

A study on contemporary Japanese architectural design : ephemeral space and fragmented urbanity

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CHAPTER 2.

CONTEMPORARY JAPANESE ARCHITECTURE: A WESTERN ANALYSIS

1. INTRODUCTION

Japanese architecture now is full of individuals who are competing among themselves, sometimes quarrelling, but actually building within their special urban environment. In all of their discussed ideas we find a mixture of Western concepts and Japanese traditions. They are oriented towards pluralism, or the 'hyperchoice'.

Although contemporary Japanese architecture is often placed under the title of 'multiplicity', it is still called 'Japanese architecture' in most of the analyses written by Western critics. We notice that it is analyzed as an integral part of the world's architectural scene. But at the same time, Japanese architects are analyzed as being Japanese, whether they have their own concepts or join Western concepts. The fundamental issue is that 'Japanese architecture' is often seen as 'Japanese' or 'architecture'. The relation between both terms is often not strong.

1.1. Purpose

This chapter will focus on the Western analysis and criticism of contemporary Japanese architecture. Many Western critics and architectural researchers have been trying to discover the hidden Japanese concepts of space. It is interesting for us, in this thesis, to analyze the approach made to understand a culture (Japanese) from a different (Western) perspective and state of mind. In order to do this, a general view of the evolution of contemporary Japanese architecture, as conditions affecting Western critics, will be made. Then we will be able to analyze these critics and their own evolution. Most of the articles discussed contemporary Japanese architecture at the time of their publication. Although some of them discussed traditional architecture, most of the time a comparison was made to focus on the contemporary one. Therefore, as we read about traditional Japanese architecture, it is in the intent of putting the contemporary architecture in perspective. In this research, by Japanese architecture we mean 'contemporary' Japanese architecture.

1.2. Definition of Architectural Criticism

Using both the senses and the intellect, the critic analyzes and evaluates the built environment and its effect on its inhabitants and users. Criticism is different from commentary. It is willing to judge and to condemn. In a small comparative study, we can make the two observations:

1. The dominant trend in general interest over the last few years has not been towards criticism. Instead, it is oriented towards profiles and biographies, where criticism may be an uncomfortable intrusion.

2. Over the last few years theoretical criticism, as distinguished from practical or applied criticism, has been growing in academic fields.
3. These observations help to define the state of criticism and commentaries on Japanese architecture written by Western critics.

1.3. Procedure

1. I have chosen three of the main architectural magazines that are involved in architectural criticism, and reviewed the articles concerning Japanese architecture. The choice was made taking into consideration:
 - a. The geographical and cultural differences in the West itself (Europe and the United States). Standards, points of interest and approaches could be different between America and Europe. In general, American critics stress on ornament and image, whether European critics stress on urbanism and participation. In Europe itself, the French magazine reflects the inland, deeply rooted, continent's point of view, and the British magazine reflects the off-land, exploring point of view.
 - b. The popularity and distribution of the magazines themselves. They are purchased in both academic and professional circles, which gives a wide perspective and a somewhat global point of view.
 - c. The interest these magazines show in the subject discussed in this paper was also an important factor. All three of them had discussed Japanese architecture, each one in its own style, and extensively.
 - d. I should also mention another consideration, which is language being limited to English and French. My sources had to be in these two languages.

These magazines are:

Architecture d'Aujourd'hui (France), Architectural Design (U.K.), The Architectural Record (U.S.A.)

2. A thorough analysis of all the articles was made in order to chart the evolution of Western criticism and its interest in Japanese architecture and its development.
3. Graphs were drawn relating the evolution of these interests and Japanese architecture's own evolution.
4. The analysis and conclusion will be based on the observation of these graphs and the contents of the articles, especially what is related to Japanese concepts of space.
5. Although some Japanese magazines, such as Japan Architect, treat with the same subject, they reflect the Japanese editor's point of view and interest. The main concern was the Western magazines, from Europe and the U.S.A. Although some Japanese critics and analysts contributed sometimes in these foreign magazines, they always reflected the foreign editor's point of view and interest.

2. ANALYSIS

After reviewing the articles concerning Japanese architecture in the three magazines, three types of graphs were drawn:

A) Description of the first type of graphs (Fig. 2.1,2.3,2.5):

- x-axis: the chronological order of the articles.
- Left y-axis: the number of pages of each article.
- Right y-axis: the categories of the articles.

The categories were classified as:

1. News: simple mentioning of architectural works, sometimes not exceeding a few lines. It is a simple news bulletin in order just to know what is happening in Japan on the architectural scene.
2. Description: containing simple descriptions of projects and architectural works. It is mainly functional and/or technical description without deep analysis.
3. Analysis: discussing concepts and methods of design of architects and/or projects. Usually it goes deeper in the concept of the project, sources of ideas and analysis of the outcome.
4. Space Concepts: related to Japanese concepts of space as a theme by themselves. Since it is my main concern, I created this category in order to trace the critics' interest in searching for the Japanese concepts as a theme, going beyond projects and architects.

These categories show how deep an article has gone in discussing Japanese architecture, and they were scaled regardless of the number of pages of the articles. Aiming at the Japanese concepts of space, we could trace the articles from the least deep to the deepest ones.

Then, trend lines relating these categories were drawn. This could help to see how deep and thorough the articles concerning the theme went through time. And another type of trend lines relating the number of pages of the articles was drawn. This could help to see how much is Japanese architecture occupying Western critics' and editors' interest through time periods.

B) Description of the second type of graphs (Fig. 2.2,2.4,2.6):

- x-axis: the chronological order of the articles.
- y-axis: the nationality of the architects discussed in the articles.
- Level 1 (in y-axis): Japanese Architects.
- Level 2 (in y-axis): Foreign Architects Working in Japan.

These levels show part of the magazine's policy and its interest in Japan. This comparison reveals when the critics and editors are interested in Japanese architecture and architects, and when they are interested in Japan as a field of work and influence for Western architects.

C) Description of the third type of graphs (Fig. 2.7), a comparative analysis:

- x-axis: the chronological order of the articles, taken in years.
- y-axis: the number of articles for each year, for all three magazine.

This type of graphs also allows us to see the interest in Japanese architecture as a theme on a yearly basis. It reflects the impact Japanese architecture has as a theme.

D) Description of the fourth type of graphs (Fig. 2.8), a comparative analysis:

- x-axis: the chronological order of the articles.
- Left y-axis: the number of pages of each article.

- Right y-axis: the categories of the articles.

The trend lines of the evolution of the number of pages of articles concerning Japanese architecture were drawn. Also, the trend lines of the Category level evolution of these articles through time were drawn. A compilation of Fig. 2.1, 2.3, and 2.5

In this chapter, an analysis of the graphs shown below will be made. And in the observations, I will stress on special issues and leading articles that show special interest in Japanese architecture and serve the purpose of defining the Japanese concepts of space and the development of Western criticism in relation to them. It should be noted that:

- The magazines, *Architecture d’Aujourd’hui*, *Architectural Design*, and *Architectural Record*, will be referred to as A.A., A.D., and A.R. respectively.
- The quotations in the texts are of two kinds: “...”, which quote the author of the article, and ‘...’, which is a stress on certain expressions of my own.
- Some authors are mentioned in the Notes section at the end of the paper. These critics contributed in an effective way to the development of Western criticism, or had some interesting analysis concerning Japanese architectural concepts of space.
- Japanese concepts of space are taken from mainly two sources: a) the traditional architecture and b) the architect’s feeling and own perception of space.

Therefore, in analyzing Japanese concepts of space, it is necessary to take into consideration the personal thoughts of the architects, which are, inevitably, influenced by their Japanese culture and tradition.

Any discovery by Western critics concerning Japanese concepts of space becomes an axiom to them. And this becomes a target to look for in contemporary architecture, and sometimes a criteria for comparison and judgement between traditional and contemporary architecture. It is perhaps a simplified, pragmatic Western method to try to understand the complicated, subjective Japanese way of thinking. An example to that is the special issue of A.D. in March 1966. Gunther Nitschke tries to present the Ma concept as a formula and method of design. And the Western-educated Arata Isozaki does the same in his exhibition “Ma: Space-Time in Japan” in 1978. It was an exhibition destined to Western audiences (Paris, New York) and, therefore, put in a relation to the Western use of space as a manipulable design concern.

2.1. *Architecture d’Aujourd’hui* Magazine ¹

After surveying the articles, drawn the following graphs were drawn:

Figure 2.1. The Number of Pages and the Categories of All Articles

Figure 2.2. Nationality of the Architects Discussed in the Articles

2.1.a. Observations

Examining the articles and the graphs, the following observations were made:

- The ratio of issues discussing Japanese architecture to the total issues of the magazine is 9%.

- There is not much stress on foreign architects working in Japan. Most of the articles (95%) are about Japanese architects (Fig. 2.2).
- Since the beginnings, special issues and leading articles have accessed to Japanese architecture through analyzing the works and concepts of different architects individually, except a few articles.
- The deepest analysis are written during the 80's and the 90's (Fig. 2.1, Category 4). Perhaps it is due to the diversity of architectural visions in Japan.
- In Fig. 2.1, the trend lines of the 'Category' data are ascending continuously. This shows that interest in Japanese architecture is still increasing.
- In this magazine, a number of important leading articles were written by Japanese architects and critics.²

2.1.b. Discussion

- A.A. started early in a special issue (May 1956, pp.1-107) to explore the Japanese aesthetics. A thorough informative analysis of the temples' architecture, the Japanese garden, the tea house, etc. made a breakthrough in the understanding of Japan. Although there was no serious attempt to discover the concepts of space, we feel that from there on, most of the critics will try to refer to these discovered values in judging Japanese modern and contemporary architecture.
- Problems facing Japanese architecture, due to blind importation from the West, were elaborated in a special issue (Oct.-Nov. 1961, pp.1-15). According to the article, Japanese traditional houses have had a big influence on Western house design. But Japan wanted to adopt again the basic concepts of the international dwellings, which don't correspond to its way of living. So the Japanese life had a contradiction: exterior life in the Western way, and family life in the traditional way. We could see "hybrid results" (p.1).
- During the big glory of Expo'70, a special issue (Oct.-Nov. 1970, pp.98-112) featured an article criticizing harshly the Expo. We could see that the critics were getting more involved in evaluating Japanese architecture in a growing concern. According to the article, there was lack of respect to two important values: esthetics and ethics. One of the factors leading to the disrespect of public interest was the rise of an economic nationalism. This conditioned the urban space where the Japanese people is "floating" (p.112).
- In June 1985 (pp.63-76), a leading article titled "Looking for the lost space" recognizes that three architects, among others, are trying to re-organize and deconstruct the Western modernism in Japan: Itsuko Hasegawa, Osamu Ishiyama and Shin Takamatsu. For Hasegawa, abstraction of space and transparency between interior and exterior are evoked. For Ishiyama, there is a tendency towards ethnocentrism, a drawback to the origins of all those "de-rooted" Japanese (p.63). For Takamatsu, interior space is compressed to the point of suffocation. All these architects have preference for metallic materials. These kinds of spaces might mean an uncertainty of our time-space. This is why these architects are looking for "the lost space" (p.63).
- Again, in a special issue (April 1987, pp.3-55), a stress is made on the destruction of Western order. It is fusing through the cleavages, folds and raisings of metallic and fragmented surfaces, detachment in the unreal floating space of modernist signs. The ephemeral surface of the city with its fragmentation, its coexisting opposites, is drawing the new shapes of post-modernity. Seven architects are discussed from this point of view: Maki,

Isozaki, Kurokawa, Takamatsu, Fujii, Ando and Hara. The last works of Maki accomplish in architecture “a revolution comparable to that of Proust in the novel, or Klee in painting” (p.6). He brings to the surface a new form of reality: scattered, elliptical, with weak links and floating events. Isozaki’s work shows the same obsession with cones, cubes and cylinders as that of Le Corbusier or Louis Kahn. But while for the great modern masters the Platonist shapes reflect thought oriented towards order, for Isozaki, these same figures are empty, devoid of internal substance. It is an ironical parody that presents itself as a dialogue between East and West. Kisho Kurokawa’s work presents a coherency: “gray space” (p.23). His buildings are the result of a contemporary transposing of the baroque-style aesthetic of the *sukiya* (the tearoom). With Takamatsu, there is a vague space, indefinite and chaotic, from which sense is generated. Hiromi Fujii’s works were structured around the theme of the effacing of conventional meanings in architecture. Ando’s architecture lies in the way it enables static worlds to intermingle in superposition that leads the spectator to a mental space without limits. Hara’s architecture effaces the limits between reality and fiction, solid bodies and unreal images, opaque forms and transparent reflections. All these architectures, the authors³ call them the “floating architectures” (p.53).

We notice how, in analyzing Japanese architecture, this magazine tried in the beginnings to set norms and standards to Japanese architecture. These norms were inspired from Japanese traditional cultural values. And any Western influence was considered a ‘bad influence’. But lately, when Japanese architects seem to use western symbols and metaphors, the critics try to unfold the Japanese specific capacity to use these symbols freely in their architecture. This is a concept that is still subject to debate. The elements of design themselves become not important. What is important is the freedom to use them and integrate them in a Japanese context. It all becomes a language of signs, going beyond the limits of an architect’s own culture. And this is appreciated as a Japanese specific way of thought. It is what makes contemporary Japanese architecture a ‘floating architecture of signs and symbols’.

2.2. Architectural Design Magazine⁴

After surveying the articles, the following graphs were drawn:

Figure 2.3. The Number of Pages and the Categories of All Articles

Figure 2.4. Nationality of the Architects Discussed in the Articles

2.2.a. Observations

Examining the articles and the graphs, the following observations were made:

- The ratio of issues discussing Japanese architecture to the total issues of the magazine is 41%.
- There is not much stress on foreign architects working in Japan. Most of the articles (94%) are about Japanese architects (Fig. 2.4).
- Until the 80’s, special issues and leading articles had treated Japanese architecture as a whole. But starting the 80’s, special issues and leading articles were about individual

architects and their concepts. This shows a shift from group thinking during the Modern and the Metabolist periods to more diversity and personal virtuosity.

- The deepest analysis were during the mid 60's and during the 80's and the 90's (Fig. 2.3, Category 4). The mid 60's were the 'discovery' era, when some scholars devoted themselves to discover the Japanese concepts of space. And the other period is due to the diversity of architectural visions in Japan.

- In Fig. 2.3, we notice that the trend lines of the 'Number of Pages' and 'Category' are ascending continuously. This shows a purely academic interest in the topic discussed, regardless of the economical situation in Japan.

2.2.b. Discussion

- A.D., in a special issue (April 1958, pp.131-157), developed an early comprehensive study of Japanese aesthetics in architecture. The author ⁵ differentiates between two Japans: the old and the new. The old Japanese architecture, with its qualities of restraint, simplicity and elegance, the decorative use of structural elements, flexibility of plans and sections, sensitive landscaping and the close relation of indoor and outdoor areas has had a stronger influence on the development of the Modern movement in Europe and America. He describes what is happening in Japan at the time of the article, by comparison, "crude, vulgar and amateurish" (p.136).

- In the special issue of February 1961 (pp.55-81), the editors ⁶ confirm that the revival of architecture in Japan can be regarded as the direct result of Le Corbusier's work in India. It is a very strong 'Modernistic point of view' that relates all values to its own scale.

- In the special issue (October 1964, pp.479-526) Gunter Nitschke ⁷ explains the Tokyo bay planning; the technical approach (Olympic planning) and the Metabolist approach (Dream planning). About the Metabolist approach, the author explains that the giant towers, the walls screwing up into space, the virtually floating bridges, are symbols of a conscious shaking-off of the age-old bonds to the earth, of a liberation from Nature.

- In May 1965 (pp.216-256), Gunter Nitschke goes deeper in the Japanese concepts of space and compares them with their counterparts in the West. He notices that the young Japanese of today (at that date) sees in his own tradition a spirit of resignation. *Mono-no-aware*, "the emotion of things", or the *Suki* or *Sabi*, and *Furyu*, the "floating with the wind" (p.221). All these represent an unwillingness to fight against destiny, nature or one's situation. The Japanese, having an introspective tradition, have been greatly attracted by the extrovert culture of the West. "Sadly, though, they have accepted too eagerly the science and technology of the West and have embraced with it the affirmative, aggressive Western attitude to nature" (p.221). It is a clear distinction between Japanese architecture and the adopted Western Modern architecture.

- "Ma, the Japanese sense of place", (March 1966, pp.116-156). In a whole special issue about this Japanese concept of space, Gunter Nitschke explains about Japanese space making in old and new architecture. In modern Japan (then) there had been three phases. Phase one (Form): blind, purely plastic imitation of architectural language of the West, resulting in doomed and isolated structures. Phase two (Space): emphasis on both the spaces enclosed and those created between their various parts, rather on the forms of the parts themselves. Phase three (Place Making): place is something dynamic and liable to change, taking full advantage of all

modern technical improvements to increase the range of the traditional concepts of architecture. It is a clear return to the roots.

- In another special issue (December 1974, pp.748-791), Gunter Nitschke goes further back and deep in the Japanese culture. He proves that primitive man marked his land using bundles of grass which, in time, became deified. Their creation, use and subsequent destruction developed into the Shinto and Buddhist festivals of Japan today. An extensive study is made relating them to traditional architecture.

- Botond Bogнар⁸ writes in a special issue (May-June 1988, pp.5-80)⁹ about "The Japanese Avant-Garde of the 80's". He notes that Japanese architects, through critical interventions, are predisposed to address critical issues on the international level. In Japanese architecture, scattered elements, incongruous motifs and materials, fractional and membranous surfaces, disjunctive forms and labyrinthine spaces are encountered as liberated and "floating signs" (p.6) or symbols. But they are holding together for they are constituted along an "integration without synthesis" (p.6), where neither opposition nor reconciliation occur. This Avant-Garde Japanese architecture is questioning the prevailing Western mode of understanding, definition and meaning of space, form and architecture.

- In the same issue, Lynne Breslin¹⁰ notes that Japanese architecture is maintaining autonomy in the face of universalizing anonymity. "Beauty in Japanese architecture and art were bound to the "elemental"." (p.27) Kazuo Shinohara's interest in "savagery" (p.28), Hiroshi Hara's "bricolage" and "modality" (p.29), Toyo Ito's "primitivism" (p.30), and Yasumitsu Matsunaga's "re-evaluation of nature" (p.31) are all consistent with the tradition of Japanese architecture in adherence to the organic, according to the writer.

- In the second issue of this series, Japanese architecture II (March-April 1992, pp.6-97), Botond Bogнар argues that Japanese architects are attempting to create a meaningful relationship between reality and fiction by taking upon the simulated world of the city. The reality of society being "simulated and schizophrenic", it is the "dawn of a New Age, the age of post-urban/post-ideal society, but not a post-ideological one" (p.20).

- In the same issue, Andreas Papadakis and Kenneth Powell note that "Japanese architecture is inviting, fascinating, diverse, free in spirit, responsive to nature, and rich in emotion" (p.7). To them, the age of ephemeral building has dawned, which is the source of freedom and a "shift away from the monumentalism of the recent past" (p.7). It is a step back to the 'floating world of Japan.'

- In the third issue of this series, Japanese architecture III (Jan.-Feb. 1994, pp.6-95), Maggie Toy¹¹ writes about two factors contributing to the style of Japanese architecture today: the economical influence, and the cultural influence. The first is caused by the rise of land price, which calls for a need to rebuild and change. The second is caused by the renewal of the Ise shrine, which is still present in Japanese mentality. Both influences call for renewal, the essence of today's Japanese architecture.

This magazine relied mainly on western scholars who had lived in Japan. The perspective is different because the critics, in general, are not 'visitors'. They are somewhat an 'inside view'. This is why we find a lot of articles concerned with the traditional concepts of space. These concepts are based on the authors' findings in Japan. But then, we notice that the analyses moved gradually away from traditions to treat with the variety of contemporary architecture. And trying to understand this variety was the difficult task by itself. It is being related to economical and social considerations: it is all based on simulation, metaphors,

consumption and fashion. We again come across the world of signs and symbols that is Japan today, presented at its highest peak in Tokyo.

2.3. Architectural Record Magazine ¹²

After surveying the articles, the following graphs were drawn:

Figure 2.5. The Number of Pages and the Categories of All Articles

Figure 2.6. Nationality of the Architects Discussed in the Articles

2.3.a. Observations

Examining the articles and the graphs, the following observations were made:

- The ratio of issues discussing Japanese architecture to the total issues of the magazine is 20%.
- Although the articles are mainly about Japanese architects, we notice a big stress on Western architects working in Japan (35%). This trend is clear in the early beginnings, before 1958, and lately, after 1988. The first period is perhaps due to the dominance of Western architecture in the mind of both Western and Japanese architects. The second period is perhaps due to the good economical situation in Japan, which attracted Western architects and investors. And the magazine shows a great interest in the opportunities that Japan can offer to these Western architects. (Fig. 2.6)
- A great importance is given to 'Japanese architects' rather than to 'Japanese architecture' as a theme. Special issues and leading articles always discussed the works and concepts of famous architects. This might be also due to the general policy of the magazine.
- Analysis (Fig. 2.5, Category level 3) was made the most during the early 60's, and also between late 70's and early 90's. This is due perhaps to the rise of some famous architects and the diversity of their concepts after the Modernist uniformity period.
- The highest number of pages (Fig. 2.5) in the articles can be seen during the mid 80's. Economical prosperity in Japan gave way to a diversity of theories and many architects became 'famous'.
- Observing the average curves of 'the number of pages' and of the 'category', we notice that they are proportional (Fig. 2.5). But we can easily relate them to Japanese economical curves. This shows that there is a close relationship between economic prosperity and abundance of concepts in architectures.

2.3.b. Discussion

- Since January 1936 (pp.10-36), this magazine stressed on viewing the works of American architects, especially Antonin Raymond, in Japan. The evaluation points were connected to

promoting these American architects. No considerable effort was made in order to understand, thus analyze Japanese architecture.

Reviews from Japanese periodicals (mainly *Kenchiku Bunka*) brought some news of Japanese architecture.

- In February 1958 (pp.157-164), an article about the work of Minoru Yamasaki (a native-born American of direct Japanese descent) was an attempt to explain the 'Japanese look and style'. It was a descriptive look at a new subject: Japanese style in architecture. We notice that an American-Japanese architect opened the path to Japanese architecture.

- A.R. started a serious analysis about Japanese architecture with a leading article about Kenzo Tange (July 1958, pp.127-138), noticing that Tange and his fellow architects are trying to combine what remains vital in their architectural tradition, with whatever is dynamic in the work of their Western contemporaries. According to the analysis, Japanese architectural tradition has influenced Modern architecture in America and Europe. The articulated wooden post and lintel finds similarity in the expressed steel cage of skyscrapers. Non-bearing walls and flexible spatial organization, indoor and outdoor relationship all influenced the West in different ways. It is an early appreciation of the values of Japanese architecture, and a receptive attitude.

- In a special issue (April 1961, pp.129-144), the author¹³ mentions that Japanese architects are designing buildings completely reconciled to the Modern principles of the West, yet completely Japanese. They are "derivative perhaps, but imitative never" (p.129). He mentions the heritage of the *Katachi*. The Japanese view is "to reject and rebel against the heritage while also trying to love and frankly accept it" (p.144). It is an early beginning of understanding the diversity and contradictions of Japanese architecture.

- In a special issue (September 1970, pp.109-128), a hard criticism is written, criticizing the "hideous cities and towns" (p.109). The author¹⁴ expresses that the Japanese have to make an effort to find a more consistent identity and "save themselves" (p.109). Nevertheless, a few promising projects are exposed. It is a purely Modern Western evaluation.

- In an article about Kisho Kurokawa (February 1973, pp.109-114), Paolo Riani¹⁵ explains the capsule's concept. The over-optimistic Japanese technology is unlike utopian architecture. It permits a direct passage from the idea to the realization. He describes Metabolism as the "hurricane and the crisis" (p.110) that will help architects to create something closer to man.

- Fumihiko Maki's architecture (August 1976, pp.69-80) was analyzed. *Shibui* is essential in his architecture. According to William Marlin¹⁶, Maki is fusing perceptions of the East and the West. Perhaps the affinity to this notion is influenced by the fact that Maki studied and taught in America. Important aspects of the integration of Maki's design with its social context are mentioned: "social contextualism", which is "a developmental relationship between human actions and architectural spaces" (p.80).

- Fumihiko Maki (April 1977, pp.107-112) was analyzed again by the same author who wrote the previous article. The author writes about "a moral geometry" (p.107) prevailing in Japanese architecture, and adopted by Maki. These proportions are different from the Western mathematical conjecture of some perfect system for measuring the world. The builder in Japan eliminates the insignificant, and a single element grows until it becomes the core of the thing being done.

- Kisho Kurokawa (August 1979, pp.67-72) and the Metabolist approach were discussed. According to the author¹⁷, Metabolism aimed at asserting the process of biology using and surpassing the technological truths of Western architecture. It meant to clear the way from the

Western ideals, for a new way of rethinking architecture. He could not judge if it was better or worse.

- Fumihiko Maki (April 1980, pp.91-100) again, analyzed also by William Marlin. Maki's buildings become an experiment in relationships, not only between an individual and the neighboring environment, but also between the design and the social, cultural, and spiritual atmosphere. According to the author, Maki "is attempting to achieve a psychic correlation between the geometry of form and the organization of space" (p.100), the theoretical physics and the thought of the East.

- Arata Isozaki (October 1983 pp.124-136, and May 1984 pp.170-182) was analyzed by Martin Filler¹⁸. He recognizes successively Isozaki the Brutalist, the Surrealist, the Technocrat, the Neo-Rationalist, the Neo-Classicist, and finally Isozaki the Postmodernist. And during all the successive periods, Isozaki has had continuity associated with a traditional serial development of forms and ideas. And his various buildings share the same qualities: "clarity of conception, a willingness to experiment, an acute sense of knowing just how far to go with architectural play, and a kind of tough elegance" (p.170).

- Kisho Kurokawa is discussed (March 1985, pp.116-134) by Douglas Brenner. According to the author, Kurokawa decided that "Modernist architecture, the International style was an obsession with the static art object, and a narrowly Western frame of reference that made it anything but international in scope" (p.116). And the Metabolists refit Modernism geometry to patterns from biology and Japanese tradition. And still looking for biology, Kurokawa adopted the principle of symbiosis, or what he calls Metamorphosis. It is expressed through the multivalent, ambiguous, sometimes conflicting symbols that compose the texture of present-day culture, Oriental and Occidental.

- Tadao Ando's design (November 1985, 117-125) is discussed by Douglas Brenner. Ando refuses to accept the present heterogeneity and chaos of the city as context. Building on the basis of geometrical order, he wants to create an interior space, organizing buildings around "interior streets" (p.117).

- Fumihiko Maki (October 1987, pp.116-127) is always popular with this magazine. According to Deborah K. Dietsch, Maki "has fostered a much subtler assimilation of Western design trends" (p.118) than other Japanese architects. The concept of *Oku*, being discussed, is fundamental in Maki's concepts. But he is also drawn to early Modernism as a model for enriching his own functionalism. It is an attitude certainly different from his Japanese contemporaries.

- From September 1988, we then notice the stress, as in the early beginnings, on the works of foreign architects in Japan like Ambasz, Foster, Graves, Holl, Jerde, Kaplan, and Pelli. A cycle starting again. It is perhaps related to economical considerations. The upheaval of Japanese economy gave a boost to construction. And foreign architects, especially Americans, rushed to have a role in this upheaval. A good reference to the policy of the magazine is the article about "The market for American architectural services in Japan comes of age".¹⁹

This American magazine's practical method tried to analyze personal achievements of famous Japanese architects and Western architects working in Japan. An appreciation of personal achievements is perceived here. From an American point of view, there is an early perception of the variety of concepts in Japan.

2.4. A Historical Review

Since the main source of information was articles concerning Japanese architecture and written by Western critics, it is essential to know the evolution of these critics in the 20th Century²⁰.

Western architecture came to Japan with a great energy during the Meiji era. It was absorbed, used and mastered by Japanese builders. Many Western critics consider this period of Japanese architecture as a 'copiage' phase. But some of them noticed that Japan set out to beat the West at its own architectural game. The result was that the essential buildings of the Meiji era are Western-style buildings. They were more than imitations. They were a demonstration of command of Western architecture through familiarity with Western design, mastery of new technology, and ability to extend and enrich the models upon which the buildings were based.

Modern architecture came to Japan as part of the world invasion of style, under the title of uniformity and order. It offered a good and practical solution to many problems facing construction in Japan, especially after the war. But the matter was very complicated, as modernization itself had involved a continual struggle between deeply rooted Oriental traditions and models that were perceived as alien. While there might be analogies between traditional timber and modern frame construction, it was not obvious how old and new should be combined. After a while, we notice the emergence of what Western critics called 'Modern Japanese architecture'. And then came 'The New Japan style'. It was much later on that Western analysts discovered the analogy between Western Modern architecture and Japanese traditional concepts. And this line of analysis still extends until now. During that period, Western architecture was Japanized, and Japanese architecture was Westernized, in the sense that exchange was at its peak.

In order to understand this complex state for the Western mind, critics started to go deeper in the Japanese culture. And this confrontation and inclusivism was often associated to the Buddhist toleration and assimilation of other faiths and customs. In fact, it might take a lifetime to understand, if possible, this way of assimilation, specific to Japanese culture, and therefore, architecture. It is important to mention here that rare are the critics who went deep in analyzing and discovering the already existing concepts of Modern architecture in traditional Japan. Most of them asserted the superiority of Western concepts and the copying attitude of the Japanese architects, always trying to uncover some influence from Le Corbusier, F.L.Wright, etc.

After this reversed opening from East to West, we find some humble admittance of the influence of traditional Japanese architecture on Western architects and concepts. To name the main ones:²¹

- a) Pierre Chareau in his "Maison de Verre" where structural elements were elegantly composed into a linear aesthetic recalls the slender wooden frames and screens of traditional Japanese construction.
- b) Frank Lloyd Wright whom Japanese architecture helped achieve making his synthesis of refined proportions, exquisite carpentry, the use of humble materials and the subtle placement in nature. The critics went further to assert the influence of Okakura's "Book of Tea"²² on Wright's vision of 'Void'.
- c) Mies van der Rohe's work shows spiritual or structural proximity to Far Eastern buildings. "The ideas of East and West meet, as if at the center of a cross, in the thoughts and buildings of Mies van der Rohe, and that, independently, an extraordinary similarity ensues."²³

Again, we stress that rare are the critics who gave importance to the influence from East to West. Most of them stressed on the influence from West to East.

Grandiose Utopian schemes based on a fantastic deployment of technology became increasingly frequent in the early 1960's in Japan. This is best seen with the group of Metabolists. There was much in the Metabolist position that recalled the Futurists' suggestion that the modern city be made into a dynamic machine of moving and variable parts. The easiest way for some critics to describe Metabolism was to make the similarity with the British group Archigram. But for others, it was another necessity to understand further the Japanese background behind these revolutionary thoughts. This philosophy was Taoism and Buddhism in modern dress; the incessant change of the former, and the idea of reincarnation of the latter. Charles Jencks even calls Metabolism: "Metabuddhism"²⁴.

The modern architectures, which emerged in Japan in the 1940's and the 1950's, built upon pre-war foundations while also absorbing new stimuli from the outside. They did not reproduce international formulae slavishly, nor did they rest within the frontiers of exclusively national definitions of culture. Their main concern was how to find the deeper social meaning of an increasingly consumerist culture. They could not be explained by a merely Western version of development, or by the oversimplifications of regionalist rhetoric. They seemed to belong to a new kind of intellectual and artistic territory resulting from the processes of global modernization, in which the very notions of the local and the universal were themselves being redefined. This is mainly why it took some time for Western critics to differentiate between what is truly international and what is truly Japanese and, also, what is the symbiosis between the two. So, in books written until the early 1970's, the international, or Western, angle of view was prevailing. In books written after that, we can sometimes find a deeper look and understanding of the regional cultural aspect of Japanese architecture. It is as if analyzing what is behind Japanese architecture requires us to be one step ahead in time, and then go back in time again in order to be able to unfold it. In fact, it needs maturity.

Sometimes around the 1970's there seems to have been a shift in architectural thinking. A new status was accorded to the architectural image and to the role of the 'symbol' in the making of forms. Preoccupation with meaning often degenerated into a surface manipulation of 'signs' and 'references'. But it also prompted reflections upon the basis of architectural language. This phenomenon, called 'Post-Modernism', relied upon a use of the past. This led to pluralism. No single stylistic or ideological label can do justice to the range of ideas and buildings produced after the 1970's. There was coexistence of several lines, all the way from high-tech to the archaic. Modern concepts were rethought. Architecture then lacked uniformity. From now on, broader tendencies are examined through individual works. In Japan, there was a degree of openness to Western tradition, and this mannerist trend would have been unthinkable in the Japan of the 1950's, when one of the main cultural tasks for architects had been the integration of Japanese tradition in modernism. But one could wonder here: is it a cycle starting again, which reminds of the Meiji era's openness to Western tradition? Under the new dispensation there was a shift towards the notion of architecture as a system of 'signs'. To Western critics, it was difficult at that stage to differentiate, in this world of 'signs', between what is borrowed from the West and what emanates from Japanese tradition and way of thinking. Two methods were seen. The first one consisted of grouping architects, Japanese and Western, under one title: diversity. And then grouping architects in subgroups, thus creating a voluntary, or easy, way of classifying Japanese architects in comparison with their Western counterparts. The second method consisted of treating with Japanese architects as individuals who have their own ideas, trying to relate them more to

their Japanese culture. And this needed much more effort and research on Japanese culture itself.

Japanese architecture now is full of individuals who are competing among themselves, sometimes quarrelling, but actually building. In all of their discussed ideas we find a mixture of Western concepts and Japanese traditions. To most of the Western critics, contemporary Japanese architecture is perplexing and confusing. It offers a rich variety of concepts, styles and methods. It cannot be placed under one title. But then, these critics still call it “Japanese architecture”. What are the common factors to all these diverse concepts in Japan today, and how does Japanese architecture, in its variety, hold together?

3. SYNTHESIS

Understanding the reasons behind the Western interest in Japanese architecture in its different stages is a starting point. The second step was charting the evolution of this criticism in the magazines discussed earlier, and concerning Japanese concepts of space. By doing this, we hope to recognize the actual state of these concepts.

In figs. 2, 5 and 8, during the pre-war period and shortly after the war, we can see a dominant interest in Western architects working in Japan. And in the case of A.R. magazine, the oldest, it showed exclusive interest in the works of these foreign architects. In fact, most Western critics never really looked at Japanese architecture during that period. To our observation, one reason is the fact that, during that period, famous architects were commissioned to design and build in Japan, and they had a great influence on the new generation of Japanese architects. The other reason is that the Modern vision, as we know, exceeded the Western world, for it was supposed to be universal. Modern Western architecture, in its turn, set values and references translating the Modernist model in an exclusive way. And any other model was not worth the trouble of research and discovery.

In figs. 1, 4 and 7, shortly after the war, we see some critics who started to discover, and thus introduce, the aesthetics and values of Japanese architecture. We can see the rise of some special issues discussing the subject. Appreciation of a 'different architecture' started to be seen. It is worth noting the article "How other peoples dwell and build".²⁵ We notice how Japanese architecture was called "other people's" architecture. It was starting to be worth the trouble of research and discovery. To our observation, the reason is the fact that during that period, the Japanese architect considered it his job to create architecture owing allegiance primarily to the aesthetic and technological discoveries of European and American artists and scientists. Although it is a concept different from its own, Japan embraced the Modern principles and started to explore them after the war.

In figs. 1, 4 and 7, during the 60's and 70's, the enigma of Metabolism attracted Western critics more, when they saw this sudden burst of new ideas coming from Japan. It was during this period of time that we find a rising number of special issues and leading articles looking deeper in the Japanese and Eastern traditional concepts of space. Much deeper analyses were perceived. To our observation, one reason is the fact that the Modernist system of values gave place to plurality of values, to heterogeneity and fragmentation that characterized the post-Modern condition. They gave place to the juxtaposition of what was previously opposed. And in architecture, we could see different currents emerging and adapting these new principles (post-modernism in all its forms, deconstructivism ...).

Perhaps the first reaction to the Modern Western architecture was in the Metabolist current. Through sometimes shocking scales, it was trying to break out of the Modern reference points. The other reason is that the reaction to the Modern movement marked the complex evolution towards a new type of society and architecture. An architecture where all Modern foundations would be destroyed. An architecture with a variable geometry, obeying no more to a coherent and decodable logic, but listening to the longings of the moments, even if sometimes they are contradictory. This implied looking elsewhere for foundations of cultural and architectural ethics. Many people then looked towards Eastern philosophy. Researchers who devoted a lot of their time in Japan made many discoveries. Japanese concepts could now be easily accepted in the Western mind. *Ma*, *Oku*, *Sabi*, *Furyu* (風流), etc. were all searched for in the deep past of Japanese culture by some Western critics²⁶. And we notice that these concepts became a reference point for judging and evaluating the works

of Japanese architects. It was a total shift from the early Modernistic points of reference. Architecture started to be oriented towards pluralism, or the 'hyperchoice'. In absence of a coherent system of values, architecture was fragmented, obeying the emotions of the moments. Each architect could orient himself towards where he sees fit, it is pluralism. All the cultures that were previously contempt became legitimate and recruited many adepts. All choices were possible, including the Japanese choice. Which meant turning towards the Japanese concepts and learn from them. At this time (around the 60's and 70's), Western critics acknowledged that Western architecture, especially the 'undefeatable' Modern one, owed a lot to traditional Japanese architecture. And in Japan, borrowing ideas from the West became more subtle and obeying to a primarily Japanese concept. This is what Kisho Kurokawa calls "Metamorphosis".²⁷

The curves in figs. 1 and 4, after the 80's, show that the interest is still getting deeper and towards more analysis of the concepts of space. We can see a rising number of special issues, and a deeper analysis. It is perhaps due to the fact that now East and West are using many concepts and forms simultaneously. But each culture still has a different angle of view. Both Japanese and Westerners see gray, but each from their own different background. We can read news and analysis about Japanese architects included with other Western architects in the same sections of the magazines. Japanese architecture is now an integral part of the world architectural scene, although some might interpret it as a lack of interest in Japanese architecture as a special topic, worth discovering.

4. CONCLUSION

After analyzing the results given in the form of graphs, and the extensive readings of the articles, what can be said about the actual state of Japanese architecture?

Now, what are the actual concepts of space that still interest Western critics? They emanate from the individual architect's vision of this world. But they are, in a certain way, interrelated. The "Imagined and Primary Landscape"²⁸ and "Floating Events"²⁹, "Metamorphosis"³⁰ and "Gray Space"³¹, "Savagery"³², "Bricolage"³³ and "Modality"³⁴, "Primitivism"³⁵, "Abstraction of Space"³⁶, "Ethnocentrism"³⁷, "Suffocation of Space"³⁸, "Surrational Architecture"³⁹, "Deconstruction"⁴⁰, "Static Worlds"⁴¹, etc. All these concepts reflect the lost and fragmented identity of the 'floating space' in which architecture appears. This shows the actual crisis of Japanese culture. It reminds us of the Edo period in Japan. "The mass, or popular culture of Edo, its fantastic nature, its pluralism and its eclecticism, together with the high density of the city of Edo, its lack of boundaries, and its conviviality are precisely the defining features of the quality of post-Modern architecture and urban space."⁴²

The actual age of Post-Modernity in Japan appears as a line going towards the moving and the undecidable. In this sense, Post-Modernity in Japan is not just an architectural movement, but a trans-historic aesthetic category. In the sense that it is not related to a sequence of time and style, but rather to a world view. If we accept that interpretation, we can recognize a Post-Modern atmosphere in different phases of Japanese architecture. Maybe we could even go back, in another chapter, to Edo to evoke the same atmosphere, as mentioned before. And behind this apparent disorder, some logic is being drawn. This logic is structured around a pillar: rupture with Modernism, its will to discover new horizons, to establish a mode of creation or thought. And all the contemporary architectural works carry some common themes: fragmentation, coexistence of opposites, the ephemeral, and the labyrinth, which could be a preparation for a New World view. This concept was difficult to be understood earlier by Western critics. Now it is highly appreciated and subject to more research. It is the Japanese "Moral Geometry"⁴³ of proportion, related to emotions, relationships, and experience, not a mathematical one.

The variety of architectural positions current in Japan leads to confusion which might be questioned. But it also sustains a dynamic architectural culture, which absorbs new ideas and transforms them. Finiteness of classical thoughts is opposed to impermanence and chaos; perfection is traded for creativity; and finally, stability is replaced by change. Given this dynamism it is quite likely that, as the dialectic continues to develop within Japanese architecture, there will be further interactions and new regrouping. The basic differences between the different architectural currents would lessen as each side borrows from the other. The convergence of Japanese architecture under one umbrella is even possible given the eclectic and inclusive philosophy in Japan.

This is what we could call 'the floating architecture of signs and symbols'. Perhaps Roland Barthes was right calling Japan "The Empire of Signs".⁴⁴

5. NOTES

- ⁽¹⁾ L'Architecture d'Aujourd'hui, Les editions Jean-Michel Place, France. It is monthly magazine for architects and architecture students. Actually, each issue is dedicated to a different theme. The language of publication is French.
- ⁽²⁾ i.e. Shuji Takashina, Yasume Yoshitake (A.A. May 1956), Oshinobu Ashihara (A.A. Oct.-Nov. 1961), K. Sone, R. Suzuki, S. Takemura (A.A. Oct.-Nov. 1970), Kazutoshi Morita (A.A. April 1983, June 1985).
- ⁽³⁾ Serge Salat and Françoise Labbe spent several years in Japan researching Japanese architecture. The outcome was a book, "Le pont flottant des songes/ Createurs du Japon, ed. Hermann, 1986.
- ⁽⁴⁾ Architectural Design, an imprint of Academy Group. A Wiley-VCH Publication, U.K. It is a monthly magazine for architects, students and teachers, developers and general public interested in architecture. Each issue has a different central theme devoted to a specific topic. A stress is given to theoretical developments.
- ⁽⁵⁾ Noel Moffett stayed in Japan to make this extensive study.
- ⁽⁶⁾ The guest-editors were Alison and Peter Smithson.
- ⁽⁷⁾ Gunter Nitschke has been in Japan closely examining the architecture. He makes important contributions to the further understanding of Eastern art, which hitherto had been on a purely formal level. For the last twenty years, he has been the lecturer in theory and history of East-Asian architecture and urbanism. He is the director of Private Institute for East-Asian Architecture and Urbanism, in Kyoto.
- ⁽⁸⁾ Botond Bogner was a Monbusho scholar, and he stayed in Tokyo researching about Japanese architecture.
- ⁽⁹⁾ The first issue of a series of three special issues titled "Japanese Architecture" aiming at charting the evolution of Japanese architecture.
- ⁽¹⁰⁾ Lynn Breslin is a partner of the New York based architectural firm Moser & Breslin. She also teaches architecture at both Princeton University and Pratt Institute of Technology.
- ⁽¹¹⁾ Maggie Toy is the actual editor of A.D. magazine.
- ⁽¹²⁾ Architectural record, division of McGraw-Hill companies. It is a monthly magazine for architects and other members of the design profession. It provides an integrated mix of design ideas, trends, news, business and professional strategies ...
- ⁽¹³⁾ John Ely Burchard went abroad and came back to America offering some critical observations on Japanese architecture. He finds that Japan, with "some of the best modern buildings in the world", faces the same architectural dilemmas, as does the Occident.
- ⁽¹⁴⁾ The author is Mildred E. Schmertz
- ⁽¹⁵⁾ Paolo Riani is an Italian architect and planner. He had lived and worked in Japan, also lecturing at the urban engineering department of Tokyo University.
- ⁽¹⁶⁾ William Marlin has written many articles analyzing the concepts of Fumihiko Maki and Kisho Kurokawa.
- ⁽¹⁷⁾ Ibid.
- ⁽¹⁸⁾ Martin Filler is editor of House & Garden and frequently writes criticism on architecture and design. He traveled to Japan to see the architecture of Arata Isozaki.
- ⁽¹⁹⁾ Abner A. Layne, A.R. March 1989 pp.33-35, explores the opportunities of American architects and constructors in Japan, especially after the signed agreement between Japan and the U.S.A. concerning that subject. Mr. Layne is free-lance writer and former senior/editor of Engineering News-Record.

⁽²⁰⁾ Some typical books were consulted:

- Kenneth Frampton, *Modern Architecture, a Critical History*, Thames and Hudson, London, 1985
- Gerd Hatje, *Encyclopedia of Modern Architecture*, Thames and Hudson, 1975
- Henry-Russell Hitchcock, *The Pelican History of Art*, Penguin, Middlesex, 1971
- Manfredo Tafuri, *Theories and History of Architecture*, Granada, London, 1980
- Charles Jencks, *Architecture Today*, Academy Eds., 1993

⁽²¹⁾ William J. R. Curtis, *Modern Architecture Since 1900*, Phaidon, 1996

⁽²²⁾ Kakuzo Okakura, *The Book of Tea*, Kodansha, Tokyo, 1991

⁽²³⁾ Werner Blaser, *West Meets East*, Birkhauser, Basel, 1996

⁽²⁴⁾ Charles Jencks, *Late-Modern Architecture*, Academy Eds., London, 1980

⁽²⁵⁾ E. A. Gutkind, A.D. February 1953, pp.31-34

⁽²⁶⁾ Mainly Gunter Nitsche, William Marlin, Serge Salat, Françoise Labbe, Paolo Riani, Op. Cit.

⁽²⁷⁾ Douglas Brenner, A.R. March 1985, pp.116-134

⁽²⁸⁾ William Marlin, A.R. August 1976, p.80. Imagined Landscape considers how people would inhabit the building, while Primary Landscape considers how people would be affected by the building.

⁽²⁹⁾ Serge Salat and Françoise Labbe, A.A. April 1987, p.6. What Fumihiko Maki brings to the surface is a new form of reality: scattered, elliptical, with deliberately weak links, which can be called “floating events”.

⁽³⁰⁾ Douglas Brenner, A.R. March 1985, p.117. Metamorphosis is the reconciliation of opposites: past versus present, art versus technology, civilization versus nature. They are conflicting symbols that compose the texture of present-day culture, Oriental and Occidental.

⁽³¹⁾ Serge Salat and Françoise Labbe, Op. Cit. The Gray Space is an allusion to the *Riyuku* gray, which affects Kisho Kurokawa’s architecture, where nature and the artificial coexist.

⁽³²⁾ Lynne Breslin, A.D. May-June 1988, p.28. Savagery is clear in the crowded program, forced several diverging spatial configurations, not always in harmony. Shinohara’s theory is also the use of the structuralism of Claude Lévi-Strauss who affirms the will of all humans to symbolize.

⁽³³⁾ Ibid., p.29. Hiroshi Hara uses Lévi-Strauss’ construct: Bricolage. It is a collage, which is the combination of quoted elements to create a metaphor. Such metaphors are central to the creation of ‘scenes’. Mood is always the lens to any scene.

⁽³⁴⁾ Serge Salat and Françoise Labbe, Op. Cit., p.40. The Modality logic is a logic in which A and non-A do not exclude each other. One thing, for example, can be simultaneously 80% A and 20% non-A. It is the cancellation of cultural and spatial limits in architecture.

⁽³⁵⁾ Lynne Breslin, Op. Cit., p.30. Toyo Ito’s earlier houses explored the “archaeological” origins of architecture. It is a primitive type in which relations among architectural elements can be compared.

⁽³⁶⁾ Kazutoshi Morita, A.A. June 1985, p. 63. The author of the article is Japanese, but we considered that he reflects the editor’s point of view. Itsuko Hasegawa’s abstraction of space implies the transparency of architecture between interior and exterior. It is a transitory architecture towards a new space.

⁽³⁷⁾ Ibid. Osamu Ishiyama’s architecture is like an illustrated folkloric sign. It is a return to the origins of the “de-rooted” Japanese.

⁽³⁸⁾ Ibid. Shin Takamatsu tries to limit and capture his volumes. Interior spaces are hardly perceived from the outside.

⁽³⁹⁾ Serge Salat and Françoise Labbe, Op. Cit., p.7. Arata Isozaki’s use of classical elements is not a classical work, but an ironical parody that presents itself as a dialogue between East and West, a homage to the golden section and to the positive/negative philosophy of the Orient.

⁽⁴⁰⁾ Ibid., p.23. Hiromi Fujii is influenced by Jacques Derrida and his theory of “deconstruction”. His works were structured around the theme of the effacing of conventional meanings in architecture.

(⁴¹) Ibid., p.39. The value of Tadao Ando's architecture lies in the way it enables static worlds to intermingle in multiple super-positions that lead the spectator to a mental space without limits.

(⁴²) Douglas Brenner, Op. Cit.

(⁴³) William Marlin, A.R. April 1977, p.107. The Japanese builder, obliged by moral custom, processed by eliminating the insignificant. A single element is enhanced until it grew, becoming the cladding and the core of the thing being done. This is all done without any mathematical concepts. It is a natural cultural process.

(⁴⁴) Roland Barthes, Empire of Signs, Cape 1983

6. GRAPHS AND FIGURES

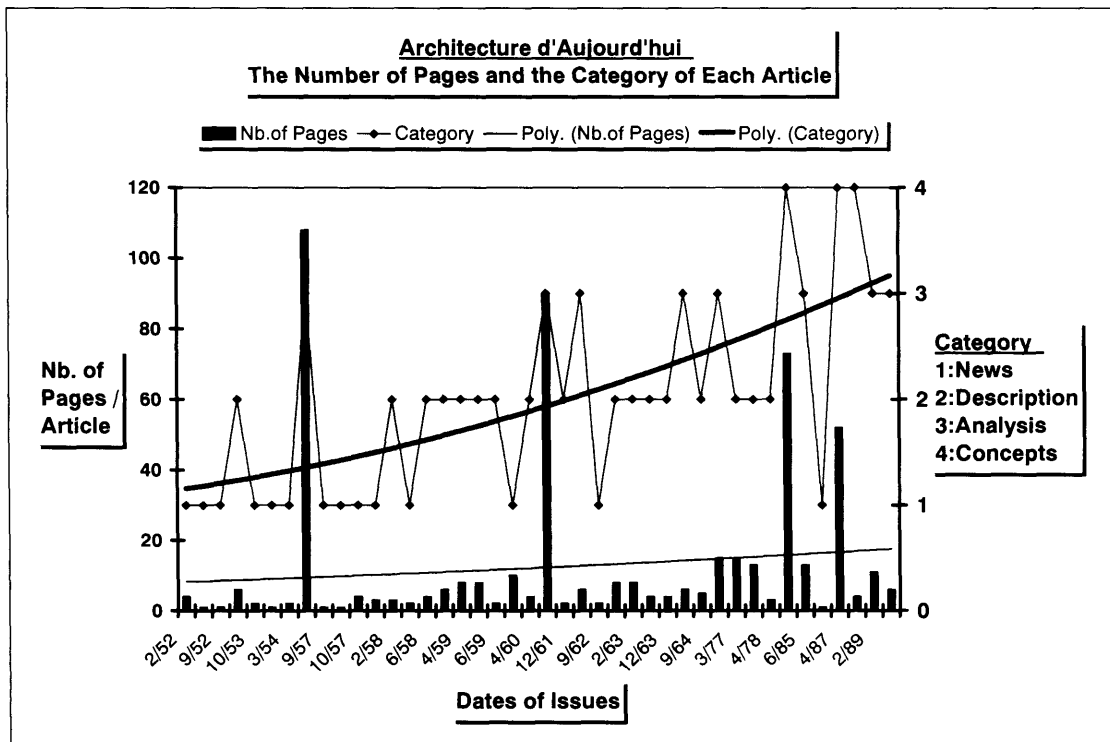


Figure 2.1. The Number of Pages and the Categories of All Articles

- x-axis: the chronological order of the articles.
- Left y-axis: the number of pages of each article.
- Right y-axis: the categories of the articles.

The categories were classified as:

1. News: simple mentioning of architectural works, sometimes not exceeding a few lines. It is a simple news bulletin in order just to know what is happening in Japan on the architectural scene.
2. Description: containing simple descriptions of projects and architectural works. It is mainly functional and/or technical description without deep analysis.
3. Analysis: discussing concepts and methods of design of architects and/or projects. Usually it goes deeper in the concept of the project, sources of ideas and analysis of the outcome.
4. Space Concepts: related to Japanese concepts of space as a theme by themselves. Since it is my main concern, I created this category in order to trace the critics' interest in searching for the Japanese concepts as a theme, going beyond projects and architects.

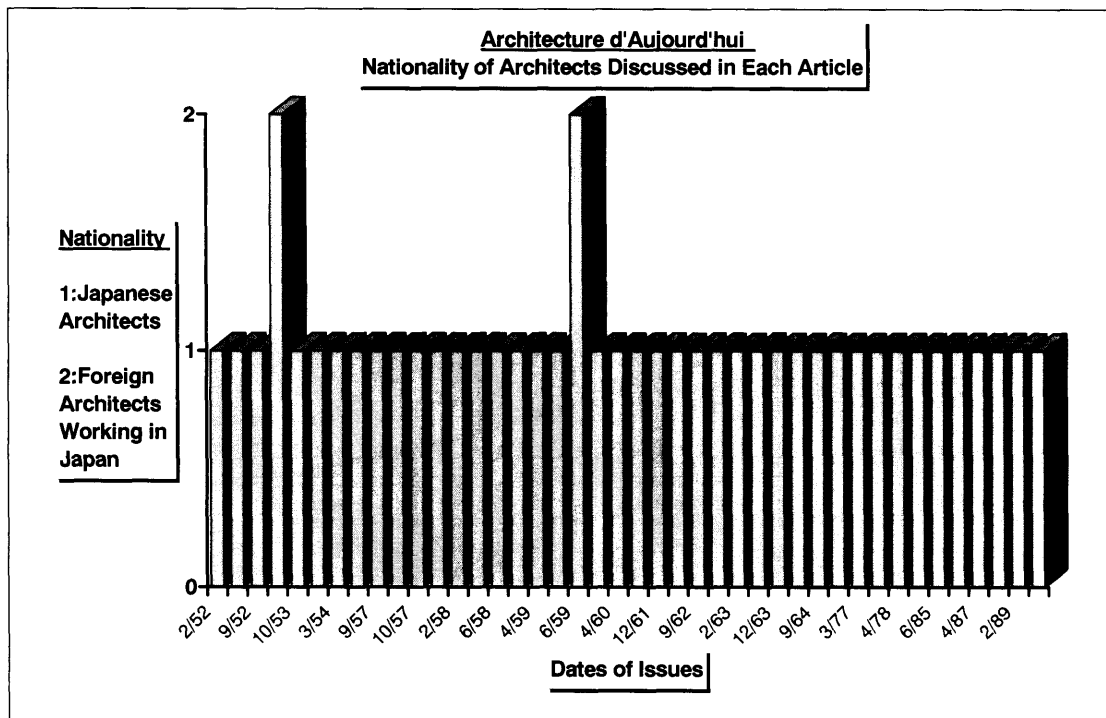


Figure 2.2. Nationality of the Architects Discussed in the Articles

- x-axis: the chronological order of the articles.
- y-axis: the nationality of the architects discussed in the articles.
- Level 1 (in y-axis): Japanese Architects.
- Level 2 (in y-axis): Foreign Architects Working in Japan.

These levels show part of the magazine's policy and its interest in Japan. This comparison reveals when the critics and editors are interested in Japanese architecture and architects, and when they are interested in Japan as a field of work and influence for Western architects.

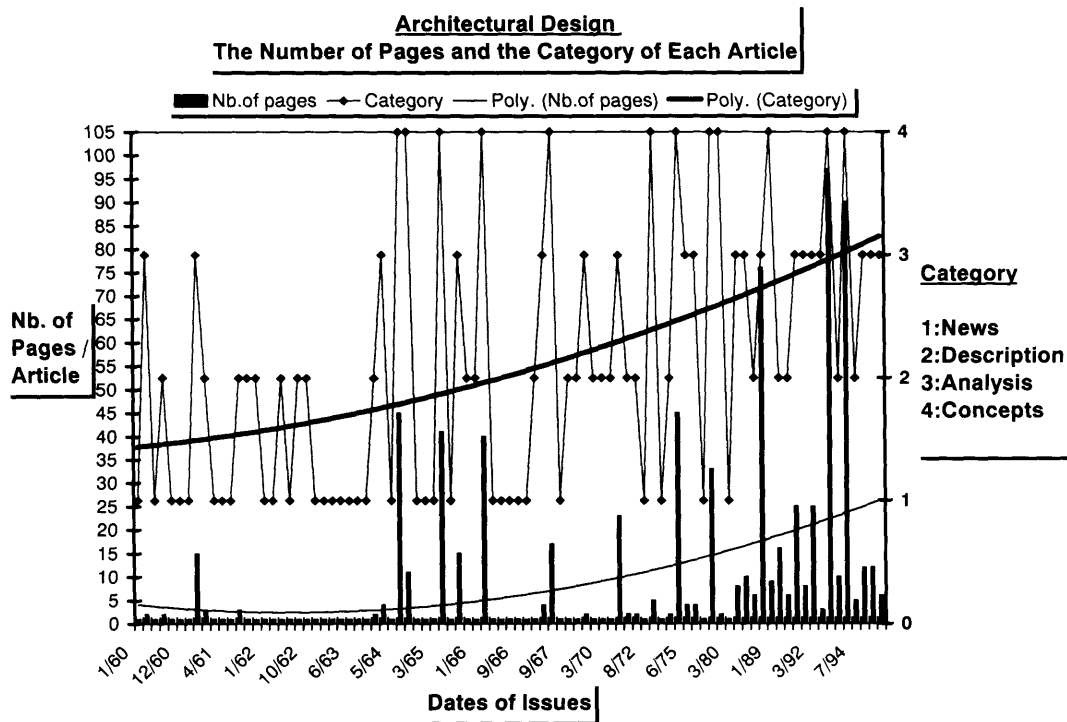


Figure 2.3. The Number of Pages and the Categories of All Articles

- x-axis: the chronological order of the articles.
- Left y-axis: the number of pages of each article.
- Right y-axis: the categories of the articles.

The categories were classified as:

5. News: simple mentioning of architectural works, sometimes not exceeding a few lines. It is a simple news bulletin in order just to know what is happening in Japan on the architectural scene.
6. Description: containing simple descriptions of projects and architectural works. It is mainly functional and/or technical description without deep analysis.
7. Analysis: discussing concepts and methods of design of architects and/or projects. Usually it goes deeper in the concept of the project, sources of ideas and analysis of the outcome.
8. Space Concepts: related to Japanese concepts of space as a theme by themselves. Since it is my main concern, I created this category in order to trace the critics' interest in searching for the Japanese concepts as a theme, going beyond projects and architects.

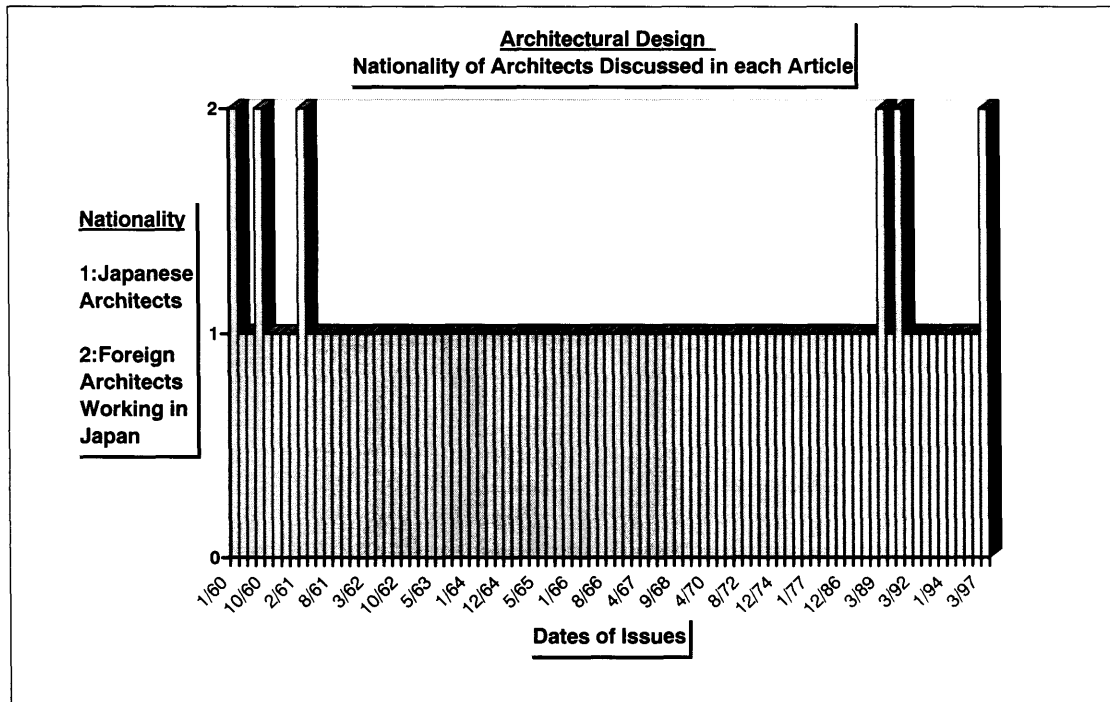


Figure 2.4. Nationality of the Architects Discussed in the Articles

- x-axis: the chronological order of the articles.
- y-axis: the nationality of the architects discussed in the articles.
- Level 1 (in y-axis): Japanese Architects.
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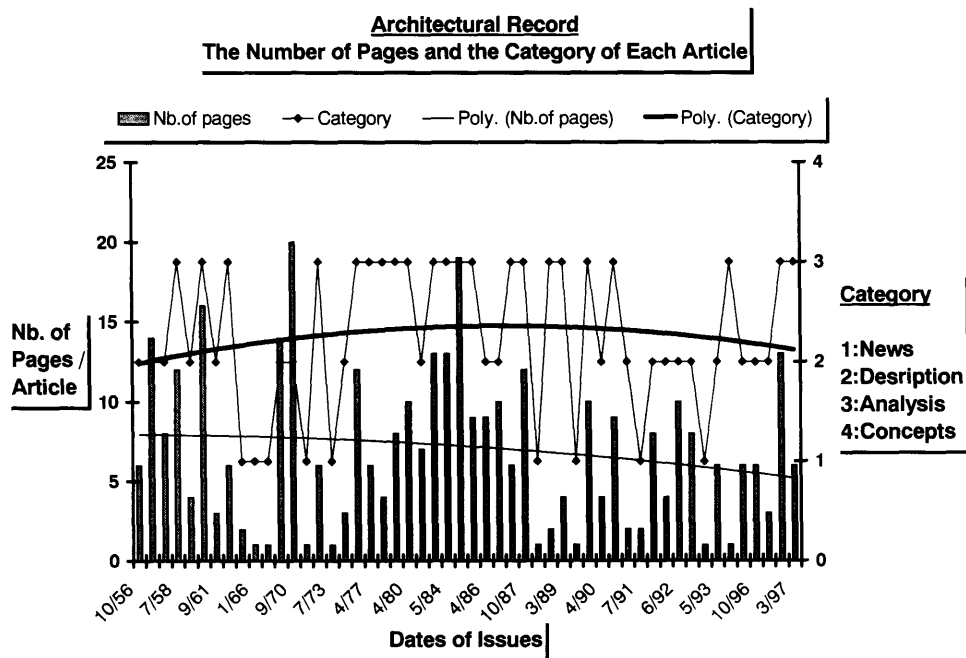


Figure 2.5. The Number of Pages and the Categories of All Articles

- x-axis: the chronological order of the articles.
- Left y-axis: the number of pages of each article.
- Right y-axis: the categories of the articles.

The categories were classified as:

9. News: simple mentioning of architectural works, sometimes not exceeding a few lines. It is a simple news bulletin in order just to know what is happening in Japan on the architectural scene.
10. Description: containing simple descriptions of projects and architectural works. It is mainly functional and/or technical description without deep analysis.
11. Analysis: discussing concepts and methods of design of architects and/or projects. Usually it goes deeper in the concept of the project, sources of ideas and analysis of the outcome.
12. Space Concepts: related to Japanese concepts of space as a theme by themselves. Since it is my main concern, I created this category in order to trace the critics' interest in searching for the Japanese concepts as a theme, going beyond projects and architects.

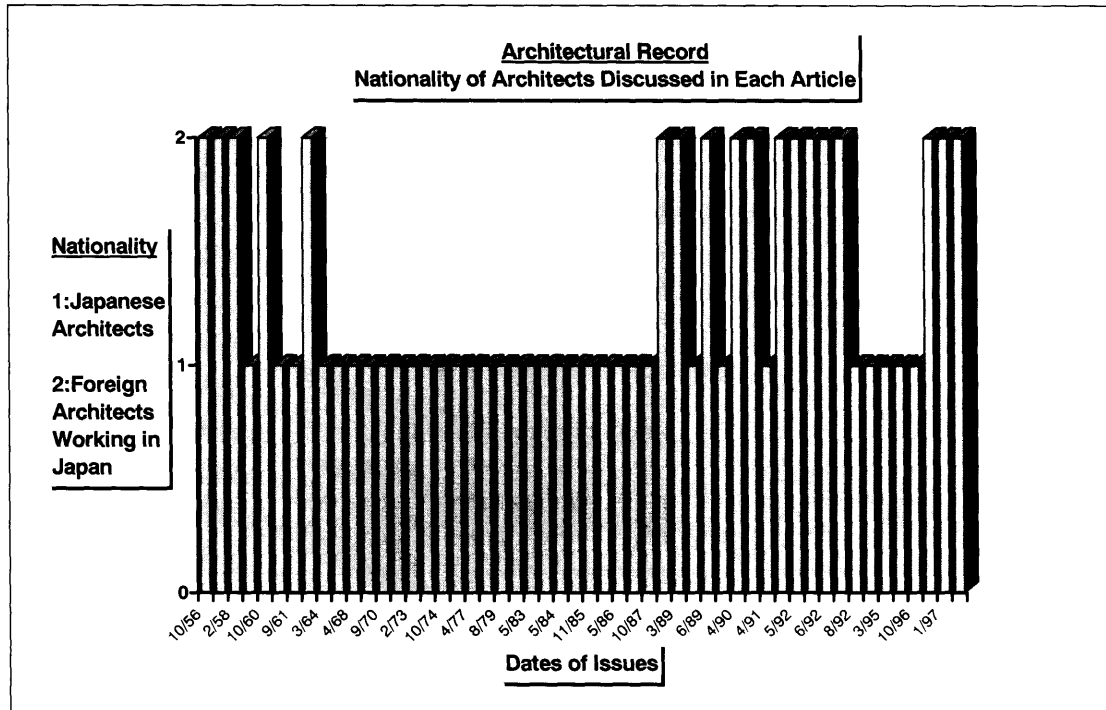


Figure 2.6. Nationality of the Architects Discussed in the Articles

- x-axis: the chronological order of the articles.
- y-axis: the nationality of the architects discussed in the articles.
- Level 1 (in y-axis): Japanese Architects.
- Level 2 (in y-axis): Foreign Architects Working in Japan.

These levels show part of the magazine's policy and its interest in Japan. This comparison reveals when the critics and editors are interested in Japanese architecture and architects, and when they are interested in Japan as a field of work and influence for Western architects.

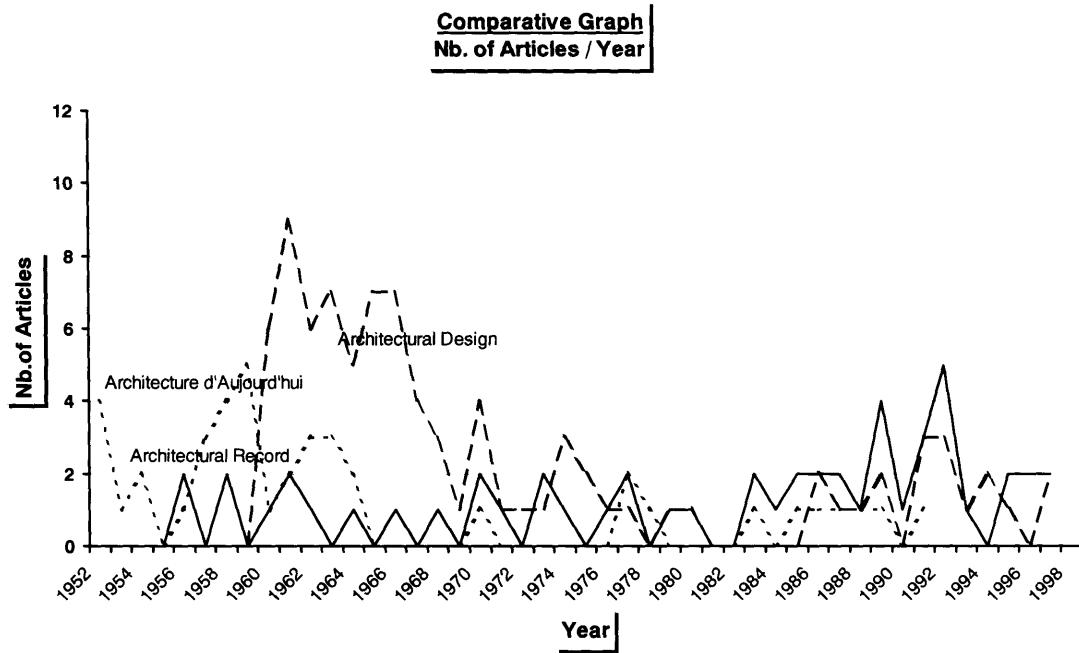


Fig. 2.7. A Comparative Analysis of the three magazines

- x-axis: the chronological order of the articles, taken in years.
- y-axis: the number of articles for each year, for all three magazine.

This type of graphs also allows us to see the interest in Japanese architecture as a theme on a yearly basis. It reflects the impact Japanese architecture has as a theme.

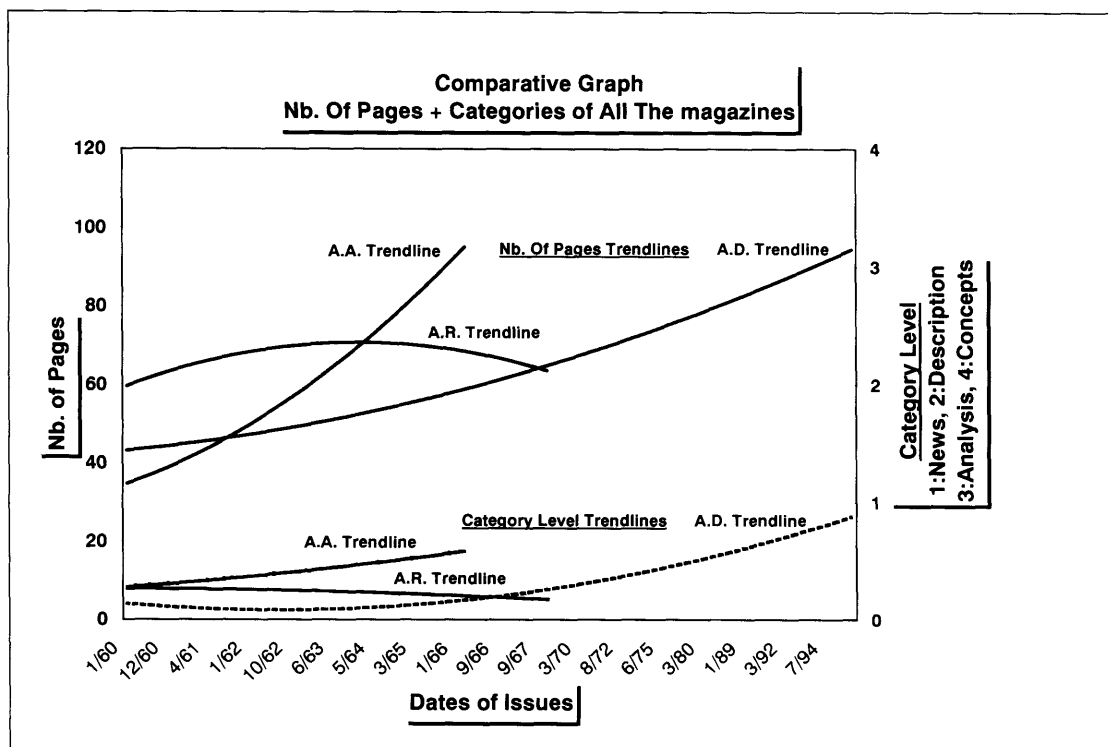


Figure 2.8. Comparative Graph of the Number of Pages and Category Level Trend lines in All three Magazines

- x-axis: the chronological order of the articles.
- Left y-axis: the number of pages of each article.
- Right y-axis: the categories of the articles.

The trend lines of the evolution of the number of pages of articles concerning Japanese architecture were drawn. Also, the trend lines of the Category level evolution of these articles through time were drawn. A compilation of Fig. 2.1, 2.3, and 2.5