

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

katana, mumei: Senju'in (千手院)

Measurements

nagasa 68.7 cm, *sori* 2.0 cm, *motohaba* 2.9 cm, *sakihaba* 2.05 cm, *kissaki-nagasa* 3.0 cm, *nakago-nagasa* 22.4 cm, *nakago-sori* 0.2 cm

Description

Keijō: shinogi-zukuri, iori-mune, normal mihaba, high shinogi, deep koshizori, chū-kissaki

Kitae: itame that is mixed with some *nagare* and *ō-hada* and that features *ji-nie* and a little bit of *jifu*

Hamon: ko-nie-laden suguha-chō that tends somewhat to a gently undulating *notare* and that is mixed with *ko-gunome*, *ashi*, *yō*, and *kinsuji* and *sunagashi* all over the blade, the upper half of the *omote* and the lower half of the *ura* side show *hotsure*, *nijūba*, and *kuichigai-ba*

Bōshi: on the omote side hakikake, nie-kuzure, and appearing as kaen, on the ura side midare-komi with a brief *ko-maru-kaeri* and *hakikake* at the tip

Horimono: on the omote side a bōhi and on the ura side a futasuji-hi which run both as kaki-nagashi down into the lower half of the tang

Nakago: ō-suriage, kirijiri, katte-sagari yasurime, two mekugi-ana, mumei

Explanation

At the Western foot of Mt. Wakakusa (若草山) in Nara there is the Senjudō (千手堂) which enshrines the Thousand-Armed Avalokiteśvara (*Senju-Kannon* in Japanese), and the group of swordsmiths who worked in the vicinity of this temple is traditionally referred to as Senju'in School. The school is the oldest of all the five major Yamato schools and old documents state that the two Senju'in masters Yukinobu (行信) and Shigehiro (重弘) were active as early as in the late Heian period. However, no signed works are extant of these two smiths and for whatever reason, signed Senju'in works remain rare throughout all periods.

This blade is *ō-suriage* and *mumei*. It shows a *kitae* in *itame* which is mixed with some *nagare* and which features *ji-nie*. The *yakiba* is *nie-laden* and is composed of complex and small dimensioned *midaere* elements, with the *habuchi* featuring *hotsure*, *nijūba*, *kuichigai-ba*, *kinsuji*, and *sunagashi*, and with the *bōshi* featuring *hakikake* and *nie-kuzure* and appearing as *kaen*, we clearly recognize the characteristics of the Yamato tradition, i.e. among the five major local lineages particularly those of the Senju'in School. A masterwork from this school which dates from the end of the Kamakura to the early Nanbokuchō period.