

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

katana, *mumei*: Enju (延寿)

Measurements

nagasa 68.3 cm, *sori* 1.1 cm, *motohaba* 2.9 cm, *sakihaba* 2.0 cm, *kissaki-nagasa* 3.7 cm, *nakago-nagasa* 17.35 cm, *nakago-sori* 0.1 cm

Description

Keijō: *shinogi-zukuri*, *mitsu-mune*, wide *mihaba*, no noticeable taper, high *shinogi*, shallow *sori*, somewhat elongated *chū-kissaki*

Kitae: *itame* that is mixed with *mokume* and that features *ji-nie*, fine *chikei*, and a *shirake-utsuri*

Hamon: *ko-nie*-laden *chū-suguha* that a wide and bright *nioiguchi* that is mixed on the *omote* side along the *monouchi* and on the *ura* side at the base with *hotsure* followed by a few small *yubashiri*, in addition, fine *kinsuji* and *sunagahsi* appear

Bōshi: *sugu* with a *maru-kaeri* and some *hakikake* at the tip on the *omote* side

Nakago: *ō-suriage*, very shallow *kurijiri*, very gently slanting *katte-sagari yasurime*, two *mekugi-ana*, *mumei*

Explanation

The Enju School of Higo province was founded by Tarō Kunimura (太郎国村) who is said to have been a grandson (from a daughter married into another family) of the Yamashiro master Rai Kuniyuki (来国行). The school then flourished from the end of the Kamakura to the Nanbokuchō period in the town of Waifu (隈府) which was located in the Kikuchi district (菊池郡) of Higo province. The school gave rise to many greatly skilled smiths, like for example Kuniyoshi (国吉), Kunitoki (国時), Kuniyasu (国泰), Kunitomo (国友), Kunisuke (国資), Kuninobu (国信), and Kunitsuna (国綱). The workmanships of these smiths is very similar and it can be said that the Enju style basically resembles the style of the Rai School with the difference that Enju blades show a more prominent amount of *masame* in the *kitae*, a *shirake-utsuri*, a *hamon* with a somewhat subdued *nioiguchi*, calmer *hataraki* within the *ha*, and a *bōshi* with a relatively large and round *kaeri* that runs back in a brief manner.

This blade shows an *itame* that is mixed with *mokume* and that features *ji-nie*, fine *chikeoi*, and a *shirake-utsuri*. The *hamon* is a *ko-nie*-laden *chū-suguha* that is mixed with *hotsure*, small *yubashiri*, and fine *kinsuji* and *sunagashi* and the *bōshi* has a prominently roundish *kaeri* whereupon we clearly recognize the characteristic features of the Enju School. The *kitae* is fine and excellently forged and the *hamon* is an calm and elegant *ko-nie*-laden *chū-suguha* with a bright *nioiguchi* and fine *hataraki* within the *ha*. Thus, we have here a blade with a particularly good *deki* among all works attributed to this school.