

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

katana, *mumei*: Taima (当麻)

Measurements

nagasa 72.5 cm, *sori* 2.1 cm, *motohaba* 3.2 cm, *sakihaba* 2.1 cm, *kissaki-nagasa* 3.7 cm, *nakago-nagasa* 19.2 cm, *nakago-sori* 0.2 cm

Description

Keijō: *shinogi-zukuri*, *iori-mune*, wide *mihaba*, thick *kasane*, deep *sori*, *chū-kissaki*

Kitae: *itame* that is mixed with *nagare-masame* and that features plenty of *ji-nie* and much *chikei*

Hamon: *ko-nie*-laden *suguha* with a wide *nioiguchi* that is mixed with *ko-ashi*, long *yūbashiri*-like *nijūba*, and many *kinsuji* and *sunagashi*

Bōshi: *sugu* with *nijūba* which runs out as *yakitsume* on the *omote* side and which features a rather pointed *kaeri* on the *ura* side

Horimono: on both sides a *futasuji-hi* that runs with *kaki-nagashi* into the tang

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

Explanation

The Taima School was one of the Five Major Yamato Schools (*Yamato-goha*, 大和五派). It was founded by Kuniyuki (国行) and flourished from the late Kamakura to the Nanbokuchō period. The *meikan* list relatively many Taima smiths but only very few signed works are extant today, i.e. the majority of the Taima blades that are going round are unsigned and attributed to this school. By trend, the Hon'ami family and other appraisers from the past have attributed Yamato blades with a prominently *nie*-laden *jiba* and with many *chikei* and *kinsuji*, i.e. which are noticeably mixed with Sōshū elements, to the Taima School. However, the few extant signed Taima works do show a somewhat different workmanship but it is possible that by the time these attributions were made, signed blades of that sōshūesque kind did still exist.

This blade clearly shows a *deki* that reflects, as described above, the Yamato tradition being mixed with Sōshū elements whereupon we are of the opinion that the attribution should be to Taima. In concrete terms, the *jiba* of the blade is particularly *nie*-laden and its *ha* shows gorgeous *hataraki* like long *nijūba*, *kinsuji*, and *sunagashi*. Both *ji* and *ha* are very healthy and the blade still maintains plenty of *hira-niku*. A masterwork among all blades attributed to this school.