

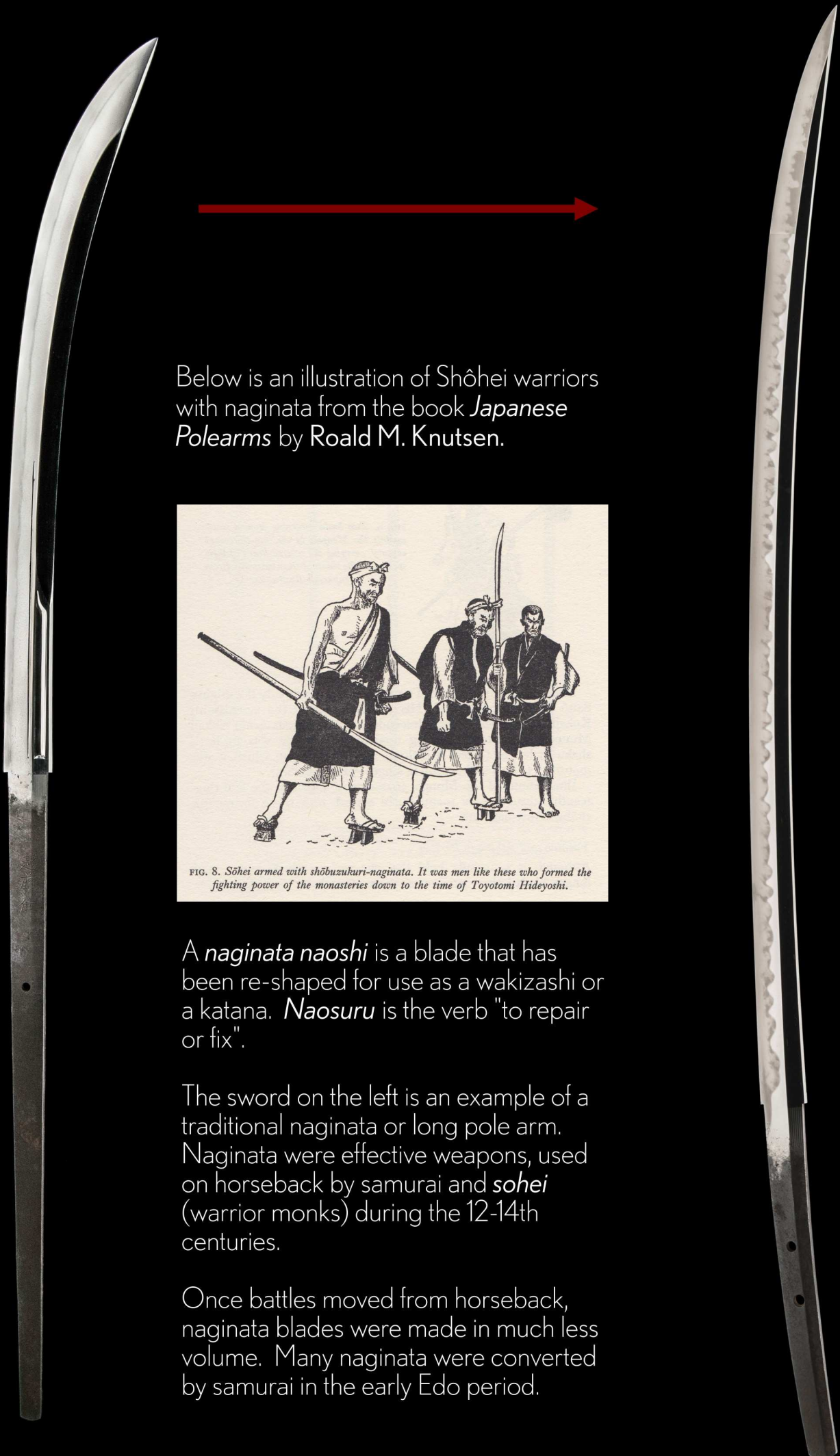
The *Ichimonji School* (一文字派) emerged in the early *Kamakura* period, subsequently thrived throughout the mid and late Kamakura until the early *Nanbokuchô* period in places like *Fukuoka* (福岡), *Yoshioka* (吉岡), *Katayama* (片山), and *Iwato* (岩戸), and gave rise to many excellent smiths.

The name of the school goes back to the fact that some of the smiths signed with the character (Japanese: *monji*) for “one” (Japanese: *lchi*). That is, there were Ichimonji smiths who just signed with said character, such who signed below with their individual names, and such who only signed with their names and without the character Ichi. The most flamboyant style within the Ichimonji School was the *ôbusa-chôji-midare* that is so rich in variety that was produced in the mid-Kamakura period by the *Fukuoka-Ichimonji* group.

This blade is in *shinogi-zukuri* and was originally a *naginata*, which was reshaped into a katana, a practice referred to as *naginata-naoshi*. It displays a *kitae* in *itame* that features a *midare-utsuri* and a widely hardened hamon in *chôji-midare* that is mixed with *ôbusa-chôji*. Some parts of the hamon reach the *shinogi*, and the ha exhibits overall noticeable undulations, resulting so in a very flamboyant interpretation.

Thus, we have here a magnificent and gorgeous work that reflects the typical approach of the mid-Kamakura period *Fukuoka-Ichimonji School*, which is also in excellent condition.





Below is an illustration of Shōhei warriors with naginata from the book *Japanese Polearms* by Roald M. Knutsen.

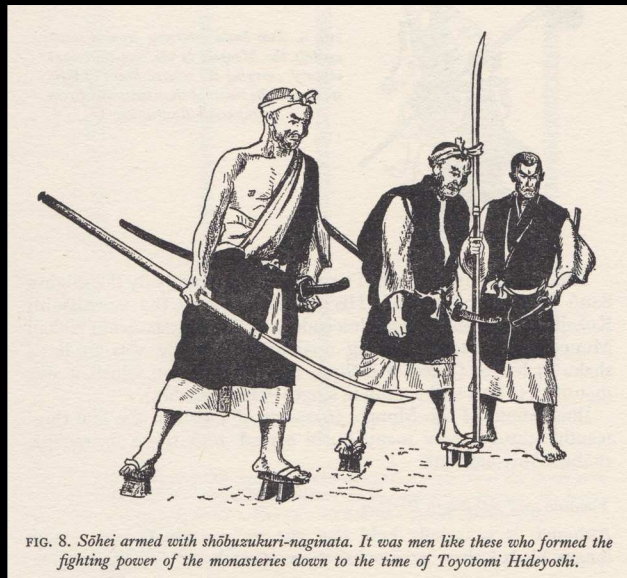


FIG. 8. Shōhei armed with shōbuzukuri-naginata. It was men like these who formed the fighting power of the monasteries down to the time of Toyotomi Hideyoshi.

A *naginata naoshi* is a blade that has been re-shaped for use as a wakizashi or a katana. *Naosuru* is the verb "to repair or fix".

The sword on the left is an example of a traditional naginata or long pole arm. Naginata were effective weapons, used on horseback by samurai and *sohei* (warrior monks) during the 12-14th centuries.

Once battles moved from horseback, naginata blades were made in much less volume. Many naginata were converted by samurai in the early Edo period.



Saki-kasane: 4.8mm

Moto-kasane: 6.2mm

Kissaki: 14.57cm

Saki-haba: 2.64cm

Nagasa: 70.1cm

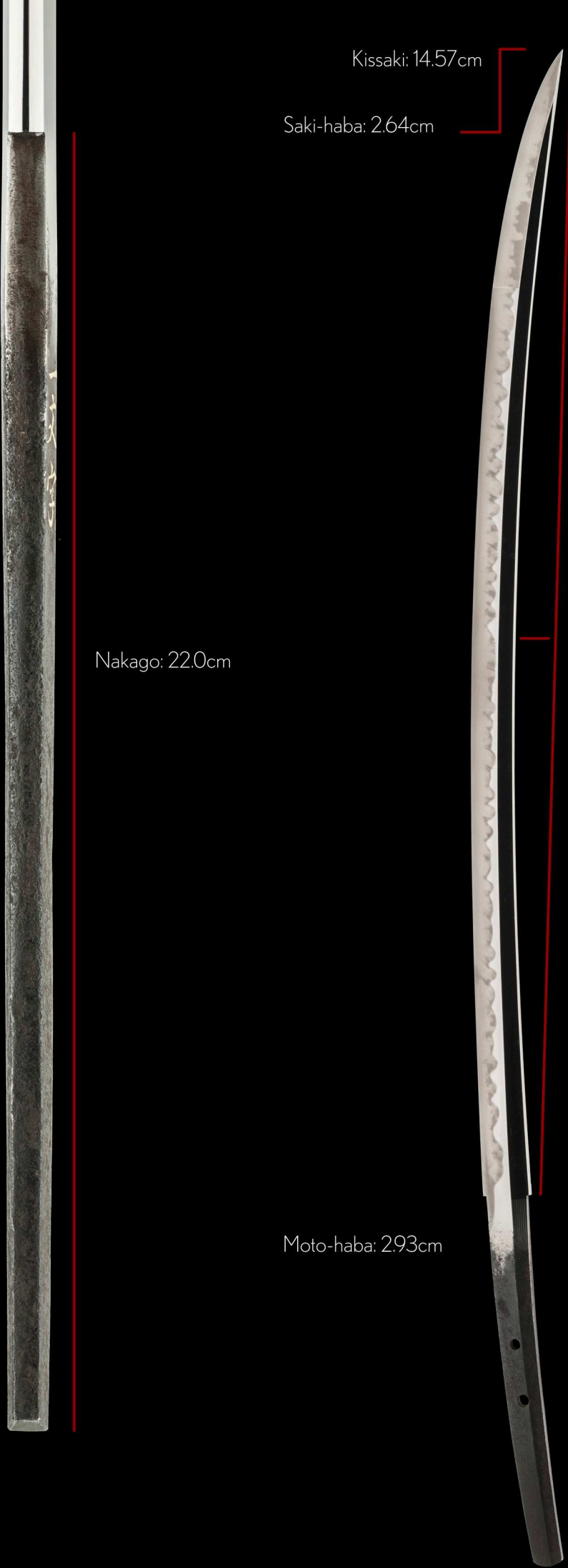
Nakago: 22.0cm

Sori: 2.0cm

Omosa: 960g

Moto-haba: 2.93cm

Mekugi-ana: 2



(lchi) 一
(mon) 文
(ji) 字



Location: *Bizen province*
School name: *Fukuoka Ichimonji*

ubu-nakago (ô-suriage)
with slanting file marks



(*ura*, reverse)



特 定
12200016

特重要第六六號

指 定 書

薙刀直し刀 (金象嵌銘) 一文字 一口

法量 長さ七〇・二釐 反り二・〇釐
形状 薙刀直し造 三ノ棟 身幅やや広く 重厚め 先反りつき 大鋒
鍔 板目肌 地沸つき 乱れ映り立つ
刃文 丁子乱れに大房丁子交じり 焼幅広く 出入りがある華やかであり
足・葉入り 匂ひ揃まりこころに小沸つき 飛跳かかる
帽子 乱れ込み 落ど焼詰め 僅かに返る
茎 大磨上 鑿目筋造 目釘孔二
作者 備前国福岡一文字派
時代 鎌倉時代中期

右者當協會に於て審査の結果
特別重要刀剣に指定する

平成十二年四月二十八日

財団法人日本美術刀剣保存協會
會長 山中貞則



Tokubetsu-Jûyô Certificate No. 686
Shiteisho (指定書) Certificate of Designation
Naginata-naoshi-katana, kinzôgan-mei: Ichimonji (一文字)

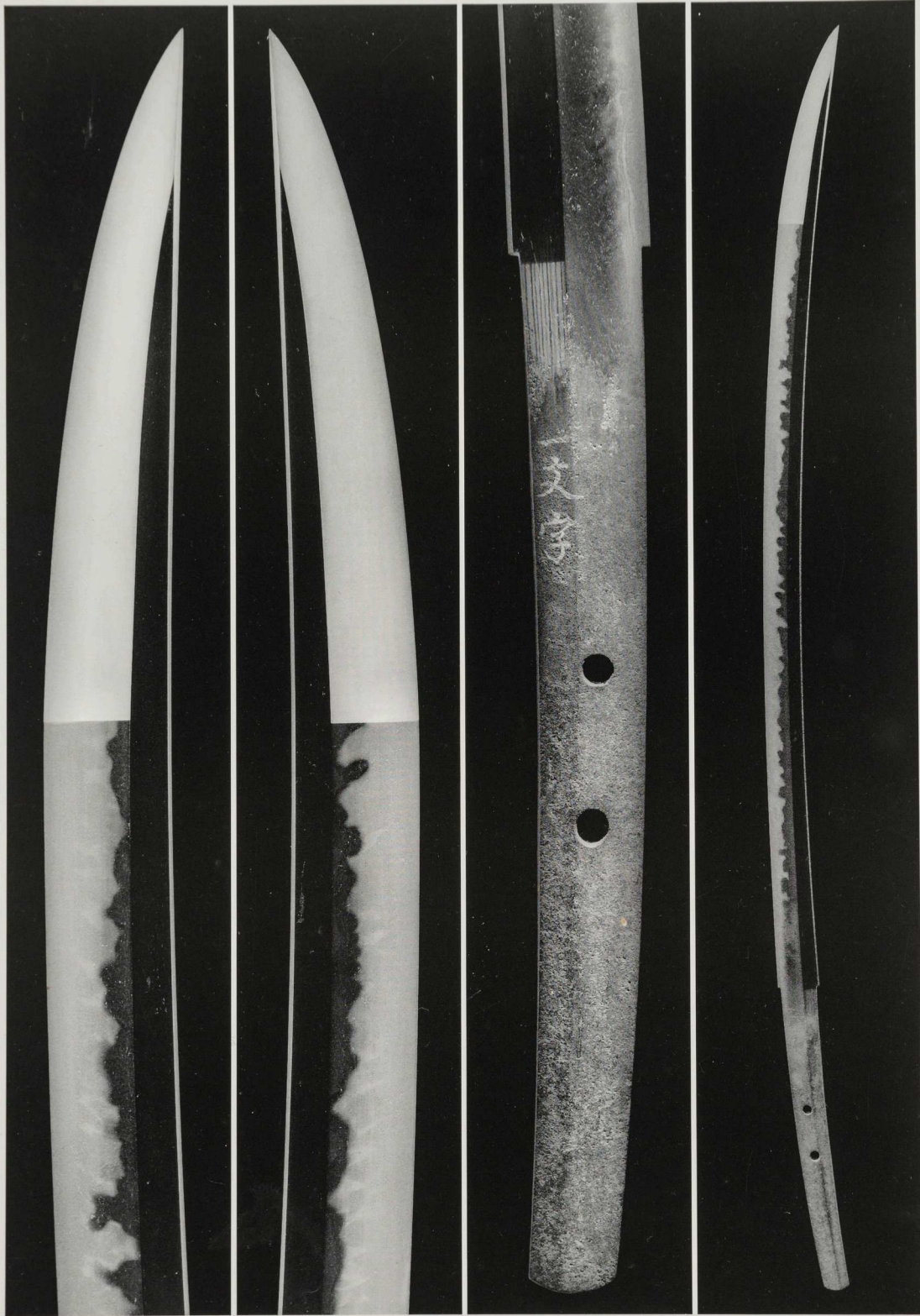
Measurements
nagasa 70.1 cm, sori 2.0 cm

Description

Keijo: naginata-naoshi-zukuri, mitsu-mune, rather wide mihaba, thick kasane, sakizori, ô-kissaki
Kitae: itame with ji-nie, featuring midare-utsuri
Hamon: chôji-midare that is mixed with ôbusa-chôji, wide yakihaba, noticeable undulations, ashi and yô rather tight nioi-guchi with ko-nie and tobiyaki
Bôshi: midare-komi, almost no turnback
Nakago: ô-suriage, , slanting file marks, two peg holes
Sakusha: Fukuoka Ichimonji school from Bizen province
Jidai: Middle Kamakura period

According to the result of the shinsa committee of our society we judged this work as authentic and rate it as tokubetsu-jûyô-tôken.

April 28, 2000
[Foundation] Nihon Bijutsu Tôken Hozon Kyôkai, NBTHK
[President] Yamanaka Sadanori (山中貞則)



薙刀直し刀 (金象嵌銘) 一文字



Designated as *Tokubetsu-Jûyô-Tôken* (a profound and important sword)
at the 16th *tokubetsu-jûyô shinsa* held on April 28, 2000

Naginata-naoshi-katana, kinzôgan-mei: Ichimonji (一文字)

Measurements

nagasa 70.1 cm

sori 2.0 cm

motohaba 2.9 cm, *sakihaba* 2.6 cm

kissaki-nagasa 14.7 cm, *nakago-nagasa* 22.0 cm, *nakago-sori* 0.3 cm

Description

Keijo: *naginata-naoshi-zukuri*, *mitsu-mune*, rather wide *mihaba*, thick *kasane*, *sakizori*, *ô-kissaki*

Kitae: *itame* with *ji-nie*, featuring *midare-utsuri*

Hamon: *chôji-midare* that is mixed with *ôbusa-chôji*, wide *yakihaba*, noticeable undulations, *ashi* and *yô*, rather tight *nioi-guchi* with *ko-nie* and *tobiyaki*

Bôshi: *midare-komi*, almost no turnback

Nakago: *ô-suriage*, slanting file marks, two peg holes, gold signature of 'Ichimonji' just above the peg hole on the front side.

Artisan

Fukuoka Ichimonji school from Bizen province

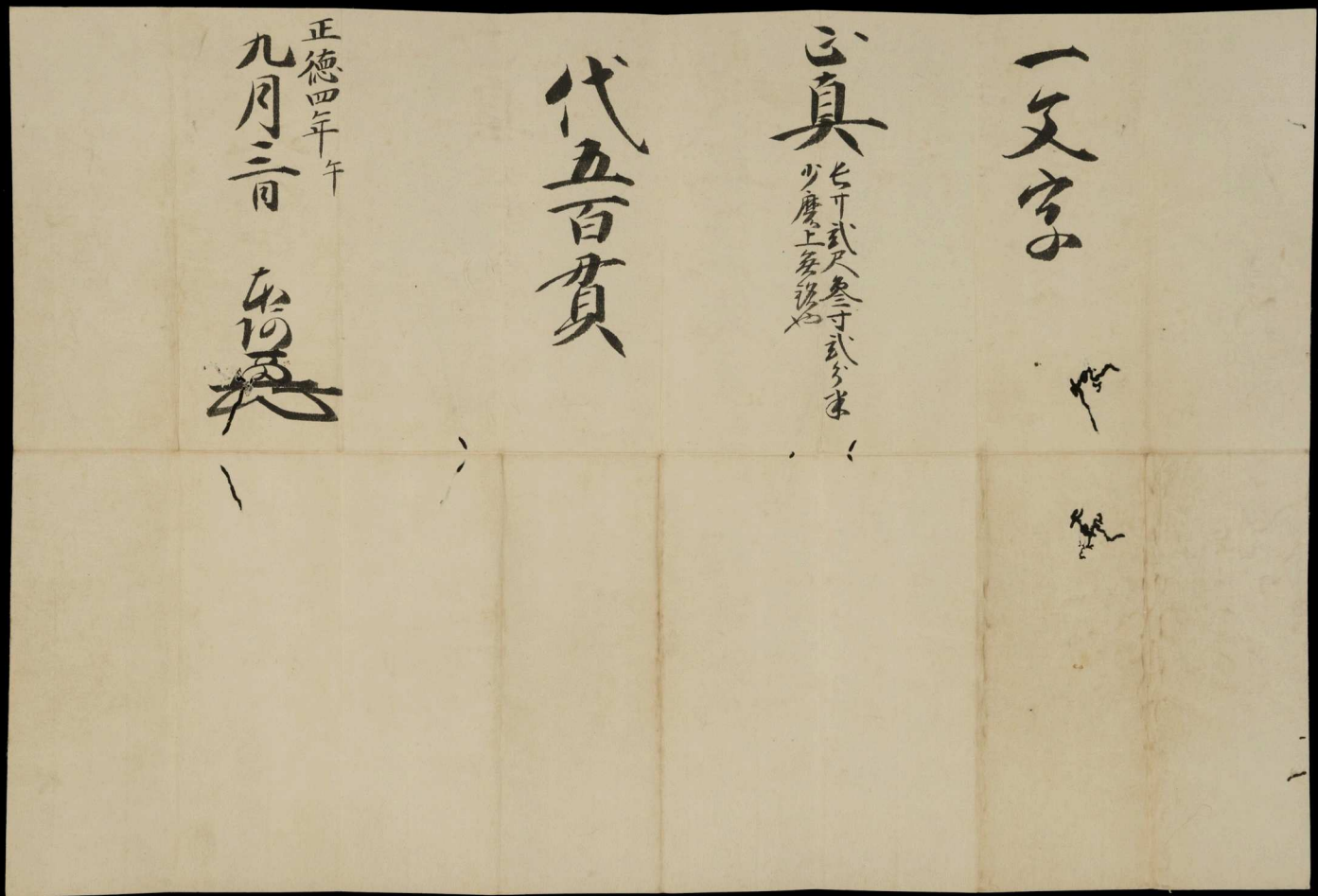
Era

Mid-Kamakura period

Remarks

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Origami (折紙)

Ichimonji

Authentic - Blade length: ~70.2 cm, shortened and unsigned
Value 500 kan

Shōtoku six (1714), [year of the] horse, ninth month, third day

Hon'ami + kaō [Kôchû, 光忠]



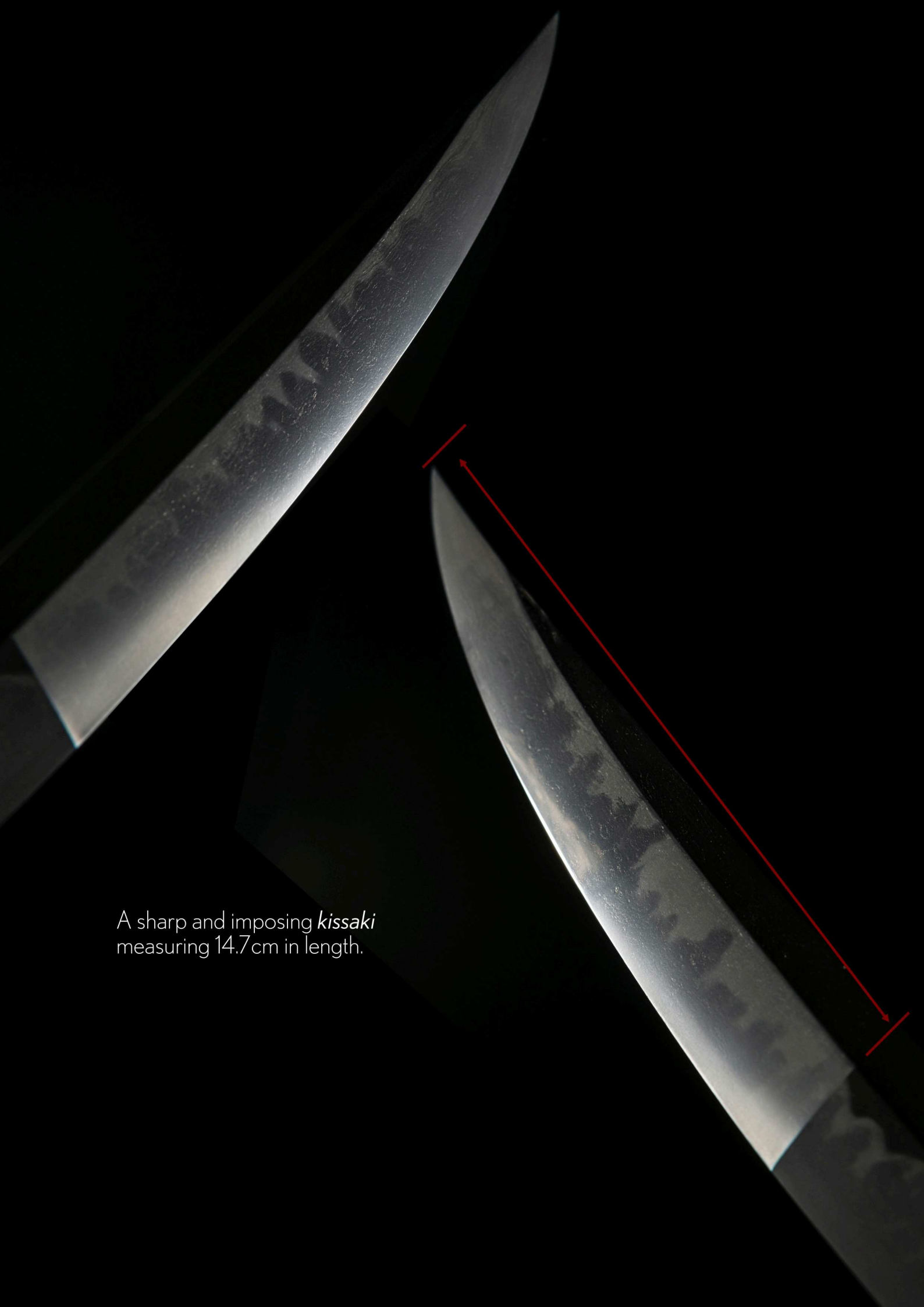


Judging by how the *kinzogan* (gold inlaid characters) has aged, it was likely written/created circa the late Edo period (early 1800s).

These characters were probably not done by the original sword appraiser *Hon'ami Kôchû* who lived during the late 1600 to early 1700s.







A sharp and imposing *kissaki* measuring 14.7cm in length.



ôbusa-chôji


A prime feature of the *Fukuoka-Ichimonji* school is the presence of beautiful *ôbusa-chôji*, engulfed clove buds with noticeably large tassels.



Mid-Kamakura mastery. Profound energy.

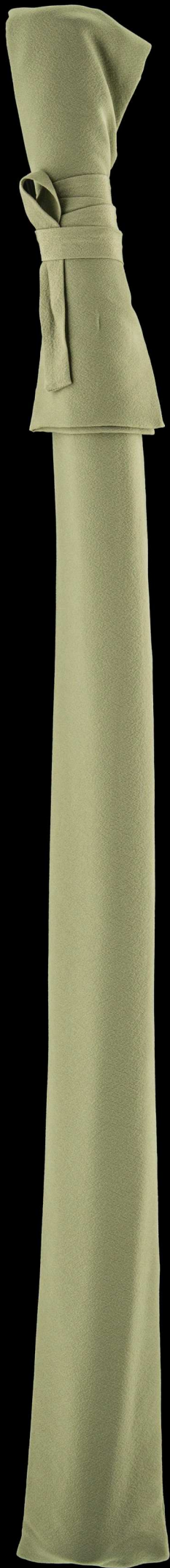
To the heavens.



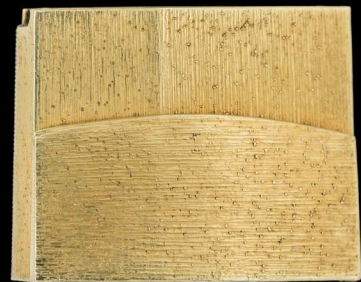


Mitsu (three) *mune* (spine/ridge) is a rare construction whereby the spine has three surfaces (the top is flat, not pointed).

It is generally found in the blades of smiths working in the *Sosho tradition*, but can also be seen on other *Koto* period swords such as from the *Yamashiro* and *Bizen* schools.



Shirasaya
(protective scabbard)



gold *ni-ju habaki* with
crisp file marks

Close-up of the
shirasaya's *mekugi-nuki*.

