

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

naginata-naoshi katana, *mumei*: Yoshikage (義景)

Measurements

nagasa 66.6 cm, *sori* 0.6 cm, *motohaba* 2.8 cm, *sakihaba* 2.6 cm, *kissaki-nagasa* 10.4 cm, *nakago-nagasa* 20.7 cm, only very little *nakago-sori*

Description

Keijō: *naginata-naoshi-zukuri*, *mitsu-mune* (with wide top face), wide *mihaba*, no noticeable taper, noticeably thick *kasane*, very shallow *sori*, *ō-kissaki*

Kitae: standing-out *itame* that is mixed with *mokume* and that features *ji-nie* and a *midare-utsuri*

Hamon: *gunome* in *nioi-deki* with *ko-nie* that is mixed with various different elements like *ko-gunome*, *ko-chōji*, angular elements, some *togariba*, *ashi*, *yō*, some relatively prominent *mura-nie* in places, a few *hotsure*, and fine *kinsuji* and *sunagashi*, the elements of the *ha* are overall rather small dimensioned

Bōshi: *sugu-chō* with a little bit of *midare-komi* and running out in *yakitsume* manner with fine *hakikake*

Horimono: on both sides a *naginata-hi* with *soebi* which end both in *kakudome*

Nakago: *ō-suriage*, *kurijiri*, *katte-sagari yasurime*, two *mekugi-ana*, *mumei*

Explanation

Since olden times, there exist several theories on the affiliation of Osafune Yoshikage (義景), some of which stating that he studied with Kanemitsu (兼光) whilst others state that he was a student of Chōgi (長義). His workmanship and the use of *gyaku-tagane* in the *mei* (partially opposite stroke order than written with a brush) however, has lead in recent years to the theory that he may have rather been an Osafune side line smith like for example Chikakage (近景) and Morikage (盛景), a theory which since has become more and more accepted.

This blade was originally a *naginata* which has been shortened and reworked into a *katana*. It shows a *kitae* in a standing-out *itame* that is mixed with *mokume* and that features *ji-nie* and a *midare-utsuri*. The *hamon* is a *gunome* in *nioi-deki* with *ko-nie* that is mixed with *ko-gunome*, *ko-chōji*, angular elements, some *togariba*, *ashi*, *yō*, and fine *kinsuji* and *sunagashi*. Compared to Nanboku-chō-period Osafune main line works, the *ha* is more complex and is composed of various different elements, which are overall rather small dimensioned. Due to this and the fact that the blade was originally a *naginata* (many *naginata* by this smith have been preserved by reworking them into *katana*), the work can be attributed to Yoshikage. The blade is in a very good condition and a masterwork among all works attributed to this smith.