

Japanese Modern Architecture

Monday: 1:10 – 4:25

Instructor: Benoit Jacquet benoit.jacquet@efeo.net

This seminar is an introduction to Japanese architecture through the prism of the history and theory of architecture in Japan. The objective is to provide a comprehensive understanding of “what is Japanese architecture?” Apart from the existing literature and the present-day knowledge on the field of Japanese architecture, the presence of architectural heritage in Japan and in Kyoto city in particular is also a valuable way to discover Japanese architecture “on site”. The topic of this seminar is to understand the synchronicity of both contemporary and ancient architecture in the XXIst century, and the importance of being immersed in this human-made heritage. The formation and the production of Japanese modern architecture is the result of a historical process, and interpretations of the past, which have adapted to the contemporary milieu, and physical, social and mental possibilities. Thus, this seminar will alternate a theoretical approach, through on-class seminar presentations, and “fieldwork”, as active on-site visits of architectural works.

Learning outcomes:

- Understand what an architectural heritage is, and the importance of preservation of material and immaterial assets.
- Recognize the various styles, specific architects, dates, and locations of important buildings.
- Understand the climatic, technological, socioeconomic, and cultural factors that have shaped the architecture.
- Learn to create an architectural analysis of a building, through its structural, spatial and socioeconomic aspects, in order to produce a building/architectural diagnostic.

Class schedule (field trip dates are subject to change):

- 1- September 7 – Introduction: The Plan/City (Kyoto) / related reading: Stavros (2014)
- 2- September 14 – The Hut/Townhouse (*machiya*). Visit of a *machiya* (Hatake) / related reading: Stavros (2026: 29-74)
- 3- September 28 – The Warehouse/Shrine (*kura/jinja*). Visit to a Shintō shrine (Fushimi Inari) / related reading: Jacquet (2021: 28-77), Tange (1965: 1-64).

- 4- October 5 – The Buddhist Monastery (*garan*) / related reading: Jacquet (2021: 79-103)
- 5- October 19 – The teahouse (*chashitsu*). Visit to a Zen temple/garden (in Daitokuji) / related reading: Jacquet (2021: 109-141), Fujimori (2007: introduction)
- 6- October 26 – Wooden architecture and carpentry / related reading: Brown (2013: 22-91)
- 7- October 31 – Visit to the village of Kitayama Nakagawachō and its agroforestry / related reading: De Jong (2022)
- 8- November 9 – The development of modern architecture. Visit to Okazaki, Kyoto Rohm Theater (Maekawa Kunio) and Itō Chūta architecture in Kyoto / related reading: Jacquet (2021: 169-201), Reynolds (2001: 74-134)
- 9- November 16 – Post war architecture and Metabolism / related reading: Jacquet (2021: 209-245), Stewart (2003: 164-218), Jacquet (2020),
- 10-November 30 – Housing in Japan. Visit of Kyoto University Yoshida or Kumano dormitories / related reading: Nishiyama (1975: vol. 1), Nishiyama (2007)
- 11-December 7 – Recent buildings in Japan. Visit to Toraya / related reading: Ōnishi (2014: 2-77)
- 12-December 14 – End of seminar student presentations.

Primary Texts

Brown, Azby, *The Genius of Japanese Carpentry: Secret of an Ancient Craft* (Tuttle publishing, 2013).

De Jong, Wil, Andrea Flores Urushima, Benoît Jacquet, Takahashi Takuya, « Cedars of the North Mountains: Historical forest culture and practices in modern day nature policies », *International Forestry Review*, Vol. 24 (1), 2022.

Fujimori Terunobu, *et al.*, *The Contemporary Teahouse: Japan's Top Architects Redefine a Tradition* (Kodansha, 2007).

Jacquet, Benoit, *et al.*, *The Carpenter and the Architect: A History of Wood Construction in Japan* (EPFL Press, 2021).

Jacquet, Benoit, Jeremie Souteyrat, *The Architecture of the Future in Japan: Utopia and Metabolism* (Le Léopard Noir, 2020).

Jacquet, Benoit, *et al.*, *Machiya: l'architecture des maisons de ville à Kyoto* (Le Lézard Noir, 2026).

Kawabata Yasunari, *The Old Capital (Koto 京都, 1962)*, trans. by Martin Holman (Tuttle, 1987).

Nishiyama Uzō, *Nihon no sumai* 日本のすまい (Chikuma Shobō, 1975).

Nishiyama Uzō kinen sumai machizukuri bunko, *Shōwa no Nihon no sumai: Nishiyama Uzō shashin ākaibuzu kara* 昭和の日本のすまい:西山卯三写真アーカイブズから (Tankōbon-sha, 2007).

Ōnishi Maki, Hyakuda Yūki, *Architecture, a place to be loved: onishimaki + hyakudayuki architects* (Tokyo: TOTO Publishing, 2024).

Stewart, David B., *The Making of a Modern Japanese Architecture* (Kodansha International, 2003).

Stavros, Matthew, *Kyoto: An Urban History of Japan's Premodern Capital* (University of Hawai'i Press, 2014).

Recommended Texts

Fujimori Terunobu, *Japan in Architecture: Genealogies of its Transformation* (Tokyo: Kenchiku Shiryo Kenkyu-sha, 2019).

Igarashi Tarō, *Contemporary Japanese Architects: Profiles in Design*, trans. David Noble (Tokyo: JPIC, 2018).

Isozaki Arata, *Japan-ness in Architecture*, trans. David Stewart (Cambridge: MIT Press, 2003).

Koolhaas, Rem, Hans Ulrich Obrist, *Project Japan: Metabolism Talks...* (Cologne: Taschen, 2011).

Ōnishi Maki, Hyakuda Yūki, *onishimaki + hyakudayuki architects / o+h / 8 stories* (Tokyo: LIXIL Publishing, 2014).

Reynolds, Jonathan, *Maekawa Kunio and the Emergence of Japanese Modernist Architecture* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2001).

Tange Kenzō, Ishimoto Yasuhiro, Walter Gropius, *Katsura: Tradition and Creation in Japanese Architecture* (Tokyo, New Haven: Yale University Press, 1960).

Tange Kenzō, Kawazoe Noboru, Watanabe Yoshio, *Ise: Prototype of Japanese Architecture* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1965).

Tanizaki Junichirō, *In Praise of Shadow* (*Inei raisan* 陰翳礼讃, 1933), trans. Thomas Harper and Edward Seidensticker, foreword by Charles Moore (Tuttle, 1977)

Course Requirements

Attendance: Daily attendance is mandatory. NO make-up classes will be given. In the event of illness or other absence, please notify your instructor or the office staff as soon as possible.

Homework: Consists primarily of readings or translations (approximately 20 pages per week). Read the assigned readings by Monday of every week in order to be able to discuss them in class.

Weekly Assignments: 12 x 5% = 60%.

Write a short essay on A4 page on the content of each week class or field trip. Submit by email in PDF format, after the relevant lecture and before the next week's lecture.

Essay and Presentation: 40%

Prepare a 1000 to 2000-word illustrated essay about a building visited during the semester or about another space you saw during your stay in Japan. Submit by email in PDF format at the end of the semester.

Grading

A+ 95-100 A 85-94 A- 80-84 B+ 75-79 B 70-74 B- 65-69 C+ 60-64 C 55-59 D 50-54 F less than 50%

Policies

All work must be submitted on the scheduled dates. Unless prior permission has been given, 5% will be deducted from the total mark for that assignment for every day it is late. Assignments submitted more than one week late without prior approval will receive a mark of zero.

Academic Integrity

As members of an academic community, each one of us bears the responsibility to participate in scholarly discourse and research in a manner characterized by

intellectual honesty and scholarly integrity. Collaborative scholarship requires the study of other scholars' work, the free discussion of such work, and the explicit acknowledgement of those ideas in any work that inform our own.

This exchange of ideas relies upon a mutual trust that sources, opinions, facts, and insights will be properly noted and carefully credited. In practical terms, this means that, as students, all work submitted in this course, whether in draft or final form, must be your own. You must be responsible for the full citations of others' ideas in all of your research papers and projects; you must be scrupulously honest when taking your examinations; you must always submit your own work and not that of another student, scholar, or internet agent. Any breach of this intellectual responsibility is a breach of faith with the rest of our academic community. It undermines our shared intellectual culture, and it cannot be tolerated.

The use of ChatGPT or any other AI tools for course assignments (with the exception of artificial neural networks like DeepL for machine translations, duly cited as instructed in pages 2-3) is tantamount to plagiarism. Plagiarism is defined as:

- The use of the whole or part of a written work including the use of paragraphs or sentences in essays or other assessable work which are neither enclosed in quotation marks nor otherwise properly acknowledged.
- The paraphrasing of another's work without attribution.

To avoid plagiarism students should use the Chicago reference style:

https://www.chicagomanualofstyle.org/tools_citationguide/citation-guide-2.html

In practical terms, this means that, as students, you must be responsible for the full citations of others' ideas in all of your research papers and projects; you must be scrupulously honest when taking your examinations; you must always submit your own work and not that of another student, scholar, or internet agent.

Any cases of plagiarism or cheating will be reported to Columbia Undergraduate Global Engagement and the academic advisor at your home institution and are subject to the code of academic conduct there. In such cases, your final grade will be determined by your home institution and not by KCJS.

Any breach of this intellectual responsibility is a breach of faith with the rest of our academic community. It undermines our shared intellectual culture, and it cannot be tolerated.

If you are a student with a disability and have a Disability Services-certified 'Accommodation Letter' from your home institution, please send me this letter before the first day of class to confirm your accommodation needs. If you believe that you might have a disability that requires accommodation and do not have an accommodations letter, you should contact the Center for Undergraduate Global Engagement at Columbia University (uge@columbia.edu).

Specific aspects of the seminar:

Although laptops are allowed in class for taking notes, we recommend that students take handwritten notes. Cell phones must not be used during the seminar (in class), and must be turned off or put on silent mode.