

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

tantō, mei: Kunimitsu (国光) (*saiha*) (*meibutsu* Kojiritōshi-Shintōgo, 小尻通新藤五)
(with old *shirasaya* and *chiisagatana-koshirae* with a glossy brown lacquer *saya*)

Measurements

nagasa 29.5 cm, *sori* 0.2 cm, *motohaba* 2.8 cm, *nakago-nagasa* 10.1 cm, only very little *nakago-sori*

Description

Keijō: *hira-zukuri, mitsu-mune*, wide *mihaba* in relation to the *nagasa*, blade features some *sori*

Kitae: somewhat standing-out *itame* that is mixed with *mokume* and that features *ji-nie* and *chikei*

Hamon: *hiro-suguha-chō* in *ko-nie-deki* with a wide *nioiguchi* that tends a little bit to a gently undulating *notare* and that is mixed with *ko-ashi*, *hotsure*, *sunagashi*, and *kinsuji*, *ara-nie* appear at the *monouchi* and make this area tend towards *nie-kuzure*

Bōshi: gently undulating *notare* with a long running-back *ko-maru-kaeri*

Horimono: on both sides a wide *futo-hi* that ends in *marudome* and that features inside on the *omote* side a relief of a *sankozuka-ken* and on the *ura* side a relief of a *kurikara*

Nakago: *ubu, kurijiri, sujikai-yasurime*, two *mekugi-ana*, the *sashi-omote* side bears centrally under the first *mekugi-ana* a large dimensioned *niji-meい* which is affected by the second *mekugi-ana*

Explanation

In the mid-Edo period Kyōhō era (享保, 1716-1736), Hon'ami Kōchū (本阿弥光忠) did an investigation on all famous *meibutsu* swords which he presented to the *bakufu* under the title *Kyōhō Meibutsu Chō* (享保名物帳). The blades featured in this compilation were henceforth also referred to as *Kyōhō-meibutsu*.

This *tantō* is such a *Kyōhō-meibutsu*. It was once part of the Ōsaka-gyobutsu (大坂御物, the personal collection of treasure swords of Toyotomi Hideyoshi) but was damaged by fire when Ōsaka Castle fell in 1615. However, we learn from the *Kōtoku Katana Ezu* (光徳刀絵図) that it was later rehardened by the first generation Echizen Yasutsugu (越前康継). As this blade is of an excellent forging quality, Yasutsugu was able to recreate certain qualitative features of its initial *ha* and the *nie-kuzure* that appear in places as well as the *kinsuji* are truly exquisite.

The engravings of a *sankozuka-ken* and a *kurikara* as relief in a *hi* are gorgeous and as they are both highly sophisticated and powerful, it is possible that they had been cut by master engraver Daishinbō Yūkei (大進房祐慶). This blade was later a heirloom of the family of the Tokugawa *shōgun* but the origins of its nickname Kojiritōshi are unclear. It comes with an old *shirasaya* and a *chiisagatana-koshirae* that features a glossy brown lacquer *saya*.