

## Elementary Course in Sword Furniture and Fittings (47)

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### Regarding the Higo Tsuba Maker Hirata Hikoza [平田彦三]

(A) This time we would like to ask you to discuss the Hirata School.

(B) Regarding Hirata Hikoza, I heard one opinion that only the first generation made tsuba. Then I heard from someone else that no, the second generation also made tsuba. I also heard that from the third generation onward, they discontinued making tsuba. Which of these opinions is correct?

Fukushi: I see. As for Hirata School tsuba, it seems that almost all of their tsuba are mumei because there is just one very mature period iron tsuba that is signed “Higo Hikoza” [ひご彦三]. As a result, we really don’t know the answer to these questions. At present, even with the style of workmanship, almost all of those pieces that have been designated as being by the first generation are within the same product range, such as those with a brass ground or a yamagane ground. Of these, a great number seem to have Odawara fukurin.

The second generation, Shôsaburô [少三郎], while it is only natural, it is my belief that he made tsuba together with his father. The third generation, Saburôbei [平田三郎兵衛], was an adopted son, and although he died before his adopted father, I believe that he also made tsuba.

Nonetheless, from the third generation onward, probably due to an order from the fief, “concerning the work of the afore mentioned person, Shiroganeya Kanshirô is to receive the entire inheritance of this service, which is to be discontinued. You are commanded to change to the office of gold and silver.” Thus, if their main job was making tsuba, then up until the point in time that they were told to “give up their entire inheritance,” they were making tsuba. This is an entirely natural way to think. Nevertheless, as I previously stated, because all of their pieces are unsigned, we do not know any other information about their works except for the style of their workmanship. Subsequently, each generation “was commanded to change to the office of gold and silver,” and, as a result of that, they became stewards of the artisans’ village. Simply put, they held an office like the artisans’ supervisor or manager, which they continued in until the end of the shogunate. Well, Mr. B, what do you think?

(B) Thank you very much. I clearly understand.

### First Generation Hirata Hikoza

Fukushi: The founder of the Hirata family was known as Inaba no Kami [因幡守] and was from Matsumoto in Gôshû (Ômi). Although he was of the Sasaki clan [佐々木], with the downfall of the Sasaki (1572), and because the clan was subsequently completely scattered, the Hirata family became rônin for a period of time. Sometime after this, Inaba no Kami was retained by Lord Hosokawa Tadaoki [細川忠興] (1564-1645) in Kyoto. He received a stipend of 100 koku, and he followed his lord to Miyazu in Tango.

Although this was an incident during the Keichô era (1596-1615), he participated in the siege of Ishida Mitsunari’s (1560-1600) castle, Tanabe-jô, and performed his duties extremely

well. When the Hosokawa clan had their fief transferred to Buzen, Inaba no Kami and Hikoza accompanied them. As a reward for their loyalty, their stipend was increased by another 250 koku, which brought their total stipend to 350 koku.

Moreover, Inaba no Kami's wife was lady-in-waiting to Akechi Mitsuhide's (1526-1582) daughter, Shûrinin [秀林院] (Hosokawa Gracia, 1563-1600, wife of Tadaoki, but called Shûkôin [秀光院] in another source), and was known as Kojijû [小侍従]. As a result, Inaba no Kami's relationship to the Hosokawa family was very strong. Finally, we do not know when Inaba no Kami died; however, we do know that he died in Nakatsu, Buzen.

I tried to make a table of the genealogy in this same way based on the above; however, this proved to be problematic as I was completely perplexed as how to make an interpretation of this information. Nonetheless, since I have gone ahead and tried to put this information together, there are bound to be mistakes. If someone notices something, please let me know and I will correct it.

(A) Sensei, thank you very much for your efforts. If I notice something, I will ask a question.

**Hirata Hikoza's father was not Matsumoto Inaba no Kami, but was probably Hirata Inaba no Kami**

Fukushi: Although I touched on this two issues ago, Hirata Hikoza was originally a warrior (bushi [武士]), and together with his father, he is said to have entered into the service of Hosokawa Tadaoki (Lord Sansai [三斎]). While it is not clear if his father's surname was Matsumoto [松本] or Hirata, the fact that he is said to have had the name Inaba no Kami is agreed to in various sources. In the *Higo Kinkô Roku* (*Record of Higo Kinkô* [肥後金工録]), as well as in other sources, he is listed as Matsumoto Inaba no Kami; however, I believe that his name is Hirata Inaba no Kami. As to why I believe so, it is because in the *Higo Kinkô Taikan* (*Dictionary of Higo Kinkô* [肥後金工大鑑]) there is a genealogy from the *Kamiyoshi Bunsho* (*Kamiyoshi Archives* [神吉文書]) that states "birth place in Matsumoto [松本], Gôshû [江州]" (Ômi [近江]). Thus, while his actual name is Hirata Inaba no Kami, because of the place name Matsumoto, I believe Matsumoto Inaba no Kami also enjoyed common use. As for these genealogies, because they have been copied over and over again, they have taken on not a few differences due to the nuances instilled in them by the people doing the copying. Thus, I have purposefully corrected this genealogy. Well, what do you think Mr. B?

(B) I see. I think your reasoning is very interesting, and it also has the power of persuasion. The father is Matsumoto and his son is Hirata. This might be possible if there were some particular reason such as his son having been adopted; however, as he was his legitimate heir, having a different surname is a bit odd.

Fukushi: Yes, that's right. Well, let's move on to the next topic.

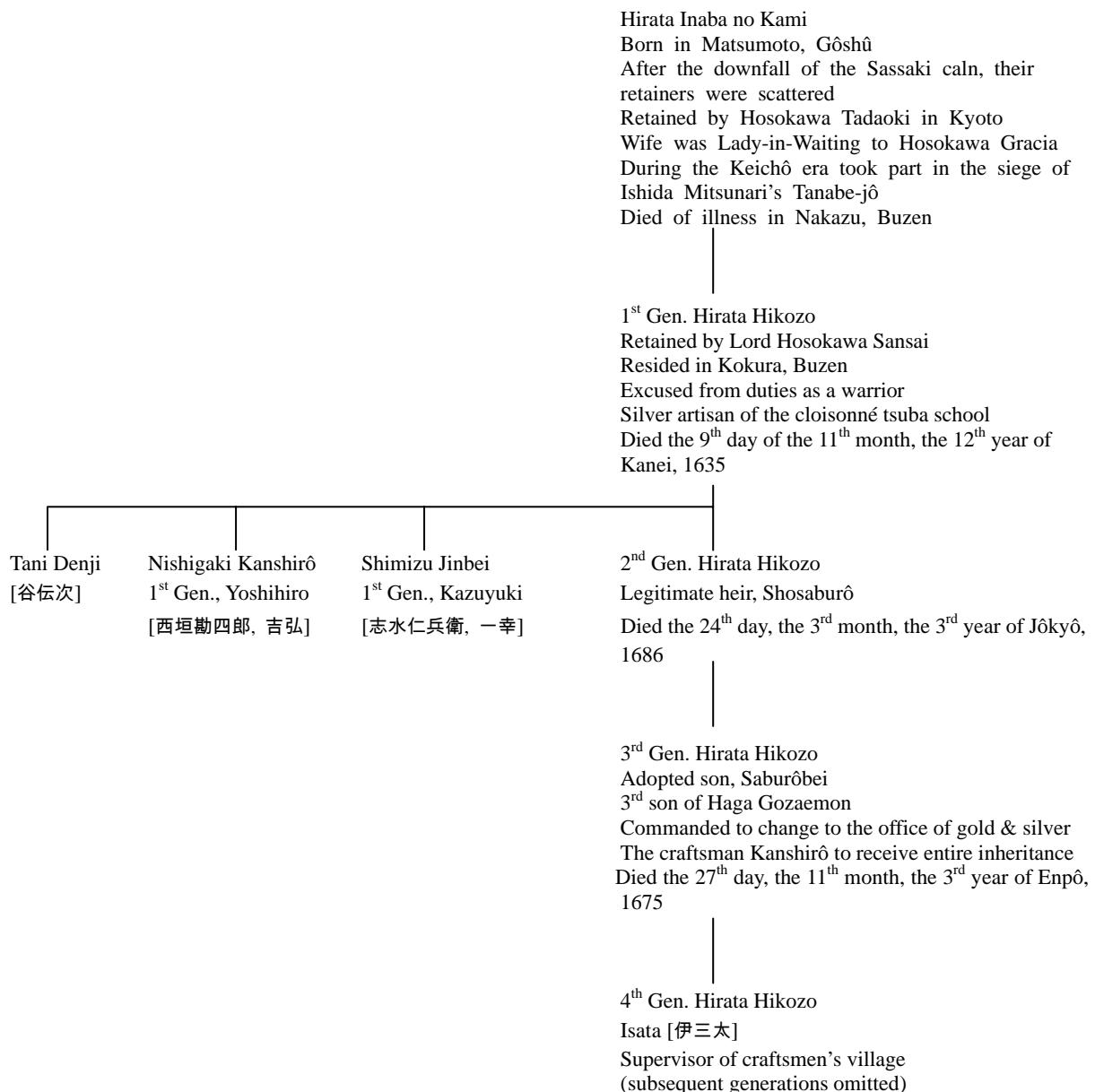
**When Hirata Hikoza was a rônin in Kyoto, is it not a fact that he studied craftsmanship?**

Previously I stated that there was a time when Inaba no Kami's family were rônin. During this period when they were rônin, what was it that they were doing. Even though they were rônin, in order to live they had to eat. In order to eat, they had to work. At that time, I believe that the youthful Hikoza must have studied the techniques of making sword fittings such as

tsuba or fuchi-kashira as a silver craftsman most likely at the Kyoto Shôami School's workshop. Or, he may have studied as a cloisonné craftsman at the Hirata School of his same surname. In the *Kamiyoshi Bunsho*, because it states "silver craftsman, school of cloisonné tsuba," I believe this is a hint as to what he was doing.

Later, in Kokura, Buzen, it seems that Hikozo was given an additional task based on the following: "You are excused from service as a warrior family, and based on a special command from Lord Hosokawa, you are to additionally take charge of the gold and silver appraisals." Moreover, when we look at the later works of Hikozo, they give an entirely Ko-Shôami impression. In addition, if we mention the Hikozo School, they have a sense of style that is expressed in their use of hiashi-yasuri (Amida-yasuri) and okina-yasuri (old man's yasuri, which is supposed to look like the beard of an old man with its irregular rings of thick and thin chisel marks), along with Odawara fukurin, which I believe are things that cannot be achieved in a single day. Moreover, this feeling they impart is profound.

### Genealogy of the Hirata School



## Style of Workmanship

Hikoza was originally a warrior and either because he suffered hardships while he was a rônin, or through the influence of Lord Sansai, or even due to the strong influence he received from the Shôami School, his works are elegant and Zen-like. Thus, these pieces possess a unique ambience. Moreover, although I said that I believed the first, second and third generations made tsuba, regarding the discussion of their individual styles of workmanship, this is just about close to impossible.

In the next section, regarding the styles of workmanship inclusive of the first and second generations, because I have listed up these characteristics divided into a number of items, please refer to these.

1. The tsuba jigane included shakudô, yamagane, suaka (plain copper), brass and iron.
2. It seems that tsuba with iron and shakudô base metals are rare.
3. The iron tsuba have superb kitae, giving them a powerful feeling with a brilliant patina.
4. The tsuba shapes are round, oblong (tatamaru-gata), mukkô-gata (four-lobed) and nadekaku-gata (rounded-square) as well as many others.
5. The ground is slightly convex, and it contains fine variations. There are no tsuba that have a completely polished surface.
6. There seems to be a large number of tsuba with shigure-yasuri (slanted rain style yasuri), hiashi-yasuri (Amida-yasuri) and okina-yasuri.
7. With sukashi, there are both ko-sukashi and ô-sukashi. All of the sukashi are negative silhouettes.
8. I have never seen any tsuba with high relief carvings.
9. Although rare, there are tsuba with wide and narrow grooves that look like they were created on a potter's wheel (known as "rokuro-yasuri").
10. Although there are tsuba that contain inlays, in most cases they used such surface inlays as keshi-zôgan (or keshikomi-zôgan, which is a style of hira-zôgan or flat inlays) or nunome-zôgan. On rare occasions one finds true karakusa (arabesques) inlays. Other types include the extremely rare chirikami-zôgan (a coarse, flat inlay) as well as cloisonné zôgan.
11. As for the mimi, there seems to be a large number of pieces on which their unique fukurin known as Odawara-fukurin has been done (translator's note: Odawara-fukurin takes its name from a type of lantern known as an Odawara-chôchin that is tall and cylindrical with a larger top and bottom that allows the lantern to collapse into its top and bottom sections).
12. Although there are tsuba with normal fukurin, there seems to be a large number of such fukurin that have yasuri.
13. The jigane used for fukurin varies, but includes silver, shakudô, yamagane and brass.

Silver and shakudô are rarely used, with yamagane being the most common. Among these there are also fukurin that combine silver and shakudô to create a night and day effect.

14. Those works that lack fukurin typically have mimi that have been beaten over slightly.
15. Around the edge of the nakago-ana, there are characteristic Hikozo hammered chisel marks. Although the arrangement of these marks was not done by just Hikozo alone, we can say that with Hikozo there are a particularly large number of tsuba with these marks. Please refer to the illustration.

(place illustration here)

(Reproduced from *Higo Kinkô Roku*)

16. There are fuchi-kashira as well as other types of fittings.

### Signatures

For Hikozo, this round tsuba is particularly thin, the jigane is extremely fine, and it is the only extant tsuba that is signed. The signature is large sized, and on the right side of the seppa-dai is engrave “Higo” [肥後] with “Hikozo” [彦三] engraved on the left. For research into Higo tsuba, this piece is a precious source of information.

In addition, he spent a great proportion of his time in Kokura, Buzen. His lord, Tadatoshi [忠利] (1586-1641), was transferred to Kumamoto during the ninth year of Kanei (1632). Because Hikozo died three years later during the 12<sup>th</sup> year of Kanei (1635), this work was made during a period of just three years, and thus, we can say that this is a work of Hikozo’s most mature period.

(place signature copy here)

(A) Thank you very much. With this, please give an explanation of the works.

- ① A tsuba with a design of the three brilliants referring to the sun, a star and a crescent moon design, signed: Higo Hikozo [ひこ彦三].  
Oblong-shape, iron ground, polished surface, negative sukashi, surface carving, slightly rounded, squared mimi and two hitsu-ana.

This is the only signed Hikozo tsuba and it has been a famed piece from long ago. It also appeared in *Higo Kinkô Roku* that was published during the 35<sup>th</sup> year of Meiji (1902). As for the workmanship, though it is a sword-smith style ita-tsuba, the kitae in the jigane is fabulous, and while the surface is polished, there are delicately rough variations. If we were to discuss a sword, I believe we could use such expressions as there are highly active chikei and kinsuji. The design is given as “sankô” [三光] (literally, the three brilliants) with the sun and a star in negative sukashi and a crescent moon in a hammered chisel style surface carving that gives a rather unusual sensation.

Moreover, from long ago the signature was read as “Hiko Hikoza” [ひこ彦三]; however, when examining the photograph this time, I could see that the “ko” character has the two dots indicating a reading of “go.” Because of this, from now on I think we can correct the reading to “Higo Hikoza.”

(Top of page 26, ① Tsuba with a design of the three brilliants -- the sun, a star and a crescent moon; ② Tsuba with a sukashi design of sea cucumbers to the left and right.)

- ② A tsuba with a sukashi design of sea cucumbers to the left and right, unsigned, Hirata Hikoza.  
Mokkô-shape, iron ground with a variegated surface, ô-sukashi and maru-mimi.

This tsuba is practically the same as the Hikoza signed tsuba, though in a different style. Accordingly, it is thicker, the kitae in the jigane is excellent, and although the piece has a certain artlessness, the ground has delicate variations. The face of the area where the sukashi of sea cucumbers has been cut out displays a certain amount of variations. Originally, this was owned by Imamura Chôga [今村長賀] sensei and Nagaya Chômei [長屋重名], and attributed to Nishigaki Shirô saku [西垣四郎作]. Other senseis such as Akiyama Kyûsaku [秋山久作] saw this as the work of Hikoza.

- ③ A tsuba with a key and swastika design, and family crests of nine stars (Hosokawa-mon), unsigned, Hirata Hikoza.  
Chrysanthemum flower-shape with a yamagane ground, lines of gold and cloisonné inlays, gold coloring, slightly rounded square mimi and two hitsu-ana.

This tsuba is extremely rare, and, moreover, it shows Hikoza's splendid level of skill. As for the range of workmanship displayed, because of the chrysanthemum flower shape, the yamagane with its reddish tinge, the key and swastika design with family crests of nine stars in gold lines, and several types of cloisonné inlays, as a work by Hikoza it has a very rare style of technique. Moreover, there is nothing about it to dislike. We can also say that the state of preservation of this tsuba is the absolute best. This tsuba was purchased by Mr. Yoshida Tomosada's shop during the 36<sup>th</sup> year of Showa (1961) and later sold to Mr. Fujii Gaku.

- ④ A tsuba with an Unsun-Karuta design (a Portuguese card game introduced during the 16<sup>th</sup> century), unsigned, Hirata Hikoza.  
Eight lobbed mokkô-gata, yamagane ground with a variegated surface treatment, shallow surface carving, maru-mimi and two hitsu-ana.

Although Hikoza made free use of every possible base metal such as iron, shakudô, yamagane, suaka and brass for making tsuba, all of them are imbued with "wabi" (simplicity), "sabi" (dark patina) and elegance, while displaying a highly unique sense of taste. Perhaps they are based on the influence of the tea ceremony master, Lord Sansai.

As for this tsuba, it is also appropriate to call the eight lobbed mokkô shape the Hosokawa family's nine star shape (kuyô-gata). The yamagane ground has a deep reddish-brown color and variations. Moreover, the design of "Unsun-Karuta," which were brought by the Portuguese, is done using a technique where the cards appear to have decayed is highly unusual. I believe this is an expression of Western (namban) culture.

(Top of page 27, ③ Tsuba with a key and swastika design and nine star family crests; Bottom of page 27, ④ Tsuba with a Unsun-Karuta design; ⑤ Tsuba with a groove and okina-yasuri design.)

- ⑤ A tsuba with a groove and okina-yasuri design, unsigned, Hirata Hikoza.

Oblong shape, yamagane ground with a groove and okina-yasuri, takefushi (bamboo-joint) fukuri and two hitsu-ana.

When we mention Hikoza's fukurin, an Odawara-fukurin is associated, and thus it is unusual for the mimi of this tsuba to have a bamboo-joint fukurin. In addition, his typical fukurin are either in shakudô, brass or yamagane.

As for the type of workmanship in this tsuba, can we not say that the impression given is one of when you throw a pot, you turn it on a potter's wheel and in the surface of the clay a pattern is created by the marks left by the fingers. The entire tsuba is thin, and though it is more or less convex, as you move to the edge of the mimi, the tsuba accordingly becomes thinner. Moreover, along with the thick groove and okina-yasuri on both sides, because the tsuba is skillfully covered in lacquer, an indescribable feeling is created.

- ⑥ A tsuba with a hiashi-yasuri or thick Amida-yasuri and okina-yasuri design, unsigned Hirata Hikoza.  
Round shape, yamagane ground with a variegated surface treatment, hiashi and okina-yasuri, Odawara-fukurin and two hitsu-ana.

This tsuba is large-sized and impressive, and I believe it is an extremely fine piece. The style of workmanship includes a yamagane ground that is close to being like brass, the hiashi-yasuri are thick and carved into the surface metal, creating a unique surface pattern of simplistic Amida-yasuri and okina-yasuri that are delicately matched and beautifully executed. On the mimi is an Odawara-fukurin, which is said to have been invented by Hikoza, and that shakes in an unstable manner.

- ⑦ A tsuba with a design of okina-yasuri and Chinese hats, unsigned, Hirata Hikoza.  
Oblong shape, shakudô ground with a variegated surface treatment, okina-yasuri, negative sukashi, Odawara-fukurin and two hitsu-ana.

Hikoza was retained by the tea ceremony master Lord Sansai, and he is a popular craftsman whose works possess a unique quality. As for these works, someone would say that they have a Zen-like refinement. Someone would also say that they have an elegantly simple tastefulness. Moreover, someone would say that they are overflowing with refinement. Everyone has the highest praise for his works. As for the tsuba in the photograph, it has a shakudô ground with a yamagane Odawara-fukurin. To the left and right are ô-sukashi in the shape of Chinese hats. The surface has such excellent variations as to be called exquisite, the okina-yasuri are done with wonderful feeling, and it is covered in lacquer. This creates an indescribable appearance.

(Top, right side of page 28, ⑥ Tsuba with a hiashi and okina-yasuri design; Middle, right side of page 28, ⑦ Tsuba with an okina-yasuri and Chinese hats design; Bottom, right side of page 28, ⑧ Tsuba with a groove and okina-yasuri design.)

- ⑧ A tsuba with a groove and okina-yasuri design, unsigned, Hirata Hikoza.  
Round shape, brass ground, polished surface, okina-yasuri, ko-sukashi, Odawara-fukurin and one hitsu-ana.

This tsuba has a brass ground, and it possesses a feeling of great profoundness. As for this

technique, similar to tsuba number five it seems to have a pattern of finger marks left in the surface of a ceramic pot when it is thrown on a potter's wheel. Moreover, unlike the usual amount of lacquer used, the tsuba seems to have much less of a covering, although a fair amount remains in the concave portion of this tsuba. In addition, because there is a mixing in here and there in the jigane of red spots, we can understand that this is an early period brass.

- ⑨ A tsuba with a design of okina-yasuri and plovers on four sides, unsigned, Hirata Hikozo.  
Oblong shape, shakudô ground with a variegated finish, okina-yasuri, negative sukashi, Odawara-fukurin and two hitsu-ana.

This tsuba is a deeply tasteful work that is highly elegant, and as for the style of workmanship, there is a shakudô ground with okina-yasuri. There are negative sukashi of plovers in four sides of the piece and two hitsu-ana, which we can say is a Hikozo original with an excellent appearance. I believe that the balance of the entire piece is superb. Moreover, on the mimi is Hikozo's characteristic yamagane Odawara-fukurin, and around the nakago-ana are Hikozo's major identification feature of hammered chisel marks.

- ⑩ A tsuba with an Amida-yasuri and restraining holes design, unsigned, Hirata Hikozo.  
Nadekaku-gata (rounded-square shape), shakudô ground with a variegated finish, Amida-yasuri, ko-sukashi, Odawara-fukurin and one hitsu-ana.

This tsuba has a nadekaku-gata, and it seems that the number of tsuba with such a shape is rather few. As for the style of workmanship, the tsuba is convex and it gets thinner as you move towards the edge of the mimi. The surface has rough variations, and among these numerous variations there are Amida-yasuri. This is a rather difficult thing to accomplish. The reason for this is that it would be wrong to have the yasuri be overly orderly, and it would be a mistake to have them be too sloppy. In addition, although it seems like an unimportant thing, the variations in the surface of this tsuba are one of the outstanding features of Hiko's style of workmanship.

(Top, right side of page 29, ⑨ Tsuba with an okina-yasuri and plovers on four sides design; Top, left side of page 29, ⑩ Tsuba with an Amida-yasuri and restraining holes design; Bottom, right side of page 29, ⑪ Tsuba with an okina-yasuri and ô-sukashi design; Bottom, left side of page 29, ⑫ Tsuba with a split chrysanthemum and arabesque inlay design.)

- ⑪ A tsuba with an okina-yasuri and ô-sukashi design, unsigned, Hirata Hikozo.  
Eight-sided shape, shakudô ground with a variegated surface treatment, okina-yasuri, ô-sukashi, and Odawara-fukurin.

I think that an eight-side shaped tsuba is very rare. As for the style of workmanship, the shakudô has a reddish tinge, the surface has delicate variations, and the okina-yasuri are rather coarse. Moreover, the tsuba is covered with lacquer and there are fish cake (kamaboko) shaped ô-sukashi on the right and left sides. At the bottom there are a pair of restraining holes. Around the nakago-ana there are Hikozo's characteristic hammered chisel marks.

- ⑫ A tsuba with a split chrysanthemum and arabesque inlay design, unsigned, Hirata Hikozo.



Oblong shape, yamagane ground with a variegated surface treatment, Amida-yasuri, negative sukashi, shakudô inlays, Odawara-fukurin and two hitsu-ana.

There are other tsuba by Hikoza with sukashi chrysanthemum. This tsuba has a jigane with a yamagane-like ground and a shakudô-like appearance that gives the impression of being an unusual sukashi tsuba. The surface has rather coarse Amida-yasuri into which arabesque inlays have been done. The Odawara-fukurin on the mimi is silver, and although there are few such silver fukurin, one comes across tsuba with silver fukurin occasionally.

⑬ A tsuba with a fern pattern inlay, unsigned, Hirata Hikoza.

Mokkô shape, shakudô ground with a variegated surface treatment, surface carvings, carved gold inlays, round mimi and two hitsu-ana.

There are tsuba by Kanshirô that are also in this style; however, it must be said that he inherited this from his teacher. The style of workmanship in this tsuba is a mokkô shape with a pair of grooves carved into the surface, and Hikoza's unique hitsu-ana. The surface shows indentations that give the impression of chisel strikes, and appears like the surface has corroded. Near the mimi there are carved fern pattern gold inlays. Within the subdued areas of this tsuba, one can see its brilliance.

(Top of page 30, ⑬ Tsuba with a fern pattern inlay [from the *41<sup>st</sup> Jûyô etc. Illustrated Volume*]; Bottom, right of page 30, ⑭ Tsuba with an okina-yasuri and ô-sukashi on the left and right sides; Bottom, left side of page 30, ⑮ Tsuba with a sandbar (suhama) and Amida-yasuri design.)

⑭ A tsuba with an okina-yasuri and ô-sukashi on the left and right sides, unsigned, Hirata Hikoza.

Oblong shape, shakudô ground, okina-yasuri, ô-sukashi, and a mixed silver and shakudô Odawara-fukurin.

This tsuba has a slightly convex surface, and on the upper right and left sides there is something I cannot identify, but it is an indentation that appears like a ceramics feature. There are okina-yasuri, and the tasteful appearance of a lacquer covering. In addition, there is the Odawara-fukurin that is not like those typically seen, but is extremely unusual, using a straight joint technique that alternates silver and shakudô.

Moreover, if this tsuba did not have the eccentrically different Odawara-fukurin, someone looking at it would think that it was just some slipshod piece of work. Nonetheless, if one carefully studies this tsuba, the delicately coarse variations in the surface are picturesque. The okina-yasuri are done in both thick and thin lines. In addition, the hammered chisel marks around the edge of the nakago-ana are tastefully executed. When you look at the entire piece, it gives the feeling of a piece of Raku-yaki ceramics. Thus, I believe this is a tsuba that we can definitively say shows Hikoza's relationship with Lord Sansai.

⑮ A tsuba with a sandbar (suhama) and Amida-yasuri design, unsigned, second generation Hirata Hikoza.

Oblong shape, shakudô ground, Amida-yasuri, negative sukashi, shakudô-fukurin and two hitsu-ana.

This tsuba is one that is said to be by second generation Hikoza. There are Amida-yasuri and the sandbar sukashi. There is no Odawara-fukurin, but a rather easygoing

shakudô-fukurin. Nonetheless, the Amida-yasuri are powerful, and the balance between the hitsu-ana and sandbar sukashi is excellent. Thus, what is it about this tsuba that gives the idea that this is by the second generation? There is simply something rather orderly about the style of workmanship, and because there is something of a delicate feeling about this tsuba, I believe it probably is by the second generation. However, if this tsuba had an Odawara-fukurin, if the thickness of the mimi was greater and added to this, if it was more powerful, we would probably take a different view about this tsuba.

- ⑯ A tsuba with sandbar sukashi, unsigned, second generation Hirata Hikoza.  
Round shape, shakudô ground, variegated surface treatment, negative sukashi, Odawara-fukurin and two hitsu-ana.

This tsuba is also said to be by second generation Hikoza. Although there are those who may not see it, one cannot deny the feeling that this tsuba is somewhat insufficiently powerful. The surface treatment, the feeling created by the sukashi, as well as the slightly angular feeling of the Odawara-fukurin is perhaps a step downward. However, as a tsuba by second generation Hikoza, its workmanship is excellent.

- ⑰ A tsuba with sea cucumber sukashi on the right and left sides, unsigned, second generation Hirata Hikoza.  
Oblong shape, shakudô ground, variegated surface treatment, okina-yasuri, ô-sukashi and Odawara-fukurin.

This is a somewhat large-sized oblong shaped tsuba. The surface is finished with okina-yasuri; however, the yasuri-me are rather more shallow than those of first generation Hikoza. The lacquer covering on the surface is also rather sparse. The Odawara-fukurin on the mimi is slightly angular and lacks finesse. The hammered chisel marks around the nakago-ana are also rather weak. Consequently, I believe it is appropriate to see this tsuba as being by second generation Hikoza.

(Top, right of page 31, ⑯ Tsuba with sandbar sukashi; Top, left of page 31, ⑰ Tsuba with sea cucumber sukashi on the right and left sides.)