

Hello! This is Takako Shimatani. Continuing with what we covered the last time, I am going to talk about the technical terms when you see a sword. Last time, I outlined 'Digane', the metal underneath. This time, I will describe 'the effect of Chichu' in Digane.



The story about Yamatodamashii

大和魂

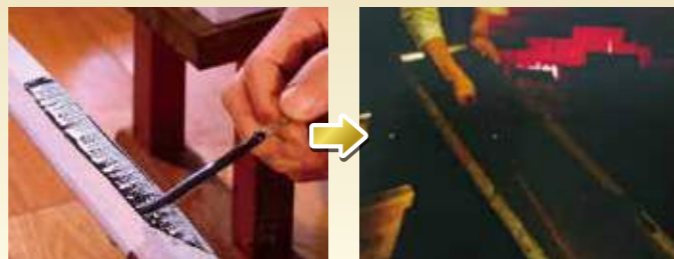
What is 'Chichu'?

It is a fine pattern between Hamon, temper pattern of a sword blade (an orange line), and Shinogi, ridges on a blade (a blue line) in Chichu.



Why was a fine pattern created?

Forging Tamahagane again and again with heating makes a fine pattern. Before 'Yakiire' *1, adding heat, a sword smith covers all of the blade with 'Yakibatsuchi' *2 in order to separate the Hada of sword from a blade. There are two kinds: 'Hikitsuti' and 'Okitsuchi'. The quantity, thickness and material of Hikitsuchi coating a whole blade allegedly produce small designs.



*1) The work to make a word which was heated in a grate cool down rapidly in water.
*2) Something to be mixed and knead with clay, charcoal and polishing powder.

A fine pattern-' the effect of Chichu'

It was produced by these various factors; Places that swords were made, schools, the quality of metal, the way to forge Tamahagane, the proportion of quantity of Yakibatsuchi, the thickness of coating, temperature, swordsmith's experience. All of these factors were mixed and created. It is impossible to make the same sword. Main effects of Chichu is 'Dinie', 'Chikei', 'Yubashiri', 'Utshuri', 'Tobiyaki'.

<p>◆ Dinie ◆ Something granular, sparkling, shining black</p>	
<p>◆ Chikei ◆ Line patterns shining black</p>	
<p>◆ Yubashiri ◆ Something like spots that Dinie were gathered and scattered near Hamon</p>	
<p>◆ Utsuri ◆ When you reflect light on a blade between a boundary of blade and Shinogi, you can see a faint white or black shadow. That is Utsuri. (You can easily find the characteristic in a lot of Bizenden. The temperature of quenching in Bizenden was lower than the temperature of quenching in others)</p>	
<p>◆ Yubashiri ◆ It was made in the high temperature when quenching. (The feature was presented in many Soshuden)</p>	

There were numerous finer patterns in the metal underneath (Hada) divided delicately. I found the aesthetics of Japanese people in them. I observed the process of making a sword in this study tour. A sword smith stithied steel, discriminated between something hard and something soft, coated iron with iron, hit and extended tough iron with a hammer... Some processes like this to make a sword and the beauty of sword created by human hands moved me very much. The most touching processes of all was hardening steel. A red blade by heating was curving as soon as it was put into water. I felt the sword was given a life. I was seriously impressed.

Then, I was very surprised at the fact a sword smith was able to produce only a few swords to satisfied him. While there are a lot of swords in the society, they were precious works of art. I recognised it again. I hope I can deliver a sword with the spirits of sword smith at that time as well. I am going to talk about Hamon in the next article.

How about this Yamatodamashii? We need your opinions and feedbacks more. We are waiting for them!

Please write as 'Sub: reply to the newsletter' and send it to us



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We deliver 大和魂

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Usual Daimyo in Okayama We had a study trip

Hello! This is Akemi Nakabori. Hot summer heat is going on. Are you all right? No health problem? All of us were unbeaten this hot summer and travelled for studying with eating joyfully!!

The home of Japanese swords

Bizen Osafune Japanese Sword Museum
Osafune is well-known as the centre of 'Bizen-den', one of 'Gokaden'. This Osafune had made a lot of sword smiths since Heian Period. The approximate 70% of important cultural properties in swords were Bizen swords. When I visited the museum, the exhibition of 'Japanese New Anatomy about swords II' was operated. It showed intelligibly the beauty of steel, 'Digane' and 'Hamon' I mentioned in the previous article as the aesthetic points



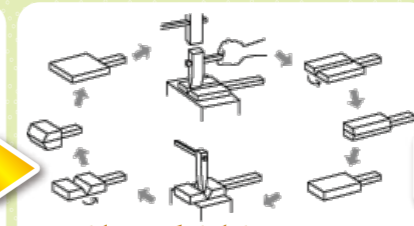
Bizen Osafune Japanese Sword Museum
The home of Japanese sword at Bizen Osafune
966 Osafune, Osafune-cho, Setouchi-shi, Okayama, 701-4271, Japan

The process of creating swords



Tansetsu

Heat Tamahagane, add straw ashes and mud on its surface, hit with a hammer and make one thing.



Orikaeshi-kitae

Make a cut and return again and again.



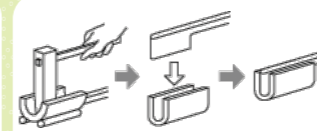
Hyoshigidukuri

Cut the material into rectangle shapes and accumulate it like shapes of wooden clappers.



Siage-kitae

A couple of sword smiths stithy each other (with giving responses). In order to give responses, an apprentice with a big hammer swings downward and a master makes sounds to the rhythm with a small hammer like interjections. The master advises the apprentice the speed and strength of swinging downward by the sound of loudness. It is the origin of Japanese words, 'Aiduchi wo utsu (相づちをうつ)'.



Tukurikomi

Hard Hitetsu covers Shintetsu, a soft core.



Sunobe

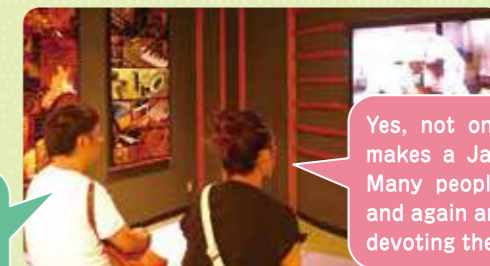
Bake and extend the material. At his timing, a sword smith makes the point of a sword. After that, the sword smith produces a shape of Japanese sword with heat and adjusts the shape of sword with a file and Sen, an equipment like a plane.



Yaki-ire

Heat the all of blade, put it into water and make a rapid cooling. The curve of blade is made naturally as well.

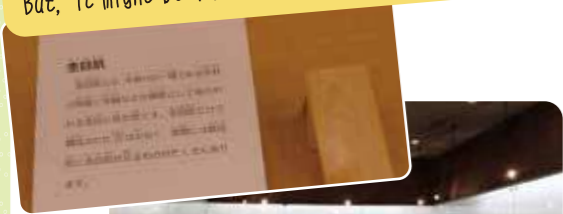
Now, it is a time you can easily purchase a Japanese sword through the Internet. But, a lot of sword smiths stithy Tamahagane again and again like this with a lot of hardship. These very difficult skills produce a Japanese sword. We should make our company tell about it firmly.



Yes, not only one person makes a Japanese sword! Many people stithy again and again and make it with devoting themselves.

After learning how to make a blade, we went to an exhibition room.

In other places, there were a lot of displayed things as well. As the expression of Hada was shown by placing the real wood, it was very easy to get it through the picture. But, it might be difficult to get it through the picture.



Kikusuiha
(菊水刃)

The bottom half of chrysanthemum was hidden and the top half of chrysanthemum was floating on water. This is the Hamon of Kikusi made on the blade. When I found this Hamon, I fell in love with it in spite of myself. For want of space, I could not show all of displayed items. But, there were many swords with interesting Hamon and Hada. I was so fascinated with the swords and the time flew by.

The studio for forging and making swords at Bizen Osahune

Swords are actually made at this place. The process of creating Japanese swords is

- 1 Toshō (forging)**
- 2 Togoshi (gridding a blade)**
- 3 Shiroganeshi (making Habaki, metal collar mounted between a sword blade and the hand guard)**
- 4 Sayashi (creating a sheath in accordance with a sword)**
- 5 Nurishi (painting Japanese lacquer, etc. on a sheath)**
- 6 Garamakishi (spreading with cloth and sharkskin and binding with string and so on)**

Chokinshi
(inscribing a dragon, etc. on a blade)

Kinkoshi
(making metal parts like sword hilt, pommel, cut-lip)

Kumihimoshi
(braiding sword strap and stitch for a hilt)

The place of forging
Unfortunately, a technician was taking a rest. I failed to see his forging. I would like to have seen it...



A Chokinshi was inscribing on sword hilt. He was inscribing a pattern on a small metal part (about 1.5cm in length) with a tiny needle. It is a delicate skill like letting us numbing.



When completed, it is like this. Though it is very difficult to find it, a small inscribing was produced on every petal and they became the sword hilt of family crest. Because I had never seen the process of making a sword, I was so moved!! I wish these traditional skills were succeeded forever. And I would like people from all of the world to know these excellent techniques. You can meet sword smiths who pass down wonderful skills to the next generation.

The studio
A director of the museum kindly guided us in the studio.

Humidity and thermal management are very important for Sayashi



The project for returning to the hometown of Yamadorige

The name of officially Registered Cultural Properties was 'Tachi Mumei Ichimonji Yamadorige'. It was registered as a national treasure on March 29th 1992. The origin of 'Yamadorige' was said to be because its varied and furious Hamon was 'like feathers of birds in mountains' or 'like burning fields and mountains'. While the presented item was a replica, it was wonderful Hamon. Judging from its style, the sword was created at Fukuoka area (currently in Osafune-cho, Setouchi-shi) in the middle of Kamakura Period. It is thought that the sword was made by *Fukuoka Ichimonji School. (*One of sword smith schools. The Ichimonji school was born in Kamakura Period. They inscribed the Japanese letter of '一' <Ichimonji> on their products. According to the places they lived, Ichimonji school was categorized and called as Fukuoka Ichimonji, Yoshioka Ichimonji, Katayama Ichimonji, Iwato Ichimonji and so on).

The project for returning to the hometown of Yamadorige
The current total amount of donation
353,609,285 JPY

The estimated price for purchasing the sword
500,000,000 JPY!!

Now, the sword is private property and kept in The Okayama Prefectural Museum of Art. The hometown of sword is Setouchi-shi. Some people have a dream to let the sword return to the hometown, the place of 'Bizen Osafune'. This project now begins. It was a beloved sword by Kenshin Uesugi, a Japanese military commander. The value of sword is said to be 500,000,000 JPY!! Wow!! I pray that a lot of money will be donated and the sword will be able to come back to the hometown. You can make a donation through the internet. So, I expect all of your cooperation



Tsubako (making a hand guard in accordance with a sword)

And the lunch! we were looking forward to...

Bizen Ichimonji Udon noodles



Not only the broth is so good but also the noodle is yummy!



Dodome
*Dodome
It is Chirashizushi. But the process of cooking is very unique. Sushi rice is steamed with broth and unrefined Sake and mixed vinegar is added to the rice.

Shimatani was in charge of researching a restaurant to eat lunch only for that day. The restaurant was a fruit of her research.→

Udon lover, Shimatani
Now, she was going to start!!
the second bowl of Udon noodles with some hunger!!



Self-serving Udon noodles. You can also boil them according to your favourite toughness-soft, middle, hard-and eat them!!

Shimatani had eaten **the 2nd** bowls of udon noodles and additionally Chirashizushi ; sushi rice in a box or bowl with a variety of ingredients sprinkled on top. We were heading to our nest destination, Okayama Castle.

After having lunch, Shimatani rustled in a moving car. She was not satisfied with only noodles, saying 'do you find my eating?'. She took away Chirashizushi Dodome' which was local dishes and well-known in the restaurant. She was having it deliciously. Some military commanders like Kuroda, Ukita and so on also ate it. The dishes are said to be an origin of Chirashizushi as well. The restaurant fascinated Shimatani's stomach. Let's have a visit!

1588-1, Fukuoka, Osafune-cho, Setouchi-shi, Okayama, 701-4265, Japan Tel:+81 (0)869 26 20 39

The Udon noodles the selected 'Shirasagi flour' was used! The colour of noodle was slightly brown.



The third bowl !!
I'll leave it to your imagination!!

I cannot stop eating!

Bizen Ichimonji Udon noodles

Okayama Castle

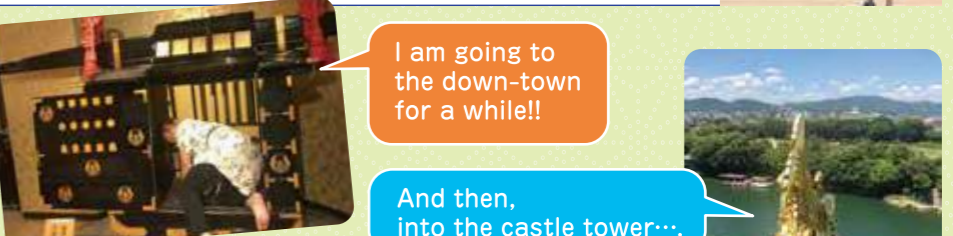


Hideie Ukita was favourably treated as one of his family members by Hideyoshi Toyotomi who had completed unification of the whole country and became a big a feudal lord. Hideie was appointed the youngest *Council of Five Elders *(five feudal lords of Hideyoshi Tokugawa, Terumoto Mouri, Kagekatsu Uesugi, Toshiie Maeda and Hideie Ukita who engaged in political affairs of Toyotomi Administration). Hideie built the castle in Hideyoshi's guidance. Eight years had been passed for building it. Okayama Castle was finally finished in 1597. Afterward, Hideaki Kobayakawa (in 1577), a relative of Hideyoshi, and Ikeda family became the lord of castle. Because the outlook of this castle was black, its nickname was 'Ujo' (crows castle). When the castle was built at that time, some gold foils were attached on roofing tiles. So, it is also called as 'Kin-ujo' (golden crow castle).

In front of castle tower, 'Fumyo-Mon' (Akazu-no-Tobira- the door that doesn't open) was settled. Behind the gate, a feudal lord was said to spend his daily life. Only the limited highly-ranked people were able to enter the castle. Since the gate was firmly closed, it was called as 'Fumyo-Mon'. Now, it is quite open like this.



Now, let's go!!



I am going to the down-town for a while!!
And then, into the castle tower...

The scene from the castle tower. You can take an extensive view far away.