

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

*tantō, mei*: Bitchū no Kuni-jū Tsuguyoshi saku - Jōji sannen nigatsu hi (備中国住次吉作・貞治三年二月日) - “Made by Tsuguyoshi, resident of Bitchū province, on a day in the second month of Jōji three (1364)”

(with *origami* by Hon'ami Kōchū from Shōtoku four, 1714, and a *tantō* box)

## Measurements

*nagasa* 26.9 cm, *sori* 0.2 cm, *motohaba* 2.35 cm, *nakago-nagasa* 8.8 cm, *nakago-sori* 0.1 cm

## Description

*Keijō*: *hira-zukuri*, *iori-mune*, wide *mihaba*, *sun nobi*, thin *kasane*, some *sori*

*Kitae*: dense *ko-itame* that features *ji-nie*, fine *chikei*, prominent *jifu*, and a *midare-utsuri*

*Hamon*: *hoso-suguha* in *nioi-deki* with a tight and bright *nioiguchi* that is mixed with a few *ko-ashi* and with *kinsuji* along the upper half of the blade

*Bōshi*: *sugu* with a somewhat pointed *ko-maru-kaeri* on the *omote* and a *ko-maru-kaeri* on the *ura* side

*Nakago*: *ubu*, *ha-agari kurijiri*, *ō-sujikai yasurime*, two *mekugi-ana*, the *sashi-omote* side bears centrally under the first, the *ubu-mekugi-ana*, a thinly chiseled *naga-mei* and the *ura* side an identically positioned date

## Explanation

Tsuguyoshi (次吉) was with Tsugunao (次直) and Moritsugu (守次) one of the most representative Aoe smiths of the mid-Nanbokuchō period. These smiths either hardened in *suguha* or in a flamboyant *saka-chōji-midare* whereas it can be said that Tsuguyoshi focused more on a *suguha* and Tsugunao more on a *saka-chōji-midare*. In any case, a highlight of their workmanship is that the *nioiguchi* is tight, bright, and clear.

This blade has a wide *mihaba*, is *sun nobi*, a thin *kasane*, and some *sori* and shows thus the typical *tantō-sugata* of the mid-Nanbokuchō period, what matches the Jōji era this blade is dated with which was the peak of such shapes. The *kitae* is a dense *ko-itame* that features *ji-nie*, fine *chikei*, *jifu*, and a *midare-utsuri*. The *hamon* is a *hoso-suguha* in *nioi-deki* with a tight and bright *nioiguchi* that is mixed with a few *ko-ashi* and some *kinsuji* and therefore we clearly recognize the characteristic features of not only the Aoe School but also of Tsuguyoshi. The *suguha* is of a particularly calm nature and the *deki* of the blade is outstanding among all blades known by this smith. Also very valuable is the fact that the *tantō* is signed and dated, making this blade an important reference for studies on this smith.

The *tantō* comes with an *origami* that was issued by Hon'ami Kōchū (本阿弥光忠, ?-1725) in Shōtoku four (正徳, 1744), evaluating the blade with seven gold pieces, and a glossy black-lacquer *tantō* ox with a gold *makie* design of an arrangement of Chinese bellflowers. The piece was an heirloom of the noble Kan'in-no-miya (閑院宮) family and the fittings of the cords of the box show the chrysanthemum crest of this family in *kebori*.