

NBTHK SWORD JOURNAL
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MEITO KANSHO:
APPRECIATION OF IMPORTANT SWORDS

Juyo Token

Mei: Soshu ju Akihiro
Oei 5 (1398)

Accompanied by a Honami Koyu origami dated Kyoho 14 nen (1729)

Owner: NBTHK

Length: 1 shaku 3 bu 5 rin (31.35 cm)

Sori: 1 bu 2 rin (0.35 cm)

Motohaba: 9 bu 2 rin (2.8 cm)

Motokasane: 1 bu 7 rin (0.5 cm)

Nakago length: 2 sun 9 bu (8.8 cm)

Nakago sori: 3 rin (0.1 cm)

Commentary

This is hiratsukuri mitsumune wakizashi. It is wide, long, slightly thick, and there is a shallow sori. The jigane is itame mixed with mokume, in some places the hada is visible, and there are abundant ji nie and chikei. The hamon is gunome mixed with choji, and some ko-notare. There are ashi, yo, a dense nioiguchi, abundant even nie, yubashiri, tobiyaki and some muneyaki, and the blade is hitatsura. There are kinsuji, sunagashi, and a bright and clear nioiguchi. The omote boshi is a small midarekomi, and the tip is a small round shape. The ura boshi is a straight style with a round tip and return. Both sides have yakikuzure hakikake. The nakago is ubu, the tip is kurijiri, and the yasurime are katte sagari. There are two mekugi ana, and on the omote center, under the first mekugi ana (the original mekugiana) there is a five kanji signature, and the ura has a date.

At the end of the Kamakura period, Soshu Den work reached its peak under Masamune, and continued under Sadamune, and in the Nanbokucho period the school was led by Hiromitsu and Akihiro. Hiromitsu's dated work is confirmed around Kano (1350-51) to Joji 3 (1364). Akihiro's dated work is confirmed from Enbun 2 (1357) to Shitoku 4 (1387). From this, Akihiro is supposed to be a slightly junior

smith to Hiromitsu. Their hamon styles, instead of being mainly notare hamon which were seen until then, are hitatsura hamon mixed with “dango choji” in which the tops of the choji features are wide and round, and are a unique style. In addition, there are supposed to be intentionally placed tobiyaki, yubashiri and muneyaki. In other words, this style was an inheritance of the Soshu Den smiths, and the smith who established the hitatsura hamon style is Hiromitsu. This hamon style influenced not only the Sue Soshu smiths in the Muromachi period but also other country smiths, and continued into the Shinto and Shinshinto periods and up to the Gendaito period, and it was an innovative hamon style in Japanese sword history. Excessive hataraki such as tobiyaki and yubashiri could degrade the dignity of a sword. However, Hiromitsu’s and Akihiro’s hitatsura hamon appear natural and without any excessive decoration or details, and in their work, sophistication and dignity have not been compromised. From this, we can recognize the high level of their ability.

However, it is pointed out that in comparing the work of these smiths, most of Hiromitsu’s blades are over one shaku and are a large size, Akihiro has blades less than 1 shaku long and are a short short size. He has one wakizashi which is 1 shaku 7 sun long (in the Tokyo National Museum in Ueno) and a small tachi with a length of 2 shaku 7 bu. Also, most of his work has simple horimono such as katana hi, goma-bashi, suken, and work without horimono is very rare. The jiba (jigane and hamon) differences do not stand out much, but prominent dango choji hamon are seen more in Hiromitsu’s work, and the hamon are mainly a notare modelled after Sadamune’s work. Regarding signatures, Hiromitsu signed on the omote “Sagami koku ju-nin Hiromitsu”, and his ura dates are signed “x nen x gatsu hi”. Akimitsu signed only before Enbun 2 (1357) and in the same style as Hiromitsu. Other works are usually signed Soshu ju Akimitsu. In addition, from Oan 2 and 3 (1369-1370), he has two styles, one signed with the nen, gatsu, and hi kanji, and the other style omits the date. After Oan 5 (1372) he omitted the kanji for nen, gatsu, and hi, and signed with the nengo and year, such as “Eiwa 2” (1376).

This wakizashi shows Akihiro’s average length, and is wide and thin, and reflects the period’s characteristic large shape, and with the tobiyaki and yubashiri, the hamon becomes a hitatsura style. The hamon is dynamic and full of movement, and has a gentle nioiguchi, abundant even nie, a diverse range of hataraki such as kinsuji, niesuji, and sunagashi, especially on the omote below the fukura, where it becomes wider which shows a noticeable Soshu Den element. In addition, there are large bunches of dango choji, and this is a masterpiece fully demonstrating his unique characteristics.

This is a Kishu Tokugawa heirloom. the “Tokugawa Jikki” (diary) lists on the page titled “the Yutokuin (Shogun Yoshimune) Jikki” No 30, in Kyoho 14 (1729) on September 28th says that “on the occasion of Kii Chunagon Munenao’s first son Naomatsu’s ceremony of reaching manhood, Yoshimune gave him part of his name, made a toast, and gave him a Soshu Akihiro’s wakizashi, and since then Naomatsu was called Hitachi-no-suke Munenobu Ason”. This is the Kishu Tokugawa’s sixth generation Munenao’s first son Naomatsu, and he appeared at Edo castle for his Genpuku Ceremony (ceremony of attaining manhood). At this time, Shogun Yoshimune gave him part of his name and changed name to “Munenobu”, and gave

him this blade. The wakizashi, besides an origami, has the Nanki Tokugawa name on the saya, and it has historical value.

Last year in June, this was a gift from a sword collector along with the previous issue's (No.829) Hiromitsu. We would like to express our sincere gratitude for this gift.

Explanation and oshigata by Ishii Akira.

Shijo Kantei To No. 830

Information: Katana

Length: slightly over 2 shaku 2 sun 5 bu (68.25 cm)

Sori: slightly less than 5 bu (1.45 cm)

Motohaba: 1 sun (3.05 cm)

Sakihaba: 6.5 bu (2.0 cm)

Motokasane: 2 bu (0.65 cm)

Sakikasane: slightly over 1 bu (0.35 cm)

Kissaki length: 1 sun 2.5 bu (3.85 cm)

Nakago length: 5 sun 5.5 bu (16.85 cm)

Nakago sori: slight

This is a shinogi tsukuri katana with an ihori mune. There is a standard width, the difference in the widths at the moto and saki stand out. There is a standard thickness, the tip has sori, and there is a long chu-kissaki. There is an itame hada, mixed in places with mokume and nagare hada. The hada is slightly visible, there are ji-nie, and a very pale whitish color. The hamon and boshi are as seen in the oshigata. The midare hamon in places has prominent high and low variations, it is nie deki, there are muneyaki, and a slightly worn down nioiguchi. The nakago is ubu and short, and the bottom is conspicuously narrow. The nakago tip is ha-agari kurijiri (sometimes this smith made iriyamagata), and the yasurime are kate sagari. There are three mekugi ana, and on the omote, under the mekugi ana, along the mune side there is an excellently engraved two kanji signature.

Tokubetsu Juyo Tosogu

Juyo Bijutsuhin

Fukei zu (scenery design) tsuba

Mei: Yamashiro kuni Fushimi ju Kaneie

Kaneie is famous as an originator of tsuba with scenery themes, and since historical times he was admired as a master of iron tsuba, and was mentioned by name along with Nobuie. He used a variety of tsuba shapes, such as mokko gata (Japanese quince), nadekaku gata (square shaped with slightly rounded corners), maru gata (round), futatsu mokko gata and kobushi gata (fist shaped). Many of them show an excellent balance of design and shape. His jigane are all iron, and his forging was unrivalled. On the ground he produced a texture using tsuchime, and his work is elegant.

This tsuba has a unique shape, an elegant and tasteful iron ground, and the iron is textured using a moderate tsuchime technique. Noting the uchikaeshi-mimi (rim) width and thickness and exquisite design, this tsuba demonstrates Kaneie's high level of skill in working iron. The scenery on the omote side has a mountain peak, on the right side there is a tree, and on the bottom, there are waves. On the ura's upper part, we see the same kind of mountain, the bottom shows a boat carved in sukidashi-bori and kebori. The composition makes use of blank space and perspective, and there is a sense of a grand space, and this is Kaneie's unique design, and the entire work has a calm and composed atmosphere. Furthermore, on the omote and ura, the pagoda's roof elements (sorin) and breaking waves are emphasized using very small gold and silver inlays. This is a masterpiece showing a majestic landscape illuminated by the sun, and is beautifully expressed.

This tsuba will be exhibited at the "Japanese Sword Juyo Bijutsu-hin Items" exhibit from Saturday March 14 to Sunday May 24 at the NBHTK.

Explanation by Arakawa Fumihito

Teirei Kansho kai

Date: February 14 (the second Saturday of the month)

Place: Token Hakubutsukan Auditorium

Lecturer: Ishii Akira

Kantei To No. 1: Tachi

Mei: Yasuhiro

Length: 2 shaku 6 sun 3 bu

Sori: 9.5 bu

Style: shinogi tsukuri

Mune: ihorimune

Jigane: itame mixed with mokume; jifu are present; some places have nagare hada; there is a slightly visible hada and clear jifu-like midare utsuri.

Hamon: mainly a choji style hamon mixed with gunome, togari, and irregular shapes; around the monouchi there is a suguha style, and the entire hamon has less vertical variation; there are ashi, yo, and almost a nioideki.

Boshi: straight and large with round point and a small return.

Horimono: on the omote and ura there are bo-hi finished with marudome.

This is the Bizen smith Yasuhiro's tachi from the latter half of the Kamakura period. Today he has three Juyo Token and two Juyo Bijutsuhin. The two Juyo Bijutsuhin works are signed: one is signed "Bizen Koku Osafune ju Ukon Shokan Yasuhiro tsukuru, and dated Tokuji 2 (1307) 10 gatsu hi. The other is signed "Bizen Koku Osafune ju-nin Sabejo Yasuhiro tsukuru", and from these it is clear he was an Osafune smith. The sword book "Meikan", beside these periods, lists work from the Showa, Kagen, and Enkyo periods. His active period was either the same as Nagamitsu's later work, or the same as Kagemitsu's and Sanenaga's active period. His hamon styles are suguha with some ko-nie, except for this one. His signature style is different from the Osafune mainstream smiths, and have a more casual presentation, and with his blade styles, this shows a different lineage from the mainstream smiths. However he is from a different school, and we can imagine from his title, he supposed to have had an official position. Because he has such a small number of works, he could have collaborated with mainstream smiths, or could have a short career.

This work has a large koshisori and the sori does not decrease at the tip, and there is a long tachi shape. There is a mainly choji style hamon mixed with gunome, and around the center of the hamon, the hamon is wide. The monouchi area is a narrow gentle suguha style. Moreover, the boshi omote from above the yokote to the tip becomes straight, and is called a "Sansaku boshi", and the style is similar to Nagamitsu's, and from this a majority of people voted for Nagamitsu. Besides Nagamitsu, some people voted for Chikakage. Many of his works are based on suguha mixed with square gunome and saka-ashi, and relatively many of them are similar to Kagemitsu's work.

This is not only Yasuhiro's midare hamon work, but also you can recognize a relationship with the mainstream Osafune school.

In addition, there is an ubu tachi shape from the latter half of the Kamakura period, and we can confirm the period's nakago shape and these details are valuable. Also, this has an origami dated Kyoho 2 (1717) by Honami Kochu and a value of 1000 kan.

The nakago is shown at 86% of its actual size.

Kantei To No. 2: Katana

Mei: Kawachi no kami Fujiwara Kunisuke
Kanei 19 nen (1642) 2 gatsu kichijitsu

Length: slightly over 2 shaku 4 sun 4 bu

Sori: slightly less than 7 bu

Style: shinogi tsukuri

Mune: ihorimune

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

Hamon: yakidashi at the moto, and above it, a mainly choji style hamon mixed with gunome, togari, and angular features; the entire hamon is wide along the upper part of the blade. There are ashi, a dense nioiguchi, and abundant regular ko-nie; on the ura's upper part the nioiguchi is slightly rough, there is a little tobiyaki, and from the middle to the to upper part of the blade there is pale muneyaki.

Boshi: wide yakiba which is straight, a komaru and a return.

The widths at the moto and saki are slightly different, there is a standard sori, the sori is emphasized around the koshimoto, and there is a chu-kissaki, and this clearly shows a Kanei to Shoho period shape. The jigane is a very well forged and refined ko-itame hada. Also, the hamon has an obvious yakidashi, the entire hamon is high and mainly composed of choji and mixed with various other hamon elements. There are variations in the hamon, a dense nioiguchi, abundant nie but no mura-nie, and the jiba (jigane and hamon) is bright and clear. From this, a top candidate for the smith would be either the Shodai Kunisuke or Shin Kunisada, and as expected many people voted for those two smiths.

For both of these smiths, the style of their work was similar. However, usually the difference between the two smiths' characteristic points are: Kunisuke's yakidashi gradually become wider and show a gentle trend; his midare hamon in some places reaches the shinogi, and overall the hamon is higher. In addition, his boshi tend to be wide, and in his midare hamon, each hamon element stands out when compared to Kunisada's hamon. On the other hand, it is pointed out that Kunisada's yakidashi are parallel to the hamon, his midare hamon are mainly densely packed with round top choji, his nagare hamon around the monouchi area are prominently high, and around the monouchi there are tobiyaki and muneyaki, and sometimes the top of the hamon has tobiyaki.

This was made five years before he passed away, and one opinion is that this was a daimei made by either the Nidai Kunisuke (Naka Kawachi) or the Shodai Sukehiro (Soboro Sukehiro). Either way, this is his typical hamon, and Kunisuke's characteristics are seen here. On the omote, we see the Naka Kawachi's characteristic "fist shape choji" original hamon, and with his few signed works, this is one of his best examples. Before and after the war this belonged to the famous sword collector Mr. Okano Taromatsu's collection.

Kantei To No. 3: Tachi

Mei: Bizen Osafune Iesuke

Eikyo 9 nen (1437) 8 gatsu hi

Length: 2 shaku 5 sun 6.5 bu

Sori: slightly over 8 bu

Style: shinogi tsukuri

Mune: ihorimune

Jigane: itame mixed with mokume and nagare hada; the entire hada is slightly visible; there are ji-nie, chikei and midare utsuri.

Hamon: mainly choji mixed with gunome, ko-gunome, togariba, and angular shaped features. There are some open bottom midare. There are ashi, yo, a nioideki hamon, and some ko-nie. On the ura around the monouchi area there are kinsuji.

Boshi: small midarekomi; on the omote the point is a komaru; on the ura the point is a togari shape, and there is a return.

The fumbari at the habaki moto is obviously gone, and you can recognize that this is a suriage tachi. The original shape is supposed to have had a koshisori, the tip would have had sori, and there would have been a tachi shape. In addition, it is prominently wide, and from this you could have guessed that this was from the early Muromachi period and around the Oei period. Also, the jigane is itame mixed with mokume hada, there are some jifu style dark areas, midare utsuri, and a prominent open bottom midare hamon. From these details, you should look at this as Oei Bizen work.

Among these smiths, two smiths, Morimitsu and Yasumitsu are famous. Compared with their work, the hada pattern is slightly irregular, the entire hada is slightly visible, and somewhat less refined. In addition, the hamon is mixed with irregularly shaped features, togariba, and in places smaller sized features. In some places there is a slightly irregularly shaped hamon, and the entire hamon is not orderly. We can say if it were work by Morimitsu or Yasumitsu, their hamon, from the moto to saki have a regular or consistent pattern, and there are few of these irregular and variable features. Also, in some places, the nioiguchi appears crumbled or irregular, and appear stained, like we see here. Therefore, in view of the workmanship, Iesuke is not quite up to their standards, and going lower in the smith's rankings, the names of Iesuke and Noriie come to mind. Beside them, some people focused on the open bottom midare hamon, and voted for Sukesada. Sue Bizen midare hamon are a fukushiki style, but a different style from this sword, and usually do not contain this many types of hamon features.

An additional comment is that in Bizen Koku, after the Oei period, the numbers of tachi made was overwhelmingly lower when compared with other provinces, but still continued into the early half of the Muromachi period.

The nakago is shown at 97% of the actual size.

Kantei To No. 4: Katana

Mei: Fujiwara Nagasada

Keio 4 (1868) Tsuchinoe Tatsu nen 8 gatsu hi

Length: 2 shaku 2 sun 2 bu

Sori: slightly over 4 bu

Style: shinogi tsukuri

Mune: mitsumune

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

Hamon: mainly gunome, and mixed with ko-notare. There are ashi, a dense nioiguchi, thick slightly uneven rough nie, kinsuji, niesuji, and sunagashi.

Boshi: straight; on the omote the point is komaru. On the ura, the point has a togari shape; both sides have hakikake and there is a long return.

The width, thickness, and kissaki are standard, and a difference in the widths at the moto and the saki is not prominent. There is a moderate sori, and obviously this is not a tachi shape, and is a Shinshinto period work. Looking at the hamon, it is mainly gunome, there are abundant nie, prominent kinsuji, niesuji, and sunagashi, some places have an unusual two layer hamon, and from this, it is obviously Soshu Den work, and at first, Kiyomaro's name comes to mind. However, this does not have Kiyomaro's strong nie hataraki, boldness, and unique broken rhythm, so we must be hesitant to decide this is his work.

This is a katana by Okachiyama Nagasada. In the Japanese sword world, the Nagasada name is relatively well known, but we do not have many opportunities to look at his work, but he has a good reputation as a skilful smith. Many of his works have a mitsumune, and mune angle is steep. His fukura are not poor like the Yamaura school, his boshi do not have a prominent midarekomi, and many of them are a suguha style. Many of his hamon are mixed with characteristic togari shapes which we do not see on this the katana, there is no prominent Kiyomaro style hamon with a characteristic wide and narrow nioiguchi, strong and weak nie, and Nagasada's hataraki are uniform. In other words, his work is similar to Kiyomaro's but not the same, and this katana shows his characteristic points very well.

Not a few people voted for Motohira and Masayuki. Many of the Shinshinto Satsuma shapes have a relatively prominent sori at the koshimoto, contain togari with nie and thick kinsuji called "Satsuma no imozuru". Also, the nie itself stands out and are rough ara-nie, and these details are seen on this katana.

Kantei To No. 5: Katana

Mei: Choshu Setozaki ju nin Akikuni

Length: 2 shaku 2 sun 5 bu

Sori: slightly over 5 bu

Style: shinogi tsukuri

Mune: ihorimune

Jigane: itame mixed with mokume hada and nagare hada. There are ji-nie, and chikei.

Hamon: round top ko-gunome are continuous, and there is a midare. There are frequent ashi and a dense nioiguchi with ko-nie.

Boshi: straight with a komaru and return. The tip has small hakikake.

Horimono: on the omote and the ura there are bonji, and under this there are long koshi-hi carved through the nakago.

This is a Choshu Akikuni katana. In the past, for the Kanteito this smith's work has only been seen once. From this, people took time to decide on the answer, and very few people voted for the correct answer. Akikuni's hamon are seen with three styles. There are suguha, round top gunome which are continuous from the moto to saki, and a suguha style mixed with ko-notare and gunome. This is a good example of his continuous hamon. In this case, there is a dense nioiguchi with ko-nie, and at a glance, this is fresh and young looking. Akikuni has the same kind of tachi dated Oei 31 nen (1424), which became the No. 26 Juyo Token, and we often see this kind of style. Taking this opportunity, I wish you would notice this and view it as a reference for future appraisals.

In voting, from the narrow continuous hamon, Yoshii school work is a good answer, but usually Yoshii smiths' work has unique utsuri just like an inverted midare hamon. This work has no such utsuri and the nioiguchi appears soft. However, usually Akikuni's signature is on the flat area of the nakago, and away from the shinogi ji. In the case of hi or grooves, they extend well into the nakago or through it.

Also, the signature's location "Setozaki" is today's Yamaguchi prefecture's Nagato City Kenzaki's part of the coast, and it flourished as a port of call for shipping along the Japan sea. Among Akikuni's works, this is the only blade with a location and with a listed date, so this is a very informative work.

Shijo Kantei To No. 828 in the New Year, 2026 issue.

The answer for the New Year's Shijo Kantei To is katana by Katsumura Tokukatsu (the shodai).

This katana is dated Ganji 1 Kinoe Ne 8 gatsu hi. That year (1864), in March, the Mito domain's Fujita Koshiro (son of Fujita Toko) who was part of the Resurrect the Emperor and Expel the Barbarians movement was raising an army at Tsukuba mountain and this was called the Tengu Party Revolt (Ganji Kinoe Ne revolt). Even after that there was a series of riots all over Japan such as the Ikedaya incident, the Kinmon no ran (Hamaguri gomon no hen), the Shikoku fleet Shimonoseki shelling incident, and the Choshu riots. This was a time in the Bakumatsu period when tension was further rising.

Around this time, the senior Mito sword smiths, Ichige Tokurin and Naoe Sukemasa had passed away in the Tenpo period. Tokugawa Nariaki (Rekko) was enthusiastic

about promoting swords, and spent time with Mito sword smiths such as the two senior smiths, Naoe Suketomo, and Tokukatsu, and sometimes he did yakiire by himself, and he passed away in Manen 1 (1860). Also, the next generation lord Tokugawa Yoshiatsu (Junkou) was deeply interested in sword making, and he left swords with his own kao. At this time, his Mito domain mansion was in Edo's Koishikawa, and there, he could concentrate on sword making. Because of this, Tokukatsu himself didn't directly become involved in the Tengu party revolt. At this time, due to social conditions, the demand for swords increased, and the domain supported this. In the Ganji and Keio periods Tokukatsu's sword making activity increased considerably, and he left the largest number of swords among the Mito sword smiths.

In this period with the Bakumatsu riots, the Mito domain had a growing interest in the practicality of weapons. There was a token (sword) durability test called "Mito aratameshi (rough cutting)", and in order to do well in this test, swords needed to be thick and strong. In the Shinshinto period, Mito left an especially large number of robust swords. Also, in the case of swords with standard lengths, they are thick and wide. Long swords maintained their thickness over their full length (the thickness of the blade did not taper down going towards the point), and possibly to avoid any difficulty in handling them, many of them had a relatively standard width, and this was supposed to emphasize practicality or functionality.

These blades were thick and wide, and the difference in the widths at the moto and saki was small. There was a shallow sori, a long chu-kissaki, and a Shinshinto shape. In the hints, we listed the prominent thickness and robust shape to help focus on this type of blade. Also, because Tokukatsu adopted the Yamato Den's solid style, many of them had a wide shinogi ji and a high shinogi, and from this we can recognize this characteristic style.

In Tokukatsu's early days, from Kaei to around the Ansei period, his hamon are midare with mainly choji and gunome in a midare hamon which he learned from his teacher Tokumune, and he trained with Unju Korekazu and Hosokawa Masayoshi. Around the end of the Kaei period, his style gradually shifted to Yamato's Hosho Den, and around the end of the Bunkyu period, he worked largely in the Hosho Den style.

Because of this, many his jigane show a masame hada, there are abundant ji-nie and fine chikei. Also, a high percentage of his work has a tight masame hada, similar to other Shinshinto smiths. However, sometimes he has a rough visible hada and this is a one of his characteristic points.

Many of his hamon are based on a Yamato influenced suguha, the hamon edge or border has hataraki and frequent nie, and there is a slightly worn down nioiguchi. Notably, before and after the Ganji period there are strong ha-nie, some mura nie, and particularly in the upper half of the blade, there are tobiyaki, yubashiri, and muneyaki which are entangled with the masame hada, and these details can cover a large area. Inside of the hamon and at the edge of the hamon, hataraki are long and frequent, and the work overflows with spirit. Many boshi have frequent

hakikake, are yakizume, or are a komaru with a return. His boshi returns are standard, but sometimes we see a long return.

His nakago tips are ha-agari kurijiri or kurijiri, the yasurime are kiri, in his very early work he has a few sujuchiugai tips with kesho. Many of his signatures are long and along the mune side, and the ura has a date. This katana has these characteristic points.

Beside Tokukatsu, a few people voted for his son-in-law the Shodai Masakatsu. He was Tokukatsu's collaborator, and sometimes is supposed to have signed his daimei. Because this kind of sosho style signature is considered to be a daimei, at this time, we treated Masakatsu as a correct answer. Masakatsu's own Yamato Den style has a relatively gentle suguha, and his jigane have less hataraki, just like Tokukatsu's work. Also, the yasurime are large sujichigai with kesho, and these details are different from Tokukatsu's.

For another proper answer Tokumune was Tokukatsu's teacher, he was the Shodai Ichige Tokurin's student, and also was supposed to have studied under Koyama Munetsugu. Many of his hamon are choji midare and his boshi are midarekomi.

Besides the correct and proper answers, Ichige Tokurin's work had a tight ko-itame hada with toran style large gunome, there is a dense nioiguchi, the jiba (jigane and hamon) is bright. Many of his yasurime are sujichigai with kesho yasuri, and kiri yasurime are seen sometimes with hirazukuri work.

If this were Saito Kiyondo's Yamato Den work, compared with Mito's strict shape standards, his shinogi ji are wide, there is a poor hiraniku, and the fukura in many of this works have a sharp shape. He has wide shinogi ji, but we see narrow shinogi ji more often. His hamon are a relatively gentle suguha with a tight nioiguchi. His boshi have hakikake which appear like like scratches made with a comb along the ji, and this is supposed to be one of his characteristic points. His yasurime are sujichigai.

The Shodai Kunikane has dated work after the Kanei period, and from this, wide blades with large kissaki are few. The hamon edge has frequent hataraki, the ji has tobiyaki, and yubashiri are not seen often. His nioiguchi are bright and clear. His yasurime are sujichigai and a large sujichigai.

Shinshinto Kunikane's 13th generation's work is seen relatively often, many of the shapes are either standard or narrow, the hamon are gentle and a quiet suguha, and tobiyaki and yubashiri are not seen often. His yasurime are sujichigai with kesho.

The Shodai Gassan Sadakatsu's masame hada work is often seen in the area under the Yokote, and appear like a wavy masame hada. Also, his yasurime are a large sujichigai and sujichigai with kesho.

Commentary by Ooi Gaku

NOTE: Once you vote for an answer and submit it, you cannot change it. Also, some people submit several answers, and in this case, even if one is the correct answer, all of their entries will become invalid. So please be careful and submit only one smith's name.