

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

tachi, mumei: Unshō (雲生)

Measurements

nagasa 69.8 cm, *sori* 1.9 cm, *motohaba* 2.6 cm, *sakihaba* 1.5 cm, *kissaki-nagasa* 2.35 cm, *nakago-nagasa* 17.6 cm, *nakago-sori* 0.3 cm

Description

Keijō: *shinogi-zukuri, iori-mune,* rather slender *mihaba*, noticeable taper, deep *koshizori* that increases again towards the tip, *chū-kissaki*

Kitae: overall densely forged *ko-itame* that is mixed with *mokume* and that features *ji-nie*, fine *chikei*, towards the *mune* an irregular *jifu-utsuri* with dark *antai*, and towards the *ha* a linear *suji-utsuri*

Hamon: *hoso-suguha* in *ko-nie-deki* with a tight *nioiguchi* that is mixed with a little bit of *gunome*, *ko-ashi*, *yō*, and some *hotsure* in places

Bōshi: very gently undulating *notare-komi* with a *ko-maru-kaeri* and fine *hakikake*

Horimono: on the *haki-omote* side a *bonji* and *gomabashi*, on the *ura* side a *suken*

Nakago: a little bit *suriage*, *kurijiri*, old *yasurime* indiscernible, new *yasurime* are *katte-sagari*, two *mekugi-ana* (of which one is plugged), *mumei*

Explanation

The Ukan manor (宇甘庄) of Bizen province was home to a group of swordsmiths which was active from the end of the Kamakura to the Nanbokuchō period. The smiths of this group, for example Unshō (雲生), Unji (雲次), and Unjū (雲重), shared the character for “Un” whereupon they are referred to as “Un group.” Their workmanship differs somewhat from Bizen works of that time as it has more in common with Rai (来) blades from Kyōto or Aoe (青江) blades from neighboring Bitchū province. According to the *meikan*, the first generation Unshō was active around Kengen (乾元, 1302-1303) and the second generation around Bumpō (文保, 1317-1319). The first generation Unji is said to have been the son of the first generation Unshō and the first generation Unjū the son of the second generation Unshō.

This *tachi* shows an overall densely forged *ko-itame* that is mixed with *mokume* and that features *ji-nie*, fine *chikei*, towards the *mune* an irregular *jifu-utsuri* with dark *antai*, and towards the *ha* a linear *suji-utsuri*. The *hamon* is a *hosō-suguha* in *ko-nie-deki* with a tight *nioiguchi* and is mixed with *ko-gunome*, *ko-ashi*, and *yō* and thus although the blade is *mumei*, it can be attributed to Unshō. A masterwork by this smith of an elegant and relatively slender *tachi-sugata* and showing a *deki* with a calm *hamon*.