

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

katana, mumei: Ko-Ichimonji (古一文字)

Measurements

nagasa 73.7 cm, *sori* 2.1 cm, *motohaba* 2.6 cm, *sakihaba* 1.6 cm, *kissaki-nagasa* 2.2 cm, *nakago-nagasa* 21.7 cm, only very little *nakago-sori*

Description

Keijō: *shinogi-zukuri*, *iori-mune*, rather slender *mihaba*, noticeable taper, deep *koshizori*, *ko-kissaki*

Kitae: rather standing-out *itame* that features *ji-nie* and a *midare-utsuri*

Hamon: *ko-nie*-laden *chōji* that is mixed with *ko-gunome*, *ko-midare*, *ko-ashi*, *yō*, *hotsure*, *sunagashi*, *kinsuji*, and small *tobiyaki*

Bōshi: almost *sugu* and running out in *yakitsume* manner, which only little hardening left

Nakago: *ō-suriage*, shallow *kurijiri*, *kiri-yasurime*, two *mekugi-ana*, *mumei*

Explanation

The Fukuoka-Ichimonji School was founded by Norimune (則宗) in the early Kamakura period and had its peak in the middle Kamakura period. Norimune and other smiths from the early Kamakura period, like for example Sukemune (助宗), Narimune (成宗), Naomune (尚宗), Muneyoshi (宗吉), Munetada (宗忠), Shigehisa (重久), or Sadazane (貞真) are referred to as Ko-Ichimonji, i.e. lit. “early Ichimonji.” Their workmanship differs from the flamboyant Ichimonji style of the mid-Kamakura period as their *jiba* as well as their *sugata* has still a strong resemblance of Ko-Bizen works.

This blade shows a rather standing-out *itame* that features *ji-nie* and a *midare-utsuri*. The *hamon* is a *ko-nie*-laden *chōji* that is mixed with *ko-gunome*, *ko-midare*, *ko-ashi*, *yō*, *kinsuji*, and *sunagashi* and so the *deki* is of a classical elegance which reminds us of Ko-Bizen at first glance. However, there are prominent *ko-chōji* in places and the *yakiba* gives overall a more sophisticated impression and so the blade rather attributes to Ko-Ichimonji. A particularly elegant work among all blades attributed to this group.