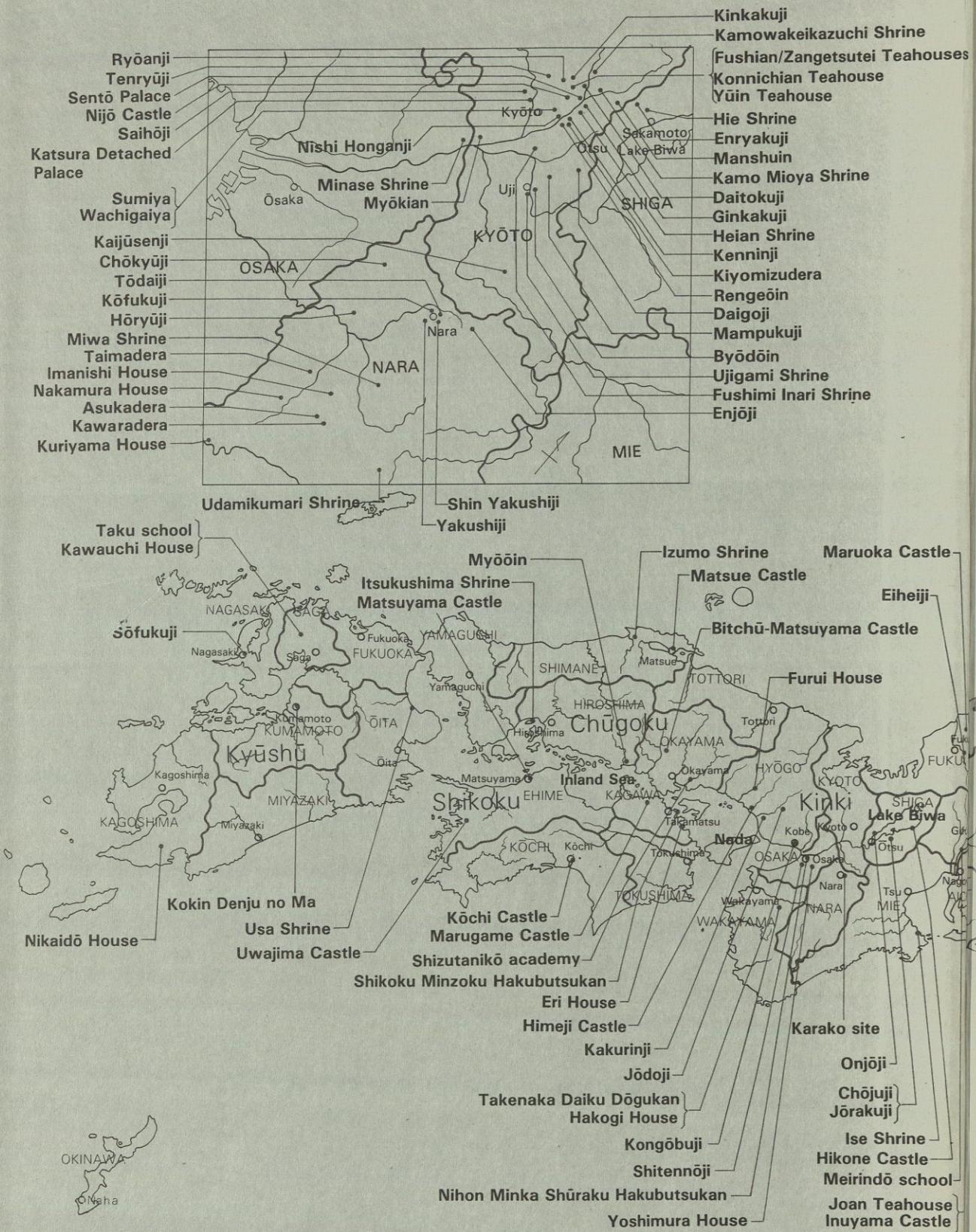
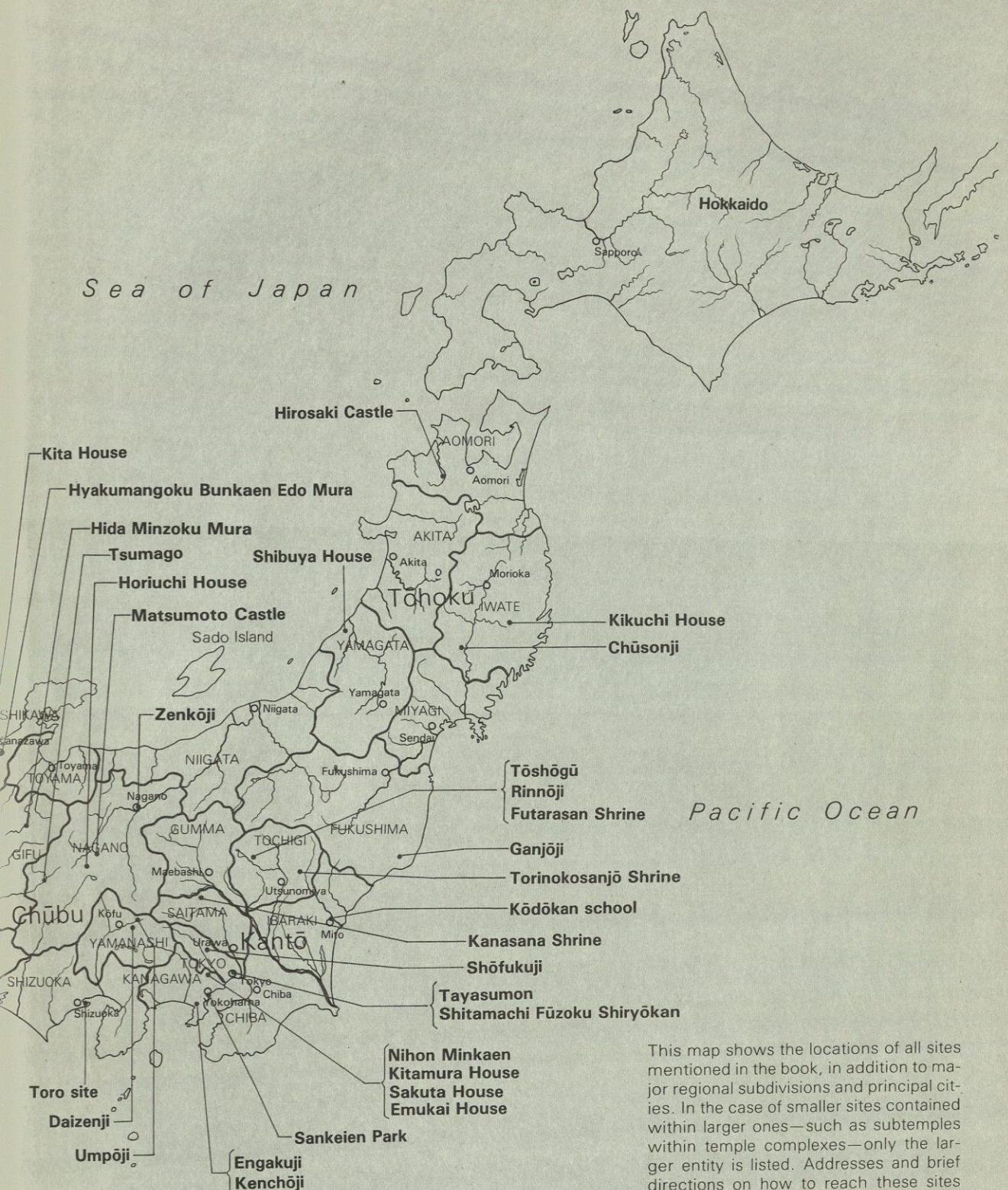


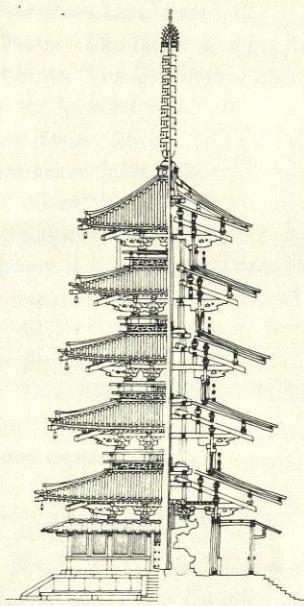
MAP OF JAPANESE ARCHITECTURE





This map shows the locations of all sites mentioned in the book, in addition to major regional subdivisions and principal cities. In the case of smaller sites contained within larger ones—such as subtemples within temple complexes—the larger entity is listed. Addresses and brief directions on how to reach these sites are given in the appendix "Sites Mentioned in the Text." Descriptions of all sites can be located in the text by referring to the index.

What is JAPANESE ARCHITECTURE?



Kazuo Nishi and Kazuo Hozumi

translated, adapted, and with an introduction by
H. Mack Horton

KODANSHA INTERNATIONAL LTD.

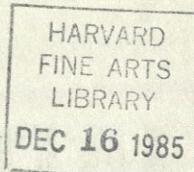
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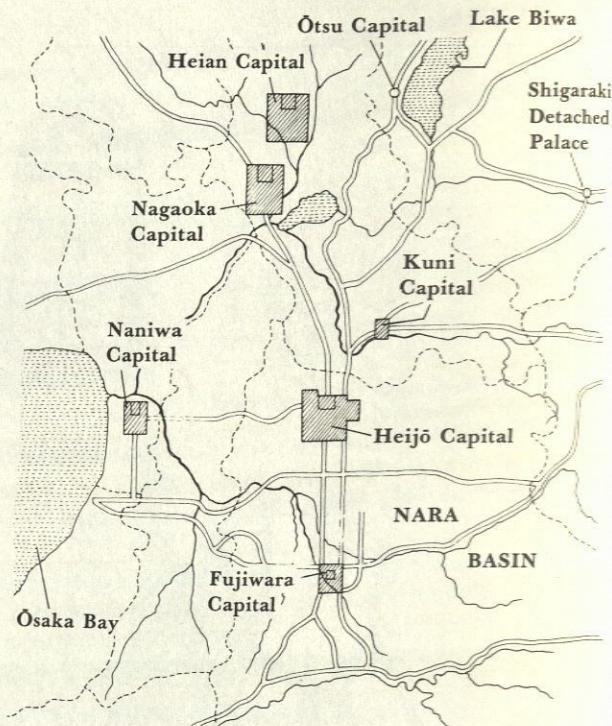
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THE ANCIENT CAPITALS

Naniwa—The First Planned City Japanese imperial palaces were traditionally rebuilt with the death of each sovereign for reasons of ritual purity, and the communities that grew up around each new palace tended to develop haphazardly. With the accession of Emperor Kōtoku in 645, however, a pre-conceived plan for his new imperial city was put into effect at Naniwa, located in present-day Ōsaka. The move to Naniwa had been occasioned by the Taika Reforms of that same year, wherein the court undertook revolutionary legal, economic, and social changes to modernize the country according to the Chinese Tang-dynasty model, the most advanced in the world at that time. As part of the effort to develop the nation, the capital was moved outside of the Nara Basin, the site of earlier centers of government, to a seaside location well suited to commerce (fig. 108). In 667, however, the capital was transferred to Ōtsu on Lake Biwa, and then soon thereafter the court returned to the Nara area.

The Fujiwara Capital By the late seventh century, relations with the Asian continent had necessitated a fixed center of government. A splendid capital was accordingly built in 694 to the south of present-day Nara City, on a plain surrounded by the fabled Unebi, Kagu, and Miminashi hills. At this imperial city, called the Fujiwara Capital, the court presided over the burgeoning growth of the new, post-Taika Japan. Major temples such as Yakushiji were established, and great poets such as Kakinomoto Hitomaro composed verses that were later collected into Japan's oldest extant poem anthology, the *Man'yōshū*. The city was laid out on a rectangular grid about 3.8 km north to south and 2.1 km east to west. Entrance from the north was via three thoroughfares, the Upper (Kamitsumichi), Middle (Nakatsumichi), and Lower (Shimotsumichi) Roads.

The Heijō Capital Though the Fujiwara Capital had been expected to be permanent, geographic considerations forced a move after less than two decades to what is now Nara City, twenty kilometers to the north. This first truly permanent capital was formally established in 710 and named Heijō-kyō, "Capital of the Peaceful Citadel" (see pp. 58–59). The Middle and Lower Roads that bounded the east and west sides of the Fujiwara Capital led to the east and center



108. Relative sizes and locations of early capitals

of Heijō, which was about twice as wide as its southern predecessor.

From Heijō to Heian The court was to remain at the Heijō Capital for three quarters of a century, from 710 to 784. The Emperor Shōmu did leave Heijō for some years, though, first commanding the establishment of the Kuni Capital in 740, then electing to move it once more to Naniwa in 744, only to have a succession of earthquakes convince him to return to Heijō in 745. For much of those years he actually governed from yet another locale, the Shigaraki Detached Palace in present-day Shiga Prefecture (fig. 108).

Emperor Kammu made the final departure from Heijō in 784. He established his new capital, Nagaoka, some thirty-five kilometers to the north in order to distance the court from the growing influence of the Nara Buddhist temples. But it soon came to be feared that an evil influence had infested the site, and Kammu peremptorily quit the area in 794 to found a new imperial city even farther north, which he called Heian-kyō, "Capital of Peace and Tranquility." Heian was to remain the capital until Emperor Meiji (1852–1912) moved his court to Edo and renamed that city Tōkyō ("Eastern Capital") in 1868.

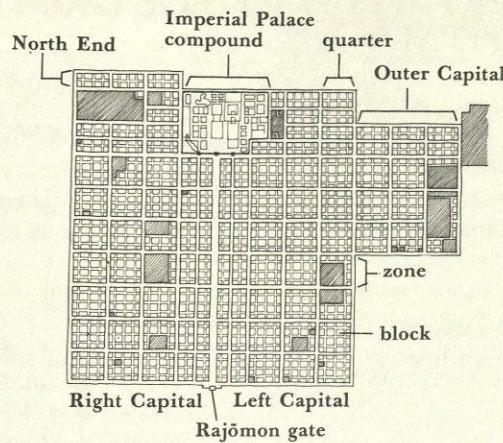
THE HEIJŌ AND HEIAN CAPITALS

The Heijō Capital The Heijō Capital was built at the height of a period of international commerce and exchange throughout Asia that centered on the Tang court and the Silk Road. Chinese prelates such as the blind master of the Lü (in Japanese, Ritsu) sect, Jian Zhen (Ganjin in Japanese; 689–763), came to Heijō to impart Buddhist teachings, and even an Indian monk attended the ceremony that marked the completion of the Great Buddha of Tōdaiji. It was not surprising then, that Heijō was designed as a copy on a smaller scale of the Tang-dynasty capital of Changan.

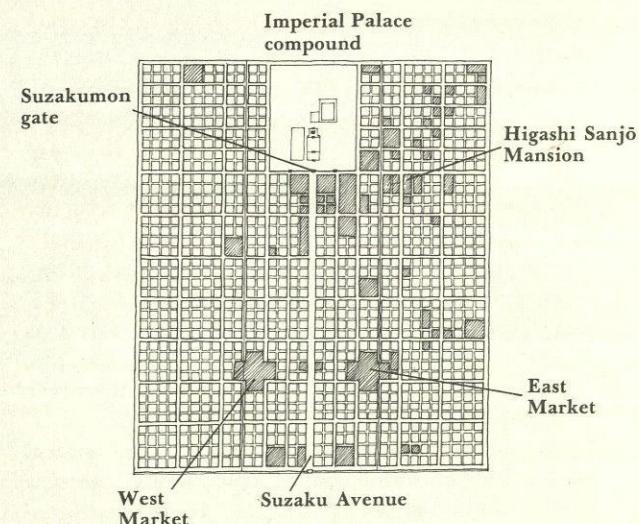
The city was composed of nine strips or “zones” (*jō*) running east and west, each one referred to by the number of the avenue at its southern border (fig. 109). Each zone was subdivided by north-south avenues into eight “quarters” (*bō*), numbered in terms of how far each was removed from the central Suzaku Avenue. That grand thoroughfare bisected the city into the “Left Capital” (*Sakyō*) and the “Right Capital” (*Ukyō*), the latter being to the west rather than the east for it was to the right of the Imperial Palace, which faced south. Thus the Ninth Zone, First Quarter, of the Left Capital was the southernmost quarter bordering Suzaku Avenue on the east. Each quarter was further subdivided into sixteen blocks (*chō*), which were 120 meters on a side, or a little narrower when bordered by a wide avenue, and these were further systematically broken down into even smaller subunits, with the result that any house lot in the capital could be pinpointed. The plan of the city was uniform save for a section of three half-quarters to the northwest, called the “North End” (*Kitanobe*), and the twelve wards to the east, known as the “Outer Capital” (*Gekyō*). The Imperial Palace compound was also slightly irregular in plan.

Living space in the Heijō Capital was apportioned according to rank and power: the more influential the resident, the larger the lot and the nearer to the Imperial Palace. It is recorded, for example, that the Tamura no Tei, mansion of the powerful mid-Nara-period figure Fujiwara no Nakamaro (706?–64), covered four blocks (one-fourth of a *bō*). Important temples also covered several blocks.

The Heian Capital The Heian Capital resembled that of Heijō in its basic grid layout, but it was com-



109. Heijō Capital in Nara period



110. Heian Capital in Heian period

pletely regular in plan. The blocks too were a uniform 120 meters on a side and were not affected by varying street widths as they had been at Heijō. There, it had been the distance from the centers of two parallel streets that remained a constant 120 meters, but at Heian, it was the size of each block that stayed the same.

As at Heijō, the Heian Capital was bisected by a great avenue called Suzaku, as wide as a modern ten-lane highway, that ran to the Imperial Palace. Over the centuries, however, Heian, today the city of Kyōto, developed asymmetrically to the north and east, and the palace, which was frequently the victim of fires, was relocated in the early fourteenth century to the east of the Heian-period compound. The present palace complex contains only a fraction of the number of buildings it originally held.

HEIJŌ—FIRST OF THE GREAT CAPITALS

The Move from Fujiwara The court of the Nara period (710–784) presided over a social and cultural efflorescence unprecedented in Japanese history. Its legal and governmental systems remained influential until the modern period, and its art and architecture became the classical norm against which later work was measured. Let us take a second look then at the birth and configuration of the Heijō Capital.

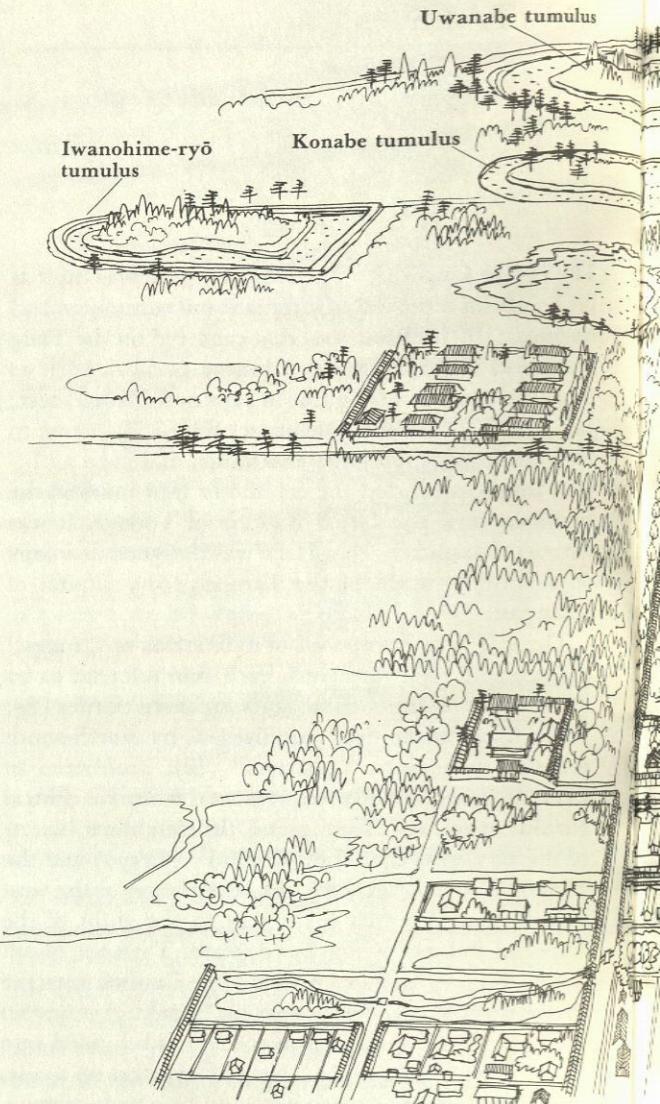
Preparation for the move north from the Fujiwara Capital officially began on the fifteenth day of the second month of 708, when Empress Gemmei (661–721) issued the proclamation of her intent. On the twentieth of the next month, she toured the Heijō site and then days later appointed two men to head the bureau in charge of the building project.

The move was effected on the tenth of the third month, 710. The empress is said to have composed this poem on the occasion, while viewing Mayumigaoka, the hill on which her deceased husband, Prince Kusakabe (662–89), was interred: “If I leave behind / The Asuka Capital / Of the coursing birds, / Will I ever see again / The place wherein rests my lord?” (*Man'yōshū*, no. 78). The “Asuka Capital” she left refers to Fujiwara. Work continued on the new capital well after the empress herself had arrived, and the strain on the treasury and labor force was immense. In the ninth month of 711, for example, a proclamation had to be issued forbidding corvée laborers from absconding.

Choosing the Site The *Shoku Nihongi*, the second of Japan’s national histories, records that the new capital was chosen on the basis of Chinese-style geomancy. This involved divination by interpreting cracks in tortoise shells (*plastromancy*), as well as satisfying the directional requirements of the “Four Birds and Beasts” (*shikin*), the Cyan Dragon, Vermilion Sparrow, White Tiger, and Dusky Warrior. These requirements stipulate a river to the east, low and damp area to the south, a long road to the west, and a rise to the north. The site satisfied all four. Moreover, its location in the north of the Nara Basin made it convenient for commerce and strategic for governing.

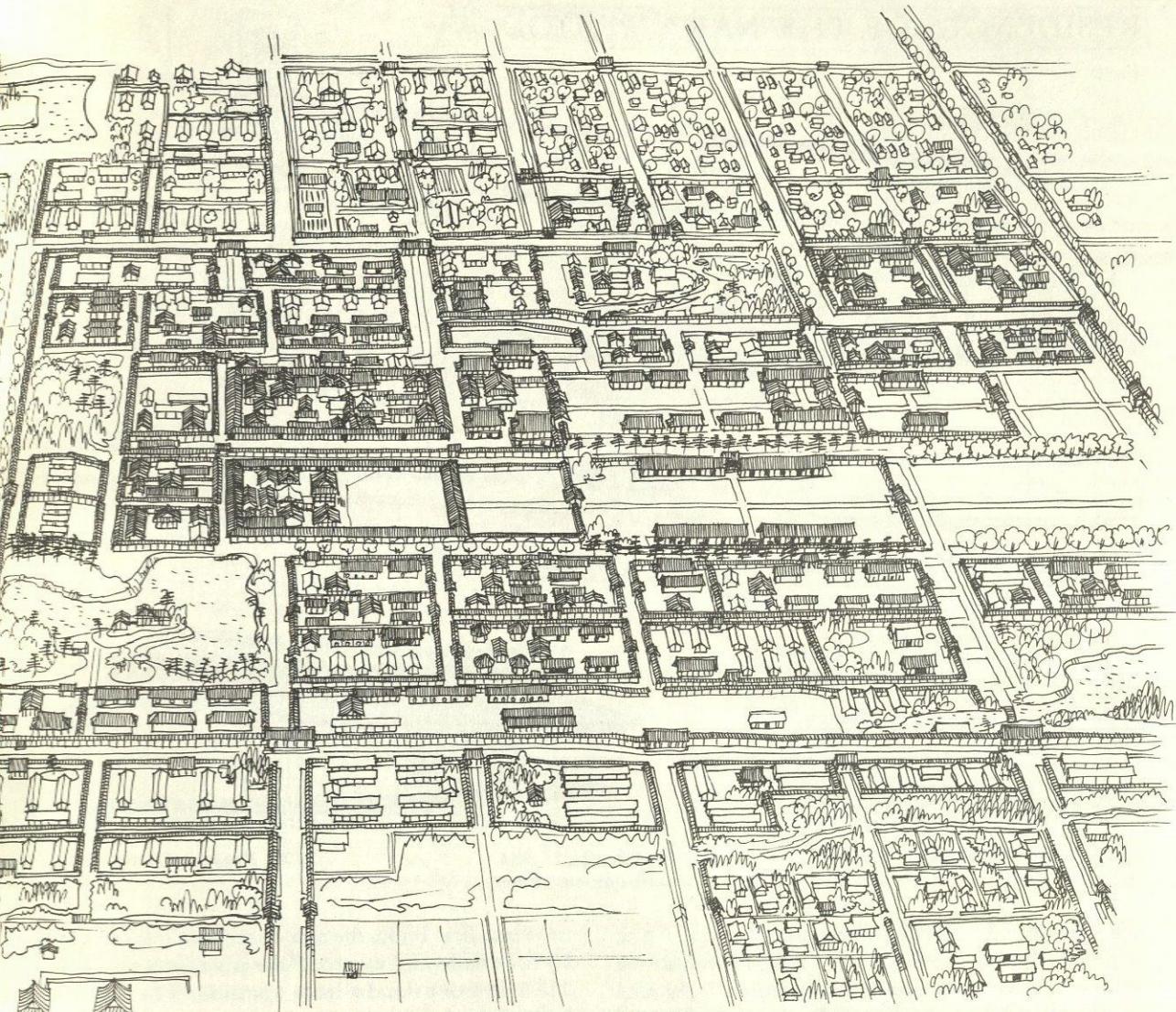
The Heijō Capital and Palace As we have already seen, Heijō was designed on a Chinese-style grid plan (see fig. 109). Basically a rectangle, the capital measured 4.7 km north to south, and 4.2 km east to west, with additional sections extending beyond the rectangle to the northwest and east. At its height it is thought to have had a population of about two hundred thousand, including the immediate environs.

The main entrance to the city was through the Ra-



jōmon (Rampart Gate) to the south, which opened on to the great Suzaku Avenue that bisected the city and ran for nearly four kilometers to the Suzakumon (Vermilion Sparrow Gate) at its northern end. The Suzakumon in turn was the main southern entrance to the Imperial Palace (Daidairi), a compound a kilometer north to south by a kilometer and a quarter east to west.

Within the Imperial Palace were located the East and West Imperial Assembly Halls (Chōshūden), then, to the north, the Court of Government (Chōdōin), with twelve buildings for the Eight Ministries and related functions symmetrically arranged along the central axis. North again was the Great Hall of State (Daigokuden), where the emperor supervised the governmental process. At the north of the com-



111. Imperial Palace and northern blocks of Heijō Capital, viewed from west

pound was the Inner Palace (Dairi), containing the Throne Hall (Shishinden) and the imperial residence halls. Dozens of other offices, stables, and storehouses surrounded the main subcompounds just mentioned.

The Court of Government and the Great Hall of State were dismantled when Emperor Shōmu temporarily established the above-mentioned Kuni Capital in 740, then built anew to the east of their original locations when he returned to Heijō in 745. The complexes are referred to as the First and Second Court of Government and Hall of State for this reason.

Figure 111 shows the northern part of the capital from the west. At right center are the Imperial Assembly Halls, followed to the left by the Court of Government with its twelve halls, the Great Hall of

State, and the Inner Palace. The older compounds, nearly vacant, border them at the west. Yet another enclosure, the Palace of the Western Pond, is located at the northwest corner of the Imperial Palace compound. Beyond the compound to the northeast are the Iwanohime-ryō, Uwanabe, and Konabe tumuli.

Much of the old Heijō Capital returned to rice fields within four decades after Emperor Kammu departed. Since the small city of Nara today occupies only the eastern part of the site, archaeological investigation is much easier to carry out than at the site of the Heian Capital, which is still a large metropolis.

THE HEIAN CAPITAL

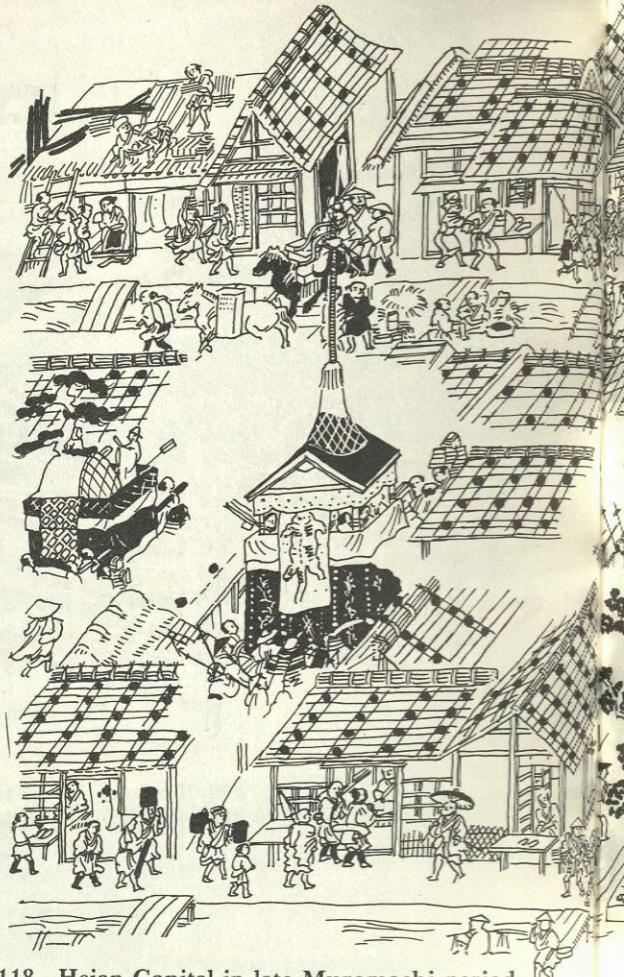
Heian—The Heart of Japan Through the centuries since the founding of the Heian Capital in 794, in which it saw the arrogation of monarchical prerogatives by the Fujiwara family, the establishment of three shogunates, and near-total destruction in the Ōnin War of 1467–77, the city continued to be thought of as the heart of Japan. Even today it bears the name Kyōto, “Capital City,” though the emperor and the National Diet are located in Tōkyō, the “Eastern Capital.” For most of Japan’s history it was the center not only of government but of learning and the arts, and all other parts of the country bowed to its cultural ascendancy.

Heian was planned on an even larger scale than Heijō, being 4.5 km east to west and 5.2 km north to south. As at Heijō, the great Rajōmon gate, made famous in modern times as Rashōmon (a later pronunciation) by the author Akutagawa Ryūnosuke and then the film director Kurosawa Akira, was the main entrance to the south, opening on to the imposing Suzaku Avenue that bisected the city. The Left Capital later came to be also called Rakuyōjō or “Luoyang City” and the Right Capital, Chōanjō or “Changan City,” both names borrowed from those of the Tang-dynasty capitals. Due, though, to the inhospitable dampness of much of Chōanjō, the population gravitated to Rakuyōjō at the east, and the term Rakuchū, “within Luoyang,” came to be synonymous for the capital as a whole.

Suzaku Avenue was lined with willows celebrated in folk songs such as the following: “Into the distance / All along Grand Avenue, / The light-green willows! / The light-green willows! / See them all so laden low, / Now in fullest bloom! / Now in fullest bloom!” At its northern terminus was the Imperial Palace, 1.4 km north to south and 1.1 km east to west, that housed the governmental and residential buildings as it had at Heijō, though with many additional structures, such as the Court of Abundant Pleasures (Burakuin), a complex as large as the Court of Government and built as a banquet facility.

The present Kyōto Imperial Palace, now used only for accession ceremonies, is located two kilometers to the east of the original. The palace burned often throughout its history, and while rebuilding took place the emperor would live at the mansion of his regent or chancellor, who usually was his maternal relative. These temporary lodgings were called “town palaces” (*sato dairi*). By the early twelfth century, emperors were starting to reside permanently in these town palaces and return to the Imperial Palace only for state occasions.

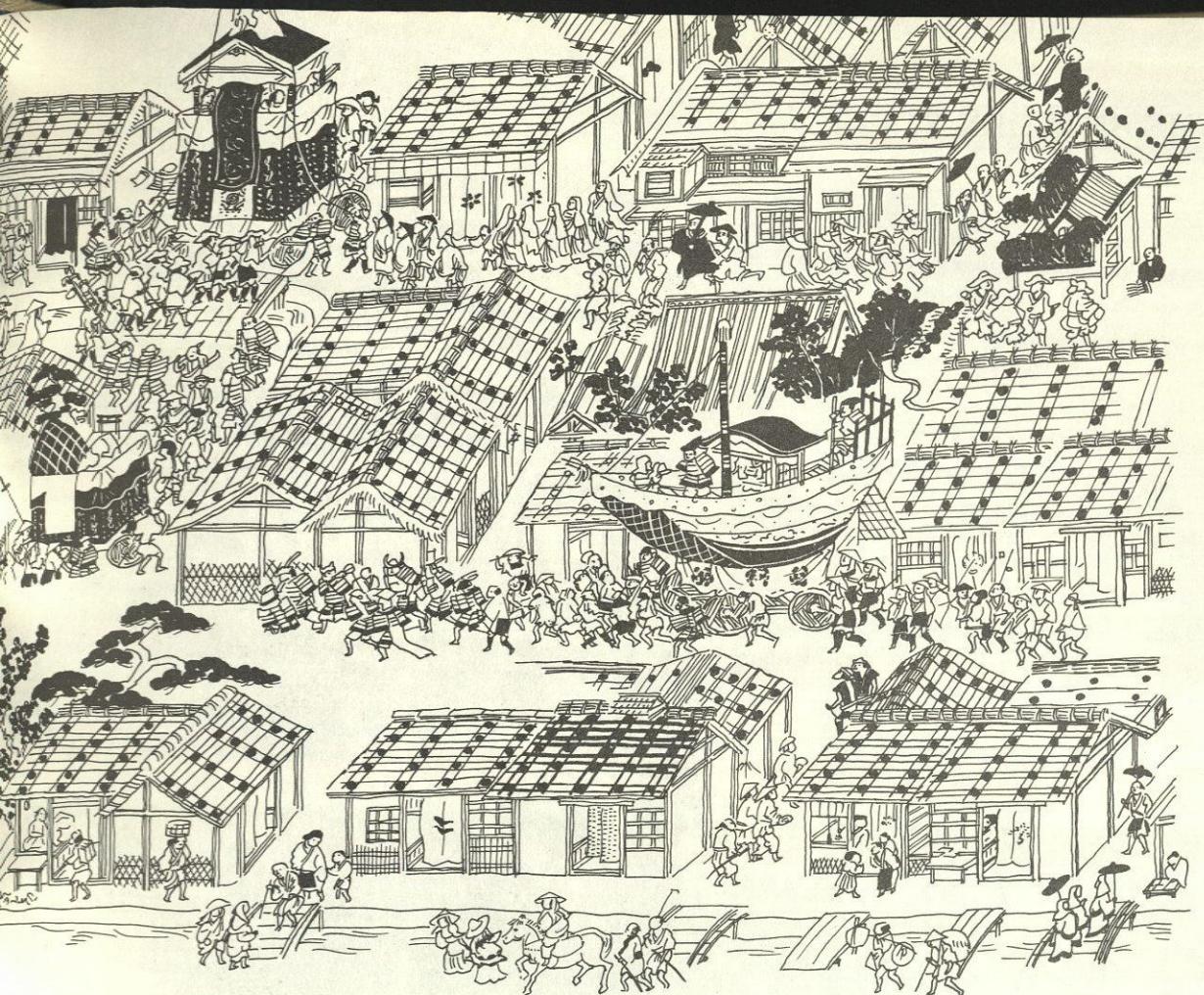
The present Imperial Palace compound is also



118. Heian Capital in late Muromachi period

much smaller than the original, and its buildings are rebuilt versions of those of the domestic quarters, which had by the mid Heian period already taken over most of the functions of the government buildings to the south. But the style of the old Great Hall of State can be seen today at Heian Shrine (Kyōto City), which was built as a two-thirds scale replica of the original. But the original roof of the Great Hall was hipped and did not take on the hip-and-gable design of Heian Shrine until a rebuilding in 1072. The Heian Shrine replica was made from information assembled from such secondary sources as the “Picture Scroll of Annual Rites and Ceremonies” (*Nenchū gyōji emaki*), originally painted in sixty scrolls in about 1173 by Tokiwa Mitsunaga, at the behest of Emperor Goshirakawa, but now surviving only in a copy ordered by Emperor Gomizunoo (1596–1680) in 1626. Only a portion of the reproduction exists, and none of the original. Another valuable source was an Edo-period study of the Imperial Palace, the *Dai Dairi zukōshō*, completed in 1797 in fifty parts by the expert on ancient usages Uramatsu Mitsuyo (1736–1804).

Urban Culture There are a number of theories concerning the population of the Heian Capital at



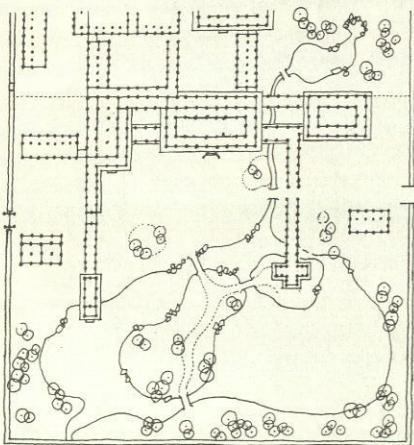
various times in its history, but it seems reasonable to estimate that at the height of Fujiwara power in the tenth century the city held about 150,000 people. In the shops and residences lining the streets of that bustling metropolis a distinctive culture took shape that prized *miyabi* or courtly elegance, a taste for the refined that set the capital and its residents apart from the coarser world beyond. In a society that seldom had recourse to the death penalty for aristocratic transgressors, exile from this cultural center was the worst fate imaginable for members of the upper class. Estate owners too tended to stay in the city and left the on-site administration to deputies.

The Development of Commerce As had been the case in the Fujiwara and Heijō Capitals, there were two areas officially set aside for markets in Heian, one in either half of the city. They were accordingly called the East and West Markets. With the decline in the southwestern part of the city, the West Market ceased to be used. Over time, the East Market too changed in character, developing from a place of commerce to a location for festivals. Buying and selling concurrently expanded into the city itself and centered at the intersections of various thoroughfares that became known for trade. Some of the most bustl-

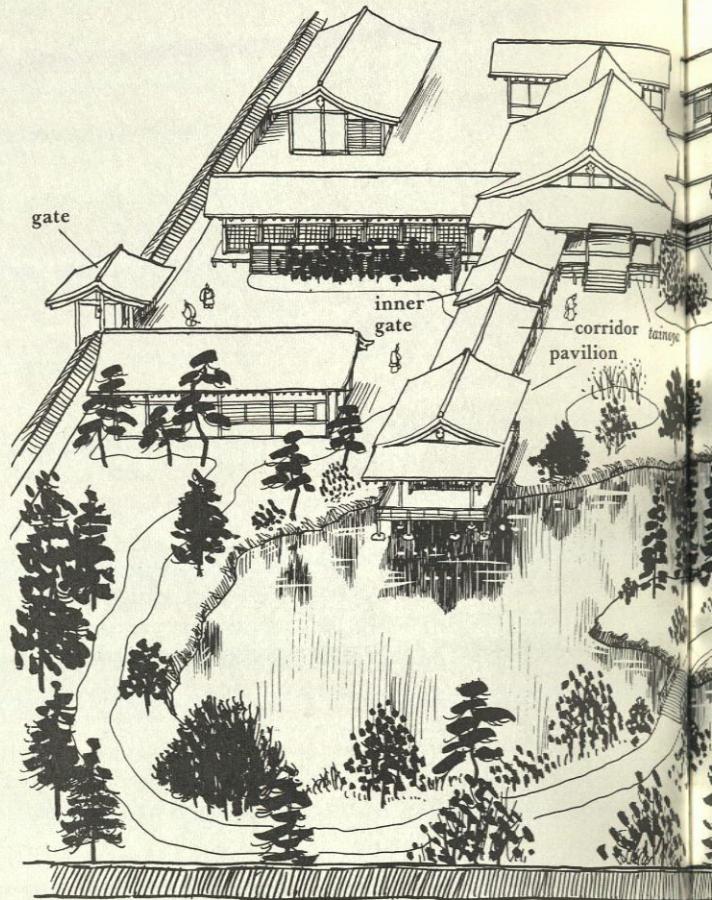
ing of these commercial areas were located at the intersections of Machi Street (modern Shimmachi Street), which ran north and south near the middle of the Left Capital, and Second, Third, Fourth, and Seventh Avenues, and Rokkakunokōji and Nishinokōji Streets as well.

City Dwellers The quality of life in medieval Heian can be gathered to some extent from a section of a pair of screens entitled "Scenes in and around the Capital" (*Rakuchū rakugai zu*; fig. 118). The screens are believed to have been presented to the warrior Uesugi Kenshin (1530–78) by the brilliant general Oda Nobunaga. There is more activity than usual in the streets in the illustration for it depicts a famous Kyōto annual event, the Gion Festival. Young men pull the various gaily decorated floats through the streets as the population looks on. Each float was built and maintained by a certain neighborhood, and competition was fierce (and still is today) to determine who could outfit the finest. It was, in fact, the neighborhood organizations and not the central government that arranged and financed the display, suggesting how strong independent commerce had become by the late Muromachi period.

THE SHINDEN STYLE



119. Hōjūji Mansion



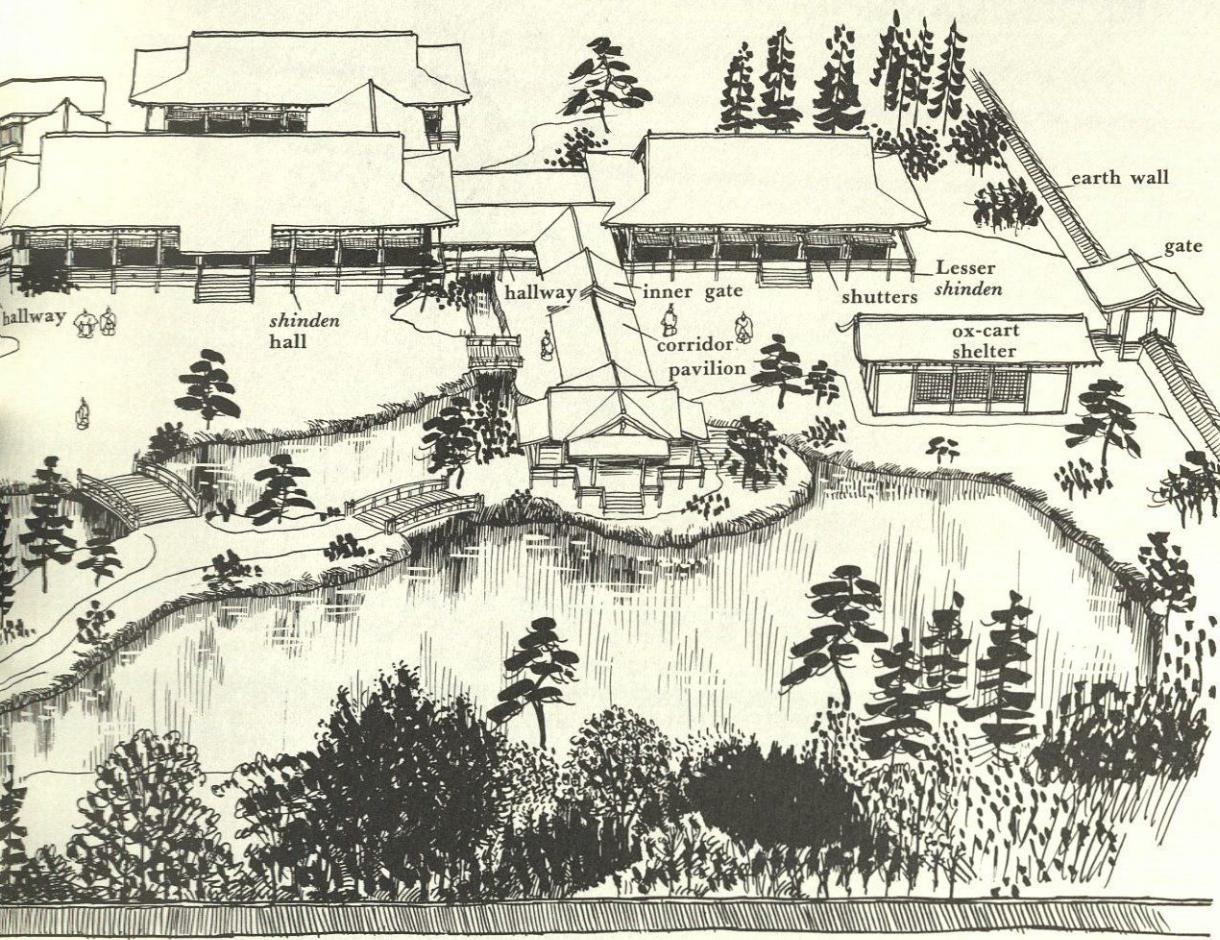
120. Hōjūji Mansion (reconstructed)

Residences of the Heian Aristocracy The Shinden style (*shinden zukuri*) takes its name from the *shinden*, the central structure in such complexes. The word literally means "hall for sleeping." Though every known Shinden-style complex had its own unique aspects, most faced south over a courtyard where ceremonies and entertainments were performed. South of the courtyard a pond was dug with a central island reached by bridges. At the pond's periphery might be a hill, made from earth excavated to create the pond, with trees planted on it. Boating on the pond was a favorite form of relaxation for the fortunate residents of such mansions.

Shinden Buildings and Grounds The *shinden* hall was the residence of the master of the house and place where he met guests and officiated at rites and festivities. Projecting from one or more sides of the *shinden* hall were hallways (*watadono*) leading to subsidiary spaces called *tainoya* (literally meaning "opposed halls"), mostly allotted to family members

and their servants. Corridors (*rō*) led from these *tainoya* to the pond, where they ended in small "fishing pavilions" (*tsuridono*) or "fountain pavilions" (*izumidono*). Midway along these southern corridors were "inner gates" (*chūmon*) through which one entered the complex, and the corridors were accordingly called "inner gate corridors" (*chūmonrō*). These corridors were quite spacious and contained the offices of the household staff.

Shinden residences were usually built on one-block lots (120 square meters), though some, like the Higashi Sanjō mansion of the Fujiwara, was two blocks north to south. The lot was surrounded by thick earth walls (*tsujibei*), which were faced with planks on both sides and topped by tiled roofs. Gates were set into the eastern and western walls, one being the Main Gate (Seimon) and the other the Rear Gate (Uramon). Inside the gate was a place for ox carts, the elegantly lacquered vehicles that were the preferred conveyance of the Heian aristocracy, and



also places to shelter the escorts and servants of guests. Most buildings were connected by hallways or corridors. The grounds were lower at the southwest, and the pond was accordingly fed by a stream that flowed in from the northeast. Water flowed by and large to the southwest in Heian, and this accounts for the dampness and consequent undesirability of that quarter of the city.

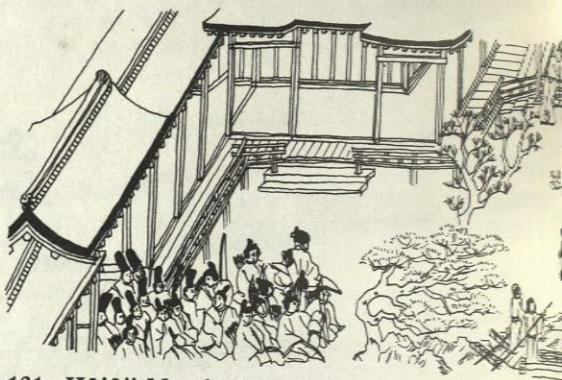
Bilateral symmetry is thought by some to have been the ideal for Shinden structures, but the actual examples we know of do not seem to have been so constructed. One possible reason for this is that the main hall faced south, but due to the garden and pond the main entrance was to one side, making the opposite side the rear. The arrangement of spaces thus progressed east to west though the buildings faced south, and irregularity was the result.

The Hōjūji Mansion The "Picture Scroll of Annual Rites and Ceremonies" and other sources have allowed historians to reconstruct on paper the Hō-

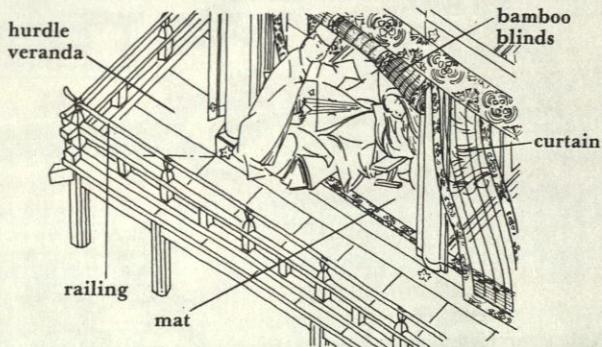
jūji Mansion, one fine example of the Shinden style (figs. 119–20). It was a huge complex, with western and northern tainoya, an eastern "lesser shinden" which corresponded to an eastern tainoya, and eastern and western fishing pavilions. The eastern of the two pavilions had a unique cross-shaped plan and was located not on the bank of the pond, as was usually the case, but actually on the island itself. It thus helped integrate the garden and the architecture of the site.

The mansion was built in what is now southeast Kyōto by Chancellor (Daijō Daijin) Fujiwara no Tamemitsu (942–92). He made it into a temple after the death of his daughter Kishi (d. 985), a favorite of Emperor Kazan (968–1008), who took holy orders after her death. The Emperor Goshirakawa later added other structures nearby, such as the Thirty-Three-Bay Hall (Sanjūsangendō or Rengeōin), when he assumed ownership.

DAILY LIFE IN A SHINDEN MANSION



121. Hōjūji Mansion



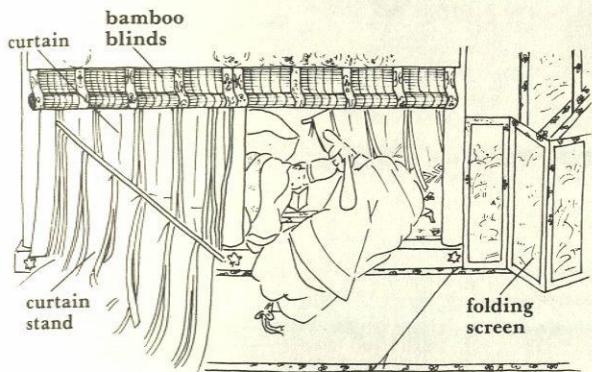
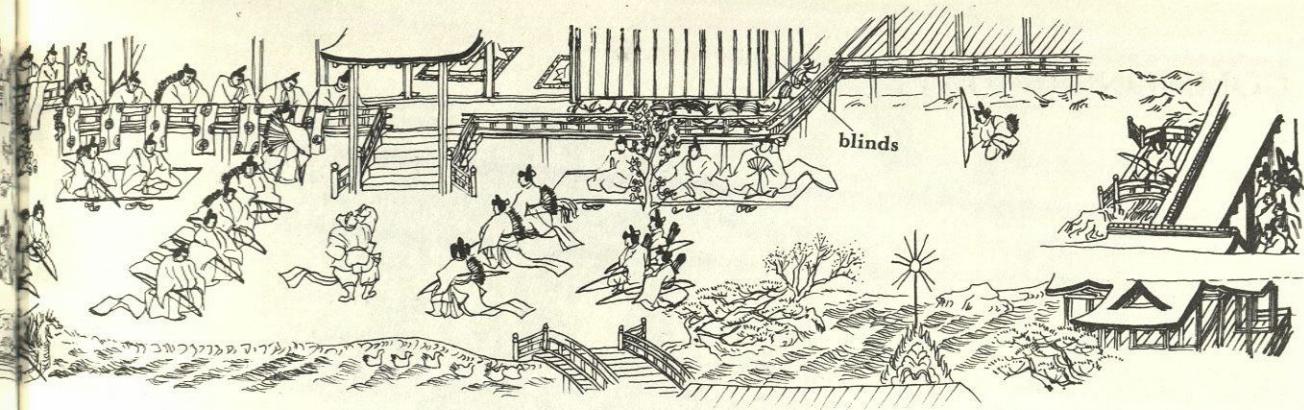
122. Hurdle veranda and peripheral chamber (*hisashi*)

The Shinden Style as Seen in Picture Scrolls Not a single Shinden complex survives today, and though excavations can suggest representative building plans and garden configurations, we must rely on secondary sources for information on elevations and interiors. Perhaps the best such sources are the narrative picture scrolls (*emakimono*), some interspersed with text, that provided entertainment and instruction to members of the Heian and medieval upper classes. Many of these scrolls, which could reach to ten or more meters in length, are illustrated versions of the literature of the day, such as *The Tale of Genji Picture Scroll* (*Genji monogatari emaki*) and *The Pillow Book Picture Scroll* (*Makura no sōshi emaki*). Others portray the lives of Buddhist saints, the history of holy places, or famous legends. Such accounts obviously required the depiction of interior and exterior architectural environments, and the scrolls are consequently invaluable tools for the historian of residential and religious buildings styles.

Figure 121, from the *Picture Scroll of Annual Rites and Ceremonies*, shows the formal visit made at the beginning of the year by the emperor to the residence of the retired emperor and empress. The event, called the *chōkin gyōkō*, involved entertainments and a banquet. The *chōkin gyōkō* depicted in the scroll is that of the Emperor Nijō (1143–65), which he made in 1163 to the Hōjūji Mansion of his father,

the Tonsured Retired Emperor Goshirakawa. **Aesthetic Rivalry** In the section of the *Picture Scroll of Annual Rites and Ceremonies* shown in figure 121 a dance is being performed in front of the Emperor Nijō and the Tonsured Retired Emperor Goshirakawa, both of whom, though not shown out of deference to their exalted status, sit on the decorated mats partially visible behind the front stairs of the central *shinden* hall. Normally, the two monarchs would be shielded by reticulated shutters (*shitomido*; described on pp. 30–31), but on this day the shutters have been removed to allow them to view the performance. To the left, on the veranda of the *shinden* and on the open hallway (*sukiyatadono*), members of the nobility sit and watch the dance. They wear court costumes called *sokutai*, with long trains (*kyo*), which they drape over the railings. The longer the train, the higher ranked the wearer. White was stipulated for winter and brown (*suō*) or double indigo (*futaai*) for summer, but at observances of this sort individual color preferences were countenanced. The color combinations chosen for the various underrobes reflected the taste and panache of each wearer, and such gatherings became fashion shows with no small element of competitiveness.

The women that watch the proceedings through the blinds to the right of the central staircase are also deeply concerned with the aesthetic effect of their



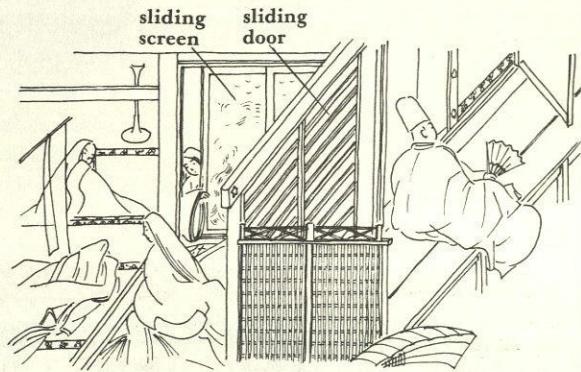
123. Shinden interior

clothing. They wear many layers of robes, with the various colors showing at the hems that are allowed to tastefully show beneath the blinds. In a society as aware of aesthetic subtleties as that of the Heian aristocracy, a solecism in choosing one's garments could brand the wearer as aesthetically insensitive and have major consequences in terms of social standing or even official preferment.

In the left foreground of the picture, a boat floats in the pond, and at the right, the roof of a temporary shelter for performances of court music (*gagaku*) is visible. The boat has a dragon-headed prow and is one of a pair customarily used; the other would bear the head of a *geki*, a mythical water bird said to resemble a cormorant but with white feathers.

Interior Decor of the Shinden Complex Picture scrolls about court life, such as the *Diary of Murasaki Shikibu Picture Scroll* (*Murasaki Shikibu nikki emaki*) and the above-mentioned *The Tale of Genji Picture Scroll* and *The Pillow Book Picture Scroll* are particularly good sources of information about Shinden-style interiors.

Evidence from these sources shows hurdle verandas (*sunoko en*), made of wooden planks laid down with slight gaps between each to prevent pooling of rain water (fig. 122). They were bordered by railings (*kōran*) elegantly curved at the ends. Floors were also of wooden planks, but thick, movable mats of woven straw with silk borders were used for sitting



124. Shinden partitions

or reclining. Swinging doors (*tsumado*) were often employed at the ends of buildings and sliding doors (*yarido*; fig. 124) on verandas. Exterior partitions consisted of the reticulated shutters noted earlier or simply of hanging bamboo (*sudare*), often with curtains (*kabeshiro*) behind. Interior partitions were occasionally built-in sliding screens, often with paintings (fig. 124). These screens were originally called *shōji* but later termed *fusuma*. The word *shōji* changed in subsequent years to denote the sliding translucent screens of white paper used on the exteriors of Shoin-style residences (see pp. 74-75). Far more frequently though, interior space was divided by means of movable screens or curtains. These included folding screens (*byōbu*; fig. 123), one-piece screens that did not fold (*tsuitate*), curtain stands (*kichō*; fig. 123), and light, hanging tapestries with Chinese- or Japanese-style scenes (*zeshō* or *zejō*). But these movable partitions only shielded those behind from sight and not from sound. Nor did they protect against the cold, thus accounting for the many layers of clothing Heian aristocrats wore. But even with robes and such heating devices as "charcoal boxes" (*subitsu*) and *hibachi*, winters in Shinden houses were uncomfortable.