

Worshipping with the fourfold at the temple complex at Delphi, Greece, the Inner Shrine at Ise, Japan, and St. Peter's Basilica at Rome

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The aim of this article is to critique Martin Heidegger's fourfold as a static concept and to reformulate it as a dynamic concept to be applied as a criterion to assess the architectural excellence of the temple complex of Apollo at Delphi, Greece, and the Inner Shinto Shrine at Ise, Japan, both exemplifying nature religions, as well as the Basilica of St. Peter's in Rome, the most influential Christian church.

Key words: Heidegger's fourfold reformulated, temple complex of Apollo at Delphi, Inner Shinto Shrine at Ise, St. Peter's Basilica at Rome

Verering by wyse van die viervoud by drie heiligdomme: die tempelkompleks by Delphi, Griekeland, die Ise-binneheiligtom, Japan en die Petrusbasilika, Rome

Die doel met hierdie artikel is om Martin Heidegger se viervoud as 'n statiese konsep te kritiseer en as 'n dinamiese konsep te herformuleer, wat dan toegepas word as 'n kriterium vir die beoordeling van die argitektoniese meriete van die tempelkompleks van Apollo by Delphi, Griekeland, en die Shinto-binneheiligtom by Ise, Japan, wat albei natuurgodsdienste beliggaam, asook die Petrusbasilika in Rome, die invloedrykste Christelike kerk.

Sleutelwoorde: herformulering van Heidegger se viervoud, tempelkompleks van Apollo by Delphi, Shinto-binneheiligtom by Ise, Petrusbasilika in Rome

In his essay, "Bauen Wohnen Denken" (1954), Martin Heidegger postulates that "the world" is revealed as a fourfold (*das Geviert*) comprising a mirror-play heaven, the earth, the gods and earthly beings in relation to each another. Unfortunately, as Graham Harman points out, "there is no easy way to clarify the fourfold on the basis of Heidegger's own explicit statements, which are infamous for their obscurity and preciousness".¹ Therefore, the fourfold has been explained in various ways that are not helpful in its application to architecture as the term *Bauen* in Heidegger's essay would imply.² Harman's critique of Heidegger's fourfold that manifests in "things"³ thus affords an opportunity to reformulate the concept as a criterion to assess architectural excellence in three religious contexts: the temple complex of Apollo at Delphi, the Inner Shinto Shrine at Ise, and St. Peter's Basilica at Rome.

Harman contends that Heidegger's fourfold is a static system. To clarify the fourfold he identifies the two great axes of the world according to Heidegger. The first axis constitutes the dualism of "the constant interplay of veiling and unveiling, absence and presence, concealing and unconcealing, sheltering and clearing, thrownness and projection, ready-to-hand and present-at-hand, *Ereignis* and *Enteignis*, being and beings, or being and time", that is "the axis that divides the shimmering façade of an object's present-at-hand surface with the underground rumbling of its enigmatic depth".⁴ The second axis of the world, according to Heidegger as interpreted by Harman, "is the difference between any thing's *specific* character and the fact that it is something at all".⁵ Harman states that "from the intersection of these two axes, the fourfold results", and concludes: "The fourfold cannot be identified with the four extremes of the two axes. Although Heidegger always pairs earth with sky and gods with mortals, these are just the tense diagonal relations across the diagram of the world. For him, all members of the fourfold mirror each other equally: Earth goes with gods and mortals no less than it does with the sky".⁶ Thus, at each pole of the world mortals, earth, gods and sky mirror each other, but as

Harman points out, “Nowhere does Heidegger discuss the exact mechanics of the mirror play”. Consequently, the most serious problem with Heidegger’s fourfold is “its lack of dynamism”.⁷ Located in the four quadrants formed by the intersecting axes of the world, they merely mirror each other, i.e. are static. Therefore Harman suggests that the fourfold becomes more interesting if Heidegger’s “philosophy of human access” be abolished “because he remains convinced that philosophy only has anything to tell us if some human being is on the scene, and nothing about the interaction of things when no humans are present”. The result will be that, “Instead of being just a more pretentious version of the analytic of human Dasein, the fourfold now has a chance to describe the relation between objects themselves”.⁸

Reinterpreted anew as a dynamic, interlocking unitary structure of mortals, the earth, gods and the sky, that reflects the identity as well as the differences between the components the fourfold may be recognised in works of architecture in which the components interact reciprocally. This architectural “world” may be interpreted as a cosmology that echoes Socrates’s theory, expounded in Plato’s *Gorgias* (507 E; written 350 BCE), that heaven and earth, the gods and human beings, are bound together and that the universe is therefore called a cosmos.

When applied to works of religious architecture one may expect both the unity and the differences between heaven and the gods and the earth and mortals, referring to what is above and what is below, to be reflected in those works that form the context in which mortals, who are earthbound, find their fulfilment in “dwelling”.⁹ Dwelling in full awareness of the fourfold are often most intensely experienced in places of worship, which requires an earth clearing and a bounded space in which an engagement with a cosmology or belief system is expressed in a concrete manner.

The fourfold clearly manifests in the two culturally dissimilar places of religious worship – the one Western (Delphi, Greece) and the other Eastern (Ise, Japan) — that are chosen for discussion. These two places, created by their architectural structures, are similar in that they both represent nature religions and in the “clearings” that their architectural structures occupy both affirm their total engagement with the fourfold. However, in St. Peter’s, in the urban setting of Rome, the greatest Christian church in which only one God is acknowledged, the exterior link is in the form of a dome, a structural form that encloses a symbolic interior that nevertheless engages the total fourfold.

The temple complex of Apollo at Delphi, Greece

One may concur with Heidegger that the Greek temple “embodies the world of a people” and that, like a work of art, it “erects a world”: “Standing there the edifice rests on rock. [...] It elucidates, at the same time, that on which and in which man finds his existence. We call it the earth.”¹⁰ The rock, which is a dense and impenetrable substance, belongs to the earth. The earth as foundation of human existence also supports the temple, which in turn, brings into view the realm of the sky in its alternating seasons and phases of night and day. In the same vein Vincent Scully points out that the apparently stereotyped design of the classical Doric temple produced “an unmatched dialogue between oneness and separateness, men and nature, men and the facts of life, men and the gods.”¹¹ The meaning of the dialogue, however, is uniquely dependent upon the geographic location and cultural meaning of the temple site, as Scully explains: “All Greek sacred architecture explores and praises the character of a god or gods in a specific place. That place is itself holy and, before the temple was built upon it, embodied the deity as a recognised natural force.”¹² According to this criterion, one of the supreme examples of Doric architecture

is the Temple of Apollo at Delphi. Geographically Delphi is situated about 150 kilometres northwest of Athens, close to the northern shore of the Corinthian Gulf, on the foothills of Mount Parnassus. The temenos of the Temple of Apollo is set on the north slope of the Pleitos Torrent Gorge within a natural amphitheatre of limestone cliffs which soar precipitously to a staggering 300 metres above it, enclosing it on three sides and then opening onto the valley of Amphissa and the Gulf of Itea (figure 1). However, the Greek builders intended it to be mythically situated at the centre of the universe that, since remote times, had been marked by an *omphalos* or navel stone (now lost).



Figure 1
The landscape setting and ruins of the Temple of Apollo at Delphi, Greece
(photograph by the author).

The preexistent, pre-Apollonian site is vividly described by C. Karouzos in apocalyptic terms: “It is as if the earth had been cleft asunder by some cosmogonic spasm; the valley is a vast and profound chasm [...]”¹³ The temple where Apollo, the god to whom it is dedicated, was invoked is situated where “the most awesome characteristics of the old goddess of the earth and her oracle were made manifest”, and while the archetypal goddess presided over the interior secrets of the earth, “the temple of the young god was placed, and generally so oriented as not only to complement but also to oppose the chthonic forces”.¹⁴ Apollo embodied the noble faculty of reason, but was also regarded by the Greeks as the god of prophecy. At Delphi, “he, too, cannot come to grips with the earth without being touched by it”.¹⁵ Therefore, in the layout of his temple, the god assumes some of the darkness of the existing cavern and also its oracular power, even though he deposes the old way of the earth goddess by opening the new way, that of the Olympian gods. At Delphi Apollo, an immortal divinity who, according to Heidegger, represents “unperturbed calmness”¹⁶ and hence (having conquered the chthonic goddess) the concept of complete openness or “open overtness”.¹⁷ However, the soothsaying Pythia who lived in the temple and was inspired by the sulphur vapour rising from the bowels of the earth remained as the priestess of the new sun god.

The architects of the temple, the brothers Trophonios and Agamedes, saw dramatic contrasts in the landscape features and endeavoured to show them to best advantage in designing the sacred way to the temple (figure 2). According to Scully the Temple of Apollo and its precinct, which includes the sacred way, are so “organized as to create, out of that basic conflict, a conscious and humanly perceptible drama, in which the god’s code of ‘Nothing to excess’, is finally to emerge in the teeth of nature’s irrational power.”¹⁸

Also heaven, the element of the fourfold that is the complementary of the earth, manifests its presence at the temple. This totality can only be experienced by the visitor who enters the site and, by degrees, becomes aware of the temple, its earthly setting and the overarching bright sky, since heaven and earth seem to be in tumultuous contention, each element confirming its essence in a dramatic way but without disturbing the essential balance. When worshippers followed the processional way which meanders from below among man-made and natural objects up to the temple, “the precarious footing of human existence in nature was temporarily forgotten”,¹⁹ and upon arrival at the temple’s main facade mortal beings most probably experienced a sense of unity with the power of the god (figure 3). One may speculate that psychologically the ritual of approaching the god’s precinct restored a sense of balance in nature’s immensity to set the worshippers’ minds at ease.



Figure 2
Temple of Apollo at Delphi, Greece, designed by Trophonios and Agamedes,
and auxiliary buildings (drawing by Athanasios Rapanos; copyright E.A. Maré).



Figure 3
Facade of the Temple of Apollo at Delphi, Greece designed by Trophonios and Agamedes
(drawing by Athanasios Rapanos; copyright E.A. Maré).

The temple was built by mortals who exerted restrained control over the topography of the site. By altering certain features of the earth and leaving others intact the builders exerted self-control, which implies the achievement of harmony between disparate elements. They neither submitted to an excess of formal order, nor to the labyrinthine darkness of the earth or the domination of the vast sky above the craggy mountain. Thus, the total manifestation of the Temple of Apollo and its sacred precinct at Delphi is expressive of the Greek sense of democracy. The emphasis of the temple design is on the open collocation of its elements so that spatially it is available to all people. Only a small, secluded, *naos* was reserved for the god, but on the temple exterior the pediment sculpture celebrates Apollo's apotheosis of elevated beauty and moral superiority.

The Inner Shrine (*Naiku*) at Ise, Japan

The most sacred collection of Shinto sites at Ise, collectively called *Ise Jingu*, centre on the *Naiku* (Inner Shrine) and the *Geku* (Outer Shrine), situated some four kilometres apart. A millennium ago these shrines had been in existence for almost two centuries. It is most remarkable that for more than 1300 years, from the time of Emperor Temmu, who reigned from 672 to 686 CE, the *Naiku* (and the *Geku*) have been rebuilt in twenty-year cycles, most recently in 1993, for the sixty-first time, as Jonathan Reynolds observes: "Although there are some differences between the appearance of Ise Shrine at the beginning of the 17th century and the present, the differences are not [...] extreme [...]." ²⁰ This is because the preservation of the shrine buildings at *Ise Jingu* is important since they are the first great architectural achievement of the Japanese people, even though their model was the modest raised-floor storehouse. According to John Burchard the present shrine buildings are "very old and very new" ²¹ In 2013 they will be rebuilt for the sixty-second time (figures 4-5). ²²

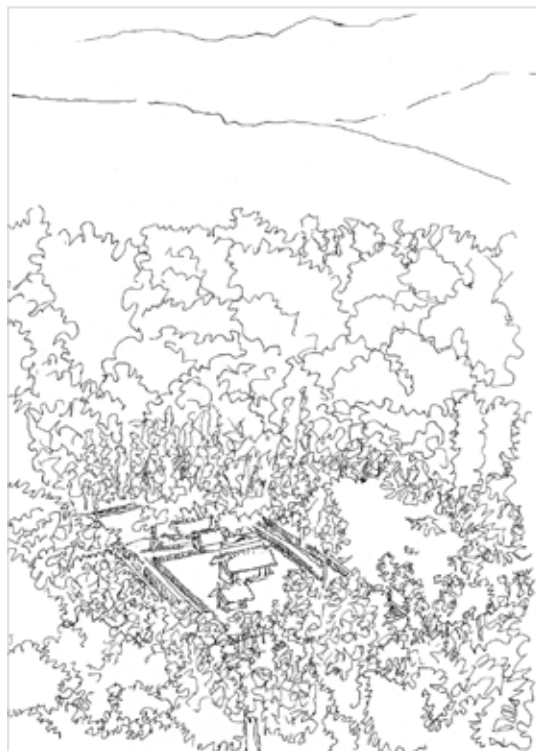


Figure 4
Aerial view of the Inner Shrine (*Naiku*) at Ise, Japan
(drawing by Athanasios Rapanos; copyright E.A. Maré).

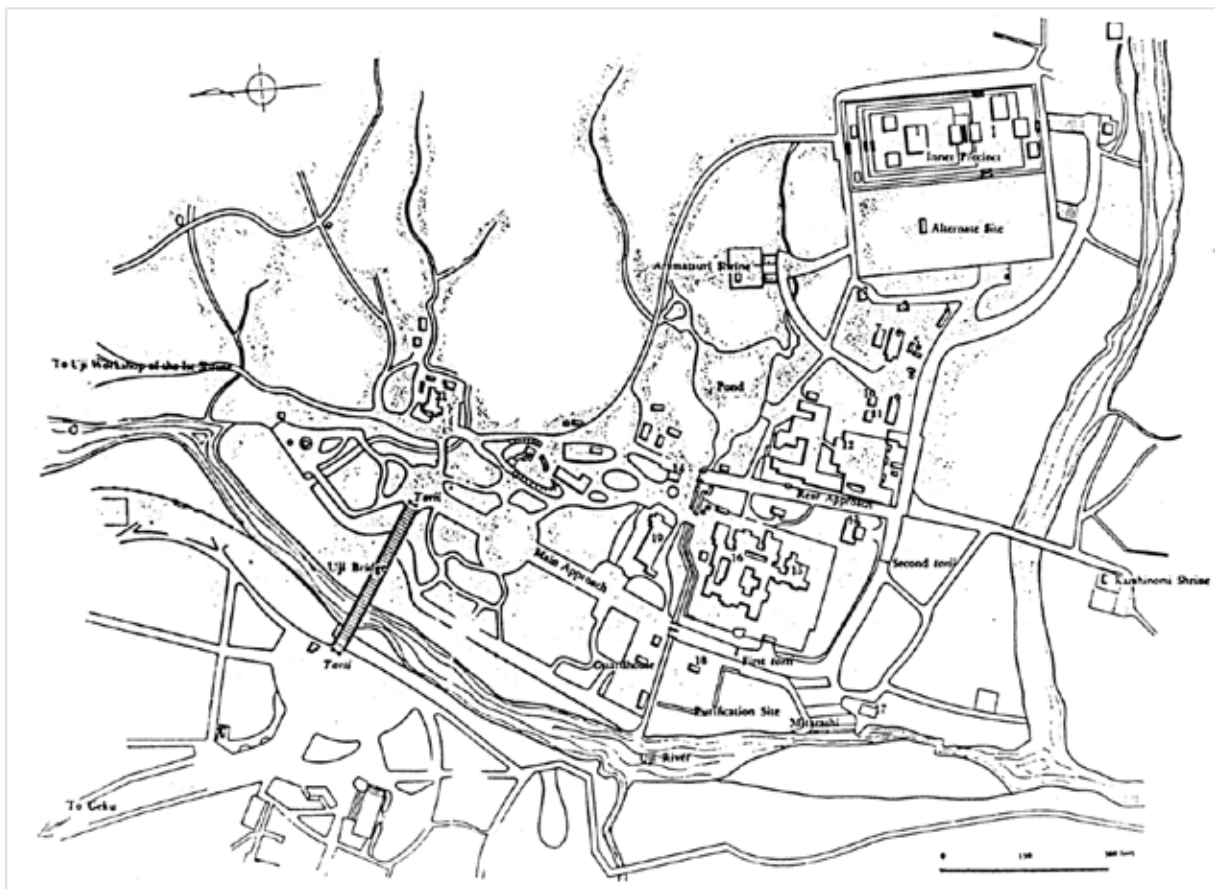


Figure 5
 Site plan of the Inner Shrine (*Naiku*) at Ise, Japan, showing its alternative site
 (drawing by Athanasios Rapanos; copyright E.A. Maré).

According to legend *Ise Naiku* was founded in the reign of Emperor Suinin (249-280 CE). Suinin's daughter, the Princess Yamato-hime, went from place to place in search of a good location for the worship of the Great Deity. When she came to the Ise area she received the following oracular message: "Since this land of Ise is a land where no turbulent tempests blow, and is a peaceful land where the twang of the bow and the hiss of the arrow are never heard, I desire to rest in this land."²³ The princess then erected a shrine for the Great Deity, the Sun Goddess Amaterasu O-mi-Kami, who was worshipped as the foundress of the Japanese imperial line and guardian of the nation. This goddess has her dwelling at the main building of the *Naiku* (figure 6), in a sacred mirror, which rests in a boat-shaped container.²⁴ As in many ancient mythologies, the boat can be interpreted as an archetypal symbol of rebirth, which is very apt at Ise with its cyclical renewal of building complexes.

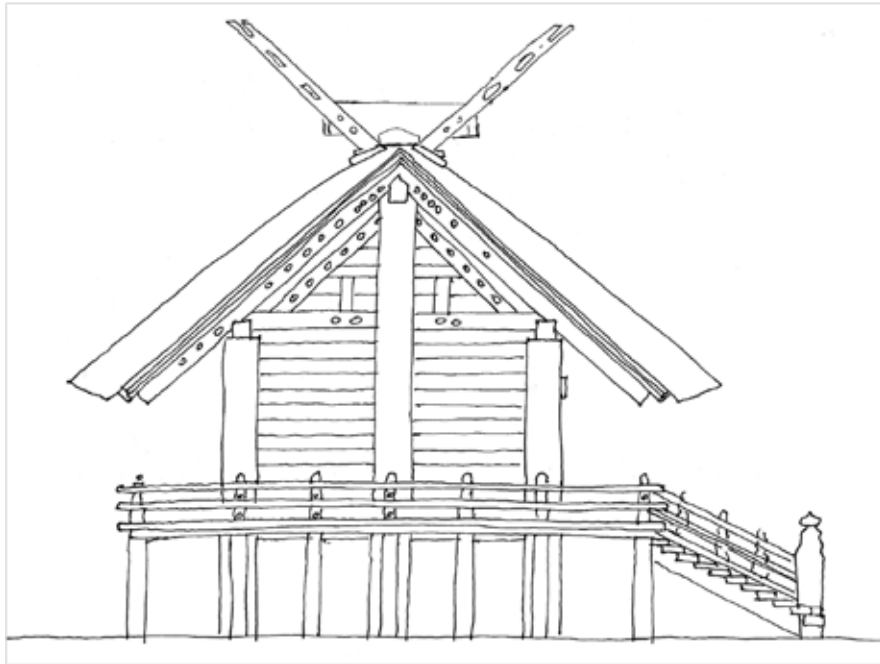


Figure 6
Side elevation of the main Inner Shrine (*Naiku*) sanctuary building
at Ise, Japan (drawing by Athanasios Rapanos; copyright E.A. Maré).

The structural materials used at the Ise shrines are mainly cypress, cedar and thatch with metal ornamentation. There are no sculptures and no intricate spaces to fathom, but the refinement of detailing grips the attention. However, more profound meanings than materiality and decoration should be given priority in the discussion of *Ise Naiku*. This shrine embodies an architectural endeavour that makes the presence of human beings as creators of order visible to the deities who are invited to dwell in these earthly places and, in their turn, manifest their presence in an abode created by mortals. In the layout of the *Naiku* a sensitive awareness of the presence of mountains, forest and sky is retained so that the origins of the Shinto religion can still be sensed there. The trees, a waterfall and other natural features that surround the *Ise Jingu* clearings complement the architectural forms, in which there exists a harmonious relationship between elements of the earth such as stone, wood and water, and air and wind which belong to the sky.

The *Naiku* is approached by means of a wooden bridge which spans the Isuzu River; at the end of the bridge a *torii*, or gateway, announces the entrance to a Shinto sacred place. The pathway to the enclosed shrine is paved with small pebbles which cause footsteps to sound *zaku-zaku*, an audible reminder to visitors that the profane space on which they tread is demarcated as separate from the sacred space of the divine presences. Throughout the *Naiku* precinct rocks are corded by ropes and white fluttering paper along either side of the path, thus enhancing their visibility while bearing witness to the care and respect Shinto worshippers lavish on natural elements that are venerated as sacred abodes. Kenzo Tange and N. Kawazoe believe that “in these stones and rocks the ancient Japanese saw something of the mystery dwelling within nature and natural phenomena”.²⁵ They adumbrate the arrangement of rocks in later traditional Japanese Zen gardens of great artistic beauty that are replete with symbolic meaning.

The arrangement of the shrine buildings on the sites within clearly defined boundaries was symbolic of how the divine presences ranked within the hierarchy of the supernatural world.²⁶ During the Nara period (645-794 CE) the *Naiku* had seventy subsidiary buildings, in addition to the main sanctuary and the east and west treasure houses. The extensive development of the site

testifies to the splendour of the religious festivals of the time and the rich and varied existence imagined for the deities dwelling there. At present the shrines comprise only four rectangular buildings: the *Shoden* or main shrine building (primarily intended as a place of repose for the divine spirit), two treasure houses behind the innermost fence, and a meeting hall for priests between the second and third fences. The fence surrounding the level clearing of approximately 18 x 39 metres and the three innermost fences clearly demarcate the hierarchy of sanctity, and are reminiscent of Heidegger’s “clearing of Being”, previously referred to (figure 7).

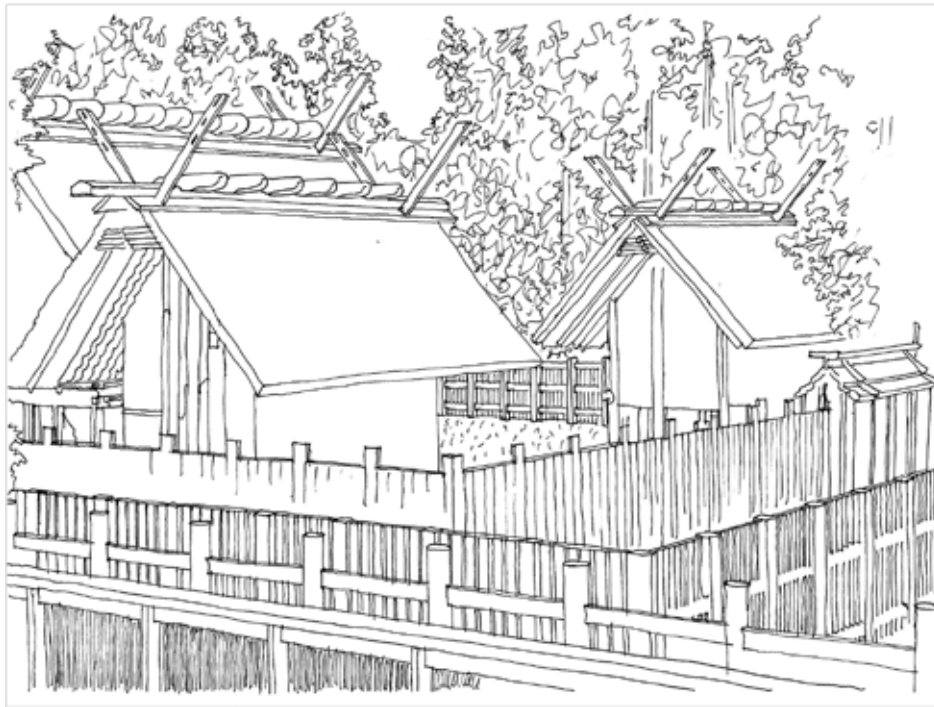


Figure 7
Inner Shrine (*Naiku*) buildings at Ise, Japan, surrounded by four enclosures
(drawing by Athanasios Rapanos; copyright E.A. Maré).

The *Naiku* complex is surrounded by four enclosures. Only the first is marked by a gateway which is open to the public. Selected people of high rank are admitted to the second enclosure, but the third and fourth enclosures are reserved only for the Emperor, who is also the high priest. The privileged pilgrim may be led by a priest to a position facing the inner shrine where he or she bows deeply and claps hands three times for the *kami*, which signifies that “reverent respect has been paid to the Emperor and the august ancestors of the Japanese nation”.²⁷

In the persistence of an architectural pattern one may identify a supreme example of how mythologising thought can imbue an established concept with timeless validity. Since the Ise complex became the prototype for all Shinto sanctuaries elsewhere in Japan, one may say that the repetition of the same basic design and layout pattern reveal acceptance by the Japanese Shinto believers that the unity of human beings and the divine presences is authentically manifest in the shrine architecture. It therefore comes as no surprise that Tange expresses his awareness of the meaning of the established shrine layouts and their periodic restructuring in mythical terms, referring back to the intentions of the original builders: “When the Japanese people try to glimpse the divine, this form becomes the symbol. Or perhaps one should say that the Japanese see in this form the divine. The energy that sustained the creation of this form was also the energy that welded the Japanese into one people; it reflects their primordial essence.”²⁸

At *Ise Naiku* (and *Ise Geku*) the fourfold is in perfect balance. The natural and the supernatural worlds are brought close together, but in such a way that each retains its separate identity. This manifests in their clearly bounded space, because the demarcation of a boundary is a prerequisite for building and dwelling. Betty Rogers Rubenstein makes the point that “although human hands have tended each stone, and care has been lavished on each pebble [at *Ise Jingu*], nature rules here – not humans”.²⁹ At Ise humans both revere and control nature. Since the layout of the shrine buildings and their precinct enclosures are basically symmetrical, Japanese thought and planning are said to be characterised by extreme formality that contrasts with the natural forms of the environment. However, there is no architectural display of the dominance of a powerful Shinto clergy.

Even though heaven and earth are different they belong together and are, so to speak, locked in a dynamic equilibrium: nature excludes neither humans nor divinities, but is inclusive of all that is mortal and transcendental. In their unity they reflect the eternal cycles of nature. Likewise, the Ise shrine structures – which do not change visibly over time because they are periodically rebuilt and belong to the cycles of nature which reveal, as Noboru Kawazoe says, a “simultaneous opposition and accord”.³⁰ This view stresses the mimetic interaction of human beings with nature.

St. Peter’s Basilica at Rome

While both the Shinto shrine and the Greek temple complex reveal a close relationship with nature, St. Peter’s Basilica in Rome, the most renowned of Christian sacred places, is located in an urban setting in the Vatican enclave. Its most notable feature, the dome, designed by Michelangelo Buonarroti (1475-1564), is the most important landmark of the city.

Most visitors reach St. Peter’s on foot. The approach to the building is along a processional way, part of which is the Ponte San Angelo across the Tiber (figure 8). In 1667 Pope Clement IX commissioned Gian Lorenzo Bernini (1598-1680) to decorate the bridge with ten bronze angels, represented as meditating on the instruments of Christ’s passion. The presence of these figures symbolically transforms the bridge into a *Via Crucis* (Way of the Cross) along which the thoughts of pilgrims are focussed on the sacred purpose of their journey while they traverse from the secular to the sacred realm. This processional way, together with the bridge, forms the main axial approach to the piazza and the facade of St. Peter’s itself. Later Benito Mussolini authorised the demolition of all obstructing buildings, allowing the processional way also to lead visually into the vast oval piazza which Bernini flanked with a roofed double colonnade that curves around it on either side, and which he likened to embracing arms gathering the faithful (figure 9).³¹



Figure 8
View of Ponte San Angelo, the approach to St. Peter's Basilica at Rome
(photograph by the author).



Figure 9
View of Bernini's colonnade, St. Peter's Basilica at Rome
(photograph by the author).

The processional way or “surface world” ends at the monumental portico of St. Peter’s, designed by Carlo Maderno (1556-1629), which separates it from the interior or “depth world”.³² Although the pilgrim may pause at the awe-inspiring entrance of St. Peter’s, he or she proceeds further on an inward journey, that is quite different from the urban approach. The inner, otherworldly, space is reached by continuing along the nave to its climactic intersection with the transepts under the dome. The Christian church is unique in that the pilgrim’s journey does not end at the main facade or at a closed entrance, as is the case with the Greek temple and the Ise shrines. Not only priests are privileged to enter into the inner sanctuary, but all worshippers are brought into the sanctuary. Proceeding along the nave, which is an extension of the exterior horizontal axis, the pilgrim arrives at the *baldacchino*³³ for St. Peter, behind which the *Cathedra Petri* is visible in the apse (figure 9). This offers the climactic religious experience of arrival at the place where the horizontal axis intersects with, or more correctly, is transformed into a vertical axis of transcendent encounter. The horizontal, earthbound, progression terminates at the intersection of the nave and transept. The pilgrim reaches the spot where, according to I. Lavin, “a topological transfusion” of Jerusalem to Rome takes place.³⁴ Here the death of St. Peter – whose first basilica stood over this site – is symbolically linked to the crucifixion of Jesus. It is the place where, for Roman Catholic believers, salvation continues to occur and is also the place where, under the dome which admits mediated daylight by means of the lantern’s openings, the horizontal way of mankind is transformed into the vertical or transcendent way of God. The dome is the physical model of the sky, as Thomas Kuhn (1979: 28) notes: “Connecting the vault above the earth with a symmetric vault below gives the universe an appropriate and satisfying closure”. But actually the dome forms an enclosure that excludes a view of the natural sky; instead it symbolises heaven, the celestial realm and its protection as a divine favour. Under the dome architecture becomes mystical, closed and unreal in a perceptual sense. It is revealing that Michelangelo intended the lantern which crowns the dome to be dark, to obscure the light of day. His intention was to express his personal sense of separation from God’s light. The detail was never executed. Instead, according to Duvignaud, the light inside St. Peter’s is an appeal to God to “entice him into the labyrinth of human exchanges and to involve Him again in a world which He seemed to be disdainful”.³⁵

Proceeding to the bronze *baldacchino*, designed and sculpted by Bernini to rise above the altar over St. Peter’s tomb, the pilgrim has a view in the apse of the *Cathedra Petri*, also designed by Bernini, that is raised on a high pedestal (figures 9 and 10). There the pilgrim stands “where earth and heaven meet in a burst of glory”.³⁶ The light shines down through a stained glass window onto the spot where the Holy Spirit descends from above in the form of a dove towards the place where the apostle’s grave is located. “Thus tomb, dome and heaven are linked through the architectural design, with light acting as the connecting catalyst.”³⁷ But the light is mediated and diffused; it is transmuted and otherworldly, designed to appear mystical, as if shining from the *Cathedra Petri* itself.



Figure 10
Gian Lorenzo Bernini, *baldacchino* in St. Peter's Basilica
(photograph by the author).



Figure 11
Gian Lorenzo Bernini, *Cathedra Petri* in St. Peter's Basilica
(photograph by the author).

The verse from Matthew 16: 18, “You are Peter and on this rock I will build my church. I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven”, is inscribed in Latin on the inner base of the dome. What are in fact linked in the edifice of St. Peter’s are the earth, represented by the tomb of a mortal, and the sky experienced only indirectly in the form of diffused light from above which is spiritualised in the interior. This arrangement is reminiscent of Rudolf Bultman’s insight that the worldview of the Bible is mythical: “Die Welt gilt als in drei Stockwerke gegliedert. In der Mitte befindet sich die Erde, über ihr die Himmel, unter ihr die Unterwelt. Der Himmel ist die Wohnung Gottes und der himmlischen Gestalten, der Engel; die Unterwelt ist die Hölle, die Ort der Qual.”³⁸ Furthermore the orientation of celebrating mass is oriented eastwards, which is according to the “cosmic sign of the rising sun which symbolizes the universality of God”.³⁹ The interior of St. Peter’s is indeed a simulated cosmology based on a symbolic system of belief, enhanced by the brilliance of art and artifice, thus unnatural. The congregation gather there for communal prayer and ritual, to the exclusion of the outside world and nature.

In contrast to the Shinto shrine and the Greek temple, where the symbol or effigy of the deity signifies its actual presence, the Christian God is transcendent (“not of this world”, in Christ’s words), but in the interior of the Christian church He is evoked by means of symbols, i.e. the structural treatment of the church interior.

Rubenstein points out that, in order to concretise and represent an authentically Christian worldview, a plan was developed which “apparently combined the exterior Solomonic altar of ancient Israel, the circular Roman Marterium, and the axial plan of the imperial basilica”.⁴⁰ The resulting construction puts the conceptual models together in a design that combines “in one structure the architectural elements of a tomb, a sacrificial altar, an imperial judgement seat, and a meeting place for the congregation”.⁴¹ Thus St. Peter’s becomes a complex new world that integrates many of the traditional aspects that symbolised secular power before the Christian era with the unique spiritual striving of the Christian religion to establish the kingdom of heaven on earth which in the fullness of time would be transformed into a new heaven and a new earth in which the ideal unity of heaven, the earth, God and mortals is attainable.

Conclusion

In the different epochs of the long history of mankind all architecture — especially in sacred places — has been instrumental in symbolising their builders’ worldviews and attitude to nature.⁴² This is evident from the brief analyses of three disparate places of worship discussed briefly in this article in which the presence of the elements of Heidegger’s fourfold is researched. The act of building in a clearing where the unity of heaven, earth, gods or divinities (or God in monotheistic religions) and mortals may manifest has historically been mankind’s affirmation of its physicality and spirituality. The architecture of nature religions exemplifies more than mere functionality and physical construction, especially in the sense that Burchard emphasises: that it is not physically difficult to reach the Ise shrines, but that “The spiritual journey is longer.”⁴³ Similarly, it is not difficult to reach the temple at Delphi, but the spiritual journey towards the attainment of Apollonian ideals is also longer than the physical. And the Christian pilgrimage to St. Peter’s is equally only partially physical, but requires of the participant to become like Jesus one with God.

The Greek and Shinto sacred precincts are architectural contexts of wholeness where the human beings interact in harmony and equilibrium with the sky, the gods and the earth. In contrast, the Christian basilica’s interior space of supplication under the shelter of the dome,

designed as a mimetic cosmology, offers human beings who seek the wholeness of the fourfold an essentially symbolic experience.

Notes

- 1 Harman (2009: 294).
- 2 An example of Heidegger’s obscurity may be found in the way he explains the relationship between mortals and Being. Mortals, he contends, are not rulers over Being, they are “thrown” (*geworfen*) by Being itself into the truth of Being, and according to Kockelmans (1984: 36), they do “not decide whether and how beings appear, whether and how the gods, history, and nature come forth into the clearing of Being, come-to-presence or depart”. It is in a space that Heidegger refers to as a “clearing” of Being that things – among which, one presumes, works of architecture are “things” (not objects: see note 2) – reveal their presence and relationship. Heidegger calls this coming-to-presence of things the happening of truth and, as mortals, human beings must accept the stewardship of the truth of Being.
- Caputo (1970: 35) interprets *das Geviert* as follows: “The world is not a static structure but a process, the process of the four together. The four depend upon one another in order to be themselves; a change in one is ‘reflected’ in a change in the other. [...] In the idea of the ‘gods’ Heidegger overcomes the concept of God as the first cause; the gods are messengers of the divine, guiding and advising human activity. The view of man as a ‘mortal’ exceeds any sociological or biological understanding of man and takes him as a being who sees ahead into death and takes over that possibility in his life. In the foursome [more generally referred to as fourfold], the ‘heavens’ are viewed not astronomically but as that which charts the course of time and bestows light upon men. The ‘earth’ is taken not in its molecular make-up but as what sustains and supports men. Should we change one of the four we disrupt the rest.”
- See also Harries (2007) and Sharr (2010).
- 3 According to Harman (2009: 294) Heidegger refers to “thing” and “object” as opposing terms, which is unjustified.
- 4 Harman (2009: 295).
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- 8 Harman (2009: 300).
- 9 Heidegger (1949: 274). Heidegger appropriates the term “dwelling poetically” (*dicterisch wohnt der Mensch*) from the German poet Friedrich Hölderlin (1770-1843), associated with Romanticism. Neither in “Bauen Wohnen Denken”, nor in any other of his works does Heidegger explain what a “dwelling” (noun) should be in which “dwelling” (verb) is poetically possible. Critics attempting an exposition of the phrase “dwelling poetically” also leave the enigma unresolved. See for example Cooper (2012) and Lazarin (2008).
- 10 Heidegger (1959: 30 and 33). The full quotation reads: “Standing there the edifice rests on rock. This resting on the rock makes the rock yield the secret of its unyielding and yet uncompelled power of holding and sustaining. Standing there the edifice withstands the storm raging above and thus reveals the very nature of the storm in its force. The shining splendour of the stone, apparently so bright only by the grace of the sun, actually makes apparent the light of day, the vast realm of the sky, the darkness of the night. The firm towering of the temple makes the invisible space of the air visible. The unperturbed calmness of the structure stands out against the mounting waves of the sea and makes their uproar apparent by contrast. [...] The Greeks very early called this rising and appeasing in itself as a whole *Physis*. It elucidates, at the same time, that on which and in which man finds his existence. We call it the earth.”
- 11 Scully (1962: 4).
- 12 Scully (1962: 1).
- 13 Karouzos in Andronicos (1975: 6). The full quotation reads: “It is as if the earth had been cleft asunder by some cosmogonic spasm; the valley is a vast and profound chasm [...]. And as soon as we reach the foot of the of the Phaedriades, at the exact spot of the Kastalian Spring, we are faced with something that appears like the chasm: the two rocks are separated by a tremendous gorge, narrow

- and impassable[:] the Arkoudorema [...] as it is known today which continues all the way down to the slope, deep into the thicket.”
- 14 Scully (1962: 100).
- 15 Scully (1962: 100).
- 16 Heidegger (1959: 63).
- 17 Jaeger (1958: 64).
- 18 Scully (1962: 100).
- 19 Scully (1962: 112).
- 20 Reynolds (2001: 339, note 21).
- 21 John Burchard, quoted in Tange and Kawazoe (1965: 9).
- 22 Watanabe (1964/1974: 26) explains the effect of the continued reconstruction on viewers: “In place of the new timbers sported by a recently reconstructed shrine, the viewer is enjoined to imagine the sanctuary as it once was. In other words, while the buildings themselves may have changed, Shinto shrines are built to retain the intent and basic design of the original architecture; it is this ancient structure as it once existed that the viewer is required to imagine.”
- 23 Picken (1994: 309) explains the essence of the cult at Ise as very simple: “It stressed four principles: (1) the authority of the Grand Shrine [the *Geku*], (2) the sanctity of the Imperial Regalia, (3) the self-awareness of Japan as *kami no kuni* (land of the *kami*) and (4) the expression of reverence by prayer, purity, and honesty.”
- 24 Tange and Kawazoe (1965: 37).
- 25 Tange and Kawazoe (1965: 25).
- 26 Tange and Kawazoe (1965: 34).
- 27 Rubenstein (1965: 84).
- 28 Tange and Kawazoe (1965: 51).
- 29 Rubenstein (1965: 81).
- 30 In Tange and Kawazoe (1965: 167).
- 31 Gian Lorenzo Bernini stated: “[S]ince the church of St. Peter’s is the mother of nearly all the others, it had to have colonnades, which would show it as if stretching out its arms maternally to receive Catholics, so as to confirm them in their faith, heretics to reunite them to the Church, and infidels, to enlighten them in the true faith” (quoted by Norberg-Schulz 1975: 287-8).
- 32 The terms “surface world” and “depth world” are borrowed from an anonymous author of *Meditations on the Tarot: A Journey Into Christian Hermeticism*. New York: Amity House, 1985: 512.
- 33 The *baldaccino* (baldaquin) evokes heaven. Like umbrellas held over the heads of people of high office it symbolises divine protection and favour. Thus, following an ancient custom a little ornamental roof is provided in St. Peter’s over the head of the officiating priest.
- 34 Lavin (1968: 343-5).
- 35 Duvignaud (1967: 84).
- 36 Rubenstein (1965: 78).
- 37 Rubenstein (1965: 79).
- 38 Bultman (1967: 15).
- 39 These words by Pope Benedict XVI are quoted from Sparavigna (1209: 1).
- 40 Rubenstein (1965: 81).
- 41 Rubenstein (1989: 81).
- 42 In the Western tradition, Vitruvius (*circa* 80-15 BCE), the Roman writer, architect and engineer, respected what he called the natural correctness of buildings by stressing the importance of placement, shape and orientation of buildings, i.e. with regard to the earth and the sky.
- 43 Burchard, quoted in Tange and Kawazoe (1965: 8).

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