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The Art of Wooden Architecture – a history of the world

**Die Kunst der Holzarchitektur:
Eine Weltgeschichte**

**L'arte dell'architettura in legno:
una storia mondiale**

Document in English

The Art of Wooden Architecture – a history of the world

1 Wooden architecture – its historiography

Historically wooden architecture has been misunderstood. Far from being an inferior building material wood is simply a different one. Wood served as a blueprint for many of the world's major architectural traditions. The range and influence of wooden architecture can be seen through an overview of its primary historical traditions.



2 The Far East

Wooden architecture and Japan - Japan's theological affinity with wood as seen in the Japanese carpentry tradition. Medieval wooden architecture – The Amida Buddha's Pure Land as interpreted by the Phoenix Hall at Uji. The transformation of castle architecture – Himeji and Nijo Castles. The Golden and Silver Pavilions. Wood's place in Chinese cosmology as interpreted by Chinese philosophy and The Temple of Heaven. The Forbidden City and the Emperor.



3 Northern Europe

The conifer forests and Scandinavian society. An integrated tradition.
Norway's Stave Churches and Norwegian society prior to the Black Death.
The Mercantile tradition of Bergen's Bryggen.
The Protestant Churches of Finland – cruciform and truncated cruciform designs.



4 Western Europe

The importance of wooden architecture in Europe's architectural history.
Half-timbering in Germany, France and England. The Hallenhaus. Holland - Wood in Waterland. The Swiss chalet.

5 Eastern Europe

The unique tradition of Russia. Axe-cut architecture and Russian society. The primitive 'scruby': the building-block of Russian architecture in wood. The pyramidal church and the 17th century schism in the orthodox church. Peter the Great's Cathedral of the Transfiguration. The gothic churches of the Maramures, Northern Romania.



6 The United States

The houses of early settlers at Massachusetts Bay. The influence of the pattern books on the architecture of Newport, Rhode Island. The Shakers. The San Francisco building boom. Wood's place in fermenting an American architecture – the Shingle Style and Grenne and Greene.



7 South-East Asia

Wood construction and its place in South-Eastern societies. Teak architecture in Lanna Thailand. The Thai Wat. The Burmese Monastery and it's destruction. The Thai House

8 Australia

Imported and indigenous woods – softwoods and eucalypts. The 'Queenlander' – an imported style. Sydney's Finger Wharves and the properties of the eucalypts.

9 Future Wooden Architecture

Wooden architecture and saving the planet. Using sustainable and local wood - the environmental houses of Andresen O'Gorman and Rick Leplastrier. The possibilities of a High-tech vernacular - Renzo Piano's Jean Tjibaou Cultural Centre, New Caledonia. Technical developments - the Downland Gridshell.

An alternative approach to architecture where buildings can be moved, reconfigured or entirely recycled.

