wing of the Museum of Modern Art.<sup>165</sup>

<sup>162</sup>Tunnard did not specify the name of the house, but Horiguchi's arrangement of only few plants in the garden appeared to be the Okada house built in 1934. Horiguchi was the leading Japanese architect by 1930s who began to blend earlier European development with traditional Japanese wooden construction. He would be well-known to the West by his Japanese Pavilion built at the 1937 Paris Exhibition.

Here, as Professor Streatfield has pointed out, it is very important to note that Tunnard was the first Western scholar who praised contemporary or modern Japanese gardens as well as traditional ones (my interview with Professor Streatfield on September 18, 1999).

<sup>163</sup>Although Tunnard was Canadian, and was living in England when he wrote the book, the book was well received in USA by avant-garde designers such as Garrett Eckbo. I am grateful to Professor Streatfield for drawing my attention to this point.

<sup>164</sup>Clausen, *op. cit.*, pp. 104-5. Among others, the concrete fireplace in the Joss house living/dining room, Portland, Oregon, built in 1940-42, was adopted from Raymond's book.

<sup>165</sup>It was probably because in the mid-1930s Tunnard did not find any modern gardens that fitted to his standard. As Professor Streatfield pointed out, Church did not really design avant-garde gardens until 1937.

Besides Wright and Church, reflecting contemporary *Zeitgeist* like Tunnard's,<sup>166</sup> Neutra, Harris, John Yeon and Belluschi also incorporated Japanese principles in their gardens. Among others,<sup>167</sup> Harris's garden (Figure 3-36 & 37) in the Fellowship Park house, Los Angeles, was an excellent example in which Japanese garden principles were adopted on American soil. Its living room is completely opened to the garden and is only blocked by sliding doors as in the Japanese houses. Its zigzag stepping stones, the rhythm formed by big trees and dwarf ones like asparagus fern, and the consideration of the odor of the mint tree are reminiscent of the Japanese way of gardening.

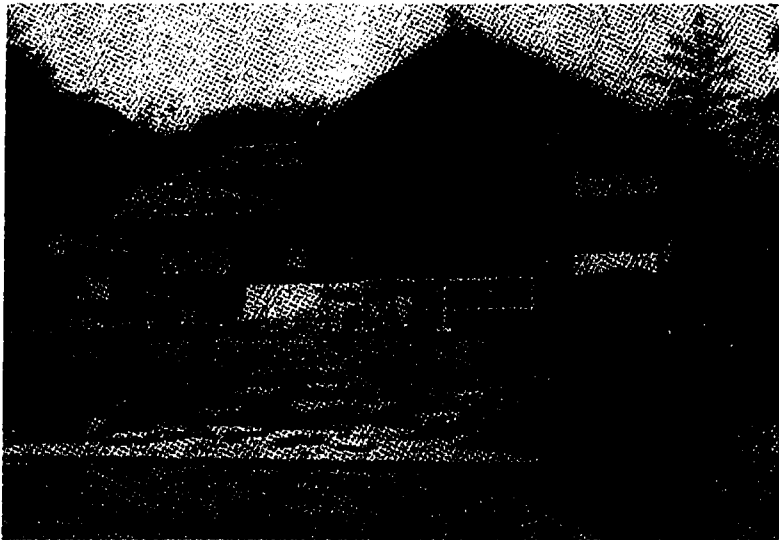


Figure 3- 46. Gardens at Katsura, near Kyoto, Japan, 17th-century.

During the 1930s, the most celebrated Japanese garden known to American architects, which represented the principles Tunnard discussed, was without a doubt the gardens at the Katsura Detached Palace in Kyoto (Figure 3-46). The gardens, which

were built in the early Edo period (1603-1867), had been known to the Westerners by

<sup>166</sup>Or, Tunnard could have reflected his contemporary view towards Japanese gardening: not coping but adopting principles. This matter of “what is first? Theory or practice?” is just like the problem of the chicken and the egg.

<sup>167</sup>For example, John Yeon's use of “the sequential unfolding of a Japanese tea garden” in his Watzek house and its garden built in Portland, Oregon in 1937 was discussed by Janet Longenecker (Janet Longenecker, *Taking Place: A Study of the Residential Architecture of John Yeon*, Master's Thesis, University of Washington, 1995, p. 34-35.

1893, but it had not been considered the best Japanese garden before the 1930s. Conder briefly mentioned Katsura, although without showing any illustration, probably for the first time as a Westerner in his 1893 *Landscape gardening in Japan*. He called it “the most famous work done by the most famous garden designer Kobori Enshiu and also as the most well-preserved garden in Japan.”<sup>168</sup> Cram did not even mention it because he dealt only with temple gardens.<sup>169</sup> Jiro Harada’s *Gardens of Japan* published in 1928, which was regarded by a contemporary reviewer as a “better than any” book on Japanese gardening,<sup>170</sup> repeated Conder’s opinion of the garden: “At the beginning of the [Edo] period the celebrated garden of the Katsura detached palace was completed by Kobori-Enshu ... This masterpiece of garden art could still be seen in an excellent state of preservation.”<sup>171</sup> Illustrating the garden, Harada included two rare photographs of Katsura garden by courtesy of the Imperial Household Agency, probably for the first time in a book written in English. Since Katsura had been cared for by the Imperial Household Agency since 1883, even by the late 1920s and early 1930s, visiting Katsura and taking pictures of it was not allowed without permission of the agency.<sup>172</sup> Then, after Taut visited there in May, 1933 and found modern qualities in its buildings and gardens,

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<sup>168</sup>Conder, p.18. He mentioned of well-preserved condition of the gardens: “This garden still remains though now much neglected, and it is said that for more than a hundred and fifty years after the death of Enshui, not a single stone had been removed.”

<sup>169</sup>Cram appeared to know Conder’s book very well. As I pointed out in the chapter III, he cited the 1893 book several times. In addition, Cram’s book included an exactly same illustration as one used in Conder’s book. Compare Conder’s plate III (Scenery of Ishiyama, Lake Biwa) with Cram’s plate XXVII (The garden of Ishi-Yama). The sight-seer at the left corner with a stick is exactly same person.

<sup>170</sup>Langdon Warner, “Japanese Gardens,” *American Magazine of Art* 29 (March 1936): 202.

<sup>171</sup>Jiro Harada, *The Gardens of Japan* (London: The Studio Limited, 1928), p. 6.

Harada’s book on Japanese garden was also published by the same publisher, The Studio in London, that would publish *the Lesson* in 1936.

<sup>172</sup>See Shunkichi Akimoto, *The Lure of Japan* Tokyo: Board of Tourist Industry, Japanese Government Railways, 1934, p. 99.

Yoshida included many photographs of the garden in his *Japanese Houses and Gardens* of 1935. A comparison of the earlier photographs with others published in Yoshida's book provides us with some clues for both Japanese and American architects' changing view in of what valuable Japanese architecture is. The earlier two illustrations published in Harada's *Gardens of Japan* show only gardens surrounding a tea pavilion, Shokin-tei, which is an independent structure built for performing the tea ceremony in *Sukiya* (tea house) style. Here in 1928, before Taut praised modern qualities of the residential buildings of Katsura built in the *Shoin* style, the illustrations had not included the residential buildings. Also in 1930, when *The Japan Magazine* published an article "Three Typical Japanese Gardens," the same illustrations were also used to illustrate the best features of Katsura garden.<sup>173</sup> However, after Taut recognized the modern qualities of the shoin buildings, photographs illustrating the gardens began not only to show the tea pavilions, such as Shokin-tei or Geppa-ro, but also the Shoin buildings. Yoshida's *Japanese House and Garden* of 1935 was the first book of such a kind. In addition to Yoshida's, *Gardens of Japan* published in 1937 by Kokusai Bunka Shinkokai also included five illustrations for the Katsura garden. Among them, one (Figure 3-46) was to describe the shoin buildings and their surrounding gardens.

Such a changing trend represented in the books on Japanese landscape architecture appeared to give a somewhat slow, yet strong impact on American architects' interest in Japanese buildings in the *shoin* style. In fact, *sukiya*-style houses, which were designed as tea-houses or garden pavilions, were quite different from American domestic houses. In

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For the general history of construction, architect, client, and etc. of Katsura, see Tadashi Ishikawa, *Imperial Villas of Kyoto: The Katsura and Shugaku-in* (Tokyo: Kodansha International Ltd., 1970).

contrast, American architects began to see Japanese residential buildings built in the *shoin* style as the one similar to the modern Western houses in principle. From their awareness of these affinities, for example between Mies' Farnsworth house and the Katsura *shoin* buildings, the so-called Katsura boom began.

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<sup>173</sup>Anonymous, "Three Typical Japanese Gardens," *The Japan Magazine* XX (February 1930): 219-221.

#### Chapter IV: The Second World War and to the Present, 1941-1999.

It is only natural to assume that the impact of the Second World War upon American architects' attitudes toward Japanese architecture was even more negative than that of the First World War, since the United States fought against Japan during the war. As a matter of fact, American architects were reluctant to deal with Japanese topics during the war. For instance, the number of publications on Japanese architecture published in the 1940s was considerably reduced compared to the number of books on Japanese architecture during the 1930s. Another noticeable example of the negative impacts of the war, which will be discussed shortly, was American reviewers' "partial," if not hostile, criticism on the books published on Japanese architecture.<sup>1</sup>

After the war, however, Americans felt remorse over the cruel effects of dropping atomic bombs. To appease their sense of guilt, American intellectuals appeared to praise Japanese culture. Also, as part of the aftermath of the merciless war, Americans began to be intrigued by Zen philosophy more than ever. Their fascination with Zen philosophy led American architects such as Mies and Gropius to be interested in traditional Japanese architecture which had been shaped partly by this philosophy. More importantly, American architects' awareness of the relevance between traditional Japanese architecture and modern Western architecture also led them to a renewed interest in Japanese architecture. On the one hand, in the late 1940s, a faction of American architects, who

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<sup>1</sup>I do not use the word "partial" in the sense that the French art critic Charles Baudelaire used it in his "Salon de 1846." He wrote that "To be just, that is to say, to justify its existence, criticism should be partial, passionate and political, that is to say, written from an exclusive point of view, but a point of view that opens up the widest horizons" (Baudelaire, *Ecrits sur L'Art I*, Paris: Gallimard [Le livre de Poche], 1971, p. 144). Unlike the good criticisms Baudelaire defined, the reviews written on the published books on Japanese architecture in the early 1940s seemed not to open up the widest horizons, as it will be discussed shortly.

were bored of sleek, light-weight, rectangular modern buildings, began to acclaim the organic qualities of Wright's architecture and to revive the then forgotten works of Greene & Greene and Maybeck as alternatives. The revival led American architects to become interested in Japanese architecture because they realized that Wright's and the Greenes' architecture had been more or less influenced by Japanese architecture. On the other hand, another faction of American architects, the proponents of International Style architecture, was also intrigued by Japanese architecture but for different reasons. Unlike the proponents of regionalist or organic architecture who were interested in the organic qualities of Japanese architecture, they were mainly interested in Japanese *shoin* style architecture partly because it had shown close relevance to their own architecture. Reflecting this interest in *shoin* houses, until approximately the 1960s, the *shoin* buildings in the Katsura Palace were regarded as the most valuable example of Japanese architecture and it produced the so-called "Katsura Boom" among both Japanese and American architects.<sup>2</sup>

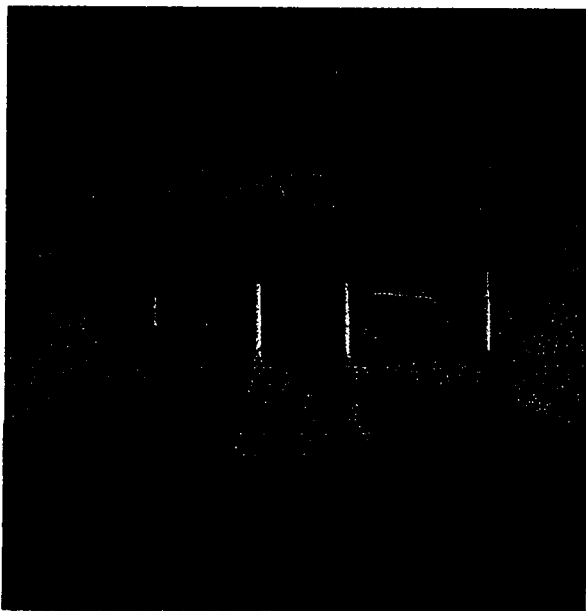
From the late 1950s and early 1960s, new attitudes toward Japanese architecture began to appear. When the Brutalist architect, Paul Rudolph visited Katsura in 1960, he expressed disappointment in the Katsura Palace since the buildings seemed to reflect a "dangerous" tendency which "wants to make [a building] prettier, prettier, prettier."<sup>3</sup> Another new attitude also began in the late 1950s. Until then, Western architects had been

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<sup>2</sup>The term, "Katsura Boom" in Japan was used in Hirotaro Ota, "On Katsura Boom," *Shinkentiku (New Architecture)* 31 (March 1956):9. According to Ota, in the early 1950s, seven books on the Imperial Palace were published in Japan. Also in America, from the mid-1950s and onwards many articles and books on Katsura were published. This will be discussed shortly.

<sup>3</sup>Editor, "The Enigma of Katsura," *Architectural Forum* (October 1960): 179. Here the editor cited Rudolph's comments on the Katsura Palace which were given to a reporter for a Japanese architectural journal *Shinken-chiku* (New Architecture).

intrigued mostly by traditional Japanese architecture, although the object of their interests had changed, for example, from Nikko to Katsura or from tea houses to shoin buildings. However, from the late 1950s onward, American architects began to be strongly interested in contemporary Japanese architecture in which Japanese architects began to incorporate modern Western features with their own architectural tradition. This strong interest in the Japanese version of modern architecture had greatly impacted Western architecture to the extent that Reyner Banham called the phenomenon “the Japonization of world architecture.”<sup>4</sup> And later with the advent of post-modern architecture in the West, American architects such as Robert Stern “reunited [not recycled] current



**Figure 4- 1. Robert Stern, the Lawson Residence, New York, 1981.**

production with the traditions,” which include, for example, the Richardsonian eyelid dormer or the Japanese *irimoya* roof incorporated in his Lawson Residence (Figure 4-1) in East Quogue, New York, completed in 1981.<sup>5</sup> Also post-modern aspects represented in contemporary Japanese architecture such as Arata Isozaki’s buildings and theories such as

Kishio Kurokawa’s “Intercultural

Architecture” began to be spotlighted in the West. Now in the 1990s, it is not unusual to

<sup>4</sup>Reyner Banham, “The Japonization of World Architecture,” in Hiroyuki Suzuki ed., *Contemporary Architecture of Japan* (New York: Rizzoli, 1985): 16-27.

find the works of contemporary Japanese architects such as Tadao Ando or Shin Takamatsu in many American architectural journals or books and to hear lectures and discussions about their work in the classrooms of major architectural schools in America.

In this chapter, I will examine such changing attitudes of American architects toward traditional Japanese architecture that occurred during the periods from 1941 to the present. I will also discuss the works of American architects and landscape architects designed and built during the periods when such changing attitudes were reflected.

### **During the Second World War**

A negative attitude of American architects towards Japanese architecture during the Second World War was well represented in the reviews of a book on Japanese architecture. One of the few books on Japanese architecture published in English during the period between 1941 and 1945 was Arthur Lindsay Sadler's *A Short History of Japanese Architecture*.<sup>6</sup> The book, which was sponsored by the Carnegie Corporation of New York, was published in 1941 in Sidney and London by Sadler, professor of oriental

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<sup>5</sup>Design & Editorial Team, *Architectural Monographs No 17, Robert A.M. Stern: Selected Works* (London: Academy Editions/St. Martin's Press, 1991). For the examples of the Richardsonian eyelid dormer, see pp. 37 & 64 among others, and for the illustration of the Japanese type roof, see p. 20.

<sup>6</sup>The small number of books published in English included Sadler, *A Short History of Japanese Architecture* (Sydney and London: Angus and Robertson, 1941); Alexander Soper, *The Evolution of Buddhist Architecture in Japan* (New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1942); and one in Japanese, M. Sekino's *Nihon Jutaku Shoshi* (Brief history of Japanese residential architecture), Tokyo, 1942. Like Sadler's, Soper's book was also reviewed only in two journals, much less than previous publications like Harada's *The Lesson*. The reviews of Soper's book appeared in 1944. The reviewers of Soper's book appeared to read the book only with an academic point of view, not a politically-loaded viewpoint. While the reviewers of the Sadler's book considered Japanese architecture as "an unworthy subject," it is somewhat obscure why Soper's reviewers did not comment on the same subject negatively. It could be partly derived from the facts that in 1944 Japan was almost defeated in the war, and the facts that while Sadler was a foreign scholar, Soper was a renowned American professor.

While Sadler's book was sponsored by Carnegie Foundation and a result of his ten years' residency in Japan, Soper's book was sponsored by the American Council of Learned Societies and the general Education Board of the Rockefeller Foundation, and was a result of his stay of two and a half years in Japan

studies at the University of Sidney. Although it was published in London and Sydney, it was reviewed in at least two American architectural journals immediately after its publication.<sup>7</sup> Interestingly enough, one reviewer was openly hostile to it. The reviewer's displeasure appeared to be derived from his biased attitude that Japanese architecture is "an unworthy subject" to write about, since it is a "poor imitation" of Chinese architecture. Mark Daniels wrote in his review of Sadler's book that:

Professor Sadler's book on "Japanese Architecture" is tiresome indeed ... Of course it is difficult for a Chinofile [sic] to review a book on any phase of Japanese interest, particularly *at this time* ... He tells us that in China the great Tang dynasty in the 7th and 8th centuries influenced the world from the "yellow sea to Persia," and goes on to say "Japan, as might be expected of her, threw herself wholeheartedly into adapting this brilliant civilization." Then why not put a little more time on the original? ... Such great and powerful works as those of Siren's "History of Chinese Art, ..., might have been models to pattern after, ..., but I suppose it is impossible to wax eloquent over *an unworthy subject*... All in all, I would not spend time reading a book on clumsy, wooden imitations of a great art that has lived a thousand or more years longer than its imitators. So, why spend effort or time on a poor imitation of a great civilization except out of curiosity? (my emphasis)<sup>8</sup>

Apparently, Daniels' criticism reflected the attitude of some scholars of Chinese architecture, who tended to regard Japanese architecture as merely a clumsy copy of Chinese architecture, because it was also noted in another review of Sadler's *A Short History* written by Elizabeth Coit few months later. Coit attributed such a ruthless

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between 1935-38. Of special interest is that while he was in Japan, the Society for International Cultural Relations helped Soper as the Society did for Taut earlier, which I discussed in the chapter IV.

<sup>7</sup>It was reviewed in *Architectural Record* 91 (June 1942); and *Western Architect and Engineer* 148 (March 1942). Considering Peter Quennell's comments on the book, however, it appeared that there were more reviews published and that the book was a subject of hot discussion when it was published. For Quennell's comments, see my following citation of it and note. 8.

<sup>8</sup>Mark Daniels, "A Short History of Japanese Architecture," *Western Architect and Engineer* 148 (March 1942): 53.

criticism as Daniels' to "possible differences of opinion on the part of orientalists."<sup>9</sup> It was, however, not the only reason for the unfavorable critique.

Another reviewer, Peter Quennell implied that the harsh response by American critics to Sadler's book during the wartime stemmed partly from non-architectural issues. In his 1942 article, "The Architectural Tradition of Japan," Quennell defended Sadler's book for its scholastic merits and lamented the "tragic" timing of its publication:

Professor Sadler's history ... is the work of a scholar and of an enthusiast. But his book is more than a chronicle. He throws some interesting sidelights on the Japanese character as that character has been evolved during long periods of self-sufficient isolation, interrupted by short lively spells of acquisition and assimilation which have stimulated the Japanese mind yet, at bottom, left it fundamentally unchanged. *That his monograph should appear at the present time [in a war time] is strange and tragic.* But the ferocious chauvinism of Japan's military leaders need not blind us to the more sympathetic and humane aspects of the national tradition upon which they have been reared (my italics).<sup>10</sup>

Quennell's comment clearly revealed the existence of some politically biased reviewers of Sadler's book during the wartime. It is thus safe to conclude that, first of all, the unfavorable nature of Sadler's reviewers derived partly from the different opinions about the values of Japanese architecture on the part of different orientalists. Second, it came partly from the chauvinist views against Japan and its architecture (note Daniels' comment of "particularly at this time"). In other words, American architects' preference for Chinese architecture and their hostility toward Japanese architecture during the war can be partly explained by the fact that during the war Japan was the common enemy for both China and America.

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<sup>9</sup>Elisabeth Coit, "A Review of A Short History of Japanese Architecture," *Architectural Record* 91 (June 1942): 80.

<sup>10</sup>Peter Quennell, "The Architectural Tradition of Japan," *Architectural Review* 92 (October 1942): 80.

Also noteworthy are the differences between Daniels' and Quennell's views on the "evolution" of Japanese architecture. While for Daniels, Japanese architecture was simply "a poor imitation" of Chinese architecture, for Quennell, Japanese architecture "has been evolved during long periods of self-sufficient isolation, interrupted by short lively spells of acquisition [from] and assimilation [with foreign architecture such as Chinese or Korean] which have stimulated the Japanese mind yet, at bottom, left it fundamentally unchanged."<sup>11</sup> Before the end of the war, Daniels' view could have prevailed. After the war, however, Quennell's more positive views won favor and have prevailed to the present. In 1985, for example, as Arata Isozaki used the musical term *Basso Ostinato* metaphorically to describe the Japanese architectural tradition, so Botond Bogнар wrote in his *Contemporary Japanese Architecture: Its Development and Challenge* that "although the Japanese initially adopted foreign social, cultural, and political systems exactly as they were, be they Chinese or Western, as time went on they modified these systems to incorporate their own Japanese traditions."<sup>12</sup>

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<sup>11</sup>Quennell, op. cit. As discussed in chapter IV, Harada wrote his history of Japanese architecture as a process of nationalization of foreign influences.

<sup>12</sup>Botond Bogнар, *Contemporary Japanese Architecture: Its Development and Challenge* (New York: Van Nostrand Reinhold, 1985), p. 9. The Japanese character was noted as early as in 1890 by Chamberlain and many others repeated the same views. Chamberlain wrote in his *Things Japanese* that "Foreigners have often stood in amaze at Japan's ability to swallow so many new ideas and institutions whole. They have dubbed her superficial, and questioned the permanence of her conversion to European methods. This is because they fail two things,--the innate strength of the Japanese character, and the continuous process of schooling which has enabled this particular race to face the new light without being blinded...The superficiality attributed to her assimilation of imported civilizations exists only in the superficial knowledge of the would-be critics." [Basil Hall Chamberlain, *Japanese Things being Notes on Various Subjects connected with Japan for the use of travelers and others* (London: John Murray, 1905), pp. 154-55, first published in 1890]. Reyner Banham also commented in his "The Japonization of World Architecture," in Hiroyuki Suzuki ed., *Contemporary Architecture of Japan 1958-1984* (New York: Rizzoli, 1985), p. 25, that "the triumph of modern Japanese architecture could be seen as ability to accept so much from abroad without, finally, becoming colonially dependent on it."

Gropius went even further to comment on Japanese indigenous features: "Most Westerners believe that Japanese architecture is only a branch of the Chinese. That seems to be unfounded. Particularly the Japanese residential house and tea house show strong independent characteristics: no symmetry, emphasis

Returning to the impact of the war, such hostility against Japan and her culture prevailed during the conflict. However, America's victory in the war brought some unexpected results to Americans' way of dealing with Japanese and Japanese culture. After the war, many Americans appeared to feel a sense of guilt about their use of atomic bombs against an almost-defenseless enemy.<sup>13</sup> For example, if one skims popular magazines like *Time* published sometime after the victory over Japan, it is not so difficult to find articles dealing with the miserable state of the people at Hiroshima which could inflict on readers such a sense of guilt. An article from *Time Magazine* reads that:

Last week, a twelve-year-old Hiroshima school boy with a ragged scar over his left eye peered at a *Time* correspondent through glasses he has worn ever since the bombing. Said Hiroshima's child: "You American? American soldier good. Americans number one." His mother and sister, he said, had been killed by the bomb.<sup>14</sup>

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on human scale by breaking axis and changing their direction, surprise effects, openness and flexibility of plan" in "Architecture in Japan," *Perspecta* 3 (1954): 14.

Japanese architects also commented on the same subject. Kenzo Tange noticed "a dialectic synthesis between the tradition and the modern" in the development of Japanese architecture. See Tange, "Creation in Present-day Architecture and the Japanese Architectural Tradition," *Japan Architect* (June 1956):25-33. And Isozaki was cited as mentioning the same view, "*Basso Ostinato*" which means that in a musical piece, the thematic note continues all though the piece (p. 11 in Bognar, op. cit.).

<sup>13</sup>There have been two different opinions concerning the legitimacy of using the bombs in 1945: one is that in 1945 Japan was already defenseless; the others argues that without using them, the war would have caused many more American casualties. For a discussion of this topic, see Saburo Ienaga, *The Pacific War, 1931-1945: A Critical Perspective on Japan's Role in World War II* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1978), pp. 200-202.

<sup>14</sup>"Japan: This was the enemy," *Time Magazine*, July 15, 1946., p.38. Another possible factor, which helped American intellectuals develop such a bad feeling about Hiroshima, was perhaps to hear or watch the art and literary works on the misery of Hiroshima which flourished in Japan after the war. Among them, most prominent was *The Hiroshima Panels (murals)* that Iri and Toshi Maruki painted vividly the destruction and the sufferings caused by the atomic holocaust. The first five panels were completed in 1951 and shown in 350 places in Japan and drew nine million foreign as well as Japanese visitors. Its third panel, among many others, accompanied by the author's following poem titled *Water*, is revealing:

Heaps of corpses lay one upon another! / ...

Please water! Water please! / Wandering and escaping from the hellfire/ people cried for water/  
to drink at their last moment.

A seriously wounded mother/ with a babe in her arms/ escaped the inferno under a flame./ ...

She ran and ran/ to finally reach the point/ where she gave her breast to the babe/ and found it dead

...

The boy, who was obviously mad at or frightened by American soldiers, was reported to say that “American soldier good.” Needless to say, the paradoxical attitude of the boy could be caused by the fear of American soldiers and the bombing. Some humanistic Americans suffered from a sense of guilt caused by such residual products of the ruthless war. Interestingly, some Americans seemed to feel, consciously or unconsciously, that this sense of guilt could be relieved by complementing Japanese culture. It was so felt in the realm of architecture. During the years between 1949-56, the Japanese architect Kenzo Tange designed and built the Peace Museum at Hiroshima. Without doubt, this was a work of dignity and confidence, but some Western critics approached the museum with some reservation. Robin Boyd wrote in his monograph on Tange’s work, which was the first work on Tange in English, that “Appreciation of the dignity and confidence of [the Peace Museum are] *allied perhaps to a guilt complex that was readily stirred by the name Hiroshima*, elevated this building to world prominence and its architect, Kenzo Tange, to recognition as a full member in the company of great contemporary architects (my emphasis).”<sup>15</sup> Then, Boyd was joined by the American architect Wolf von Eckerhardt in his reservation. Questioning why Tange was selected as one of the major five contemporary architects world-wide (including B. Fuller, P. Johnson, L. Kahn, E. Saarinen) in the Braziller series of 1962, Eckerhardt wrote that

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This poem and illustration reminds me of Picasso’s *Guernica* where a mother, which is located at the left corner, is also holding a baby who is dead from the bombing.

<sup>15</sup>Robin Boyd, *Kenzo Tange* (New York: George Braziller, 1962), p.9.

There has been a tendency in recent years to blindly idolize everything Japanese, in part because of its cute Mikado-quaintness and in part because *we feel badly about Hiroshima*. *Tange's reputation has, of course, gained considerably by this tendency* (my emphasis).<sup>16</sup>

Partly due to such a sense of guilt on the part of American architects, Japanese architecture began to lose the disfavor which it had experienced during the war, and then regained its attraction for American architects. However, a more important and practical impetus of the new popularity was mainly due to the relevance of Japanese architecture to Western modern architecture. The awareness of the relevance, which I will discuss shortly, naturally led American architects to be more interested in Japanese architecture. As a result, more books and articles on Japanese architecture were published.

### **Books**

The number of books and articles on Japanese architecture published by Westerners during the period between the mid-1950s and 1960s amounted to as many as the total number of publications published before that time in the West. So, in 1957, pointing out the flourishing publications of Japanese architecture in the late 1950s, Henry-Russell Hitchcock wrote that "It never rains but it pours. No book on Japanese architecture has appeared in English, I believe, for nearly twenty years; now three [Shinji Koike's *Contemporary Architecture of Japan* (1954), Tetsuro Yoshida's *The Japanese House and Garden* (1955), Arthur Drexler's *The Architecture of Japan* (1955)] are available..."<sup>17</sup> Although Hitchcock's claim was overstated here, his observation expressed clearly the main point we are discussing here. In addition to the three books Hitchcock mentioned,

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<sup>16</sup>Wolf Von Eckerhardt, "Makers of Contemporary Architecture," *AIA Journal* (November 1962), pp. 49-51.

<sup>17</sup>Henry-Russel Hitchcock, "Strange, Potent, Inimitable," *Architectural Review*, 121 (February 1957), 135-36.

many other books were newly published and a number of revised or reprinted versions of the out-of-print books were also distributed. Beginning with the reprinted edition of Harada's *The Lessons of Japanese Architecture* (1954), then soon followed new books such as A. Soper's *The Art and Architecture of Japan* (1955), Norman Carver's *Form and Space of Japanese Architecture* (1955) and *Architectural Beauty in Japan* published by Kokusai Bunka Shinkokai (1956). In the 1960s, Kenzo Tange published two books, *Katsura* (1960) and *Ise* (1965) with Gropius. In 1963 William Alex's *Japanese Architecture* appeared plus scores of others.

### **Japanese Architecture and Modern Architecture in America**

The sudden increase of publications resulted mostly from American architects' awareness of a relevance of traditional Japanese architecture to their own modern architecture. However, the surging interests in Japanese architecture resulted ironically from unconnected, independent efforts by two contradistinctive factions of American architects: those who believed in the organic, regional architecture and others who supported the International style formulae. Louis Mumford, one of the major proponents of the former group of architects, was aware of the relevance. Criticizing the mechanical functionalism of the International style in the 1947 article "The Sky Line," Mumford applauded "human functions" represented in the work of Maybeck or Wurster which is a product of the meeting of Oriental and Occidental architecture.

People like Bernard Maybeck and William Wilson Wurster, in California, always practiced it [human functions]...of that native and humane form of modernism which one might call the Bay Region Style, a free yet unobtrusive expression of the terrain, the climate, and the way of life on the Coast...The style is actually a product of the meeting of

Oriental [Japanese] and Occidental architectural traditions, and it is far more truly a universal style than the so-called international style of the nineteen-thirties, since it permits regional adaptations and modifications<sup>18</sup>

Mumford criticized the International Style architects because “the rigorists placed the mechanical functions of a building above its human functions,” and supported the Bay Region style as an alternative.<sup>19</sup> Mumford’s article reflected American architects’ interests in “regional adaptations and modifications” in architecture, and stimulated their interests in the Japanese architecture incorporated in the Bay Region Style. His article also started much research and writing on the work of the previous generations in the Bay Area such as the Greene Brothers, Mullgardt, or Maybeck as well as the contemporary work of the West Coast architects like Wurster, or Gardiner Dailey. Such a renaissance of the Bay Region architecture led the A.I.A. to recognize the achievement of the founders of the style. Maybeck received the A.I.A Gold Medal in 1951, and the Greene Brothers were presented in 1952 with an A.I.A. citation. In the citation, the A.I.A. pointed out the characteristics and the extent of the renaissance. The Greenes were called “formulators of a new and native architecture” and recognized as the ones whose “gifts have now multiplied and spread to all parts of the nation, and are recognized throughout the world, influencing and improving the design of small as well as great houses.”<sup>20</sup>

Mumford’s statement, “the [Bay Region] style is actually a product of the meeting of Oriental and Occidental architectural tradition,” was pivotal in that it confirmed the role Japanese architecture played in the Bay Region architecture. During the late 1940s and

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<sup>18</sup>Mumford, “The Sky Line: Status Quo,” *New Yorker* (October 11 1947): 110.

<sup>19</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 109.

<sup>20</sup>Randell Makinson, “Greene and Greene” in Esther McCoy, *Five California Architects* (New York: Reinhold Publishing Corporation, 1960), p. 146.

1950s, there were many articles, books and exhibitions regarding the Bay Region Style and most of them dealt more or less with the Japanese features represented in the West Coast architecture.<sup>21</sup> As a result, American architects came to be aware of “a close parallel” between their view on architectural design and the Japanese one. In 1949, for example, the Museum of Modern Art in San Francisco staged an exhibition entitled “Domestic Architecture of the San Francisco Bay Region.” The catalogue of the exhibition, along with Mumford’s essay, included another article, “The Japanese

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<sup>21</sup>Jean Murray Bangs’s article “Greene and Greene” followed right after Mumford’s. Bangs was the wife of Harwell Hamilton Harris whose architecture also showed Japanese characteristics (see ch. 4). She considered Mumford’s omission of the Greenes’ name unfair: “If Mumford was in search of a regional style, he missed it by about hundred miles. Such a style can only be credited to Greene & Greene,” see Bangs, “Greene and Greene,” *Architectural Forum* (October 1948): 82.

In the article, Bangs confirmed strong Japanese influences in the Greenes’ work, but she did not “pick out the oriental details in the work of Greene and Greene”: “Greene and Greene felt another influence which was strong on the West Coast at that time [1900-1910]. This was the influence of oriental art. Almost as soon as Japan was opened in the early fifties, an appreciation of its art began into the western world. Edward Morse and Ernest Fellonosa [sic], in the seventies ... By the early part of the twentieth century this was so widespread that it had entered the art departments of the public schools through Ernest Dow, who had spent years of study in Japan. Greene & Greene ran head on into this influence on the Pacific coast. One had only to walk down the street to feel it. There were beautiful Japanese tea gardens in Pasadena and in San Francisco. ... Morse and others wrote books on the methods of construction in Japan... The brothers fell under the spell of this [Japanese] art. Their work shows a strong oriental influence ... they made sum total of influences they received, something new in the world, something their own. It is one of the pleasures of erudition to pick out the oriental details in the work of Greene and Greene. Unfortunately, like so much erudition, it leads nowhere.”

Bangs’ article was followed by an exhibition held in San Francisco Museum of Modern Art in 1949, “Domestic Architecture of the San Francisco Bay Region.” In the exhibition catalogue, Clarence Mayhew wrote about Japanese influences in Bay Area architecture.

One of the major writers who contributed to the resurgence of the previous generation such as Wright, the Greenes or Maybeck and the Japanese elements in their architecture was Clay Lancaster. He published “Japanese Buildings in the United States before 1900: Their Influence upon American Domestic Architecture,” *Art Bulletin* 35 (Fall 1953); “My Interviews with Greene and Greene,” *A.I.A. Journal* (July 1957); “Some Sources of Greene and Greene,” *A.I.A. Journal* (August 1960); and *Japanese Influences in America* of 1963.

Others included Esther McCoy, *Five California Architects: Maybeck, Gill, Greene and Greene Schindler* (New York: Reinhold Publishing Corporation, 1960); Robert Judson Clark, *Louis Christian Mullgardt: 1866-1942* (San Francisco: University of California-Santa Barbara, 1966), Exhibition catalogue of “An Exhibition marking the Centennial Year of the Architect’s Birth” held at the Art Gallery, UC-Santa Barbara and The M.H. de Young Memorial Museum, San Francisco in 1966.

Influence [in the Bay Region].”<sup>22</sup> In it, Clarence Mayhew explained the “close parallel” by the fact that “the problems of topography and the climatic conditions of both California and Japan are very much the same, thus it seems quite logical that there should be similar architectural conclusions and a borrowings of ideas of design and materials.”<sup>23</sup> Then, he listed the features of the Bay area houses which were influenced by Japanese ones: the use of natural wood, the post and lintel form, standardization and modular construction inspired by Japanese use of tatami mats, low and hipped roofs with very wide overhangs, sliding doors and large window walls transformed from Japanese paper-covered sliding screens, built-in furniture and garden elements such as the shelter, fences, or the small pavilions. Japanese influences in the Bay area architecture were mostly accepted, and it stimulated American architects to be again interested in Japanese architecture.<sup>24</sup>

Independent of the regionalists’ interest in Japanese architecture, another important faction of American architects who sustained the International architectural formulae, were also aware of the relevance of traditional Japanese architecture to their own modern

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<sup>22</sup>The articles included were Mumford, “The Architecture of the Bay Region”; Elizabeth Kendall Thompson, “Backgrounds and Beginnings”; Wurster, “A Personal View”; Gardiner Dailey, “The Post-War House”; and Francis Joseph McCarthy, “The Contribution of the Client.”

<sup>23</sup>Clarence Mayhew, “The Japanese Influence,” in *Domestic Architecture of the San Francisco Bay Region* (San Francisco: San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, 1949).

<sup>24</sup>See Gardiner Dailey’s article in “Is there a Bay Area Style,” *Architectural Record* 105 (May 1949): 95.

There were also a few architects who denied Japanese influence on the Bay Area architecture. It is interesting, however, to compare Mayhew’s article with another one written by another California architect, Henry Hill. Hill’s statement was quoted in “Japanese Architecture and the West,” *Architectural Forum* (January 1953). It reads that “Many times the influence of Japanese architecture on the West Coast is mentioned—I cannot accept this. If there is a similarity of result, it is only because of a possible similarity of conditions.” Considering the fact that Hill was so interested in Chinese objects such as scrolls, bronze Buddha’s, or urns that he decorated and filled his house with them [see “Western House with a Far Eastern Flavor,” *House and Home* (June 1953)], his negation of Japanese influence in American architecture reminds me of Daniels’ review of Sadler’s book in which he degraded Japanese architecture as a clumsy copy of Chinese architecture (see chapter IV, p. 180).

architecture. For the International style architects, it was not the first time to be aware of the relevance. As I discussed in chapter III, modern architects of the 1930s such as Taut found a confirmation of their own architecture in traditional Japanese architecture and the awareness of affinities between the two was the main factor for the then flourishing publications of books on Japanese architecture.<sup>25</sup> Through reading those books on Japanese architecture, American architects could have found in Japanese architecture useful ways of solving impending problems of Western architecture such as “standardization, connection with nature, ... [and] usefulness to purpose.”<sup>26</sup>

However, the war interrupted American architects’ further lessons from Japanese architecture. Then, Western architects of the post-war era renewed their claims of the relevance between traditional Japanese and modern Western architecture to find the clues they needed. Such efforts were widely felt in the United States sometime after the war, especially when Arthur Drexler exhibited a Japanese house at the Museum of Modern Art in New York in 1954-55 and published *The Architecture of Japan* in 1955.<sup>27</sup> This attitude towards Japanese architecture in the 1950s, a re-activation or an expansion of pre-war awareness of the relevance, was in the same line as the one represented in Sigfried

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<sup>25</sup>See chapter III.

<sup>26</sup>The editor of *the Lesson of Japanese Architecture* listed the lessons in 1936: “standardization, variety in unity, conformity to a mode of living, connection with nature, simplicity and of course, usefulness to purpose,” in Harada, op. cit., p. 9.

<sup>27</sup>A similar view was proposed by Clausen and Warren Sanderson. Clausen declared that “the real wave of Japanese influence in the United States did not occur nationally until after the war when Arthur Drexler staged an exhibition of it in 1955 at MoMA in New York,” in Clausen, op. cit., p. 100. Sanderson also wrote that “It was only after the Second World War that the Japanese aesthetic, translated in part into the technological and urbanistic terms understood in Europe and America, had its effects in the West” in Sanderson, *International Handbook of Contemporary Developments in Architecture* (Westport and London: Greenwood Press, 1981), p. 6. However, Sanderson’s statement can be rephrased to be justified: Although the Japanese aesthetic had its effect in Western architecture for a long time, it was only after W.W.II that it had more fundamental effects.

Giedion's statement of 1955 concerning the general tendency of Western architecture, which was to "expand" the accomplishments of the preceding generation:

In the 1920s one was forced to do away with nineteenth-century tendencies, when one had to begin again from scratch. Today the situation is different. We stand at the beginning of a new tradition. One need no longer destroy what the preceding generation accomplished, but one has to expand it...<sup>28</sup>

Concerning the manner of how to "expand it," Giedion seemed to suggest "a cross between Western and Eastern [architectures]." In 1954, he wrote that "the rationalist and exclusively materialist attitude, upon which the latest phase of Western civilization has been grounded, is insufficient. Full realization of this fact can lead us slowly towards a new hybrid development--a cross between Western and Eastern [Japanese architecture]."<sup>29</sup>

It was by the MoMA Japanese house exhibition of 1954-55 that the relevance of Japanese architecture to Western architecture was highlighted. During the 1930s, Taut acclaimed "modern qualities" of Katsura and criticized the "degeneration of construction into decoration" represented in Nikko.<sup>30</sup> Then in the 1950s, Drexler expanded Taut's theory in his *Architecture of Japan* which was published concurrently with staging of the MoMA exhibition. As he clearly pointed out in his preface, for detailed presentations adopted in the book, Drexler selected Japanese buildings, such as Katsura, mainly having

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Drexler visited Japan in 1953 in quest for knowledge of Japanese architecture. His journey resulted in this book and in the exhibition house.

<sup>28</sup>Siegfried Giedion, *Architecture You and Me*, (Cambridge, Mass., 1958), quoted in William Curtis, *Modern Architecture since 1900* (New York: Prentice Hall, 1987), p. 258.

<sup>29</sup>Giedion, "The State of Contemporary Architecture: I. the Regional Approach," *Architectural Record* 115 (January 1954): 135. In the article, he did not specify that "Eastern" means solely "Japanese." But, in the context the passages appeared, the "Eastern" appeared to represent mainly "Japanese", partly because he was writing his "Forward" for a Japanese edition of *Space, Time and Architecture*.

<sup>30</sup>See Taut, *The Fundamentals of Japanese Architecture* (Tokyo: Kokusai Bunka Shinkokai, 1936), p. 25.

“relevance to contemporary Western architecture.”<sup>31</sup> In contrast, he included others such as Japanese farm houses, castles, temples like Nikko and folk architecture only incidentally because of the reasons which will be discussed shortly. In the same context, for the MoMA exhibition house, he also picked a specific Japanese building type, the *Shoin* style house. The *Shoin* style house, which had been spotlighted by Western architects since the 1930s, was not only “considered by [post-war American] architects to be of continuing relevance to [their] own building activities,” but also regarded as a residential complex having “a more disciplined esthetic and a wider technical range than is found in tea houses or farm buildings, however beautiful they may be.”<sup>32</sup> For Drexler, the characteristics, which give the *Shoin* style house unique relevance to modern Western architecture, were its “post and lintel skeleton frame construction; flexibility of plan; close relation of indoor and outdoor areas; and the decorative use of structural elements.”<sup>33</sup>

Drexler’s deliberate inclusion of the *shoin* buildings and exclusion of others raises a question. What then was the main aim of the MoMA Japanese house exhibition? Was there any hidden agenda, for example, like one in the 1935 London exhibition of Chinese works of art, which are now in the National Palace Museum at Taipei, the exhibition that was designed to gain public sympathy in the West for China just before Japanese invasion?<sup>34</sup> By examining the contemporary American architectural scene, individuals involved in the exhibition such as Arthur Drexler or Philip Johnson, and financial

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<sup>31</sup>Drexler, *The Architecture of Japan* (New York: MoMA, 1955), p.6.

<sup>32</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 262.

<sup>33</sup>*Ibidem.*

supporters like the Rockefeller Foundation, one can find two possible hidden agendas: a politically-loaded one and an architecturally-relevant one.

First of all, as Drexler acknowledged in his preface of *The Architecture of Japan*, the contribution of Mr. and Mrs. John Rockefeller Third was a great factor in making “possible the size and scope of both the book and the exhibition.”<sup>35</sup> John Rockefeller 3rd’s strong interest in Japanese art began immediately after World War II when he worked in Japan as “a part of the United States Government’s study of ways and means to rebuild a democratic Japan” and became acquainted “with at least one major collector of Chinese and Korean ceramics.”<sup>36</sup> This acquaintance led him to be interested in Asian arts and furthermore to found the Asia Society in 1956. He also sponsored many exhibitions of Asian art like the MoMA exhibition because he hoped that “systematic exhibitions of these treasures might inspire a new respect for Asian thought; and that they might stimulate further, deeper study of Asian ways, both past and present.”<sup>37</sup>

With such background coupled with the fact that the Rockefellers were the trustees of MoMA, their contribution to the MoMA exhibition seemed to be natural. If one of the agendas of the exhibition was to “inspire a new respect for” Japanese architecture, one of the Rockefellers was the first to be persuaded by this agenda, because following the

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<sup>34</sup>The 1961-62 exhibition of similar works was also designed for a similar purpose--to get public sympathy in the West for Taiwan during the Taiwan Straits crisis.

<sup>35</sup>Drexler, op. cit., p. 7.

<sup>36</sup>Sherman E. Lee, “The Mr. and Mrs. John D. Rockefeller 3rd Collection: A Personal Recollection,” in Denice P. Leidy, *Treasures of Asian Art: The Asia Society’s Mr. and Mrs. John Rockefeller 3rd Collection* (New York: Abbeville Press Publishers, 1994), p. 15.

<sup>37</sup>John D. Rockefeller, “A Statement by John D. Rockefeller 3rd,” in *Masterpieces of Asian Art in American Collections II* (New York: The Asia Society, Inc.), p. 7.

exhibition, Nelson Rockefeller commissioned Junzo Yoshimura, the architect of the Japanese exhibition house, to build Japanese pavilions and gardens on his estate.<sup>38</sup>

The Rockefellers' contribution to the exhibition, however, was intended to do more than "inspire a new respect." Considering the fact that the Rockefellers' money was also used on at least one more occasion to improve the U.S.-Japan relationship after the war, the Rockefellers possibly intended a politically-loaded agenda. Before the World War II, the Rockefeller Foundation supported the research and publication of Soper's book, *The Evolution of Buddhist Architecture in Japan* in the late 1930s.<sup>39</sup> In 1954 when the exhibition began in New York, Gropius, who was the former chairman of the Department of Architecture at Harvard, visited Japan. The trip was also sponsored by the International House of Japan, based on a Rockefeller Foundation grant.<sup>40</sup> Gropius was the first visitor "under the Rockefeller Foundation's program to further cultural exchange between East and West."<sup>41</sup> The main aim of his trip was noted in Peter Blake's memo sent to Douglas Haskell in 1954. It reads that "Gropius' visit to Japan was a very major contribution to better US-Japan relations."<sup>42</sup> Gropius himself stated the agenda as the one for the "improvement of human relationship" through "a spiritual cross-fertilization of East and West."<sup>43</sup> However, some nationalist Japanese considered his visit to Japan as one charged with political intentions. An article published in *Kokusai Kenchiku* (International Architecture) wrote of "two hidden intentions for the visit of Mr. Gropius":

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<sup>38</sup>This will be discussed shortly when I deal with the work in the second part of this chapter.

<sup>39</sup>Soper, op. cit., preface. Soper's book was sponsored by the American Council of Learned Societies and the general Education Board of the Rockefeller Foundation.

<sup>40</sup>Anonymous, "Gropius and Japan," *Architectural Record* (September 1954): 16.

<sup>41</sup>Reginald Isaacs, *Walter Gropius: An Illustrated Biography* (Boston, Toronto, London: A Bulfinch Press Book, 1983), p. 274.

<sup>42</sup>I am grateful to Professor Meredith Clausen for drawing my attention to this memo.

One was to propagandize American culture, and the second was to relegate Japanese culture to history. The first was to demonstrate that the American culture is so superior to the Japanese that Japanese can not catch up easily; and the second was by parading the traditional low level of culture to curb or restrict the rapid development of mechanical industrialization and preserve the Japanese system of handicraft so American control through *colonialism* might last longer.<sup>44</sup> (my Italics)

Nationalist biases appeared to color this negative view, considering Gropius' writings he published after the trip. His "Architecture in Japan" published in *Perspecta* right after the trip is full of eulogy of Japanese traditional architecture. In his conclusion to the article, for example, he summarized the lessons he learned from Japanese architecture. He wrote that "I am convinced that invaluable benefits await a contemporary student of art and architecture from a visit to Japan. Here he will find sublime, mature solutions of the intricate problems of space and of human scale--the very media for the art of architectural creation."<sup>45</sup> According to an article published in *Shinkenchiku* (New Architecture) in 1958, this encouragement of Gropius appeared to lead the A.I.A. to send a group of architects to Japan more than three times during the late 1950s.<sup>46</sup>

Although Gropius' visit to Japan seemed not as imperialistic (note the use of the term "colonialism" above) as the chauvinistic Japanese thought, there seemed to be a possible agenda which was politically charged. After World War II, the Carnegie, Ford, and Rockefeller Foundations cooperated with and supported International propaganda

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<sup>43</sup>"Gropius and Japan," *Architectural Record* (September 1954): 16.

<sup>44</sup>Masataka Ogawa, "Gropius and Japanese culture," *Kokusai Kenchiku* (1956). Quoted in Isaac, op. cit., p. 275.

<sup>45</sup>Gropius, "Architecture in Japan," *Perspecta* 3 (1954):80.

<sup>46</sup>"News and Comment: Visiting Architects," *Shinkenchiku* (later changed into *Japan Architect*) 33 (August 1958). The article reads that "What is known in Japan as the "Japan boom" appears to continue unabated in the United States. Recently fellows of the American Institute of Architects have put out a pamphlet entitled "Japan in the Fall" and begun soliciting participants for a third group trip to this country.

organizations like Congress for Cultural Freedom which was founded to support the anti-Communist and pro-capitalist forces in Europe, Africa and Asia. In 1957, for example, a conference, which was funded by the Ford Foundation and administered by the Congress for Cultural Freedom, was held in Tokyo. In recommending support for the grant application, a Ford official suggested that:

the seminar in Tokyo will help to strengthen the democratic approach to economic growth and to have these by-products: (1) *It will be widely publicized in Tokyo and have considerable importance in Japanese academic life where the need is large for anti-Marxist thinking*; and (2) it will contribute ... to the strengthening of communication between Western and Eastern scholars (my italics).<sup>47</sup>

While the main goal of the conference was obviously to discuss economic development in the Third-World, a hidden goal was to support the anti-Marxist movement in Japan which was then so popular in Japan. In other words, it represented the U.S.A.'s fear of the spread of communism after the advent of "Red China." Interestingly, such an anti-Marxist attitude was also shown in Gropius' article published after his visit to Japan. Commenting on the superior characteristics of Zen and its architecture, he contrasted Zen to the "cruel" Marxism: "Certainly Zen, in its old form, with its old social associations, has become unsatisfactory for the present generation [of Japan], but, stripped of its encrustation and rejuvenated, it seems to me to contain more vital germs of life than cruel, steam-rolling Marxism."<sup>48</sup> Returning to the question of the politically-loaded aims of the 1954 MoMA Japanese architecture exhibition, like Gropius' visit to Japan, the exhibition could be a

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The travelers, led by Kenneth M. Nishimoto, are scheduled to arrive at Haneda by air on October 11 and tour buildings and gardens of Tokyo, Nagoya, Nara, and Kyoto before leaving on October 31..."

<sup>47</sup>Quoted in Edward H. Berman, *The Influence of the Carnegie, Ford, Rockefeller Foundations on American Foreign Policy: The Ideology of Philanthropy* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1983), p. 145.

part of many efforts by which the Rockefeller Foundation tried to improve US-Japan relations after World War Two.

Secondly, the exhibition may have had an agenda which reflected contemporary politics in architectural society. The *shoin* style Japanese houses such as the MoMA exhibition house or the ones in Katsura, which were highlighted in the exhibition, appeared to be “only picked up as a hypothetical support to solve the deadlock in which modern [International style] architecture had found itself” after the war, so observed the Japanese architectural historian Teiji Ito as he commented on the “Katsura Boom.”<sup>49</sup> This assumption can be also supported by a discussion of the contemporary American architectural scene and of individuals who staged the exhibition and published *The Architecture of Japan*. The publisher of the book was Philip Johnson who was then Chairman of the Museum Committee on Architecture and was already by 1950s “the most important architectural museum figure of his time.”<sup>50</sup> He had been a foremost admirer of Miesian modernism since the 1932 MoMA International Style Exhibition and had published a monograph on Mies, *Mies van der Rohe* in 1947 after the Mies Retrospective Exhibition he curated at MoMA, which was the Museum’s “first major postwar acknowledgment of the worldwide victory of modernism.”<sup>51</sup> Arthur Drexler, the new curator of the Department of Architecture and Design of MoMA, who had just succeeded Johnson’s post and staged the exhibition, followed Johnson’s view on Miesian

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<sup>48</sup>Gropius, “Architecture in Japan,” 18.

<sup>49</sup>Teiji Ito, “The Katsura Villa, A Flower out of Season: In the Deep stream of History,” *Shinkentiku* (November 1956):61.

<sup>50</sup>Franz Schulze, *Philip Johnson: Life and Work* (New York: Knopf, 1994), p.225.

<sup>51</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 178.

modernism and later published a book on Mies, *Ludwig van der Rohe* in 1960 and again in 1986 *Mies van der Rohe Centennial*.<sup>52</sup>

While Miesian architecture was championed by Johnson at the MoMA exhibition in 1947,<sup>53</sup> the deficiencies of “the mechanical functionalism” represented in the International Style architecture were also attacked in the same year.<sup>54</sup> In 1947, for example, commenting on “Status Quo,” Lewis Mumford noticed a new wind blowing against the International Style architecture in the field of American architecture:

new winds are beginning to blow, and presently they may hit even backward old New York...Certainly Le Corbusier’s dictum of the twenties--that the modern house is a machine for living in--has become old hat; the modern accent is on living, not on the machine. (This change must hit hardest those academic American modernists who imitated Le Corbusier and Mies van der Rohe and Gropius, as their fathers imitated the reigning lights of the Ecole des Beaux-Arts.) ...The rigorists placed the mechanical functions of a building above its human functions; they neglected the feelings, the sentiments, and the interests of the person who was to occupy it...<sup>55</sup>

Advocating a contemporary regionalist view, Mumford attacked Le Corbusier, Mies van der Rohe, Gropius and “those academic American modernists who imitated them.” This attack caused a fierce debate between the two factions. In a symposium at the Museum of

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<sup>52</sup>Drexler, *Ludwig Mies van der Rohe* (New York: Braziller, 1960); Johnson, *Mies van der Rohe* (New York: The Museum of Modern Art, 1947, 1978); and Drexler, *Mies van der Rohe Centennial* (New York: Museum of Modern Art, 1986).

<sup>53</sup>Johnson’s reverence for Mies, compared to that for Wright or Le Corbusier, and the 1947 MoMA Mies exhibition were written in detail by Schulze: “The fact that he was starting his own architectural career in 1946--and finding Mies a model more easily emulable than Wright--likely helped to make Mies the best choice for the retrospective that he came increasingly to regard as The Museum of Modern Art’s first major postwar acknowledgment of the worldwide victory of modernism....(p. 178)” See Franz Schulze, *Philip Johnson: Life and Work* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1994), pp. 171-183.

<sup>54</sup>As it was discussed in chapter IV, right after 1932 MoMA exhibition, advocating Wright’s organic architecture, Mumford criticized the International Style architecture and the editor of Harada’s *The Lesson* attacked also the *aggressiveness* of the International style architecture.

<sup>55</sup>Lewis Mumford, “The Sky Line: Status Quo,” *The New Yorker* (October 11 1947): 106, 109, & 110. After Mumford’s “Skyline” article in the *New Yorker*, San Francisco Museum of Modern Art held an Exhibition. In the Exhibition catalogue where Mumford wrote a preface, the “Oriental” was considered as “Japanese.”

Modern Art in New York held in 1948 on “What is happening to Modern Architecture?,” Marcel Breuer responded to Mumford’s regionalism. He said that “I don’t feel too much impulse to set ‘human’ against ‘formal.’ If ‘human’ is considered identical with redwood all over the place, or if it is considered identical with perfection and imprecision, I am against it; also if it is considered identical with camouflaging architecture with planting, with nature, with romantic subsidies.”<sup>56</sup> In contrast, Mumford’s promotion of “regional adaptations and modifications in modern architecture” was echoed not only in practice in the work of such architects as Wright or Wurster, but also in theory as in Bruno Zevi’s book of 1950, *Toward an Organic Architecture* in which he attacked Le Corbusier’s book, *Vers une Architecture* (Toward an Architecture) of 1923 and his theory--the modern house as a machine for living in.<sup>57</sup>

Against such an attack by the advocates of organic architecture, the “factions [like Mies, Johnson and Drexler] intent on a tired international formula”<sup>58</sup> appeared to use Japanese *Shoin* style houses as “external points of reference.” In other words, as Reyner Banham pointed out, in the history of European architecture, when European architecture needed “external points of reference by which to stabilize its own uncertain vision, ... it

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See, Clarence Mayhew, “The Japanese influence,” in *Domestic Architecture of the San Francisco Bay Region* (San Francisco: San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, 1949).

<sup>56</sup>Marcel Breuer at the 1948 symposium, as quoted by Jordy, *The Impact of European Modernism*, pp. 175-76.

<sup>57</sup>Bruno Zevi learned the concept of “organic architecture” from Wright’s buildings and writings. He founded the Association for Organic Architecture in 1945 in Italy and published *Verso un’architettura organica* in 1945 in Italian and in 1950 in English. His “Constitution of the Association for Organic Architecture in Rome” summarized well his concept. See Joan Ockman, *Architecture Culture 1943-1968: A Documentary Anthology* (New York: Rizzoli, 1993), pp. 68-69.

<sup>58</sup>Drawing a broad picture of the years between the end of the war and around 1960s, Curtis wrote that “One of the striking features of the years ...was a battle between factions intent on a tired international formula, and factions seeking a revitalization on the basis of a new post-war state of mind. Even the ‘masters’ themselves were faced with the dual problem of extending their earlier discoveries and of seeking new solutions simultaneously.” See Curtis, op. cit., p. 259.

tried Greece; it revived Gothic; it turned to the arts, to science, to psychology, to the architecture of alien people -- including Japan.”<sup>59</sup> Therefore, considering the facts that the International Style architecture was badly under attack and that the makers of the exhibition were advocates of Miesian architecture, it appeared that one of the agendas of the MoMA Japanese architecture exhibition of 1954-55 was to provide such external points of reference to the advocates of the International style architecture like Mies’ architecture which was regarded as the one similar to traditional Japanese buildings.<sup>60</sup>

### **Japanese Exhibition House at The Museum of Modern Art, New York**

In the meantime, the MoMA exhibition was “the phenomenally successful showing of a complete Japanese house and garden (Figures 4-3),”<sup>61</sup> as were the Japanese pavilions and gardens in the 1893 Chicago Exposition and the 1939 New York and San Francisco Expositions. The exhibition not only attracted countless visitors but also drew considerable attention from the American press. As a result, as an editor of *Shinkenchiku* noted in 1960, “whereas interest in Japanese house and gardens had hitherto [before the

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<sup>59</sup> Banham, p. 17. Banham wrote that “...The immediate truth was that a certain (and very important) faction in the West wanted to use Japanese architecture to chastise its own deviants...” Here, “the important faction in the West” appeared to mean the International style architects and their advocates like Drexler or Johnson. Thus, the faction, which Banham mentioned, seemed to be the same as the one Curtis mentioned (see note 36 above).

<sup>60</sup> Mies’s work was considered by many as the one similar to traditional Japanese architecture. Among them, Werner Blaser, who studied under Mies at the I.I.T. and then went to Japan to study Japanese architecture in 1953, pointed out the similarities in his books published in 1950s such as *Japanese Temples and Tea-Houses* (New York: F.W. Dodge Corp., 1956) or *Classical Dwelling Houses in Japan* (Tokyo: Kinokuniya Book-Store Co., Ltd., 1958). It will be discussed later in this chapter.

For another comment on the similarities between Miesian architecture and Japanese one, see Drexler, op. cit., p. 253. According to Drexler, contemporary Japanese architecture was rarely influenced by Miesian architecture “for no other reason than its resemblance, perhaps superficial, to a [Japanese] tradition which is itself ignored [among young Japanese architects].”

Among the founding fathers of the International Style, Le Corbusier of the late 1940s did not belong to the factions “intent on a tired international formula.” Le Corbusier’s architecture after the war had changed direction profoundly. Especially his Chapel of Notre-Dame-du-Haut at Ronchamp of 1950-54 was quite different from the International Style architecture in terms of its sculptural and symbolic forms.

exhibition] been fairly esoteric, its [sic.] suddenly began to spread among the great American middle class.”<sup>62</sup> Among the many critics who had written about the exhibition,<sup>63</sup> Ada Louise Huxtable was prominent. In her article published in *Art Digests*, she first commented on the primary lessons of Japanese architecture, which had then already been well-assimilated into American architecture--“simplicity, flexibility and connection with nature.” Then, she predicted that “the Japanese [exhibition] house is bound to have considerable influence on [American] architecture and interiors in the next



Figure 4- 3. MoMA Japanese Exhibition House and Garden, New York, 1954.

few years”<sup>64</sup> in terms of its standardization and the use of module. The exhibition itself, Drexler’s *The Architecture of Japan*, and many articles on the exhibition deeply stimulated American architects’ interests in Japanese

architecture. Among the traditional Japanese buildings which attracted American architects’ attention, the Katsura Palace was undoubtedly the most highly valued one in

<sup>61</sup>Hitchcock, “Strange, Potent, Inimitable,” p. 135.

<sup>62</sup>“Short History of Contemporary Japanese Architecture,” *Shinkenchiku* (November 1960): 96.

<sup>63</sup>Among many others, there were articles about the exhibition: Anonymous, “This 17th-century House outdates its 20th-century setting,” *House and Home* 5 (June 1954); Anonymous, “The Architecture of Japan,” *Interiors* 113 (July 1954); Mumford, “The Sky Line: Windows and Gardens,” *New Yorker* October 2, 1954; Drexler, “Japanese Exhibition House,” *Journal of RAIC* 31 (October 1954); Anonymous, “A Traditional Japanese House: The Esthetic Discipline,” *Progressive Architecture* 35 (December 1954); and Edward D. Mills, *Apollo* 74 (June 1961).

<sup>64</sup>Ada Louise Huxtable, “Japanese House: Isn’t it Peaceful!,” *Art Digests* 28 (September 1954): 15.

respect of design. Along with Drexler's praise of Katsura and Ise in his book, Gropius' acclamation of Katsura in his 1954 article, which was published immediately after he returned from Japan, contributed to the rise of the so-called "Katsura Boom" in both America and Japan. In Japan, by 1956, as many as seven books on Katsura were published, and plus scores of articles.<sup>65</sup> In America, the Palace was regarded as "the highest form of Japanese genius for creating architectural space of truly human scale" and the buildings as having timeless modern qualities such as:

one continuous space composition [between outdoors and indoors] ... unlimited flexibility [achieved] by sliding walls and windows, no static spaces, no symmetry, [or] no center focus.<sup>66</sup>

These qualities were best introduced to American architects through, among many other books, the richly illustrated, *Katsura: Tradition and Creation in Japanese Architecture* published in 1960 by Kenzo Tange and Gropius.<sup>67</sup> In addition, many American architects like Belluschi, Louis Kahn and Paul Rudolph had the first-hand experience of the Katsura Palace by visiting it during the 1950s and 1960s.<sup>68</sup>

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<sup>65</sup> See *Sinkentiku* (as of February 1958 issue, the Japanese title: *Sinkentiku* has been re-Romanized as *Shinken-chiku* to facilitate pronunciation by English-speaking readers) 31 (March 1956): 1, where Ota Hirota commented on the Katsura Boom in Japan. In America, Gropius published his article on Katsura in *Perspecta* in 1954 and its excerpts was also published in "Zen palace: A Vanguard Concept," *Art News* 59 (September 1960). In 1960, along with Kenzo Tange, Gropius published a book on Katsura, *Katsura: Tradition and Creation in Japanese Architecture*, (New Heaven: Yale University Press, 1960), also in (Tokyo: Zokeisha Publishing Co., 1960).

<sup>66</sup>Gropius, "Architecture in Japan," p. 80.

<sup>67</sup>The book was reviewed in many architectural journals by American architects and critics such as John Morris Dixon in the *Progressive Architecture* (June 1961) and John E. Burchard in the *Architectural Record* (February 1961) among others.

<sup>68</sup>Belluschi, then Dean of School of Architecture and Planning at M.I.T., visited Japan in June of 1956 and went to the Katsura Palace. It was noted in a Japanese architectural journal, *Sinkentiku* (July 1956). And also see, Clausen, op. cit., p. 241. Rudolph and Kahn went to Japan to attend the World Design Conference, which was held in Tokyo in May of 1960 and visited Katsura.

However, American architects saw different qualities in the same building. For example, the “timeless modern qualities” that Gropius saw in Katsura made Rudolph “very disappointed.” Reflecting his own Brutalist architectural theory, Rudolph commented on Katsura negatively when he saw it in May 1960 when he attended in the Tokyo World Design Conference along with Louis Kahn, Peter Smithson, Ralph Erskine and Minoru Yamasaki:

I was very disappointed in the Katsura Palace. It has no unity. It is a collection of details. .. People have said it is the culmination of Japanese architecture. I don't agree with that at all...One of the criteria of a great work of art is that you can never add anything to it, nor subtract anything from it. I have a feeling that you could add two or three wings to the Katsura Palace and it wouldn't matter... [In the Palace,] there is never really a dominant element. Many architects, including myself, feel strongly that most buildings should have a really dominant space, with subsidiary spaces... Japanese architecture is at its best when it is a pavilion of one kind or another. Unfortunately, in modern architecture, with the problems which we have now, the pavilion does not always answer the question. In a city, in tightly spaced areas, it does not... We can't just be beauty-makers. It has to be meaningful. ... Architects like Louis Kahn, who often makes ugly things, are much more profound. The great danger to American architecture especially, right now, is that everyone wants to make it prettier, prettier, prettier.<sup>69</sup>

From the statement above, one can identify a new attitude of a group of American architects towards Japanese architecture. Mirroring their own changing perspective toward their own architecture, American avant-garde architects of the 1960s began to be interested in a more complex, meaningful, or even ugly architecture, rather than the

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<sup>69</sup> Anonymous, “The Enigma of Katsura,” *Architectural Forum* (October 1960): 178-79. This article included Rudolph's comments on Katsura which were given to a reporter for *Shinkenchiku*.

Here, Rudolph appeared also to attack the “Metabolist” principle which was presented first at the Tokyo World Design Conference by group of Japanese critics and architects such as Kisho Kurogawa, Fumihiko Maki, Tange or Noburo Kawazoe in 1960. He criticized a metabolist character of Katsura: “It [the Palace] looks like if it might have been built in many stages, and perhaps it was...I have a feeling that you could add...”

simple, geometric, or elegant one of the previous generation. More specifically, they moved away from the typical lessons of Japanese architecture such as modularity, harmony with nature, and so on. Rudolph also wrote of the changing perspective that “if I came to Japan ten years ago or 15 years ago, I would have been absolutely captivated by the post-and-lintel system and the sequence of spaces, etc. I’m still captivated, but my own interests are now in a very different direction. Now I’m much more interested in space and light.”<sup>70</sup> In the 1960s, Rudolph, Kahn and Robert Venturi were the advocates of such new directions in American architecture. In 1966, criticizing the now-aging trend which had advocated the relevance between Japanese architecture and the International architecture--especially represented in the 1954-55 MoMA exhibition, Venturi questioned its validity:

I question the relevance of analogies between pavilions and houses, especially analogies between Japanese pavilions and recent domestic architecture. They ignore the real complexity and contradiction inherent in the domestic program--the spatial and technological possibilities as well as the need for variety in visual experience. Forced simplicity results in oversimplification.<sup>71</sup>

Here, Venturi is in accordance with Rudolph saying “the [Japanese] pavilion does not always answer the question [of modern Western architecture].” Also, as his phrase “Less is a bore” implies, Venturi criticized such an oversimplification represented in Mies’ Farnsworth house or Johnson’s Glass house.

In addition to Rudolph’s devaluation of Katsura, during the late 1950s, one can identify another new attitude of American architects towards Japanese architecture.

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<sup>70</sup>Ibidem.

<sup>71</sup>Robert Venturi, *Complexity and Contradiction in Architecture* (New York: the Museum of Modern Art, 1966), p. 17.

From the late fifties, other American architects began to be interested in Japanese modern architecture. It resulted from American architects' question that if Japanese traditional architecture had great relevance to the modern Western one, how then are the Japanese doing in their own modern architecture? Such a question seemed to be one of the main factors which caused a strong interest in contemporary Japanese architecture and proliferation of publications on it during the period between mid-1950s and 1960s.

For example, in 1959 an editor of *Time Magazine* (November 30) wrote that

Japan has one of the world's most admired architectural traditions, one that has influenced Western artists and architects from the mid-19th century to the present. But, at home Japanese architects have long found themselves faced with a dilemma: how to be modern and still remain Japanese... new Japanese architecture...is attempting to blend modern technology with traditional Japanese needs and feeling for structure. Best of this new generation...is Kenzo Tange, 46... [he] built the Hiroshima Peace Center on the site where the first-A-bomb was dropped.<sup>72</sup>

These interests were also reinforced by America's fascination with Zen, which had shaped the principles of restraint in traditional Japanese architecture. Writing of the three waves of Western artists' fascination with the Orient, Martha Kingsbury wrote that "In the decade after the war [WW II], ... , this time [their fascination] focused intensely on Japan, and Zen. The culture that had seemed most demonically alien during the war also seemed afterwards (particularly when victimized by the atomic bomb and threatened with devastating Westernization) to be the last repository of profound insights denied by

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<sup>72</sup> "New Japanese Architect," *Time Magazine*, November 30, 1959, p.78.

In its July 1958 issue, an editor of *Architectural Record* also stated a view similar to the one published in *Time*: "Tange and his fellow architects in Japan are endeavoring to combine what remains vital in their own architectural tradition, with whatever is dynamic in the work of their Western contemporaries. They are re-examining their tradition and testing its validity in terms of the social and technical changes in Japan. At the same time they modify and adapt Western architectural ideas in Japanese terms. These two interacting

Western rationalism.”<sup>73</sup> Also, during this period, reflecting this fascination with Zen, many books on Zen were published in English. Daisetz Suzuki’s *Zen and Japanese Culture*, which was first published in 1938, was reprinted in 1959 and Alan Watts also published *The Spirit of Zen: A Way of Life, Work, and Art in the Far East* in 1958 among many others. As the example of Gropius and Mies, who studied Zen through reading Suzuki’s book, these books helped American architects to understand Zen.<sup>74</sup>

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forces are, perhaps, producing a new architecture in Japan” (“A Japanese Architect Seeks A New Expression,” *Architectural Record* (July 1958): 127.

<sup>73</sup>Martha Kingsbury, *Northwest Traditions* (Seattle: Seattle Art Museum, 1978), p.58. Writing of the three waves of Western artists’ fascination with the Orient, she wrote that “From the 1880s or 1890s through the First World War, interest focused most on North African and Near Eastern sources and to some extent India also. Rosicrucianism and theosophy were perhaps the best known and most widespread developments of those interests, and directly involved numbers of artists...By the decade before the Second World War, exploration of non-Western culture had incorporated numerous insights and attitudes from anthropology, ethnography, and Jungian psychology. In the thirties and forties, therefore, artists more often explored Far Eastern as well as Near Eastern sources and tribal as well as highly literate cultures. Surrealists led the way in much of this, and it was pushed much further by abstract expressionists and the Northwest group, for example, during the war years.”

<sup>74</sup>For Gropius’s reading of the book, see Isaacs, op. cit., p. 328, note 22: “Gropius said that he knew nothing of Zen prior to preparations for the visit [to Japan], that he had not discovered Zen philosophy directly, but through its architectural expression, particularly in Kyoto and Nara; he then studied the writings of Dr. Suzuki about the influence of Zen on Japanese life.”

For Mies, see Blaser, *Mies van der Rohe: West meets East* (Basel, Boston and Berlin: Verlag, 1996), p. 108. Also the complete list of Mies’ personal library was catalogued by Richard Seidel, and the books are now in the custody of the Department of Special Collection, the Library, University of Illinois at Chicago-Circle [see Blaser, *Mies van der Rohe: The Art of Structure* (New York: Whitney Library of Design, 1994), appendix].

Regarding Zen influence in both Japanese architecture and Japanese daily life, it is interesting to compare different explanations made by Westerners of the different time for the topic. Reflecting contemporary interest in Zen during the 1950s, Arthur Drexler, in his *The Architecture of Japan*, related Japanese winter life with Zen philosophy of restraint: “Winter was held to offer an experience of different but rewarding beauty. The wise man would not struggle to avoid it but would deliberately submit himself to it ... those adepts of Zen Buddhism [in Arthur Drexler, *The Architecture of Japan* (New York: The MoMA, 1955), p.41].” In contrast, Morse (1885) wrote, without commenting on Zen, that “Their [Japanese’s] indifference to cold is seen in the fact that in their winter parties the rooms will often be entirely open to the garden (in Morse, *Japanese Homes*, p.119). In his book, the word, “Zen” was hardly used, if at all. From his description, one can safely assume that Japanese Zen philosophy was not known to Morse in terms of its influence on Japanese architecture. In the case of Taut, his approach was different. In his *Houses and People of Japan* of 1937, it is not clear whether he knew the Zen relationship in Japanese winter life or not. More important, however, is the fact that he “decided to concentrate [his] attention on the house and not deviate into other spheres [such as religion or philosophy-related matters] which are and were being treated by better experts (p. 95).

The comparison clearly shows a significance of how a different perspective can result from two factors: (1) how the author chooses to describe the given subject, and (2) what s/he already knows about the subject.

One passage from Suzuki's book represents well Zen influence on Japanese simplicity and its similarities to abstraction in Western modern architecture:

[Zen's habit of mind] to break through all forms of human artificiality and take firm hold of what lies behind them, has helped the Japanese not forget the soil but to be always friendly with Nature and appreciate her unaffected simplicity.<sup>75</sup>

In the field of architecture, Gropius was one of the foremost admirers of Zen philosophy. In his article "Architecture in Japan," he wrote of the confirmation of his own thought in Zen and his finding solutions of problems in modern architecture in Japanese architecture:

Develop an infallible technique, and then place yourself at the mercy of inspiration." This underlines the Zen abhorrence of intellectual reasoning--"the logical impasse," as they call it--and the emphasis on instinctive response to direct experience. My own trend of thought as exemplified in the Bauhaus has here been startlingly confirmed. The spiritual forces of the Zen philosophy have deeply influenced Japanese architecture, particularly the conception and composition of the dwelling, as the container for the daily life and the design of the garden. The modernity of the traditional house is striking as it contains perfect solutions of problems which the contemporary Western architects are still wrestling with today. Complete flexibility of movable exterior and interior walls, changeability and multi-use of spaces, modular coordination of all the building parts and prefabrication, though on the basis of a handicraft production.<sup>76</sup>

As Gropius did, it was only natural that the postwar American architects became interested in Zen-influenced Japanese architecture which "contains perfect solutions" for the impending problems of the contemporary Western architects such as prefabrication.

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In other words, when a Western writer/architect describes, reads, or looks at a Japanese building, the process of choice always works in his or her brain that has been trained by contemporary ways of thinking. As a result, we can see many different stages of Japanese influences on American architecture.

In this regard, along with Taut's political implication represented in his writing on history (see chapter 4), Keith Jenkins's statement on history writing is revealing: "History is never itself, is never said or read (articulated, expressed, discussed) innocently, but that it is always for someone." *Rethinking History* (London and New York: Routledge, 1991), p.71.

<sup>75</sup>Suzuki, op. cit., p. 23.

Then, from the late 1970s on, unlike previous generations, American architects of the Post-Modern era have not generally focused on a particular style of Japanese architecture. In other words, they praised not only the simplicity of Katsura but also the superior ornamentation of Nikko as well. This attitude appeared to be influenced by prevailing relativism or by a new Japanese attitude towards their own architecture. Kisho Kurogawa suggested “the idea of harmonious coexistence” (“both-and” attitude in Venturi) which is contrasted to the modern idea of deliberate exclusion (“either-or”).

A hundred years ago, when we first began importing European civilization, people wore kimonos; to these they later added shoes. ... The Japanese way is to mix everything, not as a synthesis but as a situation.... we do not decide what is right and what is wrong, or what is good and what is bad--that is a very European kind of thinking. What we do is to separate them but accept both.<sup>77</sup>

He thus proclaimed that “Post-modernist architecture must strive to discover the things the modernists threw away [like Nikko] and then to restore them to their proper places.”<sup>78</sup>

Kurogawa’s challenging criticism of Western modern architects’ attitude was a far cry from C. Ito’s submissive statement made 40 years ago. As Bruno Taut convincingly stated, such a passive Japanese attitude toward their own traditional architecture derived from a lack of standard of quality on the part of Japanese architects of the 1930s:

When tradition broke down, standards of quality disappeared and one copied the foreign even though one’s traditional good taste rejected it--it was exotic and therefore

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<sup>76</sup>Gropius, “Architecture in Japan,” pp. 18-21.

<sup>77</sup>Kurogawa, *Metabolism in Architecture* (Colorado: Westview Press, 1977), p. 10.

<sup>78</sup>Kisho Kurokawa, “Japanese Culture and Post-modernist Architecture,” *Architecture* (1990): . For Venturi’s, see Robert Venturi, *Complexity and Contradiction in Architecture* New York: The Museum of Modern Art, 1966, especially p. 23.

interesting. It was thought that what most Europeans and Americans liked in Japan ought to be best, and so one [Japanese architect] followed their interests and judgment.<sup>73</sup>

But from the late 1950s when the nation had recovered from the aftermath of the war and its economy had rapidly grown, Japanese architects began to not follow indiscreetly the interests and judgment of Western architects on Japanese architecture, modern or contemporary. Instead, they began to establish their own standard of architectural taste and developed their own theories. For example, when an editor of *Shinkenchiku* questioned “what is Japanese?” in 1958, he was in a relatively neutral position in his value-judgment:

A lot of different people have a lot of different ideas about what “the real Japan” and “genuinely Japanese” mean. Wright is convinced that the Imperial Hotel (old) [designed by Wright] is “Japanese,” Takahasi that it is not. Maekawa regards the Brussels [Japanese Pavilion at the Brussels World Fair] display as “Japanese,” while Representative Kita says it is not. ... what is “Japanese” at one time is not necessarily “Japanese” at any other. ... It might be a good idea to look into *the question* of why everybody from the venerable Frank Lloyd Wright on down seems to think that *Japanese buildings should be exclusively “Japanese.”*<sup>74</sup> (my Italics)

This editor’s statement, that “what is Japanese at one time is not necessarily Japanese at any other,” pertains perfectly to one of the main themes I am dealing with in the present essay. When American architects looked at or read about Japanese architecture, they chose or selected particular aspects of it at one time and different ones at another. Such a question was also raised by Kenzo Tange. Taking exception to Ernesto Rogers’s attempt to identify his work with a return to the traditional forms and principles of Japanese architecture, Tange stated that “Creative work is expressed in our times in a union of

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<sup>73</sup>Taut, op. cit., p. 10.

<sup>74</sup>“Japanese,” *Shinkenchiku* 33 (September 1958): 3.

technology and humanity ... Tradition can, to be sure, participate in a piece of creation, but it can no longer be creative itself.”<sup>75</sup> This emphasis on “creation” over “tradition” was one of the background ideas for a group of young Japanese architects who declared a manifesto of “Metabolist Architecture” in 1960 and who formalized it in their works, as shown in Kurokawa’s Nagakin Capsule Tower built in Tokyo in 1972.

### The Works

With the advent of the World War II, Americans' interest in Japan and things Japanese, whether it was positive or negative, reached its height. The scope of the interest became deep and wide. It was partly because millions of Americans had been engaged for years in fighting the country, and then after the war over 500,000 American troops had been sent to and stayed in Japan as part of the occupation from 1945 to 1952.<sup>76</sup> Before the war, Japan and its culture had been relatively well known in America, but the full gamut of its culture had been generally limited to rich Americans, who could afford a trip to Japan, or intellectuals such as scholars or artists who were intrigued by Japanese wood-block prints or gardens. It was thus not until after the war that great numbers of middle-class

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<sup>75</sup>Quoted in Ockman, op. cit., p. 325.

<sup>76</sup>For the statistics, see Ezra F. Vogel’s “Forward” in Ruth Benedict, *The Chrysanthemum and the Sword: Pattern of Japanese Culture* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1989, first published in 1946). The high interests in Japanese culture were much broadened when Benedict published *The Chrysanthemum and the Sword*. In it, she suggested that Japanese culture represents a pattern by which one can explain Japanese duality which is “so ready to die by the sword and yet so concerned with the beauty of the chrysanthemum.”

Although the book was politically and theoretically biased, it raised a sensation and fired American interests in Japan. It was politically biased in that Benedict’s research was partly initiated by an intention to “understand their [Japanese] behaviors in order to cope with it [the nature of the enemy, Japan, in the war]” (Benedict, op. cit, p. 1). Secondly, it was theoretically biased in terms that she forced her “Patterns of Culture” theory into her research represented in *The Chrysanthemum and the Sword*, and it “made the Japanese seem too stiff, too bound by duty and social position, too dedicated to ideology, too concerned with their reputation.” And thus she pushed her theory to the extent that “Every greeting, every contact must

Americans started to visit Japan as occupation officers, soldiers, or businessmen and experienced its culture in person. That many Americans experienced Japanese culture in person was an important factor in building a basis for transplanting Japanese culture somewhat easily in American soil.<sup>77</sup> For example, it contributed to popularizing things Japanese in American popular culture as shown in the boom of the movies with Japanese themes during the 1950s.<sup>78</sup> In the realm of architecture, as a result of such popular interests in things Japanese, many prominent American architects such as Gropius, Belluschi, Neutra, Rudolph, Kahn, Charles Moore, Isamu Noguchi, Bruce Goff or Gordon Bunshaft of the S.O.M. visited Japan and the A.I.A. sent group of American architects to Japan to see Japanese architecture. Their first-hand experience of Japanese architecture in Japan would be reflected in their works.

As a result of such experiences and learning of American architects which had been growing until 1950s, most Japanese features, as Hitchcock pointed out in 1957, “that can be absorbed [have] already passed into the bloodstream of modern architecture in the Western world.”<sup>79</sup> The “common elements” in both architectures which could be products of such an absorption were enumerated by Hitchcock:

So multifarious and long continued has been the pattern of Japanese influence on the West that it is hard at this late date to say how many of the similarities between our present modern traditions, established gradually over the last 60 or more years, and

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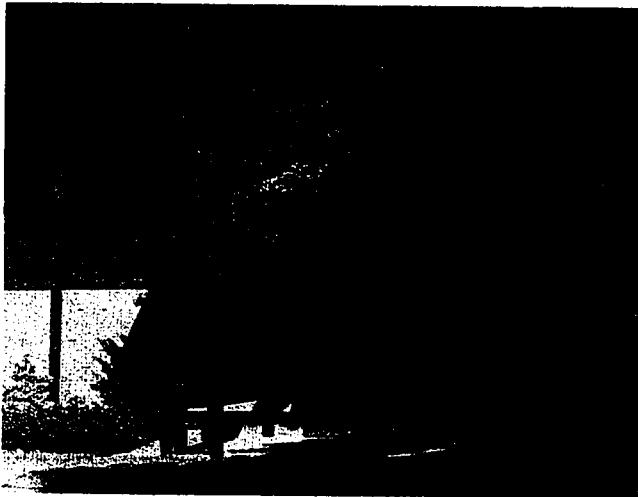
indicate the kind and degree of social distance between men.” But, as Vogel pointed out, in reality, Japanese are more “spontaneous, fun-loving, and relaxed” (in his Forward).

<sup>77</sup> Apparently, homes built by Japanese-Americans in the US also stimulated American architects’ interest in Japanese architecture. However, as I pointed out in the Introduction, I will discuss it in a different essay.

<sup>78</sup> In the 1950s, many American filmmakers made movies with Japanese themes. For example, *House of Bamboo* (Sam Fuller, 1955), *Teahouse of the August Moon* (Daniel Mann, 1956), *Sayonara* (Joshua Logan, 1957), and *The Crimson Kimono* (Fuller, 1959) among many others. These movies were noted in Pat Kirkham, *Charles and Ray Eames: Designers of the Twentieth Century* Cambridge: The M.I.T. Press, 1995, p. 431, note 61.

<sup>79</sup> Hitchcock, “Strange, Potent, Inimitable,” *Architectural Review* 121 (February 1957): 135.

Japanese traditions are due to borrowing and how many to parallel development. Modular organization, visible framed structure, open planning with movable partitions, built-in furniture, interaction of house and garden, plain walls, frank exploitation of natural



**Figure 4- 4. Belluschi, Central Lutheran Church, Portland, Oregon, 1948-50.**

materials, particularly wood, horizontality, wide eaves, and various sorts of screens for sun control are only some of the elements common to modern architecture and traditional Japanese house architecture.<sup>80</sup>

In other words, by the 1950s, most American architects knew of and adopted the common elements

enumerated above in their works. I thus focus on Japanese features adopted in American architecture other than “the elements common to modern architecture and traditional Japanese house architecture” mentioned by Hitchcock.

Like the work of Wright and Antonin Raymond, Belluschi’s work designed before the war represented that, as discussed in previous chapter, Japanese architecture was one of “the main sources of his regional modernism.”<sup>81</sup> After the war, Belluschi continued to be interested in Japanese architecture and

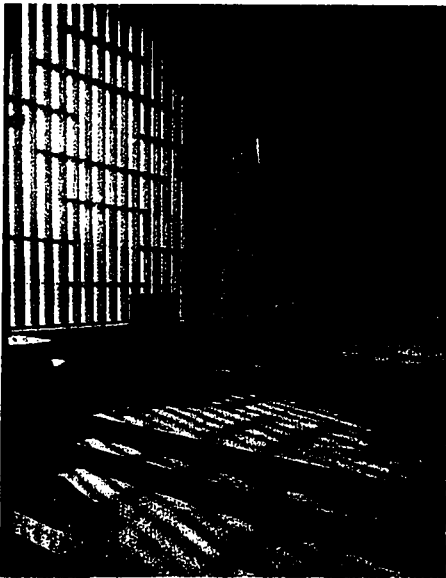


**Figure 4- 5. An Example of karahafu eaves, Harada’s Lesson, 1936.**

<sup>80</sup>Ibid.

<sup>81</sup>Clausen, *Pietro Belluschi*, p. 113.

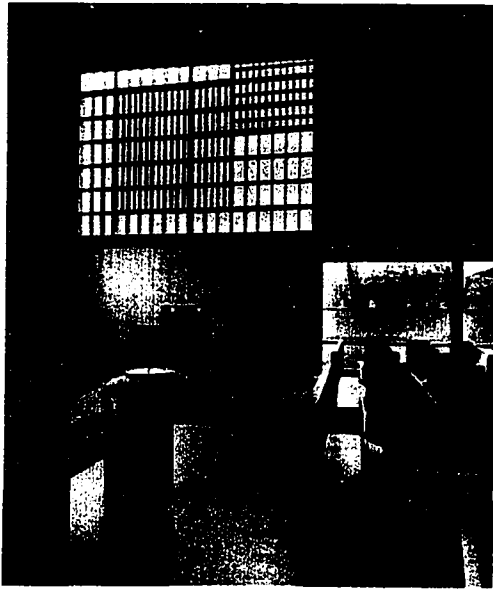
visited Japan in 1956. Even before his travel to Japan, through his reading books on Japanese architecture, he learned of some Japanese features and incorporated them in his work. His quotation of some Japanese architectural features learned from the books on Japanese architecture appeared in some church buildings designed during the late 1940s and early 1950s. As Clausen pointed out, his Central Lutheran Church (Figure 4-4) built in Portland, Oregon in 1948-50 adopted unmistakably Japanese features drawn from Harada's *The Lesson of Japanese Architecture* such as the sheltered gateway with its *karahafu* or upturned eaves (Figure 4-5).<sup>82</sup> Another Japanese feature he appeared to borrow from Harada's book was his use of a *shoji*-like grid in many church windows he



**Figure 4- 6. Belluschi, Zion Lutheran Church, Portland, Oregon, 1948-50.**

designed after 1948. The *shoji*-like grid first appeared in his Zion Lutheran Church built in Portland in 1948-50. In the church's altar area (Figure 4-6), glass windows are held in place by a grid of narrow wood mullions. Along with the wooden planes at the bottom of the windows, the latticed windows, which shed the soft and pale light into the altar, not only function like the *shoji*, but also in their proportions between the lower planes and the upper windows are similar to a typical Japanese *shoji* screen. During the

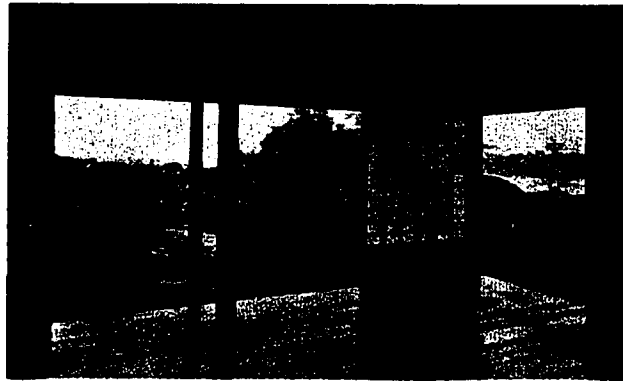
<sup>82</sup>See Clausen, *Spiritual Space: The Religious Architecture of Pietro Belluschi* (Seattle and London: University of Washington Press, 1992), pp. 19 & 64-67. Harada's *The Lesson of Japanese Architecture* included many illustrations showing the same type of covered entrance. See figures in pages 38, 44, 68, 71, or 117. The last figure is a covered corridor.



**Figure 4- 7. Belluschi, First  
Prebysterian Church, Cottage Grove,  
Oregon, 1948-51.**

used in Belluschi's churches.<sup>84</sup> Belluschi's use of Japanese-type latticed windows continued not only in his West Coast churches, but also in his East Coast churches as Portsmouth Abbey Church in Rhode Island, finished in 1961, or the

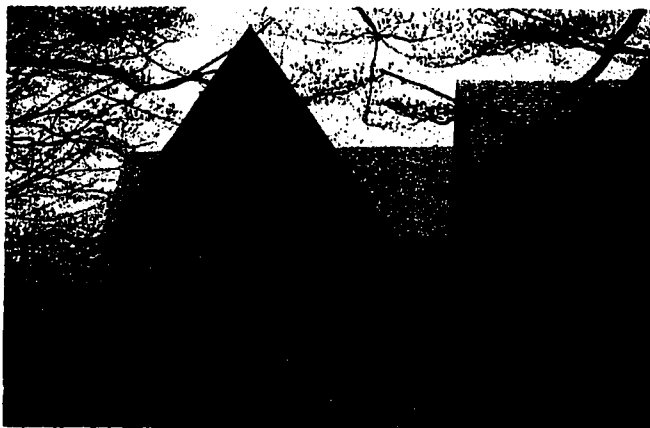
late 1940s and 1950s, Belluschi used the feature in many churches like the altar wall of Central Lutheran Church built in Eugene, Oregon in 1945-55,<sup>83</sup> in the nave wall of Central Lutheran Church in Portland of 1948-50, or in the altar wall of the First Presbyterian Church (Figure 4-7) in Cottage Grove, Oregon of 1948-51. Belluschi evidently borrowed this Japanese feature from Harada's book which included various types of latticed windows (Figure 4-8) similar to those



**Figure 4- 8. An Example of *shoji* screenes,  
Harada's *Lesson* 1936.**

Church of the Redeemer built in Baltimore in 1954-58. Belluschi visited Japan in June of 1956 while the design of the latter was in progress and adopted still other Japanese

<sup>83</sup> Although the congregation of the church commissioned Belluschi in 1945 right after the war, it was not built until late in the 1940s. So, the shoji-like grid of the altar windows in the church seems to show that Belluschi began to use the window grid only from the late 1940s when he began to incorporate Japanese features in his work such as the sheltered gateway in Central Lutheran Church (1948-50) or Japanese-type garden in the First Presbyterian Church (1948-51).



**Figure 4-9. Belluschi, Church of the Redeemer, Baltimore, 1954-58.**

features in the church. Japanese *irimoya* roofs were adopted in four arms, i.e., in both transepts, chancel, and nave roofs. Of special interest here is the *irimoya* roofs and wooden mullions used in the gables. The combination of latticed gable and

hipped roof below (Figure 4-9) is very similar to the same use of the features in the Old *shoin* at Katsura (Figure 4-10) which Belluschi visited during his 1956 trip.<sup>85</sup>

His incorporation of Japanese features into the buildings built on the American West



**Figure 4-10. The shoin of Katsura, Kyoto, 17th-century.**

Coast was a harmonious meeting of the East and West and was regarded so by a contemporary Japanese critic. Around the time of his visit to Japan, a Japanese architectural critic Tsutomu Ikuta published an article, "Regionalism and Belluschi" in *Sinkentiku*. In it, he

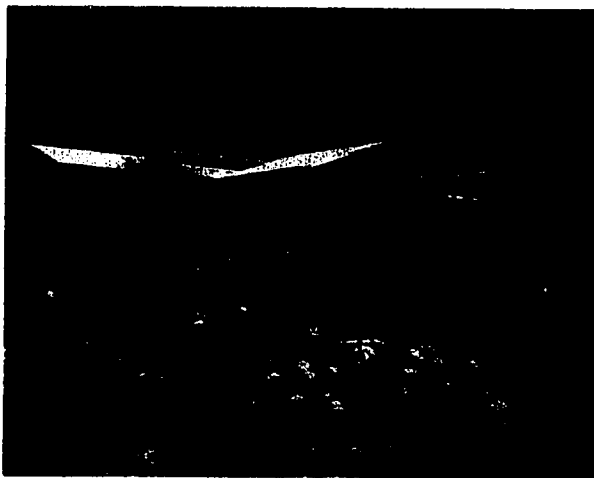
considered Belluschi's churches and residences as those "of Oriental

atmosphere, in which even Japanese influences could be discerned."<sup>86</sup> He also saw in

<sup>84</sup>See Harada's *The Lesson of Japanese Architecture*, figures in pp. 69, 74, 85, 95, 97, etc. The illustrations showed many different types of grids.

Belluschi's residential work like the Kerr house of 1941 a rarely agreeable harmony between Western features and Japanese ones: "These residences [by Belluschi] have no disagreeable traits often noticed in the vulgar architecture of so-called Japanese taste, but give wholesome, stalwart and pleasant impressions."<sup>87</sup>

Like Belluschi, Harwell Hamilton Harris admired Wright's work and Japanese architecture among other forms of architecture and incorporated them in his work before



**Figure 4- 11. Harris, the Wyle house, Ojai, California, 1946-48.**

the war, as discussed in chapter 4. After the war, Harris's wife, the architectural critic Jean Murray Bangs, aroused Harris' interest in the early wooden traditions of California architecture such as the work of Maybeck and the Brothers Greene. He became very much intrigued by the Greene and Greene's bungalows built in the late 1900s. As a result, by the time his

wife published an article "Greene and Greene" in the *Architectural Forum* in 1948, his residential works showed obvious debts to his contact with the Greens. In his Clarence H. Wyle house (Figure 4-11) built in Ojai, California in 1946-48 and the Ralph Johnson house of Los Angeles built in 1947-48, Harris owed much to the Greens in his use of subtle handling of wood, strong relationship between the house and surrounding landscape, extended rafters and double gables which were reminiscent of those of the

<sup>85</sup>He visited Katsura Palace in the summer of 1956. See Clausen, *Belluschi*, p. 241.

<sup>86</sup>Tsutomu Ikuta, "Regionalism and Belluschi," *Sinkentiku* (July 1956): 49-50.

Brothers Greenes and Japanese architecture. However, the indoors of Harris's houses are more strongly fused with the outdoors through large glass windows in the Johnson house

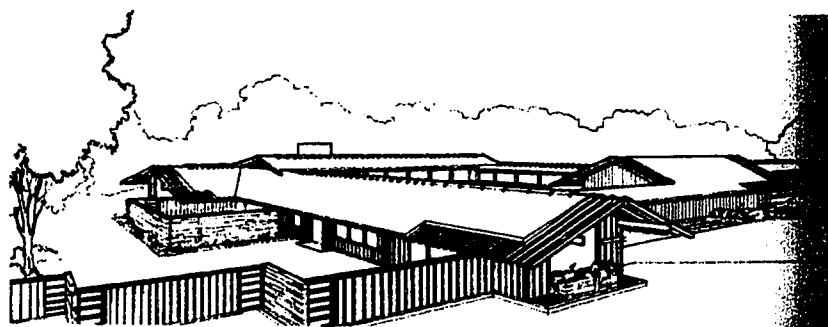


Figure 4- 13. Harris, the Pace Setter house, Fair Park, Texas, 1954-55.

living room and by providing windows on three sides of the four principle rooms in the

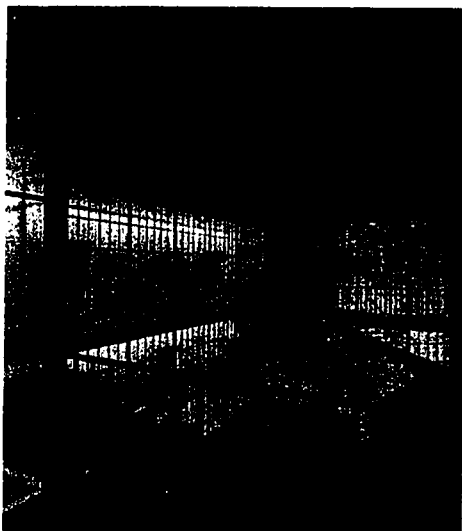


Figure 4- 14. Harris, the Antrim house, Fresno, California, 1956.

Wyle house. The wide, overhanging roofs with deep eaves and exposed rafters were used in the bungalows designed by the Greenes during the late 1900s such as the Gamble house of 1908. However, he did not exactly copy his predecessors. In these houses, Harris left the rafters open at the end without roofs. These open extended

rafters appeared frequently in his later work such as the Pace Setter house he designed for the *House Beautiful* Magazine with University of Texas students (Figure 4-13) and Saint Mary's Episcopal church in Texas in 1960. He also continued to show his deep interest in Japanese *shoji* screens which had intrigued him since early 1930s. As he used it first for the Lowe house of 1931-32, he adopted it again in his Calvin Antrim house (Figure 4-14) built in Fresno, California in 1956.

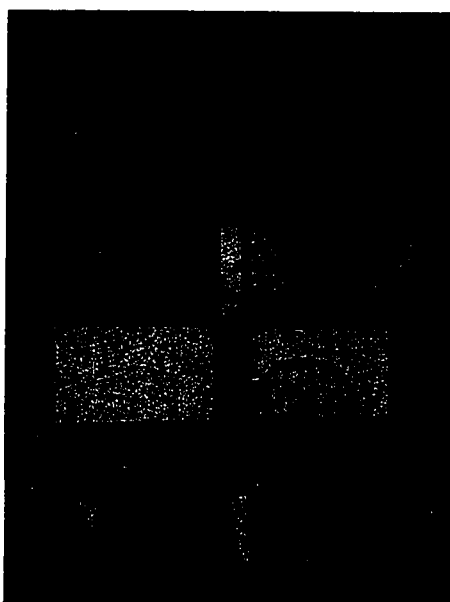
<sup>87</sup>Ibid.



**Figure 4- 15. Wurster, the Spreckels house, San Francisco, 1956-62.**

Like Harris, many American architects adopted the geometric rectangular grid of the luminous paper screens of Japanese architecture, but in many different ways. William Wurster incorporated similar features in a San Francisco townhouse. Unlike Harris' emphasis on the horizontal of the rectangular grid, however, in the Spreckels house

(Figure 4-15) built in San Francisco in 1956-62, Wurster modified the grid by putting emphasis on the vertical as Japanese architects sometimes do (Figure 4-8).<sup>88</sup> In the house, the translucent glass walls with the *shoji* grid are opened to a garden, as Japanese *shoji* functions in a Japanese house and garden.<sup>89</sup>



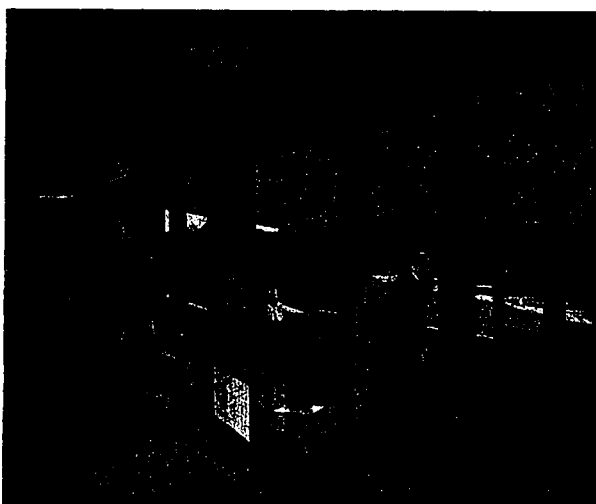
**Figure 4- 16. Drake, the Carmel house, Carmel, California, 1949.**

Gordon Drake's use of the *shoji* screen was still different from those adopted both in Harris and Wurster. In his houses such as the Vacation house in Carmel, California built in 1949 and the Malibu house built in San Francisco in 1947-51, Drake incorporated Japanese *shoji* screens extensively in a

<sup>88</sup>For Japanese use of different type of *shoji*, see my note 92 of this chapter.

<sup>89</sup>Wurster's other work also appeared to be "a product of the meeting of Oriental and Occidental architectural tradition," as Mumford wrote (Mumford, "The Sky Line: Status Quo," *New Yorker* October 11 1947: 110). However, rather than adopting specific Japanese forms like irimoya roofs, Wurster incorporated in his work architectural principles of wooden architecture including Japanese or California vernacular tradition such as mining town architecture, architecture of Maybeck, and the Greenes.

unique way. Drake's knowledge of Japanese motifs including the *shoji* screen derived mainly from his acquaintance with the screen adopted in the Fellowship Park house by Harris. Drake was a student of Harris at the University of Southern California in 1940 and then worked for his mentor during the early 1940s and also after the second world war. From the Fellowship Park house Drake learned some Japanese-inspired features such as modular design and panel construction, the features that would be later absorbed into Drake's four basic approaches to modern domestic architecture: "indoor-outdoor continuity, modular construction, architecturally-used light, and a sense of restraint."<sup>90</sup> In the Carmel house, Drake incorporated the Japanese features for sliding panels (Figure 4-



**Figure 4- 17. Drake, the Malibu house, Malibu, California, 1947-51.**

16) separating the living room from the dining area.<sup>91</sup> Although Drake was modeled for the panels on Japanese rice-paper screens, he used in the Carmel house practical materials like glass which "resist dust and abuse common to weekend and vacation homes."<sup>92</sup> Another

unique feature was Drake's use of color in the screens. Unlike Japanese *shoji* screens which are composed of white paper and natural-colored wooden frames, Drake's screens have many different colors as those in Mondrianesque paintings. This feature was also adopted in his Malibu house (Figure 4-

<sup>90</sup>Douglas Baylis and Joan Parry, *California Houses of Gordon Drake* (New York: Reinhold Publishing Corporation, 1956), p. 69. Also see Harris's recollection on Drake, a non-titled article included in Baylis, op. cit., pp. 83-84.

17). The sliding panels used in the California house have not only various materials such as muslin, natural burlap, and rice paper, but also different colors such as orange, yellow and white.

Such a blending of the Japanese and the Mondrianesque grid and color can be also seen in a contemporary house designed by Charles and Ray Eames. Their own house built in Santa Monica, California in 1949 was a Case Study house designed for *Arts and Architecture Magazine*. In the façade of the house, the composition of glass and colored (white, purple, or red) stucco panels (Figure 4-18) filling in an



**Figure 4-18. The Eames, the Eames house, Santa Monica, California, 1949.**



**Figure 4-19. The Eames, the Eames house, Santa Monica, California, 1949.**

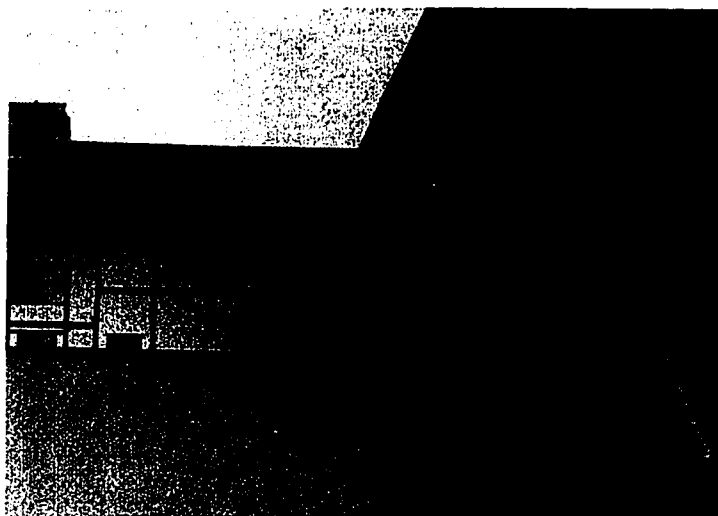
abstract grid shows a blending of Japanese *shoji* and Mondrianesque compositions, the feature that is similar to that shown in Drake's panel composition.<sup>93</sup> If one looks at the house (Figure 4-19) in a black and white

<sup>91</sup>The Japanese quality of the panel was noted in an article, An Editor, "Japanese Details Gave Drake's Houses Lightness and Grace," *The Magazine of Building House and Home* (March 1952): 102-103.

<sup>92</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 55.

<sup>93</sup>Japanese *shoji* screens have various grid: 1) a series of squares, 2) rectangles with longer horizontal bars than vertical ones, 3) rectangle with longer vertical bars than horizontal ones, 4) round-shaped one, or 5) combination of the above. While Belluschi's windows reminded one of the 3), the Eames' did one of the 2). For examples, see Harada, *The Lesson of Japanese Architecture*, figures in pp. 168, 175, 177, or 184.

photograph, the overall composition used in the facade seems unmistakably Japanese-inspired. It is reminiscent of Japanese *shoji* or wall composition where white plaster planes and *shoji* screens are filling into the grid created by the wooden post and beams as



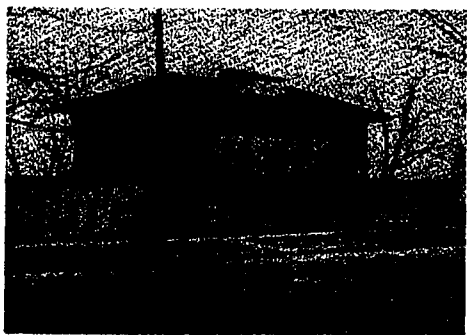
**Figure 4-20. The Imperial Palace, Kyoto, rebuilt in 1858.**

shown in the Imperial Palace in Kyoto (Figure 4-20). However, in a color photograph, it seems rather Mondrianesque. As Pat Kirkham pointed out, one thus sees in the Eames house three strong aesthetic influences at work:

"Mondrian-style

abstraction and the Miesian

aesthetic, [and] traditional Japanese architecture."<sup>94</sup> Looking at the façade, one can feel



**Figure 4-21. Wright, the Hardy house, Racine, Wisconsin, 1905.**

an overall effect of lightness and openness of the house. If one compares this facade to that of Wright's Thomas Hardy house (Figure 4-21) built in Racine, Wisconsin in 1905, although both houses adopt a similar Japanese-type of wall grid, the Eames house appears much lighter. The effect

resulted obviously from Eames's use of the translucent and transparent glass and stucco panels which were infilled into the cages made out of an exposed light steel frame, the

<sup>94</sup>Pat Kirkham, *Charles and Ray Eames: Designers of the Twentieth Century* (Cambridge: The M.I.T. Press, 1995), p. 116.

slim 12-inch rods, and 4-inch columns. The glass walls, sliding glass door and windows facilitated an intimate interrelationship between the house and its surrounding gardens, like opened *shoji* screens do in Japanese architecture. Also in the interior of the house, the flexible interior partitions, round paper lanterns, and straw mats, which are reminiscent of Japanese tatami mats, all contribute to make the overall Japanese feel of the house. The way in which the Eameses themselves lived reveals Japanese touches in their house. As



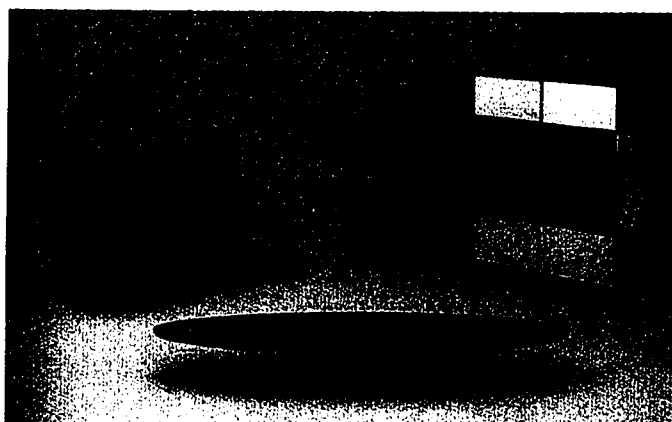
**Figure 4-22. The Eames, the Eames house interior, Santa Monica, California, 1949.**

the Figure 22 shows, sitting on the Japanese mats, they often held Japanese tea ceremonies with friends such as Isamu Noguchi, who would design many Japanese-type gardens in collaboration with S.O.M. and others. The Eameses held the tea party as if the architects wanted to acknowledge their indebtedness to Japanese architectural tradition.<sup>95</sup>

The overall Japanese feeling of the house can be clearly shown, if one compares the house with the Japanese Exhibition Building, which Kenzo Tange built in Kobe in 1950. In it, Tange replaced *shoji* with Western building materials such as

<sup>95</sup>As shown in the picture, Japanese inspiration for the house carried over into the Eames' social life. The picture shows a dinner party in honor of Charlie Chaplin. The picture was published in James Steele, *Eames House: Charles and Ray Eames* (London: Phaidon, 1994), p. 23.

prefabricated panels of wood and glass, and also replaced traditional Japanese wooden post and beam with a system of bolts, X-shaped steel frame, and steel plates.<sup>96</sup> The result is strongly similar to the Eames house where the Eameses, in turn, incorporated Japanese features into their western building.



**Figure 4-24. The Eames, the Storage Units.**

The Eameses used the same Mondrianesque or Japanese composition for their other designs such as for showrooms of furniture or furniture itself. The exterior glass wall with delicate steel frames Eames adopted for the Herman Miller Furniture Company

showroom, built in Los Angeles in 1949, and Eames Storage Units, designed in 1950, show similar compositions. In particular, the overall composition and the X-shaped steel frame at the front wall of the Eames House (Figure 4-18) was undoubtedly repeated at the same-shaped side frames of the storage units (Figure 4-24).<sup>97</sup>

Eero Saarinen, who was a collaborator with the Eames in many projects, was also “a great admirer of the Japanese house” as he stated in his address given at the *Schoner*

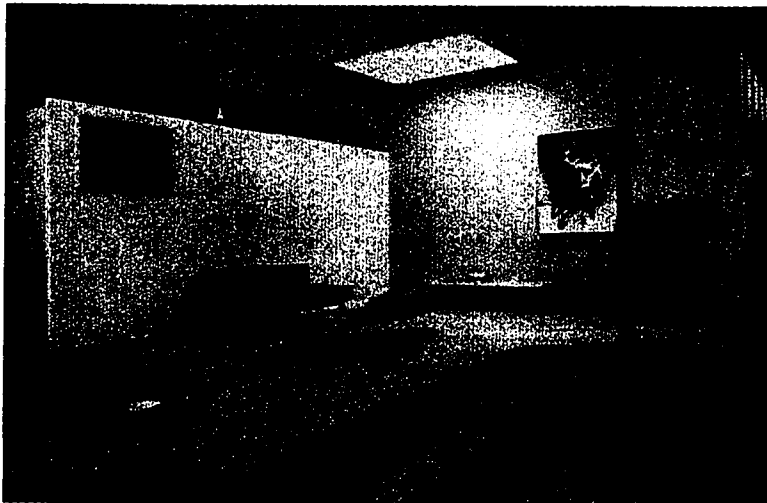
<sup>96</sup> Another comparison is the one between the Eames house and a Japanese architect Makata Masuzawa’s own house built in Tokyo in 1952. Its overall shoji-like rectangular grid and X-shaped frame appeared to be influenced by the Eames house. For the illustration, see Drexler, *The Architecture of Japan*, p. 257.

<sup>97</sup> It is not obvious if the furniture design was conceived first or if it was influenced by the house design. Since Charles Eames worked on furniture with Eero Saarinen before he designed the Eames house, it is also possible to assume that Eames incorporated the composition he had used for a storage which was exhibited in 1941 in The Museum of Modern Art’s Organic Design in Home Furnishings’ Exhibition. For an illustration of the storage, see Arthur Drexler, *Charles Eames: Furniture, From the Design Collection The Museum of Modern Art, New York* (New York: Museum of Modern Art, 1973), p. 4, figures 1 & 2.

*Wohnen* Congress in Munich, Germany in October 24, 1960.<sup>98</sup> In the address, Saarinen pointed out admirable features of Japanese architecture:

In many ways, I would want to borrow concepts, but not solutions, from the Japanese house. For instance, the way nature, outside the house, is seen from the Japanese house. You look down onto nature--and the glaring sky never enters the house or your view...Another beautiful thing about the Japanese house is the way doors have been eliminated as distracting elements. The Japanese have achieved this by making the screen of the wall equal to the moving screen of the door. Still another asset of the Japanese house is its absolute simplicity. A major factor is the very sparse use of furniture.<sup>99</sup>

Saarinen incorporated the borrowed concept of close interrelationship between the house and its surroundings, sliding screens, and simple interior in his designs, among others.



**Figure 4-26. C. Eames & Saarinen, the Entenza house interior, Santa Monica, 1950.**

Like the Eameses, Saarinen also designed a case study house for the *Arts and Architecture*. The Entenza house, which was designed by Charles Eames and Saarinen, was built in 1950 right next to the Eames house. At the exterior of the

house, Saarinen adopted deep overhanging eaves as in a Japanese house he admired. As in the Japanese interior, Saarinen used minimum number of furniture in the Entenza house. In doing so, he used his own devise, the so-called “seating pit (Figure 4-26)”

<sup>98</sup>Saarinen’s address given in October 24, 1960, p. 8. Now in Manuscripts and Archives, Yale University Library. I am grateful to Yale University Library for lending me a copy of the address.

which is a sunken area at the corner of the living room and consists of two large steps. As he pointed out, the problem of furniture can be solved “by eliminating it [furniture] completely from the living room” and the seating pit “would create a seating arrangement which is very flexible, accommodating either many or few people in these sofa-steps.”<sup>100</sup>

During the Korean War (1950-53), Charles Moore served as an Army officer in Korea and visited Japan to see Japanese buildings such as Ryoan-ji and Katsura.<sup>101</sup> In addition to his experience of the Japanese buildings and gardens in 1951 when he visited Kyoto and Nara, he was also intrigued by his learning from books on Japanese architectural principles such as Junichiro Tanizaki’s *In Praise of Shadows*. In his forward for the book



Figure 4-27. Moore, the Moore house, Pebble Beach, California, 1954.

published in 1977, Moore wrote that “[the book] comes with the thrill of a slap for us then [probably in the 1950s when it was first published in English] to hear praise of shadows and darkness.”<sup>102</sup> His learning from Japanese

architecture was formalized in his own houses. In his house (Figure 4-27) at

Pebble Beach, California built in 1954, the *shoji* screens and a Zen rock garden are

<sup>99</sup>Ibidem.

<sup>100</sup>Saarinén, the address given at the *Schoner Wohnen* Congress, p. 8. In it, Saarinen also contended that he more or less invented the idea of the seating pit in the 1940s in a competition house.

<sup>101</sup>He visited Ryoan-ji, Katsura, and the gardens in Kyoto in 1951 while he was an Army officer in Korea. See Kevin Keim, *An Architectural Life: Memoirs & Memories of Charles W. Moore* (Boston: A Bulfinch Press Book, 1996), p. 34.

<sup>102</sup>Moore’s Forward in Tanizaki, *In Praise of Shadows* (Connecticut: Leete’s Island Books, 1977). The book was translated in English in 1954 by E. Seidensticker and reprinted in the January issue of the *Atlantic Monthly*.

unabashedly Japanese. Moore's later house (Figure 4-28) at Orinda, California, built in 1962, also shows some Japanese-inspired features. In the house, as Moore himself pointed out, with the natural pillars "providing structural support for the roof," he was "free to break open the walls."<sup>103</sup> His "large barn door" and glass doors appeared to be partly inspired by Japanese *amado*, or rain door and sliding *shoji* screenes. Moore's different approaches toward surrounding landscape in both houses in Pebble Beach and Orinda are of special interest. While in the earlier house the space between the house and garden is interpenetrated each other through the *shoji* screenes, the house in Orinda appears to be dropped onto the existing landscape without any attempts at garden form in the landscape setting.<sup>104</sup>



**Figure 4-28. Moore, the Moore house, Orinda, California, 1962.**

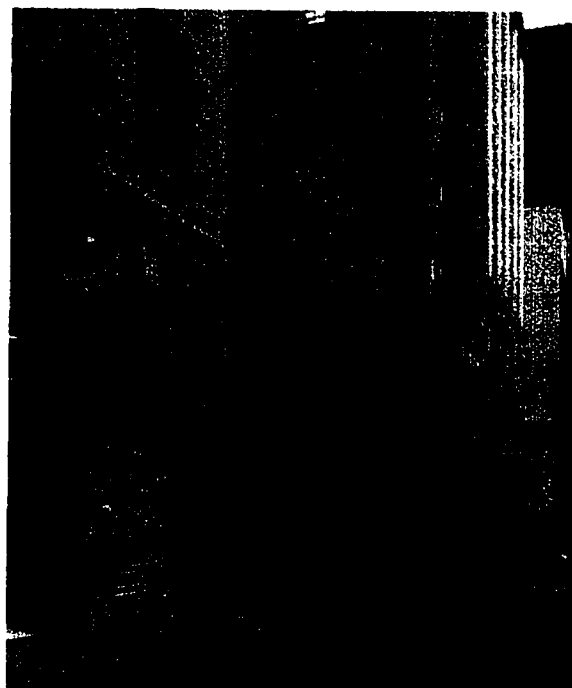
In the Midwest, Wright continued to use the Usonian ideas he had developed in the 1930s in his domestic designs from after the war until his death in 1959. As discussed in chapter IV, Wright adopted several Japanese characteristics in his Usonian houses, such as inverted planning or optimum exposure of living and dining

areas to the surrounding garden.<sup>105</sup> To this type belonged the Smith house built in Bloomfield Hills, Michigan in 1946 and the Palmer house built in Ann Arbor, Michigan

<sup>103</sup>Keim, op. cit., p. 169.

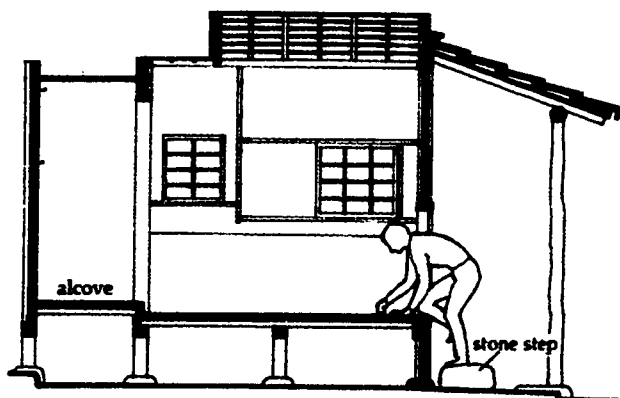
<sup>104</sup>Hudnut once criticized this type of landscape treatment: "I am equally out of sympathy with those architects who propose the abandonment of all attempts at garden form in the landscape setting of the modern house." Instead, he proposed "organic relation between house and garden" [Hudnut, "The Modern

in 1950. In the public buildings he designed after the war, Wright also incorporated some Japanese-inspired features which he had adopted in his earlier work. As in his previous towers like the National Insurance Company Project of 1924, he adopted in his Johnson Wax Research Tower of 1946-47 a tree-like rigid-core high-rise structure, which had been used for centuries in Japanese pagodas such as Yakushi-ji pagoda.<sup>106</sup>



**Figure 4-29. Wright, the Morris Gift Shop, San Francisco, 1948.**

In addition, in the Morris Gift Shop (Figure 4-29) built in San Francisco in 1948, he repeated a tunnel-like, deeply recessed arched entry of his earlier houses such as Arthur Heurtley house of 1902, the feature that reminds one of Japanese *Nijiri-guchi* or crawling-in entrances (Figure 4-30) of the Japanese



**Figure 4-30. A Crawling-in entrance in Japanese tea house.**

Garden," in Tunnard, *Gardens in the Modern Landscape* (New York: Charles Scribners' Sons, 1948), pp. 175-76].

<sup>105</sup>Professor Paul Sprague first discussed the inverted planning adopted in Wright's designs in his lecture addressed at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee in 1991.

<sup>106</sup>See M.F. Hearn, "A Japanese Inspiration for Frank Lloyd Wright's Rigid-Core High-Rise Structures," *JSAH L* (March 1991): 68-71.

tea houses and also of similar treatment in the arches of Richardsonian buildings.<sup>107</sup> The Japanese entrance through which guests enter is about 28 inches and 24 inches wide, and guests must enter on their knees. The dimension of Wright's entrance is much bigger and higher than the Japanese ones, but one feels smaller than it really is because of its long tunnel-like character. Both Wright's tunnel-like entrance and Japanese crawling-in entrance adopt the same spatial device. In both buildings, once one has entered inside through the small entrances, one feels that the rooms appear bigger than they really are. In addition, just as the tiny entrance of the Japanese tea house is the symbol of modesty, peace or equality, so the Wright's entrance might be designed as a means of enhancing the same qualities. In short, Wright did not develop many new concepts or create new architectural features during his late career. Rather, as Twombly pointed out, his "late residential work was ... built from a [ready-made] formula [in the best sense of the word]."<sup>108</sup> Even so, Wright's role can not be underestimated in terms of Japanese influences in American architecture after the Second World War. Although he did not adopt any new Japanese features in his designs after the war, his writings and work done before the war functioned continually as an important channel through which American architects such as Bruce Goff became intrigued by Japanese architecture and its principles.

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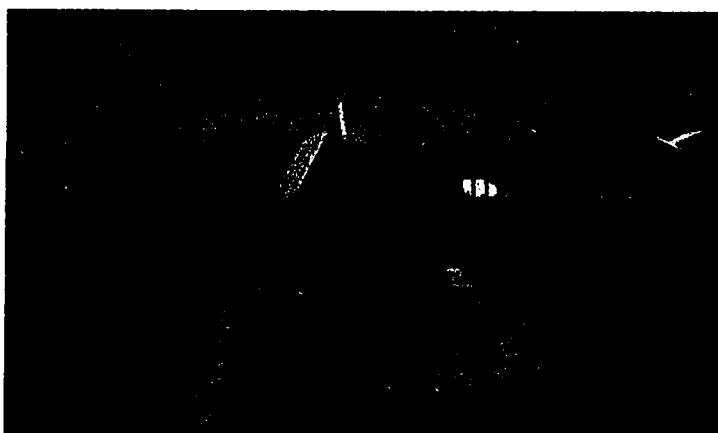
<sup>107</sup>My thanks to Prof. Clausen, who brought the similarity of Wright's entrance to the Japanese one to my attention.

<sup>108</sup>Robert Twombly, *op. cit.*, p. 343. "toward the end of his career...First of all, his innovative days as a residential architect were over. After the war, he did not design new houses so much as redesign old ones according to the social philosophy and construction technique of the Usonian period. He changed plans, programs and materials, varied size and room shapes, switched geometrical grids, played with trim and details, and put in new devices and equipment to make each dwelling different. But all were fundamentally related members of one family and more important, they were all variations on a now familiar architectural

Goff was a life-long admirer of the Wrightian principles of organic architecture, probably since 1915 when he had read Wright's 1908 article on organic architecture.<sup>109</sup> In an article published in the *Architectural Record*, Wright wrote,

Where can he [an architect] study the differentiation of form that goes to determine character as he can study them in the tree? Where can that sense of inevitableness characteristic of a work of art be quickened as it may be by intercourse with nature in this sense? Japanese art knows this school more intimately than that of any other people ... There should be as many kinds (styles) of houses as there are kinds (styles) of people and as many differentiations as there are different individuals. A man who has individuality (and what man lacks it?) has a right to its expression in his own environment.<sup>110</sup>

Although Goff's work was governed from his early career by Japanese or Wrightian principles of organic architecture, it was not until 1966 that he adopted any particular Japanese architectural forms in his work. In 1956, Goff designed a bachelor's house in



Bartlesville, Oklahoma for Joe Price, who had been a close friend and major patron of Goff's.<sup>111</sup> A decade later, in 1966, Price wanted Goff to build an addition to his house

**Figure 4-31. Goff, the Price house, Bartlesville, Oklahoma, 1966.**

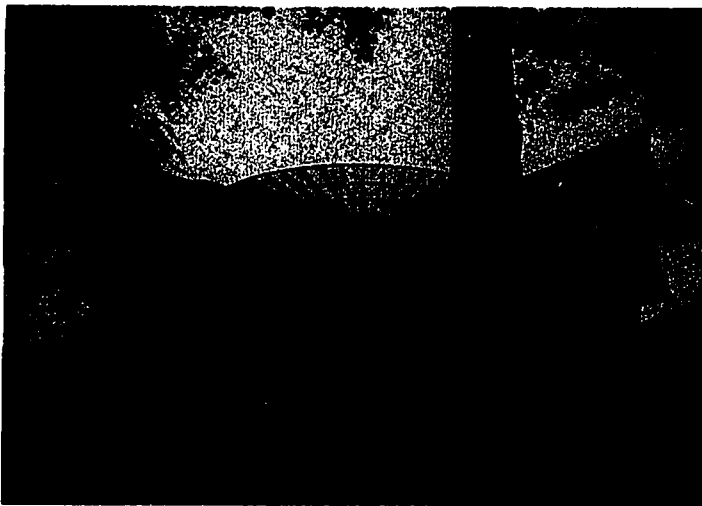
theme developed in the 1930s....The general run of Wright's late residential work was in this sense built from a formula, which is not to say that it was undesirable, for the formula was proven and humane."

<sup>109</sup>David Gilson De Long, *The Architecture of Bruce Goff: Buildings and Projects 1916-1974* (New York: Garland Publishing Inc., 1977), pp. 12-13.

<sup>110</sup>Wright, "In the Cause of Architecture," *Architectural Record* (March 1908), in F. Gutheim ed., *In the Cause of Architecture: Frank Lloyd Wright* New York: An Architectural Record Book, 1975, pp. 54-55.

<sup>111</sup>Price had known Goff since 1951 while he was studying electrical engineering at the University of Oklahoma where Goff was a Professor at the Department of Architecture. Since then, although Price's father and brother commissioned Wright to design the Price Tower in 1952 and later their own houses, Joe Price employed Goff for his residences and other public buildings.

because he needed more rooms for his newly-married Japanese wife and a museum to store and exhibit his collections of Japanese art work which Price began collecting from 1963. The museum Goff designed in 1966 reflected both client's and architect's knowledge of Japanese architectural features such as *shoji* screens, *tokonomas*, or Japanese *engawa* (in-between space like verandah area) under deep eaves of the *irimoya* style roofs (Figure 4-31). After building the addition, Goff was financed by the Prices to

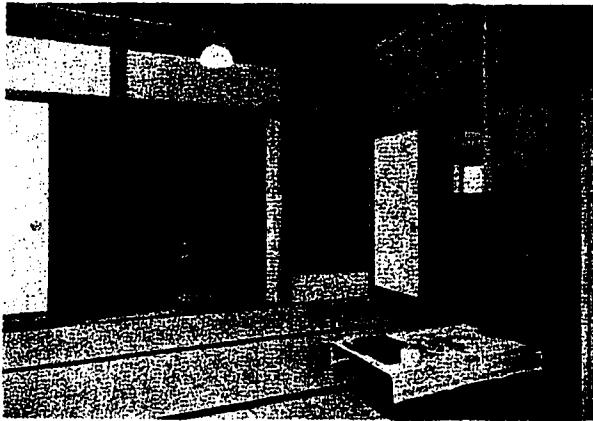


**Figure 4-32. Goff, the Bruce Plunkett house, Lake Village, Texas, 1970.**

visit Japan during March and April of 1969 for the first time in his life.<sup>112</sup> On his return from Japan, he incorporated some Japanese characteristics into his house designs. In the Bruce Plunkett house built in Lake Village, Texas in 1970 that Goff designed right after his visit to

Japan, his use of flaring eaves and fan-shaped walls are all Japanese in feeling. Especially in the door design with semi-circular glass panes on each side at the ground floor entrance (Figure 4-32), which would be also repeated in Jacob and Anna Harder house in Mountain Lake, Minnesota in 1971, one can see an evident similarities between the door design and the same feature in a usual Japanese chest design (Figure 4-33). Also in the Glen Harder house built in Mountain Lake, Minnesota in 1970, Goff repeated the

sweeping curves of flaring eaves and added the up-turning rain-plates placed above the chimneys which also reminds one of traditional Japanese roof lines. In addition, Goff's use of the rough unmatched and rounded fieldstone recalls the Greenes's similar use of



**Figure 4-33. An usual Japanese chest design, Harada's *Lesson*, 1936.**

them in their bungalows.<sup>113</sup> However,

Goff's ability to incorporate Japanese features into American buildings can be shown above all in his last work, the Pavilion for Japanese Art at the Los Angeles County Museum of Art. The

Pavilion was originally designed between

1978 and 1982 for an unspecified site to

exhibit Joe Price's collections of Japanese Edo-period (1615-1868) paintings. This was because Price commissioned Goff before Price decided on the museum where he would donate his collection. Goff died in 1982 just as he completed the design, and the next year Price finally chose the Los Angeles Museum of Art as the place for his collection since "in Southern California, [Price] simply found an interest in the Orient, especially Japan, that was lacking elsewhere."<sup>114</sup> Thus, the pavilion was constructed next to the Los Angeles County Museum between 1985 and 1988 by Goff's partner Bart Prince. As Price wrote, while designing the museum, he and Goff designated "the [Japanese] art itself as

<sup>112</sup>In appreciation of Goff's design of the museum in their house, Price and his Japanese wife Etsuko financed Goff's trip to Japan in March and April of 1969. It was Goff's first trip to abroad. See Jeffrey Cook, *The Architecture of Bruce Goff* (New York: Icon Editions, 1978), p. 89.

<sup>113</sup>Cook mentioned the piles of the fieldstone as Japanese. It is "Japanese technique of wedging with mortar behind, so that no mortar shows." (op. cit., p. 100). Once, Hitchcock mentioned similar things used in Wright's Williams house of 1895 as Japanese (see chapter II). But, both did not specify where in Japanese architecture that type of feature or technique was used.

the client to exhibit art as the artist expected it to be seen.”<sup>115</sup> Thus, to make the closest approximate to the environment in which viewers of old Japan enjoyed the art, Goff invented a translucent fiberglass material called ‘Kalwall’ for the walls in most of the



**Figure 4-34. Goff, the Japanese Pavilion, Los Angeles, 1978-88.**

galleries to create soft diffused light (Figure 4-34). This soft light should be intended not only as an equivalent of Japanese light filtered through the *shoji*, but also probably as a visual equivalent of *Moon Light* by Claude Debussy whom Goff acclaimed as “the finest artist in his mind and in his

work.”<sup>116</sup> This resulted in an environment closely similar to a traditional Japanese interior created by *shoji* screens. The non-load bearing glass-walls were made possible by the same technique that suspends the roofs of the structure from cables that are strung from the round columns and lintels in between. The crossing of two lintels above the columns are also strongly Japanese (Figure 4-35). The crossings remind



**Figure 4-35. Goff, the *chigi* elements in the Japanese**

one of the *chigi* (crossing gable-end boards forming a V shape) shown at the roofs of the

<sup>114</sup>Quoted in Paul Sachner, “House of the Tranquil Mind,” *Architectural Record* (September 1988): 95.

<sup>115</sup>Joe Price, “The Pavilion for Japanese Art,” *Arts of Asia* 19 (March-April 1989): 97.



Figure 4-36. The *chigi* in Ise shrine



Figure 4-37. Goff, the Japanese Pavilion interior, Los Angeles, 1978-88.

Ise shrine (Figure 4-36). The spaces for exhibition or display were also designed for Japanese art work and were created like Japanese *tokonomas*. However in the museum, unlike in Japanese *tokonomas*, viewing areas are separated from the *tokonomas* by an open space with a pool below (Figure 4-37). Thus, by this open space, the artwork being displayed can be kept a safe distance away from the viewer, and the usual glass protection, which causes

reflections, is not needed. Overall, if one compares Goff's museum to a traditional Japanese house with *shoji* screens, Wright's Guggenheim museum can be compared to a Gothic cathedral with clerestorey windows.

In the eastern states, a series of Mies' buildings also incorporated Japanese influences. During the years 1946-51, Mies designed and built a suburban weekend house in Plano, Illinois for a

nephrologist, Dr. Edith Farnsworth. The Farnsworth house (Figure 4-38) was built in a flat meadow between tall leafy trees, with its living room facing the Fox River. Overall it

<sup>116</sup>For a relationship between Goff's architecture and music, see Sidney Robinson, "Bruce Goff and Music," in P. Saliga and Woolever ed., *The Architecture of Bruce Goff: 1904-1982 Design for the Continuous*

is a rectangular glass-box which is supported by eight steel columns pulled to the exterior so as to give maximum flexibility in internal arrangement. The floor of the house is raised five feet above the ground and is accessed from ground level by a low stair. Raising the house was to ride above the level of the river's occasional floods. Therefore, the function of Mies' raised-floor was very different from that of Le Corbusier's which was to be used

as the space for an access to the house, for example, in the Villa Savoy.



**Figure 4-38. Mies, the Farnsworth house, Plano, Illinois, 1946-51.**

Concerning Japanese influences in the house, notable is the structural clarity shown in the house represented by the modularity and the skin and skeletal structure, i.e., the load-bearing columns and non-load-bearing glass walls. Many other features also represent Japanese

characteristics which one can find in the Katsura Palace. In Katsura, which is also a rural retreat facing a river (the Katsura River), the floor is raised so as to prevent moisture from the ground seeping into the rooms. Also the rooms could be open to the surrounding landscape if the shoji screens are taken away. When Werner Blaser, who studied under Mies at the I.I.T. in the early 1950s, visited Japan in 1953 and 1961, he found close similarities between Japanese shoin buildings and Mies's houses. His statement concerning the similarities can perfectly fit to describe the similarities between Katsura and the Farnsworth house:

What I realized to be the basic principle of Mies van der Rohe's architecture I was astonished to find again in the Japanese dwellings of the 15th to 18th centuries: the conception of a design preceding from the interior outwards, starting from a very small but important unit, the "tatami" mat - the raising of the building above the ground - the clear separation of "skin and skeleton" - the open plan without fixed walls - the relationship between interior and exterior in which the garden becomes part of the house and, resulting from these basic features of design, a clear, formal organization of the structure embodying a splendid sense of aesthetic balance.<sup>117</sup>

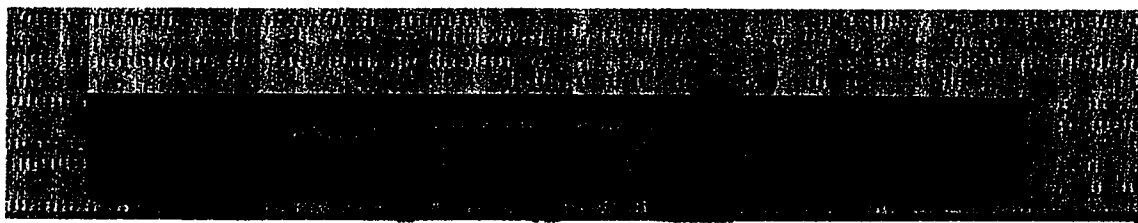


**Figure 4-39. Mies, A Conceptual Drawing, 1934.**

In other words, if one put a Japanese *irimoya* roof, a type used in Katsura, on the Farnsworth house, it might resemble Katsura. Were these similarities a result of Mies' incorporation of Japanese features in his design process of the Farnsworth

house or were they a product of

unconnected parallelism? It is useful here to examine when and how in his career Mies developed the idea of a house with a raised floor and a totally open glass-box to the surrounding gardens. Mies first developed such a house design not in the Farnsworth house, but in three conceptual sketches of 1934. As Schulze pointed out in *The Mies van*



**Figure 4-40. Mies, the Resor house Project, 1936-38.**

<sup>117</sup>Werner Blaser, *Classical Dwelling Houses in Japan* (Tokyo: Kinokuniya Book-Store Co., Ltd., 1958), p. 11.

*der Rohe Archive*,<sup>118</sup> one of the drawings (Figure 4-39) prefigures Mies's first American project, the Resor house (Figure 4-40) designed in 1936-38 and planned to be built in Jackson Hole, Wyoming. The aborted project of the house designed for Mrs. Stanley Resor, a trustee of MoMA at New York, represents basically the same features such as the raised floor or the idea of glass-box which Mies would use later in the Farnsworth house. Right before Mies designed the Resor house in around 1936, he could have learned of the Japanese feature through reading a book on Katsura.<sup>119</sup> In 1935 in Berlin where Mies then lived, Yoshida published *The Japanese Houses*. The book, published in German, was reviewed even in American journals and was the first book written in a



**Figure 4-41. Mies, the Crown Hall, IIT Campus, Illinois, 1950-56.**

Western language where the Japanese Katsura Palace was introduced to the West through rich illustrations.<sup>120</sup>

Furthermore, Mies's talk at the Armor Institute of Technology in 1938 evinced his interest in

Japanese architecture by the late 1930s. Thus, it is possible that Mies saw the illustrations and a year later incorporated the features of Katsura into his Resor project. After the project was aborted, when he was designing the Farnsworth house in 1946 he revived the plan adopted for the project partly because the idea of the raised floor fit the damp

<sup>118</sup>Franz Schulze, "Glass House on a Hillside 1934," in Arthur Drexler *The Mies van der Rohe Archive* ed., vol. IV, (New York and London: Garland Publishing, Inc., 1986), p. 158.

<sup>119</sup>It is also likely that Mies incorporated the similar feature he saw in Le Corbusier's Villa Savoye of 1929.

condition of the flood plain on which the Farnsworth house site was located. Later, he adopted the similar features in a number of other works such as the Caine house project of 1950 and the Crown Hall (Figure 4-41) at the Illinois Institute of Technology built in 1950-56.

Philip Johnson also adopted some of the Japanese features filtered through Mies. As Johnson himself wrote, his Glass house built in New Canaan, Connecticut in 1949 owed much to Mies's Farnsworth house, though Johnson's house was firmly planted on the ground.<sup>121</sup> Mies' and Johnson's incorporation of Japanese features were noted by Venturi in his *Complexity and Contradiction in Architecture* published in 1966. Concerning such "analogies between Japanese pavilions and recent domestic architecture" such as Johnson's Glass house, Venturi pointed out their "oversimplification" and coined the phrase "Less is a bore."<sup>122</sup>

The assumption of Japanese influences in Mies' Resor project and other later works such as the Farnsworth house can be also supported by the fact that during the 1930s, Mies had had plenty of contact with Japanese and Chinese architecture. Richard Neutra's recollection provides an example of Mies' contact with Japanese architecture during the 1930s. In 1930 when Neutra came to the Bauhaus in Dessau right after his visit to Japan, he and Mies got to know each other and they often discussed "the future of world

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<sup>120</sup>The 1935 edition of Yoshida's book included more than 20 figures of Katsura. For reviews of the book, see my chapter III.

<sup>121</sup>Philip Johnson, *The Glass House* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1993), David Whitney and Jeffrey Kipnis ed., p. 11. Johnson wrote that "The idea of a glass house comes from Mies van der Rohe ... My debt is therefore clear, in spite of obvious difference in composition and relation to the ground."

<sup>122</sup>Venturi, *Complexity and Contradiction in Architecture* (New York: MoMA, 1966), p. 17.

architecture.”<sup>123</sup> Apparently, Mies learned from Neutra about Japanese architecture during their discussion while Neutra taught as a guest professor at the Bauhaus in 1930. Also in 1937, according to Blaser, the Chinese architect Chen-Kuan Lee visited Mies shortly before his departure for America in 1937, and Mies is “said to have acknowledged a Chinese architectural influence.”<sup>124</sup> Blaser did not write any detail about specific features that may have influenced Mies. However, if Mies mentioned such Oriental influence in the late 1930s, it suggests that Mies was at least interested in Far-Eastern architecture during this time.

From the discussion, it is interesting to note that not only was the work done by advocates of organic or regional architecture, like Belluschi or Goff, influenced by Japanese architecture after World War Two, but also the work of the other faction of American design, those who created or supported the International Style architecture such as Mies van der Rohe or Philip Johnson, were also influenced by Japanese architecture, though in different ways.

## Gardens

After World War II, many Americans visited Japan and thus experienced actual Japanese gardens in person. This personal experience of Japanese gardening was further stimulated by a Japanese garden created in the garden of the Museum of Modern Art,

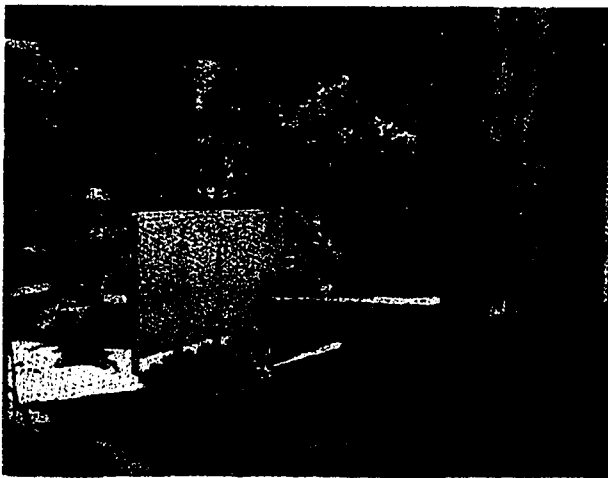
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<sup>123</sup>Dione Neutra, *Richard Neutra: Promise and Fulfillment 1919-1932, Selections from the Letters and Diaries of Richard and Dione Neutra* (Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 1986), p. 189.

<sup>124</sup>He cited Chuan Wen Sun, *Der Einfluss des Chinesischen Konzeptes auf die moderne Architektur*, Stuttgart 1982 (IGMA Dissertation 12), p. 119 [in Blaser, *West Meets East: Mies van der Rohe* (Basel, Boston and Berlin: Birkhauser, 1996), p. 6]. In the book, Blaser mainly focuses on the influences of Chinese philosophy such as Lao-Tse's or Zen in Mies' architecture and also on similarities between Chinese courtyard houses and Mies' courtyard houses. In contrast, Japanese architecture was discussed briefly here

New York in 1954. After the exhibition, reflecting the strong interests in Japanese gardening, many books on traditional Japanese gardening were published. Among many others, there were Harada's *Japanese Gardens* of 1956, Tetsuro Yoshida's *Gardens of Japan* of 1957, David Engel's *Japanese Gardens for Today* of 1959, and in 1964 the republication of Conder's seminal books, *Landscape Gardening in Japan* and *The Supplement to the Landscape Gardening in Japan* which were first published in 1893.<sup>125</sup>

Right after the war, however, scholars like Tunnard seemed hesitant to openly propagandize the superiority of Japanese garden aesthetics probably because of



**Figure 4-42. Tunnard, a garden at a Cambridge house, before 1948.**

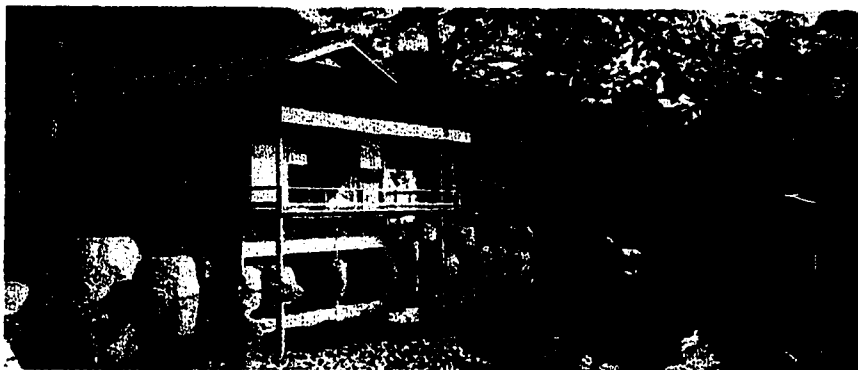
Americans' enmity against Japan. In 1948 when he published a revised edition of his *Gardens in the Modern Landscape*, he combined two chapters into one by keeping the content intact and leaving out only a chapter title, "The Oriental Aesthetics," in which he had dealt with Japanese influences in modern Western landscape architecture. In any

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(pp. 108-109, "In dialogue with Japan") where Blaser dealt with the similarities between Japanese architecture and Mies' without commenting on the matter of influences.

<sup>125</sup>Harada, *Japanese Garden* (Massachusetts: Charles Branford Co., 1956); Yoshida, *Gardens of Japan*, (New York: Praeger, 1957); Engel, *Japanese Gardens for Today* (Tokyo & Rutland: Tuttle Co., 1959); Conder *Landscape Gardening in Japan* (New York: Dover Publications Inc., 1964).

Besides the books mentioned above, there were many books published in English: Samuel Newsom, *A Thousand Years of Japanese Gardens* (Tokyo: Tokyo News Service, 1953, 1955); Kanto Shigemori with Newsom, *Japanese Gardens, A Guide to Form and Serenity in Contemporary Living* (Tokyo: Tokyo News Service, 1960); Yoshinobu Yoshinaga, *Composition and Expression in Japanese Traditional Gardens* (Tokyo, 1962); and so on. Also, Tunnard published his revised edition of *Gardens in the Modern Landscape* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1948, first published in 1938) where he discussed about Japanese influences in modern Western landscape gardening.



**Figure 4-43. Yoshimura, Tea house and garden, Tarrytown, New York, 1960-63.**

case, his knowledge of Japanese landscape architecture was also reflected in his work. Tunnard illustrated in his book a garden

he created at a Cambridge house designed by the architects Stone and Kock. In the garden, he introduced a Japanese garden screen (Figure 4-42) to “break the rectangular enclosure of the small courtyard,”<sup>126</sup> a feature frequently used in traditional Japanese flat gardens.

Later in the mid-1950s, after the MoMA exhibition, impressed by the Japanese buildings and gardens shown in the exhibition, Nelson Rockefeller commissioned Junzo Yoshimura, who was the architect of the MoMA house, to design his private home and garden in a Japanese style. Yoshimura’s Tea house and garden (Figure 4-43), which were built in 1960-63 in Tarrytown, New York, were designed in the spirit of Katsura Imperial Villa and garden. Reflecting Americans’ interests in Zen, Rockefeller also added a Japanese rock garden like one in the Ryoan-ji temple. To build a Japanese house and garden on a big estate was not a new phenomenon, as discussed in chapter 2, and the trend has been continued to the present as a Japanese garden in the computer billionaire Murdock’s California estate demonstrates.

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<sup>126</sup>Tunnard, *op. cit.*, p. 168.

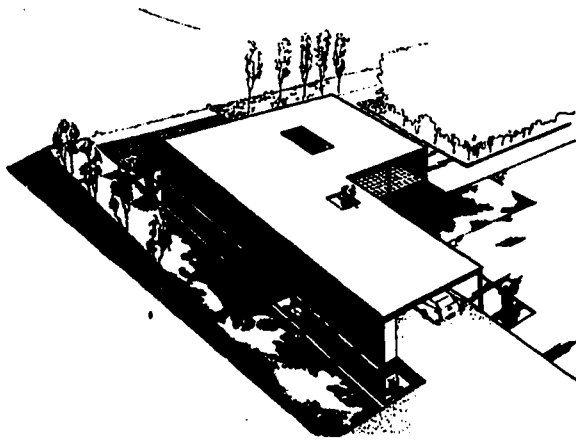
While a faithful copy of a famous Japanese garden in an American estate was a way of introducing Japanese influence to American landscape architecture, a use of Japanese garden paraphernalia in modern Western gardens, as in Tunnard's garden, marked another. In addition to the two types of Japanese influenced gardens, there was another type. Some American landscape architects digested lessons learned from traditional Japanese gardening and incorporated its principles into Western buildings. Among the lessons American landscape architects picked up from Japanese gardening principles, the most important one was the strong relationship between the house and its surroundings in traditional Japanese architecture. In his article published in 1948 in Tunnard's *Gardens in the Modern Landscape*, Joseph Hudnut emphasized the importance of the breaking the ancient boundary between architecture and landscape architecture.

Gardens, like houses, are built of space. Gardens are fragments of space set aside by the planes of terraces and walls and disciplined foliage. Until now we have defined too nicely the differences between that space which is roofed and within the house and that which is left outside and around the house. We did not see, until the architect threw down his walls, that the space of house and that of garden are parts of a single organism; that the secret of the unity lies in a unity of spatial sequences. The new vision has dissolved the ancient boundary between architecture and landscape architecture. The garden flows into and over the house: through loggias and courts and wide areas of clear glass, and over roofs and sun-rooms and canopied terraces. The house reaches out into the garden with walls and terraced enclosures that continue its rhythms and share its grace. The concordant factor is the new quality given to space.<sup>127</sup>

Although Hudnut's article, which appears to be a summary of Tunnard's book, did not relate this dissolution of the boundary to a Japanese influence, Tunnard attributed such a dissolution to Japanese garden principles as discussed in chapter III. As Tunnard

predicted, the Japanese “appreciation of form and texture, which combine to create unity between architecture and its surroundings,” have very well served as part of the basis for modern Western landscape architecture.<sup>128</sup>

Pierre Koenig’s Bailey house (Figure 4-44), which was the Case Study House #21 designed for the *Arts and Architecture* in 1959 in Los Angeles, California, represented a Japanese contribution to a dissolution of the boundary between the house and garden in American architecture. Thanks to the steel framed construction, Koenig opened the interiors to nature by means of large sliding glass doors. A strong interrelationship



**Figure 4-44. Koenig, the Bailey house, Los Angeles, California, 1959.**

between the house and garden in the Bailey house was also achieved by devices such as outside terraces Koenig provided to each of the main rooms, brick-paved bridges connecting the house and yard, and a long moat-like pool of water around and through the house. Koenig himself stated of his idea

in this house that

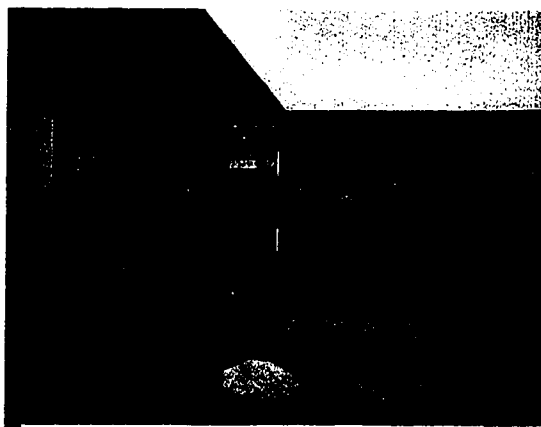
As outdoor living became more important, we felt that houses should reflect this. Outdoor space became a continuation of indoor space; buildings moved down to slab-level so that the outside could continue the inside. Glass was used to extend indoor space visually. Kitchens were turned around so that meals could be served directly from the kitchen to the outdoors. The garage went to the front of the house and carport were introduced. Open-planning allowed interaction between the family at the highest level, especially

<sup>127</sup>Joseph Hudnut, “The Modern Garden,” in Tunnard, *Gracens in the Modern Landscape* (New York and London: Charles Scribner’s Sons and The Architectural Press, 1948), p. 178.

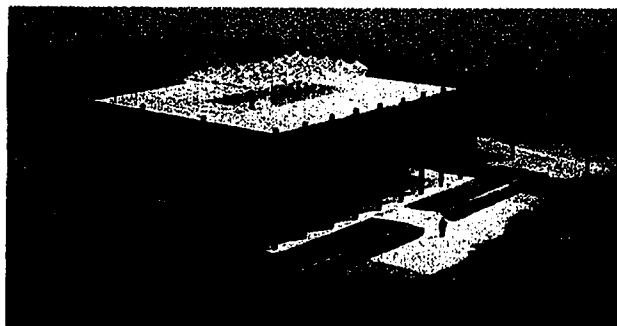
during meal times. Eating, playing, and homework were done in one space rather than in individual rooms.<sup>129</sup>

The arrangement of moat-like pool of water surrounding the house made the Bailey house (Figure 4-45) like an island set in a reflecting pool, just as Japanese castles and Minoru Yamasaki's Reynolds Metals Regional Sales Office (Figure 4-46) built in 1959 in Southfield, Michigan surrounded by pool of water.<sup>130</sup> The arrangement of rocks in the reflecting pool and gravel also recalls that of Japanese rock gardens of which a fine

example was exhibited in the New York MoMA Exhibition of 1954-55. It also reminds



**Figure 4-45. Koenig, the Bailey house, the arrangement of rocks in the reflecting pool, Los Angeles, California, 1959.**



**Figure 4-46. Yamasaki, Reynolds Metals Regional Sales Office, Southfield, Michigan, 1959.**

<sup>128</sup>Tunnard, op. cit., p. 91.

<sup>129</sup>Pierre Koenig, quoted in Davis Jenkins and James Steele, *Pierre Koenig* (London: the Phaidon Press, 1998), p. 15.

<sup>130</sup>Although the Seattle-born Japanese-American architect Minoru Yamasaki himself mentioned about Japanese influences on his work here and there in his autobiography, there are not many work in which one can see prominent Japanese-inspired features [see Yamasaki, *A Life in Architecture* (New York: Weatherhill, 1979), pp. 29-36.

one of Isamu Noguchi's later sculptural gardens such as the Chase Manhattan Plaza garden built in 1964 in New York.<sup>131</sup>

The house designed and built by James Rose in 1954 in Ridgewood, New Jersey is another quintessential example of strong relationship between the house and garden. It consists of a main house, guest house, and studio, "interspersed with gardens." In the house, the open spaces are made "integral" or "fused" with the enclosed, as Rose titled his description of the house "Fusion--a step toward intergration," which was published in *Creative Gardens* in 1958.<sup>132</sup> Rose created many devices to give continuity to house and garden: large glass doors opens up the interior to exterior;



**Figure 4-47. Rose, the house and garden in Ridgewood, New Jersey, 1954.**

the guest house hearth extends outdoors becoming plant box (Figure 4-47) block wall of

<sup>131</sup>Noguchi was born in Los Angeles in 1904 to Leonie Gilmour, an American writer and Yonejiro Noguchi, a Japanese poet. He moved to Japan in 1906 and stayed there until 1918 when he came back to the U.S. to attend an American school. For more details, see his autobiography, *Isamu Noguchi: A Sculptor's World* London: Thames and Hudson, 1967, and also Bruce Altshuler, *Isamu Noguchi* New York: Abbeville, 1994. During his visit to Japan in 1950, Noguchi learned traditional Japanese attitudes toward stone while he was working on a garden for the new Tokyo Building of *Reader's Digest* designed by Antonin Raymond in 1951. The lesson was first formalized in his *Jardin Japonais* in the UNESCO Headquarters in Paris created in 1956-58. After the garden in Paris, Noguchi continued to use Japanese garden features, especially the features of the dry garden. From the early 1950s, Noguchi collaborated with Miesian disciples like Gordon Bunshaft of Skidmore, Owings & Merrill with whom Noguchi accompanied to the Japanese sand garden in the Ryoan-ji in 1960. See Carol Krinsky, *Gordon Bunshaft of Skidmore, Owings & Merrill* (New York: The Architectural History Foundation and the MIT Press, 1988), p. 164.

The Chase sunken garden was placed within bank offices below a pedestrian plaza in downtown Manhattan. In the 'circular water garden' which is different from the Japanese dry sand garden, Noguchi placed the seven natural stones, which he "fished" from the Uji River near Kyoto, asymmetrically on the

the dining space extends beyond house toward the kitchen garden; solid extended house



**Figure 4-48. Fay Jones, Pinecote Pavilion, Picayune, Mississippi, 1987.**

wall forms back of garden seat and continues the enclosure of walled bedroom garden of main house. Besides this integration of the house and garden, Rose frequently used Japanese-type *shoji* and bamboo screens in his gardens, for example, in a tea garden, a garden in Miami, an atrium of Baltimore house and a Boudoir garden

designed for the *Ladies Home Journal*.<sup>133</sup>

Another prime example of the strong harmony between the building and its surroundings is Fay Jones's Pinecote Pavilion (Figure 4-48) built in Picayune, Mississippi in 1987. The siting, texture and form of this simple gathering place in the landscape is designed to be fused into surrounding landscape. In Jones's pavilion, the overall structure is low and wide in response to Southern Mississippi's flat landscape and the unpainted wooden columns supporting a 27-foot high roof remind one of the surrounding pine

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concentric patterns of the paving which is reminiscent of "the contour raking of Japanese gardens" and also of "the stylized sea waves [of Chinese gardens]" (see Noguchi, op. cit., p. 171).

<sup>132</sup>James C. Rose, *Creative Gardens* (New York: Reinhold Publishing Corporation, 1958), pp. 107-131.

<sup>133</sup>For illustrations, see Rose, *Creative Gardens*, pp. 9, 36, 65, and 146-48.

Rose's knowledge of Japanese landscape gardening could be achieved from his "friend and master Antonin Raymond" (see *Creative Gardens*, p. 134). Regarding Rose's denial of Japanese influence on him, see Rose, *Gardens Makes Me Laugh* (Baltimore and London: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1990), first published in 1965, pp. 52-80.

forest.<sup>134</sup> As Robert A. Ivy Jr. observed, viewed from a distance, the open building of the Pinecote pavilion, which “seems to float on a pond” recalls “the spirit of the Kinkaku” or Golden pavilion (Figure 4-49) in Kyoto, Japan and “encourages reflection on humanity’s relationship with nature.”<sup>135</sup> In addition, the exposed trellis at the end of the roof represents Jones’s admiration for the West Coast architects such as Greene and Greene and Harris.<sup>136</sup> They had influenced Jones to be

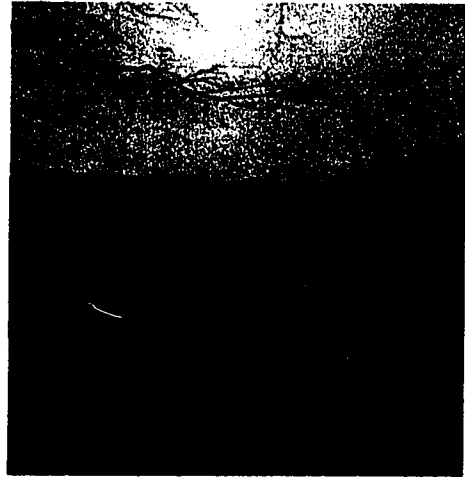


Figure 4-49. Kinkaku, Kyoto, 14th-century.

interested in Japanese characteristics such as “a reverence for nature with an emphasis on harmonious siting and landscaping, a continuity between indoor and outdoor space, and the employment of both still and moving water,” among others.<sup>137</sup>

Other landscape architects, who worked with the SOM, such as Hideo Sasaki also incorporated Japanese landscape features into the buildings designed by the firm. In an inner court garden (Figure 5-50) at the Upjohn General Office Building site in Kalamazoo, Michigan built in 1961, Sasaki intended “to provide a completely unified design, contrasting biomorphic forms with rectilinear geometry.”<sup>138</sup> As Noguchi’s natural and circular forms in the gardens of SOM designed buildings, Sasaki’s biomorphic rocks

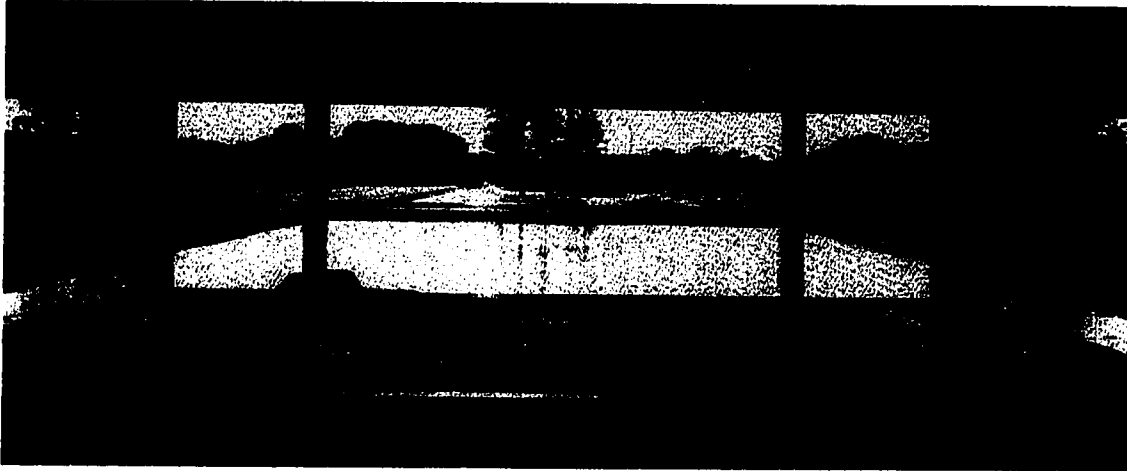
<sup>134</sup>Robert Adams Ivy Jr., *Fay Jones: The Architecture of E. Fay Jones, FAIA* (Washington D.C.: The American Institute of Architects Press, 1992), p. 76.

<sup>135</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 83.

<sup>136</sup>As discussed in previous chapters, the exposed trellis was frequently used by Greene and Greene, Maybeck, Harris and others.

...<sup>137</sup>Ivy, Jr., *op. cit.*, p. 26.

<sup>138</sup>Cited in An Editor, “SOM’s Landscape Architecture,” *Progressive Architecture* (June 1962): 142.



**Figure 4-50. Sasaki, inner court garden, the Upjohn General Office Building, Kalamazoo, Michigan, 1961.**

give a warm and deeply-moving feeling to the otherwise cold and geometrically-oriented buildings.

In sum, as three different products of the meeting between Japanese and American landscape architecture, I have discussed 1) faithful copy of famous Japanese gardens, 2) use of Japanese garden paraphernalia in Western-style gardens, and 3) incorporation of Japanese garden principle into Western landscape. The first two began to appear on American soil from the very early period of Japan-America contact, for example, in the gardens created for the Philadelphia Centennial ground in 1876 and in the Mid-Winter Fair in San Francisco of 1894. However, the third appeared in the field of American gardening during the 1930s when Tunnard provided theoretical grounds in his book of 1938 and Neutra incorporated his houses with gardens. Since then, these three types continue to be employed by American landscape architects to the present according to their different needs.

## CONCLUSION

The primary aim of my dissertation has been to analyze the specific nature of the Japanese impact on American architecture and landscape architecture, and how it changed from 1854, when Japan opened its door to America, up to the present. Overall traditional Japanese architecture has had a significant impact on the development of both the physical forms and the underlying principles of American design.

Before summarizing the nature of the influences that has been discussed, it is important to identify different paths through which American architects have been inspired by traditional Japanese architecture and different ways in which American architects have incorporated Japanese inspiration into their work. During the years of Japanese/American cultural exchange under scrutiny, American architects were mainly inspired by Japanese architecture through three different paths: genuine Japanese buildings built in America; illustrations and descriptions of Japanese buildings represented in various media such as books, articles, slides and post cards; and Japanese buildings in situ shown to American travelers. Firstly, immediately after Japan opened its door to the West in 1854, the inspiration came from looking at the Japanese exhibition buildings built on the international exposition grounds in Philadelphia (1876), Chicago (1893), San Francisco (1894) and Saint Louis (1904). American architects at the turn of the century, who were inspired by traditional Japanese architecture, such as Wright, Greene and Greene, Mullgardt and Maybeck, all attended at least one of these expositions. After World War II, Japanese house and garden exhibited at the New York MoMA was another main

avenue through which American architects as well as the public learned of Japanese designs.

Secondly, American architects were inspired by the black and white drawings included in books on Japanese culture in general, such as Engelbert Kaempfer's *History of Japan* (1727) and Rutherford Alcock's *Capital of the Tycoon* (1863), and by the black and white photographs and drawings published in the books on traditional Japanese architecture such as Edward Morse's *Japanese Homes and Their Surroundings* (1885), Joshia Conder's *Landscape Gardening in Japan* (1893), Ralph A. Cram's *Impressions of Japanese Architecture* (1905), Jiro Harada's *Gardens of Japan* (1928), Harada's *The Lesson of Japanese Architecture* (1936), Arthur Drexler's *Architecture of Japan* (1955) Kokusai Bunka Shinkokai's *Traditions of Japanese Garden* (1962) and most recently William Coaldrake's *Architecture and Authority in Japan* (1996). They were also likely influenced by the *ukiyo-e* prints in color like Hiroshige's prints in *One Hundred Famous Views of Edo* (1857) and by slides presented in architectural history classes and so on. Cram's and Greene and Greene's use of Morse's illustrations prove the importance of these illustrations, and Wright stated about his debt to the qualities of Japanese prints such as 'elimination of insignificant.'

Thirdly, from the turn of the century American architects were inspired by direct contact with Japanese buildings in Japan. Cram (1898), Wright (1905, 1914-21), Richard Neutra (1930), Charles Moore (1951), Walter Gropius (1954), Pietro Belluschi (1956), Gordon Bunshaft (1960?) and Bruce Goff (1969), in particular, profited from their trips to Japan. In addition, many groups of young architects solicited by the American Institute of

Architects went to Japan to see buildings and gardens during the late 1950s. While all three channels had contributed to form Japanese-inspired buildings in America, how each affected American architecture differently remains subjects of discussion.

Through these paths, appealing features of traditional Japanese architecture reached within American architects' range of selection and their modes of selection have generally occurred in three different ways: juxtaposition of Japanese element(s) with their own ones; transplant whole building; and abstract the elements and incorporate them. First, when some American architects found particular forms in Japanese architecture intriguing aesthetically, functionally or structurally, they simply borrowed and juxtaposed them with their own Western elements in their buildings or gardens. This type of Japanese influence was apparent during the early years of Japanese/American cultural exchange, when American architects such as McKim, Mead and White adopted the Japanese *ramma* motif in the living room of the Queen Anne style Victor Newcomb house. Also were adopted in Cram's Knapp house and Greene and Greene's bungalows. The use of Japanese garden paraphernalia like stone lanterns and stepping stones in Western-style gardens also represents this type of Japanese influence.

Secondly, other American architects imitated an entire Japanese structure without great change and transplanted it in American soil. For example, Cram built the Knapp Tea house in the same way as the Japanese build it. Japanese gardens created in such large estate gardens as the Rockefellers' were also designed in a genuine Japanese hill garden style.

Thirdly, still other American architects synthesized Japanese architectural principles or forms with their own. Wright selected Japanese elements such as low, horizontal and organic characteristics and incorporated them into his domestic architecture including the Prairie and the Usonian houses. American garden designers such as Harris, James Rose and Fay Jones incorporated the close relationship between house and garden into their work by using the repetition of architectural materials in both house and garden and by creating many means of access between outdoor and indoor.

Then, why have the American architects been intrigued by Japanese forms and principles and selected them? American architects selected certain Japanese forms and principles when they sought some external reference to solve their own vexing design problems. As their problems differed through the time, so were the ways they perceived Japanese architecture. These various perspectives are evident when one reads literature written by Western architects on traditional Japanese architecture. Early Western writers' descriptions of Japanese buildings were basically the same as those of the later ones, although their emphases varied based on their own leading ideas. Accordingly, the specific focus on what they found intriguing shifted over the years. Before the 1876 Philadelphia Exposition, Japanese architecture had not been widely known in the West. During the time, American architects' interest in Japanese architecture appeared to reflect mere curiosity or romantic sentiment for exotic, primitive freshness that could be found in Japanese culture. After the exposition, where the first real Japanese buildings in America were exhibited, American understanding of things Japanese began to grow. During the early years of Japanese/American cultural exchange, American writers like Morse found

the fine craftsmanship and picturesque qualities of Japanese houses intriguing. Western architects such as Christopher Dresser and C. T. Matthews were also attracted by the heavy ornamentation of Japanese shrines demonstrated in the design at Nikko. This trend appeared to reflect their own architectural principles, for example, ornament-oriented Victorian architecture. Not surprisingly, Westerners found Japanese structural features not as a practical model for their own use. Morse conceived Japanese houses as too fragile and not suitable to America because of the different climatic and cultural conditions.

At the turn of the century, American architects such as Cram questioned the importance of ornamentation in Japanese as well as American architectures. Unlike his predecessors who thought Nikko as the most laudable Japanese architecture, he found the real Japaneseness in the Hō-ō-dō, a structure much simpler than Nikko in terms of ornamentation. Such a conception of Cram, who was one of the founding members of the Boston Arts and Crafts Society, also reflected his allegiance to ideals of the Arts and Crafts Movement.

American architects between the two world wars were intrigued by Japanese architecture mainly because they conceived it as offering solutions for their design ideals including standardization, variety in unity, conformity to a mode of living, connection with nature, and usefulness to purpose. Beginning at this time, American architects also gained interest in Japanese *shoin* style domestic architecture, such as Katsura, because Western architects like Neutra and Taut began to be aware of similarities between their own architectural principles and those of traditional Japanese architecture. This strong

interest and awareness of the affinities faded during World War II for American architects who were reluctant to admire Japanese culture when at war with Japan.

After World War II, however, American architects revived their interests in Japanese architecture because, following the war, they urgently needed a solution for standardization and modular construction. During this period, Chicago architects like Mies were more interested in Japanese structural characteristics such as the clear separation of skin and skeleton, the open plan without fixed walls and the modular system based on the *tatami* mat. In contrast, West Coast architects like Belluschi and Harris were intrigued mainly by Japanese use of wood and the close relationship between the house and surrounding gardens.

These changing attitudes toward Japanese architecture in both different regions and times were reflected in the works of American architects since Japan had opened its door to the US in 1854. The first documented American use of Japanese architectural forms did not appear until after the 1876 Philadelphia Exposition. Looking at the Japanese exhibition buildings and reading books and articles about Japanese architecture, which rapidly multiplied after the exposition, American architects incorporated some Japanese elements into their buildings. The first such elements were the Japanese *ramma* and *kamoi*. McKim, Mead and White were the first architects who incorporated the features into their interiors during the early 1880s. Later, in 1889, Wright also adopted them in his own house. Other influential Japanese buildings built in America were exhibition buildings at the 1893 Chicago Columbian Exposition and Cram's Knapp house and Tea Garden built in 1895-98. Many American architects such as Wright, Greene and Greene

and Maybeck saw the exhibition buildings, and subsequently, aspects of the Japanese buildings, such as the *irimoya* roof, cruciform plan and horizontal railing, were reflected in their works at the turn of the century. The Japanese hill garden created at the Knapp house appeared to be influenced by Morse's *Japanese Homes* and Conder's *Landscape Gardening in Japan*.

During the period between 1897 and 1914, American architects who ascribed to the Arts and Crafts movement needed a fresh but respected source to counter the prevailing Victorian and the academic Beaux-Arts architecture. They saw Japanese architecture as rejecting false ornament in favor of honest and simple structure as well as the fine craftsmanship and picturesque qualities that characterized the Arts and Crafts architecture. They found such an inspiration in the Japanese exhibition buildings and in books on Japanese architecture. Cram's *Impressions* of 1905 and articles published in the *Craftsman* magazine were particularly influential. As a result of this learning at the turn of the century, American architects like the Greene brothers boldly began to use Japanese exterior features such as Japanese *irimoya* roofs, deep over-hanging eaves, structural timber work and stepping stones as well as interior features such as *ramma* and *kamoi* and use of Japanese lanterns. In the realm of gardening, some large estate owners brought Japanese garden masters to the US to add a typical Japanese garden to their collection of various European style gardens. Other Japanese-style gardens were laid out in small lots where American architects did not copy typical Japanese gardens but adopted some features or principles of Japanese garden art.

In between the two world wars, on the West Coast a number of architects such as Belluschi, Neutra and Harris integrated Japanese principles and forms into their own work, and created regionally inflected modern buildings. They learned about the Japanese features, which they held in common, in a number of ways: through once-filtered Japanese characteristics in Wright's architecture and books on Japanese architecture. Also common among these West Coast architects was the fact that they all put a heavy weight in their practice on the harmony between the buildings and their surroundings. Such an emphasis on harmony with nature was one of the most prominent differences which characterized the work of the West Coast architects from that of the East Coast architects, from the 1940s and onwards, focused more on the structural clarity of Japanese architecture. In the field of landscape gardening, Tunnard provided in 1938 some theoretical grounds for synthesizing Japanese principles into Western landscape, instead of simply copying them. With the advent of steel frame construction, as Tunnard suggested, it became possible for Western architects to build houses in accordance with the Japanese principles.

After World War II, advocates of organic or regional architecture (Belluschi or Goff , for example) as well as creators and supporters of the International Style architecture (for example, Mies or Philip Johnson) were also influenced by Japanese architecture, though in different ways. Another group of West Coast architects such as Neutra, the Eames, Eero Saarinen and Pierre Koenig, who designed Case Study houses for Arts & Architecture during the 1950s and 60s, were all intrigued by both structural clarity of modern architecture and Japanese close relationship between house and garden. The

Japanese unity between the house and garden was in part achieved by their use of steel framing in the case study houses. The framing enabled them to open up the whole side of the room to its surroundings by means of large sliding glass doors which function like the *shoji* screens in the Japanese house and garden. Gropius' writings on Japanese architecture (1955) and the MoMA Japanese house exhibition (1954-55), which was the phenomenally successful showing of a complete Japanese *shoin* style house and garden, contributed to the spread of Japanese house and garden influence among the architects of the case study houses as well as America's middle class.

In summary, there are many important Japanese-inspired forms and principles which have contributed to the development of modern American architecture, such as modular organization, visible framed structure, open planning with movable partitions, built-in furniture, close interaction of house and garden, plain walls, frank exploitation of wood, horizontally, effect of shadows and diffused light, plus many more architectural details such as *shoji*-like grid, *irimoya* roofs, deep-overhanging eaves with exposed rafters. Many of these Japanese-inspired features have been mentioned here and there mostly in passing. It is thus important to gather all those documents in a dissertation, and then to evaluate their value and map out their paths. Overall I mapped out the historical paths of transmission of these Japanese forms and principles. In the case that if architectural characteristics in question could be found in at least two different cultures, I provided as many sources as I could find. For example, for Greene and Greene's use of the curved roof line, exposed rafters, and mondrianesque wall patterns in their bungalows, which are common features of both Tudor vernacular and traditional Japanese architectures, I

offered those two prototypes for its sources. These analyses should enrich our understanding of American architecture as a whole and, by extension the significant influence of traditional Japanese architecture in the overall development of modern architecture throughout the West. However, a main achievement of this dissertation is to analyze the changing attitude of American architects toward traditional Japanese architecture. Recognizing when, why and how American architects selected certain features of traditional Japanese architecture for their own use over the course of years will shed light on the process by which external or foreign contacts serve as catalysts for stylistic revolution and change in American architecture.

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### Awards

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