Strangers in a Strange Land: Bruno Taut and Charlotte Perriand as Design Consultants in Japan

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Bruno Taut, the German architect and planner, and Charlotte Perriand, the French designer and architect, left their respective countries abruptly during the Nazi regime to work as design consultants for the Japanese export industry. Japan might seem an odd choice under the political circumstances, but for both it was a pragmatic solution to problems at home. They were hired by national design centers that aimed to promote Japanese folkloristic traditions with an inflection of modernism in order to make their products attractive to the Western market. As newcomers there, Taut and Perriand were caught in the conflict between local culture and international modernization.

Among the more intriguing aspects of Charlotte Perriand's long career is her sojourn in Japan. This period is difficult for us to assess not only because its social context is quite unfamiliar but also because Perriand's first contact occurred during World War II. In February 1940, the Japanese Ministry of Commerce and Industry invited her to become an official consultant for decorative arts.[1] Although she initially hesitated, with the encouragement of friends such as the painter Fernand Léger and Georges Monnet, France's agriculture minister in the government of the Popular Front, she decided to accept. Japan did not sign a military alliance with Germany and Italy until September 1940, after Perriand's arrival in Japan. But Japan had become increasingly militaristic and expansionist: the Second Sino-Japanese War (1931–45), though undeclared, had already become a full-scale war by the time Japan invaded the northern Chinese provinces in 1937. (Korea had been annexed in 1910, and Manchuria was invaded in 1931–32.) In her autobiography, *Une vie de création* (1998), Perriand mentions the war in Europe as an ominous threat, specifically the German invasion of France in June 1940. Unfortunately, this was precisely the time she had arranged to leave by train for Marseilles, from where she was to embark for

Fig. 1
Charlotte Perriand and Junzo Sakakura, view of the Takashimaya exhibition, Tokyo, 1941. Photographed by Francis Haar / AChP. © 2020 Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York / ADAGP, Paris.

Japan. The Japanese Ministry of Commerce and Industry feared Westernization but wanted to maintain its export industry at all costs and therefore decided to get Western designers to help promote its craft traditions abroad.

The full chaos of war had reached Paris by the time Perriand left the city. To understand her momentous decision, one needs to ask what sort of choices were available to a woman largely supporting herself at this moment in time. Perhaps owing to Perriand's extraordinarily optimistic constitution, she preferred to ignore the fact that she was a female professional in a setting that was mostly male.[2] In her autobiography, she focuses instead on her own accomplishments as a designer and her independence of spirit. At the same time, she passes too readily over difficulties related to both work and private life, and she fails to mention her economic dependence on her husbands in her pre- and post-Japanese career. She only briefly mentions the existence of her first husband,

Fig. 2
Bruno Taut, moon-viewing platform, Villa Hyūga, Atami, Japan, 1936. Photographed by Neil Jackson.

Percy Schoolfield, who paid for her architectural lessons with Alfred Roth, an architect in Le Corbusier's office. As a result, her autobiography leaves one with the impression that she is engaged in a mythification of her role as an independent woman.

We can speculate on the reasons for her departure. Perhaps after she left Le Corbusier's office in 1937, paid work was hard to come by. She may have been enticed by the prospect of a serious job with professional recognition, the promise of travel, and her friendship with Junzo Sakakura, whom she knew from Le Corbusier's office and who would serve as her guide in Japan. Moreover, given the upheavals of wartime and the rise of fascism in Europe, Japan may have seemed like a better alternative. When Monnet advised her to go, he told her, "Charlotte, there is a turn to fascism."[3] At any rate, a day before she boarded the boat, Paris had fallen to the Nazis.

Seven years earlier, another architect had left Europe for Japan. The German architect Bruno Taut had gone there to give some lectures, and he ended up staying from 1933 to 1936 as a Western consultant at the regional government Institute for Research in Industrial Design in Sendai, a position similar to the one Perriand would occupy.[4] Taut is known today primarily for the utopian-expressionist writings and drawings he produced immediately after World War I and for the many housing estates he designed in the 1920s. Like Perriand

during the 1930s, Taut was a social activist, and his sympathies were with socialists and communists. In the early 1920s, he was a member of the Friends of Russia group, and between the mid-1920s and 1933, he made several trips to the Soviet Union, where films of his housing were shown. His Schillerpark Estate in Berlin (1925) was visited by Anatoly Lunacharsky, the first People's Commissar of Education, among others.[5]

Perriand's work with the Popular Front occurred at a time when the Communist Party in France strengthened its position by making itself more attractive to the socialists—and to a wider audience in general—by embracing a form of regionalism that encompassed indigenous and patriotic tendencies.[6] In contrast, Taut's activist phase during the period of the Weimar Republic coincided with an extremely hard-line stance imposed by the Comintern on the German Communist Party, which perceived the socialists as often more dangerous than the right wing. Nor had the communists in the Soviet Union and Germany developed a clear policy toward the arts during the 1920s.[7] In any case, Taut had always practiced a personal form of regionalism, inspired by his teacher Theodor Fischer and by his deep interest in nature walks and landscape sketching, comparable to Perriand's need for communing with nature in her Alpine cottage.

Taut received an invitation to work in Moscow in 1932, which he accepted, and was initially put in charge of a small group of foreign architects there. However, he decided to return to Germany in February 1933, owing to the difficulty of getting projects executed in the USSR and also because his position was taken over by Soviet architects after just a few months.[8] Perriand had a similarly disappointing experience in Moscow. She went there first in 1931, to supervise Le Corbusier's Centrosoyus project, and again in 1933.[9] Both Taut and Perriand seem to have been quite outspoken in their dealings with the new communist bureaucracy. While neither of them abandoned their socialist ideals, each found the actual economic and political conditions in the Soviet Union not conducive to productive work. On March 1, 1933, two weeks after Taut returned to Berlin and two days after the Reichstag fire, he received a warning that he had been blacklisted by the Nazis, and he immediately fled to Switzerland. While still in Moscow, he had already decided either to emigrate to the United States, where the American Institute of Architects had made him an honorary member, or to go to Japan to give lectures, having received an invitation to do so from the Japanese branch of CIAM (Congrès Internationaux d'Architecture) in 1930. He sent telegrams to both organizations; because of his previous contact with Japan, an official invitation to give three lectures, sent by Isaburo Ueno, the representative of the Internacia Asocio Aritekta en Japanujo, reached him first.[10] He accepted Ueno's offer and arrived in Japan at the beginning of May.[11] Although Taut had intended to stay only three months, it became clear that a return to Germany was unthinkable, since Hitler had consolidated his power further. Given his socialist background, Taut's choice to stay in Japan is not easy to understand today. In fact, it was a practical and expedient decision, as Perriand's would be seven years later. Even though Taut and Perriand were both peripherally associated with mainstream modernism, they may be seen in their European work as outsiders, stylistically and politically. Taut's synthesis of a modernist architecture with bright, expressionist color schemes and folkloristic references places him

Fig. 3
Bruno Taut, *Maple Tree*, Sendai, Japan, November 13, 1933. Watercolor on coardboard. Akademie der Künste [AdK] Berlin, Bruno-Taut-Collection, No. 100.

outside the modern movement and its initial development. Taut's and Perriand's shared interest in rustic forms that avoid technocentric imagery and their particular kind of social activism—and, in Perriand's case, her role as an independent woman designer after her departure from Le Corbusier's office—lent them a subversive aura as atypical ambassadors of Western modernism.

But there are also some important differences between their careers in Japan. When Perriand came to Japan at age thirty-six with a solid, well-paying job offer, she was still in the early stages of her career. Taut turned fifty-three on the day after he arrived in Japan; he had the offer of a few lectures but no permanent job. On his birthday, Ueno arranged for him to visit Katsura, one of the imperial palaces in Kyoto, a revered example of traditional architecture. Taut instantly admired its simplicity, poetry, and full integration with nature, as would Perriand. After a second, longer visit to Katsura, Taut produced a beautiful series of ink sketches on rice paper with brief handwritten explanations.

Taut had come to Japan with his companion, Erica Wittich (he left his wife and son in Germany), whom he had to support as well. He obtained a job as a consultant at Sendai's Institute for Research in Industrial Design, which had been established by the state specifically for the design of exports. He left after only three months because he found its procedures too bureaucratic. He then worked very briefly as a consultant at a porcelain factory, and from 1934 to 1936, he designed handicraft objects also intended for export through a private enterprise initiated by Fusaichiro Inoue.[12] Inoue, seventeen years Taut's junior,

was the son of a well-to-do developer in Takasaki and had studied art in Paris. Perriand had met him when he was in Paris, and he would later also be helpful to her during her stay in Japan.[13]

In his venture with Inoue, Taut designed more than three hundred objects such as lamps, tea trays, magazine racks, mirrors, napkin rings, clothes brushes, buttons, and umbrella handles, using lacquered wood, metal, and braided bamboo.[14] Together with Inoue, Taut opened a store in Tokyo, Miratiss, through which they hoped to further the sale of these designs to foreigners. Inoue's undertaking can be seen as something akin more to the privately financed ventures of the Wiener Werkstätte and its commercial outlets than to either the Bauhaus or the Japanese state design institutes with their educational reform program. Taut now received a monthly salary, but this job required him to move to Takasaki, a provincial capital some seventy miles northwest of Tokyo.

In Takasaki, Taut was able to rent a small, traditional Japanese house on the grounds of the Shorinzan temple on a high hilltop overlooking the city. This particular setting provided the inspiration for several books that dealt with everyday life: Japanese customs, gestures, folkloristic traditions, and the architecture of farmhouses.[15] These books were important in introducing a broad understanding of Japanese culture to Western architects and even more crucial in showing Japanese modernist architects that an interest in European modernism did not have to exclude Japanese traditions. In contrast, Perriand's initial one-year visit was more nomadic. She traveled from province to province, investigating regional craft methods, visiting the various state-run industrial

Fig. 4
Senshintei, Takasaki, Japan. Photographed by Tatsuaki Tanaka, 2018.

Fig. 5
Bruno Taut, pipe stand, Japan, ca. 1933–36.

design institutes, and staying mostly in hotels. During a later sojourn, from 1953 to 1954, she too would live in a traditional house.

Both Taut's and Perriand's absorption of Japanese culture was primarily visual and always experienced through the filter of their European background, since neither spoke much Japanese. Taut's experiences were more varied than Perriand's: he occupied a number of different positions, carried out several architectural projects, wrote a series of books on Japanese culture and design, and stayed in Japan much longer than Perriand.

For both of them, the principal focus of their work was to advise on the production of designs for export to the West, functioning as intermediaries between East and West. Paradoxically, their place as "outsiders" within both the European context and the Japanese setting made them uniquely suited to their tasks as mediators between two cultures. Although neither of them could have fully comprehended Japanese society, their work in Japan was made easier by the fact that an international culture of modernization had existed in Japan since the Meiji Restoration in 1868.

Aside from the Japanese branch of CIAM, which had invited Taut, another Japanese organization advocating modern internationalism in architecture and design was the Japanese Werkbund (Kosaku Bunka Renmai), founded in 1937. It was modeled on the German Werkbund, which was established in 1907 to foster a closer relationship between designers and industry, of which Taut

had been an early member.[16] With the National Mobilization Act of 1938, under which the Japanese state extended its control over industry, the stage was set for Perriand's official position as a mediator between East and West and between commerce and art.

In her autobiography, Perriand writes about the Japanese effort to modernize after 1868 and alludes to the thoroughgoing centralization of institutions under the Ministry of Commerce and Industry (today known as MITI). This agency greatly facilitated her access to various government resources. According to her account, the Institute for Research in Industrial Design, one of the offices under the supervision of the Ministry of Commerce and Industry, was founded in 1928 with the aim of fostering the application of both traditional Japanese and modern techniques to objects of daily use, primarily in designs made for export. The institute's headquarters was in Tokyo, with branches in Osaka and Sendai. The Sendai branch had briefly been under the influence of Taut. Afterward it was directed by Iwao Yamawaki, who had been a Bauhaus student. Perriand recalled encountering Taut's and Yamawaki's influence at the various institutes she visited later.[17]

Both Taut and Perriand brought to their work in Japan an unusually strong feeling for nature, expressed in the numerous landscape sketches Taut made in Japan and in Perriand's ski trips to the mountains there.[18] This particular sensibility also led them naturally to what today might be called environmental and regional concerns, involving both the smaller arena of lived-in spaces and the larger social setting. Perriand saw the fundamental characteristics of Japanese architecture condensed in the scale of the tatami mat, a basic module shared by the imperial residence and the farmhouse, and also in the flexibility and indeterminacy of traditional houses, with their movable screens of rice paper.[19] She further remarked on the dampness of the Japanese house—which loose-fitting garments counteracted better than Western clothes—and on the extreme cold of houses she encountered during the winter months in northern Japan despite the common use of braziers.[20]

While Perriand's observations of Japan in her articles and autobiography are impressionistic and anecdotal, Taut is more detailed in his descriptions and makes generalizations based on his experience.[21] He writes about the interdependence of houses and their furnishings: for example, he considers the use of Western tables and other furniture inappropriate for the traditional Japanese interior, whose scale and lighting conditions have been designed for low-slung Japanese furniture.[22] Taut also believed that the Japanese house responded more effectively to the hot, humid climate of summer than to the cold of winter. He saw the evolution of various forms of braziers, including "pocket stoves," which could be dropped into the sleeves of a kimono or placed in its sash, as a practical way to deal with this condition. He noted that the Japanese "does not warm the air but he warms himself."[23]

Like Perriand later, Taut visited traditional craftsmen. In Kyoto he went to a famous iron workshop, where a young master explained to him that well-designed teakettles also produce pleasing sounds when the water boils.[24] Perriand,

Fig. 6
Charlotte Perriand, low chair; designed 1940, manufactured 1946. Bamboo, 28½ × 24¼ × 30⅜ in. (72.4 × 61.6 × 77.2 cm). The Museum of Modern Art, Gift of Lisa Tananbaum, Susan Hayden, Alice Tisch, and Committee on Architecture and Design Funds. Digital Image © The Museum of Modern Art / Licensed by SCALA / Art Resource, NY. © 2020 Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York / ADAGP, Paris.

too, believed that the ear, not just the eye, played a role in good design. The intense sensory interplay of Japanese objects and interiors—with their microcosm of varying textures that range from smooth lacquer and rice paper to rough, tactile woven surfaces and the natural irregularity of the pillar in the *tokenoma* (the ceremonial niche)—must have appealed to both designers. Perriand was especially concerned with explaining to Japanese craftsmen the function of unfamiliar Western objects that they were asked to produce. At the same time, she was fully aware of the essential ambiguity inherent in designing for Western export and for foreign conventions. She admitted not being certain what the solution might be, musing to herself, "Show films of daily life?" In addition, she also suspected that her translator "extrapolated" from what she was trying to convey.[25]

Despite their sensitivity to local traditions, Taut and Perriand did share some prejudices about Eastern and Western cultures. Without raising questions, Perriand quoted the truism from Okakura's 1906 *Book of Tea* (*Cha no Hon*) that the East is spiritual and the West materialistic.[26] Taut's preference—shared by Perriand—for the "rational" and "sensible" Katsura over the rich, almost baroque forms of Tokugawa, which he referred to as "Shogun-taste" and kitsch, is surely a reflection of modernist taste.[27] However, Taut also condemned any

straightforward transposition of Western modernism to Japan, arguing that its dwellings needed broad overhangs because of the strong sun and long rainy season.[28] Both Perriand and Taut also injected wishful political ideas into their reportage. Perriand noted (again quoting from Okakura's book) that the simplicity of the tea ceremony revealed a "veritable democratic spirit of the Far East,"[29] while Taut suggested that Katsura represented a "liberal" tradition.[30]

There was at least one major area in which Taut disagreed with Perriand. Whereas she was close to the Mingei group around Soetsu Yanagi, the founder of the "folk arts movement,"[31] Taut criticized the group for its outright imitation of traditional forms; for Taut, this was not altogether different from the direct copying of Western forms.[32] Perriand shared only Taut's dislike for the unthinking transfer of Western modernism. She disapproved of the influence of the "functionalism of the German school" at the government ministry, a taste, she wrote, that had already been abandoned in Europe. At the same time, she shared a modernist trust in creating from a tabula rasa. She believed that the Japanese students she encountered, because they were "virgins" when it came to knowing the West, could come up with spontaneous inventions of new forms. The students at the Sendai Institute, at any rate, must have been somewhat familiar with Western forms, because, as she noted, their projects revealed the strong influence of Taut, who had created a "living legacy." She also mentions other examples of Western modernist architecture, including the work of Alvar Aalto.[33]

Perriand was quite correct in her observation that by the time she arrived in Japan, Western modernism had shifted away from "functionalism" and the optimistic certainties and trust in technology that had characterized the late 1920s. Le Corbusier had always been interested in the folkloristic, as already demonstrated by the map of his 1911 journey to the Balkans and Near East.[34] This concern became more emphatic in his designs for country houses between 1930 and 1935, with their robust stone walls and rough wooden textures.

In contrast to the earlier communist internationalism, the gradual rejection of technocentric rationalism and the rise of a political culture of regionalism were supported by the French Left.[35] The growing influence of the surrealist movement in the 1930s and the rise of anthropocentric concerns further propelled this development. Elsewhere, the increasing popularity of biomorphic forms in the designs of Alvar Aalto, Frederick Kiesler, and Isamu Noguchi and in the early experimental furniture of Charles and Ray Eames would all reflect this shift. To be sure, Perriand's furniture from this period displays a much rougher and more rustic feeling than the work of Aalto or Kiesler. Perriand clearly recognized the conflict between modernism and traditionalism through her firsthand relationships with Soetsu Yanagi, the traditionalist, and his son, Sori Yanagi (a friend, who often functioned as her guide), who rejected his father's beliefs and embraced modernism. She wrote that Sori Yanagi frequently helped her to understand the ambiguities that she encountered in Japan.[36]

Taut's furniture designs in Japan—mostly wooden chairs produced at the Sendai Institute—suggest conservative Western styles. Since Taut did not design much furniture before this period, a comparison with his earlier work

is not particularly meaningful. The furniture for private houses and the small objects he designed later in Takasaki, often very beautiful, sometimes display a Japanese influence—evident in bamboo umbrella handles or a bamboo lamp stand—but other objects are closer to Jugendstil and Wiener Werkstätte designs, as in a bronze candelabrum and a lacquered cigarette box inlaid with mother-of-pearl. However, a wooden letter opener with its handle adapted to the grasp of a hand is closer to Aalto's work of the 1930s, and several of his designs display a concern for adaptability that he shared with Perriand, such as an adjustable floor lamp or a folding book stand. Perriand's furniture from her Japanese stay occasionally looks self-consciously Japanese, such as her bamboo stools shown in exhibitions in Tokyo and Osaka. But the majority of her designs appear accomplished, if not truly Japanese. A small bedside table with a bamboo base and a lacquered top has all the elegance of Aalto's furniture. Another small table with asymmetrically projecting wooden legs and what seems to be a woven top that can be replaced reveals her interest in flexibility, one of the features of Japanese interiors that most intrigued her.

Taut wrote extensively about women's roles in Japanese society as well as about the functionality of their clothing. Perriand occasionally touched on such issues in passing in her autobiography but did not deal much with the problem of being a professional woman in a position of comparative power in Japan, which must have produced some difficult situations, given the predominantly male setting. For instance, early during her stay she came upon a charming district in Tokyo that she thought might be just the place for her to live. When Sakakura told her that it was impossible because it was a geisha quarter, she still did not see why she should not reside there, although in the end Sakakura prevailed.[37] She also wrote that "before MacArthur" bathing was communal and that Japan was not aware of the "Adam and Eve complex." When she was asked by the director of a carpet factory to meet him at the bath, she reports that she readily agreed. One can only imagine what this meeting in the nude might have been like. Later, though, when taking a bath on one of her ski trips, she was segregated from the men—an unacknowledged contradiction of her earlier recollection.[38] One is left to wonder whether the director of the carpet factory wanted to embarrass her by forcing her to behave like a male colleague, a proposition she cheerfully accepted as the "custom of the country."

Toward the end of his stay in Japan, Taut suffered from a deep depression,[39] and when he departed, he probably knew he would not return. His opinions about Japan's changing political climate became more acerbic and bitter. He wrote, for example, on attending a lecture about a palace in Manchukuo (as Manchuria was renamed after it became a Japanese puppet state) and noted that the lecture amounted to little more than propaganda on what good works the Japanese had undertaken there. He felt that the architectural discussion had become an art historical mask disguising the political reality. Taut also commented on Japanese military maneuvers at the gates of Beijing, on Chinese farmers who had been made homeless, and on the extreme political tensions in Japan. He showed concern for daughters of poor families who were sold as geishas because Japanese education was so costly and not considered desirable for girls; at the same time, he found most Japanese women whom he encountered more intelligent than men.[40]

Although Perriand also wrote about wartime conditions, about the presence of Japanese soldiers on her journey in Japan, about her refusal to renew her contract after one year, and about her attempts to leave the country, she was not particularly forthcoming about the political situation she encountered. For example, she initially wanted to return to France via the United States—her friends Paul Nelson and James Johnson Sweeney would have guaranteed her stay—but then decided that she wanted to see Beijing first ("An old demon whispered in my ear to go to Beijing"). She recalled, however, that the Japanese would not allow her to visit Beijing and proposed Indochina instead. She did not explain why this might have been the case—namely, because the Japanese did not want a Westerner to see the conditions to which China had been reduced.[41] Possibly because she returned to Japan after the war and continued to have many links with the country, her observations in her autobiography about Japanese social and political attitudes remain quite guarded.

Fig. 7
Charlotte Perriand, "Ombre" (Shadow) chair, 1954; this example 1999. Stained curved plywood; 25 × 17½ × 21 in. (63 × 44 × 53 cm). Created for the exhibition *Synthèse des arts*, shown in the department store Takashimaya in Tokyo. Courtesy of Rago / Wright. © 2020 Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York / ADAGP, Paris.

Taut left Japan in 1936 but did not return to Germany, instead accepting a professorship in Turkey, where he was extremely productive as a teacher and architect until his death in 1938.[42] During the last two years of his life, he returned to the design of buildings, and the influence of Japan on his late career is not obvious. One can surmise perhaps that his Japanese experience helped him at least on a conceptual level to adapt to yet another culture. Although Turkey was more Westernized than Japan—Kemal Ataturk's modernization program had been under way for some time, and Turkey had had a strong link with Germany in the early decades of the twentieth century—an ethnic self-awareness and regional differences (especially Islamic traditions) were beginning to be explored, possibly as a reaction to Kemal's abolition of the caliphate in 1924. Kemal's relationship with the Soviet Union was particularly close, making Turkey a haven for left-wing émigrés from Nazi Germany.

In contrast to Taut, Perriand's later career shows an obvious relationship to her Japanese work. Her contact with Japan continued after the war, and during the immediate postwar period she was primarily a designer of furniture and interiors. Her prototype kitchen for the Marseilles Unité d'Habitation (1950) and her "Sahara" kitchen (1958), with their rounded, wooden-edged countertops and flexible cabinets, reveal a Japanese influence in their sensitivity to materials and use of gentle forms. The same is true of her flexible wall units of 1953–55 and for her "Shadow" stacking chair (1954), which were exhibited in Japan in 1955 as models of modern French living. Her great interest in the tatami mat as a modular unit and in the shoji screen as a movable element, as well as the integration of furniture with the interior in which it is placed, influenced much of her later work in its emphatic expression of textures and concern with flexibility. At the same time, the Japanese designs she admired were handmade. In the end, her work of the 1950s displays a contradiction between the assertively handmade, rough quality of some of her furniture designs and a lingering interest in the mass production of metal and prefabricated aluminum structures that she had explored in her collaborations with Jean Prouvé before the war. In fact, this conflict is already apparent in some of her work of the 1930s—for example, in the contrast between her first heavy, wooden Freeform Table (1937), designed for herself, or her Freeform Desk (1938), for Jean Richard Bloch, and her furniture made of chrome-plated tubular steel.

However, by the late 1950s, consumer culture would abandon the softer forms of Scandinavian modern and the biomorphic forms of surrealism in favor of a technology-inspired futurism. Perriand's work, with its allegiance to both Mingei and modernism, the mountains and the city, would take some time to find its rightful place in a continuously changing milieu. Taut felt that his presence at the Sendai Institute in Japan would have no lasting effect,[43] a prediction that is contradicted by Perriand's later encounter with his influence there. Ironically, Taut for a long time was better known in Japan than in the West. Because of his books on traditional Japanese architecture, he is quoted even in contemporary guidebooks to Katsura. In the end, because of his wide-ranging discussion of Japanese culture, his influence would be quite substantial.[44] His posthumous book *The Rediscovery of Japanese Beauty* (*Nihonbi no saihakken*, 1939) became a bestseller in Japan and was reputedly carried by Japanese soldiers in their

backpacks, a turn of events Taut would likely not have welcomed.[45] Perriand wrote of her stay in the Soviet Union, "I do not have the soul of an émigré."[46] But both she and Taut worked as émigrés who were doubly exiled: from their countries and from their native cultures. They were caught in a characteristic conflict of the modern age: the preservation of traditions in the face of widespread modernization in both the East and the West. Among their greatest contributions was to alert Japanese people and Westerners alike to the dilemma of the universalizing ethos of modernism.

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1 Charlotte Perriand, *Une vie de création* (Paris: Odile Jacob, 1998), 129–61. For a general overview of Perriand in Japan, see Jacques Barsac, *Charlotte Perriand et le Japon* (Paris: NORMA, 2008). A broad introduction to her work is presented in a catalogue for an exhibition at the Louis Vuitton Foundation that ran from October 2019 to February 2020: Sebastien Cherruet, et al., eds., *Charlotte Perriand: Inventing a New World* (Paris: Fondation Louis Vuitton and Gallimard, 2019).
2 Conversation with Mary McLeod. When Perriand was specifically asked, after a talk in New York in the fall of 1997, about the difficulties she had encountered as a woman, her response was rather dismissive. She claimed that being a woman in the design field never created an obstacle for her. "A Conversation with Charlotte Perriand," Alliance Française, sponsored by the Architectural League of New York, November 13, 1997. For the most informative account of Perriand's life and career, see Mary McLeod, ed., *Charlotte Perriand: An Art of Living* (New York: Abrams, 2003), including Yasushi Zenno's "Fortuitous Encounters: Charlotte Perriand in Japan, 1940–41," 90–113.
3 "On s'oriente vers le fascisme." Monnet, quoted in Perriand, *Une vie de création*, 130.
4 Manfred Speidel, "'Ich liebe die japanische Kultur,'" in *Bruno Taut: Natur und Fantasie, 1880–1938*, ed. Manfred Speidel (Berlin: Ernst & Sohn, 1995), 270–73; Tokoguen Mihara, "Bruno Taut: Herstellung von Kunsthandwerk in Takasaki," in *Bruno Taut, 1880–1938*, ed. Barbara Volkmann (Berlin: Akademie der Künste, 1980), 137–42; Manfred Speidel, "Bruno Taut in Japan," in *Bruno Taut*, ed. Winfried Nerdinger et al. (Stuttgart: Deutsche Verlags-Anstalt, 2001), 173–91.
5 Kurt Junghanns, *Bruno Taut, 1880–1938* (Berlin: Henschel, 1970), 65. See also the second expanded edition of this book published by Elefanten in Berlin in 1983.
6 Danilo Udovicki-Selb, "'C'était dans l'air du temps': Charlotte Perriand and the Popular Front," in McLeod, *Charlotte Perriand*, 68–89.
7 For background on the left-wing politics of the period, see Rosemarie Haag Bletter, introduction to *The Modern Functional Building*, by Adolf Behne (Santa Monica, CA: Getty Research Institute for the History of Art and Humanities, 1996), 7–8.
8 Junghanns, *Bruno Taut*, 92; Barbara Kreis, "Bruno Tauts Verhältnis zum Bauen in der Sowjetunion und seine Tätigkeit in Moskau," in Volkmann, *Bruno Taut*, 104ff., 115.
9 Perriand's dates on this work are not clear in her autobiography. On this episode, see Udovicki-Selb, "'C'était dans l'air du temps,'" 273n4.
10 Taut left by train via Paris, Istanbul, and Moscow, where he took the Trans-Siberian Railway to Vladivostok and from there traveled by ship to Japan. Speidel, "'Ich liebe die japanische Kultur,'" 270.
11 Perriand, *Une vie de création*, 157.
12 Mihara claims that the prefecture asked Taut to redesign traditional craft objects for mass production, but Speidel writes that the enterprise was attached to an institute and that the objects were partly manufactured there. Minhara, "Bruno Taut," 137–38; Speidel, "'Ich liebe die japanische Kultur,'" 271).

Other Westerners before Taut and Perriand who promoted Japanese traditions together with modernism were the Czech-American architect Antonin Raymond and his wife, the French-American artist and designer Noemi Raymond. They had worked on Frank Lloyd Wright's Imperial Hotel in Tokyo from 1919 to 1921 and decided to stay in Japan until 1938. Noemi worked as an export broker for Japanese designs in the twenties but before the Ministry of Commerce and Industry established the hiring of Western consultants as a national program.
13 Perriand, *Une vie de création*, 148.

14 Mihara states that Taut designed more than six hundred objects. "Bruno Taut," 138.
15 Taut gave lectures on Western architecture and its meaning for Japan at Tokyo University in 1934. He also published a large number of newspaper articles and essays in periodicals. Among many other topics, he wrote on the Japanese farmhouse compared to that of central Europe, the problem of quality in design, Japanese customs, and the kimono and modern dress, and he published a series on Japanese architecture seen through Western eyes (1933–34). One of his most important book publications is *Houses and People of Japan* (Tokyo: Sanseido, 1937). For a fuller listing of references, see Speidel, *Bruno Taut*, 341ff.; Junghanns, *Bruno Taut*, 240.
16 Shinji Koike, "Japan," in *Encyclopedia of Modern Architecture*, ed. Gerd Hatje (New York: Abrams, 1964), 163. Koike and Kunio Maekawa, who had worked in Le Corbusier's office, were early members. See also Leonardo Benevolo, *History of Modern Architecture* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1971), 2:775. Benevolo calls this organization the Japanese Association of Industrial Design. Because of the difficulty of translating Western words into Japanese and because of the use of ideographs, the Japanese is usually a very approximate translation. The approximation of Western terms in Japanese leads, in turn, to varied versions when they are translated back into Western languages.
17 Perriand, *Une vie de création*, 149–51. See especially her detailed breakdown of the state bureaucracy (150).
18 In addition to his ink drawings and sketches, some two hundred pastels and watercolors by Taut have survived. Akira Hasegawa, "Die Suche nach einem neuen Bruno-Taut-Bild," in Speidel, *Bruno Taut*, 13.
19 Perriand, *Une vie de création*, 157–58. Taut also wrote about the effects of movable screens. *Houses and People of Japan*, 44–45.
20 Perriand, *Une vie de création*, 159, 166.
21 Taut, *Houses and People of Japan*, 138–39.
22 Speidel, "'Ich liebe die japanische Kultur,'" 272.
23 Taut, quoted in Manfred Speidel, "Ornamente," in *Bruno Taut*, 93.
24 Speidel, "Farbiger Raum und Möbel," in *Bruno Taut*, 266–68.
25 Perriand, *Une vie de création*, 162.
26 Ibid., 147.
27 Taut, *Houses and People of Japan*, 158ff., 170ff.; on Taut's discussion of kitsch objects in Japanese culture, see also Junghanns, *Bruno Taut*, 95.
28 Taut, *Houses and People of Japan*, 258. See also his own addition of wide overhangs to an existing modernist house, the Okura House, Azabu, Tokyo, of 1936. Speidel, "'Ich liebe die japanische Kultur,'" 273.
29 Perriand, *Une vie de création*, 157.
30 Speidel, "'Ich liebe die japanische Kultur,'" 273.
31 For a fuller discussion of the Mingei movement, see Zenno, "Fortuitous Encounters." Zenno is also particularly good on the political background for national design efforts. For further background on national design institutions, see Hitoshi Mori, "The Ascent and Turning Points of Japanese Craft before the War—Perriand's Arrival in Japan," in *Charlotte Perriand et le Japon* (Tokyo: Kajima Shuppankai, 2011), 264–65.
32 Speidel, "'Ich liebe die japanische Kultur,'" 273.
33 Perriand, *Une vie de création*, 154.
34 Le Corbusier (Charles-Edouard Jeanneret), *Journey to the East*, ed. and trans. by Ivan Zaknic (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1987).
35 On related political issues, see Udovicki-Selb, "'C'était dans l'air du temps'"; and on Perriand's postwar career, see Joan Ockman, "Lessons from Objects: Perriand from the Pioneer Years to the 'Epoch of Realities,'" in McLeod, *Charlotte Perriand*, 154–81.
36 Perriand, *Une vie de création*, 155.
37 Ibid., 149.
38 Ibid., 153, 163. Her female translator tried to convince the director of the carpet factory that communal bathing was not customary in the West, but Perriand herself insisted.
39 Junghanns, *Bruno Taut*, 95.
40 Heinrich Taut, "Bruno Taut in und über Japan," in Volkmann, *Bruno Taut*, 129–36.
41 Perriand, *Une vie de création*, 179.
42 Inci Aslanoğlu, "Bruno Tauts Wirken als Lehrer und Architekt in der Türkei in den Jahren 1936–38," in Volkmann, *Bruno Taut*, 143–50; Sibel Bozdogan, "Against Style: Bruno Taut's Pedagogical Program in Turkey, 1936–1938," in *The Education of the Architect: Historiography, Urbanism, and the Growth of Architectural Knowledge*, ed. Martha Pollak (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1997), 163–92.
43 Junghanns, *Bruno Taut*, 94.
44 Hajime Yatsuka states that Taut's influence on Japanese architects was greater than that of Frank Lloyd Wright, possibly because Wright's architecture tended to be highly individualistic. "Japan," in *Encyclopedia of 20th-Century Architecture*, ed. Vittorio Magnago Lampugnani ([New York: Abrams, 1986), 177.
45 Speidel, "'Ich liebe die japanische Kultur,'" 273.
46 Perriand, *Une vie de création*, 48.