

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

katana, mumei: Ayanokōji (綾小路)

Measurements

nagasa 70.2 cm, *sori* 2.0 cm, *motohaba* 2.5 cm, *sakihaba* 1.55 cm, *kissaki-nagasa* 1.9 cm, *nakago-nagasa* 15.8 cm, *nakago-sori* 0.1 cm

Description

Keijō: shinogi-zukuri, iori-mune, slender *mihaba*, despite the *ō-suriage* a deep *koshizori*, *ko-kissaki*, elegant *sugata*

Kitae: fine and beautifully forged ko-itame that features *ji-nie* and a *nie-utsuri*

Hamon: ko-nie-laden suguba-chō with a wide and rather subdued *nioiguchi* that is mixed with *ko-chōji*, *ko-gunome*, *ko-midare*, some *karimata*, *ashi*, *yō*, and small dotted *yubashiri*, the *midare* elements are overall densely arranged

Bōshi: hakikake, tending to *yakisume*, and subdued

Nakago: ō-suriage, kirijiri, ō-sujikai yasurime, one *mekugi-ana*, *mumei*

Explanation

The Ayanokōji School was comprised of smiths like Sadatoshi (定利) and Sadayoshi (定吉) who were living in the Ayanokōji district of Kyōto. The *meikan* list Sadatoshi as having been active around Bun'ei (文永, 1264-1275) and one theory says that due to Sadatoshi living in close proximity to Rai Kuniyuki (来国行), the two smiths were making *daisaku* works for each other. The classical elegant workmanship of extant blades by Sadatoshi and Sadayoshi reminds us prima facie of Awataguchi Kuniyasu (粟田口国安) and their *hamon* consisting of closely arranged and small *midare* elements, a tendency towards *nijūba*, and a rather subdued *nioiguchi* suggest that they have been active somewhat earlier than traditionally stated in the *meikan*. Apart from that, we do see similarities in the workmanships of Sadatoshi and Rai Kuniyuki and it appears that the late years of the former overlapped with the early years of the latter.

This blade is *ō-suriage* and *mumei*. It shows a fine and beautifully forged *ko-itame* and a *suguba-chō* with a rather subdued *nioiguchi* that is mixed with *ko-chōji*, *ko-gunome*, *ko-midare*, and *karimata* and whose *midare* elements are densely arranged and as the *bōshi* features *hakikake*, we have here a highly dignified work that shows very well the characteristic features of the Ayanokōji School.