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Ancient Thoughts, and the Restriction and Utilization of the First Daigokuden-in in Heijogu

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Ancient Thoughts, and the Restoration and Utilization of the First Daigokuden-in in Heijogu

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This paper describes the relationships between the ideas of Heaven's way and the construction of an imperial palace and the events held there annually. In addition it describes cases where such ideas were not fully expressed in the restoration and improvement work undertaken on the remains. Because of the locations and meanings of ceremonies such as the annual events observed in the imperial palace have changed over time. The paper also points out the need to redefine the ceremonies if they are to be performed as a way of utilizing the remains because their original meaning is not appropriate for contemporary society.

I Ancient Chinese view of the Universe - Idea of Heaven's way¹

The ancient Chinese view of the universe is detailed in a book entitled "Ancient Chinese Theory on the Universe" by Yuichi Asano. In this chapter, we outline the ancient Chinese view of the universe mainly by drawing on Asano's work. The Confucian Scriptures consist of Four Confucian Classics and Five Confucian Books. The latter are *the Book of Changes*, *the Book of History*, *the Book of Odes*, *the Book of Rites*, and *the Chronicle of Lu*. A god called Heaven or the Lord appears in *the Book of History* and *the Book of Odes* that deal with the Western Zhou period. The people of the Zhou Dynasty are described to believe in this god. The Lord was an absolute god existing in the Heavens. As a child of the Lord, the Son of Heaven, namely the king of the Zhou Dynasty, ruled the earth at the order of the Lord. As a representative of all the people, the king worshipped the Lord enthusiastically by offering sake, grain, gems, and sacrifices at fixed dates. Observing the faithfulness of the Son of Heaven, the Lord caused timely rainfall and ensured rich harvests and the propagation of livestock as a token of his appreciation. When the king of the Zhou Dynasty performed his duties unsatisfactorily, for example the offerings were poor or religious services were delayed, the Lord caused drought, storms and other disasters as a punishment. Confucian scholars inherited the view that there is a correlation between Heaven and humankind based on the relationship between astronomical phenomena and human affairs.

During the Eastern Zhou period, the official position of chronicler was established in the Zhou royal family to keep a record of the king's words and actions. The chroniclers warned the rulers against wrongdoing based on historical lessons and performed ceremonies using their knowledge about ancient court customs and procedures of ceremonies, rites, manners or official clothing. They also calculated the orbits of sun and moon as well as those of the five planets that they needed for compiling the chronicles. They made their own astronomical observations, and taught and supervised farming techniques

for each season, according to the calendar they had made. Both in the East and West, it was important in an agrarian society to have accurate knowledge of the four seasons. While adequate sunshine plus timely wind and rain during each season helped the growth and fertility of crops, if the ruler failed to inform his people accurately about the timing of the four seasons, farming could not be effectively pursued, and this could have an undesirable outcome such as a bad harvest. For this reason, astronomical phenomena for each month, the king's duties, farming topics and other related matters were mentioned in the monthly ordinance recorded in the Book of Rites (礼記). Also, blind musicians called *Kokan* (瞽官) took charge of musical affairs, and performed duties similar to those of the chroniclers. When a poem was offered to the Son of Heaven, the musicians wrote the music for the poem, had him listen to the resulting song, which admonished him satirically about his ruling.

Since the idea of a correlation between Heaven and humankind was developed from human's one-sided assumptions, one disaster after another could happen in succession even if the Son of Heaven performed the rituals properly. What concerned the chroniclers and blind musicians was to find a rule that permitted the orderly movement of the universe, including human society, according to a certain law, so that the human society could operate systematically. The chroniclers found regularities that enabled arithmetic calculations of the revolutions of multiple stars around the North Star at a certain speed, the running of the seven days of the week, and the changes in the four seasons. The blind musicians adopted a music scale that enabled arithmetic calculations of the regularities of the universe. Both took such regularities to be a natural law that exists in the universe and called it "Heaven's way". Based on this idea of Heaven, the chroniclers read the stars and the blind musicians played wind instruments and listened to their tones in order to predict the future and people's fortunes. Thus they developed a new world view that attributes such changes to natural laws of the universe (the idea of Heaven's way), departing from the world view that explains the changes in the universe solely in terms of the will of the Lord.

World view of Spirit (氣)

A book entitled *Gupoy* (國語) that deals with historical tales about numerous states in Eastern Zhou during the Chunqiu era and a book entitled "*Syunzyusiden*" (春秋左氏伝) that mainly describes the history of Lu in the Chunqiu period are both history books authored by the chroniclers. In these books, we find not only thoughts about Heaven but also a world view of "Spirit." With the advent of spring, the air above the ground begins to shimmer and vapors rise and turn into clouds, causing rain and snow to fall and water to circulate above and below the ground. The chroniclers began to believe that the Spirits of Yin and Yang circulate between Heaven and Earth, based on their observations of astronomical phenomena and atmospheric conditions.

In the latter part of the warring period, the world view of "Spirit", which was connected with Yin and Yang, was also associated with the Chinese theory of Five Elements: Wood, Fire, Earth, Metal, and Water. *Suen* (鄒衍) believed everything in the universe to be composed of these five elements and he explained the dynastic changes in terms of the Rule of Five Virtues (五德終始説).

As a result, it was thought that everything including Heaven and humankind, was made up of Spirits, and that the differences between things arose from the way in which the Spirits of Yin and Yang and the Five Elements are mixed. Moreover, it was believed that the creation and extinction of all things are temporary phenomena that occur in the process of the meeting and parting of Spirit. Thus, all things in the universe began to be interpreted in the light of natural philosophy and as being based on the "Rules of Heaven" and the theory of the "circulation of Spirit and its meeting and parting".

Spirit was considered to be contained in human breath and the words that accompany breathing. It was thought that curses circulate along with Spirit and reach Heaven to inflict a divine punishment on others. The reason that the sound of a wind instrument was used for magic is because a tune, too, was thought to be Spirit. Since words and music originate from the human mind, Mencius, one of the Four Confucian Classics added a highly ethical, mental quality to Spirit.

Mental Spirit within humans and material Spirit in this world were considered capable of communicating and influencing each other.

Thought of *Shin-i* (識緯)²

Confucian scholars originally thought rationally, and did not talk much about superhuman strength or the unreasonable and mysterious, but in the Earlier Han period they attached great importance to the book of *Toshin* (図讖) (the book of prophecy) and *Isho* (緯書) (a book designed to help interpret the Confucian Classics, basic textbooks such as the Nine Chinese Classics) which are based on the thoughts of *Shin-i* (識緯思想), and tried to read the will of the Lord in Heaven from the indications provided by terrible events and natural disasters (idea of indications by natural disasters). It was *Tou Chujo* (薰仲舒), an active Confucian scholar of the Earlier Han (Western Han) period, that preached the theory of indication natural disasters, an integrated theory of the idea of Heaven's way and the world view of Spirit described above. In the Qin period, the Emperor was identified with the Lord, but the Confucian scholar interpreted the Emperor as the Son of the Lord, while he regarded the Emperor as being as virtuous as Lord. He resolved this contradiction by drawing on the Chinese classics of Confucianism and *Isho*. This led Confucianism to ally with imperial authority and become an ideology supporting the absolute monarchy. *Tou Chujo* also established a theory related to restraining monarchic autocracy by connecting a monarch's misrule with natural disasters, because he believed a strengthened autocracy incurs the tyranny of the absolute ruler and ruins the dynasty as was the case with Qin

period.

That is to say, a true ruler in this world was regarded as a ruler of the universe. But as the Lord of Heaven, who was not human, was unable to rule the world, he chose a person of virtue and provided him with Heaven's mandate to govern the world and nurture the people. It was believed that if the Son of Heaven governed the world with virtue and benevolence, there would be good omens-honeydew would fall and exotic gifts of animals and plants would appear. If the Son of Heaven lacked virtue, ruled tyrannically and did not obey the will of the Lord of Heaven, it was believed that the Lord would cause extraordinary astronomical phenomena to occur, such as solar eclipses, lunar eclipses and the backward movement of Mars as well as natural disasters, including earthquakes, droughts, flood damage and plagues of locusts. Dictated by the thought of the correlation between Heaven and humankind, which emphasizes that astronomical phenomena and human affairs are mutually related, the Son of Heaven, who was a ruler, felt shame at the lack of virtue when disasters or unusual events occurred.

In relation to Spirit, it was widely believed that all things in nature arise from the two Spirits of Yin and Yang as well as from those of the Five Elements that derive from them, and that disasters occur if the two spirits lose harmony. And it was believed that even the harmony and disharmony of the two Spirits could be affected by the Emperor's virtue or vice.

If the Emperor continues to lack virtue, the Lord of Heaven will modify his mandate (revolution), replace his Son with someone else with another name (by changing his family name) and change the dynasty (change of family name and mandate). This thought is generally called the philosophy of Heaven's will. By this theory it became an important political task for the Son of Heaven to deify Heaven and read its will, and "*Jutsusu*" (術数) or a stratagem, and a fortune-telling book entitled "*Divination*" *the Book of Changes* were regarded as important. *Jutsusu* refers to a system for reading and understanding the will of Heaven, a technique for predicting the future, and a strategy for ruling the country using that system and technique. It included astronomy, the study of calendars, arithmetic, and Yin and Yang and the Five Elements.³⁾

II Palace construction and theory of Heaven's way

Making the imperial palace magnificent

According to *Shih-chi* (史記), when constructing his palace, The First Emperor laid out buildings with the configuration of the "*Shibikyu*" (紫微宮), a constellation that includes the North Star, and likened the river in front of his palace to the Milky Way. *Fuhen* (賦篇) in *Munzen* (文選), a collection of literary works, reveals that the *Weiyang Palace* (未央宮) of the Later Han, and *Keifukuden* (景福殿) and *Reikou Palace* (靈光殿) of Wei in the Three-States period were also modeled on the cons

tellation and that these palaces symbolized the universe. *The Rakuyojo Taikyokuden* (洛陽城太極殿) in Wei and the *Taikyokuden of Chang'an Palace in the Tang Dynasty* (唐長安城の太極殿) were constructed to represent the North Star. The character for purple (紫) included in the names of the Forbidden City (紫禁城) in the Qing and Ming periods (the current Beijing Palace Museum) and of the *Shishinden* (紫宸殿) in Kyoto Palace are derived from the *Shibikyu* (紫微宮) constellation near the North Star. As a proof of his reign over the world entrusted to him by the Lord, the Son of Heaven built a grand palace, which symbolized the North Star, the permanent residence of the Lord, and reproduced celestial realms on Earth, thereby reinforcing his authority.⁴⁾

The Shoku Nihon Gi (続日本記 The Chronicles of Japan) proudly noted that a celebration was held to offer congratulations to the Son of Heaven by hoisting the flags of the Four gods at *South Gate on Daigokuden-in Fujiwarakyo* (藤原宮) on New Year's Day of the first year of *Taiho* (701), saying "This is the perfect and authentic ceremony". (万物の儀是に備われり)." As the dispatch of Japanese envoys to the Tang Dynasty in China was suspended in the 8th year of Tenchi (669), Fujiwarakyo (藤原京) was built as an ideal imperial capital based solely on written records, namely the *Kohkohki* of the Chinese classic *Shurai* (「周礼」考工記). However, the dispatch of envoys to Tang resumed in the second year of *Taiho* (大宝) (702) and they brought knowledge of *Daiming Palace of Chang'an Palace in the first year of Keiun* (慶雲) (704).⁵⁾ This probably triggered the plan to relocate the palace to Heijo, inspired by the need to build a more magnificent structure.

The *Rajomon* (羅城門), the *maingate of Heijokyo* (平城京), which was considered to be as large as the *Zhuque Gate of Heijokyo* (平城宮朱雀門) with five spans (one span is about 5.0m), surpassed the latter in scale, with seven spans. In the southern part of the imperial capital, a roofed mud wall comparable to the large wall of the *Heijokyo* was constructed in competition with the castle wall of a Chinese castle town.⁶⁾ The main *Zhuque Gate Street from the Rajomon* to the *Heijokyo* developed into a road about 74 meters wide, which was three times that in *Fujiwarakyo*. The scale of the development exceeded the level of practical use. It has been pointed out that such expansion was meant to present a dignified appearance to the outside world.⁷⁾ Foreign envoys visiting *Heijokyo*, went north along the *Zhuque Gate Street* after completing a ceremony in the south of the *Rajomon*, entered the palace through the front gate of the *Heijogu*, the *Zhuque Gate*, the largest gate in the palace, and attended ceremonies at the *Chodoh-in* (朝堂院) and *Daigokuden-in* (大極殿院). In a passage of November 8th of the first year of *Shinki* (神龜) (724), of the *Shoku Nihon Gi* (続日本紀), says that the palace at which envoys from overseas present offerings must be magnificent, or the Emperor will be unable to demonstrate his virtue. Therefore, it was necessary for the imperial capital, especially the facilities arranged along its axis, to be splendid from a ceremonial perspective.

Structure of the first Daigokuden-in in Heijokyu and ceremonies

The first *Daigokuden-in* in *Heijokyu* was built north of the *Zhuque Gate* in the early Nara period (Fig. 1). The *Daigokuden-in* that surrounded the *Daigokuden* had roofed mud walls that extended 600 shaku (a unit of length, 29.5cm, 177m) from east to west and 1,080 shaku (about 319m) from north to south. It was the largest *Daigokuden-in* of the palaces in the ancient imperial capital. Two thirds of the south side of *Daigokuden-in* was an open space covered with pebbles. One third of the north side formed a rise on which the *Daigokuden* and *Rear Palace* (後殿) stood. It is noteworthy that there were *Senzumi* (brick-covered) retaining walls on the front of the rise and along the east and west slopes leading to the rise.

This *Daigokuden-in* was the main site for national ceremonies such as enthronement and New Year's presentation of offerings. On these ceremonial occasions, the Emperor sat on an elevated seat. Only the Empress, court ladies and chamberlains were allowed to take seats in the *Daigokuden*. Even the Crown Prince bowed to the Emperor with the high officials from the front yard of the *Daigokuden*.⁸⁾

Meaning of the surface design of the *Senzumi* (brick-covered) retaining wall⁴⁾

The *Senzumi* retaining wall in front of the *Daigokuden* forms a complicated shape (Fig. 2). Space constraints mean we can only describe it briefly. Three concentric circles of 240 (40 x 6) shaku 280 (40 x 7) and 320 shaku (40 x 8), at 8 shaku north of the center of the *Daigokuden* and an eccentric circle of 360 (40 x 9) shaku whose center was located at the front of the *Rear Palace* (後殿) (Fig. 3) were drawn. The points of intersection of these circles defined the wall configuration. The structures of the three concentric circles and one eccentric circle had the same motif as that of the stone chamber astronomical chart (石室天文図) (Fig. 4) for the *Kitora* tomb. The three concentric circles were meant to represent *naiki* (内規) (the range in which the circumpolar stars are visible), the equator and *gaiki* (外規) [a critical circle

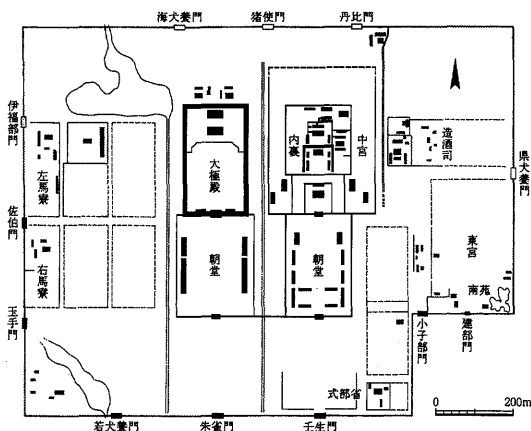


Fig. 1 *Heijokyu* in the early Nara period (from Ozawa Tuyoshi, *Kodaikyuto kouzou no kenkyu*, p. 310)

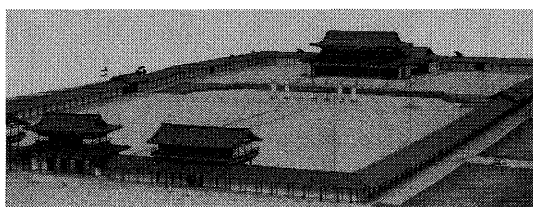


Fig. 2 *Heijokyu Daiichi Daigokuden* (1/100 model at Historical Museum, Nara National Research Institute for Cultural Properties)

(限界円) in the southern sky at the observation point], and the eccentric circle was meant to be the ecliptic. Despite the complex design method employed, the regularity of using a multiple of 40 shaku represents astronomical order.

Taikyoku (太極) of *Taikyokuden* (太極殿) established in China is defined as the origin of the universe. In astrology, it is a constellation near the North Star in which the Lord of Heaven lives. Since 太 is close to 大 in meaning, *Daigokuden* (大極殿) was likened to the North Star and the *first Daigokuden-in in Heijyokyu* (平城宮第一次大極殿院) symbolized the universe. The purpose of making such a plane surface was to bring order and peace to the earth. The Emperor's elevated seat was placed at the center of the concentric circle that represented the center of the universe (the North Pole in the heavens). The center is a place where traffic between the heavens and the earth was assumed to be possible. This can be understood as embodying the Column to the Heavens (天の御柱) that appears in the birth myth of the nation. The elevated seat at the center of the universe and the *Senzumi retaining wall* designed by concentric circles with a seat at its center was intended to seek justification for world rule from Heaven and demonstrate the authority and power of the nation.

Meaning of the elevation of the *Senzumi retaining walls*⁹⁾

The transfer of the *Heijyo* imperial capital to the Nara basin and the construction of the *first Daigokuden-in* in the *Heijyokyu* at the end of the Pleistocene plateau meant that *Daigokuden* was sited on a high platform, which had not been possible in the *Fujiwarakyu* (藤原宮) compound that inclined toward the north. It seems that the construction of this *Daigokuden-in* was strongly influenced by

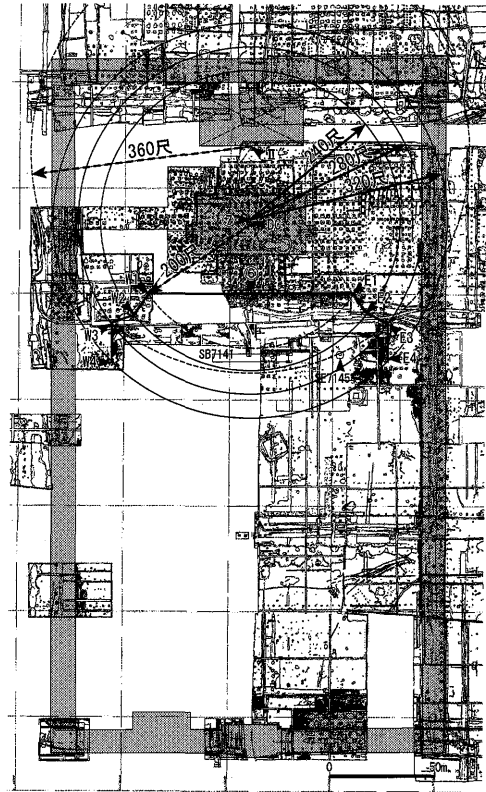


Fig. 3 Design method for *Senzumi retaining wall*

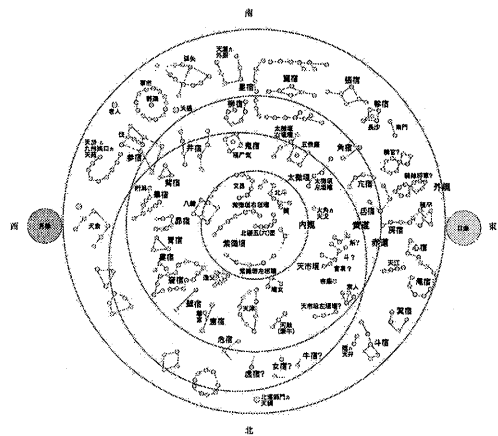


Fig. 4 *Astronomical chart for the stone room of the Kitora tomb* (Source: *Kitora tomb painting of Genmu*, one for four gods, Asuka Historical Museum's pictorial record, 2007)

Hanyuan Palace in Daiming Palace (大明宮含元殿), following the resumption of the dispatch of Japanese envoys to China (Figs. 5 and 6). *Daiming Palace*, the location of the *State Chamber* (正殿) on the high *Senzumi* retaining walls and the provision of ramps for ascending the platforms on the east and west sections of the elevated grounds were common to the *Daigokuden-in* and *Hanyuan Palace*.¹⁰⁾

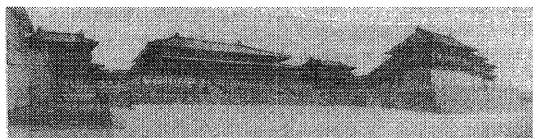


Fig. 5 *Daiming Palace Hanyuan Palace at Chang'an Palace of the Tang period* (Leaflet UNESCO)

The front of the *Senzumi* retaining wall is considered to have been about 2.4m high, with an incline of about 700, 8 shaku up (8尺上がり) and 3 shaku back (3尺転び). The number eight relates to the octagonal shape of the elevated seat and symbolizes the land under rule. The numbers three and eight both relate to the east - "the right position of the sun" (日の正位) - under the Chinese doctrine of the Five Elements, and are associated with the three-footed crow or *Yatagarasu* (八咫鳥) that appears in the myth of the era of the Emperor *Jinmu* and represents the concept of the sun. The *Senzumi* retaining wall was an insurmountable barrier between the Emperor and his vassals, who lined up in the square. The walls had the effect of visually demonstrating the ceremonial order - "Emperor is the heaven, vassals are the earth"- as stated in the Seventeen-Article Constitution. The wall must have indicated authority from a high position and made the *Daigokuden* look particularly magnificent.

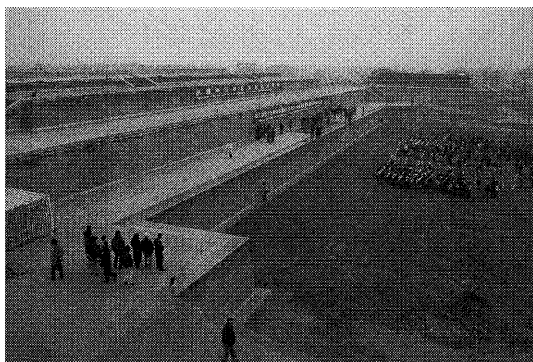
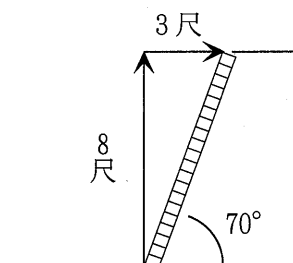


Fig. 6 Restoration status of stylobate of *Hanyuan Palace in Daiming Palace at Chang'an Palace of the Tang period*



III Renovation of the first *Daigokuden-in* in Heijyokyu

Restoration work on the first *Daigokuden* began in 2001 and is scheduled for completion in 2010, the 1300th anniversary of the relocation of the imperial capital to Heijyo. Restoration is also planned for the front yard of the *Daigokuden* and the spacious *Daigokuden-in* that surrounds *Daigokuden* with mud corridors.

Physical conditions of ancient remains and their restoration

After the relocation of the imperial capital to Heijyo, in the late Nara period, the *Daigokuden* was newly built on a new lot in the east. In the *first Daigokuden-in* area, the roofed mud corridor was scaled down to 600 *shaku* from east to west and 620 *shaku* from north to south, with the north and south ends of the corridor aligned with the Inner Palace (内裏) in the east. The first *Daigokuden-in* area was restructured as a palace positioned against the eastern palace. The northern platform was expanded to the center between north and south, with the north half designated as an area for 27 buildings and the south half designed as a graveled square. A retaining wall constructed of gems and stones was erected at the front of the new platform. On the ground from the *Senzumi* retaining wall to the new retaining wall the soil with more than 2m thickness was filled over a distance of 18m. This area including gem and stone wall and the late Nara remains, underwent a lot of digging (削平) later, but the digging did not reach the section near the *Senzumi* retaining wall. Therefore, the existence of the *Senzumi* retaining wall was confirmed by digging a trench of 2m wide into the raised ground, and the thickest part of the ground was found to be more than 1.6m. Preservation of this raised ground area is critical for keeping the remains in good condition.

After the excavation of the *Heijokyu* remains, the depth of the backfilled soil was set at 0.8m above the surface of the structural remains of the late Nara period. If the *Senzumi* retaining wall is to be restored on its original plane, it will be necessary to fill the soil of 2.4m which is the sum of 0.8m and 1.6m. However, 2.4m is too thick for the site to preserve the structural remains, as the northwest section of the *Daigokuden-in* originally had been built on soft ground. If the height of the finished level is to be the early Nara remains + 0.8m, the ground will protrude by a maximum of $1.6 - 0.8 = 0.8\text{m}$. The protruded area will be from E 1-W 1 to E 3-W 3 in Figure 3. We must decide how to deal with this section in the restoration work.

Study of restoration plans

The following three restoration plans can be considered depending on how the *Senzumi* retaining walls and the raised land in the late Nara period are treated (Figs. 7-9).

- (1) To build a retaining wall in the original position of the *Senzumi* retaining wall and make the raised ground appear higher.

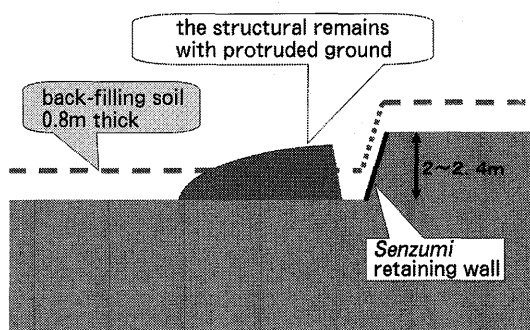


Fig. 7 Restoration plan 1

- (2) To build a low retaining wall in the original position of the *Senzumi* retaining wall and cover the raised ground with pebbles to be integrated into the square.
- (3) To move forward the *Senzumi* retaining wall to the position where the protruding section of the raised ground can be hidden and reproduce its original height.

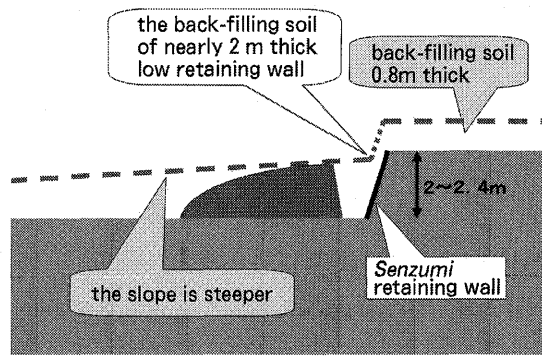


Fig. 8 Restoration plan 2

The advantages, disadvantages and the estimations of these plans are summarized below.

Plan 1 permits us to indicate the position of *Senzumi* wall correctly, but the raised ground protrudes. The plan may serve to exhibit the present condition of the multi-layered structural remains, but it does not help to restore the ancient space, especially the solemn space used for national ceremonies. Since work on the *Daigokuden* is in progress as part of the *Daigokuden-in* restoration

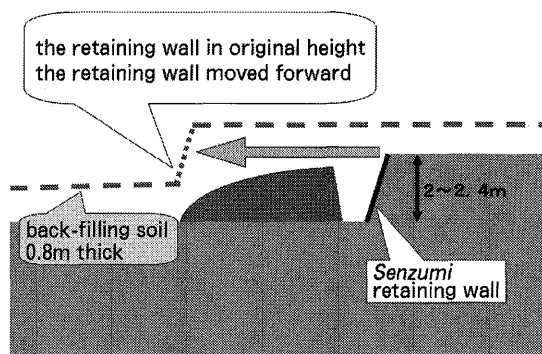


Fig. 9 Restoration plan 3

project, it will be necessary to try to reproduce the atmosphere of the open space for ceremonies instead of displaying the status of the structural remains.

Plan 2 enables us to show that the *Daigokuden-in* symbolizes the universe by indicating the correct position of the *Senzumi* retaining wall, but at the best we can only show only 0.8m of the wall height.

Plan 3 allows us to show the original height of the retaining wall, but the space between the *Daigokuden* and the *Senzumi* retaining wall approximately doubles, making it impossible to correctly indicate the points where the east and west mud corridor gradients change or the position of the ramp. In view of the fact that the stylobate on the site of the *Hanyuan Palace* (含元殿) was restored by UNESCO in recent years, it may be said that the high *Senzumi* retaining wall clearly shows the geographical features of Heijyokyo, its relationship with the *Hanyuan Palace* (含元殿) and ceremonial order, and symbolizes the spirit of the 8th century.

Plan 2 attaches importance to the correct expression of the planar position of the structural remains, while plan 3 shows the authentic front, and it is meant to provide a comprehensive understanding of the structural remains instead rather than achieving an exact representation. The mode of representation depends on which context we regard as important to understand the structural remains. Meanwhile, the principle of restoring structural remains at Japan's historical sites is to follow a policy of looking at

their planar position and representing the remains on that level. This means that plan 3 contradicts this principle. Therefore, it would be better to work on plan 2 and show the height of the *Senzumi* retaining wall as accurately as possible, while correctly showing its planar position.

The restoration of the remains is limited by such conditions as the preservation of structural remains or the need to follow the principle described above, therefore it is not always possible to express the original meaning of the remains.

IV How to utilize the *Heijokyu* remains

The first *Daigokuden-in* was built with the above ideas in mind. The significance of its construction may be partly expressed by its restoration. Besides it is not easy to imagine the activities that people undertook in that space. One way to utilize the remains is to take account of the ceremonies and annual events observed in those days.

Idea of Heaven's way and annual events¹

The winter solstice, the shortest day of the year, was the day when the sun died or revived. *Enanji* (淮南子), a collection of thoughts, theories and the wisdom of various thinkers that was published in the Han period, says there was a custom of measuring the shadows at the winter and summer solstices. *Tenkansho of Shih-chi* (史記 a chronicle written in the Early Han), and *Reigishi of Hou-hun-shu* (後漢書) also refers to a ceremony that involved measuring the shadows at the winter solstice. This ceremony was intended to correct the timing of the four seasons by observing the sun. However, there was little need to hold the ceremony because an accurate calendar that was produced from astronomical observations was available. However, the ceremony was considered important as an event symbolizing the royal authority that governs not only space but also time in the world. Astronomical phenomena, including the movement of the sun, the moon and the five planets were accurately copied into a calendar using excellent astronomical observation technology. It was thought that the smooth execution of annual events in accordance with the calendar would lead to the trouble-free movement of the heavenly bodies.¹¹⁾ Music was played at the events because it was believed to have the power to bring universal peace by harmonizing Heaven and earth [*Gakusho* No. 2 (樂書第二)].

War continued after the last days of the Later Han and the social structure changed. Ethnic groups moved south and farming communities collapsed, forcing the public to leave the land on which they had lived for many generations. Rituals that originated in agriculture, taboos, and purification were reorganized as annual recreational events in the period of *Gishin North and South Dynasties* (魏晉南北朝). The rituals became entertainment during the Sui and Tang periods.¹²⁾ Their origins also became ambiguous as is clear from the fact that Wudi of Jin and a high-ranking priest of Tan, respectively,

asked their retainers about the origins of *Kyokusuien* (曲水宴) [as described in *Zokusaikaiki* (続齋諧記)] and the Boy's Festival [as described in Vol. 29, *Toukaiyo* (唐会要), May 5, in the first year of *Ryusaku* (龍朔)].¹³⁾

Meaning of ceremonies

As the *Book of Rites* says, "Civility divides Heaven and Earth, the other music harmonizes the two (礼は天地の別、楽は天地の和)", vassals' order was ascertained by civility in the rituals and harmony between the Emperor and his vassals was achieved by the music at the banquet. Civility and music were necessary for a state governed by *Ritsuryo* (律令), legal codes to rule the country. As described earlier, the New Year's ceremony held in *Fujiwarakyo* to congratulate the Emperor was meant to indicate "This is the perfect and authentic ceremony". Annual events in ancient Japan were intended to enhance national dignity.¹⁴⁾ It has been pointed out that unique Japanese civility and music (礼楽) were created by selecting and adopting annual Chinese events. Annual events included ceremonies and banquets, such as *choga* (朝賀) held on New Year's Day, *Jyarai* held on January 17th, *Kyokusuien* (曲水宴) held on March 3rd, *Kisha* held on May 5th, the Star Festival (七夕) held on July 7th, and the winter solstice festival.

The Emperor attended the New Year's Day ceremony (*choga*) held at the *Daigokuden*, his vassals stood in the court and morning worship took place, followed by banquets. The book of ceremonies completed in the Heian period *Gishikisho* (儀式書) describes in detail the visual relationships of the positions of the Emperor, nobles, and bureaucrats in various ceremonies. This was politically very meaningful in that it allowed the Emperor-led *ritsuryo* state to maintain order.¹⁶⁾ At the time of the *Choga* ceremony the State Chamber was regarded as the *Daigokuden* at local administrative agencies (国庁) across the country. Local public servants such as *Kokushi* (国司), *Gunji* (郡司) and *Gunki* (軍毅) lined up and performed the morning worship. After the ceremony, the *kokushi* received congratulatory messages as an administrative official appointed by the Emperor, and his relationship with the *Kokushi* and *Gunji* was confirmed. A banquet was held following this formality.

Emperor Shomu invited his vassals to his palace and gave a banquet on May 5th, in the 15th year of *Tenpyo* (743). Though not officially recorded, the customary event of archery on horseback might have been held. The Crown Prince (阿倍内親王) performed the *Gosechi no mai* (五節の舞) dance (a dance performed on January 1st, January 7th, January 16th, May 5th, and the day after the November *Niiname* festival). Emperor Shomu is said to have remarked, "Civility and music are necessary for Emperor Tenmu, who brought the country under his control, to maintain national peace and order. That's why this dance was produced. I had the Crown Prince learn this dance so that she could inherit the art and keep it alive just as Heaven and Earth have eternal existence, and showed the dance to

Emperor Genshotaijo (元正太上天皇)". Emperor Genshotaijo praised the dance highly, noting that it would be helpful in teaching the orders between emperor and retainers and the elders and the young (君臣祖子の理). In the dance performed at the banquet, there was an expression of order concerned with manners.

Annual events in ancient Japan were also held to remove impurities or to pray for good health and longevity. Their origins, which were already ambiguous in China, seem to have been unknown in Japan. According to "*Gekkyuki*" (月旧記) from *Seijioryaku* (政事要略), *Nihonhakushi Nakaomimaru Renchokyu* (日本博士中臣丸連張弓) and others offered the Emperor counsel about the origins of the annual events on January 1st, the seventh year of *Tenpyoshoho* (天平勝宝) (755).¹⁷⁾ It appears that the annual events became more concerned with the idea of Heaven's way in the Heian period, as they had been before the era of the Han Dynasty.¹⁸⁾ However, it is not clear how much the annual events were influenced by their concern with that idea in the Heian period. As is customary with their editorial policy, the *Nihon Shoki* and the *Shoku Nihon Gi* do not say much about the annual events and so concrete details of ceremonies and the public awareness of them are little known.

Contemporary meaning of the restoration of ceremonies

Little is known about the ceremonies of the Nara period, but it is possible to restore and reproduce them to some degree if we supplement our knowledge by reading books on the ceremonies in that era. This will indicate the way the restored space can be used for ceremonies or banquets and help many people understand their significance. Reproduction of the ceremonies as the result of restoration and investigation will lead to an understanding of the remains.

The content, places and even meanings of the annual events in ancient Japan changed over time.¹⁹⁾ It seems necessary to modify the annual events to make them acceptable to contemporary society and create new exhibitions related to annual events, if we aim to utilize the site of Heijyokyu as a place of cultural heritage.

For example, *jarai* (射礼) or archery was a ceremony where all public servants shot an arrow in front of the Emperor, who came to the South Gate of the Daigokuden-in on January 17th. It was designed to demonstrate a glory of an empire with the participation of envoys from Silla (新羅) in ancient Korea or Southern Islands. If we plan to hold a ceremony similar to Jarai, one possibility would be to hold an event involving participation by citizens, especially those who were once in a Japanese archery club or experienced other club activities. In Kyoto's *Sanjusangendo* (三十三間堂), those who have just come of age shoot an arrow while dressed in their Sunday best. This event will serve as a reference. If we take participation in an event by guests from abroad as an example, another possibility would be to hold a match or demonstration with foreign archers. All these suggestions are

intended to allow us reframe ancient events to reflect such modern activities as community planning and cultural exchange.²⁰⁾

Kisha (騎射) or archery on horseback, was performed at the *Jukakumon* (重閣門) on May 5th. The *Jukakumon* is a two-story gate, but we cannot decide whether it was the *Zhuque Gate* (朱雀門) in front of the palace, the south gate of *Chodoin* (朝堂院南門), or the South Gate of the *Daigokuden-in* (大極殿院南門). If a horse is to run at full speed we must examine whether the gravel surface, such as at the imperial court, was good enough, whether there was a straight distance sufficient for three shots, and whether there was not a contradiction with the principle of Tenshinanmen (天子南面). The reproduction of ceremonies at suitable place might be possible after problems have been dealt with. May 5th was the day for performing *kisha* in 8th Century, but in 7th Century, a lot of herb picking (藥獵) was common on this day. *Morino former herb field* (森野旧薬園 now a national historic site) was an herb garden in Udano (now Uda city in Nara Prefecture) that Emperor Suiko visited. Nara Prefecture is the second producer of the peddlers' medicine kits to Toyama. It may also be possible to implement a program for utilizing this cultural heritage by networking all related historic sites under the key word "medicines" and cooperating with local industry.²¹⁾

In February, *Sekiden* (Confucian festival) was held. It was first seen at *Fujiwarakyu* in the first year of Taiho (大室). In the late Nara period, *Kibino Makibi* (吉備真備) completed the festival system. *Sekiden* is currently performed at the *Yushima Mausoleum*, Ashikaga school, and *Taku Mausoleum* (多久聖廟). At *Taku Mausoleum* (important cultural asset of Japan), a *sekisai* (積菜) dance is performed to music after *sekisai* (important intangible cultural asset of Saga Prefecture). This was modeled on a festival observed at the Confucian mausoleum in *Kyokufu* (曲阜), Shandong Province, China - the birthplace of Confucius. In 1995, local middle school students in Taku City took dancing lessons with the cooperation and guidance of the city of *Kyokufu* and they have been performing the art since then. We would like to see this dance at the *Fujiwarakyu* and *Heijyokyu* sites by expanding the circle of exchange through *sekiden*.

As described earlier, music is related to the concept of Heaven. Another attempt is under way to restore the musical instruments that are imperial properties of Shosoin Todaiji Temple. Music is perhaps one of the keys to utilizing the remains.

As indicated in the above plans, there are possibilities that the re-creation of ceremonies will assist our understanding of the remains and that the restoration and creation of ceremonies will help rediscover local communities, activate local exchange and industries, and promote sightseeing and international exchange. We feel that all these efforts should be consistently correlated to the Ancient Chinese culture so that the created events do not have the appearance of simple additions. Researchers have many roles to play in this context.

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