

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

katana, mumei: Shikkake (尻懸)

Measurements

nagasa 70.7 cm, *sori* 1.3 cm, *motohaba* 2.9 cm, *sakihaba* 1.8 cm, *kissaki-nagasa* 2.9 cm, *nakago-nagasa* 18.7 cm, *nakago-sori* 0.2 cm

Description

Keijō: shinogi-zukuri, iori-mune, relatively wide *mihaba*, noticeable taper, shallow *sori*, *chū-kissaki*
Kitae: itame that is mixed with *mokume* and *nagare* and that features plenty of *ji-nie* and fine *chikei*
Hamon: ko-nie-laden connected *ko-gunome* with a wide *nioiguchi* that is mixed with *midare*,
togariba, *ko-notare*, complexer *midare* elements, and plenty of fine *kinsuji* and *sunagashi*
Bōshi: midare-komi with a *ko-maru-kaeri* and much *hakikake* at the tip
Nakago: ō-suriage, kirijiri, sujikai-yasurime, four *mekugi-ana*, *mumei*

Explanation

The Shikkake School was one of the flourishing five major Yamato lineages and master Norinaga (則長) is regarded as its de facto founder. There exists *tantō* by Norinaga which are dated Bumpō three (文保, 1319) and Ryakuō three (暦応, 1340) which are signed with the supplements that they were made at the ages of 48 and 69 years respectively, on the basis of which we can calculate his year of birth as Bun'ei nine (文永, 1272). Apart from that, we know that this name was continuously used by Shikkake smiths until the Muromachi period. The workmanship of this school is characterized by basing on Yamato features, i.e. a high *shinogi*, a wide *shinogi-ji*, a *kitae* in *itame* which tends to *nagare*, and a *hamon* in *suguha-chō*, but that added with unique connected *ko-gunome* elements. Apart from that, we also know Shikkake works which are hardened in pure *suguha*.

This blade shows a *kitae* that is mixed with *nagare* and that features plenty of *ji-nie* and fine *chikei*, a *ko-nie-laden* connected *ko-gunome hamon* that is mixed with *togariba* and *ko-notare*, and a *bōshi* with plenty of *hakikake* whereupon we recognize the characteristics of the Yamato tradition and in particular those of the Shikkake School. The *jiba* is richer in *hataraki* like *chikei*, *kinsuji*, and *sunagashi* than usually seen with works attributed to this school and the blade is on top of that very healthy and of an excellent *deki*.