

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

tachi, mei: Bishū Osafune ... - ??-nen (備州長船「以下切」・○○○年八月「以下切」) - "Bishū Osafune (rest cut off) - ?? year of ??, eighth month (rest cut off)" (Masamitsu, 政光)

Measurements

nagasa 70.0 cm, *sori* 1.7 cm, *motohaba* 2.8 cm, *sakihaba* 1.85 cm, *kissaki-nagasa* 3.05 cm, *nakago-nagasa* 17.5 cm, only very little *nakago-sori*

Description

Keijō: *shinogi-zukuri, iori-mune*, normal *mihaba*, noticeable taper, high *shinogi*, deep *koshizori, chū-kissaki*

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

Hamon: *ko-notare* in *nioi-deki* with *ko-nie* and a bright and clear *nioiguchi* that is mixed with *gunome, togariba, koshi no hiraita* elements, *ko-ashi, yō*, and a few *kinsuji* and *sunagashi*, the elements of the *ha* are overall rather small dimensioned

Bōshi: *midare-komi* with a pointed and brief *kaeri* on the *omote* side and a *ko-maru-kaeri* on the *ura* side, with both sides showing *hakikake*

Nakago: *suriage*, very shallow *kurijiri, katte-sagari yasurime*, two *mekugi-ana* (of which one is plugged), the *haki-omote* side bears at the end of the tang and towards the *nakago-mune* a small and finely chiseled *mei* and the *ura* side a date on the same position, with parts of the signature being lost due to the shortening of the *nakago*

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.

The *haki-omote* side of this *tachi* bears the *mei* “Bishū Osafune”, with the rest being cut off. The signature style and the workmanship of the blade however allow an attribution to Masamitsu. The *kitae* is an overall standing-out *itame* that is mixed with *mokume* and some *nagare* and that features *ji-nie* and a *midare-utsuri*. The *hamon* is a *ko-notare* in *nioi-deki* with *ko-nie* that is mixed with *gunome*, *togariba*, *koshi no hiraita* elements, *ko-ashi*, and *yō*. The elements of the *ha* are overall rather small dimensioned which is a characteristic feature of this smith and with the clear and bright *nioiguchi*, we have here an excellently made blade by Masamitsu.