Art and Architecture of Japan

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Introduction to Japanese Art

Japanese art covers a wide range of art styles and media, including ancient pottery, sculpture in wood and bronze, ink painting on silk and paper and more recently manga, cartoon, along with a myriad of other types of works of art. It also has a long history, ranging from the beginnings of human habitation in Japan, sometime in the 10th millennium BC, to the present.

Historically, Japan has been subject to sudden invasions of new and alien ideas followed by long periods of minimal contact with the outside world. Over time the Japanese developed the ability to absorb, imitate, and finally assimilate those elements of foreign culture that complemented their aesthetic preferences. The earliest complex art in Japan was produced in the 7th and 8th centuries A.D. in connection with Buddhism. In the 9th century, as the Japanese began to turn away from China and develop indigenous forms of expression, the secular arts became increasingly important; until the late 15th century, both religious and secular arts flourished. After the Ōnin War (1467–1477), Japan entered a period of political, social, and economic disruption that lasted for over a century. In the state that emerged under the leadership of the Tokugawa shogunate, organized religion played a much less important role in people's lives, and the arts that survived were primarily secular.

Painting is the preferred artistic expression in Japan, practiced by amateurs and professionals alike. Until modern times, the Japanese wrote with a brush rather than a pen, and their familiarity with brush techniques has made them particularly sensitive to the values and aesthetics of painting. With the rise of popular culture in the Edo period, a style of woodblock prints called *ukiyo-e* became a major art form and its techniques were fine tuned to produce colorful prints of everything from daily news to schoolbooks. The Japanese, in this period, found sculpture a much less sympathetic medium for artistic expression; most Japanese sculpture is associated with religion, and the medium's use declined with the lessening importance of traditional Buddhism.

Japanese ceramics are among the finest in the world and include the earliest known artifacts of their culture. In architecture, Japanese preferences for natural materials and an interaction of interior and exterior space are clearly expressed.

Today, Japan rivals most other modern nations in its contributions to modern art, fashion and architecture, with creations of a truly modern, global, and multi-cultural (or acultural) bent.

History of Japanese art

Jōmon art

Statuette with Snow Glasses, Jōmon Era

The first settlers of Japan, the Jōmon people (c 11000?–c 300 BC), named for the cord markings that decorated the surfaces of their clay vessels, were nomadic hunter-gatherers who later practiced organized farming and built cities with population of hundreds if not

thousands. They built simple houses of wood and thatch set into shallow earthen pits to provide warmth from the soil. They crafted lavishly decorated pottery storage vessels, clay figurines called *dogu*, and crystal jewels.

Yayoi art

The next wave of immigrants was the Yayoi people, named for the district in Tokyo where remnants of their settlements first were found. These people, arriving in Japan about 350 BC, brought their knowledge of wetland rice cultivation, the manufacture of copper weapons and bronze bells (*dōtaku*), and wheel-thrown, kiln-fired ceramics.

Kofun art

The third stage in Japanese prehistory, the Kofun, or Tumulus, period (c AD 250–552), represents a modification of Yayoi culture, attributable either to internal development or external force. In this period, diverse groups of people formed political alliances and coalesced into a nation. Typical artifacts are bronze mirrors, symbols of political alliances, and clay sculptures called *haniwa* which were erected outside tombs.

Asuka and Nara art

Bodhisattva, Asuka period, 7th century

Pagoda and Kondō at Hōryū-ji, 8th century

During the Asuka and Nara periods, so named because the seat of Japanese government was located in the Asuka Valley from 552 to 710 and in the city of Nara until 784, the first significant invasion by Asian continental culture took place in Japan.

The transmission of Buddhism provided the initial impetus for contacts between China, Korea and Japan. The Japanese recognized the facets of Chinese culture that could profitably be incorporated into their own: a system for converting ideas and sounds into writing; historiography; complex theories of government, such as an effective bureaucracy; and, most important for the arts, new technologies, new building techniques, more advanced methods of casting in bronze, and new techniques and media for painting.

Throughout the 7th and 8th centuries, however, the major focus in contacts between Japan and the Asian continent was the development of Buddhism. Not all scholars agree on the significant dates and the appropriate names to apply to various time periods between 552, the official date of the introduction of Buddhism into Japan, and 784, when the Japanese capital was transferred from Nara. The most common designations are the Suiko period, 552–645; the Hakuhō period, 645–710, and the Tenpyō period, 710–784.

The earliest Japanese sculptures of the Buddha are dated to the 6th and 7th century. They ultimately derive from the 1st-3rd century CE Greco-Buddhist art of Gandhara,

characterized by flowing dress patterns and realistic rendering, on which Chinese and Korean artistic traits were superimposed. These indigenous characteristics can be seen in early Buddhist art in Japan and some early Japanese Buddhist sculpture is now believed to have originated in Korea, particularly from Baekje, or Korean artisans who immigrated to Yamato Japan. Particularly, the semi-seated Maitreya form was adapted into a highly developed Korean style which was transmitted to Japan as evidenced by the Kōryū-ji Miroku Bosatsu and the Chūgū-ji Siddhartha statues. Although many historians portray Korea as a mere transmitter of Buddhism, the Three Kingdoms, and particularly Baekje, were instrumental as active agents in the introduction and formation of a Buddhist tradition in Japan in 538 or 552. They illustrate the terminal point of the Silk Road transmission of Art during the first few centuries of our era. Other examples can be found in the development of the iconography of the Japanese Fūjin Wind God, the Niō guardians, and the near-Classical floral patterns in temple decorations.

The earliest Buddhist structures still extant in Japan, and the oldest wooden buildings in the Far East are found at the Hōryū-ji to the southwest of Nara. First built in the early 7th century as the private temple of Crown Prince Shōtoku, it consists of 41 independent buildings. The most important ones, the main worship hall, or *Kondō* (Golden Hall), and *Gojū-no-tō* (Five-story Pagoda), stand in the center of an open area surrounded by a roofed cloister. The *Kondō*, in the style of Chinese worship halls, is a two-story structure of post-and-beam construction, capped by an *irimoya*, or hipped-gabled roof of ceramic tiles.

Inside the *Kondō*, on a large rectangular platform, are some of the most important sculptures of the period. The central image is a Shaka Trinity (623), the historical Buddha flanked by two bodhisattvas, sculpture cast in bronze by the sculptor Tori Busshi (flourished early 7th century) in homage to the recently deceased Prince Shōtoku. At the four corners of the platform are the Guardian Kings of the Four Directions, carved in wood around 650. Also housed at Hōryū-ji is the Tamamushi Shrine, a wooden replica of a *Kondō*, which is set on a high wooden base that is decorated with figural paintings executed in a medium of mineral pigments mixed with lacquer.

Temple building in the 8th century was focused around the Tōdai-ji in Nara. Constructed as the headquarters for a network of temples in each of the provinces, the Tōdaiji is the most ambitious religious complex erected in the early centuries of Buddhist worship in Japan. Appropriately, the 16.2-m (53-ft) Buddha (completed 752) enshrined in the main Buddha hall, or *Daibutsuden*, is a Rushana Buddha, the figure that represents the essence of Buddhahood, just as the Tōdaiji represented the center for Imperially sponsored Buddhism and its dissemination throughout Japan. Only a few fragments of the original statue survive, and the present hall and central Buddha are reconstructions from the Edo period.

Clustered around the Daibutsuden on a gently sloping hillside are a number of secondary halls: the *Hokke-dō* (Lotus Sutra Hall), with its principal image, the Fukukenjaku Kannon (the most popular bodhisattva), crafted of dry lacquer (cloth dipped in lacquer and shaped over a wooden armature); the *Kaidanin* (Ordination Hall) with its magnificent clay

statues of the Four Guardian Kings; and the storehouse, called the *Shōsōin*. This last structure is of great importance as an art-historical cache, because in it are stored the utensils that were used in the temple's dedication ceremony in 752, the eye-opening ritual for the Rushana image, as well as government documents and many secular objects owned by the Imperial family.

Heian art

Byōdōin Phoenix Hall, Uji, Kyoto

Panel from pictorial scroll of the *Tale of Genji*, 1130

Nageire-dō, Tottori, 11th century

Bandainagon Ekotoba, Tokiwa Mitsunaga, 12th century

Pagoda in *wayō* style, Ichijō-ji, Kasai, Hyōgo

In 794 the capital of Japan was officially transferred to Heian-kyō (present-day Kyoto), where it remained until 1868. The term *Heian period* refers to the years between 794 and 1185, when the Kamakura shogunate was established at the end of the Genpei War. The period is further divided into the early Heian and the late Heian, or Fujiwara era, the pivotal date being 894, the year imperial embassies to China were officially discontinued.

Early Heian art: In reaction to the growing wealth and power of organized Buddhism in Nara, the priest Kūkai (best known by his posthumous title Kōbō Daishi, 774-835) journeyed to China to study Shingon, a form of Vajrayana Buddhism, which he introduced into Japan in 806. At the core of Shingon worship are mandalas, diagrams of the spiritual universe, which then began to influence temple design. Japanese Buddhist architecture also adopted the stupa, originally an Indian architectural form, in its Chinese-style pagoda.

The temples erected for this new sect were built in the mountains, far away from the Court and the laity in the capital. The irregular topography of these sites forced Japanese architects to rethink the problems of temple construction, and in so doing to choose more indigenous elements of design. Cypress-bark roofs replaced those of ceramic tile, wood planks were used instead of earthen floors, and a separate worship area for the laity was added in front of the main sanctuary.

The temple that best reflects the spirit of early Heian Shingon temples is the Murō-ji (early 9th century), set deep in a stand of cypress trees on a mountain southeast of Nara. The wooden image (also early 9th c.) of Shakyamuni, the "historic" Buddha, enshrined in a secondary building at the Murō-ji, is typical of the early Heian sculpture, with its ponderous body, covered by thick drapery folds carved in the *hompa-shiki* (rolling-wave) style, and its austere, withdrawn facial expression.

Fujiwara art: In the Fujiwara period, Pure Land Buddhism, which offered easy salvation through belief in Amida (the Buddha of the Western Paradise), became popular. This period is named after the Fujiwara family, then the most powerful in the country, who ruled as regents for the Emperor, becoming, in effect, civil dictators. Concurrently, the Kyoto nobility developed a society devoted to elegant aesthetic pursuits. So secure and beautiful was their world that they could not conceive of Paradise as being much different. They created a new form of Buddha hall, the Amida hall, which blends the secular with the religious, and houses one or more Buddha images within a structure resembling the mansions of the nobility.

The *Hō-ō-dō* (Phoenix Hall, completed 1053) of the Byōdōin, a temple in Uji to the southeast of Kyoto, is the exemplar of Fujiwara Amida halls. It consists of a main rectangular structure flanked by two L-shaped wing corridors and a tail corridor, set at the edge of a large artificial pond. Inside, a single golden image of Amida (c. 1053) is installed on a high platform. The Amida sculpture was executed by Jōchō, who used a new canon of proportions and a new technique (*yosegi*), in which multiple pieces of wood are carved out like shells and joined from the inside. Applied to the walls of the hall are small relief carvings of celestials, the host believed to have accompanied Amida

when he descended from the Western Paradise to gather the souls of believers at the moment of death and transport them in lotus blossoms to Paradise. *Raigō* paintings on the wooden doors of the Hō-ō-dō, depicting the Descent of the Amida Buddha, are an early example of Yamato-e, Japanese-style painting, and contain representations of the scenery around Kyoto.

E-maki: In the last century of the Heian period, the horizontal, illustrated narrative handscroll, known as *e-maki* came to the fore. Dating from about 1130, the illustrated 'Tale of Genji' represents one of the high points of Japanese painting. Written about the year 1000 by Murasaki Shikibu, a lady-in-waiting to the Empress Akiko, the novel deals with the life and loves of Genji and the world of the Heian court after his death. The 12th-century artists of the *e-maki* version devised a system of pictorial conventions that convey visually the emotional content of each scene. In the second half of the century, a different, livelier style of continuous narrative illustration became popular. The *Ban Dainagon Ekotoba* (late 12th century), a scroll that deals with an intrigue at court, emphasizes figures in active motion depicted in rapidly executed brush strokes and thin but vibrant colors.

E-maki also serve as some of the earliest and greatest examples of the *otoko-e* (Men's pictures) and *onna-e* (Women's pictures) styles of painting. There are many fine differences in the two styles, appealing to the aesthetic preferences of the genders. But perhaps most easily noticeable are the differences in subject matter. *Onna-e*, epitomized by the Tale of Genji handscroll, typically deals with court life, particularly the court ladies, and with romantic themes. *Otoko-e*, on the other hand, often recorded historical events, particularly battles. The Siege of the Sanjō Palace (1160), depicted in the "Night Attack on the Sanjō Palace" section of the Heiji Monogatari handscroll is a famous example of this style.

Kamakura art

In 1180 a war broke out between the two most powerful warrior clans, the Taira and the Minamoto; five years later the Minamoto emerged victorious and established a de facto seat of government at the seaside village of Kamakura, where it remained until 1333. With the shift of power from the nobility to the warrior class, the arts had to satisfy a new audience: men devoted to the skills of warfare, priests committed to making Buddhism available to illiterate commoners, and conservatives, the nobility and some members of the priesthood who regretted the declining power of the court. Thus, realism, a popularizing trend, and a classical revival characterize the art of the Kamakura period. In the Kamakura period, Kyoto and Nara remained the centers of artistic production and high culture.

Niō Guardian at the Tōdai-ji (Nara), Unkei, 1203

Sculpture: The Kei school of sculptors, particularly Unkei, created a new, more realistic style of sculpture. The two Niō guardian images (1203) in the Great South Gate of the Tōdai-ji in Nara illustrate Unkei's dynamic supra-realistic style. The images, about 8 m (about 26 ft) tall, were carved of multiple blocks in a period of about three months, a feat indicative of a developed studio system of artisans working under the direction of a master sculptor. Unkei's polychromed wood sculptures (1208, Kōfuku-ji, Nara) of two Indian sages, Muchaku and Seshin, the legendary founders of the Hossō sect, are among the most accomplished realistic works of the period; as rendered by Unkei, they are remarkably individualized and believable images. One of the most famous works of this period is an Amitabha Triad (completed in 1195), in Jōdo-ji in Ono, created by Kaikei, Unkei's successor.

Calligraphy and painting: The *Kegon Engi Emaki*, the illustrated history of the founding of the Kegon sect, is an excellent example of the popularizing trend in Kamakura painting. The Kegon sect, one of the most important in the Nara period, fell on hard times during the ascendancy of the Pure Land sects. After the Genpei War (1180–1185), Priest Myōe of Kōzan-ji sought to revive the sect and also to provide a refuge for women widowed by the war. The wives of samurai had been discouraged from learning more than a syllabary system for transcribing sounds and ideas, and most were incapable of reading texts that employed Chinese ideographs (kanji). Thus, the *Kegon Engi Emaki* combines passages of text, written with a maximum of easily readable syllables, and illustrations that have the dialogue between characters written next to the speakers, a technique comparable to contemporary comic strips. The plot of the *e-maki*, the lives of the two Korean priests who founded the Kegon sect, is swiftly paced and filled with fantastic feats such as a journey to the palace of the Ocean King, and a poignant love story.

A work in a more conservative vein is the illustrated version of Murasaki Shikibu's diary. *E-maki* versions of her novel continued to be produced, but the nobility, attuned to the new interest in realism yet nostalgic for past days of wealth and power, revived and illustrated the diary in order to recapture the splendor of the author's times. One of the most beautiful passages illustrates the episode in which Murasaki Shikibu is playfully held prisoner in her room by two young courtiers, while, just outside, moonlight gleams on the mossy banks of a rivulet in the imperial garden.

Muromachi art

Art of Miyabi, Kitayama Culture (Kinkaku-ji, Kyoto, 1397)

Art of Wabi-sabi, Higashiyama Culture (Ginkaku-ji, Kyoto, 1489)

During the Muromachi period (1338–1573), also called the Ashikaga period, a profound change took place in Japanese culture. The Ashikaga clan took control of the shogunate and moved its headquarters back to Kyoto, to the Muromachi district of the city. With the return of government to the capital, the popularizing trends of the Kamakura period came to an end, and cultural expression took on a more aristocratic, elitist character. Zen Buddhism, the Ch'an sect traditionally thought to have been founded in China in the 6th century CE, was introduced for a second time into Japan and took root.

Painting: Because of secular ventures and trading missions to China organized by Zen temples, many Chinese paintings and objects of art were imported into Japan and profoundly influenced Japanese artists working for Zen temples and the shogunate. Not only did these imports change the subject matter of painting, but they also modified the use of color; the bright colors of Yamato-e yielded to the monochromes of painting in the Chinese manner, where paintings generally only have black and white or different tones of a single color.

Typical of early Muromachi painting is the depiction by the priest-painter Kao (active early 15th century) of the legendary monk Kensu (Hsien-tzu in Chinese) at the moment he achieved enlightenment. This type of painting was executed with quick brush strokes and a minimum of detail. 'Catching a Catfish with a Gourd' (early 15th century, Taizo-in,

Myoshin-ji, Kyoto), by the priest-painter Josetsu (active c. 1400), marks a turning point in Muromachi painting. Executed originally for a low-standing screen, it has been remounted as a hanging scroll with inscriptions by contemporary figures above, one of which refers to the painting as being in the "new style." In the foreground a man is depicted on the bank of a stream holding a small gourd and looking at a large slithery catfish. Mist fills the middle ground, and the background mountains appear to be far in the distance. It is generally assumed that the "new style" of the painting, executed about 1413, refers to a more Chinese sense of deep space within the picture plane.

The foremost artists of the Muromachi period are the priest-painters Shūbun and Sesshū. Shūbun, a monk at the Kyoto temple of Shokoku-ji, created in the painting *Reading in a Bamboo Grove* (1446) a realistic landscape with deep recession into space. Sesshū, unlike most artists of the period, was able to journey to China and study Chinese painting at its source. *Landscape of the Four Seasons* (*Sansui Chokan*; c. 1486) is one of Sesshu's most accomplished works, depicting a continuing landscape through the four seasons.

Azuchi-Momoyama art

Cypress Tree Byōbu, Kano Eitoku, 1590

In the Momoyama period (1573–1603), a succession of military leaders, such as Oda Nobunaga, Toyotomi Hideyoshi, and Tokugawa Ieyasu, attempted to bring peace and political stability to Japan after an era of almost 100 years of warfare. Oda, a minor chieftain, acquired power sufficient to take de facto control of the government in 1568 and, five years later, to oust the last Ashikaga shogun. Hideyoshi took command after Oda's death, but his plans to establish hereditary rule were foiled by Ieyasu, who established the Tokugawa shogunate in 1603.

Painting: The most important school of painting in the Momoyama period was that of the Kanō school, and the greatest innovation of the period was the formula, developed by Kano Eitoku, for the creation of monumental landscapes on the sliding doors enclosing a room. The decoration of the main room facing the garden of the Juko-in, a subtemple of Daitoku-ji (a Zen temple in Kyoto), is perhaps the best extant example of Eitoku's work.

A massive *ume* tree and twin pines are depicted on pairs of sliding screens in diagonally opposite corners, their trunks repeating the verticals of the corner posts and their branches extending to left and right, unifying the adjoining panels. Eitoku's screen, 'Chinese Lions', also in Kyoto, reveals the bold, brightly colored style of painting preferred by the samurai.

The Siege of Osaka Castle, 17th century.

Hasegawa Tohaku, a contemporary of Eitoku, developed a somewhat different and more decorative style for large-scale screen paintings. In his 'Maple Screen', now in the temple of Chishaku-in, Kyoto, he placed the trunk of the tree in the center and extended the limbs nearly to the edge of the composition, creating a flatter, less architectonic work than Eitoku, but a visually gorgeous painting. His sixfold screen, 'Pine Wood', is a masterly rendering in monochrome ink of a grove of trees enveloped in mist.

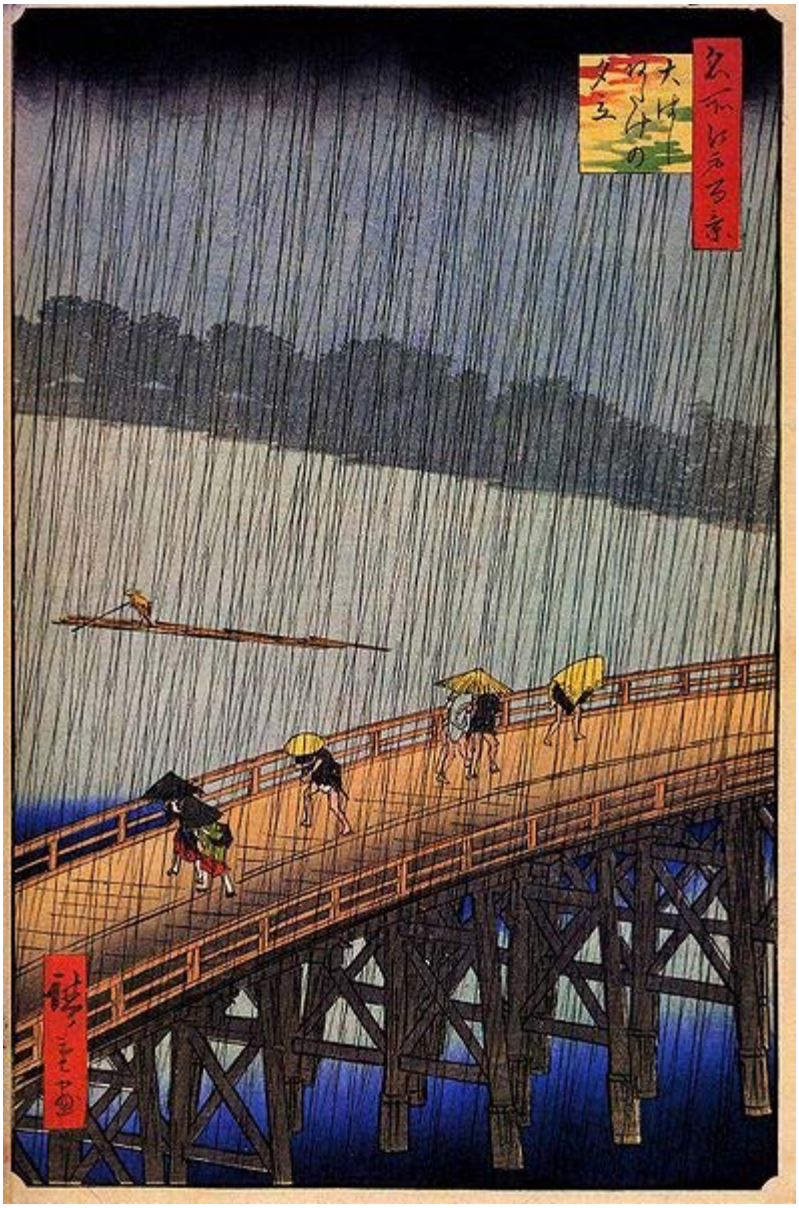
Art of the Edo period

"Fūjin and Raijin" by Tawaraya Sōtatsu

The Tokugawa shogunate gained undisputed control of the government in 1603 with a commitment to bring peace and economic and political stability to the country; in large measure it was successful. The shogunate survived until 1867, when it was forced to capitulate because of its failure to deal with pressure from Western nations to open the country to foreign trade. One of the dominant themes in the Edo period was the repressive policies of the shogunate and the attempts of artists to escape these strictures. The foremost of these was the closing of the country to foreigners and the accoutrements of their cultures, and the imposition of strict codes of behavior affecting every aspect of life, the clothes one wore, the person one married, and the activities one could or should not pursue.

In the early years of the Edo period, however, the full impact of Tokugawa policies had not yet been felt, and some of Japan's finest expressions in architecture and painting were produced: Katsura Palace in Kyoto and the paintings of Tawaraya Sōtatsu, pioneer of the Rimpa school.

Circuit style Japanese garden: Koraku-en Garden in Okayama, completed in 1700



Sudden Shower at the Atake Bridge, Hiroshige, 1856

Architecture: Katsura Detached Palace, built in imitation of Genji's palace, contains a cluster of shoin buildings that combine elements of classic Japanese architecture with innovative restatements. The whole complex is surrounded by a beautiful garden with paths for walking. Many of powerful Daimyo (feudal lords) built a Circuit style Japanese garden in the territory country, and competed for the beauty.

Painting: Sōtatsu evolved a superb decorative style by re-creating themes from classical literature, using brilliantly colored figures and motifs from the natural world set against gold-leaf backgrounds. One of his finest works is the pair of screens The Waves at Matsushima in the Freer Gallery in Washington, D.C. A century later, Korin reworked

Sōtatsu's style and created visually gorgeous works uniquely his own. Perhaps his finest are the screen paintings of red and white plum blossoms.

Sculpture The Buddhist monk Enkū carved 120,000 Buddhist images in a rough, individual style.

Woodblock prints and Bunjinga: The school of art best known in the West is that of the ukiyo-e paintings and woodblock prints of the demimonde, the world of the kabuki theater and the brothel district. Ukiyo-e prints began to be produced in the late 17th century, but in 1764 Harunobu produced the first polychrome print. Print designers of the next generation, including Torii Kiyonaga and Utamaro, created elegant and sometimes insightful depictions of courtesans. In the West, erotic woodblock "prints" became popular because the material was not otherwise available. In that sense, such niche prints did more to promote Japanese art in the West than art studies.

In the 19th century the dominant figure was Hiroshige, a creator of romantic and somewhat sentimental landscape prints. The odd angles and shapes through which Hiroshige often viewed landscape, and the work of Kiyonaga and Utamaro, with its emphasis on flat planes and strong linear outlines, had a profound impact on such Western artists as Edgar Degas and Vincent van Gogh.

Another school of painting contemporary with ukiyo-e was Bunjinga, a style based on paintings executed by Chinese scholar-painters. Just as ukiyo-e artists chose to depict figures from life outside the strictures of the Tokugawa shogunate, Bunjin artists turned to Chinese culture. The exemplars of this style are Ike no Taiga, Yosa Buson, Tanomura Chikuden, and Yamamoto Baiitsu.

Art of the Prewar period

Tokyo Station, by Kingo Tatsuno, 1914

When Emperor of Japan regained ruling power in 1868, Japan was once again invaded by new and alien forms of culture. During the Prewar period, The introduction of Western cultural values led to a dichotomy in Japanese art, as well as in nearly every other aspect of culture, between traditional values and attempts to duplicate and assimilate a variety of clashing new ideas. This split remained evident in the late twentieth century, although much synthesis had by then already occurred, and created an international cultural atmosphere and stimulated contemporary Japanese arts toward ever more innovative forms.

By the early 20th century, European art forms were well introduced and their marriage produced notable buildings like the Tokyo Train Station and the National Diet Building that still exist today.

A lot of artistic new Japanese gardens were built with Jihe Ogawa.

Manga were first drawn in the Meiji period, influenced greatly by English and French political cartoons.

Architecture: Tokyo Station, a building of Giyōfū architecture, full of bricks and pseudo-European style. This style buildings were built in urban area.

Painting: The first response of the Japanese to Western art forms was open-hearted acceptance, and in 1876 the Technological Art School was opened, employing Italian instructors to teach Western methods. The second response was a pendulum swing in the opposite direction spearheaded by Okakura Kakuzo and the American Ernest Fenollosa, who encouraged Japanese artists to retain traditional themes and techniques while creating works more in keeping with contemporary taste. Out of these two poles of artistic theory developed Yōga (Western-style painting) and Nihonga (Japanese painting), categories that remain valid to the present day.

Art of the Postwar period

After the end of World War II in 1945, many artists began working in art forms derived from the international scene, moving away from local artistic developments into the mainstream of world art. But traditional Japanese conceptions endured, particularly in the use of modular space in architecture, certain spacing intervals in music and dance, a propensity for certain color combinations and characteristic literary forms.

Art from 1603 to 1945 (Edo period and Prewar period) were supported by merchants. Counter to Edo period and Prewar period, art of Postwar period was changed to the art which is supported by people as consumers. The wide variety of art forms available to the Japanese reflect the vigorous state of the arts, widely supported by the Japanese people and promoted by the government. In the 1950s and 1960s, Japan's artistic avant garde included the internationally influential Gutai group, which originated or anticipated various postwar genres such as performance art, installation art, conceptual art, and wearable art.

American art and architecture greatly influenced Japan. Though fear of earthquakes severely restricted the building of a skyscraper, technological advances let Japanese build larger and higher buildings with more artistic outlooks.

As Japan has always made little distinction between 'fine art' and 'decorative art', as the West has done since the Renaissance, it is important to note Japan's significant and unique contributions to the fields of art in entertainment, commercial uses, and graphic design. Cartoons imported from America led to anime that at first were derived exclusively from manga stories. Today, anime abounds, and many artists and studios have risen to great fame as artists; Hayao Miyazaki and the artists and animators of Studio Ghibli are generally regarded to be among the best the anime world has to offer. Japan also flourishes in the fields of graphic design, commercial art (e.g. billboards, magazine advertisements), and in video game graphics and concept art.

Contemporary art in Japan

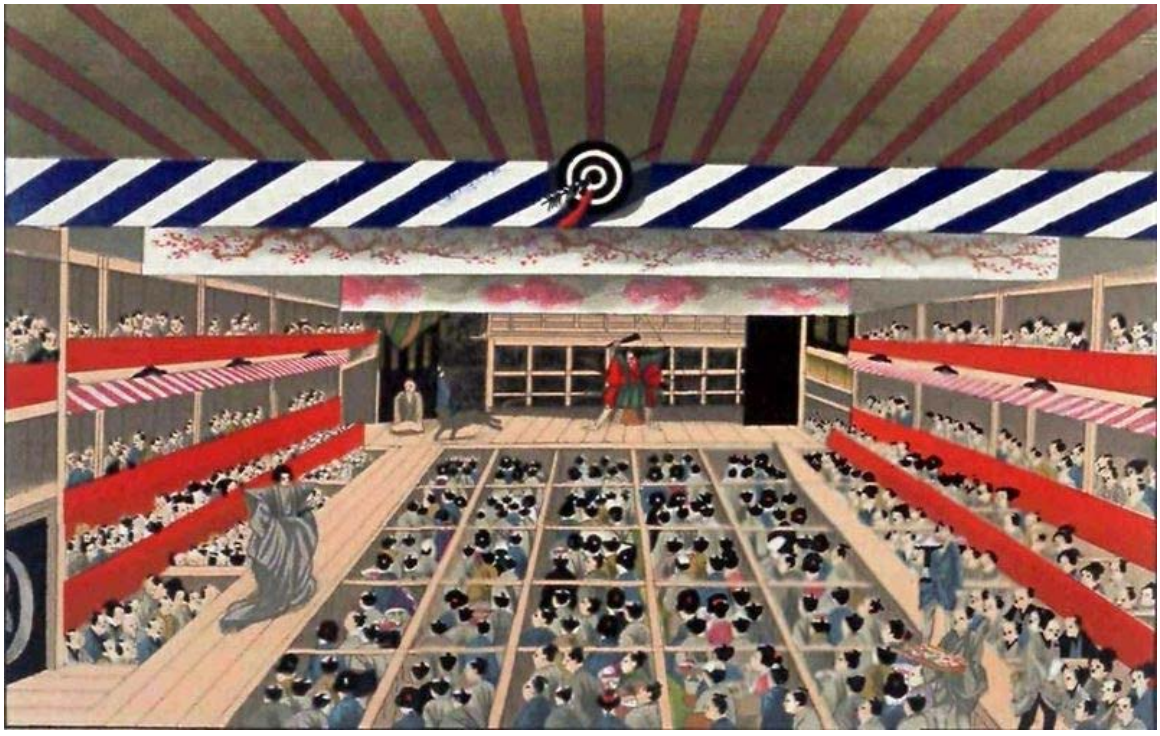
Japanese modern art takes as many forms and expresses as many different ideas as modern art in general, worldwide. It ranges from advertisements, anime, video games, and architecture as already mentioned, to sculpture, painting, and drawing in all their myriad forms.

Many artists do continue to paint in the traditional manner, with black ink and color on paper or silk. Some of these depict traditional subject matter in the traditional styles, while others explore new and different motifs and styles, while using the traditional media. Still others eschew native media and styles, embracing Western oil paints or any number of other forms.

In sculpture, the same holds true; some artists stick to the traditional modes, some doing it with a modern flair, and some choose Western or brand new modes, styles, and media. Yo Akiyama is just one of many modern Japanese sculptors. He works primarily in clay pottery and ceramics, creating works that are very simple and straightforward, looking like they were created out of the earth itself. Another sculptor, using iron and other modern materials, built a large modern art sculpture in the Israeli port city of Haifa, called *Hanabi* (Fireworks).

Takashi Murakami is arguably one of the most well-known Japanese modern artists in the Western world. Murakami and the other artists in his studio create pieces in a style, inspired by anime, which he has dubbed "superflat". His pieces take a multitude of forms, from painting to sculpture, some truly massive in size. But most if not all show very clearly this anime influence, utilizing bright colors and simplified details.

Performing arts



Kabuki Theater

A remarkable number of the traditional forms of Japanese music, dance, and theater have survived in the contemporary world, enjoying some popularity through reidentification with Japanese cultural values. Traditional music and dance, which trace their origins to ancient religious use - Buddhist, Shintō, and folk - have been preserved in the dramatic performances of Noh, Kabuki, and bunraku theater. Ancient court music and dance forms deriving from continental sources were preserved through Imperial household musicians and temple and shrine troupes. Some of the oldest musical instruments in the world have been in continuous use in Japan from the Jōmon period, as shown by finds of stone and clay flutes and zithers having between two and four strings, to which Yayoi period metal bells and gongs were added to create early musical ensembles. By the early historical period (sixth to seventh centuries CE), there were a variety of large and small drums, gongs, chimes, flutes, and stringed instruments, such as the imported mandolin-like biwa and the flat six-stringed zither, which evolved into the thirteen-stringed koto. These instruments formed the orchestras for the seventh-century continentally derived ceremonial court music (gagaku), which, together with the accompanying bugaku (a type of court dance), are the most ancient of such forms still performed at the Imperial court, ancient temples, and shrines. Buddhism introduced the rhythmic chants, still used, that underpin Shigin, and that were joined with native ideas to underlay the development of vocal music, such as in Noh.

Aesthetic concepts

Calligraphy of Bodhidharma, “Zen points directly to the human heart, see into your nature and become Buddha”, Hakuin Ekaku, 17th century

Japanese art is characterized by unique polarities. In the ceramics of the prehistoric periods, for example, exuberance was followed by disciplined and refined artistry. Another instance is provided by two 16th-century structures that are poles apart: the Katsura Detached Palace is an exercise in simplicity, with an emphasis on natural materials, rough and untrimmed, and an affinity for beauty achieved by accident; Nikkō Tōshō-gū is a rigidly symmetrical structure replete with brightly colored relief carvings covering every visible surface. Japanese art, valued not only for its simplicity but also for its colorful exuberance, has considerably influenced 19th-century Western painting and 20th century Western architecture.

Japan's aesthetic conceptions, deriving from diverse cultural traditions, have been formative in the production of unique art forms. Over the centuries, a wide range of artistic motifs developed and were refined, becoming imbued with symbolic significance. Like a pearl, they acquired many layers of meaning and a high luster. Japanese aesthetics provide a key to understanding artistic works perceivably different from those coming from Western traditions.

Within the East Asian artistic tradition, China has been the acknowledged teacher and Japan the devoted student. Nevertheless, several Japanese arts developed their own style, which can be differentiated from various Chinese arts. The monumental, symmetrically balanced, rational approach of Chinese art forms became miniaturized, irregular, and subtly suggestive in Japanese hands. Miniature rock gardens, diminutive plants (*bonsai*), and *ikebana* (flower arrangements), in which the selected few represented a garden, were the favorite pursuits of refined aristocrats for a millennium, and they have remained a part of contemporary cultural life.

The diagonal, reflecting a natural flow, rather than the fixed triangle, became the favored structural device, whether in painting, architectural or garden design, dance steps, or musical notations. Odd numbers replace even numbers in the regularity of a Chinese master pattern, and a pull to one side allows a motif to turn the corner of a three dimensional object, thus giving continuity and motion that is lacking in a static frontal design. Japanese painters used the devices of the cutoff, close-up, and fade-out by the twelfth century in *yamato-e*, or Japanese-style, scroll painting, perhaps one reason why modern filmmaking has been such a natural and successful art form in Japan. Suggestion is used rather than direct statement; oblique poetic hints and allusive and inconclusive melodies and thoughts have proved frustrating to the Westerner trying to penetrate the meanings of literature, music, painting, and even everyday language.

The Japanese began defining such aesthetic ideas in a number of evocative phrases by at least the tenth or eleventh century. The courtly refinements of the aristocratic Heian period evolved into the elegant simplicity seen as the essence of good taste in the understated art that is called *shibui*. Two terms originating from Zen Buddhist meditative practices describe degrees of tranquility: one, the repose found in humble melancholy (*wabi*), the other, the serenity accompanying the enjoyment of subdued beauty (*sabi*). Zen thought also contributed a penchant for combining the unexpected or startling, used to jolt one's consciousness toward the goal of enlightenment. In art, this approach was

expressed in combinations of such unlikely materials as lead inlaid in lacquer and in clashing poetic imagery. Unexpectedly humorous and sometimes grotesque images and motifs also stem from the Zen *koan* (conundrum). Although the arts have been mainly secular since the Edo period, traditional aesthetics and training methods, stemming generally from religious sources, continue to underlie artistic productions.

Artists

Traditionally, the artist was a vehicle for expression and was personally reticent, in keeping with the role of an artisan or entertainer of low social status. The calligrapher, a member of the Confucian literati class, or noble samurai class in Japan, had a higher status, while artists of great genius were often recognized in the Kamakura period by receiving a name from a feudal lord and thus rising socially. The performing arts, however, were generally held in less esteem, and the purported immorality of actresses of the early Kabuki theater caused the Tokugawa government to bar women from the stage; female roles in Kabuki and Noh thereafter were played by men.

After World War II, artists typically gathered in arts associations, some of which were long-established professional societies while others reflected the latest arts movement. The Japan Artists League, for example, was responsible for the largest number of major exhibitions, including the prestigious annual Nitten (Japan Art Exhibition). The P.E.N. Club of Japan (P.E.N. stands for prose, essay, and narrative), a branch of an international writers' organization, was the largest of some thirty major authors' associations. Actors, dancers, musicians, and other performing artists boasted their own societies, including the Kabuki Society, organized in 1987 to maintain this art's traditional high standards, which were thought to be endangered by modern innovation. By the 1980s, however, avant-garde painters and sculptors had eschewed all groups and were "unattached" artists.

Art schools

There are a number of specialized universities for the arts in Japan, led by the national universities. The most important is the Tokyo Arts University, one of the most difficult of all national universities to enter. Another seminal center is Tama Arts University in Tokyo, which produced many of Japan's late twentieth- century innovative young artists. Traditional training in the arts, derived from Chinese traditional methods, remains; experts teach from their homes or head schools working within a master-pupil relationship. A pupil does not experiment with a personal style until achieving the highest level of training, or graduating from an arts school, or becoming head of a school. Many young artists have criticized this system as stifling creativity and individuality. A new generation of the avant-garde has broken with this tradition, often receiving its training in the West. In the traditional arts, however, the master-pupil system preserves the secrets and skills of the past. Some master-pupil lineages can be traced to the Kamakura period, from which they continue to use a great master's style or theme. Japanese artists consider technical virtuosity as the *sine qua non* of their professions, a fact recognized by the rest of the world as one of the hallmarks of Japanese art.

The national government has actively supported the arts through the Agency for Cultural Affairs, set up in 1968 as a special body of the Ministry of Education. The agency's budget for FY 1989 rose to 37.8 billion after five years of budget cuts, but still represented much less than 1 percent of the general budget. The agency's Cultural Affairs Division disseminated information about the arts within Japan and internationally, and the Cultural Properties Protection Division protected the nation's cultural heritage. The Cultural Affairs Division is concerned with such areas as art and culture promotion, arts copyrights, and improvements in the national language. It also supports both national and local arts and cultural festivals, and it funds traveling cultural events in music, theater, dance, art exhibitions, and filmmaking. Special prizes are offered to encourage young artists and established practitioners, and some grants are given each year to enable them to train abroad. The agency funds national museums of modern art in Kyoto and Tokyo and the Museum of Western Art in Tokyo, which exhibit both Japanese and international shows. The agency also supports the Japan Academy of Arts, which honors eminent persons of arts and letters, appointing them to membership and offering ¥3.5 million in prize money. Awards are made in the presence of the Emperor, who personally bestows the highest accolade, the Cultural Medal.

Private sponsorship and foundations

Arts patronage and promotion by the government are broadened to include a new cooperative effort with corporate Japan to provide funding beyond the tight budget of the Agency for Cultural Affairs. Many other public and private institutions participate, especially in the burgeoning field of awarding arts prizes. A growing number of large corporations join major newspapers in sponsoring exhibitions and performances and in giving yearly prizes. The most important of the many literary awards given are the venerable Naoki Prize and the Akutagawa Prize, the latter being the equivalent of the Pulitzer Prize in the United States.

In 1989 an effort to promote cross-cultural exchange led to the establishment of a Japanese "Nobel Prize" for the arts, the Premium Imperiale, by the Japan Art Association. This prize of US$100,000 was funded largely by the mass media conglomerate Fuji-sankei Communications Group and was awarded on a worldwide selection basis.

A number of foundations promoting the arts arose in the 1980s, including the Cultural Properties Foundation set up to preserve historic sites overseas, especially along the Silk Road in Inner Asia and at Dunhuang in China. Another international arrangement was made in 1988 with the United States Smithsonian Institution for cooperative exchange of high-technology studies of Asian artifacts. The government plays a major role by funding the Japan Foundation, which provides both institutional and individual grants, effects scholarly exchanges, awards annual prizes, supported publications and exhibitions, and sends traditional Japanese arts groups to perform abroad. The Arts Festival held for two months each fall for all the performing arts is sponsored by the Agency for Cultural Affairs. Major cities also provides substantial support for the arts; a growing number of cities in the 1980s had built large centers for the performing arts and, stimulated by government funding, were offering prizes such as the Lafcadio Hearn Prize initiated by

the city of Matsue. A number of new municipal museums were also providing about one-third more facilities in the 1980s than were previously available. In the late 1980s, Tokyo added more than twenty new cultural halls, notably, the large Bunkamura built by Tokyu Group and the reconstruction of Shakespeare's Globe Theatre. All these efforts reflect a rising popular enthusiasm for the arts. Japanese art buyers swept the Western art markets in the late 1980s, paying record highs for impressionist paintings and US$51.7 million alone for one blue period Picasso.

Chapter-2

Japanese Aesthetics

The explicit formulation of an aesthetics in the Western sense only started in Japan a little over two hundred years ago. But, by the term **Japanese aesthetic,** we tend to mean not this modern study, but a set of ancient ideals that include wabi (transient and stark beauty), sabi (the beauty of natural patina and aging), and yûgen (profound grace and subtlety) . These ideals, and others, underpin much of Japanese cultural and aesthetic norms on what is considered tasteful or beautiful. Thus, while seen as a philosophy in Western societies, the concept of aesthetics in Japan is seen as an integral part of daily life. Japanese aesthetics now encompass a variety of ideals; some of these are traditional while others are modern and sometimes influenced from other cultures.

Wabi-sabi

Zen garden of Ryōan-ji. It was built at the Higashiyama period

A Japanese tea house which reflects the wabi-sabi aesthetic in Kenroku-en Garden

wabi-sabi tea bowl Azuchi-Momoyama period, 16th century

Wabi-sabi represents a comprehensive Japanese world view or aesthetic centered on the acceptance of transience. The aesthetic is sometimes described as one of beauty that is "imperfect, impermanent and incomplete". It is a concept derived from the Buddhist assertion of the Three marks of existence, specifically impermanence.

Characteristics of the wabi-sabi aesthetic include asymmetry, asperity, simplicity, modesty, intimacy and the suggestion of natural processes.

Description

Wabi-sabi is the most conspicuous and characteristic feature of traditional Japanese beauty and it "occupies roughly the same position in the Japanese pantheon of aesthetic values as do the Greek ideals of beauty and perfection in the West." "if an object or expression can bring about, within us, a sense of serene melancholy and a spiritual longing, then that object could be said to be wabi-sabi." "[Wabi-sabi] nurtures all that is authentic by acknowledging three simple realities: nothing lasts, nothing is finished, and nothing is perfect."

The words *wabi* and *sabi* do not translate easily. *Wabi* originally referred to the loneliness of living in nature, remote from society; *sabi* meant "chill", "lean" or "withered". Around the 14th century these meanings began to change, taking on more positive connotations. *Wabi* now connotes rustic simplicity, freshness or quietness, and can be applied to both natural and human-made objects, or understated elegance. It can also refer to quirks and anomalies arising from the process of construction, which add uniqueness and elegance to the object. *Sabi* is beauty or serenity that comes with age, when the life of the object and its impermanence are evidenced in its patina and wear, or in any visible repairs.

After centuries of incorporating artistic and Buddhist influences from China, wabi sabi eventually evolved into a distinctly Japanese ideal. Over time, the meanings of wabi and sabi shifted to become more lighthearted and hopeful. Around 700 years ago, particularly among the Japanese nobility, understanding emptiness and imperfection was honored as tantamount to the first step to satori, or enlightenment. In today's Japan, the meaning of wabi sabi is often condensed to ″wisdom in natural simplicity.″ In art books, it is typically defined as ″flawed beauty.″

From an engineering or design point of view, "wabi" may be interpreted as the *imperfect quality* of any object, due to inevitable limitations in design and construction/manufacture especially with respect to unpredictable or changing usage conditions; then "sabi" could be interpreted as the aspect of *imperfect reliability*, or limited mortality of any object, hence the etymological connection with the Japanese word *sabi*, to rust.

A good example of this embodiment may be seen in certain styles of Japanese pottery. In the Japanese tea ceremony, the pottery items used are often rustic and simple-looking, e.g. Hagi ware, with shapes that are not quite symmetrical, and colors or textures that appear to emphasize an unrefined or simple style. In reality, these items can be quite expensive and in fact, it is up to the knowledge and observational ability of the participant to notice and discern the hidden signs of a truly excellent design or glaze (akin to the appearance of a diamond in the rough). This may be interpreted as a kind of *wabi-sabi* aesthetic, further confirmed by the way the colour of glazed items is known to change over time as hot water is repeatedly poured into them (*sabi*) and the fact that tea bowls are often deliberately chipped or nicked at the bottom (*wabi*), which serves as a kind of signature of the *Hagi-yaki* style.

Wabi and *sabi* both suggest sentiments of desolation and solitude. In the Mahayana Buddhist view of the universe, these may be viewed as positive characteristics, representing liberation from a material world and transcendence to a simpler life. Mahayana philosophy itself, however, warns that genuine understanding cannot be achieved through words or language, so accepting wabi-sabi on nonverbal terms may be the most appropriate approach. Simon Brown notes that wabi sabi describes a means where students can learn to live life through the senses and better engage in life as it happens rather than caught up in unnecessary thoughts. In this sense wabi sabi is the material representation of Zen Buddhism. The idea being that being surrounded by natural, changing, unique objects helps us connect to our real world and escape potentially stressful distractions.

In one sense wabi sabi is a training where the student of wabi sabi learns to find the most simple objects interesting, fascinating and beautiful. Fading autumn leaves would be an example. Wabi sabi can change our perception of the world to the extent that a chip or crack in a vase makes it more interesting and gives the object greater meditative value. Similarly materials that age such as bare wood, paper and fabric become more interesting as they exhibit changes that can be observed over time.

The wabi and sabi concepts are religious in origin, but actual usage of the words in Japanese is often quite casual. The syncretic nature of Japanese belief systems should be noted.

Wabi-sabi in Japanese arts

Many Japanese arts over the past thousand years have been influenced by Zen and Mahayana philosophy, particularly acceptance and contemplation of the imperfection, constant flux and impermanence of all things. Such arts can exemplify a wabi-sabi aesthetic. Here is an incomplete list:

- honkyoku (traditional shakuhachi music of wandering Zen monks)
- ikebana (flower arrangement)
- Japanese gardens, Zen gardens and bonsai (tray gardens)
- Japanese poetry, particularly haiku
- Japanese pottery, notably Hagi ware
- Japanese tea ceremony
- Bonsai the Japanese art of miniature trees

Western use

Former Stuckist artist and remodernist filmmaker Jesse Richards employs it in nearly all of his work, along with mono no aware.

During the 1990s the concept was borrowed by computer software developers and employed in Agile programming to describe acceptance of the state of ongoing imperfection that is the product of these methods.

On 16 March 2009, Marcel Theroux presented *In Search of Wabi-sabi* on BBC Four as part of the channel's "Hidden Japan" season of programming. Marcel travelled throughout Japan trying to understand the aesthetic tastes of Japan and its people.

The work of American artist John Connell is centered around the idea of wabi.

Wabi and sabi refers to a mindful approach to everyday life. Over time their meanings overlapped and converged until they are unified into *Wabi-sabi*, the aesthetic defined as the beauty of things "imperfect, impermanent, and incomplete" . Things in bud, or things in decay, as it were, are more evocative of wabi-sabi than things in full bloom because they suggest the transience of things. As things come and go, they show signs of their coming or going and these signs are considered to be beautiful. In this, beauty is an altered state of consciousness and can be seen in the mundane and simple. The signatures of nature can be so subtle that it takes a quiet mind and a cultivated eye to discern them. In Zen philosophy there are seven aesthetic principles for achieving Wabi-Sabi.

Fukinsei: asymmetry, irregularity; **Kanso**: simplicity; **Koko**: basic, weathered; **Shizen**: without pretense, natural; **Yugen**: subtly profound grace, not obvious; **Datsuzoku**: unbounded by convention, free; **Seijaku**: tranquility.

Each of these things are found in nature but can suggest virtues of human character and appropriateness of behaviour. This, in turn suggests that virtue and civility can be instilled through an appreciation of, and practice in, the arts. Hence, aesthetic ideals have an ethical connotation and pervades much of the Japanese culture.

Yūgen

Yūgen is an important concept in traditional Japanese aesthetics. The exact translation of the word depends on the context. In the Chinese philosophical texts the term was taken from, yūgen meant "dim", "deep" or "mysterious". In the criticism of Japanese waka poetry, it was used to describe the subtle profundity of things that are only vaguely suggested by the poems, and was also the name of a style of poetry (one of the ten orthodox styles delineated by Fujiwara no Teika in his treatises).

Yugen suggests that beyond what can be said but is not an allusion to another world. It is about this world, this experience. All of these are portals to yugen:

"To watch the sun sink behind a flower clad hill. To wander on in a huge forest without thought of return. To stand upon the shore and gaze after a boat that disappears behind distant islands. To contemplate the flight of wild geese seen and lost among the clouds. And, subtle shadows of bamboo on bamboo." Zeami Motokiyo

Zeami was the originator of the dramatic art form Noh theatre and wrote the classic book on dramatic theory (Kadensho). He uses images of nature as a constant metaphor. For example, "snow in a silver bowl" represents "the Flower of Tranquility". Yugen is said to mean “a profound, mysterious sense of the beauty of the universe… and the sad beauty of

human suffering". It is used to refer to Zeami's interpretation of "refined elegance" in the performance of Noh.

Geidō

Geidō refers to the way of the traditional Japanese arts: Noh (theater), *kadō* (Japanese flower arrangement), *shodō* (Japanese calligraphy), *Sadō* (Japanese tea ceremony), and *yakimono* (Japanese pottery). All of these ways carry an ethical and aesthetic connotation and appreciate the process of creation. To introduce discipline into their training, Japanese warriors followed the example of the arts that systematized practice through prescribed forms called kata - think of the tea ceremony. Training in combat techniques incorporated the way of the arts (Geidō), practice in the arts themselves, and instilling aesthetic concepts (for example, yugen) and the philosophy of arts (geido ron). This led to combat techniques becoming known as the martial arts (even today, David Lowry shows, in the 'Sword and Brush: the spirit of the martial arts', the affinity of the martial arts with the other arts). All of these arts are a form of tacit communication and we can, and do, respond to them by appreciation of this tacit dimension.

The phrase *iki* is generally used in Japanese culture to describe qualities that are aesthetically appealing and when applied to a person, what they do, or have, constitutes a high compliment. *Iki* is not found in nature. While similar to *wabi-sabi* in that it disregards perfection, *iki* is a broad term that encompasses various characteristics related to refinement with flair. The tasteful manifestation of sensuality can be *iki*. Etymologically, iki has a root that means pure and unadulterated. However, it also carries a connotation of having an appetite for life. Iki is never cute.

Aesthetics and Japan's cultural identities

Because of its nature, Japanese aesthetics has a wider relevance than is usually accorded to aesthetics in the West. In her path making book, Eiko Ikegami reveals a complex history of social life in which aesthetic ideals become central to Japan's cultural identities. She shows how networks in the performing arts, the tea ceremony, and poetry shaped tacit cultural practices and how politeness and politics are inseparable. She contends that what in Western cultures are normally scattered, like art and politics, have been, and are, distinctly integrated in Japan.

After the introduction of Western notions in Japan, Wabi Sabi aesthetics ideals have been re-examined with Western values, by both Japanese and non-Japanese. Therefore, recent interpretations of the aesthetics ideals inevitably reflect Judeo-Christian perspectives and Western philosophy.

Kawaii

A modern phenomenon, since the 1970s cuteness or ***kawaii*** in Japanese (literally, "loveable" "cute" or "adorable") has become a prominent aesthetic of Japanese popular

culture, entertainment, clothing, food, toys, personal appearance, behavior, and mannerisms.

As a cultural phenomenon, cuteness is increasingly accepted in Japan as a part of Japanese culture and national identity. Tomoyuki Sugiyama, author of "Cool Japan", believes that "cuteness" is rooted in Japan's harmony-loving culture, and Nobuyoshi Kurita, a sociology professor at Musashi University in Tokyo, has stated that "cute" is a "magic term" that encompasses everything that's acceptable and desirable in Japan.

Cuteness in Japanese culture

Since the 1970s, cuteness, in Japanese ***kawaisa*** (literally, "lovability", "cuteness" or "adorableness") has become a prominent aspect of Japanese popular culture, entertainment, clothing, food, toys, personal appearance, behavior, and mannerisms. It is also referred to as *kawaii* (literally, *adorable*, *precious*, *lovable*, or *innocent*).

History

The rise of cuteness in Japanese culture emerged in the 1970s as part of a new style of writing. Many teenage girls began to write laterally using mechanical pencils. These pencils produced very fine lines, as opposed to traditional Japanese writing that varied in thickness and was vertical. Also, the girls would write in big, round characters and they added little pictures to their writing, such as hearts, stars, smiley faces, and letters of the Latin alphabet. These pictures would be inserted randomly and made the writing very hard to read. As a result, this writing style caused a lot of controversy and was banned in many schools. During the 1980s, however, this new "cute" writing was adopted by magazines and comics and was put onto packaging and advertising. From 1984-86, Yamane Kazuma studied the development of cute handwriting, which he called Anomalous Female Teenage Handwriting, in depth. Although it was commonly thought that the writing style was something that teenagers had picked up from comics, he found that teenagers had come up with the style themselves, as part of an underground movement.

Later, cute handwriting became associated with acting childishly and using infantile slang words. Because of this growing trend, companies such as Sanrio came out with merchandise like Hello Kitty. Hello Kitty was an immediate success and the obsession with cute continued to progress in other areas as well. The 1980s also saw the rise of cute idols, such as Seiko Matsuda, who is largely credited with popularizing the trend. Women began to emulate Seiko Matsuda and her cute fashion style and mannerisms, which emphasized the helplessness and innocence of young girls. No longer limited to teenagers, however, the spread of making things as cute as possible, even common household items, was embraced by people of all ages. Now there are airplanes painted with Pikachu on the side, and each of Japan’s 47 prefectures, the Tokyo police, and the government television station all have their own cute mascots. Currently, Sanrio’s line of more than 50 characters takes in more than $1 billion a year and it remains the most successful company to capitalize on the cute trend.

Prevalence

An All Nippon Airways Boeing 747 with a Pokémon livery.

Cute elements can be found almost everywhere in Japan, from big business to corner markets and national government, ward, and town offices. Many companies, large and small, use cute mascots to present their wares and services to the public. For example:

- Pikachu, a character from *Pokémon,* adorns the side of three All Nippon Airways passenger jets.
- Asahi Bank used Miffy (Nijntje), a character from a Dutch series of children's picture books, on some of its ATM and credit cards.
- All 47 prefectures have cute mascot characters.
- The Japan Post "Yū-Pack" mascot is a stylized mailbox.
- The Japan Post also uses other cute mascot characters (for example, on stamps).
- Some police forces in Japan have their own moe mascots, which sometimes adorn the front of kōban (police boxes).
- Sanrio, the company behind Hello Kitty and other similarly cute characters run the Sanrio Puroland theme park in Tokyo.

Cute can be also used to describe a specific fashion sense of an individual, and generally includes clothing that appears to be made for young children, outside of the size, or clothing that accentuates the cuteness of the individual wearing the clothing. Ruffles and

pastel colors are commonly (but not always) featured, and accessories often include toys or bags featuring anime characters.

The fashionableness of cuteness has recently been challenged by the more Western-oriented ero kawaii image of sexiness.

Perception in Japan

As a cultural phenomenon, cuteness is increasingly accepted in Japan as a part of Japanese culture and national identity. Tomoyuki Sugiyama, author of "Cool Japan", believes that "cuteness" is rooted in Japan's harmony-loving culture, and Nobuyoshi Kurita, a sociology professor at Musashi University in Tokyo, has stated that "cute" is a "magic term" that encompasses everything that's acceptable and desirable in Japan.

On the other hand, those skeptical of cuteness consider it a sign of an infantile mentality. In particular, Hiroto Murasawa, professor of beauty and culture at Osaka Shoin Women's University asserts that cuteness is "a mentality that breeds non-assertion ... Individuals who choose to stand out get beaten down."

Influence on other cultures

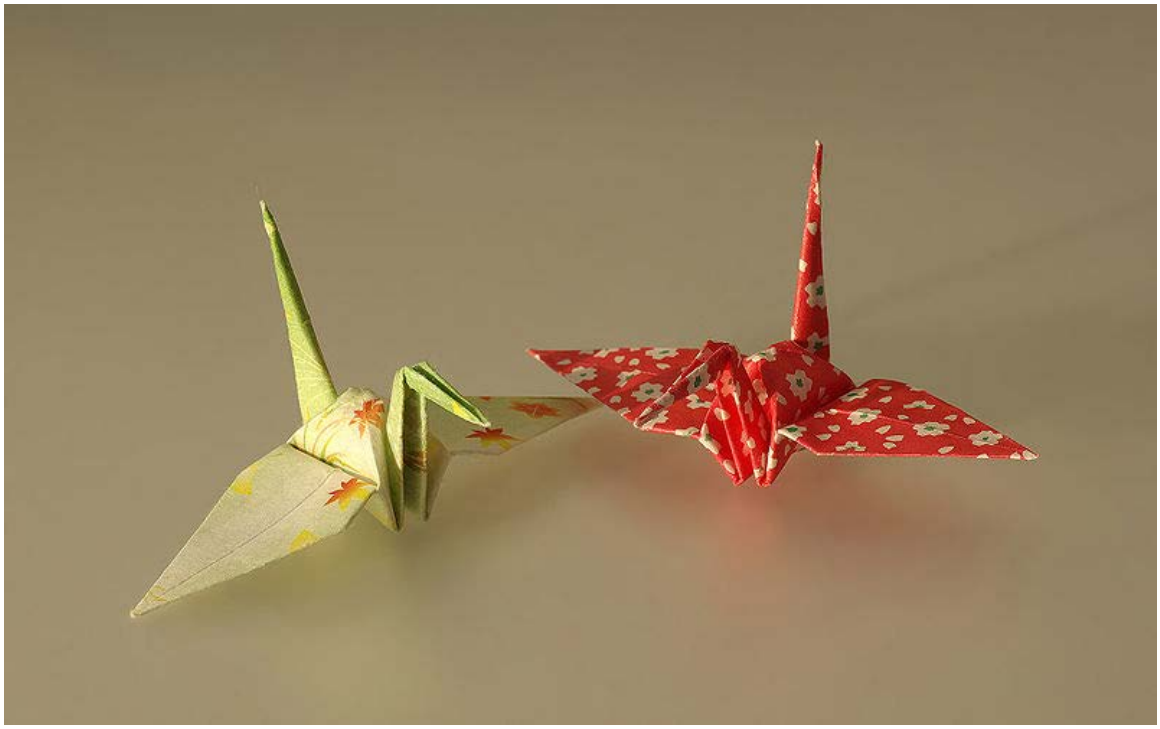
Cute merchandise and products are especially popular in some parts of East Asia, such as China, Hong Kong, South Korea, Singapore and Taiwan.

In some Asian and western cultures, the Japanese word for cute *kawaii* has joined a number of other Japanese words borrowed by overseas Japanophiles. While the usage is almost entirely limited to the otaku and viral internet subculture, it has also been used in mainstream culture by American singer Gwen Stefani, who gave *kawaii* a brief mention in her Hollaback Girl music video, Gwen also released a line of fragrances inspired by this love of *kawaii* dubbed *harajuku lovers*

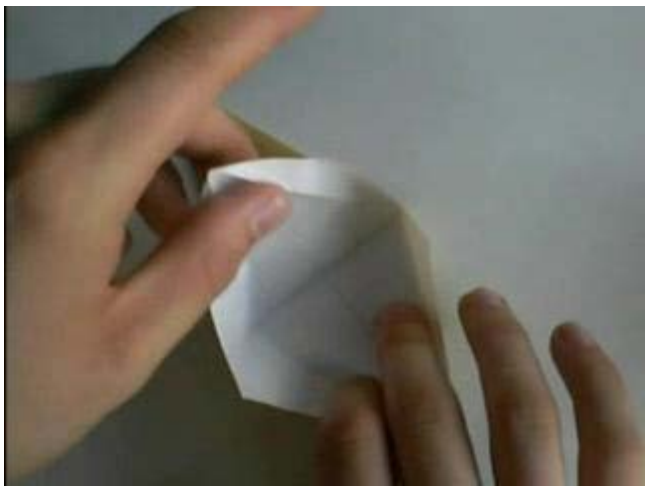
The concept of kawaii has spread to Europe, including Russia, where there is a Kawaii Factory brand which sells kawaii accessories.

Chapter-3

Japanese Origami Art



Origami cranes



the folding of an Origami crane

Origami is the traditional Japanese folk art of paper folding, which started in the 17th century AD and was popularized in the mid-1900s. It has since then evolved into a modern art form. The goal of this art is to transform a flat sheet of material into a finished sculpture through folding and sculpting techniques, and as such the use of cuts or glue are not considered to be origami.

The number of basic origami folds is small, but they can be combined in a variety of ways to make intricate designs. The most well known origami model is probably the Japanese paper crane. In general, these designs begin with a square sheet of paper whose sides may be different colors or prints. Traditional Japanese origami, which has been practiced since the Edo era (1603–1867), has often been less strict about these conventions, sometimes cutting the paper or using nonsquare shapes to start with.

History

Swan by Akira Yoshizawa, the father of modern origami.

There is much speculation as to the origin of origami. While Japan seems to have had the most extensive tradition, there is evidence of independent paperfolding traditions in China, Germany, and Spain, among other places. However because paper decomposes rapidly, there is very little direct evidence of its age or origins, aside from references in published material.

The earliest evidence of paperfolding in Europe is a picture of a small paper boat in Tractatus de sphaera mundi from 1490. There is also evidence of a cut and folded paper box from 1440. It is probable paperfolding in the west originated with the Moors much earlier, it is not known if it was independently discovered or knowledge of origami came along the silk route.

In Japan, the earliest unambiguous reference to a paper model is in a short poem by Ihara Saikaku in 1680 which describes paper butterflies in a dream. Origami butterflies were used during the celebration of Shinto weddings to represent the bride and groom, so paperfolding already become a significant aspect of Japanese ceremony by the Heian period (794–1185) of Japanese history, enough that the reference in this poem would be recognized. Samurai warriors would exchange gifts adorned with noshi, a sort of good luck token made of folded strips of paper.

In the early 1900s, Akira Yoshizawa, Kosho Uchiyama, and others began creating and recording original origami works. Akira Yoshizawa in particular was responsible for a number of innovations, such as wet-folding and the Yoshizawa-Randlett diagramming system, and his work inspired a renaissance of the art form. During the 1980s a number

of folders started systematically studying the mathematical properties of folded forms, which led to a steady increase in the complexity of origami models, which continued well into the 1990s, after which some designers started returning to simpler forms.

The **history of origami** followed after the invention of paper, and as a result of paper's use in society. Independent paper folding traditions exist in East Asia and Europe, and it is unclear whether these evolved separately, or had a common source.

Origins and traditional designs

The Japanese word origami "origami" itself is a compound of two smaller Japanese words: "ori", meaning to fold, and "kami", meaning paper. Until recently, all forms of paper folding were not grouped under the word origami, namely "tsutsumi", a kind of wrapper used for formal occasions. Before that, paperfolding for play was known by a variety of names, including "orikata", "orisue", "orimono", "tatamigami" and others. Exactly why "origami" became the common name is not known; it has been suggested that the word was adopted in the kindergartens because the written characters were easier for young children to write. Another theory is that the word "origami" was a direct translation of the German word "Papierfalten", brought into Japan with the Kindergarten Movement around 1880.

Japanese origami began sometime after Buddhist monk, carried paper to Japan during the 6th century. The first Japanese origami is dated from this period, and was used for religious ceremonial purposes only, due to the high price of paper.

A reference in a poem by Ihara Saikaku from 1680, which describes the Origami butterflies used during Shinto weddings to represent the bride and groom, indicates that origami had become a significant aspect of Japanese ceremony by the Heian period (794–1185). Samurai warriors are known to have exchanged gifts adorned with noshi, a sort of good luck token made of folded strips of paper.

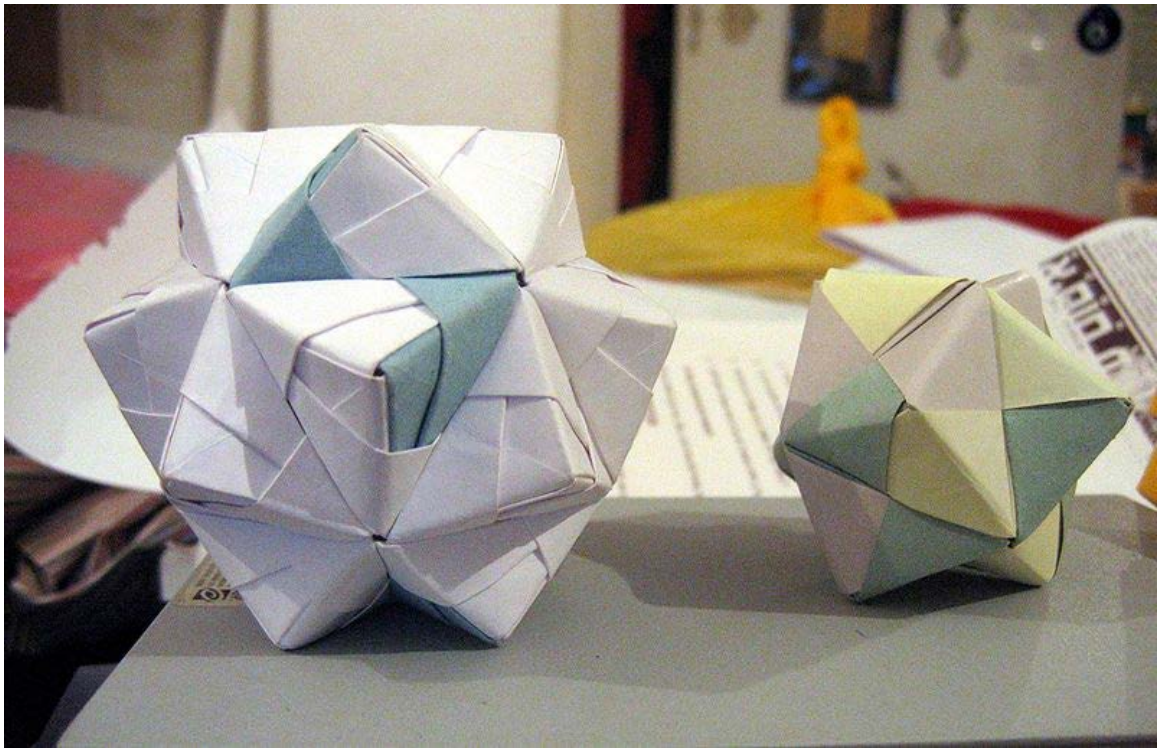
In 1797 the first known origami book was published in Japan, titled "senbazuru orikata". There are several origami stories in Japanese culture, such as a story of Abe no Seimei making a paper bird and turning it into a real one.

The earliest evidence of paperfolding in Europe is a picture of a small paper boat in Tractatus de sphaera mundi from 1490. There is also evidence of a cut and folded paper box from 1440. It is possible that paperfolding in the west originated with the Moors much earlier, however it is not known if it was independently discovered or knowledge of origami came along the silk route.

The modern growth of interest in origami dates to the design in 1954 by Akira Yoshizawa of a notation to indicate how to fold origami models. The Yoshizawa-Randlett standard is now used internationally. Today the popularity of origami has given rise to origami societies such as the British Origami Society and OrigamiUSA. The first known origami social group was founded in Zaragoza, Spain, during the 1940s.

The Chinese word for paperfolding is *"Zhe Zhi"* and some Chinese contend that origami is a historical derivative of Chinese paperfolding.

Modern designs and innovations



An example of Modular Origami (Geometric shapes formed from Sonobe units)

Friedrich Fröbel, founder of the kindergartens, recognized paper binding, weaving, folding, and cutting as teaching aids for child development during the early 19th century. As the Kindergarten system spread throughout Europe and into the rest of the world, it brought with it the small colored squares that we know of today as origami paper. Josef Albers, the father of modern color theory and minimalistic art, taught origami and paper folding in the 1920s and 30s at the famous Bahaus design school. His methods, which involved sheets of round paper that were folded into spirals and curved shapes, have influenced modern origami artists like Kunihiko Kasahara.

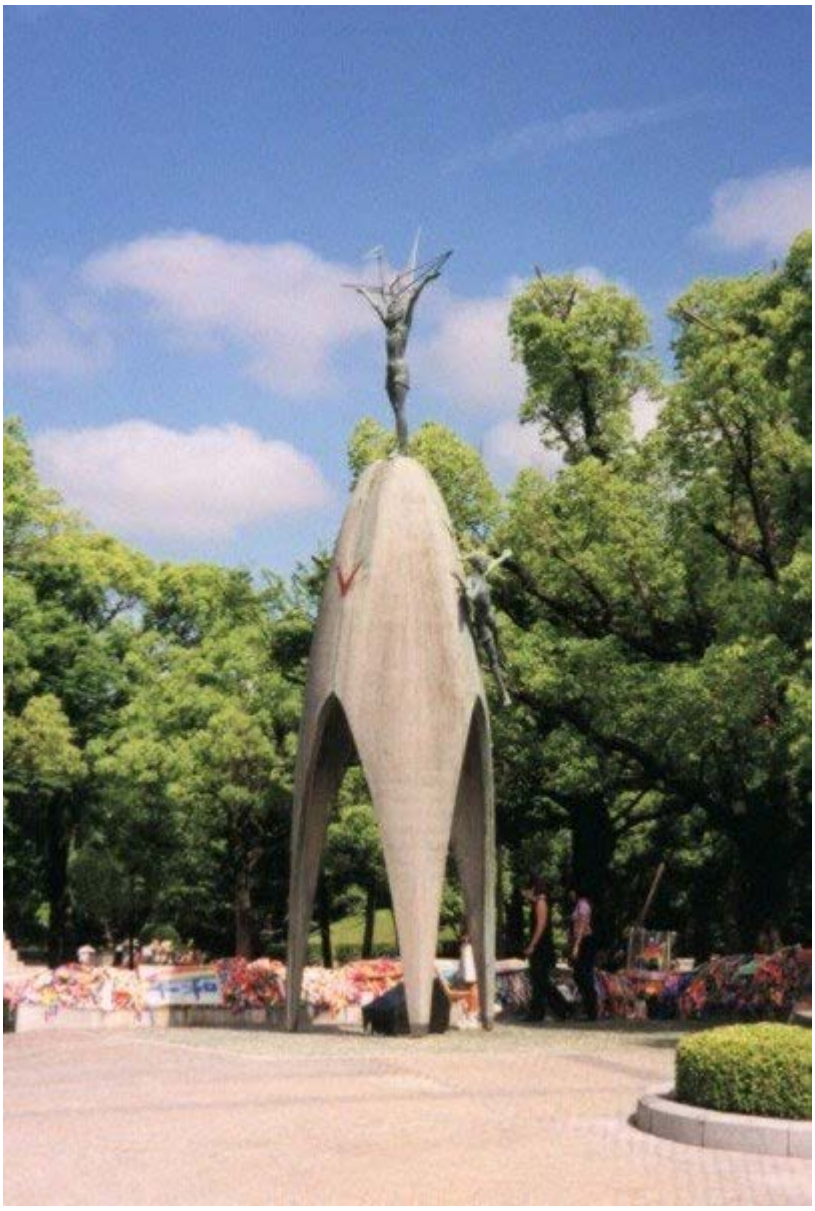
The work of Akira Yoshizawa, of Japan, a prolific creator of origami designs and a writer of books on origami, inspired a modern renaissance of the craft. He invented the process and techniques of wet-folding and set down the initial set of symbols for the standard Yoshizawa-Randlett system that Robert Harbin and Samuel Randlett later improved upon. His work was promoted through the studies of Gershon Legman as published in the

seminal books of Robert Harbin's Paper Magic and more so in Secrets of the Origami Masters which revealed the wide world of paper folding in the mid 1960s.

Modern origami has attracted a worldwide following, with ever more intricate designs and new techniques. One of these techniques is 'wet-folding,' the practice of dampening the paper somewhat during folding to allow the finished product to hold shape better. Variations such as modular origami, also known as unit origami, a process where many origami units are assembled to form an often decorative whole.

Complex origami models normally require thin, strong paper or tissue foil for successful folding; these lightweight materials allow for more layers before the model becomes impractically thick. Modern origami has broken free from the traditional linear construction techniques of the past, and models are now frequently wet-folded or constructed from materials other than paper and foil. With popularity, a new generation of origami creators has experimented with crinkling techniques and smooth-flowing designs used in creating realistic masks, animals, and other traditional artistic themes.

Sadako and the thousand cranes



Sadako Sasaki memorial in Hiroshima, surrounded by paper cranes.

One of the most famous origami designs is the Japanese crane. The crane is auspicious in Japanese culture. Japan has launched a satellite named *tsuru* (crane). Legend says that anyone who folds one thousand paper cranes will have their heart's desire come true. The origami crane has become a symbol of peace because of this legend, and because of a young Japanese girl named Sadako Sasaki. Sadako was exposed to the radiation of the atomic bombing of Hiroshima as an infant, and it took its inevitable toll on her health. She was then a *hibakusha* — an atom bomb survivor. By the time she was twelve in 1955, she was dying of leukemia. Hearing the legend, she decided to fold one thousand origami cranes so that she could live. However, when she saw that the other children in

her ward were dying, she realized that she would not survive and wished instead for world peace and an end to suffering.

A popular version of the tale is that Sadako folded 644 cranes before she died; her classmates then continued folding cranes in honor of their friend. She was buried with a wreath of 1,000 cranes to honor her dream. While her effort could not extend her life, it moved her friends to make a granite statue of Sadako in the Hiroshima Peace Park: a young girl standing with her hand outstretched, a paper crane flying from her fingertips. Every year the statue is adorned with thousands of wreaths of a thousand origami cranes. A group of one thousand paper cranes is called *senbazuru* in Japanese.

The tale of Sadako has been dramatized in many books and movies. In one version, Sadako wrote a haiku that translates into English as:

> *I shall write peace upon your wings, and you shall fly around the world so that children will no longer have to die this way.*

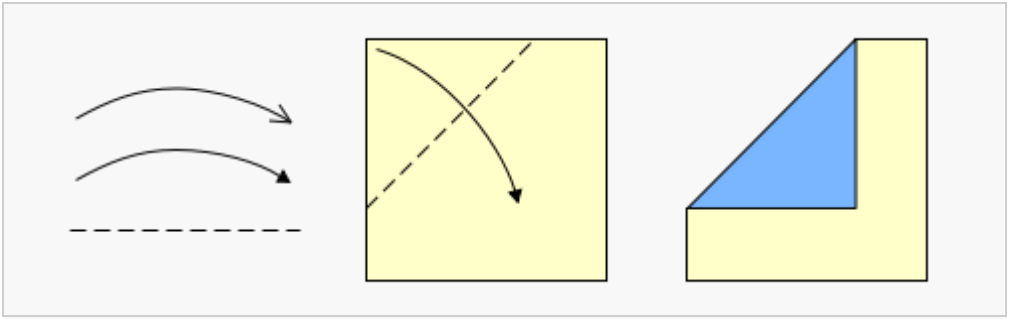
Techniques and Materials

Origami Techniques

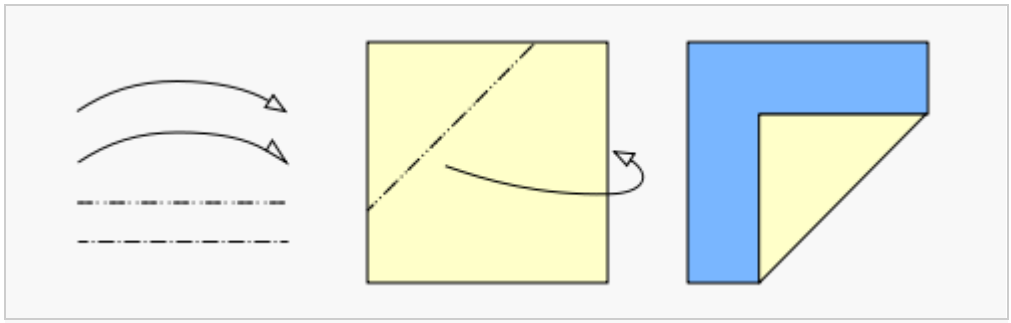
This page shows basic information about the most commonly used techniques in the Japanese art of origami.

Origami symbols

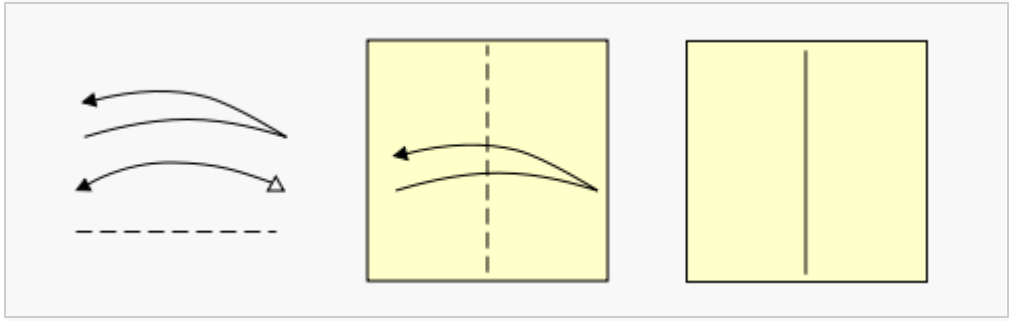
Origami symbols



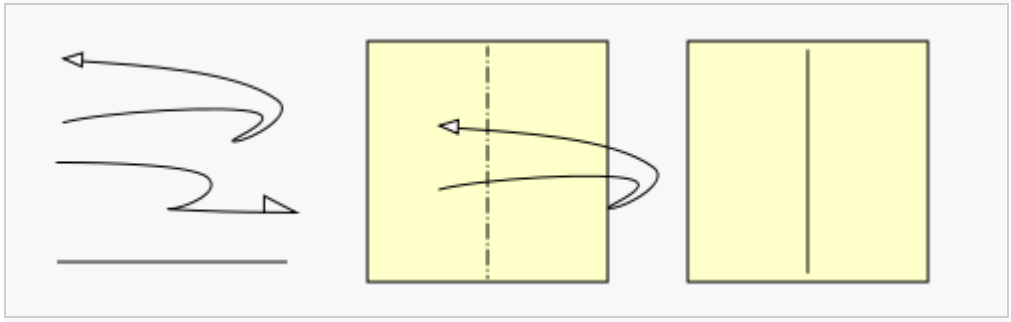
Valley fold



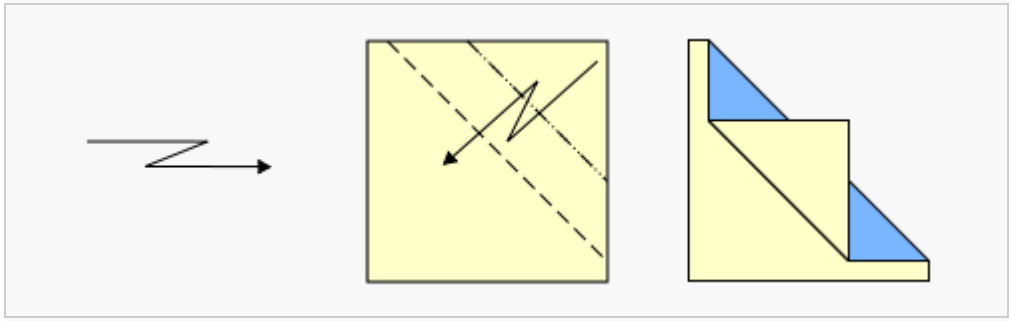
Mountain fold.



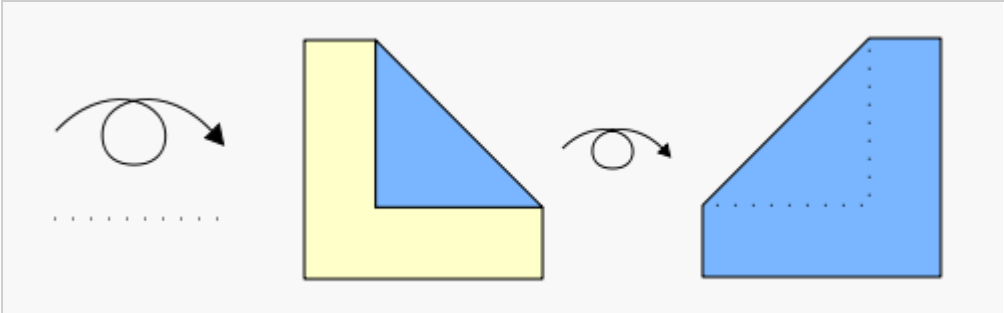
Fold and unfold valley.



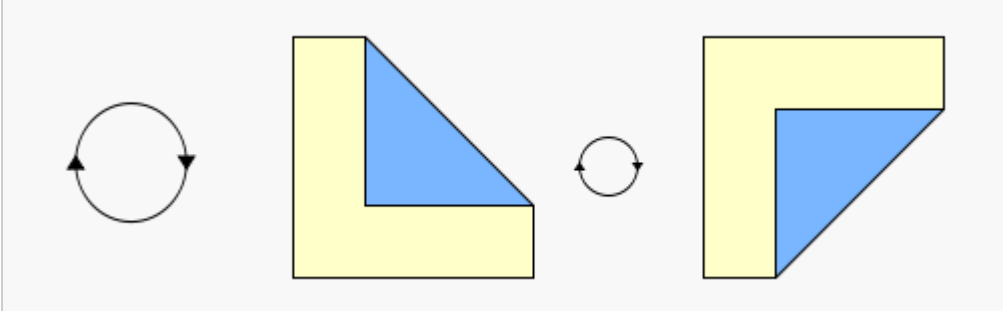
Fold and unfold mountain.



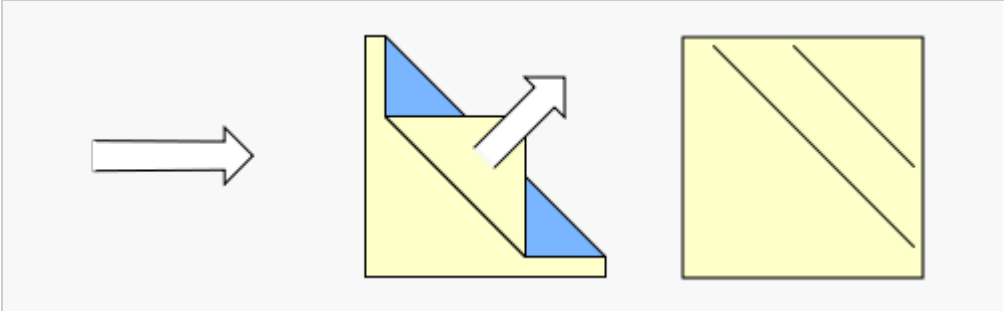
Pleat fold.



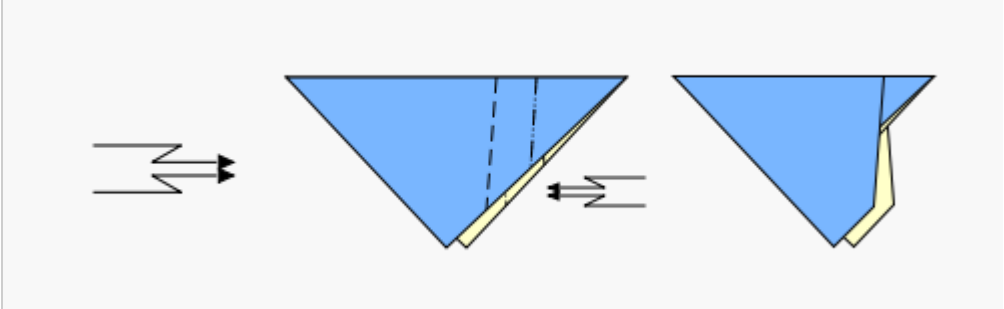
Turn over and invisible line.



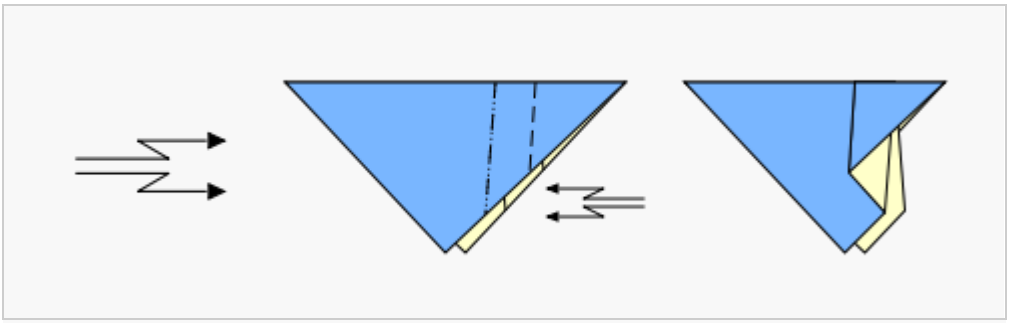
Rotate.



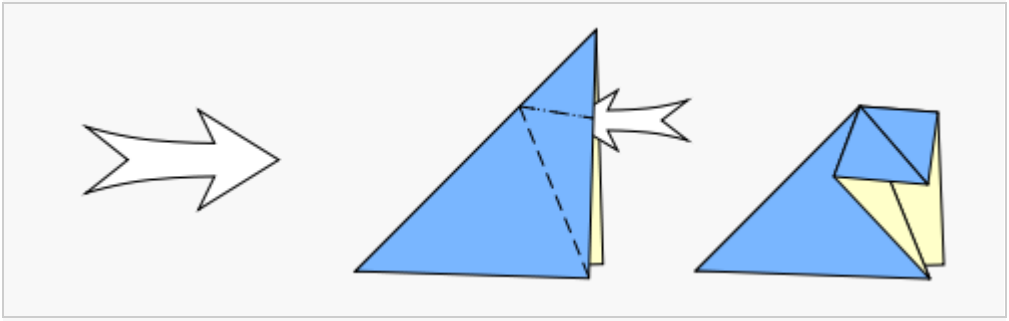
Pull.



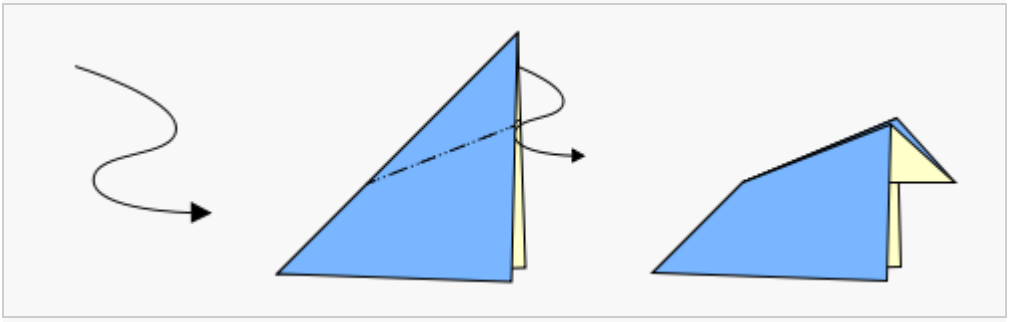
Inside crimp fold.



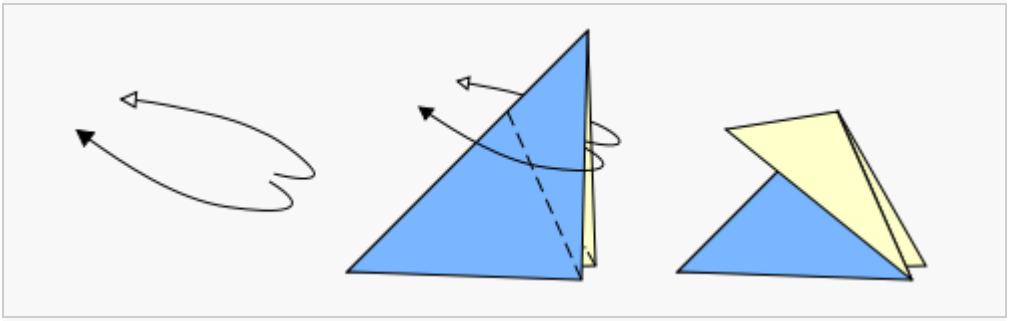
Outside crimp fold.



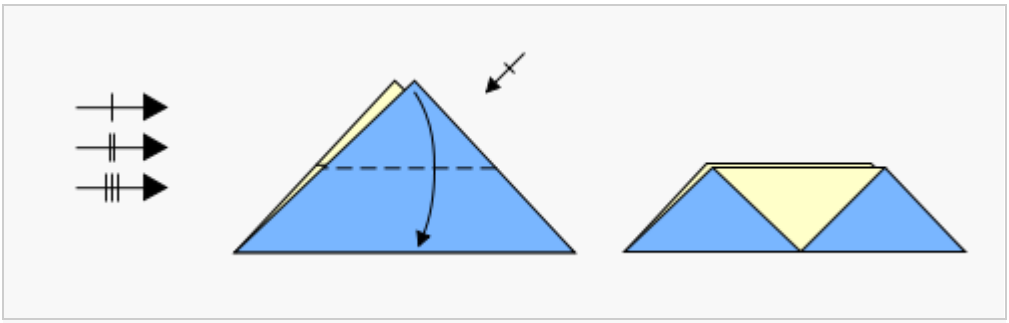
Open.



Inside reverse fold.



Outside reverse fold.

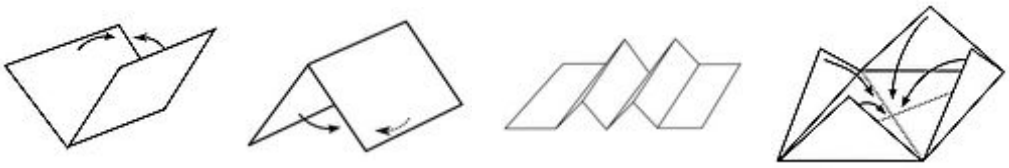


Repeat action.

Basic skills

Pureland origami is a style of origami that is done by creating only one fold at a time. Because of these restrictions, proponents of the theory have devised alternate methods of folding more complicated steps that have very similar results.

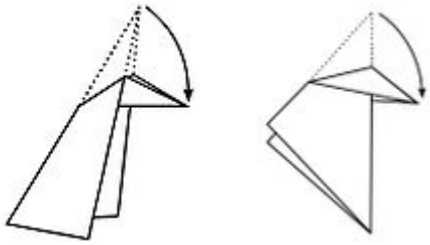
- A valley fold is the first basic fold, in which you fold the paper forward onto itself.
- A mountain fold is the second basic fold, in which the paper is folded behind itself. An easier way to do this is to turn the paper over first and then do a valley fold and turn the paper back over again.
- A pleat fold is several evenly-spaced parallel mountain and valley folds. Also called an "accordion fold."
- A radial pleat fold is an angled pleat fold, usually with a focus point on an edge or corner.
- A blintz fold is made by folding the corners of a square into the center. This can be achieved with higher accuracy by folding and unfolding two reference creases through the center.



Valley fold Mountain fold Accordion or pleat fold Blintz fold

Simple compound folds

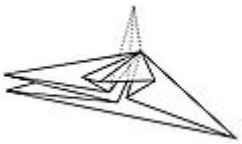
- An outside reverse fold consists of two radial valley folds extending from a single point on a central fold and a reversal of the center fold on the affected end, all done simultaneously.
- An inside reverse fold consists of two radial mountain folds extending from a single point on a central fold, and a reversal of the central fold on the affected end, all done simultaneously.



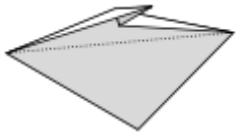
Inside reverse foldOutside reverse fold

Low-intermediate skills

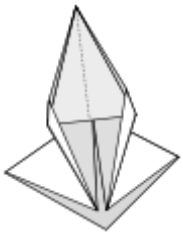
- A squash fold starts with a flap with at least two layers (for example, one flap of a waterbomb base). Make a radial fold from the closed point down the center of this flap. Open the flap and refold downward to make two adjacent flaps.
- A rabbit ear fold starts with a reference crease down a diagonal. Fold two radial folds from opposite corners along the same side of the reference crease; the resulting flap should be folded downwards so that the previous edges are aligned.
- A petal fold starts with two connected flaps, each of which has at least two layers. (For example, two flaps of a preliminary base). The two flaps are attached to each other along a reference crease. Make two radial folds from the open point, so that the open edges lie along the reference crease. Unfold these two radial folds. Make another fold across the top connecting the ends of the creases to create a triangle of creases. Unfold this fold as well. Fold one layer of the open point upward and flatten it using the existing creases. A petal fold is equivalent to two side-by-side rabbit ears, which are connected along the reference crease.
- The simplest crimp fold consists of two reverse folds performed in succession so that the edges are still parallel. The crimp can be varied so that the edges are not parallel.



Squash fold applied to one flap of a waterbomb base



Rabbit ear fold



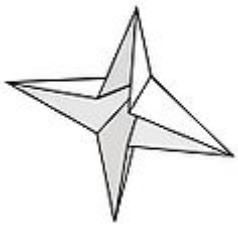
Petal fold on one half of a preliminary fold

Origami bases

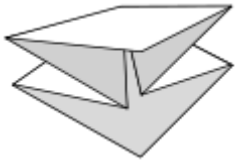
In origami, there is a series of several bases that many models are created with. In general, "base" refers to any folded paper that immediately precedes final folding and shaping of the model-to-be. The ones listed below are generally accepted as the traditional origami bases.

- The kite base is merely two valley folds that bring two adjacent edges of the square together to lie on the square's diagonal.
- The fish base consists of two radial folds against a diagonal reference crease on each of two opposite corners. The flaps that result on the other two corners are carefully folded downwards in the same direction. In other words, it consists of two side-by-side rabbit ears.
- The waterbomb base consists of two perpendicular valley folds down the diagonals of the square and two perpendicular mountain folds down the center of the square. This crease pattern is then compressed to form the waterbomb base, which is an isosceles-right triangle with four isosceles-right triangular flaps. The waterbomb base is an inside-out preliminary fold.
- The preliminary fold consists of two perpendicular diagonal mountain folds that bisect the corners of the square and two perpendicular valley folds that bisect the edges of the square. The paper is then collapsed to form a square shape with four isosceles-right triangular flaps. It is sometimes called the Square Base
- The bird base, or crane base, consists of a preliminary fold with both the front and the back sides petal folded upward.
- The frog base starts with a waterbomb base or preliminary fold. All four flaps are squash-folded (the result is the same in either case), and then the corners are petal folded upward.

If a square is blintz folded, then a kite/fish/bird/frog base is folded, and the blintzed edges teased out and collapsed n a certain fashion, this is called a blintzed kite/fish/bird/frog/base, which doubles the complexity and adds more points and edges to the original kite/fish/bird/frog base, for a more complex model that requires more points. It's possible to double blintz for a double blintzed kite/fish/bird/frog base if needed. Theoretically an infinite number of blintzes could be performed to yield an infinitely complex multi-pointed base, but paper thickness restricts this to generally two blintzes.



Water bomb base before flattening



Preliminary fold or Square Base

Fish base

Mid-intermediate skills

- The Swivel fold is difficult to describe as the term is loosely defined and there are so many different versions that could be called "swivel folds". However, generally swivel folds involve a flap of paper "swivelling" at a certain point or vertex and another flap or edge of paper, connected to the first, dragged around that point or vertex.

- Pentagon. Although most origami models start with a square or rectangular sheet of paper, a few start with a triangle, pentagon, hexagon, circle, or other convex sheet of paper. A pentagon can be traced (from a template) onto a square sheet of paper, or it can be folded from a square sheet of paper. One technique for folding a pentagon uses folds to calculate the golden ratio: (1+sqrt(5))/2. Another technique for folding a pentagon uses folds to divide a 180 degree angle into five (almost exactly) equal angles. The excess paper is often trimmed, before starting to fold the desired model. Pentagons are used in five-sided flowers, such as the *cherry blossom* and *Marie's Rose*.

High-intermediate skills

- Most of the creases in a stretched bird base are present in the regular bird base. When forming this bird base, make sure to crease the triangle at the center corner through all layers. (If you unfold completely, you will see a small square at the center of the paper.) After forming the bird base, either partially unfold the paper, and/or "stretch" two opposite corners of the bird base. These two corners, their associated flaps, and the central square will all lie flat. The other two flaps will form a pyramid. Rabbit ear each flap that is in the pyramid, so that the model lies flat. All of the raw edges will lie along the centerline of the model. The stretched bird base is used in Lang's *Bald Eagle*, Greenberg's *Eeyore*, and some other high-intermediate and complex models.
- The open sink usually involves opening out the paper, and reversing creases to make a waterbomb base in the middle of the model.
- The open double sink is equivalent to making an open sink, and then open-sinking the point in the opposite direction. It is a sinked analog of the crimp fold. When made in a single step (after pre-creasing), it can be easier to make than a single open sink, because it does not require neatly reversing the point. The open double sink is used in many box-pleated models.
- The spread squash can similarly be considered the sinked analog of the squash fold. It is used to flatten a closed flap or twist fold (see below). Instead of creating a long point to one side of the flap's base, the spread squash creates a wide splat around the flap's base. The spread squash is used in the eyes of Engel's *Octopus*, in *Marie's Rose*, and in some other intermediate and complex models.
- The closed sink simultaneously makes a locking flap inside of a sink. It is difficult because the paper cannot be opened out further than a triangle. This technique is illustrated in the Origami Forum's thread #462. The closed sink appears in some high-intermediate and complex models.
- The twist fold involves, as the name implies, twisting a section of the paper with respect to its original position. The section twisted will be a polygon; the numerous required support creases include pleat folds radiating from its corners. *Marie's Rose* demonstrates this on a pentagon.
    - It is also possible to twist a single conical point indefinitely, collapsing the sides in a waterbomb-base-like fashion as one goes. (If this is tried with a non-conical point, such as the waterbomb base itself, eventually the fold

will terminate in a spread squash.) This variant is used in many of Tomoko Fuse's modular boxes.

Complex skills

- unsink, or sometimes just unsink, makes a concave pocket convex without fully unfolding the paper, or the opposite of an open sink. It is more difficult than the closed unsink below because there is no internal flap to grab onto to help unsink the paper, so the paper must be opened out and the area to be unsunk is pushed out (to be convex) from inside the model and from behind. It is a common fold in Lang's insects.
- The closed unsink inverts a closed sink without completely opening out the affected paper. In theory, it is "just" the opposite of a closed sink. In practice, it is very difficult, because the paper being "popped" into place usually must be pulled (not pushed), and because it involves simultaneously folding over a locking flap that is hidden inside the sink. However, it is easier to manipulate than an open unsink as there is an internal flap to pull to pop the unsink in place; in an open unsink there is nothing to hold. The closed unsink appears in some complex models, such as a few of Lang's insects.

Origami paper

crane and papers of the same size used to fold it

Almost any laminar material can be used for folding; the only requirement is that it should hold a crease.

Origami paper, often referred to as "kami" (Japanese for paper), is sold in prepackaged squares of various sizes ranging from 2.5 cm to 25 cm or more. It is commonly colored on one side and white on the other; however, dual coloured and patterned versions exist and can be used effectively for color-changed models. Origami paper weighs slightly less than copy paper, making it suitable for a wider range of models.

Normal copy paper with weights of 70–90 g/m^2 (19-24 lb) can be used for simple folds, such as the crane and waterbomb. Heavier weight papers of 100 g/m^2 (approx. 25 lb) or

more can be wet-folded. This technique allows for a more rounded sculpting of the model, which becomes rigid and sturdy when it is dry.

Foil-backed paper, just as its name implies, is a sheet of thin foil glued to a sheet of thin paper. Related to this is tissue foil, which is made by gluing a thin piece of tissue paper to kitchen aluminium foil. A second piece of tissue can be glued onto the reverse side to produce a tissue/foil/tissue sandwich. Foil-backed paper is available commercially, but not tissue foil; it must be handmade. Both types of foil materials are suitable for complex models.

Washi (和紙) is the traditional origami paper used in Japan. Washi is generally tougher than ordinary paper made from wood pulp, and is used in many traditional arts. Washi is commonly made using fibres from the bark of the gampi tree, the mitsumata shrub (*Edgeworthia papyrifera*), or the paper mulberry but also can be made using bamboo, hemp, rice, and wheat.

Artisan papers such as unryu, lokta, hanji, gampi, kozo, saa, and abaca have long fibres and are often extremely strong. As these papers are floppy to start with, they are often backcoated or resized with methylcellulose or wheat paste before folding. Also, these papers are extremely thin and compressible, allowing for thin, narrowed limbs as in the case of insect models.

Paper money from various countries is also popular to create origami with; this is known variously as Dollar Origami, Orikane, and Money Origami. Towels and toilet paper are often folded by hotel staff to indicate to guests that the bathroom has been recently cleaned.

Origami paper is used to fold origami, the art of paper folding.

Kami

This paper is the easiest to find and cheapest to buy. It is also the most basic: **kami**, or koi paper. Kami is a thin, easy to fold paper. It is usually printed only on one side, with a solid color or pattern. These patterns can be as simple as a gradation from red to blue, or as complex as a multi-colored kimono pattern of flowers and cranes with gold foil embellishments. Kami comes in several sizes, but standard sizes include 75 × 75 mm (about 3 × 3 inches), 6-inch squares and 10-inch squares.

Paper-backed foil

This medium is a slightly more expensive, flashier, paper that is good for retaining creases called paper-backed foil paper, Japanese foil, or simply foil. Foil paper is composed of a thin layer of foil adhered to an extremely thin sheet of paper. The most common colors are silver and gold, but any color is possible in foil paper including bright pink, blue and copper. In many multi-color packs, one sheet each of silver and gold paper

is included. These are usually placed on the bottom end of the string if used in a thousand origami cranes.

Washi

Washi is a thick hand-made paper, available commercially but very expensive. Washi is a long-fibred paper but is also very soft. It does not hold a sharp fold due to the extremely long and thick fibres of the pulp. Inclusions of flowers, leaves, grass, seeds, string, ribbon, and other small decorative items are common for washi, adding to the random and handmade appearance of the finished craft. Washi is also accepting of ink, making it easy to print upon. Printed washi has a uniquely shiny, uneven and occasionally transparent texture. In origami it is not as commonly used as kami paper.

Chiyogami

Chiyogami (literally "1000 generation paper") is an inexpensive alternative to washi paper. It is a traditional block-printed paper.

Specialty fiber

For supercomplex origami, many folders choose a special, handmade, thin paper made of strong fibers, such as unryu, lokta, saa, and abaca. However, to properly fold out of these papers, often methylcellulose or methyl acetate is brushed over the paper and dried, to properly prepare the fibers for wet-folding.

Dollar bills and banknotes

An origami snail that is made out of a dollar bill.

Banknotes may be used to fold models as well. Banknotes are common media for folding as the subject in the center of the banknote, like George Washington, can make a striking appearance on the finished model.

Tools

It is common to fold using a flat surface but some folders like doing it in the air with no tools especially when displaying the folding. Many folders believe no tool should be used when folding. However a couple of tools can help especially with the more complex models. For instance a bone folder allows sharp creases to be made in the paper easily, paper clips can act as extra pairs of fingers, and tweezers can be used to make small folds. When making complex models from origami crease patterns, it can help to use a ruler and ballpoint embosser to score the creases. Completed models can be sprayed so they keep their shape better, and of course a spray is needed when wet folding.

Types of Origami

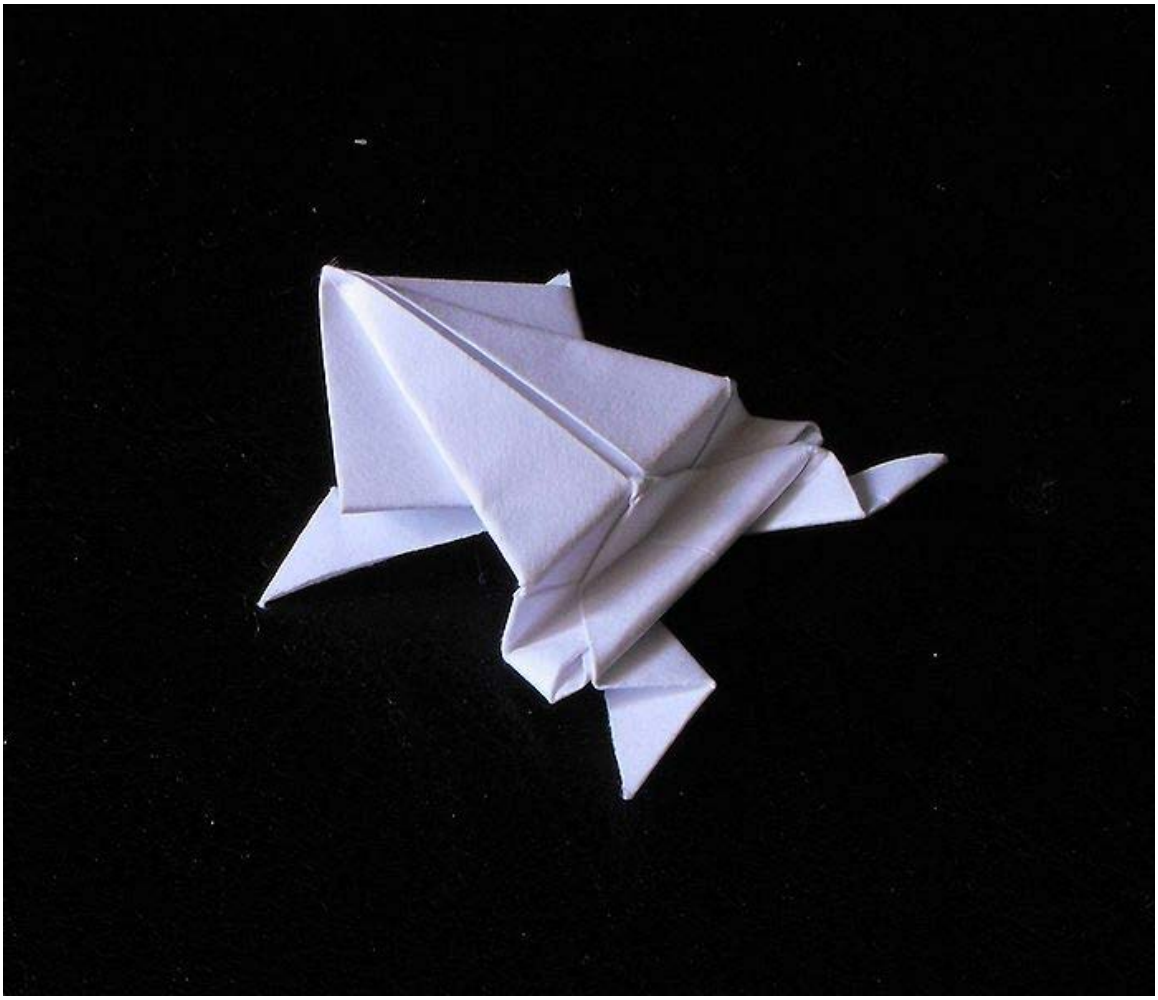
Action origami

Origami not only covers still-life, there are also moving objects; Origami can move in clever ways. Action origami includes origami that flies, requires inflation to complete, or, when complete, uses the kinetic energy of a person's hands, applied at a certain region on the model, to move another flap or limb. Some argue that, strictly speaking, only the latter is really "recognized" as action origami. Action origami, first appearing with the traditional Japanese flapping bird, is quite common. One example is Robert Lang's instrumentalists; when the figures' heads are pulled away from their bodies, their hands will move, resembling the playing of music.

A decorated paper fortune teller.

'**Action origami'** is origami that can be animated. The original traditional action model is the flapping bird. Typically models where the final assembly involves some special action, for instance blowing up a waterbomb, are also classed as action origami., More rarely models like paper plane and spinners which have no moving parts are included. Some traditional action origami involved cuts but modern models typically are built with no cuts. Action origami are normally toys built to amuse but some are designed to inspire wonder.

Action toys



Jumping frog

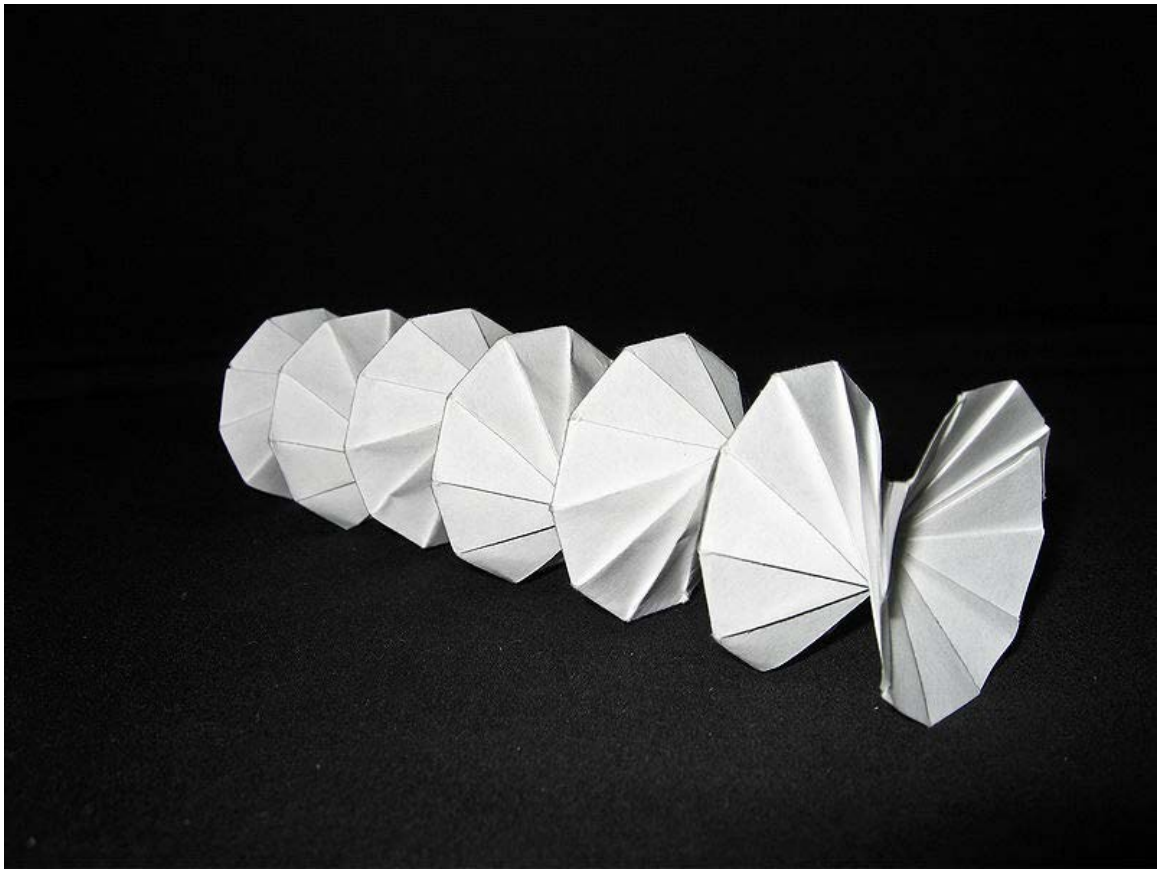
Action toys include birds or butterflies with flapping wings, beaks that peck, and frogs that hop, as well as popular traditional models like the fortune teller. Bangers are models that make a nose when flicked down hard.

Some action origami is designed to accompany a story whilst it is built.

Complex models

Some models are far more complex than can be classed as toys. They are built to amaze and astonish. For instance Robert J. Lang's Bassist, Pianist, and Violinist is a set of action models where each one plays an instrument when pulled on appropriately. Jeremy Shafer has made a number of extraordinary action models including a Swiss army knife with tools that open out, a slithering snake skin, and flashers one of which he demonstrated on the Carol Duvall Show.

Mathematical models



Spring Into Action, designed by Jeff Beynon.

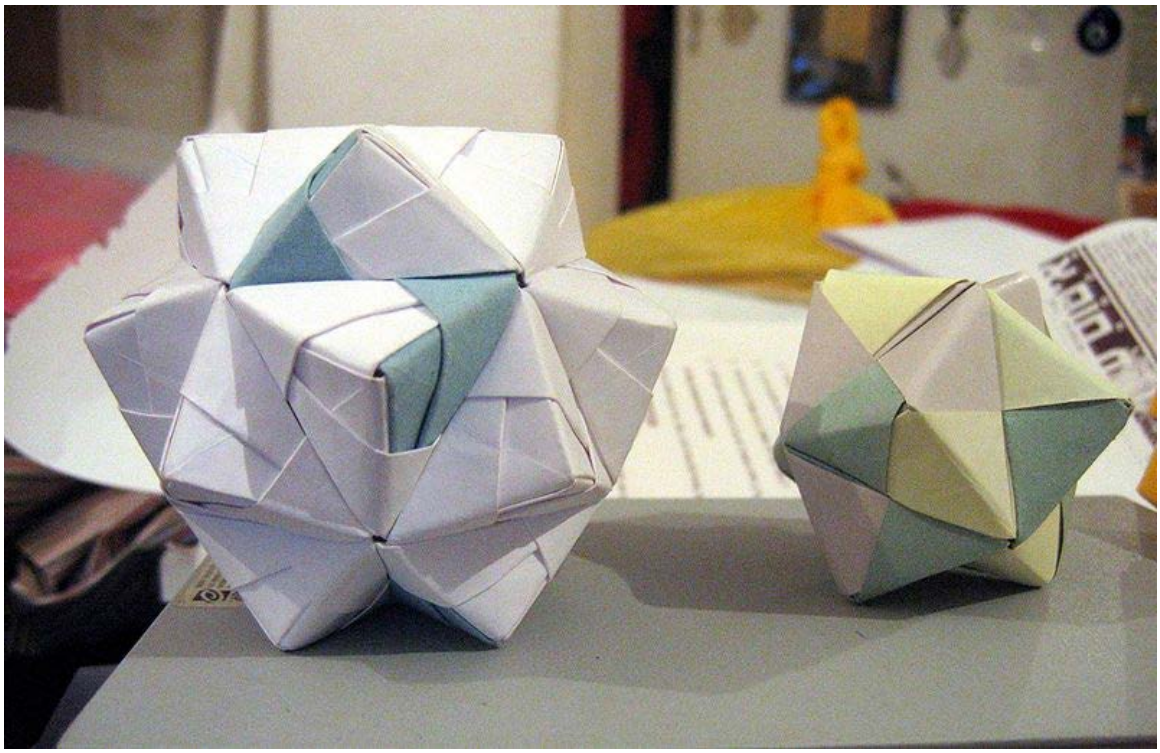
Flashers are models that can be folded up small and rapidly expanded. They have a regular pattern, the miura fold is a similar idea that has been used in commercial applications. Versions on a regular pattern can for instance be used to make a human figure when folded up or a maze when opened.

Modular origami

A stellated icosahedron made from custom papers

Modular origami, or **unit origami**, is a paperfolding technique which uses multiple sheets of paper to create a larger and more complex structure than would be possible using single-piece origami techniques. Each individual sheet of paper is folded into a module, or unit, and then modules are assembled into an integrated flat shape or three-dimensional structure by inserting flaps into pockets created by the folding process. These insertions create tension or friction that holds the model together.

Definition and restrictions



Examples of modular origami made up of Sonobe units

Modular origami can be classified as a sub-set of multi-piece origami, since the rule of restriction to one sheet of paper is abandoned. However, all the other rules of origami still apply, so the use of glue, thread, or any other fastening that is not a part of the sheet of paper is not generally acceptable in modular origami.

The additional restrictions that distinguish modular origami from other forms of multi-piece origami are using many identical copies of any folded unit, and linking them together in a symmetrical or repeating fashion to complete the model. There is a common misconception that treats all multi-piece origami as modular, but this is not the case.

More than one *type* of module can still be used. Typically this means using separate linking units hidden from sight to hold parts of the construction together. Any other usage is generally frowned upon.

The word origami comes from Japan. "Oru" meaning to fold and "Kami" meaning paper

History

A kusudama, the traditional Japanese precursor to modular origami

The first historical evidence for a modular origami design comes from a Japanese book by Hayato Ohoka published in 1734 called *Ranma Zushiki*. It contains a print that shows a group of traditional origami models, one of which is a modular cube. The cube is pictured twice (from slightly different angles) and is identified in the accompanying text as a tamatebako, or a 'magic treasure chest'.

Isao Honda's *World of Origami* (Japan Publications ISBN 0-87040-383-4 published in 1965) appears to have the same model, where it is called the 'Cubical Box'. The six modules required for this design were developed from the traditional Japanese paperfold commonly known as the Menko. Each module forms one face of the finished cube.

There are several other traditional Japanese modular origami designs, including balls of folded paper flowers known as kusudama, or medicine balls. These designs are not integrated and are commonly strung together with thread. The term kusudama is sometimes, rather inaccurately, used to describe any three-dimensional modular origami structure resembling a ball.

There are also a few modular designs in the Chinese paperfolding tradition, notably the Pagoda (from Maying Soong) and the Lotus made from Joss paper.

Most traditional designs are however single-piece and the possibilities inherent in the modular origami idea were not explored further until the 1960s when the technique was re-invented by Robert Neale in the USA and later by Mitsonobu Sonobe in Japan. Since then the modular origami technique has been popularized and developed extensively, and now there have been thousands of designs developed in this repertoire.

Types of modular origami

Modular origami forms may be flat or three-dimensional. Flat forms are usually polygons (sometimes known as coasters), stars, rotors, and rings. Three-dimensional forms tend to be regular polyhedra or tessellations of simple polyhedra.

There are some modular origami that are approximations of fractals, such as Menger's sponge. Macro-modular origami is a form of modular origami in which finished assemblies are themselves used as the building blocks to create larger integrated structures. Such structures are described in Tomoko Fuse's book *Unit Origami-Multidimensional Transformations* (Japan Publications ISBN 0-87040-852-6 published in 1990)

Notable modular paperfolders

- Robert Neale
- Mitsonobu Sonobe
- Tomoko Fuse
- Kunihiko Kasahara
- Francis Ow
- Tom Hull
- Meenakshi Mukerji
- Heinz Strobl
- Miyuki Kawamura
- Rona Gurkewitz
- Bennett Arnstein
- Valerie Vann
- David Mitchell

Modeling Systems

Robert Neale's Penultimate Module

Robert Neale developed a system to model equilateral polyhedra based on a module with variable vertex angles. Each module has two pockets and two tabs, on opposite sides. The angle of each tab can be changed independently of the other tab. Each pocket can receive tabs of any angle. The most common angles form polygonal faces:

- 60 degrees (triangle)
- 90 degrees (square)
- 108 degrees (pentagon)
- 120 degrees (hexagon)

Each module joins others at the vertices of a polyhedron to form a polygonal face. the tabs form angles on opposite sides of an edge. For example, a subassembly of three triangle corners forms a triangle, the most stable configuration. As the internal angle increases for squares, penatagons and so forth, the stability decreases.

Many polyhedra call for unalike adjacent polygons. for example, a pyramid has one square face and three triangular faces. This requires hybrid modules, or modules having different angles. A pyramid consists of eight modules, four modules as square-triangle, and four as triangle-triangle.

Further polygonal faces are possible by altering the angle at each corner. The Neale modules can form any equilateral polyhedron including those having rhombic faces, like the rhombic dodecahedron.

Mukhopadhyay module

The Mukhopadhyay module can form any equilateral polyhedron. Each unit has a middle crease that forms an edge, and triangular wings that form adjacent stellated faces. For example, a cuboctahedral assembly has 24 units, since the cuboctahedron has 24 edges. Additionally, bipyramids are possible, by folding the central crease on each module outwards or convexly instead of inwards or concavely as for the icosahedron and other stellated polyhedra. The Mukhopadhyay module works best when glued together, especially for polyhedra having larger numbers of sides.

Modular origami consists of putting a number of identical pieces together to form a complete model. Normally the individual pieces are simple but the final assembly may be tricky. Many of the modular origami models are decorative balls like kusudama, the technique differs though in that kusudama allows the pieces to be put together using thread or glue.

Chinese paper folding includes a style called 3D origami where large numbers of pieces are put together to make elaborate models. Sometimes paper money is used for the modules. This style originated from some Chinese refugees while they were detained in America and is also called Golden Venture folding from the ship they came on.

Wet-folding

Wet-folding bull

Wet-folding is an origami technique developed by Akira Yoshizawa that employs water to dampen the paper so that it can be manipulated more easily. This process adds an element of sculpture to origami, which is otherwise purely geometric. Wet-folding is used very often by professional folders for non-geometric origami, such as animals. Wet-folders usually employ thicker paper than would usually be used for normal origami, to ensure that the paper does not tear.

One of the most prominent users of the wet-folding technique was Eric Joisel, who specialized in animals, people, and mythological creatures such as fairies. He also created

origami masks. Other folders who practice this technique are Robert J. Lang and John Montroll.

The process of wet-folding allows a folder to preserve a curved shape more easily. It also reduces the number of wrinkles substantially. Wet-folding allows for increased rigidity and structure due to a process called *sizing*. Sizing is a water-soluble adhesive, usually methylcellulose or methyl acetate that may be added during the manufacture of the paper. As the paper dries, the chemical bonds the fibers of the paper tighter together which results in a crisper and stronger sheet. In order to moisten the paper, an artist typically wipes the sheet with a dampened cloth. The amount of moisture added to the paper is crucial, because too little will cause the paper to dry quickly and spring back into its original position before the folding is complete, but too much will fray the edges of the paper or will cause the paper to split at high-stress points.

Wet-folding is an origami technique for producing models with gentle curves rather than geometric straight folds and flat surfaces. The paper is dampened so it can be moulded easily, the final model keeps its shape when it dries. It can be used for instance to produce very natural looking animal models.

Pureland origami

Pureland origami is a style of origami invented by the British paperfolder John Smith which is limited to using only mountain and valley folds. The aim of Pureland Origami is to make origami easier for inexperienced folders and those who have impaired motor skills. This means that many, but not all, of the more complicated processes that are common in regular origami are impossible; and so alternative manipulations have been developed to create similar effects.

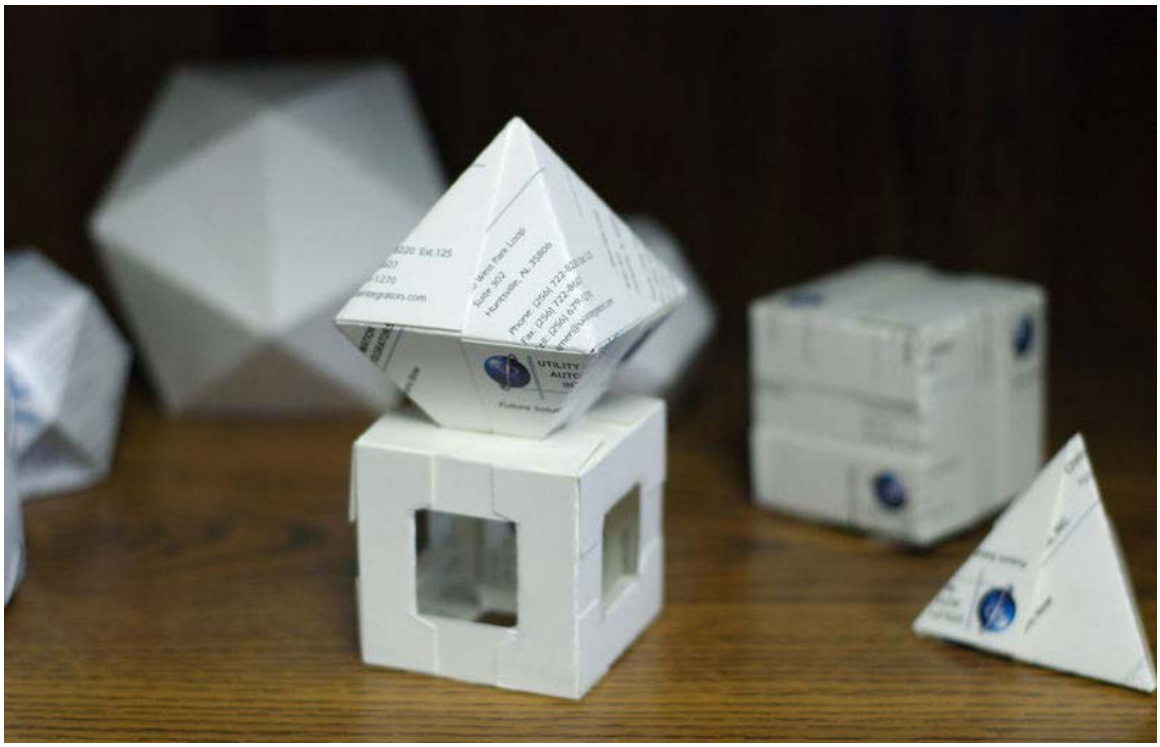
Pureland origami is origami with the restriction that only one fold may be done at a time, more complex folds like reverse folds are not allowed, and all folds have straightforward locations. It was developed by John Smith in the 1970s to help inexperienced folders or those with limited motor skills. Some designers also like the challenge of creating good models within the very strict constraints.

Origami Tessellations

This branch of origami is one that has grown in popularity recently, but has an extensive history. Tessellations refer to the tiling of the plane where a collection of 2 dimensional figures fill a plane with no gaps or overlaps. Origami tessellations are tessellations made from a flat material, most often paper, but it can be from anything that holds a crease. The history of costuming includes tessellations done in fabric that are recorded as far back as the Egyptian Tombs.

Fujimoto was an early Japanese origami master who published books that included origami tessellations and in the 1960s there was a great exploration of tessellations by Ron Resch. Chris Palmer is an artist who has extensively explored tessellations and has found ways to create detailed origami tessellations out of silk. Robert Lang and Alex Bateman are two designers who use computer programs to design origami tessellations. The first American book on origami tessellations was just published by Eric Gjerde and the field has been expanding rapidly. There are numerous origami tessellation artists including Chris Palmer (U.S.), Eric Gjerde (U.S.), Polly Verity (Scotland), Joel Cooper (U.S.), Christine Edison (U.S.), Ray Schamp (U.S.), Roberto Gretter (Italy), Goran Konjevod (U.S.),and Christiane Bettens (Switzerland) that are showing works that are both geometric and representational.

Kirigami



Business card hetkirigami

Kirigami is a variation of origami that includes cutting of the paper (from Japanese "*kiru*" = to cut, "*kami*" = paper).

Typically, kirigami starts with a folded base, which is then cut; cuts are then opened and flattened to make the finished kirigami. Kirigami are usually symmetrical, such as snowflakes, pentagrams, or orchid blossoms.

The term *Mon-Kiri* is the Japanese art of paper cutting.

In Kirigami it is allowed to make cuts. In traditional Origami, there was no Kirigami. Kirigami was simply called Origami. Just in the recent century the term Kirigami developed in order to distinguish it from "pure Origami"

Chapter-4

Japanese Painting

Japanese painting is one of the oldest and most highly refined of the Japanese arts, encompassing a wide variety of genre and styles. As with the history of Japanese arts in general, the history Japanese painting is a long history of synthesis and competition between native Japanese aesthetics and adaptation of imported ideas. Japanese printmaking especially from the Edo period exerted enormous influence on Western painting in France during the 19th century.

Timeline

Ancient Japan and Asuka period (until 710)

The origins of painting in Japan date well back into Japan's prehistoric period. Simple stick figures and geometric designs can be found on Jōmon period pottery and Yayoi period (300 BC – 300 AD) *dotaku* bronze bells. Mural paintings with both geometric and figurative designs have been found in numerous tumuli from the Kofun period and Asuka period (300-700 AD).

With the introduction of the Chinese writing system (*kanji*), Chinese modes of governmental administration and with the introduction of Buddhism in the Asuka period, many art works were imported into Japan from China and local copies in similar styles began to be produced.

Nara period (710-794)

Mural painting from the Takamatsuzuka Tomb

With the spread of Buddhism in 6th and 7th century Japan, painting of religious imagery flourished to decorate the numerous temples erected by the ruling classes. However, Nara period Japan was more strongly characterized by the art of sculpture, rather than painting.

The earliest surviving paintings from this period include the murals on the walls of the temple of Horyu-ji in Ikaruga, Nara, illustrating episodes from the life of Buddha, the Bodhisattvas, and various minor deities. The style is reminiscent of Chinese paintings from the Sui dynasty or the late Sixteen Kingdoms period. However, by the mid-Nara period, paintings in the style of the Tang dynasty became very popular. These also include the wall murals in the Takamatsuzuka Tomb, dating from around 700 AD. This

style evolved into the (Kara-e) genre, which remained popular through the early Heian period.

As most of the paintings in the Nara periods are religious in nature, the vast majority are by anonymous artists. A large collection of Nara period art is preserved at the Shosoin storehouse, formerly owned by Todai-ji, and now under the control of the Imperial Household Agency.

Heian period (794-1185)

With the development of the esoteric Buddhist sects of Shingon and Tendai in 8th and 9th century Japan, religious imagery, most notably painted Mandala, became predominant. Numerous versions of Mandala, especially the Diamond Realm Mandala and the Womb Realm Mandala, were created as hanging scrolls, and also as murals on the walls of temples. A noted early example is at the five-story pagoda of Daigo-ji, a temple south of Kyoto.

With the continuing evolution of Japanese Buddhism towards the Pure Land forms of the Jōdō sect in the 10th century, an important new genre was added: the *raigozu,* which depicts the Buddha Amida arriving to welcome the souls of the faithful to his Western Paradise. A noted early example dating from 1053 exists at the Byodo-in, temple in Uji, Kyoto. This is also considered one early example of *Yamato-e* Japanese-style painting, which contains representations of the scenery around Kyoto.

Panel from the Tale of Genji handscroll (detail)

Night Attack on Sanjo Palace

By the mid-Heian period, the (*kara-e*) Chinese style of painting had lost ground to *Yamato-e* which were initially used primarily for sliding screens and *byōbu* folding screens. However, *Yamato-e* also developed into new formats, (especially towards the end of the Heian period) including the *emakimono* hand scroll. *Emakimono* encompassed illustrated novels, such as the *Genji Monogatari* , historical works, such as the *Ban Dainagon Ekotoba* , and religious works. *E-maki* artists devised systems of pictorial conventions that convey visually the emotional content of each scene. The *Genji Monogtari* is organized into discreet episodes, whereas the more lively *Ban Dainagon Ekotoba* uses a continuous narrative illustration which emphasizes figures in active motion depicted in rapidly executed brush strokes and thin but vibrant colors. The *Siege of the Sanjō Palace* is another famous example of this style.

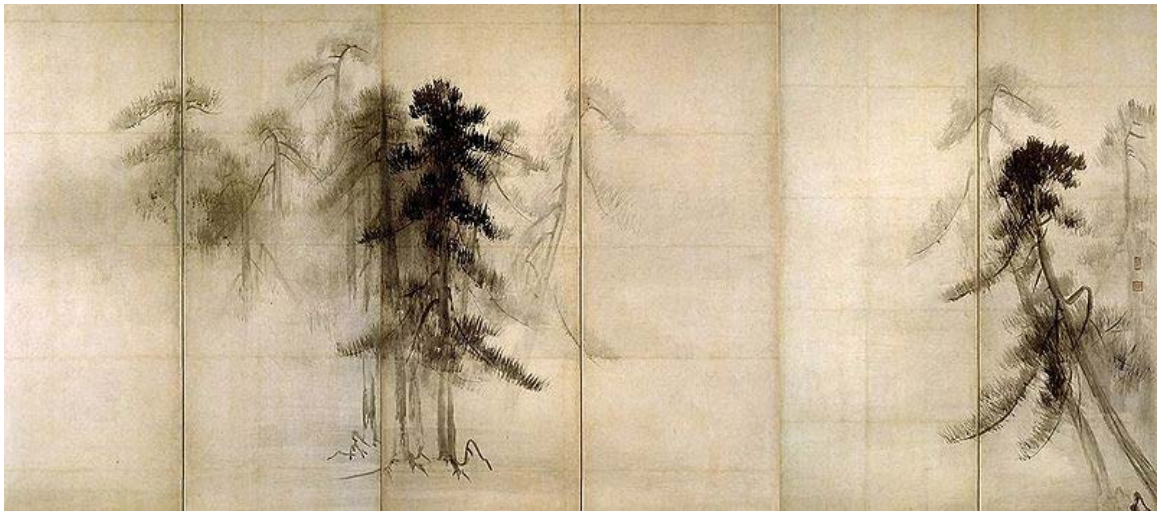
E-maki also serve as some of the earliest and greatest examples of the *otoko-e* (Men's pictures) and *onna-e* (Women's pictures) styles of painting. There are many fine differences in the two styles, appealing to the aesthetic preferences of the genders. But perhaps most easily noticeable are the differences in subject matter. *Onna-e*, epitomized by the *Tale of Genji* handscroll, typically deals with court life, particularly the court ladies, and with romantic themes. *Otoko-e*, on the other hand, often recorded historical events, particularly battles.

Kamakura period (1185-1333)

These genres continued on through Kamakura period Japan. *E-maki* of various kinds continued to be produced; however, the Kamakura period was much more strongly characterized by the art of sculpture, rather than painting.

As most of the paintings in the Heian and Kamakura periods are religious in nature, the vast majority are by anonymous artists.

Muromachi period (1333-1573)



Hasegawa Tōhaku *Pine Trees,* 1593

Landscape by Sesshu Toyo

During the 14th century, the development of the great Zen monasteries in Kamakura and Kyoto had a major impact on the visual arts. *Suibokuga,* an austere monochrome style of ink painting introduced from Sung and Yuan dynasty China largely replaced the polychrome scroll paintings of the previous period, although some polychrome portraiture remained – primary in the form of *chinso* paintings of Zen monks.Typical of such painting is the depiction by the priest-painter Kao of the legendary monk Kensu (Hsien-tzu in Chinese) at the moment he achieved enlightenment. This type of painting was executed with quick brush strokes and a minimum of detail.

'Catching a Catfish with a Gourd' (located at Taizo-in, Myoshin-ji, Kyoto), by the priest-painter Josetsu, marks a turning point in Muromachi painting. In the foreground a man is depicted on the bank of a stream holding a small gourd and looking at a large slithery catfish. Mist fills the middle ground, and the background, mountains appear to be far in the distance. It is generally assumed that the "new style" of the painting, executed about 1413, refers to a more Chinese sense of deep space within the picture plane

By the end of the 14th century, monochrome landscape paintings (*sansuiga*) had found patronage by the ruling Ashikaga family and was the preferred genre among Zen painters, gradually evolving from its Chinese roots to a more Japanese style.

The foremost artists of the Muromachi period are the priest-painters Shūbun and Sesshū. Shūbun, a monk at the Kyoto temple of Shokoku-ji, created in the painting *Reading in a Bamboo Grove* (1446) a realistic landscape with deep recession into space. Sesshū, unlike most artists of the period, was able to journey to China and study Chinese painting at its source. *Landscape of the Four Seasons* (*Sansui Chokan*; c. 1486) is one of Sesshu's most accomplished works, depicting a continuing landscape through the four seasons.

In the late Muromachi period, ink painting had migrated out of the Zen monasteries into the art world in general, as artists from the Kano school and the Ami school adopted the style and themes, but introducing a more plastic and decorative effect that would continue into modern times.

Important artists in the Muromachi period Japan include:

- Mokkei (circa 1250)
- Mokuan Reien (d.1345)
- Kao Ninga (e.14th century)
- Mincho (1352-1431)
- Josetsu (1405-1423)
- Tenshō Shūbun(d.1460)
- Sesshū Tōyō (1420-1506)
- Kano Masanobu (1434-1530)
- Kano Motonobu (1476-1559)

Azuchi-Momoyama period (1573-1603)

Screen detail depicting arrival of a Western ship, attributed to Kanō Naizen (1570–1616).

In sharp contrast to the previous Muromachi period, the Azuchi Momoyama period was characterized by a grandiose polychrome style, with extensive use of gold and silver foil, and by works on a very large scale. The Kano school, patronized by Oda Nobunaga, Toyotomi Hideyoshi, Tokugawa Ieyasu, and their followers and gained tremendously in size and prestige. Kano Eitoku developed a formula for the creation of monumental landscapes on the sliding doors enclosing a room. These huge screens and wall paintings were commissioned to decorate the castles and palaces of the military nobility. This status continued into the subsequent Edo period, as the Tokugawa bakufu continued to promote the works of the Kano school as the officially sanctioned art for the Shogun, daimyo, and Imperial court.

However, non-Kano school artists and currents existed and developed during the Azuchi-Momoyama period as well, adapting Chinese themes to Japanese materials and aesthetics. One important group was the Tosa school, which developed primarily out of

the *yamato-e* tradition, and which was known mostly for small scale works and illustrations of literary classics in book or *emaki* format.

Important artists in the Azuchi-Momoyama period include:

- Kano Eitoku (1543-1590)
- Kano Sanraku (1559-1663)
- Kano Tanyu (1602-1674)
- Hasegawa Tohaku (1539-1610)
- Kaiho Yusho (1533-1615)

Edo period (1603-1868)

Scroll calligraphy of Bodhidharma "Zen points directly to the human heart, see into your nature and become Buddha", by Hakuin Ekaku (1685 to 1768)

Wind God by Ogata Korin

Many art historians show the Edo period as a continuation of the Azuchi-Momoyama period. Certainly, during the early Edo period, many of the previous trends in painting continued to be popular; however, a number of new trends also emerged.

One very significant school which arose in the early Edo period was the Rimpa school, which used classical themes, but presented them in a bold, and lavishly decorative format. Sōtatsu in particular evolved a decorative style by re-creating themes from classical literature, using brilliantly colored figures and motifs from the natural world set against gold-leaf backgrounds. A century later, Korin reworked Sōtatsu's style and created visually gorgeous works uniquely his own.

Another important genre which began during Azuchi-Momoyama period, but which reached its full development during the early Edo period was *Namban* art, both in the depiction of exotic foreigners and in the use of the exotic foreigner style in painting. This genre was centered around the port of Nagasaki, which after the start of the national seclusion policy of the Tokugawa bakufu was the only Japanese port left open to foreign trade, and was thus the conduit by which Chinese and European artistic influences came to Japan. Paintings in this genre include Nagasaki school paintings, and also the Maruyama-Shijo school, which combine Chinese and Western influences with traditional Japanese elements.

A third important trend in the Edo period was the rise of the *Bunjinga* (literati painting) genre, also known as the Nanga school (Southern Painting school). This genre started as an imitation of the works of Chinese scholar-amateur painters of the Yuan dynasty, whose works and techniques came to Japan in the mid 18th century. Later *bunjinga* artists considerably modified both the techniques and the subject matter of this genre to create a blending of Japanese and Chinese styles. The exemplars of this style are Ike no Taiga, Uragami Gyokudo, Yosa Buson, Tanomura Chikuden, Tani Buncho, and Yamamoto Baiitsu.

Due to the Tokugawa Shogunate's policies of fiscal and social austerity, the luxurious modes of these genre and styles were largely limited to the upper strata of society, and were unavailable, if not actually forbidden to the lower classes. The common people developed a separate type of art, the *fuzokuga,* in which painting depicting scenes from common, everyday life, especially that of the common people, *kabuki* theatre, prostitutes and landscapes were popular. These paintings in the 16th century gave rise to the semi-mass produced woodcut print, or *ukiyoe,* which was one of the defining media of the mid to late Edo period.

Important artists in the Edo period include:

- Tawaraya Sōtatsu (d.1643)
- Ogata Korin (1658–1716)
- Gion Nankai (1677–1751)
- Sakaki Hyakusen (1697–1752)
- Yanagisawa Kien (1704–1758)
- Yosa Buson (1716–1783)
- Ito Jakuchu (1716–1800)
- Ike no Taiga (1723–1776)
- Maruyama Okyo (1733–1795)
- Okada Beisanjin (1744–1820)
- Uragami Gyokudo (1745–1820)
- Matsumura Goshun (1752–1811)
- Katsushika Hokusai (1760–1849)
- Tani Buncho (1763–1840)
- Tanomura Chikuden (1777–1835)
- Okada Hanko (1782–1846)

- Yamamoto Baiitsu (1783–1856)
- Watanabe Kazan (1793–1841)
- Utagawa Hiroshige (1797–1858)
- Shibata Zeshin (1807–1891)
- Tomioka Tessai (1836–1924)

Prewar period (1868-1945)

Kuroda Seiki, *Lakeside*, 1897, oil on canvas, Kuroda Memorial Hall, Tokyo

Yoritomo in a Cave by Maeda Seison

The prewar period was marked by the division of art into competing European styles and traditional indigenous styles.

During the Meiji period, Japan underwent a tremendous political and social change in the course of the Europeanization and modernization campaign organized by the Meiji government. Western style painting (Yōga) was officially promoted by the government, who sent promising young artists abroad for studies, and who hired foreign artists to come to Japan to establish an art curriculum at Japanese schools.

However, after an initial burst for western style art, the pendulum swung in the opposite direction, and led by art critic Okakura Kakuzo and educator Ernest Fenollosa, there was a revival of appreciation for traditional Japanese styles (Nihonga). In the 1880, western style art was banned from official exhibitions and was severely criticized by critics. Supported by Okakura and Fenollosa, the *Nihonga* style evolved with influences from the European pre-Raphaelite movement and European romanticism.

The Yōga style painters formed the *Meiji Bijutsukai* (Meiji Fine Arts Society) to hold its own exhibitions and to promote a renewed interest in western art.

In 1907, with the establishment of the *Bunten* under the aegis of the Ministry of Education, both competing groups found mutual recognition and co-existence, and even began the process towards mutual synthesis.

The Taishō period saw the predominance of *Yōga* over *Nihonga*. After long stays in Europe, many artists (including Arishima Ikuma) returned to Japan under reign of Yoshihito, bringing with them the techniques of impressionism and early post-impressionism. The works of Camille Pissarro, Paul Cézanne and Pierre Auguste Renoir influenced early Taishō period paintings. However, *yōga* artists in the Taishō period also tended towards eclecticism, and there was a profusion of dissident artistic movements. These included the Fusain Society (*Fyuzankai*) which emphasized styles of post-impressionism, especially fauvism. In 1914, the *Nikakai* (Second Division Society) emerged to oppose the government-sponsored Bunten Exihibition.

Japanese painting during the Taishō period was only mildly influenced by other contemporary European movements, such as neoclassicism and late post-impressionism.

However, interestingly it was resurgent *Nihonga*, towards mid-1920s, which adopted certain trends from post-impressionism. The second generation of *Nihonga* artists formed the Japan Fine Arts Academy (*Nihon Bijutsuin*) to compete against the government-sponsored *Bunten*, and although *yamato-e* traditions remained strong, the increasing use of western perspective, and western concepts of space and light began to blur the distinction between *Nihonga* and *yōga*.

Japanese painting in the prewar Shōwa period was largely dominated by Yasui Sotaro and Umehara Ryuzaburo, who introduced the concepts of pure art and abstract painting to the *Nihonga* tradition, and thus created a more interpretative version of that genre. This trend was further developed by Leonard Foujita and the Nika Society, to encompass surrealism. To promote these trends, the Independent Art Association (*Dokuritsu Bijutsu Kyokai*) was formed in 1931.

During the World War II, government controls and censorship meant that only patriotic themes could be expressed. Many artists were recruited into the government propaganda effort, and critical non-emotional review of their works is only just beginning.

Important artists in the prewar period include:

- Harada Naojiro (1863-1899)
- Yamamoto Hosui (1850-1906)
- Asai Chu (1856-1907)
- Kano Hogai (1828-1888)
- Hashimoto Gaho (1835-1908)
- Kuroda Seiki (1866-1924)
- Wada Eisaku (1874-1959)
- Okada Saburosuke (1869-1939)
- Sakamoto Hanjiro (1882-1962)
- Aoki Shigeru (1882-1911)
- Fujishima Takeji (1867-1943)
- Yokoyama Taikan 1868-1958
- Hishida Shunso 1874-1911
- Kawai Gyokudo 1873-1957
- Uemura Shōen (1875-1949)
- Maeda Seison 1885-1977
- Shimomura Kanzan 1873-1930
- Takeuchi Seiho 1864-1942
- Tomioka Tessai 1837-1924
- Uemura Shoen 1875-1949
- Shimomura Kanzan (1873-1930)
- Hishida Shunso (1874-1911)
- Imamura Shiro (1880-1916)
- Tomita Keisen (1879-1936)
- Koide Narashige (1887-1931)
- Kishida Ryusei (1891-1929)
- Yorozu Tetsugoro (1885-1927)
- Hayami Gyoshu (1894-1935)
- Kawabata Ryushi (1885-1966)
- Tsuchida Hakusen (1887-1936)
- Murakami Kagaku (1888-1939)
- Yasui Sotaro (1881-1955)
- Sanzo Wada (1883-1967)
- Umehara Ryuzaburo (1888-1986)
- Yasuda Yukihiko (1884-1978)
- Kobayashi Kokei (1883-1957)
- Leonard Foujita (1886-1968)
- Yuzo Saeki (1898-1928)
- Itō Shinsui 1898-1972
- Kaburaki Kiyokata 1878-1972
- Takehisa Yumeji 1884-1934

Postwar period (1945-present)

In the postwar period, the government-sponsored Japan Art Academy (*Nihon Geijutsuin*) was formed in 1947, containing both *nihonga* and *yōga* divisions. Government sponsorship of art exhibitions has ended, but has been replaced by private exhibitions, such as the *Nitten*, on an even larger scale. Although the *Nitten* was initially the exhibittion of the Japan Art Academy, since 1958 it has been run by a separate private corporation. Participation in the *Nitten* has become almost a prerequisite for nomination to the Japan Art Academy, which in itself is almost an unofficial prerequisite for nomination to the Order of Culture.

The arts of the Edo and prewar periods (1603-1945) was supported by merchants and urban people. Counter to the Edo and prewar periods, arts of the postwar period became popular. After World War II, painters, calligraphers, and printmakers flourished in the big cities, particularly Tokyo, and became preoccupied with the mechanisms of urban life, reflected in the flickering lights, neon colors, and frenetic pace of their abstractions. All the "isms" of the New York-Paris art world were fervently embraced. After the abstractions of the 1960s, the 1970s saw a return to realism strongly flavored by the "op" and "pop" art movements, embodied in the 1980s in the explosive works of Ushio Shinohara. Many such outstanding avant-garde artists worked both in Japan and abroad, winning international prizes. These artists felt that there was "nothing Japanese" about their works, and indeed they belonged to the international school. By the late 1970s, the search for Japanese qualities and a national style caused many artists to reevaluate their artistic ideology and turn away from what some felt were the empty formulas of the West. Contemporary paintings within the modern idiom began to make conscious use of traditional Japanese art forms, devices, and ideologies. A number of *mono-ha* artists turned to painting to recapture traditional nuances in spatial arrangements, color harmonies, and lyricism.

Japanese-style painting (*nihonga*) continues in a prewar fashion, updating traditional expressions while retaining their intrinsic character. Some artists within this style still paint on silk or paper with traditional colors and ink, while others used new materials, such as acrylics.

Many of the older schools of art, most notably those of the Edo and prewar periods, were still practiced. For example, the decorative naturalism of the *rimpa* school, characterized by brilliant, pure colors and bleeding washes, was reflected in the work of many artists of the postwar period in the 1980s art of Hikosaka Naoyoshi. The realism of Maruyama Ōkyo's school and the calligraphic and spontaneous Japanese style of the gentlemen-scholars were both widely practiced in the 1980s. Sometimes all of these schools, as well as older ones, such as the Kano school ink traditions, were drawn on by contemporary artists in the Japanese style and in the modern idiom. Many Japanese-style painters were honored with awards and prizes as a result of renewed popular demand for Japanese-style art beginning in the 1970s. More and more, the international modern painters also drew on the Japanese schools as they turned away from Western styles in the 1980s. The tendency had been to synthesize East and West. Some artists had already leapt the gap

between the two, as did the outstanding painter Shinoda Toko. Her bold sumi ink abstractions were inspired by traditional calligraphy but realized as lyrical expressions of modern abstraction.

There are also a number of contemporary painters in Japan whose work is largely inspired by anime sub-cultures and other aspects of popular and youth culture. Takashi Murakami is perhaps among the most famous and popular of these, along with and the other artists in his Kaikai Kiki studio collective. His work centers on expressing issues and concerns of postwar Japanese society through what are usually seemingly innocuous forms. He draws heavily from anime and related styles, but produces paintings and sculptures in media more traditionally associated with fine arts, intentionally blurring the lines between commercial and popular art and fine arts.

Important artists in the postwar period include:

- Ogura Yuki (1895-2000)
- Uemura Shoko 1902-2001
- Koiso Ryouhei (1903-1988)
- Kaii Higashiyama (1908-1999)

Chapter-5

History of Japanese Architecture

Kinkaku-ji, Kyoto Originally built in 1397 (Muromachi period)

Japanese architecture has a long history as any other aspect of Japanese culture. Originally heavily influenced by Chinese architecture from the Tang Dynasty it has also developed many unique differences and aspects indigenous to Japan as a result of dynamic changes throughout its long history.

Prehistoric period

The prehistoric period includes the Jomon and Yayoi cultures and other cultures before the Jomon and Yayoi cultures. There are no extant examples of prehistoric architecture, and the oldest Japanese texts, such as Kojiki and Nihonshoki hardly mention architecture

at all. Excavations and researches show these houses had thatched roofs and dirt floors. Houses in areas of high temperature and humidity had wooden floors. With the spread of rice cultivation from China, communities became increasingly larger and more complex, and large scale buildings for the local ruling family or rice storage houses are seen in Sannai-Maruyama site (before 2nd century BC) in Aomori or Yoshinogari site in Saga (before 3rd century BC).

After the 3rd century, a centralized administrative system was developed and many keyhole-shaped Kofun were built in Osaka and Nara for the aristocracy. Among many examples in Nara and Osaka, the most notable is Daisen-kofun, designated as the tomb of Emperor Nintoku. This kofun is approximately 486 by 305 m, rising to a height of 35 m.

Reconstructed pit dwelling houses in Yoshinogari, Saga Prefecture, 2nd or 3rd century

Reconstructed dwellings in Yoshinogari

Asuka and Nara architecture

The earliest structures still extant in Japan, and the oldest surviving wooden buildings in the world are found at the Hōryū-ji to the southwest of Nara. They serve as the core examples of architecture in Asuka period. First built in the early 7th century as the private temple of Crown Prince Shotoku consists of 41 independent buildings; the most important ones, the main worship hall, or Kondo (Golden Hall), and Goju-no-to (Five-story Pagoda), stand in the center of an open area surrounded by a roofed cloister. The Kondo, in the style of Chinese worship halls, is a two-story structure of post-and-beam construction, capped by an *irimoya*, or hipped-gabled roof of ceramic tiles.

Temple building in the 8th century was focused around the Tōdaiji in Nara. Constructed as the headquarters for a network of temples in each of the provinces, the Tōdaiji is the most ambitious religious complex erected in the early centuries of Buddhist worship in Japan. Appropriately, the 16.2-m (53-ft) Buddha (completed in 752) enshrined in the main hall, or Daibutsuden, is a Rushana Buddha, the figure that represents the essence of Buddhahood, just as the Tōdai-ji represented the center for imperially sponsored Buddhism and its dissemination throughout Japan. Only a few fragments of the original statue survive, and the present hall and central Buddha are reconstructions from the Edo period. Clustered around the Daibutsuden on a gently sloping hillside are a number of secondary halls: the Hokkedo (Lotus Sutra Hall), with its principal image, the Fuku-kenjaku Kannon (the most popular bodhisattva), crafted of dry lacquer (cloth dipped in

lacquer and shaped over a wooden armature); the Kaidanin (Ordination Hall) with its magnificent clay statues of the Four Guardian Kings; and the storehouse, called the Shosoin. This last structure is of great importance as an art-historical cache, because in it are stored the utensils that were used in the temple's dedication ceremony in 752, the eye-opening ritual for the Rushana image, as well as government documents and many secular objects owned by the imperial family.

Kondo and pagoda at Hōryū-ji, Ikaruga, Nara Built in 7th century

Pagoda at Yakushi-ji, Nara, Nara Originally built in 730

Heian period

In reaction to the growing wealth and power of organized Buddhism in Nara, the priest Kūkai (best known by his posthumous title Kōbō Daishi, 774-835) journeyed to China to study Shingon, a form of Vajrayana Buddhism, which he introduced into Japan in 806. At the core of Shingon worship are the various mandalas, diagrams of the spiritual universe which influenced temple design. Japanese Buddhist architecture also adopted the stupa in its Chinese form of pagoda.

The temples erected for this new sect were built in the mountains, far away from the court and the laity in the capital. The irregular topography of these sites forced Japanese

architects to rethink the problems of temple construction, and in so doing to choose more indigenous elements of design. Cypress-bark roofs replaced those of ceramic tile, wood planks were used instead of earthen floors, and a separate worship area for the laity was added in front of the main sanctuary.

In the Fujiwara period, Pure Land Buddhism, which offered easy salvation through belief in Amida (the Buddha of the Western Paradise), became popular. Concurrently, the Kyoto nobility developed a society devoted to elegant aesthetic pursuits. So secure and beautiful was their world that they could not conceive of Paradise as being much different. The Amida hall, blending the secular with the religious, houses one or more Buddha images within a structure resembling the mansions of the nobility.

The Hōō-dō (Phoenix Hall, completed 1053) of the Byōdō-in, a temple in Uji to the southeast of Kyoto, is the exemplar of Fujiwara Amida halls. It consists of a main rectangular structure flanked by two L-shaped wing corridors and a tail corridor, set at the edge of a large artificial pond. Inside, a single golden image of Amida (circa 1053) is installed on a high platform. The Amida sculpture was executed by Jocho, who used a new canon of proportions and a new technique (yosegi), in which multiple pieces of wood are carved out like shells and joined from the inside. Applied to the walls of the hall are small relief carvings of celestials, the host believed to have accompanied Amida when he descended from the Western Paradise to gather the souls of believers at the moment of death and transport them in lotus blossoms to Paradise. Raigo (Descent of the Amida Buddha) paintings on the wooden doors of the Ho-o-do are an early example of Yamato-e, Japanese-style painting, because they contain representations of the scenery around Kyoto.

Pagoda of Ichijō-ji, Kasai, Hyōgo Built in 1171

Phoenix Hall at Byodoin, Uji, Kyoto Built in 1053

Kamakura and Muromachi period

During the Kamakura period (1185–1333) and Muromachi period (1336–1573), Japanese architecture made technological advances that somewhat diverged from and Chinese counterparts.(Daibutsu-Style and Zen-Style) In response to native requirements such as earthquake resistance and shelter against heavy rainfall and the summer heat and sun, the master carpenters of this time responded with a unique type of architecture. Unfortunately, the heavy reliance on wood as the primary building material has meant that fires destroyed many of the original structures but some do survive such as Jōdo-ji in Ono (Daibutsu-Style) and Kōzan-ji in Shimonoseki (Zen-Style); or in other cases such as the registered National Treasure of Japan at Shōfuku-ji where the original Kamakura structure was rebuilt shortly after the end of the Kamakura era exactly in the same Kamakura style and clearly illustrates the expertise of the Kamakura era builders.

Daitō of Negoro-ji in Iwade, Wakayama Completed in 1547

After the Kamakura period, Japanese political power was dominated by the armed Samurai, such as Seiwa Genji. Their *simple and sturdy* ideas affected the architecture style, and many samurai houses are a mixture of shinden-zukuri and turrets or trenches.

In the Genpei War (1180–1185), many traditional buildings in Nara and Kyoto were damaged. For example, Kofukuji and Todaiji were burned down by Taira no Shigehira of the Taira clan in 1180. Many of these temples and shrines were rebuilt in the Kamakura period by the Kamakura shogunate to consolidate the shogun's authority. This program was carried out in such an extensive scale that many of the temples and shrines built after the Kamakura period were influenced by this architectural style.

Shōfuku-ji, Tokyo, Registered National Treasure Completed in 1407

Especially, remarkable event in Muromachi period, another major development of the period was the tea ceremony and the tea house in which it was held. The purpose of the ceremony is to spend time with friends who enjoy the arts, to cleanse the mind of the concerns of daily life, and to receive a bowl of tea served in a gracious and tasteful manner. Zen was the basic philosophy. The rustic style of the rural cottage was adopted for the tea house, emphasizing such natural materials as bark-covered logs and woven straw. In addition, a traditional Japanese style culture such as tatami, shōji, and fusuma was stylized in Muromachi period.

Pagoda of Jigen-in, Izumisano, Osaka Built in 1271

Ginkakuji, Kyoto Built in 15th century

Azuchi-Momoyama period

Two new forms of architecture were developed in response to the militaristic climate of the times: the castle, a defensive structure built to house a feudal lord and his soldiers in times of trouble; and the shoin, a reception hall and private study area designed to reflect the relationships of lord and vassal within a feudal society. Himeji Castle (built in its present form 1609), popularly known as White Heron Castle, with its gracefully curving roofs and its complex of three subsidiary towers around the main tenshu (or keep), is considered to be one of the most beautiful structures of the Momoyama period. The Ohiroma of Nijo Castle (17th century) in Kyoto is one of the classic examples of the

shoin, with its tokonoma (alcove), shoin window (overlooking a carefully landscaped garden), and clearly differentiated areas for the Tokugawa lords and their vassals.

Himeji Castle in Himeji, Hyōgo, Completed in 1618

Matsumoto Castle in Matsumoto, Nagano, Completed in 1600

Edo period

Katsura Detached Palace, built in imitation of Prince Genji's palace, contains a cluster of shoin buildings that combine elements of classic Japanese architecture with innovative restatements. The whole complex is surrounded by a beautiful garden with paths for walking.

The city of Edo was repeatedly struck by fires, leading to the development of a simplified architecture that allowed for easy reconstruction. Because fires were most likely to spread during the dry winters, lumber was stockpiled in nearby towns prior to their onset. Once a fire that had broken out was extinguished, the lumber was sent to Edo, allowing many rows of houses to be quickly rebuilt. Due to the shogun's policy of *sankin kotai* ("rotation of services"), the daimyo constructed large houses and parks for their guests' (as well as their own) enjoyment. Kōrakuen is a park from that period that still exists and is open to the public for afternoon walks.

Hirosaki Castle in Hirosaki, Aomori Completed in 1611

Yomeimon of Toshogu, Nikko, Tochigi

Meiji, Taisho, and early Showa periods

In the years after 1867, when Emperor Meiji ascended the throne, Japan was once again invaded by new and alien forms of culture. By the early 20th century, European art forms were well introduced and their marriage produced notable buildings like the Tokyo Train Station and the National Diet Building that still exist today. Thus, during prewar period, pseudo-European architecture (Giyōfū architecture) flourished.

In early 1920s, modernists and expressionists emerged and began to form their own groups. Kunio Maekawa and Junzo Sakakura joined Le Corbusier's studio in France, came back to Japan in early 1930s, and designed several buildings. Influence of modernism spread to many company and government buildings. In 1933 Bruno Taut fled to Japan, and his positive opinion of Japanese architecture (especially Katsura Imperial Villa) encouraged Japanese modernists.

National Diet Building in Tokyo, Built in 1936

Kyoto National Museum in Kyoto, Built in 1895

Modern architecture

The need to rebuild Japan after World War II proved a great stimulus to Japanese architecture, and within a short time, the cities were functioning again. However, the new cities that came to replace the old ones came to look very different. The current look of Japanese cities is the result of and a contributor to 20th and 21st century architectural attitudes. With the introduction of Western building techniques, materials, and styles into Meiji Japan, new steel and concrete structures were built in strong contrast to traditional styles. Like most places, there is a great gap between the appearance of the majority of buildings (generally residences and small businesses) and of landmark buildings. After World War II, the majority of buildings ceased to be built of wood (which is easily flammable in the case of earthquakes and bombing raids), and instead were internally constructed of steel. (Low-rise residential structures, however, are still constructed primarily of wood.) High visibility landmark buildings also changed. Whereas major pre-war buildings, such as the Wako, Tokyo Station, Akasaka Palace, and the Bank of Japan were designed along European classical lines, post-war buildings adopted the "unadorned box" style. Because of earthquakes, bombings, and later redevelopment, and also because of Japan's rapid economic growth from the 1950s until the 1980s, most of the architecture to be found in the cities are from that period, which was the height of Brutalist Modern architecture generally.

Yokohama Landmark Tower in Minato Mirai 21, Yokohama, Built in 1993, Design by H.Stubbius & Associates

However, since around the early 1990s, the situation has slowly started to change. The 1991 completion of the postmodernist Tokyo Metropolitan Government Building was perhaps a tipping point in skyscraper design. Hot on its heels was the Yokohama Landmark Tower. In 1996 came the much-loved Tokyo International Forum, which besides a unique design, sported a landscaped area outside for people to relax and chat. More recently, in 2003, Roppongi Hills was opened, which borrowed ideas from previous ground-breaking designs and furthered them. The new area of Shiodome, completely redeveloped since the late 1990s, is an excellent place to see a group of postmodern and European-style buildings, away from the usual jumble of '60s-era anonymous rectangular

prisms. Still, despite this slow but continuing trend in contemporary Japanese architecture, the vast majority of suburban areas still exhibit cheap, uninspired designs.

The best-known Japanese architect is Kenzo Tange, whose National Gymnasiums (1964) for the Tokyo Olympics emphasizing the contrast and blending of pillars and walls, and with sweeping roofs reminiscent of the tomoe (an ancient whorl-shaped heraldic symbol) are dramatic statements of form and movement.

Skyscrapers of Umeda, Osaka, Built in 1993, Design by Hiroshi Hara

Japan played some role in modern skyscraper design, because of its long familiarity with the cantilever principle to support the weight of heavy tiled temple roofs. Frank Lloyd Wright was strongly influenced by Japanese spatial arrangements and the concept of interpenetrating exterior and interior space, long achieved in Japan by opening up walls made of sliding doors. In the late twentieth century, however, only in domestic and religious architecture was Japanese style commonly employed. Cities sprouted modern skyscrapers, epitomized by Tokyo's crowded skyline, reflecting a total assimilation and transformation of modern Western forms.

The widespread urban planning and reconstruction necessitated by the devastation of World War II produced such major architects as Maekawa Kunio and Kenzo Tange. Maekawa, a student of world-famous architect Le Corbusier, produced thoroughly international, functional modern works. Tange, who worked at first for Maekawa, supported this concept early on, but later fell in line with postmodernism, culminating in projects such as the aforementioned Tokyo Metropolitan Government Building and the Fuji TV Building. Both architects were notable for infusing Japanese aesthetic ideas into starkly contemporary buildings, returning to the spatial concepts and modular proportions of tatami (woven mats), using textures to enliven the ubiquitous ferroconcrete and steel, and

integrating gardens and sculpture into their designs. Tange used the cantilever principle in a pillar and beam system reminiscent of ancient imperial palaces; the pillar—a hallmark of Japanese traditional monumental timber construction—became fundamental to his designs. Fumihiko Maki advanced new city planning ideas based on the principle of layering or cocooning around an inner space (oku), a Japanese spatial concept that was adapted to urban needs. He also advocated the use of empty or open spaces (ma), a Japanese aesthetic principle reflecting Buddhist spatial ideas. Another quintessentially Japanese aesthetic concept was a basis for Maki designs, which focused on openings onto intimate garden views at ground level while cutting off sometimes-ugly skylines. The 1960s architectural movement "Metabolism", based on interchangeability and dynamism, provided for changing the functions of parts of buildings according to use, and remains influential.

National Gymnasium in Yoyogi Park, Tokyo, Built in 1964, Design by Kenzo Tange

A major architect of the 1970s and 1980s was Isozaki Arata, originally a student and associate of Tange's, who also based his style on the Le Corbusier tradition and then turned his attention toward the further exploration of geometric shapes and cubic silhouettes. He synthesized Western high-technology building concepts with peculiarly Japanese spatial, functional, and decorative ideas to create a modern Japanese style. Isozaki's predilection for the cubic grid and trabeated pergola in largescale architecture, for the semicircular vault in domestic-scale buildings, and for extended barrel vaulting in low, elongated buildings led to a number of striking variations. New Wave architects of the 1980s were influenced by his designs, either pushing to extend his balanced style, often into mannerism, or reacting against them.

A number of avant-garde experimental groups were encompassed in the New Wave of the late 1970s and the 1980s. They reexamined and modified the formal geometric

structural ideas of modernism by introducing metaphysical concepts, producing some startling fantasy effects in architectural design. In contrast to these innovators, the experimental poetic minimalism of Tadao Ando embodied the postmodernist concerns for a more balanced, humanistic approach than that of structural modernism's rigid formulations. Ando's buildings provided a variety of light sources, including extensive use of glass bricks and opening up spaces to the outside air. He adapted the inner courtyards of traditional Osaka houses to new urban architecture, using open stairways and bridges to lessen the sealed atmosphere of the standard city dwelling. His ideas became ubiquitous in the 1980s, when buildings were commonly planned around open courtyards or plazas, often with stepped and terraced spaces, pedestrian walkways, or bridges connecting building complexes. In 1989 Ando became the third Japanese to receive France's prix de l'académie d'architecture, an indication of the international strength of the major Japanese architects, all of whom produced important structures abroad during the 1980s. Japanese architects were not only skilled practitioners in the modern idiom but also enriched postmodern designs worldwide with innovative spatial perceptions, subtle surface texturing, unusual use of industrial materials, and a developed awareness of ecological and topographical problems.

JR Central Towers in Nagoya, Aichi, Built in 1999

The Japanese asset price bubble of the late 1980s fostered a great deal of innovative and experimental architecture, but following the economic crash in the early 1990s, Japanese architecture has tended toward more minimal and humble approaches. This is exemplified by the work of architects such as Kazuyo Sejima and Atelier Bow-Wow.

Chapter-6

Japanese Buddhist Architecture

Examples of Buddhist architecture in Japan

Japanese Buddhist architecture is the architecture of Buddhist temples in Japan, consisting of locally developed variants of architectural styles born in China. After Buddhism arrived from Korea in the 6th century, an effort was initially made to reproduce original buildings as faithfully as possible, but gradually local versions of continental styles were developed both to meet Japanese tastes and to solve problems posed by local weather, which is more rainy and humid than in China. The first Buddhist sects were Nara's six Nanto Rokushū, followed during the Heian period by Kyoto's Shingon and Tendai. Later, during the Kamakura period, in Kamakura were born the Jōdo and the native Japanese sect Nichiren-shū. At roughly the same time Zen Buddhism arrived from China, strongly influencing all other sects in many ways, including architecture. The social composition of Buddhism's followers also changed radically with time. In the beginning it was the elite's religion, but slowly it spread from the noble to warriors, merchants and finally to the population at large. On the technical side, new woodworking tools like the framed pit saw and the plane allowed new architectonic solutions.

Buddhist temples and Shinto shrines share their basic characteristics and often differ only in details that the non-specialist may not notice. This similarity is due to the fact that the sharp division between Buddhist temples and Shinto shrines is recent, dating to the Meiji period's policy of separation of Buddhism and Shinto (Shinbutsu bunri) of 1868. Before the Meiji Restoration it was common for a Buddhist temple to be built inside or next to a

shrine, or for a shrine to include Buddhist sub-temples. If a shrine housed a Buddhist temple, it was called a *jingū-ji*. Analogously, temples all over Japan used to adopt tutelary *kami* and built shrines within their precincts to house them. After the forcible separation of temples and shrines ordered by the new government, the connection between the two religions was officially severed, but continued nonetheless in practice and is still visible today.

History

A reconstruction of Asuka-dera's original layout

Beginnings – Asuka and Nara periods

Buddhism is not a Japanese native religion, and its architecture arrived from the continent via Korea together with the first Buddhists in the 6th century. Officially adopted in the wake of the Battle of Shigisan in 587, after that date Buddhist temples began to be constructed. Because of the hostility of supporters of local *kami* beliefs towards Buddhism, no temple of that period survives, so we don't know what they were like. Thanks to the Nihon Shoki, however, we do know that an architect, six Buddhist priests and an image maker from the Korean kingdom of Paekche came to Japan in 577 to advise the Japanese the arrangement of monastic buildings. The layout of Ōsaka's Shitennō-ji (see below) reflects the plan of Chongyimsa temple in Puyo, capital of Paekche from 538 to 663. We know for certain that Soga no Umako built Hōkō-ji, the first temple in Japan, between 588 to 596. It was later renamed as Asuka-dera for Asuka, the name of the capital where it was located. Prince Shōtoku actively promoted Buddhism and ordered the construction of Shitennō-ji in Osaka (593) and Hōryū-ji near his palace in Ikaruga (completed in 603). During this period, temple layout was strictly prescribed and followed mainland styles, with a main gate facing south and the most sacred area surrounded by a semi-enclosed

roofed corridor (*kairō*) accessible through a middle gate (*chūmon*). The sacred precinct contained a pagoda, which acted as a reliquary for sacred objects, and a main hall (*kon-dō*). The complex might have other structures such as a lecture hall (*kō-dō*), a belfry (*shōrō*), a *sūtra* repository (*kyōzō*), priests' and monks' quarters and bathhouses. The ideal temple had a heart formed by seven structures called *shichidō garan*, or "seven hall temple". Buddhism, and the construction of temples, spread from the capital to outlying areas in the Hakuhō period from 645 to 710. In addition, many temples were built in locations favored by the precepts of Chinese geomancy. The arrangements not only of the buildings, groups of trees and ponds of the compound, but also of mountains and other geographic features in particular directions around the temple played important roles as well.

The Chinese five elements school of thought believed that many natural phenomena naturally fell under five categories. Six groups of five categories were established as a rule to the building of edifices.

Five elements	Wood	Fire	Earth	Metal	Water
Position	East	South	Middle	West	North
Weather	Windy	Hot	Humid	Dry	Cold
Colour	Green	Red	Yellow	White	Black
Evolution of living things	Birth	Growth	Change	Weakening	Hiding
Symbolic significance	Prosperity	Riches and honor	Power	Desolation	Death

A palace for a new prince would for example be placed east to symbolize birth, and yellow tiles would be used for the imperial palace to symbolize power.

The five elements theory is also the basis of the *gorintō*, an extremely common stone *stupa* whose invention is attributed to Kūkai. Its five sections (a cube, a sphere, a pyramid, a crescent and a lotus-shaped cusp) stand each for one of the five elements.

Chinese numerology also played an important role. According to the Yin-Yang school, which started in about 305 BC, *Yang* stood for the sun, warmth, maleness and odd numbers, while *Yin* stood for their opposites. In groups of buildings, therefore, halls occurred in odd numbers because halls themselves were believed to be *Yang*. Being *Yang*, odd numbers in general are considered positive and lucky, and Buddhism shows a preference for odd numbers. In the case of storied pagodas, either in stone or wood, the number of stories is almost always odd. Practically all wooden pagodas have either three or five-stories. Specimen with a different number of stories used to exist, but none has survived.

Because of fire, earthquakes, typhoons and wars, few of those ancient temples still exist. Hōryū-ji, rebuilt after a fire in 670, is the only one still possessing 7th century structures, the oldest extant wooden buildings in the world.

Part of Tōshōdai-ji's *garan* (left to right, the *kon-dō*, the *kō-dō*, and the *korō*)

Unlike early *kami* worship shrines, early Buddhist temples were highly ornamental and strictly symmetrical (see reconstruction of Asuka-dera above). Starting with Hōryū-ji in the late 7th century, temples began to move towards irregular ground plans that resulted in an asymmetric arrangement of buildings, greater use of natural materials such as cypress bark instead of roof tiling, and an increased awareness of natural environment with the placement of buildings among trees. This adaptation was assisted by the syncretism of *kami* and Buddhism, which through Japanese traditional nature worship gave Buddhism a greater attention to natural surroundings. During the first half of the 8th century, Emperor Shōmu decreed temples and nunneries be erected in each province and that Tōdai-ji be built as a headquarter for the network of temples. The head temple was inaugurated in 752 and was of monumental dimensions with two seven-storied pagodas, each ca. 100 m (330 ft) tall and a Great Buddha Hall (*daibutsuden*) about 80 × 70 m (260 × 230 ft). Nara period Buddhism was characterised by seven influential state supported temples, the so-called *Nanto Shichi Daiji*. Octagonal structures such as the Hall of Dreams at Hōryū-ji built as memorial halls and storehouses exemplified by the Shōsōin first appeared during the Nara period. Temple structures, such as pagodas and main halls, had increased significantly in size since the late 6th century. The placement of the pagoda moved to a more peripheral location and the roof bracketing system increased in complexity as roofs grew larger and heavier.

Usa Hachiman-gū is now a Shinto shrine, but used to be also a temple

Another early effort to reconcile *kami* worship and Buddhism was made in the eight century during the Nara period with the founding of the so-called *jungūji* or "shrine-temples". The use in a Shinto shrine of Buddhist religious objects was believed to be necessary since the *kami* were lost beings in need of liberation through the power of Buddha. *Kami* were thought to be subject to karma and reincarnation like human beings, and early Buddhist stories tell how the task of helping suffering *kami* was assumed by wandering monks. A local *kami* would appear in a dream to the monk, telling him about his suffering. To improve the *kami's* karma through rites and the reading of sutras, the monk would build a temple next to the *kami's* shrine. Such groupings were created already in the 7th century, for example in Usa, Kyūshū, where kami Hachiman was worshiped together with Miroku Bosatsu (Maitreya) at Usa Hachiman-gū.

At the end of the same century, in what is considered the second stage of the amalgamation, the *kami* Hachiman was declared to be protector-deity of the Dharma and a little bit later a bodhisattva. Shrines for him started to be built at temples, marking an important step ahead in the process of amalgamation of *kami* and Buddhist cults. When the great Buddha at Tōdai-ji in Nara was built, within the temple grounds was also erected a shrine for Hachiman, according to the legend because of a wish expressed by the *kami* himself. This coexistence of Buddhism and *kami* worship, in religion as well as architecture, continued until the Kami and Buddhas Separation Order of 1868.

Heian period

The *tahōtō* is an invention of the Heian period (Ishiyama-dera)

During the Heian period Buddhism became even more infused with Japanese elements: It met and assimilated local beliefs concerning ghosts and spirits (the so-called *onrei* and *mitama*), developing traits close to magic and sorcery which allowed it to penetrate a wide spectrum of social classes. Its merging with indigenous religious belief was then accelerated by the systematization of the syncretism of Buddhism and local religious beliefs. It was in this kind of environment that Fujiwara no Michinaga and retired Emperor Shirakawa competed in erecting new temples, in the process giving birth to the Jōdo-kyō architecture and the new *wayō* architectural style.

The early Heian period (9th–10th century) saw an evolution of styles based on the esoteric sects Tendai and Shingon. These two sects followed faithfully the Nanto Rokushū architectonic tradition in the plains, but in mountainous areas developed an

original style. This development was facilitated by the syncretic fusion of foreign Buddhism with local mountain worship cults. Called *wayō* to distinguish it from imported Chinese styles, it was characterized by simplicity, refrain for ornamentation, use of natural timber and in general plain materials. Structurally, it was distinguished by: a main hall divided in two parts; an outer area for novices and an inner area for initiates; a hip-and-gable roof covering both areas; a raised wooden floor instead of the tile or stone floors of earlier temples; extended eaves to cover the front steps; shingles or bark rather than tile roofing; and a disposition of the *garan* adapting to the natural environment, and not following the traditional symmetrical layouts. The *tahōtō*, a two-storied tower with some resemblance to Indian stupas, was also introduced by these sects during this period. According to an ancient Buddhist prophecy, the world would enter a dark period called Mappō in 1051. During this period the Tendai sect believed that enlightenment was possible only through the veneration of Amida Buddha. Consequently, many so-called Paradise (or Amida) Halls — such as the Phoenix Hall at Byōdō-in (1053), the Main Hall of Jōruri-ji (1157) and the Golden Hall at Chūson-ji (1124) — were built by the Imperial Family or members of the aristocracy to recreate the western paradise of Amida on earth. Amida Halls that enshrined the nine statues of Amida were popular during the 12th century (late Heian period). The Main Hall of Jōruri-ji is however the only example of such a hall still extant.

Kamakura and Muromachi periods

Daibutsu style (Tōdai-ji's Nandaimon)

The Kamakura period (1185–1333) brought to power the warrior caste, which expressed in its religious architecture its necessities and tastes. The influential Zen arrived in Japan

from China, and the Jōdō sect achieved independence. In architecture this period is characterized by the birth of fresh and rational designs.

The Daibutsu style and the Zen style emerged in the late 12th or early 13th century.

The first, introduced by the priest Chōgen, was based on Song Dynasty architecture and represented the antithesis of the simple and traditional *wayō* style. The Nandaimon at Tōdai-ji and the Amida Hall at Jōdo-ji are the only extant examples of this style. Originally called *tenjikuyō* because it had nothing to do with India it was rechristened by scholar Ōta Hirotarō during the 20th century, and the new term stuck. Ōta derived the name from Chōgen's work, particularly Tōdai-ji's Daibutsuden.

The Zen style was originally called *karayō* and like the Daibutsu style, was rechristened by Ōta. Its characteristics are earthen floors, subtly curved pent roofs (*mokoshi*) and pronouncedly curved main roofs, cusped windows (*katōmado*) and paneled doors. Examples of this style include the belfry at Tōdai-ji, the Founder's Hall at Eihō-ji and the Shariden at Engaku-ji. The Zen *garan* usually does not have a pagoda and, when it does, it is relegated to a peripheral position.

These three styles we have seen (*wayō*, *daibutsuyō* and zen'yō) were often combined during the Muromachi period (1336–1573), giving birth to the so-called Eclectic Style exemplified by the main hall at Kakurin-ji. The combination of *wayō* and *daibutsuyō* in particular became so frequent that sometimes it is called by scholars Shin-wayō. By the end of the Muromachi period (late 16th century), Japanese Buddhist architecture had reached its apogee. Construction methods had been perfected and building types conventionalized.

Azuchi-Momoyama and Edo periods

The main hall of Kiyomizu-dera, Kyoto

After the turbulence of the Sengoku period and the establishment of the Tokugawa shogunate in 1603, old temples like Hieizan, Tō-ji and Tōdai-ji lost their power and were surpassed in influence by the Nichiren-shū and Jōdo-shū. The Edo period was an era of unprecedented building fervor in religious architecture. The number of faithful coming for prayer or pilgrimage had increased, so designs changed to take into account their necessities, and efforts were made to catch their ears and eyes. Old sects limited themselves to revive old styles and ideas, while the new relied on huge spaces and complex designs. Both, in spite of their differences, have in common a reliance on splendor and excess. Early pre-modern temples were saved from monotony by elaborate structural details, the use of undulating *karahafu* gables and the use of buildings of monumental size. While structural design tended to become gradually more rational and efficient, the surface of religious edifices did the opposite, growing more elaborate and complex. After the middle Edo period, passed its zenith, religious architecture ended up just repeating told ideas, losing its innovative spirit and entering its final decline. Representative examples for the Momoyama (1568–1603) and Edo period (1603–1868) temple architecture are the Karamon at Hōgon-ji and the main hall of Kiyomizu-dera, respectively.

Meiji period

In 1868 the government enacted its policy of separation of Buddhas and *kami* called Shinbutsu bunri, with catastrophic consequences for the architecture of both religions. Until then mixing the two religions had been normal, but now they had to be by law intellectually and physically separated. The fact that many structures were illegal where they stood (for example pagodas at shrines) and had to be demolished caused the destruction of huge numbers of old temples and shrines. The damage was particularly severe for Buddhism because, for political reasons, often shrine structures at Buddhist temples were allowed to stand, while the opposite rarely happened.

Common temple features

- *Butsuden* or *Butsu-dō* – lit. "Hall of Buddha".
    - A *Zen* temple's *main hall*. Seems to have two stories, but has in fact only one and measures either 3x3 or 5x5 bays.
    - Any building enshrining the statue of Buddha or of a *bodhisattva* and dedicated to prayer.
- *chinjusha* – a small *shrine* built at a Buddhist *temple* and dedicated to its tutelary kami.
- *chōzuya*
- *chūmon* – in a temple, the gate after the *naindaimon* connected to a *kairō*.
- dō – Lit. hall. Suffix for the name of the buildings part of a temple. The prefix can be the name of a deity associated with it (e.g. Yakushi-dō, or Yakushi hall) or express the building's function within the temple's compound (e.g. hon-dō, or main hall)..
- *garan*
- *hattō* – lit. "*Dharma* hall". A building dedicated to lectures by the chief priest on Buddhism's scriptures (the *hō*).
- *hōjō* – the living quarters of the head priest of a Zen temple.
- *Hokke-dō* – lit. "Lotus Sūtra hall". In Tendai Buddhism, a hall whose layout allows walking around a statue for meditation. The purpose of walking is to concentrate on the *Hokekyō* and seek the ultimate truth.
- *honbō* – residence of the *jushoku*, or head priest, of a temple.
- *kairō* – a long and roofed portico-like passage connecting two buildings.
- *kaisan-dō* – founder's hall, usually at a Zen temple. Building enshrining a statue, portrait or memorial tablet of the founder of either the temple or the sect it belongs to. Jōdo sect temples often call it *miei-dō*.
- *karamon* – generic term for a gate with an arched roof. A Japanese rock garden, often present in Zen temples, and sometimes found in temples of other sects too.
- *katōmado* – a bell shaped window originally developed at Zen temples in China, but widely used by other Buddhist sects as well as in lay buildings.
- *kon-dō* – lit. "golden hall", it is the main hall of a *garan*, housing the main object of worship. Unlike a *butsuden*, it is a true two-story building (although the second story may sometimes be missing) measuring 9x7 bays.
- *konrō* – covered corridor between two buildings

- *korō* or *kurō* – tower housing a drum that marks the passing of time. It used to face the *shōrō* and lie next to the *kō-dō*, but now the drum is usually kept in the *rōmon*.
- *kuin** – kitchen/office of a Zen *garan*. A building hosting the galleys, the kitchen, and the offices of a temple. Usually situated in front and to the side of the *butsuden*, facing the *sō-dō*. Also called *kuri*.
- *kuri*
- *kyō-dō*
- *kyōzō* – lit. "scriptures deposit". Repository of sūtras and books about the temple's history. Also called *kyō–dō*.
- *miei-dō* – lit. "image hall". Building housing an image of the temple's founder, equivalent to a Zen sect's *kaisan-dō*.
- *mi-dō* – a generic honorific term for a building which enshrines a sacred statue.
- Miroku Nyorai – Japanese name of Maitreya.
- *mon* – a temple's gate, which can be named after its position (*nandaimon*: lit. "great southern gate"), its structure (*nijūmon*: "two storied gate"), a deity (*Niōmon*: lit. "*Nio* gate"), or its use (*onarimon*: lit. "imperial visit gate", a gate reserved to the Emperor). The same gate can therefore be described using more than one term. For example, a *Niōmon* can at the same time be a *nijūmon*.
- *nandaimon* – the main southern gate of a temple, in particular that at Nara's Tōdai-ji.
- *nijūmon* – a two-storied gate with a roof surrounding the first floor.
- *Niōmon* – a two-storied or high gate guarded by two wooden guardians called *Niō*.
- noborirō – a covered stairway at Nara's Hasedera.
- pagoda
- *sai-dō* – the refectory at a Zen temple or monastery.
- *sandō* - the approach leading from a *torii* to a *shrine*. The term is also used sometimes at Buddhist temples too.
- *sanmon* – the gate in front of the *butsuden*. The name is short for Sangedatsumon, lit. *Gate of the three liberations*. Its three openings (*kūmon*, *musōmon* and *muganmon*) symbolize the three gates to enlightenment. Entering, one can free himself from three passions (*ton*, or greed, *shin*, or hatred, and *chi*, or "foolishness"). Its size depends on the temple's rank.
- *sanrō* – small buildings at the ends of a two-storied Zen gate containing the stairs to the second story.
- *sekitō* – a stone *pagoda* (*stupa*).
- *shichidō garan* – a double compound term literally meaning "seven halls" and "(temple) buildings". What is counted in the group of seven buildings, or *shichidō*, can vary greatly from temple to temple and from school to school. In practice, *shichidō garan* can also mean simply a large complex.
    - *Nanto Rokushū* and later non-Zen schools: The *shichidō garan* in this case includes a *kon-dō*, a *tō*, a *kō-dō*, a *shōrō*, a *jiki-dō*, a *sōbō*, and a *kyōzō*.
    - Zen schools: A Zen *shichidō garan* includes a *butsuden* or *butsu-dō*, a *hattō*, a *ku'in*, a *sō-dō*, a *sanmon*, a *tōsu* and a *yokushitsu*.

- *shoin* – originally a study and a place for lectures on the *sutra* within a temple, later the term came to mean just a study.
- *shōrō* – a temple's bellfry, a building from which a bell is hung.
- *sōbō* – The monks' living quarters in a non-Zen garan
- *sō-dō* – Lit. "monk hall". A building dedicated to the practice of *Zazen*. It used to be dedicated to all kinds of activities, from eating to sleeping, centered on zazen.
- *sōmon* – the gate at the entrance of a temple. It precedes the bigger and more important *sanmon*.
- *sōrin* – a spire reaching up from the center of the roof of some temple halls, tiered like a *pagoda*.
- *sotoba* or sotōba – transliteration of the Sanskrit *stupa*.
    - A *pagoda*. Tower with an odd number of tiers (three, five, seven nine, or thirteen).
    - Strips of wood left behind tombs during annual ceremonies (*tsuizen*) symbolizing a *stupa*.. The upper part is segmented like a *pagoda* and carries Sanskrit inscriptions, *sutras*, and the *kaimyō* (posthumous name) of the deceased.

Tōdai-ji's *shōrō* (an early type)

In present day Japanese, *sotoba* usually has the latter meaning.

- *stupa* – in origin a vessel for Buddha's relics, later also a receptacle for scriptures and other relics. Its shape changed in the Far East under the influence of the Chinese watchtower to form tower-like structures like the *Tōbuttō*, the *gorintō*, the *hōkyōintō*, the *sekitō*, the *tō*, or the much simpler wooden stick-style *sotoba*.
- *tatchū*
    - In Zen temples, a building containing a pagoda enshrining the ashes of a important priest stands.
    - Later, it became a subsidiary temple or a minor temple depending from a larger one.
    - Finally, it became also subsidiary temple being the family temple (*bodaiji*) of a important family.
- tahōtō – a two-storied *pagoda* with a ground floor having a dome-shaped ceiling and a square pent roof, a round second floor and square roofs.
- *temizuya* – a fountain near the entrance of a *shrine* and a temple where worshipers can cleanse their hands and mouths before worship.
- *tesaki* – Term used to count the roof-supporting
- projecting from a temple's wall, usually composed of two steps (*futatesaki*) or three.
- tokyō
- *torii* - the iconic Shinto gate at the entrance of a sacred area, usually, but not always, a *shrine*. Shrines of various size can be found next to, or inside temples.
- *tōrō* – a lantern at a *shrine* or Buddhist temple. Some of its forms are influenced by the *gorintō*.
- *-tō*
    - A pagoda, and an evolution of the *stupa*. After reaching China, the *stupa* evolved into a tower with an odd number of tiers (three, five, seven, nine, thirteen), excepted the *tahōtō*, which has two.
    - The word is used together as a suffix of a numeral indicating the number of a pagoda's tiers (three tiers= san-jū-no-tō, five tiers= go-jū-no-tō, seven tiers = nana-jū-no-tō, etc).
- *tōsu* or *tōshi* – a Zen monastery's toilet.
- *Yakushi-dō* – a building that enshrines a statue of Yakushi Nyorai.*
- *yokushitsu** – a monastery's bathroom.
- *zen-dō* – lit. "hall of Zen". The building where monks practice *zazen*, and one of the main structures of a Zen *garan*.

Tōfuku-ji's *kaisan-dō*

Nijūmon at Kōmyō-ji in Ayabe

A *niōmon*

Chapter-7

Shinto Architecture

Some examples of Shinto architecture

Shinto architecture is the architecture of Japanese Shinto shrines.

The general blueprint of a Shinto shrine is Buddhist in origin. Before Buddhism, shrines were just temporary structures erected to a particular purpose. Buddhism brought to Japan the idea of permanent shrines and much of Shinto architecture's vocabulary. The presence of verandas, stone lantern, and elaborate gates is an example of this influence.

The composition of a Shinto shrine is extremely variable, and none of its possible features are necessarily present. Even the *honden* or sanctuary, the part which houses the *kami* and usually is the centerpiece of a shrine, can be missing. However, since its grounds are sacred, they usually are surrounded by a fence made of stone or wood called *tamagaki*, while access is made possible by an approach called *sandō*. The entrances themselves are straddled by gates called *torii*, which are therefore the simplest way to identify a Shinto shrine.

A shrine may include within its grounds several structures, each destined to a different purpose. Among them are the *honden* or sanctuary, where the *kami* are enshrined, the *heiden*, or hall of offerings, where offers and prayers are presented, and the *haiden* or hall of worship, where there may be seats for worshipers. The *honden* is the building that

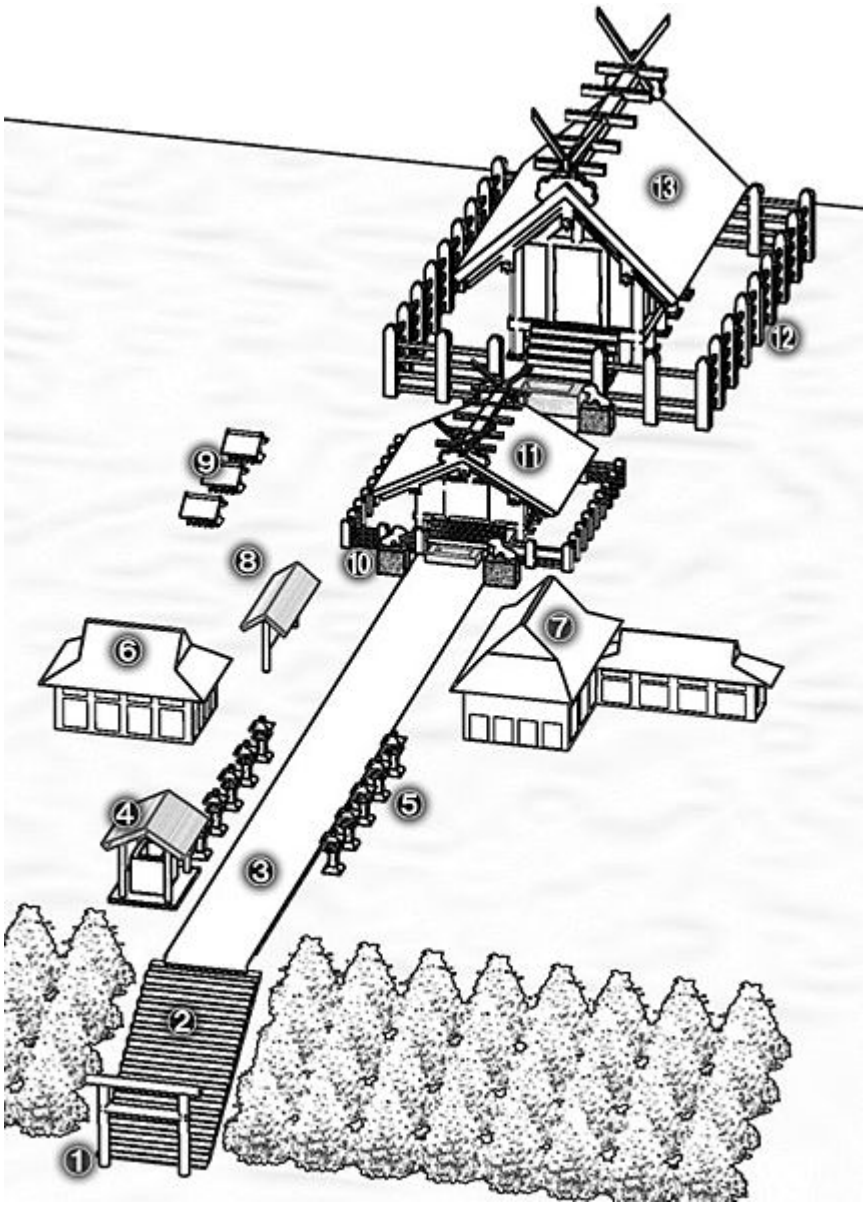
contains the *shintai*, literally, "the sacred body of the kami". Of these, only the *haiden* is open to the laity. The *honden* is located behind the *haiden* and is usually much smaller and unadorned. Other notable shrine features are the *temizuya*, the fountain where visitors cleanse their hands and mouth, and the *shamusho*, the office that supervises the shrine. Shrines can be very large, as for example Ise Shrine or as small as a beehive like a *hokora*, small shrines frequently found on road sides.

Before the forced separation of Shinto and Buddhism (*Shinbutsu bunri*), it was not uncommon for a Buddhist temple to be built inside or next to a shrine, or to the contrary for a shrine to include Buddhist subtemples. If a shrine was also a Buddhist temple, it was called a *jinguji*. At the same time, temples in the entire country adopted tutelary kami and built temple shrines to house them. After the forcible separation of Buddhist temples and Shinto shrines (*shinbutsu bunri*) ordered by the new government in the Meiji period, the connection between the two religions was officially severed, but continued nonetheless in practice.

The origin of shrines

The practice of marking sacred areas began in Japan as early as the Yayoi period (from about 500 BC to 300 AD) originating from primal Shinto tenets. Features in the landscape such as rocks, waterfalls, islands, and especially mountains, were places believed to be capable of attracting *kami*, and subsequently were worshiped as *yorishiro*. Originally, sacred places may have been simply marked with a surrounding fence and an entrance gate or *torii*. Later, temporary buildings similar to present day portable shrines were constructed to welcome the gods to the sacred place. Over time the temporary structures evolved into permanent structures that were dedicated to the gods. Ancient shrines were constructed according to the style of dwellings (Izumo Taisha) or storehouses (Ise Grand Shrine). The buildings had gabled roofs, raised floors, plank walls, and were thatched with reed or covered with hinoki cypress bark. Such early shrines did not include a space for worship. Three important forms of ancient shrine architectural styles exist: *taisha-zukuri*, *shinmei-zukuri* and *sumiyoshi-zukuri* They are exemplified by Izumo Taisha, Nishina Shinmei Shrine and Sumiyoshi Taisha respectively and date to before 552. According to the tradition of *Shikinen sengū-sai*, the buildings or shrines were faithfully rebuilt at regular intervals adhering to the original design. In this manner, ancient styles have been replicated through the centuries to the present day.

Common features



The composition of a Shinto shrine

The following is a diagram illustrating the most important elements of a Shinto shrine.

1. *Torii* - Shinto gate
2. Stone stairs
3. *Sandō* - the approach to the shrine
4. *Chōzuya* or *temizuya* - fountain to cleanse one's hands and face
5. *Tōrō* - decorative stone lanterns
6. *Kagura-den* - building dedicated to *Noh* or the sacred *kagura* dance
7. *Shamusho* - the shrine's administrative office

8. *Ema* - wooden plaques bearing prayers or wishes
9. *Sessha*/*massha* - small auxiliary shrines
10. *Komainu* - the so-called "lion dogs", guardians of the shrine
11. *Haiden* - oratory
12. *Tamagaki* - fence surrounding the *honden*
13. *Honden* - main hall, enshrining the *kami*. On the roof of the *haiden* and *honden* are visible *chigi* (forked roof finials) and *katsuogi* (short horizontal logs), both common shrine ornamentations.

Gate (*torii*)

The *torii* is a gate which marks the entrance to a sacred area, usually but not necessarily a shrine. A shrine may have any number of *torii* (Fushimi Inari Taisha has thousands) made of wood, stone, metal, concrete or any other material. They can be found in different places within a shrine's precincts to signify an increased level of holiness.

Torii can often be found also at Buddhist temples, however they are an accepted symbol of Shinto, and as such are used to mark shrines on maps.

The origin of the *torii* is unclear, and no existing theory has been accepted as valid. They may for example have originated in India as a derivative of the torana gates in the monastery of Sanchi, which is located in central India.

Pathway (*sandō*)

The *sandō* at Fushimi Inari Taisha in Kyoto

A **sandō** in Japanese architecture is the road approaching either a Shinto shrine or a Buddhist temple. Its point of origin is usually straddled in the first case by a Shinto *torii*, in the second by a Buddhist *sanmon*, gates which mark the beginning of the shrine's or temple territory. There can also be stone lanterns and other decorations at any point along its course.

A *sandō* can be called an *omote-sandō*, if it is the main entrance, or an *ura-sandō* if it is a secondary point of entrance. The famous Omotesandō district in Tokyo, for example, takes its name from the nearby main access path to Meiji Shrine. An *ura-sandō* also used to exist.

Fountain (*temizuya*)

A *chōzuya*

A **chōzuya** or **temizuya** is a Shinto water ablution pavilion for a ceremonial purification rite known as *temizu*.

Water-filled basins are used by worshipers for washing their left hands, right hands, mouth and finally the handle of the water ladle to purify themselves before approaching the main Shinto shrine or *shaden*. This symbolic purification is normal before worship and all manned shrines have this facility, as well as many Buddhist temples and some new religious houses of worship. The *temizuya* is usually an open area where clear water fills one or various stone basins. Wooden dippers are usually available to worshipers.

Originally, this purification was done at a spring, stream or seashore and this is still considered the ideal. Worshipers at the Inner Shrine at Ise still use this traditional way of ablution.

Korean dogs (*komainu*)

A pair of *komainu*, the "-a" on the right, the "-um" on the left

Komainu, often called lion-dogs in English, are statue pairs of lion-like creatures either guarding the entrance or the *inner shrine* of many Japanese Shinto shrines or kept inside the inner shrine itself, where they are not visible to the public. The first type, born during the Edo period, is called *sandō komainu*, the second and much older type *jinnai komainu*. They can sometimes be found also at Buddhist temples, nobility residences or even private homes. Called "Korean" because originally brought to Japan from China via Korea, their name was formed from *Koma*, the Japanese term for the Korean kingdom of Koguryo. The *komainu* is also one of the pieces of a *shōgi* (Japanese chess) board.

Symbolic meaning

An *un-gyō komainu*

Meant to ward off evil spirits, modern *komainu* statues are almost identical, but one has the mouth open, the other closed. This is a very common characteristic in religious statue pairs at both temples and shrines. This pattern is however Buddhist in origin and has a symbolic meaning. The open mouth is pronouncing the first letter of the Sanskrit alphabet, which is pronounced "a", while the closed one is uttering the last letter, which is pronounced "um", to represent the beginning and the end of all things. Together they form the sound Aum, a syllable sacred in several religions like Hinduism, Buddhism, and Jainism.

There are however exceptions to the rule in which both *komainu* have their mouth either open or closed. The two forms are called collectively *a-un* and individually as *a-gyō* and "*un-gyō*.

History

A Ming Dynasty guardian lion in the Forbidden City

Komainu strongly resemble Chinese guardian lions and in fact originate from Tang dynasty China. The Chinese guardian lions are believed to be themselves cultural imports arrived from either the Middle East or India, countries where the lion existed and was a symbol of strength. During its transportation along the Silkroad, however, the symbol changed, acquiring a distinctive look. The first lion statue in India appears around the 3rd

century BC on top of a column erected by King Ashoka. The tradition later arrived to China, Korea, Japan and Okinawa.

During the Nara period (710–794) the pair always consisted, as in the rest of Asia, of two lions. Used only indoors until the 14th century, they were made mainly of wood. During the Heian period (794–1185), for example, wooden or metal pairs were employed as weights and door-stops, while at the Imperial Palace they were used to support screens or folding screens.

During the early Heian period (ninth century), the tradition changed and the two statues started to be different and be called differently. One had its mouth open and was called *shishi* because, as before, it resembled that animal. The other had its mouth closed, looked rather like a dog, was called *komainu*, or "Koguryo dog", and sometimes had a single horn on its head. Gradually the animals returned to be identical, but for their mouths, and ended up being called both *komainu*.

Ubiquitous as they are now at shrines, *Komainu* have been used outdoors only since the 14th century. In Asia the lion was popularly believed to have the power to repel evil, and for this reason it was habitually used to guard gates and doors. In Japan too it ended up being installed at the entrance of shrines and temples next to the lion-dog. Being exposed to Japan's rainy weather, the pair started being carved in stone.

The *shīsā*, the stone animals that in Okinawa guard the gates or the roofs of houses, are close relatives of the *shishi* and the *komainu*, objects whose origin, function and symbolic meaning they share. Their name itself is just a corruption of *shishi-san*.

Starting from the Edo period (1603–1868) other animals have been used instead of lions or dogs, among others wild boars, tigers, dragons and foxes.

Foxes at Inari shrines

A pair of foxes at an Inari shrine

The most frequent variant of the *komainu* theme is the fox, guardian of shrines dedicated to *kami* Inari. There are about 30 thousand Inari shrines in Japan, and the entrance of each each is guarded by a pair of fox statues. Often one, and sometimes both, has a sūtra roll, a key or a jewel in its mouth. (Sūtras are Buddhist texts, a fact which attests to the Buddhist origins of Inari's cult.) The statues do not stand for the malice the animals are proverbial for, but for the magic powers they are believed in this case to possess. Sometimes the guardians are painted, and in that case they are always white. White foxes are messengers of the *kami*, who is sometimes himself believed to be, and portrayed as, a fox. Although visible genitals are rare, the left fox is believed to be male, the right one female.

Often the foxes wear red votive bibs similar to those worn by statues of other deities, for example Buddhist god Jizō, from which one expects some kind of favor in return. In this case however the bibs seem to be purely a rite, whose origins are unclear.

Sanctuary (*honden*)

Izumo Taisha's *honden*, closed to the public

The ***honden***, also called *shinden* is the most sacred building at a Shinto shrine, intended purely for the use of the enshrined *kami*, usually symbolized by a mirror or sometimes by a statue. The building is normally in the rear of the shrine and closed to the general public. In front of its usually stands the *haiden*, or oratory. The *haiden* is often connected to the *honden* by a *heiden*, or hall of offerings.

Physically, the *honden* is the heart of the shrine complex, connected to the rest of the shrine but usually raised above it, and protected from public access by a fence called *tamagaki*. It usually is relatively small and with a gabled roof. Its doors are usually kept closed, except at religious festivals. Shinto priests themselves enter only to perform rituals. The rite of opening those doors is itself an important part of the shrine's life. Inside the *honden* is kept the *goshintai*, literally, "the sacred body of the kami". The *goshintai* is actually not divine, but just a temporary repository of the enshrined *kami*.

Important as it is, the *honden* may sometimes be completely absent, as for example when the shrine stands on a sacred mountain to which it is dedicated, or when there are nearby *himorogi* or other *yorishiro* that serve as a more direct bond to a *kami*. Ōmiwa Shrine in Nara, for example, contains no sacred images or objects because it is believed to serve the mountain on which it stands. For the same reason, it has a *haiden*, but no *honden*.

Another important shrine without a *honden* is Suwa Taisha, head of the Suwa shrine network.

Worship hall (*haiden*)

The *haiden* is the hall of worship or oratory of the shrine. It is generally placed in front of the shrine's main sanctuary (*honden*) and often built on a larger scale than the latter. The *haiden* is often connected to the *honden* by a *heiden*, or hall of offerings. While the *honden* is the place for the enshrined *kami* and off-limits to the general public, the *haiden* provides a space for ceremonies and for worshiping the *kami*.

Offertory hall (*heiden*)

The *heiden* is the part of a shrine used to house offerings, and normally consists of a section linking the *honden* and the *haiden*. It can also be called *chūden* or in other ways, and its position can sometimes vary. In spite of its name, nowadays it is used mostly for rituals.

Other elements

Hokora

A *hokora* or *hokura* is a very small Shinto shrine either found on the precincts of a larger shrine and dedicated to folk *kami*, or on a street side, enshrining *kami* not under the jurisdiction of any large shrine. *Dōsojin*, minor *kami* protecting travelers from evil spirits, can for example enshrined in a *hokora*.

Sessha, massha

Sessha and **massha**, also called *eda-miya* are small or miniature shrines having a deep historical relationship with a more important shrine or with the *kami* it enshrines, and fall under that shrine's jurisdiction. The two terms used to have different meanings, but must be today considered synonyms. For this reason, this kind of shrine is now sometimes called *setsumatsusha*.

Most common shrine styles

Shrine buildings can have many different basic layouts, usually named either after a famous shrine's *honden* (e.g. *hiyoshi-zukuri*, named after Hiyoshi Taisha), or a structural characteristic (e.g. *irimoya-zukuri*, after the hip-and gable roof it adopts. The suffix -*zukuri* in this case means "structure".)

The *honden's* roof is always gabled, and some styles also have a veranda-like aisle called *hisashi* (a 1-*ken* wide corridor surrounding one or more sides of the core of a shrine or temple). Among the factors involved in the classification, important are the presence or absence of:

- *hirairi* or *hirairi-zukuri* - a style of construction in which the building has its main entrance on the side which runs parallel to the roof's ridge (non gabled-side). The *shinmei-zukuri*, *nagare-zukuri*, *hachiman-zukuri*, and *hie-zukuri* belong to this type.

- *tsumairi* or *tsumairi-zukuri* - a style of construction in which the building has its main entrance on the side which runs perpendicular to the roof's ridge (gabled side). The *taisha-zukuri*, *sumiyoshi-zukuri*, *ōtori-zukuri* and *kasuga-zukuri* belong to this type.

Proportions are also important. A building of a given style often must have certain proportions measured in *ken* (the distance between pillars, a quantity variable from one shrine to another or even within the same shrine).

The oldest styles are the *tsumairi shinmei-zukuri*, *taisha-zukuri*, and *sumiyoshi-zukuri*, believed to predate the arrival of Buddhism.

The two most common are the *hirairi nagare-zukuri* and the *tsumairi kasuga-zukuri*. Larger, more important shrines tend to have unique styles.

Nagare-zukuri

Ujigami Shrine in Uji, Kyoto Prefecture

The *nagare-zukuri* or *nagare hafu-zukuri* is a style characterized by a very asymmetrical gabled roof projecting outwards on the non-gabled side, above the main entrance, to form a portico. This is the feature which gives the style its name, the most common among shrines all over the country. Sometimes the basic layout consisting of an elevated core partially surrounded by a veranda called *hisashi* (all under the same roof) is modified by the addition of a room in front of the entrance. The *honden* varies in roof ridge length from 1 to 11 *ken*, but is never 6 or 8 *ken*. The most common sizes are 1 and 3 *ken*. The oldest shrine in Japan, Uji's Ujigami Shrine, has a *honden* of this type. Its external dimensions are 5x3 *ken*, but internally it is composed of three sanctuaries measuring 1 *ken* each.

Kasuga-zukuri

The *honden* at Uda Mikumari Shrine Kami-gū is made of 3 joined *Kasuga-zukuri* buildings

Kasuga-zukuri as a style takes its name from Kasuga Taisha's *honden*. It is characterized by the extreme smallness of the building, just 1x1 *ken* in size. In Kasuga Taisha's case, this translates in 1.9 m x 2.6 m. The roof is gabled with a single entrance at the gabled end, decorated with *chigi* and *katsuogi*, covered with cypress bark and curved upwards at the eaves. Supporting structures are painted vermillion, while the plank walls are white.

After the *Nagare-zukuri* (see below), this is the most common style, with most instances in the Kansai region around Nara.

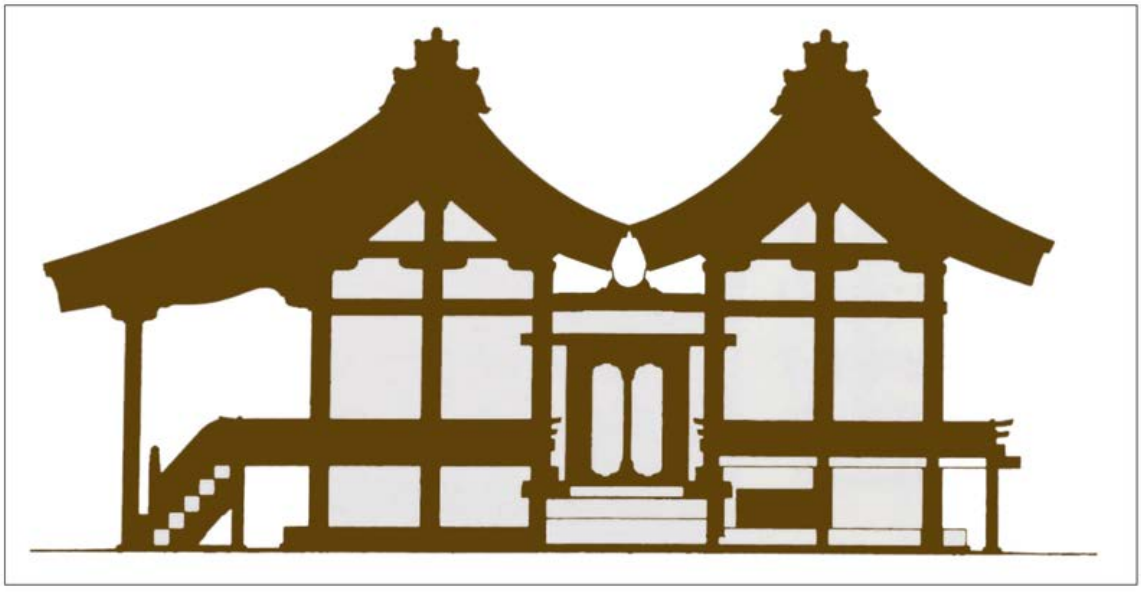
Other styles

Follows a list of other styles (in alphabetical order). Many are rare, some unique. Most deal with the structure of a single building but others, for example the *ishi-no-ma-zukuri* style, define instead the relationship between member structures. In that case, the same building can fall under two separate classifications. For example, the *honden* and *haiden* at Ōsaki Hachiman Shrine are single-storied, *irimoya-zukuri* edifices. Because they are connected by a passage called *ishi-no-ma* and are covered by a single roof, however, the complex is classified as belonging to the *ishi-no-ma-zukuri* style (also called *gongen-zukuri*).

Gongen-zukuri

The name comes from Nikkō Tōshō-gū in Nikkō because it enshrines the Tōshō Daigongen (*Tokugawa Ieyasu*).

Hachiman-zukuri



Iwashimizu Hachiman-gū's *honden*, gabled side

Hachiman-zukuri is a style used at Hachiman shrines in which two parallel structures with gabled roofs are interconnected on the non-gabled side, forming one building which, when seen from the side, gives the impression of two. The front structure is called *gaiden*, the rear one *naiden*, and together they form the *honden*. There are entrances at the center of the non-gabled side. In general, the rear structure is 3x2 *ken*, while the front one is 3x1.

The space between the two structures is one *ken* wide and forms a room called *ai-no-ma*. The actual width and height of this room vary with the shrine.

Extant examples are Usa Shrine and Iwashimizu Hachiman-gū. This style, of which only five Edo period examples survive, may be of Buddhist origin, since some Buddhist buildings show the same division. For example, Tōdai-ji's *hokke-dō* is divided in two sections laid out front and back. Structural details also show a strong relationship with the Heian period style called *shinden-zukuri* used in aristocratic residences. Another possible origin of this style may have been early palaces, known to have had parallel ridges on the roof.

Hiyoshi-zukuri

Hiyoshi Taisha's Nishi Hon-gū

Hiyoshi-zukuri / *hie-zukuri*, also called *shōtei-zukuri* / *shōtai-zukuri* or *sannō-zukuri* is a rare style presently found in only three instances, all at Hiyoshi Taisha in Ōtsu, Shiga. They are the East and West Honden Hon-gū and the Sessha Usa Jingū Honden.

The building is composed of a 3x2 *ken* core called *moya* surrounded on three sides by a 1-*ken* wide *hisashi*, totaling 5x3 *ken*. The three-sided *hisashi* is unique and typical of this style. The gabled roof extends in small porticos on the front and the two gabled sides. The roof on the back has a peculiar and characteristic shape.

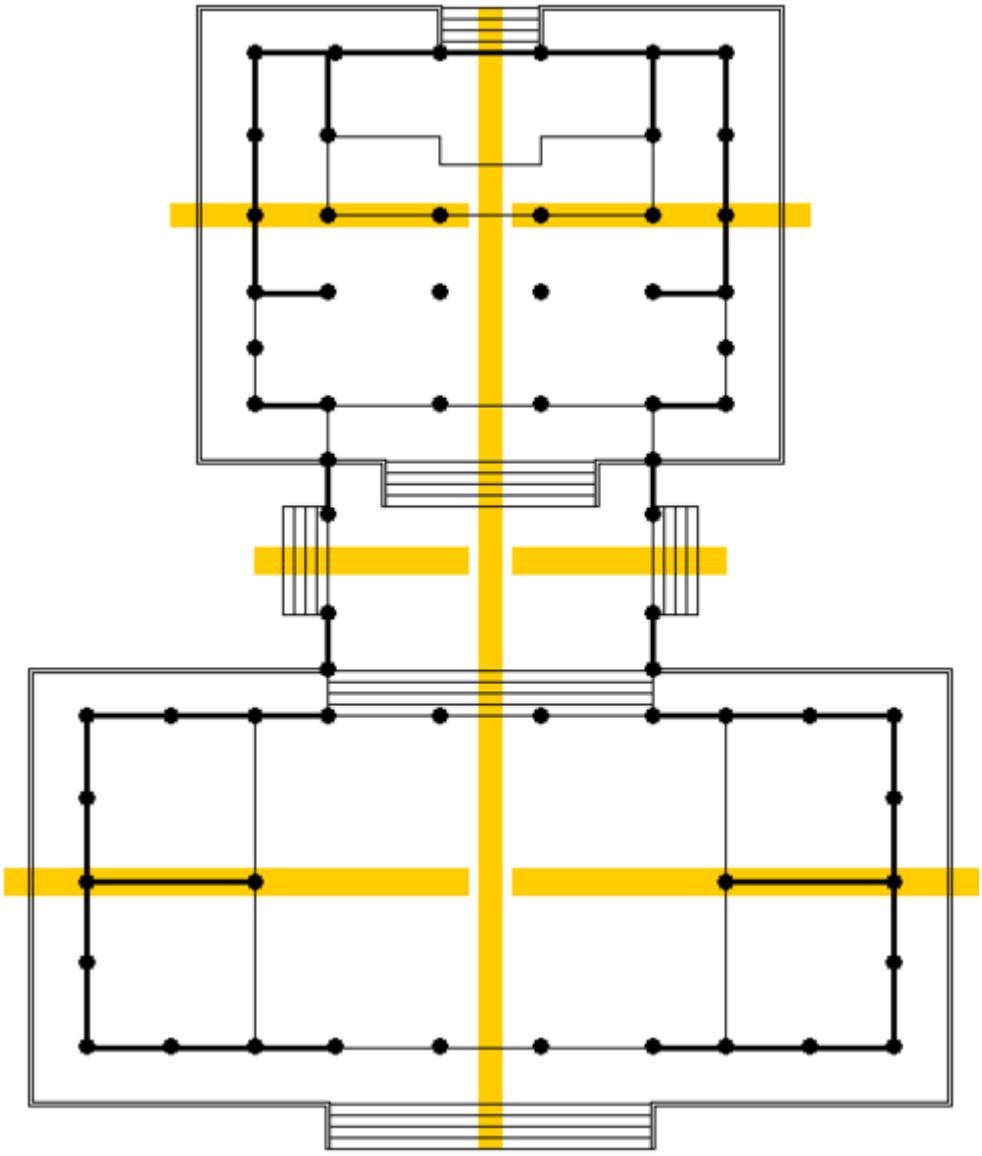
Irimoya-zukuri

A hip-and-gable roof at Shimogamo Shrine

Irimoya-zukuri is a *honden* style having a hip-and-gable structure, that is, a gabled roof with one or two hips, and is used for example in Kitano Tenman-gū's *honden*. The style is of Chinese origin and arrived in Japan together with Buddhism in the 6th century. It was originally used in the *Kon-dō* and *Kō-dō* (lecture halls) of Buddhist temples, but started to be used also in shrines later, during the Japanese Middle Ages.

The name derives from its hip and gable roof. In Japan the gable is right above the edge of the shrine's *moya*, while the hip covers the *hisashi*. In lay architecture it is often called just *moya-zukuri*. Extant examples are Mikami Shrine in Shiga prefecture and Yasaka Shrine in Kyoto.

Ishi-no-ma-zukuri



A gongen-zukuri shrine. From the top: *honden*, *ishi-no-ma*, *haiden*. In yellow the ridges of the various roofs

Ishi-no-ma-zukuri, also called *gongen-zukuri*, *yatsumune-zukuri* and *miyadera-zukuri* is the name of a complex shrine structure in which the *haiden*, or worship hall, and the honden, or main sanctuary, are interconnected under the same roof in the shape of an H.

The connecting passage can be called ai-no-ma, ishi-no-ma, or chūden. The floor of each of the three halls can be at a different level. If the *ai-no-ma* is paved with stones it is called *ishi-no-ma*, whence the name of the style. It can however be paved with planks or *tatami*. Its width is often the same as the *honden's*, with the *haiden* from one to three *ken* wider.

One of the oldest examples is Kitano Tenman-gū in Kyoto.. The *gongen-zukuri* name comes from Nikkō Tōshō-gū in Nikkō, which enshrines the Tōshō Daigongen (Tokugawa Ieyasu) and adopts this structure.

Primitive shrine layout with no *honden*

This style is rare, but historically important. It is also unique in that the *honden*, normally the very center of a shrine, is missing. It is believed shrines of this type are reminiscent of what shrines were like in prehistorical times. The first shrines had no *honden* because the *shintai*, or object of worship, was the mountain on which they stood. An extant example is Nara's Ōmiwa Shrine, which still has no *honden*. An area near the *haiden* (hall of worship), sacred and taboo, replaces it for worship. Another prominent example of this style is Futarasan Shrine near Nikkō, whose *shintai* is Mount Nantai.

Ryōnagare-zukuri

Ryōnagare-zukuri is an evolution of the *nagare-zukuri* in which the roof flows down to form a portico on both non-gabled sides. Examples are the *honden* at Itsukushima Shrine and at Matsuo Taisha.

Shinmei-zukuri

A shrine at Ise

Shinmei-zukuri is an ancient style typical of, and most common at, Ise Grand Shrine, the holiest of Shinto shrines. It is most common in Mie prefecture. Characterized by an extreme simplicity, its basic features can be seen in Japanese architecture from the Kofun period (250–538 C.E.) onwards and it is considered the pinnacle of Japanese traditional architecture. Built in planed, unfinished wood, the *honden* is either 3x2 *ken* or 1x1*ken* in size, has a raised floor, a gabled roof with an entry on one the non-gabled sides, no upward curve at the eaves, and decorative logs called *chigi* and *katsuogi* protruding from the roof's ridge. The oldest extant example is Nishina Shinmei Shrine, the shrine which gives the style its name.

Sumiyoshi-zukuri

Sumiyoshi Taisha's Funatama Jinja

Sumiyoshi-zukuri takes its name from Sumiyoshi Taisha's *honden* in Ōsaka. The building is 4 *ken* wide and 2 *ken* deep, and has an entrance under the gable. Its interior is divided in two sections, one at the front (*gejin*) and one at the back (*naijin*) with a single entrance at the front. Construction is simple, but the pillars are painted in vermilion and the walls in white.

The style is supposed to have its origin in old palace architecture Another example of this style is Sumiyoshi Jinja, part of the Sumiyoshi Sanjin complex in Fukuoka Prefecture. In both cases, as in many others, there is no veranda.

Taisha-zukuri

Kamosu Jinja's *honden*

Taisha-zukuri or *Ōyashiro-zukuri* is the oldest shrine style, takes its name from Izumo Taisha and, like Ise Grand Shrine's, has *chigi* and *katsuogi*, plus archaic features like gable-end pillars and a single central pillar (*shin no mihashira*). Because its floor is raised on stilts, it is believed to have its origin in raised-floor granaries similar to those found in Toro, Shizuoka prefecture.

The *honden* normally has a 2x2 *ken* footprint (12.46x12.46 m in Izumo Taisha's case), with an entrance on the gabled end. The stairs to the honden are covered by a cypress bark roof. The oldest extant example of the style is Kamosu Jinja's *honden* in Shimane prefecture, built in the 16th century.

Owari-zukuri

Owari-zukuri is a complex style found in large shrines of what used to be called Owari province, near Nagoya. It features many structures within the same compound, among them a *honden*, a *haiden*, a *tsuriwata-rō* (a suspended passageway), a *yotsuashimon* (a gate built with four pillars), and other buildings. Extant examples of this style include Owari Ōkunitama Shrine and Tsushima Shrine.

Misedana-zukuri

A massha at Sankō Shrine in Ōsaka

Misedana-zukuri owes its name to the fact that, unlike the other shrine styles, it doesn't feature a stairway at the entrance, and the veranda is completely flat. It is normally used only in *sessha* and *massha*, tiny, 1 *ken* shrines sometimes found on the premises of larger ones. They can however be as small as beehives or relatively large and have 1x2, 1x3 or even, in one case, 1x7 bays. Apart from the lack of a staircase, such shrines belong to the *nagare-zukuri* or *kasuga-zukuri* styles and have their entrance on the non-gabled (*hirairi*) or gabled side (*tsumairi*).

Ōtori-zukuri

The *Ōtorizukuri* is a *tsumairi* style named after Ōtori Jinja in Ōsaka. Its floor is elevated and 2x2 *ken* in size, without a veranda or railings. This style seems to have the same origins as the ancient *sumiyoshi-* and *taisha-zukuri* styles, which it resembles, and the absence of a veranda may be due to the use in origin of an earthen floor, still in use in some shrines. The interior is divided in two, *naijin* (inner chamber) and *gejin* (outer chamber). The roof is covered with layers of cypress bark shingles and has a high ridge with an ornamental rather than functional role. It does not curve upwards at the eaves and the bargeboards are simple and straight. *Chigi* and three *katsuogi* are present.

Gallery

Some *setsumatsusha*

Tsumairi style: entrance on the gabled side

A *hachiman-zukuri honden*

Chapter-8

Shinto Shrine

A **Shinto shrine** is a structure whose main purpose is to house ("enshrine") one or more Shinto *kami*. (Its most important building is used for the safekeeping of sacred objects, and not for worship). A shrine is usually characterized by the presence of a *honden* or sanctuary, where the *kami* is enshrined. The *honden* may however be completely absent, as for example when the shrine stands on a sacred mountain to which it is dedicated, and which is worshiped directly. The *honden* may be missing also when there are nearby altar-like structures called *himorogi* or objects believed capable of attracting spirits called *yorishiro* that can serve as a more direct bond to a *kami*. There may be a *haiden* and other structures as well (see below).

Miniature shrines called *hokora* can occasionally be found at the side of streets. Large shrines sometimes have on their precincts miniature shrines called *sessha* or *massha*. The portable shrines carried by faithful on poles during festivals (*matsuri*) and called *mikoshi* actually enshrine a *kami* and are therefore true shrines.

The number of Shinto shrines in Japan is estimated to be around 100,000.

Birth and evolution of Shinto shrines

Mount Nantai, worshiped at Futarasan Shrine, has the shape of the phallic stone rods found in pre-agricultural Jōmon sites.

In the Yayoi period the Japanese did not have the notion of anthropomorphic deities, and felt the presence of spirits in nature and its phenomena. Mountains, forests, rain, wind, lightning and sometimes animals were thought to be charged with spiritual power, a power whose worldly manifestations were worshiped as *kami*, entities closer in their essence to Polynesian mana than to a Western god. The spirits which gave life to human bodies came from nature and returned to it after death. Ancestors were therefore themselves *kami* to be worshiped. Yayoi-period village councils sought the advice of ancestors and other *kami*, and developed instruments to evoke them called *yorishiro*, a word that literally means *approach substitute*. *Yorishiro* were conceived to attract the *kami* and give them a physical space to occupy, thus making them accessible to human beings.

Village council sessions were held in a quiet spot in the mountains or in a forest near a great tree or other natural object that served as a *yorishiro*. These sacred places and their *yorishiro* gradually evolved into today's shrines, whose origins can be still seen in the Japanese words for "mountain" and "forest", which can also mean "shrine". Many shrines have on their grounds one of the original great *yorishiro*: a big tree, surrounded by a sacred rope called *shimenawa*.

The very first buildings at places dedicated to worship were surely huts built to house some *yorishiro*. A trace of this origin can be found in the term *hokura*, literally meaning "deity storehouse", which evolved into *hokora*, and is considered to be one of the first words for shrine.

Real shrines were born with the beginning of agriculture, when for the first time the need arose to draw a *kami* to a particular place to ensure good harvests. These were however just temporary structures built for a particular purpose, a tradition of which we find traces in some rituals still performed today.

Hints of what the first shrines must have been like can still be found here and there. Ōmiwa Shrine in Nara, for example, contains no sacred images or objects because it is believed to serve the mountain on which it stands. Those images or objects are therefore not necessary. For the same reason, it has a worship hall (a *haiden*), but no place to house the *kami* (*shinden*). Archeology confirms that indeed during the Yayoi period the most common *shintai* (a *yorishiro* actually housing the enshrined *kami*) in the earliest shrines was a nearby mountain peak supplying with its streams water, and therefore life, to the plains below where people lived. Besides the already mentioned Ōmiwa Shrine, another important example is Mount Nantai, a phallus-shaped mountain in Nikko which constitutes Futarasan Shrine's *shintai*. Significantly, the name Nantai itself means "man's body". The mountain not only provides water to the rice paddies below, but has the shape of the phallic stone rods found in pre-agricultural Jōmon sites.

The arrival of Buddhism changed the situation, introducing to Japan the concept of a permanent shrine. A great number of Buddhist temples were built next to existing shrines in mixed complexes called *jingū-ji* to help priesthood deal with local *kami*, making those shrines permanent. Some time in their evolution, the word Miya meaning "palace" came into use, indicating that shrines had by then become the imposing structures of today.

Once the first permanent shrines were built, Shinto revealed a strong tendency to resist architectural change, a tendency which manifested itself in the so-called *Shikinen sengū-sai*, the tradition of rebuilding shrines faithfully at regular intervals adhering strictly to their original design. This custom is the reason ancient styles have been replicated through the centuries to the present day, remaining more or less intact. Ise Shrine, still rebuilt every 20 years, is its best extant example. The tradition of rebuilding shrines or temples is present in other religions, but in Shinto it has played a particularly significant role in preserving ancient architectural styles. Izumo Taisha, Sumiyoshi Taisha and Nishina Shinmei Shrine in fact represent each a different style whose origin is believed to predate Buddhism in Japan, a religion which arrived in Japan around the beginning of the sixth century. These three styles are known respectively as *taisha-zukuri*, *sumiyoshi-zukuri* and *shinmei-zukuri*.

Shrines weren't of course completely immune to change, and in fact show various influences, particularly that of Buddhism, a cultural import which provided much of Shinto architecture's vocabulary. The *rōmon*, the *haiden*, the *kairō*, the *tōrō*, or stone lantern, and the *komainu*, or lion dogs, are all elements borrowed from Buddhism.

Shintai

Mount Fuji is Japan's most famous *shintai*.

The defining features of a shrine are the *kami* it enshrines and the *shintai* (or *go-shintai* if the honorific prefix *go-* is used) that houses it. While the name literally means "body of a kami", *shintai* are physical objects worshiped at or near Shinto shrines because a *kami* is believed to reside in them. In spite of what their name may suggest, *shintai* are not themselves part of *kami*, but rather just symbolic repositories which make them accessible to human beings for worship. It is said therefore that the *kami inhabits* them. *Shintai* are also of necessity *yorishiro*, that is objects by their very nature capable of attracting *kami*.

The most common *shintai* are man-made objects like mirrors, swords, jewels (for example comma-shaped stones called *magatama)*, *gohei* (wands used during religious rites), and sculptures of *kami* called *shinzō*, but they can be also natural objects such as rocks, mountains, trees and waterfalls. Mountains were among the first, and are still among the most important, *shintai*, and are worshiped at several famous shrines. A mountain believed to house a *kami*, as for example Mount Fuji or Mount Miwa, is called a *shintai-zan*. In the case of a man-made *shintai*, a *kami* must be invited to reside in it.

The founding of a new shrine requires the presence of either a pre-existing, naturally occurring *shintai* (for example a rock or waterfall housing a local *kami*), or of an artificial

one, which must therefore be procured or made to the purpose. An example of the first case are the Nachi Falls, worshiped at Hiryū Shrine near Kumano Nachi Taisha and believed to be inhabited by a *kami* called Hiryū Gongen.

The first duty of a shrine is to house and protect its *shintai* and the *kami* which inhabits it. If a shrine has more than one building, the one containing the *shintai* is called *honden*; because it is meant for the exclusive use of the *kami*, it is always closed to the public and is not used for prayer or religious ceremonies. The *shintai* leaves the *honden* only during festivals (*matsuri*), when it is put in portable shrines (*mikoshi*) and carried around the streets among the faithful. The portable shrine is used to physically protect the *shintai* and to hide it from sight.

Re-enshrinement

Often the opening of a new shrine will require the ritual division of a *kami* and the transferring of one of the two resulting spirits to the new location, where it will animate the *shintai*. This process is called *kanjō*, and the divided spirits *bunrei*, *go-bunrei* or *wakemitama*. This process of propagation, described by the priests, in spite of this name, not as a division but as akin to the lighting of a candle from another already lit, leaves the original *kami* intact in its original place and therefore doesn't alter any of its properties. The resulting spirit has all the qualities of the original and is therefore "alive" and permanent. The process is used often, for example during Shinto festivals (*Matsuri*) to animate temporary shrines called *mikoshi*.

The transfer does not necessarily take place from a shrine to another: the divided spirit's new location can be a privately-owned object or an individual's house. The *kanjō* process was of fundamental importance in the creation of all of Japan's shrine networks (Inari shrines, Hachiman shrines, etc.).

Famous shrines and shrine networks

A roadside *hokora* dedicated to *kami* Inari

Those worshiped at a shrine are generally Shinto *kami*, but sometimes they can be Buddhist or Taoist deities, as well as others not generally considered to belong to Shinto. Some shrines were established to worship living people or figures from myths and legends. A famous example are the Tōshō-gū shrines erected to enshrine Tokugawa Ieyasu, or the many shrines dedicated to Sugawara no Michizane, like Kitano Tenman-gū.

Often the shrines historically most significant do not lie in a former center of power like Kyoto, Nara or Kamakura. For example Ise Shrine, the Imperial household's family shrine, is in Mie prefecture. Izumo-taisha, one of the oldest and most revered shrines in Japan, is in Shimane prefecture. This is because their location is that of a traditionally important *kami*, and not that of temporal institutions.

Some shrines exist only in one locality, while others are at the head of a network of branch shrines that extends to all the country. The spreading of a *kami* can be due to one or more of several different mechanisms. The normal one is an operation called *kanjō*, a propagation process through which a *kami* is invited to a new location and there re-enshrined. The new shrine is administratively completely independent from the one it originated from.

However, other transfer mechanisms exist. In Ise Shrine's case, for example, its network of Shinmei shrines (from Shinmei, another name for Amaterasu) grew due to two concurrent causes. During the late Heian period the cult of Amaterasu, worshiped initially only at Ise Shrine, started to spread to the shrine's possessions through the usual *kanjō* mechanism. Later, branches shrines started to appear further away. The first evidence of a Shinmei shrine far from Ise is given by the Azuma Kagami, a Kamakura period text which refers to Amanawa Shinmei-gū's appearance in Kamakura, Kanagawa. Amaterasu began being worshiped in other parts of the country also because of the so-called *tobi shinmei* phenomenon, the belief that she would fly to other locations and settle there. Similar mechanisms have been responsible for the spreading around the country of other *kami*.

Famous shrines

Ise Shrine is the most important shrine in Japan.

Ise Shrine in Mie prefecture is, with Izumo-taisha, the most representative and historically significant shrine in Japan.

The *kami* the two enshrine play fundamental roles in the Kojiki and Nihon Shoki, two texts of great importance to Shinto. Because its *kami*, Amaterasu, is an ancestor of the Emperor, Ise Shrine is the Imperial Household's family shrine. Ise Shrine is however dedicated specifically to the emperor and in the past even his mother, wife and grandmother needed his permission to worship there. Its traditional and mythological

foundation date goes back to 4 BC, but historians believe it was founded around the 3rd to 5th century.

Izumo Taisha (Shimane prefecture) is so old that no document about its birth survives, and the year of foundation is therefore unknown. The shrine is at the center of a series of popular sagas and myths. The *kami* it enshrines, Ōkuninushi, created Japan before it was populated by Amaterasu's offspring, the Emperor's ancestors. Because of his physical remoteness, in historical times Izumo has been eclipsed in fame by other sites, but there is still a widespread belief that in October all Japanese gods meet there. For this reason, this month is known also as Month Without Gods (one of its names in the old lunar calendar), while at Izumo Taisha alone it is referred to as Month With Gods.

Fushimi Inari Taisha is the head shrine of the largest shrine network in Japan, which has more than 32 000 members (about a third of the total). Inari Okami worship started here in the 8th century and has continued ever since, expanding to the rest of the country. Located in Fushimi-ku, Kyoto, the shrine sits at the base of a mountain also named Inari, and includes trails up the mountain to many smaller shrines.

Ōita Prefecture's **Usa Shrine** (called in Japanese Usa Jingū or Usa Hachiman-gū) is, together with Iwashimizu Hachiman-gū, the head of the Hachiman shrine network. Hachiman worship started here at least as far back as the Nara period (710–794). In the year 860 the *kami* was divided and brought to **Iwashimizu Hachiman-gū** in Kyoto, which became the focus of Hachiman worship in the capital. Located on top of Mount Otokoyama, Usa Hachiman-gū is dedicated to Emperor Ojin, his mother Empress Jungū and female *kami* Hime no Okami.

Itsukushima Shrine is, together with Munakata Taisha, at the head of the Munakata shrine network (see below). Famous for his *torii* raising from the waters, it is a UNESCO World Heritage Site. The shrine is dedicated to the three daughters of Susano-o no Mikoto, *kami* of seas and storms and brother of the great sun *kami*.

Kasuga Taisha is a Shinto shrine in the city of Nara, in Nara Prefecture, Japan. Established in 768 A.D. and rebuilt several times over the centuries, it is the shrine of the Fujiwara family. The interior is famous for its many bronze lanterns, as well as the many stone lanterns that lead up the shrine. The architectural style *Kasuga-zukuri* takes its name from Kasuga Taisha's *honden*.

The **Kumano Sanzan** shrine complex, head of the Kumano shrine network, includes Kumano Hayatama Taisha (Wakayama Prefecture, Shingu), Kumano Hongu Taisha (Wakayama Prefecture, Tanabe), and Kumano Nachi Taisha (Wakayama Prefecture, Nachikatsuura). The shrines lie at between 20 to 40 km of distance one from the other. They are connected by the pilgrimage route known as "Kumano Sankeimichi". The great Kumano Sanzan complex also includes two Buddhist temples, Seiganto-ji and Fudarakusan-ji.

The religious significance of the Kumano region goes back to prehistoric times, and therefore predates all modern religions in Japan. The area was, and still is, considered a place of physical healing.

Shrine networks

The ten largest shrine networks in Japan	Branch shrines	Head shrine
Inari shrines	32 000	Fushimi Inari Taisha (Kyoto)
Hachiman shrines	25 000	Usa Hachiman-gū (Oita prefecture, Kyushu), Iwashimizu Hachiman-gū (Kyoto)
Shinmei shrines	18 000	Ise Jingū (Mie prefecture)
Tenjin shrines	10500	Dazaifu Tenman-gū (Fukuoka prefecture, Kyushu), Kitano Tenman-gū (Kyoto)
Munakata shrines	8 500	Munakata Taisha (Fukuoka Prefecture, Kyushu), Itsukushima Shrine (Hiroshima)
Suwa shrines	5 000	Suwa Taisha (Nagano prefecture)
Hiyoshi shrines	4 000	Hiyoshi Taisha (Shiga prefecture)
Kumano shrines	3 000	Kumano Nachi Taisha (Wakayama prefecture)
Tsushima shrines	3 000	Tsushima Shrine (Nagasaki prefecture, Kyushu)
Yasaka shrines	3 000	Yasaka Shrine (Kyoto)

The following six shrine networks alone account for more than 90% of all shrines in Japan.

Inari shrines

The number of branch shrines gives an approximate indication of their religious significance, and neither Ise Shrine nor Izumo-taisha can claim the first place. By far the most numerous are shrines dedicated to Inari, tutelary *kami* of agriculture popular all over Japan, which alone constitute almost a third of the total. Inari also protects fishing, commerce and productivity in general. For this reason, many modern Japanese corporations have shrines dedicated to Inari on their premises. Inari shrines are usually very small, to be easy to maintain, but can also be very large, as in the case of Fushimi Inari Taisha, the head shrine of the network. The *kami* is also enshrined in some Buddhist temples.

The entrance to an Inari shrine is usually marked by one or more vermilion *torii* and two white foxes. This red color has come to be identified with Inari because of the prevalence of its use among Inari shrines and their *torii*. The *kitsune* statues are at times mistakenly believed to be a form assumed by Inari, and they typically come in pairs, representing a male and a female, although sex is usually not obvious. These fox statues hold a symbolic item in their mouths or beneath a front paw — most often a jewel and a key, but a sheaf of rice, a scroll, or a fox cub are all common. Almost all Inari shrines, no matter how

small, will feature at least a pair of these statues, usually flanking or on the altar or in front of the main sanctuary.

Hachiman shrines

Hachiman in Buddhist robes

A syncretic entity worshiped as both a *kami* and a Buddhist *daibosatsu*, Hachiman is intimately associated with both learning and warriors. In the sixth or seventh Century Emperor Ōjin and his mother Empress Jingū came to be identified together with Hachiman. First enshrined at Usa Hachiman-gū in Ōita Prefecture, Hachiman was deeply revered during the Heian period. According to the Kojiki, it was Ōjin who invited Korean and Chinese scholars to Japan, and for this reason he is the patron of writing and learning.

Because as Emperor Ōjin he was an ancestor of the Minamoto clan, Hachiman became the tutelary *kami* (氏神 *ujigami*?) of the Minamoto samurai clan of Kawachi (Osaka). After Minamoto no Yoritomo became shogun and established the Kamakura shogunate, Hachiman's popularity grew and he became by extension the protector of the warrior class the shogun had brought to power. For this reason, the *shintai* of a Hachiman shrine is usually a stirrup or a bow.

During the Japanese medieval period, Hachiman worship spread throughout Japan among not only samurai, but also the peasantry. Presently there are 25000 shrines in Japan dedicated to him, the second most numerous after those of the Inari network. Usa Hachiman-gū is the network's head shrine together with Iwashimizu Hachiman-gū. However, Hakozaki Shrine and Tsurugaoka Hachiman-gū are historically no less significant shrines, and are more popular.

Munakata shrines

Headed by Kyūshū's Munakata Taisha and Itsukushima Shrine, shrines in this network enshrine the Three Female Kami of Munakata, namely Chikishima Hime-no-Kami, Tagitsu Hime-no-Kami, and Tagori Hime-no-Kami. The same three *kami* are enshrined elsewhere in the network, sometimes under a different name. However, while Munakata Taisha enshrines all three in separate islands belonging to its complex, branch shrines generally do not; which *kami* they enshrine depends on the history of the shrine and the myths tied to it.

Tenjin shrines

The Tenjin shrine network enshrines 9th century scholar Sugawara no Michizane. Sugawara had originally been enshrined to placate his spirit, not to be worshiped. Michizane had been unjustly been exiled in his life, and it was therefore necessary to somehow placate his rage, believed to be the cause of a plague and other disasters. Kitano Tenman-gū was the first of the shrines dedicated to him. Because in life he was a scholar, he became the *kami* of learning, and during the Edo period schools often opened a branch shrine for him. Another important shrine dedicated to him is Dazaifu Tenman-gū.

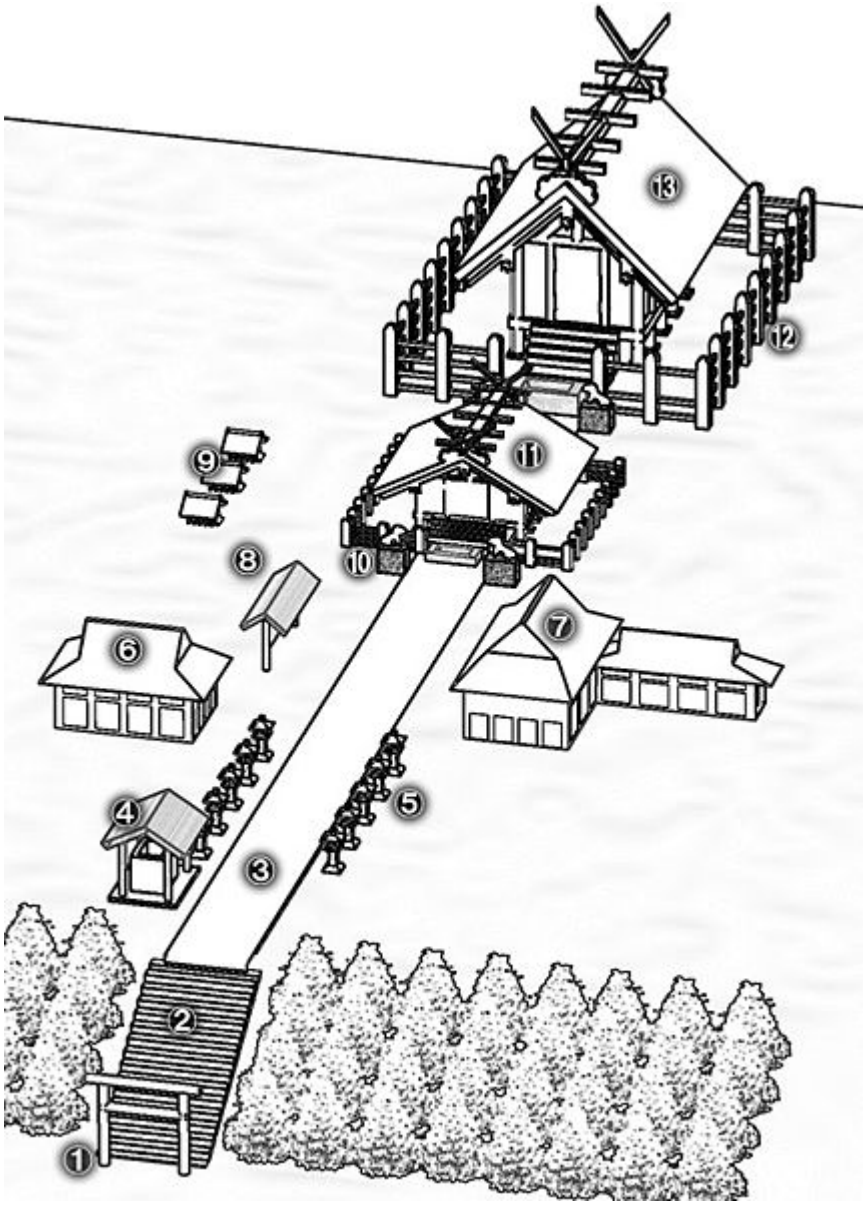
Shinmei shrines

While the ritsuryō legal system was in use, visits by commoners to Ise were forbidden. With its weakening during the Heian period, commoners also started being allowed to the shrine. The growth of the Shinmei shrine network was due to two concomitant causes. During the late Heian period goddess Amaterasu, worshiped initially only at Ise Shrine, started to be re-enshrined in branch shrines in Ise's own possessions through the usual *kanjō* mechanism. The first evidence of a Shinmei shrine elsewhere is given by the Azuma Kagami, a Kamakura period text which refers to Amanawa Shinmei-gū's appearance in Kamakura. Amaterasu spread to other parts of the country also because of the so-called *tobi shinmei* phenomenon, the belief that Amaterasu flew to other locations and settled there.

Kumano shrines

Kumano shrines enshrine the three Kumano mountains: Hongū, Shingū, and Nachi (the Kumano Gongen). The point of origin of the Kumano cult is the Kumano Sanzan shrine complex, which includes Kumano Hayatama Taisha (Wakayama Prefecture, Shingu), Kumano Hongu Taisha (Wakayama Prefecture, Tanabe), and Kumano Nachi Taisha (Wakayama Prefecture, Nachikatsuura). There are more than 3000 Kumano shrines in Japan.

Structure of a Shinto shrine



The composition of a Shinto shrine

The following is a diagram illustrating the most important parts of a Shinto shrine.

1. Torii - *Shinto gate*
2. Stone stairs
3. Sandō - *the approach to the shrine*
4. *Chōzuya* or *temizuya* - purification font to cleanse one's hands and mouth
5. Tōrō - *decorative stone lanterns*
6. Kagura-den - *building dedicated to* Noh *or the sacred* kagura *dance*
7. Shamusho - *the shrine's administrative office*
8. Ema - *wooden plaques bearing prayers or wishes*
9. Sessha/massha - small auxiliary shrines
10. Komainu - *the so-called "lion dogs", guardians of the shrine*
11. Haiden - *oratory or hall of worship*
12. Tamagaki - *fence surrounding the* honden
13. Honden - *main hall, enshrining the kami*
14. On the roof of the *haiden* and *honden* are visible *chigi* (forked roof finials) and *katsuogi* (short horizontal logs), both common shrine ornamentations.

The general blueprint of a Shinto shrine is Buddhist in origin. The presence of verandas, stone lanterns, and elaborate gates is an example of this influence. The composition of a Shinto shrine is extremely variable, and none of its possible features is necessarily present. Even the *honden* can be missing if the shrine worships a nearby natural *shintai*.

However, since its grounds are sacred, they are usually surrounded by a fence made of stone or wood called *tamagaki*, while access is made possible by an approach called *sandō*. The entrances themselves are straddled by gates called *torii*, which are usually the simplest way to identify a Shinto shrine.

A shrine may include within its grounds several structures, each destined to a different purpose. Among them are the already mentioned *honden* or sanctuary, where the *kami* are enshrined, the *heiden* or hall of offerings, where offers and prayers are presented, and the *haiden* or hall of worship, where there may be seats for worshipers. The *honden* is the building that contains the *shintai*, literally, "the sacred body of the kami". Of these, only the *haiden* is open to the laity. The *honden* is usually located behind the *haiden* and is often much smaller and unadorned. Other notable shrine features are the *temizuya*, the fountain where visitors cleanse their hands and mouth, and the *shamusho*, the office which oversees the shrine. Buildings are often adorned by *chigi* and *katsuogi*, variously oriented poles which protrude from their roof.

Before the Meiji Restoration it was common for a Buddhist temple to be built inside or next to a shrine, or viceversa for a shrine to include Buddhist subtemples. If a shrine housed a Buddhist temple, it was called a *jinguji*. Analogously, temples all over Japan adopted tutelary kami and built temple shrines to house them. After the forcible separation of Buddhist temples and Shinto shrines (shinbutsu bunri) ordered by the new government in the Meiji period, the connection between the two religions was officially severed, but continued nonetheless in practice and is still visible today.

Shrine architectural styles

Shrine buildings can have many different basic layouts, usually named either after a famous shrine's *honden* (e.g. *hiyoshi-zukuri*, named after Hiyoshi Taisha), or a structural characteristic (e.g. *irimoya-zukuri*, after the hip-and gable roof it adopts. The suffix -*zukuri* in this case means "structure".)

The *honden's* roof is always gabled, and some styles also have a veranda-like aisle called *hisashi* (a 1-*ken* wide corridor surrounding one or more sides of the core of a shrine or temple). Among the factors involved in the classification, important are the presence or absence of:

- *hirairi* or *hirairi-zukuri* - a style of construction in which the building has its main entrance on the side which runs parallel to the roof's ridge (non gabled-side). The *shinmei-zukuri*, *nagare-zukuri*, *hachiman-zukuri*, and *hie-zukuri* belong to this type.

- *tsumairi* or *tsumairi-zukuri* - a style of construction in which the building has its main entrance on the side which runs perpendicular to the roof's ridge (gabled side). The *taisha-zukuri*, *sumiyoshi-zukuri*, *ōtori-zukuri* and *kasuga-zukuri* belong to this type.

Proportions are also important. A building of a given style often must have certain proportions measured in *ken* (the distance between pillars, a quantity variable from one shrine to another or even within the same shrine).

The oldest styles are the *tsumairi shinmei-zukuri*, *taisha-zukuri*, and *sumiyoshi-zukuri*, believed to predate the arrival of Buddhism.

The two most common are the *hirairi nagare-zukuri* and the *tsumairi kasuga-zukuri*. Larger, more important shrines tend to have unique styles.

Most common styles

The following are the two most common shrine styles in Japan.

Nagare-zukuri

Ujigami Shrine in Uji, Kyoto Prefecture

The *nagare-zukuri* or *nagare hafu-zukuri* is a style characterized by a very asymmetrical gabled roof (*kirizuma-yane* in Japanese) projecting outwards on the non-gabled side, above the main entrance, to form a portico. This is the feature which gives the style its name, the most common among shrines all over the country. Sometimes the basic layout consisting of an elevated core partially surrounded by a veranda called *hisashi* (all under the same roof) is modified by the addition of a room in front of the entrance. The *honden* varies in roof ridge length from 1 to 11 *ken*, but is never 6 or 8 *ken*. The most common sizes are 1 and 3 *ken*. The oldest shrine in Japan, Uji's Ujigami Shrine, has a *honden* of this type. Its external dimensions are 5x3 *ken*, but internally it is composed of three sanctuaries measuring 1 *ken* each.

Kasuga-zukuri

The *honden* at Uda Mikumari Shrine Kami-gū is made of 3 joined *Kasuga-zukuri* buildings

Kasuga-zukuri as a style takes its name from Kasuga Taisha's *honden*. It is characterized by the extreme smallness of the building, just 1x1 *ken* in size. In Kasuga Taisha's case, this translates in 1.9 m x 2.6 m. The roof is gabled with a single entrance at the gabled end, decorated with *chigi* and *katsuogi*, covered with cypress bark and curved upwards at the eaves. Supporting structures are painted vermillion, while the plank walls are white.

After the *Nagare-zukuri* (see below), this is the most common style, with most instances in the Kansai region around Nara.

Styles predating the arrival of Buddhism

The following four styles predate the arrival in Japan of Buddhism.

Primitive shrine layout with no *honden*

This style is rare, but historically important. It is also unique in that the *honden*, normally the very center of a shrine, is missing. It is believed shrines of this type are reminiscent of

what shrines were like in prehistorical times. The first shrines had no *honden* because the *shintai*, or object of worship, was the mountain on which they stood. An extant example is Nara's Ōmiwa Shrine, which still has no *honden*. An area near the *haiden* (hall of worship), sacred and taboo, replaces it for worship. Another prominent example of this style is Futarasan Shrine near Nikkō, whose *shintai* is Mount Nantai.

Shinmei-zukuri

A shrine at Ise

Shinmei-zukuri is an ancient style typical of, and most common at, Ise Grand Shrine, the holiest of Shinto shrines. It is most common in Mie prefecture. Characterized by an extreme simplicity, its basic features can be seen in Japanese architecture from the Kofun period (250–538 C.E.) onwards and it is considered the pinnacle of Japanese traditional architecture. Built in planed, unfinished wood, the *honden* is either 3x2 *ken* or 1x1*ken* in size, has a raised floor, a gabled roof with an entry on one the non-gabled sides, no upward curve at the eaves, and decorative logs called *chigi* and *katsuogi* protruding from the roof's ridge. The oldest extant example is Nishina Shinmei Shrine.

Sumiyoshi-zukuri

Sumiyoshi Taisha's Funatama Jinja

Sumiyoshi-zukuri takes its name from Sumiyoshi Taisha's *honden* in Ōsaka. The building is 4 *ken* wide and 2 *ken* deep, and has an entrance under the gable. Its interior is divided in two sections, one at the front (*gejin*) and one at the back (*naijin*) with a single entrance at the front. Construction is simple, but the pillars are painted in vermilion and the walls in white.

The style is supposed to have its origin in old palace architecture Another example of this style is Sumiyoshi Jinja, part of the Sumiyoshi Sanjin complex in Fukuoka Prefecture. In both cases, as in many others, there is no veranda.

Taisha-zukuri

Kamosu Jinja's *honden*

Taisha-zukuri or *Ōyashiro-zukuri* is the oldest shrine style, takes its name from Izumo Taisha and, like Ise Grand Shrine's, has *chigi* and *katsuogi*, plus archaic features like gable-end pillars and a single central pillar (*shin no mihashira*). Because its floor is raised on stilts, it is believed to have its origin in raised-floor granaries similar to those found in Toro, Shizuoka prefecture.

The *honden* normally has a 2x2 *ken* footprint (12.46x12.46 m in Izumo Taisha's case), with an entrance on the gabled end. The stairs to the honden are covered by a cypress

bark roof. The oldest extant example of the style is Kamosu Jinja's *honden* in Shimane prefecture, built in the 16th century.

Other styles

Many other architectural styles exist, most of them rare.

Interpreting shrine names

The term "Shinto shrine" is used in opposition to "Buddhist temple" to mirror in English the distinction made in Japanese between Shinto and Buddhist religious structures. This single English word however translates several non equivalent Japanese words, including *jinja* as in Yasukuni Jinja, *yashiro* as in Tsubaki Ōkami Yashiro, *miya* as in Watarai no Miya, *-gū* as in Iwashimizu Hachiman-gū, *jingū* as in Meiji Jingū, *taisha* as in Izumo Taisha, *mori*, and *hokora/hokura*.

Shrine names are descriptive, and a difficult problem in dealing with them is understanding exactly what they mean. Although there is a lot of variation in their composition, it is usually possible to identify in them two parts. The first is the shrine's name proper, or *meishō*, the second is the so-called *shōgō*, or "title".

Meishō

The most common *meishō* is the location where the shrine stands, as for example in the case of Ise Jingū, the most sacred of shrines, which is located in the city of Ise, Mie prefecture.

Very often the *meishō* will be the name of the *kami* enshrined. An Inari Shrine for example is a shrine dedicated to *kami* Inari. Analogously, a Kumano Shrine is a shrine that enshrines the three Kumano mountains. A Hachiman Shrine enshrines *kami* Hachiman. Tokyo's Meiji Shrine enshrines the Meiji Emperor. The name can also have other origins, often unknown or unclear.

Shōgō

The second part of the name defines the status of the shrine.

- *Jinja* is the most general name for shrine. Any place that owns a *honden* is a *jinja*. These two characters used to be read either "kamu-tsu-yashiro" or "mori", both meaning "kami grove". Both readings can be found for example in the Man'yōshū.
- *Yashiro* is a generic term for shinto shrine like *jinja*.
- A *mori* is a place where a *kami* is present. It can therefore be a shrine and, in fact, the characters can all be read "mori" ("grove"). This reading reflects the fact the first shrines were simply sacred groves or forests where *kami* were present.

- The suffix *-sha* or *-ja*, as in *Shinmei-sha* or *Tenjin-ja*, indicates a minor shrine that has received through the *kanjō* process a *kami* from a more important one.
- *Hokora*/*hokura* is an extremely small shrine of the kind one finds for example along country roads.
- *Jingū* is a shrine of particularly high status that has a deep relationship with the Imperial household or enshrines an Emperor, as for example in the case of the Ise Jingū and the Meiji Jingū. The name *Jingū* alone, however, can refer only to the Ise Jingū, whose official name is just "Jingū".
- *Miya* indicates a shrine enshrining a special *kami* or a member of the Imperial household like the Empress, but there are many examples in which it's used simply as a tradition.
- *-gū* indicates a shrine enshrining an imperial prince, but there are many examples in which it's used simply as a tradition.
- A *taisha* is literally a "great shrine" that was classified as such under the old system of shrine ranking, the shakaku, abolished in 1946. Many shrines carrying that *shōgō* adopted it only after the war.
- During the Japanese Middle Ages, shrines started being called with the name *gongen*, a term of Buddhist origin. For example, in Eastern Japan there are still many Hakusan shrines where the shrine itself is called *gongen*. Because it represents the application of Buddhist terminology to Shinto *kami*, its use was legally abolished by the Meiji government with the Shinto and Buddhism Separation Order, and shrines began to be called *jinja*.

These names are not equivalent in terms of prestige: a *taisha* is more prestigious than a *-gū*, which in turn is more important than a *jinja*.

Shrines with structures designated as National Treasures

Shrines that are part of a World Heritage Site are set in bold.

- Tōhoku region
  - Ōsaki Hachiman Shrine (Sendai, Miyagi)
- Kantō region
  - **Nikkō Tōshō-gū** (Nikkō, Tochigi)
  - **Rinnō-ji** (Nikkō, Tochigi)
- Chūbu region
  - Nishina Shinmei Shrine (Ōmachi, Nagano)
- Kansai region
  - Onjō-ji (Ōtsu, Shiga)
  - Hiyoshi Taisha (Ōtsu, Shiga)
  - Mikami Shrine (Yasu, Shiga)
  - Ōsasahara Shrine (Yasu, Shiga)
  - Tsukubusuma Shrine (Nagahama, Shiga)
  - Namura Shrine (Ryūō, Shiga)
  - **Kamo Shrine** (Kyoto, Kyoto)
  - **Daigo-ji** (Kyoto, Kyoto)

    - Toyokuni Shrine (Kyoto, Kyoto)
    - Kitano Tenman-gū (Kyoto, Kyoto)
    - **Ujigami Shrine** (Uji, Kyoto)
    - Sumiyoshi Taisha (Osaka, Osaka)
    - Sakurai Shrine (Sakai, Osaka)
    - **Kasuga Shrine** (Nara, Nara)
    - Enjō-ji (Nara, Nara)
    - Isonokami Shrine (Tenri, Nara)
    - Udamikumari Shrine (Uda, Nara)
- Chūgoku region
    - Sanbutsu-ji (Misasa, Tottori)
    - Izumo Taisha (Taisha, Shimane)
    - Kamosu Shrine (Matsue, Shimane)
    - Kibitsu Shrine (Okayama, Okayama)
    - **Itsukushima Shrine** (Hatsukaichi, Hiroshima)
    - Sumiyoshi Shrine (Shimonoseki, Yamaguchi)
- Shikoku region
    - Kandani Shrine (Sakaide, Kagawa)
- Kyūshū region
    - Usa Shrine (Usa, Ōita)
    - Aoi Aso Shrine (Hitoyoshi, Kumamoto)

Kannushi

A kannushi

The *kannushi* or *shinshoku* is a priest responsible for the shrine's maintenance and for officiating ceremonies. These two terms were not always synonyms. Originally a *kannushi* was a holy man who could work miracles and who, thanks to purificatory rites, could work as an intermediary between *kami* and man, but later the term evolved to being synonymous with *shinshoku*, that is, a man who works at a shrine and holds religious ceremonies there.

Traditionally, most shrines did not have a *kannushi* and were maintained by a committee of parishioners called Ujiko. In a *jinguji*, Buddhist monks had of course to maintain both their shrine and their temple.