

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

*katana*, *kinpun-mei*: Awataguchi Kunimitsu - Hon'a + *kaō* (栗田口国光・本阿「花押」) (Kōson, 光遜)

## Measurements

*nagasa* 71.2 cm, *sori* 1.9 cm, *motohaba* 2.8 cm, *sakihaba* 1.9 cm, *kissaki-nagasa* 3.0 cm, *nakago-nagasa* 22.2 cm, *nakago-sori* 0.2 cm

## Description

*Keijō*: *shinogi-zukuri*, *iori-mune*, relatively slender *mihaba*, noticeable taper, despite the *ō-suriage* a deep *koshizori*, *chū-kissaki*

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

*Hamon*: *ko-nie*-laden *suguha-chō* with a bright and clear *nioiguchi* that is mixed with a little *ko-gunome* and *ko-ashi*, the *habuchi* shows *hotsure*, *kinsuji*, and *sunagashi* in places

*Bōshi*: *sugu* with a brief *maru-kaeri* and with *kinsuji* and *hakikake*

*Horimono*: on both sides a *bōhi* that runs with *kaki-tōshi* through the tang

*Nakago*: *ō-suriage*, *ha-agari kurijiri*, *katte-sagari yasurime*, three *mekugi-ana*, the *sashi-omote* side bears on the bottom half and below of the third *mekugi-ana* and on the *hira-ji* of the tang the *kinpun-mei* "Awataguchi Kunimitsu", the *ura* side bears the identically positioned *kinpun-mei* "Hon'a + *kaō*"

## Explanation

It is said that Awataguchi Kunimitsu was the younger brother of Kuniyoshi (国吉) but there are only very few signed works of him extant. The most representative ones are the *jūyō-bunkazai tachi* of the Yōrōji (養老寺) in Gifu Prefecture and the *jūyō-bunkazai tachi* that is owned by the Kurokawa Institute of Ancient Cultures. Kunimitsu mostly forged a very dense and beautiful *jigane* with *ji-nie* and hardened a calm *suguha*.

This blade is *ō-suriage* and *mumei* and was attributed by Hon'ami Kōson (本阿弥光遜, 1879-1955) via a *kinpun-mei* to Awataguchi Kunimitsu. It is of an elegant shape and its *jiba* shows the above described characteristics whereupon we are in agreement with the period attribution. Thus we have here a masterwork that does not only show the qualities of the Awataguchi School but also the renowned characteristic features of master Kunimitsu.