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## The Influence of Chinese Empire on East Asian Shrine Architecture: An Experiment in Cross-Cultural Comparison

Both the Jin Shrines (Jinci 晉祠; see figure 1) in Shanxi province and the Ise Grand Shrine-Palace (Ise Kōtai jingū 伊勢皇大神宮, commonly called Naikū 内宮; figure 2) in Mie prefecture, Japan, are shrines dedicated primarily to nature spirits. In addition, those spirits have been given – to varying degrees of success – a similar identity, that of ancestresses of powerful ruling houses. While the grafting of new powers and identities onto the divinities of known sacred sites has been well documented in both countries, the examples of Jinci and Kōtai jingū show that this was most successful if the temple buildings were altered in a way appropriate to the new personae. The architectural styles of temples dedicated to local divinities in East Asia were both eclectic and flexible, and it is consequently difficult to determine singular meaning for any architectural form. Yet, regardless of sectarian categorization, by the seventh century those ritual complexes dedicated to high-status divinities in areas that had contact with the Tang empire were organized using the language of imperial Chinese palatial architecture as an expression of that status. Other systems of organization were used for ritual sites in premodern East Asia, however, and temples and shrines built to house local divinities that were frequently (but not always) of lower status responded more directly to topographical forms specific to local sites. Building a temple in the form of a Chinese imperial palace transcended specific topographies and communicated a deity's legitimate right to rule, in earthly and spiritual realms.

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Although serving to enshrine nature spirits of diverse cultures, the structures within Jinci and Kōtai jingū were aligned with the tradition of Chinese palatial architecture, as the central divinities were elevated in status and associated with state ancestral figures. The power of the deities over territory or natural resources was, by extension, transmitted to the patron of the shrine.

We are taught to believe that there is one type of Chinese ritual space, the southward-oriented courtyard complex that can be traced to Zhou-dynasty ritual architecture, which developed in the Yellow and Wei River valleys.<sup>1</sup> Because it came to be so ubiquitous, multifunctional, and generic in its application across China, as well as East Asia, during the imperial period (221 BC–1911 AD), some have argued that the courtyard residential complex can be thought of as a “module” that was multiplied to fill wards 區, then quarters 坊, ultimately arriving at the city.<sup>2</sup> Most of China’s extant temples follow the courtyard-style format as well, therefore to determine how the courtyard complex came to be

<sup>1</sup> Because of its importance in later East Asian architecture, particularly because it was adopted and spread as the main form of Buddhist monastic architecture, the courtyard complex is the primary focus in discussions of the built tradition of China. See, e.g., Lothar Ledderose, “Building Blocks, Brackets, and Beams,” in *Ten Thousand Things: Module and Mass Production in Chinese Art* (Princeton: Princeton U. P., 2000), pp. 103–37. In the 1970s Paul Wheatley proposed an influential theory of the development of the Chinese city, suggesting that cardinal orientation and rectilinear walled compounds were typical of an Asian mode; “The Ancient Chinese City as a Cosmological Symbol,” *Ekistics* 232 (March 1975), pp. 147–58, an summary version of the last chapter of idem, *Pivot of the Four Quarters: A Preliminary Inquiry into the Origin and Character of the Ancient Chinese City* (Chicago: Aldine Pub. Co., 1971). Working from the theories of Mircea Eliade, Wheatley’s study utilized information on Chinese and Asian cities from the second millennium BC through the thirteenth century to suggest overarching elements of all Chinese imperial cities, as well as Asian cities in general. He makes two points relevant to this paper. The first is that the ideal Chinese city (as well as the Indus Valley city of Mohenjo-daro, and by extension the Asian built environment), was organized according to the cardinal directions and contained a square walled compound. The second is that these cities were then located within the landscape according to topographical siting or “*fengshui*,” which can be traced to the Western Zhou (ca. 1050–771 BC) use of divination to determine the location of royal capitals. Wheatley’s authority was “*Kaogongji*,” a text from the late-Warring States era (475–221 BC); see William Boltz “*Chou li*,” in Michael Loewe, ed., *Early Chinese Texts: A Bibliographical Guide* (Berkeley: U. of California P., 1993), p. 25. Although this text may be representative of urban design for the state of Qi of that time, Nancy Steinhardt’s longitudinal study of the imperial Chinese city shows how the idealized plan described in “*Kaogongji*” was not followed in planning imperial capitals in China until the construction of the Yuan dynasty’s Dadu in the thirteenth century; Nancy S. Steinhardt, “Why Were Chang’an and Beijing So Different,” *Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians* 45.2 (1986), pp. 339–57, and *Chinese Imperial City Planning* (Honolulu: U. of Hawaii P., 1990), esp. pp. 154–60. As I discuss below, the topographical and cosmological modes of building orientation were not always in harmony in imperial China, but could be in direct conflict with one another, leading one to the conclusion that topographical orientation of buildings may have been a different system that was, along with divination, incorporated into later *fengshui*.

<sup>2</sup> Ledderose, *Ten Thousand Things*, pp. 114–15.

so widespread, and what was implied by its use in shrine and temple architecture, cannot easily be done as an isolated investigation.

Analysis of the temples of local nature spirits, more so than the more commonly studied Buddhist monastery, provides a window into how the built environment was manipulated to express ideas about the status of divinities. Although it is well understood that Buddhist monasteries in East Asia used the same style of buildings and complexes as were used in Chinese palaces, unlike the Buddha, nature spirits did not have an international monastic institution to promote themselves as divine rulers.<sup>3</sup> The upkeep of nature-spirit temples was dependent on the strength and political savvy of their local followings, and the complexes were thus more likely to vary over time. By the early-imperial period, the formal organization of Chinese palatial architecture had become the essential language used to express the position of a deity and its patrons regardless of their sectarian classification.

Yet, not all temple and shrine buildings in East Asia are found within walled courtyards, and factors other than north-south orientation were influential in determining their organization. While researching the Jinci complex, I found a direct conflict between the courtyard complex that was used in building the ritual complexes for elite or trans-local divinities and the worship halls of local spirits. Because all of the individual buildings at Jinci are stylistically consistent with the ritual architecture of the Central Plains, however, the distinction between the isolated building oriented in response to key landscape elements and the north-south oriented hall enclosed within a courtyard complex does not stand as a sharp contrast between local and royal/imperial culture. But, by comparing Jinci with Kōtai jingū, a shrine that did not employ Central Plains architecture for its individual buildings, we can more readily see the impact of the Zhou royal complex on the sacred landscape of East Asia, both regional China as well as sovereign states on the periphery of the Chinese empire.

<sup>3</sup> Zhang Gong argues that Chinese Buddhist institutions began to fully adopt the courtyard complex style (*langyuanshi* 廊院式) of temple or monastery by the Northern-Southern Dynasties period. See Zhang Gong, *Han-Tang Fosi wenhua shi* 漢唐佛寺文化史 (Beijing: Zhongguo shehui kexue chubanshe, 1997), pp. 166–67. This became the standard format for Buddhist monasteries in China for the rest of the imperial period. Although there were variations in the ways in which individual buildings were used, the overall format of the monastery conformed, thus the study of Buddhist monasteries by themselves is less useful for understanding the meanings communicated by the architecture that stood outside of the courtyard configuration. The courtyard-style monastery was transmitted to Japan by way of Korea in the 6th c.; see Fukuyama Toshio 福山敏男, *Jiin kenchiku no kenkyū* 寺院建築の研究 (Tokyo: Chūō kōron Bijutsu shuppan, 1982) vol. 1, and Suzuki Kakichi, *Early Buddhist Architecture in Japan*, trans. and adapted Mary Neighbour Parent and Nancy Steinhardt (Tokyo: Kodansha International; New York: distributed Harper & Row, 1980).

Selective employment of the courtyard complex in these two sacred landscapes shows that this organizational system had a meaning powerful enough that it could effectively convey a conception of the status or identity of the being housed within it. As Jinci was a regional temple complex, the changes it underwent over the centuries reflect the rise and fall of the national significance of the area and the consistent need for spring-water by the local agrarian community. Kōtai jingū, because of its exalted position in the Japanese system of temples, shows how the language of the Chinese imperial palace complex was manipulated to express the supreme position of its deity in the context of imperial Japan.

In order to understand the imperial Chinese model employed to transform the indigenous nature-spirit shrines in both China and Japan, I first summarize the features of palatial architecture in China. Then I will show how the architectural language was employed to manipulate the identity of the local nature-spirit site of Jinci. Finally, I compare that case with the way the continental imperial palace model was used to reorganize the traditional “storehouse” style buildings at Kōtai jingū in the seventh century. With this comparison, I hope to illuminate the function of the Chinese imperial tradition of architectural organization in appropriating the spiritual power of local divinities for a larger political agenda, even where that agenda was only peripherally related to the Chinese empire.

#### THE LANGUAGE OF LEGITIMACY FOR ASPIRING NATURE-SPIRITS

Evidence from Chinese archeology has shown that four essential features have characterized Chinese palatial architecture from the first millennium BC: buildings are elevated on tamped-earth platforms; they are arranged in a rectilinear courtyard compound with the main buildings on axis; access is restricted with a gateway and walls; and the whole complex is oriented facing south. The palace site at Fengchu 風雛, Shaanxi province, dated to roughly 1050 BC (figure 3) shows the antiquity of this organizational scheme, one that continued to be used into China’s imperial period.<sup>4</sup>

By the early-imperial period, this model was also used for large temple complexes. Although we have no local temples with intact plans

<sup>4</sup> This can be seen in wall paintings from as early as the Eastern Han period in the wall paintings from the painted tomb at Anping 安平, Hebei; see Hebei Sheng wenwu yanjiusuo 河北省文物研究所, ed., *Anping Donghan bihuamu* 安平東漢壁畫墓 (Beijing: Wenwu chubanshe, 1990), pl. 50.



extant from this time, one example from the Song period (960–1279) is the imperially patronized Temple to the Earth Queen (Houtumiao 后土廟) at Fenying 汾陰 in modern Wanrong 萬榮 county, Shanxi province. A stele inscription dating from 1137 AD (figure 4) shows the temple as it would have appeared during the Northern Song.<sup>5</sup> The complex is entered through a formal, axial gateway, and the devoted must pass through four more walls to reach the sacred center. Stairways indicate that these buildings were elevated above the pathway of approach on solid platforms. And the courtyards on the left and right of the complex, which are labeled west and east respectively, indicate that the whole complex faced south.

## JINCI

I have discussed in greater detail elsewhere the development of the Jinci site from the Yuan through the Ming periods, specifically that it reveals how the topographical organization used at a local nature-spirit site conflicted with the language of Chinese empire that was normally employed to project the elite status of an enshrined divinity. The shrine complex, located twenty-five kilometers southwest of Taiyuan, the capital of Shanxi province, has an obscure but ancient history and is associated with both nature and ancestral spirits. Because Jinci is relatively unknown, the following section will summarize its history, and subsequently I compare it to Kōtai jingū at Ise.<sup>6</sup>

At Jinci, the distribution of buildings and complexes differs markedly from the majority of extant premodern Chinese ritual complexes in two significant ways. Most noticeably, the buildings and complexes are not organized according to the cardinal directions, resulting in a lack of clear hierarchical organization. The enclosed building complexes, like the shrine to the ancient Jin state's 晉國 ancestor Shu Yu of Tang 唐叔虞祠 (see site 2 of figure 1, and figure 5), are oriented southward. The superior size of Sage Mother Hall 聖母殿 (site 1 on figure 1, and figure 6), and its commanding position at the foot of Xuanweng Mountain 懸甕山 (also 縣雍山) overlooking the springs and waterways of the Jin River 晉水, rather than the southward orientation or the number of courtyards within the walled compound, determines its dominance

<sup>5</sup> See Wang Shiren 王世仁, "Ji Houtu cimiao maobei" 記后土祠廟貌碑, *KG* (1963.5), p. 275.

<sup>6</sup> My research on the history and architecture of Jinci appears in "Water Sprites and Ancestor Spirits: Reading the Architecture of Jinci," *The Art Bulletin* 86.1 (March 2004), pp. 6–30, and *The Divine Nature of Power: Chinese Ritual Architecture at the Sacred Site of Jinci*, Harvard University Asia Center (forthcoming, 2007).

over the general site, and the dominance as well of the Sage Mother housed within it.

The second unusual characteristic of the Jinci complex is the differentiation between the individual buildings open to the site and the walled building complexes. Although all individual buildings at Jinci are derived from the indigenous Chinese tradition of official architecture, with its tamped earth platforms, timber frame, and ceramic roof tiles, the site is composed of single temple buildings, such as Sage Mother Hall, which are open to the heterogeneity of the place. Additionally, the shrine complex of Jinci contains separate walled compounds, like that dedicated to Shu Yu of Tang, which can be closed off from casual access.

The temple-complex of Shu Yu has the four features of the architectural language of Chinese empire: the complex is elevated high above the pathway of approach (figure 7); the buildings are arranged in a rectilinear courtyard compound with the main buildings on axis; access to the main shrine buildings is restricted with a gateway and walls; and the whole is oriented southward. A close reading of the history of the site shows that the unusual distribution of buildings at Jinci is related to the divinities to whom each was dedicated and their significance in national and local power structures.

### *The Early History of Jinci*

Although the shrine almost certainly descends from a more remote antiquity, the first extensive description of the temple complex at the Jin Springs comes from the *Commentary on the Classic of Waterways* (*Shuijing zhu* 水經注) by Li Daoyuan 酈道元 (d. 527 AD), where it was described as being dedicated to Shu Yu of Tang, the second son of the Western Zhou dynasty king Wu, who was enfeoffed in the Shang dynasty territory of Tang after of the Zhou conquest. Tang was later renamed Jin, making Shu Yu the ancestor of the famous Warring States period state of Jin. By the beginning of the Han dynasty, historians believed that the name Jin was chosen by Shu Yu's son because of the Jin River emanating from the Jin Springs that flowed through the territory of his regional capital Taiyuan at Jinyang.<sup>7</sup> Through the early Tang dynasty Shu Yu was considered to be the focus of the complex from the perspective of standard histories, but even from this time it seems that the purpose of

<sup>7</sup> The location of the fief of Shu Yu of Tang has been disputed for centuries. For a summary of the arguments see Miller, *Divine Nature of Power*, chap. 3.

local pilgrimage to the site was to pray and give offerings to the Spirit of the Jin Springs.<sup>8</sup>

By the end of the tenth century, more direct documentation testifies to the early existence of the Jin Springs water goddess, but patronage in the historical record still focuses on Shu Yu. The site was rebuilt under the patronage of Song Taizong 太宗 (r. 976–997), after conquering the Shatuo Turk Northern Han dynasty at their capital of Taiyuan in 979.<sup>9</sup> Zhao Changyan's 趙昌言 (945–1009) 984 inscription documenting Taizong's rebuilding of the site focused on the glory of the Song conquest and Shu Yu's place in the Zhou royal family, connecting the Song dynasty with the regional ancestral figure.<sup>10</sup> However, the text also emphasizes that Song imperial patronage of the site was in no way like the Qin and Han emperors' worship of strange, feminine, nature spirits, suggesting that Shu Yu was not the sole object of veneration at Jinci during the tenth century.

### *The Rise of the Sage-Mother, Eleventh to Sixteenth Centuries*

After the capital of Taiyuan was moved away from the Jin Springs in the tenth century, and the Taiyuan basin gradually declined in significance as an important strategic outpost, local support of the Spirit of the Jin Springs allowed her to compete for dominance at Jinci. A stele inscription from 1267 states that a Gentlewoman Shrine (*nülangci* 女郎

<sup>8</sup> Early documentation of this activity is contained in the Jinciming stele inscription 晉祠之銘並序 written by the second Tang emperor, Taizong (r. 626–649), in 646 AD. Because the first emperor had established his power at Taiyuan before conquering Sui, he named his dynasty after Shu Yu's original fief. However, Taizong also described the temple complex as a transcendents' paradise and emphasized that the offerings being made there were given to the spring spirit; see Miller, *Divine Nature of Power*, chaps. 4 and 5.

<sup>9</sup> In order to fully dismantle the Northern Han power base, by 982 Song Taizong had the capital of Taiyuan moved away from its original location at Jinyang approximately 10 miles north to Yangqu, making its new location roughly 14 miles from Jinci. Jinci was located 4 miles from Tang-dynasty Taiyuan at Jinyang; see Li Jifu 李吉甫 (758–814), *Yuanhe junxian tuzhi* 元和郡縣圖志 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1983; rpt. 1995) 13, p. 366. After his conquest of the Northern Han, Song Taizong moved many of the clerics and powerful families in the Taiyuan basin to Luoyang, perhaps in an effort to rebuild Luoyang, see Huang Chi-chiang, "Imperial Rulership and Buddhism," in Frederick P. Brandauer and Chün-chieh Huang, eds., *Imperial Rulership and Cultural Change in Traditional China* (Seattle: U. of Washington P., 1994; Taipei: Nantian shuju reprint, 1995), pp. 160–61. But that would also have supported his effort to destroy Taiyuan as a power base, continuing the activity he began by leveling the city of Jinyang after conquering the Northern Han; see Miller, *Divine Nature of Power*, chap. 4.

<sup>10</sup> The rebuilding of his shrine-complex became a symbol of Song dynastic legitimacy over the territories of north China at a time when the Song empire was still attempting to regain control over the territories previously held by the Tang. Song Taizong seems to have also wanted to build legitimacy by rebuilding sites important to the Tang; see Huang, "Imperial Rulership and Buddhism," pp. 160–61, and 181–82, n. 85; and Miller, *Divine Nature of Power*, chap. 4.

祠) was rebuilt after the Tiansheng 天聖 reign-period (1023–1032).<sup>11</sup> A female divinity was likely worshiped at the rebuilt site by the early-eleventh century, if not before,<sup>12</sup> and the hall would thus have needed restoration after the severe earthquake in January of 1038.<sup>13</sup> An inscription on the back of the Sage Mother's seat documents that local patrons funded the addition of six dragons to the front columns and a new seat for the Sage Mother in 1087,<sup>14</sup> thus providing a *terminus ante quem* of 1087 for the Sage Mother Hall. While our understanding of the complex during the eleventh and twelfth centuries is limited, Sage Mother Hall and its subsidiary ritual structures extant from that period include the Iron Man Terrace (1094–1098) and Offering Hall (1168) (see sites 17 and 19 in figure 1).

We do not know the location of Shu Yu of Tang's worship hall from this date, but support for his cult seems to have been at the official rather than local level.<sup>15</sup> By 1011, only twenty-seven years after Song Taizong's rebuilding of the site, the shrine to Shu Yu of Tang was dilapidated and an imperial order was given for its repair. Six years later, in 1017, another official decree established a bureaucratic position to supervise donations to the temple to ensure that offerings were being used for temple maintenance and deity worship. Emperor Huizong 徽宗 (r. 1100–1126) gave Shu Yu the title King of the East of the Fen River (Fendongwang 汾東王) in the sixth month (June 24–July 23) of 1104, the same month he gave an official plaque to the temple of the

<sup>11</sup> Yi Gou 弋穀, "Chongxiu Fendongwangmiao jibei" 重修汾東王廟記碑 (1267), rpt. in Liu Dapeng 劉大鵬 (1857–1942), *Jincizhi* 晉祠志 (Taiyuan: Shanxi renmin chubanshe, 1986; hereafter *JCZ*), pp. 248–51.

<sup>12</sup> During the Song dynasty siege of Taiyuan in 979, the general Cao Han 曹翰 (924–992 AD) prayed at a goddess temple 娘子廟 roughly 3 1/3 miles west of the city, then constructed a canal to retrieve the water. Because of the similarity in distance from the location of Taiyuan during the tenth century, later sources suggest that this was the temple at the Jin Springs; Miller, *Divine Nature of Power*, chap. 5.

<sup>13</sup> Ibid., chap. 6. The 1038 earthquake is dated in standard historical documents, including Tuotuo 脫脫 (Toghto 1313–1355), *Songshi* 宋史 (Taipei: Dingwen, 1978) 10, p. 203, and Li Tao 李燾 (1114–83), *Xu Zizhi tongjian changbian* 續資治通鑑長編 (Taipei: Shijie shuju, 1983) 120, p. 19a, as Song Jingyou reign period, yr. 4, lunar mo. 12, *jiashen* 甲申, which corresponds to January 24, 1038. Fan Zhongyan 范仲淹 (989–1052) visited Jinci in the 1040s and wrote that the fish living in the spring were as long-lived as the "transcendent of the water 水仙," which further indicates that a female water spirit had been worshiped at the site for some time. Fan Zhongyan's poem on Jinci is reprinted in *JCZ*, p. 475. For more on transcendents of rivers as female spirits see Suzanne Cahill, "Sex and the Supernatural in Medieval China: Cantos on the Transcendent who Presides over the River," *JAOS* 105.2 (1985), pp. 197–220, and more generally on water goddesses and their obfuscation in medieval China, see Edward Schafer, *The Divine Woman* (Berkeley: U. of California P., 1973), pp. 41–69.

<sup>14</sup> Gao Shoutian 高壽田, "Jinci Shengmudian Song, Yuan tiji" 晉祠聖母殿宋、元題記, *WW* (1965.12), pp. 58–60.

<sup>15</sup> Miller, *Divine Nature of Power*, chap. 4.

Sage Mother.<sup>16</sup> By 1123, however, Jiang Zhongqian 姜仲謙 (n.d.) stated that his ritual expression of gratitude for rain took place in the shrine of “the Sage Mother and Shu Yu of Tang,”<sup>17</sup> giving the water goddess priority over Shu Yu. Because the Jin state was thought to have been named after the Jin River, the Sage Mother could be understood in this text as being the mother of the state (and therefore the mother of its first ruler) as well as the goddess of the springs to the Jin River.<sup>18</sup> Zhou Lingshu 周令樹 (n.d.) and Yan Ruoqu 閻若璩 (1636–1704), scholars influenced by the Ming-Qing trend in “evidential learning” (*kaozhengxue* 考正學), would eventually use this inscription to argue that the water goddess at the Jin Springs was actually the historical mother of Shu Yu, namely, Yi Jiang 邑姜.

Yet, given the history of the site during the eleventh century, a text giving thanks for rain should not have mentioned Shu Yu at all. By the beginning of the twelfth century, the deity at Jinci renowned for bringing rain was the Sage Mother. Available sources indicate that her promotions from 1077 to 1111 were granted because of miracles that produced rain. The particular historical circumstances allow some understanding of the reason for Shu Yu’s inclusion in this document. The text was composed in June of 1123, just after the “return” of the Sixteen Prefectures to the Northern Song, the portion of the Chinese empire the Song had sought to recover since the tenth century. Jiang Zhongqian mentions this event twice in his text. It seems logical that at this time Shu Yu of Tang, who was thought to have been sent to this border region to help expand the extent of Zhou rule, would have gained importance in the eyes of a Song official. Jiang stresses that it was the spirit of Shu Yu that helped the Song regain control over this territory.<sup>19</sup> Although they were interested in using stele inscriptions to correct the Song-Ming misunderstandings of the local landscape, neither Zhou Lingshu nor Yan Ruoqu contextualized the inscription within the historical moment in which it was created.

<sup>16</sup> Xu Song 徐宋 (1781–1848), comp., *Song huiyao jigao* 宋會要輯稿 (Taipei: Xinwenfeng chubun gongsi, 1976), sect. “Li,” j. 20, p. 22.

<sup>17</sup> Lit.: *Xianling zhaoji shengmu fendongwang zhi ci* 顯靈照濟聖母汾東王之祠.

<sup>18</sup> Jiang Zhongqian 姜仲謙 (Song), “Jinci xieyuwen 晉祠謝雨文” (“Text Giving Thanks for Rain”) (1123), rpt. in *JCZ*, pp. 245–47.

<sup>19</sup> In *ibid.*, Jiang states, “Yun [zhong] 雲中 (modern Datong) and Shuo[zhou] 朔州 from the beginning were part of us, our heavenly majesty impressed the distant barbarians. I believe, if it were not for the secret assistance of the divinities, by what means could we have prevented these vermin from pilfering at our borders?” (My translation; text rpt. in *JCZ*, p. 246.)

*Late-Ming Building Projects*

The sixteenth century saw an increase in the amount of construction at Jinci with local gentry, nobility, and common farmers all contributing to the projects. Shu Yu's shrine-complex was repaired in 1548 by a group of administrative officials and local gentry.<sup>20</sup> A map of the area from 1551 (figure 8), only three years after the restoration, shows the buildings of Shu Yu's complex arranged in a standard southward facing, walled-courtyard format, with the main buildings on axis. The Sage Mother Hall, by contrast, is shown at the top (west side) of the map without a courtyard enclosure.<sup>21</sup>

The gentry were not the only patrons of the sixteenth century building projects. In 1561 the rest of the complex was repaired in a combined effort of nobility and locals, and in 1563 a two-story dressing tower (literally, "comb and wash tower 梳洗樓") for the Sage Mother was added behind the Eternal Youth Spring Pavilion (site 3 on figure 1). The building was funded with money donated by local commoners and contains an image of the Sage Mother as a village girl. A memorial gateway was added in front of the Offering Hall in 1576 (figure 9, and site 18 on figure 1). The inscription on the gateway, sponsored by local officials and the Confucian schoolmaster and calligraphed by a member of the local gentry, reads "In Response" (*duiyue* 對越), a phrase from "Qingmiao" 清廟, an ode to the Zhou-dynasty ancestral temple in the *Book of Odes*.<sup>22</sup> For all those familiar with the famous passage, this elevated the status of the Sage Mother Hall to that of an apical hall of an ancestral temple (or shrine) complex. But local patronage continued to emphasize the water-giving nature of the Sage Mother, her connection to Shu Yu, if any, was of little relevance.

Drum and bell towers were added in 1606 (sites 20 and 21, figure 1), further emphasizing the ritual axis leading up to the Sage Mother

<sup>20</sup> Gao Ruxing 高汝行 (1521 *j.s.*), *Taiyuan xianzhi* 太原縣志, originally pub. 1551; rpt. Wang Deyi, ed., *Tianyige zang Mingdai fangzhi xuankan* (Taipei: Xinwenfeng chubang gongsi, 1985), vol. 3, 317-412 [j. 1, p. 11a].

<sup>21</sup> Gao, *Taiyuan xianzhi*, "Jinci zhi tu," n.p.

<sup>22</sup> "Qingmiao," *Maoshi zhengyi* 毛詩正義, j. 19, in *Shisanjing zhushu*, ed. Ruan Yuan (1816) (Taipei: Yiwen yinshuguan, 2001), vol. 1, p. 583. The Legge trans. reads: "Ah! Solemn is the ancestral temple in its pure stillness 於穆清廟/ Reverent and harmonious were the distinguished assistants; 蕭雝顯相/ Great was the number of the officers: 濟濟多士/ [All] assiduous followers of the virtue of [king] Wen. 秉文之德/ In response (*duiyue*) to him in heaven, 對越在天/ Grandly they hurried about in the temple. 駿奔走在廟/ Distinguished is he and honored, 不顯不承/ And will never be wearied among men 無射於人斯... ." (James Legge, *The Chinese Classics* [Taipei: Nantian shuju, 1992], 4, p. 569.) My thanks to Song Naizhong for emphasizing this connection in a conversation about the site. For late-16th-c. construction projects, see Miller, *Divine Nature of Power*, chap. 7.

Hall.<sup>23</sup> Although the deity to be worshiped at the end of this axis was known at that time as the Spirit of the Jin Springs, the late-Ming local gentry architecturally asserted that the complex was dedicated to a Sage Mother ancestress who, to the educated, must have been Yi Jiang.

### *Qing-Era Interpretations*

The addition of the Duiyue Memorial Gateway and the bell and drum towers was not enough to convince those dependent on the Sage Mother's efficacy as a water goddess that she was an ancestral figure, but it had a long-lasting effect on the interpretation of the site. In 1672 Zhou Lingshu was serving as prefect of Taiyuan when he visited Jinci. Finding that the shrine-complex of Shu Yu was in disrepair and that the people were dedicating all of their attention to the Sage Mother, he thought that in the best case, all of the temples except for Shu Yu's be abolished. Clearly taken by the regal appearance of Sage Mother Hall, he felt that next best would be to switch the statues and worship Shu Yu in the grander building. Finally, if nothing else could be done, then it would be better if the Sage Mother were understood to be the Mother of Shu Yu. He argued that the worship of the Sage Mother as a water spirit was likely the degradation of her status since the Song dynasty (and before) when, as evidenced by the "Text Giving Thanks for Rain" of 1123, she was Yi Jiang.<sup>24</sup>

Ultimately, it was Yan Ruoqu who promulgated the idea that the water spirit was originally the historical mother of Shu Yu. But Yan's rectified interpretation of the Sage Mother's identity was influenced by what he saw at the site, a temple that was beginning to resemble a large-scale official shrine.<sup>25</sup> After rereading Zhou's inscription he searched for the county gazetteer and read the "Text Giving Thanks for Rain," an inscriptional source to corroborate his perception of the place. By the seventeenth century the pathway to the Sage Mother Hall consisted of a strong axis of approach with symmetrically disposed bell and drum towers implying cardinal orientation through their traditional

<sup>23</sup> J CZ, pp. 72-75. Qi Yingtao 祁英濤 states that the Duiyue Memorial Gateway was repaired in the fourth year of the Wanli reign (1576); see "Jinci Shengmudian yanjiu" 晉祠聖母殿研究, *Wenwu jikan* 文物季刊 1 (1992), p. 52.

<sup>24</sup> Zhou Lingshu 周令樹, "Chongjian Jinci beiting ji" 重建晉祠碑亭記 (1672), rpt. J CZ, pp. 68-69.

<sup>25</sup> Yan Ruoqu's interpretation was adopted as the official standard. In his 1826 *Taiyuan County Gazetteer*, Yuan Peilan states that the "Spirit of the Jin Springs" was, in fact, the spirit of the mother of Shu Yu, Yi Jiang. See Yang Guotai 陽國泰 and Yuan Peilan 員佩蘭, *Taiyuan xianzhi* 太原縣志, originally published 1826 (Taipei: Chengwen chubanshe reprint, 1976), j. 3, p. 32a. This was also the interpretation adopted by Liu Dapeng in his J CZ.



functions. The axis was framed by a gateway leading to a dramatic and ancient worship hall and that was marked with a quotation from the Zhou ancestral temple. Coupled with the “Text Giving Thanks for Rain,” Yan had just enough corroboration to convince himself that the Sage Mother was the historical Yi Jiang.<sup>26</sup>

However, like the plaque inscribed with “*duiyue*,” Yan Ruoqu’s “rectification” of the Sage Mother’s identity took place only on the textual level, and it is unlikely that local farmers understood her as such.<sup>27</sup> But perhaps, had Zhou Lingshu or Yan Ruoqu possessed the resources necessary to realign the complex of the Sage Mother so that it was oriented north-south and enclose it within a rectilinear walled compound separate from the larger precinct, she may have become more convincing as a royal ancestral mother to more than just the literate elite. Such a reconfiguration of shrine buildings seems to have been effective in the adaptation of the deities at the Watarai 度会 clan temple at Ise before it became the ancestral shrine for Japan’s imperial clan. The message of the courtyard complex at Jinci can be better understood if we look outside of the Chinese context and examine its application in seventh-century Japan.

#### RITUAL ARCHITECTURE IN JAPAN BEFORE IMPERIAL CHINESE INFLUENCE

In the early centuries of our era, the architectural tradition of Japan differed markedly from that of imperial China. Before the imperial model imported from China during the sixth and seventh centuries AD was used to rebuild Japan’s capital cities, build Buddhist monasteries, and write Japanese histories, Japan had a vibrant tradition of residential and ritual architecture.

As is well known, early nature-spirit shrines in Japan did not require a hall to house an emblem or image of a divinity. Instead, simple straw ropes could be placed around a tree (*himorogi* 神籬) or a rock (*iwakura* 磐座) that was considered to be the residence for a spirit who controlled elements of the landscape. More elaborate configurations popular in some areas consisted of arrangements of rocks (*iwasaka* 磐境) or felled trees (also *himorogi*) used to create a sacred space. In this phase of Shintō, which developed during the Tumulus period (ca. 250–600 AD), an entire mountain could be the location of descent and tempo-

<sup>26</sup> Yan Ruoqu 閻若璩 (1636–1704), *Qianqiu zhaji* 潛邱劄記 (SKQS, Wenyuange edn., vol. 510; Taipei: Taiwan shangwu yinshuguan, 1986), j. 5, pp. 34a–36a.

<sup>27</sup> See Miller, *Divine Nature of Power*, chap. 7.



rary residence of nature spirits (*kami* 神). The simple structures would be used for offerings and rituals, but would not contain any symbol or image of a divinity.<sup>28</sup> At a later point, sacred objects, such as mirrors, were considered to be the *shintai* 神体, the “kami-body,” of a divinity. As *shintai* came into increasing use, buildings began to be constructed to house the sacred objects.<sup>29</sup>

The style of architecture characteristic of the Shintō shrines with permanent worship halls is thought to have been based on granaries necessitated by the wet-rice agriculture that was imported into Japan during the Yayoi period (ca. 300 BC–250 AD).<sup>30</sup> Such structures were made of wood and thatch and were raised on piles rather than having earthen platforms in order to enhance air circulation and keep the grain dry (figure 10). How these buildings also came to be used for ritual structures is unknown, but scholars speculate that the high-pile architecture was deemed to be superior to earlier semi-subterranean buildings either because they were more comfortable or because of symbolic associations where the storehouse was the most important building to this newly established agrarian society.<sup>31</sup> Archeological evidence suggests

<sup>28</sup> For more on this early stage of shrine architecture in Japan, see Fukuyama, *Jinja kenchiku*, pp. 6–14, and Watanabe Yasutada, *Shinto Art: Ise and Izumo Shrines*, trans. Robert Ricketts (New York and Tokyo: Weatherhill/Heibonsha, 1974), pp. 128–34. In some cases two shrines would be established, one in the upper reaches of the mountain, and another placed between the human settlements and the mountain; see Matsumae Takeshi, “Early Kami Worship,” in Delmer M. Brown, ed., *The Cambridge History of Japan, Volume 1: Ancient Japan* (Cambridge and New York: Cambridge U.P., 1993), pp. 336–37. This intermediate stage of Shintō development is referred to as “clan Shintō” by Matsumae, “Early Kami Worship,” p. 334.

<sup>29</sup> Ibid., p. 335.

<sup>30</sup> Dating of the Yayoi period follows Brown, ed., *Cambridge History of Japan* 1, pp. xiv–xx.

<sup>31</sup> Raised-pile architecture was either imported from Southeast Asia and/or China with the introduction of the new agricultural technology of paddy-rice cropping, or developed in response to the needs of storing the rice. Two versions of the raised-pile architecture, one with doorway on the gable end, and one with the doorway on the side parallel to the roof ridge, are thought to represent palatial and storehouse buildings, respectively. Palace buildings of the Nara period may have been constructed in this manner, supporting the idea that shrine buildings entered on the gable side, such as those at Izumo Taisha in Shimane prefecture. This also suggests that, like Ise, the use of deity halls at Izumo was first established at a preexisting sacred site during the formation of the Yamato state no earlier than the late-6th c.; see Watanabe, *Shinto Art*, pp. 134–38. On the importation of this building type from Southeast Asia through China, see William Coaldrake, “The Grand Shrines of Ise and Izumo: The Appropriation of Vernacular Architecture by Early Ruling Authority,” in idem, *Architecture and Authority in Japan* (London: Routledge, 1996), p. 31, and Watanabe, *Shinto Art*, pp. 104–5; for ways in which the style could have been developed indigenously, see J. Edward Kidder, Jr., “The Earliest Societies in Japan,” in Brown, ed., *Cambridge History of Japan* 1, p. 84. In “An Archaeological Study of the Ming Tang,” presented at the First International Conference on Chinese Architectural History, Beijing, 1998, Yang Hongxun proposed that raised buildings were transmitted as agricultural shrines (as well as granaries) to Japan along with rice agriculture. Although this type of architecture may have been present in preimperial China, by the end of the Tumulus period when worship halls were becoming more widespread in nature-spirit shrines, it was almost certainly understood to be indigenous “Japanese” to the rising Yamato

that these buildings were oriented east-west.<sup>32</sup> Although the storehouse features can still be seen in Shintō shrines today, the shrine-complex at the site of Ise underwent a significant transformation when the local deity became the Japanese imperial ancestor Amaterasu 天照 in the early years of Japan's written history.

#### ISE KŌTAI JINGŪ

The Grand Shrine-Palace of Ise is located on the Ise Peninsula in Mie prefecture on the main island of Japan. The shrine consists of two compounds of which Kōtai jingū 皇大神宮, usually referred to as Naikū, or the Inner Shrine, is dedicated to the sun goddess Amaterasu.<sup>33</sup> Because Amaterasu was thought to be the ancestral mother of the Japanese imperial clan, today, and for much of Japanese history, the Inner Shrine has been one of the most esteemed Shintō shrines in all of Japan. Analysis of the Inner Shrine shows that the high status of the deity is directly reflected in the style of her shrine, and that the language of architectural organization used to express that status was derived from imperial China.

Just as at Jinci, the larger site of the Inner Shrine is not laid out according to the cardinal directions or rigid axial symmetry (figure 2). Only the rectilinear compound clearly oriented due south in the southeast section of the site is immediately identifiable as traditional East Asian architecture: it is the inner sanctuary that houses the sacred mirror, the *shintai* of Amaterasu. The plan itself provides little information as to how devotees would travel from the initial entry at the Isuzu River to the actual shrine where the sacred mirror is held. One quickly discovers, however, that the pathway to the inner sanctuary is marked with *torii* 鳥居 gateways for guidance. The first two *torii* gateways are located on the east and west side of the Uji Bridge, which traverses the Isuzu River. These gateways identify the entrance to the realm of the larger compound. After crossing into the compound another *torii* comes into view to the south of the bridge. A *torii* can again be seen to the left of the path at the top of a tall stair up to the inner sanctuary

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clan of the 6th-7th cc., as it stood in marked contrast to the brightly colored architecture being imported from the continent during this same period; Watanabe, *Shinto Art*, pp. 56-59, and Suzuki, *Early Buddhist Architecture*, pp. 20-22.

<sup>32</sup> Coaldrake, "Grand Shrines of Ise and Izumo," pp. 19 and 33, and Edwina Palmer, "Land of the Rising Sun: The Predominant East-West Axis among the Early Japanese," *MN* 46.1 (1991), pp. 69-90.

<sup>33</sup> The other compound is Toyouke daijingū 豊受大神宮, commonly called Gekū 外宮, or the Outer Shrine, dedicated to the grain deity Toyouke.

(figure 11). This is the one of four gateways located at the cardinal directions and connected to walls enclosing the compound.

Arrival at the inner sanctuary reveals that although the architecture of the individual buildings within the complex follows the Japanese tradition developed during the Yayoi period (figure 12), the *organization* of the buildings, which are contained and obscured from view within a fully walled compound, is derived from the imperial architecture of the continent (figure 13). The buildings are constructed entirely of wood, raised on high piles, and roofed with thatch, and are thus characteristic of the so-called “storehouse” architecture. But the complex itself displays the four characteristics of the Chinese imperial tradition. The site of the inner sanctuary is elevated high above the pathway of approach, the buildings are arranged in a rectilinear courtyard compound with the main buildings on a central axis, access to the main shrine building is restricted within a series of enclosing fences (or walls), and the whole complex is oriented cardinally south.

#### *The Nature-Spirit Shrine in Japan's Proto-history*

The inner sanctuary of the Ise Inner Shrine was not always organized in this way. As noted above, recent archeological investigations as well as other textual research done during the twentieth century have shown that prior to the adoption of Chinese imperial city planning in the seventh and early eighth centuries, Japanese ritual structures were not primarily oriented along a north-south axis. Edwina Palmer has used literary and archeological evidence to suggest that an east-west axis predominated in proto-historical Japan.<sup>34</sup> East-west orientation may have been more important in the worship of sun spirits, since it would more clearly reflect the sun's path across the sky.<sup>35</sup> Many modern Shintō sites, including the Omiwa Shrine 大神神社 in Nara prefecture, the Suwa Shrine 諏訪大社 in Nagano prefecture, the Isonokami Shrine 石上神宮 in Nara prefecture, and the Munakata Shrine in Fukuoka prefecture 宗像大社, are placed between mountain formations and human settlements so that worshipers and spirits travel different pathways to reach the shrine. In the act of worship, the human actor faces the mountain and has his back to human settlements. If the preimperial tutelary deity or deities at Ise followed the format of other early nature-spirit shrines, some of which have modern living cults and extant shrines, an actual building to hold a *shintai* would not be necessary, and the loca-

<sup>34</sup> Palmer, “Land of the Rising Sun,” pp. 69–90.

<sup>35</sup> Coaldrake, “Grand Shrines of Ise and Izumo,” p. 19.

tion of worship would likely have been elsewhere at the site where the worshiper could face eastward, towards the mountains. Yet the present inner sanctuary at Ise is oriented cardinally south, and devotees turn to face north, toward the human settlements rather than the mountains, when performing rituals.<sup>36</sup> Scholars of Japanese architecture and religion explain the shift in the orientation of the inner sanctuary, both directional and cultural, in the historical context of Ise with respect to the rise of the Yamato imperial clan.

### *Ise and the Politics of Empire*

The early history of Ise shows that powerful patrons adjusted the temple complex in the seventh and eighth centuries to reflect new ideas of empire being imported from the mainland. Although there is debate about the exact nature of early worship on the Ise peninsula, Shintō scholars largely agree that prior to the seventh century the future imperial clan of Japan did not, contrary to the accounts in Japan's early chronicles, *Nihon shoki* 日本書紀 and *Kojiki* 古事記, have an established ancestral temple at Ise.<sup>37</sup> During this time, the Ise Peninsula was controlled by the Watarai clan, who worshiped tutelary deities associated with agriculture and, most likely, sun worship.<sup>38</sup> The region of Ise began to gain in strategic importance during the sixth century, when emperor Kimmei 欽明 (r. 539–571) used the shipping lanes around Ise Peninsula to attack the Owari 尾張 region (the area surrounding modern Nagoya) further inward along Ise Bay. Because the Yamato clan was interested in claiming at least limited influence over the territory, they built a shrine to their sun goddess Amaterasu, by then also believed to be the Yamato clan ancestor, at the sacred location of the Watarai tutelary deity, or deities.<sup>39</sup> Matsumae Takeshi 松前健 follows Watanabe Yasutada 渡辺保忠 in proposing that the identity of Amaterasu was attached to that of a

<sup>36</sup> Matsumae, "Early Kami Worship," p. 335. Using the research of the modern scholars Tsukushi Nobusane 筑紫申真 and Fukuyama Toshio, Günter Nitschke has hypothesized that the natural configuration of mountains and river at the site of the inner shrine indicate that the preimperial sun deity might have been worshiped locally on a site facing eastward on the bank of the Isuzu River, at the present location of ritual purification. Although speculative, his arrangement of mountains, river, and axis of worship would be consistent with other Shintō shrines across Japan and with the preimperial Japanese preference for east-west orientation; see his *From Shinto to Ando: Studies in Architectural Anthropology in Japan* (London: Academy Editions, 1993), p. 24.

<sup>37</sup> Matsumae Takeshi states that the legend of the sun deity at Ise being the ancestor of the Yamato clan was probably created in the seventh century or later, partially as a justification of the custom of Yamato imperial princess designated to serving as *saiō* 斎王, Consecrated Princess, or shaman, at Ise since the first half of the 6th c. AD; see "Early Kami Worship," p. 348 and n. 78. See also Watanabe, *Shinto Art*, p. 63.

<sup>38</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 81.

<sup>39</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 81–82.

preexisting solar deity worshiped by the Watarai at Ise.<sup>40</sup> Delmer Brown suggests that the shrine to Amaterasu was built at Ise in addition to what is now the Outer Shrine, which would have been the main location of Watarai clan worship.<sup>41</sup> Both interpretations show that a new shrine dedicated to Amaterasu was necessary in order to house the symbol of the sun goddess as an imperial ancestor at a site of previous local worship. Such changes in the perceptions and housing of deities followed changes in the nature and purpose of Shintō in the seventh century.

The building of the Inner Shrine in the elevated, axial, southern-oriented format we are familiar with today is thought to have accompanied the formation of what Delmer Brown (and others) describes as “Imperial-Country Shintō” (*kōkoku Shintō* 皇國神道), which was constructed in response to both internal and external political threats and the consequent desire to form a recognizably powerful empire in the continental mode during the middle of the seventh century. At this time the major ruling clans of Japan were struggling for power internally, a struggle that resulted in the deaths of two key Soga leaders, Soga no Emishi 蘇我蝦夷 and his son Soga no Iruka 蘇我入鹿, in 645.<sup>42</sup> The removal of the Soga allowed for a reorganization of the government to follow the continental model in bureaucratic and religious realms. The famous Taika Reforms, instituted after 645, centralized political power in the hands of emperor Kōtoku 孝德 (r. 645–654), who required individual allegiance to the emperor rather than clan leaders and established a national census and taxation. Buddhism, which had previously been propagated to bolster clan leadership, was reorganized to support a centralized imperial government and was supervised by state-appointed priests. Close modeling after continental examples was made possible by employing a number of China specialists in both state and Buddhist posts. These were “old China hands,” priests and scholars who had traveled to China at the beginning of the seventh century and had returned in the 630s and -40s, decades after the fall of the Sui (581–618) and the establishment of the Tang, or who had immigrated to Japan from South China and Korea.<sup>43</sup>

The decision to use continental models of empire to strengthen the central government was also made in response to imperial expansionism

<sup>40</sup> Matsumae Takeshi 松前健, “Origin and Growth of the Worship of Amaterasu,” *Asian Folklore Studies* 37.1 (1978), p. 9, and idem, “Early Kami Worship,” p. 349.

<sup>41</sup> Delmer M. Brown, “Sovereignty and the Great Goddess of Japan,” in Elisabeth Benard and Beverly Moon, eds., *Goddesses Who Rule* (Oxford: Oxford U.P., 2000), p. 109.

<sup>42</sup> Inoue Mitsusada 井上光貞 with Delmer M. Brown, “The Century of Reform,” in Brown, ed., *Cambridge History of Japan* 1, p. 192.

<sup>43</sup> Ibid., pp. 193–95.

on the part of both the Tang and Silla governments. During this time the Tang court was waging war on the kingdoms of the Korean Peninsula. Tang Taizong 太宗 (r. 626–649) began advancing on the northern kingdom of Koguryō in the 640s and continued until his death in 649. In 660 the Tang court was able to ally with the state of Silla to attack, defeat, and annex Paekche. Not willing to accept Chinese rule, Paekche leaders requested a reinforcing naval fleet from Japan in 663, of which the Tang destroyed at least 400 vessels. With the aid of Silla, the Tang finally conquered Koguryō in 668. Silla also had its own ambitions: it succeeded in pushing back the Tang and taking the entire peninsula by 676.<sup>44</sup> Given the rapid fall of their ally Paekche, first to the Tang and then to Silla, the Japanese had reason to be afraid.<sup>45</sup> Modern archeology has revealed extensive defense works built during this time along the northern coast of Kyushu as well as the shore of the Inland Sea; they corroborate textual evidence that the Japanese were indeed preparing for possible invasion.<sup>46</sup> We can understand why Japanese rulers, facing this possibility, would have wanted to appear as formidable as possible. The creation of a divine ancestry was an important part of that agenda.<sup>47</sup>

Yet, the real link between the site of the Ise shrine and the imperial clan came with the Jinshin civil war of 672. This conflict involved the choice of successor to emperor Tenji 天智 after his death in 671. Tenji's brother, the future emperor Temmu (r. 672–686), was aided by what was perceived to be a divine force from the Watarai's shrine (in addition to 500 soldiers sent by the governor of Ise) and was therefore able to win the war against his nephew. Temmu rewarded the shrine and established ancestral rituals there with an imperial princess as the virgin priestess (Consecrated Princess, or 斎王), in charge of shrine ceremonies.<sup>48</sup>

Although Amaterasu had been worshiped as the ancestral deity of the Yamato clan from as early as the sixth century, Temmu and his spouse empress Jitō 持統 (d. 702), created Imperial Country Shintō in conjunction with instituting state-sponsored Buddhism as part of the continued effort to establish a spiritual basis for imperial control.<sup>49</sup> Ac-

<sup>44</sup> David Graff, *Medieval Chinese Warfare, 300–900* (London and New York: Routledge, 2002), pp. 195–201.

<sup>45</sup> Inoue with Brown, "Century of Reform," p. 209.

<sup>46</sup> Brown, "Sovereignty," p. 106, and Inoue with Brown, "Century of Reform," p. 220.

<sup>47</sup> Naoki Kōjirō, "The Nara State," in Brown, ed., *Cambridge History of Japan* 1, pp. 226–29.

<sup>48</sup> Inoue with Brown, "Century of Reform," pp. 218–19, and Watanabe, *Shinto Art*, pp. 60–62.

<sup>49</sup> Naoki, "Nara State," p. 227.

cording to Naoki Kōjirō 直木孝次郎, not only did Temmu follow Tang models of centralization of the military and reformation of the administrative code, he also desired to have divine sanction for imperial rule from Buddhist as well as native Shintō divinities.<sup>50</sup> Like Kōtoku before him, Temmu's support of Buddhism followed continental precedents to use Buddhist worship for its power to help create a united empire.<sup>51</sup> He expanded on earlier efforts to dismantle clan-based Buddhism and centralize it in support of the empire by establishing Buddhist rituals at court, and sponsoring the establishment of official, continental-style Buddhist monasteries. "State protecting sutras" were the subject of lectures being held in the provinces by 677.<sup>52</sup>

Additionally, to institutionalize the sacred descent of the emperor from an indigenous divinity was a crucial part of Temmu's larger empire-building project.<sup>53</sup> As Sonoda Kōyū 藺田香融 and Brown emphasize, even while following the Tang and Silla methods of employing Buddhism to bolster state control, Temmu (and later Jitō) were especially interested in expanding the reach of state Shintō and establishing the Sun Goddess as the imperial ancestor.<sup>54</sup> Connecting the emperor with Heaven as a way of asserting a divinely bestowed right to rule was not new to Temmu, having already appeared in the third of the Seventeen Injunctions, said to have been written in the early-seventh century.<sup>55</sup> Japanese rulers had made efforts to assert their imperial identity abroad as well, as seen in the memorial presented to Sui Yangdi 煬帝 (r. 605–618) at his capital Daxing 大興 (renamed Chang'an 長安 under the Tang) in which empress Suiko 推古 refers to herself as "Son/Child of Heaven" (*tenshi* 天子) – on par with the Chinese emperor.<sup>56</sup> Yet, according to Brown, the idea of divine descent was institutionalized only after Temmu came into power. At that time a new Council of Kami Affairs (Jingikan 神祇

<sup>50</sup> Ibid., pp. 222–41.

<sup>51</sup> Sonoda Kōyū 藺田香融 with Delmer M. Brown, "Early Buddha Worship," in Brown, ed., *Cambridge History of Japan* 1, pp. 388–89.

<sup>52</sup> Sonoda with Brown, "Early Buddha Worship," pp. 392–93.

<sup>53</sup> Inoue with Brown, "Century of Reform," pp. 180–81.

<sup>54</sup> Sonoda with Brown, "Early Buddha Worship," p. 392.

<sup>55</sup> Inoue with Brown, "Century of Reform," pp. 177–82.

<sup>56</sup> Wei Zheng 魏徵 (580–643) et al., *Suishu* 隋書 (Taipei: Dingwen shuju, 1997) 81, p. 1827. In this famous mission the chief of the mission submitted a memorial to Sui Yangdi stating that the "Son (or child) of Heaven (*tianzi* 天子) in the land of the rising sun sends this letter to the Son of Heaven (*tianzi* 天子) of the land where the sun sets 日出處天子致書日沒處天子..." Translation follows Arthur F. Wright, "The Sui Dynasty (581–617)," in Denis Twitchett, ed., *Sui and Tang China*, 589–906, Part 1, vol. 3 of *The Cambridge History of China* (Cambridge: Cambridge U. P., 1979), p. 139. The wording of the memorial in itself indicates that the Japanese rulers wanted to present themselves as equal to their continental counterparts; see Inoue with Brown, "Century of Reform," p. 168.



官) was established to strengthen the belief in Amaterasu as the divine ancestor of the imperial family, rituals were reshaped so that Amaterasu could be understood better as sanctifying sovereignty, and a new shrine to Amaterasu was built where rituals could be preformed in the presence of the goddess to enhance imperial sovereignty even further.<sup>57</sup> Restructured myths that documented the idea that Amaterasu was the ancestor of the imperial clan and had been worshiped from the first century AD appeared in *Nihon shoki* and *Kojiki*, commissioned by emperor Temmu and written in Chinese script.<sup>58</sup> However, in and of themselves, the establishing of imperial rituals and documenting them through written histories were clearly not enough to elevate the status of the local nature-spirit at Ise to that of ancestor of the imperial clan. The main complex dedicated to Amaterasu needed to be physically adjusted to reflect continental ideas of empire and kingship.<sup>59</sup>

#### THE INTERNATIONAL ARCHITECTURE OF EMPIRE

Reorganization of the inner sanctuary and changes in the decoration of buildings within Kōtai jingū reflect the significance of architecture for communicating imperial presence in Japan, and ultimately for revealing meaning behind the forms being employed for this purpose across East Asia. Paralleling their efforts to reorganize government administration, seventh-century Japanese rulers used continental models for city planning and for constructing new, permanent capital cities, palaces of state, as well as Buddhist monasteries. Both Tenji's and Temmu's capitals contained Daigokuden 大極殿, which followed the Taijidian 太極殿 found in the palaces of continental capital cities, including Tang Chang'an. Although excavation of the capital cities of Tenji and

<sup>57</sup> Brown, "Sovereignty," pp. 107–8. Brown does not emphasize the nature-spirit aspect of tutelary divinities in this article, including Amaterasu and Toyouke, the grain spirit worshiped in the Outer Shrine. Perhaps as a consequence he states that the shrine to Amaterasu was added to the site of the Watarai clan ancestral spirit, which became the Outer Shrine. Matsumae Takeshi believes that the Yamato clan had a vested interest in selecting a sun deity as their ancestor spirit, as sun spirits were commonly considered to be royal ancestors on the Korean peninsula at the time. He convincingly argues that the Yamato would have grafted the identity of Amaterasu onto a local sun deity worshiped on the east coast of the Ise peninsula in order to establish an equally respectable imperial ancestor. See Matsumae Takeshi, "Early Kami Worship," pp. 347–49.

<sup>58</sup> Watanabe, *Shinto Art*, p. 27; George Sansom, *A History of Japan to 1334* (Stanford: Stanford U.P., 1958; rpt. 1999), pp. 74–75; Brown, "Sovereignty," p. 108; and George Sansom, *A Short Cultural History of Japan* (Stanford: Stanford U.P.; rpt. 1978), p. 180.

<sup>59</sup> Coaldrake, "Ise and Izumo," pp. 19–33. Buddhism was also being employed concurrently to enhance imperial power; see Brown, "Sovereignty," p. 108. The use of a cardinally oriented complex in the Chinese style would also have allowed the indigenous imperial ancestor to compete with the Buddha in status.

Temmu have not been completed, excavations of Fujiwara-kyō 藤原京, which began to be built in 694 under the reign of empress Jitō, show that it was constructed according to the principles of continental imperial city-planning, specifically the ceramic roof tiles and stone column bases of palace buildings.<sup>60</sup> This held true for Buddhist architecture as well. Excavated roof tiles and stone column bases of Daikandaiji 大官大寺 and Yakushiji 薬師寺 (sites located in Fujiwara-kyō) indicate that these two temples, which were ordered by Temmu and built by an official temple construction bureau, and completed under Jitō, were also constructed in the Tang style, with stone column bases, painted timber frames and in-fill walls, and ceramic roof tiles.<sup>61</sup>

At the same time, Kōtai jingū was reconfigured to present the Sun Goddess Amaterasu as a divine imperial ancestor. Yet, in spite of detailed knowledge of continental imperial building techniques available in seventh-century Japan, Ise was reconstructed as a hybrid – an ancestral shrine that was at once continental and indigenous, and showing Yamato power as both imperial and bestowed via a fundamentally Yamato-clan deity. Rather than enshrine their ancestral spirit in a Tang-style palace hall, as had been done for Buddhist divinities, Temmu and Jitō employed the essential principles of continental imperial architecture in the selection of the site and organization of the compound, yet retained indigenous architecture for the shrine buildings. The new ancestral shrine was constructed on a different portion of the site with a steep embankment above the pathway of approach. Rigid axial symmetry was employed in the placement of gateways, main worship hall, and subsidiary storage structures.<sup>62</sup> Rather than the sacred rope, fences were used to enclose a rectangular space obscuring the interior to the casual observer.<sup>63</sup> And the whole complex was oriented cardinally south.

Although the audience halls in Temmu's and Jitō's palatial complexes and in the worship halls of Buddhist monasteries closely followed the style of their counterparts on the continent, the buildings contained

<sup>60</sup> None question the continental source of the names of the palatial halls and city plans, yet there is debate about whether the models were derived from capital cities of the Northern-Southern Dynasties (particularly Northern Wei Luoyang) or from the Sui-Tang period. See Steinhardt, *Chinese Imperial City Planning*, pp. 109–18, and Naoki, “Nara State,” pp. 229–30.

<sup>61</sup> Suzuki, *Early Buddhist Architecture*, pp. 79–80, and Fukuyama, *Jin kenchiku* 1, pp. 133–34.

<sup>62</sup> According to Fukuyama, although the ancient shrine differs from the modern reconstruction, strict axial symmetry was used for the Nara- and Heian-period Naikū; see his *Ise jingū no kenchiku to rekishi* 伊勢神宮の建築と歴史 (Nagaoka-kyō: Nihon Shiryō Kankōkai, 1976).

<sup>63</sup> According to Coaldrake, the multiplication of fences can be understood as a Japanese interpretation/adaptation of the Chinese imperial mode and has precedent in the pre-imperial Japanese tradition for isolating centers of local power with numerous palisades, though not necessarily in a rectilinear format; see “Ise and Izumo,” pp. 19 and 29–30.

within the fences of Kōtai jingū were constructed in the indigenous style. According to Fukuyama Toshio's 福山敏男 reconstruction, the main hall, or Shōden 正殿, though smaller than its modern counterpart, was built in the preimperial Japanese manner supported on tall piles sunk directly into the earth. The timber walls were unpainted and the roofs were thatched rather than tiled. Some of the most idiosyncratic features of indigenous Japanese architecture used for Shintō shrines, including such elements as forked finials (*chigi* 千木) at the gable ends and billets (*katsuogi* 鰯木) along the roof ridge, were visible above the walls of the shrine (figure 14). Mid-eighth-century texts confirm the early use of gilt bronze fittings to embellish the structures.<sup>64</sup> Additionally, brightly colored ornamental *suedama* 据玉 were added to balustrades, further enhancing the elite appearance of the shrine buildings.<sup>65</sup> Thus evidence suggests that Kōtai jingū was made to appear regal, but neither Buddhist nor Chinese. Reconfiguring the shrine to the sun deity Amaterasu at Ise using the architectural language of both the Yamato Plain and the Tang empire, Temmu and Jitō confirmed architecturally the identity of the Sun Goddess as imperial ancestor, one that they were concurrently having committed to the written page, and in so doing successfully asserted the right of the Yamato lineage to rule over the Ise Peninsula for both local and international audiences.<sup>66</sup>

<sup>64</sup> Fukuyama, *Ise Jingū no kenchiku to rekishi*, pp. 28–30. There is some debate about the significance of metal fittings on these structures. As evidenced by the 6th-c. Tamamushi Shrine presently held in Horyūji, gilding and metal fittings were employed to enhance Buddhist architecture of the period. Coaldrake suggests that the gilding may have been used to symbolize the Sun Goddess; see “Ise and Izumo,” p. 22. Watanabe focuses on their expense and suggests that they may have been employed as an expression of status rather than because of Buddhist influence. He also cites Tang palace architecture as the source of such metal fittings for the Buddhist architecture of the period as well as the buildings at Ise; see *Shinto Art*, pp. 55–59. Fu Xinian has observed gilding on balustrades and door nails in the painted representation of the palatial gate towers in the tomb of prince Yi De 懿德 outside of Chang'an dated to 706 AD; see Fu Xinian 傅熹年, “Tang Changan Daminggong Hanyuandian yuanzhuang de tantao” 唐長安大明宮含元殿原狀的探討, in Fu Xinian, *Fu Xinian jianzhushi lunwenji* 傅熹年建築史論文集 (Beijing: Wenwu chubanshe, 1998), p. 199.

<sup>65</sup> According to Fukuyama, colors for the *suedama* were symbolic of the Five Phases (*gogyō* 五行) and followed Tang imperial usage; see *Ise Jingū no kenchiku to rekishi*, pp. 30–31. Arguing for a Tang, rather than Buddhist, source for these objects, Watanabe emphasizes that the *suedama* used in the Naikū were not employed in Buddhist architecture of the Nara period, although they did have precedent in the imperially-supported monasteries on the continent; see *Shinto Art*, p. 59.

<sup>66</sup> Coaldrake, “Ise and Izumo,” pp. 19 and 21. Although Coaldrake does not attribute the elevated site to influence from China, raised platforms are a standard characteristic of Chinese ritual architecture from as early as the predynastic Zhou palace-temple complex at Fengchu, Shaanxi province, described above. However high platform architecture became even more popular during the early centuries BC, where tamped earth cores were used to elevate timber-frame galleries and buildings to a commanding position above the ground plane. The excavated palace complex of the 3d-c. BC Qin state at Xianyang prominently displays this characteristic; see Yang Hongxun 陽鴻勛, “Qin Xianyanggong diyi hao yizhi fuyuan wenti de chubu tantao” 秦咸陽宮第一號遺址復原問題的初步探討, in Yang Hongxun, *Jianzhu kaoguxue lunwenji* 建

## POLITICS AND SHRINE BUILDING

The example of Ise shows the power of architecture in communicating divinity identity in premodern East Asia. Politics could and did have an impact on the changes that took place at ritual complexes dedicated to local divinities, but at Ise the project was successful in establishing the identity of Amaterasu as ancestor because both text and complex communicated the same message about the status of the deity. The transformed Kōtai jingū shows how the individual Shintō-style buildings of preimperial Japanese ritual architecture could be elevated, enclosed, and reoriented to express the new concepts of empire being imported from the continent. For the aspiring emperors of Japan, it was politically expedient to transform a deity of the Watarai clan into a divine imperial ancestor as powerful as those of possible continental invaders. This was done both through the official historical texts and through shrine building. With all of the funds and power of the imperial position at their disposal, emperor Temmu and empress Jitō were able to adjust the shrine radically, as they had their capital cities, in order to express their own imperial legitimacy in the language of the Tang empire – a language that could be understood both at home and across the Sea of Japan. Although cardinal orientation was used for city planning across Asia from as early as the second millennium BC,<sup>67</sup> the reorientation of local nature-spirit worship to create a Japanese imperial ancestral shrine was a successful integration of specific continental symbols of empire at a time when those symbols contained an increasingly powerful message for those fighting for rule of the Japanese archipelago, as well as the Korean Peninsula. Yet they made this shift in orientation while celebrating the preexisting architecture style of Japan, the timber and thatch structure characteristic of Shintō shrines and appropriate for a fundamentally Japanese divinity.

By comparing the history of the regional shrine complex of Jinci to the regional, cum national, ancestral shrine of Ise, we see that the language of ritual architecture was a key element in communicating divinity identity and status. As a regional shrine complex, Jinci had a

策考古學論文集 (Beijing: Wenwu chubanshe, 1987), pp. 153–68. Although the timber frame became more important structurally over time, elevating buildings continued to be an important marker of status through the Tang dynasty and the late-imperial period. Excavations of the Daming Palace in Tang Chang'an show a consistent use of high terraces to emphasize the status of buildings; see Yang Hongxun, "Tang Daminggong Lindedian fuyuan yanjiu jieduan baogao" 唐大明宮麟德殿復原研究階段報告, in Yang, *Jianzhu kaoguxue lunwenji*, pp. 234–52; and Fu, "Tang Changan Daminggong," pp. 184–206.

<sup>67</sup> As Wheatley expounded upon in elaborate detail, cardinal orientation (though not necessarily southern orientation) had been used in city planning across Asia from as early as the second millennium BC, see Wheatley, *Pivot*.

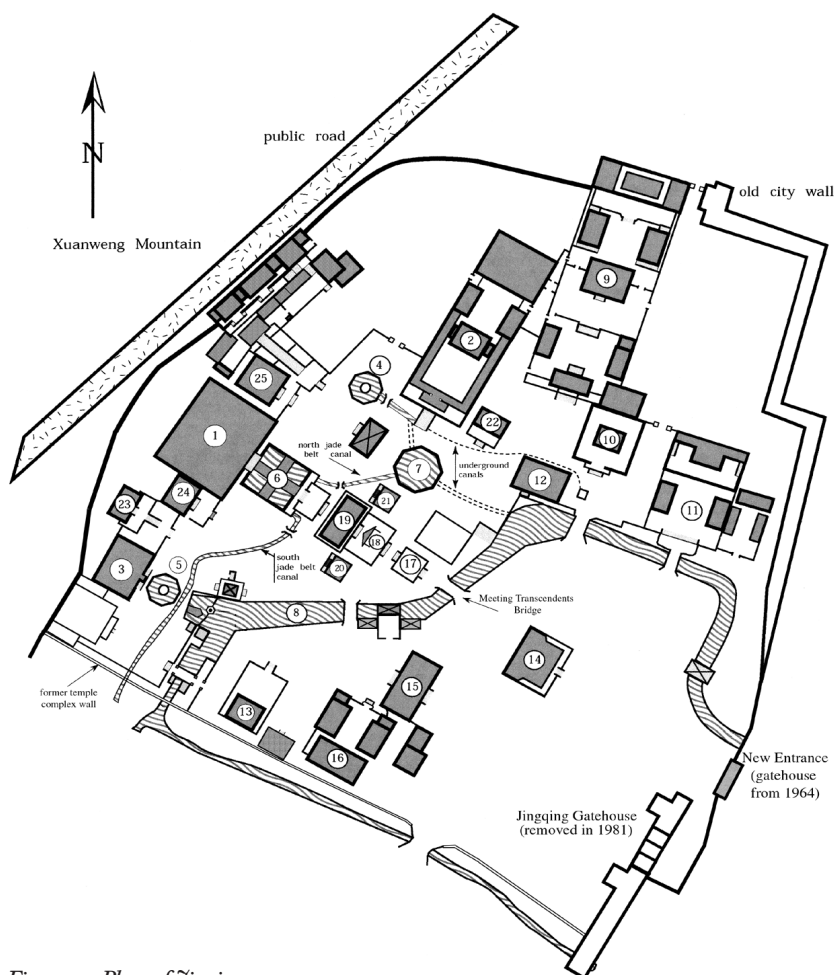
much more tumultuous history, but there are a surprising number of parallels. Both are the sites of nature-spirits and ancestral figures and both show an attempt to elevate the status of the nature-spirit through textual and architectural means. Had the local officials at Jinci been willing or able to reorient temple buildings dedicated to the Sage Mother so that they faced south and circumscribed them within a rectilinear enclosure, a dual ancestor water-spirit identity may have eventually been accepted even at the local level.

Prior to the Song dynasty, aspiring military-political leaders such as Tang Taizong went to Jinci to pay respects to the Jin state's ancestor Shu Yu. Tang Taizong's memorial commemorating his rebuilding of the site emphasizes the connection between the Tang dynasty and Shu Yu of Tang, after whose fief the dynasty was named. From the thirteenth century onward, we have enough evidence to know that Shu Yu of Tang was officially a higher status divinity than the Sage Mother, and his temple was oriented facing southward. Yet the size and imperial style of the Sage Mother Hall communicated that the Sage Mother was the most important deity at the site, even while the north-south orientation of Shu Yu's smaller, courtyard complex continued to express higher status.

Power struggles in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries allow us to see how politics was played out through temple building in the local culture of the Taiyuan basin. While ignoring Shu Yu, farmers and landowners sponsored restorations of the Sage Mother's complex to thank the deity for providing water and to assert their right to a percentage of its annual flow. The gateway, with a canonical inscription calligraphed by the local Confucian schoolmaster, as well as the symmetrically disposed bell and drum towers, were a limited attempt to elevate the status of the Sage Mother from local water-spirit to royal ancestor. But, unlike Kōtai jingū, the temple complex was never completely rebuilt to conform to the official imperial model of ancestral temple and the Sage Mother remained a water goddess for the surrounding community. Rewriting the textual history alone was not sufficient to change the identity of the local goddess, who was still worshiped as a water spirit into the twentieth century.

#### *LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS*

JCZ            *Jincizhi* 晉祠志

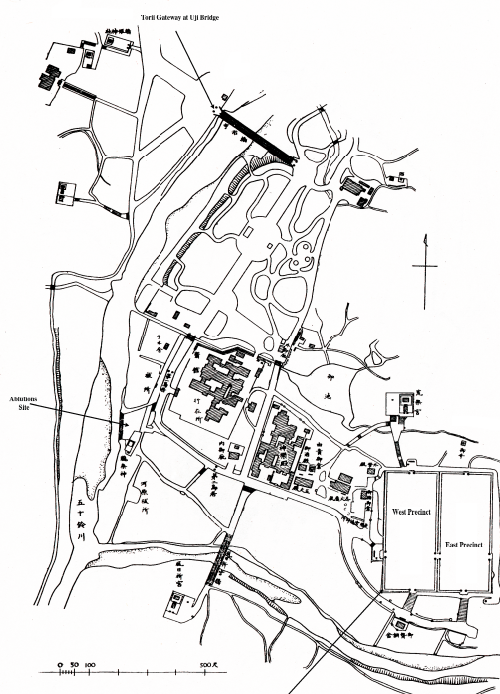


*Figure 1. Plan of finci*

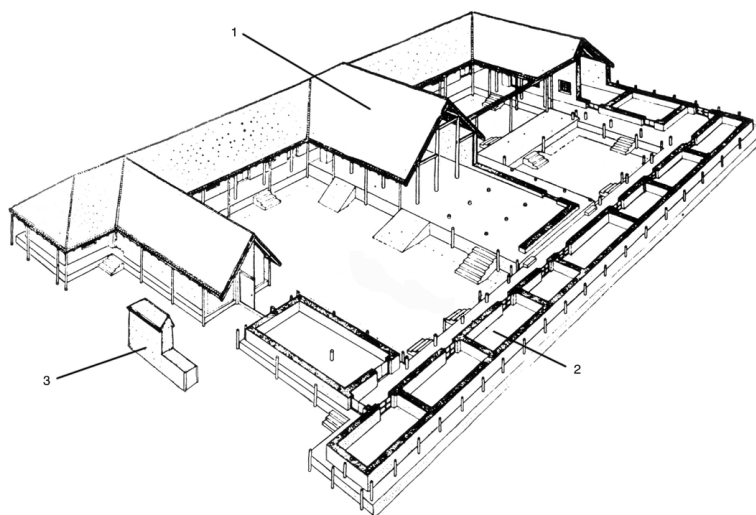
*A synthesis of several published plans of the site; made in collaboration with Robert Miller. This refers to the site as of 1985, covering the 1964 building of a new main entrance and removal of the old main gate in 1981. After 1985 other structures were modified. The specific sites are keyed as follows:*

- |                                                       |                                                                                |                                  |
|-------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| 1. Sage Mother Hall                                   | 9. The Jade Emperor<br>Three Pure Ones, and<br>Guandi Shrine/Temple<br>Complex | 15. Sheng Ying Tower             |
| 2. Shu Yu of Tang Shrine<br>Complex                   | 10. Mt. Tai Temple Com-<br>plex                                                | 16. Tongle Complex               |
| 3. Dressing Tower (mod-<br>ern Water Mother<br>Tower) | 11. Wenchang Temple<br>Palace                                                  | 17. Iron Man Terrace             |
| 4. Perfect Benefit Spring                             | 12. Juntian Yue Stage                                                          | 18. Duiyue Memorial<br>Gateway   |
| 5. Eternal Youth Spring                               | 13. Three Sages Shrine<br>Complex                                              | 19. Offering Hall                |
| 6. Feiliang Bridge over<br>Yuzhao Pool                | 14. Shuijing Stage                                                             | 20. Drum Tower                   |
| 7. Octagonal Pool                                     |                                                                                | 21. Bell Tower                   |
| 8. Earl of Zhi Canal                                  |                                                                                | 22. Tang Taizong Stele<br>Gazebo |
|                                                       |                                                                                | 23. Tai Tai Temple               |
|                                                       |                                                                                | 24. Descendants Hall             |





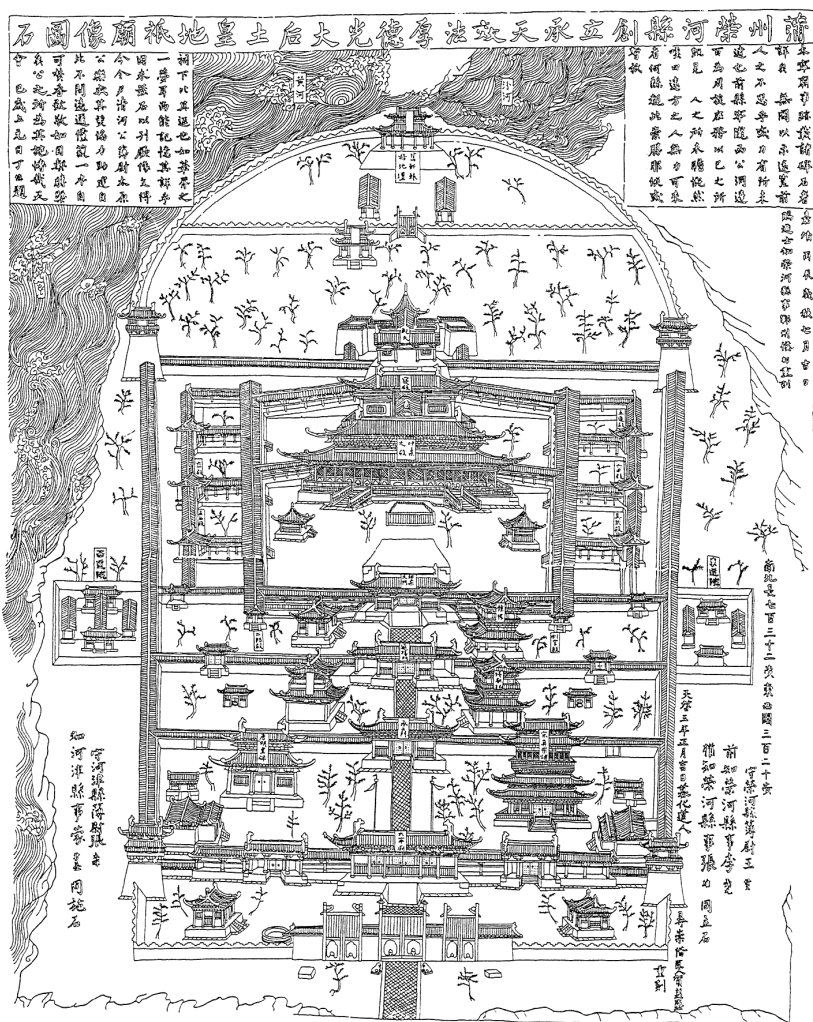
*Figure 2. Plan of Ise Kōtai jingū  
20th c.; after Fukuyama, Ise  
Jingū no kenchiku to rekishi  
(cited n. 62), pl. 1.*



*Figure 3. Palace/Temple Complex: Fengchu, Shaanxi*

*Shows the ca. 1050 BC courtyard-complex form with north-south orientation, bilateral symmetry, and screen walls, dominated ritual complexes in imperial China. The sites are keyed as follows: 1. Main Hall; 2. Subsidiary Enclosing Structures; 3. Screen Wall. Drawing adapted based on Yāng, “Xizhou Qiyi jianzhu yizhi chubu kaocha” 西周岐邑建築遺址初步考察, in Jianzhu kaoguxue lunwenji (cited n. 66), p. 97.*





图二 “蒲州荣河县创立承天效法厚德皇后土皇地祇庙像图石”摹本(约 1/2)

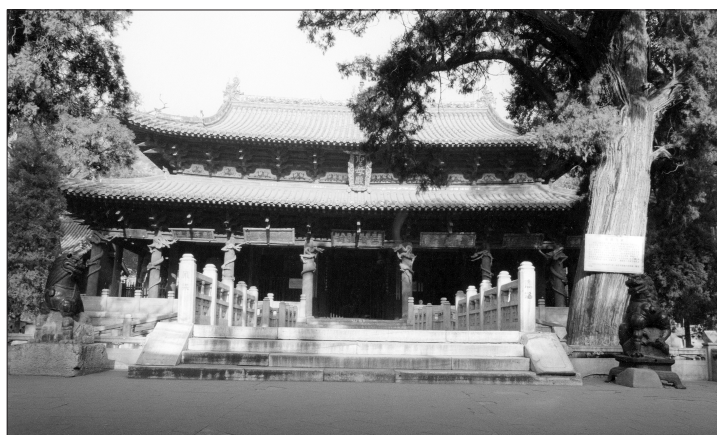
Figure 4. Temple to the Earth Queen at Fenying

In modern Wanrong county, Shanxi. Negative reversal of a rubbing of a pictorial stele inscription dated 1137 AD, showing the temple complex as it would have appeared from the 11th c. After Wang, “*Ji Houtu cimiaao maobei*” (cited n. 5), insert between pp. 274–75.



*Figure 5. Shu Yu of Tang Shrine Complex*

*This shrine is site no. 2, in the Jinci Plan (fig. 1); built 1770-71. View of entry gatehouse from Sage Mother Hall. Photo by author.*



*Figure 6. Sage Mother Hall*

*This Hall is site no. 1, in Jinci Plan (fig. 1); built ca. 1038-87. Photo by author.*

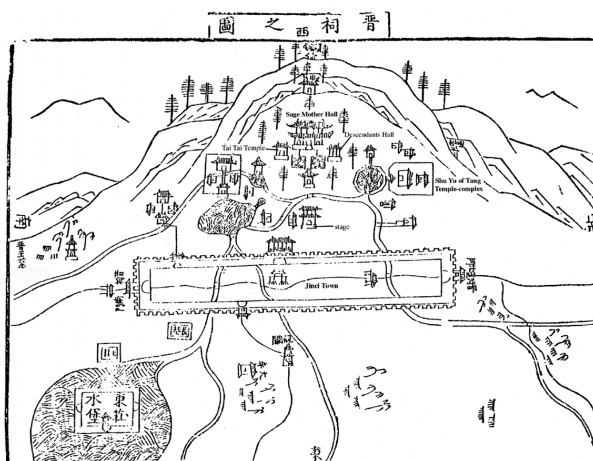


*Figure 7. Shu Yu of Tang Shrine Complex*

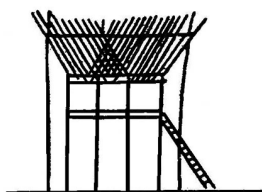
*Jinci. View of entry gatehouse from south. Photo by author.*

*Figure 8. Jinci zhitu 晉祠之圖*

*After Gao, Taiyuan xianzhi (cited n. 20), p. 322.*



*Figure 9. Duiyue Memorial Gateway  
Jinci, 1576-1606. Photo by author.*

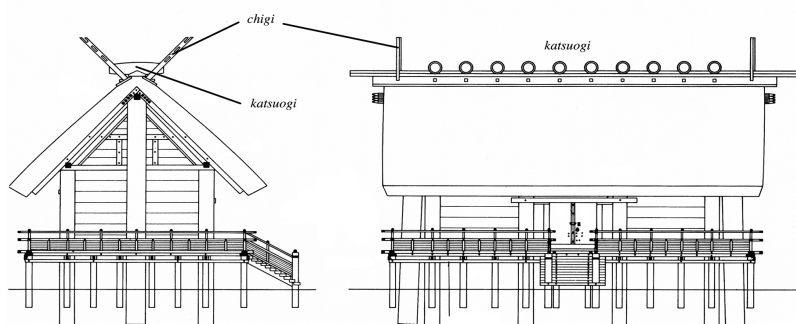


*Figure 10. Line-Drawing of Raised-floor Building  
Cast into 1st-2d c. ceremonial dōtaku bronze bell exca-  
vated in Kagawa prefecture. After photograph published  
in Watanabe, Shinto Art (cited n. 28), p. 105.*



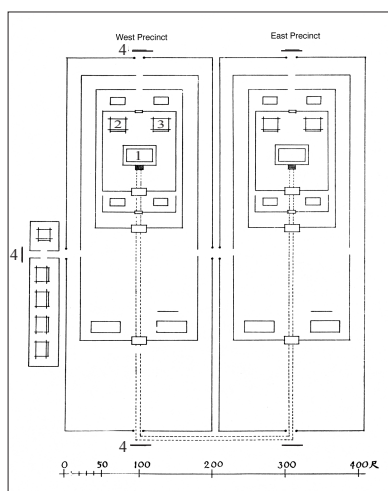


*Figure 11. Torii Gateway and Stair to Inner Sanctuary  
Kōtai jingū. Photo by author.*



*Figure 12 (ABOVE). Nara-Period Reconstruction of Shōden*

*After Fukuyama, Ise Jingū no kenchiku to rekishi (cited n. 62), pl. 30.*



*Figure 13 (LEFT). West and East Precincts of  
Kōtai jingū Inner Sanctuary*

*Reconstructed plan of Inner Sanctuary during Nara-Heian periods. After Fukuyama, pl. 24. From the time of Empress Jitō (r. 686–697) it was rebuilt about every 20 yrs., except from 1462–1585. Here the plan shows the two parallel precincts as seen during a rebuilding, after which the older of the two (whether east or west) would be dismantled. 1. Shōden; 2. West Treasury; 3. East Treasury; 4. Screen Walls.*



*Figure 14. Inner Sanctuary, Kōtai jingū  
View of Inner Tamagaki 玉垣 Gateway, showing chigi and katsugi. Photo by author.*