

**UK Sword Reg No. 99****Type:** Shinshinto tanto**Nagasa:** 24.4 cm**Moto-haba:** 3.0 cm**Saki-haba:** 2.2 cm**Sugata:** Broad hira-zukuri, iori-mune and mu-zori (no curvature)**Jihada:** Mostly a tight itame almost muji-hada but some indistinct ayasugi-hada apparent near the hamon.**Hamon:** A rather pointed and quite regular gunome in nie-deki. The boshi is slightly midare-komi, ko-maru and has kaeri.**Nakago:** Ubu with one mekugi-ana, yoko-yasurime, signed on the omote FUJIWARA SADATOSHI.

The robust shape of the blade together with the very tight jihada and the light patina on the nakago, clearly indicate shinshinto workmanship. The mei is boldly and confidently carved in large characters. The ayasugi-hada, although confined to the area near to the hamon, might indicate that the blade is associated with the revival of the Gassan school in Osaka. This is reinforced by the inclusion of the character SADA as the first character of "Sadatoshi". Indeed the calligraphy of this particular character closely resembles that of the famous Gassan Sadakazu.



However, I can find no record of this swordsmith in the Gassan school, although the present day Gassan is also named Sadatoshi. Further the inclusion of the old clan name “Fujiwara” is not associated with the Gassan school and the ayasugi-hada is not as prominent as might be expected in Gassan workmanship.

Ayasugi-hada might be termed as a defining characteristic of the Gassan school but it is usually very prominent and may also be found elsewhere, particularly in the Naminohira school from Satsuma in Kyushu. The Bungo Takeda school, also from Kyushu, often signed with a four character signature, the first two of which were “Fujiwara” and later blades of this school are quite often referred to as *Fujiwara-Takeda*. It may be, therefore, that this sword is an unrecorded and possibly amateur smith, associated with or imitating, the Bungo Takeda school in the Bakamatsu period (19<sup>th</sup> century – end of the Tokugawa period) or at least hailing from Kyushu.

The NBTHK designated this blade as Hozon Token but the origami only states that the blade is shinshinto.

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