



ITEM# UJWA264

CURRENTLY AVAILABLE

A JITSU'A NAGINATA-NAOSHI WAKIZASHI

UNSIGNED, KOTÔ LATE KAMAKURA PERIOD (KARYAKU ERA: 1326~1329)

Swordsmith:	<i>Jitsu'a</i> (実阿)
Measurements:	Length: 51.2cm (ô-suriage) Sori: 0.8cm Moto-haba: 2.9cm Weight: 500g
Jihada:	<i>Standing-out ô-itame, nagare-hada, prominent chikei and fine ji-nie</i>
Hamon:	<i>Vibrant nie-laden hoso-suguha, mixed with hotsure and plentiful kinsuji</i>
Certificate:	35th NBTHK Jûyô Tôken (Important Sword, awarded in 1989)
Fujishiro rank:	Jô-saku (ranked as a superior swordsmith)
Authentication:	Sayagaki by Tanobe-sensei (Tanobe Michihiro)
Included:	Shirasaya, fabric bag, kit, printed description

\$17,000

This stunning wakizashi from the very end of the Kamakura period is a *naginata-naoshi* by *Jitsu'a*, a superior swordsmith from *Chikuzen* province and the son of *Sairen Kuniyoshi*, who worked at the *Hakata Dangisho* - the institution established following the Mongol invasions to reinforce the defences of northern *Kyûshû*. While *Jitsu'a*'s son, the celebrated *Samonji*, would go on to embrace *Sôshû* methods, *Jitsu'a* himself remained faithful to classical *Yamato-den* interpretations. This wonderful blade features an eye-catching *jihada* with glorious pools of *ô-itame-hada* mixed with flowing *nagare-hada*. The *hamon* is a *suguha* rich in *nie*, with prominent *kinsuji*. This sword was awarded *Jûyô Tôken* certification in 1989 and comes with *sayagaki* by *Tanobe-sensei* that described the sword as a "superior work of simple, honest beauty that fully captures the smith's unique style."

Moto-kasane: 4.4mm

Omosa: 500g

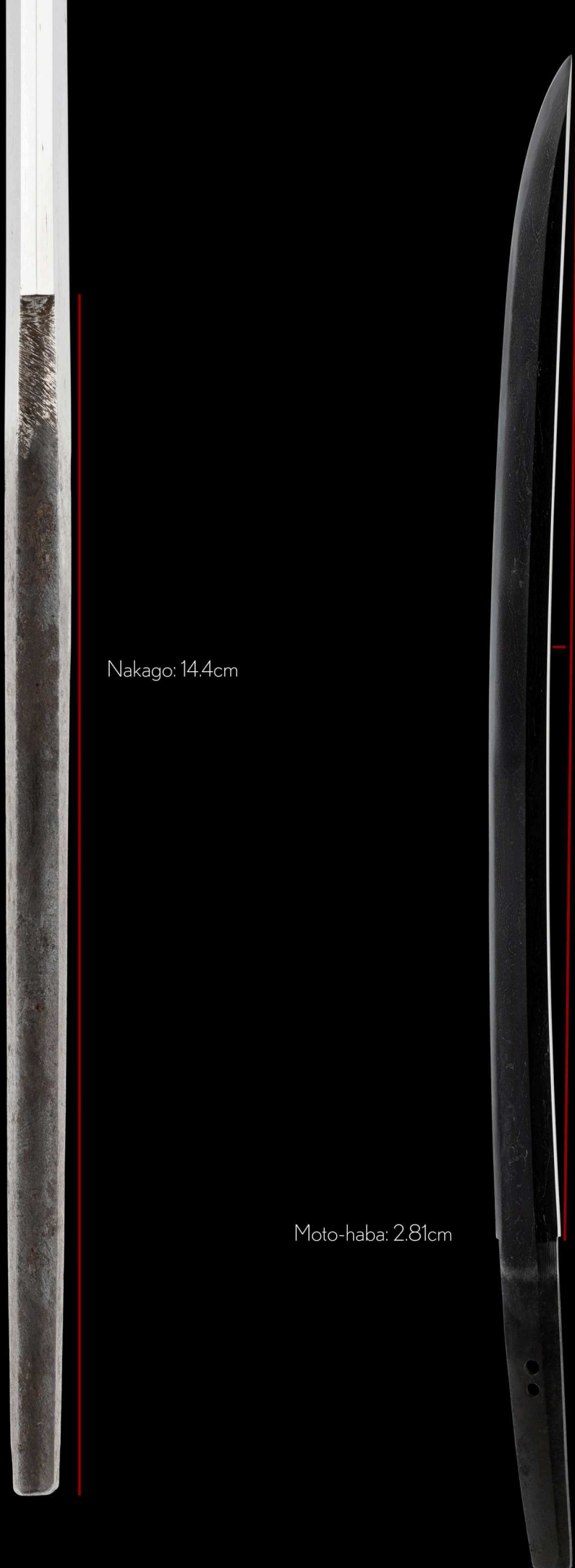
Nakago: 14.4cm

Moto-haba: 2.81cm

Nagasa: 51.1cm

Sori: 0.7cm

Mekugi-ana: 2



Jitsu'a (実阿) hails from *Chikuzen* Province during the late *Kamakura* to early *Nanbokuchō* periods. He was the son of *Sairen Kuniyoshi* (西蓮国吉), who worked at the *Hakata Dangisho* - the institution established following the Mongol invasions to reinforce the defenses of northern *Kyūshū*. While *Jitsua's* son, the celebrated *Samonji*, would go on to recast the family style within the *Sōshū* tradition, *Jitsu'a* himself held to the classical *Yamato-den* roots of the *Kyūshū* schools.

This beautiful and most elegant sword is a *naginata-naoshi* - originally a long *naginata*, later reconfigured as a *wakizashi*. It is *ō-suriage mumei*, unsigned. The prominent grain pattern of the steel is a *jihada*-lover's paradise with glorious pools of large *ō-itame* mixed with flowing *masame*. The *hamon* is a weaving *suguha* rich in *nie*, with prominent *sunagashi* and *kinsuji* - all hallmarks of the classical *Chikuzen* tradition.

The 700-year-old sword holds *Jūyō Tōken* certification from the NBTHK's 35th session. The *shirasaya* proudly carries *sayagaki* by *Tanobe-sensei* who personally reviewed the sword in early 2026.

Chikuzen province



Location: *Chikuzen province*

Swordsmith: *Jitsua* (first generation)

ô-suriage-nakago (greatly altered tang)

katte-sagari-yasurime (slanting file marks)



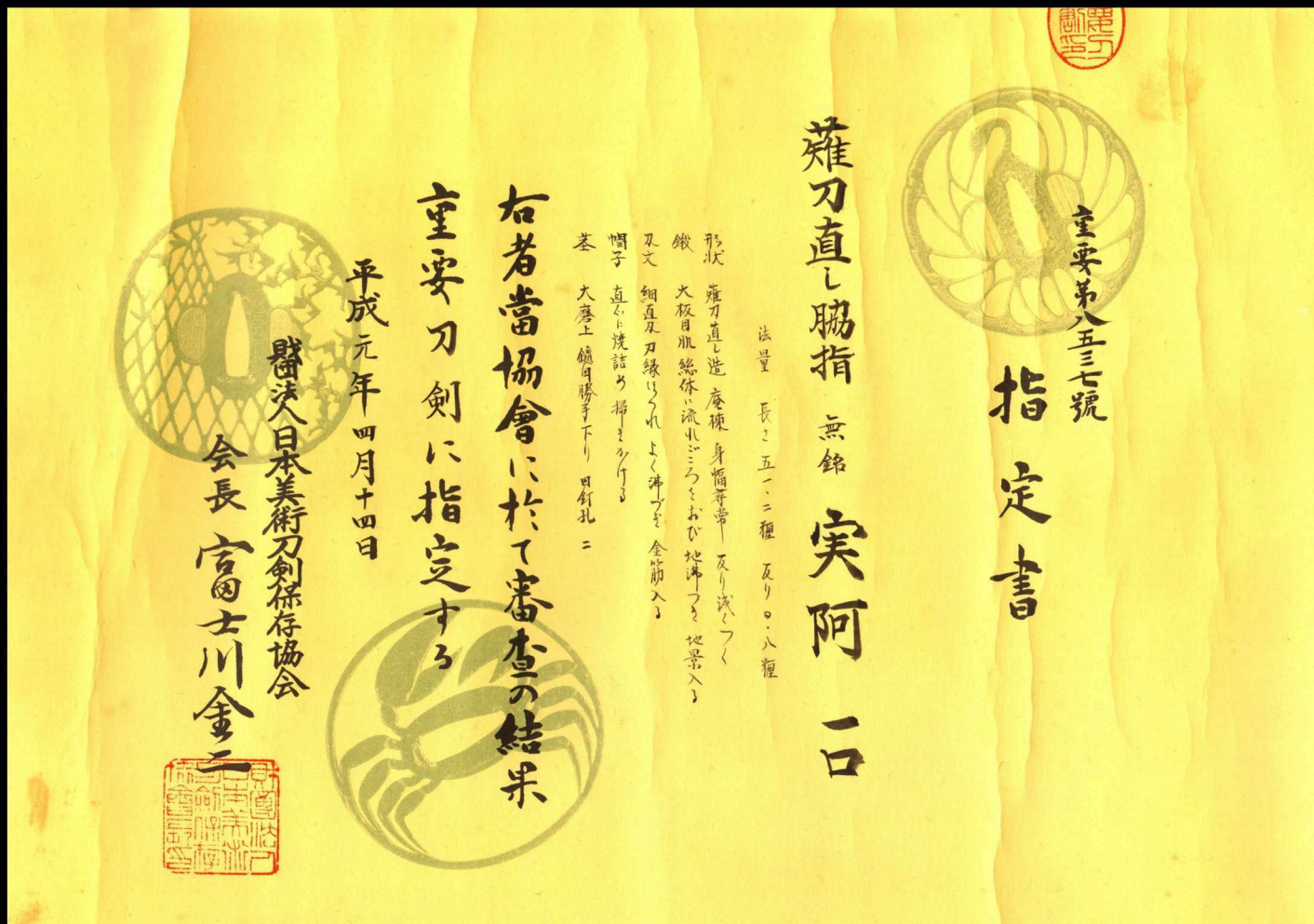
實 (Jitsu)

阿 (a)

Signed works by *Jitsua* are extremely rare, and numerous forgeries exist. The above is a signature style of Jitsua, which was authenticated as genuine by *Hon'ami Ringa*.



(ura, reverse)



Jûyô Certificate No. 8537
 Shiteisho (指定書) Certificate of Designation
 Naginata-naoshi Wakizashi, mumei: Jitsua (実阿)

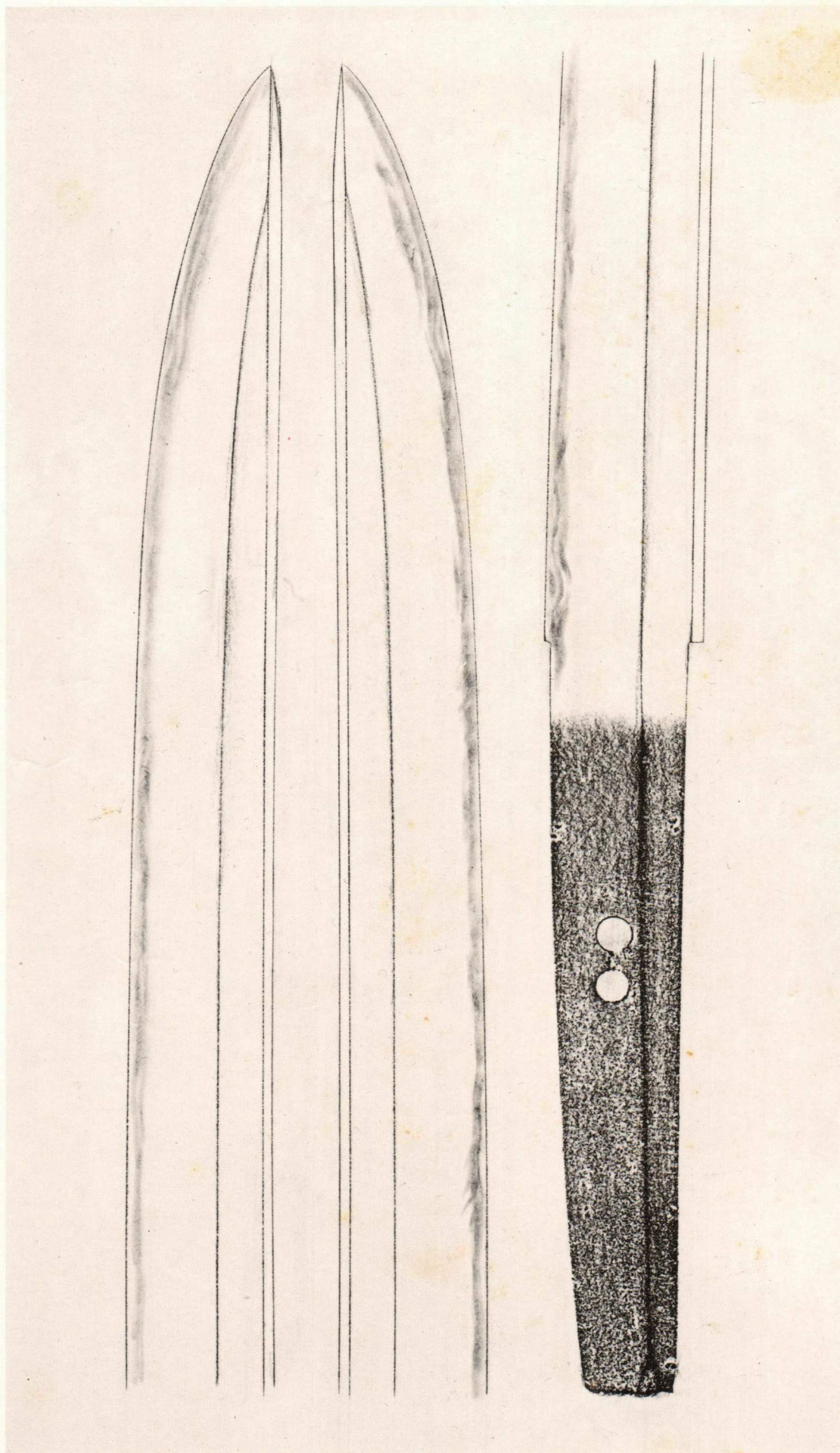
Measurements
 nagasa 51.2 cm, sori 0.8 cm

Description
 Shape: *naginata-naoshi-zukuri*, *iori-mune*, normal *mihaba*, shallow *sori*
 Kitae: *ô-itame* that tends overall to *nagare* and that features *chikei* and *ji-nie*
 Hamon: *nie*-laden *hoso-suguha* that is mixed with *hotsure* and *kinsuji*
 Bôshi: *sugu* with *hakikake* and running out as *yakitsume*
 Nakago: *ô-suriage*, *katte-sagari yasurime*, two *mekugi-ana*

According to the result of the shinsa committee of our society we judged this work as authentic and rate it as *jûyô-tôken*.

April 14, 1989
 [Foundation] Nihon Bijutsu Tôken Hozon Kyôkai, NBTHK
 [President] Fujikawa Kinji (富土川金二)

薙刀直し脇指 無銘 実阿



Jûyô Tōken oshigata

第三十五回重要刀剣

Dai sanjûgo-kai jûyô-tôken

Designated as jûyô-tôken at the 35th jûyô-shinsa

筑前国實阿

Chikuzen no kuni Jitsua

Jitsua from Chikuzen province

薙刀直無銘也地鍔ハ大板目流レ肌立チ荒ブル状ヲ呈シ地沸付キ地景入り刃文ハ直刃ホツレ沸厚ク匂口ニ潤ミアリテ沈ミ地刃ニ鄙ブル風情アリテ九州古典派ノ特色ヲ示シ質樸ノ味ワイヲ見セル優品而同工ノ持味ガ把握サル彼ハ大左父ト傳フ

Naginata-naoshi mumei nari jigane wa ô-itame nagare hada tachi araburu katachi o teishi ji-nie tsuki chikei hairi hamon wa suguha hotsure nie atsuku nioiguchi ni urumi arite shizumi jiba ni hinaburu huzei arite Kyûshû Koten-ha no tokushoku o shimeshi shitsuboku no ajiwai o miseru yûhin sikashite dôkô no mochiaji ga ha'aku saru kare wa Ô-Sa no chichi to tsutau

[This blade is] a *naginata-naoshi* and remains unsigned (*mumei*). The *jigane* exhibits a large *itame* grain with a flowing pattern that stands out, presenting a rugged and wild appearance. *Ji-nie* is present and *chikei* is visible. The *hamon* is a straight *suguha* with frayed edges (*hotsure*), where the *nie* crystals are thick and the *nioiguchi* has a moist yet subdued quality. Both the steel and the edge possess a rustic, provincial character that displays the distinct traits of the classical *Kyûshû* schools, making it a superior work of simple, honest beauty that fully captures the smith's unique style. Jitsua is considered by tradition to be the father of *Samonji*.

刃長壹尺六寸八分強

Hachô 1-shaku 6-sun 8-bu kyô

Blade length 51.1 cm

歳丙午如月探山識（花押）

Toshi hinoe-uma kisaragi Tanzan shirusu + kaô

Written by Tanzan [Tanobe Michihiro] in the second month in the Year of the Horse (February 2026)

第三十五回重要刀剣
筑前国實阿

薙刀直無銘也地鍔ハ大板目流レ肌立チ荒ブル状ヲ呈シ地沸付キ地景入り刃文ハ直刃ホツレ沸厚ク匂口ニ潤ミアリテ沈ミ地刃ニ鄙ブル風情アリテ九州古典派ノ特色ヲ示シ質樸ノ味ワイヲ見セル優品而同工ノ持味ガ把握サル彼ハ大左父ト傳フ

刃長壹尺六寸八分強
歳丙午如月探山識

Medieval Japanese Weaponry in Transition

The two Mongol invasions forced a fundamental rethink of the Japanese sword. The elegant, slender blades of the preceding period, shaped by aristocratic taste, were poorly suited to combat against forces using collective tactics, hardened leather armour, and heavy shields. Blades snapped and chipped. The response was immediate and practical: the *Hakata Dangisho* was established at the defensive stronghold of northern *Kyûshû*, with masters including *Sairen Kuniyoshi*, father of *Jitsu'a*, among those involved. It functioned as a military arsenal, tasked with developing and supplying combat-ready blades of real destructive power.

The early *Nanbokuchô* period brought further pressure. Warfare became constant, the mode of combat shifted from mounted duels to infantry-based mass engagements, and the demand was for reach and crushing force. Massive *ôdachi* exceeding three feet and heavy, elongated *naginata* became the weapons of the age. The characteristics found in *Jitsu'a's* work - a prominent, large *ô-itame* in the *jihada* and violent *nie* activity in the *hamon* - are the direct expression of that era and the smiths who met its demands without compromise.

As tactics shifted toward close-quarters combat, these large weapons became impractical in the field. But blades of this quality were never simply discarded. The exceptional steel and undeniable artistic merit meant they were preserved and passed down. The *nakago* was shortened and the pieces reconfigured as *naginata-naoshi*, giving them a second life that carried them through the centuries. As *naginata* were mostly designed to be durable and highly effective cutters on the battlefield, their "efficacy" remained unchanged when being shortened to wear them as a katana.

Thus the following saying developed among samurai warriors:

Naginata-naoshi ni namakura nashi - "No sword made from a naginata is dull!"

700 years of history awaits its next caretaker. Long live the naginata!



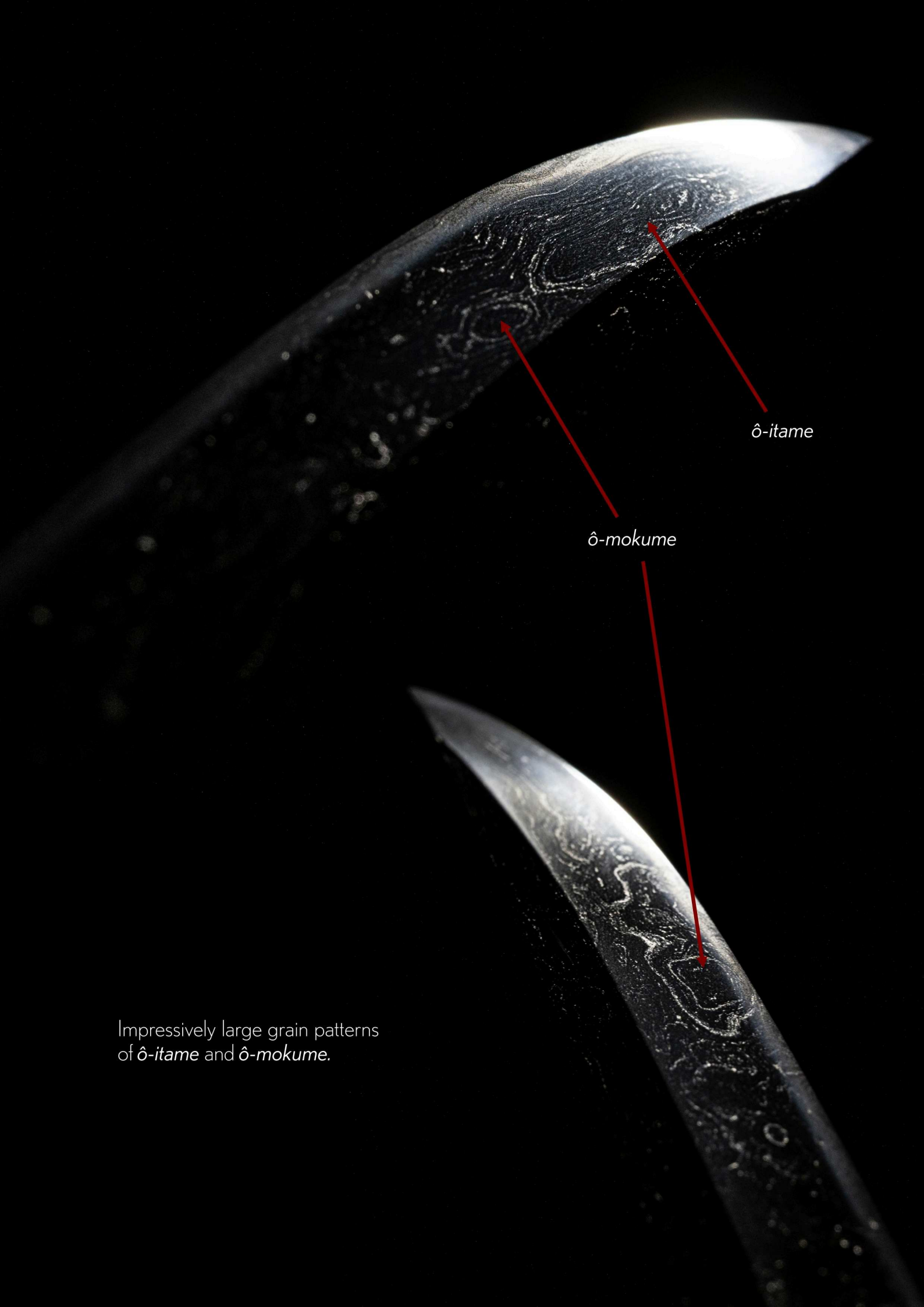
Mongol Invasion



Scrolls depicting the political upheaval of 1159 illustrate *samurai* equipped with *naginata*.







ô-itame

ô-mokume

Impressively large grain patterns
of *ô-itame* and *ô-mokume*.



This lovely *naginata-naoshi* embodies the elegance and charm of the *Yamato* tradition with a tasteful *suguha hamon* with bright nie crystals that rests easy on the eyes can be enjoyed for hours on end under the light.

kinsuji

suguha

Jitsu'a 実阿 – *Karyaku* era (嘉暦, 1326-1329), *Chikuzen*

Genealogical Line

To understand *Jitsu'a* properly, you need to trace the entire ancestral chain from which the *Sa* school emerges. The canonical lineage, recognized since the earliest sword literature, runs as follows:

Ryôsai → *Sairen* → *Jitsu'a* → *Samonji*

Ryôsai (良西), active during the *Kôan* era (弘安, 1278-1288) in *Chikuzen*, is the root of the tree. He is considered one of the founding ancestors of both the *Chikuzen* smiths and the *Sa* school. He left almost nothing - only a single *tantô* in *kanmuri-otoshi-zukuri*, 22.1 cm, in *uchizori* (the *uchizori* likely the result of repeated polishing over centuries).

Sairen (西蓮), *Ryôsai*'s son, active during *Bunpô* (文保, 1317-1319), was also known by his secular name *Kuniyoshi* (国吉) and signed as "*Chikuzen no Kuni Hakata Dangisho Kuniyoshi hôshi Sairen*" - a fascinating long signature that ties him to the *chinzei-dangisho*, the *Bakufu*'s administrative post established in *Hakata* in 1286 following the Mongol invasions, which had drawn many smiths to *Chikuzen* due to military build-up. *Sairen*'s *tachi* are elegant and classical with *ko-kissaki* and *funbari*, the *jigane* a dense *itame* with *nagare* and *masame*, the *hamon* a soft *suguha* with *ko-ashi* - altogether the characteristic workmanship of early *Kyûshû-mono*. He is rated *jôjô-saku*, a very high designation indeed.

Jitsu'a's Workmanship

The known date signatures of *Jitsu'a* are from:

The 2nd year of *Karyaku* (1327)

The 3rd year of *Genkô* (元弘, 1332)

The 2nd year of *Kenmu* (建武, 1335)

Generational Bridge

Jitsu'a sits at a remarkable pivot in Japanese sword history. As the son of *Sairen* and the father of *Samonji* – who would become one of the most celebrated smiths of all time and the founder of the entire *Sa* school – *Jitsu'a* is the crucial generational bridge between a lineage of distinguished but relatively contained *Kyûshû* smiths and the explosive brilliance of his son. His own refined, quiet workmanship - particularly that *suguha* with *kinsuji* - shows a craftsman of deep skill and subtlety - the lineage that followed speaks for itself.



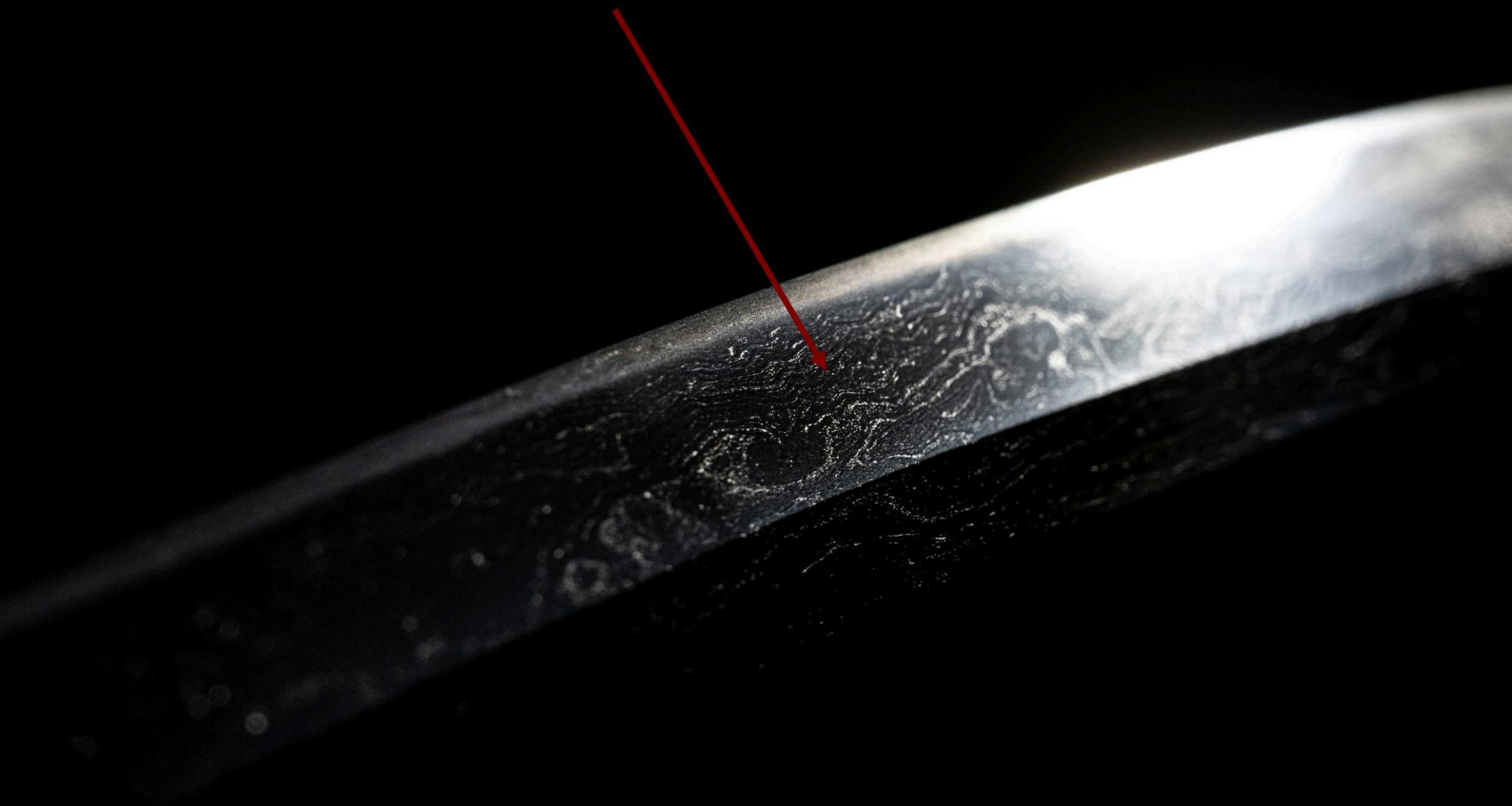


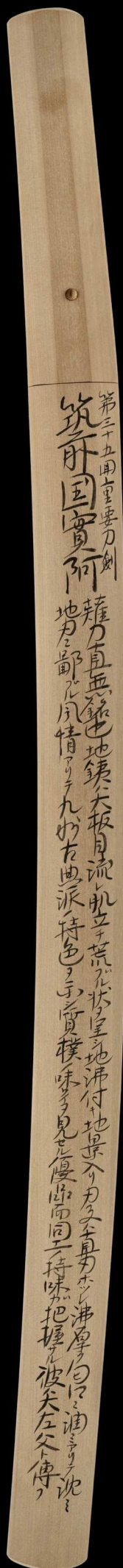
Gorgeous *nagare-hada* flows like a peaceful mountain stream with quiet confidence.

kinsuji

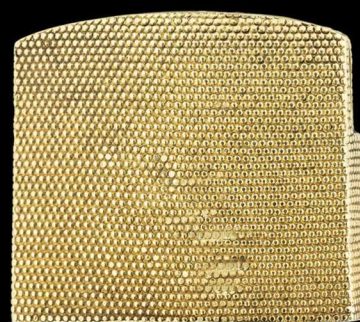


Dark channels of textbook *chikei* abound in the *jihada*.





Shirasaya
(protective scabbard)

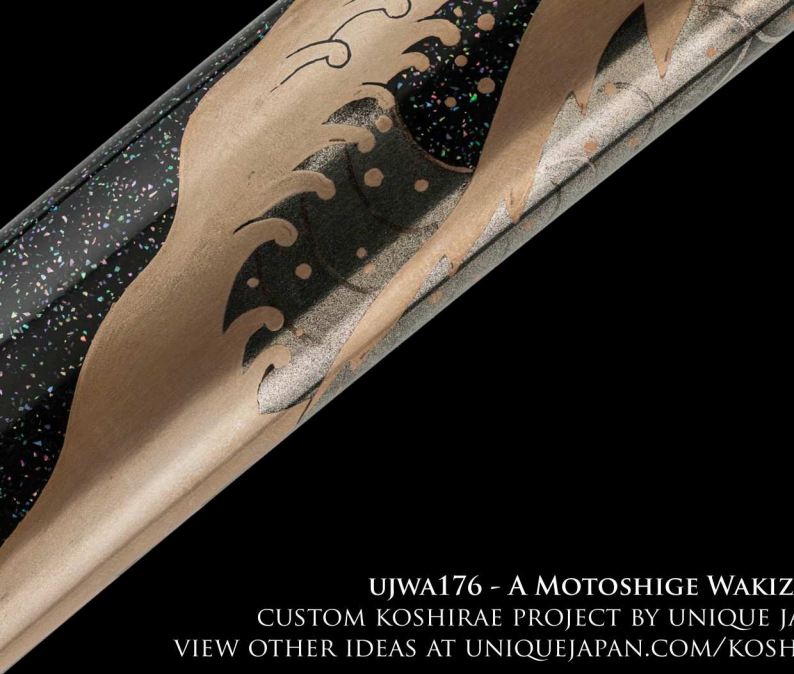


gold *habaki* with
nanako dotted ground

*"A superior work of simple, honest beauty
that fully captures the smith's unique style."*

*Tanobe Michiro (Tanzan sensei)
February 2026*





UJWA176 - A MOTOSHIGE WAKIZASHI
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