

THE TO-KEN SOCIETY OF GREAT BRITAIN
for the Study and Preservation of Japanese Swords and Fittings



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PROGRAMME

NEXT MEETING: Wednesday, 6th July 1966, 7.0 p.m. Fulham Conservative Club, 4 Shorrolds Road, S.W.6.

LAST MEETING: The first half of the evening was given over to the distribution of the Journal to members and discussion on the contents of the next and future editions. We seem to have a fairly reasonable number of promises of material but still require articles, (not essentially technical) and letters. If when you read the new Journal something strikes you as being worthy of comment, please drop us a line. These letters when published will make interesting and worthwhile reading.

After the refreshment interval, Mr. Andrew Ford gave a most interesting lecture on TAMESHIGIRI. This was well illustrated with wall charts of typical signatures and 6 examples of swords bearing testing inscriptions. Added to this a life-sized drawing of a body very ably executed (no pun intended) by our Chairman, Mr. Bon Dale, enabled Mr. Ford to illustrate the numerous cuts employed. During his lecture a certain amount of discussion arose as to whether the testing of swords served any practical purpose or was it perhaps just a form of vanity on the part of the owners. How about writing and giving us your opinions!

NEXT MEETING: It had been hoped that Mr. Knutson the well-known Kendo expert would come and give us a demonstration of IAI, sword drawing and offensive and defensive cuts and strokes. Something which as Collectors we tend to lose sight of, the actual use of the sword. However, our notice to Mr. Knutson was understandably too short, but he has said that he will give this demonstration at our August meeting.

In place of the above and also at short notice, we will be showing a film, that old favourite "The Seven Samurai". This lasts for 2½ hours, and so to allow for this we hope to start the film at 7.30 p.m. Any business will commence around 7.15 and will be brief. Members are asked to bring guests, and as last time a small charge will be made to cover the hire of the film. Our last film show was a great success; bring your friends and this one will also be a success.

ARMOUR GLOSSARY

- GAKU-ITA Lit. Oblong plate. An armour plate found on shins of 18th century and later manufacture which have an embossed decoration.
- GAKU-SODE A type of shoulderguard of one plate and having the lower plate only laced to it. The large plate is often repousse, inlaid or covered with leather. It is a modern style.
- GATTARI A metal bracket with a square or round hole at its centre. It is fixed to the back of the D^o high up and supports the top of the tube which holds the bannerette. Many are hinged at their centre for ease of removal when the bannerette is not in use or for storage.
- GENJ^oRAKU A BUGAKU mask, a name given to masks of this form.
- GESAN The tassels which hang from the D^o more commonly called KUSAZURI. These may number from 4 to 11 in number.
- GIN-NO-MIGAKI-TSUKI An ancient term used for shin guards with large knee defences decorated with silver.
- GO-ISHI A type of scale in which the top is rounded resembling the pieces in the game of GO.
- GOMAI-KABUTO This term used in ancient writings refers not to the number of helmet plates but to the number of plates in the neckguard.

SWORD GLOSSARY

ERA. The periods in Japanese sword history are of importance in that most Japanese texts quote the era rather than the actual date, or Nenyo, of a swordsmith. The periods are as follows:

First, Heian Period, from 1st year of Daido - 806 AD. to last year of Juei Era - 1183 AD.

Second, Kamakura Period, divided into three parts.

Early 1st yr. Genreki, 1184 to 6th yr. Kempo, 1218.

Middle " " Shokyu, 1219 to 3rd yr. Kenji, 1277.

Late " " Koan, 1278 to 3rd yr. Genko, 1333.

Third Yoshino Period, from 1st year of Kenbu, 1334 to 1st year of Meitoku 1393.

Fourth Muramachi Period, from 1st year of Oei, 1394 to 1st year of Bunsho, 1466.

Fifth Sengoku Period, from 1st year of Onin, 1467 to 4th year of Bunroku 1595.

End of Koto Period, beginning of Shinto.

Sixth Edo Period (or Tokugawa) from 1st year of Keicho 1596 to 9th year of Anei, 1780.

Seventh Shinshinto Period (or Kinkoto) from 1st year of Tenmei, 1781 to the 3rd year of Keio 1867.

Those are the seven main periods, and after 1867 are followed by:

Meiji to Taisho Period, from the 1st year of Meiji 1868 to 14th year of Taisho 1925.

Gendaito Period, from 1st year of Showa, 1926 to the present time.

FUTATSUJI-HI, a pair of narrow grooves carved in a blade and extending almost full length of the shinogi-ji area; different from Gomabashi or "Chopstick" hi, which are short.

● UMBARI, or funbari, a tapering of the blade from tang to point. Technically the difference between the width at the moto-haba (between the hamachi and mune machi, cutting edge and back) and the width at the sabihaba (width at the point across the yokote). A great difference in width at these points may be an indication of an old blade (for example a difference of 10:6).

FUNAGATA, tang shape, "ship bottom" often found in blades of the Soshu School.

FURISODE, tang shape, "Kimono sleeve", often found in swords, especially tanto, made between the Kamakura and Yoshino periods.

FUKA-KURIJIRI a more sharply curved version of the common sword tang tip, Kurijiri (Kuri = "chestnut").

Sword Glossary (Cont'd)

FUKURA, the curved cutting edge of the point section of the blade,
 the kissaki.

FUSHI, or "joint", a small irregularity or wave in the hamon.

(F to be continued)...

Books available, all prices include postage.

Contact: Andrew Ford,
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June 1966.

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