

SPACE IN JAPANESE ZEN BUDDHIST ARCHITECTURE

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ABSTRACT

The beginning in the medieval period the ideas “emptiness” and “nothingness” in Buddhist doctrine influences over the Japanese.

Space in Japanese architecture (kukan), as a empty place. This word originally stood for a “hole in the ground”, and in on present meaning of a “hole in the universe”, or “sky”. The ancient Japanese divided space vertically into two parts, sora (sky) and ame or ama (heaven). In the concept of emptiness both of this above it can be said is a part of space.

This paper will tries to explain and discusses about the meaning of space in Japanese Zen Buddhist architecture.

Keywords: Zen Buddhist, space, Japanese, emptiness.

INTRODUCTION

Zen as one of the religious sects which has reverberations in every corner, which philosophy has been transformed from Indian Buddhism into Zen Buddhism. Zen (chan, ch’an, an abbreviation of ch’an-an, which transliterates the Sanskrit term dhyana or its Pali cognate jhana, term meaning “meditation”) is the name of Mahayana Buddhist school of meditation originating in China and characterized by the practice of meditation in the lotus position (Jpn., zazen; Chin., tso-ch’an) and the use of koan (Chin., kung-an), as well as by the enlightenment experience satori (Dumoulin, 1988:xvii). In reality dhyana Buddhism are source from Zen Buddhism which is spread to China in the sixth century and Japan in the latter of thirteenth century.

If we desire to study the space in the Zen Buddhist architecture, we must also understand the philosophy of Zen Buddhism. As what Gropius and Tange (1960:4) said, we can understand the architecture of nations and period only as we win an inside knowledge of their way of thinking and their philosophy. It is the same that Engel (1964:365) described Zen philosophy, because of its particular methods on the one hand its universal approach on the other, has, from Japanese Middle Ages on, influenced all phases of Japanese life more profoundly than has any of the other sects and was closely associated not only with the arts, social institutions, but also, particularly, with architecture and landscaping.

This paper will tries to explain and discusses about the meaning of space in Japanese Zen Buddhism which in their developments has influenced all classes of society, especially, in architecture and gardens.

THE SYMBOL OF HUMANISM

The historical founder of Buddhism Sidharta Gautama was born about 563 BC., the son of the ruler of Kapilavastu, into the princely clean of Sakyas on the border of Nepal. Gautama lived on earth as human being but, during the more than fourthy years of active ministry that followed him attainment of supreme Enlightenment (satori) while seated in deep meditation under a sacred Bodhi Tree (Tree of Wisdom or Enlightenment). Siddharta than bathed, changed his garments and, greatly refreshed in body an spirit and with a new insight and determination, took up once more the familiar cross-legged lotus posture of meditation, under a nearby fig tree destined to become the Bodhi Tree (Ross, 1966:88). The culmination of this trance was the attainment of Buddhahood the achievement of a state of cosmic consciousness as far above the mental plane of ordinary mortals as the level of human consciousness is raised above. Only after that, he saw the cause of eternal recurrence of birth and death and thus of suffering and misery in “Four Holy Truths” the basis of his later teachings (Wickert, 1989:16):

1. *All life is suffering.*
2. *All suffering is the result of lost and desire.*

3. *The removal of desire leads to the removal of suffering.*
4. *The way to deliverance is through the Holy Eightfold Path which is: righteous belief; righteous intention; righteous word-truth and openness; righteous conduct-peaceful and pure; righteous living-causing no injury; righteous effort towards self-control; righteous thinking; righteous meditation.*

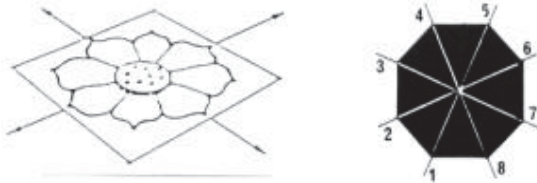


Figure 1. The basic concept of the Eightfold Path, as the aims to attain enlightenment. Its derived to the octagonal plan as a physical form.

The Holy Eightfold Path above mention which was given by the Buddha, constitute of one important part for attaining enlightenment. The basic foundation of the Holy Eightfold Path can be derived onto the basic concept of temple and Pagoda. Whose form in fact develop from the lotus petal as a place to sit for the Buddha (Figure 1). Snodgrass (1985:27) said, the petal of the lotus are the points of the compass, indicating directions of indefinite extension; their opening is the deployment of space from the center, the emanation of the one into the multiple. "What is the lotus and of what is it made?", asks the Maitri Upanishad, and then answer, "That lotus, assuredly. Is the same as space, and the four intermediate quarters are its petals" (Snodgrass, 1985:27). And so the lotus symbolism indicates a further significance of the Pagoda plan delineate in the ritual. In Japanese temple this concept can be seen as a basic form of the octagonal plan or foundation (kidan) of the Pagoda (Figures 2 and 3).

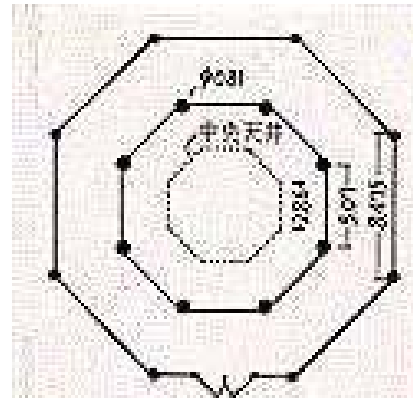


Figure 2. The octagonal plan of the Anraku-ji, Nagano. The octagonal plan was used as a basic form, and then its follow to the inside with the same plan (Genshoku nihon no bijutsu 10, Zendera to sekitei, 1967)



Figure 3. Sansho-ji Aisendo at Tofuku-ji, Kyoto. Early fifteenth century. The octagonal plan was used in the foundation (kidan) of this building (Meiho nihon no bijutsu 13, Gozan to Zen'in, 1983)

THE CONCEPT OF EMPTINESS (*sunyata*)¹

The concept of Emptiness as classic expression of the paradoxical nature of the emptiness or nothingness is the Heart Sutra, it is one of the discourses ascribed by Gautama Buddha. When the Bodhisattva Kannon was practicing the profound Prajna Paramita² wisdom he saw all the true aggregates³ to be Emptiness, and passed beyond suffering. It begins with (Legget, 1989:75):

O disciple Shariputra, form is not different from Emptiness, Emptiness is not different from form; form is Emptiness and Emptiness is form; and also with sensation, thinking, impulse and consciousness. All these things, Shariputra, have the character of Emptiness, neither born or dying, neither defiled nor pure, neither increased nor lessened.

The word empty that appears in the final response of the conservation is fundamental. Ehei Dogen (1200-1253) adds some important clarification of the relationship between nothingness and emptiness, the key concept in the philosophy of the Middle Way (*madhyamika*) Dumoulin (1988:83):

Emptiness is not "no". [But] in uttering "Buddha-nature-emptiness", one say "no". One does not say, "half a pound", or "eight ounces". One does not say emptiness, because it is emptiness. One does not say no, because it is no. One say no because it is Buddha-nature-emptiness. Thus, each piece of no is a touch stone to articulate emptiness; emptiness is the power articulating no.

The experience of this ultimate mystery is what Buddhist speak of in negative terms as *sunyata*, or emptiness, or in positive terms as *tathagata*, or suchness⁴. *Sunyata* is an Emptiness

so full of potentiality that all emerges from it, all is reabsorbed in it. In Emptiness, forms are born. When one becomes empty of the assumptions, inferences, and judgments he has acquired over the years, he comes close to the original nature and is capable of conceiving original ideas and reacting freshly (Holmes, 1990:66). Emptiness="There is no here, no there. Infinity is before our eyes", says the seventh century Zen Patriarch Sentsang in his Hsin Hsin Ming (Frank, 1973:105). Here emptiness give a special form to enter in every place of human live and inanimate object. Actually most of the paintings consists of "nothing", of space, emptiness, the void (Figure 4). Despite this, the feeling for abstract composition is somewhat stronger than the illusion of deep space. It comes the closet to reflecting the tendency in Zen Buddhism to stress rapid flashes of intuitive insight into spiritual phenomena.



Figure 4. There is a line drawn in empty space. Above that line, the absolute is actual and the world of distinction only theoretical. Below that line, the world of distinction is actual and the absolute only theoretical. A Zen picture of a familiar science. The artist has altered the proportion of column and figure to express the transcendental aloneness of Zen (Zen and the Ways, 1989)

¹ Emptiness in the translation of the Sanskrit word *sunyata*, which means "everything is no-substantial." The Japanese word for emptiness is *ku*, which also means "sky".

² Prajna, this Sanskrit term is generally translated as "transcendental wisdom." It is a kind of intuitive knowledge in its deepest sense. When this is awakened, one has the enlightenment-experience that constitutes the center of Buddhist philosophy.

³ "Five guards who approach in friendly manner" mean the five aggregates—form, feeling, perception, volition and consciousness— which frame body and mind.

⁴ In the terminology of Prajna school, this is: *sunyata* ("emptiness") *tathata* ("suchness"), and *tathata* is *sunyata*:

sunyata is the world of the Absolute, and *tathata* is the world of particulars.

All which already mentioned are related to the corresponding notion of li (Jpn., ri: absolute principle) and shih (Jpn., ji: appearance) in Chinese philosophy, and are also referred to as dark and light, depicted respectively by a black circle and white circle. The black circle, some times called darkness, represented the Absolute, also the Void. The white circle is therefore the relative, a principle which is always present wherever anything at all is. It is therefore not properly a circle as drawn, but a white circle. The circle gives the idea of a circumscribed field because of its peripheral line, but the field of relativity is not a circumscribed area in any sense. It is rather what Hindus call space (akasha) which is not room (avakasha) (Wood, 1988:29). This is the same that Takuan Soho (1573-1645) writes: Between heaven and earth there is something called ri. This ri has no form and is empty. Because it is empty, it cannot be seen with the eyes. People say that emptiness cannot be seen with human eyes (Dumoulin, 1988:280). Ri (Chin., li) and ki (chin., ch'i) are cosmic principle. Ri (also called mokyoku) is the foundation that evolves and becomes ki, or the universe of the myriad things (taikyoku). Takuan stresses the return of taikyoku to its final ground in mokyoku, which he identifies as the emptiness (Skt., sunyata; Jpn., ku) of Mahayana metaphysics. According to Zen teaching, the myriad things of the cosmos are not different from emptiness (ku) or from nothingness (mu) (Dumoulin, 1988:279).

In another side, the founder of Ts'ao-tung (Jpn., Soto) Tung-shan explain "the straight" as follows: "There is one thing: above, it is support heaven; below, it uphold earth. It is black like lacquer, perpetually in movement and activity". The straight is also the foundation of heaven and earth and of all being. But, this absolute is dynamic, constantly in motion. The perceiving mind cannot lay hold of the straight and grasp it is an object (Dumoulin, 1988:225). So that was some empty space without meaning be a place between heaven and earth. In Buddhist terminology it can be said to be the true emptiness. The pillar it support the three layers of the world (Figure 5).

It props apart heaven and earth, and their diremption creates extended space, the intermediate world, Midspace (antariksa): "At first the worlds (Heaven and Earth) were together; and when they parted asunder the space which between (antar) them became that Midspace (Snodgrass, 1985:233).

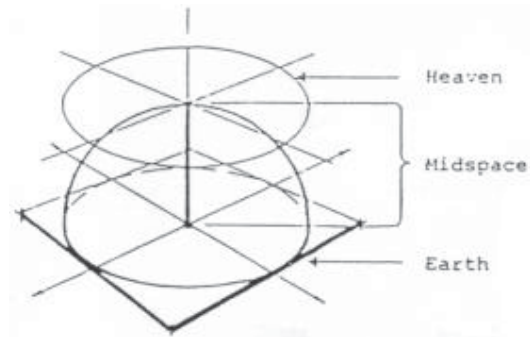


Figure 5. The axial Pillar props apart Heaven and Earth to open up Midspace. There is an empty space between Heaven and Earth (The Symbolism of the Stupa, 1985)

The beginning in the medieval period, the ideas "emptiness" and "nothingness" in Buddhist doctrine same exert great influences over the Japanese (Inoue, 1985:136). And give an example as, the Hannya shingyo sutra contains such thoughts as: "the five types of phenomenal existence are ultimately emptiness" (goun kaiku), and "colors refer the forms that are products of the first cause; real nature is not material but emptiness" (shiki soku zeki). The Japanese of the time appear to have accepted these ideas literally. The shogun and poet Minamoto no Sanetomo (d 1219) questioned the existence of the world in a poem included in the kinkaishu: "The world is a shadow reflected in a mirror; it neither is nor is not". And in a poem included in the shakushin hoshishu, emptiness is seen as basic attribute of the natural worlds: "should we ever reach the sky, we would find the clouds and mist vanished". And finally, the following passage appears in the Tsurezuregusa. "Emptiness can hold things. Many things constantly enter our minds at will because the mind does not exist. If it did exist, not as many thing would come to us (Inoue, 1985:136). The emptiness is in our mind, but when they emerges its depend to the man who experience it.

With the discussion of the void we have left the scope of phenomenology, architectural or otherwise. The void in Buddhist sense is not concept arrived at by rational thought, but an expression of an incommunicable individual experience, accessible to a person practicing meditation (Nitschke, 1988:38). If we go back to the word of emptiness resound through the temple hall and recited by the practitioner during meditation, express the radical negation achieved

by reading the mind of all conceptual thinking. As we have seen, the idea of meaningfulness of empty space, that fruitful void or *sunyata* of the Buddhist, was carried over into the Japanese architecture of the rooms, and the planning of gardens. Example can be seen at Daisen-in garden. The southern end of the garden is empty. There are no more rocks. It is world without form, void of passion, thoughts and emotions which only distract. The white sand of purity and complete freedom make this garden a fit of object for meditation. Ikkyu said, "All things inevitably turn to nothingness, and this 'turning to nothingness' means a return to original being. Another is the interaction between form and space is one of the keys to Ryoan-ji compiling suggestiveness (Figure 6). Evoking a sense of infinity in a strictly confined space, of nothingness and non attachment (Hover, 1989:110).

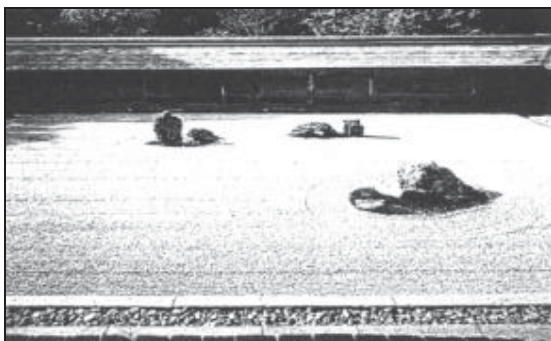


Figure 6. Stone garden of Ryoanji, Kyoto. Late fifteenth century. It is a classic example of the Japanese *kare sansui* (dry landscape) garden (Zusetsu *nihon no Bukkyo 4*, Kamakura Bukkyo, 1988)

The teahouse is an isolated. Spiritual space where the participants in the ceremony can cleanse their minds of mundane concerns. The transition from the world outside to the world of tea is aided by the garden, called *roji*, literally "dewy ground", where guests wait their host and then go with him or her to the teahouse itself. It is a world as carefully arranged as the teahouse and has its own conventions (Nishi and Hozumi, 1986:118). Thus we can see the spirit of tea is deeply steeped with the Prajna philosophy of Emptiness may sound to abstract for the teaman sipping the green-colored beverage from a handmade bowl, the Emptiness is in truth no less than the concreteness of reality itself. It all

depends on how a man looks into the nature of things. (Figure 7)

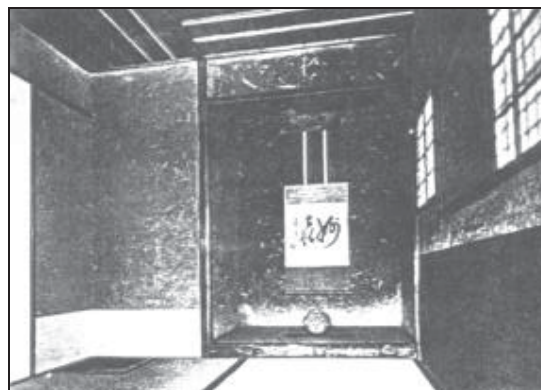


Figure 7. Myokian Tea house, Kyoto. Late Sixteenth century.

THE PILLARING OF HEAVEN AND EARTH

In Japanese mythology, there is the well-known story of how Izanagi no Mikoto and Izanami no Mikoto, primal male and female deities, circled the pillar of Heaven (Ame no Mihashira) and created the land of Yamato. It is unclear what this pillar was actually like. According to the *Kojiki* (Records of Ancient Matters) and *Nihon shoki* (Chronicles of Japan), the two deities descended to Onogoro island and there "erected the pillar of Heaven and the Hall of Eight Fathoms (Yahirodono)". If these records are taken literally, the Pillar of Heaven was not in the Hall of Eight Fathoms where the two gods wed, but suggested by the passage in the *Nihon Shoki* that describes how Izanagi no Mikoto sent one of his daughters, Amaterasu Omikaki, to heaven: "At the time heaven and earth were not yet so far apart; thus he sent her to heaven by way of pillar of Heaven" (Inoue, 1985:7-8) The creation myth, retold Post Wheeler in Munsterberg (1988:3-4) by his book "The Sacred Scriptures of the Japanese, is as follows: of old time the Sky and the Earth were not yet set apart the one from the other nor were the female and male principles separated. All was a mass, formless and egg shaped, the extant where of is not known, which held the file principle. Thereafter, the purer tenuous essence, ascending gradually, formed the Sky; the heavier portion sank and became the Earth. The lighter element merged readily, but the heavier was united with difficulty. Thus the Sky was form first, the Earth

next, and later deity (kami) were produced in the space between them. When the Sky and the Earth began, there was a something in the very midst of the emptiness whose shape cannot be described.

The genesis of the world is described in the Vedas as a “pillaring a part” of Heaven and Earth: “It is by being pillared a part by this pillar that Heaven and earth stand fast”. Heaven and Earth, originally fused, are split apart and held firm by the world Axis. The symbolic analogue is the rising of the Sun: Sky and earth which had been confused and indistinct in the darkness of night, become distinct in the light of the dawn. The light separates them and, pillar-like, props them apart: “the light of Dawn” divorces the conterminous regions (Sky and Earth) and makes manifest the “general Worlds”. So likewise Heaven and Earth are propped apart by the column of the Sun at the dawn of the Cosmos. The pillaring apart of Heaven and Earth by the column of the Sun coincides with the development of Midspace: “The Sun’s space, for it is only when it rises that the world is seen”. The directions of space emanate from the Sun-Pillar, and when the Sun sets space return into the Void. The Sun-strut, support of the worlds and origin of the quarters of space, is symbolically raised each morning of the world and removed each evening (Snodgrass, 1985:163-164).

THE WAY OF ENLIGHTENMENT

The story of the fourth nine days following in the Enlightenment (satori) is an account of the cosmic peregrination of the Buddha. Starting from the center of the universe, he ascends to the supernal worlds, then he encompasses the four directions of space. And finally he descends into the underworlds by being fully enwrapped by the coils of the serpent. The Buddha has traversed the six directions on the horizontal plane, and the nadir, recomposing then within the center, which is himself (Figure 8). This concept constitute one alteration of the position of place on philosophical in the enlightenment. Because freedom in here it means freedom from worldly. The position in the center, is the center of the world, where the upper world is a part from the cosmos itself. Where in the process of enlightenment it was mentioned above, its try for liberated oneself and enter the upper world. But at the same time it must be said that an intuition

may indicate to the inner experience of satori, which for an example has cast its illumination into the mind. Enlightenment is like rain that falls on a mountain and gathers into rivulets that run into brooks, and then into rivers which finally flow into the ocean (Bukkyo Dendo Kyokai, 1985:480). From the Zenist point of view does not wait for satori to come to him, but has own special mode of meditation leading to it. And adopted from Zen Flesh, Zen Bone it to say (Ross, 1966:138):

*The great path has no gate
Thousands of roads enter it
When one passes through this gateless gate
He walks between heaven and earth*

According to Snodgrass (1985:336-337), he explain about the four loci of liberation, range one above the other on the axis of the world, corresponding to four within the stupa. The central point at ground level (A), the point of origin for the setting out and orientation of the plan, locates the bodhimanda visible to the eyes of man on the plane of earth; the place where the axis emerges from the stupa dome (B), marked by the harmika, is the bodhimanda in the Mountain top; the uppermost disc of the spire (C) locates the Akanistha Heaven; and the jewel or vase at the pinnacle of the spire (D) locates bhutakoti⁵, the point where the Buddhas make their exit from the cosmos and enter the void (Snodgrass, 1985:336-337). As we have seen above, there are some deployment space to the architecture when the Buddha in process to enter the other worlds. Each of these position locates a point of transition one world to another (Figure 9).

The harmika marks, the point of transition from the world of desire to the world of form. The upper most disc of spire is the point of transition from the world of form to the world of the formless. The tip of spire is the point where the formless world and the cosmos in its entirety is left behind, and the realm of the void is entered. Then the harmika is the structure built at the summit of the dome or tower (Jpn., ukebana), marking the place where the central axis emerges from within the edifice (Figure 10). This is the center of the world, the location where the Buddha attained Enlightenment.

⁵ *Bhutakoti*: *bhuta* is “real, true, not false”, *koti* is “end” or “goal”. The Chinese translation is *shih chi*, in Japanese is *jissai*, is also literally “the limit of the real”.

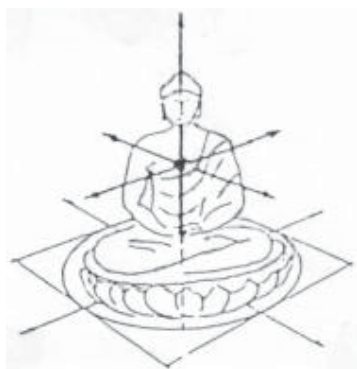


Figure 8. The Six direction of the universe. The centrifugal expansion of the directions from the center. The Buddha attained Enlightenment (The Symbolism of the Stupa, 1985)

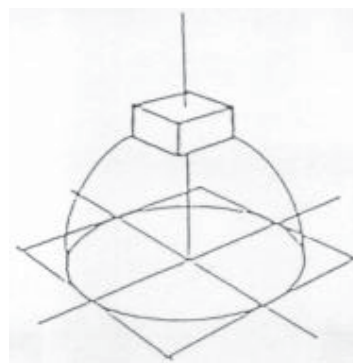


Figure 10. A sacred space at the summit of the mountain. This is the center of the world where the Buddha attain enlightenment. Its places in the top of the pagoda. Its called fukubachi for the dome and ukebana for the harmika. (the Symbolism of the Stupa, 1985)

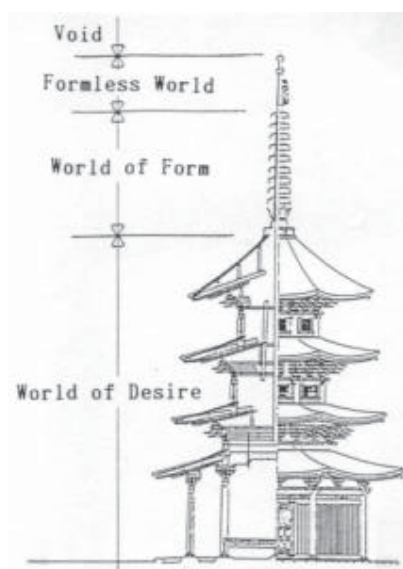


Figure 9. Anraku-ji, Nagano. Early fourteenth century. The term used here is anraku which usually means “comfortable”. Here Dogen Zenji (1200-1253) uses term in one of its Buddhist meanings, that is, as translation of the sanskrit word nirvana. An is interpreted as the body being at ease, and raku as the mind being without fabrication. The pillar is apart of Heaven and Earth. Heaven and Earth, originally fused, are split a part and held firm by the world axis. This is the place of Enlightenment in the pagoda (Meiho nihon no bijutsu 13, Gozan to Zen'in, 1983)

SPACE IN JAPANESE ARCHITECTURE

Space in Japanese architecture (*kukan*) literal, as a empty place. The first character in this word originally stood for a “hole in the ground”, and later took on its present meaning of a “hole in the universe”, or “sky”. In Japanese the word of *kukan*, composed of *ku* and the character for *kan* (interval, space). The character can also be real *ma*, which is also a key word providing important clues to the nature of Japanese culture. *Ma* is the temporal interval between two different phenomena or between two contradictory elements or between dimensions of varying nature (Kurokawa, 1988:55). This *ma*, recognition of which is now being restored in contemporary architecture, could not be created on the basis of functionalism and rationalism alone. The awareness of *ma* opens new frontiers in symbolism and pluralism for architecture. *Ku* and *ma* are all key words which express the intervening territory between spaces, temporal, physical, or spiritual, and in this they all share the quality of Japanese Culture. In Japan this *ma* are spaces of spiritual or philosophical significance that respond to the need of mental repose and detachment (Kurokawa, 1988:56). According to Susumu in Nitschke (1988:55), suggest that the ancient Japanese divided space vertically into two parts. One was *sora* (sky), which was understood as absence of content,

emptiness. The other was *ame* or *ama* (heaven), which was the opposite of *kuni* (region, realm, government) and thus meant an unearthly area of habitation and value. In the concept of emptiness both of this above it can be said is a part of space. Here space embraces universal or ground in the whole sense, but in philosophical side this can be different. Space as physical meaning or space as a form which contain space itself. In principle, this case dependent how we see a space, as a part of philosophy or as a form of architecture.

Zeami Motokijo (1364?-1443), who developed the art of Noh drama into one of Japan great dramatic forms, wrote in *Kakyo* (The Mirror of the Flower), his discourse on the Noh, of a concept called *senuhima*⁶. *Senuhima* then, describes the role of *ma* on the Noh stage, but there it does not mean “interval” as of time between events, but a moment of silent fullness that contains profound meaning. In this *senuhima* also be speaks the idea of *ku* (Kurokawa, 1988:55). This character can also be read *sora*. In the former reading it means “emptiness” or “void”, in the later it means “sky”. The idea of *ku* goes back to the concept of absolute emptiness, or *sunyata*. The second of the character *sora*, meaning “sky”, implies the universe and the infinite. Therefore *ku* represents a view of the universe which embraces all contradictions and paradoxes.

In swordsman ship, instead of keeping his mind in a state of perfect fluidity, so that he can strike the enemy the moment the latter shows a *suki*, he will have to have the attention glued to the enemy’s sword. This gluing is “stoppage,” and every stoppage means giving and advantage to the enemy, which is a *suki*. *Suki* as has already been stated, means “a space between two objects.” Or “a slit or split or crack in one solid object.” When continuity is broken up and crack begins to show, there is a *suki*. When tension slackness, certain signs of laxity appears – which is *suki*. In *Takuan’s* terminology, *suki* corresponds to “stopping.” In swordsman ship, this is taken advantage of by the enemy, who is always too ready not to let the opportunity slip away vainly (Suzuki, 1988:143).

⁶ *Senuhima* are the moments in which the music stops and the actor arrest all perceptible movement; yet in this movement of suspended action and sound the actor can express the spirit of his role more movingly than through all his other modes of performance.

The highly Japanese natural philosopher Miura Baien (1723-1789) interprets, space not as a container but as something that fill bodies. In part of his *Discourse on Metaphysics*, he says that place includes interior (*naka*). This interior is the skeleton or framework of place. Time open the present. The present vitalizes time. Nothing exists without form. Consequently, place and things are able to come into being. By interior Miura means something that is not physical in nature and that is neither area nor volume. In a letter, Miura wrote: “considering the theory of the division of one makes it apparent that all things in the universe contend with each other. But, though they are different in quality, in the total view, they are all one. They are all, therefore, compounded of the same divinity. It is important to see unity transcending difference (Kurokawa, 1988: 42). Living space becomes nothing and empty only when we take it for granted that the existence of air is natural and deservesless consideration. Relatively, but consistently, void could be defined as something occupied by nothing and solid is as something surrounded by nothing. Functionally, void without solid would mean return to nebulous wilderness. Visually, solid without void would mean loss of visible form (Chang, 1981:27). This Lao Tzu illustrates by his favorite metaphor of the vacuum lay the true essential. The reality of a room, for instance, was to be found in the vacant space, not in the roof and wall them selves (Okakura, 1864:24).

Room in the Japanese residence becomes human only through man’s presence. Without him, there is no human trace. Thus, the empty room provides the very space where man’s spirit can more freely and where his thoughts can reach the very limits of their potential (Engel in Hover, 1989:44). The relationship between interior and exterior spaces is no less important, and as an expression of the continuity between interior and exterior spaces, an entrance is of great significance in movement (Inoue, 1985:154). In Japanese architecture, in the respect, is an architecture of vistas, of continuity, of perspective. There is a constant movement of space, a gentle shifting from place to place; but no matter how far one pursues the movement one never arrives of a conception of a plastic whole (Gropius and Tange, 1960).

CONCLUSION

The ideas of emptiness and nothingness in Buddhist doctrine came exert great influence over the Japanese. The Japanese of the time appear to have accepted these ideas literally. Here emptiness give a special form to enter in every place of human live and inanimate object.

In the concept of emptiness in Japanese architecture is a part of space, as a empty place. Despite this, the feeling for abstract composition is somewhat stronger than the illusion of deep space. It comes that closet to reflecting the tendency in Zen Buddhism to stress rapid flashes of intuitive insight into spiritual phenomena.

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