

## Harima's Roads, and *Kofun* 'For Show': The tale of Nehime

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### Graves recorded in *Harima no Kuni Fudoki*

Entries about graves are scattered throughout *Harima Fudoki*, as listed in the table below. The occupants of the graves (i.e., those who were interred) can be divided into two groups: people and animals. Among the people, there are: (i) a queen-consort of local origin (1); (ii) local gentry (Tajima no Kuni no Miyatsuko) (3); (iii) ancestors of local gentry (2,4,7); (iv) a daughter of local gentry (Harima no Kuni no Miyatsuko) (10); and (v) the female servant (i.e., serf or slave) of local gentry (Owari no Muraji) (5). And among the animals there are a horse (6) and a dog (9). In short, the majority of such tales about graves concern local gentry, personages who were their ancestors, or people connected with them. Time-wise, it seems that they date from the reigns of what would be the eleventh king, Suinin, to the twenty-third king, Kensō, according to *Kojiki* and *Nihon Shoki*—in archaeological terms from sometime around the mid-Kofun Period. The people of this region in the Nara Period used the graves of their ancestors right before their eyes as the setting for their own stories. However, it cannot be said nowadays with much confidence which of the graves mentioned in *Harima Fudoki* corresponds with which of the extant burial mounds. Rather, it is no exaggeration to say that none of them can. That is because there are no detailed records of the location, size or shape of any of those graves, and anyway it is not possible to be sure which is which out of so many.

The following discussion will focus on 'Tamaoka', as one example from among the legends of graves mentioned in *Harima Fudoki* for which identification is inferred.

### 'Tamaoka' and its story

There is a passage in the entry for Narahara Sato, Kamo Kōri, in *Harima Fudoki*, concerning a grave called 'Tamaoka'. The two Princes, Oke and Woke (later Kings NinKen and Kensō), both offer marriage to the daughter of the Harima no Kuni no Miyatsuko, called Nehime, and Nehime accepts their proposal; but the brothers each defer to the other for so long that Nehime grows old and dies. Thereupon, the two Princes say, 'We shall make her grave in a sunny place where the sun shines from dawn until dusk, inter her bones there, and adorn the grave with round boulders.' And they call this burial mound 'Tamaoka' ('Jewel Hill').<sup>1</sup>

This 'Tamaoka' is thought to refer to Tamaoka Kofun, located in Tamaoka-chō, Kasai-shi, on the basis of its being the putative site of *Fudoki's* Tamano Mura in Narahara Sato, and because of the present place names of 'Tamano' and 'Tamaoka'. Tamaoka Kofun is a moated keyhole-shaped burial mound, 109m long, with two subsidiary mounds, thought to have been constructed in the early part of the mid-Kofun Period. Being covered with cobble stones (*fukiishi*), it certainly gives the appearance of being appropriately called Tamaoka. Over the century following the construction of Tamaoka Kofun, approximately fifty more burial mounds were constructed around it, albeit on a smaller scale, including Koyama Kofun (a keyhole-shaped mound, 97m.), and several scallop-shaped and round mounds, until the beginning of the sixth century, forming together the Tamaoka Kofun cluster. Presumably the reason why Tamaoka Kofun itself was selected as the stage for the story about a locally powerful family is because it was the largest and most conspicuous of the group. However, if Tamaoka Kofun was deemed to be the grave of 'Nehime', the daughter of the Kuni no Miyatsuko, then the grave of the Kuni no Miyatsuko himself must surely have existed somewhere else. Be that as it may, insofar as it is a tale concerning Yamato kings, it is not surprising that Tamaoka Kofun was chosen as the setting for such a tale, being the largest and oldest in the district.

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<sup>1</sup> Translator's note: *tama* 玉 : any spherical stone, 'jewel;', 'gem', 'rounded boulder'. It is possible that such boulders were used on burial mounds for purposes of sympathetic magic, as the homonym *tama* 魂 or 靈 means 'spirit'. The burial mound dates from before the widespread introduction of a written language, and so the name probably connoted both meanings rather than only 'jewel' or 'boulder'.

The setting for the story of Tamaoka as recorded in *Harima Fudoki* is at the time of the Princes Oke and Woke, which gives the impression of its taking place at the end of the fifth century; that presents a gap of about a century from when Tamaoka Kofun was built around the latter half of the fourth century. Also, in the text it says they placed her *bones* in it, but that is not the method of burial employed in the Kofun Period, when bodies were interred intact: it is an expression reminiscent of the cremations and reburials adopted from the Asuka Period onwards, including in the Nara Period when *Fudoki* was compiled. If that is the case, then the description ‘in a sunny place where the sun shines from dawn until dusk’, well-known as the sole written description of the choice of location for a *kofun*, is an anachronistic embellishment influenced by the awareness of *fūsui* (*fengshui*)<sup>2</sup> that was introduced later. Rather, the image for people at the time of *Fudoki*’s compilation was of a man-made landscape feature called Tamaoka Kofun with *fukiishi* boulders that glistened silver in the sunshine, and this was incorporated into the tale. Tamaoka Kofun stood out conspicuously to that degree.

Wataru SAKAE comments regarding this: ‘Its [the story’s] model was originally a local tale about the marriage of a woman from a local powerful family who was presented to the Yamato Court as an *uneme* (lady-in-waiting), and which was linked to a prominent old tomb in the district.’

### **Roads and the siting of mid-Kofun Period burial mounds**

When we look at the location of Tamaoka Kofun (1), we see that it is on a broad plain at the centre of present-day Kasai-shi, approximately 4 kilometres to the east of Hōjō-chō. (See Photograph.) The Kotani Site (2) in Hōjō-chō has been confirmed as a settlement site contemporaneous with Tamaoka Kofun, so there is no room for doubt that this was the centre of the district in the mid-Kofun Period. Tamaoka Kofun is not at the very centre of that district, but is located on the southern edge of the northern part of the plateau that is called Tamano<sup>3</sup> in *Harima Fudoki*. This location is on the route linking the Manganji River—a tributary of the Kako—with the Ichi River that itself links Himeji to Tajima. It was the gateway of the road from the Manganji River towards Hōjō and the Ichi River where it narrowed between the hills to the north and south. Tamaoka Kofun is a mid-Kofun Period burial mound that was constructed with consciousness of this route that cuts through from the Kako and Manganji Rivers to the Ichi River, and that shows that it was not built with the Kotani settlement particularly in mind. This was probably as a result of a rise in the importance of this district as a transportation route from the mid-Kofun Period onwards, on the basis that there are few notable early Kofun Period mounds on the low-lying land at the centre of Kasai-shi which included Tamaoka Kofun. That is presumably why the Tamaoka Kofun group continued being added to until the beginning of the sixth century.

As regards other large *kofun* within Hyōgo Prefecture, there are others like Tamaoka that were constructed away from the centre of the plains but at the gateway to them where they lay between the hills. Kumobe Kurumazuka Kofun (Tanba Sasayama-shi) is a keyhole-shaped mound likewise dating from the middle of the mid-Kofun Period but a little later than Tamaoka, 158 metres long, moated, and with two subsidiary mounds. It is a typical mid-period *kofun* with a rectangular stone chest coffin in a vertical-shaft accessed stone burial chamber. From the fact that it also held many grave goods, particularly weapons, it is inferred that the person interred in it had strong connections with the Yamato Court.

The locations of many of the large mid-period *kofun* in Hyōgo Prefecture, like Tamaoka and Kumobe Kurumazuka, deliberately took account of the overland routes: they do not follow on from the early Kofun Period, but suddenly appear in the mid-Kofun Period. Their sites face routes that directly link the provinces with Yamato, rather than roads that link the provinces with each other; and this is thought to be a consequence of such roads being upgraded and considered important from the mid-period onwards. For one thing, keyhole-shaped mounds were not only the tombs of kings but were also those of powerful families at the Yamato centre and of powerful gentry in the provinces, constructed in the same shape and furnished with the same accoutrements; and through their construction and burial rites, they acted out visually the commonality between the centre and the provinces. Moreover, keyhole-shaped mounds were not simply graves, but in their construction we can see the political ambitions of the Yamato Court towards the regions, since rank was signified by differences in their scale and content. This

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<sup>2</sup> Translator’s note: *Fengshui* is the Chinese Daoist system of organising landscape and architecture.

<sup>3</sup> Translator’s note: *No* referred to a grassland as yet unreclaimed for agriculture.

function of keyhole-shaped mounds had a visual effect on people in later generations too, and being man-made landscapes they were made the setting of their stories.

Tamaoka Kofun, called ‘Tamaoka’ in *Harima Fudoki*, was a burial mound of the mid-Kofun Period that was built ‘for show’, mindful of the road beside which it stood, and was an important man-made element in the landscape. Being such a landscape feature, it was made the setting for a tale about the king and the local gentry by the local people of later times, which was eventually recorded in *Harima Fudoki*. In short, a tomb dating from earlier times in the district went on to be used as source material for the people who comprised local society to eloquently recount their own origins and tales of their ancestors.

### Tales of graves in *Harima no Kuni Fudoki* and their putative sites

No.	Kōri	Sato	Tomb Name	The interred	Reign	Content	Putative site	Date of putative site
1	Kako	–	Hirehaka	Inami no Waki Iratsume	King Keikō (12th)	The human remains fell into the river and were not recovered. Only a comb-box and scarf were found, so these were buried in Hioka instead.	Hirehaka Kofun	Mid 4th C
2	Inami	–	–	Okinaga no mikoto	King Keikō (12th)	His wife Izumo no Omi Hisurahime served Inami no Waki Iratsume. Tomb is to the west of Kako Post Station. He helped lead King Keikō to Inami no Waki Iratsume	Seiryōzan Kofun	4th C
3	Shikama	Asago	–	Akone, Tajima no Kuni no Miyatsuko	King Ōjin (15th)	His wife was a woman of Agaho <i>Mura</i> . He died here, so was buried here. His remains were repatriated later.	–	–
4	Shikama	Iwa	Nagahiko’s	Nagahiko, ancestor of the Owari no Muraji	King Yūryaku (21st)	He had a good slave and a good horse, so he had graves similar to his own prepared for them.	–	–
5	Shikama	Iwa	Slave’s	Nagahiko’s slave girl	King Yūryaku (21st)	“	–	–
6	Shikama	Iwa	Horse’s	Nagahiko’s horse	King Yūryaku (21st)	“	–	–

No.	Kōri	Sato	Tomb Name	The interred	Reign	Content	Putative site	Date of putative site
7	Ihibo	Kusakabe	Izumo no Hakaya	Nomi no Sukune, ancestor of the Haji family	King Suinin (11th)	Died at Kusakabeno <i>en route</i> from Izumo; many people came from Izumo, formed a human chain to pass up boulders from the riverbed to higher ground, and built his burial mound.	Nomi no Sukune Zuka	
8	Kamu-saki	Tada	–	–	–	Iwa no Ōkami and Ame no Hiboko fought each other. Ōkami's troops amassed, pounded rice, and the bran piled up to form a hill. The winnowed bran was the burial mound, called also Kimureyama.	–	–
9	Taka	Tsuma	Dog's	Manashiro, King Ōjin's hunting hound	King Ōjin (15th)	King Ōjin's dog was killed while hunting, so a grave was made for him. The grave is to the west of Iya Hill.	–	–
10	Kamo	Narahara	Tamaoka	Nehime, daughter of the Harima no Kuni no Miyatsuko	King Kensō (23rd)	When Princes Oke and Woke were wooing her, she died while they dithered and yielded to each other, so they built a grave for her in a sunny place, interred her remains, and decorated it with boulders.	Tamaoka Kofun	Mid-late 4th C