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FOR THE PRESERVATION, STUDY AND APPRECIATION
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1979

Ron Hartmann - Editor

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P R E F A C E

This 1979 "Bulletin", the annual publication of the Japanese Sword Society of the United States, is once again a worthy product of our membership. Thanks to the authors who so kindly supplied us with the contents of this issue of the "Bulletin", we can provide all of our members with a great source of study material by which to learn from.

The material contained in this issue is varied in subject matter and offers a little something for everyone. The original article by Arnold Frenzel on ko-tosho and ko-katchushi tsuba is certainly an enlightening study as is the unique study on the Japanese Matchlock by Tomo Watanabe. We are also very proud to have an article from the late Dr. Torigoye, master of kodogu study. Another different type of article in this issue is the discussion of an important auction of swords which took place in England in 1979. The discussion by Graham Curtis is most informative and analytical. The article by Nyle Monday pertaining the the "Practical Sword" gives us an inside look into the Samurai's considerations in a sword and will broaden our thinking when studying swords. The article entitled "Sword of Friendship" is tells of a modern drama dealing with a found-again sword and the important part two of our Society members, Ian Brookes and Kajihara Kotoken, had in it. Last but not least we have a fine recap of our Token Taikai '79 by Han Bing Siong telling of his adventures during the event.

The 1979 "Bulletin" is yet another product of our Society which we can study, enjoy, and use to broaden our knowledge of the Japanese arts. Again, our many thanks to all the authors who contributed to this issue and made it possible.

Ron Hartmann - Editor

K.A. FRENZEL

THE BEAUTY OF KO-TOSHO AND KO-KATCHUSHI TSUBA

The people of the United States, Canada, Western Europe and Japan live in economies of high mass consumption, where the commodities produced and consumed tend to share a fundamental similarity, only partially alleviated by superficial differences in the production processes or in the commodities themselves. We struggle as individuals to maintain our distinctions and to discover and pursue material individuality in the face of the floodtide of depressing universal sameness.

We value the ability of technology and economic incentive to cater to our desires for conspicuous material consumption, but we regret our estrangement from a unified cycle of production and consumption, and we regret the increasingly astringent nature of the material products we enjoy. The collection of art has many motivations, some ennobeling and some unseemly, but there can be little doubt that in addition to purely aesthetic or financial[1] consideration, it is also part of our struggle for uniqueness.

While it is entirely wholesome to collect, preserve and study art objects as examples of past or vanishing cultures and techniques, our accentuation on individuality has produced an extreme counteraction to universal sameness by vesting value and appreciation on the individual artist or craftsman rather than on the inherent qualities of the objects themselves. Consider the premium placed on a signature and the "bigger" the name, the better. Failing a signature, a "good" attribution, the more specific the better, is the next best alternative. The more status the agent of attribution has the better, and so forth. The cost of this fixation on individual maker, as understable a flight as it is from universal sameness and our own alienation from the unity of the production-consumption cycle, has been an inappropriate and misplaced emphasis on the cult of the artist-craftsman and his deification, rather than on the object itself and the historial milieu into which it fits.

It is for the foregoing reasons that our attention can usefully be drawn to ko-tosho (old swordsmith) and ko-katchushi (old armorsmith) tsuba. There are no signed examples; there are no schools or groups; there are no classifications by province of origin; there is only a very rough and tentative fixing of historical occurence and use and there is, sometimes, even some ambiguity of distinction between what is uniquely ko-tosho and what is uniquely ko-katchushi. It is the very lack of self-conscious artfulness, of known individual artists, and of intentional decorativeness that draws our attention to the very high aesthetic qualities of these tsuba. Their functionalness, their simplicity, their incidental beauty, their non-ego involved production call our attention to them as quintessential expressions of the Japanese aesthetic taste.

It is our intention to first place ko-tosho and ko-katchushi tsuba into a feasible historical and functional context, then to discuss them as examples of folkcraft, and finally to illustrate some major features with a few examples.

Until quite recently, the displacement of the tachi by the katana which required the development of tsuba as we know them, was placed rather late in the Muromachi era (1392-1573); however, careful research by Masayuki Sasano[2] has done much to place the on-set of katana use in its proper historical context and accordingly to dispell the once common belief that all iron tsuba made between the Dolmen (c.500 A.D.) and Late Muromachi (1477-1573) eras were, somehow, lost. According to Sasano, sukashi tsuba[3] developed during the middle to late 14th century, i.e., during the Nambokucho (1333-1392) era. The tachi, a mounting for a slung sword hanging cutting edge down and utilizing a tsuba made by a tachikanaguchi (tachi fitting maker), were carried from the 10th-11th centuries to the Nambokucho and early Muromachi eras, and were, on account of changing battle techniques, replaced by the uchi-gatana sword and mounting in the Muromachi era.

Uchi-gatana were of two types, both meant to be carried through a waist-tie, and to be carried cutting edge up to facilitate a less encumbering mounting and a quicker draw. One uchi-gatana was for a blade less than two shaku (1 shaku = 11.93") and would today be called a wakizashi. It was originally a companion sword, without a tsuba, for the tachi, and its use was accordingly confined to the higher class tachi-bearing samarai. Sasano believes such blades were possibly carried as early as the late Heian (794-1185) and early Kamakura (1185-1218) eras. The other uchi-gatana was a blade somewhat over two shaku and was originally carried by the lower class foot soldier samurai, while his lofty superiors carried tachi along with the shorter uchi-gatana and fought on horseback. During the transitional period to full adoption of the uchi-gatana (hereinafter katana) by the late Muromachi era, higher class samurai carried increasingly long one-handed companion swords with their tachi, and mounted them with Kyo-sukashi, Ko-Shoami, Kanayama and Owari-sukashi tsuba. The swords of interest to us here, are the longer katana used by the lower class foot soldier samurai and carried by the Nambokucho era, for it is these swords that were mounted with ko-tosho and ko-katchushi tsuba. These were men who valued life no less than any soldier, but who at once understood both the impermanence of life as well as the spiritual or material awards awaiting a vigorous and sincere effort in battle.

Ko-tosho and ko-katchushi tsuba are unsigned. Why that is so is not completely clear, but it does tend to direct our attention away from the cult of individuality, away from chronologies, away from the fetish of grading and affixing comparative merit, away from the academic concerns of lineage, founder, and original creative genius. Our interest is drawn instead to the objects themselves and it compels our attention to their more significant aesthetic characteristics.

Rather than to consider ko-tosho and ko-katchushi as just early unsigned tsuba, fundamentally deriving from a production process similar to all tsuba from tachikanagushi to Late Edo (1780-1868) kinko, it might be more useful to consider them as examples of Japanese folk art and made in the humble tradition characteristic of all Japanese folk craftsmen. We can see at least as close a relationship between these tsuba and well known examples of folkcraft such as painted Seto plates, folk textiles, iron water kettles, early tea bowls, and the magnificent storage jars of the so-called Six Ancient Kilns (Echizen, Tokoname, Seto, Shigaraki, Iga, and Bizen), as we can with other early sukashi, Edo era (1615-1868) or kinko tsuba. The first and foremost characteristic of the folk art tradition [4] is that the article was made for use, hence the utilitarian features of weight, size, thickness, strength, balance and the like were central considerations. They were made for the common soldier and probably by the lower grades of sword-smiths, and perhaps lower grades of armorsmiths as well. They were not "custom made", certainly not in any explicit sense, and perhaps for no given customer. It is probably because of the relative obscurity of the maker, perhaps even the possible apprentice status of the maker that explains the lack of a signature. Furthermore to sign one's name, even if illiteracy was not a problem, would display a fundamentally non-Buddist act of attachment to the material and temporal that would have been out of keeping. The beauty or artfulness that these tsuba have is incidental. Certainly they were not revered as art objects or examples of creative originality. When one considers the qualities of ko-tosho and ko-katchushi tsuba, one cannot help but be struck by the high degree of aesthetic sensibility possessed by those who crafted them. With use as a major criterion, along with a continuous and long period of craft tradition, it is as if beauty arose almost accidentally. It is refreshing to see not just the avoidance of decorative idiosyncratic variation, but even the meaninglessness of variation for variation's own sake.

A further major characteristic of Japanese folk art, in addition to its concentration toward use, is simplicity. This is a strong and persuasive characteristic: simplicity of shape, of materials, of decoration, of coloration, of finishing, etc., and these characteristics are no less true of ko-tosho and ko-katchushi tsuba. Shapes are usually round or somewhat oblong. The material is iron, albeit of no lesser quality than that used in swords and armour. Decoration, if any, usually consists of simple design motifs frequently drawn from near-by nature, often combining subtle religious or philosophical messages. Surplus elaboration of the basic decorative element was objectionable and out of place. Decoration was usually confined to negative or positive silhouette piercing, sometimes combining both, rarely with stippling of the plate, but never was recourse made to vainglorious use of gold or silver. It is perhaps fortunate that these tsuba were sidelines, for otherwise a drive for refinement, individuality and artistic breakthrough might have destroyed the strength found in simplicity itself. Yanagi puts it very well in the following written with reference to folkcrafts: "Simplicity may be thoughtof as being characteristic of cheap things, but it must be remembered that it is a quality that harmonizes well with beauty. That which is truly beautiful is often simple and sparing. In religion and in morals we have learned, through the teachings of Christ and Buddha of the virtue of frugality, humility and honorable poverty..."(5) Indeed these tsuba have much in common with the rustic, plain, "found" objects identified with the early tea ceremony. That aesthetic of practice is frequently used as an illustration for the favorite Japanese term shibui which etymologically means "astringent" and is used to describe profound, unassuming and quiet feeling. Ko-tosho and ko-katchushi tsuba have these qualities.

Ko-tosho are probably somewhat older than ko-katchushi and date at least from the early Kamakura era. While there are no fixed sizes or proportions,

they tend to be large, befitting katana use. A width of 9 cm, a seppa-dai thickness of about 3mm and a rim thickness of 2mm or so would be narrowly representative. The obverse of the tsuba usually has a slightly sunken or concave from above shape, and indeed that is an important criterion in distinguishing ko-tosho from ko-katchushi tsuba. That can best be observed in contrast to the flatter reverse side by holding the tsuba at an angle with respect to a light source similar to the viewing of hamon on a sword. It is generally believed that ko-tosho were made from metal remaining from the sword making process and that they accompanied each sword. In general, they are decorated only with comparatively small ko-sukashi (negative silhouette) designs which are at once unobtrusive, simple and full of meaning. They tend to be drawn from folk symbolism and at least on ko-tosho tsuba, they tend to antedate the widespread diffusion of Sino-Japanese and Sino-Buddhist symbolism.

Ko-katchushi tsuba are more elaborate and selfconsciously refined than ko-tosho, but not so much so as to destroy their common affinity. An explanation for their increased elaborateness, particularly in the complexity of design and shaping of the rim, may lie in the technical and artistic skills of their likely makers, the armorsmiths, who after all also fashioned the armor generally worn by a class above the common foot soldiers who tended to be the recipients of the swordsmith tsuba and sword. Ko-katchushi tsuba tend to be about 9 cm in width, 2-3 mm at the seppa-dai, and have rims of greatly varying thickness. Sukashi techniques tend to involve the removal of more metal ground (ji-sukashi) and the resulting silhouetts are either negative or positive, or a combination of both.

Like fine examples of Japanese folk art, doubtlessly originally common and inexpensive, ko-tosho and ko-katchushi tsube, particularly the former, are hardly common today inside or outside Japan. Battle and "historical

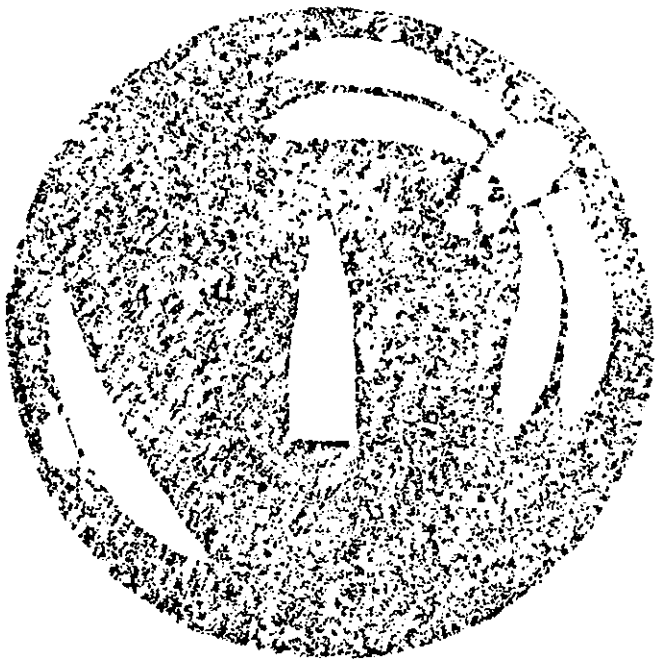
evaporation" took their toll and, regretable, the recent awakening of appreciation for simple traditional arts particularly under Yanagi, came too late to save many traditional artifacts from the oblivion of neglect. In addition, the great diaspora of Japanese martial equipment during the Meiji era (1868-1912) and after WWII did little to encourage the removal of these unglittering and unadorned objects to the west. While the writings of Sasano have done much to introduce these tsuba to foreign students and to place them in historial context, there will be a further growth of appreciation yet to come. The following pieces are all more or less representative and were found in North America in the last decade.

No. 1

No. 1 is a very early ko-tosho example, doubtless no later than the very Early Maromachi era if not earlier.(6) It measures 88.5 mm in width, 3 mm at the seppa-dai and has a rim of uneven width due to wear. The obverse is slightly dished. The only decorations are three ko-sukashi iris stalks beginning to emerge

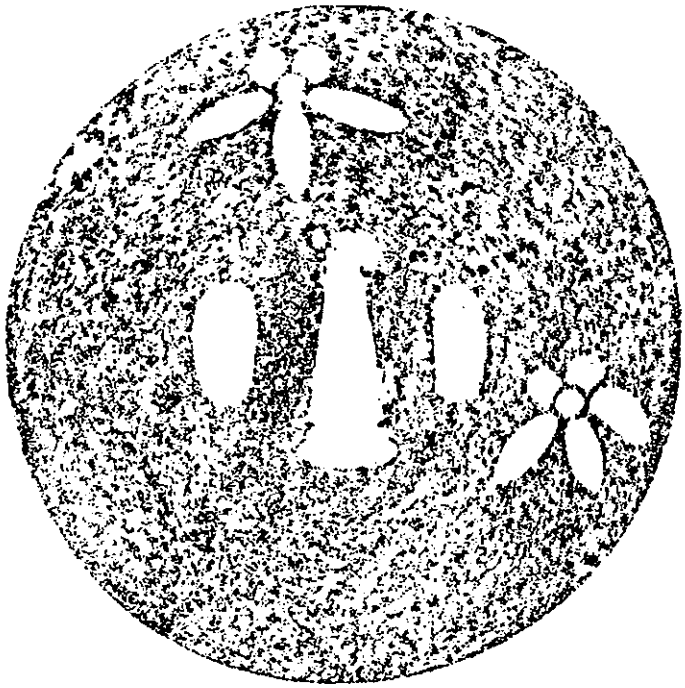
from the ground. The symbolism doubtless associates the struggles of the common foot soldier with those of an iris of feckless beauty emerging from the mud of an iris swamp. You will note there are no hitsu-ana an unnecessary accommodation on the katana of the common soldier.

No. 2



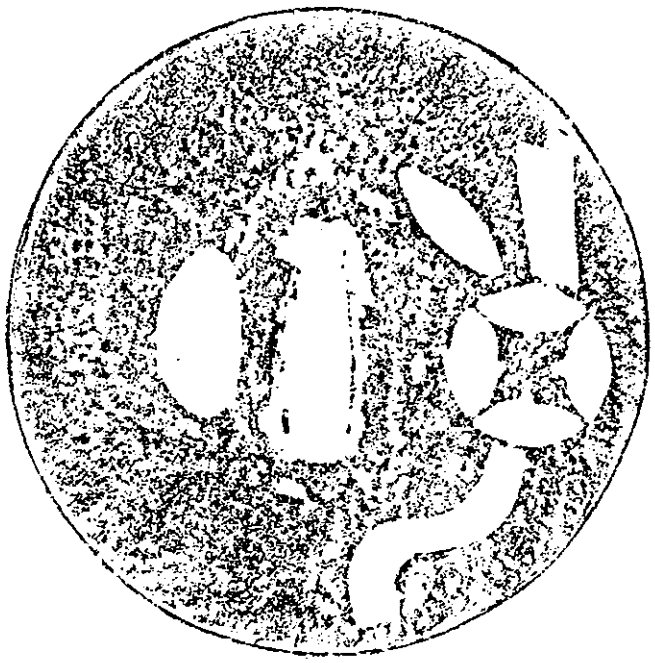
No. 2 is an almost "ideal type" ko-tosho tsuba, dating to the Early Muromachi era.(7) It measures 87.5 mm in width, 3.2 mm at the seppa-dai, and 3 mm at the rim. The obverse is slightly dished. The rather expansive ko-sukashi dragonfly is the emblem of Japan and of victory; the straw hat adds weight balance to the tsuba and unity to the design.

No. 3



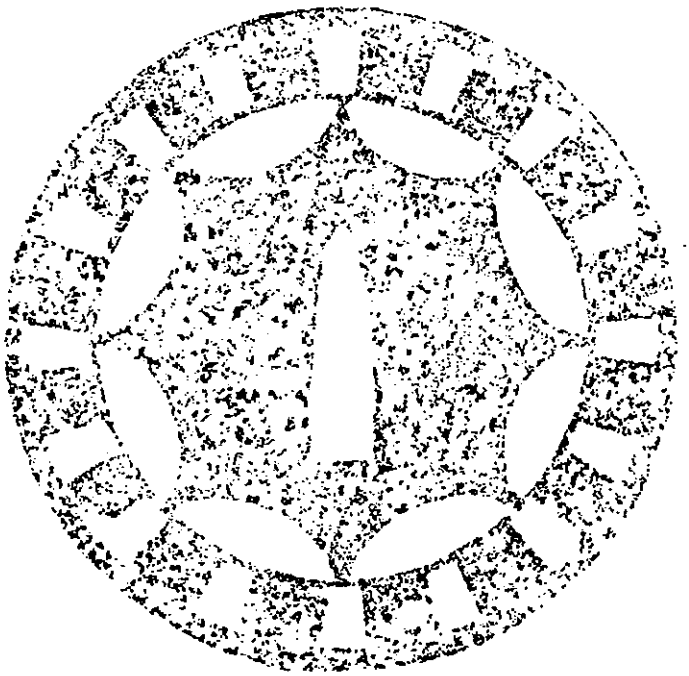
No. 3 is a ko-tosho tsuba dating to the very Late Muromachi era. It measures 91 mm in width, 3.5 mm at the seppa-dai, and 2.5 mm at the rim. The obverse is characteristically dished. The ko-sukashi design either represents bamboo grass or an unidentified flower. In contrast to No's 1 and 2, one cannot but note that the added hitsu-ana detract from the unity of the tsuba and are a regretably common blight of many early tsuba.

No. 4



No. 4 is a ko-tosho piece, dating to the very Late Muromachi era. It measures 87.5 mm in width, 3.5 mm at the seppa-dai, 4 mm at the added brass rim, and is slightly dished on the obverse. The design is a positive silhouette mon or stylized blossom imposed on negative silhouette shogun grass. The hitsu-ana is added. This tsuba is included to illustrate the common Edo era practive of reducing the size of early guards to meet the requirements of later times and adding brass or shakudo rims.

No. 5

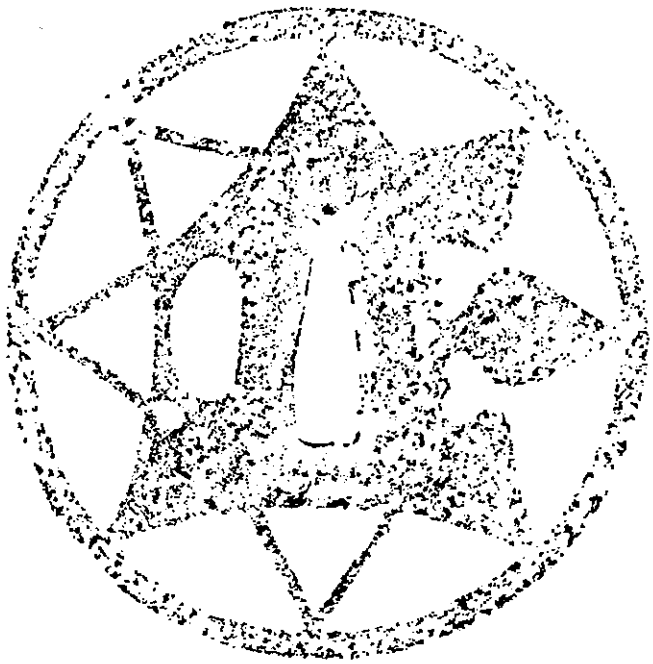


No. 5 is a ko-katchushi tsuba of the Early Muromachi era.[8] It measures 91 mm in width, 3.5 mm at the seppa-dai, and 3.0 mm at the rim. Typical of many ko-katchushi tsuba, it is slightly lozenge in section. Like many ko-katchushi tsuba the design is rather sophisticated and represents a stylized chokkomon, a design found in old bronze mirrors, thus emboding in itself a non-native influence via China.

No. 6

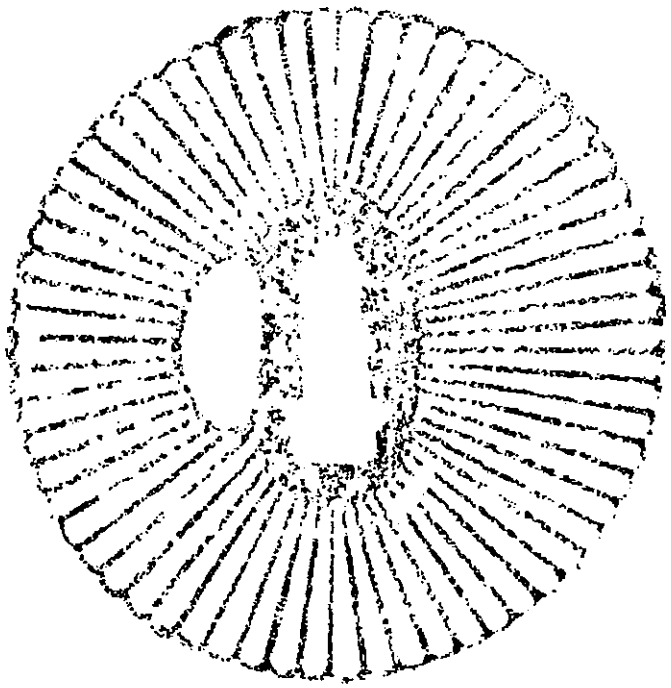
No. 6 is a ko-katchushi tsuba of the Early Muromachi era.(9) It measures 87.5 mm in width, 3 mm at the seppa-dai, 2.5 mm at the rim. At first glance it appears to be a ko-tosho tsuba, however, examination indicates both the characteristic lozenge shape in section as well as a rim indicating previous reduction in size. We can conjecture that it once had a raised rim. Being spared the addition of a hitsu-ana preserves the beauty of the ko-sukashi design. The clove symbolizes a hope for good fortune, and the monkey toys usually signify the unbending and indomitable samurai spirit. One can speculate that the tipped monkey toys here may symbolize ultimate resignation. What a subtle symbolic negation of the clove!

No. 7



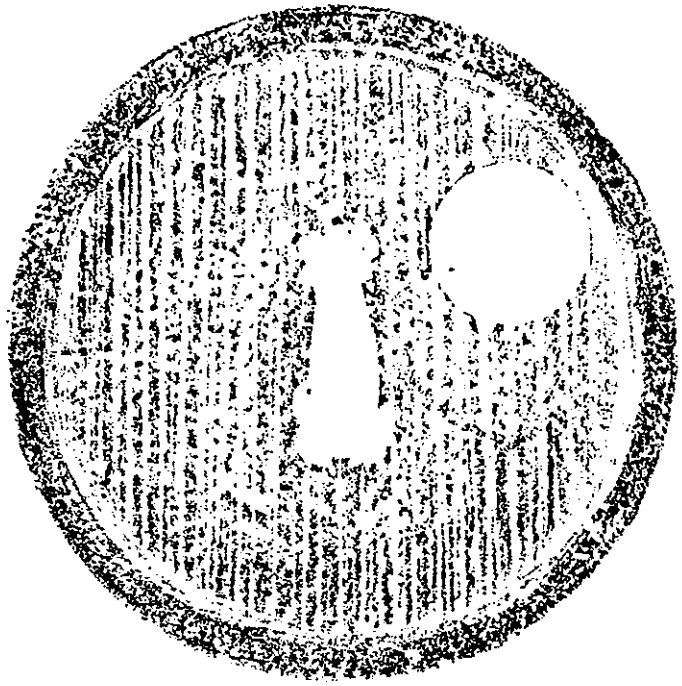
No. 7 is a ko-katchushi tsuba of the Late Maromachi era.[10] It measures 86.5 mm in width, 4 mm at the seppa-dai, 3.2 mm at the rim, and is slightly lozenge in section. The design is a very complex and sophisticated combination of ko-sukashi and ji-sukashi techniques. An eight point star is shown in positive silhouette, several points of which are highlighted in negative silhouette, and the two boar's eyes symbolize tenacity. The hitsu-ana is added.

No. 8



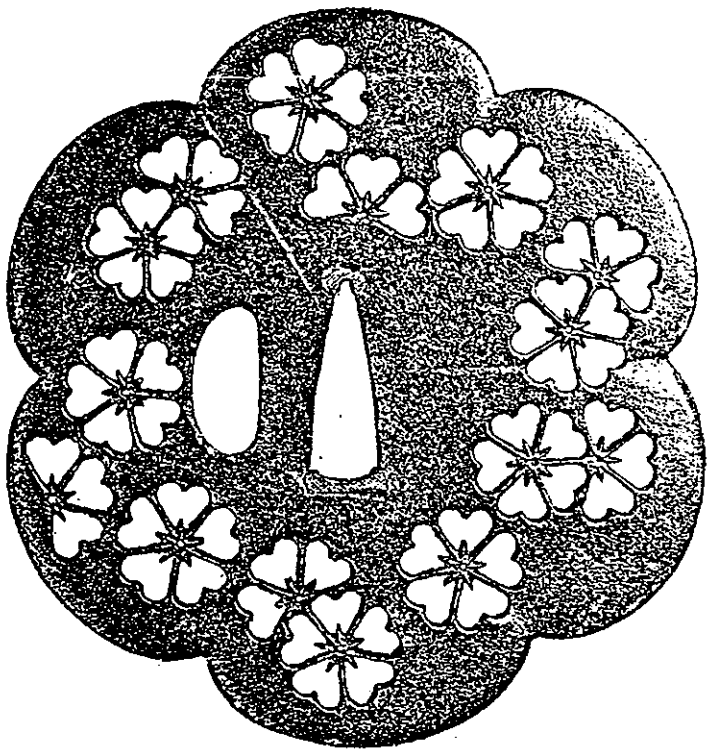
No. 8 is a ko-katchushi tsuba of the Late Maromachi era.[11] It measures 90.1 mm in width, 5.5 mm at the seppa-dai, and 7 mm at the rim. It is dished on both the obverse and reverse, and the hitsu-ana is original. The chrysanthemum is the prime decorative plant of Japan and the 64 petals may allude to an imperial connection. This is an unusual tsuba for ko-katchushi in terms of both thickness and technique. The rim was actually made separate from the petal spokes and almost inperceptably brazed onto the spokes. It would be hard to imagine any metal worker other than an armorsmith with such a high degree of skill. This tsuba is an example of the comparatively wide range of tsuba that can be classed as ko-katchushi.

No. 9



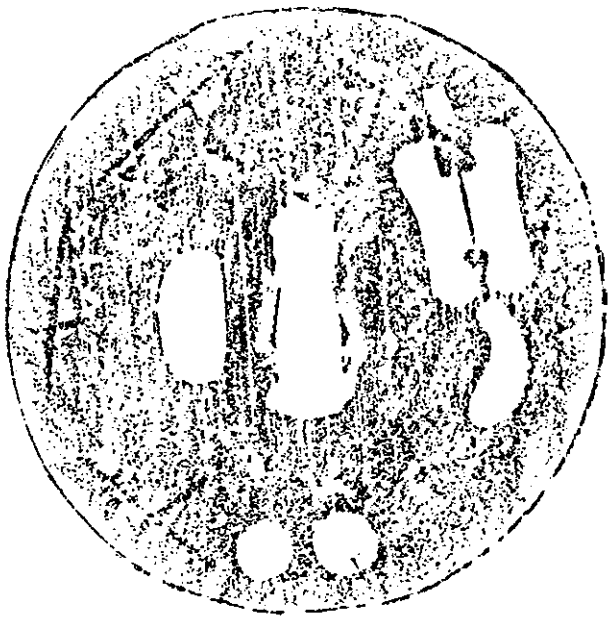
No. 9 is a ko-katchushi tsuba of the Late Muromachi or Momoyama (1573-1615) eras. It measures 91 mm in width, 2.1 mm at the seppa-dai, and 4 mm at the raised and hollow rim. Rather curiously for ko-katchushi it is dished on the obverse. The ground is incised with linear rain-like markings and the ko-sukashi circle symbolizes the moon. This type of ko-katchushi is the style most closely associated with the designation.

No. 10



No. 10 is a ko-katchushi tsuba of the Momoyama era.[11] It measures 93 mm in width, 5 mm at the seppa-dai and 2.5 mm at the rim. It is lozenge in section. The subtle cherry-blossom design symbolizes purity and suggests the association of both the blossom and samurai falling at the moment of perfection. Like the preceding tsuba, there is some doubt about the exact era. Torigoye[13] illustrates a similar tsuba that he calls "Late Muromachi-Momoyama," however, we lean to the Momoyama designation, for no design could better represent that more florid and cheerful era, coming as it did after the stark deprivations of the Sengoku-jidai (Age of the Country at War), or about the 100 years after 1467 beginning with the Onin War.

No. 11



No. 11 is a ko-katchushi tsuba of tne very Late Muromachi era. It measures 82 mm in width, 4 mm at the seppa-dai, and 4 mm at the added shakudo rim. The original ko-sukashi is a general's signaling fan accompanied by two udenuki-ana for tying a leather wrist thong. This tsuba like No. 4, is included to show later ammendments in addition to the usual hitsu-ana. In this case, the plate was later decorated with fine silver nunome in the fashion of broken pine needles, perhaps by some Shoami artist.

With the coming of the Edo era, if indeed not with the Momoyama, the age of ko-tosho and ko-katchushi tsuba came to an end. Tosho and katchushi tsuba continued to be made throughout the Edo era, but in styles barely recognizable in comparison with their antecedents. Many Edo swordsmiths made tsuba. Famous smiths like Kotetsu and Naokatsu made tsuba immitative of the styles of their day, and some minor swordsmiths like Banzai Tsuguhide and Chikuzen Nobukuni Yoshimasa are more famous for their tsuba than for their swords. A somewhat similar transition occurred with katchushi tsuba, though, in addition, clear family traditions developed within the various armormakers groups, e.g., Miochin, Saotome, Haruta, Suruga, etc. Like Edo tosho tsuba, the later katchushi bore little, if any, resemblence to their utilitarian, simple and yet profound namesakes.

Edo era tsuba of all kinds stand in sharp contract to the earlier pieces. Artfulness replaced utility and simplicity, style became atuned to the tastes of the day, and individual idiosyncracy and pride intruded on everything. Being so full of refinement, and frequently glittering with gold and silver, later tsuba doubtless do delight the eye, but something more precious has been lost.

FOOTNOTES

1. Frenzel, K.A., "On Investing in Japanese Swords," in Caldwell, Randolph B., ed. The Book of the Sword (Token Kenkyu Kai, 1972).

2. Sasano, Masayuki, Early Japanese Sword Guards: Sukashi Tsuba, (Japan Publications, Inc. 1972).

3. There is some controversy as to whether ko-tosho and ko-katchushi tsuba should be termed "sukashi" tsuba. While Sasano, ibid., passim, clearly believes they should be, see, however, Torigoye, Kazutaro. Tsuba Kanshoki (1975) "Introduction."

4. See e.g., Yanagi, Soetsu. Folk-Crafts in Japan. (Kokusai Bunka Shinkokai, 1958), and The Unknown Craftsman: A Japanese Insight Into Beauty. (Kodansha International Ltd., 1972).

5. Yanagi, Folk-Crafts..., p. 14.

6. Takezawa, M. Nihon Toban Zusetsu, (Hakurinsha, 1968), p. 54, for a similar example.

7. Chicago Token Taikai '79 Meibutsu display.

8. Chicago Token Taikai '79 Meibutsu display.

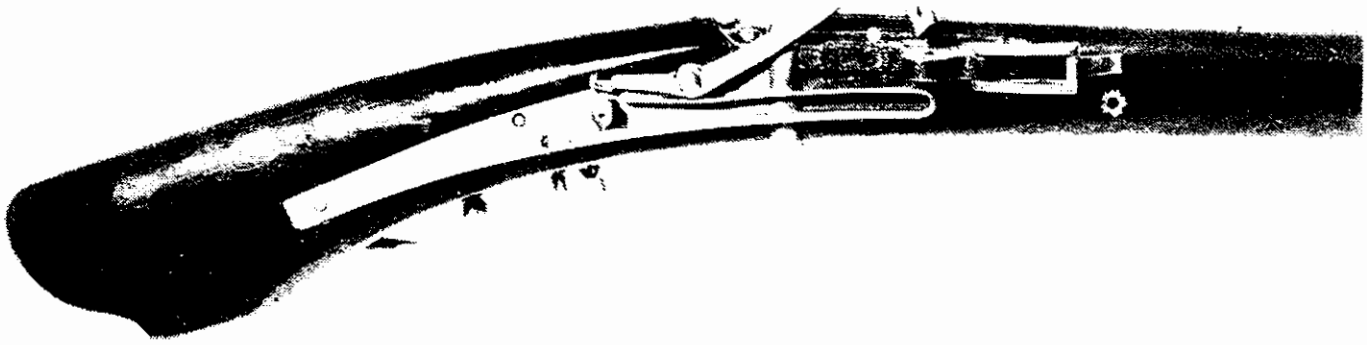
9. N.B.T.H.K. Tokubetsu Kicho.

10. Hakogaki to katchushi by Kanzan Sato; and, Chicago Token Taikai '79 Meibutsu display. It should be noted that Japanese authorities frequently do not use the prefix "ko".

11. For a similar example, see Takezawa, op.cit., p. 64.

12. Illustrated in Gonse, Louis. L'Art Japonaise, Tome II, (Paris, 1883), p. 140. Hakogaki to katchushi by Kazutaro Torigoye; and, Chicago Tokan Taikai '70 Meibutsu display.

13. Torigoye, op.cit., p. 24.



THE JAPANESE MATCHLOCK

by TOMO WATANABE

The first matchlocks were brought to Japan in 1543 by Portuguese who landed at Tanegashima Island of the west coast of Japan. Among their effects were the first matchlocks ever seen in the country.

The first use of massed fire power came shortly after in 1575,when 3,000 troops of Oda Nobunaga's army,firing in three alternating volleys,played a large part in the defeat of the 15,000 horsemen of Takeda Katsuyori at the battle of Nagashino. As historians will know,the victory at Nagashino gave Nobunaga, now Shogun,undisputed rule of Japan.

Lessons learned at Nagashino resulted in many changes in both swords and armour. The strength of an army was now decided on the number of foot soldiers it could muster rather than the strength of its cavalry forces. The Samurai spirit once so directly related to the close combat of cavalry warfare also underwent a change as war became a long range,and less honorable, affair.

It was quickly apparent that the Portuguese matchlocks which had arrived in Tanegashima would have to be copied as quickly and as faithfully as possible. The only people with sufficient technical expertise to do the job were the swordsmiths,large numbers of whom soon took to making these new weapons. In 1588 Hideyoshi,afraid of general insurrection, ordered the collection of all weapons held by the general public,temples etc.. Later,in the same vein,the Tokugawa's imposed heavy restriction of the numbers of matchlocks which could be made,thus forcing many gunsmiths to return to their previous employment as swordsmiths.

One such example was the famous swordsmith Hankei who was previously working as a gunsmith under the name Kiyotaka; so excellent was his work that about 15 or so of his guns were ordered by the Tokugawa Shogunate between 1610 and 1615 as votive offerings to temples all over Japan. Another such gunsmith whose later work is well known is the famous Higo tsuba maker Hayashi Matashichi.

These restrictive laws extended even to the lives of ordinary people,a curfew was imposed between 8 P.M. and 4 A.M. and check-points were established at the five gates out of Edo in order to control the movements of all goods and people. Quite apart from the fear of assasins entering the city the Shogun was also worried about Daimyo families leaving without authorisation,a Daimyo with his family safely at home instead of hostage in Edo was far more likely to think of rebellion. The long period of peace imposed by the Tokugawa Shogunate, together with the "closed country" policy,let to a cessation of all research and development in the field of the matchlock.

With the arrival of Commander M.C.Perry and the modern arms and equipment of the U.S.Navy in 1853,Japan was shocked into preparing for possible involvement in modern warfare. Consequently steamships and rifles were purchased from England, military thought was modelled around European examples and the period of the matchlock came to an end.

The earliest dated Japanese matchlock gun still in existence has the date 9th of Sept 1583 cut into the side of the stock. From very earliest times right up to the begining of the Meiji period the overall appearance of the Japanese matchlock changed very little though naturally different schools and different locations provided some minor variation in shape and style etc.. It may be useful at this point to explain,in as much detail as possible,the actual differences which may be attributed to a particular school or area.

Firing capacity : The average barrel size of the Japanese matchlock is 35½" with an average bore of .71",the maximum range is around 300yards with an effective range of some 55yards. Reloading time was,at best,every 2 minutes and a major disadvantage was that the guns could not be used at all in rainy weather. The absence of rifling in the barrel leads very quickly,of course, to bore-wear and subsequent inacurracy-made worse by prolonged use.

In the spring of '78 I tested a matchlock gun,using a ball cartridge after obtaining a special permit from the Japanese Government. (With the rare exception of shotguns for hunting, Japanese are not generally permitted to own,let alone to shoot, any firearm.)

The gun tested had a total length of 50",a barrel length of 38" and a bore of .50". It was,incidentally,signed Yamada Gohei and dated 1802.

My first surprise on using the gun was the noise! More used to the sound of modern shotguns I was completely unprepared for the thundering roar that came.

The Japanese matchlock,being modelled on one type of "Spanish style" hunting gun,has a very short stock and the trigger set well to the back. Consequently it had to be used with the stock pressed firmly to the cheek,as opposed to the military rifles of Europe with the longer stock held into the shoulder. The other big difference between the two styles is that while the Japanese stayed loyal to the matchlock principle,European military guns soon developed along more efficient percussion-cap lines. To continue....with cotton wool stuffed in my ears and cheeks I pressed the stock to the side of my face and pulled the trigger. My second surprise came when I realised how gentle the match action was compared to the impact of a flintlock or percussion hammer. And ready as I was, the noise was tremendous. This point was often capitalised upon in the Edo period when showmen demonstrated the shooting of Hiya (fire arrows) from Hiya-zutsu (light cannon) in temple grounds on festive occasions. The showman's assistants quickly made a cash collection before the startled audience could collect their wits. The widespread populerity of the matchlock in Japan was due more perhaps to the noise it made, than to it's actual effectiveness as a weapon. An example of the awe which loud noise inspired can be seen in the old story of a Shogun,the leader of a powerful army,who mistaking the sound

of birds rising from a lake for the enemy on the move,quickly gathered his men together and retreated. None the less the actual strength of the gun shouldn't be underrated. Actual examples of armours still exist which were used to test the penetrating power of the matchlock,many have holes shot right through them!

Types : As already mentioned,the external appearance of the matchlock in Japan,and the firing system used,remained virtually unchanged for over 250 years. The variations seen are usually in the length and bore of the various barrels. The largest,not strictly a firearm,is the Hiya-zutsu which was designed to shoot fire arrows. With a bore of 1.2"-1.6" and a barrel length of between 2.8" and 30",these small cannon look very impressive but there is no record of their being used in battle,in fact they were generally used as a public attraction. As far as actual weapons went,the largest gun was the Kakae-zutsu (hand cannon) with a bore of 2"-3½" and a barrel length of 21½"-35". Used to batter down gates,it can best be described as a bazooka fitted with a stock and was usually used on a makeshift rest due to its great weight (15 -40 pounds). The longest barrel in existence is around 10ft. There is some speculation that this was used for sniping but a more probable alternative is that it was a sports gun. The "average" matchlock,as already mentioned,has a barrel of 35½". A variant,the Bajo-zutsu has total length of under 23½". Intended as a single-handed short-carbine for use on horseback, some Bajo-zutsu are fitted with a push button trigger.

The nearest term the Japanese have for a pistol is Tanju. A simple descriptive term for a "Japanese matchlock pistol" it is simply an extremly short version of the Bajo-zutsu. The single-handed use of a matchlock on horseback of course poses particular problems and in consequence a system was evolved in which the pan was covered until the trigger was pulled,at which time the cover automaticaly moved aside to expose the pan. The system though,was very prone to malfunction and the idea never gained real popularity.

At the very end of Edo period a few experimental match-locks were made with between 3 and 20 barrels arranged in a fan-shape from a central touch-hole. The idea being that all barrels could be fired almost simultaneously with one match. An alternative saw a group of 3 or 5 barrels fixed in such a way that they could revolve. Although the barrels could be loaded in advance,it was still necessary to prime the pan for each shot. A rough parallel can be drawn between these multi-barrel smooth-bore guns and the similer developments in Europe which can be seen as primitive forerunners to the shotgun. Further similarity can be found between the revolving barreled matchlock and the early revolver.

It shouldn't be thought though,that the Japanese were completely unware of developments abroad or that comunication with the west was unheard of. In fact during the Meiji and Taisho periods quite large numbers of matchlocks were cut down to look like carbines and sold abroad. The longer barrels, incidentally were always shortened at the breech and hopeful buyers of a genuine Japanese carbine should always carefully check over the breech-screw and the rear sight to make sure

there is no sign of tampering. With the introduction of foreign rifled barrels in the Meiji period there was some attempt to rifle existing smooth-bore matchlocks but these are easy to spot as they invariably have straight,rather than spiraled rifling. Some matchlocks are found which have been converted to percussion or to bolt action at some point. Strangely,these "altered" guns are not particularly appreciated by Japanese collectors because of their non-original condition.

For general nomenclature of the matchlock,please see chart 1.

Gunsmiths : Japanese gunsmiths can basically be divided in to three schools (see chart 2). The name of each school being taken from the place where the school was founded. Naturally no mass-produced guns were signed but even so,the number of signed gun barrels are very few. Consequently matchlocks are very difficult to attribute to any particular maker,the task being made even more difficult by the lack of change in style that took place.

The names of gunsmiths set out in chart 2 are by and large all later than the mid-Edo period. The list of course does not include many of the smiths who were retained by various Daimyo or the large number of people who worked independantly of any particular group. Furthermore,information about gunsmiths in general is still search but I hope the following story will show how further information can be built up little by little.

Recently in the U.S.A. I was fortunate enough to obtain a Japanese matchlock which was inlaid with large and small butterflies on the top of barrel and the name of the owner,Matsudaira Tamba no Kami. The name Baba Yoshitake Masanobu,Seishu

Nakayama no Ju was found cut into the underside of the barrel when the stock was removed. After some research I found that Matsudaira Tamba no Kami was a Daimyo living in Gunma Prefecture more than 490 miles from Seishu where the barrel was made. Further research though,showed that the Daimyo held land in Mie Prefecture-previously Seishu. This new insight into the relationship between gunsmith and Daimyo will,I hope,lead to further research along similar lines in the field of the Japanese matchlock gun.

Tanegashima school : Based in Kyushu (Satsuma,Amakusa, Hizen,Higo) the guns of this school are rather thin in the barrel and generally have black wooden stocks. Almost none are signed with the exception of a mid-18 century copy of the original Portuguese example which is signed "Hirase Sadakata with the date 1775.

Kunitomo school : Started in 1560,the school supplied many of the weapons for Oda Nobunaga. Consequently they were invited to supply gunsmiths to various Daimyo all over Japan. Furthermore their work was in great demand as they were able to meet the varying technical and stylistic demands made by various gunnery schools. The school not only produced guns to order but made many for "casual customers". In time the quality of their work declined to such an extent that other smiths reffered to their work as "Udon-Ju" (noodle guns) as the barrels flexed so much in use as to acquire a permanent bend. In spite of this they continued to be the foremost producer of guns in the Edo period. A specialty of the school was the octagonal barrel and the bamboo pattern cut into the brass of the lock-

plate. Despite their poor reputation among other gunsmiths there is no doubt that a well made Kunitomo gun has the strongest firepower of any Japanese matchlock gun. A similar situation can be seen in the sword world where are can compare the terrible effectiveness of the best Mino blades,the finest ever produced in Japan,with the mass produced swords of the area which have little to recommend them.

Sakai school : While the effectiveness of the best Kunitomo school guns is paramount,there is no doubt that for beautiful styling the guns of the Sakai school are unrivalled.
Although the Shogun and hence the political center was in Edo city, the commercial center of Japan in Edo times was the city and free port of Sakai,near Osaka. Even after the closing of Japan and the ending of Sakai as a free trade port,the city prospered.
The city's history as a gun making center came in 1554,very shortly after the founding of the Tanegashima school. Special points of the Sakai group are octagonal barrels,almost invariably inlaid,the Rakkyo of the muzzle (*see chart 1.) and very beautifully decorated applied brass plates which proved extremely popular. Such was the fame of the excellent work that went into the stock,always light colored,and the lock-plate that some Daimyo ordered barrels from the Kunitomo group fitted to stocks made by the Sakai school. To me the general style and tasteful harmony between stock,barrel and Rakkyo-shape muzzle of the Sakai school is very similar in feel to the beautiful temper-line of Osaka Shinto blades or the shape of Hizen blades by Tadayoshi.
Similarly the inlay and work on the stock closely reflect the beauty and richness of sword-fittings and Tsuba so popular with

Edo period Samurai.

Decoration : Although in actual use a beautifully inlaid barrel was no different to a plain one, the excellence of the inlay work seen on Japanese matchlocks raises then from the level of simple weapons to that of art objects where modern collectors are concerned. Before the Meiji period inlay was generally Nunome-zogan, high relief inlay not appearing untill the Meiji period when it was widely used on export work. Even in the Edo period Samurai who had no intention of ever using their beautiful guns never went as far as having them inlaid in high relief -possibly because the shock of firing quickly loosened such lightly applied inlay and to own such a gun was tantamount to admitting that one had no intention of ever using it. Of course the finest guns needed no such decoration relying on the quality to speak for itself. I have seen a gun by Hankei for the Tokugawa Shogun which was very plain but of beautiful quality -the kind of feeling one gets when looking at the tang of a fine sword.

Signatures : I recently read an article in a American gun magazine that stated quite unequivocably that almost all signatures of Japanese matchlocks are faked. This opinion is based on information taken from an old Japanese book on military ecuipment. Nowadays however, we have come to realise that at the time the book was written the amount of research was minimal and modern collectors in general are not inclined to put very much faith in the opinions expressed in it. Personally I tend to take all signatures, with the exception of those by Hankei whose signature is coveted by both gun and sword

collectors,as being quite genuine.

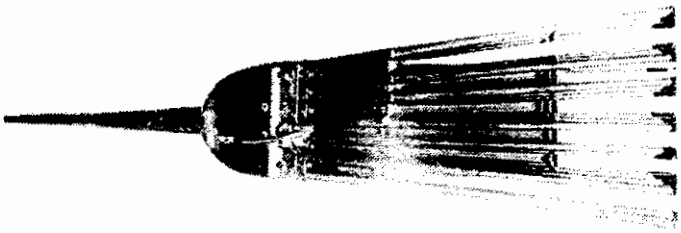
Finally,these days in Japan few people have a sense of intimacy with guns and the general appreciation of matchlocks is extremely low. However,taking into consideration the points I have already made,together with an awareness of the part that the matchlock has played in Japan's history,I hope you will agree with me that Japanese matchlocks deserve the kind of research and appreciation shown to fine swords.

Speaking for myself I certainly intend to continue my research and would really appreciate any interest,help and encouragement that JSS/US members might show me.

KAKAE-ZUTSU

Total length:65"
Bore size:2"
Unsigned

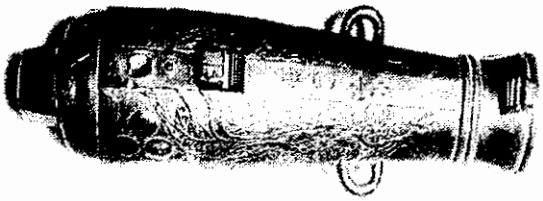
Multi-barrel gun



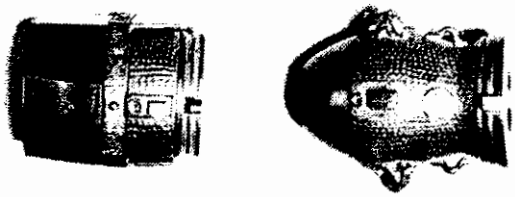
20 barrels
Total length:51" Bore size:0.5"
Signed:Kunitomo Kanyemon

8 barrels
Total length:48" Bore size:0.5"
Signed:Kunitomo Shichibei

HIYA-ZUTSU



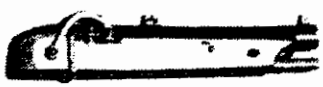
Barrel length:10"
Bore size:1.4"
Unsigned



Barrel length:2"(left)
4"(right)
Bore size:1.6" Unsigned

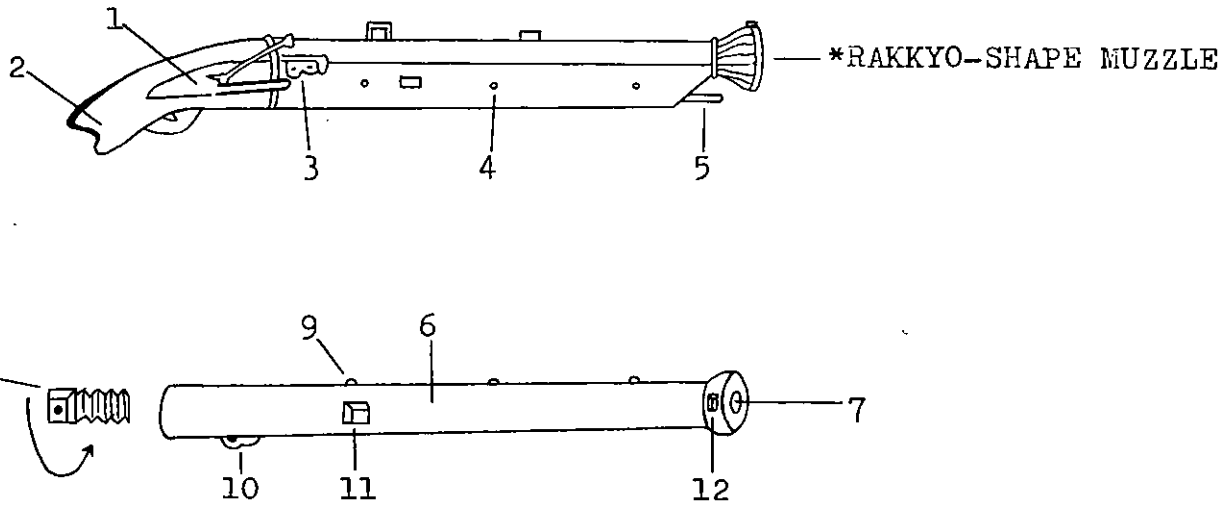
BAJO-ZUTSU

Total length:18" Bore size:0.5"
Signed:Murata Tomozayemon



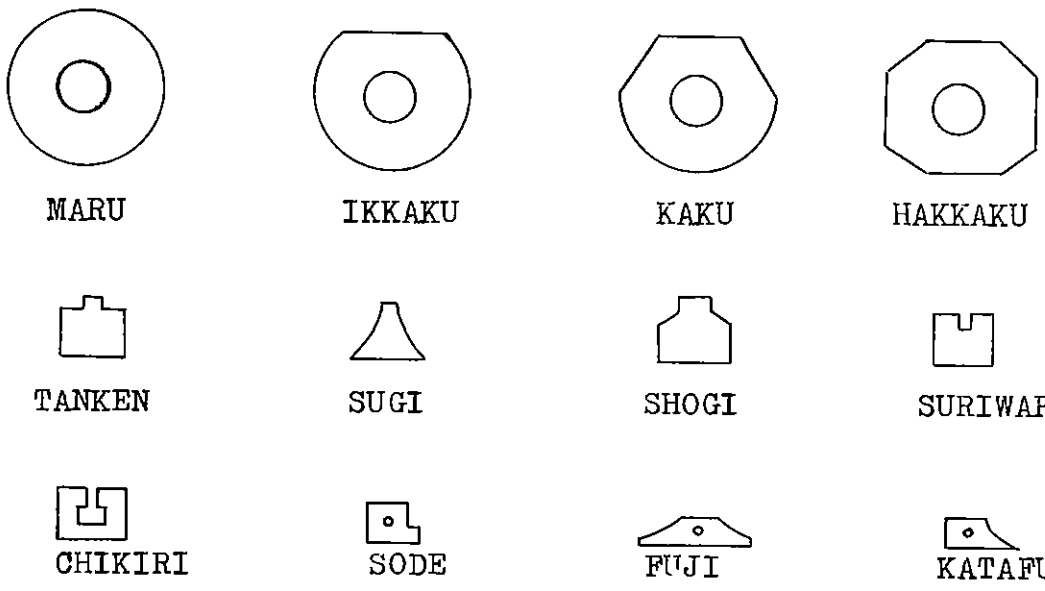
Total length:10" Bore size:0.5"
Unsigned

- CHART 1 -

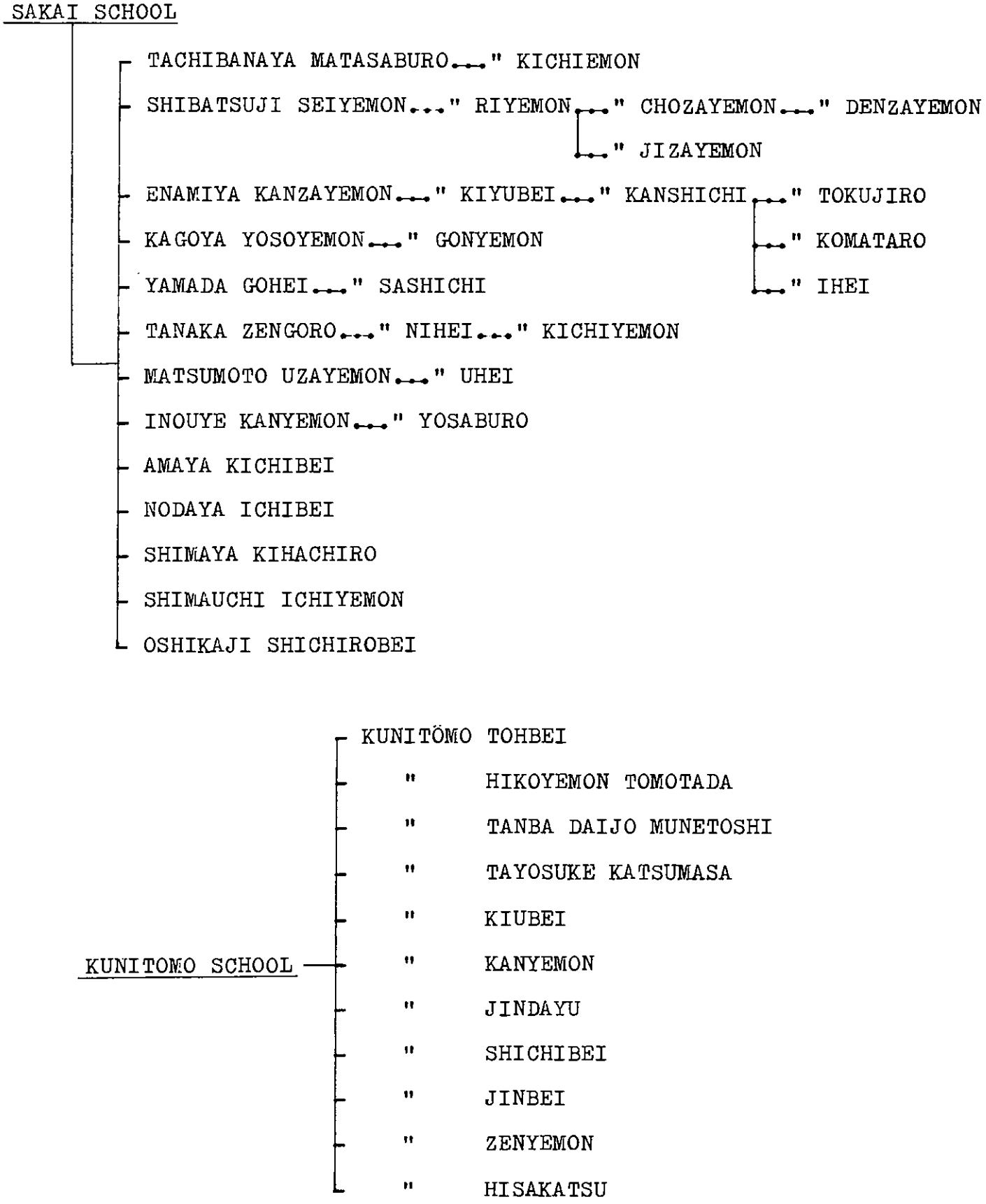


1.KIKAN (LOCK)
2.DAI (STOCK)
3.HIBUTA (PAN COVER)
4.SHINOGIME (PEG HOLE)
5.KARUKA (RAM-ROD)
6.TSUTSU (BARREL)
7.SUGUCHI (BORE)
8.NEJI (SCREW)
9.SENSASHI (PEG HOLE)
10.HIZARA (PAN)
11.ATOMEATE (REAR SIGHT)
12.SAKIMEATE(FRONT SIGHT)

*Shape of barrel & sight



- CHART 2 -


SAKAI SCHOOL
TACHIBANAYA MATASABURO
" KICHIEMON
SHIBATSUJI SEIYEMON
" RIYEMON
" CHOZAYEMON
" DENZAYEMON
" JIZAYEMON
ENAMIYA KANZAYEMON
" KIYUBEI
" KANSHICHI
" TOKUJIRO
" KOMATARO
" IHEI
KAGOYA YOSOYEMON
" GONYEMON
YAMADA GOHEI
" SASHICHI
TANAKA ZENGORO
" NIHEI
" KICHIYEMON
MATSUMOTO UZAYEMON
" UHEI
INOUYE KANYEMON
" YOSABURO
AMAYA KICHIBEI
NODAYA ICHIBEI
SHIMAYA KIHACHIRO
SHIMAUCHI ICHIYEMON
OSHIKAJI SHICHIROBEI
KUNITOMO SCHOOL
KUNITOMO TOHBEI
" HIKOYEMON TOMOTADA
" TANBA DAIJO MUNETOSHI
" TAYOSUKE KATSUMASA
" KIUBEI
" KANYEMON
" JINDAYU
" SHICHIBEI
" JINBEI
" ZENYEMON
" HISAKATSU
TANEGASHIMA SCHOOL - HIRASE SADAKATA
YAITA KINBEI

INTRODUCTION OF JAPANESE METAL WORK

by Dr. Kazutaro Torigoye

The following article, written by the late Dr. Torigoye several years ago, has been passed on to us by his good friend and student, John Yumoto. We feel very privileged to be able to present this paper in our Society annual.

1. OUTLINE

We can be rightly proud of old Japan and it's culture, and in order to truly appreciate the Arts of Japan, homage is due to her many craftsmen; perhaps it was they who in large part contributed to the culture of old Japan which the world has learned to love.

Here I will speak briefly of the thousands of fine metal workers, most of whom had inborn genius, whether of noble birth or of common origin.

My heart and imagination have been occupied with tracing their activities ever since my student days at Clark University in the USA. Did some work for the sake of art alone while others worked for bread alone? From the time of the establishment of the Shogunate (1336) and right up to the Imperial Restoration (1868) these artists have worked untiringly in a continous succession of master and student, and at times also simply as individual craftsmen without school affiliation. It is a strange and significant fact that, despite the harsh living conditions and the primitive medical facilities of the time, these craftsmen enjoyed a long and vigorous life. The exception was Sokujō, the 18th Goto master, who died at battle at the age of 32. Truly the popular sayings "THE DESTINATION OF HUMAN LIFE IS ONLY 50" and "HUMAN LIFE IS EVERVESCENT AS THE MORNING DEW" applied most aptly.

And now to the topic of the metal worker's art; the strongest work of the Kinko has always been the small Sword Fittings; they seem instinctively to have realized that the making of tsuba did not show their work to best advantage. Their reproductions included designs from Nature and from the many legendary and historical/mythological subjects rendered in exquisite chisel

work; they depicted the various emotions with equal acuity. In the case of Kogai, their shape was an additional factor to illustrate their ability to reproduce their chosen subject with sure power.

The Fuchi-Kashira sets are particularly fascinating in their combinations of designs that fit and match the two. Of the four types of Sword Fittings, Kogai, Kozuka, Fuchi-Kashira and Menuki, the latter are my favorite; with their three-dimensional quality they can communicate ideas most clearly.

Sword fittings of all kinds had a particular appeal to merchants of wealth, who at the time surpassed the aristocracy in monetary power. The craftsmanship involved and the precious metals used all added to that appeal.

The apex of the old Japanese civilization came during the Genroku period, late 16th to early 17th centuries. It was then that the materials used to make Sword fittings became ever more varied and comprised a huge variety of metals and their alloys - each designed to emphasize a delicate nuance or shading.

The subjects depicted varied equally as much and were chosen from historical and traditional legends and from folk-tales, poems, nature, animals and plants and even included foreign subjects depicted purely from imagination! The political climate of the day did not allow for complaints from the common people against their superiors, and so satire was yet another form of subject for the decoration of Sword Fittings.

A subtle example of this is the Higo Fuchi-Kashira on p.163, whose unusual shape of Kurigata constitutes a satirical allusion. (it is TOSO SORAN of which Dr. Torigoye is referring to here)

Beauty is generally thought to be something pretty, but in reality true beauty is composed of simplicity of soul, refined language, simple shape and modest expression. And, although the ways and modes of expression differ according to the time and place, fundamental values reign above them. Other superb masterpieces of this golden Renaissance age are to be found among drawings, paintings, sumie-E (India Ink Paintings) and among the works of the Ukiyoe artists, who were particularly adept at satirical depictions.

2. THE MAIN KINKO

GOTO -

The work of the Goto, the so-called iebori, has fascinated people and enamoured them with its noble beauty for four hundred years - from the time of Yojo, the first Goto master, until the practical extinction of Kinko work which came with the abolishment of Sword wearing. Machibori also gained a measure of popularity, but was never stooped to by the Goto.

The involved Goto lineage cannot be told in a few workds; there were many descendants and students in the main line, as well as the Goto side line artists who flourished widely. Although the skill of the latter equalled that of the main line artists, they had to be content to work as their underlings or else move to distant provinces, where under the patronage of the local lord they spread the Goto fame.

In attempting to classify the w ork of the Goto artists, one must single out the earlier generations: Yujo, Sojo and Joshin as being the most original. The fourth, fifth and even the sixth, Goto Eijo, had great skill; the work began to decline thereafter and few geniuses were evident among the later Goto artists. It seems that they merely took life easy and their fame was due only to their adherance to the iebori technique. Their compositions were ordinary and uninspired and it remained for Ichijo to raise the then standards above the ordinary. He was a great master and he re-established a new vision to the declining iebori technique. While his work tended to resemble Tsujo's (the 11th Goto master) he also introduced fresh ideas and he successfully combined the machibori techniques with iebori. There was no peer for him during his lifetime, and he was made Hogen, raised from the rank of Hokyo, at age 34. His depictions of nature, animals and plant life as well as landscape, are unsurpassed. A good example of his genius is the pipe illustrated on page 196 which he co-worked with Kikuoka Mitsushige the 3rd. If Ichijo lived and worked today, he would doubtlessly have been designated a Human Treasure and won coveted Academy Awards.

MINO BORI

Although Mino bori is readily appealing on first sight, the majority of the work is superficial and suffers from infantile ideas and immature nanako work.

KAGA GOTO

Maeda, the Daimyo of Kaga province was well to do and was interested in many fields of artistic endeavour; he employed a variety of artists to make sword fittings, Textiles, Lacquer Wares, etc.

The Goto artists Kenjo, Kakujo, Teijo, Enjo, Mizuki, Katsuki, and Kawamura were well known and much appreciated in their own day. The 9th Goto master, Teijo, was known to have been a man of compassion; he raised several orphans who in turn grew up to become talents of the Goto school.

ICHINOMIYA SCHOOL

Ichinomiya Nagatsune who learned from Yasui Takenaga, was especially good at depicting figures, landscapes, animals and plants in Kebori and Shishaiboti; his Katakiribori was of particular renown and equaled, if not rivalled, that of the great master Somin.

YOKOYA SCHOOL

It is no exaggeration to state that the Machibori technique reached its apex by dint of the Nara and Yokoya artists. The long tradition of Iebori which was passed on to only one son, had gradually weakened; its work suffered from lack of freedom and fresh ideas. It was thus that Machibori came into its own, to be deemed suitable for presentation items to the men of power of the day. This occurred at about the Empo or Genroku periods, which coincided with the commoners gaining monetary power over that of the nobles.

The founder of the school, Yokoya Soyo, was a student of the 7th Goto master, Kenjo's third son Injo. Few work by him are extant by him today, and those that are, are certified by either Somin or his grandson Soyo, 2nd. The authority known as Ko-Soyo or Sofu Soyo was no other than Soyo 2nd, who himself was a younger brother of Yokoya Eisei; he was later adopted by the great Somin. Somin's mastery was so powerful that his school prospered and produced a number of masters of genius among the students and their descendants until their

popularity was finally usurped by the Nara school.

Yokoya Soyo, Furukawa Genchin, Omori Terumasa and Yanagawa Naomasa were all representatives of the Yokoya school; it is to be admired that the Yokoya school managed to override the power of Iebori, despite the strong influence Iebori exercised for so long! Even Somin's early work resembled Iebori, and Sofu Soyo continued to work in the Iebori style all his life.

After the Genroku period Machibori, together with Kebori, Katakiribori, Shishaibori along with inlay work and other new techniques introduced a fresh and modern mood. Machibori continued to predominate after the middle Edo period; this is no wonder, the people having become used to a life of peace and comparative ease, tended to express their new-found wealth in a burst of splendour and luxurious brilliancy.

NARA SCHOOL

In addition to the well known 'Nara Three' - Toshinaga, Yasuchika and Joi, Toshinaru also belonged to this school; he was close to Shozui Noriyuki. The school had many expert craftsmen of whom Tanaka Toshinaga, or Riju, was a born Kinko. He was not only truly representative of the Nara school, but he was also a match for Yokoya Somin. His aesthetic consciousness appeals to me particularly - he seems to have been an artist contemporary to his time and intent to remain so.

Yasuchika was the kind of man endowed with the energy that would have made him a 'jet-setter' were he alive today- the globe would not be too large for him! He would arise in Tokyo and umpteen hours later go to bed in Camp Bretagne or Teheran in order to attend international conferences, solve complicated negotiations or hold georgeous association in honor of the reigning Monarch! His gifted talent well realized a great wealth of ideas based on human nature, landscape, historical and legendary subjects in the world of the past, present and future and encompassing as well the steep mountains of South China.

Joi, who was an excellent student of Toshinaga (the 4th Nara master's pupil's pupil) was one of the 'Nara Three'. He excelled at Shishaibori and well exemplified the Nara techniques.

The particular quality of Shishaibori is in showing the ground high although it is chiselled down to level.

Toshiharu, also one of the three Nara masters, was a man of sincere and earnest intent over even a trifle. His marvellously sure technique of freely manipulating a chisel of 4 bu in width is most admirable.

OTSUKI SCHOOL

The Otsuki school was not popular for long, but some of its early artists were craftsmen of great nobility and excellence. I would single out Otsuki Korin (the 1st) who respectfully succeeded in the Goto style of high engraving on the nanako plate.

Kano Natsuo was an artist who derived his designs from Maruyama Shijo school of painters. Their speciality was systematic depiction of objects; his work is often compared with that of Goto Somin or Ichinomiya Nagatsune; I particularly like his Nikubori, and his even more skillful Katakiribori.

Withe the exception of the Nara school, the period from late Edo through Meiji, Natsuo and Somin are often compared; I feel, however, that the latter would at times tend to superficiality.

Cherishing masterpieces of Sword Fittings in the palm of my hand, I feel as though the rainbow of four hundred years I gaze at is fading in my eyes.

A REPORT ON AN IMPORTANT COLLECTION OF SWORDS SOLD AT AUCTION IN LONDON IN JUNE OF 1979

by Graham Curtis

Auction catalogue photographs reprinted courtesy of Christie, Manson & Woods, 8 King Street, St.James, London, England.

It is a rare event these days to find even an outstanding sword in the London sale rooms. Tuesday, June 5th this year, however, witnessed the sale at Christies of not one good blade but thirteen really exciting ones. Needless to say the occasion had, for the average collector, a bitter-sweet tinge to it. At worst it provided an opportunity to see how "the other half" collect. But at very best it provided a wonderful occassion for study.

How this particular collection came to be put together has not been divulged. The catalogue merely states that it was formed in Meiji times, but it seems unlikely that a 19th century western collector would have had the scholarship and facility to gather up such an ideal collection. It is perhaps more likely that the collection was formed by a knowledgeable Japanese in Japan and sold as a whole to a western art connoisseur.

Not surprisingly the identity of the owner has been the subject of much speculation. Most collectors lucky enough to own even one of these blades would find it difficult to remain silent about it. So, was the owner of this magnificent collection really aware of what he had in his care? A rumour currently linked to the collection conerns a junk shop in south London which was discovered some ten years ago by a sword collector who was principally waiting for a bus outside it, when he made out the outline of a shirazaya in the back of the window. Pausing only to discover that levitation can be practised successfully in the West, he instantly entered the shop. When his eyes became accustomed to the gloom he found thirteen swords all in shirazaya arrayed on one wall. Beneath them he made out the stooping figure of the shop owner. Recognising the characteristic falsetto tone of a collector who believes he has stumbled on treasure, the shop keeper directed attention to the many other good things to be seen. Persistence only

succeeded in generating a certain malignance in the sepulchral tones of the owner, the swords were not for sale.

Enough of fantasy, although the following description of the blades may seem like embroidery on the hem of fantasy:

What follows is a reproduction of the catalogue description for each lots, (by kind permission of Christies), added to which are my own comments. The latter were formed by sitting down sith each blade together with the relevant section of Yamanaka's Nihontō Newsletter, which details the characteristics of blades by the smith concerned.

90 A TACHI BLADE by Bizen Osafune Morokage: style: hon-zukuri, ihori-mune, koshi-zori and chugissaki; kitae: large itame-mokume with midare-utsuri; hamon: bold midare-choji with ashi, many ko-nie and sunagashi: boshi: ko-midare-komi, slightly hakkake at the tip; horimono: bo-hi on omote and ura, kaki-toshi on ura: nakago: suriage, kiri-jiri, re-worked sujikai yasurime except in area of the mei: three mekugi-ana—69.3*cm. long, signed just above the jiri, tachi-mei, Bishu Osafune Moro(kage), most of the last character cut off, late 14th Century*, with wood habaki, in shira-saya with sayagaki: Bizen Morokage

Morokage belonged to the Omiya group and was the son of Morikage

If this blade is from the Omiya School, and if Yamanaka's view is accepted, then in comparison with contemporary work it cannot be regarded very highly. Although it is suriage, it is still long, (69cm), which fits it as being one of the long tachi in vogue in the late Yoshino-Muromachi period. It is very graceful, everything 'koroai" (just right). The hada is mixed ko-mokume/o-mokume and stands out very clearly. Fuji-shira (kotō-hen p.566), shows a mei which compares reasonably well with this example. Hammer bid on this blade was $12,000US.

91 A TACHI BLADE by Bizen Nagamitsu: style: hon-zukuri, ihori-mune, koshi-zori and chugissaki; kitae: itame-mokume with chikei and midare-utsuri: hamon: choji-midare of ko-nie and sunagashi: boshi: indistinct ko-maru: nakago: suriage, kiri-jiri, re-worked with yoko-yasurime except for lower third on omote, two mekugi-ana—70*cm. long, signed Nagamitsu (of Bizen, early Osafune school), late 13th Century*, with wood habaki, in shirasaya

This is the second of Yamanaka's 4 styles for Nagamitsu, i.e. deep koshizori with little funbari. This example does not have an ikubi kissaki. (It might have had one in the past, but it is very difficult to see if any boshi actually remains now.) The hamon is wide, as is to be expected from this style of Nagamitsu blade. The action in the hamon is immense. To some extent this stems from the distinctness of the hada within the hamon. Inazuma and sunagashi seem to be assoicated with the hada. Of all the blades in the collection, this one bears the most obvious utsuri, broad and deep black. (Yamanaka suggests that jifu utsuri should be a characteristic, which did not seem to be the case in this example. Hammer bid for this blade was $16,400 US.

92 A TACHI BLADE by Sadatsuna of Hoki province: style: hon-zukuri, taka-shinogi and ihori-mune, torii-zori and chugissaki; kitae: ko-itame with a little mokume, chikei and strong black midare-utsuri; hamon: midare becoming ko-midare towards the habaki with many ko-nie, some forming sunagashi; boshi: hakkakeru; nakago: suriage and kiri-jiri with two mekugi-ana, yasuri re-worked — 71.4*cm. long, signed Sadatsuna, the signature probably re-engraved, late 11th/early 12th Century;* with gilt-covered habaki, in shirasaya with sayagaki: Hoki Kuni Sadatsuna, Nagasa 2 shaku 3 sun 5 bu, Daikin 300 mai, Meiji 21 (1888), 1st month 6th day, Honami Chukei

Sadatsuna, descended via Sanetsuna, Moritsuna and Sanemori, was a great-great-grandson of the famous swordsmith Ohara Yasutsuna, maker of the sword Doji-giri used by Raiko to kill the Shuten-Doji

Sadatsuna worked in Owa. Yamanaka does not describe his particular characteristics, so how does this work compare with that of Yasutsuna? The nakago is so smooth, that it is hard to believe that it is Heian. The tang must be O-suriage, which means that guesses have to be made about the original shape, but torizori seems right. There is, however, not as much funbari, as there should be. The mihaba is wide. The kissaki should be long and it is not. There is not a great deal of action in the suguha-kochoji-midare, although this is the correct style of hamon. The ko-mokume hada does not seem to have O-hada mixed in as might be expected. (I wonder if this blade is actually as old as it purports?). Hammer bid was $26,000US.

93 A TACHI BLADE by Bizen Ichimonji Nobufusa: style: hon-zukuri, ihori-mune and koshi-zori with kogissaki: kitae: large itame mixed with moku, midare utsuri; hamon: choji-midare with ko-nie, nioi and many kinsuji; boshi: midare-komi; nakago: suriage, kuri-jiri, three mekugi-ana, one filled with lead and one with gold —68.2*cm. long, signed near the jiri, tachi-mei, Nobufusa saku, late 12th/early 13th Century*, with gilt-covered silver habaki; in shirasaya with sayagaki: Bizen Kuni Nobufusa, value 7000 kan

Cf. Ninon Toko Jiten, Koto, p. 289

Nobufusa, called Nakahara Gon-no-kami, was the son of Nobusada and belonged to the Fukuoka Ichimonji School of Bizen. He was appointed Goban-Kaji or Imperial Guard smith by the Emperor Go-Toba, and, with Awataguchi Hisakuni, regarded as Nihon Kaji Sosho. His work is considered quiet and restrained

Although shortened by 10 to 12 cm this blade has much of the elegance of a Heian sword, but as Yamanaka suggests for the ko-Ichimonji, it is sturdier. The hada is ko-mokume with some O-hada mixed in, but the grain does not stand out in the hamon, as is suggested for those blades made with wide suguha-choji. Nevertheless this blade stands out with it's magnificently active hamon and hada, just as the catalogue suggests. It is amazing when one sees a really excellent blade like this, how insignificant seem such blades as the Muramasas (lots 99 and 100) the Naotane (lot 102) and the Yokoyama Sukesada (lot 102). Hammer bid on this sword was $52,000US.

94 A TACHI BLADE by Bizen Masatsune; style: hon-zukuri, ihori-mune, koshi-zori and chugissaki: kitae: itame with chikei and midare-utsari; hamon: ko-choji-midare with ko-nie and a few kinsuji; boshi: ko-maru; horimono: bo-hi on omote and ura; nakago: suriage and kiri-jiri with three mekugi-ana, re-worked except just above the jiri—68.2*cm. long, signed Masatsune (of Bizen), probably 13th Century, habaki missing*, in shirasaya with sayagaki: Masatsune

There are traces of two characters above the signature, probably Bishu; the nakago, now re-shaped to form a katana instead of a tachi, would originally have been quite strongly curved, and the engraved characters appear to follow this curvature

Again, this blade is suriage by 10 cm or so, but like the Ichimonji Nobufusa it has a mixture of Heien grace and Kamakura sturdiness. The sturdiness stems from a lack of exaggerated funbari. The hi is not contemporary. The Masa character does not compare too well with Fujishiro (kotō-hen p.385), but what a beautiful blade! (If I could have afforded it, this was the blade I would have bought.) Its magnificent feature is the unexpected wonderland of the hamon and hada. Seen casually

the hamon is sobre suguha, but with the light right it suddenly explodes with ashi. Yamanaka describes 'uruoi' as a mist of wetness on black wool, which is annoying to anyone who has not seen uruoi, but on this blade there it is, and the description is as good as any! If the blade lacks anything it is utsuri. Hammer bid for this blade was $30,000US.

95 A TACHI BLADE by Rai Kuninaga; style: hon-zukuri, taka-shinogi, ihori-mune, shallow torii-zori and chugissaki; kitae: itame with chikei and ji-nie; hamon: hoso-suguba of ko-nie with a few sunagashi; boshi: ko-maru of ko-nie; nakago: o-suriage with orikaeshi-mei, four mekugi-ana, kattesagari-yasurime — *70.9cm. long, signed Rai Kuninaga (of Settsu), second quarter, 14th Century*

Rai Kuninaga was a pupil of Rai Kunitoshi of Kyoto; his school was sometimes called Nakashima Rai after that area in Settsu province, now a part of modern Osaka

The shallow tori-zori on the blade seems correct. The suguha is to be expected, but seems lifeless. The Rai characteristic of core steel showing is absent. The hada stands out, but not as much as expected. The signature does not compare well with the oshigata in Fujishiro (Koto-hen page 311). The hammer bid on this blade was $12,000US.

96 A TACHI BLADE by Bizen Kagemitsu; style: hon-zukuri, ihori-mune, koshi-zori and chugissaki; kitae: itame with midare-utsuri; hamon: gonome-midare with ko-nie and ara-nie extending into the ji, sunagashi in the mono-uchi; boshi: o-maru; horimono: futatsuji-bi on omote and ura extending through three-quarters of the nakago; nakago: suriage with four mekugi-ana, three filled with lead and copper, orikaeshi-mei—*71.5cm. long, signed Bizen Kuni Osafune ju Kagemitsu, and inscribed Yamashiro Kuni Nishijin ju Umetada orikaeshi*, with gilt-covered habaki, in shirasaya with sayagaki: Bizen Kuni Kagemitsu, Nagasa 2 shaku 3 sun 6 bu, ni-suji-bi sho-ma age-orikaeshi-mei, etc., Daikin 170 mai, Honami Choshiki, Meiji 17 (1884)

This is probably Kagemitsu III, circa 1368

This is another long blade, originally it must have been about 80cm long which suggests the Yoshino-Muromachi period. There is not a great deal of funbari, but not Kamakura style with more-or-less even width throughout the length. If this were by the sone of Nagamitsu, it would have been expected that the activity in the hamon would have been considerable, but it is not. The mei has only a passing resemblance to the oshigata in Fujishiro (Koto-hen page 137) for the first generation. (The price reflects the general opinion on this blade.) Hammer bid was $9,000US.

97 A KATANA BLADE attributed to Heianjo Nagayoshi; style: hon-zukuri, ihori-mune, torii-zori and chugissaki; kitae: itame-mokume becoming masame near the hamon, sunagashi; boshi: ko-maru; horimono: bo-hi on omote and ura, with bonji in upper part of nakago; nakago: o-suriage with re-worked kuri-jiri and two mekugi-ana—68.7*cm. long, signed Nagayoshi (Heianjo Nagayoshi of Kyoto), but the signature probably re-cut or added, 15th Century*, with copper-gilt habaki, in shirasaya

Heianjo Nagayoshi is supposed to have studied under Muramasa, so some similarity should exist between this blade and the Muramasas of lots 99 and 100. The comparison in shape is not so easy as the blade is suriage. Gone is any suggestion of a tanago-bara nakago. The blade is, however, firm and lacking in funbari which suggests Nagayoshi's modified Muromachi style. The bonji horimono, now in the nakago, looks contermporary and such a horimono was commonly used by Nagayoshi. The ji-hada is itame-mokume with a tendency to masame near to the hamon, which is not really Nagayoshi in either of his ko-mokume or coarse hada styles. The hamon shows some sunagashi induced from the masame, but otherwise it is inactive. Had the blade been ubu, perhaps the O-koshiba, a characteristic of Nagayoshi, might have been available for analysis. Nagayoshi usually signed with five characters, the two shown seem fresh and possibly added later. Hammer bid was $7,000US.

98 A KATANA BLADE attributed to Bizen Osafune Motoshige; style: wide hon-zukuri, ihori-mune, torii-zori and slightly long chugissaki; kitae: itame-mokume, very slightly tsukare in places, two small tateware, strong midare-utsuri; hamon: saka-midare with ashi, ko-nie; boshi: midare-komi; horimono: bo-hi on omote and ura, kaki-toshi: nakago: o-suriage, kiri-jiri, faint yoko-yasurime, two mekugi-ana and traces of another at the jiri—69.7*cm. long, unsigned, circa* 1334, with copper habaki, in shirasaya with sayagaki: Motoshige

Bizen Motoshige was one of the three outside pupils of Sadamune of Sagami

Yet another long blade which was probably 80 cm long originally. Here there is almost no funbari, which perhaps suggests it is the work of the second generation. The hamon is not as wide as Yamanaka suggests is generally the case, but it does seem to have midare with a saki tendency and a midare boshi. To my eye the hada was o-mokume with masame mixed in. A good blade, perhaps a little stout and subdued, but on the whole it could be by Motoshige II, a student of Sadamune. This blade sold for a hammer bid of $22,000US.

99 A KATANA BLADE attributed to Muramasa I of Ise; style: wide hon-zukuri and mitsu-mune, strong torii-zori and rather long chugissaki; kitae: itame with a little masame and ji-nie; hamon: large midare with gonome, profuse ko-nie becoming ara-nie and sunagashi in the mono-uchi; boshi: ko-maru hakkakeru; horimono: bo-hi on omote and ura extending half-way into the nakago; nakago: suriage, kiri-jiri, katte-sagari yasurime, four mekugi-ana, two filled with lead—73.5*cm. long, unsigned, late 14th or 15th Century*, with shakudo-covered habaki, in shirasaya with sayagaki: Goju-ban, shodai Muramasa

The dates ascribed to Muramasa I (and subsequent generations) vary, and he is described as a pupil of Heianjo Nagayoshi, or of Masamune

There is a tendency to look for the Muramasa hako hamon and when it is absent disappointment sets in, so lot 100 is in this respect more interesting. Nevertheless this blade does have a broad Soshu feel to it, with a longish kissaki. The hada is fine without the coarseness which might have been expected. Hammer bid was $14,400US.

100 A KATANA BLADE attributed to Muramasa II of Ise; style: hon-zukuri, ihori-mune, shallow torii-zori and chugissaki; kitae: ko-itame a little mokume; hamon: hako-midare of nie and nie clusters; boshi: o-maru, very slightly hakkakeru; horimono: bo-hi on omote and ura, kaki-toshi; nakago: ubu, kuri-jiri, faint yoko-yasurime, three mekugi-ana—67.1*cm. long, signed Muramasa, probably 16th Century, habaki missing*, in shirasaya

Probably not by Muramasa II, but a later generation of the school

This does at first sight seem right. The characteristic hako hamon and tanago-bara nakago are there with what seems to be a good comparative signature, but the characteristic of a deep notare between the hako is missing and so are the associated ashi. The tori seems too shallow and the hamon and hada life-less. Hammer bid for this sword was $15,000US.

101 A TACHI BLADE by Kamakura Ichimonji Suketsuna; style: hon-zukuri, ihori-mune, torii-zori and chugissaki; kitae: itame-mokume with small areas of shin-gane increasing in size towards the habaki; hamon: ko-choji-midare with ko-nie; boshi: o-maru with sunagashi; horimono: bo-hi on omote and ura, kaki-toshi; nakago: suriage and kuri-jiri with two mekugi-ana, ha-machi tsukare—63.8*cm. long, signed just above the jiri, Suketsuna (of Sagami), late 13th/early 14th Century*, with gilt-covered habaki, in shirasaya

Suketsuna was the second son of Fukuoka Ichimonji Sukezane, a famous Bizen smith who later moved to Sagami

In shape this blade has mid-Kamakura style and, (as Yamanaka suggests for Suketsuna blades), in it's original length of about 70 cm is a little short compared with contemporary blades. The hada is not strong O-mokume as might have been expected. The narrow nioi based choji-midare suguha is correct for Fujishiro (Koto-hen page 581), but it did not have anything like the activity of the Ichimonji Nobufusa. As to the mei, it is placed correctly, but does not compare well with that shown in Fujishiro. Hammer bid was $26,000US.

102 A KATANA BLADE by Taikei Naotane; style: hon-zukuri, ihori-mune and koshi-zori with chugissaki; kitae: very fine ko-itame and nashi-ji with chikei and slight tobi-yaki; hamon: gonome-midare, resembling choji in places, with strong nioi and profuse ko-nie, boshi: ko-midare; horimono: full-length bohi in omote, the lower part containing a kurikara design, on the ura side a three-quarter length bohi from the yokote with a vajra-hilted ken in the shinogi below it; nakago: ubu, sujikai yasurime, kuri-jiri, one mekugi-ana, copper habaki—65.5*cm. long, signed Shoji Chikuzen Daijo Taikei Fuji Naotane, and kao, and dated Bunsei* 12, *mid-autumn* (1829), in shirasaya

Naotane (1779-1857) was a pupil of Suishinshi Masahide; he worked in Bizen and Soshu styles, and his student Yoshibane is known to have carved horimono on his blades

This blade is stout with little funbari and with a relatively small kissaki, which fits it as Naotane's Bizen style. After the Koto blades, the fine hada seems flat and lifeless. Again the hamon has the general outline of Ichimonji choji-midare, but the actions within it are lacking. Fujishiro, (Shinto-hen page 176), shows examples of mei and this one compares reasonably well. Seen in isolation with it's Shinto style horimono, the blade looks good, but like the other Shinshinto blade in the collection, it lacks the depth of detail seen in the very beautiful Masatsune for example. Hammer bid for this blade was $16,000US.

103 A KATANA BLADE by Yokoyama Sukesada; style: hon-zukuri, ihori-mune and torii-zori with ogissaki; kitae: very fine ko-itame becoming almost nashi-ji, with small chikei; hamon: choji-midare, nioi; boshi: o-maru, a few nie on ura towards the point; nakago: ubu, katte-sagari yasuri, ha-agari jiri, one mekugi-ana, *habaki missing* — 68.2*cm. long, signed Bizen Osafune ju Yokoyama Sukesada saku kore, Tomonari go-ju-ku dai koin* (59*th in descent from Tomonari*) *and dated Meiji* 23 (1890), *on a day in the* 2*nd month*, in shirasaya

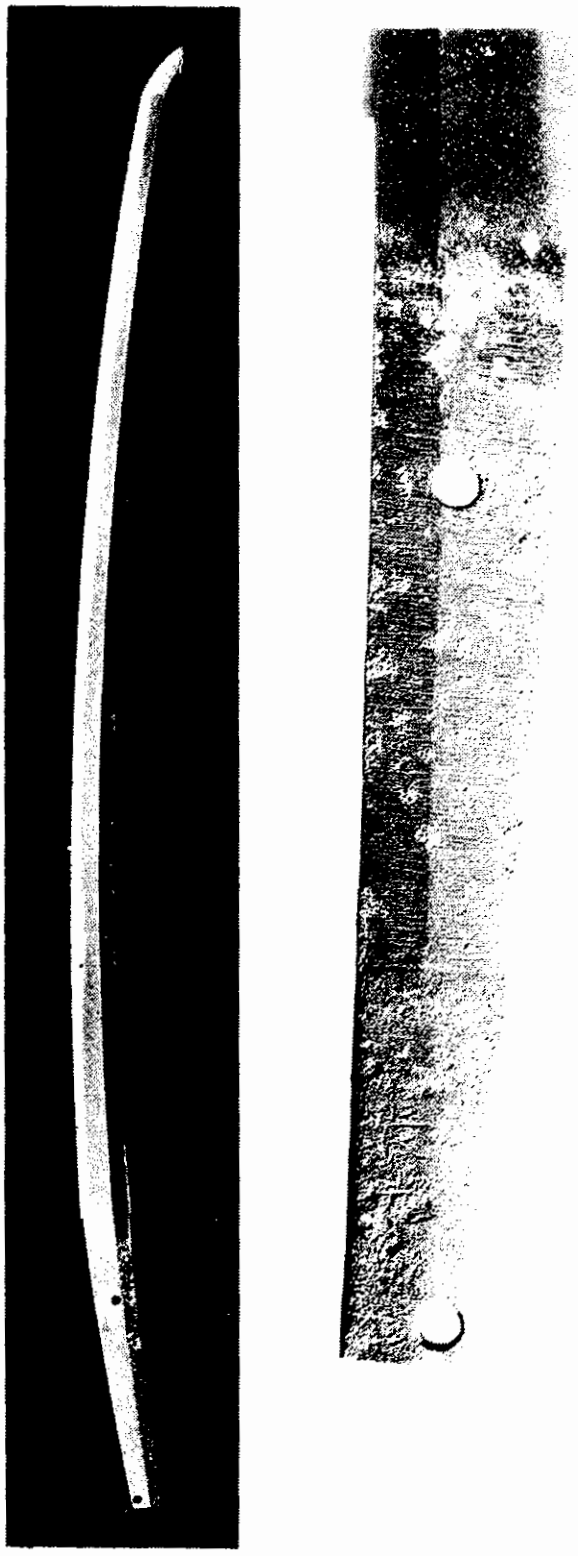
Interest waned with this blade. It is what it purports to be. The long kissaki combined with it's stoutness, in comparison with the other blades, made it seem out of place. Hammer bid was $3,600US.

The reader will have come to recognise that the collection made no attempt to be a balanced one. There are no good Shinto smiths represented. If the collection were put together in Meiji times by a Japanese for a Western collector, then it is possible that the Yokoyama Sukesada blade could have been made to order to represent the then current state of sword making. It certainly contrasts with the bulk of the blades which are, or purport to be, pre 1400 in time of manufacture. The balance in the collection lies in it's representation of the zenith of sword making.

The Ichimonji Nobufusa, the Bizen Motoshige and the Ichimonji Suketsuna are believed to have been sold to a collector in the United States. Perhaps they will become available for study, or have they become part of a speculator's gamble?

Acknowledgment: Mr. W.H.Tilley of Christies who very kindly made available copies of photographs of the blades.

LOT 90
BIZEN OSAFUNE MOROKAGE

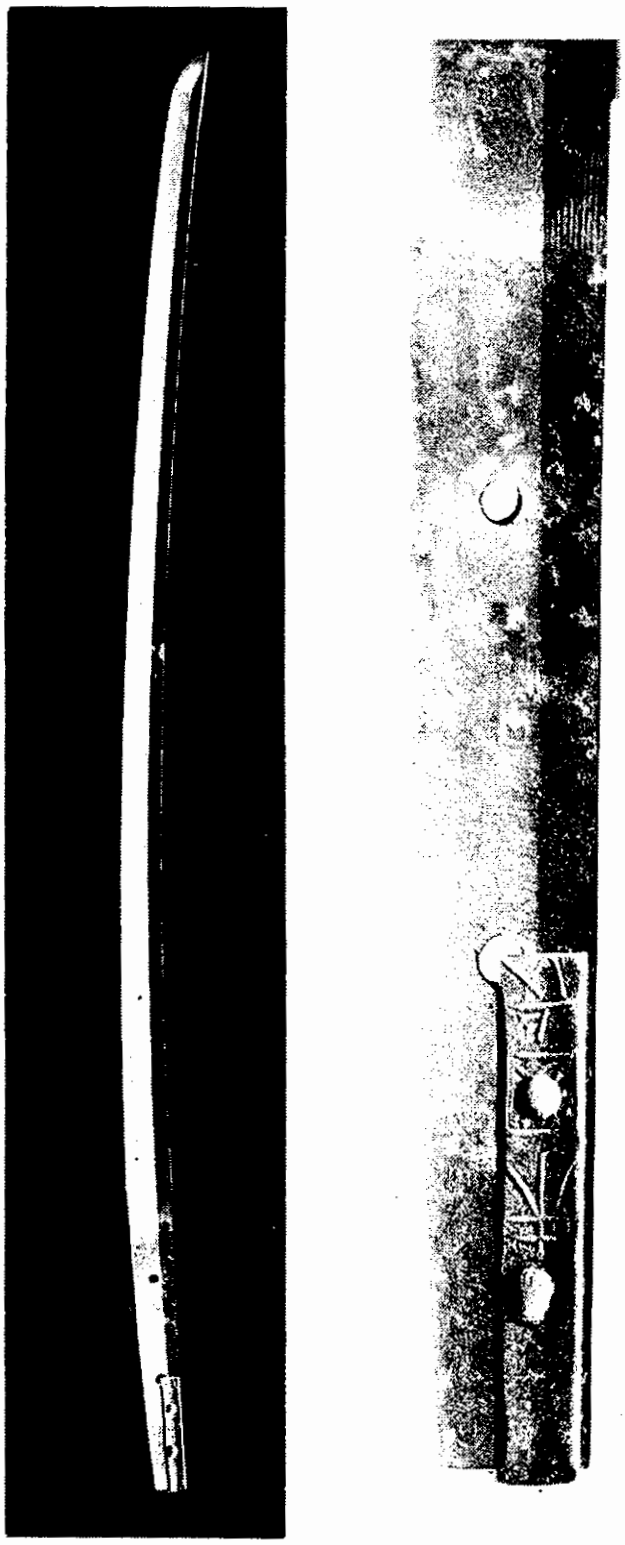


LOT 91
BIZEN NAGAMITSU

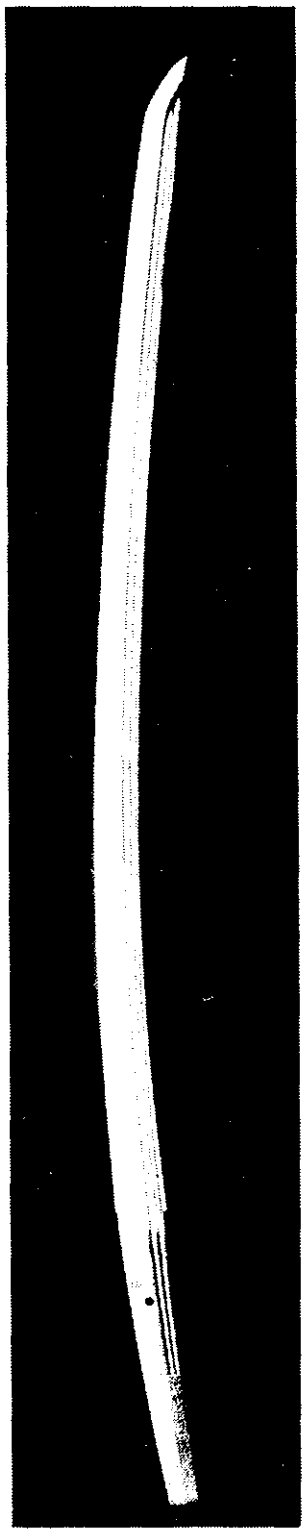
LOT 92
SADATSUNA (HOKI PROVINCE)

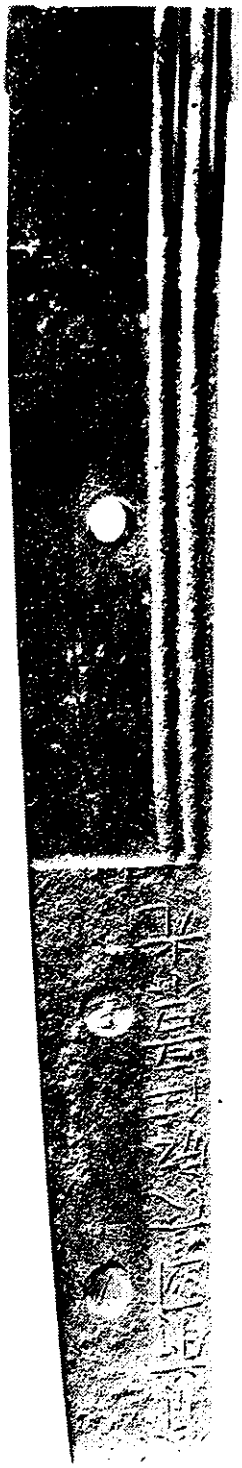
LOT 93
BIZEN ICHIMONJI NOBUFUSA

LOT 94
BIZEN MASATSUNE

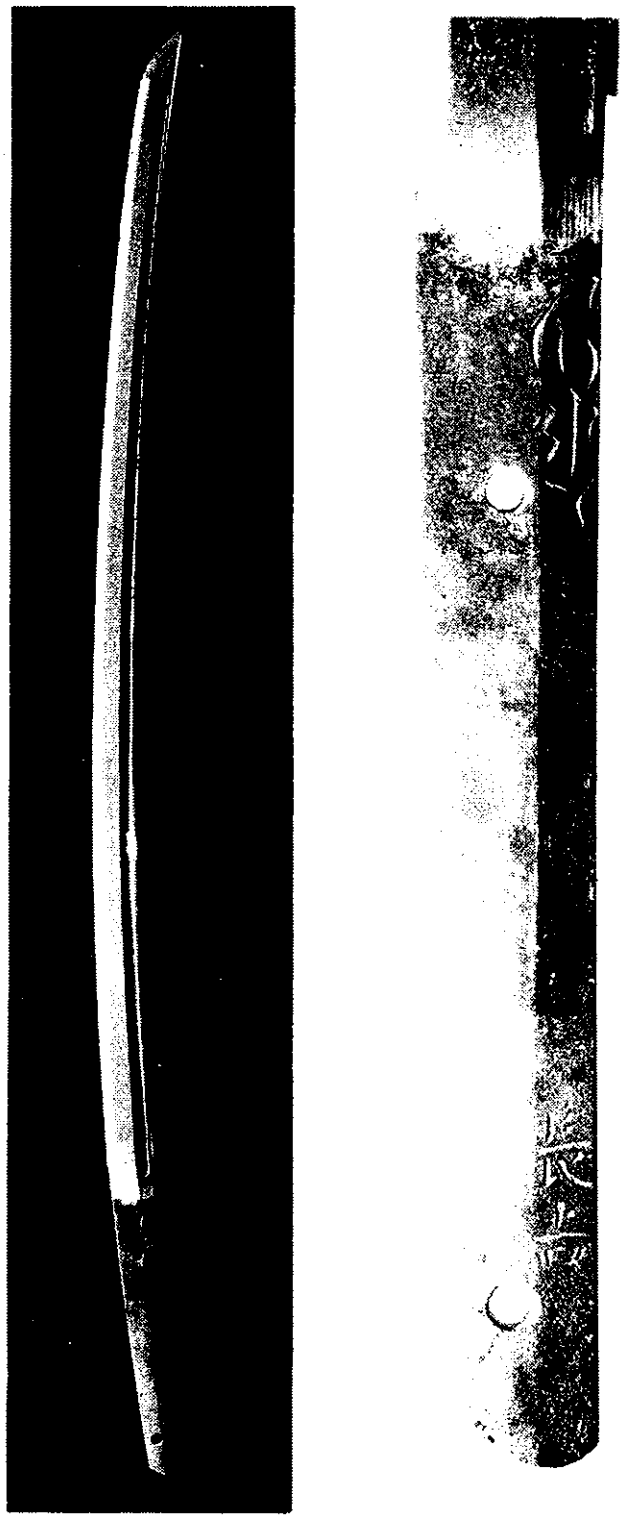


LOT 95
RAI KUNINAGA

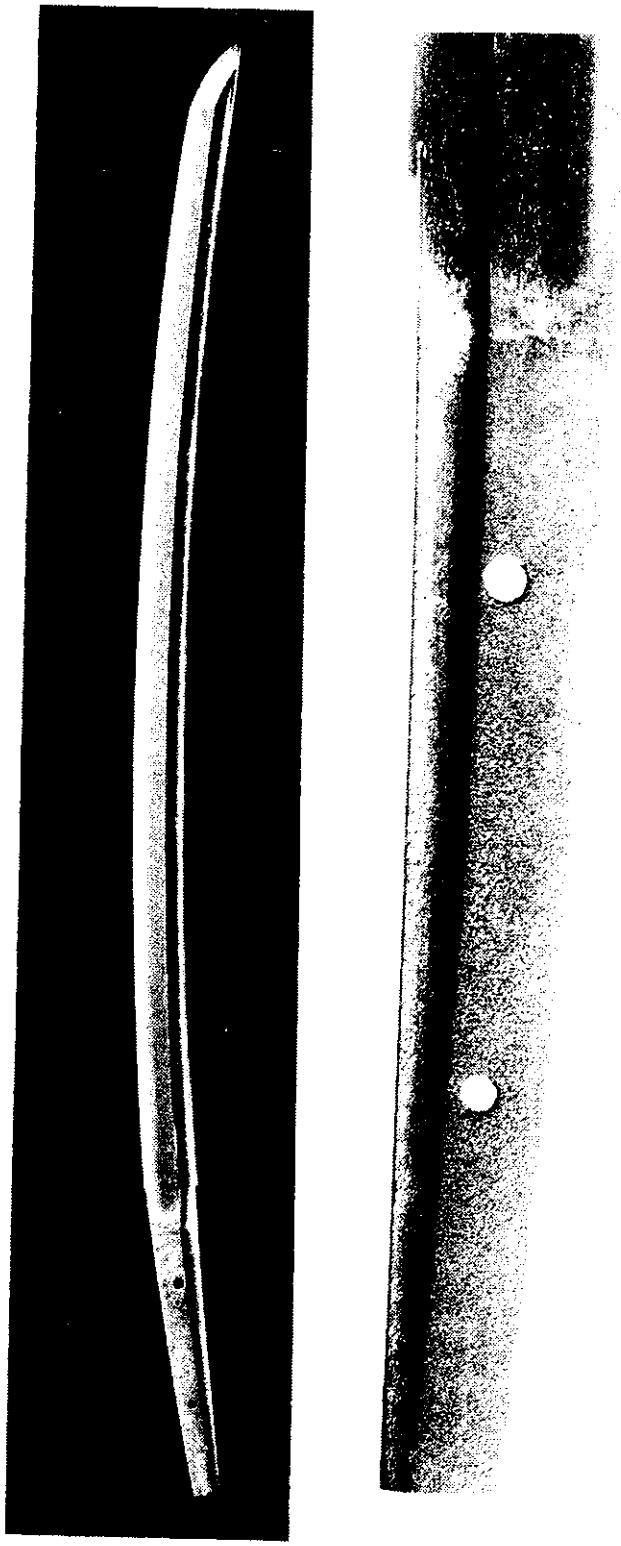




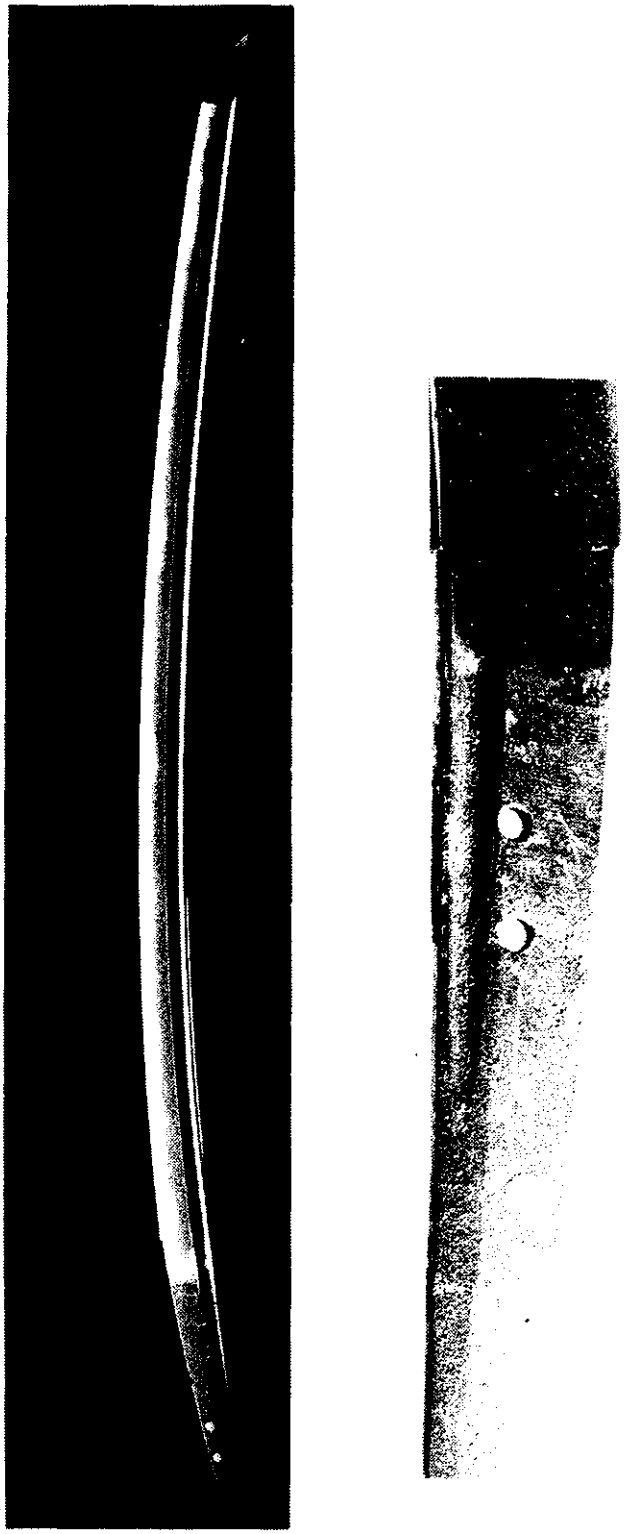
LOT 96
BIZEN KAGEMITSU



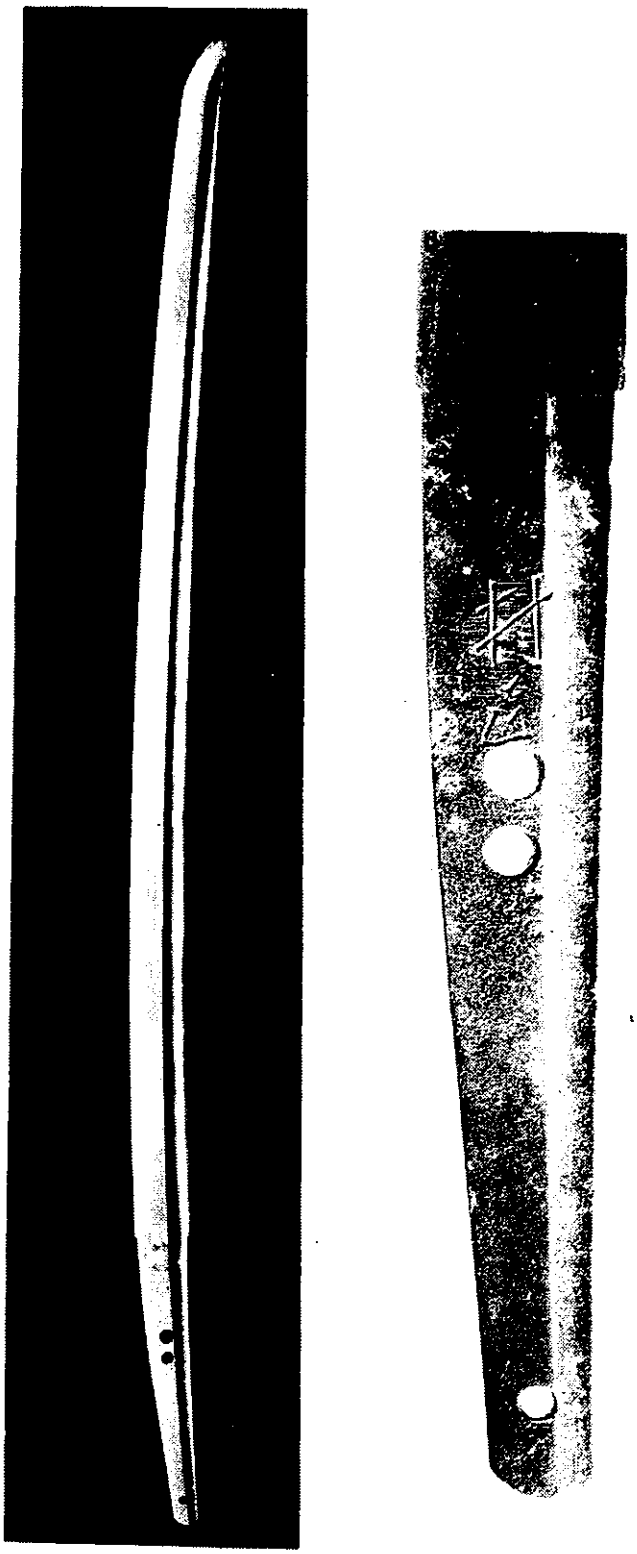
LOT 97
HEIANJO NAGAYOSHI



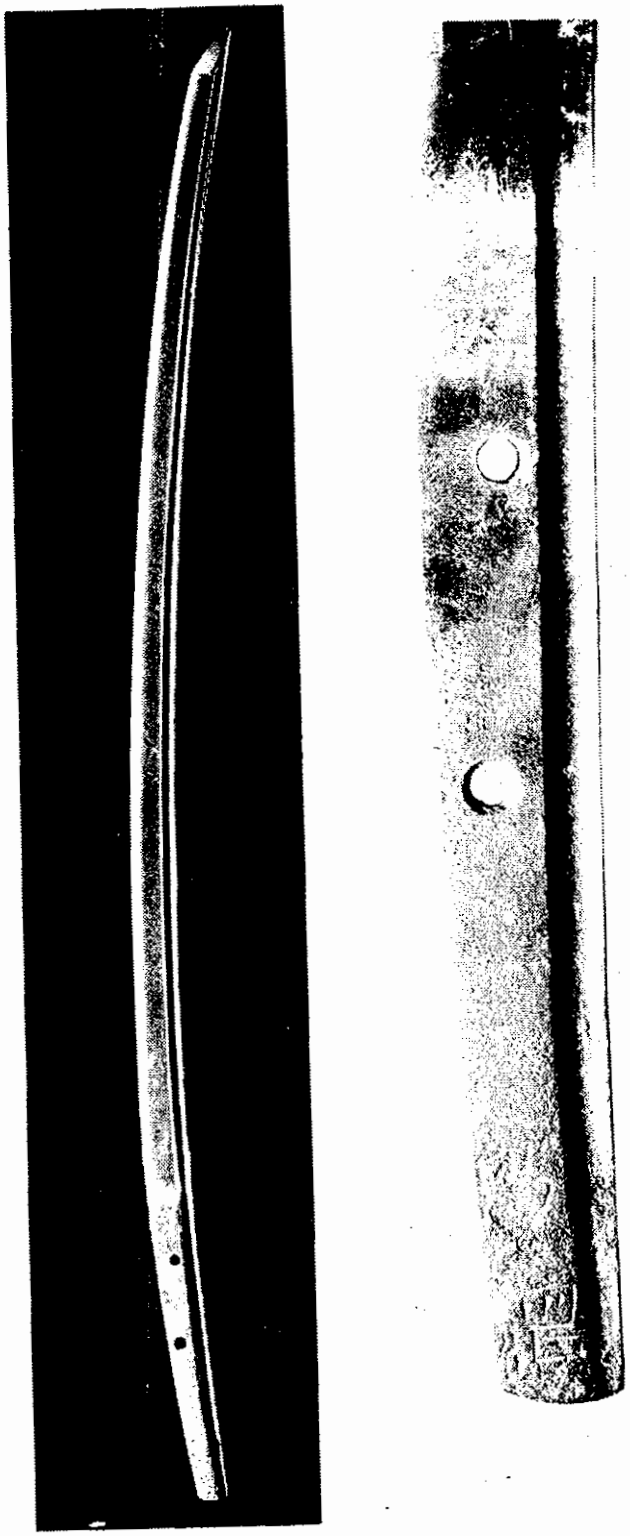
LOT 98
ATTRIBUTED TO BIZEN
OSAFUNE MOTOSHIGE



LOT 99
ATTRIBUTED TO MURAMASA I
(ISE PROVINCE)

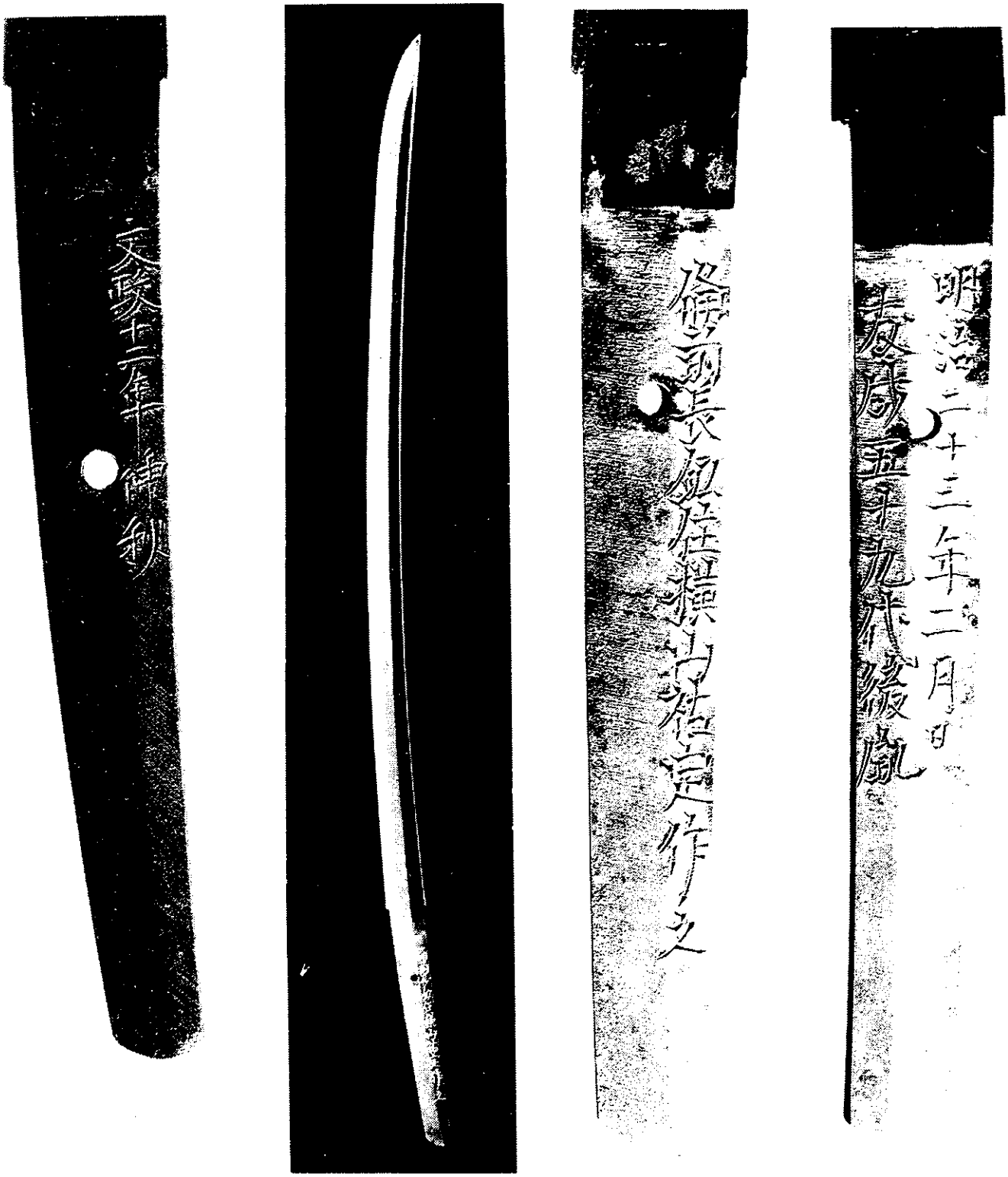


LOT 100
ATTRIBUTED TO MURAMASA II
(ISE PROVINCE)



LOT 101
KAMAKURA ICHIMONJI
SUKETSUNA

LOT 102
TAIKEI NAOTANE



LOT 102
TAIKEI NAOTANE
(ura side)

LOT 103
YOKOYAMA SUKESADA

THE PRACTICAL SWORD

by Nyle C. Monday

Of all the objects of Japanese material culture, no single object is more universally recognized as a symbol of the culture than the Japanese sword. Countless pages have been devoted to the sword as an art object, detailing in great detail the construction, nomenclature, and history of this superior weapon. Studies of various swordsmiths and their techniques in obtaining beautiful temperlines, etc., abound. However, one view of the sword has been consistantly lacking, and it is most conspicuous in its absence. The sword is a functional weapon and was developed and used throughout history from the very origin of the Yamato race. Why, then, has the warrior's view of his primary weapon been virtually ignored? It is true that the sword became a high art form, but its very structure was dictated by its primary intended function. In later years, particularly during the peaceful reign of the Tokugawa, the sword came to be seen by some as only a thing of esthetic beauty, but this was a degeneration which came about with the rise of a wealthy merchant class and the accompanied decline of the warrior. The merchant could see the beauty of the sword's form, but only the warrior understood the sword for what it truly was. When the Samurai class was abolished and the wearing of swords prohibited following the Meiji Restoration, this realistic view was gradually lost. Only within the protective walls of the BUGEI RYU (martial art 'schools') was this orientation preserved and so survives to the present day. This paper will attempt to shed some light on the warriors view of the sword by examining the customs surrounding it followed by a general discussion of the characteristics embodied in a good fighting blade. This will hopefully provide the reader with an alternate outlook from that usually set forth in books dealing with the Japanese sword. As Otake Risuke states in volume one of his Deity and the Sword:

> A sword is judged today by criteria that tend to appreciate only artistic qualities rather than the practical nature of the sword. Such a practice should be corrected.

This paper is an attempt to help in correcting this mistake notion.

There is a famous Japanese saying which states, "The sword is the soul of the Warrior." This is nothing short of the truth. A boy born into the Samurai class was made familiar with cold steel early in his life. At the age of five a young boy would be dressed in the formal clothes of his class, placed upon a GO-board, and a live sword thrust into his OBI (sash), thus initiating him into his profession. Although he might continue to wear only mock weapons until the age of fifteen, he was never without some representation of this symbol of his status. The very wearing of these deadly weapons imparted to the young warrior a feeling and an air of self-respect and responsibility. The sword never left his side, even resting within easy reach at night. Is it any wonder that he came to think of his blade as a distinct being in itself? The blade was the embodiment of the soul of its owner and many essays on the philosophical aspects of swordsmanship contain phrases which depict the sword as a mirror in which the soul of the swordsman was reflected and tested for purity in the fire of combat.

Because of the significance the blade held for the warrior an elaborate system of customs and etiquette were devised. An insult to a sword was, in effect, an insult to the man's soul and would most likely result in bloodshed. The system of sword etiquette was designed to prevent such occurances. When entering the home of a friend the long sword (KATANA) was given to a specially trained servant who would handle it with the courtesy it required. The companion sword (WAKIZASHI) was worn at all times but was considered a defensive weapon, or at least less aggressive. His friend, being in the safety of his own home, would usually have both of his swords on a rack in the particular room he was in. Generally, the rack would be oriented in such a manner as the weapons would be pointing towards the door, enabling the warrior to put them into action quickly if the need should arise. A warrior could tell, by observing the manner in which swords were placed on a rack, how

secure the owner felt in his environment. If, on the other hand, a warrior was meeting a potential or known enemy, his KATANA would never leave his side. He would normally place it on his right side when seated as this would indicate non-aggressive intent due to the difficulty of bringing the sword into play from that position. Even so, it was well known that some schools of IAI-JUTSU (sword drawing) taught methods for just such situations. To place the hilt of one's sword too near the host was deemed as an insult to the skill of the latter and would probably not go untested. Placing the sword on the left side was a sign of out-right hostility. The supreme insult in a situation such as the one described above would be to step over a sword which was laying on the floor. This was an open invitation for the owner to avenge his insulted pride.

One of the most fascinating methods of insulting a warriors weapon was SAYA-ATE, or striking his scabbard. This action was as often done accidently as it was on purpose. If a warrior was looking for an excuse to provoke another to fight, SAYA-ATE was very convenient. Many RYU of IAI-JUTSU taught special techniques for just such occasions, and often one of the adversaries had drawn and cut before the sound of the clashing scabbards had subsided. The possibility of touching scabbards accidentally was constantly on the warriors mind, and he would often avoid crowded areas for this very reason. People of the lower classes also took care to pass an armed warrior on his right side to avoid his swords. In rural areas and among older people, this behavior is to be seen in Japan up to the present day, although the individuals who display it may not recognise the reasoning which lies behind it.

These carryovers into the present are some of the many indications of how the sword came to pervade all social levels of Japanese society. Many saying and proverbs commonly used today refer to the sword. For example, "MOTO NO SAYA NI OSA-MATTA" (lit. "to be restored to the scabbard") means to "make up after a quarrel and be reunited", and "SHINOGI O KEZUTTE" (lit. "to scrape the shinogi") means to fight furiously. There are many such expressions still in current useage.

Having examined some of the aspects of the Samurai attitude towards the sword and some of the customs associated with it, it is time to look at the warrior's sword itself. It should be particularly noted that this discussion will be concerned with the sword of the warrior, which is to say there were also non-warrior swords as well. The members of the nobility wore swords which were truly works of art. Lavishly decorated, these swords were a part of the court costume and not really designed for serious combat. On the other end of the social scale, merchants and farmers commonly carried swords during certain periods of Japanese history. Swordsmiths were also known to make highly ornate blades for presentation to various shrines and temples. Almost every shrine in Japan posesses such swords. Again, these weapons were never intended for combat, and often the tangs were never drilled or punched to make the attachment of a hilt possible. These weapons are beyond the scope of this essay which will deal only with the sword meant for combat; the warriors sword.

An interesting passage concerning the ideal sword for a warrior appears in OI NO NEZAME ("Old Man Waking From Sleep"), written by Yamaura Saneo of the ITTO-RYU in the early 19th century:

> This may be different from others, but what I care most about is the example. When you wear a sword it is desireable to wear it just as naturally as animals do their horns, and feel its presence as if it were a part of your body. An ideal sword embues its trained user with courage, and no matter how far he might walk, even along a steep path, his sword should not make him tired or injure his hip. A sword with only a slight curvature in its blade (SORI) is less comfortable to wear, and less convenient to draw quickly into action than a more curved blade. A straight-bladed sword does not cut well against an object, and it is also disadvantageous in combat because it is so susceptible to HIRA-UCHI, a counterattack made against its straight flat surfaces. It is advisable that the swordsman carefully think over the merits and demerits of any sword before he uses it.

The sword was designed for a specific purpose, and the swordsman would naturally want a sword which could perform that function in the most efficient manner possible. Moreover, the techniques of KEN-JUTSU (classical swordsmanship) and IAI-JUTSU could most successfully be employed with a blade of a particular weight, balance, and length. It was this

optimum combination of attributes which varied somewhat from man to man, that the swordsman sought. Otake Risuke, master teacher of the oldest classical BUGEI RYU, the TENSHIN SHODEN KAORI SHINTO RYU, offered his view of the sword:

> The swordsman considers his sword to be an extension of his body...If the swordsman cannot easily use his sword with one hand from left to right, or for that matter in any direction, his technique will be slow. The sword must be of such a weight so as to be used quickly and freely as if it were your own finger. The cutting-edge of the sword must move with the speed of a wagtail as it strikes against the enemy's body. Failing this, the enemy will dodge or otherwise evade the stroke. The slow moviing sword does not merit being called a technique of martial arts (BU-JUTSU). If a swordsman's technique informs the enemy, "I am going to attack your head", or "Iam going to attack your forearm", it is too slow to be practical. (Otake, V.1 p.22)

What then are the specifications of this ideal sword? Obviously they vary from person to person, but some generalizations are possible. Length is probably the most variable feature. Yagyu Toshikane (1625-?) of the YAGYU SHINKAGE-RYU favored shorter blades ranging from 1 SHAKU 9 SUN 8 BU (about 55cm) to 1 SHAKU 3 SUN 3 BU (about 38cm). Short blades could be drawn and manipulated rapidly, but were a disadvantage when facing an opponent armed with a longer blade. This was the advantage exploited by Sasaki Kojiro, who used a NO-DACHI with a blade over five feet in lenght. Otake Risuke, on the other hand, suggests a sword which is more in line with combative reality. His ideal sword has a blade of about 2 SHAKU 3 SUN 5 BU (68cm) with a moderate SORI of about 5 BU and a short KISSAKI. A long graceful kissaki might be good when used in a thrusting action but it was more fragile than a shorter point, as well as being inconvenient for fast drawing. Even though the sword might be fairly long, it's balance was the factor which decided whether or not the length was excessive. A heavy sword might be useful in cutting a strong stationary target, but the reality of combat is far removed from this. Speed and mobility are vital. Otake addresses these factors also:

> In combat whether you will be victorious or not is generally decided prior to engagement with an enemy. A long heavy sword is not good for use in combat. It is patent that no truly excellent practical blade can be found among heavy and very long-pointed swords. (Otake, V.1 p.24)

The mountings (KOSHIRAE) used on a sword were also important. Although the warrior enjoyed adorning his blade with fine decorations, he would not allow them to interfere with his combat ability. The hilt (TSUKA) had to be of sufficient length to allow the swordsman the leverage necessary to cut properly. Fancy open-work sword-guards (TSUBA) were very beautiful but lacked strength. For this reason, TSUBA meant for war were usually solid iron, although these too were often nicely decorative. The SAYA (scabbard) was generally covered with a dark colored lacquer (although the Satsum clan favored red) rather than in the flashy colors of the inlaid scabbards worn at court. Many of the designs on the KOSHIRAE were practical in another manner as well. Esoteric Buddhist (MIKKYO) symbols were often used in these designs to invoke the protection of the deities, thus introducing a new dimension in self-protection.

The sword was the symbol of the warrior, and his very existence rested on the quality of the blade he wore and his ability to use it. Little wonder that he devoted so much time and effort to its study. It is hoped that this paper has succeeded in casting some light on some of the lesser known aspects of the Japanese sword. The artistic view of the sword is well known, but the view of the men whose relationship with it was most intimate has deeper significance to the study of Japanese history and culture. It is unfortunate indeed that so little information is to be found. In the near future, a new volume by Donn F. Draeger entitled JAPANESE SWORDMANSHIP will be published and almost certainly fill this disturbing void. Perhaps then the sword of Japan will once again be in its proper perspective.

Reference: Otake, Risuke: The Diety and the Sword: Katori Shinto Ryu, Vol.II, Tokyo; Minato Research and Publishing Co., 1977, 149pp, illustrated.

A SWORD OF FRIENDSHIP

It is with great pleasure that we print the following story. It is a story of a sword, given long ago as a token of friendship. Left to neglect over the years it has just recently been rediscovered and restored, once again to be preserved and appreciated for what it is, an important bit of history deserving preservation. It is particularly important to the JSS/US in that the people involved in this saving of a sword are members of our Society. Their act of compassion for this sword without financial gains, is most commendable.

The story of this sword begins almost 70 years ago. It was a gift in appreciation, given to Mr. Edgeworth David, then professor of Sydney University, Sydney, Australia, by Lieutenant Nobu Shirase who was a leader of a Japanese Antartic expedition (the first to be undertaken by Japanese) back in 1912. The expdeition advertised for volunteers in that time and began to struggle with many difficulties in their trek. Twenty-eight men sailing in the 204 ton ship, Kainan Maru, arrived in Wellington, Australia, unsure if they would ever be able to reach the antartic.

Professor David offered them help. Professor David was a geologist and had successfully accomplished an Antarctic trek was very worried about the. Lieutenant Shirase and his men made a triumphant trek one year later and afterwards presented this sword to Professor David out of his gratitude for the Professor's kindness.

Miss Mary Edgeworth David, daughter of the late Professor David, recently discovered the sword while cleaning house. She heard of Major Ian Brookes' interest in swords and contacted him about it. Major Brookes, one of the JSS/US Australian members, contacted Mr. Kajihara Kotoken seeking restoration for the sword on behalf of Miss David. Mr. Kajihara answered with a most honorable offer to restore the sword per gratus since it was "a sword of friendship" and he wished to assist in the preserving of this token of friendship between Japan and Australia. Mr. Kajihara is also a JSS/US member.

A sword of friendship

"Triad", No.16 - 1979 (Reprinted w/Permission)

by Captain Bob Skelton, Defence Public Relations

A Japanese master sword polisher travelled to Hornsby, NSW, on a special errand — to return an historically priceless Samurai sword to its Australian owner.

Mr Kotoken Kajihara, 53, of Fukouka, Kyushu, accompanied by his 25-year-old son, Yoshiko, also a sword polisher in the family tradition, crowned a labour of dedication.

Major Ian Brookes, of Mosman, NSW, who works at Training Command Headquarters in Darlinghurst, Sydney, a collector and Australian authority on Samurai swords, identified the relic earlier this year.

He advised its owner, Miss Mary David, to have it restored by a top Japanese sword polisher before damage by rust made it irreparable.

Unlike Samurai swords brought back from Japan as spoils of war by Australian servicemen after World War II, this aristocratic weapon was a gift of gratitude to Professor Edgeworth David, geologist, Antarctic explorer, and soldier.

Professor, later Sir Tannath Edgeworth David, was Professor of Geology at Sydney University, and geologist with Sir Ernest Shackleton and Sir Douglas Mawson on an Antarctic expedition in 1908-9.

The 335-year-old blade was made by Kaneyasu III, one of Japan's 100 master sword-makers and dedicated to the noble Matsu Kami, feudal lord of Matsu Province in Northern Honshu.

It was presented to Professor David by Lieutenant Nobu Shirase, leader of a Japanese Antarctic expedition, which he helped with advice and stores in Sydney in 1912.

The expedition was in Antarctica more than a year. When it returned, the sword was offered, and a lasting friendship was established which continued until Professor David's death in 1931. After his death, his widow, Caroline, brought the sword with other possessions to her daughter's Hornsby home.

The sword, in its wooden scabbard, was placed in a fishing rod cover to keep out dust and damp and stored away until 1977 when, by chance, it was brought out during a clean-up of a storage cupboard.

Major Brookes made arrangements, on behalf of Miss David, 90, Professor David's daughter, with one of Japan's expert sword appraisers and polishers to restore the blade which would normally cost $1,000.

Because of the sword's place in Australian history and circumstances in which the sword came to Australia, Mr Kajihara declined payment.

Mr Kajihara, who is descended from generations of sword polishers, wrote to Major Brookes in a metre-long letter in Japanese calligraphy. A typewritten translation in English accompanied it.

He offered to restore the sword without fee if it could be sent to him in Japan.

"I regard it as a great honour and privilege to polish such a commemorative sword and I wish no other compensation," he said.

The story in Japanese newspapers aroused a great deal of interest, so much so that a national television team went to Fukouka to film a documentary of Mr Kajihara at work restoring the sword. The screening of this film brought to light the 89-year-old daughter of Lieutenant Shirase, a retired school teacher living in Tokyo.

After its restoration, the sword went to Akita City — home of the Shirase family — for display. Mr Kajihara personally took the sword there and on the way detoured to Tokyo to show Shirase's daughter her father's sword.

Because of its veneration in Japan, he decided to complete the project by personally presenting the sword to Miss David.

What makes the story so intriguing as to arouse the interest and generosity that it has in Japan, is that, although Samurai swords have been given by the Japanese Emperor to a visiting head of state, as far as can be ascertained, this is one of the very few occasions in which a Samurai sword of this quality was given by a Japanese private citizen to a non-Japanese private citizen as a token of gratitude and goodwill.

Once the sword is returned to Miss David it is expected that it will be placed in the Australian Museum, College Street, Darlinghurst, as part of an Antarctic, geological, or scientific display.

Miss David said it should not be part of an arms display. It had historical associations for both Japan and Australia, and was linked with science, exploration, and friendship between two men from two countries — not warfare, she said.

Major Brookes receives unusual correspondence.

Miss Mary David, 91, of Hornsby, whose father received the sword because of his assistance to a Japanese Antarctic expedition.

Master Japanese sword-polisher, Mr Kotoken Kajihara, who spent 120 hours refurbishing the priceless relic, shows the result of his work.

MUTSU (NO) KAMI
KANEYASU

The following statistics and commentary are supplied by Mr. Kajihara (as presented to Miss David), and refer to the sword he restored.

MEI - MUTSU (NO) KAMI KANEYASU

STATISTICS - Blade length 2.22 Shaku (66.6cm), sori (curvature) 2 bu (0.6cm). One mekugi-ana (peg hole). Nakago (tang) is ubuzaimei (un-cut, with makers name). Shinogi-zukuri (with ridgeline) with ihore (two sided) mune (backridge).
It is forged in masame (straight grain) hada, with chikei and konie. Hamon is gunome-midare (pointed in irregular fashion), deep konie (wide and abundant nie), much kinsuji (golden threadlike forms withing the hamon) and sunagashi (sweeping lines of ko-nie thru hamon peaks). Boshi is maru (rounded) with midare-komi (irregular pattern) with hakikake (sweeping lines of ko-nie). It has chu-gissaki (medium sized point).

REMARKS -

This school of swordsmiths branced off from the Tegai school in Yamato province and had been prosperous from generation to generation since Tokugawa era.

Showing distinctive features of Tokugawa-shintou (new-swords), this sword has a stirring form with a slight curvature. Its surface and tempered line are also fine, and this sword is most beautiful to behold.

The idiom of it seems to have copied that of kotou (old swords) of Soshu-joi. This sword is said to be one of the best works done by the smith, Mutsu (no) Kami Kaneyasu.

History of 'Kaneyasu' Sword

Sir Edgeworth David, Professor of Geology of Sydney University, helped a Japanese Antartic expedition commanded by Lieutenant Nobu Shirase, which had left Japan in 1911, and he contributed to the success of the expedition. Lieutenant Shirase presented a Japanese sword , which is said to be "a samurai's soul", to Professor David out of his gratitude.

Some words were written down on the saya (shirazaya) which read: "To Professor David, from Lieutenant Nobu Shirase, leader of a Japanese Antarctic expedition". "Hidari-Mutsu (no) Kami Kaneyasu", and the measurements "2 Shaku 2 Sun 2 Bu". This is an inscription by a swordsmith. The word 'Hidari' means that the swordsmith Kaneyasu was left-handed. Meanwhile its reverse shows that this sword was contributed to admire the expeditons's courage by Mr. Tasaburou Fkuda. (apparently this was on the reverse of the saya).

I wish this sword would keep shining forever as the remembrance of friendly relations between Japan and Australia. I write this as a Japanese sword polisher who had the honor of restoring this sword. (signed: Kotoken Kajihara)

REMINISCENCES OF TOKEN TAIKAI '79 IN CHICAGO, MAY 23-26, 1979

by Mr. Han Bing Siong

When I received the announcement of Token Taikai '79 my wife and I had just booked for a holiday tour to the United States. To attend the Taikai we would have to change our itinerary drastically and also stay much longer in the States. So I decided to write for information first.

For sword collectors a Token Taikai in the States is in the first place important because of the presence of recognised Japanese experts to whom swords can be submitted for authentication. At the Token Taikai of 1972 and 1974 there was a team of sword experts of the Nippon Bijutsu Token Hozon Kyokai, at the Token Taikai 1976 it was the Toen-sha that provided the shinsa-team. This time it was the Nippon Token Hozon Kai, the oldest Japanese sword society, established 90 years ago, that would conduct the shinsa. However, as we had planned to travel through the country for more than three weeks, it would be impossible to take a sword with me to submit it for appraisal. So Token Taikai '79 would be of importance to me only if there would be an opportunity for all visitors like on the Taikai in Japan, to examine and handle swords that are put on tables for that purpose. This turned out not to be the case. I was imformed that for security reasons the swords were to be exhibited in cases behind glass. But I was so fortunate to receive an invitation from Dr. Hashioka, member of the exhibition-committee, to come and help in setting up the swords in the exhibition room so as to have the opportunity I was after. Of course we immediately changed our plans and made arrangements for a stay in Chicago for 5 days.

I have not been at the previous Taikai's in the States - in fact this time it was our first visit to the United States - so I cannot compare the exhibition in Chicago with those of the other Taikai's. But outside Japan I have never seen before so many beautiful swords in such a well preserved condition like on Taikai '79.

Among the swords exhibited there were 9 Jūyō Tōken, a very respectable amount indeed, considering that in the whole of Europe there was only one! Three were signed, a most impressive Ko Bizen tachi by Masazane, intact, in its original tachi-shape with pronounced fumbari and sori, ending in a ko-kissaki and with an interesting koshi ba; a nagamaki naoshi wakizashi by Sanenaga, younger brother of the famous Nagamitsu of Osafune and a smith of jō-jō-saku class himself; and a nagamaki naoshi katana by Suetsugu, dated Eitoku, which reputedly came from England. The other Jūyō Tōken were mumei: a Ko Bizen wakizashi with futasuji hi; a remarkably light Yamato Hosho katana with very beautiful masame hada; two nagamaki naoshi katana attributed respectively to Hojoji Kunimitsu (I did not know there was a Juyo Token by this smith in the States) and to Bizen Osafune Nagamori, a student of the famous Chōgi; a robust katana attributed to Sa Sadayoshi, son of the famous Sa, one of the pupils of Gorō Niūdō Masamune, and a typical broad Hasebe katana.

It was a thrilling sensation indeed to hold these treasures in my hands and examine their fine quality. From the start of my interest in Japanese swords I have been fascinated by utsuri. Several of these Jūyō Tōken had utsuri. Due to lack of time I could only thoroughly examine the utsuri of the Sadatsugu. For the Masazane and the Sa Sadayoshi I also had a little more time because the owner allowed me a private preview before we started the setting up of the swords for exhibition. With this collector I had corresponded since 1967 and it was marvellous to meet him in person after knowing each other for 12 years through letters.

Beside these 9 Jūyō Tōken there was a sword that before Wourld War II was designated Kokuhō. It was a tachi by Bizen Osafune Iyesuke with horimono. It was interesting to see this sword in that it made clear to me that, judging from the present day Kokuhō I have handled in Japan, the present Kokuhō system in force as from 1950 must be different from the previous Kokuhō systems. According to Albert Yamanaka's Nihonto Newsletter this sword belonged to the Tamashima Shrine in Saga.

As if it was not rewarding enough to see these 10 swords, there were numerous other swords by swordsmiths of top class (saijō saku) and exceptionally superior class (jō-jō saku) with classifications like Tokubetsu Kichō and Kōshu Tokubetsu Kichō of the NBTHK and of Yū saku and Shū saku of the Nippon Tōken Hozon Kai.

The swords of top class smiths were a mumei Rai Kunitoshi katana, a Rai Kunimitsu wakizashi with kinzoganmei, a sanji mei Kanesada (No Sada) with an ō gunome midare togari ha hamon with some of the ō gunome togari reaching up towards the shinogi, a Kanemoto wakizashi, a Muramasa wakizashi with the mei changed into Masahiro, a mumei Kanemitsu (Mr. David Pepper, who also helped in setting up the swords, by accident experienced the sharpness of the sword), an Echizen Shimosaka wakizashi, a wakizashi by Naotane with interesting uzumaki hada (whirl-pool-like formations in the hada), a niji mei Kiyomaro, also reputedly from England (Ihad the impression that this sword must have had a deep nick in the cutting edge, now polished out), a Nanki Shigekuni katana and a wakizashi by Motohira with many very pronounced imo no tsuru.

There was also a signed tanto by Rai Kunimitsu in shirasaya with sayagaki by Honami Kozon. The hamon of this sword resembled the hamon of the Rai Kunimitsu, illustrated in Nippon no Meitō (p.99) by Shibata Mitsuo and Okochi Tsunehira.

A few swords were not authenticated, like an ō suriage wakizashi attributed (I do not know by whom) to Ko Bizen Masatsune and a yoroi doshi tanto with Kunitsuna inscribed on the nakago (I had the impression that the hamon was lacking on this sword).

The jō-jō saku class was also well represented. There were an ō suriage Tegai Kanenaga II, a long, elegant and very desirable mumei ubu Fukuoka Ichimonji with a strongly curved nakago, another Fukuoka Ichimonji, ō suriage, and an ō suriage Yoshioka Ichimonji with a hamon that was much wilder than that of the ō suriage Fukuoka Ichimonji. I expected to find beautiful utsuri on these two swords but found none. The shintō period

was represented by Dewa Daijō Kunimichi and Oya Izumi no Kami Kunisada. Of the Shinshintō period there were two swords by Bizen no Suke Munetsugu, one of which had very clear and very pronounced kinsuji, and a sword by Ishidō Korekazu (who according to the catalogue was the second son of the well known Katō Chōunsai Tsunatoshi. This is in accordance with Tokuno Kazuo's Tōkō Taikan. However, I believe this must be a mistake, because according to Tokuno Kazuo himself Chōunsai Koretoshi was the second son of Chōunsai Tsunatoshi. And in view of the different dates on which they died according to the Tōkō Taikan, Chōunsai Koretoshi and Ishidō Korekazu must have been different persons. Generally Ishidō Korekazu is considered to be a nephew of Chōunsai Tsunatoshi. According to Fukunaga Kotoken he was Tsunatoshi's eldest son.)

There were also many swords of superior class (jō saku): a wakizashi dated 1407 and signed Bishū Osafune Morimitsu (according to the catalogue nidai,shōdai only signed with two characters. This was new to me.) a wakizashi by Taira Nagamori of Bungo made in Tadakoshi in the province of Iyo, which makes this sword a rare item discussed by Fukae Yasunobu in Tōken Bijutsu of July 1979 (it is interesting that according to the catalogue this sword has utsuri, but according to Fukae it is shirake), a wakizashi by Yamato no Kami Yoshimichi, a katana with orikaeshi mei Tamba no Kami Yoshimichi, a wakizashi by Nagatsuna of Osaka, a katana by nidai Yamashiro no Kami Kunikiyo, a wakizashi by Yamato Daijō Masanori, a wakizashi by Tjujimura Shirouemon Kanewaka, a nidai Yasutsugu wakizashi with very pronounced hada and a yakiba with very much activity in it, a Musashi Daijō Korekazu katana, a Monju Shigekuni katana, a Nobukuni Shigekane wakizashi, a Hizen Dewa no Kami Yukihiro katana, a Hamabei Toshinori katana, a Yamon Naokatsu katana, a katana by Jokeisai Masaaki (which was discussed by Homma Kunzan in Tōken Bijutsu of that month), a very long katana by Chōunsai Tsunatoshi with a flashy juka choji midare ha hamon and a katana and a wakizashi with both the hamon and the signatures identical, thus forming a daishō, by the 8th generation Tadayoshi of Hizen.

I was delighted to see swords of the best gendaitōkō like Gassan Sadakatsu with profuse activity in both the hamon and the hada (with tachi style gunto koshirae complete with i-kan tō-cho), Horii Toshihide, Kasama Shigetsugu (one of his blades with the most interesting inscription that it was made at the estate of Toyama Mitsuru of the Black Dragon Society, who had an important role in the annexation by Japan of Korea and the invasion of China), and Kajiyama Yasutoku (with an interesting kijimomo nakago).

Speaking of guntō koshirae, one of the mumei ō suriage katana in the exhibition of Kōshu Tokubetsu Kichō quality, originally with a kinpunmei attributing the sword to Rai Kuninaga and now attributed to Yamato Shizu, was found in a World War II army koshirae. This is another proof that the Japanese did mount their old valuable swords for modern warfare occasionally. Another sword in the exhibition by Yamashiro no Kami Kunikiyo had accompanied its owner to the battlefield in the Philippines. The idea of wearing one's forebears' sword during World War II has always fascinated me. In fact it was the start of my passion for Japanese swords.

The provisions for the lighting of the swords in the cases were splendid. Each case had a neon-light which could be moved freely by the visitor so as to be able to examine hada and hamon adequately. It worked excellently. For example I managed to put the light above a katana with kinzogan mei by Honami attributing the sword to Shizu, in such a way that even the utsuri was clearly visible.

Apart from the magnificent swords there was a large collection of tsuba and other sword fittings in the exhibition room. Most interesting was a collection of fully mounted tsuka that showed numerous kinds of hiltbindings, many of which I had never seen before. There were also a few complete koshirae, among others an excellent ito maki no tachi with kodogu not with the usual mon in gold relief, but with branches and flowers, attributed to Araki Tomei. This ito maki no tachi koshirae was reputedly once the possession of Field Marshal Gen Sugiyama, chief of the Imperial General Staff during World War II.

There was also a katana koshirae with very rich and brilliant kin nashiji lacquer and kodogu by Yurakusai Sekibun. I also saw beautifully decorated tanegashima and a most impressive set of bows with an utsubo in mint condition with mon. There were also abumi, armour and a fascinating 62 plate hoshi bachi kabuto, signed by Saotome Iyesada with the inside of the helmet bowl lacquered gilt (which seems to be a feature frequently seen in Saotome helmets). Peculiar was the presence of hibiki no ana on this hoshi bachi kabuto. Also on display was a set of sequential steps in forging a sword, very instructive indeed. The owner told me that the sample was made by the swordsmith Fujimura Kunitoshi.

On May 23 we worked until after midnight and so managed to get the exhibition room ready just in time for opening on May 24 in the afternoon. As both the items exhibited and the way all things were arranged in the Meibutsu room were splendid, I had expected people to queue for entering. To my surprise there were only a few visitors and the Meibutsu room remained quiet all 3½ days it was open. The main attraction turned out to be the shopping room.

I must concede that I have not seen before such a large amount of swords offered for sale at a time. And many were in perfect condition. There were some really interesting pieces. But the prices were extraordinary high, perhaps as high as the prices in Japan, if not even higher. I do not know if these were prices especially for the Taikai in view of the many Japanese visitors (among others the two brothers Saito, Mitsuoki and Daisuke, whom I met for the first time), or that it was the real usual price-level of Japanese swords in the United States. To quote some of the prices: a mumei Kōshu Tokubetsu Kichō ō suriage katana attributed to Yamato Shizu was offered for $14,000, a mumei Tokubetsu Kichō ō suriage katana attributed to Naoe Shizu with koshirae consisting of a same saya with Gotō tsuba and fuchi kashira en suite (the koshirae got a Saijō saku rating from the Tōen-sha): $8,500; a tanto signed Rai Kunimitsu in shirasaya with sayagaki by Honami Kozon: $15,000. I asked the owner of the Rai Kunimitsu whether he intended to submit that sword to the shinsa. The answer was no, because he was convinced that the shinsa team would certainly refer

that the sword has already a sayagaki by Honami Kozon and would point out that this sensei was a most respected authority, so a shinsa was no longer necessary. There was also a nagamaki naoshi katana mumei, attributed to Shikake with NBTHK green paper, priced $10,000. The owner of this sword told me that he also had a mumei Unju nagamaki naoshi katana, also with green paper, the price of which was $12,000. Another collector had a mumei katana with NBTHK green paper with kinzoganmei Kanekiyo for $5,500. There was also a tanto, ōsoraku tsukuri, priced $6,000. Perhaps its owner had noticed that I now and then have succeeded in doing the Shijō kantei of the Tōken Bijutsu and now wanted to test me. He asked me to tell who the smith was without removing the hilt. By way of a joke I examined the blade and after a while said that it was Kyondo. To my own surprise this turned out to be correct when the hilt was removed.

From a point of view of collecting militaria there were a few most interesting swords. There was a katana by Yamato Daijō Sadayuki with a knuckle-bow guard on the hilt, but not the usual type. It was the hilt of a cavalry sabre adjusted for a katana. Unfortunately the steel scabbard was missing, it was replaced by a lacquer scabbard. Price: $12,000! I also saw a sword with the usual knuckle-bow type hilt, but special in that it was fully decorated (sha kan officers). It had a very interesting blade, reason why its owner wanted to submit it to the shinsa first. There was a naval knuckle-bow sword as well, but this one was also not for sale. I had to contend myself with an original World War II banner staff with beautiful crown, that was standing in the middle of the shopping room during the entire Taikai.

In the shopping room I heard how the shinsa was proceeding. It rained pink papers: the refusals. Rumour had it that one collector spent more than $1,400 only to receive pink papers for the greater part. Especially Wakayama sensei was much talked about because of his severe judgments. When I had the opportunity to attend the shinsa upstairs in the specially reserved hotel rooms, Wakayama sensei had just taken the place of Sasano sensei. What I saw was contradicting the news I heard of him. First I saw him judging a kozuka. I was too far away to be able to see what kind of kozuka it was. But Wakayama

sensei put up his thumb and said to the couple concerned: this is very good. It received 85 points! A potential Yū-shū saku or Jūyō! A few moments afterwards a futatokoromono was submitted to him. With no further comment he gave 80 points. Then there was a tsuba which he avidly took up and examined closely, but which he then quickly put aside. Pink paper I thought. But soon it appeared that he had put it aside just to examine it a leisure after having judged the other items. When Wakayama sensei took up the tsuba again he fell back in his chair and while examining it from all sides uttered cries of disbelief and surprise. I remember this all so clearly because I was really surprised to see a Japanese expert reacting so spontaineously and enthousiastically. It belies the usual story that the Japanese sensei's do their work stoically with a poker face. After a while Wakayama sensei stood up and went to Yoshikawa sensei showing him the tsuba. Again sounds of admiration. After having consulted Yoshikawa sensei Wakayama sensei proceeded with writing down his judgment. Now it was the owner's turn to get excited and surprised;.....the tsuba received 90 points! I heard that during the whole shinsa only two or three items got this high rating. After this most interesting incident there was another tsuba (if I remember it correctly, it was a Haruaki Hogen) with coloured flowers in relief, which received 85 points from Wakayama sensei.

During the shinsa I met Mr. Omino Kiyoharu, a young polisher, who showed me samples of the certificates to be issued at this shinsa. I saw two kinds, a single piece of paper and a double folded one. An important feature of the double folded certificate is that the period of the item concerned is mentioned. Personally I also like it that the judges put their seals on the double folded certificates. It is like receiving an autograph from famous authors. Also interesting is that the double folded certificate explicitly declares the item concerned to be genuine (shōshin) like it was done by the Honami appraisers. However, I could not find any indication of the rating. According to the Tōken Taikai '79 Newsletters the ratings of Yū-saku (60-69 points), Yū-saku II (70-74 points), Shū-saku (75-79 points, Shū-saku II (80-84 points) would be clearly marked on both the certificate and it's envelope. From Mr. Omino I received a complimentary copy of the Tōken to Rekishi journal of the NTHK

of May 1979, No.509. In as much as I could understand it without having a Japanese dictionary at my disposal, in this journal it was announced that as of 1979 a new system of certificates was introduced abandoning the indication of ratings. Henceforth shiteishō will be issued for items with a rating of 60-69, and shōshin kanteishō for items rated 70 points or higher. As far as corresponding with the former Yū-saku and Shū-saku ratings, these certificates upon request can be replaced by the old style certificates with indication of the ratings. So I wondered whether the information provided by the organizers of the shinsa was not already out of date.

NGLO RATINGS

There were lectures by Yoshikawa sensei, Prof. Michael R. Notis, the gendai tōkō Ozawa Masatoshi and Mr. John Yumoto.

Yoshikawa sensei gave a general introduction discussing the five major schools through the various periods. New to me was his explanation on utsuri. The utsuri on Bizen blades of the Heian period is found along the shinogi, that of the Ichimonji and the Early Osafune is slightly lower, but still near the shinogi. On Oei-Bizen blades the utsuri is along the hamon, whereas on Sue-Bizen blades no utsuri is present. In the opinion of Yoshikawa sensei Masamune was indeed a very great swordsmith but there were others who were eaually superb. It is not true according to Yoshikawa sensei that Masamune was the greatest of all swordsmiths.

Prof. Notis' lecture dealt with the metallurgical analysis of soft metal mokume. He showed many slides. A very interesting subject.

Ozawa Masatoshi was a pupil of Myaguchi Toshihiro and Tsukamoto Okimasa. I reported to him that I have a sword by the latter. Ozawa sensei said he learned much from Tsukamoto Okimasz and that I should take good care of my sword, because the swordsmiths nowadays have not yet succeeded in making swords of the same quality like those made by Tsukamoto Okimasa.

Unfortunately I could not attend the lecture of Mr. Yumoto.

There were also demonstrations of horimono making by the gendai tōkō Gōda Toshiyuki and of shirasaya making by Hirado Takakazu, who according to Tōken to Rekishi No.509 is a shirasaya maker of the Imperial Household Agency. I did not know that the two pieces of a shirsaya are glued together with cooked Japanese rice ground into a fine paste.

Last but not least I discovered that a Taikai is also very important because of the opportunity to make new friends.

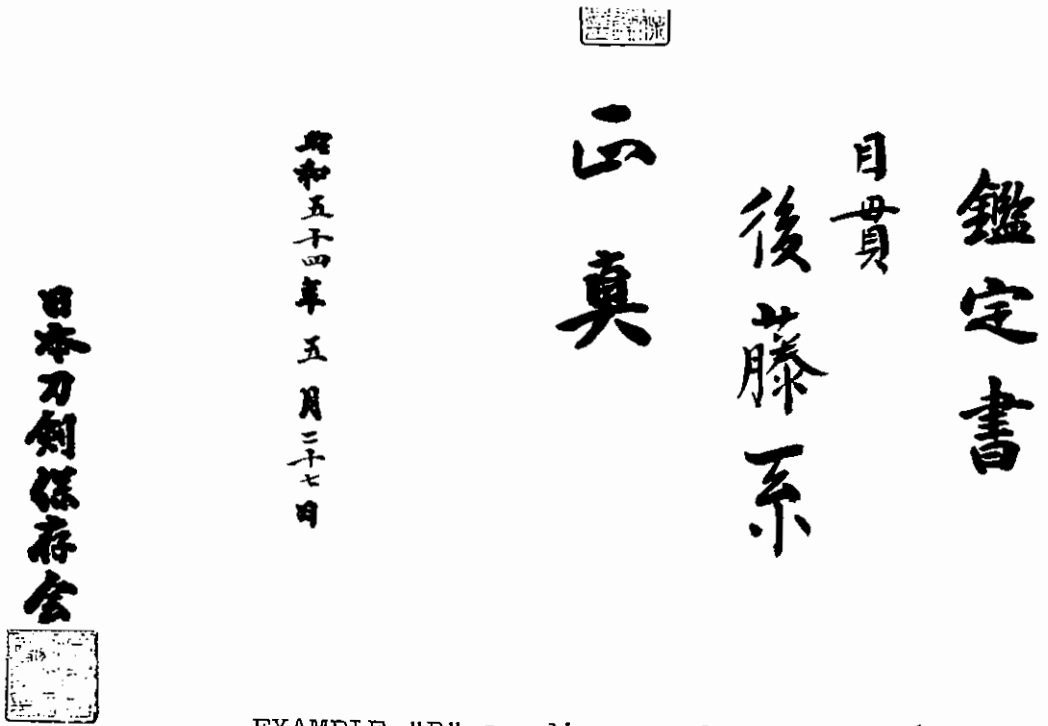
* * *

Editor's postscript -

The following illustrations are examples of the various types of certificates which were issued by Mr. Yoshikawa's Society, Nippon Token Hozon Kai, during Token Taikai '79. The format of these papers has been translated and explained in some detail in order to assist certificate holders in understanding their papers.

Anyone wishing to have the entire text of their papers translated can contact the JSS/US and a translator will be recommended.

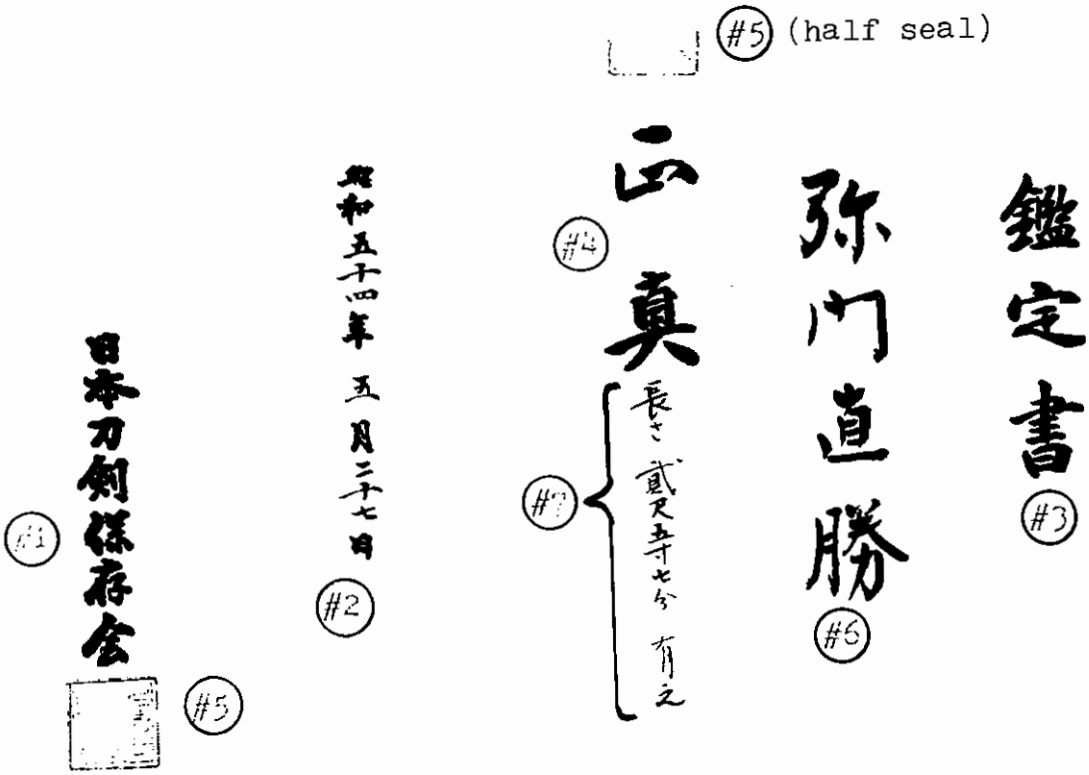
Ron Hartmann



EXAMPLE "B" as discussed on page 76

EXAMPLE "A" -

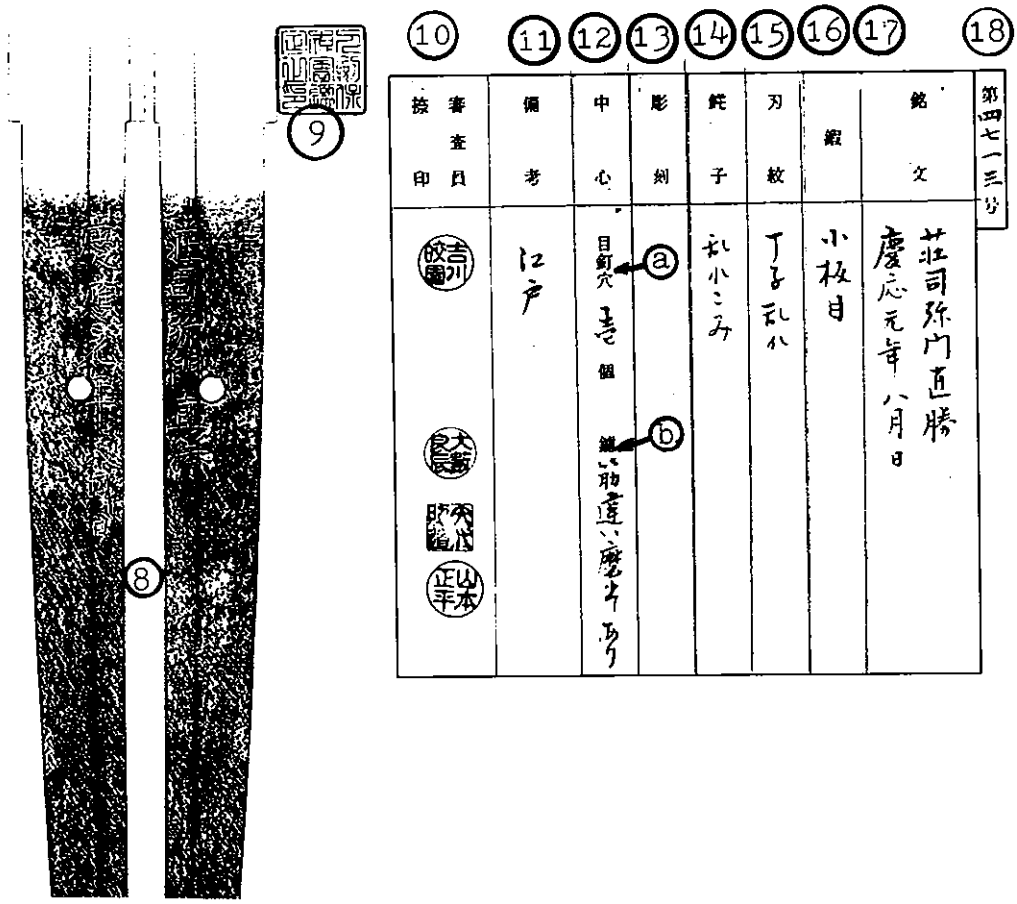
This is an example of a paper issued for a sword which received a rating over the 70 point rating. Therefore it is rated as "KANTEISHO". The characters for "Kanteisho" are written on the envelope in which the paper is contained and also on the paper itself (item #3 below).



Other items found on this rank paper upon the initial unfolding will be as follows:

#1 - Name of issuing society, "Nippon Token Hozon Kai".
#2 - Date of shinsa.
#3 - Type of paper or rating of paper (Kanteisho in this case).
#4 - Shoshin (stating "genuine"). Mumei (unsigned) blades have the statement "Kiwame" added to this statement, meaning it is "attributed".
#5 - Seals. The whole seal is used as a signature in a sense, and is present making the paper "official". The half seal is used to identify the first sheet as part of the second portion of the paper.
#6 - Statment (maker of the item).
#7 - Nagasa (length statistics as they exist at time of shinsa).

EXAMPLE "A" (unfolded)



#8 - Oshigata of the sword papered.
#9 - Official "Seal" on oshigata and on paper.
#10 - Judges seals (top to bottom: Yoshikawa Koen; Oyabu, Yoshitoki; Yashiro, Terumichi; Yamaoto, Masahira.
#11 - Biko or "notes" (in this case stating Edo period sword).
#12 - Nakago; 12a stating Mekugi-ana; 12b stating Yasurimei or file markings.
#13 - Chokoku or carvings (if present).
#14 - Boshi form
#15 - Hamon and yakiba pattern.
#16 - Kitae or type of forging.
#17 - Meibun or signature on the sword (and date if present).
#18 - Dai number (paper number).

The entire Kanteisho paper is folded (when folded up) with three folds, then opening to full width with one fold right to left, then opening with one last fold top to bottom. The paper is issued contained in its envelope.

EXAMPLE "B" - This is an example of a paper of Kanteisho rank for kodogu, in this case a fine pair of menuki. It is slightly larger in size than a sword paper of equal rank and it is folded twice, then once to full width and finally once to full size. The format of the envelope and the outer paper is the same as for a sword paper, but the inside is modifi to describe kodogu.

EXAMPLE "B" -

(picture)

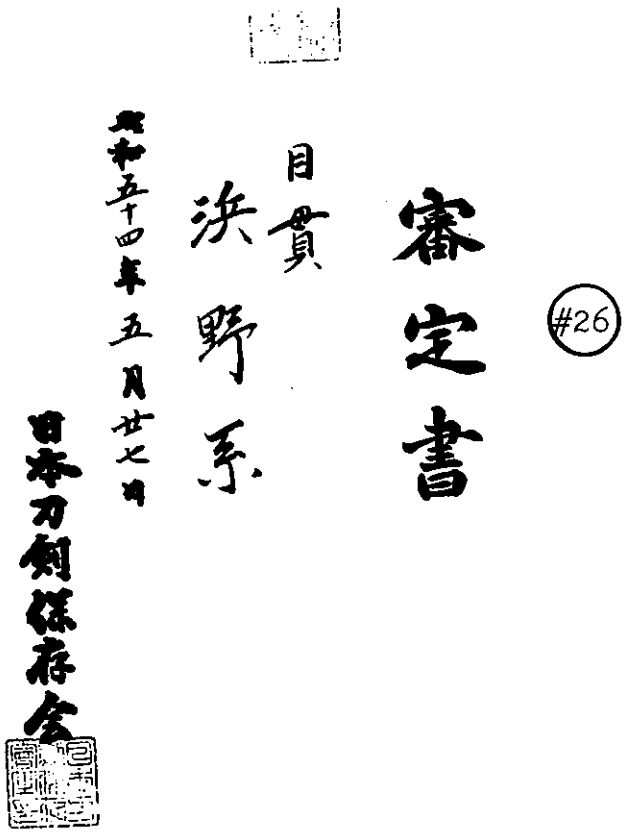
⑲ 審査員 鑑印	⑳ 備考	㉑ 拵え	㉒ 寸法	㉓ 図柄 彫り	㉔ 造込み 下地	㉕ 銘文	第一七三八号
	江戸中期		・センチ	桐桔梗家紋三双 高彫り 金色絵	赤銅七子地	無銘	

#19 - Official seals: Top left Wakayama, Homatsu; Top right Sasano, Taigyo; Bottom Yoshikawa Koen.
#20 - Biko or "notes" on the item.
#21 - Koshirae (if a complete koshirae or mounting is judged).
#22 - Sunpo or measurements.
#23 - (right side) Zugara or motif of item. (left side) Hori or technique used on item's making.
#24 - (right side) Tsukurikomi or form, style; (left side) Shitaji or material used.
#25 - Meibun or signature (if present).

A photograph of the item is pasted onto the left side of the paper (as an oshigata is for a sword paper) and the over-lapping seal is affixed.

EXAMPLE "C" -

This example is of a paper issued for a pair of menuki which were rated below the 70 point level and therefore it is of the "Shinteisho" rating.

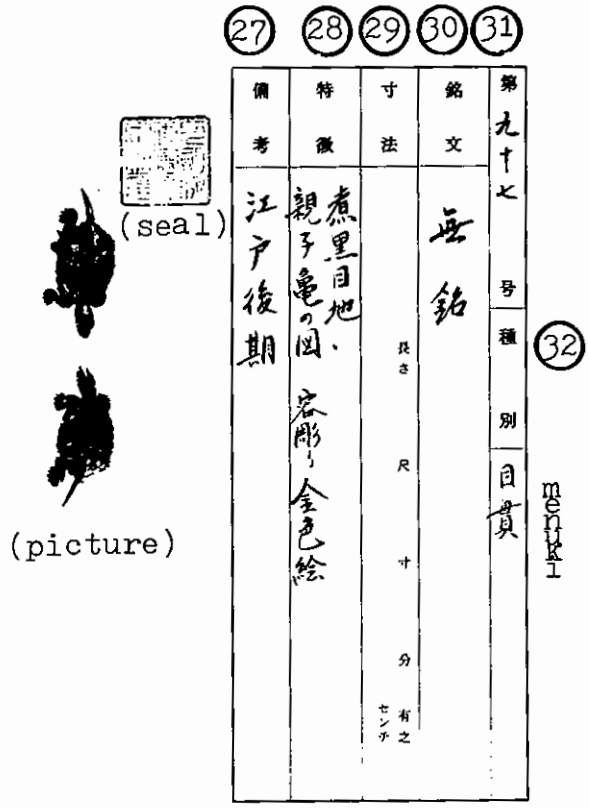


The items numbers #1, #2, #5, #7 are the same as on example "A" on page 75. The item #26 is different and states "SHINTEISHO" and identifies the rating of this specific paper.

The paper is contained in an envelope which also has the characters "Shinteisho" written on it. Taking out the paper one finds that the paper is simply folded once, right to left, and then again once, left to right. The first unfolding reveals the same format as on the higher ranking papers except the characters "Shinteisho" replace "Kanteisho". The additional characters "Shoshi" (#4 on example "A") are also not used, at least on this example.

EXAMPLE "C"

Opening the paper fully one finds the usual photograph of the item for which the paper is issued and the "official" seal over the photograph. Missing are the "judges seals". The format for this "Shinteisho" paper continues:



#27 - Biko (notes).
#28 - Tokucho (characteristics and distinctive features).
#29 - Sunpo (measurements).
#30 - Meibun (signature if present).
#31 - Item description in general.

One feature of the papers as issued by Mr. Yoshikawa's group, the Nippon T o k e n Hozon Kai,is the watermark which is present on all their papers.

Holding the paper up to a light source, one will notice the official Society watermark on all papers issued. It will also be noticed that the watermark differs from the "Kanteisho" paper to the "Shinteisho" paper. This is yet another difference in these different ranking papers.

A rather subtle characteristic of the papers issued by this Society, yet important when one thinks of it, is the quality of the oshigata afixed to each paper. This is an area in which other Societies falter and although a well made oshigata does not add to the authentication merit of a paper it does add to the overall appearance of the certificate.

Another feature worth mentioning is that each judge afixes his personal "seal" to each paper. This personal "seal" is like a signature, perhaps even more binding than a signature. By afixing one's seal to a paper it is as if that individual judge is putting his word or opinion on-the-line, whereas other societies simply afix the organizational seal and avoid any personal commitments. All papers are open to criticizm and in this sense such personal seals attest to the individual judge's opinion and commitment. It is putting his reputation and judgement "on-the-line" so to speak.