

The 16th and 17th centuries in England and Japan witnessed parallel developments in the political centralization of the feudal nations. The English monarchy drew power and wealth from the dissolution of the Catholicism, increasing political stability and centralization of power under Elizabeth I and James I in the 16th century, and later in the 17th century under William of Orange; meanwhile in Japan Nobunaga, Hideyoshi, and finally Ieyasu unified Japan under the shogunate and inaugurated the Edo period of feudal Japan. During this period the nobility in both countries accumulated wealth from their titles and built multiple residences in town and country, yielding the English Renaissance country house in England, and the Sukiya-style country villa in Japan. Despite the somewhat similar political provenances, however, their architectural approach was diametrically opposed, with the Japanese country villa embracing asymmetry, rustic elegance, and integration with nature while the English country house celebrated symmetry, opulent ornamentation, and dominance over the countryside. These differences are exemplified by Chatsworth House in Derbyshire and the Kikugetsutei & Shoenkan complex in Kagawa Prefecture, which reflect the environmental and cultural influences of the time.

Chatsworth House is an imposing mansion dominating the Cavendish lands in Derbyshire. Originally built in the Tudor style by Robert Smythson for Sir William Cavendish and his wife Bess of Hardwick in the late 16th century, the Elizabethan structure's façade was redone in the 17th century in a Renaissance style by William Talman under the direction of their descendant, the 4th Earl and later 1st Duke of Devonshire. This earned it a place in Colen Campbell's collection of English Renaissance designs, *Vitruvius Britannicus*. A cube-like, three-storey quadrangle of load-bearing stone masonry with an interior courtyard, the building stands out from the surrounding land, rising up abruptly from its tightly-controlled and elaborately geometric par terre gardens to dominate the grounds. Large glass windows spanning the tall floor-to-floor heights admit light and command views from the grand living quarters of

the upper storeys. The interior is ornately decorated with richly carved panelling and stone or tiled floors, while the exterior is decorated with Roman-inspired detailing that emphasizes the deliberate regularity and symmetry of its façade.

Kikugetsutei is the remainder of an originally somewhat larger Sukiya-style villa in Takamatsu. The villa nestles in the typically Japanese naturalistic Ritsurin Garden. The garden was initially created by Lord Takatoshi Ikoma around 1625 and improved over the next century by the Matsudaira family, who took over control of Takamatsu, for use as a villa for relaxation and entertainment. The complex consists of several rectangular, independently-roofed single-storey structures connected together at their corners in an irregular, primarily diagonal arrangement embedded within the garden, with Kikugetsu-tei's southeast end overlooking the garden's pond. As with most traditional Japanese architecture, sliding screens separate the interior and exterior and function as interior partitions, allowing the entire structure to open up to the garden in the summer or close against the winds in winter. Its structural base is formed by a raised wooden platform floored with tatami mats; its hipped roof of thatch supported by post-and-beam wood construction. Although the house belonged to a feudal lord, in keeping with the Sukiya style the building's materials are unadorned and unpainted, the villa's elegance arising from the rustic simplicity, refinement, and careful arrangement of its plebeian materials.

The first, and most obvious, contrast of these structures is in their form. In elevation, Chatsworth House's imposing, tall, compact profile and flat, balustraded roof dominates the landscape as its focal point. On each side, a tripartite façade creates an obvious focal point at the center. Meanwhile Kikugetsutei's elevation embraces uniformity, its even heights and textures eschewing any directive for the eyes. The villa's hipped roofline slopes gently at the ends and otherwise maintains a consistent, low profile tucked below the treeline; it draws no more or less attention than the carefully arranged landscape of the surrounding pond and garden, more part of the landscape than apart. In plan, Chatsworth House establishes the singular shape of a hollow square, and organizing itself along the

cardinal axes, with each side providing a different view of the grounds. The deep-set windows on its raised floors provide a contained, picturesque, and dominant view of the gardens below. Chatworth House's compact quadrangular plan minimizes dialog with the garden, standing apart and separate. Its placement is blatant and singular in the landscape, and the views of it and from it therefore predictable and understandable. Kikugetsutei links its pavilions in seemingly random distribution connected along their diagonals, interleaving each room with sections of the garden to maximize its appreciation and provide a variety of views both from its interior and on approach, allowing the garden to reveal itself in stages as one walks through the building, or the building to reveal itself in stages as one walks through the garden. In section, Chatsworth House rises up sharply from the grounds, its thick walls a barrier to the outside and its high ceilings and triple-stacked storeys creating the drama and grandeur of exaggerated verticality; Kikugetsutei floats lengthwise just above the ground, stretching out along the ground, reaching out to and connecting with the garden with its verandas and deep eaves, blending with the landscape by its low profile and sloped roofs. Hiding its interior height by low ceilings paralleling the floor, it redirects attention along the horizontal. Separation from the outside is gradual and variable, in the form of removable wooden shutters and translucent *shoji* screens. In each of these moves, we see the reflection of the building's cultural heritage: the rationalized hierarchical order and centralized focus of the Renaissance vs. the abnegation and exploration of the tea ceremony; the compact and defensive heritage of the Medieval stone keep vs. the creative escape from the rigid and formulaic requirements of formal Japanese feudal architecture; the assertive dominance over the countryside vs. engagement and integration with the garden.

The second contrast is of ornamentation. Kikugetsutei's ornamentation derives from the function of its materials: the simple, rectilinear joins of its modular tatami mats, the gridded screens of its *shoji*, the color and texture of its timber frame, its wooden veranda, its thatch roof, its paper *fusuma* partitions. Unlike the more formal Shoin-style feudal Japanese architecture, the wooden structure is neither carved

nor painted, its *shoji* plainly gridded, and its *fusama* not decorated by paintings. Each aspect of its décor eschews ornamentation in favor of the thoughtful appreciation of its materials and their placement. By contrast the design of Chatworth House is primarily of ornamentation: its exterior exhibiting nonstructural Roman-inspired ornament and the interior impressively decorated with carved wooden paneling and paintings. While both exhibit a regular rhythm in their façade, Chatsworth House highlights the intentional repetition of its windows with pilasters while in Kikugetsutei the rhythmic pattern of its posts and panels is merely a subdued result of the regularizing effect of a modular structure.

The third is of material and structural function. Chatsworth House is constructed of stone and glass, with wood only used for decoration. Its massive load-bearing stone walls and large glass windows are a blatant statement of power and wealth, and an expression of the buildings primary purpose of protection from the elements. Kikugetsutei uses post-and-beam timber construction. Its structure is deliberately delicate, using equal-sized columns throughout rather than a hierarchic scheme as in Shoin construction. The more gently sloped thatch roof—compared to the steeply inclined tile roofs of more formal Japanese architectural styles—gives the structure a lighter and less imposing look. The walls, exempt from any load-bearing duties, are primarily of wood and *shoji*-paper sliding panels. These panels are removable to allow maximum ventilation in the hot, humid summers and to allow visual and emotional connection between the interior and the garden. When closed, the translucent lattice-backed *shoji* paper allows filtered daylight to penetrate the building envelope. In Chatsworth House by contrast, the tall glass windows are intended to throw as much of the already-reduced daylight of the frequently overcast English sky into the rooms as possible, while solid walls help to maintain heat in the often chilly weather. Many of the differences between Chatsworth House and Kikugetsutei are a result of their environmental and historical context. Chatsworth combines the inheritance of Medieval castle keeps and the new ideas about Renaissance architecture trickling into England from abroad. Its massive stone structure and large windows are a function of the cold and cloudy English climate, available materials,

and geotechnical stability. Kikugetsutei on the other hand draws not only from the Shoin architectural style of the nobility, but also the more basic materials of the minka to create a naturalistic rustic charm. Functionally, it is optimized for the hot, humid summers of Japan, the availability of quality construction wood, and the need to build structures that can flex and withstand earthquakes.

Many differences between Chatsworth House and Kikugetsutei, such as the materials, construction method, lighting and ventilation plans, derive from their environmental conditions. However, in addition to these contrasts are the differences in style: the asymmetry, garden integration, lack of ornament and emphasis on rustic, but refined, simplicity and materiality in Sukiya style architecture, and the baroque ornamentation, symmetric composition, and dominating design of the English Renaissance style. While Chatsworth House is designed to overwhelm and impress the visitor with its grandeur—as expressed in its powerful structure, rich materials, and intricate ornamentation—Kikugetsutei's design blends with its background, expressing the wealth of the owner in an understated way through quality of materials, craftsmanship, and placement. Through a combination of environmental and cultural influences,, 17th century England and Japan developed entirely opposite architectural styles for their country houses despite their nearly identical purposes of supporting the pleasure and entertainment of a feudal aristocracy.

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