

# Orientalism and Melancholy: Bruno Taut in the East

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Fig.1. Bruno Taut, Own house in Istanbul, 1938, general view

It took me several attempts to locate Bruno Taut's Ortaköy house in Istanbul (Figs.1,2,8). The house Taut designed for himself in the last months of his life during his exile from Nazi Germany, is hidden in a forest-like hill over the Bosphorus. Though noticing the house from the coast was a relief, it proved only momentary. I spent a few more hours to find the road and walk up to the building, before discovering the narrow path that takes you down to the entrance gate at the back. I circled several times with curiosity around the house that looks like a floating lighthouse over a dense sea of trees. One enters Taut's house from the back and moves forward to the main living room. This octagonal room with high ceilings is the main attraction. The view and light of Bosphorus stream through the windows that are situated on two different heights across the space. The narrow built-in wooden stair at one corner of the living room takes you up to the study-room. Upon entering the study-room I closed the door on my back and could not avoid remembering the micro-cosmic space of Taut's Glass House (1914). 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 viewing the Bosphorus. As I turned my body following the edges of the room, I was suddenly frightened to see a shadow at my back. It took me a few seconds to realize that the shadow was my own reflection on the mirror at the door. The door was designed to align with all the lines at the edges of the room and a mirror was laid in place of the windows. Thus, the solid wall of the room was also rendered transparent through the illusion created by the reflection of the Bosphorus view on the mirror. At the moment you close it, the door vanishes. You find yourself in a micro-cosmos whose entrance and exit you can no longer notice.

After leaving the house, I could finally conceive things with more measured enthusiasm and I returned to my critical questions. Isn't it a bit odd

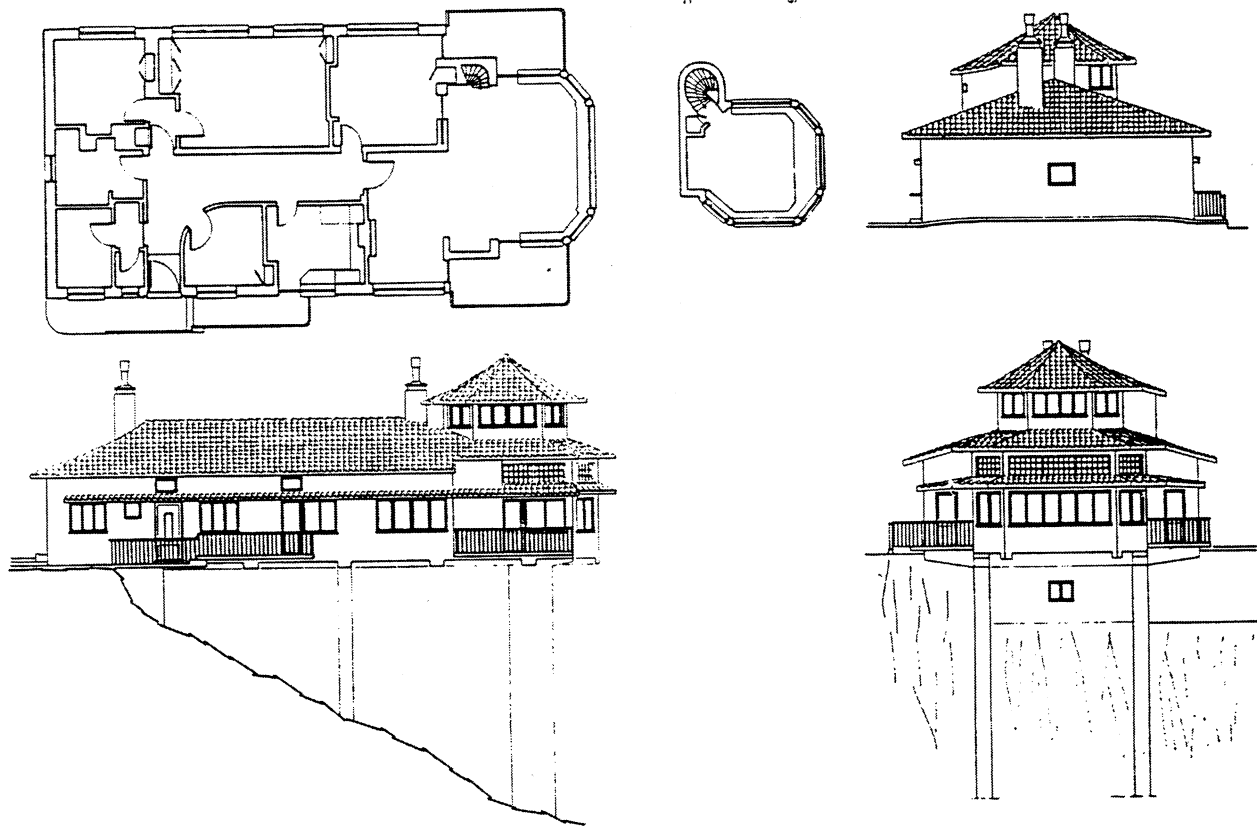


Fig.2. Bruno Taut, Own house in Istanbul, 1938, plans and elevations

that the house is totally raised on enormously tall columns and it touches the earth only at one negligible point? Don't the multiple layers of eaves look too Chinese? Or too 'traditional?' What happened to the 'hard-core' avant-gardism that Taut is often expected to represent? As a matter of fact, Taut's work in Turkey often disappointed his friends and some architectural historians, who did not fail to notice the seemingly regionalist/nationalist tone of his practice here.<sup>1</sup> For instance, Martin Wagner wrote a letter to Walter Gropius complaining about Taut's steps back from modernism: "As everyone who gets old, Taut is stuck with Renaissance principles and he can't find a way towards the New! I am very disappointed... It is a shame for such an avant-gardist."<sup>2</sup> Did Taut also fall into the trap of *Heimat* ideology whose most dangerous face had yet to be shown or was he attempting to construct a cross-cultural encounter? Rather than taking a step back from modernism, is it possible that Taut tried to avoid imposing a style from abroad? Is it possible that he had another project in mind he did not live to pursue? On the other hand, Taut's choice of Japan and Turkey as his locus of exile, rather than United States as many of his German colleagues preferred, is another question that needs to be addressed. How much was Taut's interest in the 'East' Orientalist? Can his experience of exile in Japan and Turkey be regarded as an opportunity to test the limits of Western modernism? What were his critical strategies to avoid the globalization of Western modern architecture under the name of 'International Style?'

In this paper, I shall approach these questions within a broader framework concerning what I would like to call geographical 'otherness.' Contemporary post-colonial topics have risen as important issues in recent architectural criticism, when a historian or critic is dealing with the so-called non-Western contexts.

For many countries such as Turkey and Japan however, framing the questions in terms of post-colonialism would sound less convincing. These countries did not really suffer from a literal colonization but rather from other forms of Eurocentrism such as Orientalism, Westernization (importation of Western modernism), or economic and psychic burdens of being peripheral. The word 'geographical other' thus suits these countries better since, one still needs to take into account the power relations and perceived hierarchies between them and the European, North American countries. These discussions are now even more urgent, in a profession like architecture, where architects are increasingly working globally without much theoretical sophistication or historical knowledge about questions concerning these countries.

By taking Taut's experience as a case study, I would like to introduce melancholy as an explanatory concept to analyze the self-image and reaction of the geographical 'other' in a world where the ideologies of Orientalism and Eurocentrism have taken command. I will comment on a condition Taut noticed in 'Oriental' countries under modernization. Here I differentiate modernization from modernity, and define modernization as a 'stylized' version of modernity, predicated on the assumption that Modernism (representations of modernity associated with European beginnings) is a 'spatio-temporally neutral model' to be imported anywhere.<sup>3</sup> In the case of architecture, this importation has been the paradigmatic problem of many 'non-Western' contexts. Modernization in this sense is Eurocentric by definition. However, this does not make modernity and modernism an impossible project in places outside Europe.

Along with Eurocentrism, I argue that Orientalism, in Edward Said's sense, also produces melancholia in the subject who

is deemed to be the 'Oriental.' While in Orientalism Said analyzed the image of the 'Oriental' from the viewpoint of the 'Occidental,' here I am more concerned with the image of the 'Oriental' from the viewpoint of the 'Oriental' herself. I am concerned with the (psychic) burdens of perceived marginality. My questions share issues with recent discussions on multiculturalism, minorities or displacement; yet they are more concerned with the experience of living in a peripheral country. Bruno Taut's visions of the 'Orient' in his early career when he was in Germany, as well as his experience in Japan and Turkey is an interesting example in this regard. Here we are dealing with a 'First World' immigrant in the 'Third World'—a transnational experience of a different kind.

## Orientalism

Bruno Taut has often been a difficult figure for architectural historians, given his predilection for spiritualism and religiosity on the one hand, and functionalism and efficiency on the other. Taut's texts are full of mythical and exotic elements as well as socialist utopias.<sup>4</sup> His fascination with the 'East' during his early Expressionist days further complicates him as a figure of the modern period.<sup>5</sup> One suspect question that immediately emerges in such situations is the issue of Orientalism.

It has now been more than twenty years since Edward Said wrote his groundbreaking work on Orientalism that rightly transformed the dominant opinion.<sup>6</sup> Said discussed how the representations of the 'Orient'—whether scholarly or artistic—gradually constructed an imaginary border between the 'East' and the 'West.' Knowledge about the Orient 'Orientalized the Orient' as the exotic, fanciful, irrational, and barbarian 'Other' of the 'Western' rational, progressive and civilized Self. Orientalist representations have not only presented an ideologically distorted knowledge about the 'Orient', but have also created the idea about the perceived 'superiority of the West'. To know the 'Orient' thus meant to control, manipulate and claim hegemony over it.

Taut, on the other hand, increasingly appreciated 'Eastern' civilizations against the crisis of the 'West', especially during and immediately after the First World War. *Die Stadtkrone*<sup>7</sup> and *'Ex Oriente Lux'* are possibly the two texts where Taut's ideas about the 'East' as the savior of Europe reached its ultimate radicalism.<sup>8</sup> By bringing dozens of architectural examples from non-European countries as a proof of redemption, Taut not only continued to believe in his social utopian ideas that architecture can save the world, but he also turned his gaze eastward for this purpose. Taut's anti-war ideas motivated his hopes to find a model for peace and harmony in the 'Orient'. Though this is not a type of Orientalism that claims the superiority of the 'West', nor does it claim any desire to control, manipulate or dominate the 'Orient'; I shall point out that its Orientalist undertones are still apparent.

In Orientalism, Said argues that despite the changes in the knowledge of the 'Orient' through centuries, a latent Orientalism

that constructed the vision based on the 'separateness of the Orient, its eccentricity, its backwardness, its silent indifference, its feminine penetrability, its supine malleability' persisted.<sup>9</sup> The 'very possibility of development, transformation, human movement ... is denied the Orient and the Oriental.'<sup>10</sup> History, thus, 'belongs to the West.'<sup>11</sup> One outcome of this latent Orientalism, as Said argues, was the imperialist ideology that justified itself upon the conviction that the 'Orient' required Western attention and redemption. Another consequence was 'the wisdom of the East' sort of phrases that again caused further distancing of the 'Orient' as the ready-at-hand tablet to be taken out of its medicine chest whenever 'Western progress' is under suspicion.<sup>12</sup> The idea about the saving power of the 'Orient' in the times of crisis—but probably only when seen by the 'Western' eye—is one of the basic symptoms of Orientalism in its seemingly affirmative face. In the early days of his career Taut may be regarded to have fallen into a similar type of Orientalism.

Taut's project for Turkey at the beginning of his career (a

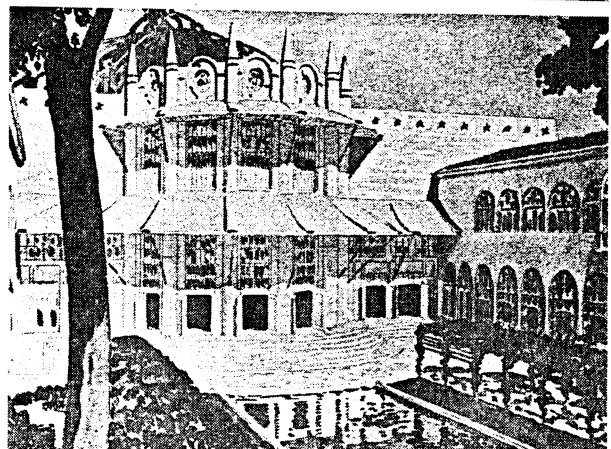
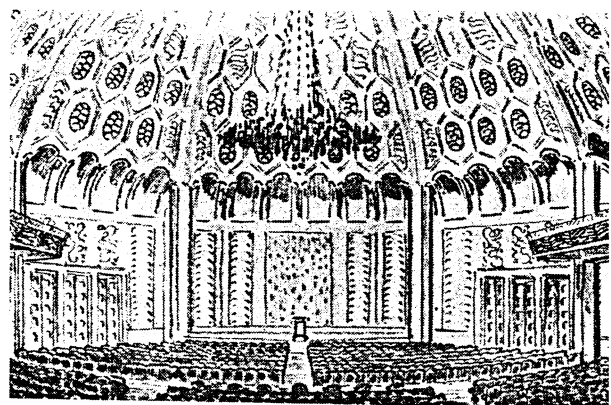


Fig. 3. Bruno Taut. *German-Turkish House of Friendship Competition*, 1916; view from the main hall and the courtyard

country that also fell into the Oriental side of the imaginative border of Orientalism) for the German-Turkish House of Friendship Competition in 1916 would support this point. The competition was organized by D. Werkbund and twelve German - Austrian architects were invited.<sup>13</sup> Interestingly, these participants hardly proposed a project that was in line with the avant-garde movements of their period. Rather a neo-classical taste with some Ottoman applique materials seems to resonate. Taut's project looked most 'Ottoman' of them all (Fig. 3). The overall organization of the project was based on the typology of classical Ottoman mosques. The big dome, arched arcades on the external elevation, the repeated minaret-like elements, overhanging eaves and revaks in the perspective from the courtyard further supported this iconography. Nevertheless, I would say the interior of the main hall was conceived as a version of the 1914 Glass House with light filtering from its transparent dome. Taut proposed to fill in the coffers of the dome with a mosaic of (probably) colored stained glass. To make this transparency possible, Taut proposed to construct the dome from reinforced concrete truss beams with a special keystone detail at the peak.

Taut's attempts to incorporate his project for the Friendship competition in its context through a literal repetition of 'regional' elements can be valued as an intention for cross-cultural encounter. However this intention has led to an Orientalist taste. What would using a literal imitation of traditional architectural forms imply in this situation? Wouldn't this mean that for the most parts of this project Taut was denying a similar rejuvenation of forms that he promoted in Germany? Wouldn't this imply that he rather preferred architecture to stay as 'eternal,' 'authentic,' 'untouched,' 'exotic' and 'distant' as 'it has always been' in this part of the world? In doing so, Taut was repeating the Orientalist ideology that allowed no history or change to places other than the 'West'. Though I shall suggest in the following pages that Taut's second and last encounter with Turkey after twenty years proved more attentive in his search for a fruitful cross-cultural awareness, the easy trap of Orientalism still needed this emphasis.

## Melancholy

Twenty years after the Friendship Competition, the Kemalist State invited Taut to Turkey along with forty other German and Austrian architects/experts. These architects were invited to design the 'new' architecture of the new nation state. As soon as his arrival, Taut was loaded with serious responsibilities.<sup>14</sup> In addition to the numerous schools he designed all over Anatolia, he was also extremely influential as a teacher. Shortly after designing the Catafalque of Atatürk, he died on the Christmas Eve of 1938 in Turkey.

Taut had spent three years (1933-1936) in Japan, before arriving in Turkey during his exile from Nazism. Compared to his extremely loaded responsibilities in Turkey, Taut hardly found any chance to build in Japan, but he spent his time researching and writing several books on Japanese architecture.<sup>15</sup> These

works prepared the foundation of his practice and theoretical statements in Turkey. In the longer versions of my work on Taut,<sup>16</sup> I have pursued a textual analysis of these books and his last book written in Turkey, *Lectures on Architecture*.<sup>17</sup> These texts illustrate Taut's questions, concerns and hesitations about modernism outside the 'West.' I argued that Taut's observations in these books can be explained in terms of melancholia. Due to my limited space in this paper, I have to skip this important part and summarize the argument without the textual analysis.

Freud explains melancholia as an ungrieved loss where the melancholic subject preserves the lost object in the shelter of her ego and resists to confront its loss. This lost object can be a thing, a person or an ideal. In the case of unpathological mourning, the subject overcomes this loss after a process of grief. Yet in melancholia the subject internalizes the lost object so much that this costs her the loss of her own ego. "In grief the world becomes poor and empty, in melancholia it is the ego itself," as Freud summarized.<sup>18</sup> Melancholia in Freudian analysis is also specified with the love and hate relationship the melancholic subject holds for the lost object as well as herself. In it the ego swings between narcissism and self-hate, comes back and forth between the feeling of self-adulation and inferiority. In using Freud, I am not proposing to pursue a psychoanalytical examination of the individuals in Turkey or another peripheral country—which would certainly be beyond my capacities and quite hard for historical figures anyway—but to explore the explanatory and critical power of psychoanalytical knowledge for our topic.

I interpret melancholy as an explanatory concept in two senses. The first point is the inferiority complex of the 'other' that is also pursued in Taut's texts on Japan. Taut observed phenomena such as Japanese people's being "ashamed by their own traditional houses"<sup>19</sup> or their "desire for being taller" as they take the European height to be the standard of humanity and the 'Western way of living' to be "much more healthy."<sup>20</sup> I can assert that a similar glorification of 'Western look and body' was also promoted in Turkey after the Kemalist Revolution. One may look at the pages of periodicals such as *La Turquie Kemaliste* to see how being blond with blue eyes or doing sports 'à la West' was constructed as the ego-ideal of a nation.<sup>21</sup>

As I have already noted, the lost object causing melancholy may be a person, a thing and also an ideal. The feeling of unworthiness, inferiority or self-hatred is nothing but the melancholic subject's perceived distance from the ego-ideal. Yet, what happens when this ego-ideal is constructed as an unreachable one? Ideologies of Eurocentrism traveling to the 'Orient' have constructed the 'Western' body as 'the ideal' norm for humanity. The Oriental believes in the superiority myth of the 'West' himself. If Western modernism, and consequently the Western body, history and progress is considered to be 'a universal norm' to be applied anywhere, then we can assert that a regional and particular truth has been universalized during the process of modernization. Apart from the ideology of ergonomics, the 'International Style' has been the most evident example of this in

architecture (though its originators did not intend to do so). Therefore, for the 'non-Western' subjects, we should be able to speak of a melancholy caused by the lost right of being part of universality. In recent reflections on melancholia scholars have argued that Freud's models for normalization hardly work for subjects that are excluded from normalcy in the first place. In his text, Freud himself implied but did not pursue the consequences of his gendered reading:

A good, capable, conscientious woman will speak no better of herself after she develops melancholia than one who is actually worthless; indeed, the first is more likely to fall ill of the disease than the other, of whom we too should have nothing good to say.<sup>22</sup>

The more 'the good woman' is conscious, the more she realizes her distance from the 'ideal' and the more she becomes melancholic. When we consider the Eurocentric definition of 'the normal,' 'the universal,' or 'the ideal,' we can replace 'the good woman' in this quotation with the conscious peripheral subject. Orientalism and Eurocentrism stretch the distance between the peripheral subject and her ego-ideal. The construction of the ego-ideal as 'Western' produces an incurable melancholy in the 'non-Western' subject.

In this context, Taut's diagram comparing the idealized European and Japanese body (Fig.4) should be viewed as an important gesture and an unheard warning against the ideology of standardization based on 'Western' norms. The ideology of ergonomics would influence world architecture more than it might be imagined at first. In graphic standard books, generations of architects all over the world would learn and apply several physi-

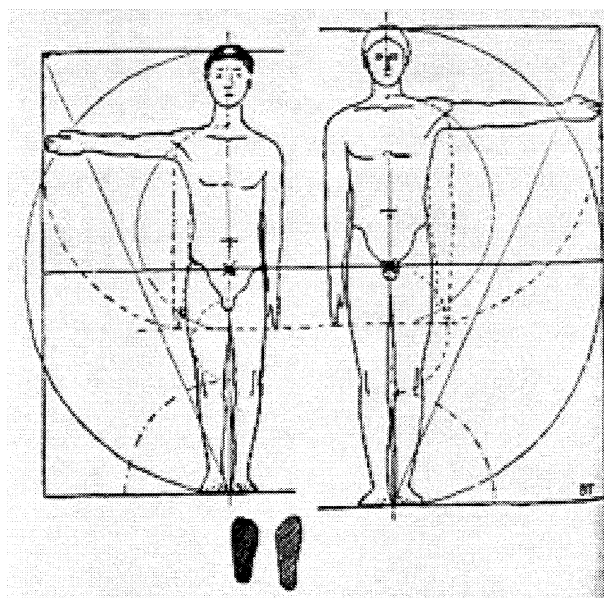


Fig.4. Bruno Taut's Comparative Diagram, in *Houses of People of Japan* and *Lectures on Architecture*

cal 'standards' to their 'modern' furniture, kitchens, bathrooms and stairs. These 'modern norms' would be based on the dimensions and proportions of the idealized 'Western' masculine body à la Vitruvius, and ignore racial or gender differences. Taut, on the other hand, challenges the notion of a universal norm by representing two norms in this diagram, rather than taking the 'Western' man's body as the standard of humanity. This suggests that he is well aware of the melancholy caused by the perceived distance from the ego-ideal.

The second point I would like to discuss in relation to melancholy is Taut's criticism of imitating both Western and traditional forms; and his proposal of climate as a ground to avoid these imitations. While writing his last books, Taut was in the 'Orient' itself that obliged him to notice the growing Westernization across the globe. He realized that the 'non-historical,' 'exotic,' 'redemptive' image of the 'Orient' in his youth is nothing but an Orientalist dream that hardly confronts the real problems of either the 'East' or the 'West.' The discussions in these texts suggest that Taut had already recognized the main conflict among countries that came late to modernity, and that had to live with the dilemma of copying Western forms or searching for an alternative modernism. Taut expressed this condition as 'enthusiasm for foreign taste' followed by corresponding reactions in the direction of an uninspired 'Nipponism.'<sup>23</sup>

Taut's resistance as an architect in Turkey was a battle on two fronts. In *Lectures on Architecture*, he did not hide his hostility for various practices of modern architecture such as 'house as a machine,'<sup>24</sup> imported 'cubic architecture' that 'put boxes on needles'<sup>25</sup> or profit-oriented, mechanized American skyscrapers.<sup>26</sup> His main attack was on homogenizing and generalizing 'Modern Architecture.'<sup>27</sup> Yet Taut was also very well aware of the threat of nationalism taking command in countries such as Germany. *Lectures on Architecture* is also full of passages that severely criticize advocates of nationalism. Referring to Jansen, Taut summarized his position with the following motto: 'Every good architecture is national. Every nationalist architecture is poor.'<sup>28</sup>

Can the swing between the admiration (love, envy) and reaction (hate, repulsion) towards the 'West' ('universality'—the lost object) be explained in terms of melancholia? The 'slavish imitation of foreign styles' and 'uninspired' nativism Taut observed as two dead-end dialectical paradigms of modern architecture in Japan and Turkey is an envy and a repulsion. In both cases we can speak of a melancholic attachment to a lost ideal. In envious melancholia there is an attachment to the 'West' as a substitute for the lost right of being part of 'universality.' In repulsive melancholia there is a reaction to the 'West' or 'universality,' and an attachment to the traditional forms as a substitute for the lost glory days of the past. Envious and repulsive melancholia are a pencil and an eraser on the same notebook. The latter continuously erases what the pencil has written at the expense of its own consumption. The oscillation between envy and repulsion is similar to the 'countless single conflicts in which love and hate wrestle together,' or in which the ego swings be-

tween narcissism and self-hatred. Whether we are faced with a dialectical struggle between two opposing positions, or a tension that exists simultaneously in one individual; envy and repulsion are two faces of the same condition - a condition that is shadowed by melancholy.

What were Taut's critical practices to resist this condition? Though he was against the 'universalization' of Western modernism and body, Taut did not give up universality as a principle. On the contrary, *Lectures on Architecture* is an attempt to define universal principles of architecture in a way that would integrate geographical and cultural differences. Taut defined the main principles of architecture as technique, construction, function and finally proportion that actually stands above the other three.<sup>29</sup> After defining the 'universal essence' of architecture as such, he also claimed that all external conditions of architecture should be a function of climate.<sup>30</sup> In each design, the four abstract principles should be made concrete to achieve a climate-specific building.

the more architectural forms are appropriate to the climate, light and air of their place, the more they are universal.<sup>31</sup>

In making this statement the logic Taut must have followed

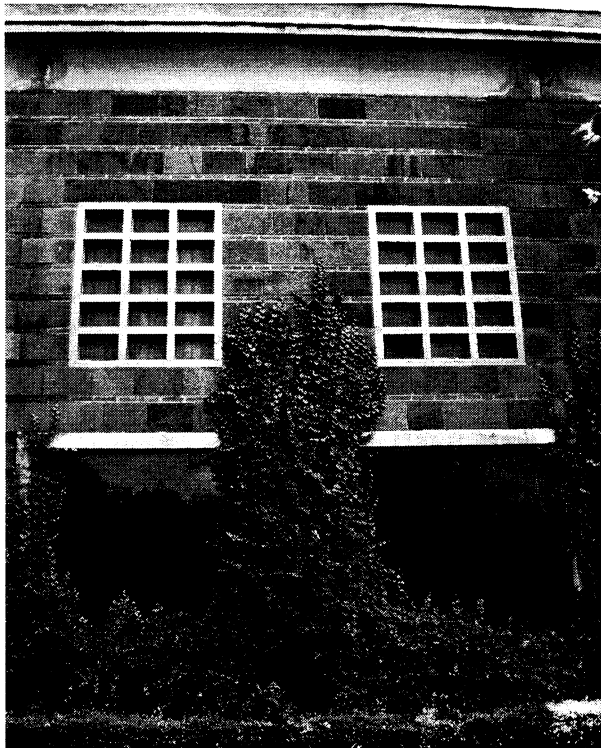


Fig.5: Bruno Taut, Faculty of Linguistics, History and Geography, Ankara, 1937-1940, stone details

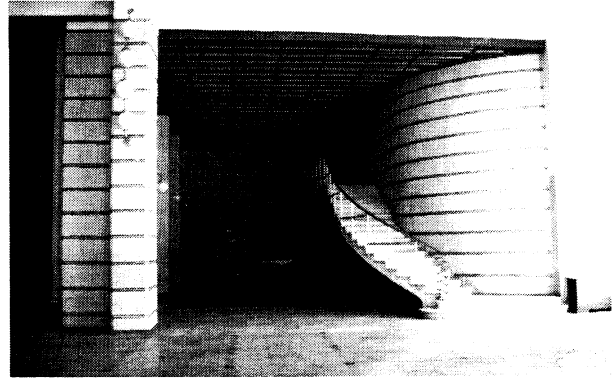


Fig.6: Bruno Taut, Faculty of Linguistics, History and Geography, Main Hall

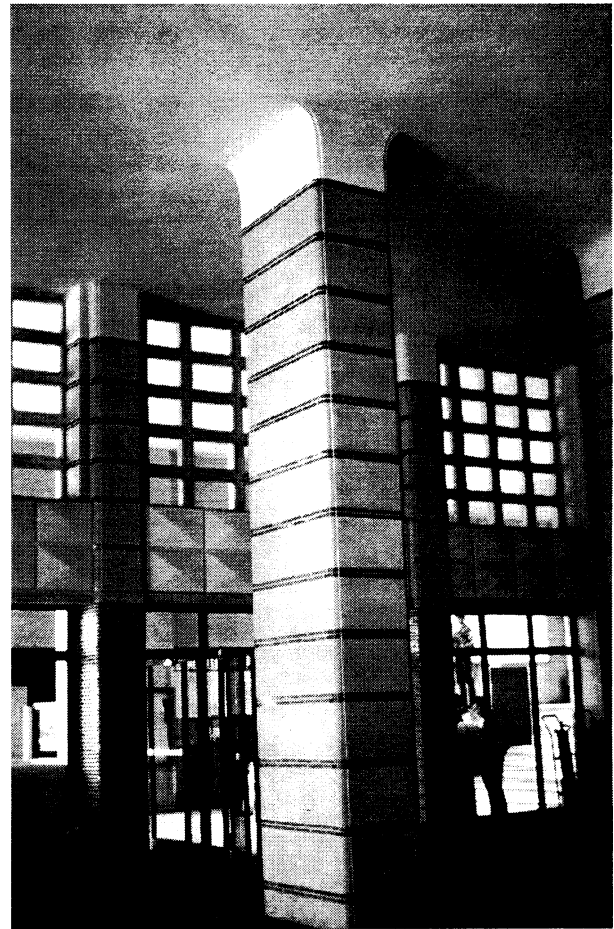


Fig.7: Bruno Taut, Faculty of Linguistics, History and Geography, Column



should be this: Nature is universal, climate is both a fact of nature and place-specific. Thus, according to Taut, climate is the ground to achieve a non-Eurocentric definition of universality in architecture.

After these discussions one may view Taut's projects in Turkey from a different angle than some of his colleagues who found them conservative. In the Faculty of Linguistics, History and Geography in Ankara (Fig. 5-7), Taut's emphasis on tactile sensitivity, constructive ornament and symbolism is manifest. Unlike the trendy 'cubic buildings' in Turkey with surfaces devoid of texture or ornament, Taut made use of stones and tiles with different colors, roughness and tactile qualities. On the exterior he treated the front façade as a skin made out of hard stones and bricks woven with the use of Alma\_1k system a traditional way of stone binding associated especially with Seljuk communal buildings. The transformation from the stone of the front façade to the stucco of the side façade, refined joint details between the stones and the window frames, specially designed gutters, curved surfaces and expressive handrail details stand as memorable features of the building. In the main hall of the interior, Taut further elaborated on the design of constructive ornament (Figs. 6-7). This hall looks like a very irregular space in plan, yet inside one realizes that actually Taut had carefully designed spaces within spaces, framed by differentiating the smooth surfaces of roof-work from the ornamented surfaces of in-fill walls (Figs. 6).

For the most part of his practice in Turkey, Taut endeavored



Fig.8. Bruno Taut, Own House in Istanbul, 1938, Double-height windows in the living room

to design climate-specific buildings. For instance, the 'city crown' he suggested in a competition project for the Ankara Parliament was not only a repetition of his ideas in *Die Stadtkrone*. The courtyards of this building were meant to come to terms with climatic concerns.<sup>32</sup> In many of his schools, Taut used a specific window detail with sun-shading frames placed at mid-height. The level these frames are placed make it possible to both pro-

tect the interior from excessive sun at eye-level, and allow light enter the building from above. Taut actually used a similar solution for the windows of his own house in Istanbul (Fig.8). From some viewpoints, the multi-level hanging eaves of this house looks like Chinese pagodas; but from other angles, one realizes that they are designed as sun-shading devices for the double-height windows, just as in the traditional vernacular houses of the region. In an interview, Taut was asked to comment on the 'modern Turkish house.' In his answer Taut suggested to filter the principles of both European modernism and traditional 'Turkish houses' through the category of climate. Taut's definition for the 'modern Turkish house' was nothing but a description of his own house in Istanbul.<sup>33</sup>

These gestures of symbolism and regionalism should not be regarded as essentialist attempts. In their moment in history, they are rather critical strategies to resist the 'enthusiasm for foreign taste' or uncritical importation of Western modernism. Taut's exile in Japan and Turkey in 1933-1938 gave him the opportunity to test the limits of Western modernism and its globalization under the name of 'International architecture'. On the one hand, Taut seems to be intuitively aware of the critical power of promoting place-specific concerns to resist Eurocentrism; on the other hand, he is also aware of the traps of nationalism. I explain the paradigmatic dilemma Taut observed in these countries in terms of the melancholy of the peripheral subject. Taut's emphasis on climate as a principle to attain an in-between position is neither an accomplished project nor an ahistorical ready-at-hand 'solution.' Needless to say, it would be too naive to believe that Taut has 'cured' the melancholy of the 'other' world through his theory of climate. Nor did he suggest answers for broader ideological, political or economic issues. The over-emphasis on the 'redemptive value' of climate as a critical position against Eurocentrism is, of course, an exaggeration, if not a total form of make-believe. Yet we should still acknowledge its historical virtue as an attempt towards an appropriate modernism. It has helped Taut to believe that he has resolved the dilemma of modernization and allowed him to pursue his projects. What happens when we demystify it? We are left with nothing but melancholy.

The tension that I tried to explain in terms of melancholy still stands as a contemporary dilemma in many 'non-Western' countries. In architectural criticism, framing the question in terms of the opposition between modern and regional, international and national, Western and Eastern has been tricky enough to force the critics to choose between two unpleasant options. On the one hand, accusing all nationalist and regionalist tendencies for their chauvinism and anachronism usually ends up in failing to suggest an alternative to the hegemonic Westernization of 'non-Western' contexts. These accusations ignore the strategic and emancipatory potential in provisional promotion of 'identity' in 'non-Western' contexts that live with the economic as well as psychological burdens of being peripheral. On the other hand, underlining some supposedly fixed identities with increasingly bolder pens not only fall into essentialist definitions and myths

of origins, but also self-marginalize these contexts even further. Identity politics constantly produces 'wounded attachments' and melancholic subjects who self-identify themselves as the 'victim', 'marginal', or 'oppressed'. These subjects become upset observers of the past, hopelessly waiting to take their revenge from history. However in the long run, playing the card of marginalism is a game the marginal is destined to lose, exactly because in doing so she chooses to play the role she does not aspire to. What would be the critical positions in such a situation? Does the 'continuous deferral theory', in other words the suspension of any definition of identity despite the acknowledgment of its necessity for resisting a history of colonization (and Eurocentrism), provide a fruitful path for architecture, as some architectural critics have suggested?<sup>34</sup> Is a non-Eurocentric definition of universalism possible, or do we have to advance our ways of living in an increasingly relativistic world?

#### NOTES

(\*) This essay is excerpted from a broader study currently being developed at the Ph.D. Program in Architecture, Columbia University. I would like to thank Edward Said, Mary McLeod, Kenneth Frampton and David Eng for taking their time to discuss issues raised in this paper.

<sup>1</sup> The following biographies of Taut include very brief informations about the Turkish period:

Luciana Capaccioli, *Bruno Taut. Visione e Progetto* (Delado: Libri, 1981); Kurt Junghanns, *Bruno Taut, 1880-1938* (Franco Angeli Editore 1978); Bettina Z'aller-Stock, *Bruno Taut. Die Innenraumwerke des Berliner Architekten*. (Stuttgart: Deutsche Verlags-Anstalt, 1993)

The following articles deal with Taut's stay in Turkey:

Inci Aslanoglu, Inci, 'Bruno Taut's Wirken als Lehrer und Architekt in der Türkei in den

Jahren 1936-38' (Bruno Taut's Influence as a Teacher and Architect in Turkey during 1936-38), *Bruno Taut 1880-1938. Akademie der Künste*, (29 June - 3 August 1980): 143-150; Sibel Bozdoğan, 'Against Style: Bruno Taut's Pedagogical Program in Turkey, 1936-1938,' *The Education of the Architect. Historiography, Urbanism and the Growth of Architectural Knowledge*, ed. Martha Pollak (Cambridge, London: MIT Press, 1997): 163-192; Kristina Hartmann, 'Bruno Taut im Türkischen Exil' ('Bruno Taut in Exile in Turkey'), *Der Architekt*, Vol.2, (Januar 1992): 111-117; Bernd Nicolai, 'Bruno Taut's Akademiereform und Sein Weg Zu Einer Neuen Architektur für die Türkei' ('Bruno Taut's Reforms at the Academy of Fine Arts: Opening the Path to a New Architecture for Turkey'), *Atatürk i Âin Dönemine*. İki Eser: Katalok ve Anıtkabir. İki Mimar: Bruno Taut and Emin Onat, (Thinking for Atatürk. Two Works: The Catafalque and Anıtkabir. Two Architects: Bruno Taut and Emin Onat. (Istanbul: Milli Reasürans T.A.Ş., 1997):37-43;

Bernd Nicolai, *Moderne und Exil. Deutschsprachige Architekten in der Türkei 1925-1955*. (Berlin: Verlag für Bauwesen, 1998); Manfred Speidel, *Bruno Taut. Wären und Wirkung* ( Bruno Taut. His Work and His Influence ), *Atatürk i Âin Dönemine*.... pp.54-62.

+zer, Bülent, (1980), *Casa del Anima/A House of the Soul* , Domus,

611, p.28.

Bülent Tanju, *Türkiye'de Farklı bir Mimar: Bruno Taut* ( Bruno Taut: An Architect Apart ), *Atatürk i Âin Dönemine*. ... pp.22-26.

<sup>2</sup> verfallt wie viele, die ins Alter kommen, in die Grundsätze der Renaissance und findet keinen Weg mehr in das Neue! Ich bin tief enttäuscht...Schade um diesen Avantgardisten"

Letter by Martin Wagner to Walter Gropius. 8.29.1937, quoted in Manfred Speidel, (1997). 'Bruno Taut. Wären und Wirkung' ('Bruno Taut. His Work and His Influence'), *Atatürk i Âin Dönemine*& p.58.

<sup>3</sup> This definition is similar to Habermas : Jürgen Habermas, Jürgen, (1985). *The Philosophical Discourse of Modernity*, Trans. Frederick Lawrence (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1985, 1987): 2.

<sup>4</sup> As Rosemarie Bletter has argued, the glass utopias of Scheerbart and Taut or the Glass House of 1914 Werkbund Exhibition were not only technocratic impulses to explore the potentials of a new material. On the contrary, as Taut and Scheerbart were also aware, glass had a long history as the metaphor of sacred, spiritual and romantic sources. The mythico/poetical connotations of glass/crystal imagery dated back to the Old Testament, and they can be observed in Arabic myths, New Testament, both the sacred and profane imagery of the Middle Ages, Alchemist moment and Romantic age. Through these myths, the clarity and translucence of glass has been constructed as the metaphor of transcendental spirituality, purity of spirit, divine wisdom, beauty and love. Taut and Scheerbart referred to this glass/crystal imagery as a metaphor of social change and spiritual transformation.

Bletter Bletter, 'Expressionism and the New Objectivity', *Art Journal*, 43, no.2 (Summer 1983): 117; Rosemarie Bletter, 'The Interpretation of the Glass Dream-Expressionist Architecture and the History of Crystal Metaphor,' *JSAH* 40, No.1 (1981): 20-43.

<sup>5</sup> Many historians of Modern Architecture have neglected Taut's interest in the East and the challenges this raises against the mainstream development of 'Modern Architecture'. Tafuri is one of the few historians who has mentioned Taut's fascination with the 'East', but this time the spiritual, mythic and Oriental tone of Expressionism causes its deprecation. Tafuri hardly gives the status of avant-gardism to Taut until he abandoned his spiritualism to join Martin Wagner and Ernst May in the urban reform projects of Weimar Germany. However by criticizing Taut for his interest in the 'East', Tafuri himself continues the Orientalist ideologies that define 'the East' as the mythical, irrational, or spiritual, 'other' of the rational and progressive Western modernity.

<sup>6</sup> Edward W. Said, *Orientalism*, (New York: Vintage Books, 1978). Afterword added in 1994. I admit that it would be too much to expect figures such as Taut to erase all the constructions of their contexts and come up with totally non-Orientalist texts, especially before such a consciousness was raised. Therefore my point is not to condemn or celebrate Taut and add one more name to the list of 'innocent vs. guilty' architects. Rather, I am more interested in our tasks as historians and cultural critics in discussing relevant examples that would help developing critical strategies for the present.

<sup>7</sup> In *Die Stadtkrone* (1919) Taut criticized modern cities for their lack of a crowning symbol and a communal structure to attain collective unity. He illustrated examples from all over the world to show how



an 'organic unity' could be achieved in these town scapes, as opposed to the chaos of the new cities. Taut's examples range from Medieval to Indian, Chinese and Ottoman sources.

<sup>8</sup> 'Kill the European, kill him, kill him, kill him off! Sings St. Paulus [Scheerbart].

Are we exaggerating? Take a look at any of the photographs of the great pagodas of Madura, Udupur, Ö Each tiny part of the great culture from the forth to the sixteenth century in Upper India, Ceylon, Cambodia, Annam, Siam and on Insulinde - 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 ñ culture'

In Bruno Taut, 'Ex Oriente Lux: Call to Architects', 1919 in T.C. Benton (ed.). *Form and Function*, (London: Crosby Lockwood Staples, 1975): 81-82.

<sup>9</sup> Said, E., *Orientalism*, p. 206.

<sup>10</sup> *ibid.*, p.208.

<sup>11</sup> Said relies on the highly mediated and ideologically distorted form of knowledge that the Orientalist studies after 1312 produced. Though scholarly works on this issue are rare in the discipline of architecture, the ones that exist suggest that the same is true for architectural knowledge. For a discussion on Owen Jones, John Ruskin, James Fergusson and others see: Mark Crinson, *Empire Building, Orientalism and Victorian Architecture*. (London, NY: Routledge, 1996). In architectural historiography one would often come across this sort of latent Orientalism, most notably in A History of Architecture where Sir Banister Fletcher divided world architecture into 'historical' and 'non-historical' styles. While the 'historical styles' are discussed as 'Western' ones that have continuously evolved from Ancient Egypt and Greece to the present; Indian, Chinese, Japanese, Ancient American and Saracenic architecture are introduced to the reader as 'non-historical' styles without evolution or succession: Sir Banister Fletcher, *A History of Architecture on the Comparative Method for Students, Craftsmen and Amateurs*, (NY: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1901, 1943). (Though she does not discuss the book in relation to Orientalism, for an interpretation of Fletcher's book and its revisions see: Gulsum Nalbantoglu, 'Toward Postcolonial Openings: Rereading Sir Banister Fletcher's History of Architecture', *Assemblage* 35, (April 1997), 7-17.

<sup>12</sup> Said, *Orientalism* p.206-208.

<sup>13</sup> The invited architects included Peter Behrens (second), German Bestelmeyer (winner) Paul Bonatz, August Endell, Theodor Fischer, Walter Gropius, Hans Poelzig and Bruno Taut. Gropius did not enter, Eric Mendelsohn proposed a project independently.

For illustrations and information about all of the entries see: Suha Ozkan, S,ha, 'Türk-Alman Dostluk Yurdu +neri Yarışması', 1916 (Turkish-German House of Friendship Competition, 1916), *ODTÜ Mimarlık Fakültesi Dergisi*, V.1, N.2, (Autumn 1975): 177-210.

<sup>14</sup> He became the head of both the Department of Architecture in Fine

Arts Academy and the Department of Construction in the Ministry of Education.

<sup>15</sup> Bruno Taut, *Nippon, mit Europäischen Augen Gesehen* (Tokio: Verlag Meiji Shobo: 1934) translated into Japanese; Bruno Taut, *Fundamentals of Japanese Architecture* (Tokyo: Kokusai Bunka Shinkokai, 1935); Bruno Taut, *Japans Kunst* (Tokyo: Verlag Meiji Shobo, 1936);

Bruno Taut, *Houses and People of Japan* (Tokyo: Verlag Sanseid Co., 1937);

See also Bruno Taut, 'Houses and People of Japan', *Daidalos*, 54, (Dec 1994):62-73.

<sup>16</sup> See my paper 'The Last Melancholy of the 'Other' World. Bruno Taut in the Orient'

<sup>17</sup> Bruno Taut, *Mimari Bilgisi* (Lectures on Architecture) Trans. Adnan Kolatan (Istanbul: G,zel Sanatlar Akademisi, 1938)

<sup>18</sup> Sigmund Freud, 'Mourning and Melancholia,' *General Psychology Theory* (New York: Touchstone, 1917): 167

<sup>19</sup> Taut, 'Houses and People of Japan'Ö. p.66.

<sup>20</sup> *ibid.*, pp.64-65.

<sup>21</sup> For a more detailed discussion see my paper 'La Turquie Kemaliste: State, Architecture, Propaganda/Publicity' in MESA Conference, November 19-22, 1999, Washington.

<sup>22</sup> Freud, 'Mourning and Melancholia'.... p. 168.

<sup>23</sup> Taut, 'Houses and People of Japan,'Öp.69.

<sup>24</sup> Taut, *Mimari Bilgisi* (Lectures on Architecture)Ö p.89.

<sup>25</sup> *ibid.*, p.166.

<sup>26</sup> *ibid.*, p.43, 157.

<sup>27</sup> 'The world is increasingly getting uniform and homogenous, just like the soldiers who wear uniform clothes to carry their uniform weapons

When technique dominates the house, machines, equipments, mechanical utilities, etc. that can be used anywhere in the world conquer the environment. ... This brings a situation where buildings all around the world look like machines that can be utilized without changing its shape in relation to place. This results in international architecture, that is, the numberless modern buildings whose pictures we see in all magazines.... Architecture is thus confronted with such a devastation that it will take it too long to recover. If this was just an aesthetical delusion, it would not be too wrong. However, nature, in our case climate, will take the revenge of this terrifying negligence: It will soon be understood that a building which is convenient for one country is not so for another.'

*ibid.*, pp.85-86.

<sup>28</sup> 'Jede gute Architektur ist national - jede nationale Architekt ist schlecht'

*ibid.*, p.333

<sup>29</sup> 'Technique supplies the building with necessary conditions to resist external conditions; construction gives it the strength to combat natural forces. What gives the building a fine, relieving condition to live in is function. Yet, '[A]rchitecture is the art of proportion!'

*ibid.*, p.4-5.

<sup>30</sup> *ibid.*, p.62.

<sup>31</sup> Taut, *Mimari Bilgisi* (Lectures on Architecture)Ö p.92.

<sup>32</sup> Taut decided not to enter this competition at the last stage due to the

immature state of his project. Yet, he still decided to publish two sketches and site plan of his project to raise a discussion. Taut conceived the Parliament as the 'city crown' of Ankara to be seen from all places - a clear self-reference to Die Stadtkrone. The site plan was formed as a series of courtyards that would be appropriate for the climate.

Bruno Taut, 'Kamutay M, sabakas1 Program1 Hulasas1 (Parliament Competition Program Summary)', *Arkitekt*, No.4, (1938): 130-132.

<sup>33</sup> [The modern Turkish house will be born] whenever the architects free themselves from the cubic style fashion that has become an ordinary, standard practice here. Only then the principles of modern architecture will be applied with a freedom of thought. Both for houses and some other buildings climate will be given a priority and thus some characters of the traditional Turkish house, such as shading eaves, pavilion like structures, and double-height windows in rooms with high ceilings will be applied automatically. 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, or a misunderstood nationalism. The end will be kitsch'

Bruno Taut, 'Türk Evi, Sinan, Ankara' ('Turkish House, Sinan, Ankara'), *Her Ay*, No.2. (1938): 93-94.

<sup>34</sup> see Prakash, Vikramaditya and John Biln's articles in G.B. Nalbantolu, C.T. Wong (ed.), *Postcolonial Space(s)*. (NY: Princeton Architectural Press, 1997).

Figures: The photographs belong to the author except the following figures and drawings:

Fig. 1. Bernd Nicolai, *Moderne und Exil*.

Fig. 2: Bettina Zöller-Stock, Bruno Taut. *Die Innenraumentwürfe des Berliner Architekten*.

Fig 3: Suha Ozkan, "Türk-Alman Dostluk Yurdu Öneri Yarismasi, 1916" (full references are above)