

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

*tachi, mei*: Ichi Kenmu gannen jūnigatsu hi (一 建武元年十二月日) - "Ichi, on a day in the twelfth month of Kenmu one (1334)"

## Measurements

*nagasa* 77.4 cm, *sori* 2.0 cm, *motohaba* 2.95 cm, *sakihaba* 2.0 cm, *kissaki-nagasa* 3.3 cm, *nakago-nagasa* 21.9 cm, only very little *nakago-sori*

## Description

*Keijō*: *shinogi-zukuri*, *iori-mune*, rather wide *mihaba*, long *nagasa*, noticeable taper, *funbari*, shallow *koshizori* that increases again towards the tip, rather elongated *chū-kissaki*

*Kitae*: dense *itame* that is partially mixed with *mokume* and *nagare* and that features *ji-nie*, fine *chikei*, and a *midare-utsuri*

*Hamon*: *chōji* in *nioi-deki* with *ko-nie* that is mixed with *gunome*, *togariba*, *ashi*, *yō*, *kinsuji*, *sunagashi*, and some *tobiyaki* in places, the elements of the *ha* are overall rather small dimensioned that tend to slant

*Bōshi*: *midare-komi* with a rather pointed *kaeri* that features plenty of *hakikake* and makes the *bōshi* tend to *kaen*

*Nakago*: *ubu*, *kurijiri* that tends to *ha-agari*, *sujikai-yasurime*, two *mekugi-ana*, the *haki-omote* side bears about centrally above of the first *mekugi-ana* a large chiseled character for *Ichi* and below and towards the *nakago-mune* a smallish date that starts below of the second, the *ubu-mekugi-ana*

## Explanation

The two major currents of Kamakura period sword making in Bizen province were Ichimonji and Osafune. The Ichimonji School flourished subsequently and in the Nanbokuchō period in locations like Fukuoka, Yoshioka, and Iwato and gave rise to many great master smiths. The name of this school goes back to some of its smith signing with the character for "One" (*ichi*), or with the character for "One" followed by an individual name below or just an individual name. The Yoshioka-Ichimonji School particularly thrived after the Fukuoka-Ichimonji School had its peak, i.e. from the end of the Kamakura to the Nanbokuchō period. Representative masters from this school were for example Sukemitsu (助光), Sukeyoshi (助吉), Sukeshige (助茂), Suketsugu

(助次), and Sukeyoshi (助義). The Yoshioka-Ichimonji smiths did harden in a flamboyant and large dimensioned *midareba* as their Fukuoka-Ichimonji colleagues did, although more rarely, as they focused more on a *midare* with a prominent amount of *gunome* whose elements are rather small dimensioned.

Although this blade bears in the upper half of the tang just a largely chiseled character for *Ichi*, the execution of this character and the interpretation of the *jiba* attributes it to the Yoshioka-Ichimonji School. The *kitae* is a dense *itame* that features *ji-nie* and a *midare-utsuri*. The *hamon* is a *chōji* in *nioi-deki* with *ko-nie* that is mixed with *gunome*, *togarinba*, *ashi*, and *yō* whose elements are overall rather small dimensioned and tend to slant. Thus, we recognize in the *jiba*, which is excellent, the characteristic features of this school. Admirable is that the blade is of an *ubu tachi-sugata* with a long *nagasa* and feels heavy in the hand. Apart from that, the blade is not only signed *Ichi* but also dated, which is very rare for the Yoshioka-Ichimonji School, and so we have here also an important reference work.