

The Status of Descendants of the Baekje Kingdom during Emperor Kanmu's Reign

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Abstract

This article examines the status of kinship groups claiming to be of Baekje descent during the reign of the Japanese Emperor Kanmu (b.737, r.781-806). Being a maternal descendant of the Baekje royal house himself, Kanmu extended some unprecedented favours to various immigrant clans. However, the bestowed rewards and privileges varied greatly depending on the individual family. In an attempt to provide an explanation for this difference in treatment, the role of the immigrant clans, or members thereof, is first discussed in terms of Kanmu's philosophical beliefs, his bureaucracy, and his Hinder Palace. Then, the difference in status between the immigrant kinship groups is analyzed, and a possible explanation for the difference in treatment is suggested.

Keywords: ancient Japan, Yamato, Kudara, Sugano, Koma, hereditary title, *konikishi*, naturalization, assimilation

Kanmu's Baekje Origins

As a descendant of the Tenji line,¹ the non-ruling branch of the Japanese imperial family since the Jinshin war of 672, nothing during Kanmu's youth indicated that one day he would become sovereign. However, when the ruling Empress Shōtoku passed away in 770, no suitable heirs were found in the Tenmu line,² and Prince Shirakabe, a grandson of Great King Tenji, assumed the throne as Emperor Kōnin. Most likely, the enthronement of the 61-year-old Kōnin was a transitional measure until his 9-year-old son, Imperial Prince Osabe, was old enough to rule. Despite his young age, Osabe was favoured above all other children of Kōnin and appointed crown prince because his mother was an imperial princess of the Tenmu line, and thus Osabe represented the merging of the two imperial lineages (see fig. 1).

It was not until 773, after Osabe and his mother were accused of sorcery and removed from the capital that Yamabe, the later Emperor Kanmu, was appointed crown prince.³ Even at this point, Yamabe's selection was met with opposition. Although he was probably the eldest legitimate son, his father and some government officials originally proposed other members of the imperial family as heir to the throne. It is now commonly accepted that Yamabe was initially left out of consideration for the position of heir apparent due to his maternal descent.

As was customary for aristocratic males in eighth-century Japan, Yamabe's father had several consorts and concubines, and most of these women outranked Yamabe's mother, Takano no ason Niigasa. Until the mid-770s, Niigasa's surname and hereditary title (*kabane*) had been Yamato no fuhito.⁴ Various sources testify to the fact that

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1. Members of the imperial family descending from Great King Tenji. On the usage of "Great King" (*ōkimi*) rather than "Emperor" (*tennō*) for Japan's pre-8th century rulers, see Piggott (1997).
 2. Members of the imperial family descending from Great King Tenmu.
 3. *Shoku nihongi*, Hōki 3/3/2; 3/5/27; 4/1/2.
 4. Niigasa and her father Yamato no fuhito Ototsugu received the name Takano no ason during the reign of Kōnin. Although no mention is made of this bestowment

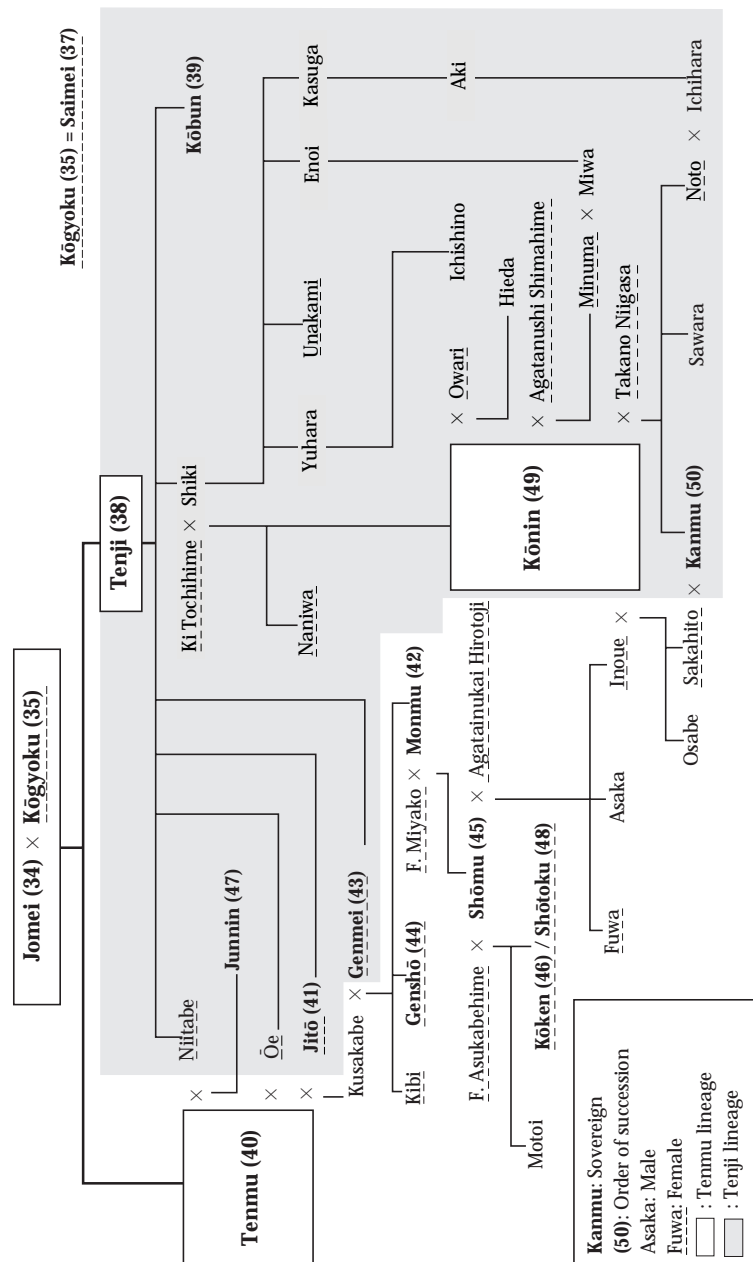


Figure 1. Selected Genealogy of the Japanese Imperial House

this kinship group claimed descent from the royal house of Baekje. Already in 505, this bond between the Yamato family and Baekje royalty was mentioned in the *Nihon shoki* (The Chronicles of Japan):⁵

The King of Baekje [Muryeong] sent Lord Sa-a. He eventually had a son named Lord Beopsa. He was the ancestor of the Kimi of Yamato.⁶

Almost three centuries later, Niigasa's biography as recorded in the *Shoku nihongi* (Chronicles of Japan, Continued) also stresses her family's relationship with the Baekje royal family since the entries around the time of her death in 790 state that her ancestors were the "descendants of Crown Prince Sunta, son of King Muryeong."⁷ Furthermore, according to the early ninth-century *Shinsen shōjiroku* (A Record of Titles and Surnames Newly Selected), a genealogy of the clans inhabiting Heian and the Five Inner Provinces, the Yamato family were "the offspring of King Muryeong, a descendant in the 18th generation of King Dongmyeong of the kingdom of Baekje."⁸

The fact that both historical records refer to Dongmyeong as the ancestor of the Baekje kings shows that their compilers had some understanding of Korean history and mythology. Muryeong was the 25th king of Baekje and, indeed, a descendant in the 18th generation when counted from Dongmyeong. However, Dongmyeong was not a Baekje sovereign; he has to be identified with Ko Jumong or King Dongmyeong of the Korean kingdom of Goguryeo. He was the father of Onjo, who according to the *Samguk sagi* (Historical Records of the Three Kingdoms) was the actual founder of Baekje.⁹

in the court annals of that era, Niigasa was referred to as Takano no ason for the first time in 778. *Shoku nihongi*, Hōki 9/1/29. It is likely that she was given this name around the time of Yamabe's appointment to crown prince.

5. *Nihon shoki*, Muretsu tennō 7/summer, 4th month.

6. Translation by Aston (1993, 1:406), modified.

7. *Shoku nihongi*, Enryaku (hereafter abbreviated as E) 8 following year/1/15; *Shoku nihongi*, E 9/12/1.

8. *Shinsen shōjiroku* (1962, 286).

9. *Samguk sagi*, gwon 23.

Kanmu also seems to have been deeply aware of his mother's roots and when her posthumous name was decided upon, the foundation myth of Goguryeo as recorded in the *Samguk sagi*, in which reference is made to the solar origins of the royal families of Goguryeo and Baekje, was taken into consideration.¹⁰ "Her Highness, Princess Child of the Sun, Heavenly Ruler" (天高知日之子姬尊) clearly refers to the fact that, as a descendant of Domo, Niigasa was a "child of the sun."¹¹ One day later, another reference is made to the tale of Dongmyeong's birth as preserved in Korean records as it is stated that he was born from a daughter of a river god who had been impregnated by the sun.¹²

Once enthroned, this maternal consanguinity with the royal house of the former Baekje kingdom caused Kanmu to rely on members of immigrant kinship groups for various reasons and purposes, thus raising their political and social importance.

Philosophical Beliefs

A first element in terms of Kanmu's actions towards immigrant clans are his philosophical beliefs and the importance of the Kudara no konikishi family in this matter. Possibly owing to his partial descent from Baekje immigrants, Kanmu was deeply affected by such continental concepts as the Mandate of Heaven (*cheonmyeong*), *yin-yang*, and the Five Elements. Because his father's succession to the throne meant a shift back towards the Tenji line of sovereigns, Kanmu firmly believed his rule marked the accession of a new dynasty. Thus, in line with the above-mentioned philosophical concepts, the establishment of a new capital (Nagaokakyō) was required, and Kanmu twice observed a sacrifice to the Lord on High (*kōten jōtei*; ch.: *haotian*

10. Various versions of the foundation myth exist and can be found in translation in Grayson (2001, 63-88). An article focusing on references to the sun in the Goguryeo foundation myth is Gardiner's (1982).

11. *Shoku nihongi*, E 8 following year/1/14.

12. *Shoku nihongi*, E 8 following year/1/15.

shangdi) to legitimate his rule.¹³ These ceremonies took place in Katano, Kawachi province, an area generally accepted as Kanmu's favourite hunting field,¹⁴ and the homeland of the Kudara no Konikishi, a family whose members Kanmu considered to be his "maternal relatives."¹⁵

Like the Yamato clan, the Kudara no Konikishi traced their genealogy back to the kingdom of Baekje. The *Shinsen shōjiroku* states that they were the descendants of King Uija, the 31st king of Baekje.¹⁶ According to the *Nihon shoki*, Uija had sent his son, Prince Pung, as a "hostage" to Japan in 631.¹⁷ When Uija surrendered to the Tang armies in 660 and was brought to China as a prisoner, Pung returned to the Korean peninsula with, among others, Abe no omi Hirafu, a Japanese navy general. There they joined forces with

13. *Shoku nihongi*, E 4/11/10; E 6/11/5. Since two references are made to the winter solstice, and the text of the incantations uttered during the second ceremony is to a large extent identical to the *Datang jiaosilu* (Records of the Suburban Sacrifice of the Great Tang), it is believed that Kanmu carried out the suburban round altar sacrifice (*kōshi*; ch.: *jiaosi*). This sacrifice was a Chinese Confucian ritual intended to legitimize the position and actions of an emperor. *Datang jiaosilu*, 4. Takikawa (1967, 484-495) provides a comparison of the proclamations of the Tang, Kanmu, and emperor Montoku, who also carried out the ceremony in 856. *Nihon montoku tenno jitsuroku*, Saikō 3/11/22-25.

14. Murao (1963, 14); Takahashi (1991, 44); and Takahashi (1992, 143).

15. *Shoku nihongi*, E 9/2/27. To explain Kanmu's claim that they were his maternal relatives, Tsunoda (1976, 38-39) has suggested that a daughter of Kudara no Shōsei may have married someone of the Yamato family and that their son was Yamato no Ototsugu, Kanmu's maternal grandfather (see fig. 2). However, it is also possible that Kanmu was merely referring to the fact that Uija was a descendant of Muryeong and that as such the Yamato and Kudara families were related. For a survey of other explanations, see Tanaka (1997, 82-83) and Ōtsubo (2003, 129-131).

16. *Shinsen shōjiroku* (1962, 298).

17. *Nihon shoki*, Jomei tennō 3/3/1. In fact, because Uija did not succeed to the throne until 641, Pung was probably sent by King Mu, Uija's father. Although the Chinese character 質 i.e. "hostage" or "pawn" is used in the court records, Song (2006) has suggested that Pung and his relatives came to Japan following the first envoy to the Tang (*kentōshi*) since their experience in diplomacy would be useful for the Japanese when dealing with the Tang empire and the Silla kingdom.

In this land of Yamato since the beginning of Heaven and Earth, gold, though it has been brought as an offering from other countries, was thought not to exist. But in the east of the land which we rule, [. . .] Kudara no Kyōfuku of the Junior Fifth Rank, has reported that in his territory, in the district of Oda, gold has been found. Hearing this we were astonished and rejoiced, and feeling that this is a gift bestowed upon us by the love and blessing of Rushana Buddha, we have received it with reverence and humbly accepted it, and have brought with us all our officials to worship and give thanks.²⁴

As a reward, Kyōfuku was given the Junior Third Rank that same day and was appointed to the office of extra-codal imperial advisor (*hisangi*).²⁵ Throughout the rest of his life, Kyōfuku continued to serve in various high offices such as Imperial Household Minister (*kunaikyō*) and Justice Minister (*gyōbukyō*).

Kyōfuku's raised status provided an opportunity for his clan to intermarry with aristocratic families active in the top stratum of Japanese bureaucracy. The most noteworthy example of intermarriage occurred around 754 when Kudara no Konikishi Myōshin, Kyōfuku's granddaughter, became the secondary wife of Fujiwara no ason Tsugutada. The Kudara no Konikishi clan was now linked to the Southern House of the Fujiwara family, one of the most important aristocratic families at that time.

Unquestionably, Myōshin was also the most important woman of the clan during Kanmu's reign. Based on the biography of Fujiwara no ason Takatoshi (Myōshin's son), recorded in the *Kugyō bunin* (Directory of Nobles), 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, several scholars assume Kanmu and Myōshin were romantically involved.²⁶

24. Translated by Sansom (1931, 125-126), modified.

25. *Kugyō bunin*, Tenpyō 21.

26. *Kugyō bunin*, Daidō 3; *Ruiju kokushi*, 75 E 14/4/11. See for example Murao (1963, 231); Tsunoda (1976, 33-34, 39) and Murai (1997, 30).

Irrespective of whether or not these two had a love affair, Kanmu greatly favoured Myōshin and frequently visited her husband's residences. As a result, several favours and rewards were extended to Myōshin and her relatives. When Kanmu went on a hunting trip in Katano in late 783, the district was exempted from paying that year's rice-paddy taxes (*denso*); the Kudaradera, the clan temple of the Kudara family, received part of the tax grain (*shōzei*) of two provinces; and several members of the family were granted court ranks. On that occasion, Myōshin received the highest awarded rank.²⁷ The following month, Myōshin's court rank was raised again to Senior Fourth Rank Upper Grade.²⁸ In 787, when Kanmu visited another villa of Tsugutada in the vicinity of the Nagaoka capital, he bestowed the Junior Third Rank upon Myōshin and, in 794, when it was decided that a new capital (Heian) would be built in Uda, 11,000 sheaves of rice were given to Myōshin and fourteen other women for the construction of new residences.²⁹

Around her husband's death in 796, Myōshin's influence at court was extended even further as she was appointed director of the Palace Retainers' Office (*naishi no kami*), the principal administrative office of the Hinder Palace.³⁰ Apparently, she concurrently held the post of director of the Table Office (*kashiwade no kami*).³¹ In 797, Myōshin again received an extraordinary favour when she was granted an area of no less than 77 *chō* (approximately 76.3 ha) in Noto province.³² And, two years later, she was awarded the Senior Third Rank one day before Kanmu again journeyed to the Katano district.³³

In the mean time, Kanmu also bestowed an unprecedented and extraordinary favour on the entire Kudara no Konikishi clan. In 797,

27. *Shoku nihongi*, E 2/10/16.

28. *Shoku nihongi*, E 2/11/24.

29. *Shoku nihongi*, E 6/8/24; *Ruiju kokushi*, 78 E 13/7/9.

30. *Ruiju kokushi*, 75 E 14/4/11.

31. *Nihon kōki*, E 16/1/24.

32. *Nihon kōki*, E 16/1/24.

33. *Nihon kōki*, E 18/2/7.

he issued a supplementary law (*kyaku*) stipulating that the clan was forever exempted from conscripted labour in the state-run corvée system.³⁴

It is hard to imagine that all these favours and promotions in court rank were awarded purely as the result of a supposed love affair between Kanmu and Myōshin. Thus, the answer must be sought elsewhere, which brings our argument back to Kanmu's philosophical beliefs.

Throughout his reign, Kanmu seems to have travelled to Katano at least once a year.³⁵ With the exception of two trips in 795 and 799, all the imperial journeys took place around the time of the winter solstice. Although the records mostly specify that Kanmu went to Katano on a hunting trip and wintertime was undeniably the ideal season for falcon hunting, it is unlikely that this was the sole purpose of the journeys. On at least four occasions, members of the Kudara no Konikishi family were generously rewarded with fairly high ranks and other benefits, making it difficult to interpret this gesture simply and solely as a sign of appreciation for their hospitality. This is reinforced by the fact that Kanmu journeyed extensively to other places throughout his reign and, although these trips were frequently followed by banquets, the rewards bestowed on individual people were usually limited.

34. Supplementary law dated E 16/5/28, preserved in *Ruijū sandai kyaku* 17 (1965, 516) and *Ryō no shūge* (Collected Commentaries on the Administrative Codes) 13, *Buyakuryō*, 409. For a detailed analysis of this law, see Tanaka (1994) and Otsubo (2003, 150-151).

35. The historical records contain references to these journeys in the following entries: *Shoku nihongi*, E 2/10/14-18, E 2/10/16, E 3/11/1, E 4/11/10, E 6/10/17-20, E 6/10/20, E 6/11/5, E 10/10/10-13, E 10/10/12; *Ruijū kokushi* E 11/9/28, E 12/11/10, E 13/9/22, E 13/10/13, E 14/3/27; *Nihon kiryaku*, E 14/10/16-22, E 16/10/8; *Nihon kōki*, E 18/2/8, E 19/10/17-25, E 21/10/9-15, 18/10/9. Missing years can easily be accounted for. In 786, it was probably inappropriate to make an imperial journey because Kanmu's father received his final resting place, and in 789, Niigasa's illness and death may have prevented a trip (*Shoku nihongi*, E 5/10/28, E 8/12/23, E 8/12/28). The absence of references to Katano at the end of Kanmu's reign may be explained by the fact that parts of the *Nihon kōki* (Latter Chronicles of Japan) are lost.

In all likelihood, the rewards given to the various members of the Kudara no konikishi family were connected to rituals carried out on the winter solstice. During his first hunting trip to Katano in 783, Kanmu may have inspected the area for the erection of a round mound to hold the previously mentioned sacrifice to the Lord on High. Furthermore, it is clear from the historical records that in 787 Myōshin's husband, Tsugutada, carried out the ritual in Kanmu's name. It is not surprising that an emperor who was deeply aware of his consanguinity with the royal house of Baekje selected the homeland of an immigrant kinship group from that same kingdom in which to construct a round mound, since the custom was practiced in Baekje, too, and the proceedings of the ritual itself might even have been based upon a version of the ritual carried out by the Baekje kings.³⁶

Government Administration

A second element requiring attention in order to establish the status of immigrant clans is the role their members played in the bureaucratic system.

As far as the Kudara no Konikishi are concerned, they retained their influence to a certain extent after Kanmu's enthronement due to their intermarriage with the Southern Fujiwara. However, the Kudara could only aspire to provincial and mid-level appointments, and none of the clan's male members attained Kyōfuku's Junior Third Rank.³⁷

Much more significant was the fact that under Kanmu some members of other immigrant clans rose to top level positions within

36. Hayashi (1974). Although the exact site of the ceremony is unknown, all the suggested locations lie close to Mt. Katano in present Osaka prefecture. For a list of possible locations, see Fukunaga et al. (1987, 130-131) and Takahashi (1991, 112-117).

37. The highest rank achieved by a Kudara during Kanmu's reign was that of Senior Fourth Rank Lower Grade, held by Kudara no Konikishi Genkyō. *Nihon kōki*, E 18/9/10. For a full list of all the Kudara no Konikishi promoted in rank and appointed to office during Kanmu's reign, see Otsubo (2003, 134-143).

the central government. During Kanmu's reign, some families traditionally represented in the State Council (*daijōkan*), the highest legislative and policy-making office in the *ritsuryō* state, were replaced by a number of previously insignificant families of immigrant origin. As a result, clans with a hitherto rather low social and political position were drawn into the core of politics.

The first person of Baekje origin to be given a seat on the State Council was Yamato no ason Iemaro, a maternal relative of Kanmu. Over the course of a decade, Iemaro had made a noteworthy climb up the bureaucratic ladder. His name appears for the first time in the historical records in 786 when he was promoted from the lowly Junior Seventh Rank Upper Grade to the Junior Fifth Rank Lower Grade.³⁸ Two weeks later, Iemaro's newly acquired status as a member of the middle nobility already paid off as he was appointed executive secretary of Ise province (*Ise daijō*).³⁹ From that moment, Iemaro continued to receive promotions and appointments, serving in ever closer proximity to his cousin Kanmu. In 788, he became director of the Wine-Making Office (*zōshū no kami*) in the Imperial Household Ministry (*kunaishō*).⁴⁰ In 789, he was appointed director of the Arsenal Office (*zōheishi no kami*) and in 791, associate director of the Palace Stables Bureau (*naikyū no suke*).⁴¹ By 796, Iemaro held the Senior Fourth Rank Lower Grade and was admitted into the top stratum of Japanese aristocracy through his appointment to the office of imperial advisor (*sangi*), the lowest position within the State Council.⁴² The following year he was also given the responsibility of guarding the palace enclosure as director of the Imperial Gate Guards' Headquarters (*emon no kami*).⁴³ In 798, he was promoted to the office of middle counsellor (*chūnagon*) in the State Council and

38. *Shoku nihongi*, E 5/1/7.

39. *Shoku nihongi*, E 5/1/24.

40. *Shoku nihongi*, E 7/2/28.

41. *Shoku nihongi*, E 8/5/28; E 10/1/28.

42. *Nihon kōki*, E 15/7/28; *Kogyō bunin*, E 15.

43. *Nihon kōki*, E 16/3/11.

was awarded the Junior Third Rank.⁴⁴ He was then appointed to the office of Regulatory Minister (*jibu no kami*) and in mid-799 he became Mediate Affairs Minister (*nakatsukasa no kami*), upon which we are informed that he also held the office of governor of Sagami province (*Sagami no kami*).⁴⁵

These numerous appointments create the impression that Iemaro was an able politician whose advice and experience were greatly appreciated. However, his biography as preserved in the *Nihon kōki* seems to suggest the opposite:⁴⁶

He was unsophisticated and lacked talent and education. Because he was a maternal relative of the emperor, he [enjoyed] special preference and promotion. [The fact] that people from a foreign [clan] enter [the ranks of] the highest officials, originates here. One can say his rank was too [high] and his true merit was insufficient. Although he held highly respected offices, he did not shy away from the vulgarity of meeting with old friends.

Although the biographies recorded in the *Nihon kōki* tend to be "unrelentingly critical,"⁴⁷ it is possible that the compilers of this record, members of the Fujiwara family, one of the families traditionally represented in the State Council, were envious of Iemaro's achievements and attempted to discredit him. Another possible explanation could be the fact that Kanmu, being a strong ruler, preferred people who could be easily dominated in top-level positions, thus keeping most power for himself.

At the beginning of 805, another member of a clan claiming Baekje descent was given a seat on the State Council when the aged and ill Kanmu announced the appointment of Sugano no ason Mamichi to the office of imperial advisor.⁴⁸ Before 790, Mamichi held the surname and hereditary title of Tsu no Muraji. He thus belonged

44. *Kogyō bunin*, E 17.

45. *Nihon kōki*, E 18/2/20; E 18/6/16.

46. *Nihon kōki*, E 23/4/27.

47. Brownlee (1991, 39).

48. *Nihon kōki*, E 24/1/14.

to a kinship group that claimed to be in the lineage of King Geungusu, the 14th king of Baekje.⁴⁹ Although Mamichi served as director of the Left Palace Guards (*saeji no kami*) and of the Military Guards' Headquarters of the Left (*sahyōe no kami*) early in his political career, Kanmu probably held Mamichi in high esteem because of his scholarly abilities. In 785, Mamichi became scholar in Crown Prince Ate's Eastern Palace Agency (*tōgū gakushi*) and combined this appointment with several other offices such as that of associate director and, later, director of the Manuscripts and Books Bureau (*zusho no suke* and *zusho no kami*). In addition, Mamichi was involved in writing the final draft of the *Shoku nihongi*, which was presented to Kanmu in 797. He also headed the Board of Discharge Examiners (*kageyushi*), and as such, he was responsible for the compilation of the *Enryaku kōtaishiki* (Enryaku Regulations on the Transfer of Office) along with Fujiwara no ason Uchimaro.

Although not of Baekje descent, two other men belonging to an immigrant kinship group deserve to be mentioned in this context since they too held high government posts during Kanmu's reign.

The first is extra-codal imperial advisor Koma no ason Fukushima. Fukushima's original surname and hereditary title was Sena no kimi.⁵⁰ His biography as recorded in the *Shoku nihongi* claims he was a descendant of a man who fled from the Korean kingdom of Goguryeo to Japan after Tang General Li Chi occupied Pyeongyang in 668.⁵¹ In fact, Fukushima had been appointed extra-codal imperial advisor by Shōtoku in 765 and had served in this function ever since.⁵² By the time Kanmu came to the throne, Fukushima was already in his seventies and entitled to retirement. However, he remained in office until

49. *Shoku nihongi*, E 9/7/17. While the entry announcing Mamichi's name change claims Geungusu was the 16th ruler of the kingdom, reference is once more made to the solar origins of King Dongmyeong and Baekje.

50. Between 747 and 750, Fukushima and seven relatives held the hereditary title of *konikishi* before being given the surname and title Koma no ason. *Shoku nihongi*, Tenpyō 19/6/7; *Tenpyō shōhō* 2/1/27.

51. *Shoku nihongi*, E 8/10/17.

52. *Shoku nihongi*, Tenpyō jingo 1/1/7.

785.⁵³ Because he had served as Palace Construction Minister (*zōgū no kami*) in 767 and 768, he may have advised Kanmu on the construction of Nagaokakyō.⁵⁴

The second person deserving special mention is Sakanoue no ōsukune Tamuramaro who entered the State Council as imperial advisor in mid-805.⁵⁵ The Sakanoue clan also claimed to have continental origins. In 785, Tamuramaro's father had petitioned the throne to have his hereditary title changed from *imiki* into *sukune*.⁵⁶ In this petition, he claimed descent from Achi no Omi, a great-grandson of Emperor Lingdi of the Later Han Dynasty. Tradition has it that when the Later Han Dynasty fell in 220, Achi no Omi first fled to Korea and then to Japan.⁵⁷ Tamuramaro had served in various construction agencies,⁵⁸ and his family was traditionally involved in military affairs. Tamuramaro's father had been involved in the suppression of the rebellion of Fujiwara no Nakamaro in 764; and Tamuramaro himself fought the *emishi* in northern Japan on several occasions. During his last campaign in 801-802, he was finally successful in suppressing the rebellion, and most likely these military successes led to Tamuramaro's inclusion in the State Council.

The Hinder Palace

The increased social and political importance of people from immigrant descent described above was also reflected in the composition of Kanmu's Hinder Palace.

53. *Shoku nihongi*, E 8/10/17.

54. *Kugyō bunin*, Tenpyō keiun 1; *Kugyō bunin*, Tenpyō keiun 2.

55. *Nihon kōki*, E 24/6/23.

56. *Shoku nihongi*, E 4/6/10.

57. *Nihon shoki*, Ojin tennō 20/Autumn, 9th month.

58. During Kanmu's reign, Tamuramaro was appointed associate director of the extra-codal Bureau of Skilled Artisans (*takumi no suke*), emissary for the construction of Izawa fortress (*zō-Izawajō-shi*), and emissary for the construction of Shiba fortress (*zō-Shibajō-shi*). *Shoku nihongi*, E 6/3/22; *Nihon kiryaku*, E 21/1/9; E 22/3/6.

The women of the Kudara no konikishi family benefited greatly from Myōshin and Tsugutada's influence as several of them were in attendance at court and they attained a higher rank than many of their male relatives during Kanmu's and following reigns. Four women were appointed female officials: Keishin, Myōhon, Shintoku, and Shinzen,⁵⁹ and at least four other relatives of Myōshin were selected for an even more coveted position as one of Kanmu's consorts: Kyōnin, Kyōhō, Jōkyō and Fujiwara no ason Minamiko, a granddaughter of Tsugutada and Myōshin.⁶⁰

59. Until 797, the personal name of a woman belonging to the Kudara no konikishi family mentioned in the historical records is Kōhō (*Nihon kōki*, E 15/11/10; *Nihon kōki*, E 16/2/7). From 805 onwards, Kyōhō is used (*Nihon kōki*, E 24/11/15; *Nihon kōki*, Kōnin 2/1/29; *Shoku nihon kōki*, Jōwa 7/11/29). According to Ueda (1999, 394), Kudara no Kōhō is a fifth female official of the family in Kanmu's Hinder Palace. However, it is highly likely that Kōhō is the same woman as Kudara no Kyōhō, one of Kanmu's consorts.

60. A fifth consort may have been Keishin, who was Myōshin's sister. In 796, ten women were awarded their first rank (*Nihon kōki*, E 15/11/10). Four of these women are generally accepted to be Kanmu's consorts, and the other six include Keishin. In an edict issued three months later, all ten women were given rank rice fields (*iden*) "corresponding to a man's share]" (*Nihon kōki*, E 16/2/7). At first sight this appears to be in violation of the Rice Paddies Code (Denryō) of the Yōrō Code, where it was stipulated that women only receive two-thirds of a man's share of rank rice fields. However, according to a commentary on this clause in the *Ryō no shūge*, the imperial consort (*hi* or *kisaki*), the imperial spouses (*fujin*), and the junior imperial spouses (*hin*) were allowed shares equal to men. In 760, an entry in the *Shoku nihongi* also stated that from then on the directors of the Palace Retainers' Office and the director of the Storehouse Office (*kura no kami*) were to be given rank rice fields and rank households (*ifu*) as if they were men (*Shoku nihongi*, Tenpyō hōji 4/12/12). Because of their low rank, of the six women not usually recognized as Kanmu's consorts, none qualified for the position of director of the Storehouse Office. Since Myōshin was at that time already appointed as director of the Palace Retainers' Office, it seems that only one other female official was entitled to receive rank fields equal in size to male officials' allotments. This allows for only two possible explanations. Kanmu may have extended the favour of rewarding rank fields of such size to the associate directors of the Table Office (*kashiwade no suke*) and the associate directors of the Sewing Office (*nui no suke*) who, according to the codes, hold the same minimum court rank of Junior Fifth Rank as the director of the Palace Retainers' Office; or Keishin and the five other women mentioned in the edict should be identified as Kanmu's consorts. In 804,

In addition to the Kudara no konikishi women, other females of immigrant descent were also selected as imperial consorts and concubines.

During the first decade of his reign, Kanmu had a relationship with Kudara no sukune Nagatsugu, a woman belonging to the Asukabe no kimi family. Several Asukabe families are recorded in the *Shinsen shōjiroku*, and they all claimed descent from Baekje kings.⁶¹ Nagatsugu was originally a secondary consort of Fujiwara no Uchimarō with whom she had several children. However, in the early 780s she became a serving girl (*nyōju*) in the palace, and in 785 she gave birth to Yasuyo, one of Kanmu's sons. Although Yasuyo was never recognized as an imperial prince (*shinnō*) he did receive the family name and hereditary title of Yoshimine no ason in 802.⁶²

In 793, Nishigoribe no muraji Manu gave birth to Imperial Prince Sakamoto.⁶³ Manu, too, who was descended from Baekje royalty as the *Shinsen shōjiroku*, mentions two Nishigoribe no muraji branches, both claiming descent from King Chogo.⁶⁴

Finally, Kanmu had two consorts who belonged to the Sakanoue clan. The first, Sakanoue no ōsukune Matakō, was the sister of Tamuramaro. From the entry upon her death in 790, it is clear she already became one of Kanmu's consorts before his enthronement.⁶⁵ The second was Sakanoue no ōsukune Haruko, a daughter of Tamuramaro. She probably became a consort around 800, the birth year of her son with Kanmu.

This selection of women belonging to immigrant kinship groups as consorts was in fact a precedent. Although Kōnin also had a

Keishin was promoted once more with several known consorts and concubines, adding further evidence to the supposition that she was a consort too (*Nihon kōki*, E 23/7/7). *Ryō no gige* (Interpretations of the Administrative Codes) (1939, 3:107-108); *Ryō no shūge* (1966, 12:349).

61. *Shinsen shōjiroku* (1962, 288, 302, 327).

62. *Kugyō bunin*, Kōnin 7; Saeki (1962, 157).

63. *Ichidai yōki* (Essential Annals of an Age) lists her first name as Yoshi. *Ichidai yōki* (1983, 67).

64. *Shinsen shōjiroku* (1962, 326, 331).

65. *Shoku nihongi*, E 9/7/21.

spouse of immigrant origin, this marriage had taken place decades before he became emperor during a time when nobody could foresee he would one day be enthroned. This in fact made Kanmu the first reigning emperor who created marital ties with immigrant kinship groups.⁶⁶

The Kudara no Konikishi versus Other Immigrant Kinship Groups

All the above clearly shows that for some reason the Kudara no konikishi were treated differently from the other immigrant kinship groups. Although Kanmu relied upon the clan to legitimize his rule and they were intermarried with one of the most powerful aristocratic families at that time, the clan failed to see this translated into political power. Even though several of the clan's daughters became either government officials or Kanmu's consorts, none of the male members were admitted into the top stratum of Japanese aristocracy, although this was achieved by descendants of other immigrant clans.

Both Sugano no Mamichi and Sakanoue no Tamuramaro had probably been appointed due to their meritorious deeds in terms of scholarship and military affairs respectively, and Yamato no Iemaro due to the fact that he was a relative of the emperor. However, the Kudara no konikishi, too, were maternally related to Kanmu, moreover, a significant number of Kudara women became part of the Hinder Palace, and the clan certainly served Kanmu well in terms of religious affairs and lower level administration. Kanmu's appreciation of the clan is further exemplified by the eternal exemption from corvée labour granted to them, a privilege not even given to the Yamato, Kanmu's closest relatives.

66. For several years scholars have been debating whether or not the Soga family was an immigrant family. If they were a foreign clan, Kōnin was not the first sovereign to marry a woman of immigrant descent and Kanmu was not the first sovereign to have foreign blood.

This makes one suspect that the Kudara no konikishi clan occupied a unique position resulting from a different level of assimilation into Japanese society.

Analysis of the *Kugyō bunin* shows that membership of the State Council was restricted to men holding one of three possible hereditary titles: *mahito*, *ason*, and *sukune*.⁶⁷ These titles were the three highest in the eight *kabane* system (*yakusa no kabane*) proclaimed by Tenmu in 684 and were not available for immigrants.⁶⁸ This Kudara lineage, on the other hand, held the title of *konikishi*, a title given only to the descendants of the royal families of the former Baekje and Goguryeo kingdoms.⁶⁹ However, by the late eighth century only one clan, the descendants of the last king of Baekje, still carried the title *konikishi*. The other families had been assimilated into Japanese society by applying for new surnames and accepting new hereditary titles. This naturalization by name-changing was a practice that "came to be permitted on a truly wholesale basis" in the mid-eighth century.⁷⁰

Whereas there are people from Goguryeo, Baekje, and Silla who have long yearned after assimilation to the sacred [i.e., naturalization], have adopted our ways and earnestly pray to be granted surnames, and it is to be permitted in every case.

However, this opportunity was never seized by the Kudara no konikishi, nor did any Japanese sovereign offer them a new name and title.

67. In a few cases, members of the imperial family also held a regular seat on the council, and for obvious reasons, they did not have a hereditary title. Another exception in hereditary titles can be found in the office of extra-codal advisor. In the mid-8th century both Kyōfuku and his brother Nanten had been appointed extra-codal advisors despite having the title *konikishi*. However, this office was an honorary appointment not provided for in the codes and assigned to any official holding the Third Rank who did not have a regular seat on the council (Miller 1980, 181).

68. Kiley (1969, 177).

69. See Tanaka (1994, 62) for a list of families receiving the title of *konikishi*.

70. *Shoku nihongi*, 20 Tenpyō hōji 1/4/4. See also Kiley (1969, 184).

Thus, not only did the clan retain their surname, explicitly referring to the former Baekje kingdom, they also retained their title, a clear reference to their royal origins. As a result, they may have been considered to be a special class of citizens, who were not fully naturalized, nor fully assimilated into Japanese society.

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GLOSSARY

<i>ason</i> (J.)	朝臣	<i>naikyū no suke</i> (J.)	麿助
<i>cheonmyeong</i>	天命	<i>naishi no kami</i> (J.)	尚侍
<i>chūnagon</i> (J.)	中納言	<i>nakatsukasa no kami</i> (J.)	中務卿
<i>chūjikan</i> (J.)	太政官	<i>nyōju</i> (J.)	女孀
<i>denso</i> (J.)	田租	<i>ritsuryō</i> (J.)	律令
<i>emon no kami</i> (J.)	衛門督	<i>saeji no kami</i> (J.)	左衛士督
<i>gokusui no en</i> (J.)	曲宴	<i>Sagami no kami</i> (J.)	相模守
<i>gyōbukyō</i> (J.)	刑部卿	<i>sahyō no kami</i> (J.)	左兵衛督
<i>haotian shangdi</i> (Ch.)	昊天上帝	<i>sangi</i> (J.)	參議
<i>hisangi</i> (J.)	非參議	<i>shinnō</i> (J.)	親王
<i>Ise</i> (J.)	伊勢	<i>shōshi</i> (J.)	少紫
<i>jibu no kami</i> (J.)	治部卿	<i>shōzei</i> (J.)	正稅
<i>kabane</i> (J.)	姓	<i>sukune</i> (J.)	宿禰
<i>kageyushi</i> (J.)	勘解由使	<i>tōgū gakushi</i> (J.)	東宮學士
<i>kashiwade no kami</i> (J.)	尚膳	<i>yakusa no kabane</i> (J.)	八色の姓
<i>kāten jūtei</i> (J.)	昊天上帝	<i>zōgū no kami</i> (J.)	造宮卿
<i>kunaikyō</i> (J.)	宮內卿	<i>zōheishi no kami</i> (J.)	造兵正
<i>kunaishō</i> (J.)	宮內省	<i>zōshū no kami</i> (J.)	造酒正
<i>kyaku</i> (J.)	格	<i>zusho no kami</i> (J.)	圖書頭
<i>mahito</i> (J.)	真人	<i>zusho no suke</i> (J.)	圖書助

(Ch.: Chinese; J.: Japanese)