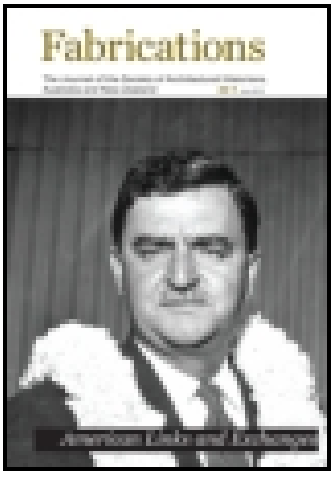

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Authentic Japanese architecture after Bruno Taut: the problem of eclecticism

Sandra Kaji-O'Grady

This paper will examine attitudes to eclectic stylistic borrowing in Japan in the twentieth century in light of the concept of authenticity. I am particularly interested in how an earlier claim correlating European modernist and traditional Japanese architecture continues to colour conceptions about what is an 'authentic' response for Japanese architects to make to contemporary conditions. Non-Western and vernacular architectures generally have been the repository for touristic desires for regional authenticity and difference. Yet Japan's unique role in the development of modernist architecture has given a peculiar intensity to the demand for its architecture to resist a perceived postmodern decadence. The conflation of the *sukiya* tradition, as exemplified in Katsura, with modernism has become increasingly problematic in the face of the international rejection of many of the principles of modernist architecture. Japanese architects are faced with the curious prospect that the abandonment of modernism entails a turning away from national architectural traditions. Western criticism of contemporary Japanese architecture consistently values what appears to be the seamless meshing of modernism and Japanese architecture in the work of Tadao Ando, Fumihiko Maki and Kishi Waro over work which, in the postmodern manner, emphasizes disparate origins and internal formal contradictions. Such a condition requires a clearer understanding of the context and aims of the argument that European modernism and traditional Japanese architecture share compositional strategies and ambitions.

In the first part of this paper I will examine the construction of the modernist-*sukiya* couple in the writings of Bruno Taut from the 1930s. Amongst the European modernists who visited, worked and studied in Japan between the wars, Taut had the greatest influence on both the ways in which the Japanese perceived the relevance of their own traditions in the present and upon the international understanding of Japanese architecture. Taut interweaves three different considerations of authenticity in his writings. The first consideration attends to questions of national identity, the second to the question of authenticity as a true expression of one's age, and the third to the nature of artistic individuality and originality. In his attempt to discern a true Japanese architecture amongst what he perceives as the "intolerable garishness" of a "civilization in decay", Taut refers to a model of the artist-architect that he previously developed within a Nietzschean-inspired German idealism.[1] Taut's egoist view of the artist's role as a man elevated above normal humanity is at odds with the modest Japanese pursuit of the mastery of craft. Yet this view determines Taut's evaluation of the diverse architectural examples found in

Japan. While Arata Isozaki argues that Taut was simply a willing mouthpiece for an argument conceived by Japanese supporters of international modernism, the legacy of Taut's activities in Japan are complex and continue to operate in attitudes to subsequent developments both amongst the Japanese and Western critics.

Fig. 46 "Purification of Heart" at Shorinzan

Figure 1: Bruno Taut, *Houses and People of Japan*, 2nd ed, Tokyo: Sanseido, 1958, p 44

Isozaki notes that Taut came to Japan as a refugee in 1933 after Hitler seized power, although in his own writings Taut promotes his visit as having a scholarly purpose.[2] A group of young Osaka-based architects called the "International Architecture Association" arranged for Taut to visit Katsura Palace in Kyoto, at that time not open to the public, and to spend four hours there at his leisure. The group's leader, Isaburo Ueno, had studied at the Weimer Werkbund. Isozaki argues that Isaburo conceived the scheme of reinterpreting Japanese traditional architecture along the principles of modern architecture in order to overcome the suppression of modernism. The immediate catalyst was the impending competition for the National Museum. The intention of the competition organizers was to promote what was called the 'crown style'—a practice of using the Japanese roof over a rationalist stripped Western classicism. The group decried the style as a conservative eclecticism and tried to organize a resistance of internationalist modernists. They needed an authoritative spokesperson to make the argument that Japanese traditional architecture shared its compositional characteristics with European modernism. According to Isozaki, "Taut intuitively understood his role and played it to the hilt in exchange for being allowed to stay in Japan."[3] Isozaki has argued that Taut's role was to confirm and broadcast a discursive synthesis between Japanese-ness and

modernism which had been previously developed by European-trained Japanese architects.[4] The larger argument in which Taut's claim to the modernity of Katsura is made does not, however, simply reflect the wants of his hosts. Taut's writings on Japanese architecture maintained values specific to his earlier activities as an intellectual in Germany.

Taut's involvement in the *Deutsche Gartenstadtgesellschaft* and the *St_rm* circle of the Expressionists, two very different groups active in Berlin between 1910 and 1920, indicates his attempt to reconcile the anarchic impulses of Expressionism with the need for practical social reform found in the Garden City movement.[5] Taut was affronted by the present age which he believed had been in decline since the Gothic era, but was convinced that a new age was dawning. He was little interested in the idea that architects should respond to what he called the ephemera of the *Zeitgeist* and believed that the architect was called to express the more authentic soul of the *Volk*. He held an idealized view of the *Volk*, sometimes defined as the populace, at other times referring to the agrarian worker, and always seen as an inarticulate community in need of the intellectual. He thought that through the efforts of architects, artists and intellectuals, the *Volk* could make contact with a higher nature and the industrial worker could be saved from bad taste and degenerative habits. Taut used the term 'nature' to refer to the higher ideals of life although he was equally attracted to an idealized vision of the countryside. Taut abhorred the materialist, city-based culture of Berlin and supported decentralization and a return to the land. Technology was not rejected outright but was to function to serve the higher needs of *Geist*, or spirit. In this way, he sought to transcend the limitations of positive rationalism, and in its place install a new rationalism based on creative rather than analytical thought. He was convinced "the true essence of architecture can only spring from the heart."[6] In relation to the other arts, architecture was the highest and given the task of unifying the others for the good fortune of the masses.

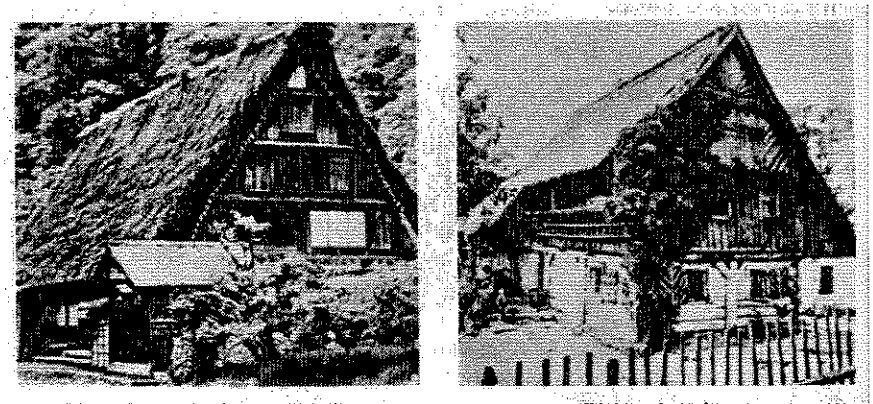

Fig. 160 Left: Japan, Shirakawa Right: Austria

Figure 2: Bruno Taut, *Houses and People of Japan*, 2nd ed, Tokyo: Sanseido, 1958, p 112

Although the beneficiaries of Taut's program of a renewed architecture were the masses, he did not subscribe to socialism, was suspicious of the state and wary of politics. Iain White has made a thorough study of Taut's writings and

architecture during the period. White accepts the Marxist critic Georg Lukács characterization of the values of the Activist elite with whose views and societies Taut aligned himself. Lukács points out that these were not the values of the proletariat but rather the traditional values of the liberal bourgeoisie masquerading as objective truth: good taste, aesthetic delight, appreciation of beauty and respect for creative genius.[7] In Taut's writings, these values are most evident and in architecture are translated into a preference for purity and emptiness and an affected simplicity and austerity. As Taut moved towards functionalism and away from ambitions of a spiritual nature, he continued to value clarity of structure and rational organization as means to social betterment.

All these values come into play in Taut's perception of Japanese architecture. He observed that what had attracted modernist architects to Japan in recent decades was not, as it was for other visitors who visited its historic monuments, an interest in the exotic, nor the violent asymmetry, nor the minute dwarfishness and overloaded "bizarrie" of Nikko. What modernist architects sought was "an idealized conception of cleanliness, clarity, simplicity, cheerfulness and faithfulness to the materials of nature, and for the greater part they still retain that conception."[8] Such a summation indicates well that which Taut anticipated to be confirmed by his visit. Accordingly, he rejected the idea of a hotel and requested that his hosts organize for his accommodation a simple and authentic country home. On installation in just such a house in Takasaksi, north of Tokyo, he was, however, appalled by the lack of thermal comfort, the hardness of the futon and the high temperature of the communal bath. He decried the primitive kitchen which required his wife to work while kneeling on the floor. He railed at the fleas breeding in the tatami mats and the noisy rats in the ceiling. His wife was horrified at the prospect of having to dust all the horizontal bars on the shoji, a task which she estimated would take at least three hours at a time two or three times a day.[9] Furthermore, Taut found it "incomprehensible that people of such a high aesthetic standard" should not avert the offensive odor created by the proximity of the toilet to the living room, a location which obstructed what potentially was the best view.[10] He was taken aback by the explanation which accorded its location to Feng Shui principles which he promptly condemned as "simply gibberish" and "superstition, probably artificially nourished, which gives a whole profession and many temples their living."[11] Taut lamented that, although he took photographs only of the simple and most commonplace things, it was impossible for a European to look at the photographs and not find them picturesque since the camera cannot smell, sweat and freeze.[12] He perhaps came to realize that his own understanding had been constructed on such images alone. Dismissing the avowed spiritual connection the Japanese profess to have with nature, he argued that their houses are "nothing more than tents ... hence no doubt the closeness to nature on which the Japanese insist so emphatically."[13]

Disappointed with the house and particularly with the absence of structural and functional logic that he found there, Taut went in search of the authentic Japanese architecture which he was sure existed either elsewhere or in the past. He found in the remaining examples of buildings constructed by the aristocratic Heike family in Shirakawa evidence of the use of triangulation and an understanding of structural integrity. Taut proposed that after the Heike were destroyed by the Genji in 1185, Japan underwent a subsequent decline from an aboriginal culture to a Chinese-Buddhist influenced one favouring the aesthetic

over rationalistic construction. Likewise, he acclaimed the Ise temple for its Buddhist subordination of the aesthetic to structural necessity. In Ise he found "the art of omission" pushed to its extreme and declared "after a first visit to Ise one knows what Japan is."[14] He subsequently declared the commonly practised methods of construction a "phenomenon of degeneration, and in fact non-Japanese."[15]

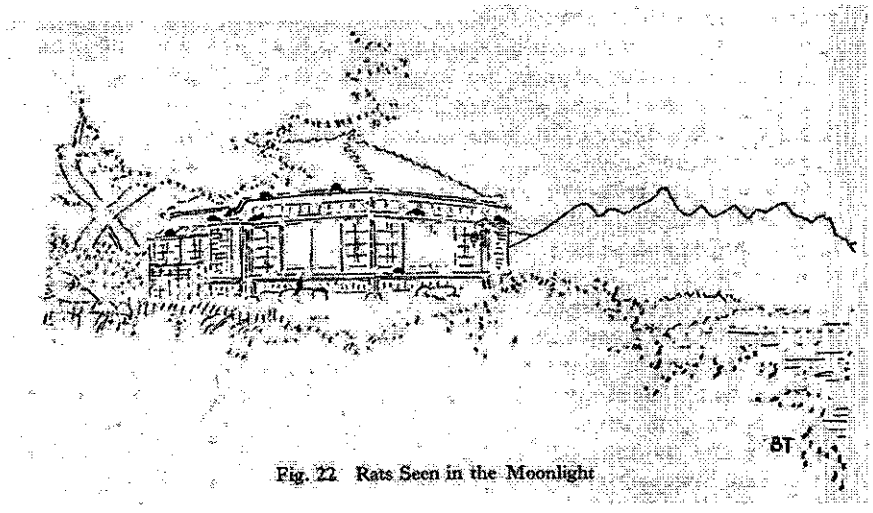

Figure 3: Bruno Taut, *Houses and People of Japan*, 2nd ed, Tokyo: Sanseido, 1958, p 22

Where Ise and the houses of the Heike were granted authentic status on the grounds of their rational structural expression, Katsura achieved this through its demonstration of a "freedom of intellect which does not subordinate any element of the structure or the garden to some rigid system."[16] Taut rejected the codified refinements of tea culture as a "dictated accumulation which can never become architecture" but found in Katsura a boldness and originality which was not imitative.[17] He felt sure that the unique quality of Katsura, ascribed to Kobori Enshu, was the doings of "a man who must have been an authority on taste and had a remarkable quality of invention, as well as liberty from convention and a vast artistic horizon."[18] The goal for a modern Japanese architecture was found in Katsura but could only be accomplished where "the materials remain architectural; where the architect has freedom to grapple with new problems and is allowed to develop and to gain recognition; and where the prospect still exists of becoming a modern daimyo in intellectual pursuits and in decisive influence on the problems facing the country."[19] Consistent with his earlier disinterest in concepts of historic authenticity, Katsura is revered for its "eternal beauty forever inexplicable."[20] Taut declared beauty was achieved in the palace because its architect unified common utility with dignified representation and philosophical spirituality. In Katsura he found "the absolute proof of my theory, which I regarded as a valid base for modern architecture."[21] He concluded that the personality of Kobori Enshu, a polymath who was equally a philosopher, an official and a master of garden art, flower-arrangment and tea culture, was "an entirely modern one."[22]

It is with Taut's writings that Katsura and the Ise shrine have come to be regarded as *Honmono*, authentic, in opposition to *ikamono*, kitsch or trash as Taut translated it and found represented by Tokugawa and Nikko Toshogu. On the basis of these buildings he claimed "simplicity almost to the point of poverty is the essential basis of Japanese aesthetics."[23] The context in which Taut's statements were elicited and broadcast is one of political exigency. The values underlying the judgements he made are those of a European liberal bourgeoisie intellectual with a specific history in Activism and an idiosyncratic understanding of function and the role of the architect in society. Nevertheless, these values quickly influenced the perception Japanese had of their own architectural history. In an English language tourist guide published in 1936 by the Japan Travel Bureau, the author Professor Hideto Kishida describes Nikko as a place of international renown yet apologetically explains,

> It is indeed a magnificent and wonderful thing to see. Only it must be noted that from the point of architectural esthetics, the buildings at Nikko do not represent the pure 'spirit of Japan,' as their decoration is exaggerated in its detail, and their architecture is marked by certain defects when judged in the light of 'shibumi,' the sole canon by which true Japanese architecture may be appraised.[24]

Kishida writes of Katsura,

> One can certainly recognize in the buildings of the Kyoto Palace the so-called 'Japanese taste,' and I wish to emphasize here that this Japanese taste which is expressed in this palace building is not to be seen either in the buildings of Buddhist temples or in the Nikko-Byo.[25]

This is a dramatic shift in the standing of the two buildings in Japanese culture and it is curious that Kishida refers to the "so-called 'Japanese taste'" with such temerity.

The quotation marks with which Kishida puts 'Japanese taste' into question are rarely found in Western criticism of contemporary architecture which persists in measuring new work against the qualities of sobriety, cleanliness, modesty and restraint so dear to bourgeois good taste. Contemporary Japan bears only displaced and ossified remnants of the rituals and beliefs from which Katsura emerged. Yet appropriateness of response to contemporary conditions is rarely valued by Western critics confronted by the extreme architectural expressions borne of an economy in which building costs are incidental relative to land. Japanese architects who stray from the synthesis of modernism and the austerity and simplicity of Katsura are typically received with disdain or regret even by the most important and influential writers. Of current architectural tendencies, William Coaldrake laments "coherence created by traditional design or by international architectural influences has been shattered" by "an aggressive consumer society and a degree of cultural schizophrenia". In place is "a bewildering diversity of architectural expression" with "form following the capricious aesthetic, seasonal and financial dictates of current fashion."[26] Coaldrake faults architects such as Arata Isozaki whose work and writings he describes as "impenetrable to reasoned analysis because it subsumes traditional Japanese architecture in a Western matrix of spatial analysis devised only in this century."[27]

Botond Bognar perceives in Western criticism a tendency to favour architects such as Kenzo Tange, Tadao Ando and Itsuko Hasegawa who seem most able to work within the rules of the game of modernism while imbuing it with an inflection which conforms to Western ideas of Japanese style.[28] Astute and self-aware as Bognar is, he nevertheless admits,

> My reaction to any new work in Japan is inevitably conditioned by these exemplars from the past. I look for signs of that peculiarly Japanese austerity, those subtle shifts in repetitious patterns, those contrasts of rich incident with sublime blankness. It is easy to find these beloved characteristics in much of the current Japanese work [of the] avant-garde—in the buildings of Fumihiko Maki or Tadao Ando for example. It is harder for me to appreciate avant-garde work that rebels against these traditions—that is based almost entirely in Western traditions ... such as Isozaki or Shin Takamatsu.[29]

Of course, architects who eschew the aesthetic sensibility of what, in the context of their clients, can only be an affected poverty, have argued against both the relevance and the reduction of Japanese architecture to the ideal found in Katsura. Kisho Kurokawa has pointed out that Taut and other modernists neglected the decorative and whimsical aspects of Katsura in order to claim its modernity.[30] Some architects have proposed to revive the architecture that Taut condemned—the fortified architecture of the samurais and shoguns and the Baroque flourishes of temple architecture—in order to locate a true Japanese style. These architects, such as Shin Takamatsu and Takasaki Masaharu, hope to revive the excesses of Nikko or the primitive arts of the Jomon period in order to claim authentic national alternatives to that of Katsura.

A second approach, and the one I wish to address in greater detail in the remainder of the paper, has been to reject the very idea and possibility of a Japanese style, both in the past and the present, and with it the modernist egoist conception of the architect. This second approach, for want of a better phrase, might be called "strategic eclecticism." To be eclectic is to select at will. An eclectic thinker selects and reconciles principles belonging to different, even competing or contradictory schools of thought. The eclectic deliberately selects and brings together. Lodged in the self-conscious act of choosing is the acceptance that there is no one certain Truth, only contingent and local truths. Nineteenth century eclecticism, Colquhoun observes, was the product of an interest in history and bore a sense of nostalgia of the past whose styles it used.[31] He notes that "Eclecticism depends on the power of historical styles to become the emblems of ideas associated with the cultures that produced them."[32] To be able to maintain the signifying power of an architectural style, Colquhoun argues that it is necessary that the architect possess a sympathetic identification and knowledge of the styles of the past and the ability to subject those styles to ideological distortions.[33]

Western architecture was introduced in Japan in the period of the Meiji restoration. When it took power in 1868, the Meiji government instituted an all-encompassing edict called *wa kon yo sai* or 'Japanese spirit upon Western intelligence,' thereby setting in place the duality of Western and Japanese influences. Traditional Japanese architecture lost its official sanction, yet this period coincided with the nineteenth-century "battle of the styles". The first Western-style buildings were in a conglomeration of modes, including Gothic,

Renaissance and Baroque and introduced an array of new building materials including cement, steel and bricks. Kawazoe Noboru describes the impact of Western architecture at this time as limited to "only the techniques and external forms of the industrial civilisation of the West, without understanding the spiritual background."[34] What Noboru understands as being a failure on the part of the turn of the century Japanese architect to fully comprehend the new formal material, in contemporary practices is taken up as a positive strategy.

In the strategic eclecticism of contemporary Japanese architects, the motivations are not nostalgically motivated by a sense of history. Nor is there an identification or knowledge of the styles of the past that are used - quite the opposite. Eclecticism has come to be conceived in Japan as a procedure which eliminates content or truth from form—it works only with the visible and recurring motifs that constitute style divorced from place and time. Eclecticism permits the incorporation of multiple foreign styles as formal material divorced from origin and drained of meaning. Where nineteenth century architects were capable of working in several styles, they did not use several styles in one building without an attempt at synthesis. Even architects such as Togo Murano, whose long career consisted of copies of examples of modernism and derivations of multiple styles, attempted to synthesize contradictory styles into a well-mannered whole.[35] Kenzo Tange's Main Gymnasium Building is described by Coaldrake in terms of an "easy eclecticism—drawing together the International Style, classic antiquity, and temple roof and castle walls from Japanese tradition."[36] In contrast, contemporary eclecticism emphasizes disjunction and the difficulties which proclude synthesis. Takeyama Minoru, for example, whose work displays an irresolved assemblage of opposing styles, describes his approach as analogous to an oxymoron, "bracketing together opposite or incongruous meanings without placing anything between them to hide their incompatability."[37]

Through internal contradiction, strategic eclecticism voids the ideological ambitions of Western architecture and neutralises the cult of authorship through the distancing effect of style. This strategy places Japanese stylistic forms as equally recoverable for new purposes and thereby produces a distancing effect upon Japanese architectural traditions. This distancing is not accidental but sought out by its practitioners. In earlier examples of eclecticism in Japan, the architect, although not the originating genius of modernism, is at least an autonomous and unified subject, selecting and bringing together styles at will. In contrast, architects such as Isozaki and Hisashi who work with multiplicitous forms collaged together without a controlling vision have proposed the architect as an internally divided figure. Isozaki argues that the contemporary Japanese architect finds him or herself equidistant between historical Japanese architecture and Western architecture. He sees the Ise shrine and Ryoan-ji temple "from the same distance as I do Stonehenge or the works of Sir Edwin Lutyens, for we all see these architectures as fictive constructs."[38] He is, he thinks, as much a stranger in Japan as he is a stranger in the west. Perceiving that "all architectural style is reduced to ruins" he claims that "architecture must become schizophrenic and eclectic."[39] Consequently his Tsukuba Centre building of the late 1980s is a "a group portrait, so to speak, of architects such as Ledoux, Giulio Romano, Michelangelo, Otto Wagner, Michael Graves, Richard Meier, Charles Moore, Aldo Rossi, Hans Hollein, Peter Cook, Adalberto Libera, Philip Johnson, Leon

Krier, Lawrence Halprin, Ettore Sottsass and many more."[40] He proposes that "the explicit representation of these concretely manifested fragments is by no means consistent, nor do they converge on one point, but ceaselessly revolve around the periphery of that unoccupied centre."[41]

Isozaki's retreat from modernism is not simply an example of postmodernism as an international phenomenon. Isozaki recognises the peculiar fictional status of Japanese style in the annals of architecture and identifies the problem for the Japanese architect as one of how to operate within these fictions of nationality. His solution is eclecticism, not historicism. Isozaki maintains that he is not copying historical elements but using what is "exterior" and outside the body.[42] It is not the content but the forms that are borrowed and these he transforms through reversal, collage and fragmentation. Isozaki does not stand outside and above the West, selecting architectural forms as if he were wandering through a museum; rather he is already split as a subject, not so much speaking several languages, as being spoken through several languages. The Japanese cultural identity is so divided and multiplied that it is no longer possible to determine the origins or meanings of practices and words. Isozaki has experienced psychosomatic crises in which he is bedridden. These crises, which occur at regular periods of a decade or so, coincide with stylistic changes in his oeuvre. This personal struggle and Isozaki's practice of engaging in debate with an invented alter ego 'Shin', underwrite what is already evident in his architecture.[43] Japanese and Western architectural histories become for Isozaki a source of stylistic modes whose repetition is made without the desire to recover an authentic past. A staged encounter is made with what is earlier and other, between two equally voided pasts in which both traditions are cast adrift from the present. Eclecticism is not here a mark of insincerity, personal failure to commit or inability to invent but is rather a strategy for negotiating the impossibility of authenticity to time, nation or self.

To recognize the significance of Isozaki's architecture it is inappropriate to revert to the values used by Taut such as the simplicity, purity and rationality of form, continuity or derivation against Japanese architectural history or to make reference to the originality of the architect's vision. In contrast to Taut's egoist vision of the architect, Isozaki is disinterested in status and claims "I try to be a kind of nothing, a kind of void is what I am always striving for."[44] Critics of contemporary Japanese architecture need to be aware of the ideological framework in which Taut's vision of an authentic Japanese architecture is made and of the ongoing way in which it structures expectations and judgements both from within and outside of Japan. The conceptions of authenticity operating in Taut and much Western criticism of Japanese architecture and which posit definitions of national identity, historical appropriateness or artistic originality are inevitably reductive, essentialistic and themselves, driven by definitions and values which are anything but universal and objective. The eclecticism of Isozaki and others is not simply derivative of an American and European postmodernism but is strategically directed against a complex history of exchange and negotiation between Japan, modernity and the west.

Notes

1 Taut wrote of his first experience of Japan, "The general impression (of Tokyo) was one of intolerable garishness ... this utter aimlessness, this total absence of direction even in bad taste, did more than shatter our illusions about Japan; it lacerated our finer feelings. After all, Berlin, Paris and London, even in their drearier aspects are never devoid of character and integrity. Being sensitively organized, I yielded to a mood of acute depression ... I was seriously regretting that I had ever ventured on the journey to Japan." Bruno Taut, *Houses and People of Japan*, 2nd ed, Tokyo: Sanseido, 1958 [1937], pp 2–3.

2 Isozaki notes that Taut's status in Japan was precarious since Japan had established the Axis alliance with Germany and Italy and implies that this condition made Taut all the more amenable to his role in promoting Katsura. Arata Isozaki, 'Discourse on Diversity', *Rassegna*, 76 (1998): 106.

3 Isozaki, 'Discourse on Diversity', 106

4 Isozaki, 'Discourse on Diversity', 106.

5 Iain B White, *Bruno Taut and the Architecture of Activism*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1982, pp 7–16.

6 Bruno Taut, Die Stadtkrone (1919) in White, *Bruno Taut and the Architecture of Activism*, p 74.

7 White, *Bruno Taut and the Architecture of Activism*, p 214.

8 Bruno Taut, *Fundamentals of Japanese Architecture*, 2nd ed, Tokyo: Kokusai Bunka Shinkokai (The Society for International Cultural Relations), 1937 [1936], p 9.

9 Taut, *Houses and People of Japan*, pp 6–22.

10 Taut, *Houses and People of Japan*, p 38.

11 Taut, *Houses and People of Japan*, p 31.

12 Taut, *Houses and People of Japan*, p 52.

13 Taut, *Houses and People of Japan*, p 21.

14 Taut, *Houses and People of Japan*, pp 148–149.

15 Taut, *Fundamentals of Japanese Architecture*, p 13.

16 Taut, *Fundamentals of Japanese Architecture*, p 19

17 Taut, *Fundamentals of Japanese Architecture*, p 20.

18 Taut, *Houses and People of Japan*, p 301.

19 Taut, *Fundamentals of Japanese Architecture*, p 21.

20 Taut, *Houses and People of Japan*, p 278.

21 Taut, *Houses and People of Japan*, p 293.

22 Taut, *Houses and People of Japan*, p 303.

23 Taut, *Houses and People of Japan*, p 64.

24 Hideto Kishida, *Japanese Architecture*, Japan Travel Bureau, 1948 [1936], p 50.

25 Kishida, *Japanese Architecture*, p 104.

26 William Coaldrake, *Architecture and Authority in Japan*, London: Routledge, 1996, p 253.

[27] Coaldrake, *Architecture and Authority in Japan*, p 253.

[28] Botond Bognar, *Togo Murano: Master Architect of Japan*, Rizzoli: New York, 1996, p 28.

[29] Botond Bognar, *The New Japanese Architecture*, Rizzoli, New York, 1990, p 10.

[30] Kisho Kurokawa points out the judgements Taut and Gropius passed on Katsura and the Ise shrine were made entirely within the context of Modern architecture, were one-dimensional and have skewed the appreciation of their traditions by Japanese. He argues that they overlooked several important decorative features of Katsura Palace including: the decorative metalwork of the staggered shelves in the Chu Shoin; the dramatic checked pattern of the tokonoma of the Shokintei arbour; the round window of the tokonoma of the Shin Shoin; the round window in the Shoiken retainer's room and the velvet baseboard wall on the door pulls of those same quarters. Kisho Kurokawa, *Intercultural Architecture: The Philosophy of Symbiosis*, Washington, D.C.: The American Institute of Architects Press, 1991, p 27.

[31] Alan Colquhoun, 'Three Kinds of Historicism', *Modernity and the Classical Tradition: Architectural Essays 1980–1987*, Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1994, p 6.

[32] Colquhoun, 'Three kinds of Historicism', p 6.

[33] Colquhoun, 'Three kinds of Historicism', p 16.

[34] Kawazoe Noboru, *Contemporary Japanese Architecture*, Tokyo: Kokusai Koryu Kikin, 1973, p 19.

[35] Trained in the American Beaux-Arts Style in the 1920s and practising right up until his death in 1984, Murano's career coincided with enormous stylistic changes. He adopted them all and not in the chronological order in which they appeared or with any concern for their ideological intent. A great traveller he produced a body of work that includes an example of almost every twentieth-century style. His Takarazuka City Hall of 1980 resembles Gunnar Asplund's Stockholm Public Library of 1927, a building rooted in classicism. His Morigo Building and the Ube Public Hall reveal a strong affinity with the expressionist architecture of northern Europe that he admired. His Trappist Convent of 1969 could be the sister building to Le Corbusier's La Tourette of nine years earlier; even its sketch drawings resemble those of Corbusier. Others of Murano's buildings do not resemble a single precedent or style, but mix allusions to historical periods from the medieval to the modern. Unlike the modernist architects whose buildings Murano imitated, he had little interest in the integration of technology and expression or the dogmas of form following function. He mostly used a structural system using an equal-span frame and attended primarily to the surface covering the structure. His interiors bear little relationship to their exteriors. Multifarious styles were selected for the sheer pleasure of manipulating surfaces, materials, visual effects and spaces. Murano was capable of producing an undulating ceiling lined with mother of pearl shell and shimmering mosaics for one wing while at the same time working convincingly in the *sukiya* style on another and in the restrained language of modernism on a concurrent project. He treated Japanese *sukiya* architecture

with the same indifferent and sensational treatment he gave to Western styles and was not above using the idiom of his contemporaries, such as Tadao Ando. Murano theorised little but his thesis 'Staying above style' was published in the Japanese journal *Kenchiku to Shakai* in 1919 and he later wrote on the advantages of eclecticism for Japanese architects.

[36] Coaldrake, *Architecture and Authority in Japan*, p 264.

[37] Minoru Takeyama, 'Source of meaning: Diachrony of Intentions and its Background,' in B. Bognar (ed), *Minoru Takeyama*, London: Academy Editions, Architectural Monographs, no. 42, 1995, p 29.

[38] Arata Isozaki, *The Island Nation Aesthetic*, Academy Editions, London, 1996, p 8.

[39] Isozaki, *The Island Nation Aesthetic*, p 52.

[40] Arata Isozaki, 'Tsukuba Center Building', in Bognar, *The New Japanese Architecture*, pp 54–57.

[41] Isozaki, 'Tsukuba Center Building', in Bognar, *The New Japanese Architecture*, pp 54–57.

[42] Arata Isozaki, 'Projects: 1983-1990', *D: Columbia Documents of Architecture and Theory*, 4, (1995): 97.

[43] The character for Isozaki's name can be read as either 'Arata' or 'Shin,' such that the alter ego is always there in the writing of his name.

[44] Arata Isozaki in interview, C. Knabe and J. R. Noennig (eds), *Shaking the Foundations: Japanese Architects in Dialogue*, Munich: Prestel, 1999, p 110.