

Jūyō-tōken at the 48th *jūyō shinsa* held on October 11, 2002

katana, mumei: Ko-Mihara (古三原)

Measurements

nagasa 71.0 cm, *sori* 1.6 cm, *motohaba* 2.95 cm, *sakihaba* 2.1 cm, *kissaki-nagasa* 3.5 cm, *nakago-nagasa* 23.4 cm, *nakago-sori* 0.2 cm

Description

Keijō: shinogi-zukuri, iori-mune, wide mihaba, no noticeable taper, normal kasane, relatively deep sori, somewhat elongated chū-kissaki

Kitae: standing-out itame that is mixed with mokume and nagare and that features fine ji-nie, chikei-like elements, and a shirake-utsuri

Hamon: hoso-suguha in ko-nie-deki with a tight nioiguchi that tends a little bit to a gently undulating notare in places and that is mixed with hotsure and uchinoke

Bōshi: sugu with an ko-maru-kaeri and fine hakikake at the tip

Nakago: ō-suriage, kirijiri, kiri-yasurime, three mekugi-ana, mumei

Explanation

The Bingo Mihara school emerged at the end of the Kamakura period and flourished henceforth until the end of the Muromachi period. Works from the end of the Kamakura throughout the Nanbokuchō period are referred to as Ko-Mihara. There were many *shōen* manors located in Bingo province which were owned and administrated by important shrines and temples of the Yamato region and therefore we can see a certain Yamato influence in the works of the Mihara School, suggesting that a certain exchange had taken place between the local smiths and their colleagues from the central Kinai region. In direct comparison with Yamato works, the *jiba* of Mihara blades shows in general lesser *nie*, the *kitae* tends to feature *shirake* and appears as a standing-out *itame* with a prominent amount of *mokume*, the *nioiguchi* is tighter, and the *bōshi* more calm.

This blade shows a standing-out *itame* that is mixed with *mokume* and *nagare* and that features fine *ji-nie*, *chikei*-like elements, and a *shirake-utsuri*. The *hamon* is a *hoso-suguha* in *ko-nie-deki* with a tight *nioiguchi* that is mixed with *hotsure* and *uchinoke*, and the *bōshi* shows *hakikake* whereupon we recognize Yamato characteristics and thus overall the typical features of the Ko-Mihara School. The blade is overall of a calm interpretation and an unobtrusive taste, although it still suggests that it is of a superior cutting ability and has with its magnificent shape a quite ambitious feel.