

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

katana, *mumei*: Ichimonji (一文字)

Measurements

nagasa 67.8 cm, *sori* 1.9 cm, *motohaba* 2.7 cm, *sakihaba* 1.9 cm, *kissaki-nagasa* 3.0 cm, *nakago-nagasa* 16.4 cm, no *nakago-sori*

Description

Keijō: *shinogi-zukuri*, *iori-mune*, normal *mihaba*, no noticeable taper, deep *sori*, rather compact *chū-kissaki*

Kitae: dense *ko-itame* that is mixed with *nagare-masame* and that features *ji-nie*, fine *chikei*, and a *midare-utsuri*, the steel is bright

Hamon: *chōji-midare* in *nioi-deki* with *ko-nie* that is mixed with *ōbusa-chōji*, *gunome*, *togariba*, many *ashi* and *yō*, and a few *kinsuji* and *sunagashi*

Bōshi: *midare-komi* with *hakikake* and a rather pointed *kaeri* that runs back with some *midare*

Nakago: *ō-suriage*, *kurijiri*, *ō-sujikai yasurime*, three *mekugi-ana*, *mumei*

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 Ichimonji workmanship focuses on a characteristic *chōji-midare* and particularly unique is the flamboyant *ō-chōji* and *jūka-chōji* of the mid-Kamakura period Fukuoka-Ichimonji School.

This blade shows a dense *ko-itame* that features a *midare-utsuri* and a flamboyant *chōji-midare hamon* in *nioi-deki* with *ko-nie* that is mixed with *ōbusa-chōji*, *gunome*, many *ashi* and *yō* whereupon we clearly recognize the characteristic features of the mid-Kamakura period Ichimonji School. The blade is in a very healthy condition with much *hira-niku* left and the bright *jigane* with its *ji-nie* deserves particular mention. A masterwork among all blades attributed to this school.