

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

katana, *mumei*: Den Yoshikage (伝義景)

Measurements

nagasa 69.0 cm, *sori* 1.35 cm, *motohaba* 3.0 cm, *sakihaba* 2.3 cm, *kissaki-nagasa* 5.2 cm, *nakago-nagasa* 17.8 cm, no *nakago-sori*

Description

Keijō: *shinogi-zukuri*, *iori-mune*, wide *mihaba*, no noticeable taper, thick *kasane*, shallow *sori*, *ō-kissaki*

Kitae: standing-out *itame* that is mixed with *mokume* and that features *ji-nie*, fine *chikei*, some *jifu* in places, and a faint *utsuri*

Hamon: *ko-nie*-laden *chū-suguha-chō* that is mixed with various different elements like *gunome*, angular sections, *ko-gunome*, some *togariba*, *ko-ashi*, *yō*, some *mura-nie* in places, *kinsuji*, *sunagashi*, *yubashiri* and small *yubashiri*-like *tobiyaki*, the elements of the *ha* are overall rather small dimensioned

Bōshi: *sugu-chō* with a pointed *kaeri* on the *omote* and a somewhat pointed *kaeri* on the *ura* side, both sides feature *hakikake*, *mura-nie*, and *yubashiri*

Horimono: on both sides a *bōhi* that runs as *kaki-nagashi* into the tang

Nakago: *ō-suriage*, shallow *kurijiri*, *katte-sagari yasurime*, three *mekugi-ana*, *mumei*

Explanation

Since olden times, there exist several theories on the affiliation of Osafune Yoshikage (義景), some of which stating that he studied with Kanemitsu (兼光) whilst others state that he was a student of Chōgi (長義). His workmanship and the use of *gyaku-tagane* in the *mei* (partially opposite stroke order than written with a brush) however, has lead in recent years to the theory that he may have rather been an Osafune side line smith like for example Chikakage (近景) and Morikage (盛景), a theory which since has become more and more accepted.

This blade shows a standing-out *itame* that is mixed with *mokume* and that features *ji-nie*, fine *chikei*, some *jifu*, and a faint *utsuri*. The *hamon* is a *ko-nie*-laden *chū-suguha-chō* that is mixed with various different elements like *gunome*, angular sections, *ko-gunome*, some *togariba*, *ko-ashi*, *yō*, *kinsuji*, and *sunagashi*. As the elements of the *ha* are overall rather small dimensioned, the *ha* is *ko-nie*-laden, the appearance of the *hataraki* within the *ha*, and as the *bōshi* shows a pointed *kaeri*, we see characteristic features of Yoshikage and the attribution to this smith is thus the most appropriate one. The blade is with its wide *mihaba*, *ō-kissaki*, and shallow *sori* of a large and magnificent shape that truly reflects the typical shapes from the heydays of the Nanbokuchō period and the *yakiba* is with its *yubashiri* and *yubashiri*-like *tobiyaki* very tasteful. A masterwork among all blades attributed to this smith.