Toward a Cosmopolitan Ethics in Architecture: Bruno Taut's Translations out of Germany

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> The stronger the belief that East and West belong together,
> the stronger the energy to get to know the foreignness
> in one's nature. With the growth of this energy, the
> melancholy will sink down to the grave it deserves.
> —Bruno Taut, "Japans Kunst"

My two intentions in this article are to exemplify a cultural practice that complicates the received notions about modernism's relation with "non-Western" countries by using a theoretical framework that I call translation,[1]

1. For more discussion on this theory of translation see Esra Akcan, "Modernity in Translation: Early Twentieth Century German-Turkish Exchanges in Land Settlement and Residential Culture" (PhD diss., Columbia University, 2005). I would like to thank my committee, Barry Bergdoll, Sibel Bozdoğan, Kenneth Frampton, Andreas Huyssen, Mary McLeod, and Gayatri Spivak, for their helpful comments on my dissertation, which constitutes the groundwork of this article. I would also like to thank Manfred Speidel, Bernd Nicolai, and the staff of the Akademie der Künste for opening their archives for my study. For the theories of translation I am especially indebted to (in chronological order) Walter Benjamin, "The Task of the Translator," in *Illuminations*, ed. Hannah Arendt, trans. Harry Zohn (New York: Schocken, 1968), 69–82; Andreas Huyssen, *Die frühromantische Konzeption von Übersetzung und Aneignung: Studien zur frühromantischen Utopie einer deutschen Weltliteratur* (Zurich: Atlantis, 1969); James S. Holmes, *Translated! Papers of Literary Translation and Translation Studies* (1972; rpt. Amsterdam: Rodopi, 1988); George Steiner, *After Babel: Aspects of Language and Translation*, 3rd ed. (1975; rpt. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998); Antoine Berman, *The Experience of the Foreign: Culture and Translation in Romantic Germany*, trans. S. Heyvaert (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1992); Jacques Derrida, "Roundtable on Translation,"

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and to discuss the conceptual distinctions between hybridity and cosmopolitan ethics. To do so, I focus on the German-born architect Bruno Taut's theoretical writings in Japan and Turkey and analyze his own house in Istanbul through the lens of these theories.

Even though recent scholarship has established that the architecture of the early twentieth century was much more complex, diverse, and multifaceted than what the initial proponents of postmodernism were willing to acknowledge, the relation of modernism to the world at large is still a growing field of research.[2] The customary account about the impact of modernist architectural movements on countries that remain outside the imaginary borders of Europe and North America usually condemns modernism for monotonous "International Style" blocks, devoid of local specificity. While this account may seem

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in *The Ear of the Other*, trans. Peggy Kamuf (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1985), 93–161; Talal Asad, "The Concept of Cultural Translation in British Social Anthropology," in *Writing Culture: The Poetics and Politics of Ethnography*, ed. James Clifford and George Marcus (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1986), 141–64; Gayatri Spivak, "Can the Subaltern Speak?" in *Marxism and the Interpretation of Culture*, ed. Cary Nelson and Lawrence Grossberg (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1988), 271–313; Eric Cheyfitz, *The Poetics of Imperialism: Translation and Colonization from the Tempest to Tarzan* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1991); Jacques Derrida, "Des tours de Babel," trans. Joseph F. Graham, in *Theories of Translation: An Anthology of Essays from Dryden to Derrida*, ed. Rainer Schulte and John Biguenet (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1992), 218–27; Tejaswini Niranjana, *Siting Translation: History, Post-structuralism, and the Colonial Context* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1992); Gayatri Spivak, "The Politics of Translation," in *The Translation Studies Reader*, ed. Lawrence Venuti (London: Routledge, 2000), 397–416; Lawrence Venuti, *The Translator's Invisibility: A History of Translation* (London: Routledge, 1995); Sherry Simon, *Gender in Translation: Cultural Identity and the Politics of Transmission* (London: Routledge, 1996); Lawrence Venuti, *The Scandals of Translation: Towards an Ethics of Difference* (London: Routledge, 1998); Susan Bassnett, "The Translation Turn in Cultural Studies," in *Constructing Cultures: Essays on Literary Translation*, ed. Susan Bassnett and André Lefevere (Clevedon, UK: Multilingual Matters, 1998), 123–40. Additionally, I am indebted to essays in the following anthologies: Schulte and Biguenet, *Theories of Translation*; André Lefevere, *Translation, History, Culture: A Sourcebook* (London: Routledge, 1992); Tutun Mukherjee, ed., *Translation: From Periphery to Centerstage* (New Delhi: Prestige, 1998); Susan Bassnett and Harish Trivedi, eds., *Postcolonial Translation* (London: Routledge, 1999); Lawrence Venuti, ed., *The Translation Studies Reader* (London: Routledge, 2000); Edwin Gentzler, *Contemporary Translation Theories*, 2nd ed. (Clevedon, UK: Multilingual Matters, 2001).

2. Postmodernism in architecture usually connotes a different meaning than "postmodern condition" (Jameson and Harvey) or "postmodern thought" (Lyotard). Robert Venturi's and Aldo Rossi's books, both written in 1966, are regarded as the first manifestos of postmodernism in architecture, even though they exemplify very different trajectories. The historian Charles Jencks's writings of the late 1970s and 1980s have been instrumental in establishing the canon of postmodern architecture and, as a prerequisite, in reading modern architecture through the lens of postmodernism. See Robert Venturi, *Complexity and Contradiction in Architecture* (New York: Museum of Modern Art, 1966); Aldo Rossi, *The Architecture of the City*, trans. Diane Ghirardo and Joan Ockman (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1982); and Charles Jencks, *The Language of Post-modern Architecture* (London: Academy Editions, 1987).

to hold true for the majority of cities around the world, it hardly explains the intentions of many modern architects themselves, and certainly not of Taut. The reaction to this alleged homogenization of the world through modernization is usually interpreted as "regionalist" architecture. It is thus far too common to treat modern architecture in non-Western countries as an oscillation between the regional and the modern, the national and the international. However, such a bipolar analysis remains on the surface in coming to terms with the complexities of cross-cultural relations in this period. The increased geographic mobility, collaboration, and confrontation between professionals from different countries throughout the twentieth century have continuously produced new hybrids and dialectical relations. In this sense, there is no pure regional or international style of expression, no pure architecture produced at a location completely closed to other locations. The definition of the local is always in flux. Nor can there be an architecture that is produced at some abstract space outside the forces of any local condition. Understanding modern architecture therefore requires an explanatory concept that challenges the common dichotomies such as international versus national style or modernist versus regionalist building. I propose the concept of translation in analyzing these histories of exchanges between places. Translation is elaborated here as a conceptual framework that explains modernization in terms of the interaction between different places and nation-states. A theory of modernization as translation discusses the mutual dependence and interaction between different countries by tracing the flows of people, ideas, images, information, and technologies across geographic space, as well as their varying degrees and modes of transformations at the new destinations. Translation is thus the study of a field that explores and evaluates different experiences of the foreign, of the "other," of what had yet remained outside, in a given context, at a given moment. It is through translation that a country opens itself to the foreign, modifies and enriches itself while negotiating its domestic norms with those of the other. However, translation is not removed from the geographic distribution of power. It can hardly be considered a neutral exchange between equals or a "bridge" between cultures that are smoothly translatable. Translation must thus be treated as a contested zone where geographic differences are discovered, reconciled, or opposed and where conflicts between westernization and nationalization are negotiated or intensified.

Taut was one of the few architects of the modern period who were consciously engaged in understanding these tensions and potentials inherent in cross-cultural translations. Exiled from Germany in 1933, he spent three years in Japan and two years in Turkey until his death in 1938. Living abroad gave

him a unique opportunity to reflect on the problems of modernization outside Europe. Taut had taken an interest in non-Western architecture long before he moved to Japan and Turkey. Curiosity about the "East" is obviously not a value in itself, since this hardly qualifies anything unless its distinction from the orientalist interest (in Edward W. Said's sense) of numerous painters, poets, or writers can be specified. What makes Taut a revealing case is his intellectual growth over the years and the resulting transformations in his approach throughout his career. Taut considered his architectural engagements in Japan and Turkey as continuous experiences.[3] Therefore his career after leaving Germany and his last theoretical statements can hardly be understood without discussing their gradual development in all three countries. By tracing Taut's letters, diaries, and manuscripts in Japan and Turkey, this article suggests the reconstruction of a theory that might be called a cosmopolitan ethics in architecture.

Ex Oriente Lux: Germany, 1919–33

Taut's early texts (the ones usually attributed to his "expressionist period") were full of references to Asia.[4] As Rosemarie Bletter has demonstrated, the glass utopias of Paul Scheerbart and Taut or the latter's Glass Pavilion for the Werkbund Exhibition in 1914 were more than technocratic impulses to explore the potentials of a new material. On the contrary, as Scheerbart and Taut were also aware, glass had a long history as the metaphor of sacred, spiritual, and romantic sources, including Asian ones.[5] In *Die Stadtkrone* (written during the war and published in 1919) Taut illustrated examples of cities with a "city crown" from all over the world to show how an "organic unity" could be achieved in urban settlements, in contrast to the "chaos" of the modern European cities. Taut's examples included medieval, Indian, Chinese, and

3. Bruno Taut, letters from Istanbul, manuscripts in Nachlaß Taut, BT-Slg-01-9 bis 13, BT-Slg-01-142, Baukunst Sammlung, Akademie der Künste, Berlin. Hereafter cited as BS, AKB.

4. Paul Scheerbart, *Glass Architecture*, trans. James Palmes (New York: Praeger, 1972); Bruno Taut, *Die Stadtkrone*, with Paul Scheerbart, Erich Baron, and Adolf Behne (Jena: Diederichs, 1919); Taut, *Alpine Architektur* (Hagen: Folkwang, 1919); Taut, "*Ex Oriente Lux*: Call to Architects," in *Form and Function*, ed. Tim Benton and Charlotte Benton (1919; rpt. London: Crosby Lockwood Staples, 1975), 81–82. See also Simone Hain, "Ex Oriente Lux," in *Moderne Architektur in Deutschland 1900 bis 1950: Expressionismus und neue Sachlichkeit*, ed. Vittorio Magnano Lampugnani and Romana Schneider (Stuttgart: Hatje, 1994), 133–60.

5. Rosemarie Bletter, "Bruno Taut and Paul Scheerbart's Vision: Utopian Aspects of German Expressionist Architecture" (PhD diss., Columbia University, 1973); Bletter, "The Interpretation of the Glass Dream—Expressionist Architecture and the History of the Crystal Metaphor," *Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians* 40 (1981): 20–43; Bletter, "Expressionism and the New Objectivity," *Art Journal* 43, no. 2 (1983): 108–20.

Ottoman cities, as well as a comparison between Ebenezer Howard's garden city and the Chinese city of Küfu. For Taut, this comparison proved that "all rational men end up with similar principles," although he ranked the garden city slightly higher for its potential to guide modern settlements.[6] Through this comparison Taut was not just adding one more example from the East to his list. The assertion that the garden city's principles could be observed in a Chinese city claimed a universal truth to the model he was promoting, without any evidence of communication between the two or in-depth analysis of the Chinese example. Here an example from the East became a vehicle to prove the alleged universality of the architect's own principles, rather than being evaluated in its own right.

In *Ex Oriente Lux* (*The Sun Rises from the East*, 1919), Taut's ideas about the East as the "savior of Europe" were most radically asserted:

> Kill the European, kill him, kill him, kill him off! Sings St. Paulus [Scheerbart] . . .
>
> Each tiny part of the great culture from the fourth to the sixteenth century in Upper India, Ceylon, Cambodia, Amman, Siam and on Indulines—what melting of form, what fruitful maturity, what restraint and strength and what unbelievable fusion with plastic art! . . . Bow down in humility, you Europeans!
>
> Humility will redeem you. It will give you love, love for the divinity of the earth and for the spirit of the world. You will no longer torment your earth with dynamite and grenades, you will have the will to adorn her, to cultivate and care for her—culture![7]

The forcefulness of Taut's prose needs to be understood within the bellicose context of World War I. By offering dozens of architectural examples from non-European countries as a proof of redemption, Taut not only continued his social utopian position in assigning a sanctifying value to architecture but also turned his gaze eastward for this purpose. Taut's antiwar ideas must have motivated his search for a model of peace and harmony in the "Orient" that he could not find in modern European cities at the dawn of the war.[8] This is not a type of common orientalism that claims the superiority of the West, nor does it claim any desire to control, manipulate, or dominate the Orient. However,

6. Taut, *Die Stadtkrone*, 82.

7. Taut, "*Ex Oriente Lux*," 81–82.

8. Ian Boyd Whyte has also argued that Taut's interest in the East was directly linked to his disappointment with the events in Europe before and during World War I (*Bruno Taut and the Architecture of Activism* [Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1982]).

another sort of orientalist undertone is still present here. The idea about the Orient's saving power in times of crisis is one of the basic symptoms of orientalism, still in Said's sense, in its seemingly affirmative face. This type of orientalism not only distances the Orient as the ready-at-hand solution to be taken out of the medicine chest whenever "Western progress" is under suspicion but also treats the Orient as an exotic, unchanging, and harmonious dreamland deprived of progress, modernity, and the idea of history (fig. 1).

Taut's approach to these questions became much more refined in Japan and Turkey. The transformation had started before he was exiled from Germany, as exemplified in his book *Die neue Wohnung: Die Frau als Schöpferin* (*The New House: Woman as Creator*, 1924).[9] The book's historical examples of Japanese and Ottoman vernacular houses held a specific place in Taut's formulation of the characteristics of modern dwellings. For instance, rooms without walls in Japan fascinated Taut. The movable partitions that continuously changed the division of space, and the sliding exterior walls that allowed different levels of continuity with the outside, inspired him to make flexibility an important principle of the modern dwelling. Taut also admired the built-in-the-wall closets of Ottoman vernacular houses (*Wandschränke*) that functioned as minimized service spaces, freeing the rest of the room. In his own modern dwellings during the Weimar period, the service spaces such as the kitchen, bath, and closets were inspired by the Ottoman closets and similarly handled as minimum boxes to be opened up and closed down, leaving the maximum space for the living sections.[10]

Thus Taut claimed, in his early career, to have found the *true* law of land settlement simply by declaring that a Chinese city had the same principles as Howard's garden city. In doing so, he not only assimilated effortlessly the non-Western example into his own frames of reference but also used it to claim the "universality" of his own approach. A few years later Taut treated the Orient as a region where one could search for an alternative to and ultimately redeem what he perceived as the Western crisis that culminated in World War I. He did not claim that oriental architecture was inferior—quite the contrary—yet he still separated and stereotyped it almost as a nonhistorical style that could criticize the historical progress of Western civilization. During the Weimar

9. Bruno Taut, *Die neue Wohnung: Die Frau als Schöpferin*, 2nd ed. (1924; rpt. Leipzig: Klinkhardt und Biermann, 1928), rpt. as *Die neue Wohnung: Die Frau als Schöpferin*, ed. Manfred Speidel (Berlin: Gebrüder Mann, 2001).

10. Taut also noted how the division between sleeping and living spaces does not exist in the rooms (*oda*) of Ottoman vernacular houses. This was an organization that, he later suggested, could be plausible for small working-class houses in Germany (*Die neue Wohnung*, 21–23).

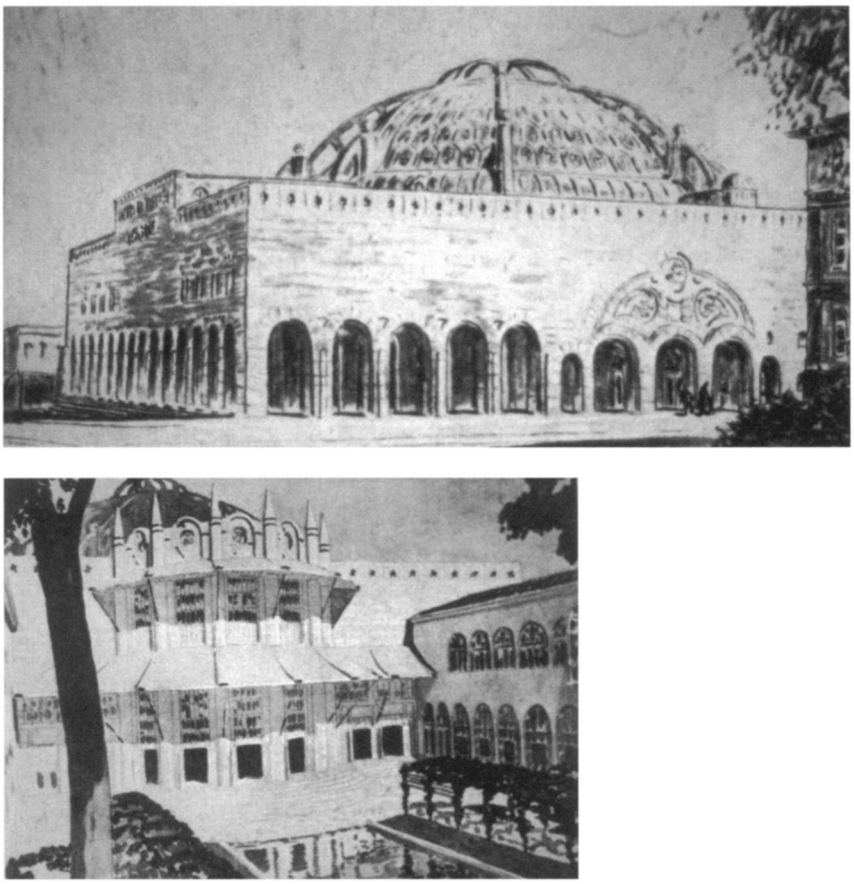


Figure 1. Bruno Taut, entry for the House of Friendship Competition, Istanbul, 1916 (*ODTU Mimarlık Fakültesi Dergisi* 1, no. 2 [1975]: 197–98)

period Taut's interest in the architecture of Japan and Turkey became more nuanced. Nevertheless, the occasional references to the historical examples from these regions rarely came to terms with their actual problems of modernization. This changed after Taut immigrated to these countries, when he was forced into exile after the National Socialists seized power in 1933.

Melancholy of the East: Japan, 1933–36

The Japanese International Association of Architects invited Taut to Japan, where he was mainly occupied with designing craft objects and researching

the country's vernacular architecture (fig. 2). As opposed to his heavy responsibilities in Germany and later in Turkey, Taut had few opportunities to build in Japan and spent his time writing several books on Japanese architecture.[11] A new theory of architecture emerged from this research, which culminated in *Mimari Bilgisi* (*Lectures in Architecture*), a book written and published in Turkey just before Taut's death.

For most of his projects in exile, Taut did more than simply transport his German practice to new locations. His designs appeared so transformed that many scholars and colleagues interpreted this as a radical change. For instance, in Germany, Taut had been highly critical of the *Heimatstil* for nostalgically promoting the revival of values embodied in traditional German farmhouses. In Japan, however, after spending most of his time researching the region's vernacular architecture, he promoted the "Japanese houses" and the Katsura Palace as a guide to the properties of an appropriate modern architecture in that country.

Why would a visionary avant-garde designer promote a building practice based on the study of traditional vernacular houses? Is it possible that Taut, rather than advocate a nostalgic conservatism, tested the geographic limits of German modernism during his exile in Japan and Turkey and realized the necessity of translating his own ideas? The answer to these questions can be found in Taut's texts from the period. I suggest that Taut had two main intentions: to criticize the Western orientalist perceptions of these regions and to criticize the current modernization in Japan and Turkey.

Houses and People of Japan (the title was originally intended to be *The Japanese House and Its Homelife*) was the main book in which Taut delivered his research, written in the form of a diary chronicling a one-year sojourn in Japan.[12] Envisioned as a "contribution to international friendship"

11. Bruno Taut, "Nippon, mit europäischen Augen gesehen" (manuscript of 1933, Nachlaß Taut, BS, AKB); Taut, "Die Architektur des Westens mit ihrer Bedeutung für Japan" (manuscript for the Conference Series of July 9–17, 1934, Kaiserlichen Universität Tokio); Taut, *Fundamentals of Japanese Architecture* (Tokyo: Kokusai Bunka Shinkokai, 1935); Taut, *Japans Kunst* (Tokyo: Meiji Shobo, 1936); Taut, "Japanese Village" (in English) (manuscript of 1936, Nachlaß Taut, BT-Slg-01-85, BS, AKB); Taut, "New Japan: What Its Architecture Should Be" (in German) (manuscript of 1936, Nachlaß Taut, BT-Slg-01-86, BS, AKB); Taut, *Houses and People of Japan*, 2nd ed. (Tokyo: Sanseido, 1958). *Japans Kunst* and *Houses and People of Japan* are hereafter cited as *JK* and *HP*, respectively.

12. For the German version see Bruno Taut, *Das japanische Haus und sein Leben*, ed. Manfred Speidel (1937; rpt. Berlin: Gebrüder Mann, 1997). *The Japanese House and Its Homelife* is the title Taut used for the prospectus of 1935. (This prospectus is reprinted at the end of the German version.) The book was first published in English in 1937 with Taut's own arrangements. The German version did not appear until 1997. In a letter to Sanseido from Turkey in June 1937 (also reprinted at the end of the German version), Taut wrote that he must have left the original German manuscript in Mr. Hirai's office. In her letter of February 10, 1939, Erica Taut talks about the German manuscript of *Nippon* that she will send to Shinoda. The manuscript was later found and belongs to Iwanami Verlag in Tokyo today (see Speidel's "Anmerkungen" at the end of the German publication).

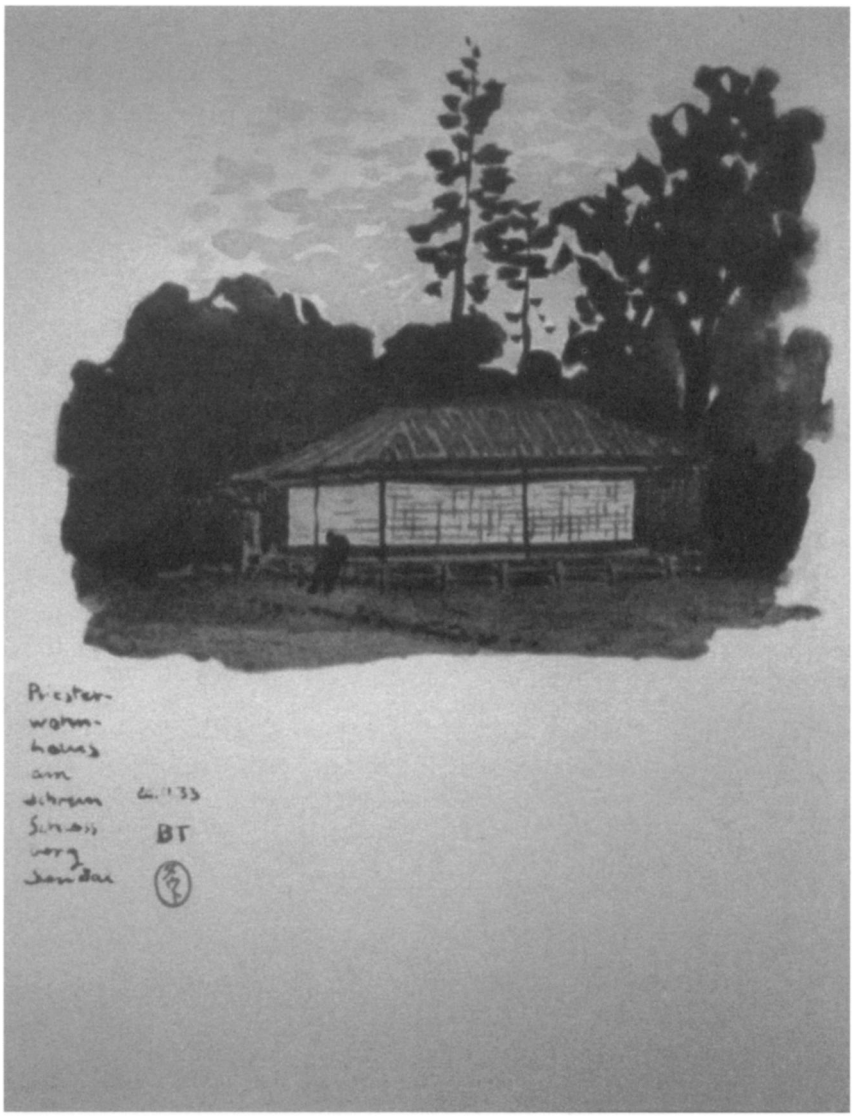


Figure 2. Taut's sketch of a Japanese vernacular house in *Houses and People of Japan*

(*HP*, ii), the book is a lively, detailed, interrogative representation of Taut's research on traditional "Japanese houses," living habits, crafts, and clothes as well as their confrontation with the demands of modern living. Determined not to "go back as ignorant as . . . [he] came" (*HP*, 40), Taut aspired to disclose and challenge Western orientalist views of Japan, which eventually led him to develop deeper thoughts on the notion of non-Western modernization.

"I failed to see how the Japanese could possibly claim that their house is their castle. . . . But after all, these houses are nothing more than tents, though provided with roofs and structural refinements" (*HP*, 21). These were the words Taut used to express his astonishment at his first visit to the house he would inhabit in Japan. In his deliberately ironic words, Taut bumps his head against the low door frames during his first day, has a hard time finding door handles and other such things, desperately looks for familiar furniture, and tries to get used to the "oddities" of his new habitat, such as taking off his shoes before entering the house, surviving the hot water in the bathroom and the freezing temperature of the house, sleeping on mats, eating with chopsticks, and so on. About the houses and ways of living he passionately researched during the rest of his stay in Japan, Taut continued:

> But could it be called a room? It was really nothing more than an open hall, raised above the level of the ground. . . . The problem was where to eat, sleep, and work. . . . furniture could hardly be used on the soft straw mats. . . . Where was I to work, and how was I to dispose my books and papers? . . . My wife was not less perturbed when she came to inspect the kitchen. . . . There was neither stove, nor gas, nor even a kitchen table. . . . [In] this so-called kitchen . . . there was nothing else to see. . . . But how on earth were we to make ourselves at home? (*HP*, 5–8)

These words at the beginning of *Houses and People of Japan* are deliberately misleading. By repeating some of the orientalist stereotypes, the architect was actually preparing the ground for criticizing European perceptions of Japan. Taut's real intentions are disclosed in the following pages of the book:

> What is still today the image of Japan, which—apart from a few connoisseurs—generally prevails among the masses of the West? Is it not that of a strange island whose singular inhabitants, contrary to custom everywhere else, have introduced into art an affected elegance, faintness, dwarfish diminutiveness, irregularity, abnormality, oddity—in a word, whim [*Marotte*]? . . . The West only saw what it understood, and relished it the more as it appeared to be an exotic, piquant curiosity. (*HP*, 175)

And further:

> The intention [of this book] has been to show that strange and unaccustomed ways have very natural and simple reasons. Whosoever looks at these ways as something exotic behaves like a child in the zoo gaping in front of the glass cage of the boa constrictor. But such a sentimental and romantic approach to the unfamiliar is as unjust as it is unreasonable, since human beings all over the world are endowed with an equal amount of reason. (*HP*, 75)

The West, which "only saw what it understood," deemed the East nothing more than an "exotic" fairyland, distant and strange, abnormal and odd. During his life in the Orient, Taut's orientalist hymns were toned down. Furthermore, he also intuitively realized some of the basic problems of non-European countries under westernization. For instance, based on the increasing number of suicides and the dark depictions of movies such as *Alpus Teisho*, Taut asserted in a chapter titled "Melancholie," in his manuscript "Japans Kunst" ("Japan's Art"), that a depressive mood and melancholy governed the Japanese artistic scene, about which he freely speculated throughout the manuscript.[13] Taut mainly talked about a fundamental dichotomy (*Zwiespalt*) that caused some sort of "depression" and "resignation." The recent indications of this dichotomy, the architect argued, were largely due to the perceived gap between the East and Europe, the declining state of Japanese tradition as a mere "exotic museum piece," and the perceived opposition between the traditional ways of living and European modernism.[14] Taut's choice of the word *melancholy* is more theoretically suggestive than it appears at first. It implies his intuitive recognition of one of the most pertinent cultural reactions to modernization in many non-Western countries. Melancholy is the tension that stems from the perceived inequality between "West" and "non-West" at the moment of cross-cultural translation—a condition that I have elsewhere explained in further detail as "the melancholy of the non-Western."[15]

Taut's observations in "Melancholie" can be additionally supported by analyzing his manuscripts and published pieces for Japanese journals, where the architect delivered his criticism and suggestions on modern architecture.[16] In *Houses and People of Japan*, for instance, he discussed his confrontation

13. Bruno Taut, "Japans Kunst: Mit europäischen Augen gesehen" (manuscript of 1936, Nachlaß Taut, Mappe 1.14, BTS 323, p. 24, BS, AKB).

14. Ibid., 12–13.

15. Akcan, "Modernity in Translation"; Akcan, "Melancholy and the 'Other,'" www.eurozine.com.

16. See, most notably, Taut, "New Japan."

with the contemporary modern problems of Japan in the chapter titled "What Now?" This chapter was written as an imaginary discussion with Mr. Suzuki, but it was actually a collage of real conversations between Taut and his Japanese colleagues.[17] It contained some phrases that may suggest Taut's relapse into the orientalist hopes of his early career. Yet this dream about the redemptive power of the Orient took place only momentarily in this conversation, since Taut's imaginary friend Mr. Suzuki warned him not to idealize the "glorious days of the past" and not to ignore the modern developments of Japan (*HP*, 259–60). Besides, the fact that Taut was now in Japan obliged him to notice the country's expanding westernization. Unlike the earlier accounts where the architect treated the Orient as nonhistorical and redemptive, Taut was now much more attentive to the development of modern architecture in Japan, as well as the actual problems emerging during this process. He assessed the main conflict as the dilemma between copying Western forms and searching for an alternative modernism. In "What Now?" Taut questioned both the enthusiasm for and reaction to westernization:

> Taut: What I do mean is the admirable way in which the Japanese house has adapted itself to the special *climate of Japan* and is in harmony with local customs and daily occupations. . . . And then, why is there nowhere that splendidly conceived veranda adapted to modern style building? Where are the broad gables, in Japan a most necessary thing to keep the large window openings shaded from sun and rain, since you must leave everything open during the heat. Terraces and balconies are *Western imitations*!
> Suzuki: Ah, well, you may be right. But then, you see, for modern life the old style of building is not suitable at all.
> Taut: Nobody said you were to imitate the old style completely! That would be as terrible a mistake as *slavish imitation of foreign styles*. But it does seem as if some of your countrymen *feel ashamed*, if their houses don't look exactly like every house in Paris or Berlin. This seems to lead others into reaction, causing them to construct their homes entirely in the old classical way, which is wrong too. After all, it can't be terribly difficult to find an arrangement for simultaneously shading roofs and providing light for the rooms inside. (*HP*, 262–63; my emphasis)

A feeling of insecurity, Taut observed, unsettled his Japanese colleagues. In a previous part of the text Taut had already criticized the "European reception rooms" that were placed in modern houses, despite the disfavor of their owners, just because they were "consider[ed] necessary . . . to please the Euro-

17. This information is taken from Speidel's editorial note in Bruno Taut, "Houses and People of Japan" (rpt. of "What Now?"), *Daidalos* 54 (1994): 62–73.

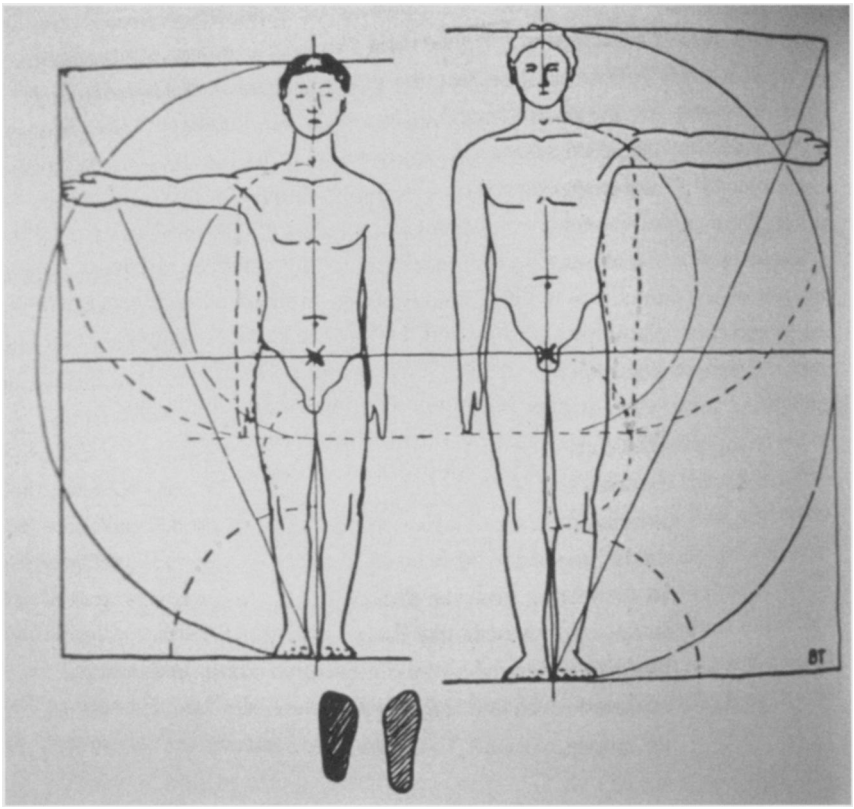


Figure 3. Comparative diagram for the human body (*HP*, 41; *MB*, 65)

peans" (*HP*, 177–78). The theme of inferiority was also repeated when Taut and Suzuki talked about the Japanese people's desire to be taller, since they took the European height as the human standard and considered the "Western way of living" "much more healthy" (fig. 3).[18] Thus ideologies of Eurocentrism traveling to the Orient constructed the Western body (that itself varies and should

18. The discussion is introduced when Mr. Suzuki adds to the "catalog of our progress" that Japanese people are getting taller. Taut objects to this statement by saying that "stature has nothing to do with genius" and that neither the proportions of the Japanese body nor the traditional way of sitting or sleeping have necessarily caused an unhealthier lifestyle (compared with the European). To support his point, Taut says that he will throw away his spring mattress and lie on flat mats when he "gets home." (Taut never went back to Germany.) Suzuki replies: "Well, this is amusing and interesting, I must say! . . . We generally think that the Western way of living is much more healthy. And there you come along, a European, telling us the contrary" (*HP*, 261–62).

not be standardized) as the ideal human norm. The "oriental" himself—Suzuki—believed in the superiority myth of this Western norm. If the ideal European masculine body was considered a universal norm, then we can assert that a regional and particular truth had been universalized during modernization. Therefore the non-Western subjects could speak of a feeling of inferiority caused by the lost natural right of belonging to this universality.

The ideology of ergonomics influenced world architecture more than it might be imagined. From graphic standards books such as *Neufert*, generations of architects worldwide learned and applied several physical standards to their modern furniture, kitchens, bathrooms, and stairs.[19] These norms were based on the dimensions and proportions of the idealized white masculine body à la Vitruvius and ignored racial or gender differences. In this sense, Taut's diagram comparing the idealized European and Japanese bodies can be assessed as a groundbreaking yet overlooked comment on the politics of ergonomics. With this diagram, which appeared both in *Houses and People of Japan* and in the original (Turkish) version of *Mimari Bilgisi*, the architect admitted that his initial uneasiness in moving about his house in Japan, because of the low door frames, "uncomfortable" heights of the door handles, and the like, was not caused by a lack of refinement in ergonomic design but was a matter of difference. Today this diagram must be considered as an unheard warning against the ideology of standardization based on European and North American norms. Rather than take the "Western man's" body as the human standard, this diagram challenges the notion of *a* universal norm by representing two norms. Unlike the white man's body, the Japanese masculine body does not fit into a geometric square when his arms are wide open. While the white man's legs are half of his whole body, the Japanese man's legs are proportionately not the same. Even though Taut's comparative diagram ignores gender or racial differences, it must be considered as a step toward deuniversalizing the Western masculine body as the standard of ergonomic design. So already by the mid-1930s Taut's intuitive realization of the non-Western subject's distance from the ego ideal led him to one of the most critical contributions on the state of architectural standardization.

Houses and People of Japan was a study of the vernacular architecture in Japan and its implications for the modern period. Apart from the research on Japanese architecture, the book opened multiple perspectives for Taut's thinking about architecture. For instance, it led him to reflect on the definition of architecture as an institutionalized profession. In various passages Taut com-

19. Paul Bonatz brought *Neufert* to Turkey. I would like to thank Can Bilsel for this information.

mented on the distinction between the mason and the architect, which still remains one of the main criteria where the professionalization of architecture, and the distinction between "architecture" and "vernacular building," is under dispute (*HP*, 173, 193). Rather than suggest a hierarchical difference between a craftsman and an architect, vernacular and modern architecture, Taut was interested in improving the standardization of architectural materials in relation to the legacy of Japanese mats, which he considered an example of preindustrial standardization (*HP*, 206–8). At another point Taut started to formulate a typological matrix of the Japanese house according to its historical development (*HP*, 121). Even more so, he increasingly commented on the importance of climate for shaping architecture after his research on the Japanese vernacular.[20]

For our purposes, the most relevant comment is Taut's definition of the Japanese vernacular, or more specifically the farmhouse (*Bauernhaus*) as "cosmopolitan" building. In his piece "The Japanese Village" Taut claimed that the Japanese farmhouse was both "national" and "international."[21] In *Houses and People of Japan* he collected an impressive number of comparative images of farmhouses from Japan and another European country that looked strikingly identical. Putting a picture of a house in Japan next to a curiously similar one from Austria, Germany, Italy, Serbia, Sweden, and Switzerland, the architect drew the reader's attention to a provocative body of evidence (fig. 4). Even though he admitted that the reasons for these striking similarities had to be explained after some research, he did not retreat from claiming that the "cosmopolitanism" of the Japanese farmhouse, as well as the "universality" of peasant life, could well have created this resemblance:

> The Japanese farmer, who does not speak to the world with words, speaks through his houses. He is the Japanese nation and his tongue is a *cosmopolitan* one. And being *cosmopolitan*, it has *universal power*. . . . The cosmopolitan mind of the peasants shows itself in its sociability and in their toler-

20. He said, for instance: "Thus it was the climate that built the Japanese house, more especially the summer. . . . To keep the body in its normal balance there is no better means than the life in a Japanese house. . . . Otherwise one would have to use expensive apparatus to give the same airing effect. But such ventilation is artificial and can only be used temporarily" (*HP*, 72).

21. "Anyone who undertakes a closer study of the Japanese village should not be stuck by any impression of seemingly 'exotic' strangeness. Rather, except for some Japanese specialties such as floor mats and paper windows, he will feel that all species of farmhouse throughout the world reflect themselves in the Japanese farmhouse. . . . The Japanese farmhouse is thus an enigma in itself. It is remarkable indeed that here, in contrast to any machinery of war or peace, is a cultural phenomenon born of the very soil of Japan and absolutely national, though the various forms of this same culture in all its details and variations happen to be quite international" (Bruno Taut, "The Japanese Village" [in English, manuscript of 1936, Nachlaß Taut, BT-Slg-01-85, BS, AKB]).

Abb. 178 Links: Japan, Shirakawa

Rechts Österreich

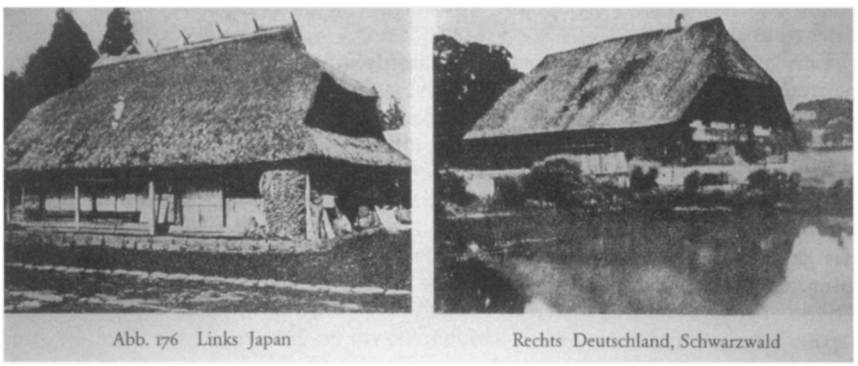


Abb. 176 Links Japan

Rechts Deutschland, Schwarzwald

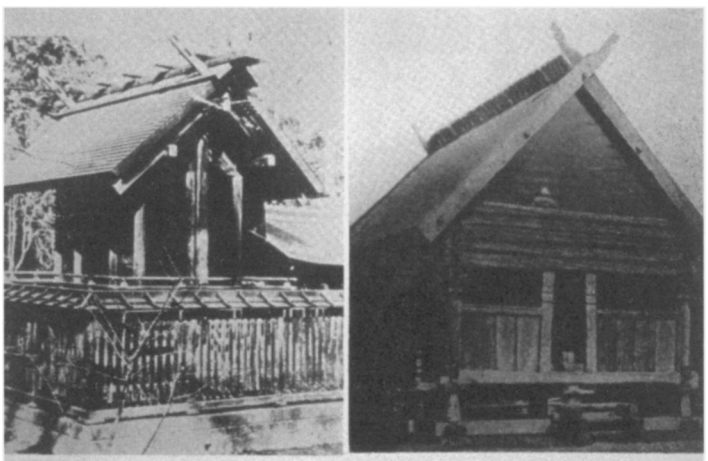


Fig 167 Left: Japanese Shrine

Right: Swedish Store-House

Figure 4. Taut's comparison of Japanese and European farmhouses in *Houses and People of Japan*

> ance of different kinds of wishes or inclinations. Nevertheless, there is ever the same spirit, which unites all the many variations and produces an aesthetic whole. (*HP*, 112–13; my emphasis)
>
> The organism of the Japanese house very naturally originates from the life and work of the country folk. However much climate and types of agriculture differ, the peasants all over the world are fundamentally alike. . . . Farmhouses all over the world once had the same open fireplace as is found nowadays in Japan. . . . A kettle hung or stood over the fire at which the people gathered together to warm themselves, and dry their wet clothes, the fireplace being the central point for the family and the household. (*HP*, 116–17)

The validity of these assertions is naturally suspect, yet my point is not about the historical evolution or geographic expansion of these houses themselves but about Taut's aspirations in interpreting them. The architect's choice of the word *cosmopolitanism* here, as opposed to, say, *nationalism*, is crucial. During the same period, the revival of national vernacular types, such as the discourse of the German farmhouse, was abruptly becoming a tool for the cultural politics of National Socialism. A similar danger was also becoming more and more evident in other countries, including Turkey, because of the rise of chauvinistic nationalism. In contrast, Taut was promoting the study of vernacular architecture to disclose the architectural principles not of nationalism but of cosmopolitanism. What could have motivated Taut to see a cosmopolitan chord in Japanese vernacular buildings? If he was trying to differentiate his own interest in the vernacular from the architects of the German *Heimatstil*, and if he was trying to prove the similarity between farmhouses of different nations, why did he refrain from using words such as *international*? The implicit answers to these questions can be found in Taut's next book, *Mimari Bilgisi*.

Melancholy of the East: Turkey, 1936–38

On September 30, 1936, Martin Wagner, Taut's colleague from the Weimar housing reform who was in Turkey at the time, sent a telegram to Japan, directing Taut to depart "immediately" for Turkey. After Hans Poelzig's sudden death just before making it to Turkey, Wagner convinced the authorities to invite Taut instead.[22] Taut's work in Turkey would later disappoint his friends and a number of architectural historians. For instance, Wagner himself complained

22. After receiving the news, Taut wrote in his diary: "Bums!!! Schluss mit Japan" (Bum!!! End with Japan). He reported that he ate his last breakfast and lunch with friends and departed for Turkey, his third country of exile after a brief stay in Russia and three years in Japan. Ten days later, on October 10, Taut arrived in Turkey ("Tagebuch—Japan" [manuscript dated July 16—November 2, 1936, Nachlaß Taut, BTS 01-75, pp. 20–21, BS, AKB]).

in a letter to Walter Gropius about Taut's steps back from modern architecture: "As everyone who gets old, Taut is stuck with Renaissance principles and he can't find a way toward the New! I am very disappointed. . . . It is a shame for such an avant-gardist."[23] To give another example, Paul Bonatz relied on Taut's use of the traditional Almaşık constructional system on the exterior walls of the Faculty of Language, History, and Geography building in Ankara as support for his own position advocating nationalism in architecture.[24] Were these judgments correct? Did Taut start promoting a nationalist *Heimatstil* in Turkey after criticizing such a development in Germany during the 1920s? What was the visionary architect of German expressionist utopias—the designer of ten thousand worker and middle-class houses in over twenty *Siedlungen* and urban housing blocks, the promoter of pure, functional, flexible, and efficient houses for the modern dwellers of Germany—really pursuing in Turkey?[25]

As soon as he arrived, Taut was given serious responsibilities. He became the head of both the Department of Architecture at the Academy of Fine Arts and the Department of Construction in the Ministry of Education. In letters to the architects Ernst May and Hans Scharoun, Wagner claimed that Taut's career in Turkey was not a bright one, since he was able to get commissions "only" for a few buildings, and since he "turned all teachers and patrons against

23. Wagner to Gropius, August 29, 1937, quoted in Manfred Speidel, "Bruno Taut: Wirken und Wirkung," in *Atatürk için Düşünmek. Iki Eser: Katafalk ve Anıtkabir. Iki Mimar: Bruno Taut and Emin Onat* (Istanbul: Milli Reasürans TAŞ, 1997), 54–62.

24. Paul Bonatz, *Leben und Bauen* (Stuttgart: Spemann, 1950).

25. The following biographies of Taut include brief information about the Turkish period: Kurt Junghanns, *Bruno Taut, 1880–1938* (Milan: Franco Angeli Editore, 1978); Luciana Capaccioli, *Bruno Taut: Visione e Progetto* (Bari: Dedalo Libri, 1981); Bettina Zöller-Stock, *Bruno Taut: Die Innenraumentwürfe des Berliner Architekten* (Stuttgart: Deutsche Verlags-Anstalt, 1993). The following articles comment on Taut's works in Turkey: Inci Aslanoğlu, "Dışavurumcu ve Usçu Devirlerinde Bruno Taut (1880–1938)," *METU Journal of Architecture* 2, no. 1 (1976): 35–47; Bülent Özer, "Casa del Anima/A House of the Soul," *Domus*, no. 611 (1980): 28; Inci Aslanoğlu, "Bruno Taut's Wirken als Lehrer und Architekt in der Türkei in den Jahren 1936–38," in *Bruno Taut, 1880–1938* (Berlin: Akademie der Künste, 1980), 143–50; Kristina Hartmann, "Bruno Taut im Türkischen Exil," *Der Architekt* 2 (1992): 111–17; Manfred Speidel, "Natürlichkeit und Freiheit: Bruno Tauts Bauten in der Türkei," in *Ankara, 1923–50: Bir Başkentin Oluşumu* (Ankara: TMMOB Mimarlar Odası, 1994), 52–65; Sibel Bozdoğan, "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; Bernd Nicolai, "Bruno Tauts Akademiereform und sein Weg zu einer neuen Architektur für die Türkei," in *Atatürk için Düşünmek*, 37–43; Speidel, "Bruno Taut"; Bülent Tanju, "Türkiye'de Farklı bir Mimar: Bruno Taut," in *Atatürk için Düşünmek*, 22–26; Bernd Nicolai, *Moderne und Exil: Deutschsprachige Architekten in der Türkei, 1925–1955* (Berlin: Verlag für Bauwesen, 1998); Esra Akcan, "Öteki' Dünyanın Melankolisi: Bruno Taut'un Doğu Deneyimi," *Domus m* (February–March 2001): 36–41.

him" by committing lots of "faux pas" at the academy.[26] Even though Taut's relations with his Turkish colleagues were not always smooth,[27] the architect's own diary and letters indicate that he was often intensely busy but content with his work,[28] and that he had a fulfilling life in finding his "homeland" and "happiness" in architecture, not necessarily in a specific country.[29] Taut was also one of the first German architects whose work was extensively covered in the Turkish architectural journal *Arkitekt*, where young Turkish architects had been attacking their "foreign" colleagues for lacking the necessary background to create the "new Turkish architecture." Taut nevertheless soon won his colleagues' appreciation, as his correspondence with the journal's editor, Zeki Sayar, suggests.[30]

Taut designed numerous schools in Ankara, Istanbul, Izmir, and Trabzon. These built projects are usually known as his only designs in Turkey, yet his diary and a report to the Ministry of Education indicate that he worked

26. Wagner to May, February 10, 1939, Nachlaß Wagner, Doc. 26, BS, AKB. In a letter to Scharoun, Wagner wrote: "Bruno Taut did not receive big or rewarding tasks here. Now he is building only a school in Ankara, plans two ministries, a big opera house for twelve hundred people. He also contributed a nice sketch for the Parliament for a competition. But it is not yet confirmed that these projects will be realized." In another letter to May, Wagner repeated: "Bruno Taut, whom I brought in from Japan in place of Poelzig, has in fact some commissions. But these interest me little, only a school—which is to be built with incapable craftsman" (Wagner to Scharoun, December 30, 1937, Nachlaß Scharoun, Mappe 6.3, BS, AKB; see also Wagner to May, March 12, 1937, Nachlaß Wagner, Doc. 26, BS, AKB).

27. Many of his colleagues, such as Asım Mutlu, Sedad Eldem, Rebi Gorbon, Eyüp Kömürcüoğlu, and Zeki Sayar, also mentioned how strong the Japanese influence was on Taut when he first arrived in Turkey. Yet these architects also added that he was soon interested in learning the Turkish (Ottoman) architectural heritage as well. See Asım Mutlu, *Anılarda Mimarlık* (Istanbul: YEM, 1995); and Ömer Gülsen, ed., "Erinnerungen an Bruno Taut," *Bauwelt* 75, no. 39 (1984): 1675–84.

28. Taut's diary in Istanbul illustrates that he spent almost all of his time working either on building designs or on revising the academy's architectural program. In letters to Carl Krayl, Tokugen Mihara, and Isaburo Ueno, Taut also speaks about his loaded but fulfilling program in Turkey ("Istanbul Journal," manuscript, Nachlaß Taut, Mappe 3.18, BS, AKB; Taut letters to Karl and Li Crayl, Nachlaß Taut, BTS 01-337, BS, AKB; Taut letters to Tokugen Mihara, Nachlaß Taut, BT-Slg-01-141, BS, AKB; Taut letters to Isaburo Ueno, Nachlaß Taut, BT-Slg-01-9 bis 13, BS, AKB).

29. In a letter to Ueno, Taut wrote: "Where is homeland? Answer: Building. Where is happiness? Answer: Building [Scheerbart]" (Taut to Ueno, August 9, 1938, Nachlaß Taut, BT-Slg-01-13, BS, AKB).

30. In the opening of his own exhibition at the academy, Taut had a brief conversation with Sayar, who had written a critical editorial about "foreign architects" by using a sketch of Taut's Faculty of Language, History, and Geography building. In the exhibition Sayar thanked Taut and voiced interest in publishing the architect's project for the Parliament competition. Taut said playfully, "Enfin je suis auch turque" (finally, I am also Turkish), and the two had a better relationship thereafter. Apart from the exhibition project, Sayar also published chapters of Taut's book *Lectures on Architecture* serially in *Arkitekt* (Taut, "Istanbul Journal," June 4, 1938, 125).

on over twenty buildings, most of which remained pending upon his death.[31] Taut collaborated with several assistants and colleagues from Germany such as Grimm (who had worked in Taut and Hoffmann's office), Mundt, Franz Hillinger (who had worked with Taut for Gemeinnützige Heimstätten AG), Margarete Schütte-Lihotzky, and Wilhelm Schütte (whom Taut himself invited to Turkey; they collaborated in a couple of projects at the Turkish Ministry of Education).[32] He organized a large and well-received exhibition of his lifetime work at the Istanbul Academy in 1938.[33]

Taut was also extremely influential as a teacher and prepared a reformed pedagogical program at the Academy of Fine Arts.[34] As his diary suggests, Taut was in touch with many of the young and established architects of Turkey, working closely with them either at the academy or in the design and drawings of his own projects. Again, from his diaries and letters, we understand that Taut spoke German and French with his Turkish colleagues and German, French, and English with his Japanese friends, yet he also learned some Turkish as well as Japanese. Shortly after designing the catafalque of Atatürk, Taut died suddenly in December 1938 in Turkey. He had been suffering from asthma.[35]

When Taut came to Turkey, he found himself under similar pressures that he had observed in Japan. Just like in Japan, he reacted against blindly copying forms from both Western modernism and an anachronistic past.[36] In *Houses and People of Japan*, *Fundamentals of Japanese Architecture*, and "New Japan: What Its Architecture Should Be," Taut had already disparaged examples of imported European modernism in Japan. Strolling down the road between Yokohama and Tokyo was "a cold shower of disillusionment" for him because of "the ludicrous would-be modernity of the tin facades" (*HP*, 2–3), the "many ugly things, many 'modern' things and much trash" as the legacy of a "frantic importation of Western civilization" (*HP*, 53–54). Instead of improv-

31. Taut's report to the Ministry of Education, Manfred Speidel Archive, Aachen.

32. Taut to the Schüttes, March 17, 1938. I would like to thank Manfred Speidel for providing this document for me.

33. Bruno Taut, "Ansprache zur Eröffnung der Taut—Ausstellung in Istanbul am 4.6.1938," in Aslanoğlu, *Bruno Taut, 1880–1938*, 260.

34. Taut changed Egli's program at the academy and concentrated on social issues such as social housing projects (Bozdoğan, "Against Style"; Nicolai, "Bruno Tauts Akademiereform"; Gülsen, "Erinnerungen an Bruno Taut").

35. The last words he wrote in his diary were about his students at the academy, seeking permission for them to work in the school until 9 p.m. ("Istanbul Journal," December 13, 1938, 144).

36. In the public lecture of his exhibition at the academy, Taut summarized his position as a "search for synthesis between old tradition and modern civilization" ("Ansprache," 260).

ing the structural conditions, the modern works had augmented the risk of earthquake and fire in big cities (*HP*, 239). The modern houses had none of the traditional vernacular sensitivity to climate (*HP*, 53). The statistics showed that one-third of the school-age children in Tokyo were sick because of the "falsely built houses."[37] In his publications in Turkey, Taut did not hide his hostility for similar architectural practices, either. He openly criticized the "house as a machine";[38] imported "cubic architecture" that "put boxes on needles" (*MB*, 166); profit-oriented, mechanized American skyscrapers (*MB*, 43, 157); and "degenerated" modernism (*MB*, 166). Yet this does not mean that he advocated a traditionalist vision. He was equally against a blind "imitation of old styles" that was motivated as a reaction to the "slavish imitation of foreign styles" (*HP*, 263). In Japan, Taut had concluded:

> For more than seventy years now Japan had been importing Western civilization with all her might. But what had happened during those seventy years could not be compared to a natural growth. . . . One would have to give the Japanese time. Perhaps they have to make even more mistakes yet before they finally solve their problem of cultural synthesis. The day will come when foreign plants will have taken root in the new soil. But for the time being, *enthusiasm for foreign taste* will be followed by corresponding reactions in the direction of an *uninspired "Nipponism."* (*HP*, 265; my emphasis)

Taut's stance in Turkey was similar. In letters to his Japanese friends, the architect wrote that he "remains faithful fighting against" the architectural approach "named as *cubic*" in Turkey.[39] Taut's insightful observations of modernism's basic dilemmas outside Europe should not be swiftly dismissed as easy generalizations. On the contrary, Taut's remarks can be theoretically suggestive in disclosing typical conditions. As long as modernism was perceived as a "universal" form of expression, then, we should be able to speak about the reaction of a subject that was gauged by his or her ability to catch up with this modernism as a style. The "slavish imitation of foreign styles" and "uninspired" nativism Taut observed as two dead-end paradigms of modern architecture in Japan and Turkey can rightly be interpreted as the two faces of this reaction. Here the subject oscillates between fascination for and resistance toward the West. In

37. Taut, "New Japan."

38. Bruno Taut, *Mimari Bilgisi*, trans. Adnan Kolatan (Istanbul: Güzel Sanatlar Akademisi, 1938), 89. Hereafter cited as *MB*. For the German see *Architekturlehre*, ed. Tilmann Heinisch and Goerd Peschken (Hamburg: VSA, 1977).

39. Taut to Mihara, undated, Nachlaß Taut, BT-Slg-01-145/2, BS, AKB.

the phase of "slavish imitation of foreign styles," there was an attachment to the West as a substitute for the deprived right of sharing this notion of "universality." In the phase of "uninspired" nativism, there was a resistance against the West, or "universality," that it supposedly embodied and an attachment to the traditional forms as a substitute for lost glorious days of the past. It was these days of the past that were perceived not to have been ruined by the feeling of insecurity. Three decades earlier Taut had observed the same dilemma that Frantz Fanon outlined as the two basic but unproductive responses of the Algerian subject to the perceived "inferiority of his culture." The subject either "unfavorably criticizes his own national culture" or "takes refuge" in passionately defending it.[40]

Rather than perceive this dilemma as a struggle between two groups with opposite positions, it is usually more helpful to conceive it as a tension that exists simultaneously in one or a group of individuals. In other words, "slavish imitation of foreign styles" and "uninspired" nativism, fascination, and resistance to the West are the two faces of the same condition—a condition that I call the melancholy of the "other."[41] On the one hand, accusing all regionalist tendencies for their chauvinism and anachronism would have failed to suggest an alternative to the hegemonic westernization of non-Western contexts. These accusations would have ignored the strategic and emancipatory potential in the provisional promotion of regional or national expressions in these regions. On the other hand, underlining some supposedly fixed identities with increasing inflexibility would have fallen into essentialist definitions, myths of origins, and would have maintained the segregation of the non-West from the West. Taut's suggestion to resolve this fundamental dilemma, I will argue below, was nothing less than aspiration to construct a cosmopolitan ethics in architecture.

Toward a Weltarchitektur: Turkey, 1937–38

During 1937 Taut noted in his diary that he was working on the manuscript of a book that he later described as his "great work." This book first appeared

40. Frantz Fanon, *The Wretched of the Earth*, trans. Constance Farrington (New York: Grove, 1963), 237.

41. This dilemma, I suggest, is caused by the melancholy of the non-Western subject itself. The lost object here that causes melancholy remains centered on the natural right to belong to the condition of universality (an ideal of the early twentieth century). The oscillation between fascination and resistance to the West is similar to the melancholic condition in which the ego, in Freudian terms, swings between love and hatred. See Akcan, "Modernity in Translation."

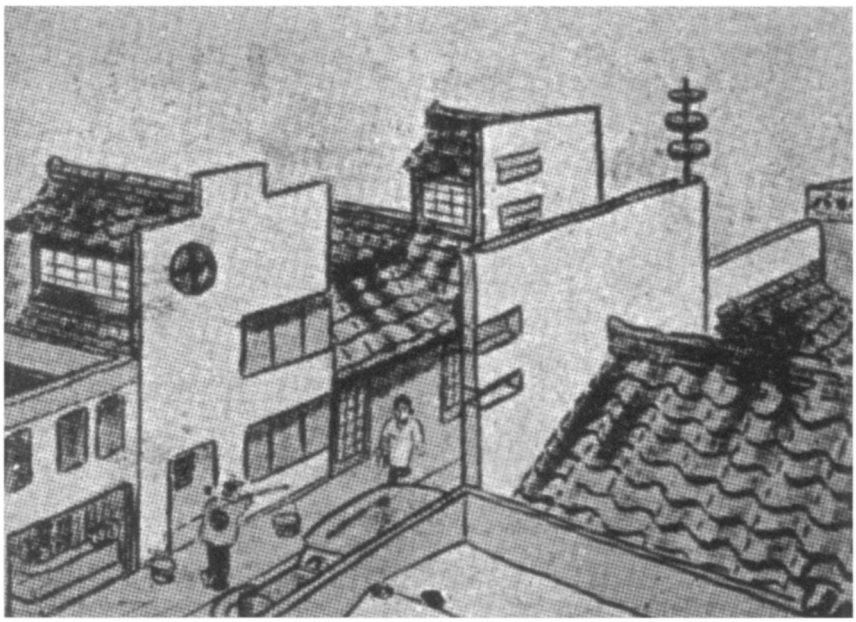


Figure 5. Sketch for "Concealing the Front: Cubic Facades in Japan" in *Mimari Bilgisi*

in Turkish as *Mimari Bilgisi* shortly before the architect's death.[42] Because the German version, *Architekturlehre*, did not appear until 1977 and was published without figures, the Turkish version is the only one that expresses Taut's precise intentions.[43] Taut's main criticism in this book was the generalization of modern architecture as a style across the globe (fig. 5):

> The world is increasingly getting uniform and homogeneous, just like the soldiers who carry uniform weapons in uniform clothes. (*MB*, 45–46)

> When technology *dominates* the house, machines, equipment, mechanical utilities, and the like that can be used anywhere in the world conquer the

42. Parts of the book appeared in *Arkitekt* during 1938. The book was rich in detail and covered various subjects. Though it was a theoretical work, Taut referred to historical examples from many parts of the world, including Europe, the United States, Japan, Turkey, and Africa.

43. Taut may have considered titling the German version *Architekturgedanken* (*Thoughts on Architecture*), as a letter from his wife, Erica, to Isaburo suggests. In another letter she mentioned how important this book was for Taut (Erica Taut letters to Isaburo, February 1 and 10, 1939, Nachlaß Taut, BTS-01-16, BTS-01-17, BS, AKB).

> environment. . . . This brings a situation where buildings all around the world look like machines that can be used without changing their shape in relation to place. This results in commonplace architecture [*cihan mimarisi* in Turkish, *Allerweltsarchitektur* in German], that is, the numberless modern buildings whose pictures we see in all magazines. . . . Architecture is thus confronted with such devastation that it will take too long to recover. If this was just an aesthetic delusion, it would not be too wrong. However, *nature, in our case climate*, will take its revenge on this terrifying negligence: it will soon be understood that a building that is convenient for one country is not so for another. (*MB*, 85–86; my emphasis)

The latter quotation is one of the earliest criticisms of what was thereafter called the International Style. In *Modern Architecture*, written in 1929 in Germany, Taut had already warned his colleagues about the danger of homogenization across the world through modernization.[44] Taut was one of the first architects to realize that the International Style was motivating the spread of European modernism by claiming a universal character for a form of expression that originated from a limited region. Yet he was also well aware of the reactionary threat of nationalism taking command in countries such as his native one. *Mimari Bilgisi* was full of passages that severely criticized advocates of nationalism, whether they expressed themselves in modern or historical forms: "Whether the architects are forced to create national architecture through modern expressions," as in "Fascist Italy," or "they are forced to use historical styles . . . both of the results are a disaster" (334).

How did Taut think, then, that he could reconcile the two forces at the very heart of the dilemma he had unveiled? Though Taut was against treating the Western man's body as a global norm, he was still immersed in the belief that architecture could embody universality. *Mimari Bilgisi* was an attempt to define universal principles of architecture in a way that would integrate geographic and cultural differences. By exemplifying "Greek Temple," "Gothic Cathedral," "Turkish Mosque," and "Japanese House," Taut defined the main principles of architecture as *technique*, *construction*, *function*, and finally *proportion*, which stood, for him, above the other three (*MB*, 4–5, 24). Then Taut opened a category that would respond to geographic differences: climate. According to Taut, almost all external conditions of architecture were a function of climate (*MB*, 62), and in each design the four abstract principles had to be made concrete to achieve a climate-specific building. Climate not only gave "a specificity, a tonality, a musical color to the building" but also, Taut asserted,

44. Bruno Taut, *Modern Architecture* (London: Studio Limited, 1929).

mirrored the ethnic differences in body proportions and human expressions.[45] In other words, climate was not only a functional matter for him, as it was for most European architects, but a much broader—even a metaphysical—issue. What distinguishes Taut's notion of climate is that he conceived it as a category to help attain universality rather than regionalism.

"The more architectural forms are appropriate to the climate, light, and air of their place, the more they are universal" (*MB*, 92). In making this statement, Taut was suggesting that climate specificity forged a universal architecture that was non-European, an architecture that captured what might be called, perhaps, a non-Eurocentric universality. According to Taut, the idea of nature was universal; it could be applied worldwide; it was the earth itself. Climate, on the other hand, was both a fact of nature, something of the earth, and it was also place-specific. Thus climate, it followed for Taut, was the foundation for a non-Eurocentric universal architecture. Taut's stay in Japan and Turkey led him to test the geographic limits of western European modernism and to advocate a theory of modern architecture that would challenge the universalizing claims of modernization (in the sense of the importation of Western modernism) but nevertheless safeguard a notion of universality. In this way, Taut was able to maintain the importance he had assigned to nature as a guide for architecture during his early career in Germany.[46] While he had not elaborated a category of difference in nature then, he was now interpreting climate as the thing that came to terms with geographic diversity.

Taut criticized those who rejected foreign influences in rejuvenating domestic norms.[47] Yet he advocated a foreign influence that would be, he said, "no false Internationalism, no uniformalization [*Weltuniformierung*] of the world, no dullification [*Langweiligmachen*] of the whole earth," but a hybridization that would "make both sides richer" (*JK*, 206). In *Mimari Bilgisi* he used the word *Allerweltsarchitektur* to criticize the homogenizing tendencies of modern architecture (46). If Taut was against internationalism or uniformalization of the world, which word did capture his intentions? What

45. "When you observe a specific facial [human] expression in a mass of people, it is always possible to assert that these expressions are a result of climate. Nations have adjusted themselves to climate, and this has created several expressions. The importance of this for the art of proportion is that these expressions are reflected in body proportions to a certain extent" (*MB*, 65; see also 74).

46. Bruno Taut, "Die Erde eine gute Wohnung," *Die Volkswohnung*, February 24, 1919, 43–48; "The Earth Is a Good Dwelling," trans. Don Reneau, in *The Weimar Republic Sourcebook*, ed. Anton Kaes, Martin Jay, and Edward Dimendberg (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1994), 456–59. For more on Taut's ideas on nature see Bletter, "Bruno Taut and Paul Scheerbart's Vision."

47. Already in *Japans Kunst* Taut had argued that a fruitful modern architecture in Japan would be the result of a synthesis with European influences (206).

would be a construct that could open a country to foreign influences, without totally assimilating its domestic norms within the norms of the foreign? Can it be that the "cosmopolitan" farmhouse that Taut so willingly defended in *Houses and People of Japan* was a preview of what he aspired to see rejuvenated through contemporary architecture?

The word *cosmopolitan* not only assures openness to the foreign but also defies the orientalist segregations between East and West. The possibility that a cosmopolitan farmhouse exists must have been the very evidence for Taut against the persistence of the geographic divide. In his own words, only when one "gets to know the foreignness in one's own nature" can one have the vigor to send "melancholy . . . down to the grave it deserves." Only when a culture opened itself to the foreign with "the belief that East and West belong together" could it challenge melancholy."[48]

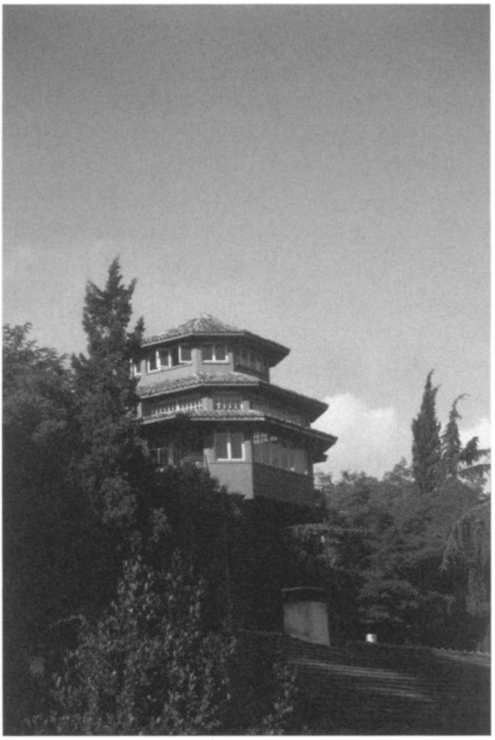
Taut's frank confrontation with and eventual denunciation of the orientalist perceptions about non-European countries, as well as of the consequences of the spread of European modernism, led him to his search for a cosmopolitan ethics. While the architect genuinely criticized the dissemination of the International Style to countries such as Japan and Turkey, he was equally critical of the rising nationalist discourses. In an attempt to reconcile his aspiration for a universally valid set of architectural principles with his aspiration for the vitality of cultural differences, Taut emphasized the idea of the cosmopolitan and the determinative value of climate. In this, his theory in progress sought ways to differentiate *Allerweltsarchitektur*—defined as the exportation of European modern architecture to the rest of the world—from his aspiration for what might be called a cosmopolitan *Weltarchitektur.*

Cosmopolitan Self: Cosmopolitan House, Istanbul, 1938

> Would a European ever want to build in Europe a Japanese house with European workmen? If one would work on the bridge of cultures, this is only possible by an awakened understanding of foreign singularities and by showing how the human spirit works logically and reasonably although its conceptions may vary completely from place to place. . . . In this way we become aware of the same spirit whose various products are merely the consequence of different premises. (*HP*, 40)

Visitors are usually shocked when they first see the house Taut designed for himself in Ortaköy, Istanbul (fig. 6). Like his own house in Dahlewitz, which

48. Taut, "Japans Kunst," 24.



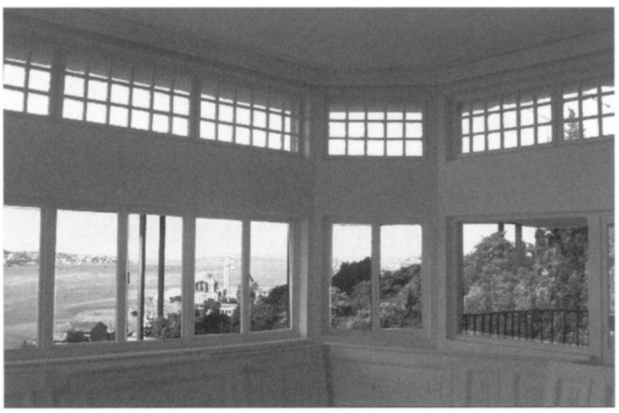


Figure 6. Taut's house, Istanbul, 1938. Author's photographs

was built to embody the principles of the "rational house," Taut's house in Istanbul strikes one as slightly off. The building stands out like a floating lighthouse over a dense sea of trees on the slopes overlooking the Bosphorus. Taut's house often provokes surprise for its symbolic gestures. Local people commonly refer to it as the "Japanese house." If the multiple layers of eaves are meant to be references to pagodas, what exactly do they mean in Turkey? Why Japan in Turkey? Why a reference to any symbol from any country, whatsoever? What happened to the avant-garde designs inspired by expressionist utopias, or the social housing projects with flat roofs?

Based on the previous discussion, one may view Taut's house (and other projects in Turkey and Japan) from a different angle. The initial sense of shock then gives way to what can be considered, oddly enough, both traditionalist and out of place. Taut himself recognized this building as an important realization of his later thought. In his letters from Turkey to Walter Segal and Kurata, for instance, he wrote about his enthusiasm to "show how to apply theory into practice" and to design buildings that would stand as "samples of my architectural understanding today."[49]

One enters the house from the back and moves forward to the main octagonal living room with high ceilings. The view and light of the Bosphorus stream through the windows situated at two different heights across the space. The narrow built-in wooden stair at one corner of the living room leads up to the study. This smaller octagonal room looks like the tower of the house from the exterior and has an inclined ceiling in the interior as in a Seljuk tomb. It is also surrounded almost on all sides with windows at table height overlooking the Bosphorus.

Rather than cover over the foreign, or totally domesticate an imported idea, or still, rather than assimilate and contain it as if it had no foreignness, Taut was explicit in expressing the legacy of Japan in his house. This house has an estranging, foreignizing effect, but a totally different one from the other foreign buildings that had become commonplace in Turkey by the time of his arrival. In a country wide open to foreign influences from its west, but equally closed to the ones from its east, building a "Japanese house" was definitely a critical and original gesture. The house integrated elements from Germany and Turkey as well. Its similarity to two of Taut's 1925 projects in Germany (the house in Dahlewitz and Haus K) cannot be left unmentioned. In all houses Taut differentiated the service spaces from the main living halls, whose circular plans were meant to capture the maximum opening to the outside. The organi-

49. Taut to Segal, March 2, 1937, quoted in Speidel, "Bruno Taut," 57; Taut to Kurata, November 6, 1937, quoted ibid.

zation of the plan and the tripartite massing of Haus K is especially similar to the house in Ortaköy. In the latter, sun-shading devices replace the terraces. As a matter of fact, the more one looks at Taut's Ortaköy house, the more complicated the building becomes. From some viewpoints, the multilevel hanging eaves look like pagodas. But seen from other perspectives, they do not look dissimilar to the vernacular houses of Istanbul. One realizes that the eaves in Taut's house were designed as sun-shading devices for the double-height windows of the interior. This use of sun-shading devices at the midlevel of a double-height window was actually very common in the traditional vernacular buildings of the region, commonly referred to as "old Turkish houses." In an interview for a Turkish magazine, Taut was asked to comment on the "modern Turkish house." His answer was concerned with a residential modernism that explicitly condemned both the copy of modern European houses and the "kitsch" imitation of traditional ones. He suggested instead the filtering of the principles of both through the category of climate. Taut's definition for the "modern Turkish house" was in reality a description of his own house in Istanbul:

> [The modern Turkish house will be born] whenever the architects free themselves from the fashion of cubic style that has become an ordinary practice here. Only then will the principles of modern architecture be applied with a freedom of thought. Both for houses and for some other buildings *climate* will be given priority, and thus some characters of the traditional Turkish house will be applied automatically, such as *shading eaves*, *pavilion*-like structures, and *double-height windows* in rooms with high ceilings. Among these windows, the ones at the bottom will provide the view and necessary illumination for the house; the ones at the top will give a harmonious, sweet light to the whole room. . . . To be sure, one should avoid direct copies. Otherwise, this attempt will turn into a sentimental romanticism, namely, a misunderstood nationalism. The result will be the ugly pretension called *kitsch*. (my emphasis)[50]

As this quotation suggests, Taut regarded his Ortaköy House also as a particular continuation of the memory of vernacular architecture in Turkey. From his diary, we understand that Taut had just studied a typical wooden house during his trip to Edirne with Celal Esat (Arseven),[51] the leading art

50. Bruno Taut, "Türk Evi, Sinan, Ankara," *Her Ay*, no. 2 (1938): 93–94.

51. In his diary Taut reported that he saw Necmi Abi Evi (House of Necmi Brother) during his architectural trip to Edirne with Sinasi and Celal Esat, in addition to visiting the following: Selimiye Mosque, Üç Şerefeli Mosque, Old Mosque, Ekmekçioğlu Ahmed Paşa kervansarai, Tunca bridge, and Yıldırım Mosque. In the vernacular house of Edirne, Taut was interested in the principle of what he called *Wohnveranda* (semiopen sofa) and living space on the second floor ("Istanbul Journal," January 20, 1938, 95).

historian at the academy who was one of the first to draw attention to the term *Turkish house* as an important category of art history.[52] Long before he left Germany, Taut had already included a lengthy description of an "oriental" *oda* (room) in his book *Die neue Wohnung*.[53] At the academy he had already become familiar with Sedad Eldem's National Architecture Seminar. In his diary Taut also referred briefly to Eldem's idea of *milli mimari* (national architecture), based on the modernized interpretation of vernacular houses.[54] The double-height windows of the Turkish house were a topic of interest for Taut in *Mimari Bilgisi*, where he claimed that the proportions of these windows were taken from nature (92–93; see also 151–52).

Conclusion

During his opening talk at the Istanbul Academy, Taut had linked his own intellectual growth to the influence of Immanuel Kant's humanism.[55] Perhaps it is only fitting, then, that Taut, who shared his hometown with Kant, was striving to establish a cosmopolitan ethics in architecture. Taut's theory on what might be called *Weltarchitektur* was neither complete nor an ahistorical ready-at-hand solution. Needless to say, today it would be questionable to glorify Taut's position as the "therapy" for melancholy, as he might have liked to see it. The overemphasis on the redemptive value of climate as a critical position against Eurocentrism is, naturally, an exaggeration, even if not totally irrelevant. Nevertheless, Taut was one of the first architects to engage with the tough problems of a world characterized by increased connections and negotiations between different geographies. What stands out in Taut's late career is his sensitivity and openness to hybrid influences from a variety of regions and his willingness to translate those influences. But hybridity in itself is not adequate to distinguish his theoretical suggestion, nor does it sufficiently show Taut's continuing relevance. His still-engaging contribution needs to be understood, I suggest, in terms of a cosmopolitan aspiration.

52. Djelal Essad, *Constantinople: De Byzance à Stamboul* (Paris: Laurens, 1909); Celal Esad, *Eski Istanbul*, ed. Dilek Yelkenci (Istanbul: Çelik Gülersoy Yayınları, 1989); Esad, *Türk Sanatı* (Istanbul: Akşam Matbaası, 1928); Celal Esad Arseven, *L'art turc: Depuis son origine jusqu'à nos jours* (Istanbul: Devlet Basimevi, 1939).

53. Taut, *Die neue Wohnung*, 21.

54. In his diary Taut occasionally mentioned (but did not comment on) Eldem's position on *milli mimari* (e.g., "Istanbul Journal," May 10 and June 30, 1938).

55. Taut, "Ansprache," 260. Bletter also suggests that the humanism of Kant, developed particularly in "Perpetual Peace," strongly influenced the young Taut ("Bruno Taut and Paul Scheerbart's Vision").

I would therefore like to differentiate the concept of a hybrid artifact from one that embodies cosmopolitan ethics. I define *hybrid* as a de facto product of modern times, where there are no "pure national," or "pure Western" and "pure Eastern," artifacts because of the constant translations between countries. While this hybridization has been amplified under globalization, it is definitely not a recent phenomenon; indeed, we can trace it as early as our historiographical tools allow us, even though it has established itself in different political and economic contexts with accelerating intensity. The architects of the modern period also translated the foreign into the local and the local into the foreign on so many occasions that after a while there were only hybrids, making a much more nuanced understanding of translation necessary. The opinions of most architects have been shaped by the assigned local or global association to forms, rather than by the existence of pure local or pure global forms themselves. Hybrid artifacts are testimonies to the paradigmatic existence of translations between countries. There are many of them.

However, being a hybrid in itself does not prevent the ideological separation between West and non-West, nor is it an antidote to chauvinistic nationalism or ethnocentrism. Hybrid artifacts are the prerequisites of a cosmopolitan ethics, but they alone are not capable of achieving it. There are many historical examples of buildings (or any type of artifacts) that were explicit and legible hybrids but that were well attached to the official chauvinistic nationalist ideologies of their countries or used as propaganda tools by the same ideologies. Having a mixed palette of influences from numerous parts of the world is hardly a value in itself in the modern world.

The hybrid escapes its potential risk of maintaining separatist ideologies or fundamentalist identity politics only when it is coupled with a cosmopolitan ethics, in the Kantian sense of the term. Cosmopolitan law and hospitality were the two prerequisites for what Kant called "perpetual peace," a peace that annihilates the possibility of any future war.[56] Placed in the context of his writings as a whole, Kant's pursuit cannot be reduced merely to a legal formula for a global federation of lawful states, which one might falsely

56. Immanuel Kant, "Perpetual Peace: A Philosophical Sketch," in *Political Writings*, ed. Hans Reiss, trans. H. B. Nisbet, 2nd ed. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), 93–130. For informative essays see esp. Allen W. Wood, "Kant's Project for Perpetual Peace," in *Cosmopolitics: Thinking and Feeling beyond the Nation*, ed. Pheng Cheah and Bruce Robbins (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1998), 59–76; Jürgen Habermas, *The Inclusion of the Other: Studies in Political Theory*, ed. Ciaran Cronin and Pablo De Greif (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2001), 165–203; and Martha Nussbaum, *For Love of Country: Debating the Limits of Patriotism*, ed. Joshua Cohen (Boston: Beacon, 1996).

deem accomplished in such institutions as the League of Nations or the United Nations. Rather, Kant's aspiration must have also been toward an ethics that identifies an individual's response to the idea of an inclusive universal community. I am aware that the reference to Kant may at first seem to bring back the hierarchical assertion of European Enlightenment values. Kant's text has been challenged on numerous grounds, especially for its hidden Eurocentrism in the sense of the philosopher's ambition to extend his own legal structures to the rest of the world under the mask of perpetual peace.[57] Many critics have also rightly questioned the relevance of this text for discussing a postnational world order, if there were to be one, since Kant's own constitutional definitions came out of a world where the modern category of a nation-state itself was not yet well established.[58] Besides, Kant was not promoting an all-encompassing single world state.[59] I would nevertheless like to maintain the category of cosmopolitan ethics as an aspiration, even if ways to achieve it without repeating Eurocentrism have yet to be defined. This cosmopolitanism need not necessarily be idealist, absolute, or timeless as it is sometimes perceived in the conventional Kantian version, but it may rather be redefined as a historically constituted and conscious aspiration reached *after* experience, a "project" after the recognition of the pitfalls of anticosmopolitan, exclusionary ideologies or separatisms based on nation, ethnicity, race, or something else. In this sense, a cosmopolitan ethics that would be relevant for the world today is an aspiration for what Bruce Robbins defined as a "genuine striving toward common norms and mutual translatability,"[60] an aspiration that sees the potentials in the global circulation of goods, images, and ideas, in immigration and transport, namely, in hybrid cultural formations, but is not satisfied with them.

Against the objections that cosmopolitanism must necessarily impose Eurocentric modernist values, I used a modern case study as a counterexample. Namely, Taut's simultaneous aspiration for a non-Eurocentric cosmopolitan architecture may stand as a case in point, even if it is a premature one. On

57. See, e.g., Jacques Derrida, *Adieu to Emmanuel Levinas*, trans. Pascale-Anne Brault and Michael Naas (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1999); David Harvey, "Cosmopolitanism and the Banality of Geographical Evils," *Public Culture* 12 (2000): 529–64; and Walter Mignolo, "The Many Faces of Cosmo-polis: Border Thinking and Critical Cosmopolitanism," in *Cosmopolitanism*, ed. Carol Breckenridge et al. (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2002), 157–87.

58. Cheah and Robbins, *Cosmopolitics*.

59. Kant declared that such a single world state would result in a "soulless despotism" ("Perpetual Peace," 113).

60. Bruce Robbins, "Actually Existing Cosmopolitanism," in Cheah and Robbins, *Cosmopolitics*, 12–13.

the one hand, the cosmopolitan ethics and perpetual peace that Taut must have discovered through Kant were the ultimate task of modernism as the heir of the Enlightenment. On the other hand, many of Taut's writings and projects aimed to construct an alternative against the homogenizing tendencies of what he called *Allerweltsarchitektur*, which exported European modernism to the whole world. It is for this reason that I interpreted the architect's last theoretical statement as one that sought not only for a challenge against Eurocentric modernization, not only for hybridity, but also for a cosmopolitan ethics.