



Autobiography of a Patricide: Arata Isozaki's Initiation into Postmodernism

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The exchange of architectural culture between Japan and the west, from Katsura through to Ando, is remarkable for the fact that a discernible current of words has flowed almost entirely in one direction, from the west to Japan. As a source of words rather than objects, Japan has been absent not only from such classic architectural literature as the first editions of Banister Fletcher's *A History of Architecture*, which located historical architecture solely in the west, but also in the much more recent *Words and Buildings: A Vocabulary of Modern Architecture* by Adrian Forty.¹ When you go to Japan you can see numerous ancient buildings in Kyoto, and as many modern buildings in Tokyo, but no words. Images in Japan are omnipresent but are always detached from a conceptual context. When Edward Said advocated his theory of orientalism, was it not based on exactly this kind of one-way traffic?

Given this lacuna, Arata Isozaki's 2006 book, *Japan-ness in Architecture*, appeared to turn the tide, offering a significant body of words to fill part of this obvious vacancy. Providing abundant, specialised information on Japanese architecture, the book is rich in the scope of its references and detail of its endnotes, far richer, even, than any other text in the existing body of the architect's writings. Faced with this deluge, I cannot help but wonder whether *Japan-ness in Architecture* might make western readers perplexed by the sheer amount of information on offer – a confusion complicated not only by the unfamiliarity of names and concepts but also by the maze-like structure of Isozaki's logic and rhetoric.

In the preface to the English edition (originally a postscript in the Japanese version), Isozaki writes that his book offers an attempt at 'grasping buildings as textual spaces', which obliges both readers and the author to 'not only consider the objectness of buildings but also discuss the texts written about them, thus shifting the stance to a metalevel'.² In his own preface Sabu Kohso, the book's translator, also feels compelled to offer a definition of *Japan-ness in Architecture*, emphasising that it is 'a historical survey, a theoretical-critical analysis and reflection upon Japanese architecture and culture at large, and above all an auto-critical account of the architect Arata Isozaki's own personal trajectory'.³ This last part is reiterated by Dana Buntrock in her blurb for the back cover, stating that Isozaki's essays are at once autobiographical and oracular. Thus, the book appears to reveal the reality of textual spaces embedded within Japanese architecture, a reality hitherto concealed by the scarcity of words. It goes without saying that for western readers this book also casts a new light on another aspect of Isozaki, who has long influenced younger Japanese architects, including myself, through his writing as much as his built works. For us Isozaki without words is like Le Corbusier without words.

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Hajime Yatsuka

Words, however, are not only signifiers of definition but form part of an infinite matrix (or language, even) of interpretation. Japan-ness, as a concept as much as a book, is in this way not so much an immutable, fixed identity as an almost intangible ideal that Japanese modern architects have constantly felt obliged to relate and justify their works to. Herein lies an essential problematic of Japan-ness – that it cannot be reduced to an image, nor a sensibility and far less an aesthetic. Referring to the Katsura Imperial Villa as a typical example, Isozaki writes that, as a discourse, it 'became almost a mythographical entity, irrespective of its existing buildings and gardens', and that 'modernists, especially, have sought to decode the architecture of Katsura in sympathy with their own design themes, making it a fulcrum for their own tactics'.⁴ Why this obsession with Katsura? Why were designers so nationalistic (in the broadest sense of the word)? The simultaneity of this parochialism and worldliness is illustrated by the opening sentence of the book's first chapter: 'From its inception the problematic of "Japan-ness" has belonged to an external gaze.'⁵ In reality, the actual word 'architecture' in Japanese (*kenchiku*), together with other words like *geijutsu* (art), *kukan* (space), *bi* (beauty), *shakai* (society), *ai* (love) and *rekishi* (history) – words without which everyday conversation in Japanese would be totally impossible – have always belonged to an external idea.⁶

Architecture, in this sense, along with practically everything else in the country, was reinvented almost anew on the occasion of Japan's 1868 Meiji Restoration. The history of Japanese architecture is therefore an invention of modern Japan. Accordingly it is a part of the history of modern architecture, and not the other way around. The historian Chuta Ito was the first specialist in this field, and someone frequently referenced by Isozaki (who had a series of conversations with him towards the end of Ito's life). Ito was the first person to cite historic Japanese architecture as a conceptual category – before

him neither architectural historiography nor even architecture (with a capital A) existed.⁷ Thus, being an architect, producing architectural works and writing a history of architecture are all roles fundamentally alien to the Japanese. And within this Isozaki is no exception. However old the issues he discusses, his subject is actually the contemporary Japanese architectural scene⁸ (which he looks almost to reinvent) and more fundamentally himself. As such this book is in reality a strategic autobiography of an architect.

Set against this charged and multivalent background, we can see that Bruno Taut's famous architectural distinction, from his 1933 visit to Japan, between *honmono* (authentic) and *ikamono* (kitsch), was much more ambiguous for the Japanese than Taut would have imagined because he had never had any reason to question the legitimacy of his own existence as an architect (a role he almost came to define). But what about his Japanese colleagues? Could they be architects – that is, western beings – in spite of living and working on land that did not equate to the western concept of ground? How could this professional definition be achieved? The answer, one could argue, is that they did this by trying to be as western as possible, an ambition that led many Japanese architects to create pastiche copies (*ikamono*) of western works. Conversely, in order to be *honmono*, the assumption was that they should prove their own authentic identity, or Japan-ness.⁹

Taut realised that the objects of his own Japanese architectural admiration were part of the lives of ordinary people, and therefore counter to the heroic notion of architecture in the western sense of the word. He especially liked the Ise Shrine, not as a sacred monument, but as some kind of prototypical peasant shelter, although unlike Marc-Antoine Laugier he did not try to shape this primitive hut into an emblem of architectural theory. Taut's secular interest in Ise is illustrated by the fact, scarcely referred to before, that he was rather indifferent to other religious structures. Just as Shinto was never really an authentic religion in Japan – with no rigorous codes or dogma unlike Buddhism or Christianity – Taut never saw in Shinto shrines a viable architectural subject. This did not mean, however, that shrines and Shintoism were *ikamono*. The inauthenticity or otherwise of these religious structures did not really matter to him because the lives and rituals of the people who occupied these buildings could not be doubted. But it did matter to the Japanese modernist architects. For them, both container and contents ought to be *honmono*. And so whereas the German architect saw in the traditional buildings of Japan a way out of the established dictates of making architecture, his Japanese counterparts oriented themselves in precisely the opposite direction, because they felt an imperative to become modernists.

They therefore had a reason to be more sensitive to architecture-ness as much as Japan-ness. This was the ultimate *aporia*.

Again, Isozaki is no exception, in spite of his disclaimer of operating at a metalevel. Essays on Katsura and Ise, written before the book's two other chapters, certainly discuss the buildings themselves, but Isozaki's appears to be mainly concerned with how his predecessors – Taut, Sutemi Horiguchi and in particular his own mentor, Kenzo Tange – interpreted, or rather contextualised, these legacies. Isozaki's postmodernism comes through here, apparent in his attempt at demystifying (he cites the word 'myth' frequently) the notion of Japan-ness and the hypothetical discussion he constructs around what his predecessors would have made of it. In this way he superimposes his own position onto the debate, just as earlier modernists used Japan-ness as a pretext for abstracting the essence of Japanese modernism. Isozaki's approach is thus based on a double reading – a reading of a reading – which makes his own words metatexts rather than pretexts.

Wet this Sisyphean task is never accomplished, as Isozaki resigns himself to the impossibility of superimposing his own myth upon those fabricated by Tange and others, putting them into question and shifting his argument to a higher level. This resignation perfectly illustrates his ambivalent position even among the postmodernists. Despite its attempt at deconstructing the myth, his argument is destined to generate another myth because identity is, after all, a mythical construct. If he were being a real postmodernist (I use the word real rather than authentic because authenticity seems alien to postmodernism) he should have simply neglected myth altogether. This is an oblivion practised by a younger generation of architects who, with little sense of revolt, feel that the act of becoming an architect is as natural for them as it is for their western counterparts, and do not see the necessity of justifying their own local identity any more. These architects are simply indifferent to nationhood, and for them history provides no more an imperative for identification than academic research. For example, a western architectural audience might discern a shadow of Japan-ness in the works of Tadao Ando, but there is no substance (nor even myth) to this, only illusion. Ando has never tried to align his work to a Japanese tradition. His Japan-ness is one that is seen only through an external gaze. The same, even more so, can be said about younger architects. While early Japanese modern architects came to exist through their own critical consciousness, recent postmodernists, in this sense, have done so through their unconsciousness – Japanese modernism coupled with Japan-ness has long been dead.

By contrast, Isozaki stands somewhere between the two – a postmodernist in terms of his meta removal, and a modernist in his historicism, believing in the necessity of making a personal survey of the historical perspectives relevant to any contemporary situation. For example, he writes that 'for Japanese modernists – and I include myself – it is impossible not to begin with western concepts. That is to say, we all begin with a modicum of alienation.'¹⁰ A true postmodernist would feel no such disaffection.¹¹ But it is partly the ambivalence generated by this dual allegiance that gives the book its uniqueness – a quality most apparent in Isozaki's chapter on Chogen – the medieval building style derived from the temple projects undertaken by the twelfth-century priest Shunjobo Chogen, and a strand of Japanese vernacular architecture perhaps unfamiliar to a western audience. This should really be the first chapter in this anthological autobiography rather than the third, because it covers a subject that Isozaki has been concerned with since his formative student years in Tange's design studio at Tokyo University. It is not that Chogen's works were discovered by Isozaki, but that no one before him discussed them as paradigms for contemporary architecture. This concern, eventually written about much later, was first conceived when, as a young architectural student, he would stop off at Nara to see Chogen's Todaiji temple on his way home to Kyushu for the summer holiday. For Isozaki it was almost a rite of initiation.

This medieval diversion (both intellectual and literal) is significant given its 1950s context – a period when Japanese architects became increasingly preoccupied by a controversy surrounding the value of tradition, reviving a wartime debate but this time under the influence of a new leftist political sensibility. Tange's two canonical books – *Katsura: Tradition and Creation in Japanese Architecture* (1960) and *Ise: Prototype of Japanese Architecture* (1962) – represented the culmination of this debate. The first of them, significantly, appeared in the same year as Tange's Tokyo Bay Plan, a project Isozaki worked on as a member of the design team. This scheme was essentially made up of just two components – a series of residential megastructures in the form of a huge but elegant temple roof and a number of office quarters. Isozaki was responsible for the latter, and their design closely resembles his own city-in-the-air proposals from the same period, but they also share an affinity with the brutal, even uncanny structures of Chogen's Daibutsu-yo.

Before the Tokyo Bay Plan, Tange's studio had been investigating the possibility of transplanting the idea of the central core system from Mies van der Rohe and SOM into Japanese models. At the time, Japanese building codes prohibited the building of anything higher than 31m, but the idea of a core seemed to work well at this reduced and pre-

viously unexplored scale, beyond its mere functional suitability. It was Isozaki who developed this idea further, reversing its inherent introversion so as to expose inner cores as self-standing monumental objects – something one can see clearly in his 1960 city-in-the-air Shinjuku project (a proposal defined by its vertical cores and horizontal, bridging office spaces, and developed just a few months before his work on Tange's own Plan began). Isozaki, it appears, therefore, was the originator of the autonomous core. That the idea was accepted by Tange and included in his Plan (an episode never referred to in this book), seems to have provided further ambivalence for Isozaki in his own patricide.

Implicitly, then, within his Tokyo Bay Plan, and explicitly in his two defining books, what Tange was trying to present was a synthesis of two opposing (in Nietzschean terms) prototypes of Japanese culture – Dionysian *Jomon* (the residential megastructures on the water) and Apollonian *Yayoi* (the office cities in the air). Discussed in the opening essay of Isozaki's book as a defining Japanese dialectic, *Jomon* is thought to date to 8000BC, *Yayoi* to 300AD. Their integration was in part a reaction to the criticism of Noboru Kawazoe (founding member of the Metabolist group), who argued that Tange's early works were too indulgently sophisticated (paradigms of the aristocratic *Yayoi* tradition), and as a consequence were not appropriate for the architecture of postwar democracy. In response, Tange introduced more powerful *Jomon* types of expression, based on the modification of Le Corbusier's brutalist *béton brut* vernacular.¹²

In two books and one defining architectural project, Isozaki's mentor had in this way managed to abstract the collective will of the Japanese people into a system of construction based largely on two models developed thousands of years earlier. He later offered a synthesis of the opposing *Jomon* and *Yayoi* types in the form of the villas at Katsura, originally built for and by the retired emperor Go-Mizuno, but for Tange transcending aristocratic aesthetics and thereby crystallising a singular and more accessible Japanese sensibility. This rhetorical twist, justifiable only by identifying the relations of the Royal Family and the Japanese people as going beyond ruler and ruled (as emphasised by prewar nationalists), was a demonstration also of his own role as presenter of the nation's collective will, and commander of the Hegelian (and Giedionian) *zeitgeist*. Isozaki's own sympathies at the time undoubtedly lay with the *Jomon* ideal, preoccupied as he was with detaching himself from the more sophisticated *Yayoi* aesthetics associated with conventional Japanese taste. But does Chogen's Daibutsu-yo fall into this category? Even if it did, it does not seem to present the obvious way out for a student keen to distance himself from the influence of his mentor. This is one of the core problems presented in this autobiography.

Within the context of Japan's modern architectural movement, the relationship of historians – even if their specialty was not modern architecture – to architects (words and buildings!) has long been significant. To comprehend Japanese modern architecture fully one needs to reference these works – just as western modern architecture would be incomplete without the grand narratives of Giedeon, Zevi and Pevsner. For Tange's generation, Hiroto Ohta, a professor at Tokyo University, was the leading architectural historian, and a figure deeply influenced by Sutemi Horiguchi, Japan's first modernist architect (and another object of Isozaki's fascination).¹³ As an academic scholar, Ohta's approach was highly positivistic, but at the same time he also tried to incorporate detailed investigation within the *grand récit* of a national history of architecture. Thus he was a modernist historian (and a master story-teller) even if he rarely discussed contemporary issues. As a matter of course, Japan-ness was one of his main topics (he is the author of the canonical book, *An Introduction to the History of Japanese Architecture* published in 1962), through which certain architectural sensibilities may have been transferred onto Tange, and through him to Isozaki.

Following Ohta, an important, intermediary figure in Isozaki's ongoing relationship with Tange was his close friend Teiji Ito. His name is cited only twice in *Japan-ness in Architecture* but his influence on the architect was profound. As a member of the same generation of patricians (Ito sought to supplant Ohta just as Isozaki tried to supersede Tange) Ito was the most promising architectural historian at Tokyo University in the early 1960s, so it came as a surprise when he was not nominated to succeed Ohta. I once asked Isozaki about this and he replied that Ito was too original a thinker and that his insight would have driven the retiring master into a state of inquietude (Isozaki may have wished for this kind of succession himself). It was Ito who called Isozaki's attention to Chogen and Daibutsu-yo, though not through his writings but through their conversations together. A shortage of research documentation meant that Ito only published his work on Chogen much later, in 1994, and then not in the form of an academic paper but as a fictionalised novel. The unenthusiastic reception to this book perhaps encouraged Isozaki (free from any historicist imperative by writing as an architect) to produce his own interpretation – a paper published three years later.

Collectively, the attraction of Chogen for these two ambitious architectural thinkers (one a historian, the other an architect) was in many ways its ability to present a third, synthetic alternative to the *Yayoi-Jomon* dialectic. The clarity of this gentle insurrection, however, was tempered by Isozaki's work on Katsura (the final chapter of *Japan-ness*, and a text originally published

in 1983), which presents the same subject as Tange's 1960 book, uses images by the same photographer (Yasuhiro Ishimoto) and appears to have been written very much as an ode to his mentor's own reading (specifically Tange's interpretation of Katsura not as 'a tranquil composition of the court style' but as a model for a 'certain dynamic expression'). Given his claim that 'a new generation is no longer able to behave heroically like Tange',¹⁴ Isozaki should perhaps have resigned himself to the dialectic so dramatically (heroically, even) formulated by his master, rather than trying to find a third alternative. The key to the appeal of Chogen, however, was its ambivalence, simultaneously neither aristocratic nor populist, and an architectural style too heretical, too personal and perhaps even too *unheimlich* (in Anthony Vidler's terms) to have produced any followers. That Chogen's built works never became dominant but instead remained isolated exceptions must have appealed especially to Isozaki, who has consistently tried to find a way to reify personal visions in his built works. As a postmodernist, Isozaki has only ever pursued the personal, while Tange, as a modernist, needed the collective will of the people.

In spite of their comradeship as iconoclasts, there were also significant differences between Ito and Isozaki. Ito was a modernist historian with a particular interest in presenting architectural history through what was called a productionist view. This was largely a materialistic approach focusing, under the influence of Marxism, on collective modes of architectural production. In the late 1950s Ito wrote two prominent texts – his doctoral thesis on 'A History of Japanese Peasant Huts in the Medieval Period' (1958) and a much shorter essay on Katsura published in the non-academic *Kenchiku-Bunka* magazine (November 1956). His thesis, in particular, was unique in that he analysed a mode of building and an architectural type through the lenses of medieval taxation and land ownership – an approach far removed from the academic mainstream, which typically offered stylistic analyses of various building activities. In his essay on Katsura, Ito showed how architectural production diverged during the historic turn of Japan's medieval and early feudal period. While one approach offered a more bureaucratic mode of construction, typically employed by the dominant Samurai class, the other revealed itself through such exceptional buildings as Katsura, in which the client-designer (retired emperor Go-Mizono) oversaw the construction process by consulting over several decades with a small group of carpenters employed by his family. Tange, whose own studio programme used a similar productionist approach, analysing post-war Japanese cities through patterns of economic and demographic mobility, cited Ito's thesis in his own book on Katsura, using it to

bridge royal villas to the model of the peasant hut. That the *Kiwari* system (a proportional order derived from timber rafters) was used only in royal residences (Ito's first category) but was significantly absent at Katsura, gave Tange justification for his argument, which tactfully shifted the analysis from Ito's materialistic collectivity to an idealistic and spiritual collectivity.

When I asked Isozaki about Ito's two defining texts, he said that at the time he had found the thesis too complicated, but the essay fascinated him. His reading of Ito's works and their influence in the eventual choice of his own research topic (not so much the generic model, typified by traditional *minka* houses, but the exceptional model of Katsura) provided the first step in Isozaki's later (meta) readings of historic buildings. In this, his inclination was always much more towards the singular rather than the collective, something at odds with his receptivity to Marxism at the time. Collective and anonymous building activities, be it the peasant huts admired by Taut in relation to Ise and Katsura, or structures for the dominant class as methodologically researched by Ito, were never his concern. Neither was Tange's predisposition towards dialectical constructs, nor even the productionist research of his design studio.

What Isozaki did concern himself with (and a subject that forms the final and most thrilling part of his book) was an investigation of the absent master architect Enshu Kobori (1579–1647) – a well-known expert of garden design, tea ceremonies, poetry and calligraphy, and a key cultural figure within Japan's early Edo period. Enshu's name is treated more ambivalently than any other in *Japan-ness in Architecture* because it has come to be synonymous with the notion of taste. This association is derived from the tradition of tea masters to which Enshu belonged. The ceremony itself, half ritual and half act of genial hospitality, actually displays a system of hermeneutics; it is created, not through fabrication (of hot water acting upon tea leaves), but through interpretation, based on the specific tastes of the tea masters – an aesthetic sensibility that can be extended to the design of the ceremony's physical environment, building and garden. Accordingly, taste is more than just a preference. Rather it is a philosophy or vision of the world, a hermeneutic entity, or a world of words. Isozaki uses Enshu to look again at Katsura, noting initially that the villa had been constructed in at least three distinct stages. Being built slowly over half a century, 'it has no clearly defined, dominant form or style'. The 'taste' discharged by each of the various stages is therefore different. As with his reading of Chogen, Isozaki's preference is not for the *Ko-shoin* (First Pavilion), the building most favoured by a modernist interpretation (notably by Tange), but for the *Shin-goten* (New Palace), the building open to a more obscure – even uncanny

– reading. The *Shin-goten* offers a space that is not transparent and systematic but instead one infused with opacity and complexity (as Venturi would see it against the simplicity and transparency of Mies). In the context of taste, this choice seems natural for Isozaki when considering his inclination towards the postmodern, but taste itself is only the first step of his intellectual approach; there lies a more significant problem. He cites Enshu (whom Taut had mistakenly designated the main creative force behind Katsura) and goes on to discuss the problem of authorship in detail. ‘The entire issue’, he insists, ‘is built around a blind spot’ generated by the absence of the author. Accordingly, Enshu appears not as the person in charge of the actual construction, but as a bundle of certain tastes associated with his name (or *Enshu konomi*). Referring to the absence of the architect as author in traditional Japanese building and landscape design, Isozaki extrapolates that ‘It is perfectly correct to say that Enshu was not the author of Katsura Villa. But it is also correct to say that the *konomi* – the “system” and methods that may be discerned – was indeed Enshu’s’.¹⁵

The omission here, in the English translation, of Isozaki’s reference to ‘aesthetic judgment as automaton’ is regrettable.¹⁶ In its original Japanese, what Isozaki was suggesting was that aesthetic ideas are not manifested simply through the individual, but exist as a conceptual category beyond superficial taste. Implicit within this is the radical idea that aesthetics, as automata, ultimately refute the very idea of aesthetics. Isozaki’s translator, Sabu Kohso, might have considered the original Japanese term ‘*jido-kikai*’ (automaton) too confusing to put into English; its omission cannot have anything to do with Japan-ness (or rather Japanese-ness), because the word really developed its currency in the west as a surrealist term, used by artists like Alfred Jarry and Marcel Duchamp. Isozaki has long been enchanted by surrealist automata (evidenced by his famous Marilyn Monroe French curves, inspired by Duchamp’s ‘stoppages’) as well as by Russian formalist theories analysing language as a rhetorical mechanism, transcending the individual speaker (or writer). I remember an occasion in the early 1970s, while Isozaki was formulating his own theory of *maniera* (manner), he showed me a new anthology of Russian formalism edited by Fredric Jameson.¹⁷ This text was clearly an influence in developing his own interest in the autonomous logic inherent in automata, something he subsequently explored, architecturally, through what he saw as the rhetorical device of using pure geometries. Again, this was essentially an escape from the transparent (and modernist) system employed by Tange for developing sophisticated proportions. Once dependent on platonic geometry, you need not care about proportion, or aesthetics.

As the last stage in a detachment from modernism, and the last act of patricide, this book consists of a series of readings along a tightrope of hermeneutic interpretation. That Isozaki is highly conscious of the endemic hazards of this approach is proof of his postmodernism, because postmodernism never simply demystifies the myth of modernism, it replaces the unintended (or unconscious) myth with another deliberate myth. The ambivalence of Enshu’s taste, able to lead simultaneously to the opposing poles of intellectual mannerism and Japanese kitsch, is presented by Isozaki as one of its inherent flaws. As a modernist, he is against kitsch, but at the same time, as a post-modernist, he suspends any kind of authenticity – as he does in deconstructing the idea of Ise as the origin of Japanese architecture. In this rhetorical *tour de force*, automata become the defining hermeneutic strategy. Nothing guarantees anything else, even history is relative – Enshu, who was a real figure and a man responsible for numerous buildings and gardens is, in his absence at Katsura, summoned only to support Isozaki’s postmodern reading. Similarly, the twelfth-century priest Chogen, certainly no artist by vocation (as there were no artists in medieval Japan) is compared to Brunelleschi as a ‘demiurge’, and therefore transcending any possible academically verifiable interpretation. But what else should we expect from this architect-creator? Isozaki must be aware that all this is just another myth – even if on a so-called metalevel – and one that generates a certain fascination, not only for his readers, but as the guiding principle for his own continuing architectural practice.

Arata Isozaki
Japan-ness in Architecture
MIT, 2006

1. Banister Fletcher’s *A History of Architecture* was originally published in 1896 and in 1919 was the first historical book on architecture ever translated into Japanese, but it was not until the book’s sixth edition, in 1921, that a separate chapter on Japanese architecture was added. Ten years before the Japanese translation of the first edition, historian Chuta Ito criticised the book’s eurocentrism, but still used Fletcher’s theoretical structure to imagine his own parallel history of Japanese architecture – a simultaneity of acceptance and rejection that has come to define Japan’s relationship with western architectural history.
2. Arata Isozaki, *Japan-ness in Architecture*, trans. Sabu Kohso (Cambridge MA: MIT Press, 2006), p IX.

3. *Ibid*, p xvii.
4. *Ibid*, pp 249–51.
5. *Ibid*, p 3.
6. This is illustrated by the story of Frank Lloyd Wright, recounted by Isozaki, who misinterpreted the Taoist concept of *ku* (omnipresent emptiness) as the Japanese word for ‘space’. At the time of Wright’s first encounter with Japan, the word *kukan* (space), was used only in the context of the physical sciences, and not in the modern architectural sense, denoting a limited and articulated inner territory.
7. Given that the very notion of history, as well as architecture, was in this sense a western (and modern) import, Banister Fletcher’s eurocentric history is perhaps not entirely without reason.
8. By contemporary I mean several decades after Isozaki’s student days in the early 1950s, the most fertile period for Japanese postwar architecture.
9. See Hajime Yatsuka, ‘Internationalism Versus Regionalism’, in Russell Ferguson (ed), *At the End of the Century: One Hundred Years of Architecture* (Los Angeles: The Museum of Contemporary Art, 1998).
10. Arata Isozaki, *op cit*, p 65.
11. Isozaki is typically a modernist, for instance, in his argument about what is called the Imperial Crown style (*teikan-yoshiki*) in the book’s introductory chapter, simply assigning to it the role of a reactionary style allied to a prewar (and wartime) regime. I think this is the one weak point in what is an illuminating book. Although this is too complex an issue to pursue here, my view is that Japanese modernist architects were never suppressed by this regime, and that historicist styles like *teikan-yoshiki* were rather just a reflection of the conservative tastes of the time. The struggle, in this sense, was not political (as it was in postwar Japan) but stylistic. It should also be noted that Isozaki’s translator has confused this style with *teikan-heigo-shiki* (or Imperial Crown Synthesis style), which architect Kikutaro Shimoda had proposed ten years earlier in the 1920s. Chuta Ito, offered by Isozaki as the expert on *teikan-yoshiki*, was really quite critical of Shimoda’s synthetic style. *Teikan-yoshiki*, with its strong references to nationalism, was actually an *a posteriori* label from Japan’s postwar period.
12. In this sense Tange was operating as a typical modernist in that he based his own view on the dialectical reaction to his works. The resulting synthesis is evidenced by the fact that Noboru Kawazoe eventually became co-author of his book on Ise.
13. It was Ohta who advocated the renaming of *Teijiku-yo* (literally Indian style, an irrelevant name only denoting a deviation from the authentic Chinese style) to *Daibutsu-yo* (Great Buddha style).
14. Arata Isozaki, *op cit*, p 267.
15. *Ibid*, p 295.
16. In the translation, references to automata are either simply neglected or translated as an ‘autonomous aesthetic’, or that ‘*Konomi* is itself an automation’.
17. Fredric Jameson, *The Prison-House of Language: A Critical Account of Structuralism and Russian Formalism* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1972).