

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

naginata-naoshi wakizashi, shu-mei: Chōgi - Hon'a + kaō (長義・本阿「花押」) (Kōson, 光遜)

Measurements

nagasa 41.45 cm, *sori* 1.4 cm, *motohaba* 2.75 cm, *nakago-nagasa* 13.0 cm, no *nakago-sori*

Description

Keijō: *naginata-naoshi-zukuri*, *iori-mune*, wide *mihaba*, no noticeable taper towards the tip, high *shinogi*, particularly thin *kasane*, deep *sori* with some *sakizori*, scarce *fukura*

Kitae: overall rather standing-out *itame* that features *ji-nie*

Hamon: *nie*-laden and flamboyant *gunome* with a bright *nioiguchi* that is mixed with *koshi no hiraita-gunome*, angular *gunome*, some *togariba*, many *ashi* and *yō*, *kinsuji*, *sunagashi*, *yubashiri* and some prominent *yubashiri*-like *tobiyaki*

Bōshi: *midare-komi* which runs out in *yakitsume* and which shows fine *hakikake*

Horimono: traces of a thin *hi* can be seen next to the *shinogi* of the tang on both sides in the area of the *mekugi-ana*

Nakago: *ō-suriage*, *kirijiri*, *kiri-yasurime*, two *mekugi-ana*, the *sashi-omote* side bears about centrally under the second *mekugi-ana* the red-lacquer attribution “Chōgi” and the *ura* side the identically positioned inscription “Hon'a + kaō”

Explanation

It is said that Chōgi was a descendant of Osafune Sanenaga (長船真長) and together with Kanemitsu (兼光), he was one of the best smiths when it comes to the so-called Sōden-Bizen style, a style that was very popular among Nanbokuchō-period Bizen smiths. Extant date signatures of Chōgi range from Jowa (貞和, 1345-1350) to Kōryaku (康暦, 1379-1381). His workmanship shows a hardening in either *nioi-deki* or a *jiba* with a strong emphasis on *nie*, especially the latter interpretations are much more Sōshū-oriented than that of Kanemitsu. Accordingly, there was the saying in olden times that if a Bizen blade does not look like Bizen at all, it is a Chōgi. His *hamon* shows mostly more variety and ups and downs than that of Kanemitsu and his *kitae* is an *itame* with plenty of *ji-nie* and *chikei*.

This blade was once a *naginata* that has been shortened and reworked into a *wakizashi*. It is likely that the original blade was a classical *naginata* with little bulbousness towards the tip. The *kitae* is an overall rather standing-out *itame* that features *ji-nie* and the *hamon* is a *nie*-laden *gunome* that is mixed with *koshi no hiraita-gunome*, angular *gunome*, some *togariba*, many *ashi* and *yō*, *kinsuji*, *sunagashi*, *yubashiri* and some prominent *yubashiri*-like *tobiyaki*. The *ha* is flamboyant, rich in variety, and composed of complex elements and with the abundance of *ashi* and *yō*, the prominent presence of *nie*, the *hataraki* of the *jiba*, and the *yubashiri*-like *tobiyaki*, we recognize a known workmanship of Chōgi whereupon we are in agreement with Hon'ami Kōson's (本阿弥光遜, 1879-1955) attribution. The blade features a bright *nioiguchi* and is of an excellent *deki*.