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Japanese Sword Terminology & Related Glossary

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A

AGARI TACHI OR GITO – Toy-like ceremonial imitation sword.

AHIOTORU – Reheating the edge after a poor tempering job.

AI – Tempering.

AIKUCHI – Tanto up to 1 foot long mounted without tsuba (guard).

Same as Kusungobu (9.5 sun) tanto and yoroi-doshi sometimes mounted this way.

AITORI – Mild heating to neutralize strains after hardening the edge.

AIZUCHI – Hammer men-3 to each smith.

1. Tsuchigashira - head man
2. Nakazuchi - middle brother.
3. Otozuchi - younger brother.

AKIHAGI no TSUYU – A dew-like spot on yakiba or hamon.

AMAKUNIGARA – Horimono carving of dragon wrapped around sword.

AMANURU KANE – Steel by Nio Kiyotsuna of Suwo province appears weak and has dark or whitish patches on the surface.

AOBIE – A short bamboo sword. www.samurai-sword.com

AOBUCHI – (blue pool) Dark blue steel with whirlpool grain, from Soshu.

AOI – hollyhock, commonly used as a Mon

AOGOKORO – Bizen blades having characteristics of Bitchu Aoe blades.

AOSAN no MITSUKE – Straight temper lines by Bizen Sanenaga and Shogen Nagamitsu resembling those of Bitchu Aoe and Bingo Mihara smiths.

AOYAKI no KITAE – A white gold line along dark ji portion of blade.

ARA-NIE – coarse or large nie

ARARE no MIDARE – A hamon typical of old Hoki Yasutsuna or Sanemori schools . Small irregular lines mixed here and there in the hamon.

ARASHIAGE – The rough finishing on a sword.

ARATOGI – Roughly sharpening a sword by the smith before tempering.

ARATOMATSU – Stone powder mixed with clay used in hardening.

ASAI-NOTARE – A shallow undulating hamon.

ASAGIDO – A grindstone formerly used for swords.

ASASHI – Shallow as in shallow back angle or shallow nie appearance.

ASHI – Leg or foot. Short lines extending from patterns of nie or nioi.

ASHI SADAMARU – A steady hamon pattern either straight or wavy.

ASHI-NAGA – Long ashi.

ASHIGITAE – A method of folding steel in the forging process.

ASHINAGA CHOJI – Choji (clove seed pattern) with long legs.

(Ashinaga was a mythical person with very long legs.)

ASOBI KOKORO – Mixed Yamashiro and Yoshioka Ichimonji choji patterns.

ASOBI TAMA – Round gem-like hard spots along hamon of certain smiths.

ATOBI – Grooves in a sword carved later by other than the original smith.

ATOBORI – Horimono carvings added later to decorate or to hide defects.

ATO MEI – signature added at a later date

AWASE-DO – Whetstone.

AWASE HADA – Joined lines seen on Bizen blades or on other blades that have been ground down to look like old blades.

AYASUGI – A wavy grain made by gouging the steel with a round nose chisel, then hammering flat. Mostly by Gassan and Satsuma Naminohira smiths.

AZUKI MIDARE – Temper line like a row of small beans.

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BAGAI-MONO – Blades made by lower than middle class sub-groups.

BAKUFU – Military government of the Shogun

BATTO – Drawing a sword for action.

BOHI – Wide groove almost fitting shinogi surface.

BOHI SOYEBI – Wide groove beside a narrow groove.

BOKKEN – Wooden sword for practicing sword kata

BOKU-TO – Imitation sword of wood carried by a doctor.

BONJI – Priest characters. Sanscrit invocations to the Gods.

BOSHI – Shape of temper line at the kissaki (point).

BOSHI AGARU – Loss of boshi by broken point or other causes.

BOSHIGATA – Very smooth small round boshi of Yamashiro style.

BOSHISAKI – The very tip of the boshi temper line.

BOTAN BA – A peony flower pattern in the hamon about 6 inches below the point in blades by Chikuzen Sa.

BOTAN-UTSURI – Peony flower shape reflections appearing in Bizen blades around 1250 to 1330.

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BO-UTSURI – Stick-like faint rainbow reflections on surface.

BU – Japanese measurement (approx 0.1 inch)

BUDACHI – Common name for all army swords.

BUGEI – Military arts – use of sword, etc.

BUEITO – Military sword. Mostly old ceremonial tachi types.

BU JIN – "People of the Samurai Spirit." A philosophy of honor, respect, and contemplation of life's mysteries developed in both women and men, and the people who lived by the samurai code.

BUKE – Military men, Samurai.

BUNDO-BA – Scale weights pattern hamon.

BUN no KITAE – Back half of blade surface is faintly white. Appears on many shobu-zukuri daggers. Characteristic of Bingo smiths.

BUSHIDO – A code of ethics and moral principles for Samurai. The first works were by Yamaga Soko (1622-85) in Bukyo (The Warrior Creed) and Shido (The Warrior's Way).

BUWO TACHI – Sword type of about 750 AD for a Chinese style dance.

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CHABANA MIDARE – Choji with tops rounded like tea flower petals.

CHIBURI – The act of slinging blood off the blade before re-scabbarding.

CHIGAU MIDARE – Oblique hamon of Bitchu blades.

CHIGUSA – Steel of .7 to .8% carbon. Produced in Harima.

CHIISA KATANA – A general term for all swords shorter than the katana but also used to indicate a length between wakizashi and standard katana, but also used to indicate a length between wakizashi and standard katana.

CHIJI KOMASAME – Undulating fine straight grain of Suwo Nio smiths.

CHIJI MIDARE – Wrinkled irregular hamon by Miike & Kongobyoe groups.

CHIKEI – A clear gray short thin curved line along the surface grain appearing to be below the surface. Similar to kinsuji or inazuma.

CHIKUTO – A bamboo sword. Also, a bamboo fencing sword. In olden times a bamboo knife was used to cut the umbilical cord of new-born babies.

CHIRI – The narrow surface on either side of a groove. Kata-chiri- one side surface; roy-chiri – double edge surface.

CHIISA KATANA – short katana

CHOJI – Clove seed shape folds in hamon. Many varieties.

CHOJI-MIDARE – Clove shapes mixed with irregular patterns in hamon.

CHOJI KAGE – Clove pattern with shiny spots that seem like shadows.

CHOJI OIL – Oil for the care of swords

CHOKUTO – Prehistoric straight single edge sword found in burial mounds.

CHU – medium

CHU-HANDACHI – Medium length tachi.

CHU-KISSAKI – medium sized point (kissaki)

CHU-SUGUBA – Medium width straight hamon.(Follows curve of sword.)

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DABIRA-HIRO – Wide broad-sword.

DABIRA-SEBA – Narrow board-sword.

DAI – great or large

DAI-MEI – student smith signing his teacher's name

DAIJIRI – Boshi turn-back that resembles a gun butt daisword.com

DAIMYO – feudal lord

DAISHO – (Large-small) A matched pair of swords or fittings for same.

DAITO – Long sword (over 24 inches)

DAI TSUKE – Appraised values of swords.

In the Ashikaga period values were given in oban – large gold pieces. In Tempo (1630) the books used koban- small gold pieces – 1/10 oban. Later in yen worth from US \$.50 to .35 just

before the war. Post-war values are in units of 10,000 yen worth \$28.00 but these are set by dealers and are purely fictitious to help sell swords.

DAMBIRA or Danpira, or Dabira – Very wide blade.

DANDANBA – Alternate 3” lengths of komidare and large choji.

DATTO – Not wearing a sword.

DE-AI-ZASHI – A low rated sword for every day wear. (Tsunezashi)

DENAORI – Re-tempered blades.

DENCHU-ZASHI – Sword for palace wear.

DENGAKU YAKI – Use of a large fan instead of bellows to burn the charcoal in tempering by Yokoyama Kozuke Daijo Sukesada.

DO – The way.; The mid-section target in Kendo (stomach).

DOGANE – A metal band around a sword handle.

DOKEN & HOKO – Cooper swords and daggers of the bronze age.

DORAN or TORAN – High wave patterns of hamon.

DOYO no JUKA – Double choji patterns of varying size along sword.

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EBIRA KATANA – Extra long sword carried on the back. (Seoi katana)

EBOSHIGATA – Boshi pattern that looks like court head gear.

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FUCHI – collar on hilt

FUCHI-KASHIRA – set of hilt collar (fuchi) and butt cap (kashira)

FUHA – Tiny cracks in yakiba – characteristic of Awa Kaibu Group

FUKI-OROSHI – A kind of smelted iron- same as Oroshi- tetsu.

FUKURA – The cutting edge of the blade kissaki (point). Several shapes:

FUKURA-KAKU – Sharply curved point.

FUKURA-KARERU – Straight edge point.

FUKURA-SUGU – Nearly straight edge point.

FUKURA-TSUKU – Curved edge point.

FUKURA KOKORO – Boshi line characteristic of Yamato smiths.

FUKURE wo FUSERU – Smoothing small swellings on blade surface.

FUKURE – Flaw; usually a blister in the steel

FUKURIN – Rim cover of a tsuba

FUKURO CHOJI – Bag shape choji similar to tadpole shape.

FUNAGATA – Ship bottom shaped nakago (tang).

FUNBARI – Blade becoming noticeably wider near the base notch.

FURISODE – A tang shape with the end deeply curved toward the back side which resembles a kimono sleeve.

FURMICHU – Irregular thickness of choji outline by Bizen Mitsutada.

FUSHIBA – Pointed knot-like breaks in a straight hamon on Mino blades.

FUTAEBA – Double hamon on Bitchu and Bingo blades or re-tempered.

FUTAE BOSHI – Double hamon in point including turn-back. Appears only on blades by Sadamune, Higo Kuniyoshi & Fujishima Tomoshige.

FUTAMATA YARI – A two pronged spear.

FUTASUJI BI – Pair of identical grooves. Same as Nihon bi.

FUTAYE-BA – Double line of nie and nioi.

FUTATOKORO MONO – Matched set of kozuka and kogai on a sword.

FUTATSU-BA – Paired choji on blades of Katayama Ichimonji Group.

FUTOKORO KATANA – Tanto worn inside clothing. No tsuba, round end.

FUTO YASURI – Coarse file marks.

FUTSU MUNE – Roof shape back ridge. Same as Ihorimune.

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GAKU-MEI – Signature from original tang inserted in shortened (o-suriage) tang.

GASSAN HADA – Grain made by gouging with round chisel then flatten.

GENDAITO – Traditionally forged sword blades by modern smiths before WWII

GENNOBA TETSU – Steel of .3 to .4% carbon. Same Jami tetsu.

GIJOTO – Ceremonial court swords with various styles of mountings which indicate the rank of the wearer. See books on koshirae.

GINBI KEN – Ken shape sword with grooves.

GINKEN – Common iron sword with silver plated fittings used as a gift.

GIMEI – A false signature on a blade. Usually a copy of a famous smith to increase the sword's value.

GIN – Silver

GIN no HA – Silvery lines one to three inches long appearing along a straight temper line or on the surface of blades by Kagemitsu.

GINSUJI – A silvery color kinsuji line in the yakiba.

GITO – General term for ceremonial swords, mostly used to accompany money gifts. Same as agari-tachi, painted wood with gilt decorations.

GIO no KURIKARA – Horimono of dragon twining around sword.

GISAKU HO – Faked or forged blades.

GOBAN-KAJI – 24 famous smiths selected to serve and instruct Emperor Gotoba, 1184-1210. Six more served him in exile on Oki Island.

GOKADEN – The Five Schools of the Koto period

GOKENBA – Peaked groups of 3 or 5 zigzags by Mino Seki no Magoroku.

GOMAE KITAE – Five layer forging. Done by Bizen and Soshu schools.

GOMABASHI – Chopstick grooves with claw underneath.

GOMEIKEN – Five most famous swords . They are as follows:

1. Mikazuki Munechika by Sanjo kokaji Munechika
2. Onimaru Kunitsuna by Yamashiro Awataguchi Kunitsuna
3. Odenta by Miike Tenta Mitsuyo
4. Dojikiri Yasutsuna by Hoki no Yasutsuna
5. Juzumaru by Bitchu no Tsunetsugu

GOSHO-YAKI no TACHI – Blades forged by Goban-kajis Tsuguiye and Tsugunobu, and tempered by Emperor Gotoba. Same as Kiku no Gosaku.

GONOME-MIDARE – Irregularly undulating hamon

GUNOME – undulating hamon

GUNTO – army or military sword mountings

GUNTO – Machine made blade in army or military sword mountings

GYAKU – Reversed or angled back. (In hamon patterns.)

GYAKU- ASHI – Reversed slanted ashi in hamon.

GYAKU- CHOJI – Slanted choji patterns in hamon.

GYAKU TAKANOHA – Reversed takanoha file marks

GYOKEN OKIYO – Position of Emperor's sword on his left.

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HA – Cutting edge of a sword.

HA AGARI KURIJIRI – Irregular U shape tang end.

HABAKI – Collar around blade above the tang to fit the blade securely into scabbard.

HABAKI-MOTO – About 3” of blade adjacent to the habaki. (Koshi) Also called temoto “near the hand” portion of blade.

HABAKI-SHITA – Portion of blade covered by the habaki.

HABIKI – An iron club used by a policeman. Same as Jite.

HA-BUCHI – Border line between ji and yakiba.

HACHIWARA – A short defensive rod called helmet breaker.

HADA – Grain in steel, pattern of folding the steel

HADAKA TOMO TSURUGI – General name for a thousand sword blades without mountings made in the time of Emperor Nintoku , 313 AD.

HAGANE – Steel.

HAGARAMI – A flaw.

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HAGI no MIDARE – A Soshu School temper line.

HAGI no TSUYU – Nie crystals shining like dewdrops reflecting colors.

HAGIRE – Edge cracks in the hamon (fatal flaw)

HAIKEN – To wear sword. Same as HAITO

HAKAGE – Reflection-like patterns among choji on blades of Nagamitsu.

HAKASE – A sword being worn.

HAKA KOKORO – Faded unclear boshi with nie like faint brush marks.

HAKI TACHI – Tachi for everyday use. Length to suit the wearer.

HAKIZOE KODACHI - Short tachi worn with a long one.

HAKIZOE TACHI – A second tachi when two are worn.

HAKKAKE or HAKIKAKE – Effect like brushed lines along hamon.

HAKKAKERU – Swept –up effect on boshi lines. Same as Hakkake.

HAKO BA – Box shape hamon. Bizen & Kaga schools.

HAKOGAKARITARU-MIDARE – Very irregular hako, Mihara Group.

HAKO-MIDARE – uneven box shaped hamon

HAKO MUNE – Square back to sword.

HAKUJIN – A naked blade.

HAMACHI – Edge notch where blade joins tang. A stop for the habaki.

HAMIDASHI – Tanto or dagger with a small guard (tsuba)

HAMAGURI – Blade so thick as to resemble a clam shell outline.

HAMAGURI BA – Thick all along the edge.

HAMIDASHI – Tanto with small guard.

HAMIDASHI-MIDARE – Irregular hamon tops extending into ji surface.

HAMADATSU– Also called Kwaiken. A small woman's knife, usually fully tempered, used for protection and Jigai.

HAM-MITSU-KADO – Junction of yokote and shinogi lines at point.

HAMON – Temper pattern along blade edge

HANDACHI – Tachi mountings used on a katana or wakizashi

HAN-GETSU – Half-moon temper patterns in the yakiba surface.

HANKENSAKI – Boshi line pointed like ken. Bitchu smiths.

HANABA – Notches on hamon making irregular patterns.

HANAREBA – Temper patterns on ji surface away from yakiba.

HANARURU NIE no FUJI no HANA – Wisteria flower shapes of nie above or below the hamon.

HANA YAKIBA – Irregular hamon patterns of Yamashiro Nobukuni blades.

HA no KAGE – A darker shadow or reflection of a choji pattern.

HA no SORORI – A Mino hamon of groups of large and of small patterns.

HANTACHI – Semi-tachi mountings on a katana. Same as Handachi.

HANZASHI KOZUKA – Small kozuka to fit a small tanto.

HARAKIRI – Suicide by belly cutting. Same as seppuku.

HASU-YAKIBA – Oblique hamon. Katayama Ichimonji Group.

HATARAKI – activities or workings within the hamon or temperline

HA-TSUYA – Edge luster, light color of yakiba- a stone for bringing out the proper color of the edge. (Paper thin finishing stones.)

HAZAKAI – Boundary line between yakiba and ji.

HAZEYAKA – Brightly shining surface nie crystals.

HAZURE – Strays here and there along suguba hamon of Yamato blades.

HAZUYA – Finger stones used to show the hamon and hada

HEIJO TACHI – Military swords. Same as Buei-to.

HEI NAKAGO – Straight tang with wide triangular end.

HESHI-TETSU HO – A method of making sword steel from the lumps of iron produced smelting iron sand.

HEYAZASHI – Sword carried in clothing.

HI or KESSO – Grooves cut in a sword.

HIGAKI YASURIME – Certain file marks on the tang.

HIKAGE – Dark patterns on blade surface similar to choji utsuri.

HIJIKI HADA – Dark sea-weed shape patterns on blade surface.

HIJIRI KATANA – Short tanto with handle of reddish hard wood.

HIKI HADA – Leather scabbard cover.

HIMO KATANA – A short dagger. Same as Hishu and Himo kogatana.

HIMURA – Unevenly chiseled groove caused by poor work or much polishing.

HI no KAKITOME – Groove stopped near the base of a blade.

HIRA – Flat surface of a blade.

HIRA no MITSUKE – Wide thick blades of Awa Kaibu Group.

HIRA MUNE – Flat back.

HIRA YAMAGATA – Same as Kurijiri. Chestnut shape tang end.

HIRAZAYA TACHI – A tachi not worn but placed in Imperial carriage.

HIRAZUKURI – Flat surface blade without shinogi ridges.

HIRO SUGUBA – Wide straight yakiba. (Follows curvature of blade.)

HIRO-SUGUHA – Wide, straight temper line (hamon)

HISAKI-AGARU – Groove that reaches the point.

HISAKI-SAGARU – Groove that does not reach the point.

HISHU – Short dagger . Same as Tosa. Also called HISHU-GATANA.

HITATSURA – Full temper pattern- scattered all over the blade.

HITOYE HABAKI – One piece habaki, Niju—or wari – 2 piece habaki.

HITSU or HITSU ANA – One or two holes in a sword guard through which kozuka and / or kogai are inserted into pockets in the scabbard. Possibly hitsu may also mean the handle of a kozuka.

HIZUKURI - Final stage of forging in which the drawn out steel is shaped into the proper sword cross-section.

HO – Kozuka blade.

HOCHO TETSU – Soft steel of .1 to .3% carbon.

HOJI-MONO – Blade re-tempered by a different smith at a later time.

HOKEN – Ken shaped temple sword.

HOKKOKU HADA – A faint whitish reflection covering the back surface of some blades by smiths of Echizen, Etchu, and Echigo provinces.

HOKKOKU-MIDARE – A zigzag hamon mixed with pointed patterns.

HONAMI – Name of the family of official appraisers.

HONAMI MEI – Honami appraisal signatures in red or gold blades.

HONAMI TOGI – Secret polishing method used by the Honami polishers.

HON KITAE or SEKI TETSU HO – Initial forging for steel blocks to be combined into sword laminations.

HON-DZUKURI or SHINOGI-DZUKURI – Normal blade with shinogi.

HONSANMAI GITAE – A three blade lamination forging.

HORI DO SAKU – Horimono was made by the same person that made the sword

HORIMONO – Carving on blades.

HORIMONOSHI – A professional carving artist.

HOSO KOGATANA - An ancient slim knife used by seal hunters. (Hososabi)

HOSOMI – A slender blade. Also called HOSOMI ZUKURI no TACHI

HOSO SUGUBA – Narrow straight yakiba. Same as Ito-suguba.

HOTSURE – Strays along a hamon

HOTSURE HADA – Disorderly mixture of straight & wood grain . Mino.

HOYAKEMONO – Blade slightly damaged by fire. Characteristics:

1. Temper line dim and blurred.
2. Surface appearance glassy.
3. Nie grains scattered on surface.
4. Hamon disappears here and there
5. Faded reflections on surface.
6. Yakiba white but indistinct edge.

HOSHI – Stars. Bright nie crystals in yakiba or hamon. Bitchu smiths.

HOSHI no YUBASHIRI – Yubashiri spots that look like stars.

HOSO-DACHI – Slim decorative ceremonial tachi not for actual use.

HOSOJI – A narrow pointed boshi tip. Bizen and Soshu schools.

HOSO SABI – Slim dagger mentioned in ancient books.

HYOTAN BA – Hamon of gourd shape irregular patterns.

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I or I-SAKU – Hobby make.

IBUSE – Big round boshi on tachi of northern Japan.

ICHIMAE BOSHI – The whole point tempered.

ICHI – One or first

ICHIMAE GITAE – Blades forged for one piece of steel. Higo Dotanuki.

ICHIMAI – one-piece sword construction

ICHIMAI BOSHI – point area (kissaki) that is fully tempered

ICHIMONJI – Name of groups that signed just Ichi. (# 1 man!)

ICHIMONJI KAERI or ICHIMAI KAERI – Horizontal return.

IHORI-MUNE – Angle of back of sword – low or high.

IKARI KISSAKI – Large curve on point.

IKUBI – Neck of wild boar . Almost no neck on kissaki.

IMONO TSURU – Thick nie hamon line like sweet potato vine.

INAZUMA – Lightening shape marks in yakiba or hada (a type of activity in the hamon).

IRO – Color of hada and yakiba almost the same with hamon blurred. Bingo.

IROKOGATA – Hamon like a row of fish scales.

IRO no OSHIE – Clear sky-blue color of Yamashiro blades.

ISEKI BOSHI – Boshi line stops at back edge or comes close to edge.

ISHIKE – Stone-like impurities left in a blade.

ISSHAKU SANZUN – Dagger 1 shaku 3 sun long.

ITAME – wood grained hada

ITAME HADA NAGARU – Ends of wood grain patterns stream out.

ITO – silk or cotton hilt wrapping

ITOCHIKAKI – Dim nioi in suguba hamon.

ITOGOKORO – Bitchu hamon like a twisted thread.

I-no-ME BA – Wild boar eye design in hamon by Hiromitsu.

ITOKEBA – Twisted thread hamon with shiny nie here and there.

ITOMAKI NO TACHI – tachi with top of saya wrapped with ito

ITO no SADAME – Narrow suguba with thread-like nioi.

ITO no WAKACHI – Very narrow straight line on some Yamato blades.

ITO SUGU – Thin, thread like hamon

ITO SUGUBA or HOSO SUGUBA – Narrow straight yakiba.

ITO wo HIKU – Nioi line like shiny silk thread.

ITSUTSU no HADA – The five steel grain patterns:

1. Matsukawa – Pine tree bark grain.
2. Mokume – wood burl grain.
3. Nogi hada – small tips of millet grain.
4. Kumo – clouds – white cloud-like mixed with blue.
5. Nashiji hada – sliced pear surface grain.

ITSUTSU no IRO – Five colors in judging steel:

1. Black – a dark muddy color.
2. Asagi-iro – darker than sky blue.
3. Sky blue.
4. Whitish blue color.
5. Crystal clear blue color.

ITSUTSU no KANE – Five points in judging steel:

1. Soft steel – most common.
2. Tenacious steel – forged soft steel.
3. Well tempered steel – number 2 well tempered.
4. Tough and hard steel – good for cutting edge.
5. Well purified steel.

IZUHA – Steel from Izuha – .8 to 1% carbon content.

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JAMI – Steel with .3 to .4% carbon.

JI – sword surface between the shinogi and the hamon

JI-GANE – surface steel

JIARE – Surface of a tired blade polished too many times.

JIBA – Small tempered spots projecting into surface from hamon.

JIFU – Small whitish grain shapes like letters c, o, s, in the surface of Bizen blades.

JIFU no MAKIKOMI – Coiled whitish stripe-like hamon patterns.

JIGAI – Suicide by cutting the throat.

JIGANE – Sword steels:

1. Hocho tetsu – impure soft iron.
2. Oroshi tetsu – lumps of iron from the smelting process.
3. Sen oroshi tetsu – cast iron, white or gray.
4. Hagane oroshi tetsu – a lump melted from sand iron ore.
5. Mizuheshi tetsu – melted lump chilled by cold water and forged some.
6. Namban tetsu – imported iron. Sword steels were made by mixing these.

JIGOSHI – Strong hada pattern.

JI-HADA – Surface texture – course or fine of various patterns of hada.

JI HAN - GETSU – Half moon patterns in ji.

JI IRO – Colors of blade surface.

JIAKUSHI – Faint pattern on ji.

JI KONETSUCHI – A clay-like texture in Higo Enju blades.

JINDACHI – Same as tachi – a long slung sword.

JI-NIE – The frosty look of surface nie.

JI no TSUYU – Gem-like spots shining like dew on Bizen Moriye blades.

JIN TACHI – A very long sword. Same as Jindachi.

JINTO – A tachi for fighting. A war sword.

JIN WAKIZASHI – Medium length sword worn with a tachi.

JISHO no HADA – Fine grain like nashiji on early Bitchu blades.

JI-TSUYA – Dark colors luster on ji surface.

JITTE – Defensive rod with hook on the side carried by police.

JIYAKI – Partially double hamon on Soshu blades.

JIZO BOSHI – Boshi shaped like a priest's head

JIZO GASHIRA – Boshi line resembling the shaven head of priest Jizo.

JIZOGATA – Same as last. Most Mino blades have this.

JIZO HADA – Fine grain with round clear dark spots. Bitchu blades.

JUKA – Reheated or re-tempered blade.

JUKABA – Large choji hamon of Kunisuke or Yoshimichi.

JUKA CHOJI – Double choji pattern.

JUKA no SAKAASHI – Ashi of juka choji slanting toward point.

JUMONJI no KITAE – A cross-like pattern 6” below the point.

JUMONJI YARI – a spear with doubled-edged cross blades

JUSAN no MITSUKE – Thirteen points on blade appraisal:

1. Surface grains – straight; burl; wood; plain.
2. Shapes – long ; medium ; short, points large; medium; small.
3. Curvature – even ; curved near base; curved near point.
4. Temper lines – small, medium, large irregular; large, medium ,small waves; wide, medium, narrow straight yakiba.
5. Boshi shapes – no turn-back; circle; flame; brushed; full temper.

6. Boshi turn-back – deep, medium, short.
7. Shape of back – roof shape; double; round.
8. Color of blade surface- blue; white; black.
9. Nie – course ; medium; fine.
10. Nioi – shallow ; deep; firm;
11. Color of tempered surface – white, black.
12. Ridge (shinogi) – high ridge; wide shinogi surface; narrow surface.
13. Carvings – deep; shallow.

JUTETSU – The Ten Brilliant Pupils of Masamune: Rai Kunimitsu, Hasebe Kunishige, Kanemitsu, Shizu Kaneuji, Go Yoshihiro, Norishige, Naotsuna, Chogi (Nagayoshi), Sa and Kinju (Kaneshige).

JUTOE – Officers in charge of Imperial Palace Guards in 760 AD.

JUYO KODOGU – "important sword mountings"; a rank given by the N.B.T.H.K.

JUYO TOKEN – highly important origami (certificate) for sword by N.B.T.H.K.

JUYO TOKEN TO ZUFU – Annual publications of the N.B.T.H.K. in which a rubbing of the tang is printed and text is given for all blades and fittings which received Juyo ratings that year.

JUZU – Hamon like rosary beads

JUZUBA – Buddhist beads – a form of gonome hamon.

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K [A](#)|[B](#)|[C](#)|[D](#)|[E](#)|[F](#)|[G](#)|[H](#)|[I](#)|[J](#)|[K](#)|[M](#)|[N](#)|[O](#)|P|Q|[R](#)|[S](#)|[T](#)|[U](#)|V|[W](#)|X|[Y](#)|[Z](#)

KABUTO – helmet

KABUTO-GANE – tachi style pommel cap

KABUTO- WARI – Helmet breaker – square pointed rod 12 “ long with hook. Kusunoki Masashige had one made by Masamune, hence all modern copies are inscribed in honor of Masamune.

KADOBA – Same as hako-midare, a box like hamon pattern.

KAEN – Flame shape boshi pattern.

KAERI – Boshi turn-back

KAERBUKO – Polliwog shape – almost the same as choji.

KAGEHI – Small groove beside a regular groove on a blade.

KAI GUNTO – Naval sword produced during WW II.

KAI MIHARA – Blades of Bingo Mihara School with full temper pattern.

KAI SHINOGI – Meaning not clear, perhaps clam shell shape point.

KAI SHINOGI TACHI – Tachi with thick round point.

KAESHIZUNO – A hook shaped fitting used to lock the scabbard to the obi while drawing

KAJI – Swordsmith; NIHON KAJI – Japanese swordsmith

KAJIBI – Grooves cut by the same smith who made the blade.

KAKARI – Part of hamon frayed and run up toward the back of the blade.

KAKIHADA – Fake sword. Acid imitation of yakiba and surface grain.

KAKIHAN – Swordsmiths or tsuba makers below signature.

KAKI NAGASHI – End of groove pointed.

KAKI-TOSHI – Groove continuing to end of tang.

KAKU-DOME – Square end of groove.

KAKU-MUNE – Square back ridge of sword.

KAMAKURA-MONO – Kamakura things – A general term for blades made by Shintogo Kunimitsu, Yukimitsu, Masamune, Sadamine Group in Sagami province.

KAMASU KADO or KAMASU-ZUKURI – Large point with straight edge.

KAMIKAZE – divine wind, the providential typhoons which destroyed the Mongol fleet when they tried to invade Japan.

KAMISHIMO-ZASHI – Daisho swords in conservative black mountings.

KAMURI JIZO – Boshi point slants toward edge and fades out.

KAMURI OTOSHI – Narrowed back for most of the length of the sword.

KANASUJI – Chikei lines near the cutting edge.

KANA TOKU – Anvil.

KANJI – Japanese characters

KAN no HA – A straight hamon continues straight to a little above yokote before curving with point, almost touching edge at that place.

KANMURI-OTOSHI – Back ridge beveled like a naginata

KANTEI – Study and appraisal of swords.

KANSEI no HA – An irregular temper line that looks stern and has nie crystals in yakiba as well as along hamon line.

KAO - carved monogram of swordsmith on tang (nakago)

KARAKAMI NAKAGO – Faking by welding genuine tang on spurious sword.

KARASUGUCHI – A beak shape flaw in a blade.

KARA TACHI – Early Chinese decorative swords with ken shape point.

KARAYO TACHI – Mountings copied from Chinese swords of about 730 AD.

KAREKI no MIDARE – Irreg. zigzag hamon with gnarled branches. Sa.

KARIMATA KITAE – Boshi with web-foot wild goose shaped nie.

KASAGI-ZORI – Even curve on a blade. Same as torii-zori.

KASANE – Thickness of blade.

KASANEME ATARU – Awtaguchi blades thicker than usual at base.

KASHIRA – Cap on the end of handle – pommel. KASUMI no OSHIE – A misty nioi in blades of Hizen Yoshikage.

KASURI KOKORO – Nie along hamon and yakiba appear splashed. Mihara.

KASURI no OSHIE – Splashed nie patterns rather coarse.

KATACHIRI – Flat surface left by groove that extends to shinogi.

KATAKIRI – Sword with one side flat (no shinogi)

KATAKIRI-BA – Blades sharpened to one side only.

KATA MASSUGU – Thin firm suguba on thick narrow blade by Yoshitsugu.

KATAMONO – Thin steel sheet set on edge for test cutting by swords.

KATANA – Long sword worn edge up in sash by samurai.

KATANA KAJI – Swordsmith.

KATANA KAKE – Sword stand

KATANA MEI – Signature side that faces out when worn edge up

KATANA TOGISHI or TOGIMONOSHI – Sword polisher (and sharpener).

KATANA DAISHIYO – Polite handing of sword to another person.

KATANAGARI – Confiscation of swords ordered by Hideyoshi.

KATANA KAKE – Sword stand for horizontal display.

KATANA KIZU – A sword wound.

KATANA HAI – False edge – the back of a sword.

KATANA SHIN – Blade or body of a sword.

KATANA HIRA – Flat of the blade.

KATANA TSUTSU – A papermaché lacquered sword case.

KATAOCHI GONOME – Gonome leaning to one side like saw teeth.

KATASHINOGI KATAKIRIBA TSUKURI - Ridge on one side, other flat.

KATA UNOKUBI – Blade with only on side thinned down along the back.

KATTE SAGARI – File marks slanting down to left.

KATTE AGARI – File marks slanting right. Or Katte uye

KAWADZUNOKO-CHOJI or KAWAZU-CHOJI – Tadpole choji, a mushroom shape long neck choji.

KAWAGANE – Surface or skin steel.

KAWAHIKEN – Pictures in grooves filled over with tinted glass.

KAWAKAMIBE TSURUGI – 1000 swords made at Kawakami Shrine.

KAWASE – Patterns like sand banks within irregular hamon.

KAZU-UCHIMONO – Fast mass-production of swords.

KEBORI – Line carving done on sword mounts

KEIKI – A sort of psychic feeling engendered by a blade.

Keiki iyashii – A rude feeling.

Keiki jingjo – A conservative appearance.

Keiki susudo – A stern or gloomy appearance.

KEIKO – Practice battle

KEN – Straight double edged sword

KEN BI – Ken designs engraved in blade. Several styles...

KENBO-MIDARE – Zigzag choji pattern done by Kenbo (kanefusa).

KENGATA CHOJI – Fist shape choji.

KENGIO – Ken shape tang end.

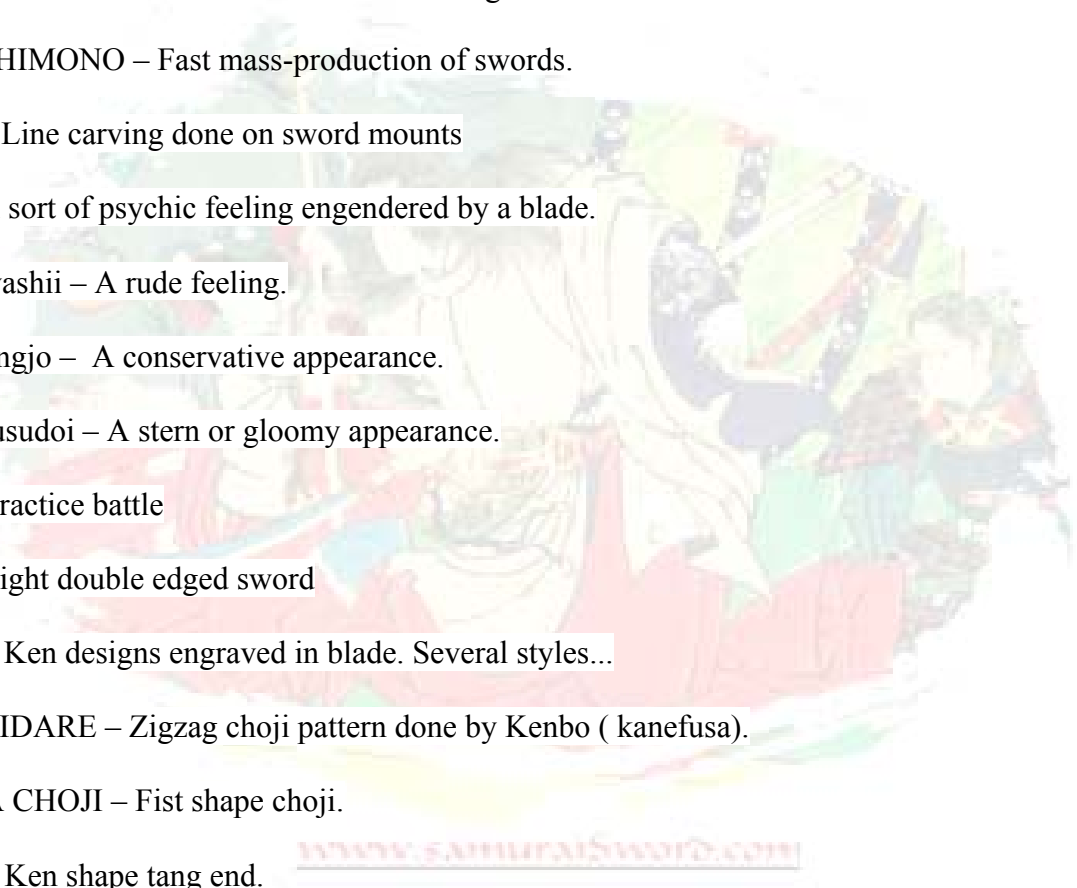
KENGYO – Triangular or pointed nakago-jiri

KENJO MUKI – Too high complimentary values on swords to be presented.

KENSHI – An expert swordsman.

KENSO – Telling a man's fortune from patterns on his blade.

KEN TAKAHI – Ancient term for sword hilt, or handle.



KEN-GATA TACHI – Old tachi in one piece with pierced handle.

KESAN – Hada like nashiji (pear texture) surface.

KESHO YASURI- Decorative file marks tang.

KESSO – Blood grooves in sword. Same as Hi.

KEZURIDAI – Block or stand for clamping sword when using the draw-shave.

KIBAHA – Oni tooth shape hamon. A sharp saw tooth pattern.

KIDACHI – Wooden sword used in fencing. Like bokuto.

KIE no NIE – Nioi that looks like nie in yakiba of Norimune blades.

KIJI MOMO – Tang shaped like pheasant leg.

KIJINO-TACHI – Ceremonial tachi worn during an emperor's visit.

KIKUBA – Chrysanthemum design in hamon a little below yokote line.

KIKU – chrysanthemum

KIKU ICHIMONJI – Chrysanthemums with ichi – below it for signature.

Also – 16 or 8 petal chrysanthemums in hamon of Bizen Norimune blades.

KIKU GYOSAKU – Swords by Emperor Gotoba signed with kiku.

KIKUBA – chrysanthemum temperline (hamon)

KIKUKA no MIDARE – Row of kiku flowers in hamon by Hojoji Kunimitsu.

KIKUSHUI - BA – Hamon with chrysanthemum blossoms floating on water.

KIKU-TSUKURI TACHI – Same as kiku Gyosaku.

KIN – Gold

KINKO – Soft metal sword fittings (not iron)

KIN MEI – Gold inlay or lacquer signature added by appraiser.

KINSUJI – Whitish golden line along or in hamon or yakiba.

KINTO – Same as kintsukuri tachi.

KINZOGAN MEI – Same as kin mei. Gold signature attribution.

KIO-ZORI – An even curve. Same as Torii-zori.

KIRI – paulownia

KIRI-HA – Flat sword with both sides beveled to the edge

KIRI -HA TACHI – Long tachi with straight kissaki cutting edge.

KIRI-HA TSUKURI – Old blades with parallel sides and edge slanted from both sides.

KIRIKAKE – Kosori Group hamon with rows of small points like scratches.

KIRI KOMI – Battle nick in blade. Polisher should not remove.

KIRIMONO – Carving. Same as horimono.

KIRIMONO MEZURASHI – Carvings on blades which rarely have them.

KIRIMONO TOGARI TATAZU – Gracefully finished Soshu carvings.

KIRI NAKAGO – Tang cut off square, usually in shortened blades.

KIRI SUJI-CHIGAI – File marks.

KIRI TAMESHI or TAMESHI KIRI – Blade cutting tests.

KISSAKI – The point of a blade. Many shapes.

KITAE – Forging. Many methods

KITAE KATA – Forging methods.

KITAENOBE – Heating and hammering.

KIZU – Various flaws or defects in a blade.

KO – Old or small

KOBUSE – Blade constructed with hard steel around a soft core

KOBUSHIGATA CHOJI – Fist shape choji patterns.

KOBUSE TSUKURI – Soft steel center covered by hard steel.

KOCHOJI – Small choji pattern.

KODACHI – Short tachi blades 2 feet or less. used in Kamakura times.

KODOGU – Collective term for fittings except tsuba. Except tachi.

KODOMO DAISHO – A child's pair of swords.

KOFUDA – Appraisal certificate issued by the Honami appraisers on blades worth less than five gold pieces.

KOGAI – Hair arranger fitted in pocket opposite kozuka, on some swords.

KOGARASU TSUKURI – A blade that is mostly shinogi shape but double edge toward the point.

KOGATANA – Short knife with a hole or ring at the end of the handle so it can be used as a needle to draw a cord through the severed neck to mouth of an enemy head for carrying.

KOIGUCHI – the mouth of the scabbard or its fitting

KOJIBO – Tool for correcting a warped blade.

KOJIRI or SAYAJIRI – Bottom end fitting on scabbard.

KOKADO – Small pointed boshi.

KOKONOTSUKA TSURUGI – 9 grips (long) sword. Ancient way of measuring.

KOKUHO – national treasure class sword

KOMARU – Small round boshi.

KOMASAME – Small straight grain tang.

KO-MEI – Small character signature on a tang.

KOMI – Shapes of tang ends.

KO-MIDARE – Small irregular hamon pattern or small irregularities in other hamon patterns.

KO-MOKUME – Small burl grain hada. Same as nogihada.

KONASHIMONO – Shinto blades with some faking to look like koto.

KONE-TSUCHI – Extremely fine texture of Higo Enju blades.

KONGOSHA – Emery stone used in polishing.

KO-NIE – Tiny nie crystals along hamon.

KO-NIE DEKI – composed of small nie

KONOHAGITAE – Steel pieces piled like leaves for forging.

KONUKA HADA – Very fine grain Hizen style hada.

KORE – Kanji on tang meaning "This" for example Saku Kore "Made this".

KOSEKI – Old blades by Mino, Seki smiths with no nie on hamon.

KOSHIATE – Leather pads to which swords were fastened when worn.

KOSHI-BA – Area a few inches above edge notch with fancy patterns.

KOSHIGATANA – Short dagger. Same as koshizashi or koshinomono.

KOSHI HI – Groove extending part way up a blade.

KOSHI HIRAKITARU-MIDARE – Irregular open loops hamon.

KOSHI KOBATA – Short dagger. Same as koshigatana.

KO-SHINOI – Continuation of shinogi on point.

KO-SHINGOI SAKI – Intersection of small ridge and back lines.

KOSHI MITSUKE – Swollen irregular lines near base of cutting edge.

KOSHIMONO – Anciently- short blades; later- swords worn in the sash.

KOSHIRAE – Sword mountings including scabbard, handle and fittings.

KOSHIZASHI – Short dagger. Same as koshigatana.

KOSHIZORI – Blade; curving more near the base. Mostly before 1335.

KOSUJI-CHIGAI YASUREME – Slanted file marks. (Kattesagari)

KOTO – Old Sword Period (prior to 1596)

KOTO no SUNSHAKU – Old measurement records, mostly Chinese.

KO-UCHI KATANA – Short fighting sword before wakizashi came in style.

KO-WAKIZASHI – Short wakizashi of 1 foot to 1 foot 4 inches long.

KOZORI – KOSORI – General name of Bizen Osafune branch schools.

KOZUKA – Spike for hair arranging carried sometimes as part of Katana-Koshirae in another 'pocket'

KUBIKAKI KATANA – Short tanto used to finish cutting neck in seppuku.

KUBIKIRI – Same as above . Also called kubitori (snatch neck).

KUBIKIRI – Incurved short chisel edged knife.

KUBITORI – Head cutter. Same as kubikiri.

KUDARI ASHI – Irregular oblique hamon. Bizen Kanehira & Motoshige.

KUGE TACHI – Imperial tachi.

KUI-CHIGAI – Criss-cross straight lines of nie and nioi nibbled away.

KUMI-IRE – Narrow portions of hamon have double lines.

KUMI-IRE YAKIBA – Ashi on straight hamon criss-cross each other.

KUMO HADA – A cloud bank appearance of the hada.

KUMOI TSURIAI – Deep clear hamon with cloud-like swellings of nie.

KUMONO IHADA – Spider web-like whitish grain lines in hada.

KUMORI GANE – Somewhat cloudy hada surface of Suo Nio School.

KUNI – province

KURI-JIRI – Chestnut shape tang end.

KURIKARA – dragon horimono (engraving/carving)

KURIKATA – scabbard (saya) fitting for attaching the sageo

KURUMA TACHI – Style of tachi to be carried in a carriage.

KUSUNGOBU – 9.5 “ dagger. Same as yoroidoshi – armor piercing tanto.

KUTSUROGU – Crudely forged blade with coarse surface texture.

KUWAKO – Silk worm head shape of boshi tip.

KUWANA UCHI – Forgeries of Bizen blades by Kuwana and Ise smiths.

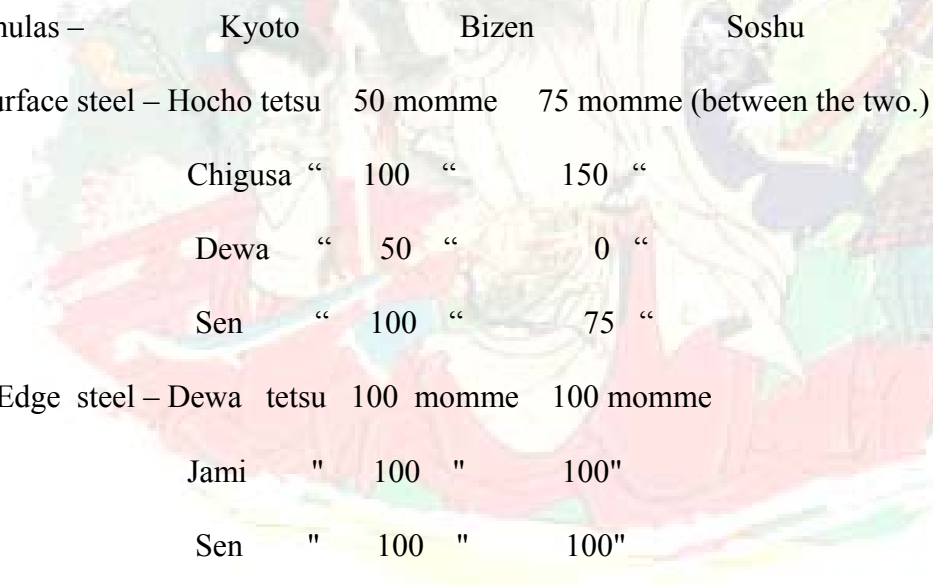
KUZURE – crumbling or disintegrating

KWAI-KEN – Short tanto carried hidden in clothing mostly by women.

KWAKI or KAKI – Tang affected by getting too hot in tempering.

KWAKI ARUMONO – Blade somewhat affected by being in a fire.

KYODEN – A method of forging used in Kyoto. A formula for mixing steels.



Formulas –	Kyoto	Bizen	Soshu
Surface steel – Hocho tetsu	50 momme	75 momme	(between the two.)
Chigusa “	100 “	150 “	“
Dewa “	50 “	0 “	“
Sen “	100 “	75 “	“
Edge steel – Dewa tetsu	100 momme	100 momme	
Jami "	100 "	100"	
Sen "	100 "	100"	
Center steel – Mix as you please.		Same	

KYOGEN DAISHO – Matched pair of swords for kabuki stage use.

KYO no GOKAJI – The 5 shinto smiths of Kyoto.

1. Iga no Kami Kinmichi
2. Tamba no Kami Yoshimichi
3. Izumi no Kami Rai Kinmichi
4. Omi no Kami Hisamichi
5. Etchu no Kami Masatoshi

KYOZORI – Kyoto style torii-zori.

KYUICHI – Kyushu blades having white hair-like grain.

KYUHOKU no SADAME – Resemblance between Kyushu & north Japan blades.

KYOWA no SADAME – Similarities in Awataguchi and Yamato blades.

M [A](#) | [B](#) | [C](#) | [D](#) | [E](#) | [F](#) | [G](#) | [H](#) | [I](#) | [J](#) | [K](#) | [M](#) | [N](#) | [O](#) | [P](#) | [Q](#) | [R](#) | [S](#) | [T](#) | [U](#) | [V](#) | [W](#) | [X](#) | [Y](#) | [Z](#)

MACHI – Notches in blade to stop habaki. Edge – hamachi; back – munemachi.

MACHI OKURI – Notches (hamachi and munemachi) moved up the blade.

MACHI TOGI – Professional polishers who work for the general public.

MACHI SAYAMAKI – Cheap, ready-made scabbards.

MADO AKI – Open a window. Polish short section to check blade quality.

MAE SAGARI no JIZO – Head shape boshi leaning toward edge.

MAGE SAKI – To repair & retemper point. Hamon blurred 2” below point.

MAKI HADA – Whirlpool grain in blades by Etchu Norishige. (Uzuhada)

MAKI ITO – Braid for handle wrapping.

MAKURA-DASHI – Pillow sword.

MAKURI-GITAE – Roll-in forging. Same as kobuse-tsuki.

MAMORI KATANA – Short tanto or aikuchi carried for protection. Also first sword for a boy under 5. Handle & scabbard covered in brocade.

MARU – round

MARU-DOME – Round end of a groove.

MARU KITAE – Blades made of one piece of steel. Many tanto made this way.

MARU MUNE – Round back of blade.

MASAGO-MIDARE – Nie like dusted sand along hamon.

MASAME HADA – Straight grain hada. Large, medium, small styles.

MATAGI – Boshi and turn-back like tree fork with small circle.

MATAGI KOKORO – Forked tree shape boshi turn-back. Bitchu style.

MATSUBA – Thin notches like pine-needles running into surface of blade.

MATSUBA SAKI – Surface between back and small ridge above yokote.

MATSUKAWA HADA – Pine tree bark surface grain on tired Bizen blades.

MEI – Signature chiseled on a blade, mostly on the tang. Signature is away from body when worn - katana - edge up, tachi - edge down. A few exceptions.

MEIKIKI – Sword judging persons in the Muromachi period 15th & 16th century.

MEIBUTSU – famous sword

MEKUGI – Bamboo peg or metal rivet holding the handle on a sword.

MEKUGI ANA – Hole for mekugi. Katana 2.4” down ; wakizashi 1.8” down.

MEKURA KAERI – A certain turn-back on late koto Bizen blades.

MEMPO – Face guard or mask

MENUKI – Ornaments under handle wrapping to improve grip.

MENUKIO – Handle wrapping. Same as udenukio.

METEZASHI – Any dagger worn in the right side waist.

METEZASHI – Short daggers having reddish wood handles.

MI – Body of a sword. Not including tang. The blade.

MIDAREBA – Irregular hamon patterns. Many varieties.

MIDARE CHOJI – Irregular clove seed shapes in hamon.

MIDARE GASHIRA – Irregular tops of midare patterns – some high, some low.

MIDARE KAGERO – Slightly wavy suguba hamon by Bizen Kanemitsu.

MIDARE KOMI SUKOSHI KAERU – A short boshi return.

MIDARE HOKKOKU GOKORO – Small points in Bingo groups hamons.

MIDARE no AHSI HASAKI ni NUKERU – Ashi touching edge.

MIDARE ITO – Thin lines of nie like sunagoshi in Bingo hamon.

MIDARE SANJU – Triples lines mixed in Bitchu midare patterns.

MIDARE UTSURI – Irregular reflection spots in hada.

MIHABA – Width of blade at the machi.

MIHAKASHI – Common name for a sword worn by a Emperor.

MIIKE HI – Shallow wide grooves on Miike blades.

MIKAZUKI GOKORO – New moon shape boshi. Yamashiro

MIMIGATA – Ear shape hamon pattern.

MINO KOSHIRA – Gonome-choji hamon as made in mino province.

MISEZAYA – Decorative scabbard cover for a short dagger.

MITOKORO-MONO – Matching set of kozuka, kogai and menuki

MITORI JIBA – Fine short lines strayed into ji in Chikushu blades.

MITSU KADO or MITSU KASHIRA – Junction of yokote and shinogi lines.

MITSUMATA YARI – Three pronged spear.

MITSU MUNE – Three surface ridge back.

MITSURUGI – Honorific term for the Emperor's sword.

MITSUZURE CHOJI – Triple choji in groups along hamon. Ichimonji.

MIYOSHINO GOKORO – Row of cherry blossoms hamon on Mino blades.

MIYOSHI SAMONJI – Blades by the great Chikuzen Sa.

MIZUBUNE – Water trough for hardening the edge of a blade.

MIZUHESHI – Process of heating and chilling in water to harden the edge.

MIZUHIKI – Mixture of straight grain and burl in hada of Bingo blades.

MIZUKAGE – Hazy line in ji commonly due to re-tempering.

MIZUKIWA – Bright clear burl grain on Bizen blades.

MIZU UCHI – Pounding heated steel with wet hammer to give fine texture.

MOCHI TACHI – Tachi of high rank official carried held up by servant beside his carriage.

MOE-TACHI – Hamon by Bizen Sukesada looks delicate and somewhat swollen.

MOJI no KITAE – Surface grain by Hiromitsu looks like characters.

MOKKO – Four lobe shaped (a tsuba shape)

MOKUME HADA – A burl wood grain hada.

MOKUTATSU – Burl pattern standing out clearly.

MOKUTAN MATSU – Powdered charcoal used in forging.

MOKU TO – A two foot oak wood sword lacquered black.

MON – Family crest

MON HABAKI – Habaki with family crest on it.

MONOKIRI – Edge of a sword.

MONO-UCHI – Portion of blade 4 or 5 inches below the point. Striking point.

MOMME – Unit of weight = 58 grains troy or .1325 ounce or 3.7565 grams.

MONO NOGU – Arms and armor.

MORO BOSHI – Sharp angle boshi with a long turn-back. Yamashiro.

MOROHA – Double edged sword. Same as ryoba.

MOROHA TSUKURI – Two edged sword – mostly daggers.

MOTAGI – Decorated menuki heads.

MOTOHABA – Width at habaki.

MOTOKASANE – Thickness of sword at machi.

MOYASHI NAKAGO – Faking method of heating tang to make it look old.

MU – empty or nothing

MUJI HADA – No grain visible.

MUKADE SHINAE - “ Hundred legs”. A kind of flaw.

MUKU KITAE – “ No scale” forging. Using almost pure iron in forging.

MUMEI – no signature (unsigned blade)

MUNE – Back ridge of sword blade

MUNE-GANE – Steel for the back portion of a blade.

MUNE MACHI – Notch in the back of a blade to stop the habaki.

MUNESUJI – Center ridge line down the back.

MUNE TETSU KITAEZUKURI – Forging lamination process.

MUNE UCHI – Striking with the back of the blade.

MUNEYAKI – Temper pattern on the back of some blades.

MURAKUMO BOSHI – Nie along boshi resembles rising clouds or vapor.

MUSEMONO – Fire damaged blades. Blurred temper lines, cloudy surface.

MUSO TO – Sword without mountings; a naked blade.

MUZORI – Without curve- almost straight.

N | **A** | **B** | **C** | **D** | **E** | **F** | **G** | **H** | **I** | **J** | **K** | **M** | **N** | **O** | **P** | **Q** | **R** | **S** | **T** | **U** | **V** | **W** | **X** | **Y** | **Z**

N.B.T.H.K. – Nihon Bijutsu Token Hozon Kai (sword preservation group) in Tokyo in 1948 through the efforts of Dr. Homma and Dr. Sato.

N.T.H.K. – Nihon Token Hozon Kai (sword appraisal group) established in Tokyo in 1910 as a noncommercial entity to foster preservation of the Japanese sword.

NABE-GANE – Cast iron.

NABIKI – Straight grain in hada follows curve in point to back of blade.

NADARE – Avalanche of white spots.

NAGADACHI – Same as nodachi and nagamaki. Long blade with long handle.

NAGADACHI – Long slim tachi used by officers at a state banquet.

NAGAE KATANA – Extra long sword with 4' handle. Like nagamaki.

NAGA-HAKAMA – Sword worn with a hakama garment. Tanto or short wakizashi.

NAGAMAKI – Long sword with a 4' handle. Same as Nodachi and nagadachi.

NAGASA – blade length (from tip of kissaki to munemachi)

NAGINATA – Short sword blade on a long shaft. A halberd.

NAKAGO – Tang of a blade.

NAKAGO JIRI – End of Nakago

NAKAGO MUNE – Back of a tang . Several shapes; flat or rounded.

NAKAGO MUNE-MAKI – Tip end of a tang. Many shapes.

NAKAGO no HIRA – Surface of tang.

NAKAGO MUNEKADO – Edges of the tang back. Sharply cut.

NAKAGO SAKI – Tip of the tang.

NAKAGO SHINOJIJI – Ridge surfaces on tang.

NAKAGO SHIRI – Surface of the tip of the tang.

NAKAGO SHIRI no SHURUI – Cross-sections of tang tips.

NAKA SUGUBA – Medium width yakiba.

NANA KO – raised dimpling (fish roe)

NAMAZU HADA – Whitish patches in dark blue surface with dark spots.

NAMBAN TETSU – Chinese or other imported iron.

NAMBOKU – North-South dynasties. Nambokucho (PERIOD)

NANKO – Soft steel.

NANATSU SAYA KATANA – A ken or hook shaped blade with three branch blades on each side. Very ancient – about 260 AD.

NANONAKI MIDARE – Full temper pattern of Kaibu Group blades.

NAOSHI – Corrected or repaired.

NARA MONO – A poorly made blade. Same as tsutsugitae.

NARA TACHI – Tachi blades made by Yamato Tegai and Senjuin Groups.

NASHIJI – Hada like pear skin

NATA – Gardener's knife or hunting knife. Hana-nata – flower knife.

NATSU no KA – Choji pattern of deep nioi on Norimune blades.

NEJI HADA – An artificially produced twisted burl grain appearance.

NENGO – Japanese era

NETABA – Sharp edge of sword or knife.

NEZUMI-ASHI – Rat's feet ashi marks.

NERI TSUBA TACHI – Tachi with a leather guard.

NETABA – Stropping or honing a blade just before using.

NEZAGITAE – Twisting and pounding in forging to make a wood grain.

NIE – Fine white crystals formed in the hamon or ji.

NIE ASASHI – Thin nie along the hamon giving a shallow appearance.

NIE ATSUSHI – Thick nie in hamon or surface that looks deep.

NIE-DEKI – Hamon done in nie

NIE FUKASHI – Dense nie of small crystals not coarse.

NIE IRO – More nie existing in large portions of hamon. Yamashiro.

NIE ITOME-O WAKERU – Nie along each side of hamon. Izumo smiths.

NIE KARRI TSUKAE – Nie in boshi seeming to prevent turn-back.

NIE MASARU – Nie existing all along hamon from base to point.

NIEME ATARU – Dense nie on hamon and surface of Soshu blades.

NIE NODO – Dense nie in the point of Izumo blades.

NIE OI – Secondary nie line overhanging hamon in Kikuchi blades.

NIE SADAME – Nie thick in places, lacking entirely in others.

NIE SUJI – Nie lines about 2 inches long parallel to hamon, here and there.

NIE SUTE – Nie temper patterns in the surface of Soshu blades.

NIE TORI-MIDASU – Uneven disorderly nie along hamon.

NIHONBI – Pair of identical grooves . Same as futasujibi.

NIJUBA – Double hamon. A second line near the base of blade.

NIJUBA KUISAGARU – Boshi line split – one hanging down.

NIJU BOSHI – A sort of double boshi line on Chikuzen Sa blades.

NIJU SAGEO – Eight foot braided cord attached to scabbard.

NIKU – meat (blade having lots of fullness)

NIKU OKI – Degree of meat (roundness) on blade surface:

1. Hiraniku ari. A greater height of roundness; even curve.
2. Hiraniku sukunashi. A flatter curve, but still an even curvature.
3. Haniku ari . Applies to 1 or 2 but higher near the edge.
4. Haniku sukunashi. Same as 3 but high point near shinogi

NIOI – Crystals like nie but much finer and darker. Hamon patterns may be made of nioi or a thread-like line of nioi may parallel or be mixed in with nie hamon (cloud like hamon). Presence of both is considered good.

NIOI-DEKI – composed of nioi

NIOI-GIRI – Loss of nioi. Considered a flaw.

NIOI NAMIAI – Small swellings under nioi hamon on Bizen blades.

NIOI SHIMARU – Narrow nioi line.

NIOI-NIE FUKASHI – Wide area of nioi and nie.

NISE – FALSE.

NISE-MEI – False signature.

NODACHI – Field tachi worn by high officials

NODACHI NAOE – Field sword of early times with straighter handle.

NOGIHADA – Rice beard shape grains in hada.

NOKOGIRI or NOKOHA – Saw tooth hamon.

NOMI IRE – Upper part of habaki.

NORO – Slag resulting from the smelting of iron.

NORAN BA – Fluctuating hamon with crooked notches. Mino Kaneujis.

NOSHIBA – No turn-back on boshi. Follows edge to tip.

NOTARE – Wavy hamon. Large, medium, small, or irregular.

NOTARE-MIDARE – irregular wave like hamon

NUNOME – overlay metal-work

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○ – large

OBI – belt sash

O-CHOJI – Hamon of large choji (clove seed) patterns.

O-DACHI – very long sword (over 30 inches)

OGIBA – Fan shape hamon mixed with hitatsura. Masamune and Sadamune.

O-GONOME – Large gonome pattern hamon.

OINO-DACHI – Large sword carried on the back. Same as seoi tachi.

OISUSUKI – Irregular hamon becoming more irregular toward the point.

O-KATANA – Early a large heavy dagger; later a long sword.

OKINA BUKA – A term for the old look of blades by Kagemitsu.

OKINA GOKORO – “Old man atmosphere” applied to Awataguchi blades.

OKINA HIGE – “Old man whiskers” in boshi by Soshu Shintogo Kunimitsu.

OKINA MITSUKE – “Look like old men”. Early ko-Bizen.

O-KISSAKI – large kissaki

OKITE – Marks made by scraping clay with a triangle of wire in tempering.

OKITSUCHI – Additional mud supplied in tempering.

O-KOSHIGATANA – Large silver mounted tanto, subject of a poem in 1200.

O-MIDARE – Large irregular hamon pattern.

OMIHAKASHI – Honorific name for a sword worn by an emperor.

OMOBA – A double nioi hamon found on Bizen and Mino Seki blades.

OMOTE – Side of sword away from body as it is worn. Signature side. The opposite side is called ura. Usually has the date, if any. Katana omote is opposite to tachi omote.

O-NIE – Brilliant nie found on full tempered Soshu blades.

ON KEN – Same as wakizashi. Originally a dagger hidden in the clothing.

ONNAMOCHI DAISHO – Special daisho presented to a Lord by his bride.

O-NOTARE – Large wave pattern hamon.

ORI AWASE NI-MAI – Two plate folding and forging method.

ORI AWASE SAN-MAI – Three plate folding and forging method.

ORIGAMI – Certificate of appraisal.

ORIGAMI DAICHO – Record books of origami certificates issued.

ORIKAESHI MEI – Blade signature folded into opposite side when blade is shortened. Sometimes to make a fake signature look genuine.

ORIKAESHI SAN-MAI – Special method of forging.

ORIKANE no HA – Small rectangular temper pattern found slightly below hamon on blades by Soshu Hiromitsu.

ORI KARAMI – Methods of wearing swords through the sash.

ORIKOGI KITAE – Method of piling steel pieces for forging.

OROSHI – Surface of the angles of the back of the blade.

OROSHI DAINI – Deep curvature of ko-Bizen blades.

OROSHIGANE – Specially processed steel for making swords

OROSHI TETSU – Smelted iron poured on the ground to harden.

OSAME TACHI – Tachi swords offered to shrines.

O-SEKI NIE – Nie in the hamon and on the surface of Bingo blades.

O-SEPPA – Large seppa (usually on tachi)

OSHIGATA – Rubbing of tang with inscription.

OSHIGATA-ZUMI – Ink cake for making rubbings of the tang inscriptions.

OSHI HADA or OSHIMONO – Clear silvery surface grain.

O-SHINAE – A flaw.

OSORAKU TSUKURI – A light wakizashi with a very long point.

O-SUJI-CHIGAI – Large diagonal file marks on tang.

O-SURIAGE – A shortened tang with the signature removed

O-TACHI – Very long tachi, some are 5 or 6 feet long.

OTO – Same as tachi.

OTO RYO – Material for a sword issued to a smith by the government.

OTOSHI-ZASHI – Tachi worn almost vertical through sash.

O-WAKIZASHI – Longer wakizashi – almost 2 feet long.

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RAKKA no SUYE – Hamon starting large irregular at the base and becoming small to straight as it goes up the blade to the point.

RYOBA – Double edge sword. Similar to moroha.

RYOGOSHI – Fighting sword and short dagger worn on the hip.

RYOJIRI – The 2 flat surface either side of a groove in the shinogi.

RYUNOME – Large spots scattered here and there on a blade.

RYU – Dragon horimono.

RYUGO CHOJI – Choji patterns that look like dragon heads

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SABAKI-GASHIRA – Tips of boshi line fork out. Chikushu Sa and his son.

SABIDORO – Clay coated on blade for hardening and tempering process.

SADABA – Irregular patterns evenly distributed along the blade.

SAGE-FUDA – Honami appraisal cards for blades worth less than 5 gold.

SAGE HO – Old time forging when smith smelted his own ore.

SAGEO – Cord or braid attached to kurikata on side of scabbard.

SAGE TACHI – A way of carrying tachi when on guard duty.

SAGE-ZAYA – Short dagger hanging at the waist of a priest.

SAGURI – Catch-hook on saya

SAIDAN – A cutting test. Same as kiri-tameshi.

SAIHA or SAIJIN – A retempered edge.

SAITO – Retempered blades. Same as saiba or denaori.

SAKA – Slanted

SAKA-ASHI – Hamon with ashi pointing toward the point of blade.

SAKA-ASHI no SU – Notch-like surface patterns running into yakiba.

SAKA-CHOJI – Choji shapes slanting down toward base of blade.

SAKA-GONOME – Slanted gonome.

SAKA-MIDARE – Irregular patterns slanting down toward base of blade.

SAKA-TE – Holding sword with point down.

SAKAZUNO – Hook-like fitting on wakizashi or tanto scabbard.

SAKI – Tang end of a sword blade.

SAKI-HABA – Blade width at yokote

SAKI-ZORI – Sword curve more pronounced toward the point.

SAKU – Kanji on tang meaning "Made".

SAKU KORE – Made this.

SAKU – Rope carved as a symbol of Fudo, a Buddhist divinity.

SAME or SAME-KAWA – Patch of skin from belly of giant ray, used on sword handles and sometimes on scabbards. Ara-same new raw same. Ai-same – same colored blue for use by elders.

SAMONJI – Left hand written characters (reversed) on tangs.

SAMURAI – Warriors hired by feudal lords before 1870.

SANBONSUGI – Three cedar trees pattern hamon. Kanemoto.

SANGEN-BA – Pointed zigzag hamon by Mino Seki Kanemoto.

SANKO TSUKA KEN – Ken sword with Buddhist vajra handle.

SANMAI-KITAE – Three layer method of forging.

SASHI-GATANA- Medium length wakizashi.

SASHI-OMOTE – One side of a sword. See omote. Haki-omote – see ura.

SASHIRYO MUKI – Appraisal values of blades worth 50 pieces of gold or more, to be worn by Lords on formal occasions.

SASHI-UTSUMUKU - Tanto with back curved toward cutting edge.

SASHIZOE – A second blade worn.

SASUGA – Short dagger, pocket sword. Same as sashi-gatana.

SAYA – Scabbard. Many kinds, see books on koshirae.

SAYA-ATE – Clashing scabbards - a challenge to fight.

SAYAGAKI – An appraisal written on a shirasaya. Not reliable unless signature and kakihan of a recognized authority is added.

SAYAGUCHI – Mouth of the scabbard (koi-guchi)

SAYAMAKI SASHIYO – A way of inserting a dagger through the belt.

SAYASHI – Scabbard maker.

SEKI BA – Pointed irregular hamon of Mino Seki blades.

SEKI-GANE – Soft metal plugs in the tsuka hitsu-ana

SEKI KEN HO – Ancient stone knives.

SEMI HADA – Grain like cicada wings. Possibly artificial.

SENA – Ridge of a sword. The back ridge.

SENSUKI – Scraping blade with a draw-shave before coating with clay.

SENTETSU – Cast iron use in sword making.

SEOI TACHI – Large heavy tachi carried over the back in the field.

SEPPA – Washers to fill out space provided for tsuba on blade.

SEPPUKU – The ritual act of taking one's own life by using a Hara-Kiri cut to slice one's stomach open from left to right, then finishing with an upward turn. Usually accompanied by a Kaishuken, or Second, who would behead the man after to relieve suffering or if he should falter, to save honor. Usually performed with a purified Wakizashi or Tanto in Shirasaya.

SETTO – Tachi presented to a general by Emperor at start of a campaign.

SHAKU – Measurement of length. 11.93 inches; 30.3 cm.

SHAKUDO – Copper and gold alloy used for sword fittings

SHI – Teacher, master artisan.

SHIAGE – Various finishing processes in making a blade.

SHIBUICHI – copper and silver alloy used for sword fittings

SHIHOZUME KITAE – Method of lamination in forging.

SHIKOMI-ZUE – Sword cane.

SHIMABA – Islands of temper outside hamon.

SHIMARU – Tightly packed hamon.

SHIMOTSU TACHI – Gift swords for New Year and wedding ceremonies.

SHINAE – Small cracks cross-ways in a blade.

SHINAI – Bamboo sword used in Kendo

SHINAHU OSHIE – Temper line along top 5” same as boshi.

SHINAI-UCHI – Fencing with bamboo sword.

SHIN-GANE – Soft center steel.

SHINOGI – Ridges on each side of a blade.

SHINOGI HIKUSHI – Flat shinogi surface.

SHINOGI JI – Sword flat between the mune and shinogi.

SHINOGI SUJI - Ridge line continuing on tang.

SHINOGI TAKASHI – Raised ridge line. Same as Shinogi takaku.

SHINOGI ZUKURI – Sword with shinogi

SHIN no KURIKARA – Horimono of dragon twined around sword.

SHINTO – New Sword Period (1596 to 1781)

SHINSAKUTO – Japanese swords made between the end of WWII and present time

SHIN-SHINTO – New-New Sword Period (1781 to 1868)

SHINZA – Where a team of judges (performs kantei) of a Japanese Sword, Toso or Tosugu

SHINOTSUKURI or SASA TSUKURI – a form of tachi.

SHIRAKAMI HADA – Fine white hair lines in hada by Awa smiths.

SHIRAKERU – Whitish steel.

SHIRAKE UTSURI – Faint whitish spots or reflections.

SHIRA-SAYA – Plain wood storage scabbard

SHIRUSHI no TSURUGI – Same as setto.

SHITA KAJI – A smith who specialized in smelting ores.

SHITA KITAE – The heating-forging-folding process of making steel.

SHITANJI KEN – A ceremonial sword with rosewood mountings.

SHITODOME – Small collars in the kurikata and/or kashira

SHO - The matched small (sho) sword with large sword (Dai) of a pair of swords or fittings for same.

SHOBU-OSHIE – Iris leaf shape swords of Bingo Province.

SHOBU-ORI – A flaw caused by overheating to melting point.

SHOBU TSUKURI – Shobu shape with ridge lines to point without yokote.

SHOGUN – supreme military leader

SHOSEI KEN – Mountings made according to old Chinese rules.

SHOTO – Short sword (between 12 and 24 inches)

SHOWA TO – Swords made by hand in Showa time – 1926 on. Not gunto.

SHUGO – Tachi handed to a general at start of an expedition.

SHUMEI – Red lacquer signature

SHUMOKU KITAE - Stacking of various kinds of steel at start of forging.

SHURI KEN – A knife made for throwing.

SHUSSE DOGU – Up grading a blade by Honami family appraisal.

SOE YAKIBA – A second hamon on blades by Nobukuni of Yamashiro.

SOMENBA – Numerous sunagashi lines along hamon look like noodles.

SO no HA – Old term for swollen irregular hamon.

SO no KURIKARA – Highly stylized dragon horimono.

SO MUNE – Round back.

SORI – Curve.

SORIBUSE – Reduction of curve by hammering.

SORI FUKASHI – Deep curve.

SORI-MONO – Set of matched fittings for a sword, or pair of swords.

SORI no NAOSHI KATA – Methods of changing blade curvature.

SORI TSUKE – Method of curving blade in original forging.

SUDARE-BA – Bamboo blinds effects in hamon

SU KEN – Simple ken engraved on sword.

SUE – Late or later

SUGABA – Straight (parallels edge curve) hamon.

SUGATA – Shape of sword blade

SUGUBA ASHI-IRI – Straight with vertical legs or notches.

SUGUBA GYAKU ASHI – Straight with slanted ashi.

SUGUBA ni HA CHU NIOI KUZURE – Irregular nioi in hamon.

SUGUHA – Straight temper line

SUGU-KUDZURE-HA – Straight but crumbling hamon.

SUGU-KUICHIGAI-HA – Straight but nibbled hamon.

SUGA-MAKI or SUGEMAKI – Grain resembling vein of sedge leaf. Yamashiro.

SUGUBA HOTSURE – Straight hamon somewhat frayed in places.

SUGUNI KOMIDAREBA – Straight mixed with small irregularities.

SUGUNI NEZUMI ASHI – Straight with rats feet ashi. Bitchu Aoe.

SUGU UTSURI – Straight soft whitish line that appears to reflect hamon.

SUGI SAKI – Boshi line forks out like distant cedar tree tops.

SUHAMA – Small half-oval patterns in yakiba or full temper pattern.

SUJIGANE – Golden temper lines in Bizen Nagamitsu blades.

SUKASHI – Cut out

SUKI - Draw-shave for rough shaping of blade after hammering.

SUMI HADA – Smooth blackish patches on the surface of Bitchu blades.

SUMI GOMORI – A kind of flaw.

SUN – Japanese measure, approx. one inch

SUNAGASHI – Activity in hamon like brushed sand

SUNOBE – Drawing out the laminated steel block into a sword.

SUN-NOBI – Longer than average tanto or wakizashi.

SU no SADAME – Irregular boshi, thick and deep with sand-bar tip.

SURIAGE – Shortened blade. All or part of tang cut off.

SURIAGE MONO – A shortened blade. Sometimes this was done to reshape tang like some famous smith whose name was added to increase the value.

SURIAGE NAKAGO – Tang of a shortened blade.

SURUME GITAE – Squid forging. Folding like a cooked squid. A quick way.

SUYAKI KITAE – Faint whitish line running down center of surface.

SUYE HA – A method of forging.

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TABANE – Repeated folding and forging steel to purify and add carbon.

TABANE MONO – A cheap forging method. Also called Nara mono.

TACHI – Long sword worn with cutting-edge down

TACHI BUKURO or KEN BUKURO – Sword bag.

TACHI HAGI – Palace guards who wore tachi.

TACHI no HAKIYO – How to wear a tachi sword ; how to put it on.

TACHI KAKE – Sword rack or stand for a tachi.

TACHI KAKI – Simulated cutting with tachi in a sword dance.

TACHI MEI – Signature facing away from body when worn edge down

TACHI no SUNSHAKU – Measurements of tachi scabbard and handle.

TACHIO – Tie cord holding sword in place when worn.

TACHIRYO – List of materials and labor to make a sword and fittings.

TADARE HADA – Rough coarse blade surface.

TAGANE MAKURA – Tiny burrs along signature chisel strokes.

TAIFU KOGAI or WARI-KOGAI – Split kogai to use for chopsticks.

TAIKAN – Large reference book about Japanese Swords.

TAIKEN – Carrying a sword in the belt.

TAKABORI – High relief carving.

TAKANOHA – Hawk feather style of yasurime

TAKA no TSUMEBEBA – Hawk talons oblique lines in hamon.

TAKA YAMAGATA – Small U-shape tang end.

TAKE no KOHADA – Grain like surface texture of bamboo sprout.

TAKENOKOZORI – Back of a dagger slightly curved toward cutting edge.

TAKE no OSHIE – Paper-like spots in yakiba and along hamon. Also fine straight grain resembling the grain of bamboo.

TAKIOCHI – Long turn-back in boshi resembling a waterfall.

TAKENO-GATANA – Bamboo fencing sword.

TAMABA – Jewel like temper spots outside main hamon, or in full temper.

TAMAGAKI MIDARE – Hamon of row of beads connected by swept marks.

TAMAHAGANE – Raw steel for making swords

TAMA no UCHI no TAMA – Dark beads within white beads on hamon.

TAMESHIGIRI – Cutting test of a sword. Same as kiritameshi.

TAMESHI MEI – Gold inscription on tang describing test and by whom.

TAME TOGIBORI – Signature cut with round chisel and grooves polished.

TANAGO-HARA – Fish belly shaped nakago

TANJAKUBA – Tiny rectangular patterns mixed in full temper patterns.

TANTO – Dagger or knife less than one foot long.

TANZAKU KITAE – Forging together various pieces of different kinds of steel and iron to get the required qualities for sword steels.

TATARA – Smith's smelter for making sword steel

TATE – A row of nie along hamon as seen Izumo blades.

TATEWARE – A kind of flaw.

TATSUTA – Place name describing a certain hamon pattern.

TEGUSE ARUMONO – Blades with conspicuous characteristics altered or attributed to great masters having the same characteristics.

TEKONE – Iron handle attached to sword material for forging.

TENUKIO – Same as udenukio. Scabbard cord.

TO – sword

TOBI-ASHI – Patches of nie resembling foot prints.

TOBIDAMA – Beads shapes scattered here and there on surface.

TOBIYAKI – Islands of temper pattern in the ji. www.murasword.com

TOGARI – Pointed hamon patterns; saw teeth.

TOGI – Sharpening blades (sword polish or polisher). Final polishing was not started until 1625.

TOGI MEI – Polisher's signature inscribed with needle at base of blade.

TOGIYA – A sword sharpener.

TOKO – Sword work.

TORAN – Billowing high waves hamon pattern.

TORA no KAERI – Boshi turn-back is long like a tiger's tail.

TORII-ZORI – sword curve in the middle of the blade.

TOSHO – Sword artisan.

TOSO – Sword-furniture, I.E.: Fittings, Fuchi-Kashira; Kozuka; Menuki and Tsuba

TOSOGU – Parts of the mounting in general.

TOSU – An ancient short dagger worn on court dress.

TSUBA – Sword guard.

TSUBA BUKURO – Guard cover bag of purple leather.

TSUBA KATANA – Sword with a guard for fighting.

TSUBO KASA MENUKI – Screw type metal rivet to hold handle on tang.

TSUBOMI CHOJI – CHOJI design by Hojoji Kunimitsu of Tajima.

TSUBUDOKORO – Large grains in center of same skin.

TSUCHI – Hammer for removing or replacing mekugi pin in handle.

TSUCHI NURI BERA – Special shaped tools for scraping the clay off to form various hamon patterns in tempering. Made of wood, metal, or wire.

TSUCHI NURI DAI – Block to hold blade while coating with clay.

TSUCHI TORI – Clay mud applied to blade before hardening to prevent the body of the sword from getting too hot. Scraped thin along edge.

TSUGI NAKAGO – A faking method. Same as gisaku no ho.

TSUJIGIRI – A killing in the street to test a sword.

TSUKA – Sword handle.

TSUKA BUKURO – Sword handle cover.

TSUKA-GASHIRA – Pommel at the end of a sword handle.

TSUKA GUCHI – Hole in handle to insert tang of sword.

TSUKA ITO – Braid for wrapping handle.

TSUKA-MAKI – art of wrapping the handle of a sword

TSUKKAKE HABAKI – Long narrow habaki.

TSUKA MAKI – Handle winding.

TSUKAI TACHI – Cheaply made tachi for gift purposes.

TSUKEO – Cords attached to handle or guard.

TSUKI no WA – New moon shape crack in the point of a blade.

TSUKUSHI NAGINATA – Naginata blade with side socket for shaft.

TSUKURU or ZŌ – Worked or made (by).

TSUKURI-ZORI – Strongly curved blade.

TSUKURI-SUGU – Slightly curved blade.

TSUMI WAKIZASHI – First stage of making steel from pieces of iron.

TSUNAGI – wooden sword blade to display fittings

TSUNAGI TAMA – A Naoe Shizu Group style of bead pattern hamon.

TSUNE-ZASHI – Low rated swords for everyday wear.

TSUNI-WAKASHI – Piling iron and steel pieces on spatula for forging.

TSURUGI – Ancient name for ken type sword.

TSUKURI – Shapes of blades.

TSURARA – Icicle. Hamon looks thick with cohesive nie.

TSURARABA – Double or second hamon of nie along main hamon.

TSURUMAKI – Bag for bow-string fastened by same cord that secures tachi.

TSUTSUGAESHI – Same as Tsutsu-gitae forging method.

TSUTSU-GITAE – Cheap forging method by which an iron piece of sword length is covered by a sheet of steel then finished in usual manner.

TSUYGANE – Steel quality of Chikuzen Sa School. Deep lustrous color.

TSUYO-GITAE – Crushed-ice grain in some Mino blades from too much heat.

TSUYU FROST – In Yamashiro blades some hard and soft steels are mixed. In Mino blades it is seen as suguba with knots here and there. In Bizen blades frost exists between midare patterns.

TSUYU no SADAME – Dew drops smaller than gem spots in Bizen blades.

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UBUHA – Faint pattern or light thin lines on retempered blades.

UBU NAKAGO – Original unaltered tang of blade.

UCHIAI HADA – Color along hamon is dull. Chikuzen Sa School.

UCHIBI – Groove hammered in instead of carved in. Chikushū blades.

UCHIGATANA – Long fighting sword with tsuba.

UCHIKO – Powder for cleaning swords.

UCHIKOMI – Cutting scar or nick in sword or deep rusted spots.

UCHIKOMI HADA – Artificial imitation of grain on koto swords.

UCHIMAKI – Cheap forging similar to tsutsu-gitae.

UCHIMONO – Old term for most longer forged and tempered weapons.

UCHIMONO-SHI – Swordsmith.

UCHINOKE – Small new moon shape nie lines on blades of master smiths.

UCHIZORI – Curved toward cutting edge.

UDENUKI – Cord on sword scabbard.

UKIKEN – Raised carved of ken in groove. Mostly on Chikuzen blades.

UKIKUMO HADA – Whitish floating cloud spots in Suwō blades.

UKI MENUKI – Menuki outside the wrappings. Same as hari menuki.

UKI WAKI – Silver spots inside kaeruko choji shapes in hamon. Moriiye.

UKYO TSUKA – Handle made of hard wood copying ancient fashion.

UMA-HA – Horse teeth hamon

UMANO HAMIDARE – Same as last but more irregular. Masamune, Sadamune.

UMARE SHITA – Low rated blades.

UMEGANE – Small holes in blade surface plugged with same kind of steel.

UNOKUBI-ZUKURI – Shinogi surface thinned for a third of blade length.

URA – Side of sword next to body when worn. Katana opposite to tachi.

URA HA – Secondary hamon lines sometimes intermittent.

URA no NAMI – Hamon effect like waves rolling on a beach.

URA-MEI – signed on the ura (usually the date)

URIZANE – Oval mekugi-ana. Rivet holes not round. Sometimes gourd shape.

UROKOGATA – Fish scale shapes of nie with irregular legs.

URUMI-GOKORO – Watery looking yakiba with blurred lines.

URUMU – Poor condition of blade – dirty, unsharp.

UTSUMUKU – Curving toward cutting edge. Mostly daggers and wakizashi.

UTSURI – Reflection of temperline in ji

UZU HADA – Whirlpool grain.

UZUMAKI HADA – Small whirlpool grain in ji and yakiba.

UZUMOKU – Burl grain that looks like a whirlpool.

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WAKASHI NAKAGO – Faking age in a tang by heating almost to melting.

WAKASHINOBE – An intermediate step in forging.

WAKE no MOKUYAKI – Burl patterns here and there close to hamon.

WAKI – Boundary between ji and yakiba.

WAKI-KUZURE – Boiling disintegration of hamon or boshi line.

WAKIZASHI – Medium length sword from 1 shaku to 2 shaku (12 and 24 inches)

WAKIZASHI no TACHI – Old term for wakizashi.

WARE – Opening in the steel

WARIHA-GITAE – Cutting edge steel inserted in body steel.

WARI-BASHI / WARI-KOGAI – Kogai split to form chopsticks.

WARIKOMI KITAE – Same as wariha-gitae. A quick forging method.

WATASHI no FUNE – Thin nie swept marks and gold color spots. Bizen.

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YAGEN-DOSHI – A short heavy armor smashing sword.

YHAZU MIDARE – Arrow notch pattern; a sort of dove-tail hamon.

YAKEMONO – Swords burned in fire. Ji color glassy, hamon blurred.

YAKIBA – Hardened, tempered surface along edge. Many shapes.

YAKIBA no HO – Applying clay before hardening and tempering edge. To keep body of sword from getting to hot. Scraped thin along edge to allow edge to get hot enough to harden. Patterns formed by scraping.

YAKIBA MODOSHI – After blade is heated and plunged in water to harden, the edge is reheated slightly to reduce brittleness (tempering) , and again plunged in water to stop the annealing at the exact point required.

YAKIBA no TOKUSHU naru SHO – Hamon strays that touch edge.

YAKIBA TSUCHI – Clay for coating blade. Charcoal & stone added.

YAKIBA WATASHI – Hardening and tempering process.

YAKIDASHI – Hamon beginning above the ha-machi.

YAKIHABA HIROSHI – Wide yakiba surface.

YAKIHABA SEMASHI – Narrow yakiba surface.

YAKIGASHIRA – Head or ji side of a hamon.

YAKI-IRE – Fast quenching of sword (tempering)

YAKIUZURI – Flaws consisting of scattered islands of temper pattern.

YAKIMURA – Disorderly texture patches on newly made blade.

YAKINOSHI – Retempered blades.

YAKINAOSHI UTSURI – In retempering the tang is kept cool by wet cloth wrapped around it. Where cloth stops a faint line is formed.

YAKIOTOSHI – Temper line stops above the base of cutting edge.

YAKIZUME – temperline in boshi with no turn-back

YAMAGATNA – Mountain knife. A hunting dagger.

YAMAJI no HA – Mixed wide and narrow lines in wavy hamon.

YAMATOJI – Cracked patterns in yakiba of Kaibu Group smiths.

YAMATO KAERI – Boshi resembles butt end of gun. Yamato blades.

YAMATO NAMI – Short swollen lines along main swollen hamon lines.

YAMAZAKURA – Small clove pattern resembling wild cherry blossoms.

YAMAZAKURA no MIDARE – Choji pattern like cherry blossoms.

YAME – Scar caused by arrow point on blade surface.

YAN no TACHI – Sword worn by Emperor at enthronement ceremony.

YANONE – Arrow head.

YARI – Spear. Futamoto yari – 2 pronged; Mitsumoto yari – 3 pronged.

YARI KATANA – Same as yari.

YASURI or YASURI MEI – File marks on tang. Many styles.

YASURI KIRI – Tangs having file marks rather than hammer or shave marks.

YATSUKANO TSURUGI – Early sword measuring eight hand-grasps.

YAWARA ASOBI – Long blades by Kunimitsu of Tajima. Slender shapes.

YAWARAKATA – Mellow looking blades of Bizen Hatakeda Moriiye.

YO – Leaves. Small patterns or lines in yakiba disconnected from hamon.

YOKOTE – Line between ji and kissaki

YOKOTE SHITA – Small surface just below yokote.

YOKOTE UYE – Small portion of surface just above yokote line.

YOKOME no KITAE – Reflection-like surface patterns of Bizen Kanemitsu.

YOKOME UTSURI – Same as above.

YOKOTEGIRI – Sweeping horizontal cut with a sword.

YOKOYASURI – Surface grain looking like horizontal file marks.

YORI ITO – Suguba hamon like a ply thread. Bizen and Bitchu blades.

YOROIDOSHI – Armor cutting tanto. Also called metazashi.

YOSENAMIBA – Hamon like waves lapping a beach. Swollen irregular.

YOSHINO-GAWA – Design of cherry blossoms floating on Yoshino River.

YOTSUME YUI – Four groups of four spots each by Bizen Moriye.

YUAI – The effect produced by heating and cooling in tempering process.

YUAI GOKORO – Firm appearing nie on Yamato blades.

YUAI HADA – A dark blue strip appearing above hamon of Sa blades.

YUBASHIRI – Weak temper spots or bright bands of hard metal showing.

YUCHIGAIMONO – Second tempering not completely erasing the first.

YUKAGEN – Secret temperature of water for cooling to tempering.

YUGAWARIMONO – A second tempering when first failed. Results in a porous surface and sand floating lines on the surface.

YUKICHIGAI NIE – Nie lines along hamon with overlapping ends.

YUKON – Faint gem-like patterns on blades of Sanemori of Hoki.

YUZURI DOGU – Swords or other objects handed down for generations.

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ZAI MEI – Having maker's name inscribed. www.samuraiSword.com

ZANGURI – Rather coarse texture of nashiji hada.

ZOGAN – inlay

ZŌTŌ-HŌ – Forging methods.

ZUKURI – sword''

Certification ratings (Origami) awarded through Shinsa... and their meanings

N.B.T.H.K. (NIHON BIJUTSU TOKEN HOZON KAI)

The N.B.T.H.K. (Nihon Bijutsu Token Hozon Kai) was founded in 1948 and is commonly recognized by collectors. They operate the Japanese Sword Museum in Tokyo. The NBTHK shinsa are held only in Japan. The names of their origami have changed over time. The N.B.T.H.K. issued the following types of origami starting in the 1950's.

KICHO (white papers) - "Important Work"
TOKUBETSU KICHO (green papers) - "Extraordinary Work"
KOSHU TOKUBETSU KICHO (blue papers) - "Special Extraordinary Work"
JUYO TOKEN - "Very Important Work"
TOKUBETSU JUYO - "Extraordinarily Important Work"

This ranking scale was changed in the 1980's. The current system of origami includes the following types:

HOZON - "Worthy of Preservation"
TOKUBETSU HOZON - "Extraordinarily Worthy of Preservation"
JUYO TOKEN - "Very Important Work"
TOKUBETSU JUYO - "Extraordinarily Important Work"

JAPANESE MINISTRY OF EDUCATION ORIGAMI

The following ratings are only granted by the Japanese Ministry of Education. These ratings are seen only on items of great artistic, cultural and historical value. Swords with these ratings are not found outside of Japan.

JUYO BIJUTSU HIN - "Important Art Object"
JUYO BUNKAZAI - "Important Cultural Asset"
KOKUHO - "National Treasure"

N.T.H.K. (NIHON TOKEN HOZON KAI)

The N.T.H.K. (Nihon Token Hozon Kai) also issues origami. N.T.H.K shinsa are held in the U.S. in conjunction with sword shows. For the last few years they have held shinsa in Chicago - during the month of April. The N.T.H.K sword ratings are:

- SHINTEISHO** - "Genuine Work" / 60-69 points
- KANTEISHO** - "Important Work" / 70-84 points
- YUSHU SAKU** - "Very Important Work" / 85-94 points
- SAI YUSHU SAKU** - "Special Important Work" / 95-100 points

FUJISHIRO SWORDSMITH RATINGS

While not origami, the Fujishiro system of rating swordsmiths is widely used by collectors and students of Nihonto. It is based on the two volume set, *Nihon Toko Jiten*, by Matsuo Fujishiro. Fujishiro rated smiths of the Koto, Shinto and Shin shinto eras. This rating system applies to swordsmiths, unlike the N.B.T.H.K. and N.T.H.K. origami which are awarded to a specific sword blade. In the Fujishiro rating system, the swordsmiths are rated:

- Chu Saku** - "Average Made"
- Chu Jo Saku** - "Above Average Made"
- Jo Saku** - "Superior Made"
- Jo Jo Saku** - "Above Superior Made"
- Sai Jo Saku** - "Most Superior Made"

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