

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

katana, *mumei*: Ayanokōji (綾小路)

Measurements

nagasa 71.1 cm, *sori* 2.4 cm, *motohaba* 2.65 cm, *sakihaba* 1.7 cm, *kissaki-nagasa* 2.6 cm, *nakago-nagasa* 20.8 cm, *nakago-sori* 0.1 cm

Description

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

Kitae: *ko-itame* that is mixed with *nagare*, *masame*, and *ō-hada* and that features plenty of *ji-nie* and a *nie-utsuri*

Hamon: *ko-nie*-laden *suguha-chō* with a partially subdued *nioiguchi* that is mixed with *ko-gunome*, *ko-chōji*, *ko-midare*, *ashi*, *yō*, and fine *kinsuji* and *sunagashi*, the *midare* elements are densely arranged

Bōshi: *sugu* with *hakikake* that make it appear as running out in *yakitsume* manner

Nakago: *ō-suriage*, *kirijiri*, gently slanting *katte-sagari yasurime*, one *mekugi-ana*, *mumei*

Explanation

The Ayanokōji School was comprised of smiths like Sadatoshi (定利) and Sadayoshi (定吉) who were living in the Ayanokōji district of Kyōto. The *meikan* list Sadatoshi as having been active around Bun'ei (文永, 1264-1275) and one theory says that due to Sadatoshi living in close proximity to Rai Kuniyuki (来国行), the two smiths were making *daisaku* works for each other. The classical elegant workmanship of extant blades by Sadatoshi and Sadayoshi reminds us *prima facie* of Awataguchi Kuniyasu (粟田口国安) and their *hamon* consisting of closely arranged and small *midare* elements, a tendency towards *nijūba*, and a rather subdued *nioiguchi* suggest that they have been active somewhat earlier than traditionally stated in the *meikan*. Apart from that, we do see similarities in the workmanships of Sadatoshi and Rai Kuniyuki and it appears that the late years of the former overlapped with the early years of the latter.

This blade is *ō-suriage* and *mumei* but still maintains a very beautiful *tachi-sugata*. It shows a dense *ko-itame* with *nagare*, *masame*, and plenty of *ji-nie* and a *ko-nie*-laden *suguha-chō* with a partially subdued *nioiguchi* that is mixed with *ko-gunome*, *ko-chōji*, and *ko-midare* and whose *midare* elements are densely arranged. The *bōshi* features *hakikake* and thus we have here a masterwork that clearly shows the characteristic features of the Ayanokōji School.