

A brief introduction to the basic techniques of inlay (zogan) on iron tsuba

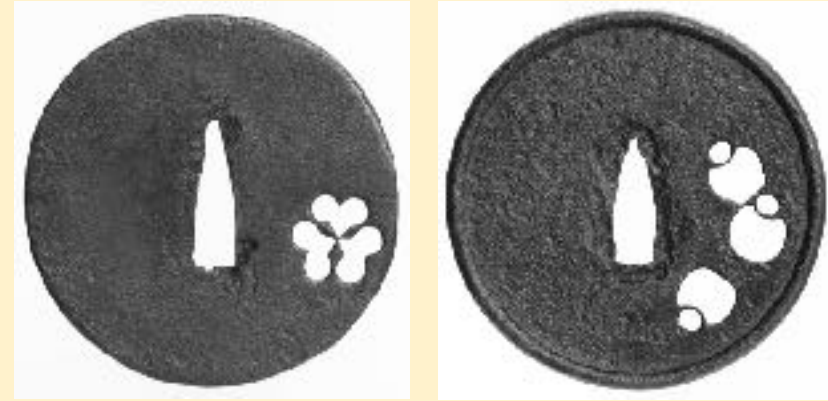
With some examples from the Ashmolean collection

Mark Radburn



Types of iron tsuba decoration:

- Mon or Ko Sukashi - Ko Toshō (late Heianjō) and Ko Katchushi (Kamakura)



- Ji Sukashi - Kyo sukashi, Ko Shoami, Owari and Kanayama (Eikyō period 1429 - 41)



- Kebori - Kamakura (Onin 1467-69)



First use of zogan - Onin tsuba

Zogan - to inlay a shape

- Ten zogan (Onin 1467-69)
- Suemon zogan (Onin 1467-69)



The four main types of zogan

- Suemon zogan
- Hira zogan
- Nunome zogan
- Hon zogan

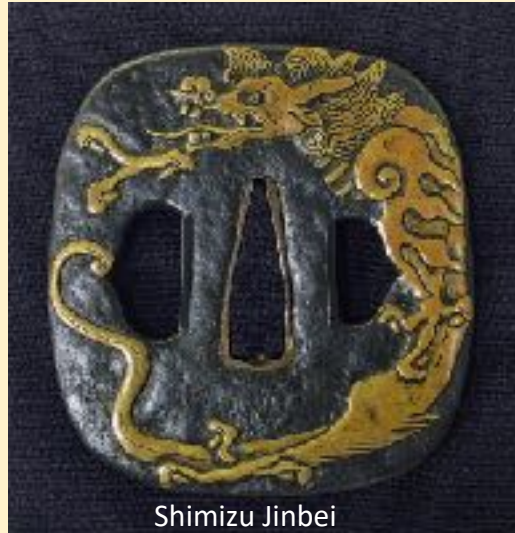
Suemon

Suemon - to set in or lay in a pattern or design

- Technique
 - Motif is made separately similar to a menuki
 - The tsuba plate is carved out to take the suemon
- Onin and in particular Higo schools of Nishigaki and especially Shimizu



Onin



Shimizu Jinbei



Late Jingo - maybe 5th master

Suemon



EAX.10315



Shimizu Jinbei



Shimizu Jinbei



Nishigaki Kanshiro



EAX.10315



Shimizu Jinbei ?

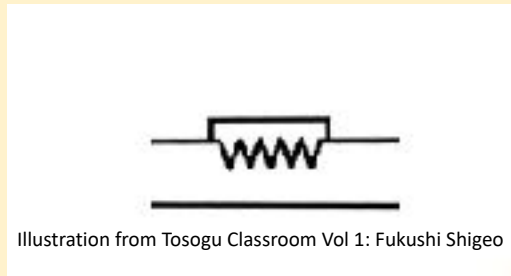


Amatsune Chisokutei or Shimizu Shigenaga

Nunome

Nunome - fabric or texture zogan

- Technique
 - Ground plate is prepared by cross-hatching with a file or chisel
 - Gold or silver wire or fragments are hammered into the cross-hatching
- Shoami, Kyo schools and Higo schools



Ko Shoami Tokyo National Museum

Nunome

Nunome - fabric or texture zogan

- Higo schools (Nishigaki, Hayashi, Kamiyoshi, Shimizu and Edo Higo) and later Edo Period schools



Nishigaki Kanshiro



Hayashi Shigemitsu



Shimizu Jinbei



EAX.10944

Nunome



EA1978.396



EAX.10853 and EAX.10854

Nunome

This type of tsuba is known as 'Kenjo' or often 'Kyo-Kenjo' (literally means "offerings from Kyoto")."

These tsuba are likely a development of Kyo Shoami makers. Current research suggests these tsuba were made and sold by the merchant Toichiya Kichibei in the Genroku period (1688-1704) as Toichi tsuba or Kenjo-tsuba.

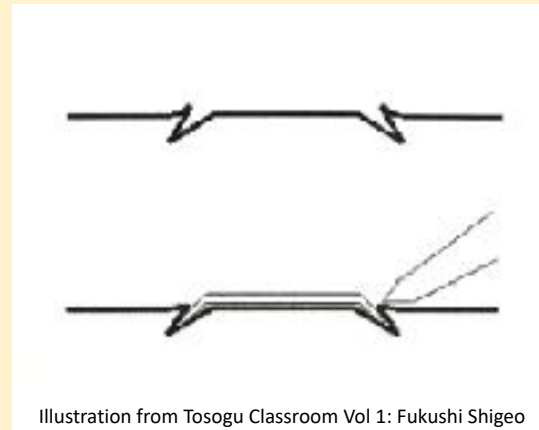


EAX.10853 and 10854

Hira zogan

Hira zogan - flat inlay

- Technique
 - Outline created by incised carving
 - The (large) piece of inlay is spread over the plate and the edge closed into the incision
 - The inlay and plate are polished smooth



- Used in Kyoto by Umetada school and by Heianjo workers but made famous in Kaga (Kanazawa) and used on abumi (stirrups) as well as tsuba.

Hira zogan



EAX.10168 Yoshiro style



EAX.10151 Heianjo



EAX.10161 Heianjo

Hon zogan

Hon zogan - 'true' inlay i.e. kebori channel or groove created as opposed to nunome zogan

- Technique

- 'Swallow tail' groove is created in the tsuba plate
- Gold or silver wire is hammered into groove, expands and is so held in place
- A more sophisticated technique is to leave an edge to the chiselled hole which is then hammered into the inlay

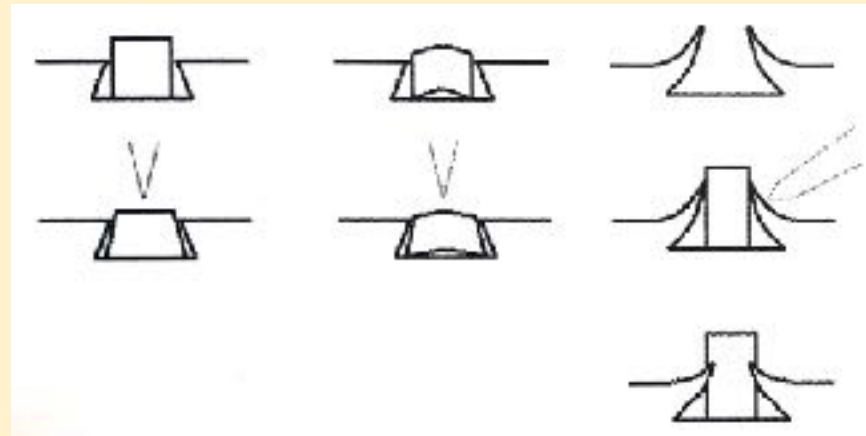


Illustration from Tosogu Classroom Vol 1: Fukushi Shigeo

Hon zogan



Juyo Hayashi Matashichi



Juyo Bijutsuhin Hayashi Matashichi



TH Nishigaki Kanshiro



Juyo Kamiyoshi Juhei

Hon zogan

- Higo tsuba by Nakane Heihachiro
- Gin honzogan border along the rim in the form of the kaminari-mon pattern
- Heihachiro was probably a high ranking Higo samurai who made utsushimono of Shoami tsuba as a pastime
- His teacher was probably Kamiyoshi Fukunobu.
- His dates are 1805 to 1870 and he lived in Kumamoto.
- This tsuba would be mounted on a Nobunaga koshirae. See the koshirae on display in the Headley lecture theatre

