

NBTHK SWORD JOURNAL
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MEITO KANSHO
APPRECIATION OF IMPORTANT SWORDS

Juyo Bijutsuhin

Tanto
Mei: Norishige
Owner: NBTHK

Length: 7 sun 6 bu 2 rin (23.1 cm)
Sori: uchizori
Motohaba: 6 bu 4 rin (1.95 cm)
Motokasane: 1 bu 7 rin (0.5 cm)
Nakago length: 3 sun 4 rin (9.2 cm)
Nakago sori: slight

Commentary

This is a hiratsukuri tanto with an ihorimune, and the mune angle is sharp. There is a standard width, it is slightly thin, and there is an uchizori. The hada is itame mixed with mokume, there are spiral shaped hada, and the entire ji has a large pattern hada. There are abundant dense ji-nie, thick chikei, and a dark color jigane. The hamon is ko-midare mixed with ko-notare, there is a dense nioiguchi, abundant and rough nie, and hotsure at the hamon edge. There are kinsuji, sunagashi, yubashiri, and pale muneyaki at the bottom. The boshi is straight and has kuichigai-ba. The omote is a komaru. The entire ura is a nie kuzure style, and both sides have hakikake. The nakago is ubu, the tip is a ha-agari kurijiri, and the yasurime are a shallow katte-sagari. There are three mekugi ana, and on the center, there is a two kanji signature.

Norishige came from Etchu Koku Gofuku go Saeki, and in Edo period sword books such as the "Kokon Meizukushi" he is listed as one of the Masamune Jutetsu smiths. He has work that is supposed to be from Showa 3 (1314), Geno 1 (1319), and from the following year, Geno 2 (1320). The

“Kozan Oshigata” lists work from Enkyo 3 (1310) and Karyaku 3 (1328) with old oshigata. Also, in earlier studies, the historic sword book “Kiami Hon Meizukushi”, at the end of the book, there is a mei “Eitoku1 nen (1381) August” which is signed Kiami”. Norishige was called Goro Jiro, and he was a student of Kamakura Shintogo Nyudo Mitsuzane, and this has been confirmed. Looking at this information today, the conclusion would be that Norishige and Masamune did not have a mentor-protege relationship, but are both supposed to have been students in the Shintogo Kunimitsu school. In addition, many of Norishige’s signed works are tanto, he has only four tachi, of which two are Juyo Bunkazai, and two are Tokubetsu Juyo. His tanto tend to have an uchizori shape, and a slightly small size. His tachi are wide and the kissaki are a standard size, and from these details, today, the opinion is that Norishige was a slightly senior student to Masamune, and this has become the accepted viewpoint. His signatures, besides being two kanji, are “Saeki Norishige (saku)” and “Katsu Norishige”. His calligraphy styles show straight lines and a somewhat prominent curves, and they are not uniform. His jigane show a large itame, itame, and ko-itame hada with abundant nie, and all types of patterns, but his unmistakable unique jigane shows hard and soft areas which are mixed together and well forged. This jigane is called “Matsukawa-hada” which shows the steel’s charm. Noting this, the “Kiami Hon Meizukushi” commented on the characteristic steel’s good forging. Norishige has several hamon styles besides suguha, such as mixed with notare and komidare, and either style has strong nie. Examining Norishige’s work, his itame hada shows tangled kinsuji and sunagashi in the jigane and hamon, and complex variations. The jigane has yubashiri and tobiyaki, and might be a pioneer hitatsura hamon which contains many variations and complexities, and this is supposed to be the core of Norishige’s work. Many of his works express more prominent nie variations than Masamune’s work.

There is a standard width, a strong uchizori, and poor fukura, and this is similar to Norishige’s unique “takenoko sori” tanto shape. The jigane has Norishige’s unique “Matsukawa-hada” which shows the charm of his forging. In addition, the hamon is not one of his best efforts but shows his hataraki such as tobiyaki and yubashiri along with the hada pattern. If you examine it carefully, around the hamon border, in the jiba (jigane and hamon) there are kinsuji, niesuji, and sunagashi, and the nie and nioiguchi blend seamlessly into the hada pattern, and these details show his main characteristics. The work is subtle and exhibits many details. In his Juyo Token work, the majority of them do not have prominent tobiyaki and yubashiri, and in that respect from the shape, the jigane, and the hamon, this tanto is considered to be an example of his typical work.

In Showa 13 (1938) during the Juyo Bijutsuhin certification process, it became clear that the original owner was the former Fukuoka domain Kuroda family’s 17th lord Kuroda Nagashige, and it was handed down in the family. The accompanying ukon colored (a strong yellow) antique bag has a written address on it: Tokyo-shi, Akasaka-ku Fukuyoshi-cho Itchome, and the “Koshaku Kuroda Family”. This lends support to its being in their collection, and enhances its value.

In November of Reiwa 7 nen (2025), Mr, Nara Iwao gifted this with a total of 19 other blades to the NBTHK. We will study and exhibit them extensively, and we would like to express our sincere gratitude.

Explanation and oshigata by Ishii Akira

Shijo Kantei To 835

Information

Katana

Length: 2 shaku 3 sun 5 bu (71.2 cm)
Sori: slightly over 5 bu (1.6 cm)
Motohaba: slightly over 9 bu (2.8 cm)
Sakihaba: slightly less than 6 bu (1.75 cm)
Motokasane: 2.5 bu (0.75 cm)
Sakikasane: slightly less than 2 bu (0.5 cm)
Kissaki length: 9 bu (2.7 cm)
Nakago length: slightly less than 7 sun (21.1 cm)
Nakago sori: slight

This is a shinogi tsukuri katana with an ihorimune. There is a standard width, and the difference in the widths at the moto and saki is slight. The blade is thick and heavy for its width up to the saki. The width of the shinogi ji is notably narrow. There is a shallow sori and chu-kissaki. The jigane is a tight ko-itame hada, and is mu ji. The ko-itame hada is mixed with some nagare hada. There are abundant ji-nie. The hamon and boshi are as seen in the oshigata. In the hamon, there are thick long ashi, a dense nioiguchi, fine sunagashi, some niesuji, yubashiri, and a bright nioiguchi. The nakago is ubu, the nakago mune is round, and the tip is a narrow kurijiri. The yasurime are a large sujichigai with kesho, and there is one mekugi ana. On the omote, centered on the shinogi line, starting about a one kanji space up from the mekugi ana, there is a long kanji signature. On the ura, starting at a two kanji space above the mekugi ana, there is a date.

2026 Gendai Toshoku Ten Metal Engraving Crafts

NBTHK Chairman's Prize

Botan zu (peony design) menuki

Waritanzaku mei: Fuyuteru

Beginning this year, we are introducing a new prize, the “NBTHK Chairman’s Prize” for the best work among metal carvers and engravers. This includes horimono on the blade, metal engraving, shirasaya, toso, tsukamaki, and shirogane, and the first award recipient is Mr. Kuwana Fuyuteru. In 2025 at the Gendai Toshoku Ten he received the Kunzan award for his “sakura kuyo-mon karakusa kin zogan tsuba” which used precise karakusa inlays and was highly acclaimed.

This year, he turned from his Higo tsuba work, and created a single peony menuki in Somin’s style.

There is a high level of skill required to make menuki, and this is a softly or gently blossoming peony with a deeply carved core, and a high level of technical skill is required to execute this design, and Mr. Kuwana demonstrated his skills in producing this work. The layers and layers of petals are carefully carved, one by one, and skillfully express the flower’s unique softness. The more one looks at it, the more one forgets that this is metal work, and falls prey to the illusion that the flower seems to sway in the wind. Also, not only in the front (omote) menuki, but also on the back (ura) menuki, the volume of the petals is large, and we can recognize the artist’s efforts to carefully observe the original, and to try to depict it in the menuki.

Metal engraving work, including copies of original work, will lead to it being compared with older or original work. With this pressure, even this year, to produce these menuki, Fuyuteru has spent a considerable amount of time and effort. We are very delighted with these results which culminated in his winning the NBTHK’s Chairman’s Award. We also look forward to seeing his coming efforts for next year.

Explanation by Takeda Kotaro

Teirei Kansho kai

Date: July 11th (the second Saturday of the month)

Place: Token Hakubutsukan Auditorium

Lecturer: Ishii Akira

Kantei To No. 1: Wakizashi

Mei: Soshu ju Tsunahiro

Length: 1 shaku 2 sun 1 bu 4 rin

Sori: 2 bu 3 rin

Style: hiratsukuri

Mune: mitsumune

Jigane: itame mixed with mokume and nagare hada; there are jifu; the entire hada is moderately visible; there are ji-nie and chikei.

Hamon: ko-gunome mixed with choji; there is a ko-notare style hamon; going towards the point, the hamon becomes wider. There are ashi, yo, and abundant even nie; the upper half of the blade has tobiyaki, yubashiri, and muneyaki, and becomes hitatsura. There are some kinsuji and sunagashi.

Boshi: midarekomi; the tip is komaru; there is a long return which continues to form muneyaki.

From the prominent tobiyaki, yubashiri, and muneyaki, at a glance it is obvious this is Soshu Den hitatsura work. This kind of style was established in the Nanbokucho period by the Soshu smiths Hiromitsu and Akihiro, and the Kyoto Hasebe school smiths, and even in later generations, many smiths worked with this style. In the case of the Soshu smiths, their characteristic hamon are mixed with plump choji bunches called “dango choji” in a unique hamon. If it were Hasebe school work, there would be a mainly notare hamon, sometimes mixed with yahazu choji. Their boshi are large and round, and the return continues to form muneyaki, and you can recognize their style which is different from this work.

From the signature, this is supposed to be a Soshu Tsunahiro wakizashi from around the Tenmon period (1532-54). Tsunahiro produced good hitatsura hamon, and many of them have a nioiguchi, but this hamon has thick even nie, and the tobiyaki and yubashiri hataraki have a more natural feeling than seen in his usual work. Because of this, quite a few people judged this as work from earlier period smiths. However, on the omote's upper half, there are crescent moon shaped features in the hamon, and these are viewed as Tsunahiro's characteristic hamon features. It has an intentional or designed feeling when compared with Nanbokucho period hitatsura. Also, the inkoku calligraphy (incised characters) are not seen in work from either Hiromitsu and Akihiro, or in the Hasebe school's work, and it would be better to avoid their names from this point. In addition, the long thick blade with a prominent sakizori shape clearly shows the period's characteristic points.

Tsunahiro's only Juyo Bijutsuhin work is this wakizashi. According to one theory, this was handed down in the Dewa Koku Akita domain's Satake family.

Kantei To No. 2: Katana

Mei: Izumi no kami Fujiwara Kunisada

Length: 2 shaku 3 sun 4.5 bu

Sori: 5 bu 6 rin

Style: shinogi tsukuri

Mune: ihorimune

Jigane: ko-itame hada mixed with itame and mokume hada; the entire ji is well forged; there are abundant ji-nie, fine chikei, and mizukage at the machi.

Hamon: there is a yakidashi at the moto; above this, the hamon is mainly choji mixed with ko-gunome, and togariba; there are ashi, a dense nioiguchi, and thick slightly uneven ko-nie; on the ura around the monouchi area there are tobiyaki and prominent muneyaki.

Boshi: there is a wide yakiba which is straight; the point is a komaru, and there is a return.

This widths at the moto and saki are slightly different and there is a shallow sori. The emphasis in the sori is around the koshimoto. There is funbari and a chu-kissaki, and the shape is from the Kanei to Shoho period (1624-47).

The jigane has a well forged and refined ko-itame hada. The hamon has a clear yakidashi at the koshimoto, and above this, it is high, and composed mainly of choji hamon mixed with ko-gunome with variations. There is a dense nioiguchi, abundant nie, and the jiba (jigane and hamon) is bright and clear. From these details, Shin Kunisada or the Shodai Kunisuke's names are cited as prime examples, and just as expected, many people voted for these two smiths.

The work of both smiths is similar, but conventionally different characteristic points are: Kunisada's yakidashi are parallel to the edge, the hamon is composed mainly of large and small round top choji which densely packed together. The hamon is prominently wide around the monouchi. Along with this, there are tobiyaki and muneyaki, and sometimes there are three tobiyaki around the monouchi. On the other hand, Kunisuke's yakidashi are called "Osaka yakidashi" and gradually become wider going away from the machi. His midare hamon are prominently wide, and in places almost reach the shinogi. In addition to this, his boshi yakiba tend to be wide, and his hamon compositions consists of several different hamon patterns compared with Kunisada.

Based on these points, this katana shows Shin Kunisada's characteristic points. On the ura, around the monouchi area, tobiyaki are emphasized more than usual and this is a typical example of his hamon composition. A majority of people voted first for Kunisuke, but in the second vote, considering these differences, voted for Kunisada.

Kantei To No. 3: Tachi

Mei: Narimune

Length: 2 saku 4 sun 7 bu 5 rin

Sori: 7 bu 8 rin

Style: shinogi tsukuri

Mune: ihorimune

Jlgane: ko-itame hada mixed with mokume hada; the entire ji is tightly forged; there are abundant fine ji-nie, midare utsuri, and some jifu.

Hamon: ko-midare mixed with ko-gunome and ko-choji; on the ura, in the center area, there are prominent ko-choji; on the omote and in the ura's central areas, at the top of the hamon, there are tobiyaki; there are ashi, yo, a dense nioiguchi, even ko-nie, hotsure, uchinoke, kinsuji and sunagashi. Boshi: there is a weak yakiba; the boshi is straight and yakizume.

This blade has a large koshisori, funbari at the moto, the difference in the widths at the moto and saki is relatively prominent and the sori on the upper part of the blade falls slightly down going forward towards the kissaki. With the small kissaki, you can judge as work from the end of the Heian Period to the early Kamakura period. The ji shows a ko-itame hada pattern which is well forged, and there is clear utsuri. The hamon is komidare, and on the ura there are prominent ko-gunome and ko-choji, and there is a slightly artificial or unnatural feeling. From these details, and the period, the Ko-Ichimonji name comes up.

That said, the hamon has even ko-nie, and on the omote, the hamon is mainly komidare which shows a Ko-Bizen characteristic appearance. In addition, the period for Ko-Bizen and Ko-Ichimonji work overlapped, and some of their styles cannot be clearly identified as the work of one of the two groups. From this, the Ko-Bizen opinion is as good as the correct answer.

In addition, in the meikan, Norimune is listed as an Ichimonji school founder, and Norimune's son Narimune, born around the Shogen (1207-10) era, is Sukemune's younger brother, and today confirmed examples with his signature consist of less than ten works, so there is a limited number of works from this smith. Many of his tachi reflected the period's style, and are narrow and elegantly shaped, and his hamon are essentially the same as the early Ichimonji smith's styles, but his jigane are ko-itame hada and well forged like this example, and you can recognize the excellent forging, and the tachi shows his high level of skill.

Kantei To No. 4: Katana

Mei: Hizen Koku ju nin Iyo no jo Minamoto Munetsugu

Length: slightly over 2 shaku 3 sun 4 bu

Sori: 4 bu

Style: shinogi tsukuri

Mune: ihorimune

Jigane: small pattern itame hada; there is a slightly visible hada; there are abundant fine ji-nie and chikei.

Hamon: the entire hamon is wide; it is composed of gunome mixed with ko-gunome, konotare, and togariba; there are ashi, abundant nie, fine sunagashi, tobiyaki, and around the center of the blade, there are muneyaki.

Boshi: wide midarekomi, and almost a yaki-kuzure style. There are strong hakikake.

This blade is wide, and the difference in the widths at the moto and saki does not stand out. There is a shallow sori, slight funbari at the moto, and a chu-kissaki. From the shape you can guess this is either a Keicho Shinto or Shinshinto period work. However, the jiba (jigane and hamon) does not have a fresh Shinshinto feeling, so you can judge this as being Keicho Shinto work.

In this period, there was a strong Soshu Den style being expressed nationwide, and representative smiths are Hankei, Yasutsugu, Owari Ujifusa, Kashu Kanewaka, the Kyoto Horikawa and Mishina schools, Nanki Shigekuni, and Hizen Iyo no jo Munetsugu. The Hizen-to characteristic points are that there is no excessive sori, a so-called komenuka hada which is a fine visible hada, the hamon valleys have nie, in some places the nioiguchi has a belt-like shape, and there is a straight boshi along the fukura. However, these characteristics do not apply to Munetsugu, and he shows prominently different and unique characteristics among the Hizen smiths.

In other words, most of his shapes reflect the period just like this one, his jigane are mainly itame, and there are abundant ji-nie and frequent chikei, and on the whole, there is a strong texture or appearance present in the ji. Also, overall, his hamon are wide, there are small and large variations in the gunome midare, in some places there are togariba or a slightly midare-like togari hamon, and we would say it's impossible to name a composition or design which is his unique style. Also, there are abundant nie, kinsuji, sunagashi, tobiyaki, and yubashiri mixed with muneyaki which emphasizes Soshu Den hataraki, and we can see it in this katana. Moreover, an important point is his boshi, which invariably is midarekomi and has hakikake, and although there are differences in the strength of these features, there can be a kaen shape, and there is always some variation. This is a crucial key point to narrow down this sword as being Munetsugu's work.

In voting, only half of the people here voted for him. From the togari hamon, a relatively large number of people voted for Satsuma-to. If it were a Satsuma blade, there would be more ara-nie (rough nie) and prominent kinsuji inside of the hamon, and there would be a prominent sori around the koshimoto. Also, Munetsugu's nakago shape is a tanago-bara style. On long swords most of the other Hizen smiths signed on the ura side, starting with Fujiwara, but Munetsugu used Minamoto on the omote side. His different style shows up, not only in the upper half of the blade, but also on the nakago.

Kantei To No. 5: Wakizashi

Mei: Nobukuni

Length: 1 shaku 1 sun 3.5 bu

Sori: slightly over 1 bu

Style: hiratsukuri

Mune: mitsumune

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

Hamon: the bottom half is based on notare mixed with ko-gunome, and the upper half has a narrow suguha shape, with a slightly small notare style; there are abundant frequent ko-nie, sunagashi, and kinsuji; the bottom half has yubashiri.

Boshi: the omote is almost a suguha style; the ura is a small midarekomi; both sides have a komaru; there is a slightly long return, and the tip has hakikake.

Horimono: on the omote and ura there are katana-hi carved into the nakago; on the ura, the bottom half has traces of a soe-hi.

The Shodai Nobukuni is supposed to be Ryokai's son or Ryo Hisanobu's son and Ryokai's grandson. He has two styles of hamon. One is the traditional Rai school suguha style, and the other is based on a notare in a strong Soshu Den style. He is one of Sadamune's santetsu (three best students) along with Osafune Motoshige and Tanshu Hojoji Kunimitsu.

This wakizashi is wide long, and thin, and it obviously is Nanbokucho period work. The jigane is itame, there are abundant j-nie, frequent chikei, and nie utsuri. The hamon is notare, there are strong ha-nie, kinsuji, sunagashi, and yubashiri. The boshi is komaru with a return. There is hakikake, and at the first glance, this clearly shows Nobukuni's characteristic points. Furthermore, on the ura's bottom half and along the hamon side, there are prominent nagare hada, and this can be seen as one of his characteristic points too. However, after somewhat too much polishing, the blade is thin, and this stands out. Because of this, some opinions were that this was the work of a Hasebe school smith from the same period. Surely, some Hasebe school work is not a clear hitatsura, and their level of workmanship is fine. But if it were their work, the nagare hada would be seen, not only along the hamon side, but also along the mune side, and be mixed with mokume hada which would be sandwiched between the nagare hada above and below. There would also be more prominent tobiyaki and yubashiri, the boshi would be round, and there would be a large return sometimes continuing to form muneyaki and extending down to around the machi area, and this is seen more often as elements of a hitatsutsura hamon.

The Shodai Nobukuni inherited Daishinbo's style of carving, and he is skillful, and almost none of his work is without horimono. Most of his work has some horimono, and simple ones like on this blade, such as katana hi, futasuji hi, suken, and kurikara and hatahoko inside of a hitsu.

Shijo Kantei To No. 833 in the June, 2026 issue

The answer to the Shijo Kantei To in the June issue is a tachi by Shikkake Norinaga

Unfortunately, the signature was cut off below “Yamato Shikkake”, but from the signature and style, it can be clearly recognized as work by Norinaga. Norinaga has two signed tanto dated Bunpo 2 (1318) at the age of 48 which is owned by the Boston Museum, and a tanto dated Ryakuo 3 (1340), at the age of 69. These are the 47th and 69th Juyo Token blades. From this, Norinaga was born in Bunei 9 (1272), and his active period is very clear. On the other hand, there are several theories concerning where he lived and this is still unsettled. Candidate locations are Yamato Kuni Yamanobe Gun Kishida Mura (today's Tenri City), Soegami Gun Zoshi Mura (around the Todaiji area in Tanukezan Hachimangu), and Uda Gun Mitue Mura (Nara prefecture's To-tan, and the prefecture border with Mie).

Also, Hironori who is supposed to be his ancestor does not have any confirmed dated work. Norinaga is regarded as being the actual Shikkake school founder. The Meikan lists school smiths such as Norinari, Norizane, Norikuni, and Norisada, we almost cannot see any of these works today. In the Muromachi period, we have most often see tanto signed “Norinaga” and “Yamato Kuni Norinaga” and these are considered to be Shikkake school descendants.

Among the Shikkake school's descendant's work, most appear to be work from the latter half of the Muromachi period, and we can confirm the presence of several different signatures just like we see with Osafune Sukesada's kazuuchi signatures. Many of these blades were donated as honoto at the Danzan Shrine and Horyuji Saien Do. This is a hypothesis and my personal opinion, but I think that in historic times people donated Norinaga blades and prayed for fulfilment of their wishes, and consequently they experienced good luck. Since then, I can imagine that with believer's desires for honoto, multiple smiths likely produced swords with “Norinaga” signatures. For example, in Kanagawa Prefecture's Isehara Shi Ooyama, visitors donated “Osame tachi” which were large tachi honoto made out of wood, and this became a trend. Furthermore, letting my imagination run wild, outside of the Shikkake school, some smiths produced inferior blades. And later, these could serve as a foundation for considering Nara style blades to be an example of inferior swords and taba-katana (mass production or kazuuchimono swords).

Now, in talking about tachi, the shape has a standard width, the widths at the moto and saki are slightly different, although being suriage, funbari was left at the moto, there was a large koshizori, the tip has sori, and there is a chu-kissaki, and from these details, you can think about work from the latter half of the Kamakura Period.

Noting the wide shinogi ji for the width of the blade, how thick it is, and the high shinogi, we can recognize a robust look, and this shows Yamato's characteristic shape in this period.

In addition, the forging is itame with strong nagare and some masame, the hamon has frequent hotsure, kuichigai, sunagashi, and kinsuji, and the jiba (jigane and hamon) have prominent hataraki parallel to the hamon. Also,

from the monouchi, the hamon width gradually becomes wider, and at the same time the hamon edge hataraki and nie are strong which we often see in tanto, and these characteristic points appear in the tachi too. Moreover, the boshi has frequent hakikake and yakizume, and the entire tachi strongly shows Yamato Den's common characteristic points.

Among the work from the latter half of the Kamakura period in Yamato, Norinaga has many hamon mixed with continuous gunome and ko-gunome, and are based on a suguha style mixed with frequent gunome ashi, and these are major characteristic points which we can confirm. At this time, many people recognized this as important element in making a judgement. Also, Norinaga has several of works with gunome hamon which are continuous from the top to the bottom. Among the other Yamato school smiths, Norinaga actively incorporated trends from the latter half of the Kamakura period which were exemplified by the Osafune smiths' characteristic clear mixtures of gunome and ko-gunome in their hamon.

However, another of Norinaga's characteristic points is the forging which is not too tight, there is a slightly visible hada, and not too much strong ha-nie for the period's Yamato work. In addition, in some of his work, the nie and the nioiguchi are slightly shallow and tight.

Norinaga has almost no existing ubu nakago tachi, so we can't be sure of his nakago tips, but we can confirm that in the "Kokon Meizukushi", one oshigata looks like it is either kata-sogi (one side is shaved) or iriyamagata. Furthermore, two Juyo Bunkazai blades in the "Kozan Oshigata" show nakago tips which are either kata-sogi or iriyamagata, and considering that many tachi and tanto have their nakago tips in common, we can guess Norinaga's nakago tips are same as on his tanto, and either iriyamagata or a kata-sogi style.

Norinaga's yasurime are katte sagari, he signed long signatures on the omote along the mune side with a fine chisel, many of the mei can be on either side of the ana, or above the mekugi ana, and this is the same as his usual nakago style.

In addition, some historical books list Norinaga as being two generations judging from his long or short signatures, but in examining the books, we cannot find clear differences in the styles and the signatures. In addition, as I mentioned above Norinaga lived a long life for this period, and judging from this, in the latter half of the Kamakura Period to early the Nanbokucho period, the shodai Norinaga can be thought to be one person.

Besides the correct answer, some people voted for work from the Yamato five schools other than Shikkake, such as Senjuin, Teigai, Toma, and Hoshō.

The Senjuin school is the oldest among the five schools, and many of their shapes are narrow, the tip falls down going forward, there is an old style shape, the overall hamon width is low, some parts of the hamon are komidare, there is a classic old style, and tachi signatures are two kanji or just "Senjuin". From the hint about a long signature, some people voted for

Senjuin Yasushige. If we look at his Juyo Bijutsuhin work, his overall forging is a masame hada and unique.

In this period, the Teigai school's representative smith is Kanenaga. His forging is tight, among the Yamato smiths he has the least prominent nagare hada, there are strong nie and sometimes mura nie. Looking at his signed work, he has the strongest nie among the Yamato five schools, many of his hamon are a notare style, and there are slightly prominent wide and narrow variations in the hamon width. His nakago tips are kurijiri, the yasurime are takanoha, on tachi, his signatures are almost all two kanji mei, the same as the other Teigai smiths, although Kanenaga's Juyo Bijutsuhin tachi does have a long signature. But his characteristic points are a long kissaki in the Nanbokucho period work, and his hamon are mixed with prominent gunome and togariba.

The Toma school's nakago tips are iriyamagata, and there are very few signed works. Among the Kamakura period tachi, Kuniyuki's signed work is famous. Kuniyuki's jigane are tight, the jiba (jigane and hamon) nie are fine, variations in the edge of the hamon are gentle for Yamato work, and this appears like a classic Yamashiro style, and his signatures consists of two kanji. Also, mumei work judged as Toma work are different from Kuniyuki's work: the jiba (jigane and hamon) has strong and rough nie, there are good hataraki such as chikei, kinsuji, and sunagashi, which looks like Soshu Den work, and in any case is different from this tachi.

The same school's Aritoshi has an Einin 2 (1294) date in a long kanji signature on a tachi. The jigane is tight, long nijuba stand out, and it is his characteristic style.

The Hosho school has some long signatures such as Fujiwara and a name, their forging is completely masame, the same is seen in tanto, the nakago yasurime are higaki, and their original tips are supposed to be kiri.

Explanation by Ooi Gaku

PLEASE 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.

NOTICE: REVISED SHINSA FEES

Please note the revised Shinsa Fees below

Shinsa Fees (revised)

2026 October Shinsa fees beginning with advance applications in September, 2026

Hozon and Tokubetsu Hozon Shinsa

(1) Hozon applications

Shinsa result		Member fee	Non-member fee
Pass	Token ・ Tosou	¥35,200	¥40,700
	Tosogu	¥24,200	¥29,700
Fail to pass	Token ・ Tosou	¥14,300	¥19,800
	Tosogu	¥9,900	¥15,400

(2) Tokubetsu Hozon applications for items which already have a Hozon kantei paper

Shinsa result		Member fee	Non-member fee
Pass	Token ・ Tosou	¥49,500	¥55,000
	Tosogu	¥42,900	¥48,400
Fail to pass	Token ・ Tosou	¥14,300	¥19,800
	Tosogu	¥9,900	¥15,400

3) Applications for a combined Hozon and Tokubetsu Hozon Shinsa

Shinsa result		Member fee	Non-member fee
Hozon : Fail	Token ・ Tosou	¥14,300	¥19,800
	Tosougu	¥9,900	¥15,400
Pass Hozon, Fail Tokubetsu Hozon:	Token ・ Tosou	¥49,500	¥60,500
	Tosougu	¥34,100	¥45,100
Pass Hozon and Tokubetsu Hozon	Token ・ Tosou	¥78,100	¥89,100
	Tosogu	¥62,700	¥73,700

NOTE: If an application is submitted for Hozon and Tokubetsu Hozon together and items pass both levels, there will be a discount. The discount will be ¥ 6,600 for Token and Tosou, and ¥4,400 for Tosougu)

Juyo Token Shinsa

Shinsa result		Member fee	Non-member fee
Pass	Token ・ Tosou	¥314,600	¥369,600
	Tosougu	¥171,600	¥226,600
Failure to pass	Token ・ Tosou	¥29,700	¥84,700
	Tosogu	¥20,900	¥75,900

Tokubetsu Juyo Token Shinsa

Shinsa result		Member fee	Non-member fee
Pass	Token ・ Tosou	¥486,200	¥541,200
	Tosou	¥343,200	¥398,200
Failure to Pass	Token ・ Tosou	¥44,000	¥99,000
	Tosougu	¥29,700	¥84,700