

Appraisal Series

first of multi-part study

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SUGATA PLACES TIME

There are two steps in the appraisal of any antique:

- First** - the environment of origin is established by placing age
- Second** - actual origin is placed within this known environment

First: **TIME** - Then: **PLACE**

Long Tread Highway

The appraiser's path:

- ERA
- TIME PERIOD
- PROVINCE
- SCHOOL
- SMITH

WHEN
WHERE
WHO

ERA:

First step reduces the splay of historical possibilities by placing ERA - KOTO, SHINTO, SHIN-SHINTO

TIME:

Once the limits of era have been set, the Time Period is considered. Time is placed with sword shape - SUGATA

PROVINCE:

When time is confined to the specific historic and social environment, the appraisal-points will reveal PROVINCE

SCHOOL:

The schools in a province are differentiated by style

SMITH:

As there were few individuals working in a school at a given time, a sword at this step will usually scream its author

The first step is always TIME **SUGATA = TIME**

1

The beginning is simple:

It's either old ...or new

⊂

Old Swords

1600 A.D.

New Swords

Five Schools - Eight Roads

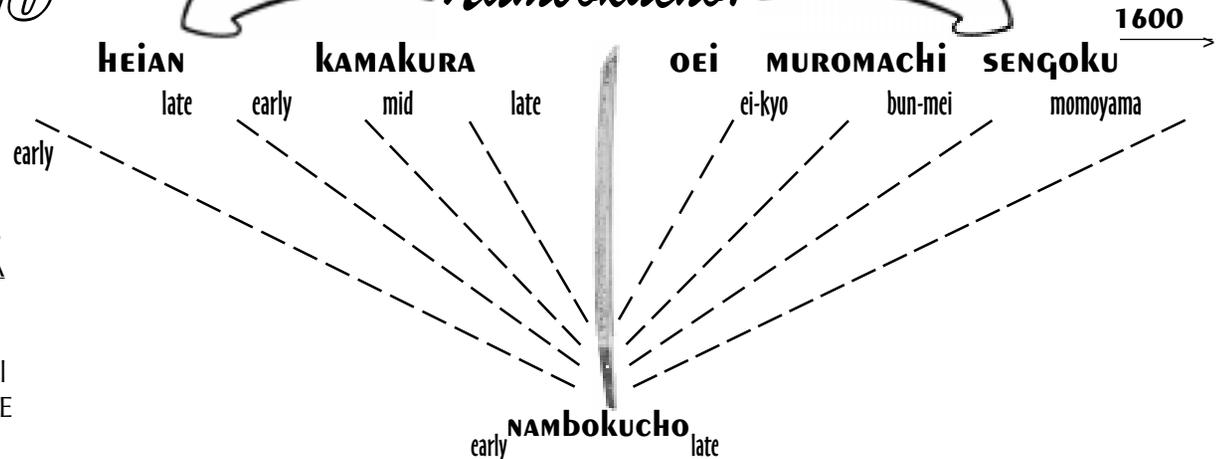
Seven Provinces - Eight Roads

2

...if old:

⊂

which side of Nambokucho?



The renewal of peace in OEI marked a return of the graceful KAMAKURA styles, which left the long, broad O-KISSAKI NAMBOKUCHO shape isolated in history. Choice between KAMAKURA and O-EI is equally stark. The difference between KAMAKURA and O-EI swords can be likened as that between KOTO and SHINTO. KOTO appraisal, therefore, looks for the distinctive NAM-BOKUCHO shape, for a piece in question is either before or after.

So the first question becomes: Which side of NAMBOKUCHO?

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