

**NBTHK SWORD JOURNAL**  
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**Meito Kansho**  
**Examination of Important Swords**

Juyo Bunkazai

Type: Tachi

Mei: Kuniyuki

Length: 2 shaku 5 sun 8 rin (76.0 cm)

Sori: 6 bu 9 rin (2.1 cm)

Motohaba: 1 sun 2 rin (3.1 cm)

Sakihaba: 6 bu 8 rin (2.05 cm)

Moto kasane: 2 bu 3 rin ( 0.7 cm)

Saki kasane: 1 bu 5 rin (0.45 cm)

Kissaki length: 1 sun 6 rin (3.2 cm)

Nakago length: 6 sun 6 bu 5 rin (20.15 cm)

Nakago sori: none

**Commentary**

This is a shinogi tsukuri tachi with an ihorimune. It is wide, and a difference in the widths at the moto and saki is not prominent. The tachi is thick, there is a large sori which is a kasagi sori (wa-zori), and an inokubi style short chu-kissaki. The jigane is itame mixed with mokume, the entire ji is well forged but the hada is moderately visible. There are abundant ji-nie

and chikei, and the upper half has utsuri. The entire hamon is wide, and mainly ko-choji mixed with kogunome and square shaped features. It is a komidare style hamon. On the omote the upper half of the hamon is a tobiyaki style hamon, and there are some yubashiri and small details. There are frequent ashi and yo, and on the omote there are small Kyo saka-ashi. The upper half has some muneyaki, and the nioiguchi has slightly thick ko-nie. On both sides, the boshi above the yokote is straight, and on the omote, the tip is “falling down” (dropping toward the fukura) and komaru with a return, and nijuba. On the ura the boshi is yakizume and the tip has hakikake. The horimono on the omote and ura are bo hi. On the omote, the hi is almost carved through the nakago, and on the ura the hi is carved through the nakago. The nakago is suriage and the tip is kiri. The new yasurime are a shallow katte-sagari, and the original yasurime style is unknown. There are two mekugi ana. Under the second mekugi ana, on the flat area, there is a large size two kanji signature.

Rai Kuniyuki is famous as being the actual founder of the Rai school which prospered from the mid-Kamakura to Nanbokucho periods in Yamashiro. Reportedly his son has a two kanji signature “Kuniyuki” dated Koan 1 (1278), so the common opinion is that his active period included the Kogen to Bunoo (1256-61) period. His signed confirmed works are relatively numerous, and many of them are tachi. He also has two ko-tachi, (one of them is Juyo Bijutsuhin with the Meibutsu “Fudoo Kuniyuki” but its location today is unknown). In addition, a tanto and an uchigatana which has a signature on the omote are Juyo token, and his signed works include one Kokuho and ten Juyo Bunkazai. His tachi shapes range from

narrow to wide, but most of them are standard or are slightly wide. With either shape, his boshi are usually an inokubi style. Also the deepest part of the sori is seen on the center of the blade, and the entire sori is a well balanced wa-zori (kasagi-sori) which is a Rai school characteristic point. The jigane are ko-itame and itame hada with a slightly visible hada, and many of them have abundant ji-nie and bo-utsuri. The hamon are never a pure suguha, but are based on a slightly shallow wide notare and suguha mixed with ko-choji, square shaped features, and komidare. There are frequent ashi and yo, and overall the hamon becomes ko-nie deki.

Among the hamon, mainly the ko-choji and ko-midare hamon, there is a classic style, and the tops of the square shaped ko-choji features have what is called a karimata (forked) style shape, and this is one of his characteristic points. The same style hamon is seen in the work of the same area's smiths, but slightly earlier in the work of smiths such Awataguchi Kuniyasu and Ayanokoji Sadatoshi, and we can see this as one of the Yamashiro school's characteristic points until the mid-Kamakura period. Also, on the omote, the hamon's ashi are angled toward the nakago, and are called Kyo-saka ashi, and as pointed out, this is one of his important characteristic points. In addition, although many suguha style hamon have mune yaki, this unique characteristic is hard to miss. Moreover, on Kuniyuki's wide blades, relatively many have bo hi carved deeply into the nakago, and the same feature is seen in the work of the two kanji Kuniyuki.

Although the tachi is suriage, it is 2 shaku 5 sun long, wide, and has a dynamic tachi shape, and still

preserves its wa-sori shape. It has hi, but because it is thick, it still has a heavy feeling and a healthy shape. From the habaki area, in the togi-damari area (where the rust at the top of the nakago begins), we can see that there has been very little or no additional polishing since the blade was made suriage.

Therefore, there is rich hiraniku over the entire blade, and we can see that the jigane's small sized itame hada is well forged. From the moto to the tip, there are no irregularities and rough areas, so we can see the original well forged surface. Also, the hamon is mainly ko-choji, mixed with several different hamon elements, and is a variable midare hamon. There are frequent ashi and yo, and on the omote in places, we see saka-ashi. In addition, in places, there are kari-mata style hamon features. On the omote, the upper part has some muneyaki, and we can recognize Kuniyuki's original style and at the same time, the Rai school's characteristic points. The entire tachi shows classic workmanship, and because it is healthy, the wide hamon has a fresh feeling. Also, we should note that the boshi has a strong yakiba, and exhibits Kuniyuki's characteristics and features. Among his work, this is an outstanding quality work, and originally over 2 shaku 7 sun in length. It shows the age's samurai character and nobility and harmony, and is one of his most praised masterworks.

Explanation and the oshigata by Ishi Akira.

## Shijo Kantei To No. 811

The deadline to submit answers for the issue No. 811 Shijo Kantei To is September 5, 2024. Each person may submit one vote. Submissions should contain your name and address and be sent to the NBTHK Shijo Kantei. You can use the Shijo Kantei card which is attached in this magazine. Votes postmarked on or before September 5, 2024 will be accepted.

Votes can also be submitted online to <https://www.touken.or.jp/shijokanteinyusatsu.html> (see the April, 2024 issue, page 30). We will accept votes every month from the 10th at 10:00 am to the 5th of the following month at 23:59 pm.

If there are sword smiths with the same name in different schools, please write the school or prefecture, and if the sword smith was active for more than one generation, please indicate a specific generation.

### Information

Type: Katana

Length: 2 shaku 1 sun 1 bu (63.95 cm)

Sori: 5 bu (1.5 cm)

Motohaba: 1 sun (3.0 cm)

Sakihaba: slightly less than 7 bu (2.05 cm)

Motokasane: slightly less than 3 bu (0.85 cm)

Sakikasane: slightly less than 2 bu (0.55 cm)

Kissaki length: 1 sun 2.5 bu (3.8 cm)

Nakago length: 6.5 sun (19.8 cm)

Nakago sori: slight (0.1 cm)

This is a katana with an ihorimune. It is wide, and the widths at the moto and saki are slightly different. The blade is thick, there is a low shinogi, a large sori, and a slightly long chu-kissaki. The jigane is a tight ko-itame hada, there are ji-nie and fine chikei. The hamon and boshi are as seen in the picture. The hamon has some areas mixed with small sized hamon elements, and it is a togari style hamon. There are abundant ashi, a dense nioiguchi, and abundant ko-nie. In some areas, there are strong nie and the steel becomes rough looking. There are kinsuji, sunagashi, and a bright nioiguchi. The horimono on the omote and ura are bo-hi with the ends finished in maru (round) dome. The nakago is ubu, the tip is ha-gari kurijiri, and the yasurime are kate-sagari. There is one mekugi-ana. On the omote, along the mune side there is a five kanji signature plus a "saku" kanji, and the entire mei has six kanji.

This smith has very few horimono, even including bo-hi. Also, his signature style is not constant or consistent.

**2024 Gendai To-shoku Ten**

**Engraving Section**

**NBTHK Chairman's Award**

**Namu daishi henjo daisho kongo-o moji (Buddhist chant in kanji) sukashi tsuba**

Mei: Reiwa mizunoto u-toshi Yoshiyuki saku

The tsuba's artist is Kawashima Yoshiyuki who has been exhibiting at the Gendai To-shoku Ten since Showa 61 (1986), and has received many prizes, including the grand prize. Last year, he received the Kanzan award for the "Namu dai-shi dai-hi kanzeon bosatsu moji tsuba", and this year represents two sequential years in which he has won the grand prize award.

This year's prize winning work shows his specialty of carving kanji on a sukashi tsuba with an iron ground. On the moderately patinated jigane he has carved "namu daishi henjo daisho kongo-o" with eleven kanji. Because a kanji character carved through a tsuba is a simple subject, this type of work can prominently highlight small mistakes and rough work, and it is difficult work. Mr. Kawashima's perfect technique overcomes these problems, and produced a beautiful work. The thickness of the kanji characters, the composition, the contact points with the mimi (rim) and seppa-dai are more creative when compared with last year's work, and we can see his improved work.

Also, this year, I can imagine that this project was difficult and he likely spent a lot of time on this work. The result is this tsuba, and for next year, we are expecting that he will be exhibiting even better work. For his next work, we are looking forward to see what kind of characters he will use, either from Chinese poetry or Buddhist elements.

Explanation by Takeda Kotaro

## July Teirei Kansho Kai

Date: July 13 (the second Saturday in July)

Place: Token Hakubutsukan auditorium

Lecturer: Ishii Akira

### Kantei To No. 1: Katana

Juyo Bijutsuhin

Orikaeshi mei: Norifusa

Length: 2 shaku 2 sun 7.5 bu

Sori: 5.5 bu

Style: shinogi zukuri

Mune: ihorimune

Jigane: itame hada; there are abundant ji-nie, chikei, midare utsuri, and a clear jigane.

Hamon: ko-choji mixed with ko-gunome and a continuous midare; some parts of the choji and gunome have slight vertical variations, and there are some saka-ashi; the upper half is a suguha style with a slight midare hamon. Over the entire hamon there are frequent ashi and yo, a gentle nioiguchi, ko-nie, kinsuji, and sunagashi; around the monouchi area there are yubashiri, small tobiyaki, and a bright nioiguchi.

Boshi: suguha, with some hakikake; the omote tip is a togari style and the ura tip is komaru.

Norifusa worked in the Kamakura Ichimonji school. He signed his mei under the mekugi ana along the



mune side. On this katana, the fourth mekugi ana is the original one, and the original length is supposed to have been around 2 shaku 6 sun. Although there is a large degree of suriage, the funbari is not too strong, so originally this would not have had a prominent large koshizori, and this kind of shallow koshizori shape is rare. However, there are examples of this kind of shape: the Oogaki clan's Toda family's Masatsune which is Kokuho and owned by the Tokyo National Museum, and the Tokugawa family's heirloom Juyo Bijutsuhin Masatsune blade owned by the NBTHK.

In talking about Ichimonji school work, we should note that they are famous for their wide hamon with vertical variations and a gorgeous style, and Norifusa has this kind of work, a kokuho owned by the Fukuyama museum. On the other hand, there are blades with considerably narrower hamon, and this is seen in the work of some Ichimonji school smiths such as Yoshifusa and Sukezane.

This katana has prominent midare utsuri, and looking at the entire hamon, it is not too high. Around the monouchi area, the hamon is more gentle, and from this many people had the opinion that this was from the latter half of the Kamakura period, and Osafune smith work. But the choji hamon is obviously has prominent gunome, and also the midare bunches or clusters are in close contact without gaps, and there are high and low variations. In addition, around the monouchi area there is a narrow hamon, and in many Osafune works, the hamon becomes a suguha style and narrow. In the case of Ichimonji school work, the area has clear hataraki such as yubashiri and nijuba, and inside and along the edge of the hamon there are hakikake, kinsuji, and sunagashi.

However, among the Ichimonji school's work, Norifusa's jigane has abundant ji-nie, chikei, and a strong looking jigane, the jiba (jigane and hamon) is bright and clear, the midare hamon has saka-ashi, and compared with other smiths, his choji bunches or clusters are small, there are frequent fine ashi, and these characteristic points are seen here.

## **Kantei To No. 2: Tanto**

Mei: Sa  
Chiku-shu ju

Length: 7 sun 7.5 bu

Sori: slight

Style: hirazukuri

Mune: ihorimune

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

Hamon: notare mixed with gunome, and suguha with gyosho style midare. There are frequent ashi and yo, a slightly dense nioiguchi, abundant ko-nie, yubashiri, small tobiyaki, frequent kinsuji and sunagashi, long nie-suji, and a bright and clear nioiguchi.

Boshi: shallow notare; tsukiage, the tip has hakikake, the tip is a gentle togari, and there is a dense and long return.

Horimono: on the omote there is a shin-no kurikara, and on the ura there are bonji and goma-bashi carved through the nakago.

This is not a mitsumune style tanto which we sometimes see, but has an ihorimune, and is a good example of Sa's work. The length is around 7 sun

which is short. It is thick and there is a shallow sori, a poorly shaped fukura, and this clearly shows Sa's characteristic shape.

The forging is a tight ko-itame hada, there are dense ji-nie, fine chikei, and a refined and clear jigane. The hamon is bright and clear, based on notare, and mixed with gunome. There is a slightly dense nioiguchi, abundant ko-nie, yubashiri, nie-suji, frequent kinsuji and sunagashi, and this clearly shows Samonji's characteristic points. Also, after removing the habaki, under the machi along the ha side, there is a yakikomi, and we can recognize this characteristic point too.

Because part of the hamon's gyosho (flowing) style is somewhat strong, some people voted for Masamune and Sadamune. But this does not have such strong chikei, the boshi is notare and tsukiage, the tip is a togari shape, the return is long, and there is a tight nioiguchi compared with the hamon side, and these are clearly Samonji's major characteristic points. Considering the shape, you can arrive at Samonji's name readily.

Samonji has few horimono, and many of them are simple ones such as katana-hi and gomabashi. The horimono could be later additions made for religious reasons, and this is no later than the Muromachi period.

For another proper answer, some people voted for Yasuyoshi, but most of his tanto are around 1 shaku, which is a long size, his forging has whitish areas, his hamon are a nioiguchi type with some ko-nie, his midare hamon size is small compared with Daisa, and if his boshi tips are sharp, many of them fall down toward the hamon edge.

## Kantei To No. 3: Katana

Mei: Taira Katsumori

Kino Hidehiro hoka e watasu bekarazu

Length: slightly over 2 shaku 1 sun

Sori: 8. 5 bu

Style: shinogi zukuri

Mune: ihorimune

Jigane: itame hada, mixed with some nagare hada, and the hada is visible. There are ji-nie, chikei, some jifu shaped large hada areas, a dark jigane, and whitish areas along the shinogi ji.

Hamon: wide, with open valleys, and mixed with choji, togariba, and yahazu shaped elements. Some areas have strangely shaped midare. There are ashi, yo, nioi deki, frequent tobiyaki and muneyaki, and the blade becomes hitatsura. There are kinsuji, sunagashi, and a worn down nioiguchi.

Boshi: midarekomi; there are hakikake, the tip is komaru, and there is a long return which continues to the muneyaki.

In thinking of hitatsura hamon on a long blade, the Go Tohaku (artist's name), or Hasebe Kuninobu's tachi is famous. However, the Hasebe school's tachi are actually mainly a suguha style, but their extant tachi examples are very rare. However, hitatsura hamon on long blades have been seen since about the mid-Muromachi period. Sue-Bizen smiths are best at this, followed by the Shimada smiths, and Hakushu Hiroyoshi. Furthermore, we sometimes see Taira Takada, Heianjo Nagayoshi, and Sue Seki smiths' work like this. When looking at hitatsura hamon, it is

important to observe what is the basic hamon pattern, when one ignores the tobiyaki and muneyaki.

Based on the hamon, It is then necessary to notice the shape and the jigane.

This hamon is mixed with all kind of midare hamon patterns, and it has a lively appearance, and produces an uneven impression. The nioiguchi width is not constant, and there are many places where it is tight and narrow. However, the hamon contains many strangely shaped features and strong features, and an active midare pattern, and the hamon is indeed a Taira Takada midare hamon.

In addition, in particular, the sori at the tip is prominent. Weak forging work is seen in the monouchi and koshimoto areas, and these are the school's characteristic points.

This is a well executed work, and among the Taira Takada smiths, many people voted for the most skilled smith, Taira Nagamori. Taira Katsumori is one of the late Koto Taira Takada smiths, and he has dated Kyoroku (1528-31) period work, but his extant work is rare, and he does not have strong characteristics in his work, but we can associate this work with his name. So at this time, we treated all Takada school smiths as a correct answer.

Besides the correct answer, if it were Sue Soshu work, there would be prominent chikei, a mitsumune, detailed horimono, and the hamon would have prominent choji and gunome, and some square shaped features. If it were Tsunahiro's work, he has crescent moon shaped hamon. If it were Sue Bizen work, the jiba (jigane and hamon) is bright, and in the case of hiatatsura hamon, many of their shinogi stand out with a sharp angle. If it were Shimada smith work, the hamon are mixed with large swaying togariba.

Also, if there are muneyaki, the togariba hamon would be prominent. Koga work has prominent square shaped hamon features, and the mune yaki on the shinogi ji forms a suguha style. Heianjo Nagayoshi's hamon are the same on the omote and ura, and he has horimono. If it were Sue Seki work, the jigane has nagare hada, there are round top gunome, choji, and togariba, and there are fewer ashi and yo, and often the width of the nioiguchi is nearly constant.

## **Kantei To No. 4: Tanto**

Mei: Kanasaki

Length: 7 sun 2.5 bu

Sori: uchizori

Style: hirazukuri

Mune: ihorimune

Jigane: slightly tight itame hada; along the mune side the hada is slightly visible; there is some nagare hada; there are ji-nie, and the mune side has strong whitish (shirake) utsuri.

Hamon: narrow suguha; there is a nioiguchi, very small hotsure, and a tight nioiguchi.

Boshi: straight, the tip is komaru; there is a slightly long return; the boshi falls down towards the hamon edge; the ura return has a slightly tight nioi-guchi.

Horimono: on the omote and ura there are katana-hi carved through the nakago.

This is a Rai utsushimono work by the Sue Seki smith Kanasaki. This is a small sized tanto, and at a glance, the width is standard for the length, there is uchizori, the jigane is tight and has utsuri, the hamon

is a clear defined suguha, the boshi is komaru, there is a return, and it almost looks like Rai Kunitoshi work, and in voting, not a small number of people voted for Rai Kunitoshi. Beside Kunitoshi, some people voted for smiths from the latter half of the Kamakura period who were good at making suguha tanto, such as Yoshimitsu and Shintogo Kunimitsu.

But observing the tanto in detail, we can see there is a strong uchizori, the fukura is very poor, and if it were from the Kamakura period, it would be likely to be very worn down from polishing.

If that were so, the hamon around the fukura area would be close to the blade's edge, the boshi return would be short, or yakizume, the nioiguchi and the jigane should have weak areas in some places, but this tanto has no such areas. Therefore, we can guess that this specific shape was forged, and then yaki ire was performed. In other words, the shape was copied, because after a long period, there should be some damage from use, or from repeated polishing. On the other hand, the jiba (jigane and hamon) is compatible with the shape, and in a healthy condition. This is a big difference between the original and an utsushimono.

Also, the smith aimed at reproducing the nie utsuri. There are strong shirake unsuri, but under the lighting here, it is uniformly bright or strong from the top to the bottom. It does not have the charm we see in old bo-utsuri, which when being examined from different angles, shows a range in colour and strength. The hamon does not have enough clarity, rather than nioideki, there is a tight nioiguchi, and there is almost no variety along the hamon edge, and these details are different from those in the original work.

Furthermore, the jigane has nagare hada areas, the boshi tip looks like it is falling towards the hamon side, and these are Sue Seki Rai utsushi characteristic points.

In voting, many people voted for smiths who were good at making suguha hamon, such as Seki smiths like No-sada and Kanetsune. In the case of Rai utsushi work, it is difficult to distinguish individual characteristics, and all Sue Seki Rai utsushi smiths' names are treated as correct answers at this time.

The oshigata is 98% of the actual size.

## **Kantei To No 5: Wakizashi**

Mei: Hizen kuni ju Minamoto Munetsugu

Length: 1 shaku 8 sun 5 bu

Sori: 5 bu

Style: shinogi zukuri

Mune: ihorimune

Jigane: itame hada and the hada is visible; there are frequent ji-nie, chikei, some jifu, and a slightly dark jigane.

Hamon: the entire hamon is wide and based on a notare pattern mixed with large gunome, normal gunome, and togariba; there are vertical variations, and some nie kuzure. There are ashi, frequent yo, strong nie forming uneven mura nie, small tobiyaki, pale yubashiri on the shinogi ji and in the corner of the mune, kinsuji, frequent sunagashi, niesuji and a slightly worn down nioiguchi.



Boshi: midarekomi; there are frequent hakikake and kaen; the tip has a togari shape, midare kaeri and a slightly long return.

This is a Shodai Iyojo Munetsugu's rare shinogi zukuri wakizashi. The difference in widths at the moto and saki is not prominent, and there is a large kissaki, which shows well Keicho Shinto period characteristic points.

Munetsugu's forging usually is itame mixed with nagare hada, the hada is visible, and there are clear jifu. Kanasaki's forging is relatively fine when compared with other Shinto smiths whose work usually appears rougher. Considering the unique shape, we can imagine that this wakizashi was probably a special or custom order.

The hamon clearly shows Munetsugu's characteristics. The entire hamon is wide, and based on a large notare mixed with ko-notare. There are large gunome, gunome, togariba, vertical variations, square shaped features, and the hamon has an irregular composition. There are frequent ashi and yo, the nioiguchi edge on the side of the hamon is slightly thick, and toward the inside of the hamon, the nioiguchi widens and becomes hazy, and some parts are interrupted by yo. There are dark and light areas. The nie form groups and form mura. There are tobiyaki, niesuji, kinsuji and sunagashi, which show strong Soshu den characteristic points.

Also, Iyojo Munetsugu's work has often muneyaki. On this wakizashi, on the shinogi ji and corner of the mune, there are frequent yubashiri, and a slightly worn down nioiguchi. The boshi is midarekomi, there are strong hakikake and a kaen shape, and the work

is exuberant and these are Munetsugu's characteristic points too.

Another acceptable answer is Harima daijo Tadakuni. His jigane are based on a tight ko-itame, there is uniform forging, and even in his midare hamon, many of his nioiguchi edges are clear. In the case where there is a dense nioiguchi, there is not much difference in the brightness between the habuchi and the edge. There are dark and light areas in the nioiguchi, and his work is typical Shinto style

## **Shijo Kantei To No.809 in the June 2024 issue**

The answer for the Shijo Kantei To No. 809  
is a katana by Hankei.

Hankei's blades have almost no dates, even in his early era Kiyotaka mei period. But there is a Kiyotaka signature dated February of Keicho 10 (1610) and March of Keicho 15 (1615), and the Hinomi-ozaki Shrine has a paper related to his Ho-no (item donated to a shrine) gun dated Genna 5 (1619), Spring 19 (date). Also, there is a Koyasan Kongo Sanmai-in ho-no-to paper signed by Hankei and dated on kanei 1 (1624), August 1. Considering these items, for a Keicho Shinto smith, Hankei was late comer compared to smiths who have Koto period work, and

in the Keicho period, are entering their later years or are at their peak period, such as Horikawa Kunihiro, and the Shodai Iga-no-kami Kinmichi.

These smiths played an active role in the transition from the Koto to Shinto period, and have many examples of popular shapes from the Tensho period which are wide and have a large kissaki or long chu-kissaki. But around the Genna to Kanei period, active smiths such as Hankei and Nanki Shigekuni have many blades which are not so large, and whose widths are standard or slightly wide, and have a chu-kissaki or a long chu-kissaki.

However this katana has a long chu-kissaki, but the width is standard. Also, the kasane is standard, and the widths at the moto and saki are not very different. There is a shallow sori, and from the jiba (jigane and hamon), you can judge this as Keicho Shinto work. You can see the standard width on rather late period Keicho Shinto smith's work such as Hankei's, and this is a characteristic point.

As we listed in the the hints, Hankei has many mitsumune works, and the angle is sharp, but sometimes he has ihorimune. Also, because both, the ha-machi and mune-machi are wide, his nakago become narrow, and this is a one of his characteristic points.

Hankei's jigane are itame or a large itame and the hada is visible. It is mixed with mokume and nagare hada, and many of them are an unrefined hada. There are often ji-ware, but these aspects are compatible with Hankei's wild personality, and are not

faults, but considered to be his characteristic points. However, there are frequent ji-nie and thick dull chikei. We can say it looks like Norishige's matsukawa hada style. It is similar but the texture is not as good as Norishige's, and it is called "hijiki hada".

The hamon is based on notare, and some places are mixed with gunome shaped features, which do not have clear shapes which makes the boundary between the jigane and hamon unclear, and the hamon shape is not clear. There are very dense, thick nie, rough nie which are uneven, frequent long yubashiri, nie-suji, kinsuji and sunagashi, and a worn down nioiguchi, which reflect Norishige's style.

The boshi are midarekomi, with prominent and variable hataraki, the same as his hamon, and this is his standard style.

The nakago has an especially notable shape, and just from the nakago, it is possible to judge this as his blade, with a very unique shape. As I explained above, both machi are wide, making the nakago narrow. In addition, the yasurime on the omote are o-suji chigai, and on the ura are gyaku-o-suji chigai, which is different from the omote yasurime. The nakago mune has higaki yasuri, and a large size mekugi ana, and these are all his characteristic points.

At a glance, the nakago tip looks like ha-agari kurijiri, but actually there is a straight cut across the mune side's line. In addition, the bottom of the nakago tip along the hamon side has a lot of niku, and he put a shinogi in that area. The shape looks similar to a yaken or grinder for herbs, and we call it a yaken

shape, which is a unique shape. We can see this in the Izumi-no-kami Kaneshige school's work but we don't see it much in the work of other smiths.

The signature inscription is special, using a sukui chisel (with a rounded point), and the inside of the chiseled line resembles the bottom of a boat, and the top of the chisel marks are not sharp, and this is a unique appearance.

In Hankei's signatures, the "han" kanji's top right side looks like the katakana character "ro" or "ru", and we can read it as either "ro mata" and "ru mata". In the case of hirazukuri work, many of his nakago mune are kaku-mune, and judging this is difficult. But on shinogi tsukuri katana and wakizashi we can see maru-mune and mune with minimal niku, besides kaku-mune. In such a case many of the "han" kanji can resemble "ru mata", just like on this katana. Some people understood this, and voted for "ru mata Hankei", and that was very impressive.

At this time, if you have studied Hankei's style, there is no doubt in a kantei-to, and a majority of people voted for the correct answer. Regular or consistent studies can be very educational the results here were very good.

Explanation by Ooi Gaku.

## **Notice**

### **The number of articles accepted for Shinsa will be limited**

In order to have efficient and accurate Shinsa evaluations, the NBTHK will limit the number of articles which will be accepted for Shinsa. We are sorry for any inconveniences this will cause. If any items are submitted with false statements or descriptions, and the NBTHK observes that an application is incorrect or inappropriate, these items will be removed from the Shinsa without notice, and the applicants could be refused permission to participate in future Shinsa

### **Token Shinsa**

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

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

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

### **Toso Shinsa**

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

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

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

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

## **Tosogu Shinsa**

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

Up to 650 items will be accepted from internet applications.

Up to 100 items will be accepted from paper applications.

## **Applications through the internet**

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

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

## **Application via documents**

The NBTHK must receive applications within the designated application period.

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

The order of acceptances for a Shinsa will be determined by the stamp’s date and time.

Beginning with the November, 2024 acceptance period (starting in October with pre-registration), if the number of applications is over the number of places available, and some applicants have the same time stamps, the selection of the items accepted for the Shinsa will be made via a digital drawing.

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

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