1. INTRODUCTION

TOWARDS OVERCOMING COLONIAL MODERNITY

In 1915, the Japanese Government-General of Korea hosted the Joseon Industrial Exhibition in Gyeongbok Palace, the main palace of the last Korean dynasty (the Joseon dynasty), to commemorate the fifth anniversary of Japanese colonial rule over the Korean peninsula.

It has been argued that the Joseon Industrial Exhibition of 1915 was hosted for the purpose of legitimizing Japan’s colonization of Korea, as a great amount of visual materials were displayed with the intention of showing the developments of Korea since the beginning of the colonial rule. It has also been argued that Japan encouraged this legitimization by creating spatial and architectural contrasts between the traditional (Korea) and the modern (Japan) in the 1915 exhibition. For example, a great number of the traditional buildings in Gyeongbok Palace were demolished and a few survivals made drastic contrasts with Western-styled pavilions (mainly in Neo-Renaissance and International Styles) for the 1915 exhibition.

However, to be on a par with the West, Japan started to develop a series of historical narratives in searching for its historical origins in Asia, and it also carried out archaeological investigations in the Korean peninsula around the early 1900s. I argue that the developed historical narratives with traditional Korean artworks and architecture (i.e. the shared historical origins between Japan and Korea) influence the architectural conditions of the 1915 exhibition. And, the status of traditional Korean architecture in the Japanese exhibition expresses architectural modernity in terms of showing historical progress.

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novelty but by otherness. Much of the research has unconsciously followed a colonial mentality. So, it has taken the perspective that only through Western forms can one explore architectural modernity in Korea in this time period. Unfortunately current research assumes not only the inferiority of traditional Korean architecture, but also the superiority of Western-styled architecture. Furthermore, this perspective has been expanded and applied in defining the origins and the developments of Korean architectural modernity during the entire colonial period; we unconsciously seek architectural modernity only in Western architectural forms / styles, Western building materials / construction methods, and Western scientific / technological ideas. Consequently, only morphological and technological aspects of Korean architectural modernity have been suggested.

However, rather than just being cast aside or being devaluated, the status of the Korean traditional architecture in the 1915 exhibition suggests a different reading from the previous ones if we consider that there had been a series of Japanese efforts to build its own history with Asian as well as Korean art and architectural traditions from the early Meiji period.

To grasp the full scope of my argument, it is important first to shed some clarity on how Japanese art and architectural traditions were invented, categorized and presented in the global context as part of Japan’s nationalistic intentions to outshine the West starting in the late nineteenth century. As informed by the hermeneutic research method, the author mainly focuses on the Japanese overseas exhibition materials (reports and articles) published between 1893 and 1915.

2. JAPAN IN THE WEST

From the second half of the nineteenth century, a great number of world exhibitions were held in the West to show off the new scientific, technological and cultural innovations of the rapidly industrializing Western nations and to highlight their colonial expansions into Asia and Africa. (see Figure 2) For example, the Crystal Palace was built for the Great Exhibition of 1851 in London and the Eiffel Tower was constructed for the Exposition Universelle of 1889 in Paris. Art Nouveau was in vogue in the Exposition Universelle of 1900 in Paris. World exhibitions had included industrial and imperial displays together since a colonial display was first shown in 1870. In this sense, these exhibitions were originally a manifestation of the political aim to show the superiority of the advanced Western nations, and architectural techniques were devised to create drastic visual contrasts between the developed and the underdeveloped conditions in the exhibition grounds. Along with the rise of capitalism in the West at the time, world exhibitions also became markets where newly produced and imported items were introduced, advertised and consumed to entice modern consumers.

A group of representatives from Japan first observed the International Exhibition of 1862 in London, and Japan participated in the Exposition Universelle of 1867 in Paris for the first time. (see Figure 3) Following the 1867 Paris exhibition, Japan went on to participate in others where it not only scrutinized the scientific and industrial achievements of the advanced Western nations, but also learned visual and spatial display techniques which it employed its inland modern exhibitions beginning in 1877. The Japanese Meiji government considered modern exhibitions as an important tool to modernize Japan. In 1877, Japan hosted its first inland modern exhibition at Ueno park, modeling it after the 1873 Vienna exhibition. Between 1873 and 1910, Japan participated in a total of 37 world exhibitions.

Through this process, Japan became confident about her commercial success in Western markets owing to the growing interest in Japonism, which fed exotic tastes in the West around the mid-nineteenth century. The Japanese participation in the world exhibitions around this time period was thus highly charged with a capitalistic spirit in the sense that Japan aimed to sell herself to the West. In doing so, Japan also intended to achieve the status of a strong modern nation by ceaselessly juxtaposing herself with the advanced Western countries. For example, Japan’s intentions in participating in the 1873 Vienna exhibition reflect her political aim of becoming a modern nation...
by selling herself as a commodity in the highly capitalistic environment.\(^{13}\)

As a matter of fact, Japan never saw itself as an inferior nation or culture from the time it first started to Westernize during the early Meiji period. (Beasley argued that the Japanese envoys never had an interest in Western art or music when they visited America and Europe in 1860 and 1862, respectively.)\(^{14}\) As seen in the Meiji restoration slogan of "wakon yousai" ("Eastern [Japanese] Spirit and Western Technology"), the Japanese government aimed for systematic modernization (Westernization) without internalizing the Western spirit. (One can also find the same notion in another motto from the Meiji era: "employs the ethics of the East and the scientific technique of the West thus bringing benefit to the people and serving the nation.\(^{15}\) The better the Japanese came to know Western especially European societies of the time, which were in their eyes riddle with conflict and division, the more they concluded that Westerners were barbarians.\(^{16}\)

However, Japan also concluded that Western imperialistic power came from modernization. What modernization meant to Japan was not only scientific, technological and military achievement\(^{17}\) but also the historicizing of the past.\(^{18}\) It is important to acknowledge that Japan had made a series of efforts to build its own history (toyoshi\(^{19}\)), with its traditions reflecting Asian origins, since the Meiji twenties.\(^{20}\) On the one hand, therefore Japan imported Western materials, systems, and ideas while on the other it began restructuring its traditions, including art and architecture. The historical narratives developed around this time period clearly reflect Japan’s political intention to achieve a status to rival that of the West.\(^{21}\)

### 3. Japanese Overseas Exhibitions and Architectural Modernity Portraying Historical Progress

Notably, Japanese displays in early world exhibitions were mainly planned by European merchants or diplomats who had found Japan economically beneficial to the West. There was thus little evidence of any intention on Japan’s part to display its own history in the Exposition Universelle of 1867 in Paris and the Vienna International Exhibition of 1873. It was not until the World’s Columbian Exposition of 1893 in Chicago that Japan displayed its traditional artworks and architecture so as to highlight historical progress. (see Figure 4) The interior exhibition in the Phoenix Hall was aimed to demonstrate the changes in Japanese traditional art over three different historical periods, the Fujiwara, the Ashikaga and the Tokugawa.\(^{22}\) Kakuzo Okakura (1862-1913), who was a pupil of Earnest Fenollosa (1853-1908), contributed to this historical exhibition. (Earnest Fenollosa went to Japan to teach philosophy and political sciences in 1878. However he became very interested in Japanese traditional arts. Fenollosa served the first director of the Tokyo School of Fine Arts in 1887 and Kakuzo Okakura succeeded him in 1890. Kojin Karatani argued that "it was Fenollosa who had actually discovered traditional art and introduced a view to categorize it into a historical order\(^{23}\)"

(see Figure 5)

Ascribing to the idea of "Japan as a museum of Asia" ("Thus Japan is a museum of Asiatic civilization; and yet more than a museum, because the singular genius of the race leads it to dwell on all phases of the ideals of the past, in that spirit of living Advaitism which welcomes the new without losing the old.\(^{24}\) Okakura kept working on historicizing Japanese art and architectural traditions with Asian (Buddhist) origins and compiled the first Japanese art and architectural history, Histoire de l’art du Japon, for the Exposition Universelle of 1900 in Paris.\(^{25}\) Japan’s historical intentions were also evident in the design of the Japanese exhibition pavilion.\(^{26}\) (see Figure 6) Fundamentally based on the Kondou of Horyuji, which was claimed to be the oldest example of Japanese architecture by the contemporary architectural historian Chuta Ito (1867-1954), the pavilion was designed with a mixture of architectural ornaments from different Japanese historical periods, and displayed genuine Japanese artworks from the Tendou to the Fujiwara (898-1185) periods.\(^{27}\) (It has been also argued that the use of various ornaments was also aimed to feed the exotic taste of French people, so the architectural intention was quite ambivalent.\(^{28}\) Moreover, it was constructed 20 meters higher than Kondou so that it would be seen above the surrounding Western pavilions in the exhibition grounds.\(^{29}\)
In the Japan-British Exhibition of 1910, along with the twelve historical tableaux showing Japan's long historical progress from ancient times, there was an architectural display featuring architectural models of historically important Japanese buildings, such as Kondou of Horyuji and Houou-dou of Byodoin, made to various scales, including 1:1 reproductions.

"For the first time in the exhibitions in which it has taken part the Japanese Government undertook to illustrate all the different styles of Japanese buildings in a complete set of models. This exhibition at the White City in this department was so complete that the whole history of Japanese architecture was made comprehensive by means of elaborate and faithful reproductions of famous buildings of every description.\(^\text{31}\) (see Figure 7)

For this special architecture exhibition, the two leading contemporary Japanese architectural historians from Tokyo Imperial University, Chuta Ito and Tadashi Sekino (1868-1935), collaborated. For Ito, Horyuji from the Nara period (710-794) was not only the oldest and the most refined example of Japanese architecture, but also the only remaining architectural archetype preserving cultural influences from Egypt, Assyria, Persia, India, Greece, the Eastern and Western Roman empires through its architectural elements, interior sculptures and paintings.\(^\text{32}\) (see Figure 8) He also saw Horyuji as encompassing a comprehensive history of the old art and architecture of East Asia. Developing Ito's ideas, however, Sekino went one step further. He argued that the architecture of Byodoin, with its extremely delicate and splendid characteristics independent of the Buddhist influences of the Nara era, reflected the unique Japanese architectural developments of the Fujiwara period (900-1200).\(^\text{33}\) Sekino claimed that Byodoin was proof that (Buddhist) art from China and Korea had been developed in the Japanese fudo [climate and soil] for hundreds of years, finally achieving a unique and simple beauty in the Fujiwara period.\(^\text{34}\)

Japanese historical displays continued at subsequent world exhibitions. For example, at the Panama-Pacific International Exhibition of 1915, Koichi Takeda (1872-1938) designed the Japanese pavilion in the style of an aristocrat's villa, representing the historical progress of Japanese art and architectural elements with its interior and exterior decorations from different periods. (see Figure 9)
Architectural Modernity in the Planning of Japanese Overseas Exhibitions in the West and the Colonized Korea

4. ARCHITECTURAL MODERNITY IN THE JOSEON INDUSTRIAL EXHIBITION OF 1915

The Japanese interests in Buddhist architectural traditions were extended to the Korean peninsula even before the Japanese annexation of Korea in 1910; for the first time, ancient Korean architectural traditions were discovered and studied around the early 1900s. (Sekino Tadashi investigated Korean Buddhist art and architectural traditions in the early 1900s. He made a report on Korean architecture in 1904.) Especially, for the purpose of finding the Japanese historical origins in Korea, a government-sponsored research division lead by government-appointed historians carried out archaeological investigations into Korean traditional artworks and architecture during the entire colonial period. Here, I especially talk about the “Historic Spot Investigation” carried out by the Japanese occupation government during the entire colonial period. This project has been understood as Japanese efforts to colonize Korean art and architectural traditions. However, I want to highlight the dual aspect of it because Japan’s interests on Korean traditions were already started under its historical intentions to overcome the West from the early Meiji period.

In this context, I argue that the Japanese historical intentions were further applied to the planning of the Joseon Industrial Exhibition of 1915 where Korean architectural traditions, showing the Japanese historical origins in Korea (i.e. the shared historical origins between Japan and Korea), were displayed in the inside as well as the outside of Art Museum built for the 1915 exhibition. (see Figure 10)

Figure 10. Postcard showing the Buddhist pagodas in front of Art Museum (Misulgwan)
(Source: The 1915 exhibition official report, vol. 3.)

Recognizing Japan’s historical intentions with respect to the architecture of the 1915 exhibition creates a new understanding of the architectural relationship between Exhibition Hall No.1 and Geunjongjeon. Rather than simply creating a visual contrast between the new and the old, the juxtaposition of the two was fundamentally intended to create a spatial connection through the outdoor path between the courtyard of Exhibition Hall No.1 and the foreground of Geunjongjeon. The idea of spatial continuity between Gwanghwamun and Geunjongjeon was included in the architectural planning stage of the 1915 Exhibition, and it was realized in the design of Exhibition Hall No.1. (see Figure 11) In 1915 exhibition official report, vol.1, these intentions are clearly laid out, as it is stated that: “traverse circulation was recommended from Gwanghwamun to Geunjongjeon through…Exhibition Hall No.1 and the architectural form of… Exhibition Hall No.1 was designed to accommodate it.”

Given the fact that Exhibition Hall No.1 and Geunjongjeon were spatially connected to each other and that Exhibition Hall No.1 was the first building that visitors encountered upon entering the Exhibition grounds, it can be argued that the architectural juxtaposition of Exhibition Hall No.1 with Geunjongjeon can be seen as a new element of the historical exhibition; by virtue of its location in the most symbolic part of the 1915 exhibition grounds, it represents the shared future development of Korea and Japan.

Figure 11. Plan showing the urban procession from Gwanghwamun (palace gate) across the entry plaza, and through Exhibition Hall No.1 to Geunjongjeon (throne hall)
(Source: The 1915 exhibition official report, vol. 1.)

5. CONCLUSIONS

In view of this evidence, it is insufficient and even potentially fallacious to claim that the architecture of the Joseon Industrial Exhibition of 1915 was solely intended to produce a dramatic visual contrast between Western-style architecture and Korean palace architecture, as has been suggested by current scholarship. On the contrary, the ancient Korean artifacts and the newly built exhibition pavilions were carefully placed to fit into the structure of Gyeongbok Palace so that they created a historical display together with Joseon palace architecture. Japan’s political intentions were thus realized by internalizing Korean art and architectural traditions in its visualization of Korea’s colonial history.

Thus, it can be argued that Korean architectural traditions came to
be discovered and investigated from the early 1900s and they were also displayed in the 1915 exhibition. Like its previous exhibition in the West around the 1900s, Japan also represented itself through historical displays in the modern exhibition in Korea and in this case, the Japanese construction of history were imagining the developments of internalized Korean architectural traditions; here, the internalized Korean architectural traditions show modernity in the sense that they show historical progress.

REFERENCES


ENDNOTES

1 Shin, Ju-Back argues that Gyeongbok Palace had become the most popular place for hosting modern exhibitions during the colonial period. (Ju-Back Shin, "Bakramhoe: Gwashi, Seonjeong, Gyemong, Sobi eui Cheheom Gongan" (Exposition-Space for Ostentation, Advertisement, Enlightenment and Experiencing Consumption). Yeoksabipyong 67 (2004): 357-394. For the Joseon Industrial Exhibition of 1915, please see the article by Kim, Tae-Woong. For various uses of graphics, statistics, photos and models in advertising Japanese colonial policies and achievements, please see the article by Shin, Ju-Back.

2 In addition, his romantic sense of modernity ("a tradition against itself (Ibid., 1.)") also closely ties the modern to its immediate past, the traditional. So, I want to argue that "modernity" exists at the intersection between "tradition" and "history."
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To understand Japan's anthropological efforts to overcome the West, see Beasley, Japan encounters the barbarian, 65 and 74-75.

Ibid., 50, 55, 64-5 and 66.

The publication of Histoire de l'art du Japon was commissioned to Kojin Karatani, "Japan as Museum: Okakura Tenshin and Ernest Yoshimi argued that world exhibitions were places where the general public first met with new products (Ibid., 43.).

For more on the International Exhibition of 1862 in London, see Edmund Lockyer, "Japan at the exhibition, 1867-1970" (PhD diss., Stanford University, 2000).

Yoshimi, Baglamhoe, 136.

Ibid., 135.

See Ayako Hotta-Lister, The Japan-British Exhibition of 1910: Gateway to the Island Empire of the East (Richmond, Surrey: Japan Library, 1999), 221-222.

Yoshimi said that the European interest in Japan grew a lot at the 1873 Vienna exhibition (Yoshimi, Baglamhoe, 130 and 236.).

Ibid., 133.; Ibid., 135.

W G Beasley, Japan encounters the barbarian: Japanese travellers in America and Europe (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1995), 78.

Charles W Iglehart, A Century of Protestant Christianity in Japan (Tokyo; Rutland, VT: Charles E. Tuttle, 1959), 37.; The Meiji restoration slogan was actually derived from the old one saying "Japanese spirit and Chinese scholarship."

See Beasley, Japan encounters the barbarian, 65 and 74-75.

Ibid., 50, 55, 64-5 and 66.

"Japan's earlier studies of the past had been used largely to affirm the status quo or to 'discover' the errors of the immediate past; the notion of progress, however, transformed Japan's very history and world vision (Stefan Tanaka, Japan's Orient (Berkeley, Los Angeles, London: University of California Press, 1993), 33.)."; 'Intellectuals of the early-Meiji period eagerly adopted the 'world histories' of Europe so as to develop a history in which Japan, too, could be part of the universal order... they sought a scientific methodology that prioritized the study of human activity as a regulated and historical object. Through their reading of the histories of Western civilization, they came to believe that universal laws existed that govern all societies, including Japan, and they attempted to place Japan into that universalistic framework. In this sense the West, a geographical and idealized entity that represented progress and modernity, replaced China as Japan's ideal (Ibid., 36.)."

"The realm for this new past was toyo, which was at once contiguous with Western histories and antithetical to them. Geographically, toyo expanded the area of the Western universal; it added the 'Far East' to the Western Orient, thereby reinforcing the Western split between the Orient and Occident. But it also reflected an awareness that such territorial categories, especially those defined by Europe, are not neutral or objective. By elevating toyo to an equivalent half of the whole, this history offered a competing totality – a new sequence and order – to the universal of the West (Ibid., 34.)."

"By the Meiji twenties (1887-1896), Japanese historians' initial enthusiasm for a philosophy of history that implicitly imposed a uniformity based in European progress had waned, and they began to turn toward a Japanese and Asian past….The shift away from enlightenment history toward Japan's roots was due in large part both to Japan's very acceptance of enlightenment history and to the ultimate failure of that history to accommodate Japan as an equal….However, 'the orient' in the Japanese sense implied not only Japan's need to see itself as the equal of 'the West,' but as Japan's desire to be perceived as the most refined stage of 'the Orient'(Ibid., 45.)."

To understand Japan's anthropological efforts to overcome the West, see the first chapter of Eiji Oguma, A genealogy of 'Japanese' self-images (Melbourne: Trans Pacific Press, 2002).; Kyoko Matsuda argued that Tsuibo developed a theory to criticize the Western-centered perspective by supporting the singular origin of human mankind denying biological differences between human races. See Kyoko Matsuda, Teikoku no nishen: Hakurankan to ibunka hyocho [Imperial perspective: exposition and the representations of alien culture] (Tokyo: Yoshikawa kobunkan, 2003), 149-150.; Katsuhiko Yamaji argued that Tsuibo developed the idea of the Japanese as a mixed blood race to compete with the West. See Katsuhiko Yamaji, Kindai nihon no shokuminchi hakurankan [Modern Japanese colonial exhibitions] (Tokyo: Fukyosha, 2008), 51.

See Victoria Louise Weston, Japanese painting and national identity: Okakura Tenshin and his circle (Ann Arbor, MI: Center for Japanese Studies, University of Michigan, 2004), 111.


Okakura Kakuzo, The Ideals of the East (London: J. Murray, 1903), 3.; Okakura's ideas are also shown in the following publications: The Awakening of Japan (1904) and The Book of Tea (1906).


The design of the Japanese pavilion was made by the Japanese exhibition commissioner and art dealer Hayashi Tadamasa (Mishima, "1900 nen Paris bankokuhaku ni okeru nihonkan no keitain tsuite," 134.).

Ibid., 134 and 139.; Mishima argued that Hayashi Tadamasa considered Buddhist architecture for the design of the exhibition pavilion and was influenced by Itô's work on Horyūji. He also argued that Hayashi wanted to inform the West of the Japanese long art and architectural history developed from its early periods (Ibid., 136-137.)

Ibid., 138.

Ibid., 135.

"One of the chief aims of the Japanese government for the 1910 Japan-
British exhibition was to show to Japan's Western ally that Japan's civilization had not been of modern acquisition, as was often believed in the West, but that she had had a long and varied history of her progress (Japan-British Exhibition, Official report of the Japan British Exhibition, 1910, at the Great White City, Shepherd's Bush, London (London: Printed by Unwin Bros., 1911), 199.). Japanese civilization finds its source in remote antiquity. It was in the latter half of the third century of the Christian era that a noted 'father of the civilization of the East and the West,' a native of Kudara [Baekje], one of the three kingdoms of Korea, brought with him Chinese learning and was presented to our Imperial court, thus opening the gates to the inflow of Chinese and Hindoo civilization (Ibid., 256.)."  


34 Ibid., 125.  

35 This problem is further discussed in my essay for Chora: Intervals in the Philosophy of Architecture (Vol. 7), entitled “Constructing Architectural History in the Joseon Industrial Exhibition of 1915.”  


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