

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

tachi, mei: Bishū Osafune ?-mitsu - Ōan shichinen jūgatsu hi (備州長船○光・応安七年十月日) -
“Bishū Osafune ?-mitsu (Masamitsu), on a day of the tenth month of Ōan seven (1374)”

Measurements

nagasa 68.05 cm, *sori* 2.6 cm, *motohaba* 3.0 cm, *sakihaba* 1.9 cm, *kissaki-nagasa* 3.4 cm, *nakago-nagasa* 17.5 cm, no *nakago-sori*

Description

Keijō: *shinogi-zukuri, iori-mune*, relatively wide *mihaba*, no noticeable taper, deep *koshizori* that increases again towards the tip, *chū-kissaki*

Kitae: rather standing-out *itame* that is mixed with *mokume* and some *nagare* and that features *ji-nie*, fine *chikei*, and a *midare-utsuri*

Hamon: *ko-notare* in *nioi-deki* with *ko-nie* and a bright *nioiguchi* that is mixed with *gunome*, *togariba*, angular *gunome*, *ashi*, *yō*, a few *kinsuji* and *sunagashi*, and some *tobiyaki*, the elements of the *ha* are overall rather small dimensioned

Bōshi: *midare-komi* with pointed *kaeri* and fine *hakikake*

Horimono: on both sides a *bōhi* that ends in *marudome*

Nakago: a little bit *suriage*, *kirijiri*, both old and new *yasurime* are *katte-sagari*, foir *mekugi-ana* (three of which are plugged), starting above of the third *mekugi-ana* (the *ubu-mekugi-ana*) and towards the *nakago-mune*, the *haki-omote* side bears a small and finely chiseled *naga-me*, the *ura* side bears an identically positioned date

Explanation

Masamitsu (政光) was a Bizen Osafune smith from the Nanbokuchō period and one of the students of Kanemitsu (兼光). The earliest extant dated blade is from the Enbun era (延文, 1356-1361), i.e. the Nanbokuchō period, and the latest one from the Ōei era (応永, 1394-1428), i.e. the early Muromachi period, and so we have a good grasp of his active period. Like Tomomitsu (倫光) and Motomitsu (基光), Masamitsu too followed the style of master Kanemitsu. He hardened in various ways, e.g. in *notare*, *gunome*, and *suguha*, and a characteristic feature of Masamitsu is that his elements of the *ha* are overall rather small dimensioned.

This *tachi* shows a somewhat standing-out *itame* that is mixed with *mokume* and *nagare* and that features *ji-nie* and a *midare-utsuri*. The *hamon* is a *ko-notare* that is mixed with *gunome*, *togariba*, angular *gunome*, *ashi*, and *yō*, with the elements of the *ha* being overall rather small dimensioned. The *bōshi* is *midare-komi* with a pointed *kaeri* and although the character for *Masa* in the *mei* has become illegible, the described workmanship of the blade and the signature style clearly reflect the typical features of Masamitsu. The *sugata* and the *jiba* are in a very good condition and the date of Ōan seven makes this blade an important reference.