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Traditional Japanese wood construction

Traditioneller japanischer Holzbau

Costruzione in legno tradizionale giapponese

Traditional Japanese wood construction

In the art of building, the Japanese selected wood as their main material, only using stone for the foundations. This choice lasted until the 19th century for geographical and climatic reasons, and also because of the strong cultural link that unites this people living in an archipelago stretching over 4.000 km.

The Japanese house is subject to exceptional constraints, from earthquakes and typhoons to rains and floods. It is a functional tool serving the Japanese lifestyle. Unlike in the West, the uniformity of the construction system does not imply repetition of models. Each house is different, for the occupants know how to express their needs while respecting the environment. Their main concern is to integrate - in the narrowest sense of the term - the building into the site so that it engages in dialogue with the surrounding space. This discipline leads to the definition of a constructed yet flexible perimeter made fluid by the treatment of consistently light façades. The landscape is used with discernment, leading to a wide range of ambiances. The occupant, as master of his constructed space, modifies its boundaries at will. He is sensitive to events, and can modulate his environment as the fancy takes him.

In Japan, the art of building shows that the form, arising from function, is still closely linked with the materials used. The structural components are clearly distinct from what fills the space defined, with a primary structure made up of the post-and-beam system and a secondary structure comprising partitions and movable components. The broad overhanging roof, a major component in the construction, is set on pillars creating an open-plan area thanks to which, between the garden and the interior, there is an exchange modulated by sliding panels, either opaque or translucent.

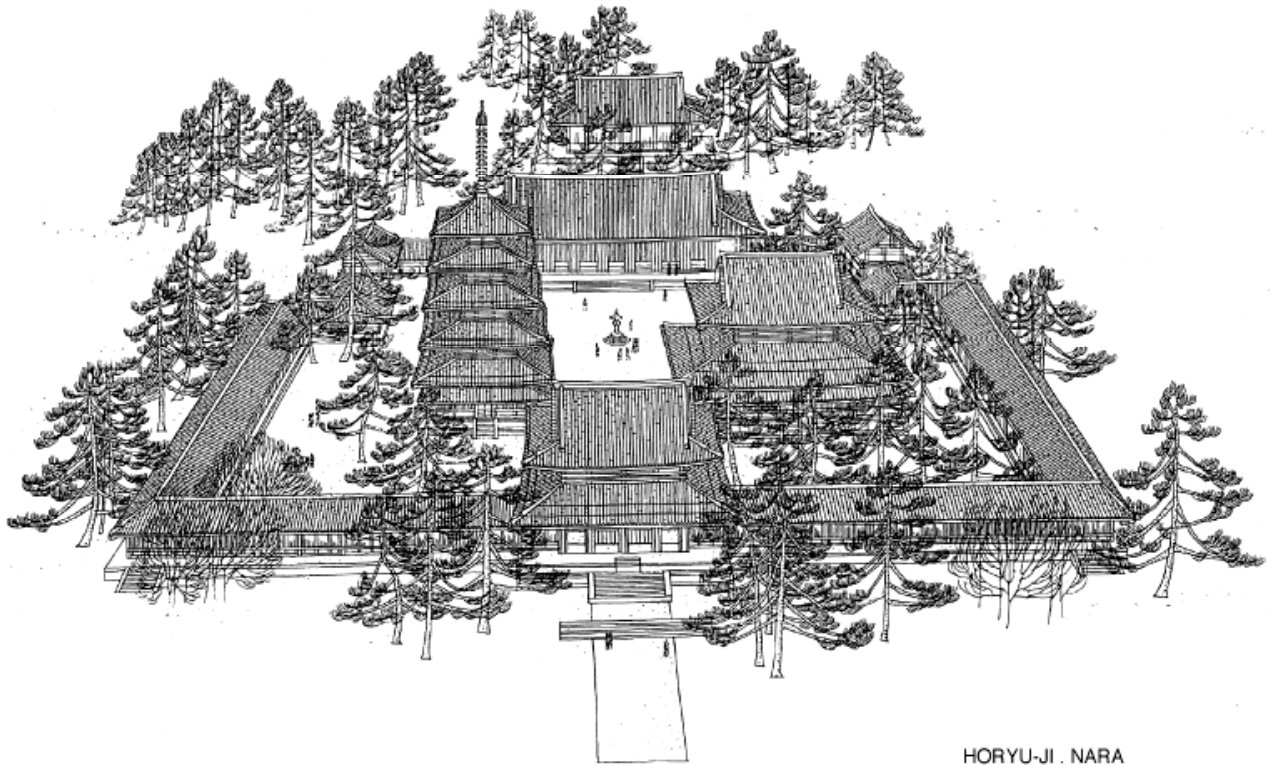
Traditional Japanese architecture arises from constant observation of nature, its rhythms and a concern with integrating the structure as a living entity. The constructed house is not a complete object to be maintained, but a collection of living spaces on which people imprint, with each passing day, their lifestyles and their efforts to engage in dialogue with their constructed setting and the materials it comprises.

After the second great fire of Tokyo in 1658, the authorities established strict rules on types of housing according to caste using standardized components.

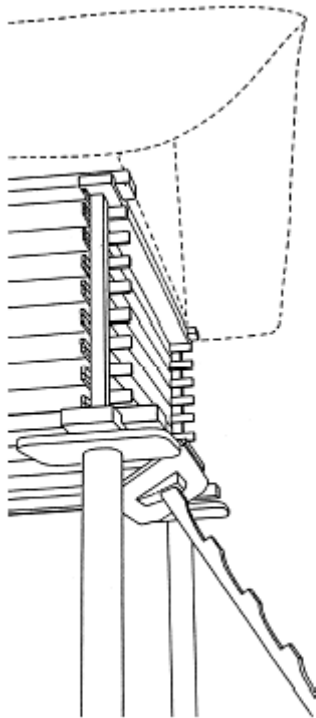
This was the origin of *kiwariho*, the "art of splitting wood". The harmonization of the dimensions of timber and building components made it possible to rebuild the city quickly. Artisans continued to specialize from the late 17th century to the 19th century, so that in major urban centers such as Osaka high-quality prefabricated components were produced, then transported to remote provinces, where they enhanced the post-and-beam structures set up locally.

The Japanese house is a living entity, the expression of a civilization that has maintained remarkable unity in living spaces in tandem with the great architectural diversity. Through its presence, its availability and its flexibility, wood was the only material fulfilling this need, imposing on builders a discipline contributing to the harmony of these living spaces.

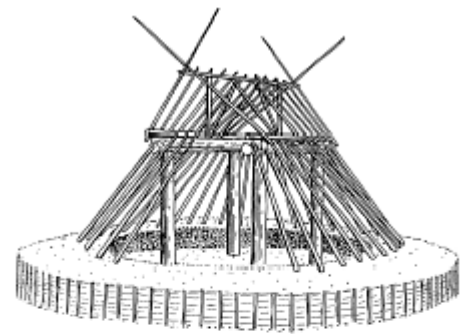
From the humblest home to the most sumptuous palace, it is in Japan that wood has most effectively demonstrated its ability to stay in tune with changes in a refined lifestyle that goes far beyond mere functional needs.



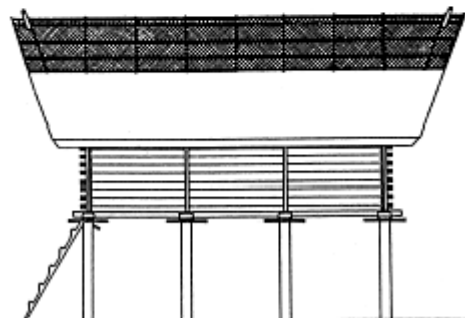
HORYU-JI . NARA

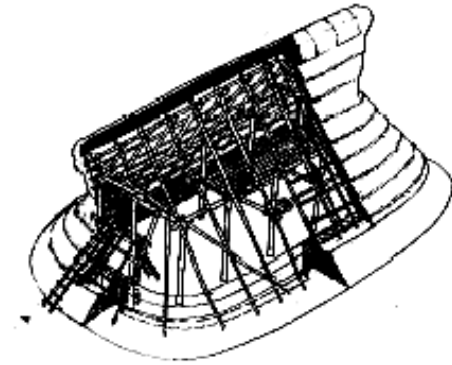
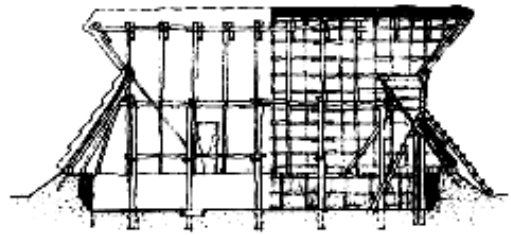
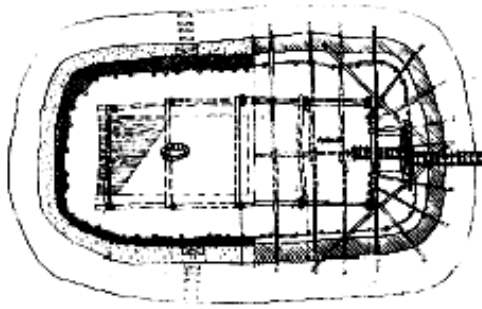


HOUSE AND GRANARY AT TORO ISEKI (200 BC)

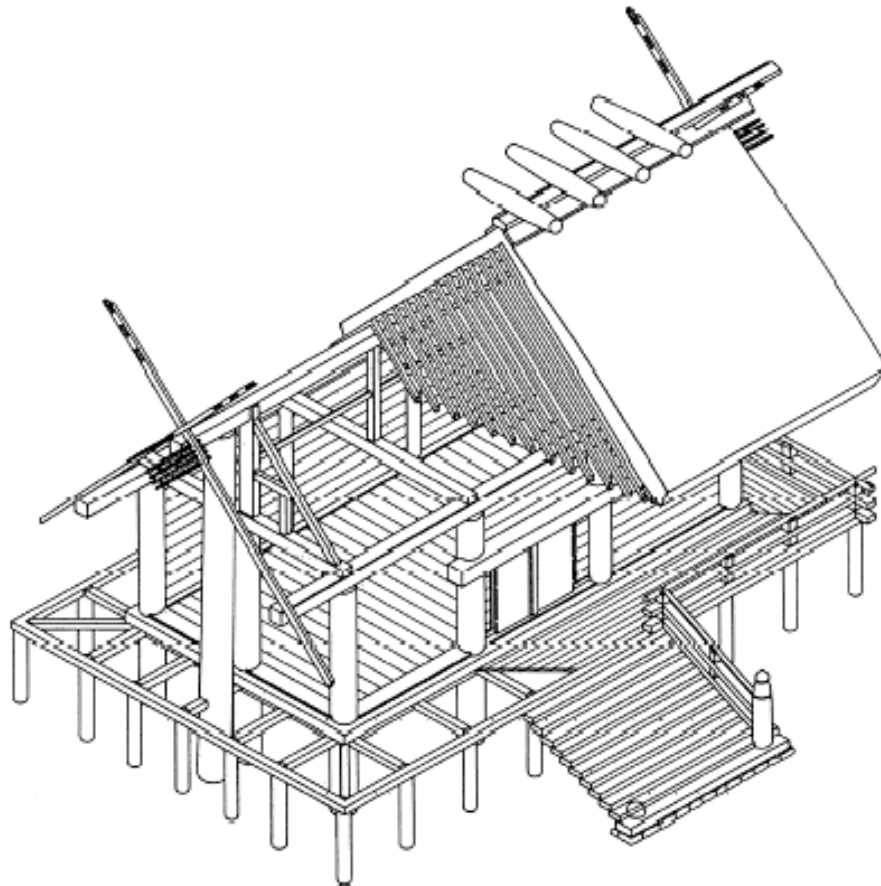


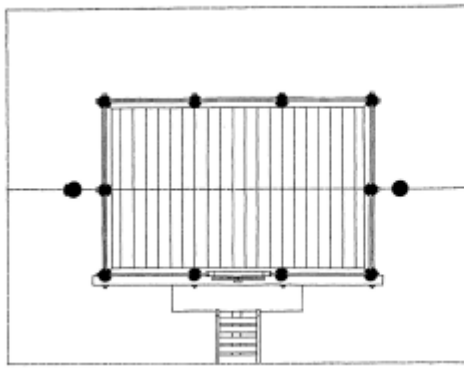
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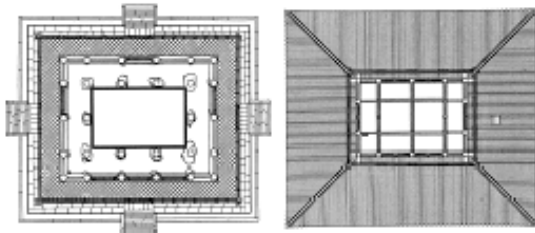
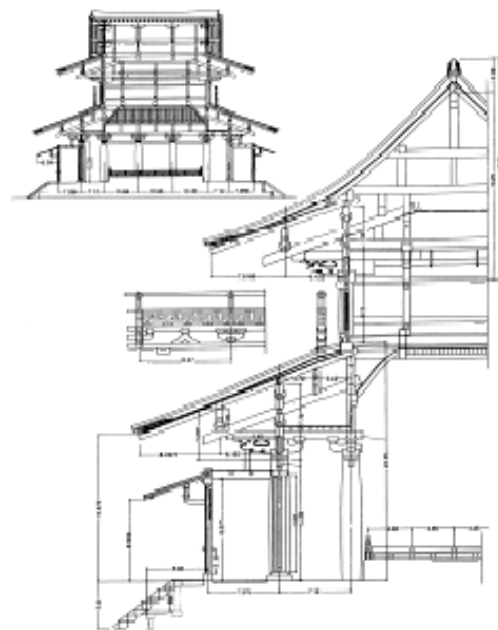
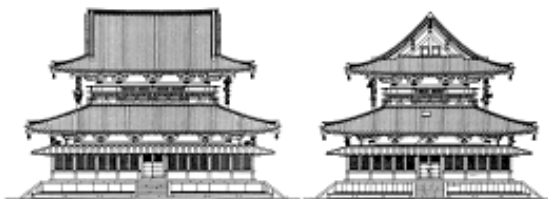
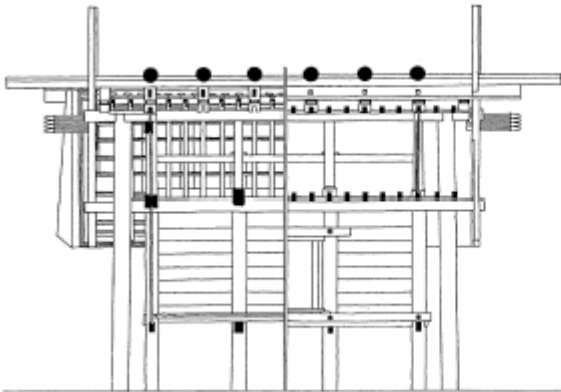


HOUSE AT UTSUNOMIYA - JŌMON PERIOD (3500 BC)

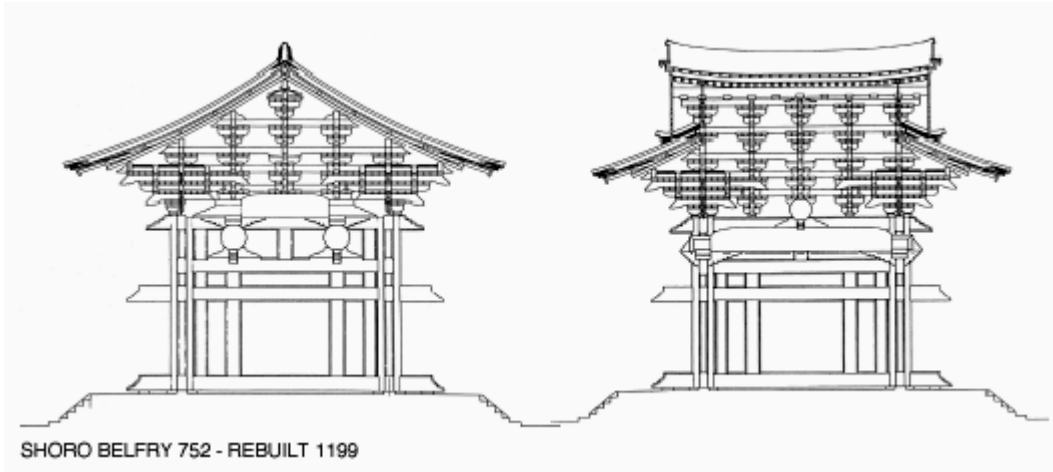
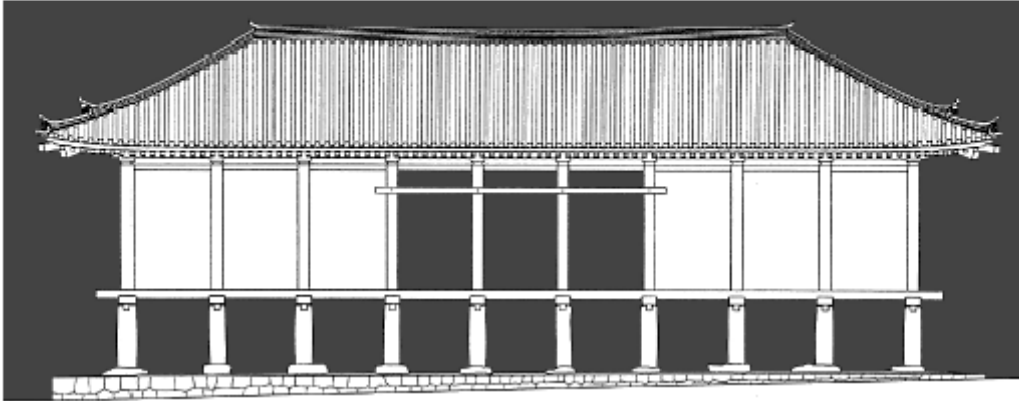
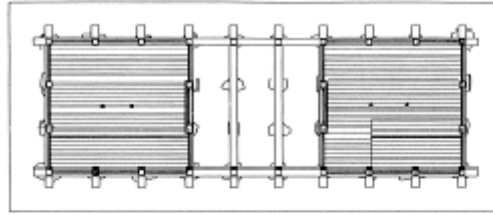




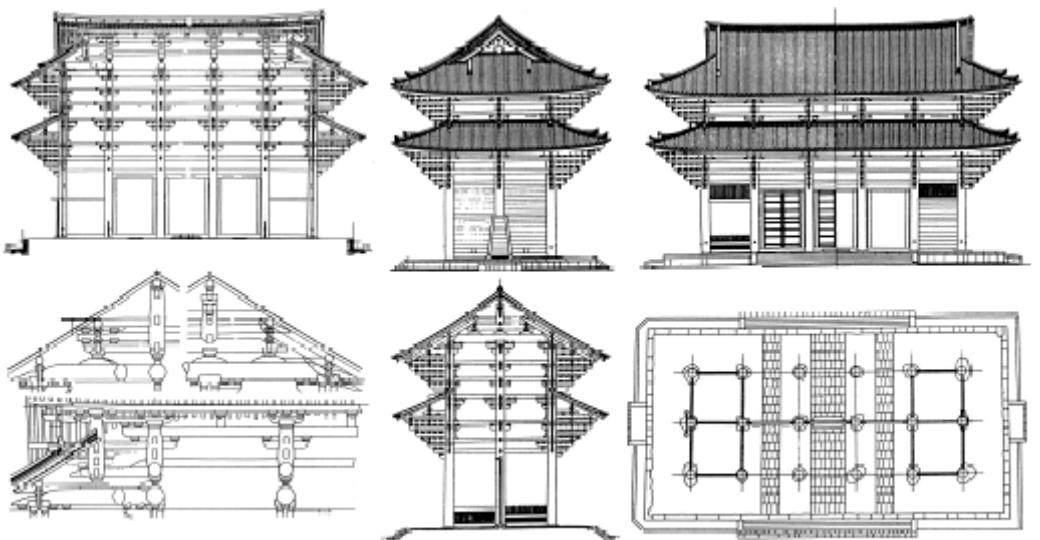
ISE SHRINES 692
REBUILDING EVERY TWENTY YEARS
SIXTY FIRST REBUILDING 1993



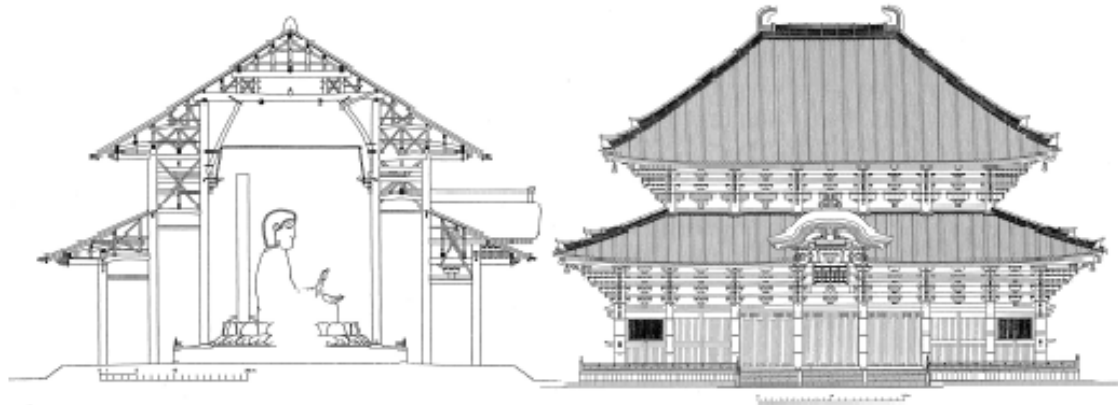
HORYU-JI TEMPLE - NARA 7.c
KONDO ASUKA PERIOD (552-645)
KOFUZO REPOSITORY 8.c



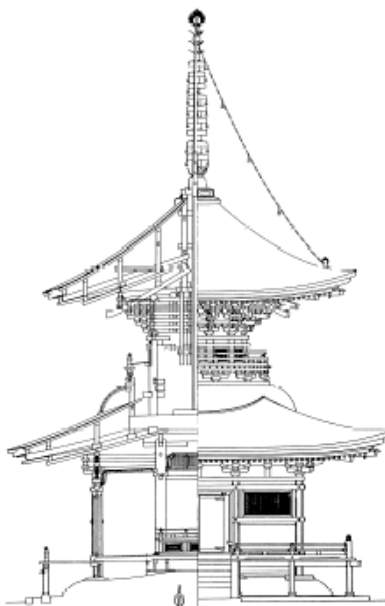
SHORO BELFRY 752 - REBUILT 1199



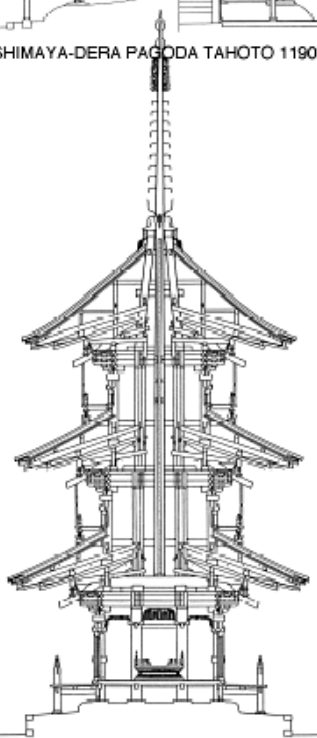
NANDAIMON GATE - TENJIKU STYLE - h. 29 m - REBUILT 1199



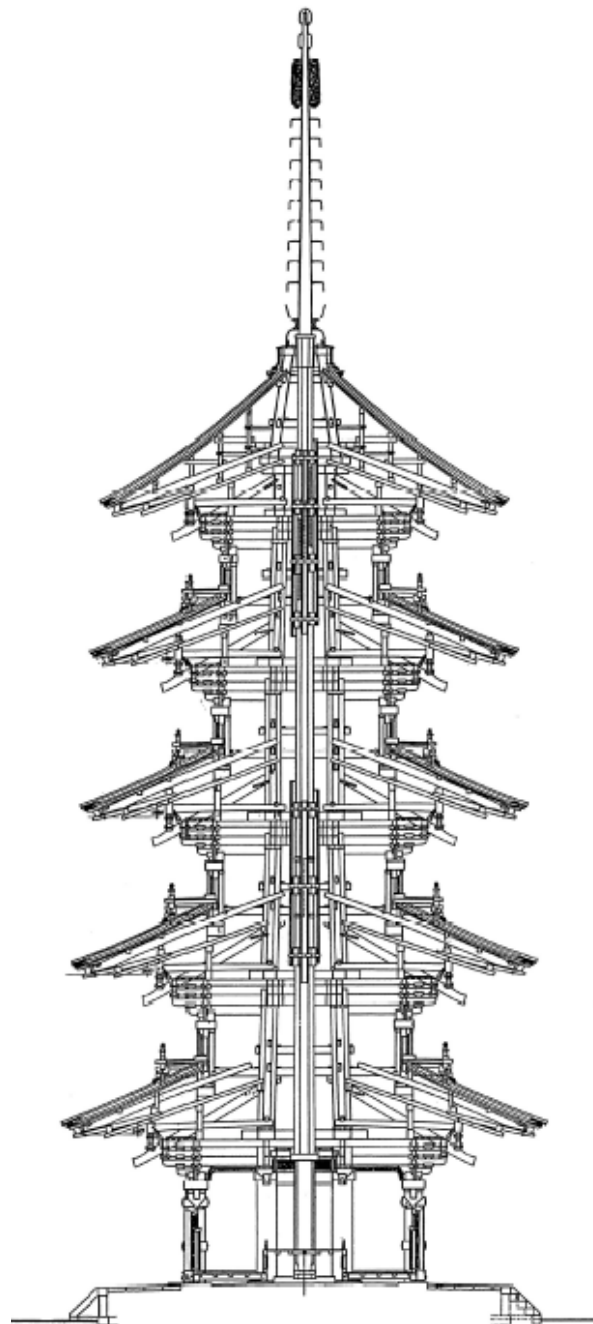
TODAI-JI TEMPLE NARA 752 - h: 48,5 m - REBUILT 1195 AND 1709



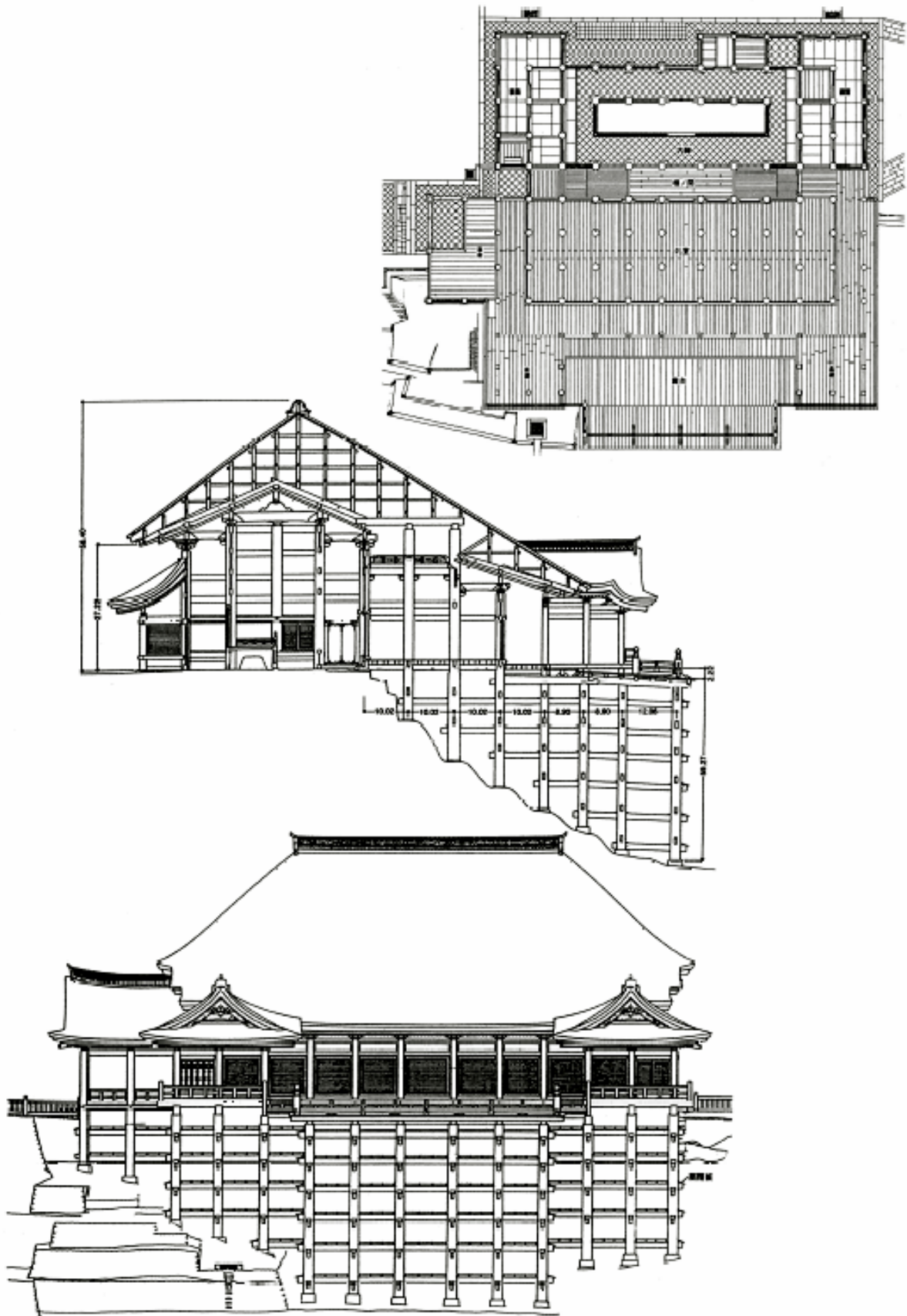
ISHIMAYA-DERA PAGODA TAHOTO 1190



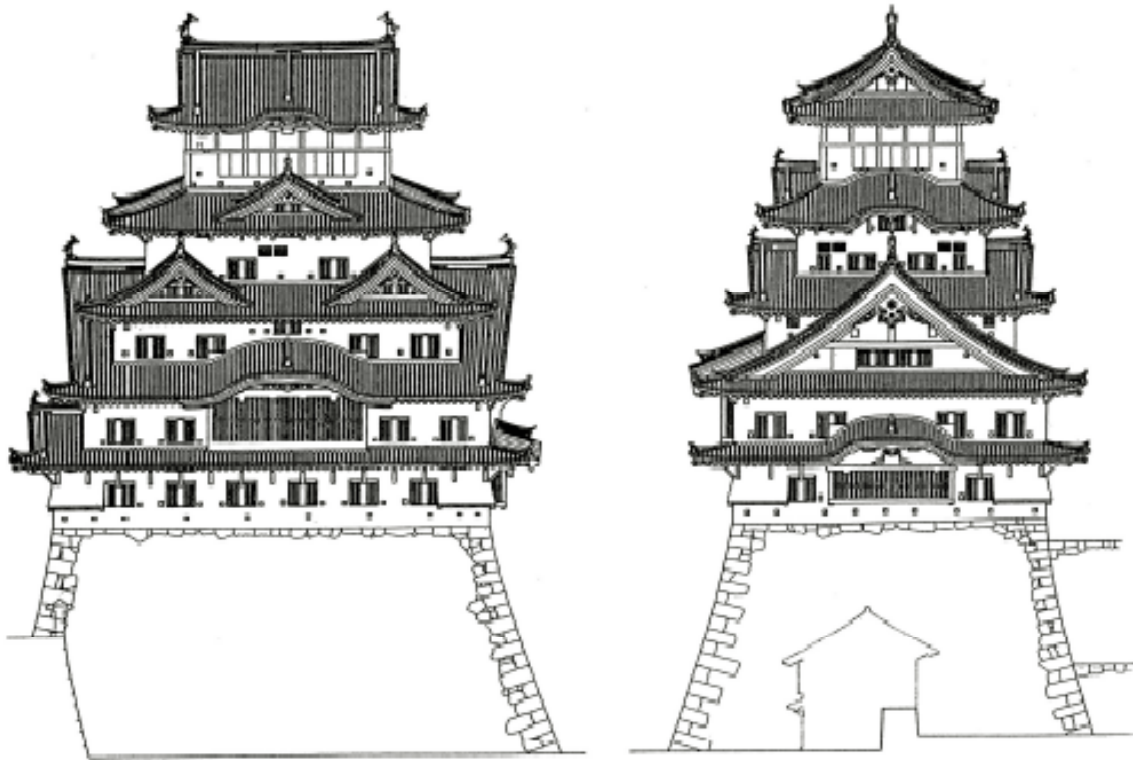
KIYOMIZUDERA PAGODA 780



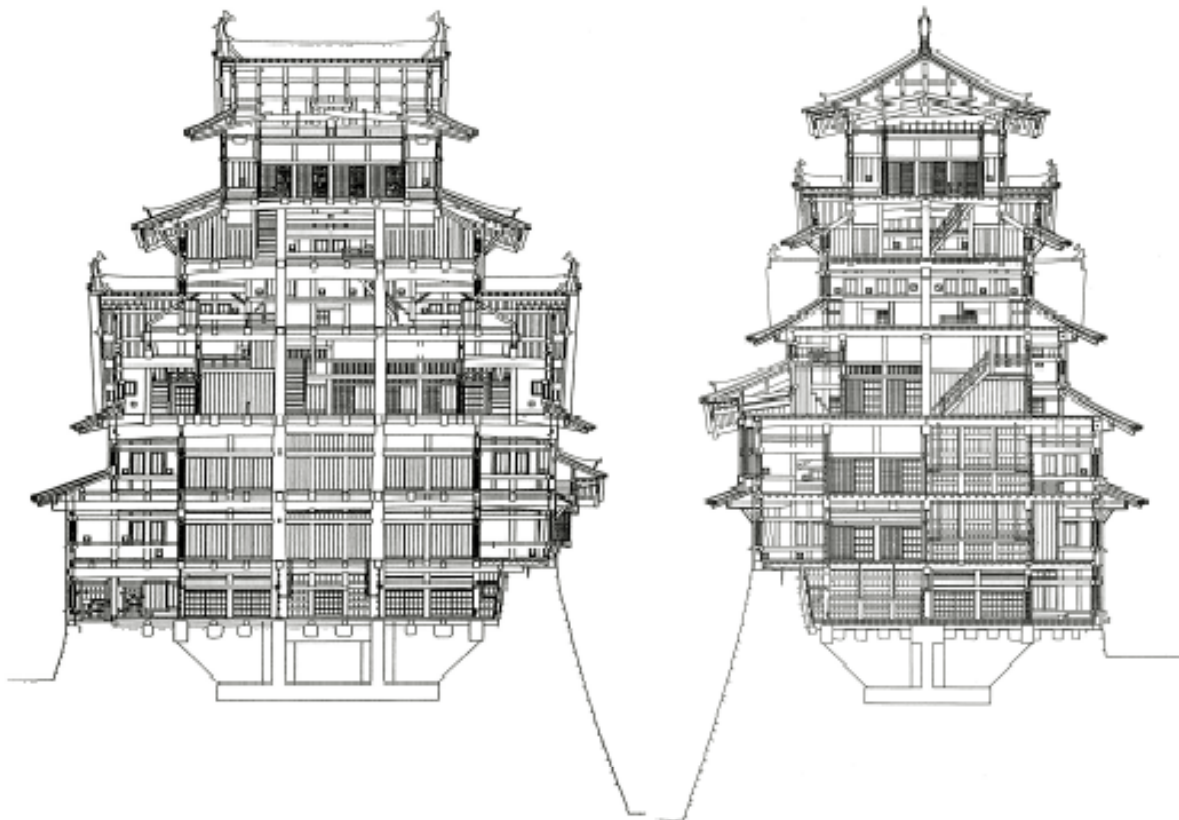
TOJI PAGODA 796 REBUILT 1644 - h: 56m

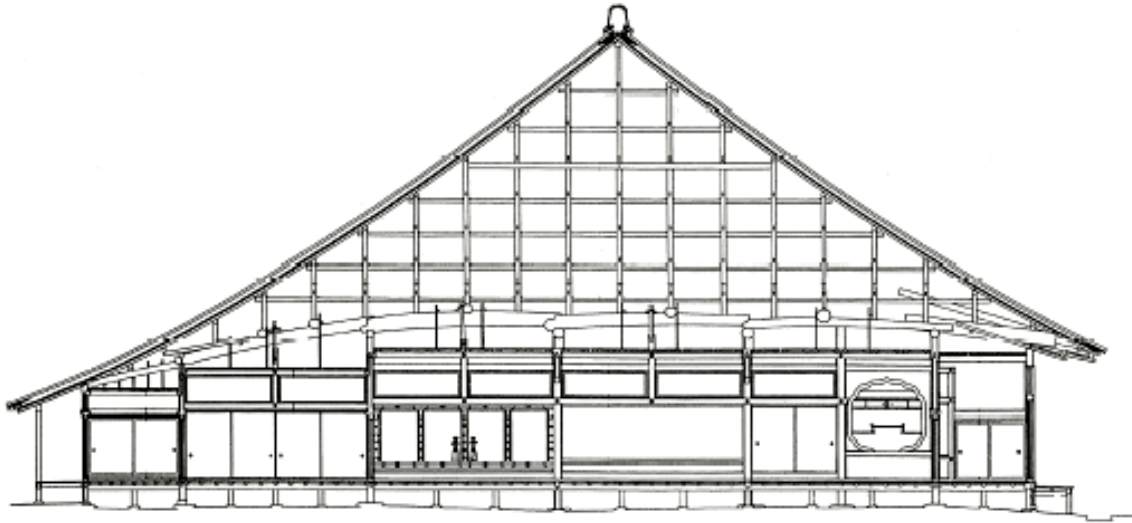


KIYOMIZUDERA TEMPLE 780 REBUILT 1633

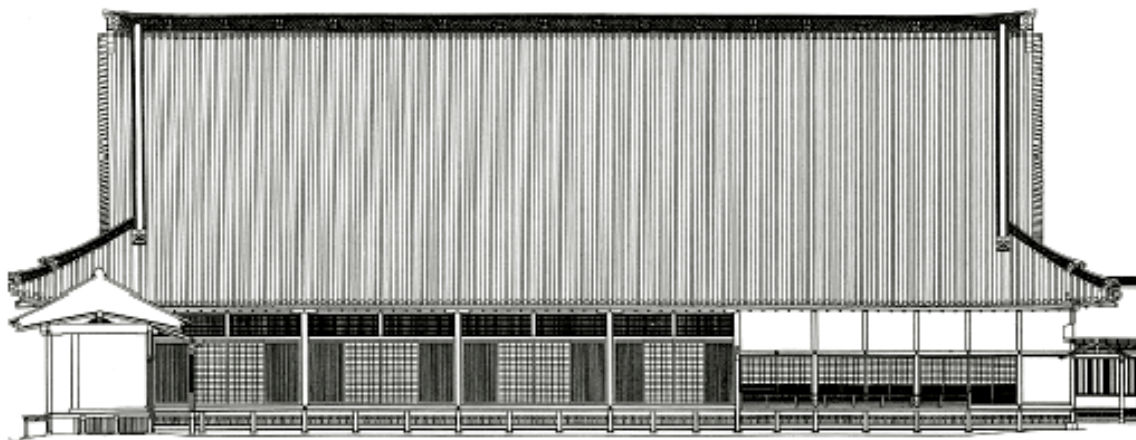
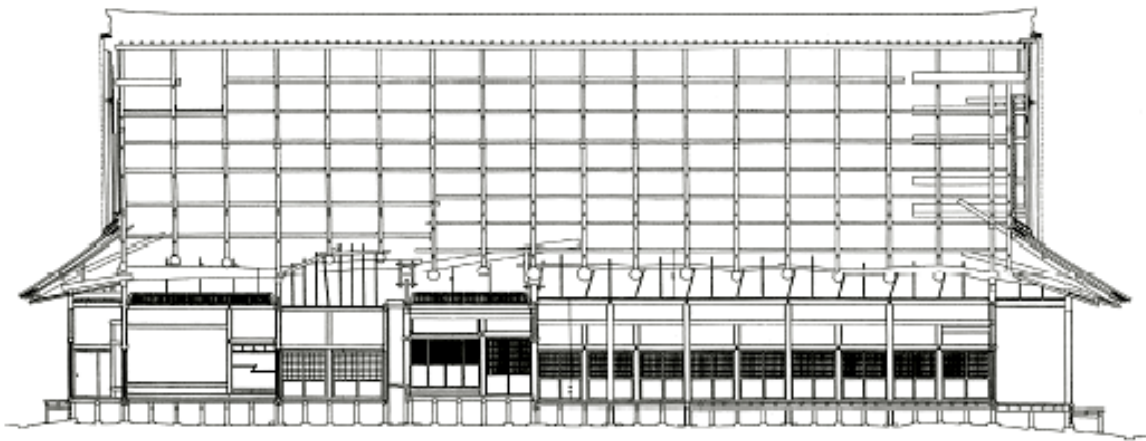


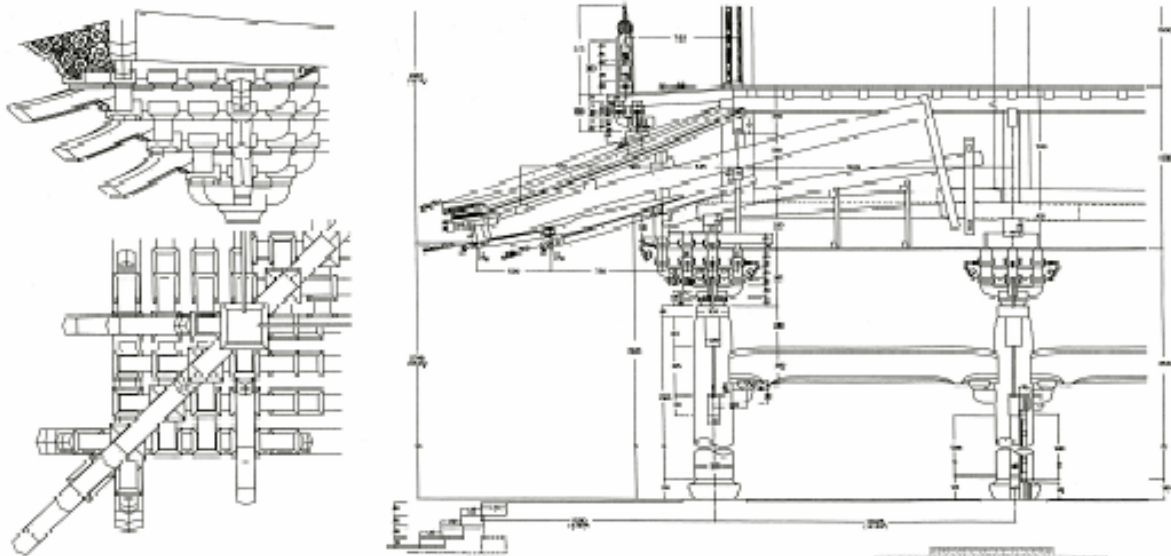
HIMEJI CASTLE 1613 MAINTOWER 48,40 m HIGH



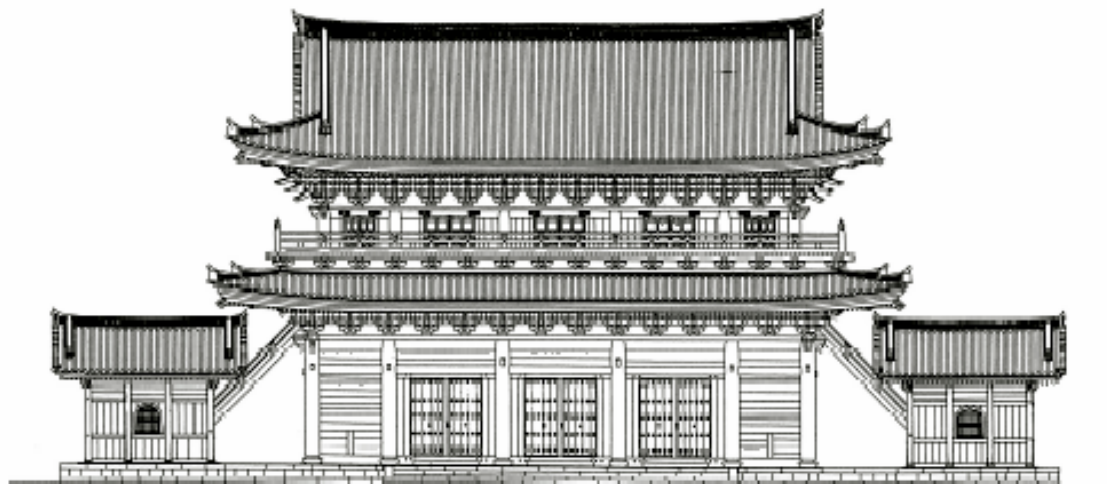
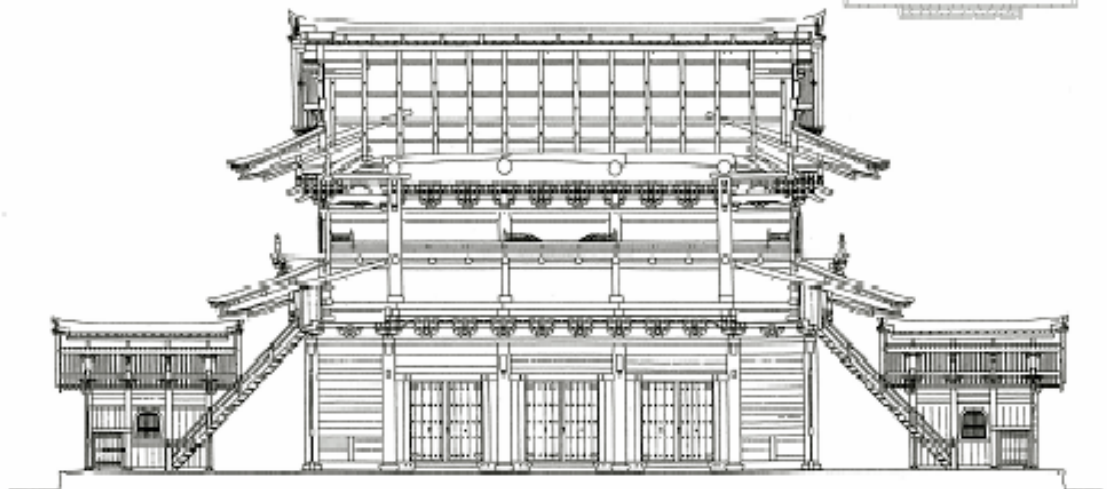


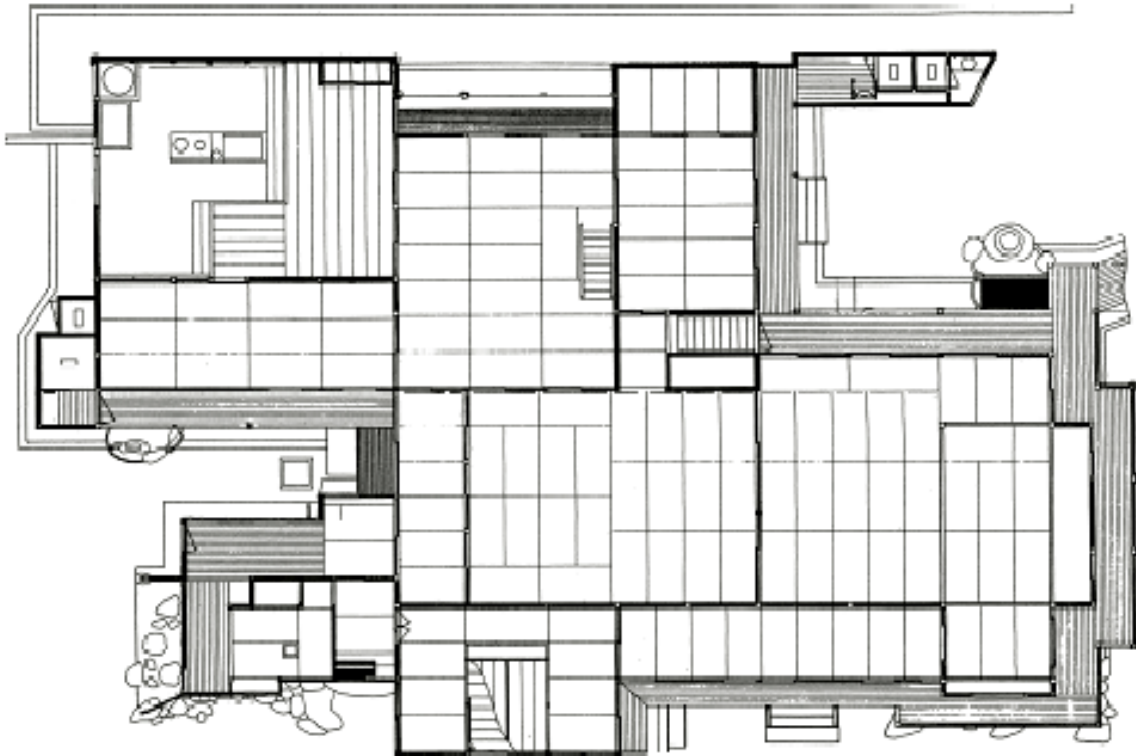
NISHI-HONGANJI TEMPLE - KYOTO - 1591 - MOMOYAMA PERIOD (1573-1603)



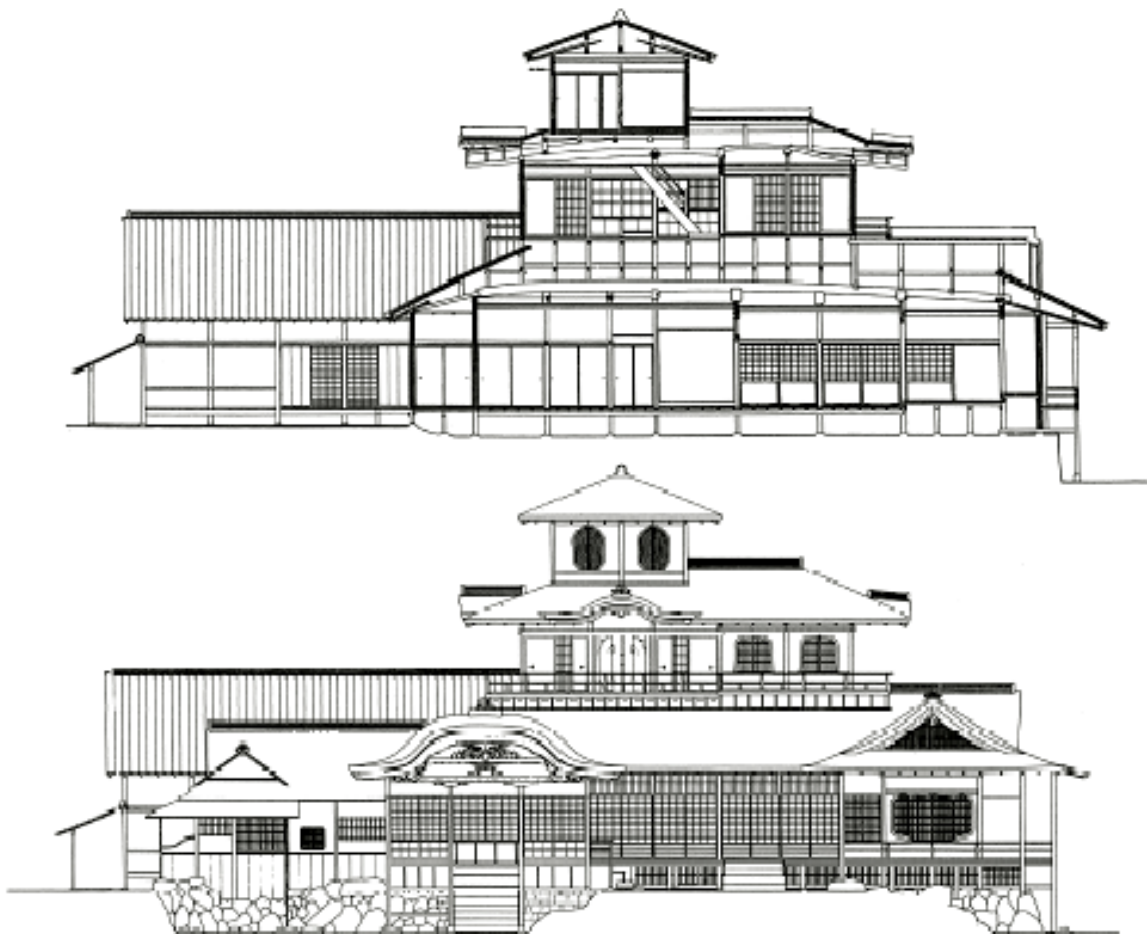


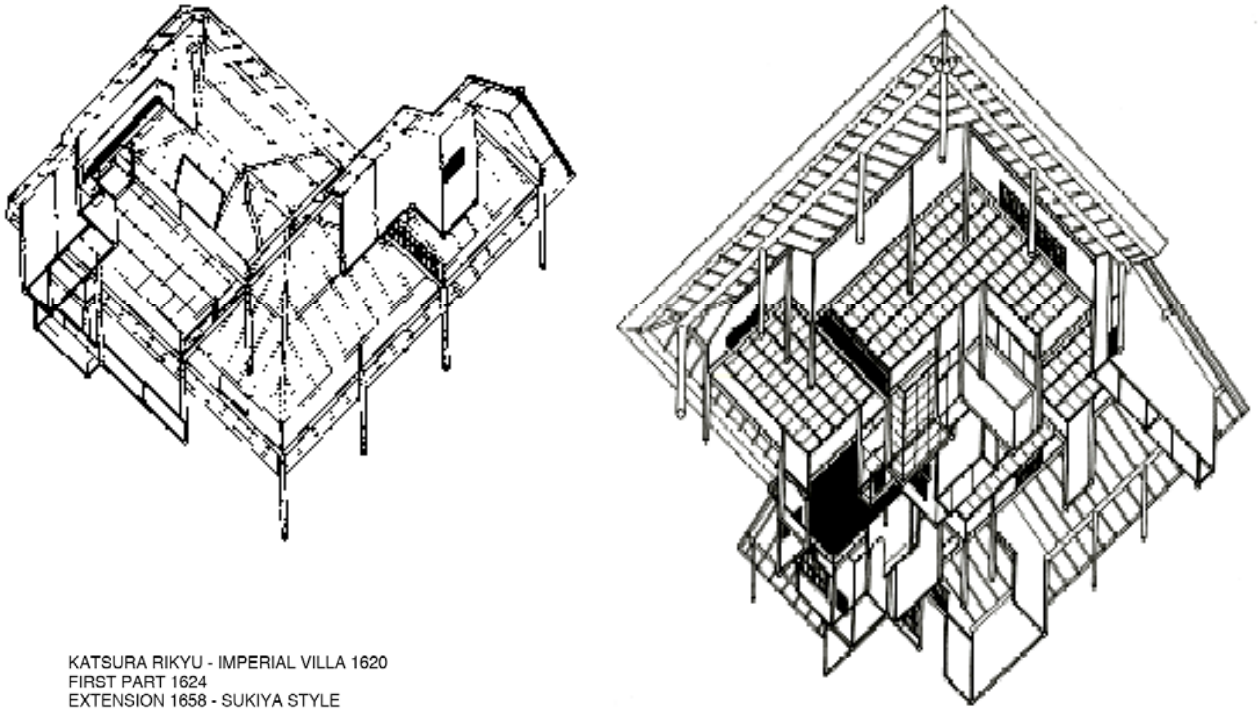
NANZEN-JI TEMPLE - SANMON GATE 1628



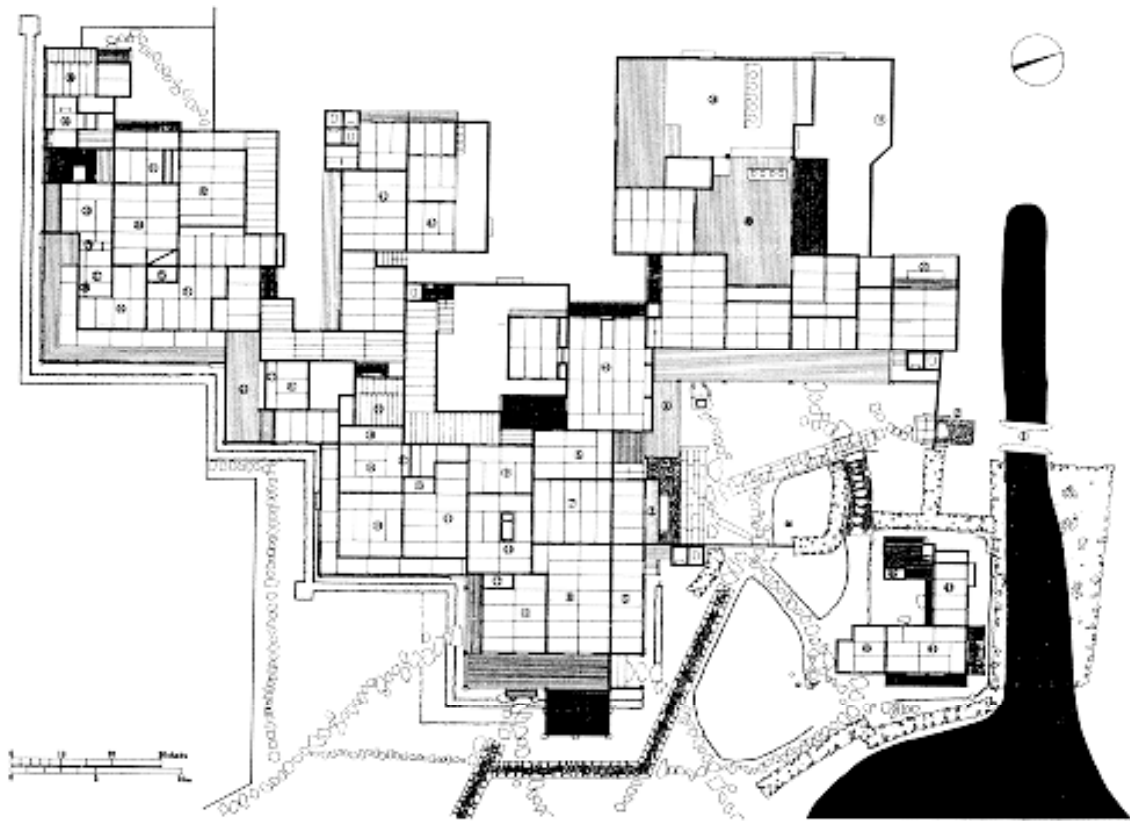


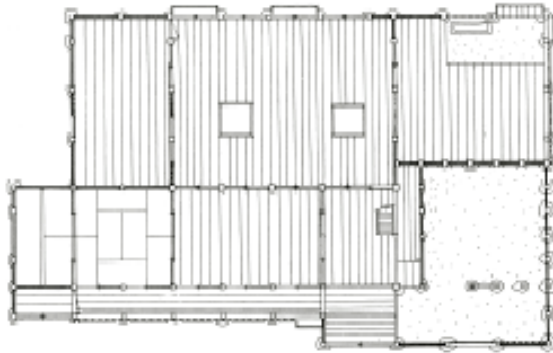
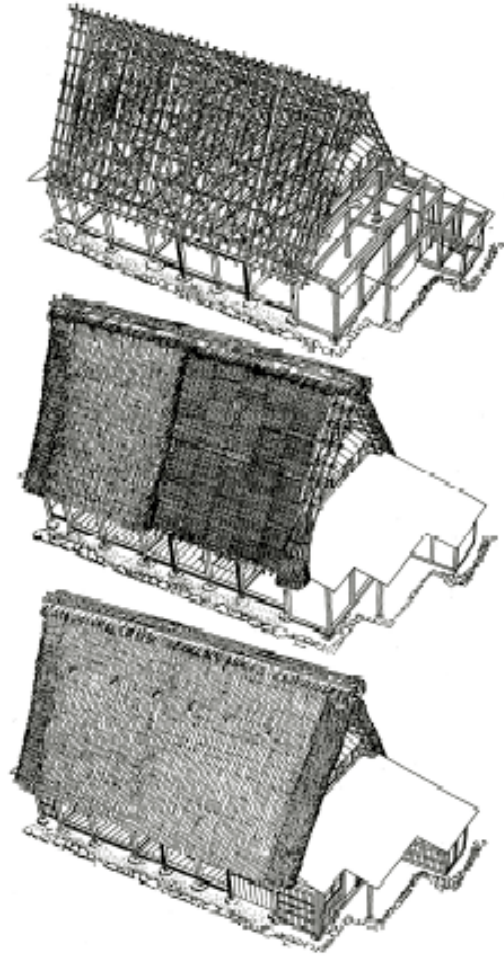
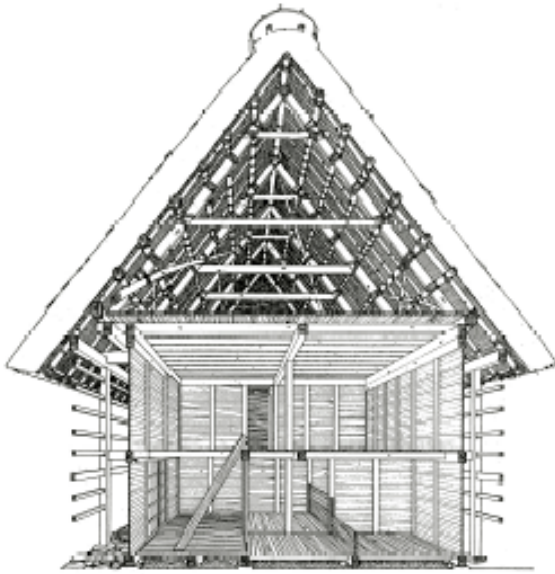
HIUNKAKU PAVILLON 1588 - FLYING CLOUD PAVILLON - NEAR NISHI HONGANJI



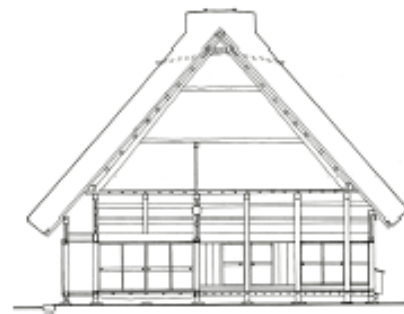
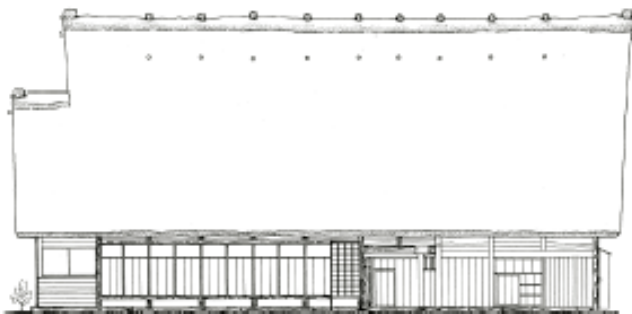
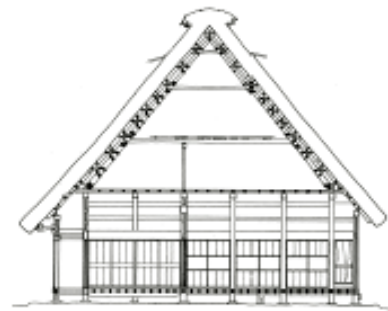
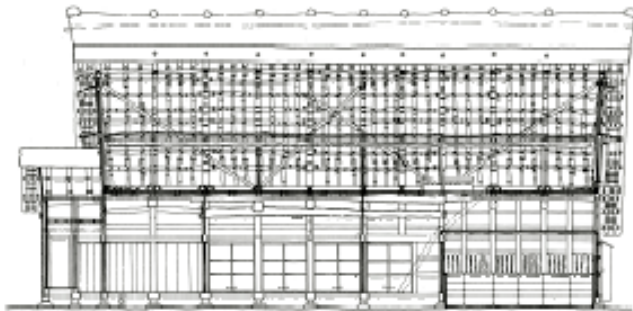


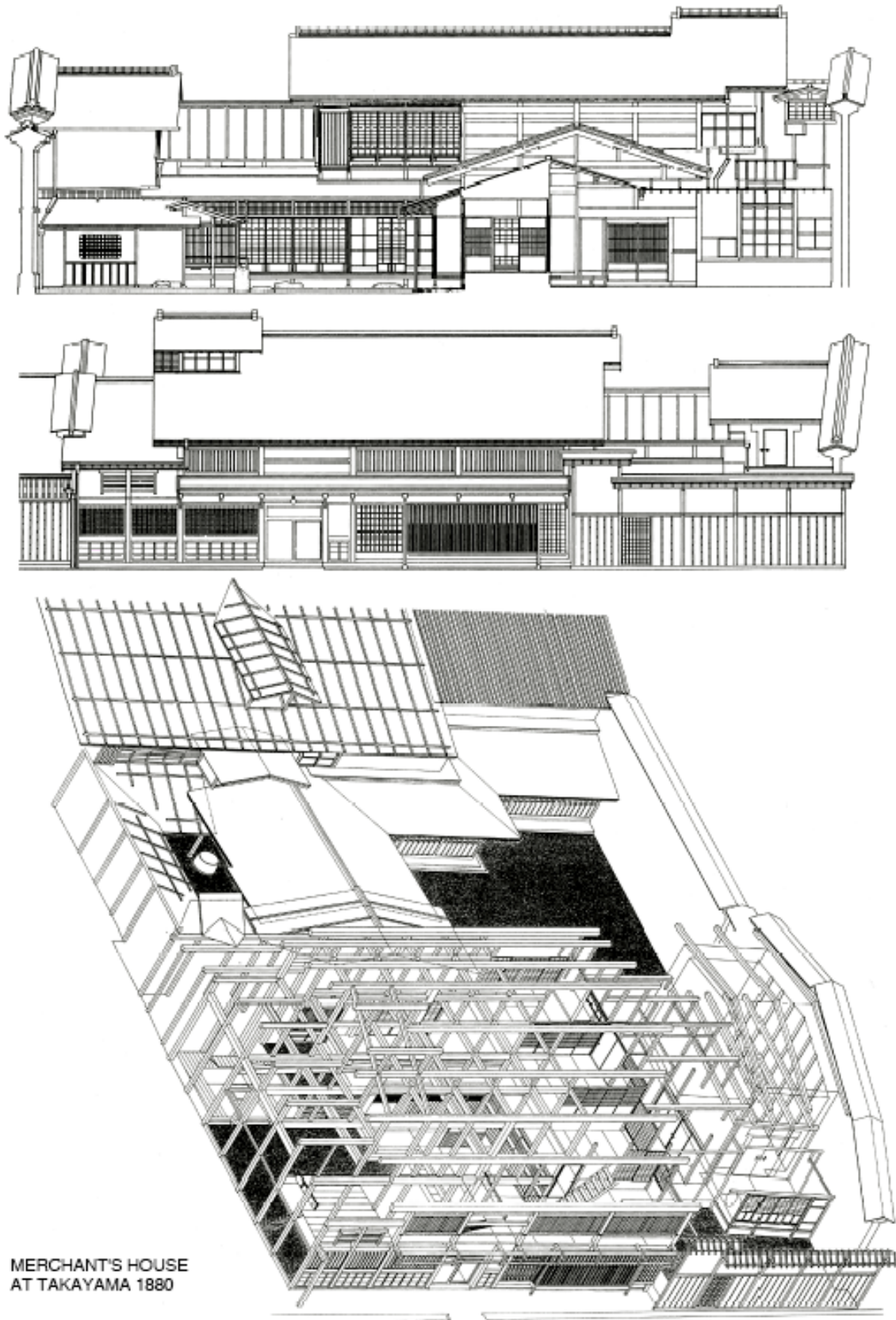
KATSURA RIKYU - IMPERIAL VILLA 1620
FIRST PART 1624
EXTENSION 1658 - SUKIYA STYLE

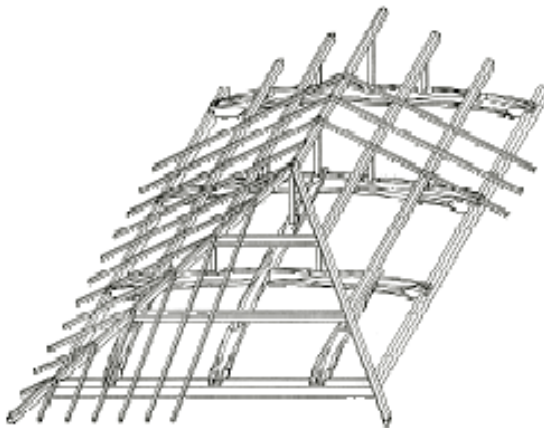
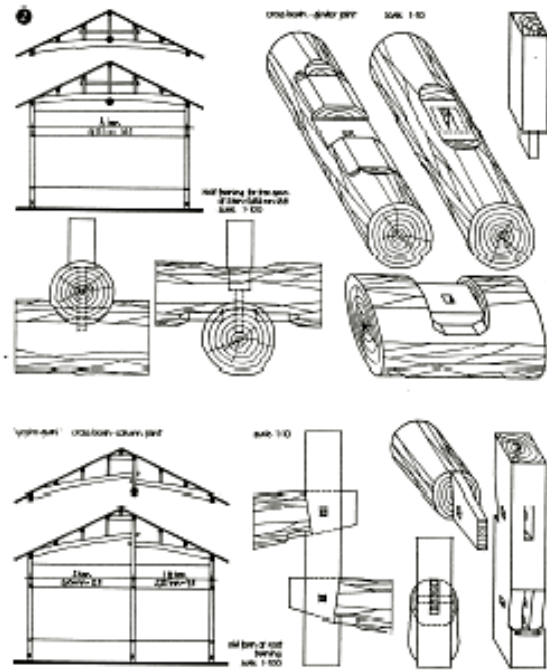
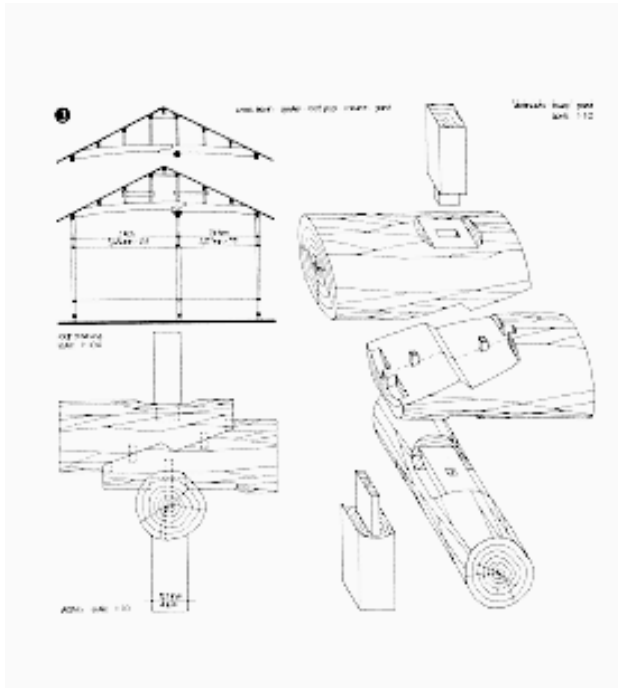




FARMHOUSE AT SCHIRAKAWA -GŌ BUILT IN GASSHŌ-ZUKURI STYLE

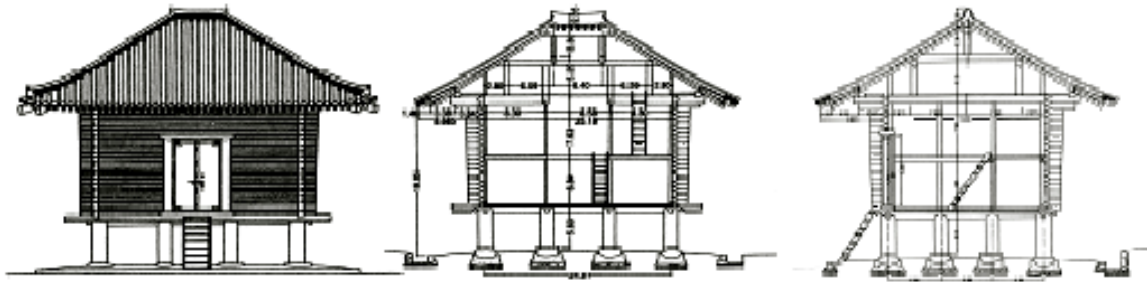




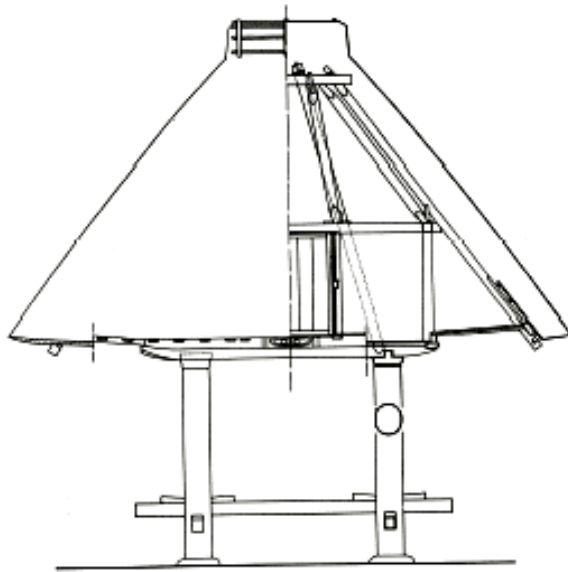


THE JAPONISHE HOUSE - HEINRICH ENGEL





TOSHODAIJI TEMPLE NARA 759 - REPOSITORY AZEKURA-ZUKURI STYLE



STOREHOUSE AT NAGOSHIMA - KIUSHIU

