

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

tantō, mei: Fujiwara Sanekage - Jōji rokunen nigatsu hi (藤原真景・貞治六年二日) - "Fujiwara Sanekage, on a day in the second month of Jōji six (1367)"

Measurements

nagasa 28.9 cm, only a hint of *sori*, *motohaba* 2.4 cm, *nakago-nagasa* 9.7 cm, no *nakago-sori*

Description

Keijō: hira-zukuri, iori-mune, the *mihaba* is wide in relation to the *nagasa*, thick *kasane*, a hint of *sori*

Kitae: rather standing-out *itame* that is mixed with *mokume* and some *nagare* in places and that features *chikei*, plenty of *ji-nie*, and *jifu*, the steel is blackish

Hamon: *nie-laden ko-notare* with a wide *nioiguchi* that is mixed with *gunome*, many *kinsuji* and *sunagashi*, *yubashiri*, and *muneyaki*

Bōshi: *midare-komi* with a rather pointed *kaeri* on the *omote* and a *maru-kaeri* on the *ura* side, the *kaeri* runs back on both sides in a long fashion

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

Nakago: *ubu, ha-agari kurijiri, sujikai-yasurime*, one *mekugi-ana*, the *sashi-omote* side bears about centrally under the *mekugi-ana* a four-character signature and the *ura* side, also under the *mekugi-ana* but more towards the *nakago-mune*, a date

Explanation

It is said that Kashū Sanekage was a student of Etchū Norishige (則重) but when we take into consideration extant dated works of Norishige from the eras Shōwa (正和, 1312-1317) and Gen'ō (元応, 1319-1321) and such of Sanekage from Jōji (貞治, 1362-1368), these dates appear too far apart to suggest a direct relationship. Thus, it is more likely that Sanekage was indirectly influenced by Norishige or rather his way of making swords.

This *tantō* shows a rather standing-out *itame* that is mixed with *mokume* and some *nagare* and that features *chikei* and plenty of *ji-nie*. The *hamon* is a *nie-laden ko-notare* with a wide *nioiguchi* that is mixed with *gunome*, many *kinsuji* and *sunagashi*, *yubashiri*, and *muneyaki*. The *kitae* also shows *jifu* and the steel is blackish whereas we recognize northern characteristics and with the *nie-laden yakiba* and the plenty of *kinsuji* and *sunagashi*, we arrive at the lineage of Norishige, in particular at the interpretation of Kashū Sanekage. Signed works of this smith are rare, what is even more true for dated works, which makes this blade a very important reference. In addition, it is in a very good condition.