

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

katana, mumei: Enju (延寿)

Measurements

nagasa 69.8 cm, *sori* 2.05 cm, *motohaba* 2.8 cm, *sakihaba* 1.8 cm, *kissaki-nagasa* 2.95 cm, *nakago-nagasa* 18.8 cm, *nakago-sori* 0.1 cm

Description

Keijō: shinogi-zukuri, iori-mune, normal mihaba, noticeable taper, relatively high shinoigi, deep toriizori, chū-kissaki

Kitae: itame that is mixed with *mokume* and *nagare* and that features *ji-nie*, fine *chikei*, and towards the *shinogi* a little bit of *shirake-utsuri*

Hamon: chū-suguha in *ko-nie-deki* with a wide and rather subdued *nioiguchi* that is mixed with some *ko-gunome*, *ko-ashi*, partially *aome* prominent *nie*, a little bit of *kuichigai-ba*, and a few *kinsuji* and *sunagashi*

Bōshi: sugu with an *ō-maru*-style *kaeri* and a little bit of *hakikake* at the tip

Nakago: ō-suriage, kirijiri, sujikai-yasurime, four 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 retains despite the *ō-suriage* a deep *toriizori*-style curvature. The *kitae* is an *itame* that is mixed with *mokume* and *nagare* and that features *ji-nie*, fine *chikei*, and a little bit of *shirake-utsuri*. The *hamon* is a *chū-suguha* in *ko-nie-deki* with a wide and rather subdued *nioiguchi* that is mixed with some *ko-gunome*, *ko-ashi*, a little bit of *kuichigai-ba*, and a few *kinsuji* and *sunagashi*, and with the Enju-typical *ō-maru*-style *kaeri*, the blade can be attributed to the Enju School. Thus, we are in agreement with the period attribution to Enju and we have here a blade with a noticeably well *deki* among all works attributed to this school.