

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-anā

Nakago: ō-suriage, kirijiri, kiri-yasurime, two mekugi-anā, the sashi-omote side bears about centrally under the second mekugi-anā 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*.