

point of view and to more convincing scholarship.

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Notes

1. Key sources not cited include Robert Gutman, *Architectural Practice: A Critical View* (New York: Princeton Architectural Press, 1988); Dana Cuff, *Architecture: The Story of Practice* (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1991); Mary N. Woods, *From Craft to Profession: The Practice of Architecture in Nineteenth-Century America* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1999); Mark Alan Hewitt, *The Architect and the American Country House, 1890–1940* (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 1990).
2. Frederick Squires, *Architec-tonics: The Tales of Tom Thumtack, Architect* (New York: William T. Comstock, 1914).

Murray Fraser, ed.

Sir Banister Fletcher's Global History of Architecture, 21st edition

London: Bloomsbury Visual Arts, 2019, 2 vols., 2, 633 pp., 2,200 illus. \$575 (cloth; slipcase edition), ISBN 97814725272 (vol. 1), ISBN 9781472589972 (vol. 2), ISBN 9781472589989 (set)

The two volumes of the twenty-first edition of *Sir Banister Fletcher's Global History of Architecture* (henceforth *Banister Fletcher's Global History*) are a sumptuous textual and visual banquet to delight varied tastes, with offerings that can be savored repeatedly over time, separately or, if desired, in their entirety. No matter where one enters the volumes, it is soon evident that this edition represents a boldly radical and welcome rethinking of *Banister Fletcher* (first published in 1896).¹ For the first time, the word *global* enters the title, and more than any other worldwide architectural history survey to date, these volumes reveal a truly global architectural history beginning to take shape.

Rather than the “singular authorial voice” that characterized earlier *Banister Fletcher* editions (1:xvii), this work presents 102 chapters written by eighty-eight major scholars from around the world. Recognizing the specialized expertise of these scholars, editor Murray Fraser gave them considerable freedom in crafting their contributions. While many are architectural historians, others are architects, archaeologists, art historians, and cultural

historians, representing a multiplicity of disciplinary approaches. This massively expanded edition, the first to be published in two volumes, signals an important departure from other global histories of architecture (including previous *Banister Fletcher* editions) in that it was jointly produced by many individuals. Noting the reliance on teamwork needed to pull the numerous contributions together, Fraser states that this edition “indeed can be claimed as the largest collective research project to date in architectural history” (1:xxiv). This work demonstrates long-overdue humility in its recognition that authoritative knowledge of global architectural history is beyond the grasp of any one individual or small group of scholars. At the risk of sounding imperial, one could say that holding *Banister Fletcher's Global History* in one's hands is rather like holding a globe on which appear more of the world's architectural histories than ever before. They are presented non-hierarchically, and if they do not yet enjoy equal coverage, clearly the plan is to remedy that in the future.

The clarity of the volumes' structure and the flexible interpretations permitted to the contributors result in a harmonious text rather than a cacophony of multiple authorial voices. In his excellent introduction, Fraser explains this edition's underlying principles and framework. Addressing the two versions of “The Tree of Architecture,” he underscores the imperialist perspective of early editions of *Banister Fletcher*, in which the so-called West was viewed as the source of “modern styles” while the non-Western world was seen as capable of producing only “nonhistorical styles” of architecture. In contrast, the current edition reflects a radical rethinking in which postcolonial and poststructuralist critiques are taken seriously.

Banister Fletcher's Global History uses as its starting point 3500 BCE, commonly accepted as the beginning of the “urban revolution,” and concludes with the present day. A neutral framework divides the volumes into seven parts covering sequential and broad periods that unfold in linear time without focusing on particular historical events or favoring particular regions. Chapters in individual parts follow a consistent geographical route, making it easy for readers to circumnavigate the globe in a predictable direction. Acknowledging

that this edition bears only some “traces” of the original works, Fraser defends the use of Sir Banister Fletcher's name in the title by affirming that “just as no man is an island, nothing stands anew” (1:xv).

Preceding part 1, an engaging chapter by Catherine Gregg titled “*Sir Banister Fletcher's A History of Architecture: The Father, the Son, His Wife, and Their Book*” reveals the fascinating long history of this work and includes a useful table with a chronology of various *Banister Fletcher* editions. The original 1896 edition, written by both Professor Banister Fletcher and his son Banister Flight Fletcher, contained 159 illustrations and focused entirely on European architecture, concluding in contemporary Britain of the late nineteenth century. Although the elder Banister Fletcher died in 1899, many subsequent editions bore both names as the son continued to revise the text and add new illustrations. In the fifth edition of 1905, for example, the problematic “Tree of Architecture,” an illustration that would become iconic, appeared for the first time. Sir Banister Fletcher, the son, received sole credit for the sixth edition, published in 1921, despite the major contributions of his first wife and coauthor, Alice Maud Mary Fletcher. That edition featured a new version of “The Tree of Architecture,” which became the authoritative model for the seventh to sixteenth editions, through Sir Banister Fletcher's death in 1953.

Beginning with the seventeenth edition, published in 1961, various editors revised and reshaped the book. Critically, in the seventeenth edition, seven contributing authors responsible for particular sections replaced the sole authorial voice. By the twentieth edition, the centennial edition published in 1996, the number of contributing authors had risen to thirty-six. In the present twenty-first edition, the authorial voice of Fletcher has disappeared entirely, except when quoted or used with original drawings. With 2,200 illustrations, this is the first edition to use color images; it is also “the first fully digitized online edition” (1:xxxviii). Gregg's critical perspective on the Fletcher dynasty, and her appreciation of the long-overlooked first Lady Fletcher, fortunately does not prevent her from making readers aware of Sir Banister Fletcher's perspectives on architecture, not all of which may be palatable, but which

may still prompt some to refer to his writings.

Careful forethought and intellectual labor guided the design of the current edition as a whole as well as its parts. Volume 1 contains Fraser's introduction, Gregg's essay, a useful glossary, and other necessary information in addition to the four parts covering the period from 3500 BCE to 1500 CE. Volume 2 takes the reader from 1500 CE to the present day in three parts. Each part is preceded by a short introduction based on a theme; these themes are, respectively, intentionality, internationality, ideology, exchange, empire, manufacture, and modernity. For example, the introduction to part 5, titled "Empire" and covering the period from 1500 to 1800, does a particularly wonderful job of framing this period in distinctly global terms. It provides readers with an overview of the expansion of European mercantile empires, which of course encountered other powerful empires and states from the Safavid dynasty in Iran to the Tokugawa shogunate in Japan.

By setting guidelines for the book's chapters, the editor has ensured consistency while also allowing authors considerable freedom of interpretation. For example, in part 1, which covers the period from 3500 BCE to 500 BCE, a given chapter on a particular country or region might provide examples beyond this period to better explain an argument. In fact, none of the fourteen chapters in part 1 fits the part's framing dates exactly, and much the same can be said about the chapters in all the other parts of the book. Thus, there is a chapter on Sumer and Akkad (Iraq) in the period 3500–2000 BCE, a span of 1,500 years. The chapter on the Andes surveys an even longer period of 3,800 years, from 4000 BCE to 200 BCE. In comparison, the chapter on archaic Greece covers only 250 years, 750–500 BCE. This flexibility allows for chronological breaks and overlaps with other parts of the book and even some inconsistencies. Such ambiguities are welcome, as they support the diversity of approaches and historical chronologies across the globe. The multiple chapters in each section allow for both a concentration on particular countries or regions (for example, in part 1, three chapters address Egypt and Iraq during different periods) and individual chapters on other areas, an

approach that puts large parts of the globe into conversation with each other.

The original version of "The Tree of Architecture" suggested that building traditions were anchored in an individual culture's geography, geology, climate, religion, social and political factors ("social" in the second iteration), and history. Architecture grew from the local soil, generated through the interactions of various natural and human forces. Obviously, students of history need to understand such context, and each of this edition's chapters draws upon yet also transforms this tradition by beginning with two sections, "History and Geography" and "Culture and Society." Once again, the authors were granted considerable flexibility in how they approached these sections—a wise choice, given that a single chapter might combine Southeast Asia, the continent of Australia, and the Pacific, or individual countries such as Korea or France, during a given period. In these immensely useful introductory sections, readers are likely to learn something new even about regions they think they know and gain insight into places where they have never been. Succinct text boxes interrupt chapter accounts to draw attention to architectural styles, recurring details, building types, individual architects, or themes of the authors' choice. Finally, each chapter offers brief analysis of a few representative buildings. The lavish use of carefully chosen maps and beautiful photographs as well as new drawings further enlivens the text.

Banister Fletcher's Global History rejects the colonialist vision presented in both earlier versions of "The Tree of Architecture," where the thriving upper branches of modern Western architecture (most prominently represented by Western colonial powers) overshadowed the stunted, lowermost branches of the non-West. Part 7 of the book, covering the period from 1900 to the present day, includes the Middle East, Eastern Europe, Russia, the Indian subcontinent, China, Japan, Korea, Southeast Asia, Australia, Oceania, Africa, Central and South America, and Canada. Some of these regions still tend to be omitted from discussions of contemporary architecture. By foregrounding these neglected countries, regions, and continents, this edition enables them to take their rightful place among the upper branches of the "Tree of

Architecture" and will help to shift long-standing biases that may still exist within our shared disciplinary consciousness.

Fraser anticipates potential criticism in his introduction, noting that postcolonialism prepared the ground for the many changes we see in this new edition, and that this work stands at the limits of what is currently possible. However, one might still ask why the architectural production of France and that of the entire continent of Africa during a particular period both qualify for a single chapter. Surely there should be more than one chapter on various African nations or regions? Such shortcomings reveal our need to continue the already decades-long process of changing how we research and teach global architectural history. Piloted by sure guides, this book will be cherished not only by students and scholars but also by those who are enchanted by architecture's ability to transport us to known and unknown territories.

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Note

1. *Banister Fletcher* refers to Banister Fletcher and Banister Flight Fletcher, *A History of Architecture on the Comparative Method*, twenty editions of which were published from 1896 onward by many different publishers.

Neil Jackson

Japan and the West: An Architectural Dialogue

London: Lund Humphries, 2019, 472 pp., 20 color and 180 b/w illus. \$77 (cloth), ISBN 9781848222960

In his latest book, Neil Jackson brings a new perspective to the study of exchanges of architectural ideas and designs between Japan and the West by examining how people experience and understand the cultural spheres of others. In so doing, he reinvents the ways architectural historians might use extensive and relatively unknown materials from various fields. Although Japanese architectural ideas and technologies have historically been deeply influenced by those of China, a closer look at scholarship on the country's more recent architectural past reveals the study, imitation, and absorption of Western ideas, forms, and technologies, the subsequent rediscovery of traditional