

POLYTECHNIC OF TORINO  
FACULTY OF ARCHITECTURE  
Degree in Architecture  
*Honors theses*

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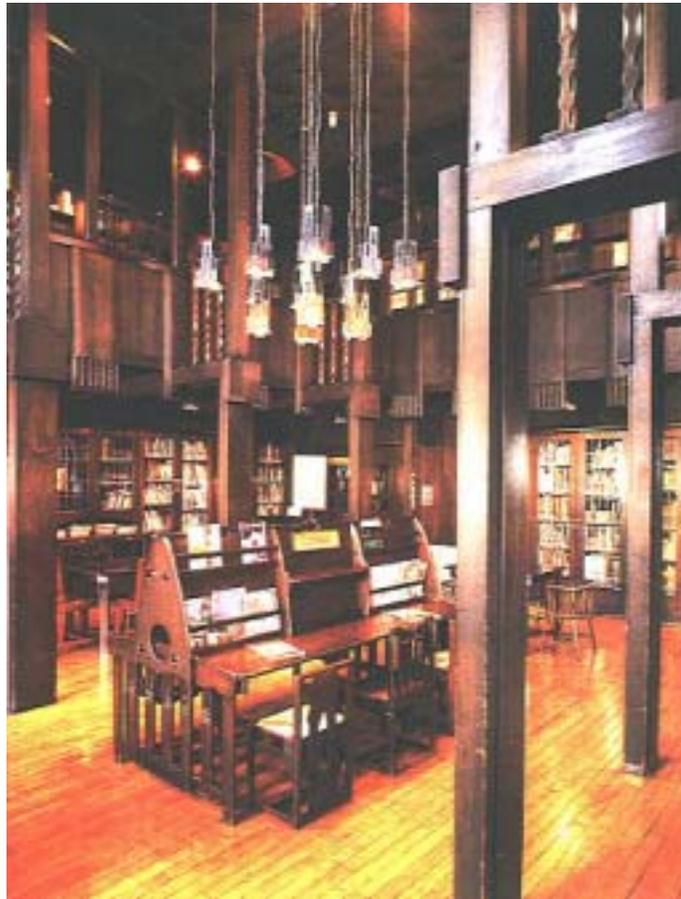
**The Domestic Architecture of Charles Rennie Mackintosh**

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Many are the questions arisen on Charles Rennie Mackintosh while working at this thesis. Can his work be considered to all effects as part of the Art Nouveau Movement? Which were the cultural basis from which he started to develop his own architectural thinking? How has the presence of his wife, Margaret Macdonald, influenced on his mature period? Why at a certain stage of his career has he gone into a crisis?

To these questions as well to many others we have tried to find an answer. What has certainly turned out from our research has been his deep knowledge of Scottish architecture as well as his personal interpretation which, according to many critics, has made him one of the pioneers of the Modern Movement.



Glasgow School of Art: The Library

The modernity of Mackintosh does not consist in new technologies, in new building types but it is made of the right proportion, of the use of well known forms, of the belief that form should follow function, that materials should be used in an appropriate manner without denying their natural features. And, above all, that an architect should construct the decoration, not decorate the construction.

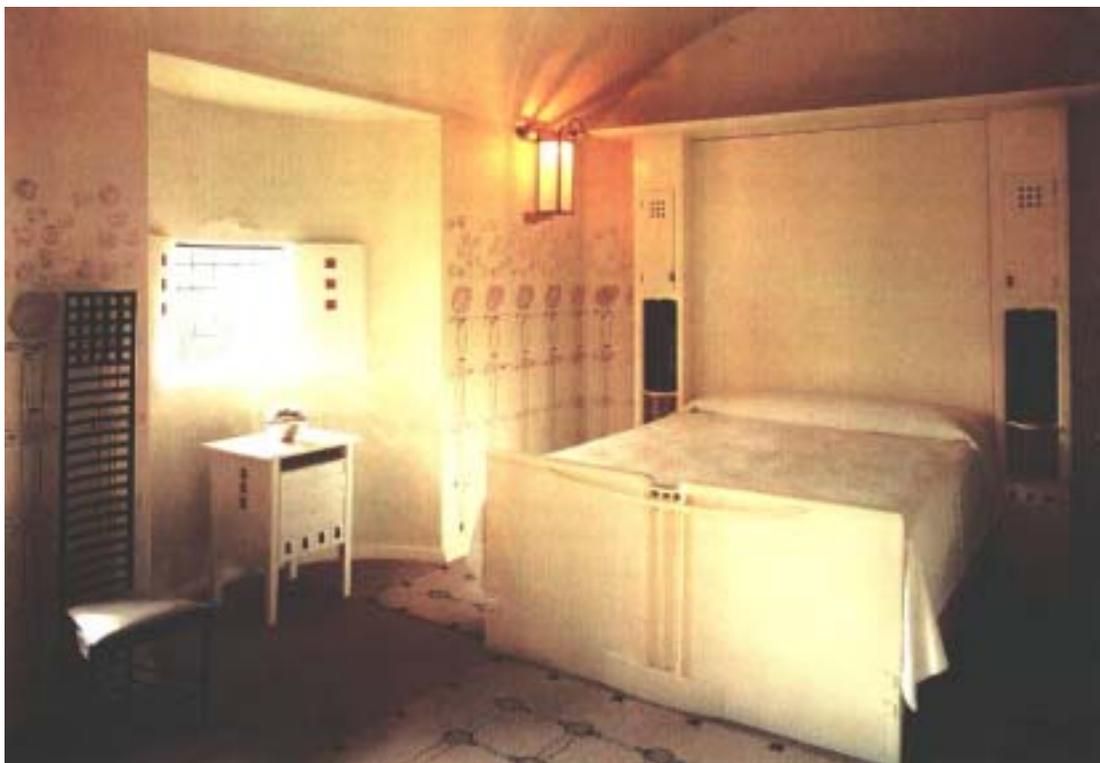
His simple, true and native architecture was sometimes too modern and therefore not well accepted by the critics and the common people, still too used to the stylistic revivals against which Mackintosh fought.



Windyhill, Kilmacolm

Our analysis on domestic architecture has tried to underline some particular aspects of his way of designing. Sometimes, this has made us comparing him with an overseas colleague, Frank Lloyd Wright.

Though they never met, these two architects show, in a surprising way, great similarities in their thinking architecture as the Mother of all arts; in believing in the need of a national and native architecture which perfectly suits the place where it belongs; in denying decoration as itself and in trying to make it, where necessary, part of the same structure; in the deep interest towards all natural forms; in the common inspiration from Japanese culture and art.



**The Hill House, Helensburgh: The Master Bedroom**

Thanks to the detailed chronology we can conclude affirming that the aim of this work has been to draw the present state of the buildings designed by Mackintosh. When the volume written by Thomas Howarth was first published in 1952 (a fundamental text for whoever wants to have knowledge of Mackintosh), we had already lost traces of many of his buildings. It was thanks to Howarth's and other Scottish friends that little by little his architecture was rediscovered and appreciated, even if the most important role has been played by the Charles Rennie Mackintosh Society which, from 1977 on, has been trying to recover many of the works of the architect which would otherwise get lost.

The most updated Italian text dates back to 1988 and it is the book edited by Guido Laganà from which we started to draw the chronology and has supplied us with a wide bibliography to start with. Moreover, from 1988 on, new studies have been made, less important buildings have been discovered and furnishings, the existence of which was till then ignored, have been found. All this material was added to Laganà's list and supplied us with additional information on the work of the Scottish architect.

The publication in 1990 of the only known architectural writings of Mackintosh has also allowed us to better analyse his works, trying to see through his ideas, so well expressed in these important manuscripts which have been translated and added in appendix to the thesis itself.

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