

# A Comparative Study on Pattern in Traditional Palaces of Korea, China and Japan.

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The purpose of this study is to ascertain the pattern in traditional palaces among those in the neighboring three nations of East Asia, notably Korea, China and Japan. The basic assumption underlying this particular academic study is that these northeastern Asian states have been developed a unique inter-cultural ties over long periods of time in history, culminating in their respective design cultures. Moreover, there are the similarities as well as dissimilarities more conspicuous than the traditional palaces since the traditional palace is the intensive space of the design elements and in better preservation than any other building. Thus, it would appear most feasible to incorporate the individual space cases into a common typological setting, which will be followed by an extensive comparative analysis. Undoubtedly the ultimate goal to be pursued, by so doing, has to be inquiry into the identical prototype of Korean pattern.

Samples of the traditional palace taken in the study are the Changduckung of Korea, the Forbidden City of China, and the Nijo castle of Japan. These traditional palaces represent five dimension – the original characteristic, the time of built, the status of user, preservation, the ease of approach. It takes three steps to proceed this study. For the comparative analysis of the design elements, the analysis framework is established. This framework is formed by the research of the three nations' documents. The building of the traditional palace is consists of three parts: roofs, walls and columns and platforms. Besides, the outside factors of the building – the gate, the fence, etc.– are the important constitution element of the traditional palace. In second step, the pattern should be collected and investigated through the observation of the actual traditional palaces – the Changduckung, the Forbidden City, the Nijo castle. At this step, digital camera and other appropriate devices would be used for the study. The third step is the analysis of the results of the investigation of the pattern from step two.

To sum up similarities and dissimilarities among the pattern in traditional palaces of Korea, China and Japan is as the following : It is to be noticed that the mainly common characteristics of the pattern are 'symbolism' and 'naturalism'. But the representation style of the design element is differed from the country. In the West, the pattern is appreciated by an aesthetic level, but the East Asian pattern is a symbolic alphabet deeply rooted in religious and folk beliefs. That is, the East Asian people "read" a story written in visual language rich in linguistic and literary allusions. Patterns are themselves often used as decorative elements, and they also serve as communication methods and talismans to dispel evil influences and attract good fortune. East Asian patterns have two general characteristics. First, there is an emphasis on nature. Second, there is an almost incredible variety of motifs, and variations on motifs. But the difference of the respective country comes from the expression style of the pattern: the Chinese express the magnificent pattern with various color, the Korean do the moderate pattern with harmonious color with the nature and the Japanese do the stylized pattern with the material color.

# A Comparative Study on Patterns in Traditional Palaces of Korea, China and Japan.

- Focused on the exterior patterns : the Motif, the Form and the Symbol -

## 1. Introduction

The purpose of this study is to ascertain the pattern<sup>1</sup> in traditional palace, with a view to establishing casual relationship, if any, among those in the neighboring three nations of East Asia, notably Korea, China, and Japan.

The basic assumption underlying this particular academic study is that these northeastern Asian states have developed unique inter-cultural ties over long periods of time in history, culminating in their respective design cultures. Moreover, nowhere are the similarities as well as dissimilarities more conspicuous than the traditional palaces since the traditional palace is the intensive space of the design elements – especially pattern - and is better preservation than any other building.

Thus, it would appear most feasible to incorporate the individual space cases into a common typological setting, which will be followed by an extensive comparative analysis. Undoubtly the ultimate goal to be pursued, by so doing, has to be inquiry into the identical prototype of Korean pattern.

## 2. Examples

Examples of the traditional palace taken in the study are *the Changduckung* of Korea, *the Forbidden City* of China, and *the Nijo castle* of Japan. These traditional palaces represent five dimension – the original characteristic, the time of built, the status of user, preservation, the ease of approach.

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<sup>1</sup>. The term 'pattern' refers to distinguishing marks made onto surfaces. In prehistoric eras, before the emergence of language, symbols served as a means of communication. Gradually, they gave way to more advanced forms of expression – letters and drawings, from which paintings and design motifs derived. The interior and exterior spaces of the traditional buildings of Asian nations and their furnishings showcased a rich variety of such design patterns. These design elements yields glimpses into the lifestyles of the Asian people of the past, their social mores, and their personal

In terms of the original characteristic, they are archetype or prototype of their own traditional palaces and have patterns of pre-modernization. They were built mostly during the 16<sup>th</sup> century with a few in the 17<sup>th</sup> century and their user were the man of supreme power – a emperor, a king, a *shogun*. Moreover, these traditional palaces have the intensive place of patterns and preserved better than any other palace. Lastly, they open to the general person and then have the ease of the investigation through the observation. Besides, these traditional palaces are included the World Heritage of UNESCO and are worth of treasure of the human race.

### 3. Process & Method

It takes three steps to proceed this study. Firstly, it needs to be established the analysis framework from the documents. In second step, the pattern should be collected and investigated through the observation of the actual traditional palaces – the Changduckung, the Forbidden City, the Nijo castle -. At this step, digital camera and other appropriate devices would be used for the observation of the exterior elements. The third step is the analysis of the results of the investigation of the design elements from step two.

The process and method of the study are as follows ;

**Table1. Process and method**

STEP	PROCESS	METHOD
Pre.	The Form of the scheme of the study	
1st.	The Establishment of the analysis framework .	The Research of the documents.
2nd	The Collecting & Investigation into the Pattern	The Observation of the actual traditional palace – the Changduckung, the Forbidden City, the Nijo castle -.
3rd	The Analysis of the results of the investigation of the Pattern from 2nd step.	The View of Comparative analysis.
Post.	The making of the Conclusion	

### 4. Results and Discussions

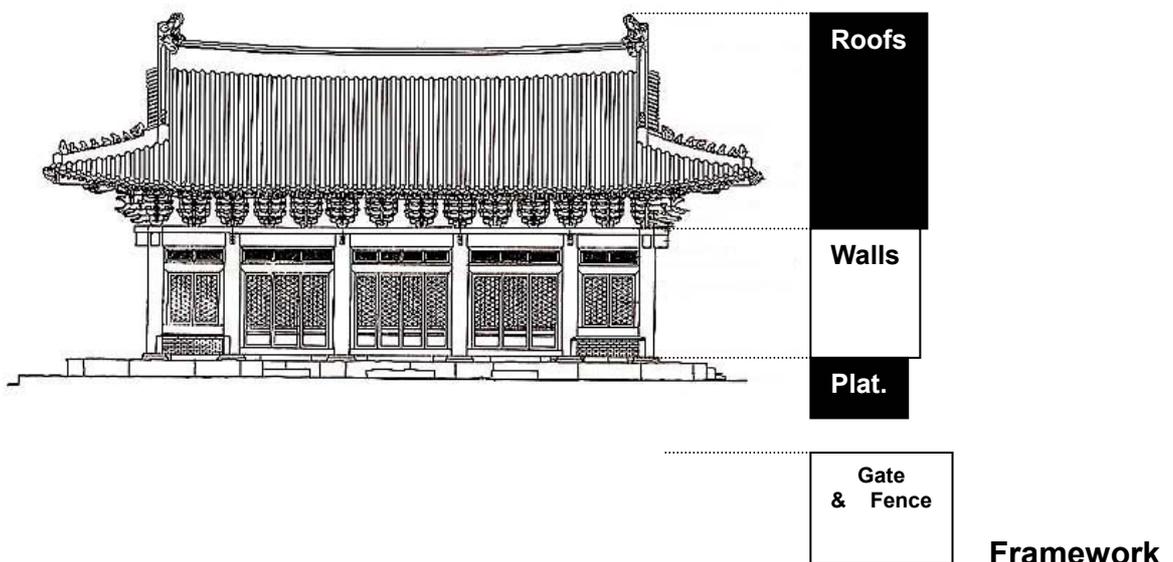
#### 4.1. Framework I - Architecture

For the comparative analysis of the pattern, the analysis framework(architecture) is established. This framework is formed by the research of the three nations' documents.[1][2][3] The building of the traditional palace is consists of three parts : roofs, walls and columns and platforms. Besides, the outside factors of the building – the gate, the fence, etc. – are the important constitution element of the traditional palace.

Accordingly, the analysis framework(architecture) is established as follows :

**Table 2. The Analysis Framework - architecture**

CONSTITUTION PART	DETAILS
roofs.	roof / eaves / braket set / etc.
walls.	Column / column base / wall / door & window / etc.
platforms	Platform / balustrade / steps / beast ornaments (fronting the building) / etc.
outside	Gate / fence / etc.



#### 4.2 II – Pattern

For the more detail analysis of the pattern, the analysis framework(pattern) is established. This framework is formed by the basis of the Korean documents and symbolism. The pattern of the traditional palace is divided by the motif and the form : imaginary motif or actual motif ; animal, plant, insect, nature, goods, letter, etc. Because in

the West, the pattern is appreciated by an aesthetic level, but the East Asian pattern is a symbolic alphabet deeply rooted in religious and folk beliefs. That is, the East Asian people “read” a story written in visual language rich in linguistic and literary allusions. Patterns are themselves often used as decorative elements, and they also serve as communication methods and talismans to dispel evil influences and attract good fortune.

**Table 3. The Analysis Framework - pattern**

DIVISION		PATTERN	SYMBOL	DIVISION		PATTERN	SYMBOL	
ACTUAL MOTIF	ANIMALS	Beasts	Elephant Deer Tiger Toad Rabbit Bat Turtle	IMAGINARY MOTIF	Beasts	Mystical unicorn lion Crow of three legs Golden hen	Justice Sun High & noble	
		Birds	Crane Peacock Hen Mandarin duck Duck			Plants	Imaginary flowers	Good fortune riches and honors many children
		Fishes	Carp Fish			Lucky physiognomy	Taeguk Palkae Templegong	Eternity youth, Harmony Creation
	PLANTS	Flowers	Lotus Ume Chrysanthemum		Geometry	Mark Successive circle	Successive happiness	
		Grasses	Arabesque Orchid		Four sides beasts	Blue dragon White tiger Red phoenix Black turtle	Four sides	
		Trees	Bamboo Linden Willow Pine		Four mysterious beasts	Dragon Chinese phoenix Turtle Imaginary horse	Dispel the evil Dignity of royal Sky & earth Yang & yin Lucky physiognomy	
		Fruits	Pomegranate Mushroom Peach		Ten long life creatures	Sun, Mountain, Water, Stone, Cloud, Pine, Turtle, Crane, Grass of eternal youth, Deer	A royal family Long life Eternal youth	
		Insects	Butterfly Locust		Twelve horary signs	Tiger, Dragon, Horse, Hen, Rabbit, Cow, Monkey, Pig, Mouse, Dog, Snake, Sheep	Influence teaching. by	

<b>Nature</b>	<b>Sun&amp;mo on Cloud Waves</b>	Yin and Yang Divinity Royal court	<b>Face of ghost</b>	Dispel the evil
<b>Goods</b>	<b>Pot Coin Treasure</b>	Lucky physiognomy Authority Dispel evil		
<b>Letter</b>	卍 喜 回	Good fortune Harmony Success		

### 4.3 the Results & Discussion

In this study, patterns of the traditional palaces are characterized by the actual use.

The results of the study on pattern are as follows [table 4, figure 1,2,3] and for understanding the feature of the three palaces, collecting patterns arranged in expression scale.: They were commonly used nature motif, repeated similarly and chiefly located on the roofs. Besides, they were frequently used patterns related lucky physiognomy, but scarcely used pure decoration. Same patterns of three palaces are arabesque, cloud, temple-gong and the Chinese phoenix.

**Table 4. The Patterns of three palaces.**

	<b>CHINA</b> ( the Forbidden City)	<b>KOREA</b> ( the Changduckung)	<b>JAPAN</b> ( the Nijo Castle)
<b>Roofs</b>	<b>Roof &amp; Eaves:</b> dragon / phoenix / lion / sea horse / celestial horse / yayu / suanni / xiezhi / douniu / xingshi <b>Braket set :</b> golden-dragon / phoenix / grass / whirling flowers / cloud / arabesque	lotus / a human-led parade / phoenix / dragon / gardenia / geometry / wave / cloud  chrysanthemum / cloud / arabesque / geometry / lotus / double-blossomed flower / buddist flower / dragon / peaceful flower	Chrysanthemum / leaves / temple-gong / arabesque / long-tail whirls / helmet / lion / peonix / wave / anuruddha / chrysanthemum  <b>Etc. :</b> phoenix / pine / camellia / snow / bamboo
<b>Walls</b>	<b>Door &amp; window :</b> geometry	geometry(plaid / intersection) / gardenia	Geometry(plaid)
<b>Platforms</b>	<b>Platform :</b> dehorned dragon / arabesque / cloud /tortoise / crane	mystical unicorn lion / cloud / arabesque / chrysanthemum / phoenix	

	<b>Balustrades</b> :: dragon / cloud <b>Etc.</b> : dragon / cloud		arabesque
<b>Outside</b>	<b>Gate</b> : dragon / phoenix / lion / sea horse / celestial horse / yayu / suanni / xiezhi / douniu / xingshi /lotus / lion / flower	phoenix / dragon / gardenia / geometry / wave / cloud	Helmet / chrysanthemum / arabesque / temple-gong / phoenix / pine / camellia / snow / bamboo

In the Changduck-palace of Korea, 23 kinds of pattern are used 64 times and various flower patterns are frequently used against cloud and geometric lines. Unique patterns of the Changduck-palace of Korea are plum flower, gardenia, jucdae-lattice and 亞-lattice. The patterns of the Changduck-palace of Korea concentrate lucky physiognomy. The pattern of the Changduck-palace are abstractly expressed with soft and thick lines

In the Forbidden city of China, 25 kinds of pattern are used 103 times and dragon patterns are frequently used. Unique patterns are rabbit, turtle, crane, cat, imaginary horse, mountain, and horse. The patterns of the Forbidden city of China concentrate Long life symbol. The patterns of the Forbidden city are realistically expressed with various and strong color.

In the Nijo-castle of Japan, 20 kinds of pattern are used 43 times and Chrysanthemum flower patterns are frequently used. Unique patterns of the Nijo-castle of Japan represented in *ranma* - snow, helmet, bird, bamboo, butterfly and pine. The patterns of the Nijo-castle of Japan scarcely used as a means of dispelling evil. The patterns of the Nijo-castle are ordered and detailed with decoration and skill.

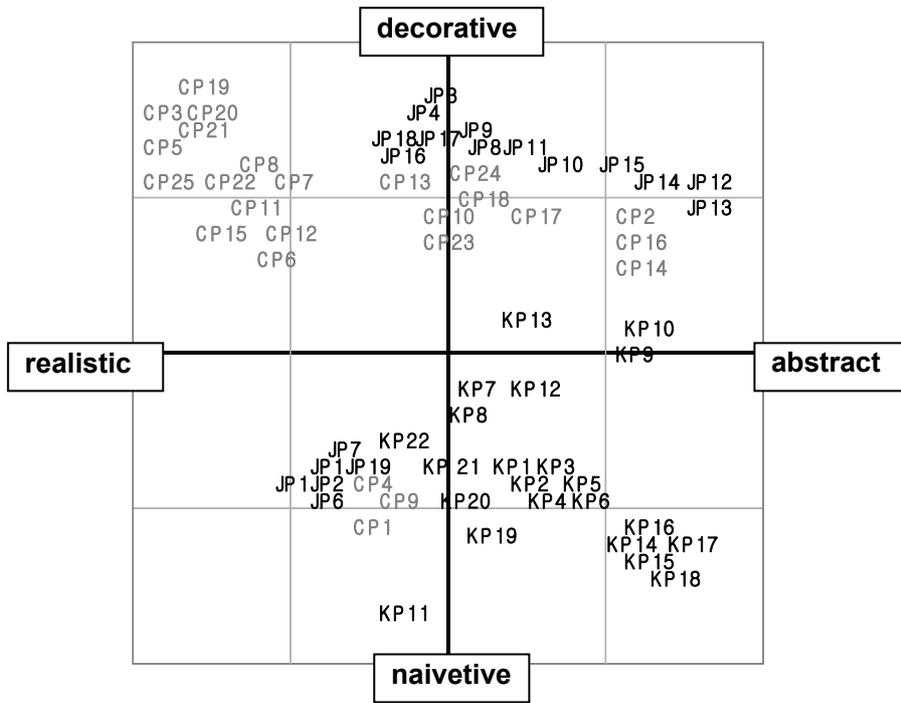


Fig 1. The expression scale of the Patterns : K(Korea) / C(China) / J(Japan)

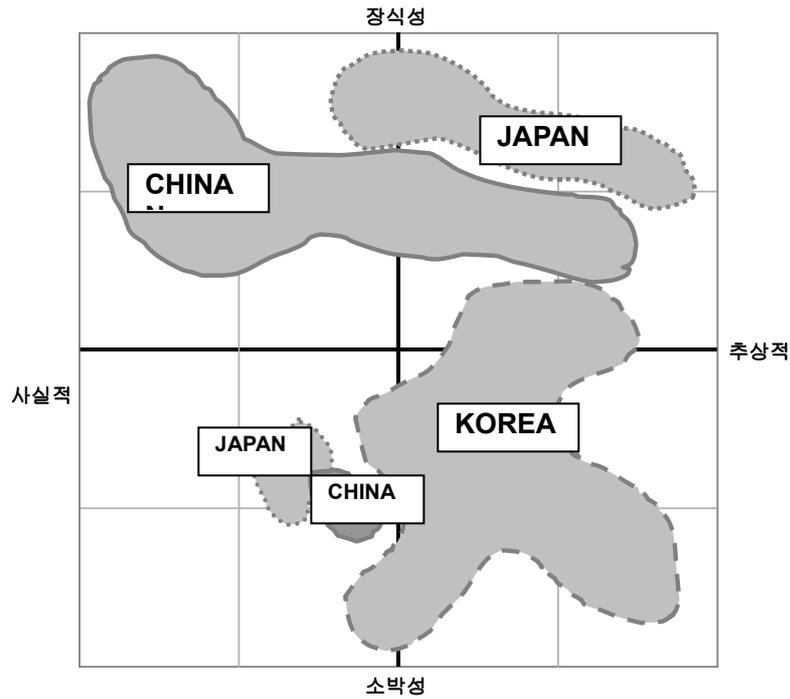
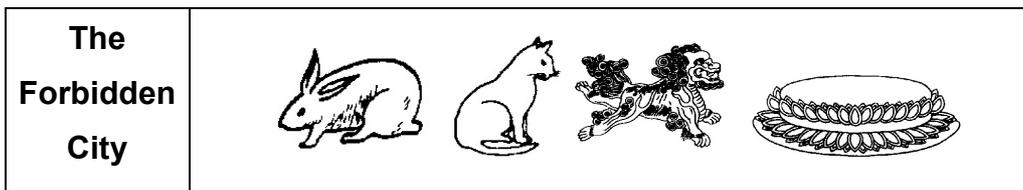


Fig 2. The expression scale of the Patterns



<p>The Changduc kung</p>	
<p>The Nijo Castle</p>	

**Fig 3. The characteristic Patterns of three palace**

## 5. Conclusions

To sum up similarities and dissimilarities among the pattern in traditional palaces of Korea, China and Japan is as the following : East Asian patterns have three general characteristics. : First, there is an emphasis on nature. Second, a certain vagueness is preferred to absolute clarity. Finally, there is an almost incredible variety of motifs, and variations on motifs[6]. It is to be noticed that the mainly common characteristics of the artistic design are 'naturalism' and 'humanism'. But the representation style of the pattern is differed from the country. : The typical features of China are reality, symmetry, the meandered curve, the magnificent volumn and the various color. In Japan, ordered and detailed with decoration and skill, the mathematical asymmetry, the straight line, abbreviation and achromatic color are important feature of the pattern. While the major features of Korean pattern are asymmetrical balance with nature, moderate pattern with soft and thick line and harmonious color.

It is hoped research findings in this study would lay a cornerstone for design development of the East Asia. It is believed that the existing piecemeal research on the design elements of the individual nation in that part of the world needs to be replaced by the one based on broder perspectives on the subject.

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