

April 28, 2008

Dear Colleagues in DOCOMOMO working parties;

We at DOCOMOMO Japan would like to ask your support to prevent the demolition of two mo.mo. buildings by joining our appeal. Both of them are central post offices in Japan's big cities of Tokyo and Osaka. They were designed by the same architect, Tetsuro Yoshida (1894-1956), who is counted as one of the prominent architects in modern Japan. He wrote books in German on Japanese architecture and gardens including "Das Japanische Wohnhaus" (1935), "Japanische Architektur" (1952), and "Der Japanische Garten" (1957). All of them were published by Wasmuth in Berlin, Germany.

The Tokyo Central Post Office building, built in 1931, faces the plaza of the Tokyo Central Station. The building is a good example to express dignity as a central post office in the capital with simple design methods and motifs of modern architecture. Bruno Taut highly praised this post office for its sincerity to modern architectural method and originality during his stay in Japan (1933-36). It was the building that received the highest reputation by modern architects as the best piece of Japan's modern architecture.

The Osaka Central Post Office building also faces a plaza in front of the Osaka Central Station. It was built in 1939, just before World War II broke out. In this building, Yoshida made further progress in his design; simpler, more sophisticated design than the post office in Tokyo.

We have registered these two buildings in our DOCOMOMO Japan Selection of 100 announced in 2003.

The owner of these two buildings, the Japan Post, is now making a plan to redevelop the sites with high-rise office towers demolishing historic buildings or "preserving" only a fragment of them no more than an apology for the loss. We at DOCOMOMO Japan have already submitted an appeal to protest their demolition promoting awareness of their historical importance.

With this worrisome situation, we are anxious to have your support. We will be glad if you are so kind as to send us a message to call for protection of their historical values. The e-mail address to receive your support messages is shown below. We would be grateful if we have them by May 15 because we want to submit an appeal with messages from you as soon as possible to the Japan Post.

fujioka.h.aa@m.titech.ac.jp

Sincerely yours,

Hiroyuki Suzuki, Chair of DOCOMOMO Japan

P. S. Attached to this e-mail are the photos of the buildings. Should you have a good example of preservation of an old central post office building in your place, please let us know.