

## Light reflects well in a Japanese house (Issued May 28, 2009)

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A painter Yukari Kobatake

(Reproduced in English from the Japanese issue with the permission of Conservation Association of Hatada House <http://culture-h.jp/hatadake-katsuyo/OldHouse-and-light-ap-low.pdf>)

(English translation by Mayo Onishi with correction by Koichi Hatada and Makoto Tawada)



I arrived at the suburbs of Habikino-city by a train and a bus from Umeda. When I got off a bus at the station nearby and asked the way to the Hatada house at a police box, I was told that this area was full of people of Hatada. Most are the Hatadas!! At last I located the Hatada house while counting the nameplate of the same family name.

I passed through the entrance hall, and exclaimed in excitement since there was a Kamado(a cooking stove) that I watched for the first time in my life.

I was impressed by the calm beauty with stillness, and excited that I came to the splendid place today.



I was interested in a long ladder which follows the Tsushi(attic) and climbed the ladder up out of curiosity, and found astonishing sight with massive structure of the big beams. What a splendid space it was!

When I compare the windows of old Japanese house with those of Western building, I find that the former is smaller than the latter and there is not so much light in the room.

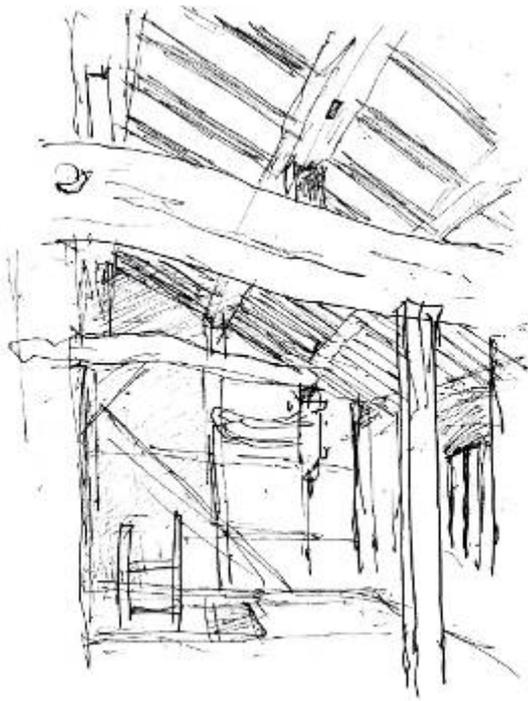


The most effective light in old Japanese houses is the sunlight that comes in through windows. When I visited the Hatada house, unfortunately, it was a cloudy day, and the room was rather dark in spite of the daytime. However, when my eyes got acclimatizing to the darkness, I felt surely the presence of light.

The limited light of the sun comes in the room from windows, and unites with darkness in the room to make a shadow like a sumi(Indian-ink) drawing written on the Japanese paper. The light became so dazzling and precious while the space was felt so pleasantly to me.

Light reflects well in an old Japanese house.

Photo and written by Mayo Onishi

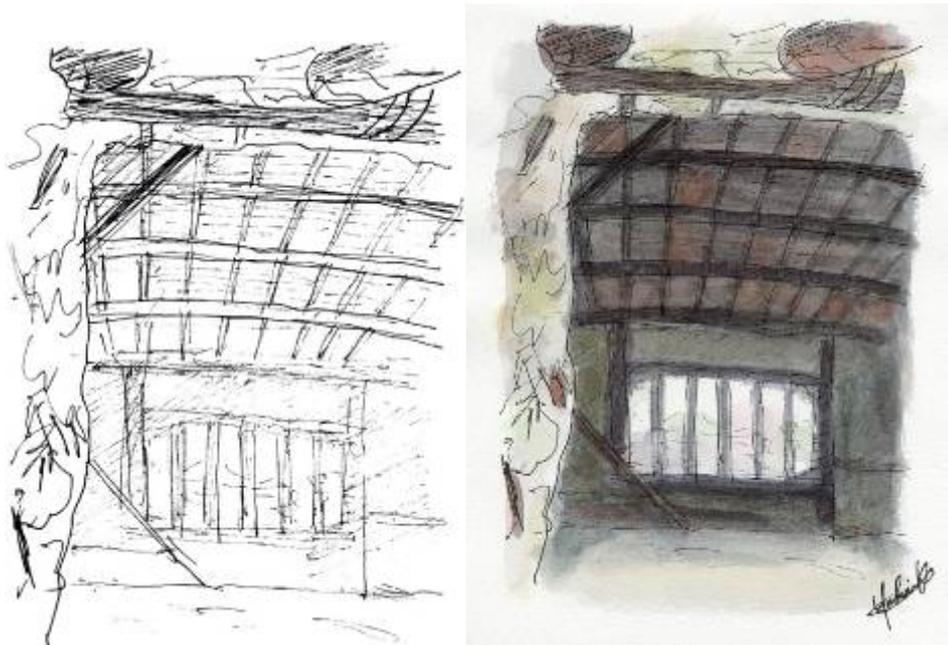


Wow!! Excellent!!

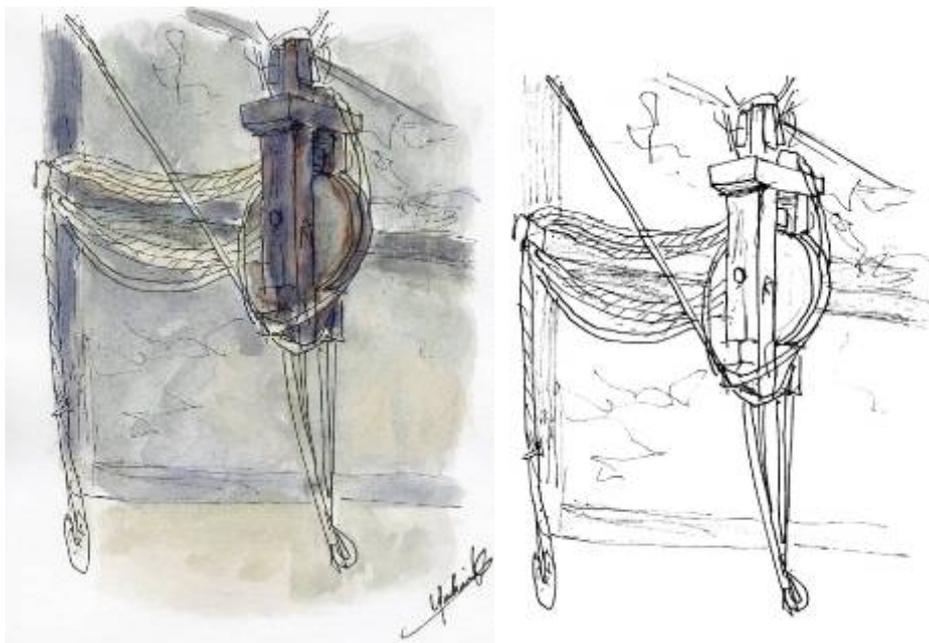
“Hari”(Tie beam) watches us. The atmosphere that somebody comes out to.



The tool which worked in old days would wait for the master to return.



I found the balanced motif of the light and shade and wanted to draw it.  
I hope this splendid motif remains for a long time.



The tools which stopped working seem to wait for next turn without thinking that its duty was finished.

When I visited the Hatada house, I admired Ohdo (the big door for residential use), Massive structure of the beams above the earthen-floored area and Tsushi (loft of the main house) of that I made sketches above. I have sketched the Horii House in Higashi-Ohmi-shi, Gamo, Shiga which is the mimeograph birthplace before. Both houses still keep the state of old lives in Japan and tell us the folk life of the Edo era. I am very pleased to have more motifs to sketch and hope that such houses remain for a long time as a place to hand down the culture to the future people.

Drawn and written by Yukari Kobatake