

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

tachi, mumei: Ko-Ichimonji (古一文字)

Measurements

nagasa 77.95 cm, *sori* 3.1 cm, *motohaba* 2.8 cm, *sakihaba* 1.75 cm, *kissaki-nagasa* 2.4 cm, *nakago-nagasa* 18.7 cm, *nakago-sori* 0.3 cm

Description

Keijō: *shinogi-zukuri*, *iori-mune*, rather slender *mihaba*, noticeable taper, some *funbari*, deep *koshizori* that bends down towards the tip, *ko-kissaki*

Kitae: rather standing-out *itame* that features *ji-nie*, fine *chikei*, and a *midare-utsuri*

Hamon: *nie-laden ko-midare* mixed with *ko-gunome* along the lower half and a gently undulating *notare-chō* along the upper half that is wider than the *ko-gunome* section and that is mixed with *ko-ashi*, *yō*, *sunagashi*, and *kinsuji*

Bōshi: *sugu* with a brief *ko-maru-kaeri*

Nakago: *ubu*, *kurijiri*, *sujikai-yasurime*, one *mekugi-ana*, *mumei*

Explanation

The Fukuoka-Ichimonji School was founded by Norimune (則宗) in the early Kamakura period and had its peak in the middle Kamakura period. Norimune and other smiths from the early Kamakura period, like for example Sukemune (助宗), Narimune (成宗), Naomune (尚宗), Muneyoshi (宗吉), Munetada (宗忠), Shigehisa (重久), or Sadazane (貞真) are referred to as Ko-Ichimonji, i.e. lit. “early Ichimonji.” Their workmanship differs from the flamboyant Ichimonji style of the mid-Kamakura period as their *jiba* as well as their *sugata* has still a strong resemblance of Ko-Bizen works.

This *tachi* is *ubu* and is with its rather slender *mihaba*, *ko-kissaki*, and deep *koshizori* of an elegant *sugata*. It shows a rather standing-out *itame* that features *ji-nie* and a *midare-utsuri* and a *nie-laden hamon* with *kinsuji* and *sunagashi* which is different in the upper and the lower half. That is, the lower half appears as a mix of *ko-midare* and *ko-gunome* and the upper half of a wider, gently undulating *notare-chō* that is mixed with *ko-ashi* and *yō*. Thus, the blade reflects the delicate classical taste of Ko-Ichimonji works and is a highly elegant masterwork with an excellent *deki* among all blades attributed to this group.