

NBTHK SWORD JOURNAL
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Meito Kansho
Examination of Important Swords

Tokubetsu Juyo Token

Type: Tanto

Shu-Mei: Masamune (meibutsu Ashiya Masamune)
Honami with kao (Kojo)

Koshirae: Accompanied by an antique saya:
Gold ikakeji (urushi ground) Aoi mon
chirashi aikuchi tanto koshirae

Length: 9 sun 4 rin (27.4 cm)

Sori: slight uchizori

Motohaba: 8 bu 9 rin (2.7 cm)

Motokasane: 1 bu 2 rin (0.35 cm)

Nakago length: 3 sun 2 bu (9.7 cm)

Nakago sori: slight

Commentary

This is a hirazukuri tanto with a mitsumune. It is slightly wide and slightly long; it is thin and has an uchizori. The jigane is itame mixed with mokume, the entire jigane is well forged, and in the lower half, some hada is visible. There are abundant dense ji-nie and frequent chikei. The hamon is notare, mixed with

ko-gunome. There are ashi, a dense nioiguchi, frequent large rough nie, and some areas along the habuchi are a hotsure style. There are yubashiri, tobiyaki, kinsuji, nie-suji, and a bright and clear nioiguchi. The boshi is midarekomi, the point on the omote is a yakizume style, and the ura is yaki-kuzure with a komaru and return, and there are hakikake. The horimono on the omote is a suken, and on the ura is a gomabashi, and on both sides, these are carved into the nakago. The nakago is ubu and the tip is kengyo. The yasurime are unknown, there are four mekugi ana, and two are closed. On the omote, half way down and on the center, there are kanji spelling Masamune. The ura has kanji for Honami with a kao and says this is judged with a shu-meii which has almost worn off.

Speaking about Goro nyudo Masamune, he was a great master smith in Japanese sword history. He is known as a master craftsman in the sword world. He inherited his style from Kunimitsu and Yukimitsu's nie style and Soshu Den work, and raised it to the level of an art. In the Edo period, he was counted as one of "the best three sword smiths" along with Awataguchi Toshiro Yoshimitsu and Go Yoshihiro. The "Kyoho Meibutsu Cho" lists 335 blades (included some damaged in fires), and 59 are Masamune's work. According to an old story, the year of his death is supposed to have been in the early Nanbokucho period and was Koei 2 (1342). Also, he had a blade which was lost in the big fire in the Meireki period which was the Meibutsu Edo Chomei ("long mei") Masamune, and this is supposed to have a date. Consequently, it is thought that his active period was around the end of the Kamakura period, and this is considered to be a reliable date.

Masamune's existing signed works are the Meibutsu Fudo Masamune" which is Juyo Bunkazai, two emperor's treasures, "Kyogoku" and "Daikoku", and "Honjo", and these four tanto are famous. Many other blades are large suriage mumei blades. In the case of katana, the shapes have a standard width with a chu-kissaki, and some of them are wider with a long chu-kissaki. The jigane has a moist, unique appearance, with abundant nie, and is the result of hard and soft iron forged together, and there are abundant chikei. However, there is no pretentiousness in his work at all, like in later period work with a visible hada, and his work appears to have a natural and uncontrived appearance. Regarding the hamon, if we call Bizen hamon physical or real, Masamune's hamon are said to have an "abstract beauty". There are all kinds of shapes in the hamon, but they do not appear to be rigorously organized or formed. Dr Honma expressed the idea of his hamon as being "eccentric" ("Kyo"). "The hamon show a free and relaxed spirit while still being bold, but they have a dignity. We can say that this reflects his true skill and ability, and there's a reason why "Masamune is Masamune". Also, his nie are seen in large and small sizes, with strong and weak appearances, we also see nie kuzure, nie-suji, yubashiri, and tobiyaki, and there is no question that his work shows the charm of nie-deki work. Along with the nie, the hamon nioiguchi forms one harmonious whole. Also, the nioiguchi's moist appearance, light and shadow, and wide and narrow width variations show activity and a variety of appearances, making one think of all kinds of scenery, with an ever changing appearance. Conventionally, these forms are compared to black ink (sumi-e) landscape paintings, and present a dynamic hamon appearance,

and we could say this is Masamune's unique and most attractive characteristic point, and we recognize his high level of artistry which other smiths cannot follow.

This tanto is listed in the "Kyoho Meibutsu Cho" as "Meibutsu Ashiya Masamune". It is slightly wide, and slightly long. However, there is little left of the hamachi, and the width of the upper half is narrow compared with the bottom half. From this we can imagine that this was originally made around the late Kamakura period with a slightly large tanto shape. Also, the jigane is well forged with a "sticky" ("mochi-like") feeling, and is itame hada. There are chikei in many places, and the well forged jigane shows the quality of his work. In addition, the hamon shows subtle variety in the nioiguchi, with thick rough even nie, prominent hataraki such as midare, tobiyaki, and yubashiri, and its rather unbalanced appearance is charming. This shows a high level of skill, and the entire work is dignified. This is an excellent masterpiece which other Soshu Den smiths could not match.

The tanto's story is mentioned in the "Tokugawa Jikki" (diary) on the April 8 page (10 days before Ieyasu passed away) which says that "the Daitokuin (Ieyasu) in Genna 2 (1616) called Matsudaira Chikuzen no kami Toshitsune, Shimazu Mutsu no kami Iehisa, and Hosokawa Tadaoki nyudo Sansai, to his room, and he gave each of them a blade". Also the "Kansei Jushu Shoka Fu" No.108, lists Shimazu Iehisa's name on the same day Ieyasu invited Iehisa to his room. It says "In appreciation for his work, he received a Masamune wakizashi, and this means an eternal farewell". From this, we found that Iehisa received this from Ieyasu as a memento, and since

then, this has been handed down in the Shimazu family for a long time. Today, this tanto has an old saya with the family's sayagaki and an excellent gold ikakeji Aoi mon chirashi aikuchi tanto koshirae which was made no later than the early Edo period.

This is being exhibited at the Fukuyama Museum exhibition "The Masamune Jittetsu: the Master Smith Masamune and His Students" until March 27, 2024.

Explanation and photo by Ishi Akira.

Shijo Kantei To No. 806

The deadline to submit answers for the issue No. 806 Shijo Kantei To is April 5, 2024. 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 April 5, 2024 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 (69.65 cm)

Sori: 7.5 bu (2.3 cm)
Motohaba: 1 sun (3.05 cm)
Sakihaba: 6.5 bu (2.0 cm)
Motokasane: 2.5 bu (0.75 cm)
Sakikasane: slightly less than 2 bu (0.5 cm)
Kissaki length: 1 sun 2 bu (3.6 cm)
Nakago length: slightly over 7 sun 1 bu (21.6 cm)
Nakago sori: very slight (0.1 cm)

This is a shinogi zukuri katana with an ihori-mune. There is a standard width, the widths at the moto and saki are slightly different, there is a large sori and a chu-kissaki. The jigane is ko-itame hada, there are abundant dense ji-nie, and a unique jigane. There are fine chikei and a slightly dark jigane. The hamon and boshi are as seen in the picture. The hamon contains strange large midare which look like a crushed mushroom-shaped cloud. There are ashi, yo, frequent nie, some midare hamon valleys have a dense nioiguchi, compressed or dense nie, kinsuji, sunagashi, and a bright nioiguchi. The nakago is ubu. The tip is kurijiri (ha-agari kurijiri), the yasurime are suji-chigai, and the nakago mune is round. There is one mekuigi ana. On the ura, in a four kanji space or interval above the mekuigi-ana, on the center, there is an "ichi" kanji, and under it, along the mune side there is a long title. Furthermore, under the title on the flat ground (hira) there is a soe-mei.

Juyo Tosogu

**Botan Kujaku zu (peony and peacock design)
Mitokoromono**

Kozuka, kogai mei : Ishiguro Masayoshi with kao Menuki wari-tanzaku mei: Sandai me (third generation) Ishiguro Masayoshi

Ishiguro Masayoshi was representative of the master gold smiths in the Ishiguro school, which flourished in the latter half of the Edo period.

He was born in Anei 3 (1774), and at the beginning of his career he studied under the Hosokawa school's Sano Naoyoshi. Later, he studied under Ishiguro Masatsune, and “Masayoshi” name is supposed to have been derived from the “Masa” and “Yoshi” kanji from each of his teacher’s names. There was no family relationship between Masatsune and Masayoshi. But after the second generation Masatsune (Moritsune who was Masatsune’s son) passed away, he succeed as head of the Ishiguro family as the third generation. He trained many students, including his son Koreyoshi, and established the Ishiguro school’s foundation. The menuki tanzaku Mei has an Ishiguro third generation signature and this is a valuable reference material in understanding Masayoshi’s genealogy.

The Ishiguro school is good at flower and bird images. They are known to use takabori iroe techniques to express rich and lustrous pictures. This mitokoromo’s subject is also a peacock and peony, or a flower and a bird picture, and we can enjoy the essence of the Ishiguro school. The kozuka and the kogai have a shakudo nanako ground with takabori, and the gold iroe is used luxuriously. The background trees are bold, even the tree bark’s texture is expressed, there is a large peony in full bloom, and the appearance of the open petals is delicate and

three dimensional. The menuki have a shakudo ground with gold iroe. The omote has a peony, the ura has a peacock, and each wing has fine carving and details, and his back, stomach, and tail, each have a different technique used in the carving work. This is a large composition, but with the fine detailed carving, the presence of the bird and flower is strong and shows the Ishiguro school's unique elegant work.

Explanation by Kugiya Naoko

February Teirei Kansho Kai

Date: February 10 (second Saturday in February)

Place: Token Hakubutsukan Auditorium

Lecturer: Kugiya Naoko

Kantei To No. 1: Tachi

Mei: Rai Kunitoshi

Genko 1 (1321) 12 gatsu hi

Length: 2 shaku 4 sun 6 bu

Sori: 9 bu

Style: shinogi zukuri

Mune: ihorimune

Jigane: tight ko-itame hada; there are abundant ji-nie, fine chikei, some jifu, and pale midare utsuri.

Hamon: wide suguha mixed with ko-choji, ko-gunome, and angular shaped features. The hamon is komidare. There are frequent ashi and yo, some nie-

deki areas, some muneyaki, frequent kinsuji and sunagashi, and a bright nioiguchi.

Boshi: straight; the tip is komaru and there is a return.

This is a Juyo Bijutsuhin Rai Kunitoshi ubu signed tachi. There is funbari at the habaki moto, a narrow shape, from the koshimoto to the tip there is a uniform sori, and a wa-zori tachi shape. The jigane is a tight ko-itame with abundant ji-nie, and refined forging, some areas have what is called Rai hada, and there are jifu. The hamon is based on suguha, with a bright nioiguchi. On the omote, the tips of the ashi turn to the direction of the nakago, and this is called Kyo-saka-ashi. There are muneyaki, and they show Yamashiro, and especially Rai school, characteristic points very well.

Among these points is the shape which is narrow, and the hamon is mainly suguha. The boshi is a beautiful komaru, and if you pay attention to these characteristics, it is possible to narrow this sword down to Rai Kunitoshi's work.

The date Genko 1 is supposed to be when Rai Kunitoshi was 81 years old and his last work. Many Rai Kunitoshi works are based on a gentle suguha hamon, but this has a prominent ko-choji hamon, the signature is different from his usual style, and it is pointed out that this has some influence from Rai Kunimitsu.

In voting, some people voted for Rai Kuniyuki. They looked at this as Rai school work, and from the narrow shape, and a mainly choji hamon, the answer is understandable. But if it were Rai Kuniyuki's work, the top of the hamon would have prominent karimata (split or forked arrowhead) shaped yubashiri, the

hamon would have a gentle ko-midare style, and a more classic style.

Beside the proper answer, many people voted for Ko-Bizen work. That vote is supposed to have come from the fact that the tachi's utsuri is not the Rai school's unique nie utsuri, but a midare utsuri style. Rai Kunitoshi and Ryokai rarely have this kind of utsuri. If it were Ko-Bizen work, it have a large koshi-sori, and a tip falling down going forward shape (the sori becomes more shallow going towards the point).

Kantei To No. 2: Katana

Mei: Mondo-no-sho Fujiwara Masakiyo
with Ichiyo Aoi mon

Length: 2 shaku 4 sun 5.5 bu

Sori: slightly less than 5 bu

Style: shinogi zukuri

Mune: ihori mune

Jigane: tight ko-itame hada; some areas contain a large pattern hada; there are abundant ji-nie and chikei.

Hamon: shallow notare mixed with gunome, ko-gunome, and togariba. It is nie deki, some areas have rough nie; there are yubashiri, nijuba, san-juba, kinsuji and sunagashi.

Boshi: on the omote the boshi is notare komi; the ura is a shallow midare komi; both tips are komaru; there are frequent hakikake and kaen.

This katana is wide and thick. There is a long kissaki, a strong shape, rich hiraniku, and the blade is heavy

and has a unique Satsuma shape. The jigane has a tight ko-itame hada with some nagare hada. The hamon is mainly gunome and togariba. There are condensed or compact areas of nie forming pointed or sharp features in the hamon. There are rough nie, thick kinsuji, and this work clearly shows Satsuma Shinto, and Shinshinto characteristic points. In voting, many people focused on Masakiyo, Motohira, and Masayuki.

Looking at the details, the togariba are present in large and small sizes, the midare hamon has variations, the edge of the hamon has intermittent yubashiri, the top of the hamon has nijuba and sanjuba, the boshi has frequent hakikake which form a flame-like shape, showing Masakiyo's characteristic points very well.

If this were Motohira's work, there would be a tight ko-itame hada and a refined jigane. The entire blade would have a continuous gunome hamon and a tight nioiguchi at the koshimoto. On the other hand, if it were Masayuki's work, there would be funbari, and the area around the monouchi would be narrow. There would be a long kissaki and unique shape. Even though the jigane is well forged, whitish forging lines are seen. Also, Motohira and Masayuki's Satsuma Shinshinto work has kawari tetsu, which is a pale steel color which is less bright than chikei, and this kawari tetsu has a belt-like shape, but Masakiyo's work does show this type of feature.

The nakago photo is 97% of the actual size.

Kantei To No. 3: Katana

Mei: Bizen Osafune ju Kagemitsu
Gentoku 3 nen (1331) 3 gatsu hi

Length: 2 shaku 3 sun

Sori: slightly less than 8 bu

Style: shinogi zukuri

Mune: ihorimune

Jigane: tight ko-itame hada; there are abundant ji-nie, fine chikei, and midare utsuri.

Hamon: notare style mixed with ko-gunome, ko-togariba, and ko-choji. There are frequent ashi and yo, a nioiguchi with ko-nie, yubashiri, kinsuji and sunagashi.

Boshi: notarekomi. The tip is komaru and there is a return.

This tachi has a standard width, a large koshizori, the tip has sori, and there is a chu-kissaki. From this, you can judge this as being work from the latter half of the Kamakura period. The jigane has a tight ko-itame hada, there are abundant ji-nie, and an especially refined hada with midare utsuri. The hamon is based on ko-choji, ko-gunome, and togariba and is a midare hamon. The boshi is notarekomi, the tip is komaru and a sansaku style. From this, the names of smiths such as Osafune Nagamitsu, Kagemitsu and Chikakage name come to mind.

Usually, Kagemitsu's hamon are a suguha style mixed with ko-gunome, ko-choji, kaku-gunome, and kataochi gunome, and the entire hamon has saka-ashi. In view of this, this hamon's character is between a kaku-gunome style hamon and a saka-ashi style hamon, but the style type is not obvious. In

addition, the width of the hamon has high and low variations. From these details, it seems to be difficult to narrow down this work to his name.

In consideration of this, after the late Kamakura period, all Osafune smiths such as Nagamitsu, Sanenaga, Kagemitsu, and Chikakage are treated as correct answers.

Looking at the jigane, there is a tight ko-itame hada with fine ji-nie and very refined forging. Among the Osafune smiths, Kagemitsu has a reputation for excellent forging, and this is one of the characteristic points to look for in his work. If it were Chikakage's work, his jigane is itame, there is a visible hada, and there are some irregularities.

Kantei To No. 4: Katana

Mei: Kazusa-no-suke Fujiwara Kaneshige

Length: 2 shaku 3 sun 4 bu

Sori: 4 bu

Style: shinogi zukuri

Mune: ihorimune

Jigane: ko-itame hada; there is a slightly visible hada, there are abundant large ji-nie and frequent chikei.

Hamon: gunome; some areas are mixed with ko-gunome and it is a continuous pattern. There are frequent ashi, a dense nioiguchi, abundant nie, some yubashiri, kinsuji and sunagashi.

Boshi: yakisage at the yokote; notare-komi; there is a round tip and a long return.

This katana has a standard width, the widths at the moto and saki are different, there is a shallow sori

with a chu-kissaki, and a Kanbun Shinto shape. The shinogi ji has masame hada, and along the top of the hamon, the gunome have equal heights. This style is often seen Edo Shinto work.

There are many Edo Shinto smiths who worked with gunome hamon such as Kotetsu. But each smith's gunome hamon is different. One of Kazusa-no-suke Kaneshige's gunome hamon characteristics is that some areas have a "one then two, a one then two" continuous gunome pattern. In places, this katana has this kind of hamon pattern.

For another proper answer, there is Kotetsu, and Izumi-no-kami Kaneshige, and beside these, some people voted for Okimasa. If it were Kotetsu's juzu-ba gunome hamon, there would be thick ashi, and the jiba (jigane and hamon) would be brighter and clearer. If it were Okimasa's work, two gunome are fused together in a continuous hamon pattern, and many of the gunome have ha-nie going to up to the ji and appear rough.

Today, it is known that Izumi-no-kami Kaneshige is a different smith than Kazusa-no-suke Kaneshige. Many of his Kanei to Shoho period Shinto blades have suguha hamon and notare hamon mixed with gunome.

Kantei To No. 5: Katana

Mei: Kunihiro

Length: slightly over 2 shaku 1 sun 8 bu

Sori: 2 bu

Style: shinogi zukuri

Mune: ihorimune

Jigane: itame hada mixed with mokume hada; there is a fine visible hada. There are ji-nie and chikei.

Hamon: suguha. Some places contain gunome and togari. There are ashi, yo, nie-deki, some rough nie, and yubashiri.

Boshi: midarekomi; the tip is sharp and there is a long return.

This is a wide blade, and the widths at the moto and saki are not very different. There is a shallow sori and a large kissaki. From this, you can narrow the period to Nanbokucho, Keicho Shinto, and Shinshinto. The jigane is itame mixed with mokume, the entire jigane has a fine visible hada, there are frequent chikei, and a zanguri (rough) Horikawa hada. The hamon is a suguha style mixed with gunome and togari. The dense nie has shallow or narrow regions which shows Kunihiro's characteristic point very well. Kunihiro has two styles, one is a Sue-seki Soshu style called Furuya-uchi, and another style is modelled after Soshu master smiths' work and called Horikawa-uchi, and this is a Horikawa-uchi style work. In voting, from the rough Horikawa hada, the notare-komi, and sharp tipped boshi were looked at as a sanpin boshi, and some people voted for Dewa Daijo Kunimichi. If it were Kunimichi's work, many hamon have prominent high and low variations, and are gorgeous work, and his jigane has nagare hada along the hamon side, which becomes masame hada. Some voted for Koto smiths such as Shizu Kaneuji. From the thin kasane, this seems to be looking at this as Nanbokucho work. But some Horikawa Kunihiro katana are thin, and some of his shapes appear as though he was aware or conscious of Nanbokucho work. If it were Kaneuji's work, his jigane do not have Horikawa hada, they

seem to have a more moist appearance, the blueish color is more pronounced, and there is a more classic feeling.

Shijo Kantei To No.804 in the 2024 New Year's issue

The answer for the Shijo Kantei To is a tachi
by Rai Kuniyuki.

At first glance, the narrow blade with a large sori, and with different widths the moto and the saki, and with a small kissaki tachi shape looks like work from the end of the Heian period to the beginning of the Kamakura period. However, narrow tachi continued to be made in small numbers after that period, and they began to be seen again in the latter half of the Kamakura period. However, the sori from the mid-Kamakura period tachi is different from the older style sori, where the sori appears to decrease going forward towards the point, but sori still appears at the tip, so you can recognise the difference from the different periods.

This style of sori is called a naka-zori, wa-zori, and a torii-zori, but in general, the sori at the moto is stronger than at the tip. However, many Rai school sori are appear to be almost uniform over the length of the blade. The hints said wa-zori, so even though this is a narrow shape, we can tell that it is work from after the mid-Kamakura period.

In addition, it is also Rai school work, of which a large number has survived to the present, and they called Kyo-zori. But in work from Sanjo, Gojo, early Awataguchi, Sadatoshi, etc., there are many old tachi from the era where the sori is described as "the tip falls down going forward" which is a classic tachi shape. Therefore, care must be taken in carefully observing the sori.

Rai Kuniyuki tachi are well known, and he has two styles called in-yo (narrow and wide), but there are also blades which are wide and have an ikubi kissaki that are typical of the mid-Kamakura period's style, and with a standard width or which are slightly wide. The fact that there are many works which are wide and that there are few narrow ones like this one confirms that his most active period was during the mid-Kamakura period. This is in contrast to the fact that while both Awataguchi Kuniyasu and Sadatoshi, whose hamon patterns are similar, have both narrow and wide blades, there are few works that are wide and many that are narrow. You can see the difference in the period from this.

Among Rai work, most Rai Kuniyuki jigane have a visible hada, but this one is a slightly tight itame hada, with abundant ji-nie and refined forging. The bo-utsuri and refined forging are very typical of the Yamashiro school jigane.

The hamon is a suguha style mixed with a midare hamon, with frequent ko-nie, a bright nioiguchi, and a Kyo-saka-ashi with the ashi pointing slightly toward the nakago (particularly in the case of Rai work, there are conspicuous saka ashi on the omote,). Moreover, the tip of the ashi appear slightly swollen, and the suguha style gentle midare hamon has muneyaki. The boshi is straight, with a komaru and an

elegant return. This shows the Rai school's characteristic points very well.

Notably, the hamon has small midare patterns, such as ko-choji, ko-gunome, and ko-midare, and it has a classic appearance. The top of the hamon has hataraki such as dot-like karimata style small uchinoke and tobiyaki, and this kind of the characteristic style can be narrowed down to judge this as Rai Kuniyuki's work.

In addition, in the case of a wide shape, the hamon's width is wide for the width of the blade, the midare pattern is high, the midare pattern at the koshimoto has slight vertical variations, and the upper part becomes a suguha style with long ashi. It has been pointed out that there are many blades like these. This tachi is narrow with a relatively wide hamon, and this is not seen often.

Also, the nakago yasurime are kate-sagari, and the two kanji signature is in a large gyosho style made with a slightly thick chisel are also consistent with Rai Kuniyuki's style. The signature's place is often below the mekugi ana (along the mune side or in the center), and sometimes a part of the signature is over the mekugi ana, and in rare cases, it is placed above the mekugi ana.

For a proper answer, many people voted for Ayanokoji Sadatoshi. However, many of the narrow tachi made by him had an old fashioned shape from the early Kamakura period, with the sori being described as having "the tip falling down going forward", and with a small kissaki. The hamon appear rather "moist" (uruoi), and compared to Kuniyuki, the hamon is generally more narrow, and the midare hamon features are closer together and tighter. Although there is some slight high and low variations, there were some areas where ko-gunome are intertwined, and

even when going towards the top, it is the same. The top of hamon karimata style (split arrowhead or branched arrowhead design) hataraki is prominent, but it is often connected and forms a nijuba appearance. The boshi are often a slight midare and with hakikake.

In addition, Sadatoshi's forging has a slightly moist (uruoi) appearance and a soft looking hada (The "Kokon Meizukushi" states that his jigane look moist, and Dr. Honma Kunzan said it had a "melting iron" color). Sometimes there are weak chikei. His signatures are placed along the mune above the megugi ana, and the kanji "Sada" is written in a large sosho style (the inscription in the "Kokon Meizukushi" is in a large sosho style), and the "toshi" is smaller in a gyosho style. This doesn't match the hints. Only in the case of a hi being carved into the nakago, he carved the signature down around the end of the hi.

In addition, one theory in historical sword books states that Sadatoshi lived near Kuniyuki, and they had an association where they each made daisaku for the other. Although it is not certain whether this is true, if we look at the existing items, it has been pointed out that even if the two dates overlap, it would probably be in the later years of Sadatoshi's career and the early years of Kuniyuki's career

Seeing the tachi as a Rai school work, people voted for the two kanji Kunitoshi, Ryokai, and Enju Kunimura.

The two kanji (niji) Kunitoshi generally made a wide shape, his midare hamon bunches or groupings are generally larger than Kuniyuki's, and his style is more gorgeous with midare. His boshi are midarekomi and a more dynamic style, and in the rare case of a narrow shape, his hamon are a suguha style just like Rai Kunitoshi.

Ryokai often has narrow shapes, the jigane has nagare hada and is whitish. His hamon have less hataraki, and a more plain appearance, and the nioiguchi is also often worn down.

In Enju Kunimura's work, long blades are often seen, the jigane is whitish, and the hamon is narrow, there is a tight nioiguchi with ko-ashi, and the nioiguchi are worn down when compared to Rai Kuniyuki. Many boshi have a pronounced round appearance and a short return.

Besides the proper answer, there was also a vote for Awataguchi Kuniyasu. If it were his work, it would often be a long tachi with the tip falling down (the sori becomes more shallow going towards the point). And if there is a well forged jigane it will be even stronger and clearer, which is typical of Awataguchi work. On the other hand, in case of a visible hada, the visible hada may be a little strong, and at first glance, it may not be typical of Kyoto work. In addition, the hamon has karimata, but it has an older appearance and is narrow, and the nioiguchi tends to be unclear or blurred. The signature is placed along the mune side above the mekugi ana, and the "Kuni" kanji is written in a gyosho script, but the character for "Yasu" has a unique sosho style.

If it were a Bizen work such as Ko-Bizen or Ko-Ichimonji, you need to pay attention to the shape and small differences in the jiba (jigane and hamon). Especially if utsuri, such as jifu utsuri and midare utsuri, have a clear contrast against the dark areas.

Ooi Gaku