



ITEM# UJKA317

A NAKAJIMA-RAI KATANA

UNSIGNED, EARLY-MID NANBOKUCHO PERIOD (CIRCA 1330~1375)

Swordsmith:	<i>Nakajima-Rai</i> (attribution, o-suriage mumei)
Measurements:	Length: 72.1cm Curvature: 1.9cm Moto-haba: 3.15cm Weight: 720g
Jihada:	<i>Vivid itame mixed with nagare with ji-nie and abundant chikei</i>
Hamon:	<i>Suguha-chō in bright nioguchi, nie-deki mixed with ko-chōji, ko-gunome, ashi and yō, hotsure, kuichigai-ba, nijūba, uchinoke, kinsuji, and sunagashi</i>
Horimono:	<i>Bōhi on both sides that runs through the nakago (kaki-tōshi)</i>
Certificate:	62nd NBTHK Juyo Token (a sword designated as <i>Profound and Important</i>)
Fujishiro:	Jo-saku (first generation Rai Kuninaga is ranked as superior smith)
Included:	Shirasaya, fabric bag, stand, kit, DVD, booklet, printed description

SOLD

The *Nakajima-Rai* branch of the esteemed *Rai* school was founded by *Rai Kuninaga*, a pupil of national treasure swordsmith *Rai Kunitoshi*. *Kuninaga* moved from *Kyoto* to the *Nakajima* district in *Settsu* province (Osaka) in the *Gentoku* era (1329-1331), earning him the nickname *Nakajima-Rai*.

This powerful katana personifies the samurai and his character. It is a sword with a composed presence and prepared spirit for the warring *Nanbokuchō* period battlefields. An abundance of *hataraki* (activity) embedded deep in the soul of the steel is awe-inspiring and hugely inspirational. The virtues of bravery, loyalty and the fragility of life beats within this sword. Life is a challenge. Take responsibility and engage with utmost commitment and intent.

Saki-kasane: 4.3mm [^]

Moto-kasane: 6.9mm

Omosa: 720g

Kissaki: 3.95cm

Saki-haba: 2.1cm

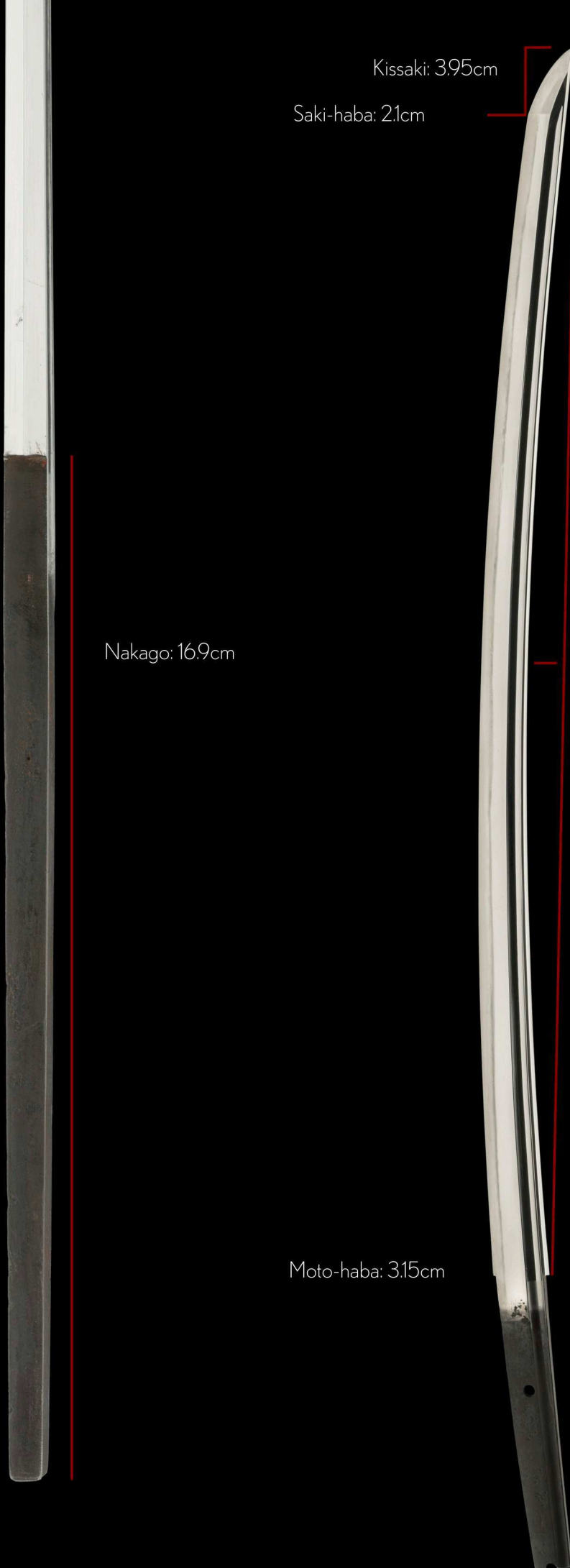
Nakago: 16.9cm

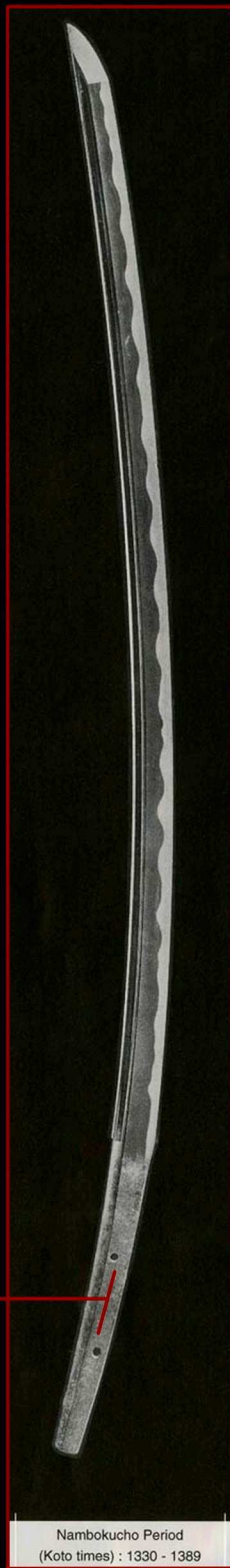
Moto-haba: 3.15cm

Nagasa: 72.1cm

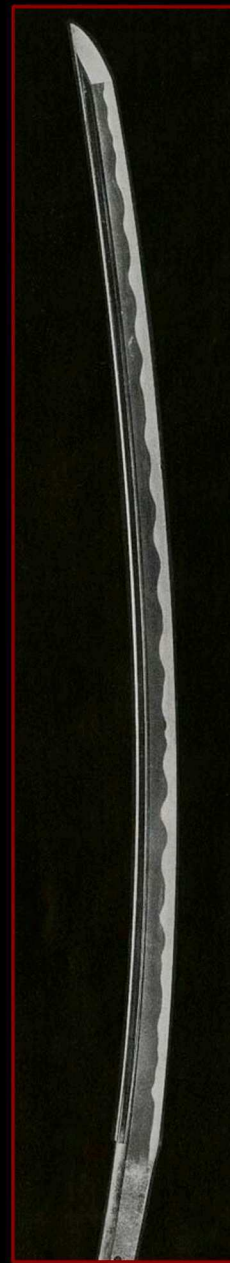
Sori: 1.9cm

Mekugi-ana: 1





original
signature



o-suriage nakago
(greatly shortened)



Nakajima-Rai
Juyo katana

This katana was crafted during the warring *Nambokucho period*, circa 1330-1375. The original cutting edge would have been over 80cm and called a *nodachi*. These swords were extremely effective when fighting on foot against cavalry.

Very few of these long and imposing blades have survived in their original length. Later generations of samurai had them shortened (*o-suriage nakago*) to a convenient size for everyday wear thus losing any signature in the process.

Above is an example of a sword from the Nambokucho period. Note how through the shortening process the *Nakajima-Rai* blade attained its current powerful shape.

28201662

一 刀 無 銘 中 島 来 一 口

重要第一三九〇〇 號

指 定 書

法量 長さ七二・一釐 反り一・九釐

形状 鎗造庵棟身幅広く元先の幅差殆ど開かず磨上げながら

鍛 板目に流れ肌と交え肌立ちこころ 地沸つき 地景入り

刃文 直刃調に小丁子・小互の目交じり足・葉入り沸つき刃縁にはづれ

喰違刃二重刃・打のけ現われ 金筋・砂流しかなり

匂口 明るい

帽子 浅くのたれ込み小丸ごころに掃きかける

彫物 表裏に椿楓を掻き通す

茎 大磨上 鏡目切り 目釘孔一

右者當協會に於て審査の結果

重要刀剣に指定する

平成二十八年十月十八日

公益財団法人日本美術刀剣保存協會

會長 酒井忠久

徳島 教育委員会
第 16387 号
昭和47年12月1日

NBTHK Juyo Token Certificate of Designation

A sword designated as *Profound and Important*
by the Society for the Preservation of the Japan Art Sword

Issued in the 62nd year of Heisei (2016), October 18th

Katana, mumei

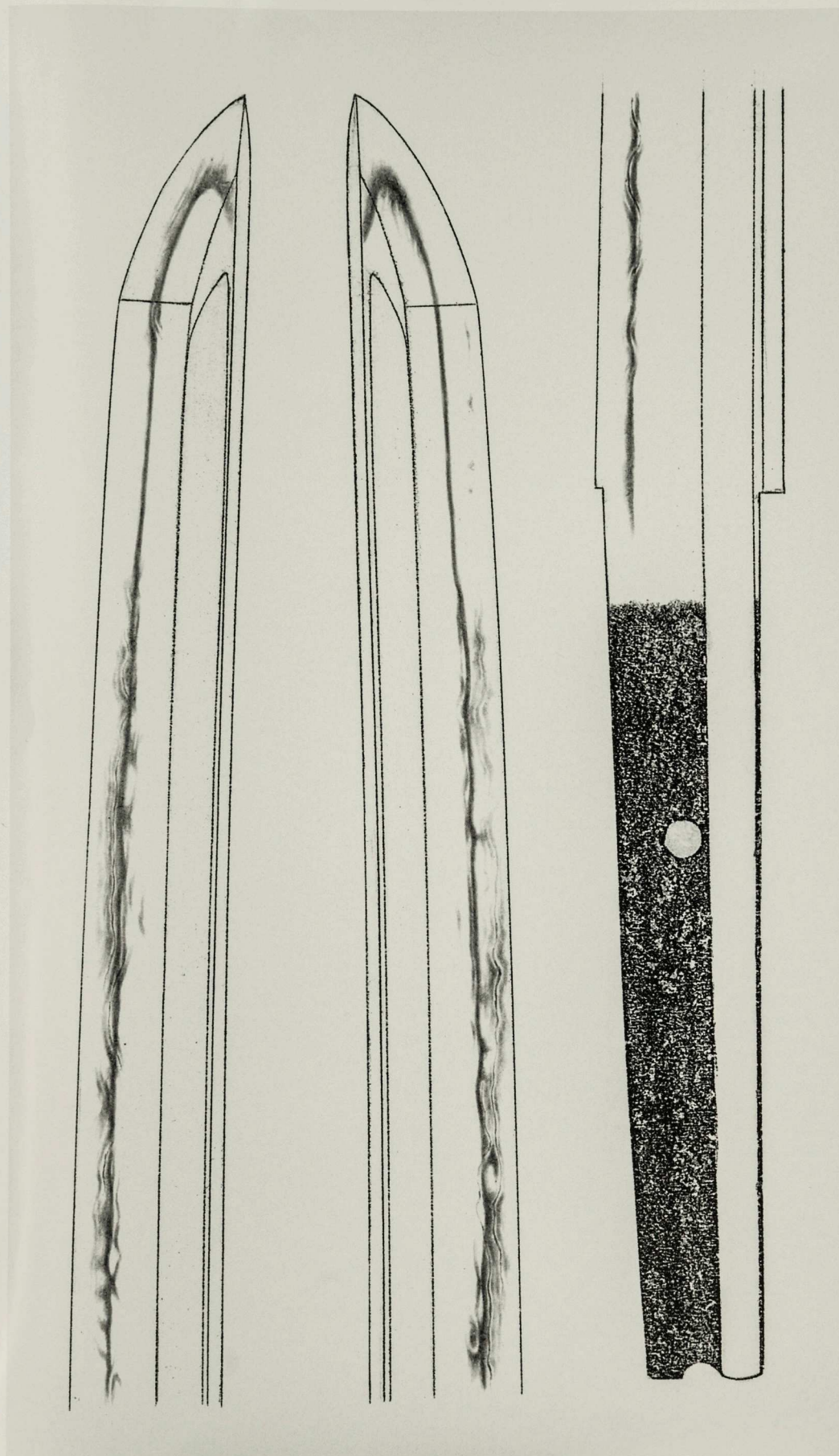
Nakajima-Rai
(中島来)

Length: 72.1cm
Curvature: 1.9cm

Nihon Bijutsu Token Hozon Kyokai
(NBTHK)

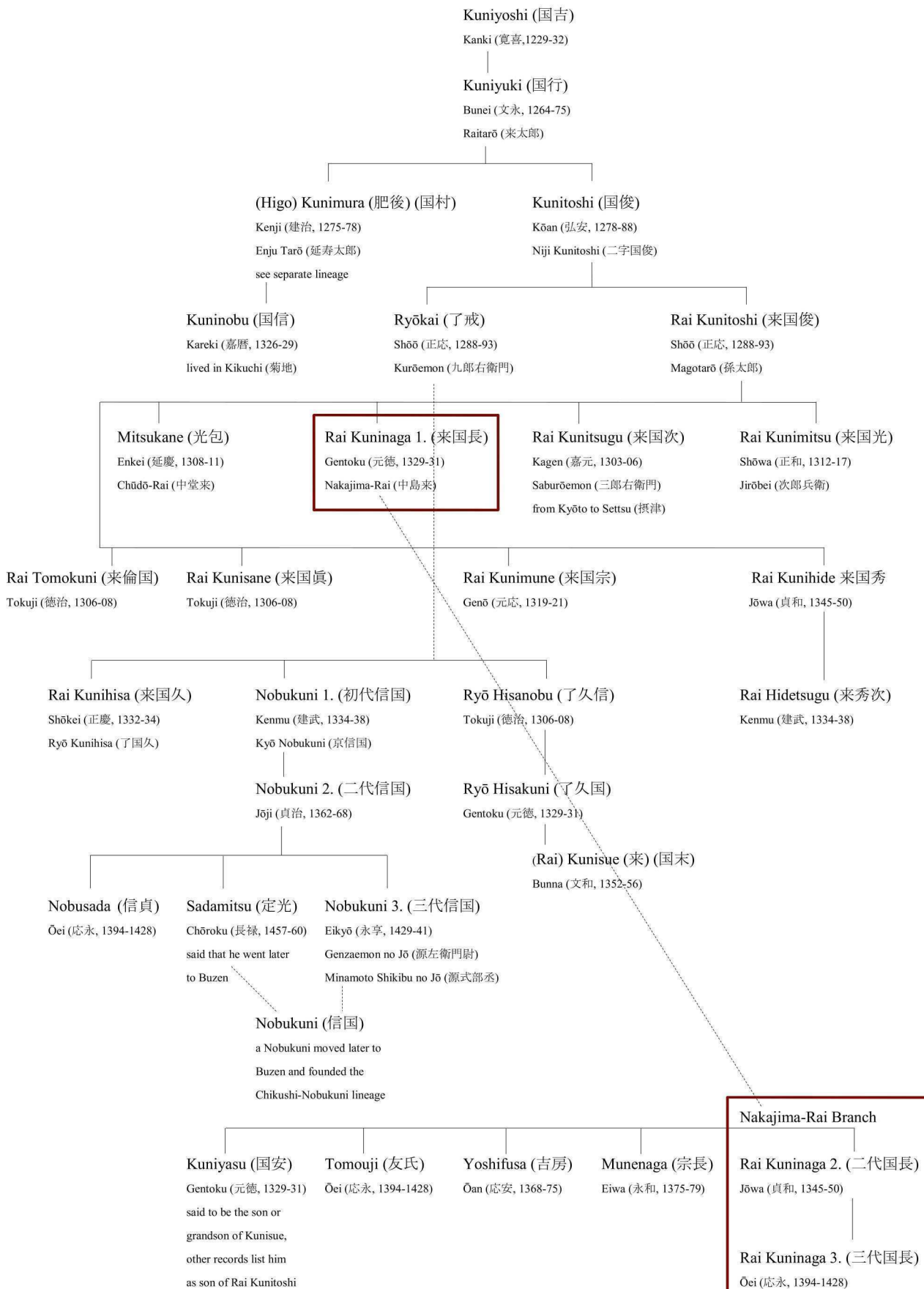
[President] Sakai Tadahisa (酒井忠久)

刀 無銘 中島来



NBTHK Juyo Token White Paper
This *oshigata*, tracing of the *hamon* pattern, illustrates the wonderful amount of *hataraki* (activity) in the hamon.

Rai school Yamashiro, province (Kyoto)



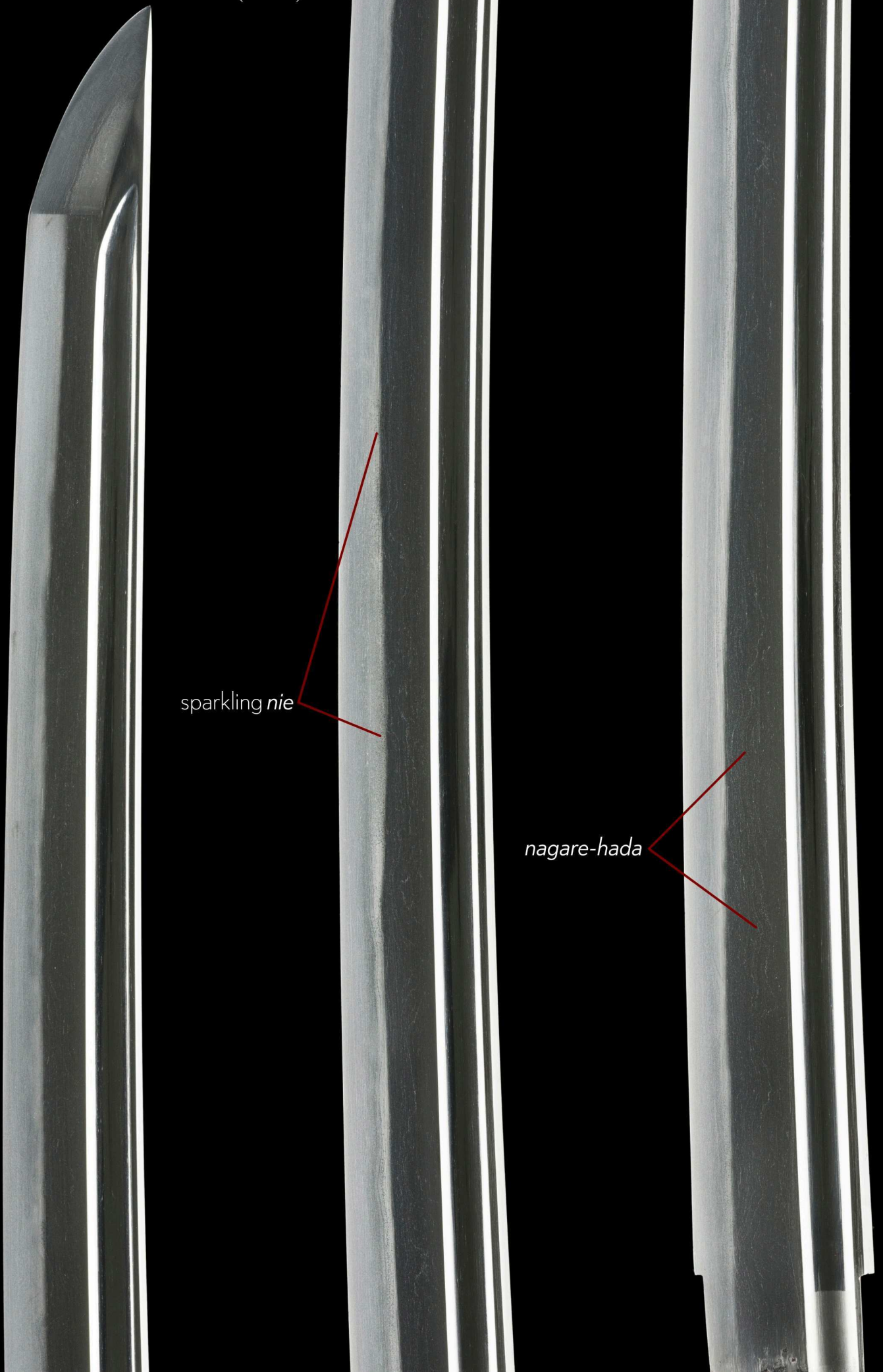
The *NBTHK Juyo Token* certificate describes the *ji* (body) and *ha* (hardened edge) of the blade as being in outstanding condition (*kenzen*).



ura (back)

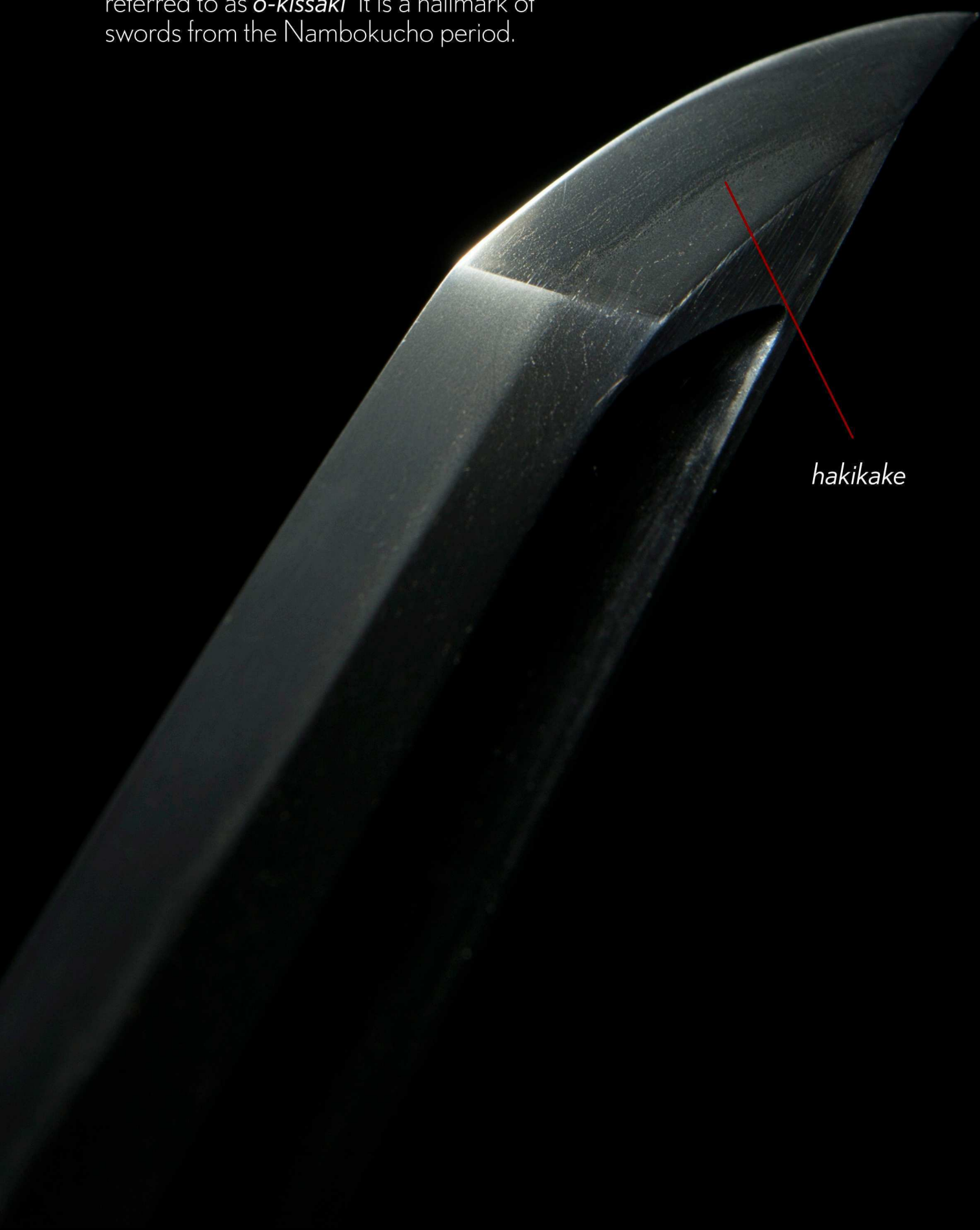
sparkling *nie*

nagare-hada



The *boshi* displays beautiful *hakikake* - a gentle sweeping pattern along the *hamon*.

The large tip (*kissaki*) of this katana is referred to as *o-kissaki*. It is a hallmark of swords from the Nambokucho period.



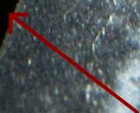
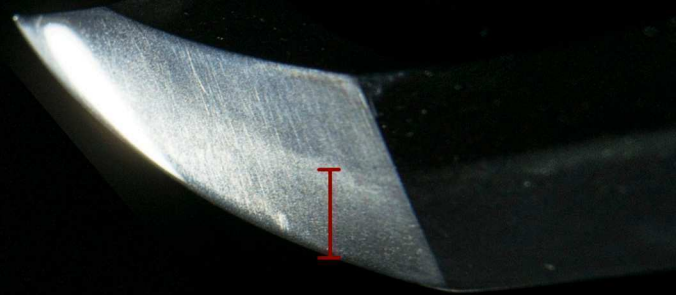
hakikake

An important point to pay attention to when assessing the health of a Japanese sword is to see how much distance there is from the *hamon* to the cutting edge.

Very often on swords older than 600 years, from the *Kamakura* and *Nambokucho* periods, a blade is narrowed significantly due to its numerous polishes. More polishes means the blade narrows and the hamon begins to "hug" the cutting edge. This narrowing is especially noticeable in the *kissaki* (tip) area that is often reshaped after battle altercations.

It's a beautiful thing when we see ample distance such as on this *Nakajima-Rai* katana. A wide sword is a healthy sword. It suggests that it's in similar condition from when it was first made.

This is a primary reason why this katana was awarded prestigious NBTHK Juyo Token.

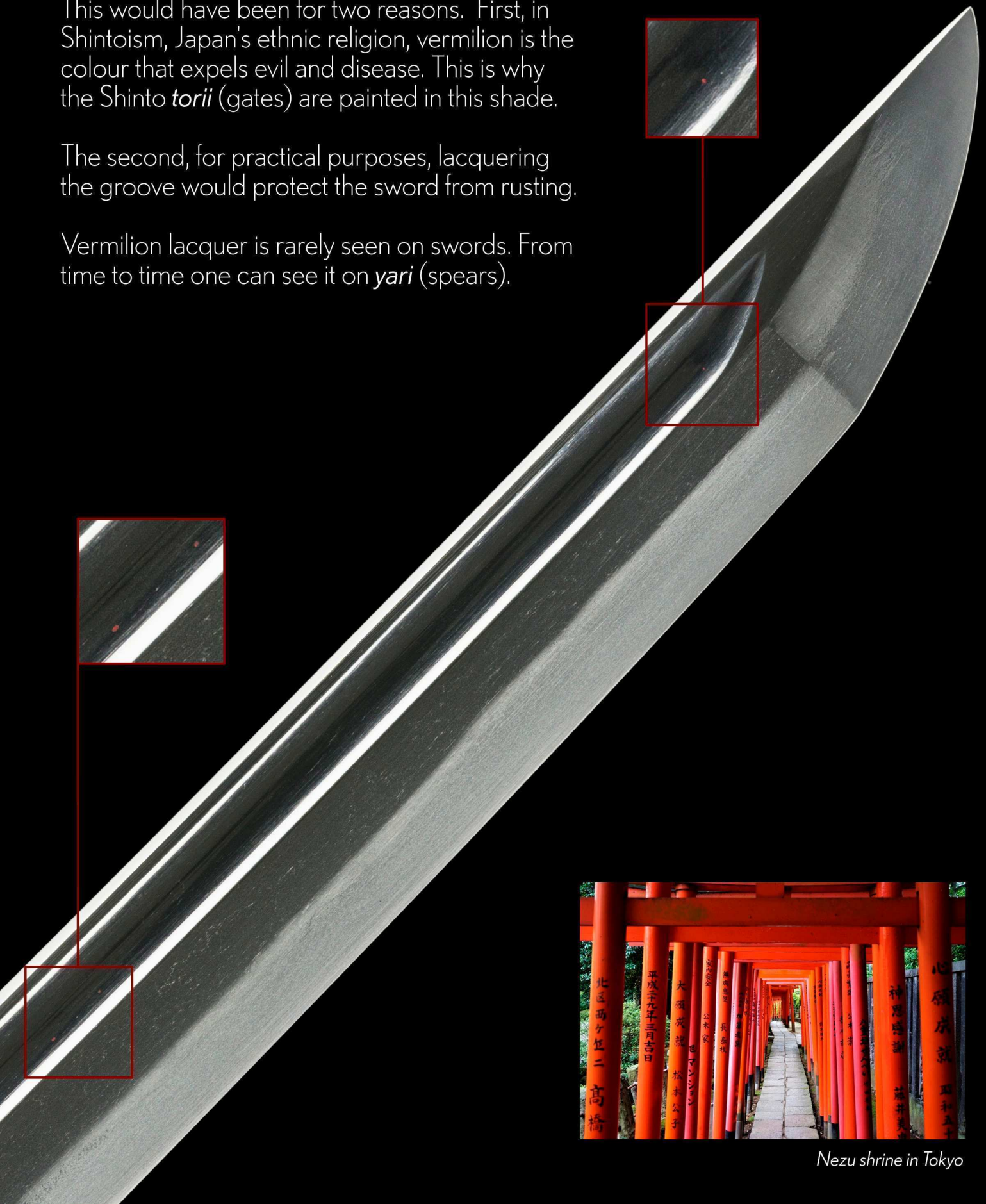


Looking closely on the *hi* (groove) tiny spots of red *vermilion lacquer* can be seen. This suggests that for a significant period of time, both grooves were once lacquered in this colour.

This would have been for two reasons. First, in Shintoism, Japan's ethnic religion, vermilion is the colour that expels evil and disease. This is why the Shinto *torii* (gates) are painted in this shade.

The second, for practical purposes, lacquering the groove would protect the sword from rusting.

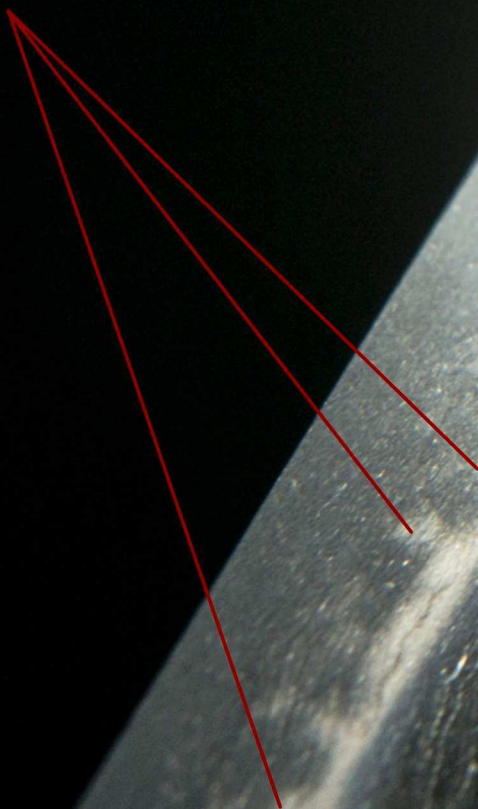
Vermilion lacquer is rarely seen on swords. From time to time one can see it on *yari* (spears).

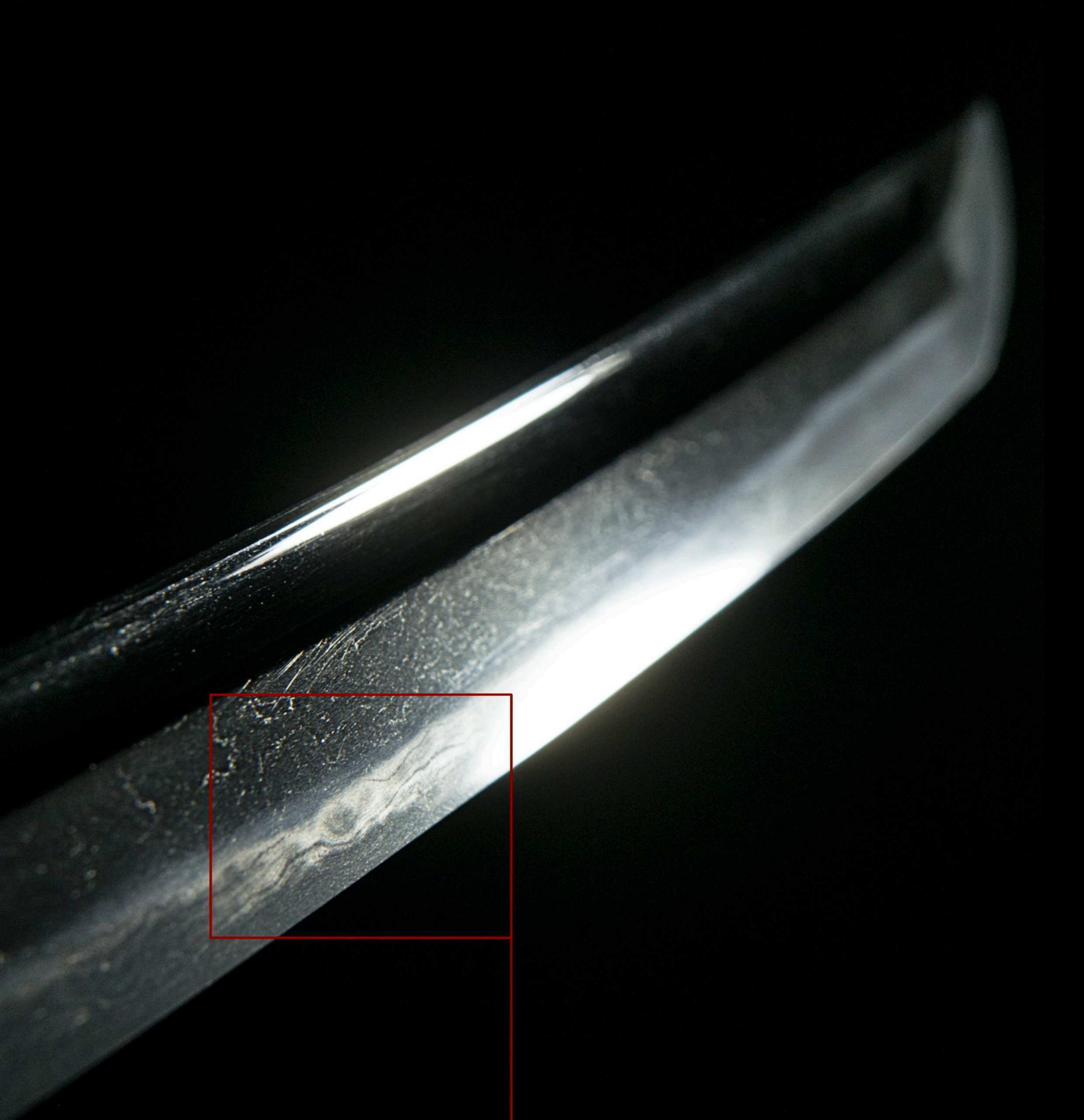


Nezu shrine in Tokyo

yo means 'leaf'.

Yo are tiny *ashi* (legs) that are scattered inside the *hamon*.





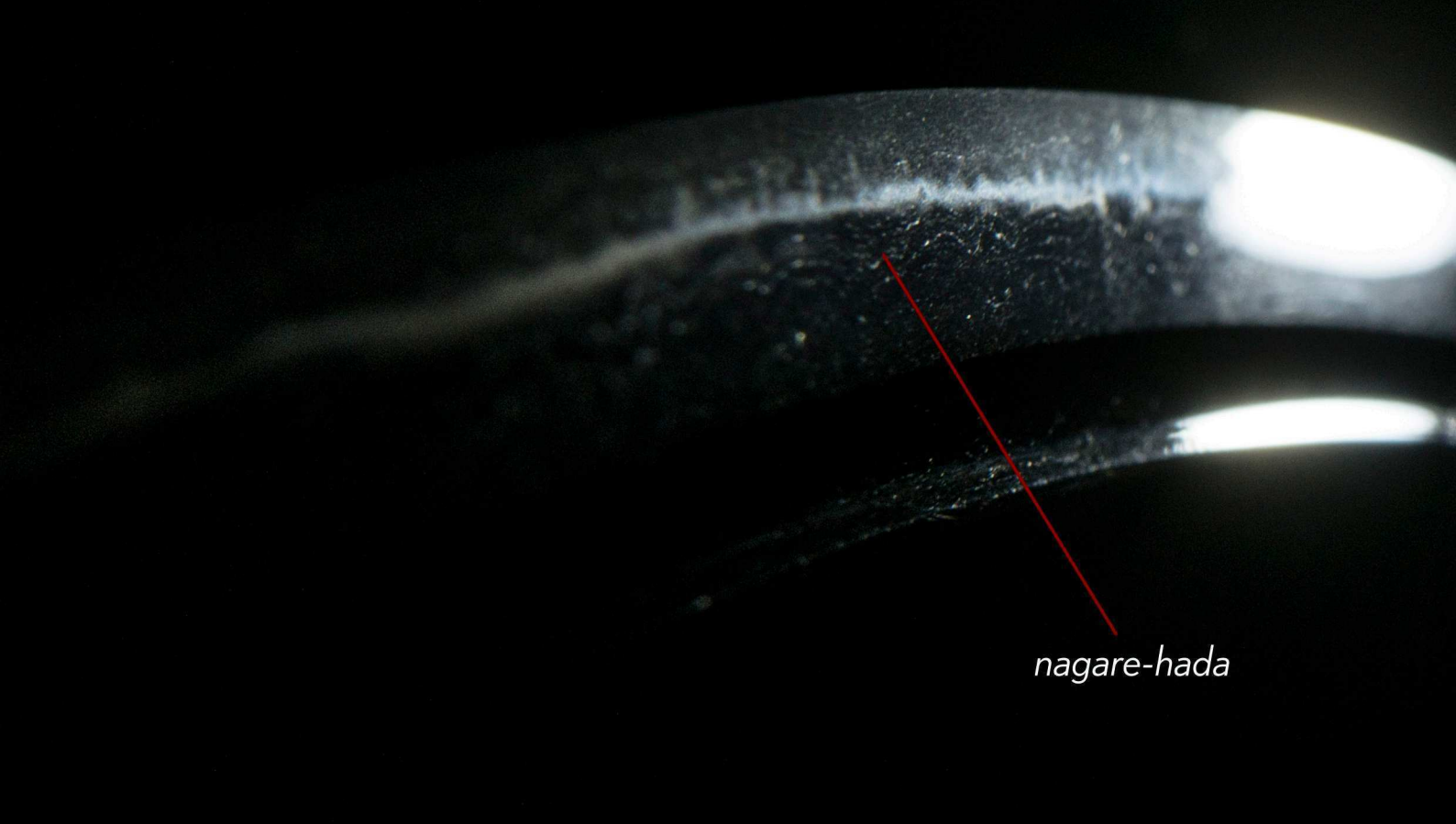
Parallel lines of *kinsuji* wrap around a large grain pattern of *itame-hada* inside the *hamon*.

Pure *nihonto*.



kinsuji - dark lines of *nie*
inside the *hamon*

Flowing *nagare-hada* gently influences the *ko-gunome hamon*
(tightly waving temper line). This is a sword with sophistication.



nagare-hada



kuichigai-ba is the area of the *hamon* where the *nioguchi* splits over a noticeable distance.





nie-deki
(*nie* crystals in the hamon)

ji-nie (*nie* crystals appearing in the *ji*)

chikei (dark solid lines of *nie* in the *ji*)



Rarely seen *uchinoke* in the shape of small *crescent moons* appear above the *hamon*.

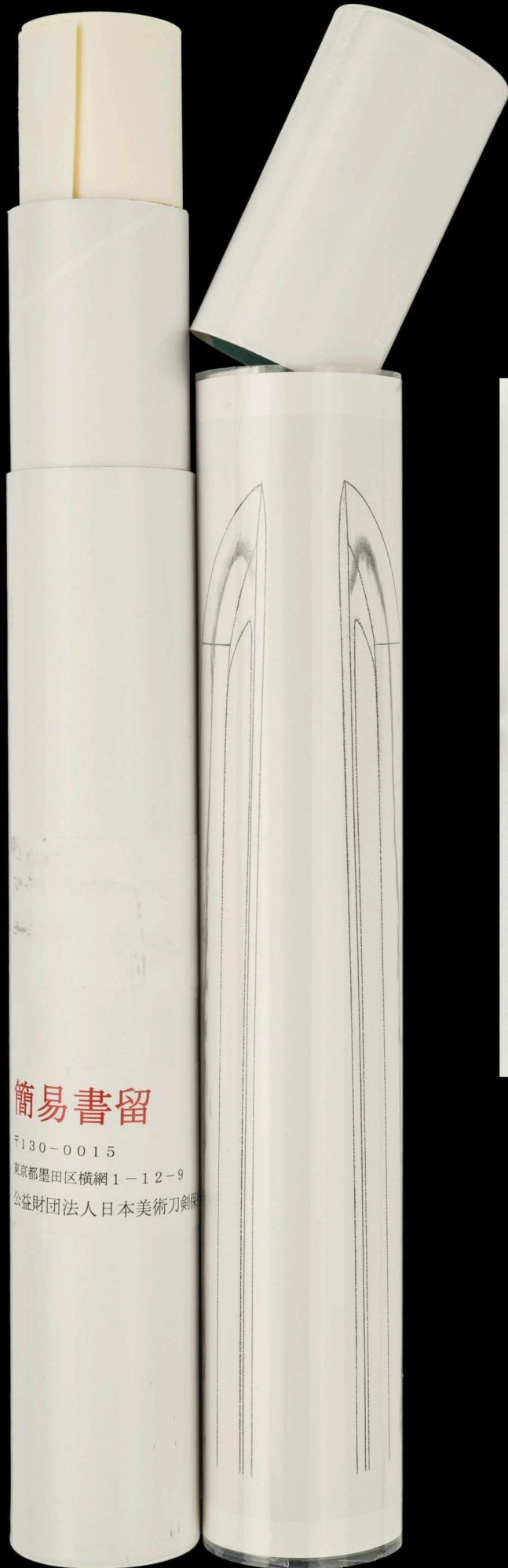
Uchinoke is an admirable quality on swords from the *Rai* family, *Yamashiro Sanjo* and *Yamato Tega*i schools.



A new, top quality shirasaya will be handcrafted for the katana to better care and protect the blade.



*a gold wrapped *ni-ju habaki* from the Edo period.*



平成二十八年十月十八日指定 第六十三回 重要 刀 剣

刀 無銘 中島米

法量 長さ七二・一釐 反り一・九釐 元幅三・二釐 先幅二・一釐 鋒長三・九五釐 茎長さ六・九釐 茎反り僅小

形状 鍔直、庵焼、身幅広く、元先の幅差殆ど聞かず、磨上げながらも磨反りつき、先へも反り加わり、大鋒、鍔に流孔肌を交え、肌

立ちこころ、地沸つき、地肌頼りに入る。刃文、地肌幅広く、直刃調に小丁子、小五の目交じり、足、兼頼りに入り、刃縁には

つれ、直刃、二重刃、打のけ現われ、金筋、砂流しかり、匂目明る。鞘子、浅くのたれ込み、小五こころに挿さかける。彫物

表裏に横溝を掻き通す。茎、大磨上、先切り、匂目切り、目釘孔一、無銘。説明 米國後の門人米國長はのちに摂津の中島に移住して作刀したことから中島米の呼称がある。銘鑑に拠れば同銘一代があり、初代を元祖

二代を正平、応安領と記している。有銘作の遺例は僅少で、米流の伝統を継承した作風を見せしており、様式的には米國光に似て、少く作位の

強さ感がある。

この刀は、身幅広く鋒の大きさを延びた力強い姿形を示し、地鉄は板目に流孔肌を交え、肌立ちこころとなり、地沸つき地肌入り、刃文は地肌

広く、直刃調に小丁子、小五の目交じり、匂目明る、薄厚つき、金筋、砂流しかなど、地刃に中島米の特色が著しく、柄の首背され

る点である。板目の肌立ちこころとなつた鞘には地鉄が細かく頼りに磨き、特色ある直刃調の刃文には光の強い沸が厚くついて刃中頼りに磨

き、地刃も無銘に健全である。

62nd NBTHK Juyo Token Certificate Traditionally rolled in protective tube.

All information will be precisely translated for the new caretaker. A printed and bound description of the sword from this catalogue will also be included along with a sword stand and a Unique Japan maintenance kit.

A complimentary sword maintenance kit with *mekugi-nuki* and a bottle of *Fujishiro* sword oil (trusted by the Japanese sword museum) is included with all sword purchases.



safe, extra large cloth for adding oil to the blade

Care and Protection

The maintenance kit also includes a large cloth to comfortably and safely rest the sword when viewing (for hours on end!).

And when the sword is not in hand, watch the **Art of the Japanese Sword DVD** or read the insightful sword picture book from the **All Japan Swordsmith Association** (also included free for clients).



40cm x 40cm cloth
(in blue and white)