

Japanese influence on Europe was particularly strong in the period of japonism, which is widely pinned down and limited to the second half of 19th century. However, this Japanese vogue transformed into a sophisticated knowledge and admiration for Japanese art, philosophy and everyday life by the interwar period. This transformation happened within a framework of international modernity and is a subject of this text.

What is the Japanese element in modernism that alludes its latent japaneseness? I argue that it is a symptom of Japanese aesthetics that deeply rooted into common consciousness by the time between the wars.

The geographic focus of this paper is on Central Europe and Japan. Japanese art scene has been an active participant of international art debates since the beginning of 20th century. This dynamic situation in Japan played a crucial role in seeking the history and unique face of modernism. Many prominent artists took part in this process including the ones for Central Europe. Therefore, few case studies will be included, such as on Johannes Itten, Bedřich Feuerstein and Bruno Taut.