

## A Record of Ancient Izumo

In the early eighth century, the imperial court commissioned a series of regional surveys (*fudoki*) to learn more about the lands under its control. The *Izumo no kuni fudoki* (Regional records of Izumo Province) describes the geography and culture of Izumo Province (now part of Shimane Prefecture). Compiled in 733, it is one of the earliest written records of Japan. It is also one of the few *fudoki* that have survived almost completely intact to the present day. A copy of the multivolume text is displayed nearby.

The text mentions the presence of iron in the ancient Nita District (in what is now Okuizumo), indicating the centuries-long history of ironmaking in the region. The relevant section of the survey reads:

*The iron from the above-mentioned townships [Fuse, Mitokoro, Mizawa, and Yokota] is durable and well suited for forging into various objects.*