CHAPTER THREE

THE SEARCH FOR A SUITABLE SITE

The first clear reference in the historical records to Kanmu’s decision to construct a new capital appears only in mid-784, six months before the actual move, when a group of court officials was dispatched to inspect a possible site. However, Kanmu’s intention to abandon the Nara capital can be traced back to the beginning of his reign.

As we saw at the end of the first chapter, the state was in political turmoil during those first few months of the Enryaku era (782–806). This situation was worsened by the poor state of the nation’s economy and the widespread social unrest resulting from the collapse of the principle of ‘public land, public people’.\(^1\) One year after his enthronement, Kanmu expressed his concern in an imperial written command (mikotonori):

...As ruler, We benevolently govern the realm and We care for the people. [However,] official and private matters have begun to languish, and this deeply troubles Our mind. It would really be desirable to bring a halt to construction, to exert oneself in agriculture, and to give priority to frugality in government, thereby filling the storehouses with goods. Now, the residential quarters of the palace are adequate and there is no shortage as to the various clothes and accessories (fukugan). Furthermore, construction on the various Buddhist sanctuaries (butsunyō) is finished and the monetary value has decreased. Therefore, the Palace Construction [Ministry] (zōgushō) and the Imperial Decree [Ministry] (chokushishō), as well as the [Office for the Construction of the] Hokke[ji] (zō-Hokkeji-shi) and the Minting [Office] (jusenshi), are discontinued; thus [We] multiply the treasures in the court storehouses and [We] have to value a government that omits uselessness. However, the various artisans

\(^1\) Tsuboi and Tanaka, *The Historic City of Nara*, 132. Under the Taika Reform, all farmland had been nationalised and was distributed among the people under the allotted rice field (handen) system. Ideally a redistribution of available land took place every six years. However, farmers were also encouraged to open up new rice fields (konden). In 743, these new rice fields were declared private rice fields (shiden), and everyone, depending on their rank, was permitted to own certain amounts of such fields permanently [SN Tenpyō 15/5/27]. Initially, tax (so) had to be paid on these new rice fields, but later they became private property and eventually tax-free rice fields (fuyusoden).
of the Palace Construction and Imperial Decree [Ministries] should be assigned to the Carpentry Bureau (mokuryō) and the Palace Storehouse Bureau (kuraryō) according to their skills. The other [personnel] should be assigned to their previous office.²

Seemingly, this command was an attempt at economic reform by bringing an end to some construction projects, by encouraging agriculture, and by abolishing unessential government agencies. However, the abolition of both the Imperial Decree Ministry (chokushishō) and the Minting Office (jusenshi) was short-lived, cancelling the saving. From a document preserved in the Heian ibun, it is clear that by 789 the Imperial Decree Ministry was re-established in the form of the Imperial Decree Office (chokushisho).³ The existence of this office in the 790s is further substantiated by the discovery of two inscribed wooden tablets during excavations carried out on the site of the former Nagaoka capital in 2000 (see mokkan 2 and 3).⁴ The extracodal Minting Office was re-established in 790, and eight years later, a directive was issued by the Council of State stating that the number of scribes was to be increased by two, giving a total of ten.⁵

² SN Enryaku 1/4/11. A translation into German can be found in Lewin, “Die Regierungs-annalen Kammu-Tenno”, 95–6.
³ HI, doc. 4897. In the official histories, the Imperial Decree Ministry appears for the first time in 764, but it must have existed before that, because it is stated that one of its officials, Awata no ason Michimaro, was appointed to an additional office [SN Tenpyō hōji 8/10/20]. The responsibilities of the ministry are unclear. It may have been in charge of supervising the new rice fields opened by permission of the central government (chokusaiden); of conveying imperial decrees (chokushi); and, judging from Kanmu’s written command, it also seems to have been responsible for the emperor’s clothes and accessories (fukugan). Tsunoda Bun’ei has suggested that the Imperial Decree Ministry may have been a predecessor of the Chamberlain’s Office (kurōdokoro), the private secretariat of the emperor ensuring confidentiality in dealing with important documents, that was established in 810 by Emperor Saga. Tsunoda, Tsunoda Bun’ei chosakushū 3 Ritsuryō kokka no tenkai, 309–11.
⁴ Unfortunately, the only inscription preserved on the tablets is the name of the Imperial Decree Office, and as a result no further information on the office’s duties can be gleaned from them. The site where the tablets were discovered is known as the Tōin site and will be discussed in further detail at the end of chapter 9.2, “The Role of the Urban Centre”.
⁵ SN Enryaku 9/10/2 and RSK 4 Enryaku 17/12/20. This office in charge of minting coins appears for the first time in the historical documents in 694 [NS Jirō tennō 8/3/2].
Furthermore, the reasons for closing down the Palace Construction Ministry (ぞうしょ)\(^6\) in 782 may have been other than of an economic nature. In the early twentieth century, Kanmu’s statement that he was satisfied with the Nara palace buildings and the related abolition of the Palace Construction Ministry was interpreted as an indication that at that time Kanmu still had no intention of moving away from the Nara capital, and scholars thereupon concluded that he left for Nagaoka precipitately. However, if the hypothesis about the importance of the shift in imperial lineage and the ‘revolutionary years’ holds true, Kanmu was already determined upon his enthronement to abandon the Nara capital. Thus, there was no further need to carry out extensive—and expensive—repairs to the existing buildings at the Nara palace, as they would shortly be abandoned. There was also no need to stock up building materials to carry out the repairs, since the Emperor would move away soon and these materials would then have to be transported to the new site, doubling the work involved.\(^7\)

Nevertheless, even though the decision to leave Nara thus probably dates from the time of Kanmu’s enthronement, two more years passed before a group of court officials was dispatched to Yamashiro province to “inspect the site of the village of Nagaoka for the transfer of the capital” (table 3.1).\(^8\)

---

\(^6\) The Palace Construction Ministry was an extracodal office in charge of constructing and repairing the various buildings of the imperial palace (きゅう門) and the detached palaces (里宮). It was first established as a Palace Construction Department (ぞう門) for the construction of the Fujiwara palace. In 701, the department was given more importance, and it became an office (し kicker) [SN Taihō 1/7/27]. When the Nara palace was built a few years later, the office mushroomed into a ministry (し lie) [SN Wado 1/3/13]. There is a great deal of uncertainty concerning the number of people attached to it, but it probably employed more than 1,360 people. It was revived again as a Palace Construction Office (ぞうしょ), possibly at the time of the construction of the Heian capital, to be absorbed again into the Carpentry Bureau in 806 [NKō Enryaku 15/7/24; RSK 5 Kanpyō 3/8/3; NKō Daidō 1/2/3]. Abe, *Nihon kodai kanshoku jiten*, 253–55.

\(^7\) To name but a few scholars in favour of this theory: Hayashi, *Nagaokakyō no nazo*, 50; Fukuyama et al., *Nagaokakyō hakkatsu (shinpan)*, 44; Kishi, “Nagaokakyō to Nihon no tojō”, 83; Takahashi, *Dōkyō to Nihon no kyūto*, 9; and Murai, *Heiankyō nendaiiki*, 20.

\(^8\) SN Enryaku 3/5/16.
Table 3.1 The inspection party dispatched to Nagaoka village

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NAME</th>
<th>OFFICE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fujiwara no Oguromaro</td>
<td>Middle counsellor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fujiwara no Tanetsugu</td>
<td>Middle counsellor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Saeki no Imaemishi</td>
<td>Controller of the left (sadaiben)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ki no Funamori</td>
<td>Imperial advisor and middle captain of the Inner Palace Guards' Headquarters (konoe chūjō)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ōnakatomi no Kooyu</td>
<td>Imperial advisor and director of the Department of Shintō (jingikan no haku)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sakanoue no Karitamaro</td>
<td>Director of the Palace Guards' Headquarters of the Right (ueji no kami)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Saeki no Kuramaro</td>
<td>Director of the Imperial Gate Guards' Headquarters (emon no kami)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fune no Taguchi</td>
<td>Associate director of the Divination Bureau (on'yō no suke)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Judging from the historical records, Kanmu assumed a rather passive role in the selection of the proper site and the construction of his new capital. We find no record of him visiting the area prior to the relocation of the capital. We can therefore assume that he either knew the area very well or fully trusted the judgment of the inspection party, who certainly seem to have had prior knowledge of the area they were about to survey.

As will be shown later in this chapter, both Fujiwara no ason Tanetsugu and Fujiwara no ason Oguromaro had close ties to one of the immigrant kinship groups living in Yamashiro province. In addition, Tanetsugu had served as governor of that province during Kōnin's reign and early during Kanmu's reign he had been appointed governor of Ōmi province, located east of Yamashiro province.10

Saeki no sukune Imaemishi had served as Settsu daibu, the director of the Settsu Office (Settsu-shiki) in Naniwa, also located in an area near Yamashiro province. Moreover, Imaemishi was probably the most experienced civil engineer of the time. During the previous forty years he had worked on several large-scale projects, such as the construction of the Tōdaiji and the Saidaiji and the construction of Ito fortress.

9 Despite of having been involved in the rebellion of Higami no Kawatsugu, Karitamaro seems to have regained Kanmu’s trust quite rapidly, for he had been pardoned just four months after being demoted [SN Enryaku 1/5/16].
10 SN Hōki 2/9/16; SN Hōki 6/9/27; and SN Ten’ō 1/5/25.
(Ito-jō) in Chikuzen province, and he had been supervising the repairs carried out at the Dazai Headquarters.\(^{11}\)

Ki no ason Funamori, related to Kanmu through the Emperor’s paternal grandmother Ki no ason Tochihime, had been vice-governor of Tajima province, located northwest of Yamashiro province.\(^{12}\)

Saeki no sukune Kuramaro was governor of Tanba province at the time of the construction of the Nagaoka capital and had to travel through the village of Nagaoka on his way to the provincial headquarters (kokufu).\(^{13}\) The same goes for Sakanoue no ōmiki Karitamaro, who had been appointed governor of Tanba province (Tanba no kami).\(^{14}\) In addition, Karitamaro’s father Sakanoue no ōmiki Inukai had served as director of the Tōdaiji Construction Agency (zō-Tōdaiji-chōkan) and Sakanoue no ōmiki Oshikuma had been appointed chief carpenter (ōtakumi) of the Nara Capital Construction Agency (zō-Heijōkyō-shi).\(^{15}\) We may therefore assume that the Sakanoue family was specialised in certain construction techniques which were passed down through the generations.\(^{16}\)

Then, which features of the Nagaoka area convinced these men that it would be a proper location for the new capital?

As representatives of the Department of Shintō and the Divination Bureau, Ônakatomi no ason Kooyu and Fune no muraji Taguchi carried the spiritual responsibility of approving the capital to be built in the village of Nagaoka. It was their duty to confirm whether this area, located between a long hill to the west and a curve of the Kadono River (present Katsura River) to the east, possessed the necessary geographical features for establishing a capital, guided by the Chinese topomantic model (fūsui, Chin. feng shui).\(^{17}\) Following this model, the

---

\(^{11}\) SN Enryaku 9/10/3; SN Tenpyō hôji 7/1/9; SN Jingo keium 1/2/28; SN Tenpyō jingo 1/3/10; and SN Tenpyō hôji 8/1/21.

\(^{12}\) SN Hōki 2/int.3/1.

\(^{13}\) SN Enryaku 5/1/7.

\(^{14}\) SN Enryaku 1/6/20.

\(^{15}\) SN Tenpyō hôji 8/11/13 and SN Wado 1/9/30.

\(^{16}\) Karitamaro’s son, Sakanoue no ōsukune Tamuramaro, would also serve in various construction agencies. During Kanmu’s reign, he was appointed associate director of the extracodal Bureau of Skilled Artisans (takumi no suke), emissary for the construction of Izawa fortress (zō-Izawajo-shi), and emissary for the construction of Shiba fortress (zō-Shibajo-shi) [SN Enryaku 6/3/22; NKi Enryaku 21/1/9; NKi Enryaku 22/3/6].

\(^{17}\) Based upon Stephen Skinner’s and Victor Xiong’s remarks concerning the translation of the Chinese concept of feng shui, I have chosen not to use the mainstream term ‘geomancy’. Skinner, The Living Earth Manual of Feng-Shui, xi–xii; and Xiong, Sai-Tang Chang’an, 43.
topography of the cardinal points of an auspicious site should ‘befit the four gods’ (shijin sōō). That is, the site should have a mountain range in the north, symbolic of the Black Warrior (genbu), which protects the area from the seasonal northwest winds in the Kinki area and allows for a maximum amount of sunshine. The south side of the site, corresponding to the Vermilion Sparrow (shujaku), should be an open space with a meandering stream or a lake, symbolising water reluctant to leave the auspicious site. In the east, the site should be bounded by a river, which corresponds to the Azure Dragon (seiryō); and a trunk road should run in the west, symbolic of the White Tiger (byakko).

The area of Nagaoka fulfilled all these topomantic requirements. Nagaoka hill, from which the village and the capital derived their name, stretched from north to south on the northern and western sides of the site. Springing from the northeast, Kadono River flowed east of the capital site, while Tanba road was located in the west and Lake Ogura lay in the south.

18 Already in 708, during the reign of Empress Genmei, certain topographical requirements were the main point of concern in determining the location of the new Nara capital, for it is recorded in the Shoku Nihongi that “the four beasts fit the charts and the three mountains provide protection” [SN Wado 1/2/15].

19 Nakayama, “Nagaokakyo kara Heiankyo e”, 229.


21 The ‘four gods’ principle, in which the gods of the cardinal directions are identified with four different topographical or man-made features as described in this paragraph, might actually be a later development in topomancy. The earliest Japanese written reference to these new requirements of a site ‘befitting the four gods’ can be found in the Sakuteiki, an eleventh-century manual on garden making in shindenzukuri-style villas. Although many historians and archaeologists refer to this modified topomantic model when discussing the planning of the Japanese Chinese-style capitals, it is not entirely certain that this practice already existed in Nara and early Heian Japan. The original feng shui model calls for a site protected by mountain ridges in an armchair formation on the east, north, and west, with an open plain and a distant mountain in the south. For a preliminary investigation into this matter and the relationship between feng shui and shijin sōō, see Van Goethem, “Tracing Feng Shui in Ancient Japanese Capital Cities—Case-study: Nagaokakyo, Japan’s Forgotten Capital”; and Van Goethem, “Influence of Chinese Philosophical Thought on the Construction of Nagaokakyo, Japan’s Forgotten Capital”.

22 The place name Nagaoka may date back at least to the second half of the seventh century, for a potshard inscribed with ‘長岡...’ was unearthed from a layer dating back to the Kofun and Asuka periods. Yamaguchi, “Nagaokakyo ato Sakyo dai 492ji (7ANDTD-5 chiku)—Sakyō ichijō sanbō nichō, higashi nībō ōji—hakkutsu chōsa hōkoku”, 88–9, 94–7.

23 If the original Chinese topomantic model was followed, the cardinal directions corresponded to four mountains or mountain ridges. These were, clockwise from the

---

18 Already in 708, during the reign of Empress Genmei, certain topographical requirements were the main point of concern in determining the location of the new Nara capital, for it is recorded in the Shoku Nihongi that “the four beasts fit the charts and the three mountains provide protection” [SN Wado 1/2/15].

19 Nakayama, “Nagaokakyo kara Heiankyo e”, 229.


21 The ‘four gods’ principle, in which the gods of the cardinal directions are identified with four different topographical or man-made features as described in this paragraph, might actually be a later development in topomancy. The earliest Japanese written reference to these new requirements of a site ‘befitting the four gods’ can be found in the Sakuteiki, an eleventh-century manual on garden making in shindenzukuri-style villas. Although many historians and archaeologists refer to this modified topomantic model when discussing the planning of the Japanese Chinese-style capitals, it is not entirely certain that this practice already existed in Nara and early Heian Japan. The original feng shui model calls for a site protected by mountain ridges in an armchair formation on the east, north, and west, with an open plain and a distant mountain in the south. For a preliminary investigation into this matter and the relationship between feng shui and shijin sōō, see Van Goethem, “Tracing Feng Shui in Ancient Japanese Capital Cities—Case-study: Nagaokakyo, Japan’s Forgotten Capital”; and Van Goethem, “Influence of Chinese Philosophical Thought on the Construction of Nagaokakyo, Japan’s Forgotten Capital”.

22 The place name Nagaoka may date back at least to the second half of the seventh century, for a potshard inscribed with ‘長岡...’ was unearthed from a layer dating back to the Kofun and Asuka periods. Yamaguchi, “Nagaokakyo ato Sakyo dai 492ji (7ANDTD-5 chiku)—Sakyō ichijō sanbō nichō, higashi nībō ōji—hakkutsu chōsa hōkoku”, 88–9, 94–7.

23 If the original Chinese topomantic model was followed, the cardinal directions corresponded to four mountains or mountain ridges. These were, clockwise from the
The site at Nagaoka also provided easy access to Tenji’s Ōtsu palace (Ōtsu no miya) and his burial mound in Yamashina (Yamashina no misasagi), whereas the area of the Nara capital was identified with the burial area of the Tenmu lineage.24

Of course, the inspection team also had to take into account more practical matters, such as whether the available land was sufficiently large for the construction of a capital, whether the area was prone to flooding, and the eventual location of the markets and their accessibility. Another important consideration in the search for a suitable site was the accessibility of timber resources. The site at the village of Nagaoka gave direct access to the woods on the border between Yamashiro and Tanba provinces and indirect access via the Ōi River to other forests within Tanba province.25 For all these matters, the inspection party probably consulted with the then-governor of Yamashiro province, Tajihi no mahito Hitotari, and his vice-governor, Kamitsukeno no kimi Ōkawa.26

A final decisive factor in the selection of Nagaoka village as the site for the new capital can be found in Kanmu’s own words. In 787, almost three years after the move, Kanmu declared, “We have relocated the capital to this village because [the area is] convenient by water and land”.27 One year later he repeated his statement, saying, “We constructed the capital in Nagaoka because [the village] is convenient by water and land”.28 This ‘convenience by water and land’ is taken to refer to the site’s superior transportation facilities.

24 Toby, “Why Leave Nara?”, 343. Tsunoda Bun’ei has put forward the suggestion that Kanmu originally planned to revive the Ōtsu palace. He therefore appointed Fujiwara no Tanetsugu as governor of Ōmi province to inspect the site and ascertain the possibility of creating a capital there. However, in Tsunoda’s view, these plans were abandoned because the site proved to be too small. Tsunoda, “Kanmu tennō”, 48.
26 Tajihi no Hitotari and Kamitsukeno no Ōkawa had both been appointed in 781 [SN Ten’ō 1/5/25].
27 SN Enryaku 6/10/8.
28 SN Enryaku 7/9/26.
3.1 Better Transportation Facilities

As Ronald Toby has written, ensuring smooth transportation was important in two respects: the prosecution of the frontier wars against the *emishi* in the northeast, and the pursuit of communications with the southwest and with the continent.29 However, the most pressing reason to move to an area providing better transportation facilities may have been of a domestic, economic nature. By the second half of the eighth century, the finances of the *ritsuryō* state were in dire straits. Large-scale projects such as the construction of the Tōdaiji and its *daibutsu*, initiated by Shōmu, had exhausted the state’s finances. Corruption was rife in local governments,30 and the central government was faced with growing deficits in tax-collection.31 Although Kōnin had taken some measures to improve state finances, the treasury was running dry when Kanmu took the throne. Thus, it seems only natural that if the expense of transferring the capital was undertaken, its location should provide for a more efficient tax-collating system. Not only did good transportation routes increase the speed and ease with which tax goods could be brought to the capital, it also enabled faster communication, making it somewhat easier to control the local governments.

Also, tax goods were not the only products that needed to be transported to the capital. By the end of the Nara period, the Nara capital had developed into an enormous city, housing up to 100,000 people.32 As the Nara capital grew larger, consumption rose, and providing the

30 Yamamura, “The Decline of the *Ritsuryō* System”, 14–9. For a more detailed study of corruption at the level of the district and provincial governments, see Yoshimura’s *Kokushi seido hōkai ni kansuru kenkyū*.
32 In the 1920s, Sawada Goichi estimated the total population of the Nara capital to be around 200,000 inhabitants, with a potential margin of error of up to 50,000. Kishi Toshio made his own calculations in the 1980s and arrived at a figure of 100,000. However, since Kishi assumed that the Fujiwara capital was three times smaller than the Nara capital, his calculations might also require revision because recent excavations have revealed that Fujiwara may have been larger than traditionally accepted. Current estimates of the population of the Nara capital range from 70,000 to 100,000 inhabitants. Sawada, *Naracho jidai minsei keizai no suteki kenkyū*, 276–83; Kishi, *Kodai kyūto no tankyū*, 152–68; Tsuboi and Tanaka, *The Historic City of Nara*, 128–29; Farris, “Trade, Money and Merchants in Nara Japan”, 303. For the size of the Fujiwara capital, see Nakamura, “Fujiwarakyō no jōbōsei”, 15; and Yamashita, “Fujiwarakyō—Nihonhatsu no tojō keikaku”, 56. See also below, chapter 7, n. 2.
population of the capital with necessary food and other commodities became increasingly problematic. Nakayama Shūichi has calculated that, with a population of 100,000, the city had an annual need of 15 million kilograms of rice to be used exclusively for human consumption. In addition to the rice, the city’s residents needed a continuous supply of meat, fish, grain, salt and other products such as building materials, iron, pottery, cloth, etc. This called for an efficient transportation network linking the capital to the various regions by land routes or water routes.

Several roads connected the Nara capital to the former Fujiwara capital, to the alternate capital (baito) at Naniwa, to the provincial headquarters of Izumi, Kawachi, Kii and Ōmi provinces, and to imperial palaces at Yoshino, Hora and Shigaraki. However, the capital had one major disadvantage. Nara was enclosed by mountains on three sides, making easy access by land possible only from the south.

The village of Nagaoka, on the other hand, was located near the crossroads of several old trunk routes, and a large quantity of taxes and products already passed through or near the Nagaoka area on the way to the Nara capital. Goods transported over land coming from the Shade Route (San’in-dō) entered the area from the northwest, commodities from the eastern provinces were carried along the Eastern Sea Route (Tōkaidō), Eastern High Route (Tōsandō) and North Land Route (Hokurikudō) and passed east of the city, while products from the Sun Route (San’yō-dō) were transported to the Yamazaki relay station (Yamazaki-eki) south of Nagaoka, where they crossed the Yodo River and entered the Nara capital from the north (figure 3.1).

---

33 In his calculations, Nakayama Shūichi still used the figures 200,000 and 250,000 for the number of inhabitants of the Nara capital. Nakayama, “Nagaokakyo hakkutsu”, 2145; and Nakayama, “Nagaokakyo hakkutsu no genkyō”, 1.

34 It needs to be pointed out that there is no mention of a ‘Fujiwara capital’ (‘Fujiwarakyō’) in the Nihon shoki. Although the palace area is indeed referred to as ‘Fujiwara-no-miya’ or ‘Fujiwarakyō’, the capital is called Shin’yaku-no-miyako, Shin’yakakkyō or Aramashi-no-miyako (‘new expanded capital’) [NS Jitō tennō 5/10/27; NS Jitō tennō 6/1/12]. The only reference to a ‘Fujiwara capital’ in an ancient text can be found in an introductory note to Manyōshū 1–78. Manyōshū, 1: 47; Kishi, “Nihon tojōsei sōron”, 63. However, the term Fujiwarakyō has become widely accepted since its use by Kita Sadakichi. Kita, Tēto, 129 ff.

35 In 683, Tenmu had announced the adoption of the Chinese system of multiple capitals [NS Tenmu tennō 12/12/17]. From this point onwards, Naniwa—present-day Osaka—functioned as the alternate capital or auxiliary capital (fukuto), while Asuka’s Kiyomihara palace (Asuka no Kiyomihara no miya), and later the Fujiwara and Nara capitals, would be the primary capital.

36 Inoue Mitsuo presents a detailed description of the old roads in the Yamashiro valley in Inoue, Kyōto, yakudōsuru kodai, 49–63. A full survey of the road system in ancient Japan can be found in Kodai kōtsū kenkyūkai, Nihon kodai dōro jiten.
a Toba no Tsukurimichi  
b Shade Route  
c North Land Route  
d Yoko Avenue  
e Koganawate Road  
f Sun Route  
g South Sea Route

A Kadono river  
B Kamo river  
C Ohata river  
D Koizumi river  

1 Kose relay station  
2 harbour (?) [L203]  
3 Yodo port  
4 Yamazaki relay station  
5 Yamazaki port  
6 Uji port

Figure 3.1 Transportation toward the Nagaoka Capital.
The accessibility of the Nara capital by water was also far inferior to that of the Nagaoka capital. The Nara capital’s closest significant port was Izumi port, situated on the Kizu River. This port was accessible for boats of up to 1.5 tons, but the current on the Kizu was quite strong, requiring the shipper to have good navigational skills. Moreover, the port was located several kilometres away from the capital, requiring additional transport by horse carriage or oxcart across the mountain ranges to the north of the city. Smaller rivers, such as the Saho, entered the Nara capital from the south. By way of the Yamato River these rivers provided the capital with a link to the Inland Sea at Naniwa. However, like the Kizu, the Yamato had a fairly strong current.

The Nagaoka area, on the other hand, possessed excellent river connections. To the south, the Yodo River provided the site with a direct link to Naniwa, a connection that would be of great value in the construction of the Nagaoka palace. Transport further inland was facilitated by several rivers that discharged into the Yodo River. The Kadono River connected the area with the Kadono district and Tanba province, and was essential for transporting wood to the construction site. The Uji River formed a connection with Ōmi province and Lake Biwa, and the Kizu River provided a connection with the area of the former capital in the Nara basin. In addition to these major rivers, several smaller streams—of which the most important were the Terado, the Obata, the Inu, and the Koizumi rivers—cut through the site of the new capital. As a result, several ports were located in the immediate vicinity of the Nagaoka capital. Yodo, mentioned in the Nihon kōki in 804, was located where the Kadono and Uji rivers joined the Yodo River. Yamazaki, near Yamazaki bridge, which spanned the Yodo, was located close to the southern edge of the city and was accessible for ships carrying up to three tons. The historical records also mention Takazaki, though it is not clear which port is meant and its location has yet to be confirmed. Finally, Kadonoi on the Kadono River was located some five kilometres north of the Nagaoka capital.

37 Nakayama, Nagoakakyō: uchi to soto, 3.
38 See chapter 4.1, “The Importance of the Secondary Capital at Naniwa”.
39 Takahashi, “Nagoakakyō to suiriku no ben”, 152.
40 NKō Enryaku 23/7/24.
41 Nakayama, “Kodai teito no shizen kankyō to Nagoakakyō ni tsuite”, 24.
42 SN Enryaku 6/8/24. One theory, supported by Bruno Lewin, claims that ‘Takazaki’ is the result of a writing error mixing Takahashi (高橋) and Yamazaki (山崎), and that the port being referred to is Yamazaki port. Another theory, supported
The superior river network around the site of the Nagaoka capital seems to have resulted in a shift from land transport to water transport during the late eighth century.\(^4\) Instead of using carriages, it is believed that when the Nagaoka palace was constructed, goods coming from Naniwa were trans-shipped onto smaller vessels in Yamazaki or Yodo and then floated to the construction sites on the smaller streams running through the city. Some four hundred metres southeast of the Nagaoka palace, in present Kamiueno-chō, Mukō city, there used to be an area called Kurumagaeshi.\(^4\) Although there is no guarantee that this place-name dates back to the eighth century, it might indicate a location where goods were transferred from carriages onto boats. Excavations in an area east of the palace site in 1990 also led to the discovery of a large number of wooden stakes which had been driven into the ground, possibly to protect the riverbank or for the construction of some kind of pier in a harbour (figures 3.1 and 9.5).\(^5\)

3.2 A Transfer Backed by Local Families?

Quite often, the support of local families is mentioned as also having played a significant part in the relocation and construction of the Nagaoka capital. At the turn of the twentieth century, the historian Kita Sadakichi was the first to suggest that one of the major reasons for constructing the new capital in Yamashiro province was that the area was inhabited by several immigrant kinship groups, the Hata family in particular.\(^6\) In the 1960s, Murao Jirō suggested that Kanmu moved to the area of Nagaoka because it was the home of the Haji family,
his maternal relatives. However, scholars have become increasingly sceptical about the role of the Hata and the Haji in the move to Nagaoka. As we shall see, Kanmu seems to have held another provincial family, the Kudara no konikishi of Kawachi province, in much higher esteem.

The Hata were an immigrant kinship group that possessed vast tracts of land in the northern part of Yamashiro province. Their presence was particularly strong in the three districts of Kii, Kadono and Atago, located east and north of Nagaoka village. Traditionally, it is thought that the family, known as weavers, sake brewers, and hydraulic and construction engineers, made large financial and technological

47 Murao, Kanmu tennō, 20–9. Other scholars adhering to this view include Inoue Mitsuo, Kyōto yakudōsuru kodai, 124; Fukuyama et al., Nagoakakōyō hakkatsu (shinpan), 40; Piggott, Tōtaiji and the Nara Imperium, 249; Takahashi, Dōkyō to Nihon no kyōto, 15, 22; McCullough, “The Heian Court”, 21; and Hotate Michihisa during a private conversation in 2000.

48 There is considerable debate on the exact origins of the Hata. An entry in the early eighth-century Nihon shoki claims they came from Paekche, whereas the early ninth-century Shinsen shōjirōku states that the Hata were the descendants of Emperor Shi Huangdi, the founder of the Chinese Qin dynasty. Nowadays, however, the most widely accepted theory is that the family came from the Korean kingdom of Silla during the first half of the fifth century. Hirano Kunio, for example, believes that the compilers of the Nihon shoki might have altered “Silla” to “Paekche” because of the political situation at the time. From the Samguk sagi and an inscription on a stele erected in honour of King Kwanggaet'o of Koguryō, we know that there were frequent struggles between Japan and Silla around 399. Wongtack Hong, on the other hand, believes the Hata might have been immigrants from Paekche after all, because their migration seems to have coincided with a decree issued in 399 to conscript a large number of soldiers in preparation for an attack by Paekche on Koguryō. According to the Samguk sagi, this caused a large number of people from Paekche to flee to Silla in an effort to avoid conscription. NS Ōjin tennō 14/2; Saeki, Shinsen shōjirōku no kenkyū; kōshiken, 4: 347; Hirano, “Hatashi no kenkyū”; Hong, Paekche of Korea and the Origin of Yamato, 55. For research on the Hata family, see for example Lewin, Aya und Hata: Besiedlungsgruppen Altjapans Kontinentaler Herkunft; Ueda, “Kodai no naka no torajin”; and Katō, Hatashi to sono tami—Torai shizoku no jitsuzō. On the Kwanggaet'o stele, see Courant, “Stèle Chinoise du Royaume de Ko Kou Rye”, 227–38; Szczesniak, “The Kōtaï Monument”, 254–68; and Lee and de Bary, Sources of Korean Tradition, vol. 1, From Early Times Through the Sixteenth Century, 24–6. On the wars between Japan and Silla, see Szczesniak, “Japanese-Korean Wars in A.D. 391–407 and Their Chronology”.

49 According to the Map of Allotted Rice Fields in the Kadono district (Kadono-gun handenzu) of 828, more than seventy percent of the district’s inhabitants belonged to the Hata family. See Inoue Mitsuo, Kodai no Nihon to torajin—Kodaishi ni miru kokusai kankei, 184–85.

50 The tamped-earth (hanchiku) method, a special technique of layering and solidifying soil used for constructing earth walls and earth platforms, is believed to have been transmitted by the Hata. Archaeologists are still debating when the tamped-earth technique was introduced in Japan. Some date the earliest technique back to the Yayoi (300 B.C.–250 A.D.) or Kofun (250–710) periods, while others argue that
contributions to the construction of the Nagaoka capital and was thus influential in determining the location of the site. To explain why the Hata family contributed to Kanmu’s grand construction plans, scholars point to Fujiwara no Tanetsugu, a senior member of the inspection party and possibly Kanmu’s closest advisor. As Tanetsugu was maternally related to the Hata, the general assumption is that Tanetsugu would make sure the family’s members would rise up the social ladder in return for providing the necessary land, funding, and technological know-how for constructing a capital near their stronghold. In addition, it should be noted that Fujiwara no Oguromaro, another member of the inspection party, was also related to the Hata through his marriage to a daughter of Hata no Shimo no Shimamaro.

However, the contributions of the Hata family may not have been as substantial as is commonly accepted. Although several Hata clan members were rewarded for their efforts, these rewards were minimal compared to the rank Hata no Shimamaro had achieved decades earlier. Specifically, the highest rank bestowed upon a member of the Hata family was that of junior fifth rank upper grade, given to Hata no imiki Tarinaga because of his help in “the construction of the palace.

51 Tanetsugu’s biography in the Shoku Nihongi does not mention his parents’ names, but according to the Kuyō bunin and the Sonpi bunmyaku his father was one of Fujiwara no Umakai’s sons, Fujiwara no Kiyonari, an otherwise unknown member of the Ceremonial Fujiwara. In the Kuyō bunin, Tanetsugu’s mother is merely identified as the “daughter of Hata no [imiki] Chōgen”. However, quoting the Sonpi bunmyaku, Hayashi Rokurō has cast doubts about the assertion that Tanetsugu’s mother was a daughter of Chōgen, claiming that Chōgen’s daughter was Fujiwara no Sugatsuji’s mother while Tanetsugu’s mother was “Hata no Motome” (巋(案)源女). Kuyō bunin, 1: 63; Sonpi bunmyaku, 2: 520, 524; Hayashi, Nagoakakkyō no nazo, 24; and Takahashi, Dōkyō to Nihon no kyūto, 196. For a short biography in English on Hata no Chōgen, see Bingenheimer, A Biographical Dictionary of the Japanese Student-Monks of the Seventh and Early Eighth Centuries, 73–4.

52 See for example Ponsonby-Fane, “Ancient Capitals and Palaces of Japan”, 213; Sansom, Japan, A Short Cultural History, 189; Reischauer, Early Japanese History part A, 217; Sacki, Nihon kodai no seiji to shakai, 215; and Morris, The World of the Shining Prince, 17.

53 When Shōmu decided to move to the Kuni capital in 740, Hata no Shimamaro had contributed to the construction of the palace wall. As a reward, he received the family name and hereditary title Uzumasa no kami and was given money and cloth. More important, however, is that he rose at once from the senior eighth rank lower grade to the junior fourth rank lower grade, the highest rank ever bestowed upon a member of the Hata family [SN Tenpyō 14/8/5].
area”. A few months later, Uzumasa no kimi no imiki Yakamori, a relative if not the son of Shimamaro, was rewarded with the junior fifth rank lower grade because of his help in constructing a wall. The only other Hata family member mentioned in the months around the move to the Nagaoka capital is Hata no miyatsuko Koshima. He was appointed senior lieutenant of the Palace Guards' Headquarters of the Right (ueji no daijō) five days before Kanmu moved to Nagaoka.

Other families were certainly not mere bystanders to the construction of Nagaoka, and they made economic and technological contributions, further indicating that Hata support has been overestimated. For example, when Hata no Tarinaga was awarded a higher court rank at the end of 784, Kurikuma no muraji Hiromimi of the Kadono district received a promotion for providing provisions for the labourers, as did Kawahtobe no Hiroi, head of the provincial brigade (gundan) of Keta village in Tajima province. The following year, Kusakabe no muraji Kunimasa was given a promotion for providing provisions for the construction of a mooring place and Mino no omi Hironushi rose in rank for his contribution to the construction works. Then, Suguri no obito Masumaro, a descendant of another family from Paekche origin, also received rank for maintaining 36,000 labourers for eight months at his own expense.

The second family often mentioned in connection with the selection of the site at Nagaoka is the Haji, the ‘deity clan’ to which Kanmu’s maternal grandmother, Haji no sukune Maimo belonged. According

---

54 SN Enryaku 3/12/18.
55 Hayashi, Nagaokakyo no nazo, 94. Nakayama Shūichi has stated that one of Yakamori’s sisters was married to Oguromaro. Nakayama, “Mukōshi no ryakushi 39: Daijikan no in no kaki: Nagaokakyo (sono 22)”, 3.
56 SN Enryaku 4/8/23.
58 A few months later, Hiroi was also given the new family name and hereditary title of Takada no omi [SN Enryaku 4/2/9].
60 All families mentioned in the Shinsen shōjiroku were classified into one of three categories, depending on their descent. A family descended from a sovereign or a male descendant of a sovereign belonged to the ‘imperial clan’ (kōbetsu), a family claiming its ancestors were heavenly or terrestrial deities was designated a ‘deity clan’ (shinbetsu), and all families that came from overseas were categorised as ‘foreign clans’ (banbetsu).
61 Although William McCullough claims the Haji were immigrants of Korean descent, the Haji family is classified as a ‘deity clan’ in the Shinsen shōjiroku. The Haji claimed their forefather was Nomi no sukune, a descendant of Amanohohi no mikoto, a deity born from Susanoo no mikoto after having made an oath with Amaterasu ōmikami. McCullough, “The Heian Court”, 21; Saeki, Shinsen shōjiroku no kenkyū:
to the *Shoku Nihongi*, by the late eighth century the Haji family consisted of four lineages.\(^{62}\) Haji no Maimo belonged to the so-called Mozu no Haji lineage.\(^{63}\) In 790, a year after the death of Kanmu’s mother, these Mozu no Haji received the family name Ōe, with the hereditary title of *ason*.\(^{64}\) Traditionally it is assumed that this family name was based upon the place where the family actually lived, because that had been the case nine years earlier when two other Haji lineages received a new family name.\(^{65}\) Taking into consideration the contemporary marriage customs,\(^{66}\) Murao Jirō therefore concluded that both Takano no Niigasa

---

\(^{62}\) SN Enryaku 9/12/30. One of these lineages might have been the Haji living in the Shiki and Tajih districts of Kawachi province, who are mentioned in the *Wamyō raiju sho*, a tenth-century dictionary-encyclopaedia of Japanese words arranged by category of meaning. Of the three remaining lineages, two were living near the Nara capital in Yamato province and one was based in Izumi province. Wamyō raiju shō: honbunhen, 615; Sakamoto and Hirano, *Nihon kodai shizoku jinmei jiten*, 485.

\(^{63}\) ‘Mozu’ is believed to have been derived from the area of Mozuno in the Ōtori district of Izumi province, where Nintoku’s burial mound is located, and it is thought that the Mozu no Haji were charged with its care.

\(^{64}\) NS Enryaku 9/12/1; NS Enryaku 9/12/30. Originally Ōe was written 大枝, but changed to 大枝 in 866 [NS] Jōkan 8/10/15. Although it seems strange that the Haji lineage most closely related to Kanmu was the last one to receive a new family name, Murao Jirō has argued that it was merely because the hereditary title of the Mozu no Haji might have been muraji, whereas that of the other lineages was the slightly higher title of sukune. Therefore, before the Mozu no Haji could be awarded a new family name, they had to be ranked on a level equal to the other lineages. Murao suggested that when the Yamato no fuhito, Kanmu’s paternal relatives, received their hereditary title of *ason*, Kanmu might have given his maternal relatives, the Mozu no Haji, the title of *sukune*; and that only in 790 the three Haji lineages were awarded the title of *ason*. Takinami Sadako is also convinced that the Mozu no Haji ranked lower than the Sugawara and Akishino branches. Murao, *Kanmu tennō*, 6; Takinami, *Nihon kodai kyōtei shakai no kenkyū*, 480.

\(^{65}\) In 781, Haji no sukune Furuhito, Haji no sukune Michinaga, and several others petitioned the throne to have their family name changed to Sugawara, based upon the place name Sugawara, an area in the Right Capital of Nara [SN Ten’ō 1/6/25]. The following year, Kanmu agreed to a request made by Haji no sukune Yasuhito and his relatives to have the family name of their branch of the Haji family changed to Akishino, based upon a township called Akishino, located in the Sōshōshimo district, north of the Right Capital of Nara [SN Enryaku 1/5/21].

\(^{66}\) Most imperial and noble marriages in the Nara period seem to have been duolocal or uxorilocal in nature. Therefore, any children born from these marriages were raised in the homes of their maternal relatives. For research in Japanese on the issue of marriage in ancient and medieval Japan, see Sekiguchi, “Ritsuryō kokka ni okeru chakusai mekake sei ni tsuite”; Sekiguchi, “Nihon kodai no kon’in keitai ni tsuite—sono kenkyūshi no kenrō”; Sekiguchi, *Nihon kodai kon’inshi no kenkyū*, and Sekiguchi et al., *Kazoku to kekkon no rekishi*, 14–29. In English, see McCullough, “Japanese Marriage Institutions in the
and Kanmu were born and raised in Ōe village, northwest of Nagaoka. Thus, Kanmu moved to Nagaoka village because he was familiar with the area and was assured of the political and economic support of what Murao called the ‘Yamashiro clique’; that is, the maternal relatives of Takano no Niigasa and other people loyal to the Tenji lineage of the imperial family.\footnote{The ‘Yamashiro clique’ included certain members of the Fujiwara family who had intermarried with local powerful families that were in many cases of immigrant descent. Murao also thinks Kanmu’s father was raised in Yamashiro province. Since it was customary for an imperial child to be named after his or her wet nurse, it is believed that Könin’s personal name Shirakabe was derived from the name of a woman belonging to the Shirakabe family. Although the Shinsen shōjiroku mentions several Shirakabe families in various provinces, Murao assumed Könin’s wetnurse was a descendant of the Shirakabe no muraji family mentioned under the ‘deity clans’ of Yamashiro province. From this he concluded that Könin’s father had a villa in Yamashiro province and that Könin was born there. Murao, *Kanmu tennō*, 8–9.}

However, several elements indicate that neither Takano no Niigasa nor Kanmu were born in Yamashiro province.

First, because of the difference in social position—Shirakabe being a member of the imperial family and Niigasa being the descendant of immigrants—their marriage was probably duolocal in nature, with Niigasa living in or near her family’s residence. Based on the location of their respective tombs, Niigasa’s parents were most likely living near the Nara capital.\footnote{According to the Engi shiki, a tenth-century collection of detailed regulations supplementing the Yōrō Code, Haji no Maimo’s tomb is located in the Heguri district, and Yamato no Ototsugu’s tomb is located in the Hirose district. Both districts were part of Yamato province, respectively located to the west and southwest of the Nara capital. *Engi shiki*, bk. 21, 764. Kobayashi Kiyoshi has expressed doubts about the attribution of Haji no Maimo’s tomb in the *Engi shiki*. Kobayashi, *Nagaokakyō no shinkenkyū: zen*, 60.}

Second, the family name Takano, bestowed upon Niigasa and her father during Könin’s reign, also indicates the family may have been living near Nara.\footnote{On the bestowment of the name Takano, see chapter 1, n. 29.} It is generally accepted that this family name was derived from the Takano Mausoleum (*Takano no misasagi*) of Kōken/Shōtoku, located in the Sōnoshimo district of Yamato province. That Niigasa received this family name is usually explained as a move by Könin to have his wife of immigrant descent more easily accepted by the court nobility by creating a connection between her and the previous sovereign. However, according to a map of rice fields allotments (*handenzu*) in Yamato province dating from 774, a member of the Yamato
family was actually in charge of the district where Kōken/Shōtoku was buried, thus providing proof that Niigasa’s paternal relatives were living in the area.\textsuperscript{70}

Third, the \textit{Nihon kōki} also provides an element in support of the claim that the Ōe no ason, and thus the Mozu no Haji, were living in Yamato and Kawachi provinces. In 796, Ōe no ason Ujimaro and Ōe no ason Morokami from Kawachi province, and Ōe no ason Nagahito from Yamato province were all registered in the Right Capital of Heian.\textsuperscript{71}

Finally, further evidence can be found in the fact that no records of Kanmu ever visiting Ōe village survive, even though it was close to both the Nagaoka capital and the Heian capital and was supposed to be the territory of his maternal relatives.

Thus, it is doubtful that the Mozu no Haji were based in the Nagaoka area before the relocation of the capital. Most likely, they received the family name of Ōe not because they lived there, but because this was the village where their relative Takano no Niigasa was buried.\textsuperscript{72}

Therefore, the presence of his maternal relatives can probably be ruled out as a motivation for Kanmu to select Nagaoka village as the site for his new capital.

Alternatively, the geographic relation between the Nagaoka area and the Katano district in Kawachi province may have been decisive in the site’s selection. Not only was Katano the location of the ritual to the Lord on High,\textsuperscript{73} it was the homeland of the Kudara no konikishi, an

\begin{footnotesize}
\begin{enumerate}
\item See Takinami, \textit{Nihon kodai kyūtei shakai no kenkyū}, 484; and Takinami, \textit{Heian kento}, 20.

\item NKō Enryaku 15/7/19.

\item Both Kobayashi Kiyoshi and Takahashi Tōru refer to the custom of burying the sovereign’s relatives north of the capital. Two of Kanmu’s wives, Fujiwara no ason Otomuro and Fujiwara no ason Tabiko, were buried near Niigasa, and many tombs, such as those of the Empresses Genmei and Genshō and the tombs of Shōmu and his wife Komyō, are found north of the Nara capital. Kanmu’s tomb was also originally planned to be built northwest of the Heian capital. Kobayashi, \textit{Nagaokakyō no shikenkyū: gendai}, 61; and Takahashi, “Kanmu tennō no seitō shōkūkushi”, 141.

\item On the ritual, see chapter 2.2, “The Confirmation of the Shift toward the Tenji Line”. Toda Hidenori has suggested that Kanmu originally intended to construct his capital in Katano but that he changed his mind because the site did not meet the topographical requirements and because the area was too closely connected to the Southern House of the Fujiwara family, whereas Fujiwara no Tanetsugu belonged to the Ceremonial House. Toda, \textit{Nara Heian jidai no kyūto to bunka}, 92–5. Toda Hidenori finds a strong opponent of Katano as a possible location for the capital in Hayashi Rokurō in a postscript to Hayashi, “Nagaoka Heiankyō to kōshi enkyū”.
\end{enumerate}
\end{footnotesize}
immigrant kinship group whose members Kanmu considered to be his maternal relatives.74

Like the Yamato no ason clan, the Kudara no konikishi traced their genealogy back to the royal family of Paekche (figure 3.2). The Shinsen shōjiroku states that they were the descendants of King Ûija, the thirty-first king of Paekche.75 According to the Nihon shoki, Ûija had sent his son Prince P’ung as a ‘hostage’76 to Japan in 631.77 When Ûija surrendered to the Tang armies in 660 and was taken to China as a prisoner, P’ung returned to the Korean peninsula to join forces with Poksin, another member of the royal family, and with the Buddhist monk Toch’im in an attempt to restore the kingdom of Paekche.78 However, their plan failed, and P’ung’s brother, known in Japan as Kudara no konikishi Zenkō, fled to Japan, where he and his people were given land in Naniwa in 664.79 During the eighth century, the most prominent male member of the family was Kudara no konikishi Kyōfuku, who held high rank and high offices during the reigns of Shōmu and Kōken/Shōtoku. After Kanmu’s enthronement, the family retained some of their influence and succeeded in creating close ties to the imperial family, even though

---

74 SN Enryaku 9/2/27. To explain Kanmu’s claim that the Kudara no konikishi were his maternal relatives, Tsunoda Bun’ei has suggested that a granddaughter of Kudara no Zenkō may have married someone of the Yamato family and that their son was Yamato no Ototsugu, Kanmu’s maternal grandfather. Tsunoda, “Kanmu tennō”, 38–9. However, it is also possible that Kanmu merely referred to the fact that Ûija was a descendant of Muryōng, and that as such the Yamato and Kudara families were related.

75 Saeki, Shinsen shōjiroku no kenkyū: kōshōhen, 5: 185.

76 In return for military support during warfare with the other kingdoms and China, the Paekche court sent members of the royal family to Japan as security. Although the Chinese character ‘⾰’ (i.e., ‘hostage’ or ‘pawn’) is used in the court records, it has been suggested that P’ung and his relatives came to Japan following the first envoy to the Tang since their experience in diplomacy would be useful for the Japanese when dealing with the Tang empire and the Silla kingdom. See Tanaka, “‘Konikishi’ sei shiyō to Nihon kodai kokka”, 38. However, the Samguk sagi, too, uses shitsu to describe the members of the royal family sent to Japan. See for example, the entry for the fifth month of the sixth year of King Asin’s reign (397). Samguk sagi, Paekche pongi 3; and Brown, “The Yamato Kingdom”, 140–41.

77 NS Jomei tennō 3/3/1. However, because Ûija did not succeed to the throne until 641, P’ung was probably sent by King Mu, Ûija’s father.

78 NS Saimei tennō 6/9/5; NS Saimei tennō 6/10, Winter. For an account of the downfall of Paekche, see Lee, A New History of Korea, 67.

79 NS Tenji tennō 3/3. According to Sima Guang’s Zizhi Tongjian [Comprehensive mirror for aid in government, 1065–1084], P’ung first found asylum in Koguryō, but with the downfall of this state in 668, he was captured by the T’ang army and was exiled to Lingnan in South China. Zizhi Tongjian 201, Zongzhang 1 (668), twelfth month, cited in Song, “Nanaseiki no Wakoku to Kudara—Kudara Ōji Hōshō no dōkō o chūshin ni”.

Figure 3.2 Selected Genealogy of the Yamato and Kudara Families, and Their Intermarriage with the Imperial Family.
none of the male Kudara no konikishi attained Kyōfuku’s junior third rank. However, several of the family’s daughters were present at Kanmu’s court, and they attained higher ranks than their male relatives during his and subsequent reigns. The most important woman of the family at that time was undoubtedly Kudara no Myōshin, a granddaughter of Kudara no Kyōfuku.

Several scholars assume a love affair existed between Kanmu and Kudara no Myōshin, believing that the two met in the late 750s, during one of the young prince’s frequent falcon hunts in the Katano district. They base their case on the biography of Fujiwara no ason Takatoshi, Myōshin’s son, recorded in the Kugyō bunin, which states that his mother “received the Emperor’s affection”, and two poems composed by Kanmu during a winding waters party (gokusui no en) held in 795. Whether or not the two were romantically involved, it is clear from the historical

---

80 During the Enryaku era, the highest rank for a male member of the family was bestowed upon Kudara no konikishi Genkyō, who achieved the senior fourth rank lower grade sometime before he was appointed justice minister (gyōbu no kami) in 799 [NKō Enryaku 18/9/10].

81 Kudara no Myōshin was the secondary wife of Fujiwara no Tsugutada, a member of the Southern House of the Fujiwara family and a high-ranking court official. She had already achieved a fairly high rank during the reign of Kōnin, but at the court of Kanmu she played an even more prominent role. In 781, a few months after his enthronement, she rose to the junior fourth rank upper grade [SN Ten’ō 1/11/20]. She was given further promotions over the following years, rising to the junior third rank in 787 [SN Enryaku 2/10/16; SN Enryaku 2/11/24; SN Enryaku 6/8/24]. When the decision was made to construct the Heian capital in Uda, 11,000 soku rice of the provinces Yamashiro, Kawachi, Settsu and Harima were given to fifteen women, among them Myōshin, in order that they could build new residences [RK 78 Enryaku 13/7/9]. Around the time of Tsugutada’s death in 796, she was appointed director of the Palace Retainers’ Office (naishi no kami), the principal administrative office of Kanmu’s Hinder Palace [RK 75 Enryaku 14/4/11]. It appears she combined this office with that of director of the Table Office (kashiwade no kami) [NKō Enryaku 16/1/24]. In 797, Myōshin was once more bestowed with an extraordinary favour when she received an area of no less than 77 chō made up from confiscated fields of demoted officials (bokkanden) and untilled land (no) in Noto province [NKō Enryaku 16/1/24]. Two years later, Myōshin was awarded the senior third rank [NKō Enryaku 18/2/7]. For Myōshin’s influence in the Hinder Palace, see chapter 11.

82 The historical records frequently refer to Kanmu’s hunting trips, and both the Sagano monogatari and the Tōyōki inform us that he loved hawks and that during his spare time he was coping their talons and beaks, a task requiring significant skill and performed only by trained hawkers. Since both the Sagano monogatari and the Tōyōki were written several centuries after Kanmu’s reign, some caution is needed. Sagano monogatari, 635; and Tōyōki, 642.

83 Murao, Kanmu tenno, 231; Tsunoda, “Kanmu tenno”, 33–4, 39; and Murai, Heiankyō nendaiki, 30. For the entries in the historical records on which they base their case, see KB Daidō 3 and RK 75 Enryaku 14/4/11.
records that Kanmu greatly favoured Myōshin and that he frequently visited the homes of Tsugutada, Myōshin, and their son Takatoshi.

According to the historical records, Kanmu also seems to have travelled to Katano at least once each year throughout his reign (table 3.2).84 Except for two occasions, all of these imperial journeys took place around the time of the winter solstice. Although the records usually state that he travelled to Katano to go hunting and wintertime was indeed the ideal season for falcon hunting, it seems unlikely that this was the sole purpose of his journeys. On at least four occasions, Kanmu generously bestowed fairly high rank and other rewards upon members of the Kudara no konikishi family, and it is hard to explain this gesture simply and solely as an expression of gratitude for the clan’s hospitality. Throughout his reign, Kanmu made dozens of hunting trips and imperial journeys to other places, and, although they were frequently followed by banquets for officials of the fifth rank and above, the rewards bestowed on individuals were usually limited.

It is therefore possible that the rewards given to the various members of the Kudara family were intended not merely as a sign of gratitude for the clan’s hospitality. When Kanmu went hunting to Katano in 783, the district was excused from paying this year’s rice-paddy taxes (denso); the Kudaradera, the clan temple of the Kudara no konikishi family, received 10,000 sheaves of rice (soku) of the tax grain (shōzei)85 of the provinces Ōmi and Harima; and several members of the family were rewarded with rank.86 The extent of the rewards during this first hunt may indicate that Kanmu had just inspected the area of Katano for the erection of a round mound. This implies that he already planned to construct a capital at Nagaoka, due north of Katano, in late 783. It is also not surprising that a sovereign who was deeply aware of his consanguinity with the royal family of Paekche selected the homeland of immigrants from that same kingdom in which to construct a

84 In 786, it was probably unseemly to travel to Katano, because Kanmu’s father, Konin, received his final resting place in the East Tawara Mausoleum (Tawara no higashi no misasagi); in 789, Niigasa’s illness and death may have prevented the journey [SN Enryaku 5/10/28; SN Enryaku 8/12/23; SN Enryaku 8/12/28]. In later years, the absence of references to Katano may be accounted for by the fact that several parts of the Nihon kōki are lost.
85 This was a field tax accumulated at the provincial office and augmented through loaning (suiko).
86 SN Enryaku 2/10/16. With her rise to the senior fourth rank lower grade, Myōshin received the highest rank.
Table 3.2 Entries in the historical records related to Katano and the Kudara family

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DATE</th>
<th>PURPOSE</th>
<th>SOURCE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Enryaku 2 (783)/10/14–18</td>
<td>hunting trip to Katano; remission of taxes; gifts to the Kudaradera; ranks bestowed upon the Kudara family</td>
<td>[SN]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enryaku 2/10/16</td>
<td>winter solstice on the first day of the eleventh month; remission of taxes</td>
<td>[SN]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enryaku 3 (784)/11/1</td>
<td>hunting trip to Katano (Tsuguta-da’s residence)</td>
<td>[SN]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enryaku 4 (785)/11/10</td>
<td>sacrifice to Heaven</td>
<td>[SN]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enryaku 6 (786)/10/17–20</td>
<td>hunting trip to Katano</td>
<td>[SN]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enryaku 6/10/20</td>
<td>ranks bestowed upon the Kudara family</td>
<td>[SN]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enryaku 6/11/5</td>
<td>sacrifice to Heaven</td>
<td>[SN]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enryaku 10 (791)/10/10–13</td>
<td>hunting trip to Katano (Tsuguta-da’s residence)</td>
<td>[SN]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enryaku 10/10/12</td>
<td>ranks bestowed upon the Kudara family</td>
<td>[SN]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enryaku 11 (792)/9/28</td>
<td>hunting trip to Katano</td>
<td>[RK]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enryaku 12 (793)/11/10</td>
<td>hunting trip to Katano; gifts bestowed upon Tsugutada, officials of the fifth rank and above, noblewomen, ladies-in-waiting, etc.</td>
<td>[RK]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enryaku 13 (794)/9/22</td>
<td>hunting trip to Katano</td>
<td>[RK]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enryaku 13/10/13</td>
<td>hunting trip to Katano; gifts bestowed upon the Kudara family</td>
<td>[RK]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enryaku 14 (795)/3/27</td>
<td>hunting trip to Katano</td>
<td>[RK]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enryaku 14/10/16–22</td>
<td>hunting trip to Katano (Tsuguta-da’s residence)</td>
<td>[NKi]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enryaku 16 (797)/10/8</td>
<td>hunting trip to Katano</td>
<td>[NKi]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enryaku 18 (799)/2/8</td>
<td>trip to Katano</td>
<td>[NKo]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enryaku 18/10/9</td>
<td>hunting trip to Katano</td>
<td>[NKo]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enryaku 19 (800)/10/17–25</td>
<td>trip to Katano</td>
<td>[NKi]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enryaku 21 (802)/10/9–15</td>
<td>trip to Katano</td>
<td>[NKi]</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
round mound, since the custom is known to have been practiced in Paekche, too.\textsuperscript{87}

In conclusion, the Hata and Haji families, traditionally seen as instrumental in the move to Nagaoka, seem to have played no larger part in the relocation process than various other local families. Rather, Nagaoka’s geographic relation to the homeland of the Kudara no konikishi where Kanmu twice observed the sacrifice to the Lord on High in legitimation of his reign, was a deciding factor.

\textsuperscript{87} For the presence of round mounds in Paekche, see Hayashi, “Chōsen no kōshi enkyū”.