



**ITEM# UJKA416**

## A YOSHIOKA-ICHIMONJI KATANA

UNSIGNED, NAMBOKUCHÔ PERIOD (CIRCA 1333~1360)

**Swordsmith:** *Yoshioka Ichimonji school*  
**Measurements:** **Length:** 72.3cm (*o-suriage*)      **Curvature:** 1.1cm      **Moto-haba:** 2.89cm  
**Jihada:** *Mokume-hada and ko-mokume with midare-utsuri*  
**Hamon:** *Bright chôji-midare mixed with suguha-chôji in nioi-deki*  
**Certificate:** **NBTHK Tokubetsu Hozon** (*Especially Worthy of Preservation*)  
**Included:** Shirasaya, fabric bag, stand, kit, description

**SOLD** - *custom koshirae now in process.*

The illustrious *Ichimonji* school was founded during the *Kamakura* period and was active into the warring *Nambokuchô jidai* (1333-1392). The school takes its name from the practice of their smiths inscribing their *nakago* with the horizontal character "ichi" - (meaning number one) and sometimes followed by their name. Given the length and curvature of the sword and its fairly long *chû-kissaki*, this katana can be comfortably dated to the early to mid-1300s. The joy of owning a Japanese sword of this pedigree is to sit down quietly under the right light and let the 'hamon magic' transport you away 700 years to the Bizen promised land. In this weighty sword you'll enjoy a narrow *suguha-chôji* at the base of the blade which then blossoms beautifully about halfway up into a wide *ô-chôji-midare*. Visible *mokume-hada* in all sizes can be appreciated along with *midare-utsuri* and *mune-yaki*, where the top spine of the blade looks to be on fire. This is an ideal sword to consider building a striking custom koshirae for and Unique Japan will guide you throughout the process. Of course, enjoying the sword in shirasaya only is perfectly fine too!



Saki-kasane: 4.3mm

Moto-kasane: 6.7mm

Omosa: 745g

Kissaki: 3.12cm  
Saki-haba: 1.73cm

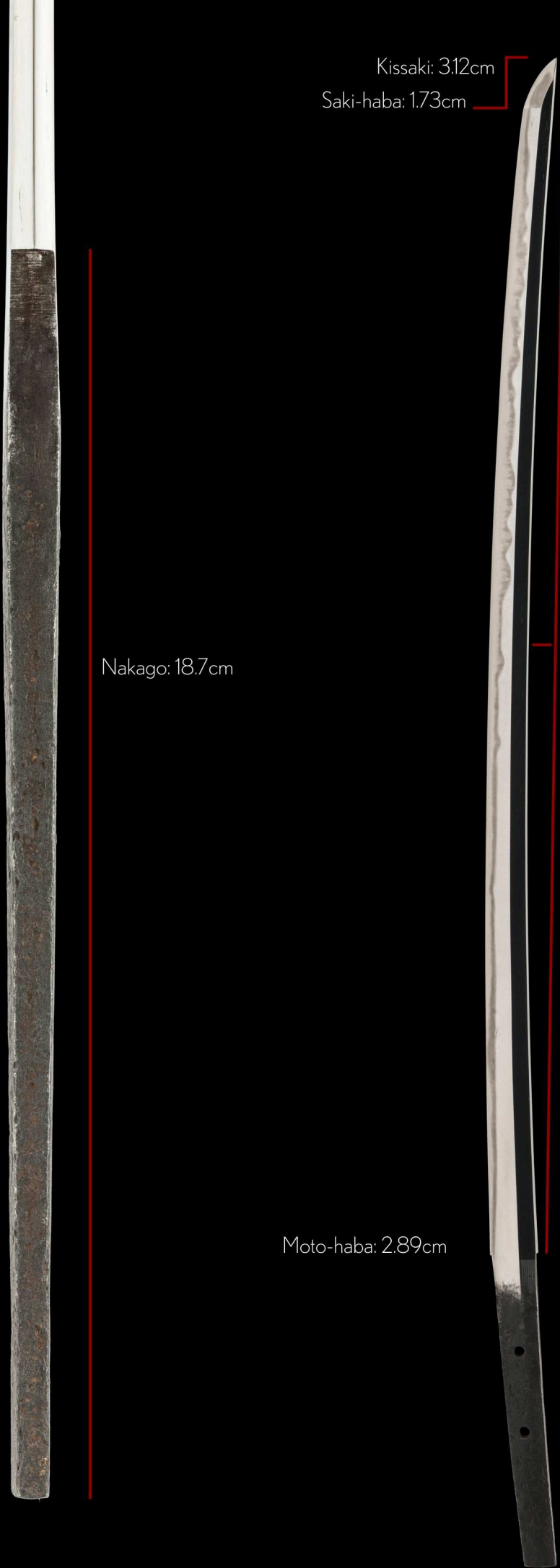
Nakago: 18.7cm

Moto-haba: 2.89cm

Nagasa: 72.3cm

Sori: 11.0cm

Mekugi-ana: 2



The illustrious *Ichimonji school* was founded during the *Kamakura* period (1185-1333) and was active into the *Nambokuchô* period (1333-1392). The school takes its name from the practice of their smiths inscribing their swords' tangs (*nakago*) with the horizontal character "ichi" (meaning number one) and sometimes followed by their name.

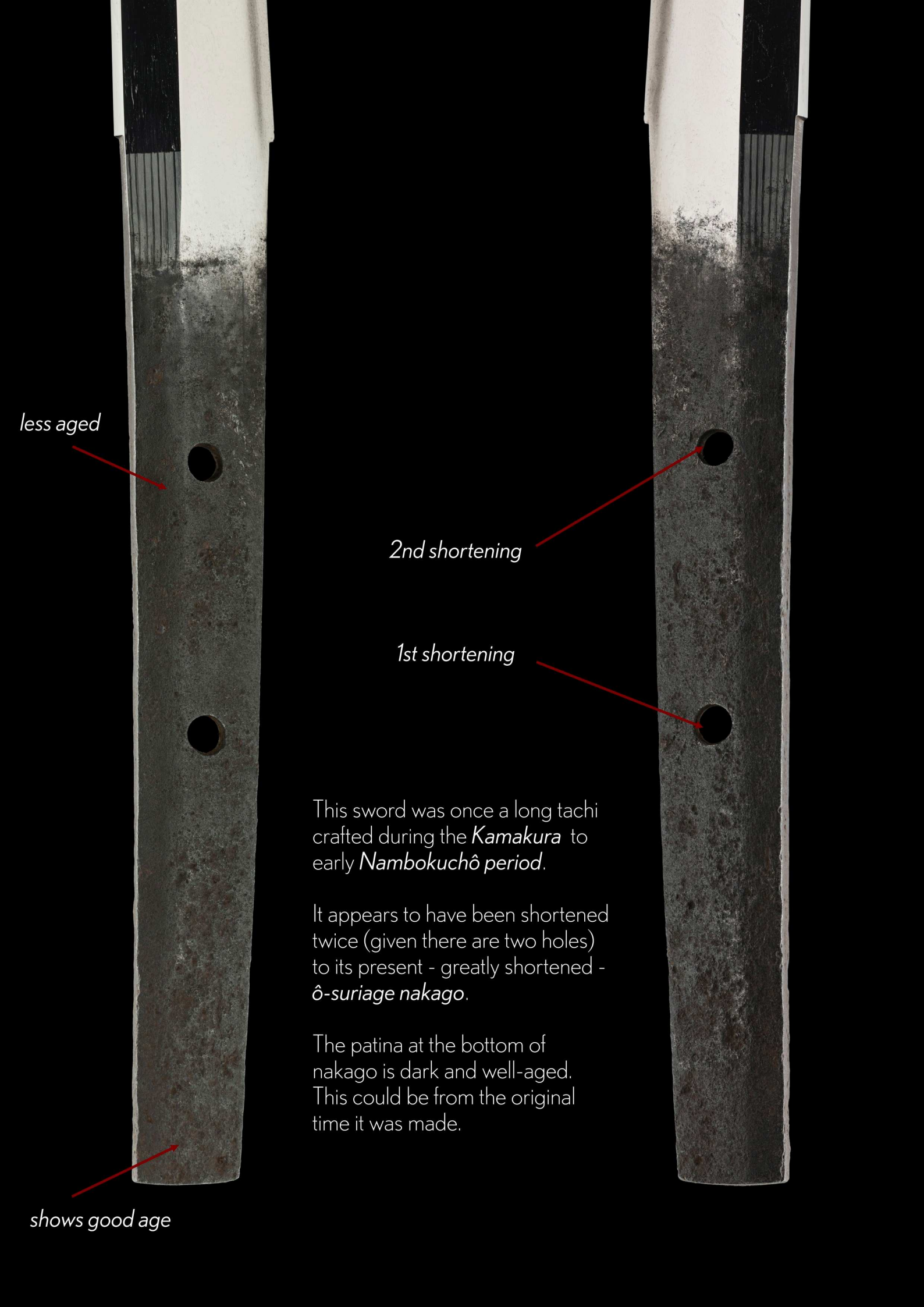
Major schools within the Ichimonji umbrella, include *Ko-Ichimonji*, the flamboyant *Fukuoka Ichimonji* group, *Yoshioka Ichimonji*, *Iwato Ichimonji* and *Katayama Ichimonji*. This katana has been attributed to the *Yoshioka Ichimonji* school.

The founder of the Yoshioka Ichimonji school was *Suke Yoshi*, said to be the grandson of *Suke mune* who lived in the town of Fukuoka. As the name suggests, smiths of this school live in the village of *Yoshioka* in Bizen province.

Given the modest curvature of this sword and a fairly long *chû-kissaki*, we can comfortably date the piece to the mid-1300s, during the *Nambokuchô* period. It is a spirited sword starting off with a *suguha-chôji* (a more straight hamon) at the base of the blade and then blossoms about halfway up into a wide *ô-chôji-midare*. Visible *mokume-hada* in all sizes can be appreciated along with *midare-utsuri* and powerful *mune-yaki*, where the top spine of the blade looks to be on fire. There is plenty of classic Bizen sword study to enjoy and history for your mind to escape to.

The sword is in shirasaya-only making it a potential candidate for a custom koshirae. The sword recently achieved NBTHK Tokubetsu Hozon and has not been submitted for NBTHK *jûyô* certification.





less aged

2nd shortening

1st shortening

This sword was once a long tachi crafted during the *Kamakura* to early *Nambokuchô* period.

It appears to have been shortened twice (given there are two holes) to its present - greatly shortened - *ô-suriage nakago*.

The patina at the bottom of nakago is dark and well-aged. This could be from the original time it was made.

shows good age

特 保  
04-202212

No. 1019807



鑑定書

一 刀 無 銘 伝 (吉岡一文字)

長 二尺三寸九分弱

右は當協會に於て審査の結果特別保存刀剣と  
鑑定しこれを証する

令和五年三月十日

公益財団法人日本美術刀剣保存協會



東京都 教育委員会  
第 324261 号  
令和3年12月14日

## NBTHK Tokubetsu Hozon Certificate of Designation

A sword designated as *Especially Worthy of Conservation*  
by the Society for the Preservation of the Japan Art Sword

Issued in the 5th year of Reiwa (2023), March 10th

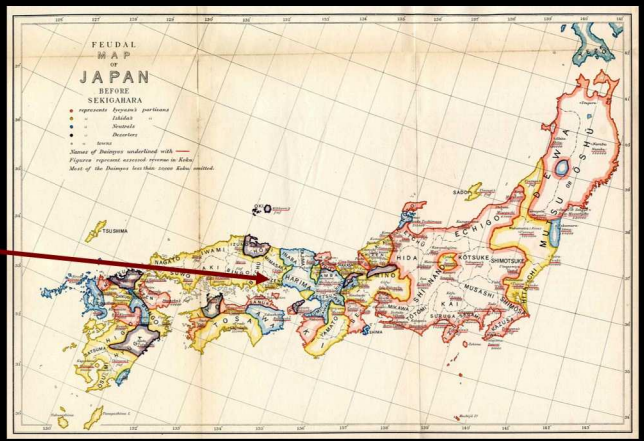
One, Katana

*Mumei* (unsigned)  
*Yoshioka Ichimonji*

*Nagasa* (length)  
2-shaku 3-sun 9-bu jaku (72.3cm)

Nihon Bijutsu Token Hozon Kyokai  
(NBTHK)

Highlighting the locations of notable Bizen tradition schools that began from circa 1000AD during the *Heian* period and flourished during the *Kamakura* to *Nambokuchō* periods (1185~1392) during the *kotō* era.



Yoshioka Ichimonji (1287~1360)

Osafune school (1230~1596)



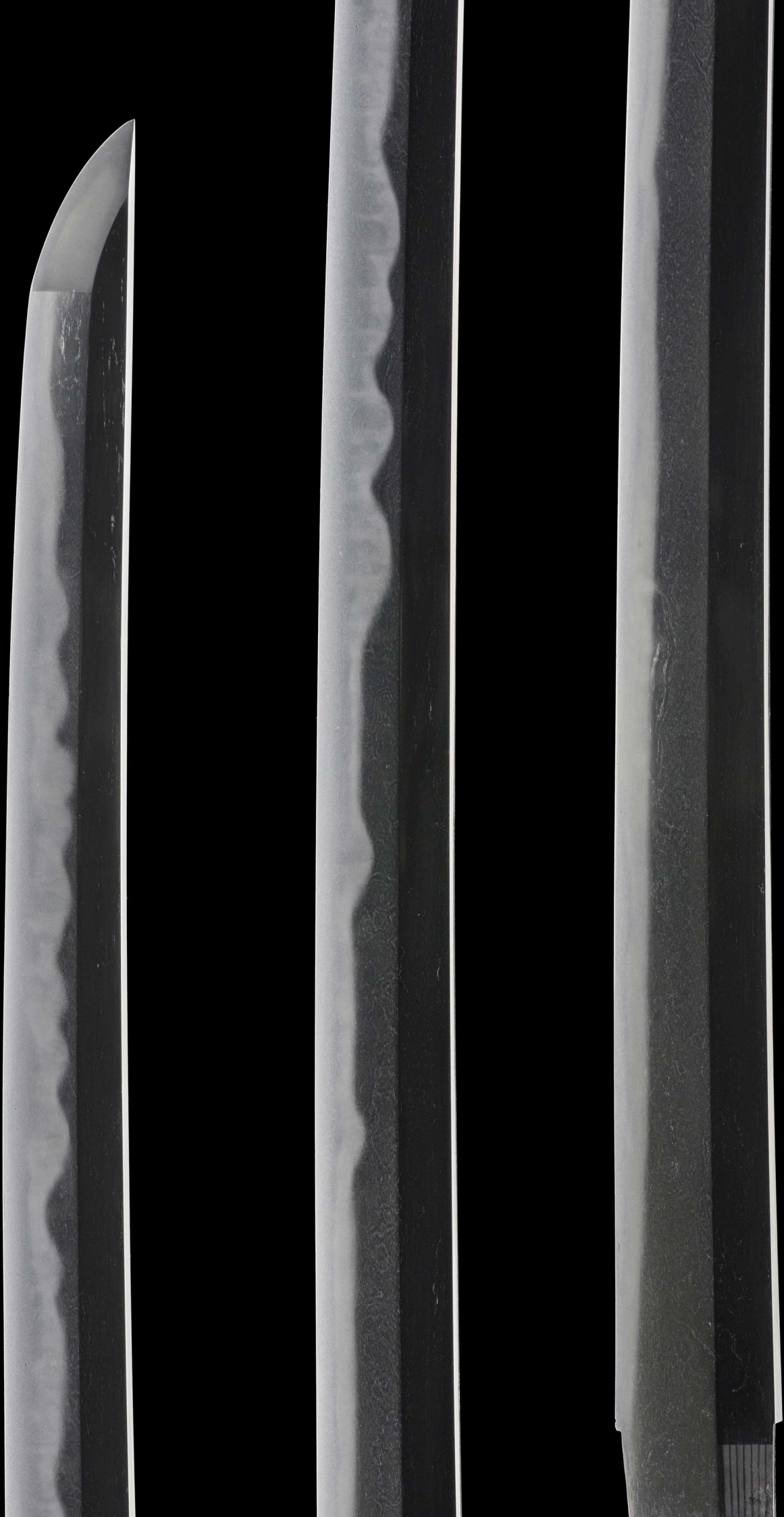
Yoshii river

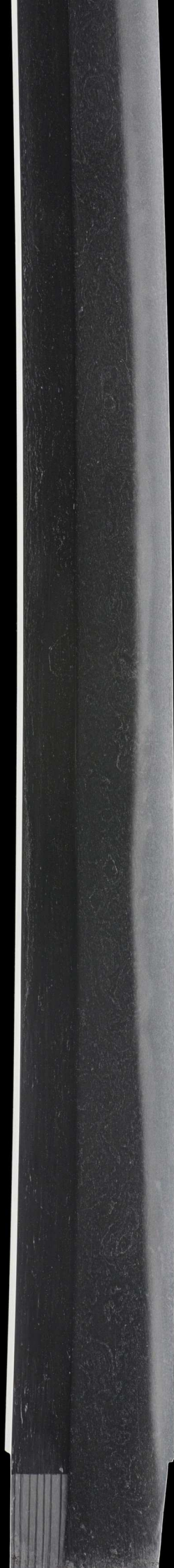
Hatakeda school (1232~1275)

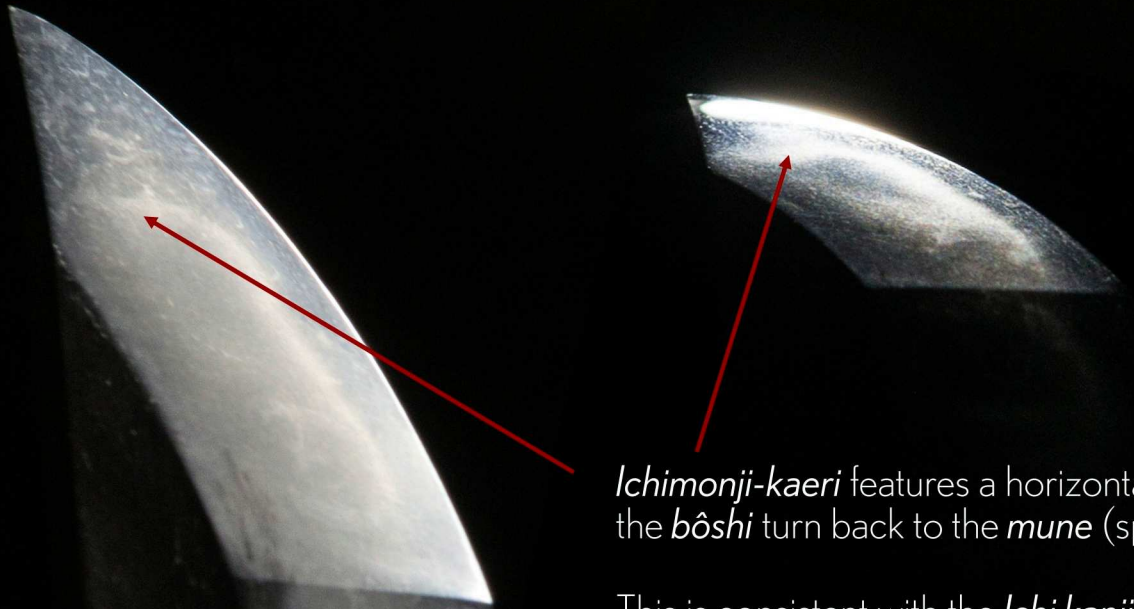
Katayama Ichimonji (1212~1220)

Fukuoka Ichimonji (1184~1293)

The *Takahashi*, *Asahi* and the *Yoshii* rivers played an instrumental role in developing sword making in the Bizen and Bitchū provinces

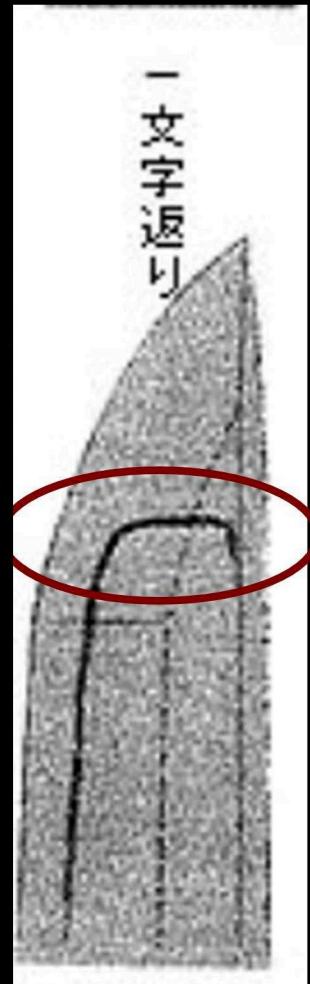






*Ichimonji-kaeri* features a horizontal line on the *boshi* turn back to the *mune* (spine).

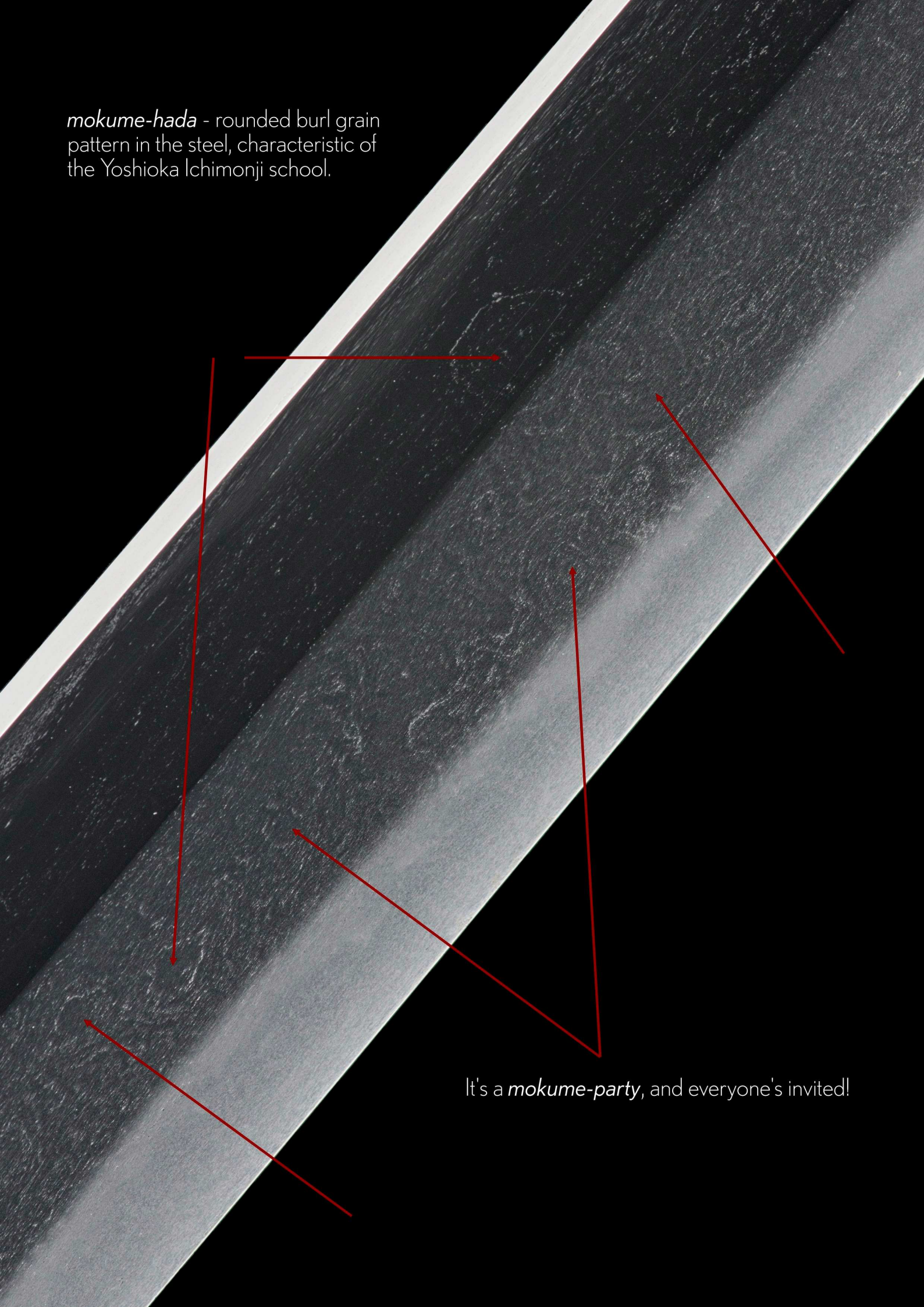
This is consistent with the *Ichi kanji* "一" that is synonymous with the school.



The image shows two Japanese swords (katana) positioned diagonally against a black background. The blades are highly reflective, showing a rich, dark grey patina known as mokume-hada. A prominent, fiery hamon (edge pattern) is visible, characterized by a chōji-midare (double-sawtooth) pattern. The lighting highlights the texture and the sharp edge of the blades.

A rich *mokume-hada* backdrop to a fiery *chōji-midare* hamon.

*mokume-hada* - rounded burl grain pattern in the steel, characteristic of the Yoshioka Ichimonji school.



It's a *mokume-party*, and everyone's invited!

The *mune* (spine) has been tempered, which is known as *muneyaki*.



*muneyaki*

A *Bizen* feast your eyes...

*midare utsuri* (reflection)

*nioi-deki* - super fine martensite particles that resemble the milky way.



*wide yakiba* (hardening area)

*o-chôji* (large clove blossoms)

*suguha-chôji* (straight clove blossoms)





*Shirasaya*  
(protective scabbard)



gold-wrapped *habaki* with  
horizontal file marks



Koshirae bag



*Recently Completed Custom Koshirae*

ujwa250

*A Suishinshi Masahide Wakizashi*

Rare body-cutting test performed by Masahide himself

February 1800

NBTHK Tokubetsu Hozon

Rising phoenix theme with twisting *kizami* saya

