

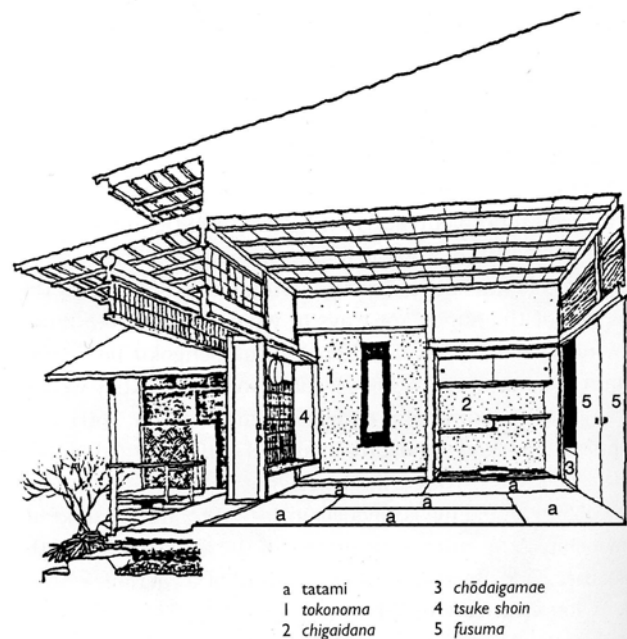
274 Plan of Himeji Castle. (Pierre and Liliane Giroux, after Ōta Hirotarō, from *The Art of Ancient Japan*, Editions Citadelles, Paris.)

important figures of the period had a hand in its construction, and the scale of the buildings and the intricacy of their configuration are in stunning contrast to the simplicity of Inuyama Castle.

The entire complex consists of several maze-like enclosures arranged around the central enclosure, or *honmaru*, where the *tenshu* stands (Fig. 274). Castle enclosures could be laid out in a number of different ways: in a ladder-like progression up a hill, as a series of concentric rings with the *honmaru* at the heart, or in a number of interlocking units as at Himeji, this last being the most effective militarily. To approach the *tenshu* of Himeji Castle, would-be attackers had to cross broad open areas, follow paths at odd angles to the main structure, and pass through narrow gates flanked by strongly fortified watchtowers. The *honmaru* itself consists of four main buildings: three three-storied keeps linked by crossing towers and a five-storied *tenshu*. This rectangular complex surrounded what was originally a working garden. The *honmaru* is virtually impregnable, yet the *tenshu*, its sequence of tiled roofs punctuated by curved Chinese gables and sharply pointed triangular gables, has a light, ascending rhythm that suggests the graceful white heron, or *shirasagi*.

SHOIN

The second architectural innovation in the Momoyama period was the *shoin*, an elaborate form of residence that evolved out of the aristocratic *shinden*. Its development begins with the political ascendancy of the samurai class in the medieval period, but it reached its mature form in this period. *Shoin* architecture, and particularly the living-reception room, reflects the formalized relationship between samurai lord and retainer. The most important room in a *shoin*, whether that of a shogun, daimyo, or retainer, was the space where the master might entertain either his lord or his vassals. In its most developed form it consisted of two levels, the floor of the upper section elevated a few inches above the lower. The highest-ranking samurai, whether he was the master of the house or not, sat on the upper level. Behind where he sat was a *tokonoma*, a shallow raised alcove where a scroll might be hung and a flower arrangement or objects of value might be displayed (Fig. 275). Next to the *tokonoma* there was usually another alcove, a recess of comparable depth with compartments above and below, and in the center a *chigaidana*, or group of interconnected shelves at different heights. At right angles to these two alcoves was a small room known as the *tsuke shoin*, or attached study, which projected from the wide veranda outside. In the wall facing the veranda was a large window, often circular or bell-shaped in the Chinese style and covered with opaque paper. Below it would be a set of cabinets, often used as a desk. At right angles to the window wall was another set of shelves, on which books and writing implements could be displayed. Opposite the *tsuke shoin* there was usually a set of four *fusuma* in the wall of the main room, about two-thirds of its



275 Cutaway drawing of main room in *shoin* building.



276 Kyakuden (Guest Hall), Kōjōin precinct, Onjōji, Shiga prefecture. 1601.

height. The purpose of the area behind the doors, known as the *chōdaigamae*, depended on the needs of the lord. In daimyo mansions the doors might conceal a waiting room for bodyguards. In less official structures, they might lead to a bedroom, and sometimes they served merely as ornamentation. It is also in this period that the tatami mat began to be used to carpet the entire floor surface of a room. Tatami came in standardized sizes, although these standards can differ from region to region. Room dimensions from this period onward, therefore, would be set with an eye to how the tatami mats could be configured to cover the floor surface. It soon became standard to describe a room as being so and so many mats—a five-mat room, a seven-mat room, and so forth.

A simple form of fully developed *shoin* architecture is seen in the *kyakuden*, or guest hall, of the Kōjōin precinct within Onjōji, a temple on Lake Biwa (Fig. 276). Just like the court aristocracy, samurai would use temples as places of retreat or permanent retirement, and in the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries a great many *shoin* retreats were established in temples famous for their tranquillity or scenery. This was one of the important ways in which many suburban or provincial temples damaged during the Sengoku Jidai could obtain the patronage of wealthy daimyo—vital if they were to carry out rebuilding and refurbishment. Built in 1601 by a samurai who had been ordained and retired to Onjōji, the *kyakuden* is one of the earliest surviving examples of the *shoin*. The oblong building is divided into five rooms of differing dimensions. The entrance is on one of the narrow sides of the structure. One ascends the stairs in front of a carriage rest—a spot where a two-wheeled carriage can be left once the oxen have been released from their shafts—and enters a small vestibule; ahead is the master's reception and living room. Opposite its entrance door are a *tokonoma* and *chigaidana*, and

at the left a *tsuke shoin* with its own *tokonoma*. To the right of this main room are smaller rooms, the master's sleeping quarters being set behind the *chōdaigamae*. A veranda surrounds the building, wider on the long side facing the garden to permit sheltered viewing of nature in its seasonal changes.

One of the grandest examples of *shoin* architecture at the beginning of the Momoyama period would have been Hideyoshi's Jurakudai residence behind the imperial palace in Kyoto. However, he had it dismantled in 1595 after the suicide of his nephew there. Fortunately, Nijō Castle, the residence of the Tokugawa in Kyoto—although the shoguns primarily resided in Edo—has survived to the present. The Ōhiroma, or Great Audience Hall, was remodeled around 1625, and includes the elements already seen in the *Kyakuden*, but on a grand scale appropriate for formal interviews with the shogun



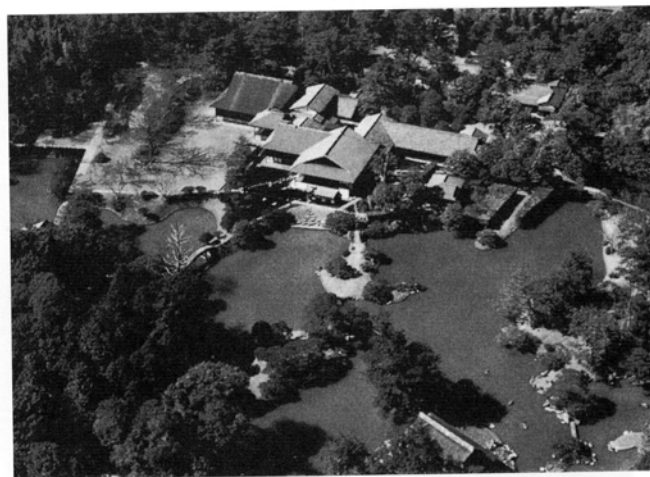
277 Ōhiroma (Great Audience Hall), Nijō Castle, Kyoto. c. 1625.

(Fig. 277). This room occupies the long side of the building facing the garden and consists of two main areas: the lower level for the shogun's vassals, and the upper level, where the shogun sat, backed by a *tokonoma* painted with a massive pine tree set against a gold ground, a visual metaphor for the strength and enduring nature of his *bakufu*. To the right of the *tokonoma* is a *chigaidana*, and—on the long wall facing the garden—a *chōdaigamae* leading to a waiting room for bodyguards; to the left, an abbreviated attached study, or *tsuke shoin*. The ceiling is elaborately coffered, and the panels above the decorated sliding doors are deeply carved and brilliantly painted with flower and cloud motifs.

#### KATSURA IMPERIAL VILLA

Both Hideyoshi and the early Tokugawa shoguns subscribed to the importance of a stable and fairly prosperous emperor and court, albeit one with a cultural rather than a political role. They therefore ensured that the imperial house and its leading courtiers had the means to keep themselves in a manner appropriate to their station. The tradition of the aristocratic mansion also experienced a revival during this period, and one of the most superbly designed buildings of the early seventeenth century is a palace retreat, the Katsura Imperial Villa located on the Katsura River to the southwest of Kyoto (Fig. 278). Built originally between 1620 and 1624 for Prince Toshihito (1579–1629), the buildings and surrounding grounds combine a style of artlessness known as *sukiya*—a subdued and unostentatious effect achieved through painstaking attention to detail—with specific elements recreated from the *Genji monogatari*, one of the prince's favorite books (see pages 116–118). The last palace that Genji built was called Katsura because it too was located along the Katsura River. As described in the novel, Prince Toshihito's villa has in its grounds a large lake with several artificial islands, a rustic fishing pavilion, and a lodge next to the racecourse for the games held in conjunction with the festival at the Kamigamo Shrine in Kyoto. The buildings of the original villa consisted of a main *shoin* (known today as the old *shoin*, or *koshoin*) with a bamboo-floored moon-viewing platform, a smaller *shoin*, and a music room set in the garden grounds. In 1642, a new *shoin* was built onto the southwest side of the older structure, greatly extending the horizontal nature of the building. Inside, no provision was made for emphasizing the rank of individual guests by different floor levels or by connotative images in the *tokonoma*. The palace was designed for the informal assembly of courtiers and the imperial family, as a place where they could put aside issues of class and in a relaxed atmosphere enjoy the few gentle cultural pursuits the Tokugawa *bakufu* permitted them.

Especially notable at Katsura are the surprising, but pleasing, visual and spatial dissonances that occur in the design of the buildings and in the disposition of decorative patterns. Viewed from the front, the *koshoin* appears to be a stable, rectangular structure capped with a hipped-gable roof



278 Aerial View of Katsura Imperial Villa, Kyoto. 1620–23.

(Fig. 279). However, the section on the extreme lower right, which looks like a solid wall, is actually a wood-and-plaster panel concealing the stairs leading to the moon-viewing balcony. To the left of the balcony are grouped a number of irregular stones that obscure the base of the building, making it seem to float above the ground. If you follow the path around the lake, you notice similar spatial dissonances. As you pass through a wooden gate, nature at first appears neatly manicured. Moss surrounds the stones of the path, and trees border the area in a regular pattern. The space then narrows between path and trees, and you must duck under overhanging branches. Suddenly the path curves sharply, and interrupting an open vista of the lake you see an island with a replica of Mount Horai—of Chinese Daoist mythology—and Katsura Villa beyond. Along the path around the lake, interesting contrasts of textures also arrest the eye. Cleanly



279 General view of *shoin*, Katsura Imperial Villa. 1620–4.