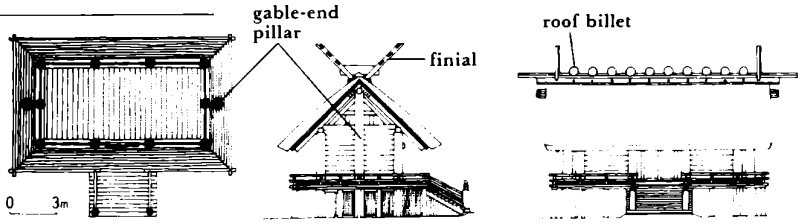
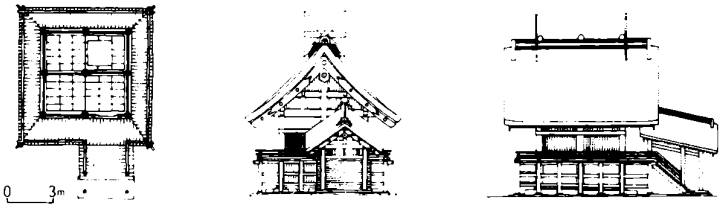
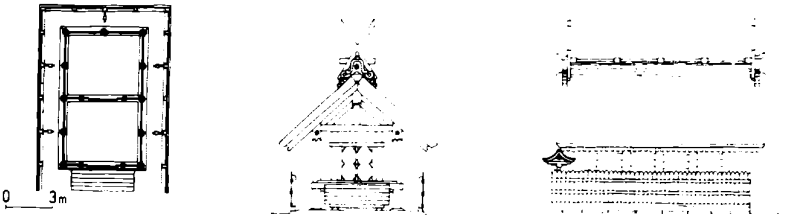
SHINTŌ SHRINES



70. Shimmei style: Main Shrine of Ise Shrine



71. Taisha style: Main Shrine of Izumo Shrine



72. Sumiyoshi style: one of Main Shrines of Sumiyoshi Shrine

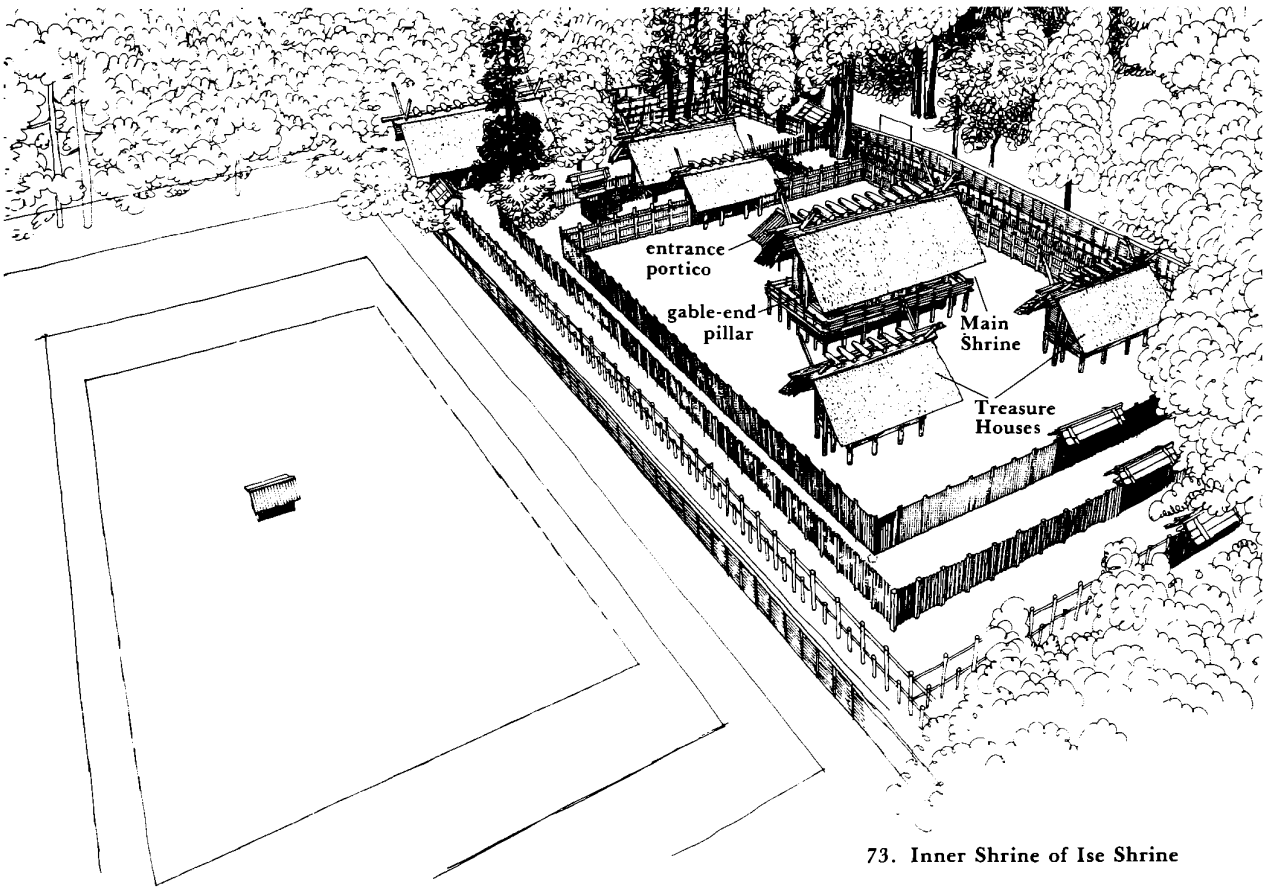
Nature Worship Shintō, "the Way of the Gods," is Japan's indigenous religion. Animistic in nature, it worships not only anthropomorphic deities, but also the spirits of awe-inspiring elements of nature, especially certain mountains and trees. Early shrines used none of the monumental architecture of later Shintō structures. Some, like Miwa Shrine (Nara Prefecture) and Kanasana Shrine (Saitama Prefecture) have as their central object of worship the mountain behind them, and thus even today have no central building corresponding to the "main hall" (*honden*) used in other Shintō complexes. Instead, in the case of Miwa Shrine, a massive rock called a *yorishiro* atop Mt. Miwa is the focus of the sacred precinct. At the base of the mountain is a small worship hall (*haiden*) and a *torii*, the characteristic post and lintel gate that indicates a Shintō sanctuary (see fig. 83 for an illustration of a torii).

The Shrine Prototype Actual shrine structures were probably built in response to the need to summon a deity in order to offer prayers for a bountiful crop or express thanks for a good harvest. These early structures, the prototypes of the shrines we know today, are found either in a central location in a village or before mountains, boulders, and other places where the gods were thought to dwell. These original constructions were most likely temporary in nature.

The configuration of the early shrines is unknown, but possibly resembled the portable shrines (*mikoshi*) still carried on poles during festivals today. Indeed, the arrangement of the foundation stones at Kasuga Shrine (see fig. 74b-d) and Kamo Shrine (see fig. 75) suggest that their principal structures were originally movable.

The Oldest Shintō Shrine Styles The main types of Shintō shrines in use today took their final forms after the introduction of Buddhist architecture. Though influenced to varying degrees by Buddhist temple forms, they nevertheless remain stylistically separate and distinct. The three most venerable Shintō shrine styles are the Shimmei (fig. 70), Taisha (fig. 71), and Sumiyoshi (fig. 72). Each is primarily identified with one famous complex—Ise Shrine (Ise City, Mie Prefecture) for the Shimmei, Izumo Shrine (Hikawa District, Shimane Prefecture) for the Taisha, and Sumiyoshi Shrine (Ōsaka City) for the Sumiyoshi.

Ise Shrine actually consists of two shrine complexes, the Outer (Gekū) and Inner (Naikū; fig. 73). The most important structure is the Main Shrine (Shōden; figs. 70, 73) of the Naikū. Located in the center of the complex, it has an entrance portico projecting from its south side. Shrines (and other types of buildings as well) with entrances in the side



73. Inner Shrine of Ise Shrine

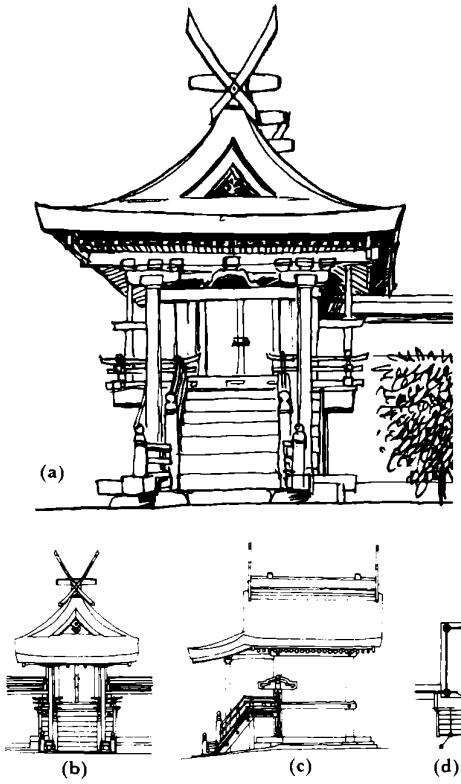
parallel to the roof ridge are called *hirairi*, "side-entered," as opposed to those entered at the gable end (*tsumairi*). Visual support for the roof ridge is provided by two massive pillars, called *munamochibashira*, that stand independently beyond the gable sides of the structure and lean slightly inward. Above the plank walls is a miscanthus (*kaya*) roof topped by ten roof billets (*katsuogi*) and, at either end, forked finials (*chigi*) that are extensions of the bargeboards. The floor is elevated on posts. Surrounding the Main Shrine and the two Treasure Houses (Hōden) to the north are concentric fences, the Mizugaki, Uchi (Inner) Tamagaki, Tono (Outer) Tamagaki, and, surrounding the whole, the Itagaki.

To the east of the shrine complex in figure 73 stands a second lot with a small structure at the center. As a rule, the shrine buildings are rebuilt on the contiguous lot every twenty years in order to ensure ritual purity for this, the shrine to the goddess of the sun, Amaterasu, primary in the Shintō pantheon. The sixtieth rebuilding took place in 1973. Once the new shrine complex is completed, the older one is dismantled, and a small structure is built over the short "heart pillar" (*shin no mihashira*) over which the Main Hall used to stand. The rebuilding process, beginning with the cutting of special lumber far in the mountains, takes years to accomplish and is enormously costly. Ise, therefore, is the only shrine today that is regularly rebuilt, though the practice was common at many shrine sites in the past.

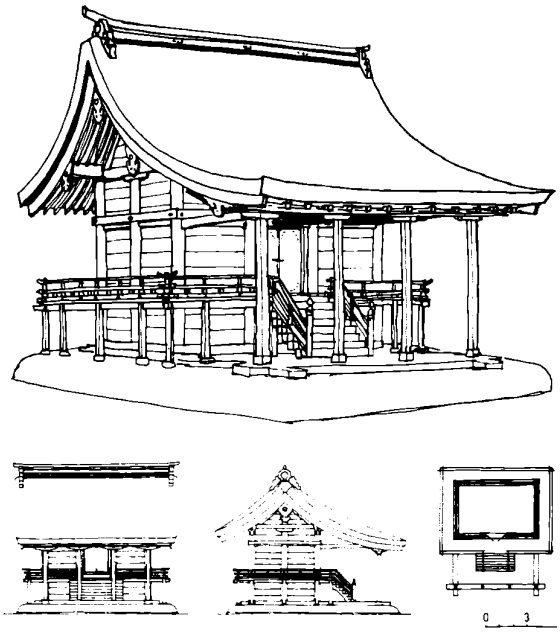
Izumo Shrine, built for the worship of Ōkuninushi and four lesser gods, has a similarly ancient heritage and was rebuilt twenty-five times. The Main Shrine (Honden; fig. 71) is a gable-entrance structure of impressive size, hence the name Taisha, "Great Shrine." Originally it may have been even larger—shrine legends say the prototype stood nearly one hundred meters tall and was reached by a grand staircase. In plan, the present Main Shrine resembles that of the Daijōe Shōden, built for the accession of each new emperor. The Main Shrine at Izumo is thought, therefore, to preserve a floor plan characteristic of ancient domestic architecture.

The third of these particularly ancient shrines, Sumiyoshi, consists of four nearly identical gable-entrance structures that originally overlooked the sea, as befit a place of worship of gods of sea voyages (fig. 72). Today, though, the site is surrounded by a modern urban neighborhood. Whereas the Ise and Izumo Shrines are left unpainted, the Sumiyoshi buildings are finished in brilliant red and white.

COMMON SHRINE STYLES



74a-d. **Kasuga style: exterior of Kasugadō, Enjōji; front, side, and plan of a Main Shrine, Kasuga Shrine**



75. **Nagare style: one of two Main Shrines at Kamo Mioya Shrine (Shimogamo Shrine)**

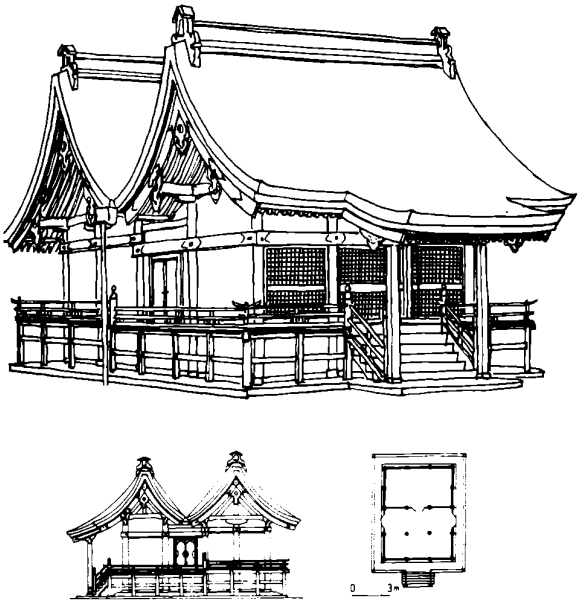
The Influence of Buddhist Architecture Shintō structures began very early in their development to adopt Buddhist temple characteristics. For example, the straight eaves, such as those at Sumiyoshi Shrine (see fig. 72), which are thought to have been the norm for early Shintō roofs, gradually adopted the gentle curve of Buddhist buildings. But Buddhist influence was not overbearing—the hip roofs and tiles common in Buddhist structures were not generally adopted by Shintō builders, and neither was the wattle-and-daub temple wall construction.

Further Buddhist influence entered in the Heian period with the development of the *honji suijaku* doctrine, which holds that Shintō deities are actually avatars of Buddhas and Bodhisattvas. This sectarian blending caused subsidiary Buddhist temples (*jingū-ji*) to be built on Shintō properties, and vice versa, Shintō shrines (*chinjusha*) to be constructed in temple complexes.

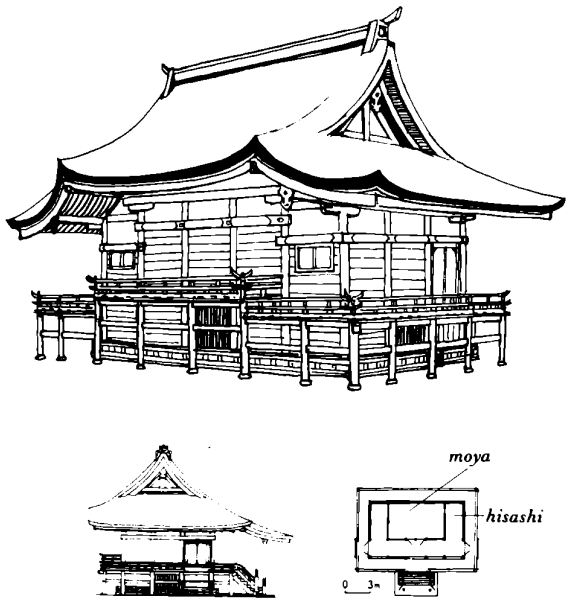
The Nagare and Kasuga Styles The Nagare style is the most widely used shrine type (fig. 75) and is characterized by a gable roof that slopes out over the entrance on the non-gable side of the structure. The design suggests a Shimmei-style building (see fig. 70) with a roof extended at one side and lacking roof billets and forked finials. Its best examples are the two Main Halls (Honden) at the Kamo Mioya Shrine and the Main Hall and Provisional Hall (Gonden) at the Kamo Wakeikazuchi Shrine (both shrines in Kyōto City), which were last rebuilt in 1863.

The Kasuga style (fig. 74) is one bay in plan, with the entrance and stairs on the gable side and protected by a long porch roof. Kasuga Shrine (figs. 74b-d), from which the style takes its name, is thought to have been first built in the 730s at the foot of Mt. Mikasa east of the Heijō Capital, now Nara City (see p. 56). The present configuration of four identical one-bay Main Shrines (Honden) in a line is believed to go back to at least the Heian period. The shrine was rebuilt every twenty years until modern times, and the present main structures date from 1863. They resemble the Sumiyoshi style (see fig. 72) in their red and white color scheme, gable entry, and use of roof billets and forked finials, but differ in their smaller size and hip-and-gable roof with long porch overhang.

Two other fine examples of the Kasuga style are the Kasugadō (fig. 74a) and Hakusandō of Enjōji



76. **Hachiman style: Main Shrine of Usa Shrine**



77. **Hie style: Main Shrine of East Precinct, Hie Shrine**

temple (Ninnikusenchō, Nara City), built between 1197 and 1228. They are the oldest Kasuga-style shrines extant and are thought to have been built originally as part of Kasuga Shrine, then moved to their present location when Kasuga was rebuilt. The Kasuga style is the second most commonly used shrine type.

Further Developments in Shintō Shrine Architecture The Hachiman style (fig. 76) was created by linking two Nagare-type shrines (fig. 75) back to front. The practice was first used in Buddhist structures to provide a separate space for worshippers. Another well-known shrine configuration is the Hie style (fig. 77), a hip-and-gable variant of the Nagare style, with a truncated rear roof. The design is the result of adding subsidiary spaces (*hisashi*) around all but the rear side of the central core (*moya*) and extending the roof further over those additions. Hie Shrine (Ōtsu City, Shiga Prefecture), after which the style is named, contains two nearly identical main structures, one each in its east and west precincts.

Other Buddhist architectural elements continued to be gradually incorporated as well. These included corridors, two-story gates, and even pagodas. One superb example of fine design coupled with tastefully added Buddhist concepts is Itsukushima Shrine. First built on its present scale in 1168 by the great warrior Taira no Kiyomori (1118–81), Itsukushima Shrine (Hiroshima Prefecture) is built out over the water (see fig. 244). At high tide its main buildings and connecting corridors seem to float, their vermilion members reflecting on the shallow waves. The use of connecting corridors is reminiscent of the Shinden style of aristocratic domestic architecture (see pp. 64–67).

By the end of the Heian period in the twelfth century the major shrine styles had reached maturity. Further developments were limited to minor variations in configuration or style of ornamentation. Kibitsu Shrine (Okayama City), built in 1425, combines its Main Hall (Honden) and Worship Hall (Haiden) under one hip-and-gable roof, but with the gables doubled to indicate the two spaces beneath. Examples of the increasing use of ornamentation include the Shinra Zenshindō of Onjōji temple (Shiga Prefecture, late fourteenth century) and most notably the Tōshōgū at Nikkō (Nikkō City, Tochigi Prefecture; see pp. 44–47).