

**NBTHK SWORD JOURNAL**  
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**May, 2016**

**Meito Kansho**  
**Examination of Important Swords**

**Juyo Bijutsuhin**  
**Important Art Object**

Type: Tachi  
Mumei: Kunimura

Length: 2 shaku 5 sun 7 bu 7 rin (78.1 cm)  
Sori: 1 sun 07 rin (3.25 cm)  
Motohaba: 9 bu 7 rin (2.95 cm)  
Sakihaba: 5 bu 5 rin (1.65cm)  
Motokasane: 2 bu (0.6 cm)  
Sakikasane: 1 bu 2 rin (0.35 cm)  
Kissaki length: 8 bu 6 rin (2.6 cm)  
Nakago length: 6 sun 9 bu 3 rin (21.0 cm)  
Nakago sori: 1 bu (0.3 cm)

**Commentary**

This is a shinogi zukuri tachi with an ihorimune, and a little thick kasane, the widths at the moto and saki are different. There is large koshizori, also the tip has with a small kissaki. The jihada is tight koitame mixed with a little bit itame type jihada, and some part has nagare-hada. There are ji-nie, and jifu type utsuri. The hamon is chu-suguha, mixed with ko-gunome type hamon, and there are frequent ashi and yo. On the omote is Kyo-saka-ashi, and the ura is standerd saka-ashi stand out, there is nioiguchi and a little uneven hanie. The boshi is a straight, the omote is round , the ura is large round type and the both shallow return. The horimono on the omote and ura are bo-hi with maru-dome. The nakago is suriage. On the omote around the tip in the center has large two kanji signature.

The west side of country in Kyushu produced a couple of sword school since old time in Heian period. In Satsuma, the Ko-Namihira school such as Yukihira. In Bunnbo, the Kyushu-Classic school, such as Hidehira and Yukihira. Their Jahada are soft and moisturized, the characteristic Jihada. Their hamon are low yakiba,

suguha type, soft, and whole hamon torn down. Their Jihada and hamon has reputation artless and simple.

The later period, around end of the Kamakura, there is a Higo kuni Enju school which brought new wave from the other country. The tachi smith Kunimura is a founder of the school, and called "Enju Taro. Since old time, Kunimura supposed to son of Yamato Senjuin school smith Hiromura who was Rai Kuniyuki's son in law and grand son of his daughter. The school produced many master smiths, such as Yuniyoshi, Kunitoki, Kuniyoshi, and Kuninobu. During Nambokucho period, they prospered in Kikuchi county Waifu area. The school styles are similar to Rai. The difference are whitey utsuri stand out, the hamon are a little torn down, jihada include masame type hada, often there is nijuba, the boshi tip round is large, and shallow return. They are based on the Rai school work, but same time there has some Yamato school characters and this is a the school characteristic point.

Kunimura's signature work are mainly one classified Juyo-Bunkazai, four classified Juyo-Bijutsuhin, and two classified Tokubetsu-Juyotoken. We could not say he is a large productivity smith. His standard reputation are : in many ubu nakago work are around 2 shaku 7 sun long length, a difference between moto and saki are stand out, and small kissaki tachi shape. In case of with bo-hi work, there are several ryo-chiri( there are space both side on shinogiji). Compared with same school smiths, many of his jihada and hamon looks week, mainly suguha hamon hataraki are not stand out, and usually his style are gentle look.

The tachi is large suriage, but still over 2 shaku 5 sun length. You can imagine the original was one of the most long length tachi among his work, dynamic shape. The jihada is a little visible nagare hada, over all tight koitame and refine hada, which is a little different from Rai school, soft looking. There are uneven dark utsuri, which is not the school typical whitey utsuri, some part are jifu type utsuri, and the difference are his characteristic point.

Also, compared with same school other smiths quiet and gentle hamon, his hamon are a little wide hamon with stand out hataraki, which is different. His hamon's ashi are same as Rai school, the omote side ashi are toward nakago side call "Kyo-saka-ashi", and the ura side are standard saka-ashi, and this shows evidence of standard genealogy. However, the preservation is a good, with Kunimura signature, and we could say this is a his great and valuable work.

This is classified Juyo Bijutsuhi in Showa 9, and at the time owner was old Morioka han 44<sup>th</sup> lord Nanbu Toshihide and it is possible at the Edo period, this belong to the family descendant.

Explanation and photo by Ishii Akira.

## **No.712 ( 2016 May) Tosogu Kanshou Juyo Tosogu**

## **Ichinotani zu (design from a Genji and Heike battle story) sukashi tsuba Mei: Sashu-ju Oda Naonori saku**

Kyushu Satsuma has strong warlike spirit character and through in Koto and Shinto period they produced many swords. Same time they developed a lot of toso and kinko which wear with swords. In the Edo period, especially two main schools Oda and Shishiki were prospered. At the Oda school smiths continued from Naoka, Naonori, Naomasu(Naonobu), to Naokata. This is a nidai Naonori's work.

The tsuba theme is Ichinotani battle at the Genji and Heike war. The upper half composition is Yoshitsune and Benkei are running down in Hiyodorigoe with unexpected white flag (means lost). The down half composition is against a young warrior is running away to offshore, a Kanto warrior Kumazai Naozane call him "showing your back to enemy is coward, comeback and come comeback" and responding him, a Heike's young nobleman Atsumori looking back scene by sukashi. Both of them are famous scenes.

Oda nidai Naonori's work are different from his father and founder of the school Naoka's work like Natamame-tsuba which is thick and full of solid and dignified feeling. His tsuba are a little thin, curving are refine and soft looking. The tsuba is free and witty curving. Also beside thin tsuba, full of solid nikudari curving, inherited from father, which showing Naonori's character very well.

Also, let's pay attention to kin-iroe on the mimi. At first, this looks like some gold come out. I would like to understand to using nunome-zogan, for torn down gaiety, bring classic and elegant look, and gold on the fukurin's gold look like come out. This is a same kind of technique as Edo Yasuchika's gold suri-hagashi work. We could say, this is a Naonori's unique delicate skill. Usually, Naonori sign on the ura side, but this is signed on the omote side. May be either special order or some intention.

Explanation by lida Toshihisa

## **Shijo Kantei To No. 712 (May 2016)**

The deadline to submit answers for the No. 712 issue Shijo Kantei To is June 5, 2016. Each person may submit one vote. Submissions should contain your name and address and be sent to the NBTHK Shijo Kantei. You can use the Shijo Kantei card which is attached in this magazine. Votes postmarked on or before June 5, 2016 will be accepted. If there are sword smiths with the same name in different schools, please write the school or prefecture, and if the sword smith was active for more than one generation, please indicate a specific generation.

### **Information:**

Type: katana

Length: 2 shaku 3 sun 4.5 bu (71.05 cm)  
Sori: slightly over 6 bu (1.85 cm)  
Motohaba: 1 sun 02 rin (3.1 cm)  
Sakihaba: 7 bu 8 rin (2.35 cm)  
Motokasane: 2 bu 3 rin (0.7 cm)  
Sakikasane: 1 bu 7 rin (0.5 cm)  
Kissaki length: 1 sun 6 bu 7 rin (5.05 cm)  
Nakago length: 6 sun 6 bu (20.0 cm)  
Nakago sori: very slight

This is a shinogi-zukuri katana with an ihorimune, a wide width, and the widths at the moto and saki are almost none. There is a slightly large sori with a large kissaki. The jihada is tight koitame. There are thick dense ji-nie, fine chikei and unique jihada. The hamon and boshi are as seen in the picture. On the habuchi, there are niju-ba and kuichigaiba. There are ko-ashi, a bright nioiguchi, konie, kinsuji and fine sunagashi. The nakago is ubu, and the nakago tip is kirijiri. The yasurime are katte-sagari, and there are two mekugi ana. On the omote side, towards the mune side, there is a long kanji signature.

## **Teirei Kanshou Kai For New Year**

The swords discussed below were shown in the February 2016, meeting at the NBTHK headquarters building. This discussion presents answers concerning the makers of these blades.

Meeting Date: April 9, 2016 (2<sup>nd</sup> Saturday of April)

Place: Token Hakubutsukan auditorium

Lecturer: Ooi Gaku

### **Kantei To No. 1: tachi**

Mei: Sanenaga

Length: slightly over 2 shaku 5 sun 2 bu

Sori: 8 bu

Style: shinogi-zukuri

Mune: ihorimune

Jihada: itame mixed with a little mokume and hada is little visible. There are thick jinie, and midare utsuri.

Hamon: gunome mixed with kogunome and kochoji. There are ashi, yo, nioiguchi type, a little hotsure, and sunagashi.

Boshi: based on shallow notare, small midare, komaru and a little return.

This is a long distinctive tachi shape with ubu-nakago, from this some people voted for older period. This is a large koshizori, but the tip is not uchizori, with chu-kissaki, from this, this should be mid Kamakura period shape.

The jihada has midare utsuri, the hamon are gunome mixed with choji and nioiguchi type hamon, from this, you can narrow down to Bizen work. Also, based on gunome hamon, frequent midare hamon, but the hamon up and down are not stand out, the height of hamon are almost same, at the koshimoto and the monouchi area hamon are low, from this, you should judge as Osafune school work.

This is a Osafune Sanenaga's early work from the style and the signature. Usually Sanenaga's characteristic points are tight well forged jihada, tight nioiguchi, based on suguha mixed with gunome and konotare with koashi, simple hamon, with typical sansaku boshi. Beside this, he has visible jihada, gorgeous midare hamon, also boshi is midare, which is same as Nagamitsu work. Also, he has few frequent nie type work which is Ko-Bizen and Ko-Ichimonji style. From this, at the vote many people look at as Nagamitsu work is undersandable.

If dare to look for the difference, Sanenaga's hamon are little smaller, some part has konotare type hamon, which is Sanenaga's later work characters.

Sanenaga's round shape two kanji signature are old, later his signature are square shape kanji and many of them are long. Along with the signature, his styles are changed from stand out gunome and choji hamon to based on many simple gunome hamon and his transition is almost same as Nagamitsu's. Among the Nagamitsu signature, there seem to Sanenaga's sign. His work are similar to Nagamitsu, but he has very few work compared with Nagamitsu, from this, you can imagine he worked daisaku for Nagamitsu. The signature is close to Nagamitsu own which is opposite from usual and some people point out this is Nagamitsu signed for Sanenaga. The tach is valuable work which can identified both smiths strong relationship.

As almost correct answer, from the visible jihada and smaller hamon, some people voted for Chikakage. His jihada are mixed with oo-hada, uneven look, less moisture and his hamon are saka-ashi type and hanie are stand out.

## **Kantei To No. 2: tachi**

Mei: Unji

Length: slightly less than 2 shaku 4 sun 5 bu

Sori: 9.5 bu

Design: shingi-zukuri

Mune: ihorimune

Jihada: itame mixed with mokume, nagarehada and hada is little visible. There are fine jinie, torndown chikei, jifu utsuri, and jihada is little dark.

Hamon: based on wide suguha, mixed with gunome, kogunome, choji type hamon, some midare hamon are square shape, and some part togariba. There are ashi,

saka-ashi, frequent yo, around the monouchi midare hamon and hataraki are simple, tight nioiguchi type, nie, konie, a little kinsuji and sunagashi and torn down nioiguchi.

Boshi: straight, round and a slight return.

The tachi is classified Juyo Bijutsuhin. It shows obviously Unrui and Unji's characteristic points. It is a suriage, but still has large wazori left. The jihada is itame mixed with mokume, hada is a little visible, there are dark jifu utsuri close to shinogiji, and dark color jihada. The hamon based on suguha, mixed with frequently square shape hamon and saka-ashi type hamon, and some part mixed with implicit togariba which looks like slanting wedge to suguha. There are stand out sakaashi and yo, the bottom part are frequent midare hamon and the upper half is opposite, less alteration and simple hamon. Also, there are tighter and torn down frequent hane. The boshi round shape is strong and short return. These are characteristic their points.

Compared with Unjo and Unji, the Unjo tachi are narrow shape and hataraki are little gentle and lower yakiba. The Unji tachi are both width and yakiba are wider, and many of them are strong nie and frequent hataraki.

But both of them work seen sometimes opposite style. The jihada and the hamon shows strong Unji's characteristic points, but the shape is narrow. It is difficult to narrow down the smith name, so Unjo name treated as correct answer at this time. Also, Unjo tachi are Nambokucho period shape, there are deeper nioiguchi and frequent hane.

At the vote, because of the boshi above the yokote looks straight, many people voted for Osafune Chikakage. If his work, there is no obvious wa-zori, the utsuri are mibare utsuri, no such a high yakiba and the upper half part is not such a stand out simple hamon. His boshi is straight, notare, komaru and return which is different from the tachi. If Motoshige, Jihada is mixed with masame and many of boshi are tip is sharp.

### **Kantei To No 3: katana**

Mumei: Teigai

Length: 2 shaku 2 sun 6 bu

Sori: slightly less than 5 bu

Style: shinogi-zukuri

Mune: ihorimune

Jihada: itamehada, some part nagarehada, and hada is little visible. There are thick jinie, fine chikei, and pale bo-utsuri.

Hamon: based on chu-suguha mixed with some part gunome, kogunome type hamon, and some part shallow notare type. There are ashi, little deep nioiguchi, some part deep nioiguchi, thick strong nie, some part hotsure, uchinoke, mixed

with kuichigaiba and nijuba, a little nie-suji, kinsuji, sunagashi, and bright and clear nioiguchi.

Boshi: straight type, frequent hakikake, the round tip and a slight return.

The katana is wider shinogi width, the jihada is itame and hada is a little visible. There are thick jinie, fine chikei which is strong forged jihada, and mixed with nagare-hada, with pale bo-utsuri. The hamon is based on suguha with strong nie, and there are a lot of hataraki in the habuchi. The boshi is frequent hakikake, and shallow return. These are showing strong Yamato school characteristic points very well.

The both mihaba and length are standard size, but no funbari, from this, you can imagine originally the tachi has a large suriage. Also, the kissaki is chu-kissaki from these, you can narrow down for one of five Yamato school work in late half Kamakura period.

Among the five school, the Hosho school are whole jihada is masame-hada which is quite different from this. If the Senjuin school, shape, jihada and homon are strong classic look, and think about these two schools are out of the candidate. The Sikkake school characters are stand out gunome hamon more than this, and often continued hamon. Thier nioiguchi are tighter, hataraki in hamon and habuchi are gentle compared with other schools. At the Toma school, Kuniyuki signed work are more gentle than this, but strong candidate. His work are more strong nie, chike and kinsuji are stand out which feels Shoshu school character and has more full of spirit.

The important characters for the katana are: the hamon some part is notare type wide and narrow hamon, there are some part nioiguchi become wider toward to tip of hamon, and nie are large and strong and the nagarehada is not stand out. These are Teigai school with leading smith Kanenaga's characteristic and important investigate points.

#### **Kantei To No 4: katana**

Mei: Gashu-ju Kanewaka ( 2 dai Matasuke)

Length: 2 shaku 3 sun 5.5 bu

Sori: 5 bu

Design: shinogi-zukuri

Mune: ihorimune

Jihada: ko-itame, some part nagarehada mixed with masamehada. There are fien ji-nie, and jahada is little dark.

Hamon: saka-choji midare, some part mixed with togariba and sakaashi type.

There are ashi, nioiguchi type, little uneven nie, tobiyaki, fine sunagashi and bright nioiguchi.

Boshi: midarekomi, the tip little hakikake, komaru and a slight return.

It is relatively well known Nidai(second generation) and Sandai(third generation) Kanewaka have saka-ashi choji midare hamon work. Other older brother Arihira's work available today but there is not much chance to look at them and does not come out often for kanteito. We were worry, they do't have much correct answer at this time, but unexpectedly, many people voted for correct answer without confusion.

This is a wide mihaba, shallow sori, with longer chu-kissaki shape. The hamon is saka-ashi type choji midare. This is a obviously refer to suriage Aoe work in Nambokucho period. From this, some people voted for Aoe work, but this has a healthy jihada and homon, whole katana is fresh Shinto look, and many people concentrated for Shinto smith who is known for choji midare hamon.

Especially, the jihada mixed with masame-hada, the choji midare hamon are sakaashi type, the choji cluster are long, some of them close to shinogi-ji, the boshi is midarekomi. From this, many people voted for Fukuoka Ishido. From the writing, there are many mutual characteristic points, but you look at the actual katana, the choji midare hamon are some what different from Ishido school. Some people seems to sensitively catch the characters, and choose another famous choji midare hamon smith Kanewaka.

The Ishido school choji hamon are mainly with nioiguchi, Ichimonoji style intricacy and all kind of choji close together become midare hamon. There are more stand out ashi and yo, with midare-utsuri, and more close to original Aoe.

The Kanewaka saka-choji midare hamon are based on founder of the school Seki style. If you straight the sakaashi type madare hamon, groupe of the round top of gunome, gunome-choji, and togariba up and down are continued, just like the Seki work. There is no utsuri, the jihada is mixed with masame, hamon with nie and these characters are common for other Kanewaka's work.

### **Kantei To No. 5: tachi**

Mei: Fujishima Tomoshige

Design: shinogi-zukuri

Mune: ihorimune

Length: slightly less than 2 shaku 01 bu

Sori: slightly less than 7 bu

Jihada: tight itamehada. There are fine jinie, and midare utsuri.

Hamon: based on tsuno-yakiba, some part mixed with bottom open gunome, gunome, square shape hamon, and togariba. There are ashi, yo, konie, some part mixed with tobiyaki, yubashiri, and mune yaki, fine kinsuji and sunagashi.

Boshi: midarekomi, hakikake, on the omote tip sharp and return and the ura is yaki-kuzure and long return.

The kanteito made big difference if you know or do't know about the "Kashu Fujishima's tsuno-yakiba". The tsuno-yakiba is kaku-gunome and hakoba(square shape hamon) are both side of top of sharp and become just like demon's horn.



Fujishima Tomoshige school continued from end of Kamakura to Shinshinto period. Beside in Kaga work, there is in Echizen work too. There are theory, he was son of Kasu Sanekage, and a student of Rai Kunitoshi. Older tachi in Atuta shrine, signed two kanji Tomoshige is continued gunome hamon with high shinogi-ji, which is Shikkake style work. After in O-ei period the school nakago are katasogi style (not exact), and in the early time, they supposed to be influenced strongly by Yamato smiths.

Especially, in Muromachi period they produced many blades and characteristic work. Around O-ei period, there are some tight koitame, refined jihada just like the tachi. But many of them are dark jihada which seen many Northern country, and some of them are white nagarehada, with midare utsuri. Many of their midare hamon is mixed with hakoba and togariba which become harsh feeling. There are nie, frequent muneyaki and togiyaki and some of them look like hitatsura. Their habuchi has frequent hataraki, their boshi is strong hakikake, sometimes crumble and long return. Their character is look like Bizen-den mixed Mino Bizen-den. Because of this, people who did not recognize tsuno-yakiba, considered between two schools.

Beside these two schools, some people voted for the Taira Takada school. Because many of the school work are in Tenmon(1532-54) to around Tensho(1573-91), their mihaba is wider, longer length, koshizori, and saki-zori stand out which is different shape from the tachi. Also, some part of their jihada is soft, white color, many of them are nioiguchi which is different look from the tachi.

### **Shijo Kantei To No 710 (in the, 2016 March issue)**

The answer for the Shijo Kantei To No. 710 in the March issue is a katana by Echu-kami Takahira ( same smith as Shodai Kashu Kamewaka) dated Genna 8 (1623).

This is a standard mihada, the width between moto and saki are little different, little larger sori with chu-kissaki. Compared with Keicho Shinto work, the mihaba is little narrower, the width between moto and saki are a little more different, and the kissaki is smaller. But compared with Kanei(1624-43) to around Sho-ho(1644-47) period shape, the width between and moto and saki are not much different, and the kissaki is larger. This kind of shape are seen transition time from Keicho to Kanei period, often around Genna ( 1615-23) period.

The jihada is itame, whole jihada is tight, mixed with mokume, notare, and some part box shape midare hamon. There are bright nioiguchi, frequent nie, and some part nie-kuzure. From the characters, majority people voted for Takahira, or Shodai Kanewaka. Beside these few people voted Nidai Matasuke and Sandai Shiro-uemon Kanewaka. Both smiths have midare hamon mixed with box midare hamon, and their work are similar to Shodai's work. And at this time we treated their name is correct answer.

It is well known character "Kanewaka work is hako-midare hamon". But Shodai Kanewaka hako-midare hamon are not necessary typical hako(box)shape, often there are deep nie, mixed with nie-kuzure. After the Nidai Kanewaka and Kashu Shinto smiths around him, hako-midare hamon become more clear box shape.

Kashu Shinto hamons are beside hako-midare, notare mixed with gunome, and midare-ba(hamon) mixed with saka-choji, gunome and choji. Most of them are deep nioiguchi and frequent nie.

A midare-ba, midare means disorder, and many of them are irregular hamon. But the Kashu Shito midare are different from other country's midare-ba. We can often recognize their unique irregular rhythm midare hamon.

The midare hamon is one of Kashu Shinto's characteristic point, with their stand out jihada, itame become masame type. At the to-ken shinsa, judges conversation "the hamon midare is irregular (disorder), and this is not a Kashu Shito" means this unique rhythm midare hamon.

Beside correct answer, few people voted Taikei Naotane.

It supposed to come from the signature with kao. If Naotane's Soshuden, jihada are itame and oo-itame, whole jihada is visible, often mixed with uzumaki-hada. Most of his hamon are notare mixed with gunome, there are frequent nie, frequent kinsuji and sunagashi. There are no box shape hamon stand out in his midare hamon .

Same time, in case he sign a katane, many of them are signed in ura side, and please attention for this.

Explanation by Hinohara Dai