

KO-OSAFUNE

- Technical: SUGATA - Earlier pieces are Late-HEIAN/Early KAMAKURA narrow-bodied KOSHIZORI, FUNBARI TACHI with KO-KISSAKI. Later finds wide, Mid-KAMAKURA with BIZEN IKUBI KISSAKI. Some with raised SHINOI and wide SHINOI-JI.
- HADA - KO-MOKUME, O-MOKUME with JI-NIE. Excellent HADA. CHIKEI. "Peony" UTSURI and CHOJI-UTSURI.
- HAMON - O-CHOJI, KO-CHOJI mix, KO-MIDARE, OBUSA and GUNOME according to smith. KAWAZU "Tadpole" with ASHI and YO. NIOI-TOGARI. Some profuse NIE. KINSUJI and INAZUMA. OSAFUNE MONOUCHI: A simple MIDARE or lessening of pattern.
- BOSHI - KO-MIDARE, KO-NOTARE with KO-MARU. Some TOGARI. NAGAMITSU "SAN-SAKU" BOSHI drops at or near the YOKOTE, then swells gently once or twice through the KISSAKI to become narrow again toward KO-MARU or pointed KO-MARU.
- NAKAGO - Standard long and dated signatures. BIZEN NAKAGO evolves.

KO-OSAFUNE:

Nationally honored MITSUTADA establishes the OSAFUNE style, from which NAGAMITSU and KAGEMITSU secure the guild and its fame.

Initial considerations examine for NAGAMITSU, then KAGEMITSU.

NAGAMITSU and KAGEMITSU have differing similarities:

Both have NAGAMITSU "SAN-SAKU" BOSHI - See NAGAMITSU School

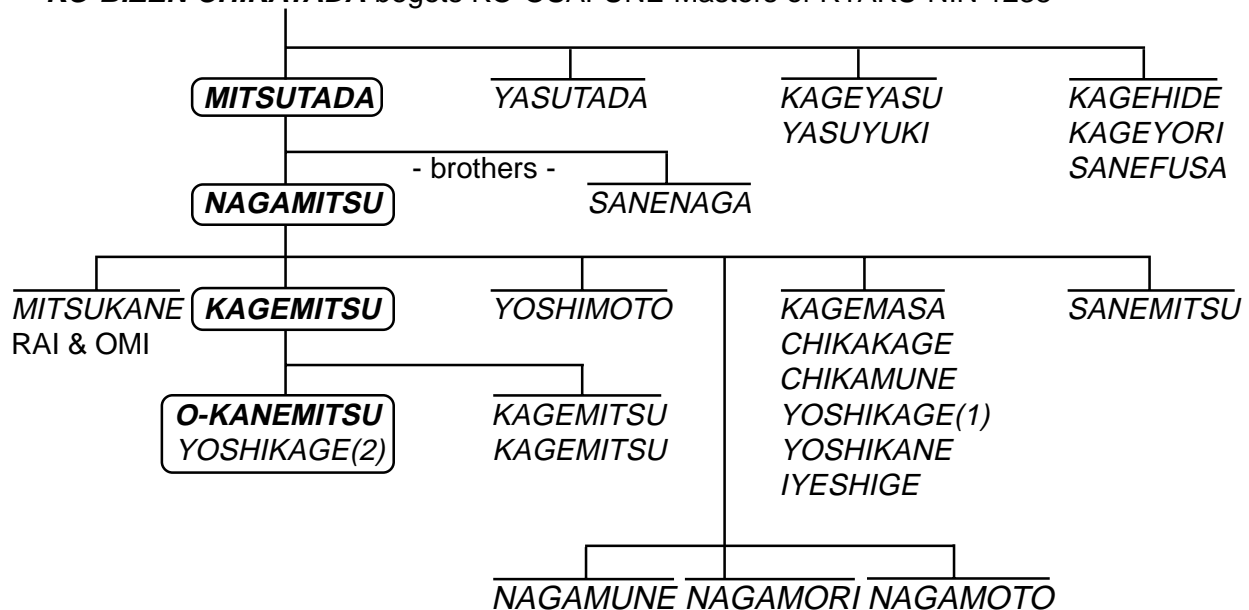
Both have OSAFUNE MONOUCHI - CHU-width of less pattern

Both have CHOJI-UTSURI that may be spotty

- **NAGAMITSU** has GUNOME-CHOJI MIDARE BA with NIOI "Smoke" TOGARI. Pattern has gentle undulations of height.

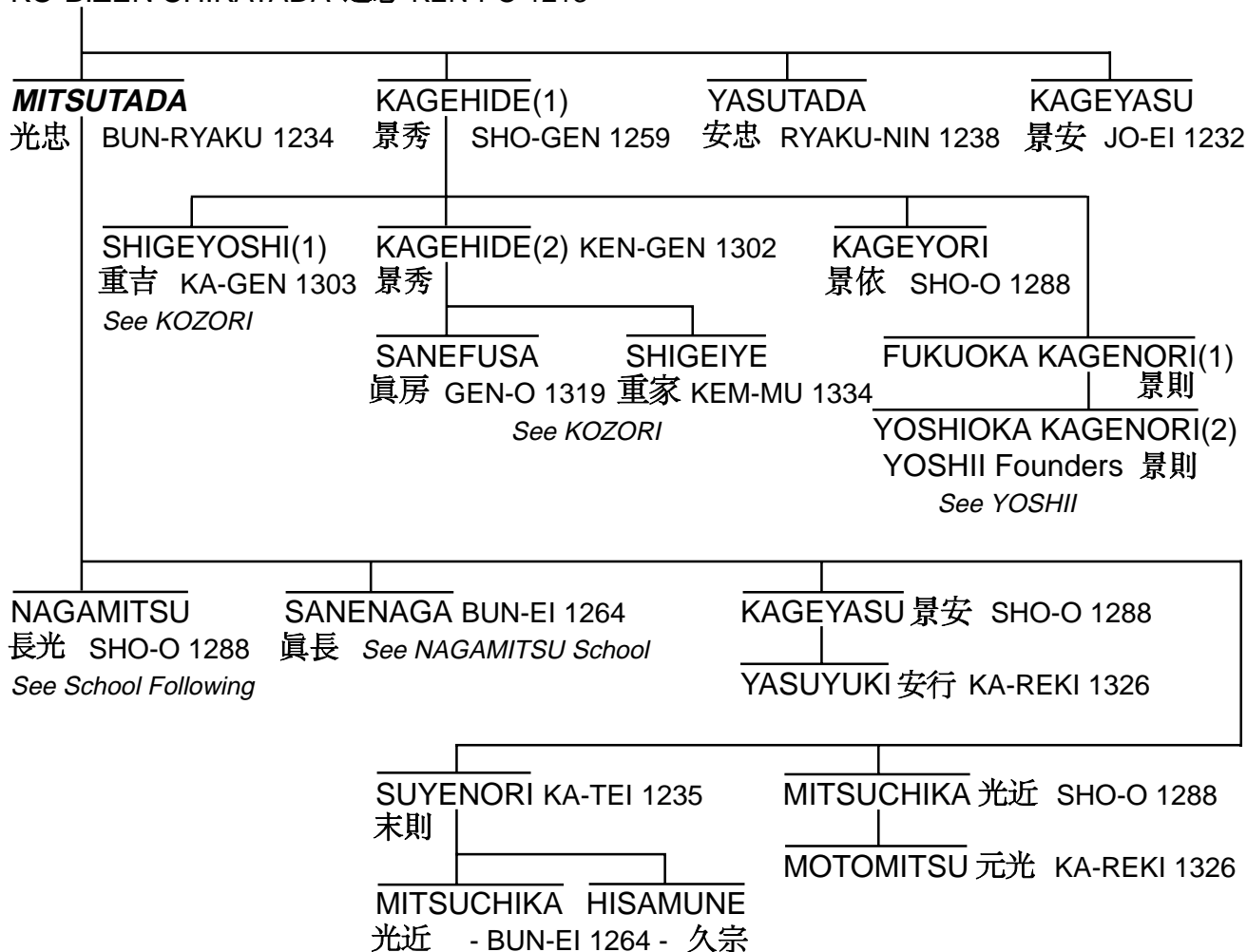
- **KAGEMITSU** has leaning KATAOCHI "Stooped Shoulders" GUNOME-MIDARE with SAKA-ASHI. Pattern is somewhat even in height.

KO-BIZEN CHIKATADA begets KO-OSAFUNE Masters of RYAKU-NIN 1238



MITSUTADA School

KO-BIZEN CHIKATADA 近忠 KEN-PO 1213



SUYENORI KA-TEI (t: MITSUTADA, f: YASUNORI): From TEI-O 1222, his line falls from first teacher, FUKUOKA NORIMUNE. FUKUOKA JU. ITAME HADA. CHOJI BA. SUYENORI 末則

YUKIZANE BUN-O: OSAFUNE JU. ITAME. NIOI-DEKI KO-CHOJI emerges from KO-MIDARE BA. Large MEI. BISHU JU YUKIZANE 備州住行眞

YUKIZANE KO-AN: WAKI GORI HIKASA JU. BIZEN-no-KUNI HIKASA SHO YUKIZANE 備前國日笠庄行眞

YUKIHIDE SHO-AN: EI-NIN 1293 to SHO-AN 1299. WAKI-GORI HIKASA JU. KO-MIDARE with ASHI-IRI. YUKIHIDE 行秀
BIZEN-no-KUNI HIKASA JUNIN SHINSHI YUKIHIDE 備前國日笠住人進士行秀
BIZEN-no-KUNI HIKASA GYOSHO JUNIN YUKIHIDE TSUKURU 備前國日笠御莊住人行秀造

MITSUTADA

MITSUTADA RYAKU-NIN (f: CHIKATADA, br: KAGEYASU): OSAFUNE Founder. Work from RYAKU-NIN 1238 to BUN-EI 1264. OSAFUNE JU. Before SOSHU found MASAMUNE and the TEGAI exploded around YAMATO KANENAGA, the artistic power of MITSUTADA would ignite the most prolific sword center in history. His inspired genius drew excited prodigies like filings to a magnet, firing the lives and forges in OSAFUNE for 350 years.

His time arises from the transition to Mid-KAMAKURA. Most MITSUTADA are SURIAGE or O-SURIAGE, as are many swords from this era. For this reason many attributed O-SURIAGE have erroneously been given recognition. MITSUTADA was one of the truly greats, his YAKIBA architecture is a harmony of seemingly diverse disciplines that weave and counterpoint disparate patterns. There is reserve. There is delicate refinement of contrasting subtleties. Most O-SURIAGE MU-MEI, although very beautiful ICHIMONJI style creations, are simply not OSAFUNE swords and generally lack the interactive and subtle dynamics of this master. The reaction of scholarship has promulgated these considerations:

O-SURIAGE candidates in the ICHIMONJI style with KAWAZU, JUKA and OBUSARISE, keeping an even and strong height that carries through the MONOUCHI should be given a stern eye. - This is not the practice on genuine signed pieces.

Argument proposes that dynamic variance was lost in the absent YAKIDASHI on O-SURIAGE of 2.2 SHAKU or less. However, it is classic supposition that the KO-OSAFUNE definer of reserve or restraint of pattern in the MONOUCHI was birthed and gifted from brother, FUKUOKA KAGEYASU and signed MITSUTADA show the first bannering of this famous OSAFUNE signpost.

THEREFORE:

- Look for variance in YAKIBA height.
- Look for diverse figures and TOBI-YAKI.
- Look for the OSAFUNE MONOUCHI, that devoted passion pursued so vigorously by descendants NAGAMITSU and KAGEMITSU: the KO-ASHI defined KO-CHOJI line descends smoothly from pattern to a varying but fairly even CHU-width approach to the BOSHI.

There are many O-SURIAGE ICHIMONJI style swords, but few MITSUTADA. One always remembers, - The work is the true signature of the master. Genuine MITSUTADA weds strength with RESERVE, - and does so artistically. It's not all brassy dance-and-show. Swords that are "too fancy" have been called MITSUTADA. ***continued-***



MITSUTADA

ICHIMONJI

MITSUTADA

MITSUTADA General: Swirling MOKUME and O-MOKUME veiled of JI-NIE with MIDARE-UTSURI that makes the surface appear wet. BO-HI is common.

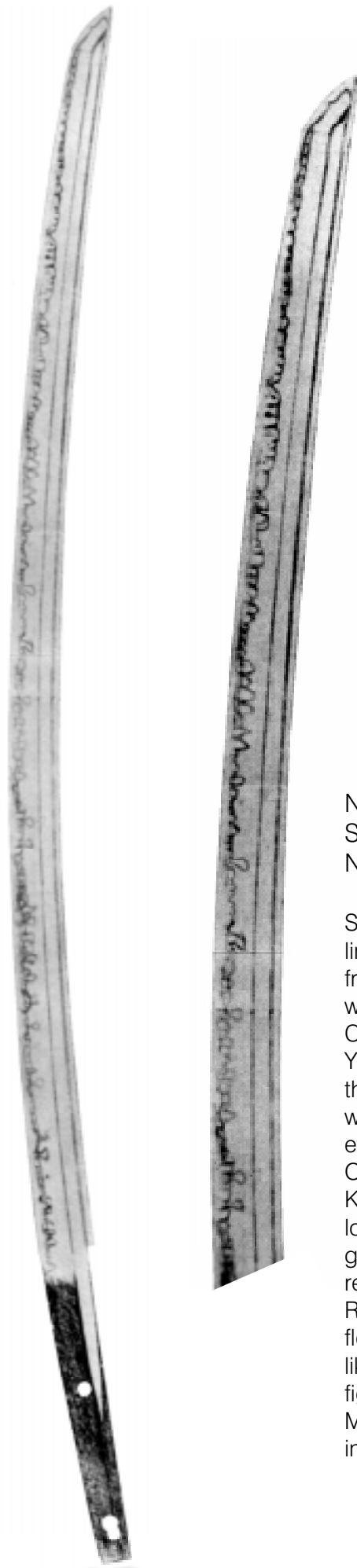
MITSUTADA First Period: Showing deference for his formative and conservative roots, KO-BIZEN, early work may have an early KAMAKURA feel and be KO-MIDARE of KO-CHOJI BA in NIE that has KINSUJI and SUNAGASHI. MITSUTADA famous for TOBI-YAKI.

MITSUTADA Later Period: Mid-KAMAKURA national SUGATA trend brings the KEN-CHO 1249 widening of the upper and its IKUBI style, bold KISSAKI, - however KO-OSAFUNE liked the more normal, elongated feel. GUNOME pushes through CHOJI. TOBI-YAKI appears at the tops. KAWAZU CHOJI is associated to the school and the time.

Note: ICHIMONJI work will be far more brazen and uniform. MITSUTADA YAKIBA will rise and fall, and will have generally less height than ICHIMONJI. MITSUTADA is a more dynamically combined and reserved line. Look for hard or soft TOBI tethered by strings.



BUNKAZAI MITSUTADA



NAGASA: 2.3 SHAKU 2.3 BU
SORI: 8.6 BU
NAKAGO: 5.9 SUN

MOTO-HABA: 9.3 BU
SAKI-HABA: 6 BU

SHINOGI-TSUKURI, IHORI-MUNE, KOSHIZORI TACHI. Classic lines are powerfully sculpted anew. A BO-HI SHINOGI-JI falls from the KO-SHINOGI through the NAKAGO. Swirling MOKUME with JI-NIE. OSAFUNE MONOUCHI: a smooth BOSHI finds CHU-width, evenly set, squarish CHOJI beginning from the YOKOTE. Each nodule resets the slight undulation by finding the top of its neighbor. Looping YO-painted CHOJI crest a wave-like swell through the upper, which breaks-up and falls in ever changing combinations. Square, oblong and pointed OBUSA GUNOME jut through jostling KO-CHOJI where delicate KO-ASHI trace detail. Far and near KAWAZU sentinels rise like look-outs in the mid, tending little-ones crowding their KAWAZU garden. KINSUJI and SUNAGASHI combine in long undercurrents that spill to the fore, flooding anchored pillars and pilings. Round TOBI-YAKI stand on pinnacles to dot the lower with floating viscous bulbs, while UTSURI rises from the HABUCHI like steam. OMOTE lower is quieter than URA, its faraway figures stand placidly. KIRI-JIRI SURIAGE NAKAGO has two MEKUGI-ANA, the lower with multiple bores. His small MEI rests in the JI, solidly above the lower ANA:

光忠 MITSUTADA