

NBTHK SWORD JOURNAL
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Meito Kansho
Appreciation of Important Swords

Juyo Token

Type: Katana

Mei: Bizen koku ju Osafune Ukyo-no-suke
Katsumitsu
Bunmei 16 nen (1484) 2 gatsu jo kichijitsu

Length: 2 shaku 2 sun 9 bu (69.4 cm)

Sori: 6 bu 1 rin (1.85 cm)

Motohaba: 1 sun 7 rin (3.25 cm)

Sakihaba: 7 bu 9 rin (2.4 cm)

Motokasane: 2 bu 1 rin (0.65 cm)

Sakikasane: 1 bu 5 rin (0.45 cm)

Kissaki length: 1 sun 2 bu 5 rin (3.8 cm)

Nakago length: 5 sun 6 bu 1 rin (17.0 cm)

Nakago sori: 3 rin (0.1 cm)

Commentary

This is a shinogi zukuri katana with an ihorimune. It is wide, and the difference in the widths at the moto and saki are not prominent. It is thick, there is a saki sori and a chu-kissaki but it is an inokubi style kissaki. The jigane is a tight ko-itame mixed with some itame, and there are ji-nie, fine chikei and midare utsuri. The hamon is ko-choji mixed with kogunome and togariba. On the omote there is a small midare hamon, and on the ura, some places have open valley midare hamon. There are ashi, yo, and the hamon is nioideki. The bottom half of the hamon has tobiyaki, and the entire hamon has a bright and clear nioiguchi. The boshi is a wide notarekomi, the tip is komaru, and on the ura there is a long return. There are yubashiri, and they are especially prominent on the omote. The horimono on the omote and ura are bo-hi finished with maru-dome. Below the hi on the omote there are carved kanji for “tenka taihei kokudo annei”. On the ura there are carved kanji for “fuki manfuku kairyo manzoku”. The nakago is ubu and the tip is ha-agari kurijiri. There is one mekugi ana, and the yasurime are katte-sagari. On the omote, on the shinoji-ji there is a large size long signature, and the ura has a date.

Osafune Katsumitsu was a representative sword smith among the Osafune smiths after the mid-Muromachi period, which we call “Sue Bizen”. The meikan lists several smiths with the common name Katsumitsu. Among these, in particular, Ukyo-no-suke and Jiro Saemonjo are famous. Concerning Ukyo-no-suke, the “Tsuchiya Oshigata” has a date

of Bunmei 3 (1471), and “Bizen koku ju Ukyo-no-suke Katsumitsu tose (age) 37, Osafune Sakyoshin Munemitsu saku kore”, and from this we can see that he was born in Eikyo 6 (1434). Also an extant tanto (owned by the Hayashibara museum) lists “Osafune Katsumitsu shatei (brother) Munemitsu”, and from this we can see that Ukyo-no-suke Katsumitsu and Sakyoshin Munemitsu are brothers. Furthermore, Munemitsu has a tanto signed “Sukemitsu jinan (second son) Sakyoshin Munetsugu” dated in Bunmei 9 (1477). From this, we can see that Ukyo-no-suke was Rokuzo-zaemon Sukemitsu’s first son, and his dated works are concentrated from around the early Bunmei period to the Entoku period (1470-80), or about 20 years. Ukyo-no-suke’s active period was during the Onin-no-ran wars (1467-77) which was started due to Shogun successor problems, and as you know, the war spread all over Japan, and the Sengoku period started then. Also, Katsumitsu and Munemitsu worked in the Chugoku area, and were influenced by the power struggle inside the Bakufu between Yamana Mochitoyo and Hosokawa Matsumoto, and we can confirm from extant work, that they moved their forge as ordered by their protector, the military commander Akamatsu. The first place in Bunmei 16 (1484) was to Bizen Kojima, and in Bunmei 18-19 it was to Bitchu Kusakabe. Furthermore, in Chokyo 2 (1488), Shogun Ashikaga Yoshinao ordered the Bizen gozoku (a powerful family), the Uragami family, to defeat the Omi shugo-shoku (guardian)

Sasaki (Rokaku) Takase, and ordered both smiths to move to the Omi koku Magari location. This is shown in the “Inryoken Mokuroku” (Kyoto Sokoku temple’s Rokuon-in Inryoken’s official diary (he was the intermediate between the zen temple and the shogun) dated Chokyo 2 nen in the Aug 2 entry.

The following year the two smiths made swords in Kyoto. Also, the “Ukyo-no-suke” signature’s latest date is Entoku 2 (1490), and after that date, his son “Jirozaemon Katsumitsu was working, and at that time the next generation was supposed to be active.

There were many orders for all kinds of items, such as tachi, katana, wakizashi, and naginata, and that reflected the chaotic period. Katsumitsu’s hamon styles are suguha, open valley double style midare, ko-gunome and ko-choji midare on small hamon and choji midare. Among these, his choji midare are not seen often in other Sue Bizen smith’s work, and is a small sized but gorgeous hamon, and they are evaluated highly, and are known as his representative style.

This katana has a standard length, the tip has sori, and there is a Muromachi period shape. Notably, among Sue Bizen work, it is wide and thick, there is a strong shape, and it clearly shows his meticulous work. The jigane is a very tight ko-itame hada, and very refined, and at a glance this gives us the impression that this is one of his best works. In addition, the hamon has a tight nioiguchi with a healthy appearance. On the omote there is a complex small midare hamon using several different

shaped hamon elements. On the ura, in places there are Sue Bizen characteristic open valleys in the midare hamon, and the omote and ura have slightly different hamon, and it is interesting, excellent workmanship. Also this is nioideki, and there are almost no nie, and it is hard to miss this detail. For sue-Bizen work, the midare utsuri is relatively clear. The mei is larger than usual, and without hesitation, it makes you feel that Ukyo-no-suke himself thought that this could be his masterpiece. Among his work, this is one of his best efforts and was made at the age of 50. Also, among the carved “kairyō manzoku” kanji is a Buddhist phrase, and it means people’s wishes will be satisfied through Buddha’s mercy, and there is no owner's name on the sword, but people who lived in that turbulent world wished to be protected by a sword.

According to one theory, this used be Yamaoka Teshou’s (a Meiji period sword user, politician and artist) sword.

Explanation and oshigata by Ishi Akira

Shijo Kantei To No. 814

The deadline to submit answers for the issue no. 814 Shijo Kantei To is December 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 December 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.

You can submit votes online to

<https://www.touken.or.jp/shijokanteinyusatsu.html>

(see the April, 2024 issue, page 30). We will accept votes every month from the 10th at 10:00 am to the 5th of the following month at 23:59 pm. 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: Tachi

Length: slightly over 2 shaku 3 sun (69.8 cm)

Sori: 6 bu (1.8 cm)

Motohaba: slightly less than 9 bu (2.65 cm)

Sakihaba: 5 bu (1.55 cm)

Motokasane: slightly less than 2 bu (0.55 cm)

Sakikasane: slightly over 1 bu (0.35 cm)

Kissaki length: 8 bu (2.4 cm)

Nakago length: 7 sun 3.5 bu (22.3 cm)

Nakago sori: slightly less than 1 bu (0.25 cm)

This is a shinogi zukuri tachi with an ihorimune. It is narrow, and the widths at the moto and saki are different. It has a standard thickness and a large koshi sori even though it is suriage. There is some funbari at the moto, the tip falls down slightly going forward (i.e. the sori becomes more shallow going towards the point), and there is a small kissaki. The jigane is ko-itame hada, some places are mixed with itame hada, and there is a slightly visible hada. There are abundant ji-nie and clear jifu utsuri. The hamon and boshi are as seen in the oshigata. The hamon is a suguha style mixed with ko-midare and ko-choji. Notably, the ko-choji are prominent, and some areas at the top of the hamon have slight high and low variations. There are ko-nie and fine kinsuji and sunagashi. The nakago is suriage, the tip is kiri, and the yasurime are suji chigai. There are four mekuigi ana. On the omote, under the ubu mekuigi ana along mune side, there is a slightly large size two kanji signature made with a fine chisel.

TOKUBETSU JUYO TOSOGU

**Kuiai shishi zu (lion design) mitokoromono
Kozuka and kogai mei: Mon Yujo; Koju with kao
menuki: mumei Yujo
Accompanying paper: Kasei 4 nen (1792) dai
(price) 500 kan on a Koshu origami**

The Goto family Shodai Yujo is supposed to have been born in Eikyō 12 nen (1440) and passed away in Eishō 9 nen (1512) at the age of 73 years. He enhanced his family name by developing innovative shakudo forging techniques and elegant carving and forging techniques, and established the Goto family's foundation. Yujo worked for the 8th Shogun Ashikaga Yoshimasa, and Yoshimasa's collection "Higashiyama Gyobutsu" included Yujo's work. After that, the Goto family worked for the authorities at the time, such as Oda, Toyotomi, and Tokugawa, and until the Bakumatsu period they were prosperous and considered the best of the souken-kinko (sword koshirae makers and gold smiths). According to Kano Natsuo, "among the all souken smiths Yujo had best techniques and most original work in the past and present", and without Yujo we cannot talk comprehensively about Japanese goldsmith work.

This work was appraised by the Goto family's 11th generation Koju, and judged as Yujo's kuiai shishi design work with a gold mon. Koju made the kozuka and kogai ground metal, and finished the

mitokoromono. The shishi figures have a very rich nikuoki, and a defined body, and each shishi shows lively motion, which has the feeling of the Goto family's number one smith Yujo's overwhelming strength, and is an excellent master work. Also, the Koju kogai is almost completely covered with nanako work from the rim to the tip (but not on the back), and the carefully decorated gold inlay warabite (ferns) produce a good effect and composition. The kozuka shows the same kind of work. Koju used Yujo's work to make a mitokoromono, and we can see his strong spirit, and it displays the excellent high quality of a Goto family masterpiece.

This has an origami (paper) by the 14th generation Goto family smith Keijo Koshu, and it says the ground or foundation work was done by Koju, and the value is 500 kan.

Commentary by Kujiya Naoko

October Teirei Kansho Kai

Date: October 9 (the second Saturday in October)

Place: Token Hakubutsukan Auditorium

Lecture: Takeda Kotaro

Kantei To No. 1: Katana

Mei: Kuniyasu

Length: 2 shaku 2 sun 5.5 bu

Sori: 9 bu

Style: shinogi zukuri

Mune: ihori mune

Jigane: itame mixed with mokume and nagare hada; the entire hada is a large pattern, and the hada is visible; there are abundant ji-nie, frequent chikei, pale nie utsuri, and a dark color.

Hamon: ko-midare mixed with ko-gunome and ko-choji; the top of the hamon has yubashiri and nijuba; there are frequent ashi and yo, and ko-nie. Some parts of the habuchi are not clear, and there are kinsuji and sunagashi.

Boshi: on the omote, above the yokote, the ura is straight, and the tips on both sides are komaru with hakikake.

This is a Juyo Bijutsuhin Awataguchi Kuniyasu tachi. The shape is narrow, the widths at the moto and saki are different, the tip falls down going forward (the sori becomes more shallow going towards the tip) and there is a small kissaki. From this, you can judge this as work from the end of the Heian period to the early Kamakura period. The jigane is itame mixed with mokume and nagare hada, the hada is visible, there are abundant ji-nie,

frequent chikei, and pale nie utsuri. The jigane appears dark. The hamon is ko-midare with ko-choji and ko-gunome, and the top of the hamon has yubashiri, nijuba, and some places have a soft or unclear appearance.

In talking about the Awataguchi school's work, their jigane is a characteristic tight ko-itame hada with abundant large ji-nie, and is called a nashiji hada. But in this tachi's jigane, the hada is visible and there is a dark color, and at first glance, it looks like Yasutsuna's Ko-Hoki forging. This could be a confusing point in identifying the maker. Kuniyasu's work has two types of jigane, one is Awataguchi's characteristic nashiji hada, and the other is a visible itame hada with prominent ji-nie and chikei, and this is an example of the latter. But looking at the details, there are pale utsuri, the hamon is a classic ko-midare style with fine elegant ko-nie, the top of the hamon has uneven karimata shaped yubashiri, and you can recognize an often seen characteristic classic Kyoto style. This blade has some areas which are rich in hataraki such as nijuba, kinsuji and sunagashi, and besides its classic elegance, this work has the strength and feeling of a tachi.

On page 14, the oshigata is 92% of the actual size.

Kantei To No. 2: Tanto

Mumei: Bizen Osafune Motoshige

Showa 5 nen (1316) 6 gatsu hi

Length: 8 sun 2.5 bu

Sori: uchizori

Style: hirazukuri

Mune: ihorimune

Jigane: itame mixed with nagare and masame hada; the entire ji is visible; there are fine ji-nie, jifu, and midare utsuri.

Hamon: mainly square gumome mixed with gunome, and kataochi gunome; the entire hamon has saka-ashi; there are ashi, and a nioiguchi with ko-nie.

Boshi: midarekomi; the tip drops down going to the point. There is a komaru.

This is a Juyo Token Osafune Motoshige tanto dated Showa 5 nen. There is a standard width with uchizori and a Kamakura period beautiful shape. The visible itame hada has utsuri, the hamon is mainly square gunome mixed with gunome and kataochi style gunome. From these details, it is possible narrow this work down to Bizen Osafune smiths names centered on Kagemitsu. On that basis, looking at the forging, it has jifu and a slightly soft jigane, the hada appears a bit irregular, and you can recognize Bizen branch school elements. On the hamon around the monouchi area, the square gunome are long, there are prominent saka-ashi, and the top of the square gunome elements have no vertical variations and are the same height. From

these aspects of the jiba (jigane and hamon) you can reach the answer of Motoshige.

In voting, people captured the above characteristic points, and voted for Motoshige, Kagemitsu and Kanemitsu. From the shape, a Kagemitsu vote is understandable, but from the disorder in the hada and the hamon's composition, this is not main stream Osafune work. I wish look at this as branch school work, and different from what we often see in Kagemitsu's tight and refined jigane. Also, if it were Kanemitsu's work, the shape would be a Nanbokucho period shape.

Talking about Motoshige, we usually tend to think of a Nanbokucho period large shape, but one of his earliest works is a tanto dated Showa 5 nen (1316) in the Kamakura period, and he worked until the Nanbokucho period. We should remember that a sword smith active in two different periods like this has shapes from both periods.

Kantei To No. 3: Katana

Mei: Fuyuhiro

Length: 2 shaku 3 sun 8 bu

Sori: 8.5 bu

Style: shinogi zukuri

Mune: ihorimune

Jigane: itame mixed with mokume and large itame; the entire hada is visible; there are ji-nie, chikei, and a slightly dark color.

Hamon: the moto has a short yakidashi, and above that it is a wide suguha. The hamon is a ko-notare hamon, with ko-gunome, ashi, yo, ko-nie, kinsuji, tobiyaki, yubashiri, and mune yaki.

Boshi: wide yakiba and almost ichimai. It is straight, and there are hakikake and a long return.

This is a Juyo Token Fuyuhiko katana. There is a standard width, the tip has sori, and there is a chu-kissaki. The shape is from the latter half of the Muromachi period. The jigane is itame mixed with large itame, the hada is visible, there is a dark color, a slightly less refined jigane, and the entire ji shows Northern Japan's characteristics. The hamon is a wide suguha mixed with tobiyaki and yubashiri. The boshi has hakikake, a wide yakiba, and becomes an ichimai style, and from the jigane and boshi, this looks like Hokuiku and sue-koto period work. At this point, it is difficult to say this is Fuyuhiko's work. The hamon is a relatively organized suguha, and there are tobiyaki flowing sideways which is from clay falling off during yaki-ire. There are unnatural yubashiri and muneyaki, and the moto has a narrow yakidashi, and these are Fuyuhiko's characteristic points. People recognized this, and voted for the correct answer in the first vote.

According to the Meikan, Fuyuhiro's work was copied in many areas such as Sagami, Mino, Wakasa, Hoki, Izumo, Bizen, Bichu, Bingo, Kii, and Aki, and because of this, they have a wide range of styles, and no fixed form. Therefore, beside this work being slightly unsuitable for kantei, people could not answer correctly in the first vote, but many had the correct answer at the second and third votes, and I was impressed.

On page 16, the oshigata is 92% of the actual size.

Kantei To No. 4: Katana

Mei: Yamato no kami Yasusada

Length: slightly over 2 shaku 8 bu

Sori: 2.5 bu

Style: shinogi zukuri

Mune: ihorimune

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

Hamon: notare mixed with gunome; some parts of the midare pattern have angular shaped features; the entire hamon is a wide midare; there are ashi, frequent nie, and some areas have a rough nioiguchi; on the ura side around the monouchi, area there are small yubashiri.

Boshi: the omote is yaki-kuzure suguha, and the tip is round; the ura is straight with a round tip.

The widths at the moto and saki are different, there is a shallow sori, a stick-like shape, and a chu-kissaki. The jigane is a tight ko-itame hada, the shinogi ji has masame hada, and from these details, you can look at this as a Kanbun Shinto sword, and in particular, an Edo shinto sword. The hamon is mainly a high and wide notare. It has gunome, and in some places angular shaped features. The mune angle is sharp, and there is a prominent stick-like shape, and you can recognize these as Yasusada's characteristic points. Considering that Yasusada made many long blades, this is not a short katana, but rather more likely, a long wakizashi.

Besides the correct answer, many people voted for Kotetsu and Edo Hojoji. In the case of Kotetsu, it is supposed to have a straight yakidashi at the moto, and large and small gunome fused together which are called hyoutanba, and thick ashi. Also, if it were Hojoji work, the hamon would be a chu-suguha style, and the border of the hamon would not have very much high and low variations, and continuous juzuba, and is different from this.

Note: on page 19, the right side oshigata is 93% of the actual size.

Kantei To No. 5 : Katana

Mei: Kawachi no kami Fujiwara Masahiro

Hizen kuni Bichu daijo Fujiwara Masanaga

Length: 2 shaku 4 sun 6.5 bu

Sori: 6.5 bu

Style: shinogi zukuri

Mune: ihorimune

Jigane: tight ko-itame hada; some areas have a visible hada; there are large abundant ji-nie, fine chikei and a slightly dark color.

Hamon: straight yakidashi at the moto, and then gunome, choji, ko-gunome, and angular shaped features connected by a notareba. There are ashi, yo, and areas with a dense nioiguchi. The valleys of the midare hamon have dense and frequent nie, and there are sunagashi and tobiyaki.

Boshi: straight; the tip is round, and there is a long return.

Horimono: on the omote and ura there are bo hi carved into the nakago.

This is a gassaku katana by the Nidai Masahiro and his son Masanaga. It is wide, and the widths at the moto and saki are not very different. It is thick, there is a slight sori with a chu-kissaki, and this has a Hizen characteristic well-balanced good shape. The entire jigane is a tight ko-itame hada, but in some places, the hada is visible and has a dark color. Considering these elements, you can look at this as Bo-Hizen work. The hamon is gunome and choji midare, and the elements are grouped and connected by a shallow notare hamon. There are

more strong nie in the valleys of the midare hamon. The boshi is straight and follows along the fukura and there is a long return, and these are Hizento characteristic points and show well the school's unique midare hamon.

In voting, people voted for Bo-Hizen smiths such as Masahiro, Yukihiro, and Tadakuni and Shin-Kunisada. Among the Hizento, Tadakuni's works have good midare hamon with prominent kinsuji and sunagashi, they are dynamic, and there is a sense of exuberance. In the case of his midare hamon, we have often seen midarekomi boshi with strong hakikake and a long return. This is different from Tadahiro's style and Bo-Hizen smiths such as Masahiro and Yukihiro where the boshi goes along the fukura and is straight, with a komaru and return. Yukihiro has sometimes has wide choji and unusual hamon, and Masahiro has similar hamon. Therefore we judged it could be difficult narrow this work down to an individual name, and all Bo-Hizen smiths' names are treated as correct answers. The Shin Kunisada answer is supposed to come from the yakidashi at the moto, and besides the midare hamon, the boshi is straight, round, and with a return. Generally, his entire hamon are small with gunome and choji, and sometimes in the mitsugashira and monouchi area, and the mune have tobiyaki.

The Nidai Masahiro, after his father passed way in Kanbun 5 (1665), changed his name to Kawachi no kami, and on the same day his son Masanaga

received the Bitchu daijo title, and we can recognize that this is at least after they received the title seen on the Kanbun 5 nen April 13th work.

Note: The nakago picture is 93% of the actual size.

Shijo Kantei To No.812 in the September 2024 issue

The answer for the Shijo Kantei To is a katana by Kato Tsunahide dated Bunka 12 (1815).

As the signature indicates, this is a gassaku work by Kato Tsunanori and Suishinshi school smiths, such as his teacher Suishinnshi Masahide, his son Suishinshi Sadahide, Masahide's student Taikei Naotane and Nakatsuka Mitsuhide, and at this time we treated Masahide and Taikei Naotane as correct answers. However, this entire work well illustrates Kato Tsunahide's characteristic points. From now on if you see blades similar to this one, you should first consider Tsunahide.

In Bunka 12 (1815) all the smiths' ages were: Masahide, 66 years old; Tsunahide 39 years old; and Sadahide, Naotane, and Mitsuhide were 37 years old (reference: Hosokawa Masayoshi was 30

years old, and Chounsai Tsunatoshi was 18 years old). This was made on January 1st by the same generation Masahide student smiths as Tsunatoshi. In a special group collaboration, they made a commemorative work (in Bunka 1 or 1804, Mitsuhide changed his name to Kuniyasu, but he is supposed to have used his Suishinshi student name when he was working under Suishinshi).

All the signatures were carved by Tsunahide, and the upper half of the blade is typical of his characteristic style. Probably, the school students' collaboration was not the main effort, and it is possible they worked more on specific tasks or aspects of the sword.

The following year Bunka 13 (1816) Tsunahide was 40 years old, and there is a story that he became mentally deranged, and actually, after Bunka 13, we never see his work. His active time was during the early half of the Shinshinto period, but it is somewhat difficult to pinpoint the precise period. But this sword has a narrow shinogi ji width for the blade's width, a thick kasane, poor hiraniku, a long kissaki, and muji style forging, and if you can observe these characteristic points, it is possible to narrow the blade down to Shinshinto work. Also, there is a large sori, so it has to have been around the Bunka to Tembo period, and this is often one of Tsunahide's characteristic points.

In the early half of the Shinshinto period, Osaka Shinto style toran-midare hamon were widely popular, and there were two styles. One is large and small gunome hamon arranged in order, and round top gunome shapes are clearly present, and there is also a large gunome midare style. The other style is gunome-choji and continuous gunome at the top of the hamon, and with vertical variations slightly controlled and tilted features, and there is a clear wave shaped toran-midare hamon, just like on this katana. Among the smiths at the time, large gunome midare hamon were made by Suishinshi Masahide, Tegarayama Masahide, and the Ichige Tokurin smiths. Of the toran-midare group, Ozaki Suketaka and Tsunahide are representative.

A comparison of Tsunahide and Suketaka's toran-midare, often brings up the different angular shapes in the valleys which drop from the top of the midare-hamon. Tsunahide's valley shapes are narrow, the vertical walls are long, and they can appear with a shape just like a bucket, and the valley corners and bottom are slightly round. Suketaka's shapes have wave crests extending almost over the valley, which becomes a trapezoid like shape, and between the wave crest and valley bottom, the valley walls are about the same, and the valley looks like a square. Around the katana's central area, one can recognize Tsunahide's characteristic toran valleys, but around the monouchi area, Suketaka style valleys appear. Sometimes Tsunahide has a type of trapezoid-like

shape, and so it is not the deciding factor. Also, it is said that Tsunahide often mixed three types of gunome together in his hamon, but Suketaka sometimes has similar hamon with mixed types of gunome, and this is not a deciding factor.

However, one of the points of differentiation between the smiths is the thickness of the nioiguchi. Tsunahide's nioiguchi are slightly tight, and his tobiyaki look hard. Compared to this, Suketaka's nioiguchi are wide and dense, and there are abundant ko-nie, and more like Sukehiro and Terukane's often seen toran-midare hamon. Also, Suketaka's nakago tips are iriyamagata, and this becomes an important difference.

In voting, some people voted for his father Kato Kunihide and Chounsai Tsunatoshi. Tsunahide had a short active period, and even though his name is famous, his works are few. Kunihide is famous as a Suishinshi student, but less so than Tsunahide, and there are few chances to see his work. He has more suguha and gunome midare hamon, and sometimes he has toran-midare hamon, which are often prominent gassaku work with Tsunahide. Also, from the Bunka to around the early Tenpo period with his early work, Tsunatoshi's nakago shapes are very similar to Kunihide's, so at this time, the Kunihide and Tsunatoshi answers are both treated as correct answers. However, if you look at this as a Kato school toran-midare hamon, Kunihide has very few works available, and Tsunatoshi is famous for many

choji-midare works. So if you can't narrow down the smith, you are better off voting for Tsunahide who produced a high percentage toran-midare work.

Beside these, many people voted for Suishinshi Masahide, and as I mentioned above, many of his tora-midare hamon have large gunome, and also have a dense nioiguchi, the nie are uneven in places, and they overflow into the ji to form black hadaka-nie, and many of his yakidashi are the same width as the upper part of the hamon. His ura side dates start from the yasurime starting area, and you need to pay attention to all types of discrepancies.

Taikei Naotane's early work has either large gunome and toran groups. However, the same as Masahide, he has dense nioiguchi and frequent nie, and we often see hadaka-nie, and inside and at the edge of the hamon there are frequent hataraki such as sunagashi, kinsuji, hotsure, and yubashiri. However his early signatures are a gyosho style in a large size, his ura side date locations start the same way as Masahide's.

Also, some people emphasized the three gunome grouped together in one group, and they voted for Ichige Tokurin and Itakura Gon-no-shin Terukane (the nidai Echigo no kami Kanetsada). Tokurin has large gunome midare hamon instead of toran midare hamon, and a dense or wide nioiguchi, abundant nie, and a very clear nioiguchi, and these are supposed to be his characteristic points. Rather

than a group of three gunome in his hamon, he had repeated gunome in one, or two, or three gunome groups with a constant interval.

The Terukane answer is supposed result from the three gunome groups under the yokote. Roughly, in Terukane's gunome hamon, there are tilted gunome from the nagoto to yokote (Tsunahide has a few examples like this) and on this katana they become higher and this is a difference. Also, if it were his work, he has a characteristic high ihorimune, and a dense nioiguchi, inside of the hamon the sunagashi stand out, and the nakago tip is iriyamagata.

Explanation by Ooi Gaku.

Notice

The number of articles accepted for Shinsa will be limited

In order to have efficient and accurate Shinsa evaluations, the NBTHK will limit the number of articles which will be accepted for Shinsa. We are sorry for any inconveniences this will cause. If any items are submitted with false statements or descriptions, and the NBTHK observes that an application is incorrect or inappropriate,

these items will be removed from the Shinsa without notice, and the applicants could be refused permission to participate in future Shinsa

Token Shinsa

A limited number of items will be accepted. During the acceptance window or month for a Token Shinsa, a limited number of items will be accepted, and this will generally be 1,600 items.

The number of articles accepted through internet applications for a Shinsa will usually be limited to 1,400 items.

The number of articles accepted through paper applications will usually be limited to 200 items

Toso Shinsa

Toso (koshirae) Shinsa applications can be made by mail or through the internet.

For these Shinsa, an upper limit of 100 items will be accepted.

The number of items accepted through internet applications will usually be limited to 80 items.

The number of items accepted through paper applications will generally be 20 items.

Tosogu Shinsa

Tosogu (koshirae component) Shinsa items will generally be limited to 750 items

Up to 650 items will be accepted from internet applications.

Up to 100 items will be accepted from paper applications.

Applications through the internet

After a registration for shinsa is completed, click on the “registration” button, and the screen should show your complete pre-registration document. After the pre-registration is complete and you have a confirmed reservation number, you cannot change the accepted shinsa item for another item. In case you desire to change an item for shinsa, you must cancel the registered item, and then register another item. If you cancel an accepted item when the submitted Shinsa applications reach the limited number, other people’s items cannot be accepted for Shinsa.

During the registration period, if you wish to register another item, and we have already reached limit for the number of accepted items, you cannot register any additional items, so please be aware of this.

The Shinsa’s application period extends from the 1st to the 25th of the month, starting at 10:00 am.

Application via documents

The NBTHK must receive applications within the designated application period.

The application period is from the 1st to 7th of the month (a date stamp is required).

The order of acceptances for a Shinsa will be determined by the stamp's date and time. If the number of applications is over the limited number, we will decide by lottery which items will be accepted.

The lottery will use digital process:

- 1. We will use the Excel RAND function targeted to the lottery, and to each applicant we will issue a random number.***
- 2. Based on the number of applicants, until we reach the limiting number, we will accept Shinsa applications by the ascending order of the random assigned numbers.***

Sometimes, items arrive without postmarks, in a letter bag, or with a postage stamp, so please be aware of this. We cannot accept applications delivered directly to the NBTHK by a courier service.

When the number of documents is above the limited acceptance number, or past the acceptance date, we will return the applications.