

# The construction of the Nagaoka Palace and Capital

– *Mokkan* 木簡 as a Historical Source –

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## Introduction

The official and non-official historical records that relate the events of the late 8<sup>th</sup> century refer only indirectly to the construction of the Nagaoka Palace and Capital, and contain no more than fragmentary information about the supplies and personnel needed. Because of this, it was assumed that construction on the Nagaoka Capital grinds to a halt following the murder of Fujiwara Tanetsugu and the death of deposed Crown Princess Sawara in 785, ultimately resulting in the impossibility of finishing the capital and thus leading to the abandonment of the city. In this article, inscribed wooden tablets (*mokkan*) that were unearthed during decades of excavations on the territory of this former Japanese capital are used to supplement entries from the historical records in order to create a more detailed image of palace and capital construction.

## The first phase of construction<sup>1</sup>

In 784, Emperor Kanmu announces his intention to abandon the Nara Capital and have a new capital constructed.<sup>2</sup> For that purpose, he dispatches a group of eight government officials to Nagaoka Village in Yamashiro Province for the purpose of inspecting the site's suitability for establishing a *ritsuryô* capital [SN Enryaku 3/5/16]. Merely one month later, eighteen Officials for the Construction of the Nagaoka Palace (*zô-Nagaokagû-shi*) are appointed [SN Enryaku 3/6/10].<sup>3</sup>

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1 The idea of two phases in the construction of the Nagaoka Capital and Palace was first launched by *mokkan*-specialist Shimizu Miki. See SHIMIZU, 1985, „Nagaokakyô zôei ron – futatsu no kakki o megutte“.

2 Although Emperor Kanmu probably took the decision to construct a new capital shortly after his accession to the throne, the first official reference to his intentions in the historical records is given only in 784.

3 Unlike for other capitals, the *Shoku Nihongi* (SN) does not make a clear distinction between the construction agencies of the palace (*miya* 宮) and the city (*miyako/kyô* 京) of the Na-

Thereafter, events develop rapidly. Emperor Kanmu's determination to move without delay is clear from the fact that the whole country is ordered to transport to the Nagaoka Palace this years' taxes and the various materials needed by the people involved with the construction [SN Enryaku 3/6/13]. Emperor Kanmu also orders the distribution of part of the "proper tax" (*shōzei*) among high-ranking officials, Imperial Princesses, Imperial Consorts and some female officials to fund construction of their residences in the new capital [SN Enryaku 3/6/23]. Throughout the following months, several rescripts pertaining to the payment of the various taxes and the sending of tributes are issued. As it is of utmost importance for successful construction that high-quality goods conforming to the regulations stipulated in the codes are collected, provincial officials are threatened with permanent dismissal if they should forward tax goods of low quality. Negligent district officials are to be fired and removed from their family's register [SN Enryaku 4/5/24]. In another rescript, the central government condemns the improper use of the proper tax and other government property by local officials [SN Enryaku 4/7/24; RSK 19 Enryaku 4/7/24]. It is not long before the first provincial officials are dismissed from office for the low quality and belated delivery of the procured goods [SN Enryaku 4/7/28].

In addition to gathering the necessary taxes, a further requirement for realising Emperor Kanmu's plan for the construction of a capital is the gathering of a large workforce. Part of this workforce can be mobilised through the system of corvée (*zōyō*). However, since this labour tax is limited to sixty days per year for males above the age of seventeen, the State Council issues a directive (*daijōkanpu*) in mid-785 stating that a census should be made in each province and that all vagrants should be sent to their place of origin [RSK 12 Enryaku 4/6/24]. Thus, the central government ensures that the largest possible workforce is gathered.

Although an entry dating from 785 preserved in the *Shoku Nihongi* claims that 314 000 labourers are working on the construction site, it seems more likely that this number refers to the number of working days rather than individual people [SN Enryaku 4/7/20].<sup>4</sup> In any case, construction progresses at an amazing speed.

A mere six months after having dispatched the inspection party, Emperor Kanmu deems the new palace structures worthy enough, and both he and his consorts put up at the residential quarters of the Nagaoka Palace [SN Enryaku 3/11/11; SN Enryaku 3/11/24]. Construction on government structures and private residences has also advanced considerably, as the court nobles also surely move to the new capital. Less than a year after dispatching the survey party, the historical records testify to the fact that several parts of the capital are already complete.

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gaoka Capital. The name of the construction agency only refers to the Nagaoka Palace, but is believed to have also been in charge of supervising construction work on the capital area.

4 FARRIS, 1998, *Sacred Texts and Buried Treasures*, p. 178.

On the first day of Enryaku 4, the new year celebrations (*chôga no gishiki*) are held ‘as usual’ in the recently completed Imperial Audience Hall (*daigokuden*) of the Nagaoka Palace [SN Enryaku 4/1/1]. That same day, court officials of the Fifth Rank and above are invited to a banquet in the Imperial Residence (*dairi*).<sup>5</sup>

In the 3<sup>rd</sup> month, Emperor Kanmu hosts a Winding Waters Party (*gokusui no en*) at the Shima Compound (*Shima no in*) [SN Enryaku 4/3/3]. A rescue excavation carried out in the Left Capital sector in 1980 yielded an inscribed wooden tablet that further corroborates the existence of this detached palace (*rikyû*).<sup>6</sup>

● 鳴院 ||| 物守斐太一人飯參升

□□

● □□□

十月廿三日領

(type 019<sup>7</sup>; (198) x 32 x 5)<sup>8</sup>

5 Emperor Kanmu occupies two Imperial Residences in the Nagaoka Palace. From 784 until 789 he lives in the West Palace (*Nishi miya*), after which he moves to the East Palace (*Higashi miya*). The West Palace was probably located north of the Imperial Audience Hall (*daigokuden*). However, excavations in its supposed location in 1971 have yielded no tangible evidence.

6 SD801801, L8018; *mokkan* no.537 in *Nagaokakyô mokkan ni*. When discussing a wooden tablet, the initial part of the footnote provides a reference to the excavation and the archaeological feature from which the wooden tablet has been unearthed. Based on these references, one can easily retrieve more detailed information on the archaeological context of the find in the relevant research reports. Although the excavations of the Nagaoka Capital and Palace are carried out by various centres and organisations, a uniform system is used to identify each excavation. Those carried out in the presumed palace area are labelled ‘P’, those taking place in the Left Capital are labelled ‘L’, and those carried out in the Right Capital are labelled ‘R’. Within these three categories, each excavation is numbered chronologically. The remains found during each excavation are also coded. A letter code refers to the particular kind of archaeological feature, e.g. SB for a building and SD for a ditch. This code is followed by the serial number attributed to the excavation and the serial number of the particular kind of remains found during the excavation.

7 Formally, the inscribed wooden tablets of the ancient period (*kodai mokkan*) can be divided into eighteen types. The classification adhered to in this article was created by the Nara bunkazai kenkyûjo and is used by the Mokkan Gakkai. Details on the classification can be found – in Japanese – in the introductory chapters of each volume of *Mokkan kenkyû*, the annual journal of the Mokkan Gakkai. An introduction in English on *mokkan* typology is given in SATÔ, 1995, „The Wooden Tablets (Mokkan) of Ancient Japan“. In the 1990s, Yamanaka Akira developed a new classification system that pays more attention to the individual characteristics of each tablet. However, because it is impossible to simply convert the code of each previously published tablet into the new system without reexamining the actual tablet, I have chosen to follow the old classification system. For Yamanaka Akira’s classification system, see MUKÔSHI MAIZÔ BUNKAZAI SENTÂ and MUKÔSHI KYÔIKU IINKAI, 1993, *Nagaokakyô mokkan ni: kaisetsu*, pp. 17–19.

8 In addition to the formal type, the length, width and thickness of each wooden tablet is given in millimetres. Figures between round brackets ( ) indicate incomplete specimens.

This wooden tablet is only partially preserved and part of the text is missing. Judging from the contents of the tablet, it can be classified as a request for rice (*seihan monjo mokkan*), a type of inscribed wooden tablet that is usually rectangular in shape (type 011). Because the ancient *ritsuryō*-state provided government officials on duty with meals under the system of ‘daily food for government offices’ (*shoshi jōshoku*) or ‘morning and evening provisions’ (*chōse-kiryō*),<sup>9</sup> extensive correspondence was conducted on this subject, as numerous meals must be requested and delivered every day.

In the case of this rice request, three horizontal lines, the purpose of which is unclear, are carved 1 mm apart into the tablet under the inscription ‘*Shima no in*’.<sup>10</sup> On the 23<sup>rd</sup> day of the 10<sup>th</sup> month, a chief (*azukari*) requests three *shō* (approximately 2 litres) of rice for one person. The function of this person is not entirely clear, but the phrase ‘物守’ possibly refers to the guarding of commodities before they are brought into a storehouse and, after comparison with other documents, it is assumed that ‘斐太’ is a variant of ‘飛驒匠’ (*Hida no takumi*), that is, a carpenter from Hida Province.<sup>11</sup>

Two months after the Winding Waters Party, the *Nihon shoki* refers to a red bird that stays for over ten days in the Consort-Empress' Palace (*kōgōgū*). This indicates that construction on Fujiwara no ason Otomuro's residential quarters is completely finished [NS Enryaku 4/5/19].

In the 6<sup>th</sup> month, the State Halls (*chōdō*) are mentioned and by the 8<sup>th</sup> month the records state that the wall around the State Halls Compound is completed [SN Enryaku 4/6/18; SN Enryaku 4/8/23].<sup>12</sup>

Thus, judging from the available written sources, the residential quarters of the Emperor and his consorts, as well as the essential government structures and even some non-essential compounds such as the *Shima no in* are completed much faster than had been the case for other capitals and palaces.<sup>13</sup> Careful

9 SATŌ, 1995, „The Wooden Tablets (*mokkan*) of Ancient Japan“, p.98.

10 In this article, the following symbols are used when reproducing the inscription on the wooden tablets. A black dot (●) separates the writing on the front of the tablet from the writing on the back; a small circle (○) indicates the presence of a transverse hole in the tablet. Each square (□) stands for one missing character. However, when the actual number of missing characters is unknown, □ □ is used. In some cases a possible decipherment is suggested, these suggestions are written between brackets and followed by a *katakana* ‘ka’ ( [ ㇀ ] ) above the illegible character(s). Chinese characters written between square brackets ( 「 」 ) were written in different handwriting than the main text.

11 MUKŌSHI MAIZŌ BUNKAZAI SENTĀ and MUKŌSHI KYŌIKU IINKAI, 1993, *Nagaokakyō mokkan ni: kaisetsu*, p. 68.

12 The *Shoku Nihongi* actually refers to the wall of the ‘*daijōkanin* 太政官院’, the State Council Compound, instead of that of the ‘*chōdōin* 朝堂院’. However, Asano Mitsuru has argued that the two words were synonyms during the Nara period and that ‘*daijōkanin*’ was used for the State Halls Compounds of the Later Naniwa and Nagaoka Palaces. YAMANAKA, 2001, *Nagaokakyō kenkyū josetsu*, p. 25.

13 A comparison of the time needed for the construction of the various capitals is offered in KOBAYASHI, 1975, *Nagaokakyō no shinkenryū: zen*, p.47.

reading of the historical records clarifies that it was a full seven years after construction had begun on the Nara Capital that the completion of the Imperial Audience Hall is finally announced. In fact, construction on both the Fujiwara and Nara Capitals had taken more than fifteen years to complete. After seven years of construction on the Heian Palace, construction on the Court of Abundant Pleasures (*Burakuin*) remains unfinished and when construction on the Heian Capital is halted after thirteen years, the capital is only partly finished.

How is it therefore possible to construct the Nagaoka Capital in such a short time span? Furthermore, the area where the Nagaoka Capital is planned had been inhabited for centuries and several tumuli (*kofun*) dot the landscape.<sup>14</sup> In addition, there is a 25 m difference in height between the highest part of what will become the Nagaoka Capital in the northwest corner and Ogura Lake in the southeast, because the entire palace area (*kyûjô*) and a large part of the urban centre (*tojô*) are to be constructed on the eastern slopes of Mt. Nishiyama and Nagaoka Hill (now Mukô Hill).<sup>15</sup>

Therefore, the first thing that needs to be done by the construction team is levelling of the site. Actually, the Nagaoka Palace is not the only palace located on a slope; at Naniwa, Nara, Ôtsu, Shigaraki, and later Heian, the palace area is always located on a plateau and never in a low-lying area.<sup>16</sup> Usually, one fairly smooth, even slope is created for the entire palace area. However, at the Nagaoka Palace the areas for the various government facilities and imperial residences are levelled separately, and terraces varying in their relative heights are created. Undoubtedly, this significantly reduces the amount of levelling work required.

A second challenge facing the construction workers is the gathering of construction material. In the 1970s, Kobayashi Kiyoshi calculated that a total of 75000m<sup>3</sup> of wood was required for the construction of the facilities of the Nagaoka Palace<sup>17</sup> and for the most important structures, such as the Imperial Audience Hall, pillars of up to 80cm in diameter were needed.<sup>18</sup> Since Emperor Kanmu had abolished the Palace Construction Ministry (*zôgûshô*), in charge of constructing and repairing the various buildings of the imperial palace (*kyûden*) and the detached palaces (*rikyû*) at Nara in 782, it is unlikely that such a volume

14 To name but a few of the larger tumuli located within the confines of the capital: the Imazato kurumazuka tumulus, the Imazato ôtsuka tumulus, the Tsukamoto tumulus and the Igenoyama tumulus. Some of these tumuli, such as the Igenoyama tumulus, were left undisturbed, while others were destroyed. Research on the tumuli destroyed during the construction of the Nagaoka Capital is available in OKAMURA, 1992, 'Nagaokakyô no zôei ni yotte kowasareta kofun'. In some cases, tuff from certain tumuli may have been re-used for construction during the Nagaokakyô era. KYÔTO SHINBUNSHA (ed.), 2005, *Kyûto no roman: Nagaokakyô hakkutsu 50 nen no seika*, pp. 15–16.

15 NAKATSUKA, 2002, „Iseki no ichi to kankyô“, p. 14.

16 NAKAYAMA, 1959, „Kodai teito no shizen kankyô to Nagaokakyô ni tsuite“, p. 27.

17 KOBAYASHI, 1975, *Nagaokakyô no shinken'yû: zen*, p. 119.

18 KOBAYASHI, 1970, „Yôzai kansô mondai kara mita Nagaokakyô no zôei“, p. 88.

and size of building material is just lying around available for use [SN Enryaku 1/4/11]. Using lumber from freshly cut trees also poses a problem, since trees need to dry out for approximately two years to avoid the warping, twisting or cracking of beams and pillars.<sup>19</sup> Therefore, it must be concluded that during the early stages of construction Emperor Kanmu relies upon stocks of timber on hand in provincial or district headquarters, or possibly even material supplied by individuals, as well as the dismantling of existing structures and the transportation of these recycled materials to the construction site.<sup>20</sup>

In 1987, an excavation in Minami Ward, Kyôto City, in an area corresponding to the northeast corner of the Nagaoka Capital, yielded hundreds of wooden tablets supporting the assertion that construction progresses swiftly. Some of the tablets refer to government offices, personal names or court ranks, other tablets – more interesting for the present discussion – concern the transportation and receipt of logs (*kure*) or the request for workers and construction tools.

- (1) ● 進○上樽十六村<sup>附使川原万呂進上如件以解</sup>  
「請」  
● ○ 四月廿二日板茂千依  
「少志」  
(type 051; 379 x 23 x 4)
- (2) ● 進○上樽十六村<sup>附使川原万呂進上如件以解</sup>  
「請」 四月廿二日板茂千依  
「少志」  
● 一長○押以今日夕進上以解  
(type 011; 302 x 39 x 4)
- (3) 進○上樽十六村<sup>附使的乙公進上如件以解</sup>  
「請」 五月十八日板茂千依  
「少志」  
(type 011; 352 x 35 x 2)
- (4) ● 進○上樽十六村<sup>附使笠万呂進上如件以解</sup>  
「請」 [板茂千依<sup>カ</sup>]

19 Based upon four entries in the *Nihon sandai jitsuroku* that concern fires destroying parts of the Heian Palace in the second half of the 9<sup>th</sup> century, Kobayashi Kiyoshi concludes that it took at least one year and eight months between the felling of a tree and the beginning of construction [SJR Jôgan 8/6/3; SJR Jogan 10/2/13; SJR Jôgan 18/4/28; SJR Gangyô 2/4/25]. KOBAYASHI, 1970, „Yôzai kansô mondai kara mita Nagaokakyû no zôei“, p. 88.

20 This reuse of wood for construction purposes is not unusual. At the end of 743, parts of the Nara Palace are recycled during the construction of the Imperial Audience Hall in Kuni [SN Tenpyô 15/12/26].

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(type 011; 289 x (25) x 3)

On these four shipment  tags (*nifuda mokkan*) the name of their writer – Itamochi no Chiyori – has been preserved. He informs his superiors in the capital that Kawahara no Maro (1 and 2), Ikuha no Otokimi (3) and Ikuha no Kasamaro (4) are accompanying a shipment of sixteen logs.<sup>21</sup> Because the first two tablets are written on the same date, mentioning the name of the same messenger, the question arises as to whether these two tags refer to the same shipment or whether they refer to two separate shipments. It is possible that sixteen logs are the standard load for one carriage and that Kawahara Maro accompanies more than one carriage, receiving a shipping tag for each of them.

The writing on the back of the second wooden tablet also indicates that these shipments do not merely concern the delivery of rough construction materials. The shipment and receipt of an exposed tie beam (*nageshi*) indicates that in some cases, logs are processed and finished before being shipped.

Of even greater interest is the fact that on the first three wooden tablets some characters are written in a different handwriting and in red ink across the original inscription. In all three cases the Chinese characters for ‘*ukeru* (請)’ and ‘*shôsakan* (少志)’ are written. The use of ‘*ukeru*’ indicates that someone signed for receipt of the logs while *shôsakan* refers to the office of the person signing for receipt. In the Yôrô Code, provision is made for one or two *shôsakan* or assistant recorders in the Military Guards' Headquarters of the Left and the Right (*sahyôefu* and *uhyôefu*), the Imperial Gate Guards' Headquarters (*emonfu*) and the Palace Guards' Headquarters of the Left and the Right (*saejifu* and *uejifu*).<sup>22</sup> However, it is also possible that a similar position existed in the three extra-codal guards' headquarters: the Middle Imperial Guards' Headquarters (*chûefu*), the Inner Palace Guards' Headquarters (*konoefu*), and the Outer Imperial Guards' Headquarters (*gaiefu*).

From these examples it also becomes clear that this type of shipping tag did not have a prescribed shape. While the first tablet is a rectangular wooden strip, one end of which tapers to a point (type 051), the other three are rectangular at both ends (type 011), the only common physical element being a small hole made in the top part after the tablets have been written upon. This small hole may have been used to tie the tag to the shipment of logs with a piece of string, or to tie several tablets together.

21 SD20350, L 203; *mokkan* nos. 17–20 in *Nagaokakyô sakyô shutsudo mokkan ichi*.

22 *Ryô no shûge* 5, p. 141, p. 144 and p. 145; *Ryô no gige* 1, pp. 56–57; ABE, 1995, *Nihon kodai kanshoku jiten*, pp. 200–215.

A long, thin wood shaving (*kezurikuzu*) with the inscription “上樽十六□” (type 091; 101x21x1) has also been discovered, indicating that these shipment tags were frequently reused by shaving off the top layer of an inscribed tablet with a knife to create a blank writing surface.<sup>23</sup>

In addition to the above-mentioned wooden tablets that are clearly identifiable as connected to the transportation of logs, it is highly likely that several other wooden tablets discovered during this excavation were also shipping tags for logs.<sup>24</sup> Itamochi Chiyori's name is also presumed to be visible on two other wood shavings.<sup>25</sup> Other wooden tablets unearthed from the same site concern construction tools that were sent as tribute (*shinmotsu*) to the capital.<sup>26</sup>

- (1) ● 卅六日進物
- 〔末カ〕  
廣湍□足 □ □ 川合乙人鑿  
矢作廣千万呂 □ □ 危寸□倉<sup>鑿七十</sup>
- 〔千カ〕                      〔千カ〕                      □ □  
● 卅七日進物 危寸□倉 矢作廣□万呂 川合乙上  
川合乙人 廣湍□足 五人□  
(type 019; (235)x29x2)
- (2) 進物 □□                      □□ □□四尺  
□ □                      川合乙人<sup>鑿五十</sup>穿  
(type 081; (253)x(20)x4)
- (3) ● □四  
穿 川合乙人五十切穿  
● □生河内万呂  
(type 019; (110)x22x3)
- (4) ● 漆常陸万呂<sup>鑿七十</sup>磨  
● □□  
(type 019; (126)x(12)x2)

Unfortunately, none of these four inscribed wooden tablets was discovered intact. The first inscription is pieced together from five fragments that were part

23 SD20350, L 203; *mokkan* no. 295 in *Nagaokakyô sakyô shutsudo mokkan ichi*.

24 For example, *mokkan* nos. 21–23 in *Nagaokakyô sakyô shutsudo mokkan ichi*.

25 SD20350, L 203; *mokkan* nos. 377 and 679 in *Nagaokakyô sakyô shutsudo mokkan ichi*.

26 SD20350, L 203; *mokkan* no. 36–37 and 39–40 in *Nagaokakyô sakyô shutsudo mokkan ichi*.

of a rectangular strip of wood that had been used to record personal names and tribute goods on two consecutive days. On the 26<sup>th</sup> day, four people delivered construction tools, identified in two cases as chisels (*nomi*). One day later, the inscription concerns tribute presented by five people, the same four men mentioned on the front of the tablet plus Kawai no Otokami.

The second tablet was also severely damaged before its discovery and only a few Chinese characters are legible. It informs us that Kawai no Otohito presented fifty chisels and an unknown number of 穿, possibly some kind of tool used to drill holes, as tribute. The tablet also testifies to the delivery of four *shaku* (approximately 1.2m) of an unknown material.

The third tablet is partially burnt. However, the preserved inscription again refers to Kawai no Otokami, who now presents 50 切穿. The exact meaning of this compound is unknown, but it can be surmised it is some kind of cutting tool or drill. On the back, the tablet is signed by Kawachi no Maro, whose function was probably that of a scribe (*shijō* or *shosei*).

Of the fourth tablet, the top end is missing. The inscription tells us that someone presented seventy chisels and an unknown number of 磨, possibly a tool used to sharpen the chisels.

In addition to levelling the site and gathering the necessary tools and construction materials, a third challenge to be overcome by the construction team is the need for millions of clay roof tiles in various shapes. Extensive research in the 1960s and 1970s by Okawa Kiyoshi and Kobayashi Kiyoshi has led to the supposition that approximately five million tiles were needed for the continental-style structures of the Nara Palace.<sup>27</sup> However, because excavations have revealed that the proportion of continental-style structures at the Nagaoka Palace is bigger than that of the Nara Palace; there was most likely an even larger demand for clay tiles.<sup>28</sup> As it is impossible to have so many tiles fired in only a few months time, this too is an indication of the dismantling and reuse of existing buildings.

Therefore, Kobayashi Kiyoshi had already suggested in the 1970s that structures constituting the Imperial Audience Hall and the State Halls Compound of the Later Naniwa Palace were transported to the building site at Nagaoka Village,<sup>29</sup> thereby speeding up the construction process. However, it still took several years of archaeological excavations, as well as a thorough analysis of the discovered roof tiles, to provide proof for this claim. It has become clear that

27 In 1966, Ôkawa Kiyoshi published his research on roof tiles used at the Kôfukuji. ÔKAWA, 1966, *Kawara no bi – Umoreta Nihon kodaishi*. A few years later, Kobayashi Kiyoshi arrived at similar figures by counting the roof tiles of the lecture hall (*kôdô*) of the Tôshôdaiji in Nara. KOBAYASHI, 1975, *Nagaokakyô no shinkenkyû: zen*, p.120

28 KOBAYASHI, 1975, *Nagaokakyô no shinkenkyû: zen*, p.120; NAKAYAMA, 1976, „Nagaokakyô kara Heiankyô e – kôtsû to chikei“, p.242. For detailed research on the various base-stone construction techniques used in the various Japanese Chinese-style capitals, see KUNISHITA, 1992, „Kisokôzô kara mita kodai tojô no soseki tatemono“.

29 KOBAYASHI, 1970, „Yôzai kansô mondai kara mita Nagaokakyû no zôei“.

about 90 percent of the roof tiles for structures in and around the Imperial Audience Hall and the State Halls Compound, the first structures in the Nagaoka Palace to be completed, are identical to the tiles used for Emperor Shōmu's Later Naniwa Palace.<sup>30</sup>

It has also been clarified through excavations that the State Halls Compound and the Imperial Audience Hall at Nagaoka are largely identical in size and composition to those of the Later Naniwa Palace.<sup>31</sup> This indicates that not only the roof tiles of the Later Naniwa Palace were reused, but also the structures themselves. It is possible to reconstruct a building on another location, provided that the pillars, beams and other structural elements, such as base stones and tuff used to cover the earthen platforms, are carefully marked before being dismantled. This construction material is then loaded onto boats and swiftly shipped to the construction site via the Yodo River, which directly links Naniwa to Nagaoka.

Possibly a direct consequence of the extensive reuse of old pillars from the Later Naniwa Palace is the fact that the percentage of foundation stone buildings at the Nagaoka Capital is higher than at previous capitals. After a couple of years, the supporting pillars of embedded-pillar buildings show rotting at their bases, although this does not render the pillars completely worthless. By sawing off the base of such pillars and erecting them on top of foundation stones, instead of placing them directly into the soil, a structure can be rebuilt with very few other modifications.

In addition to the overwhelming percentage of roof tiles originating from the Later Naniwa Palace in these two government compounds, the other 10 percent of tiles is connected to the Nara Capital. This need for additional roof tiles can be explained easily.

First, tiles broken during the dismantling and transportation of the Naniwa structures need to be compensated for. Second, there are some differences between the Later Naniwa and Nagaoka Palaces resulting in added roof surface. At the Nagaoka Palace, a rear hall (*kōden*) is constructed behind the Imperial Audience Hall. This feature will also be adopted in the Heian Palace, where this rear hall is known as the Imperial Retiring Room (*shōanden*). In addition, a longer wall surrounds the Imperial Audience Hall Compound.

In both cases, clay tiles produced in the Tanida kiln were used to meet the need for additional tiles. This kiln, located in present Nagaokakyō City, had originally been producing tiles for the Saidaiji in Nara, but its tiles were now used for the roofed tamped-earth wall (*tsuiji*) surrounding the Imperial Audience

30 The Later Naniwa Palace was constructed in 726 [SN Jinki 3/10/26]. It functioned as the auxiliary capital of the state from then on, except for a brief period in 744, when it served as the main capital [SN Tenpyō 16/2/26]. For a detailed study on the clay tiles unearthed in the Nagaoka Palace and Capital, see MUKŌSHI KYŌIKU IINKAI, 1987, *Nagaokakyō koga shūsei* (*Mukōshi maizō bunkazai chōsa hōkokusho*, Vol. 20). An early publication on Nagaoka roof tiles is UEDA, 1956, „Nagaokakyō ato kinpen shutsudo no koga ni tsuite“.

31 KYŌTO SHINBUNSHA, 2005, *Kyūto no roman: Nagaokakyō hakkutsu 50nen no seika*, pp. 13–14.

Hall Compound.<sup>32</sup> This was possible for two reasons. First, the Saidaiji had recently been completed, and second, the former head of the Saidaiji Construction Agency (*zô-Saidaiji-chôkan*) was Saeki no sukune Imaemishi, who ranked second in the Agency for the Construction of the Nagaoka Palace [SN Jingo keiun 1/2/28].

In the area west of the Imperial Audience Hall and the State Halls Compound, the percentage of Naniwa Palace-style roof tiles is slightly lower, at approximately 75 percent. Even so, it is very likely that these structures also originally stood in the Later Naniwa Palace. Another area with a large proportion of tiles from the Later Naniwa Palace is the presumed location of Crown Prince Sawara's Eastern Palace Agency (*tôgûbô*) south of the State Halls Compound.

Wake no ason Kiyomaro probably played a major role in the transfer of the Later Naniwa Palace structures to the site of the Nagaoka Capital. However, ever since the publication of Kita Sadakichi's *Teito (August Capitals)* in 1915, scholars have been inclined to assume that Wake Kiyomaro was firmly opposed to Fujiwara Tanetsugu and the move to the Nagaoka Capital, and was a driving force behind the relocation of the capital to Uda Village (Heian) ten years later.

There is, however, little evidence to support the view that Wake Kiyomaro and Fujiwara Tanetsugu were rivals. On the contrary, due to previous events, Wake Kiyomaro may have felt indebted to the Ceremonial House of the Fujiwara family to which Fujiwara Tanetsugu, Emperor Kanmu's most important advisor during the early 780s and the head of the Agency for the Construction of the Nagaoka Palace, belonged.<sup>33</sup> In addition, at the end of 784, Wake Kiyomaro's name is mentioned as one of twenty-three government officials who receive a promotion in rank six months after the start of construction on the Nagaoka Palace [SN Enryaku 3/12/2].

Other entries in the historical records hint at Wake Kiyomaro's close connection to Emperor Kanmu and the transfer to the Nagaoka Capital. Prior to Emperor Kanmu's enthronement, Wake Kiyomaro holds Junior Fifth Rank Lower Grade for a long time, but seven months after Emperor Kanmu's enthronement, his court rank is raised four steps to Junior Fourth Rank Lower Grade [SN Ten'ô

32 This type of clay tile is known as type 6732Q of the Nara Palace style. The Tanida kiln is actually a group of kilns consisting of the Ôedayama kiln (*Ôedayama gayô*) and the Kawaradani kiln (*Kawaradani gayô*). NAGAOKAKYÔSHI SHI HENSAN IINKAI, 1991, *Nagaokakyôshi shi: shiryô hen 1*, pp.435–485.

33 In 769, Empress Shôtoku had entrusted Kiyomaro with verifying an oracle from Hachiman, the deity of the Usa Hachiman Shrine in Bungo Province, to appoint monk Dôkyô as her successor. However, Kiyomaro reported back that the throne should never be occupied by someone who is not a member of the Imperial family [SN Jingo keiun 3/9/25]. Monk Dôkyô is furious and has Kiyomaro exiled to Ôsumi Province [SN Jingo keiun 3/9/25]. Monk Dôkyô also sends men to murder Kiyomaro, but they fail to do so and Fujiwara Momokawa (Tanetsugu's uncle) offers Kiyomaro 20 sustenance households (*fuko*). Upon Empress Shôtoku's death and the enthronement of Emperor Kônin, Kiyomaro is called back to court and given the hereditary title of *ason* [SN Hôki 2/3/29].

1/11/18]. In 783, one year before the survey party is dispatched, Wake Kiyomaro is appointed director of the Settsu Secretariat (*Settsu shiki*) located in Naniwa [SN Enryaku 2/3/12]. Finally, when Emperor Kanmu's principal consort, Fujiwara Otomuro, and his mother, Takano no ason Niigasa, set out for the Nagaoka Capital two weeks after the Emperor and the government officials moved there, Wake Kiyomaro is a member of the Office for the Order of the Imperial Procession (*shidaishi*) accompanying them [SN Enryaku 3/11/17; SN Enryaku 3/11/24].

Wake Kiyomaro's connection to the Settsu Secretariat in particular conclusively disproves the theory that Wake Kiyomaro was thwarting the construction of the Nagaoka Capital.

Three days before the inspection party is appointed, the Settsu Secretariat sends the following report to the capital [SN Enryaku 3/5/13]:

Am 7. Tage dieses Monats, in der 4. Doppelstunde, haben sich gegen 20000 Kröten, etwa 4 Bu lang und von schwarzgesprenkelter Farbe, von der Südstrasse des Marktes Naniwa, an den südlichen Sümpfen (in einer Länge) von ungefähr 3 Chô hintereinander, den Weg entlang nach Süden in Bewegung gesetzt und sind in das Innere des Tempels Shitennôji eingedrungen. Als die 7. Doppelstunde kam, zerstreuten sie sich allesamt.<sup>34</sup>

The *Mizu kagami* further specifies that this event is an auspicious omen announcing that ‘the capital must be moved’.<sup>35</sup>

In historical records dating from the 7<sup>th</sup> century, the migration of animals as an omen for the relocation of a capital is frequently mentioned. In 645, a migration of rats is the prelude to the transfer of the capital from the Asuka region to the Nagara Toyosaki Palace in Naniwa [NS Taika 1/12/9]. Nine years later, migrating rats announce a return from the Naniwa area to the Asuka Kawabe Palace [NS Hakuchi 5/1/1; NS Hakuchi 5/12/8]. Finally, a third group of migrating rats announces the move from the Asuka Plain to the Ôtsu Palace in Ômi Province in 666 [NS Tenji 5/winter]. However, it needs to be pointed out that in all cases the migrations originate in the existing capital and the animals head in the direction of the future capital.<sup>36</sup> This stands in sharp contrast to the auspicious omen announced in 784, where the toads do not depart from the Nara Capital but from the alternate capital at Naniwa, and head south instead of north.

Ten days later, the Settsu Secretariat is once more the site of an auspicious omen when Takefu no muraji Saio, one of the Secretariat's clerks (*shishô*), catches a white swallow [SN Enryaku 3/5/24].

Because of this close connection between the construction of the Nagaoka Palace and the reuse of structures originating from the Later Naniwa Palace, it seems likely that Emperor Kanmu appoints Wake Kiyomaro to the office of

34 Translation quoted from LEWIN, 1962, „Die Regierungsannalen Kammu-Tenno: *Shoku-Nihongi* 36–40 und *Nihon-Koki* 1–13 (780–806)“, p. 137.

35 The *Mizu kagami* makes mention of 30000 toads instead of 20000. *Mizu kagami*, p. 91.

36 KISHI, 1984, „Nagaokakyô to Nihon no tojô“, p. 93; KISHI, 1988, *Nihon kodai kyûto no kenkyû*, p. 225.

director of the Settsu Secretariat because he already has a transfer of capitals – and a plan to recycle the old palace structures – in mind and wants to make sure that the officials of the Settsu Secretariat will cooperate fully during the entire operation.

Wake Kiyomaro's appointment to office in the Settsu Secretariat does not seem to be the only strategic appointment. Just a few months before dispatching the inspection party, Ki no ason Mahito is appointed associate director of the Settsu Secretariat (*Settsu no suke*) [SN Enryaku 3/4/2]. The Ki family originates from Kii Province, the only province that sent ships as tribute (*kôshin*).<sup>37</sup> From this and other documents, it is believed that the Ki family was closely involved in shipbuilding, navigation on the Inland Sea as well as travel to the Korean peninsular.<sup>38</sup> Because water transport plays such an important role in the construction of Nagaoka, the cooperation of the Ki family was more than welcome and Imperial Advisor and Middle Captain of the Inner Palace Guards' Headquarters (*konoé chûjô*) Ki no ason Funamori, another member of the family, is appointed to both the inspection party and the construction agency [SN Enryaku 3/5/16; SN Enryaku 3/6/10].

Fujiwara Tanetsugu also has ties to the Later Naniwa Palace because his grandfather Umakai had been appointed head of the Naniwa Palace Construction Office (*zô-Naniwagû-shi*) by Emperor Shômu in 726 [SN Jinki 3/10/26].

In addition to the two omens and the appointment of officials, other entries in the official historical records dated around the time of the transfer of the capital indicate a close relationship between Settsu Province and the Nagaoka Capital.

One week before the construction agency is appointed, Sumiyoshi no kami, one of four deities worshipped in the Sumiyoshi Shrine in the Sumiyoshi District, the southernmost district of Settsu Province, receives the Third Order of Merit [SN Enryaku 3/6/2]. A few weeks after Emperor Kanmu and the court officials take up residence at the Nagaoka Capital, Sumiyoshi no kami's rank is raised from Senior Third Rank to Junior Second Rank [SN Enryaku 3/12/29].

Three possible reasons can be advanced as to why rank is bestowed upon Sumiyoshi no kami: it could be a request for permission to tear down the structures of the Later Naniwa Palace, or an offering to ensure smooth transportation of the construction materials, or a compensation for the loss of importance of the province due to the fact that the secondary capital is destroyed.

As elucidated before, construction has progressed significantly by mid-785 and labourers continue to work day and night to complete the Nagaoka Palace and Capital. At the end of the 8<sup>th</sup> month, Emperor Kanmu travels to Nara where Imperial Princess Asahara, his 7-year-old daughter with his half-sister Sakahito, has been preparing herself to assume her role as High Priestess (*saiô* or *itsuki-no-miko*) of the Grand Ise Shrine (*Ise-dai-jingû* or *saigû*) [SN Enryaku 4/4/23].

37 *Engi shiki* 23, p.587.

38 KISHI, 1966, *Nihon kodai seiji shi kenkyû*, pp.116–134.

During his absence from the Nagaoka Capital, matters of state are entrusted to Crown Prince Sawara, Minister of the Right Fujiwara no ason Korekimi and Middle Counsellor Fujiwara Tanetsugu [SN Enryaku 4/8/24].

On the 7<sup>th</sup> day of the 9<sup>th</sup> month, Imperial Princess Asahara sets out for Ise Province and is accompanied by several government officials to the border of Yamato Province [SN Enryaku 4/9/7]. Emperor Kanmu does not return to the Nagaoka Capital, but instead goes on an extended hunting trip near Mizuo Hill [SN Enryaku 4/9/8].<sup>39</sup>

Around ten o'clock in the evening of the 23<sup>rd</sup> day of the 9<sup>th</sup> month, Fujiwara Tanetsugu makes an inspection tour of the Nagaoka Palace to check the progress of construction activities. All of a sudden, the darkness is pierced by two arrows that strike Tanetsugu down [NKi Enryaku 4/9/23]. A severely injured Tanetsugu is brought to his private residence where he undergoes treatment. Messengers are immediately dispatched to notify Emperor Kanmu who is still absent from the capital. Upon hearing the news of the attack, Emperor Kanmu hurries back to Nagaoka, but by the time of his arrival, his trustworthy advisor has passed away [SN Enryaku 4/9/24].

The assassination of Fujiwara Tanetsugu is followed by a criminal investigation and a series of appointments and replacements as the people who have been found guilty of the conspiracy are executed, exiled or demoted.<sup>40</sup> Initially, Saeki Imaemishi, a member of a foreign clan (*banbetsu*) and the first member of the Saeki family to have been appointed Imperial Advisor (*sangi*), replaces Tanetsugu as the head of the agency for the construction of the Nagaoka Palace [SN Enryaku 3/12/2]. However, seven months later he too is demoted and sent to Kyūshū as Governor-General of the Dazai Headquarters (*dazai no sotsu*) [SN Enryaku 5/4/11].<sup>41</sup>

39 Many scholars assume Mizuo Hill should be identified with the area of present Mizuo in Ukyō Ward, Kyōto. Takahashi Tōru however, claims that because Mizuo is located in a secluded area it would have been impossible for Emperor Kanmu to travel from the barrier where he said goodbye to his daughter to Mizuo in just one day. Therefore he suggests that Mizuo Hill might have been located in the vicinity of the Nara Capital. TAKAHASHI, 1991, *Dōkyō to Nihon no kyūto: Kanmu tennō to sento o meguru nazo*, pp. 148–149.

40 For details of what happens in the aftermath of the murder, see SAKAEHARA, 1986, „Fujiwara Tanetsugu ansatsu jiken go no ninkan jinji“.

41 It is not clear why Saeki Imaemishi is demoted but as a long-time member of the Tōdaiji Construction Agency (*zō-Tōdaiji-shi*) he might have been too close to the faction in favour of Crown Prince Sawara who had also been found guilty of the conspiracy against Fujiwara Tanetsugu. At least seven of the nineteen people believed to be involved in the murder conspiracy were attached to either Crown Prince Sawara's Eastern Palace Agency or to the Tōdaiji Construction Agency. Crown Prince Sawara also had close dealings with the Tōdaiji and its construction agency during the 760s and 770s. Therefore, it does not seem unlikely that even after Sawara returns to secular life upon his appointment as Crown Prince he still has significant influence – and friends – in both the temple and the construction agency. A document in the *Tōdaiji yōroku*, for example, refers to the continued support of Sawara's Eastern Palace Agency for the temple. *Tōdaiji yōroku*, p. 267.

In the meantime, a driving force behind the construction works of the Nagaoka Capital is Suguri no obito Masumaro, a descendant of immigrants from Paekche living in Ômi Province. Early 786, he is promoted from Junior Seventh Rank Lower Grade to Outer Junior Fifth Rank Lower Grade as a reward for maintaining 36 000 labourers for eight months [SN Enryaku 4/12/10].

### The second phase of construction

It is often stated that after Fujiwara Tanetsugu's death, the immigrant Hata family to which he was maternally related suspends its financial as well as its technological assistance, and construction on the Nagaoka Capital grinds to a halt. As a result, Nagaoka was abandoned because the capital could not be completed, and the Heian Capital was constructed.

This notion is based on the interpretation of two entries preserved in the official historical records. The *Shoku Nihongi* records that, in 791, Emperor Kanmu orders the provinces of Echizen, Tanba, Tajima, Harima, Mimasaka, Bizen, Awa, and Iyo to take care of the dismantling of the various palace gates of the Nara Capital and transport them to the Nagaoka Capital [SN Enryaku 10/9/16]. Upon the death of Wake Kiyomaro in 799, the *Nihon kôki* states that even after ten years of construction the capital remained unfinished [NKô Enryaku 18/2/21].

As elucidated above, it is not unusual for it to take seven years before some essential features of a palace are built. Therefore, the fact that Emperor Kanmu orders the gates to be transferred need not be interpreted as an indication of troubled construction.

The statement in Wake Kiyomaro's biography is also open to doubt, as the early Heian-period scholar Miyoshi Kiyoyuki writes in his *Iken fûji jûnijô* that when Emperor Kanmu decided to construct his new capital, the Nagaoka Capital had already been completed.<sup>42</sup>

A careful reading of the historical records also suggests that construction on the Nagaoka Capital and Palace continues after Tanetsugu's assassination, given the fact that the completion of the State Halls Compound is reported mid-786 [SN Enryaku 5/7/19].

A wooden tablet unearthed from a site in what used to be the area of the Left Capital indicates that around that time, Emperor Kanmu may have relied upon the help of workers involved in the construction of the Tôdaiji to have the Nagaoka Capital constructed.<sup>43</sup>

<sup>42</sup> *Iken fûji jûnijô*, (p.2).

<sup>43</sup> SD1301-A, L208; *mokkan* no.1293 in *Nagaokakyô mokkan ni*.

- 寺石工佐伯息人

- 五年七月十四日 岳田王

(type 019; (262)x27x4)

This wooden tablet is a summons of a temple stonemason (*tera no ishiku*) called Saeki no Okihito. The stonemasons are responsible for quarrying and processing the tuff that is to be used to cover the platforms on which temples or government offices are built. Because ‘temple’ at that time usually referred to the Tōdaiji, Okihito may have been attached to the Tōdaiji or the Tōdaiji Construction Agency. On the reverse side, the tablet is signed and dated by Prince Okada.<sup>44</sup> Interestingly, this predates by five days the entry in the *Shoku Nihongi* announcing the completion of the State Halls Compound.

The historical records also abound with references to increased efforts to ensure that the various taxes are collected, to suppress corruption and to encourage the sending of labourers, all essential elements to sustain construction.

Early in 786, the State Council decrees that taxes-in-kind (*chō*) and labour-substitute taxes-in-kind (*yō*) should also be levied upon the migrants (*furōnin*) in the nine provinces under the jurisdiction of the Dazai Headquarters (*dazaifu*). Officials who fail to carry out this order will no longer be eligible for other government offices [RSK 8 Enryaku 4/12/9].<sup>45</sup>

A few months later, various provinces and districts are admonished for their negligence in forwarding taxes, and district officials as well as provincial officials are held responsible when official granaries (*shōsō*) burn down [SN Enryaku 5/4/11; SN Enryaku 5/6/1]. The cause of the divine fires (*shinka*) is questioned and the embezzlement of taxes is suspected. As a countermeasure, provincial and district officials will be required to compensate for losses incurred by any fire in the granaries [SN Enryaku 5/8/8].

The following year, a system of honourable dismissal is set up to put a halt to the misuse of taxes by government officials, and provincial officials are warned once more against negligence of local politics [SN Enryaku 6/int.5/11; SN Enryaku 6/7/25].

To increase the number of people subjected to corvee labour as well as the income generated from the commoners, the State Council also decrees that children born from the union between a free person (*ryō*) and an unfree person

44 In 2000, another fragmentary tablet (type 019, (63)x(16)x2) merely mentioning this Prince's name was discovered southeast of the palace enclosure (L425, SD42501). *Mokkan* no. 13 in NAKAJIMA, 2001, „Kyōto . Nagaokakyō ato (1)“.

45 During construction on the Heian Capital, the State Council will issue similar decrees to curb the evasion of tax payments and will require the provincial officials to make up for any deficiencies from their provincial rice (*kuge*) [EKS Enryaku 14/7/27; RSK 8 Enryaku 16/8/3; RK 79 Enryaku 16/8/3; EKS Enryaku 16/8/3; RSK 8 Enryaku 21/8/27].

(*sen*), should be recognised as free persons [SN Enryaku 8/5/18; RSK 17 Enryaku 8/5/18].<sup>46</sup>

Three years after Fujiwara Tanetsugu's death, Emperor Kanmu issues an edict saying that the palace structures have yet to be completed and much construction work remains to be done. He also expresses his concern about the poor conditions of the construction workers and grants the people of those provinces sending labourers to the Nagaoka Capital a reduced interest rate [SN Enryaku 7/9/26]:

... Jedoch sind die Palastgebäude noch nicht fertig, und es bleibt ziemlich viel Hand anzulegen. Die Nöte des Aufgebotes (an Arbeitskräften) lasten sehr auf der Bevölkerung. Deshalb soll die Vergütung für ihre Arbeitsleistung reichlich ausfallen, denn Wir wünschen keine Mühsal und Plage. Wie Wir jetzt vernommen haben, sind die Kittel der Arbeitsleute, die den Palast erbauen, unzulänglich, und die Leute sind häufig schwächlich. Während Wir gelassen darüber sprechen, bewegt Uns innerlich ein tiefer Schmerz. In sämtlichen Provinzen, die Arbeitsleute stellen, soll bei der diesjährigen Reisleihe, gleichgültig ob es sich um (Reis) der Hauptsteuer oder um (Reis) der Amtsfelder handelt, der betreffende Zins durchgängig gesenkt werden. Beispielweise betragen für ein Darlehen von zehn Garben die Zinsen fünf Garben; zwei Garben (davon) sollen dem Volk zurückerstattet werden, drei Garben der Behörde zugehen. Von dem, was vor dieser kaiserlichen Verfügung eingezogen worden ist, soll ebenfalls zurückgegeben werden.<sup>47</sup>

In 789, the official records report that Palace Construction Officials (*zôgûshi*)<sup>48</sup> donate rice wine, food, and toys to needy workers [SN Enryaku 8/3/1]. Five months later, Emperor Kanmu bestows high court ranks and other gifts upon the officials involved in palace construction [SN Enryaku 8/8/1]. At the end of the year, chief carpenter Mononobe Takamaro is promoted to the Outer Junior Fifth Rank Lower Grade [SN Enryaku 8/11/9].

In addition to these references to continuing construction, the historical records also mention a large number of government offices and other facilities, indicating that construction has advanced considerably.<sup>49</sup>

Whereas the first phase of construction is characterised by rapid construction through the reuse of clay tiles and other construction materials from the Later Naniwa Palace, archaeological excavations have clarified that the second phase,

46 The codes prohibit marriage between free and unfree persons. Should children be born from such unions they should be classified as unfree persons, and their parents should be separated. *Ryô no gige* 2, pp. 94–104.

47 Translation quoted from LEWIN, 1962, „Die Regierungsannalen Kammu-Tenno: *Shoku-Nihongi* 36–40 und *Nihon-Koki* 1–13 (780–806)“, pp. 221–222.

48 According to Bruno Lewin, these officials are not palace construction officials but officials charged with rebuilding the Grand Ise Shrine. LEWIN, 1962, „Die Regierungsannalen Kammu-Tenno: *Shoku-Nihongi* 36–40 und *Nihon-Koki* 1–13 (780–806)“, p. 227 n. 13.

49 For a full list of the government offices mentioned in the historical records pertaining to the Nagaoka era, see MUKÔSHI KYÔIKU IINKAI, 1983, *Mukôshi maizô bunkazai chôsa hôkokusho*, Vol. 9, p. 50.

which started around 788, involves usage of dismantled structures from the Nara Capital and new building materials. At this stage, new types of clay tiles are produced. The Tanida kiln, in the western part of the Nagaoka Capital, had previously been producing clay tiles for the Saidaiji, but becomes at this time one of the main production centres of the Nagaoka Palace roof tiles.<sup>50</sup>

The focus on water transport now shifts from the Yodo River to the Uji River for clay tiles of the Hora Palace (*Hora no miya*) and timber from Ômi Province, the Kizu River for transferring the structures of the Nara Palace, and the Kadono River for fresh lumber from Tanba Province.

The most important event concerning palace construction in the late 780s is the fact that Emperor Kanmu moves from his original Imperial Residence to a second Imperial Residence, the East Palace (*higashi miya*) in 789 [SN Enryaku 8/2/27].

An inscribed wooden tablet discovered in Mukô City in 1980 yielded further information on the construction of Emperor Kanmu's second Imperial Residence.<sup>51</sup>

[解申カ]

● 造東大宮所 □□ □□

[附近衛カ]

● 八年正月十七日 □□□□

(type 081; (239)x(10)x5)

This long and narrow wooden tablet has been preserved only partially and most of the text is missing. It is probably a *mokkan* document (*monjo mokkan*) sent by the East Great Palace Construction Office (*zô-Higashi-ômiya-dokoro*). If indeed the tablet contained the Chinese character ‘解’, the message was some kind of report sent to a superior government office.<sup>52</sup>

The East Great Palace Construction Office is probably an extraordinary office set up for the construction of Emperor Kanmu's second Imperial Residence and is thus subordinate to the Nagaoka Palace Construction Agency.

The date written on the back of this wooden tablet predates by forty days the entry in the *Shoku Nihongi* announcing the move of Emperor Kanmu from the West Palace to the East Palace. On the tablet the palace is called ‘*higashi ômiya*’, East Great Palace, possibly to avoid confusion with Crown Prince Ate's Eastern Palace (*tôgû*).

Other inscribed wooden tablets unearthed from the same general area during the same and preceding excavations also confirm that construction in the Na-

50 YAMANAKA, 1997, *Nihon kodai tojô no kenkyû*, pp.102–103. The kilns connected to the Jôjuji and the Hôshôji in Takatsuki City, Ôsaka Prefecture also produced clay tiles of the Nagaoka type. KOBAYASHI, 1975, *Nagaokakyô no shinkenkyû: zen*, pp.80–82 and p.120.

51 SD1301-B, L51; *mokkan* no.216 in *Nagaokakyô mokkan ichi*.

52 For a short but useful introduction on the formal expressions used on inscribed wooden tablets, see KITÔ, 1990, *Mokkan*, pp.46–61.



also some kind of metal object, all intended for use on the construction of the Yamamomo Compound mentioned at the top end of the tablet.

[料カ]

□遣姦楛但馬國六十二番夫卅一人□

(type 081; (328) x (12) x 4)

This tablet is so heavily damaged that its original shape can no longer be determined.<sup>56</sup> Fortunately, the text on the fragment is reasonably well preserved and informs us about provisions distributed among labourers sent by Tajima Province. These labourers were involved in gathering small twigs (*shimoto*) and might have been involved in the construction of the Yamamomo Compound. It seems that the sixty-two workmen provided by Tajima Province worked in two shifts because provisions are only requested for half the workforce.

Because another wooden tablet found in the same layer during the same excavation is dated Enryaku 6/7/3<sup>57</sup> and two tablets found in the same layer during an earlier excavation are dated Enryaku 6/11/6 and Enryaku 6/11/27<sup>58</sup>, we may safely assume that these tablets concerning the construction of the Yamamomo Compound can also be dated to 787.

The upper layer of the ditch (SD1301-B) also yielded several interesting inscribed wooden tablets dating from after 787.

- □□板 棕古樽一板 以下下桁<sup>三枚</sup>
- □月十七日近衛□□□□

(type 081; (171)x(16)x5)

This fragment of a wooden tablet concerns the request for, or delivery of, construction materials such as logs and purlins (*keta*).<sup>59</sup> On the back, the tablet is dated and mention is made of the Inner Palace Guards (*kono*). It is known from Nara-period documents that the personnel of the Military Guards (*hyôe*) took part in temple construction.<sup>60</sup> Therefore it is plausible that Emperor Kanmu also relied upon his personal guard units for the construction of his palace.

Other inscribed wooden tablets presumably refer to the granting and sending of labourers.

[夫カ]

給人四□□

(type 091)

56 SD1301-A, L51; *mokkan* no. 338 in *Nagaokakyô mokkan ichi*.

57 SD1301-A, L51; *mokkan* no. 376 in *Nagaokakyô mokkan ichi*.

58 SD1301-A, L13; *mokkan* nos. 207 and 208 in *Nagaokakyô mokkan ichi*.

59 SD1301-B, L22-1; *mokkan* no. 217 in *Nagaokakyô mokkan ichi*.

60 MUKÔSHI KYÔIKU IINKAI, 1984, *Nagaokakyô mokkan ichi: kaisetsu*, p. 184.

Unlike most of the wooden tablets discovered in the Nagaoka Capital, this wood shaving is not made from the wood of a Japanese cedar (*sugi*, Lat. *Cryptomeria japonica*) or a cypress (*hinoki*, Lat. *Chamaecyparis obtusa*), but from some other coniferous tree.<sup>61</sup> The inscription most likely concerns the granting of four labourers.

夫三人 吉足

(type 081; (168)x24x4)

This slightly bigger and more complete wood fragment refers to three labourers and is signed by a government official named Yoshitari.<sup>62</sup>

- □□ □□六升寮工一人寺工二人料
- □ □ □ □

(type 081; (169)x(14)x3)

Something was written on both sides of this wooden tablet, but unfortunately most Chinese characters are illegible.<sup>63</sup> Mention is made of one *tsukasa no takumi*, a craftsman attached to a government office, probably the Carpentry Bureau; and two *tera no takumi*, craftsmen involved in temple construction.

The same layer also yielded information about the construction of various Palace Rooms (*zôshi*) connected to the State Council.

The following rectangular strips of wood were discovered with several wooden tablets dated Enryaku 8 (789) and Enryaku 9 (790).<sup>64</sup>

- 〔陸<sup>カ</sup>〕            〔貳升<sup>カ</sup>〕
- 史生料飯□升    倉長□□
- (1) • 造大臣曹司所    息人貳升    合壹斗
- 史生宇努「韓国」
- 十月廿三日    茨田清成
- (type 011; 375x36x6)

- (2) 請夫二人 工息人九月五日松□  
右以明日可給遣

(type 011; 212x35x1)

On both wooden tablets, the personal name Okihito is recorded.<sup>65</sup> Because the tablets were discovered during the same excavation as the previously mentioned wooden tablet regarding a Tōdaiji stonemason named Saeki Okihito, it is as-

61 SD1301-B, L22-1; *mokkan* no. 220 in *Nagaokakyô mokkan ichi*.

62 SD1301-B, L51; *mokkan* no. 219 in *Nagaokakyô mokkan ichi*.

63 SD1301-B, L22-2; *mokkan* no. 218 in *Nagaokakyô mokkan ichi*.

64 See for example *mokkan* nos. 5, 8, 9, 11, 53 and 55 in *Nagaokakyô mokkan ichi*.

65 SD1301-B, L13; *mokkan* nos. 1 and 7 in *Nagaokakyô mokkan ichi*.

sumed these three wooden tablets concern the same person. By now, Okihito is certainly no longer part of the Tōdaiji Construction Agency because that office had been abolished in the spring of 789 [SN Enryaku 8/3/16].

The first tablet is a request for rice. On the reverse side, the wooden tablet is dated and signed by two scribes, Manta no Kiyonari, a descendant of an immigrant family living in the vicinity of the Nagaoka Capital, and Uno no Karakuni. Judging from the handwriting, ‘Karakuni’ was added later by another person.

The tablet stipulates that the scribe receives six *shō*, and Kuranaga and Okihito receive two *shō* each, a total of one *to* (7.2 litres). All these people are attached to the Great Ministerial Palace Room Construction Office (*zō-daijinzō-shi-sho*), an extra-codal office subordinate to the State Council.

Only four types of Great Ministers (*daijin*) are known to have existed in ancient Japan: the Prime Minister (*daijōdaijin*), the Minister of the Left (*sadaijin*), the Minister of the Right (*udaijin*) and the extra-codal Great Minister of the Centre (*naidaijin*). At this time in Japanese history, only the Minister of the Right had been appointed. Since the appointment of monk Dōkyō, no Prime Minister had served the emperor. The office of Great Minister of the Center was only awarded three times in Japanese history: in 669 to Fujiwara no Kamatari, in 777 to Fujiwara no ason Yoshitsugu, and finally in 779 to Fujiwara no ason Uona [KB Tenji 8/10/15; KB Hoki 8/1/2 KB; Hōki 10/1/1]. At the beginning of Emperor Kanmu's reign, Fujiwara no ason Tamaro is promoted to the office of Minister of the Left, but after his death a few months later, no new Minister of the Left is appointed until the accession of Emperor Heizei in 806.

The Great Ministerial Palace Room Construction Office mentioned on the wooden tablet is probably a predecessor of the Official Residence Construction Office (*zō-kansha-sho*) provided for in the *Engi shiki*.<sup>66</sup> This office is responsible for the construction of various facilities such as the Palace Room of the State Council (*daijōkan zōshi*), the Great Ministerial Palace Room (*daijin zōshi*) and the Treasury of the State Council (*daijōkan kuriya*).

The second wooden tablet certifies that a request for two labourers and one craftsman, Okihito, has been granted. This tablet was written on the 5<sup>th</sup> day of the 9<sup>th</sup> month and was signed by ‘Matsu...’. Because of similarities in handwriting with another wooden tablet discovered in the vicinity<sup>67</sup>, the full personal name of this official was probably Matsutari.

The same layer in the ditch also yielded a scroll title spindle (*daisenjiku*) and a ruler (*jōgi*), both referring to Palace Rooms.<sup>68</sup>

- (1) ●大臣曹司作所  
●大臣曹司作所

<sup>66</sup> *Engi shiki* 11, p. 343.

<sup>67</sup> SD1301-B, L13; *mokkan* no. 6 in *Nagaokakyō mokkan ichi*.

<sup>68</sup> SD1301-B, L13; *mokkan* nos. 136 and 2 in *Nagaokakyō mokkan ichi*.

(type 061; (212)x15x9)

(2) ● 「醬横 左左左太政官□□□ 弟」  
 [右カ] [給カ]

● 右依造□大臣曹司所□□□□壹斗□マ□人

(type 061; 358x23.5x4)

On both sides of the scroll title spindle (1) mention is made of a Construction Office for the Great Ministerial Palace Room (*daijinzôshi sakusho*); therefore, the scroll that was once wrapped around this spindle must have contained information relevant to this office.

Six V-shaped notches, which were used by scribes to draw boundary lines (*kaisen*) on writing paper, are cut into the right side of the ruler (2). A scribe used the front of the wooden tablet for writing practice (*shûsho*). On the back of the ruler, mention is made of a Construction Office for the Palace Room of the Minister of the Right (*zô-udajinsôshi-sho*).

From 782, the position of Minister of the Right, the highest *ritsuryô*-official during most of Emperor Kanmu's reign, is held by Fujiwara no ason Korekimi. When Korekimi dies in the autumn of 789, it takes several months for him to be replaced by Fujiwara no ason Tsugutada [SN Enryaku 8/9/19; SN Enryaku 9/2/27].

Because the layer from which the ruler was unearthed probably dates from 789, and because some of the other inscribed tablets discovered at the same time are datable to the 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> months, the Construction Office for the Palace Room of the Minister of the Right referred to on the ruler was probably set up in the period during which there was no Minister of the Right. During this intermediate period, construction work or repairs on the palace room could be carried out before Tsugutada took up his office.

● 作官曹司所十五人半了六十六夫

● 七月廿一日

(type 011; 394x30x5)

One more wooden tablet unearthed from the same ditch is connected to Palace Room construction. The tablet is dated to the 21<sup>st</sup> day of the 7<sup>th</sup> month and concerns labourers for the Construction Office for the Council Palace Room (*sakukan sôshisho*).<sup>69</sup>

In 1999, a ditch (SD42502) near the intersection between 3<sup>rd</sup> Row North Street and East 2<sup>nd</sup> West Street, approximately fifty meters southwest of

69 SD1301-B, L13; *mokkan* no. 3 in *Nagaokakyô mokkan ichi*.

SD1301, yielded more wooden tablets connected to the construction of the Nagaoka Palace and Capital [L429].<sup>70</sup>

- ○請飯
- ○造東大

(type 019, (63)x(30.5)x4)

This wooden tablet is another fragment of a request for rice.<sup>71</sup> The inscription on the back probably refers to the East Great Palace Construction Agency. Therefore, the inscribed wooden tablets unearthed from ditch SD42502 probably date to the late 780s, when construction on Emperor Kanmu's second Imperial Residence was in full swing.

[人カ]

- □院作□□
- 九十三□□

(type 081; (73)x(15)x2)

Another fragment concerns the construction of a certain compound (*in*), but further details are missing.<sup>72</sup> Since only one character seems to have preceded ‘*in*’, the compound may be identified as the East Compound, the South Compound or the Shima Compound. The number on the back may indicate the amount of certain goods or the number of labourers requested.

□屋奴蘇伎板五百枚 秦佐美万呂宋人豊□等作所進

(type 039; (243)x(17)x4)

This rectangular strip of wood with a deep notch carved into the left side has been partially preserved.<sup>73</sup> The tablet accompanied a shipment of 500 thin planks used as roof shingles (*sogi ita*) provided by various workshops.

- 下政所 木工二人 漆工一人 料魚菜  
直丁二人
- 「鍛冶所食口十三人九月卅日佐伯□万呂」

(type 011; 332x31x4)

This neatly preserved *mokkan* document concerns the fish and vegetables given to five workmen attached to the Administrative Office (*matsurigoto dokoro*).<sup>74</sup>

70 This area of the 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> Blocks in the 2<sup>nd</sup> Column on 3<sup>rd</sup> Row, Left Capital has been identified as the possible location of the Treasury of the State Council, the Nagaoka Palace Construction Agency and the Carpentry Bureau (*mokuryō*). For more details on the actual excavation, see MUKŌSHI KYŌIKU IINKAI, 1994, *Mukōshi maizō bunkazai chōsa hōkusho*, Vol. 50, pp. 49–95, esp. pp. 68–71.

71 SD42502; L429; *mokkan* no. 4 in NAKAJIMA, 2000, „Kyōto . Nagaokakyō ato“.

72 SD42502; L429; *mokkan* no. 5 in NAKAJIMA, 2000, „Kyōto . Nagaokakyō ato“.

73 SD42502; L429; *mokkan* no. 2 in NAKAJIMA, 2000, „Kyōto . Nagaokakyō ato“.

Provisions are requested for two woodworkers (*mokkô*), two watchmen (*jikichô*) and one lacquer worker (*shikkô*).

On the back, another person wrote a secondary inscription dated the 30<sup>th</sup> of the 9<sup>th</sup> month. This inscription records the number of meals required for people attached to the Metalworkers' Office (*kaji-no-tsukasa*), an office in charge of making iron and copper articles and subordinate to the Imperial Household Ministry (*kunaishô*).

- 〔道カ〕
- 「道 道 □」
- 〔内カ〕
- 造□□□□
- 〔月カ〕
- 「九月□ □ □

(type 019; (86)x(19)x4.5)

This tablet is an excellent example of the reuse of wooden tablets.<sup>75</sup> After the original inscription was no longer valid the tablet was not discarded, but it was used a second time to practice the writing of the Chinese characters for ‘*michi*’ and ‘*tsuki*’. The only Chinese character preserved from the original inscription is ‘*tsukuru*’, possibly followed by ‘*uchi*’.

In 1985, a wooden tablet containing a reference to an Inner Construction Office (*zô-naisho*) had already been unearthed from another gutter in the Left Capital.<sup>76</sup>

〔五カ〕

造内所□□ □ □ 院瓦□

(type 091; (88+49)x(6)x(6))

This tablet was actually pieced together from two fragments, but based upon the type of wood, the size of the tablet and the handwriting they are believed to belong together. This Inner Construction Office is not mentioned anywhere else but it was probably a temporary office subordinate to the Nagaoka Palace Construction Office. Judging from the contents of the wooden tablet, the Inner Construction Office was responsible for construction works on a certain compound.

From around 790, the tax-collecting measures are relaxed somewhat. Arrears on certain taxes are remitted and the amount of provincial office rice that can be confiscated to make up for the arrears is lowered, which could be an indication

74 SD42502; L429; *mokkan* no. 1 in NAKAJIMA, 2000, „Kyôto . Nagaokakyô ato“.

75 SD42502; L429; *mokkan* no. 3 in NAKAJIMA, 2000, „Kyôto . Nagaokakyô ato“.

76 SD5202, L8566; *mokkan* no. 759 in *Nagaokakyô mokkan ni*.

that the main construction effort has come to an end [SN Enryaku 9/int.3/16; SN Enryaku 9/11/3].<sup>77</sup>

However, after these two phases of construction, Emperor Kanmu does not deem his capital to be finished. Excavations carried out in 1999-2000, clearly indicate that both the grid plan and the capital's facilities continue to evolve.<sup>78</sup> During these excavations, the remains of the East Compound (*Tôin*) were discovered. This compound is located in the 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Block, 3<sup>rd</sup> Column, North 1<sup>st</sup> Row of the Left Capital, approximately 1.5 kilometres northeast of Emperor Kanmu's second Imperial Residence.

When construction begins on the Heian Capital in 793, Emperor Kanmu announces his withdrawal to the East Compound to facilitate the dismantlement and moving of his main residential palace [NKi Enryaku 12/1/21]. Therefore, the compound functions as the official residence of Emperor Kanmu for a period of one year and nine months.

The remains of fourteen buildings, two of them hybrid structures in which some pillars are embedded in the soil and others are set on foundation stones; one well and several ditches have been discovered.

Several tiles carry the Chinese character ‘旨’ (*shi*) indicating a connection with the Imperial Decree Office (*chokushisho*).<sup>79</sup> Research on all clay roof tiles discovered in the site allowed researchers to date the construction of the East Compound to around 791.

Interestingly, one of the posthole-type buildings (SB435006) was constructed on top of East 2<sup>nd</sup> Column Avenue. This was the first time archaeologists have discovered a structure that had been built on top of a pre-existing major road in a capital city, and this discovery reinforces the supposition that the East Compound was actually located outside the city limits of the capital.

- 東院内候所収帳
- 延暦十三年正月一日

(type 061; (104)x30.5x8.5)

<sup>77</sup> The amount is considerably less than decreed in 745 [SN Tenpyô 17/11/27]. In 795, the regulations are tightened once more to finance the construction of the Heian Capital. The State Council then introduces a system of collective reimbursement, in which all the provincial officials are required to make up for any deficits [RSK Daidô 2/12/29, referring to an earlier directive issued in Enryaku 14/7/27].

<sup>78</sup> The east part of the site is located in Minami Ward, Kyôto City and the west part in Morimoto-chô, Mukô City.

<sup>79</sup> The responsibilities of this office are unclear. From before 764 it existed as an Imperial Decree Ministry until it was abolished in 782 [SN Tenpyô hôji 8/10/20; SN Enryaku 1/4/11]. The Imperial Decree Ministry/Office might have been in charge of supervising the new rice fields opened by permission of the central government (*chokushiden*); of conveying imperial commands; and, judging from Emperor Kanmu's rescript issued on the occasion of the ministry's abolishment, it also seems to have been responsible for the emperor's clothes and accessories (*fukugan*). From a document dated 789 and preserved in the *Heian ibun* it has become clear that the ministry is soon re-established in the form of the Imperial Decree Office (*chokushisho*) [HI 4897].

This scroll title spindle was used for a storage record drawn up by the Palace Lackey Office (*naikôsho*) of the East Compound.<sup>80</sup> This office for government officials waiting upon the emperor is usually set up within the outer enclosure of the Imperial Residence. The fact that this office is transferred to the East Compound lends further credibility to the statement that the compound was the Emperor's main residence until the move to the Heian Palace.

On the back of the tablet is the date Enryaku 13/1/1. On this day, Ôtomo Otomaro receives the sword of office for another campaign against the *emishi* [NKi Enryaku 13/1/1]. Because construction workers are busy taking down the structures within the palace enclosure and the East Compound is now the official residence of Emperor Kanmu, this ceremony must have taken place in the East Compound.

The site also yielded other dated wooden tablets. In addition to the types of roof tiles used for the compound's construction, the inscribed wooden tablets indicate that the East Compound was erected during the second phase of construction. Only two wooden tablets contain dates prior to the establishment of the East Compound.<sup>81</sup> However, both dates have been recorded on scroll title spindles that were made when Nara was still the capital. After the Nara Capital was abandoned, the scrolls, and the spindles around which they were wound, were simply brought to the Nagaoka Palace.

The other tablets are dated between Enryaku 12/1 and Enryaku 13/1, which roughly coincides with the period of time during which the East Compound served as Emperor Kanmu's official residence.<sup>82</sup>

[解申カ]

●□ 延暦十二年正月十六日□ □□  
 ● □  
 (type 019; (55+175)x41x4)

This wooden tablet is part of a document dated Enryaku 12/1/16.<sup>83</sup> On the day mentioned on the tablet, the annual Imperial Dancing Festival (*tôka no sechie*) for women takes place in the palace [RK 72 Enryaku 12/1/16]. This is exactly one day after the inspection of Uda Village by Fujiwara Oguromaro and five days before Emperor Kanmu announces that he will move to the East Compound until the Heian Palace is completed.

80 SD435030, L435; *mokkan* no.4 in SATÔ, 2002, „Shutsudo iseki – Nagaokakyôki: moji kanren shiryô“.

81 One scroll title spindle is dated Ten'ô 1/8 (type 061; (86) x 23.5 x 8.5), the other one dates to Enryaku 2/1 (type 061; (59) x 31 x 11). SD435030, L435; *mokkan* nos.1 and 2 in SATÔ, 2002, „Shutsudo iseki – Nagaokakyôki: moji kanren shiryô“.

82 See for example *mokkan* nos.3, 5 and 6 in SATÔ, 2002, „Shutsudo iseki – Nagaokakyôki: moji kanren shiryô“.

83 SD435030, L435; *mokkan* no.3 in SATÔ, 2002, „Shutsudo iseki – Nagaokakyôki: moji kanren shiryô“.

## The dual capital system

It is generally assumed that with the dismantling of the Later Naniwa Palace, Emperor Kanmu abolishes the system of dual capitals.<sup>84</sup> This system dates from 683, when Emperor Tenmu announces the adoption of the Chinese system of multiple capitals and an alternate capital (*baito*) or auxiliary capital (*fukuto*) is set up in Naniwa [NS Tenmu 12/12/17].

However, it seems that after the dismantlement of the Later Naniwa Palace some kind of dual capital system continues to exist. Certain events, such as when the Emperor bids farewell to his daughter Asahara, the High Priestess of the Grand Ise Shrine, support the suggestion that Emperor Kanmu and his government officials continue to use the imperial and administrative facilities of the Nara Palace for certain ceremonies. Thus, during the early year of the Nagaoka Capital, the Nara Capital might have functioned as the state's secondary capital. When the second phase of construction is begun, Nagaoka becomes the one true capital and significant use is made of the now no-longer-needed Nara Palace structures.

The suggestion that a dual capital system continued for a while might provide an explanation for an entry in the *Nihon sandai jitsuroku* that has puzzled scholars for some time and that has cast doubt over the actual date of the transfer of the capital to Nagaoka. A message sent in 864 by the provincial headquarters of Yamato Province states the following [SJR Jôgan 6/11/7]:

The capital of Nara was transferred from the old capital [the Fujiwara Capital] in Wadô 3 [710]. ... In Enryaku 7 [788] the capital was transferred to Nagaoka. Since then, 77 years [have passed and] the roads of the capital have been turned into rice-field ridges.

Since there are exactly 77 years between Enryaku 7 and Jôgan 6, Enryaku 7 cannot be interpreted as a slip of the pen for Enryaku 3. However, although there is never an official announcement that the capital is moved from Nara to Nagaoka, the fact that Emperor Kanmu's consorts and mother, as well as the government officials, take up residence there implies a transfer. That the transfer takes place in 784 is also endorsed by an entry in the biography of Wake Kiyomaro stating that after ten years of construction the capital was still not completed [NKô Enryaku 18/2/21].

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### Abbreviations used in the text

EKS	<i>Enryaku kôtai shiki</i>
HI	<i>Heian ibun</i>
KB	<i>Kugyô bunin</i>
NKi	<i>Nihon kiryaku</i>

<sup>84</sup> KISHI, 1984, „Nagaokakyô to Nihon no tojô“, pp.99–101.

- NKô *Nihon kôki*  
 NS *Nihon shoki*  
 NSJ *Nihon sandai jitsuroku*  
 SN *Shoku Nihongi*  
 RK *Ruijû kokushi*  
 RSK *Ruijû sandai kyaku*

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