

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

wakizashi, mei: Bishū Osafune-jū Motoshige - Enbun ninen jūgatsu hi (備州長船住元重・延文二年十月日) - “Motoshige, resident of Osafune in Bizen province, on a day in the tenth month of Enbun two (1357)”
(with old *shirasaya*)

Measurements

nagasa 32.3 cm, *sori* 0.5 cm, *motohaba* 2.8 cm, *nakago-nagasa* 9.7 cm, *nakago-sori* 0.1 cm

Description

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

Kitae: standing-out *ō-itame* that is mixed with *mokume* and *nagare* and that features *ji-nie*, fine *chikei*, *jifu* that is partially accompanied by *antai*, and a wide *sugu-utsuri*

Hamon: *hiro-suguha-chō* in *nie-deki* that tends a little bit to a gently undulating *notare* and that is mixed with *gunome*, the upper half of the *omote* side shows connected angular *gunome* elements and there are *ko-ashi*, *hotsure* towards the *ha-machi*, *kinsuji*, *sunagashi*, and small *yubashiri*

Bōshi: *sugu* with a somewhat pointed *kaeri*

Horimono: on the *omote* side a *bonji* and a *kurikara*, on the *ura* side a *sankozuka-ken*

Nakago: *ubu*, *kurijiri* that tends to *ha-agari*, *sujikai-yasurime*, two *mekugi-ana*, the *sashi-omote* side bears centrally under the second, the *ubu-mekugi-ana*, a *naga-mei* and the *ura* side an identically positioned date

Explanation

Motoshige (元重) was a Bizen Osafune School smith but belonged to a different local lineage than for example Kanemitsu (兼光) and Chōgi (長義). We know dated works from the end of the Kamakura period, i.e. the Shōwa era (正和, 1312-1317), to the mid-Nanbokuchō period, i.e. the Jōji era (貞治, 1362-1368), and there exists the theory that two generations have been active in that period of time. As for Motoshige's workmanship, he forged a *kitae* that is mixed with *nagare-masame* and *jifu* and hardened a *hamon* with prominent angular *gunome*, slanting elements, and *hataraki* like slanting *ashi* and *yō*, and so with the pointed *kaeri*, we recognize certain Aoe elements, with this tendency towards Aoe being thus regarded as a characteristic feature of Motoshige.

This *wakizashi* shows a standing-out *ō-itame* that is mixed with *mokume* and *nagare* and that features *ji-nie*, fine *chikei*, *jifu* that is partially accompanied by *antai*, and a wide *sugu-utsuri*. The *hamon* is a *suguha-chō* that tends in *nie-deki* that tends a little bit to a gently undulating *notare* and that is mixed with *gunome*. The upper half of the *omote* side shows connected angular *gunome* elements and there are *ko-ashi*, *kinsuji*, and *sunagashi*, and with the somewhat pointed *kaeri*, we clearly recognize in the *jiba* the characteristic features of Motoshige.

The old extant *shirasaya* has a *sayagaki* which states that the blade was once part of a bequest of the Owari-Tokugawa family and then presented to the family of the Tokugawa *shōgun*.