

# Kōdōkan Jūdō's Three Orphaned Forms of Counter Techniques – Part 3: The *Katame-waza ura-no-kata* “Forms of Reversing Controlling Techniques”

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## Abstract

**Background & study aim:** The purpose of the present paper is to provide a comprehensive review of *katame-waza ura-no-kata* [“Forms of Reversing Throwing Techniques”], a non-officially accepted *kata* of *Kōdōkan jūdō* made famous by the late Mifune Kyūzō, of which the date of creation has not been previously established, nor under what circumstances it was created or what its sources of inspiration were.

**Material & methods:** To achieve this, we offer a careful critical analysis of the available literature and rare source material on this *kata*.

**Results:** *Katame-waza ura-no-kata* was finalized by Itō Kazuo (1898-1974) in June 1970 mainly based on techniques Itō had learned from his teacher Mifune Kyūzō. Mifune, in turn, drew his inspiration of the *nige-waza* [escaping techniques] and *kaeshi-waza* [countering] included in the *kata* likely from intellectual ideas of Takahashi Kazuyoshi and *newaza* [ground fighting] techniques perfected primarily by Oda Jōin, Mifune himself and to a lesser extent possibly by Toku Sanbō, Kawakami Chū, and others. *Katame-waza ura-no-kata* adheres to the same structure as *katame-no-kata* hence is divided in three series of five techniques each followed up by a counter-control technique. *Katame-waza ura-no-kata* is a *randori-no-kata* form. The objective of the *kata* is not to copy a supposed gold standard performance that then needs to be evaluated and scored by a jury, but to develop the ability of performing *jūdō* at the supra-mechanical level of *myōwaza* [unexplainable sophisticated technique], irrespective of differences in minute technical details.

**Conclusions:** *Katame-waza ura-no-kata* is an exercise devised by the late *jūdō* master Itō Kazuo, which similarly to how *katame-no-kata* complements *nage-no-kata*, serves as a complement to *nage-waza ura-no-kata*. It is a valuable training exercise of which the practice is intended to contribute to developing the highest levels of *jūdō* technical ability. Sadly, the *kata* remains largely unfamiliar to most *jūdōka* due to a lack of qualified instructors and its current status as a non-officially accepted *Kōdōkan kata*.

**Key words:** grappling • history • Jigoro Kano • judo • *kaeshi-waza* • *kata* • Kodokan • Kazuo Ito • Kyuzo Mifune • *newaza* • *ura-no-kata* • *ura-waza*

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## INTRODUCTION

In the 1980s, after having learnt of the existence of a 1955 16mm *jūdō* film featuring the legendary Japanese *jūdō* master Mifune Kyūzō 三船久蔵, a rare *Kōdōkan jūdan* 十段 (10<sup>th</sup> degree), we were intrigued by two *kata* which Mifune demonstrated in the movie and which we had never heard anything about. These were the *nage-waza ura-no-kata* 投業裏の形 [Forms of reversing throwing

techniques] and Mifune's *Sōen goshinjutsu* 三船九段 案護身術 [Mifune Kyūzō's personal self-defense] first promulgated by him when he was still a 9<sup>th</sup> *dan* holder. So, naturally we were interested in finding additional resources and learning more about these *kata*.

Unfortunately, we were unable to locate anyone in Europe who seemed to have been intimately familiar

*Jūdō* - is a Japanese form of pedagogy, created by Kanō Jigorō, based *inter alia* on Neo-Confucian values, traditional Japanese martial arts, and modern Western principles developed by John Dewey, John Stuart Mill, and Herbert Spencer.

*Kaeshi-waza* - reverse or counter techniques, also called *ura-waza*.

*Kata* - predetermined and choreographed physical exercises, which together with free exercises (*randori*), lectures (*kōgi*) and discussions (*mondō*) form the four critical pillars of *Kōdōkan jūdō* education.

*Kōdōkan* - the specific name of his school and style of *budō* as given by its founder Kanō Jigorō (1860-1938)

*Mifune Kyūzō* - a most celebrated *Kōdōkan jūdō* 10<sup>th</sup> *dan*-holder, born in 1883, died in 1965.

*Ura-waza* - reverse or counter techniques, also called *kaeshi-waza*.

with these *kata*, and who could provide instruction in it. However, on February 19, 1987 we received from André H.F. Le Capitaine, the General Secretary of the *International Martial Arts Federation – Europe* (IMAF-Europe), a photocopy of a book in Japanese that had been presented to him on June 23, 1982, by Satō Shizuya 佐藤静彌 (1929-2011), *Kōdōkan* 6<sup>th</sup> *dan*, at that time the Secretary-General of the worldwide International Martial Arts Federation (IMAF) or *Kokusai Budōin ~ Kokusai Budō Renmei* 国際武道院・国際武道聯盟 [1]. The book was authored by Itō Kazuo 伊藤四男 (1898-1974), *Kōdōkan* 9<sup>th</sup> *dan* [2]. In addition to containing descriptions of *nage-waza ura-no-kata*, Itō's book contained a second *kata*, called *katame-waza ura-no-kata* 固め技裏の形, a *newaza* 寝技 [ground fighting techniques] *kata* which we had never heard about. As we were at the time very keen on expanding our knowledge of *newaza*, we were very interested in mastering this *kata*.

We learned that Satō had been a student of the in 1974 deceased Itō, and given that he functioned as Itō's *uke* in the book, it was likely that he too had learnt these *kata*. Unfortunately for us, Satō during most of his foreign activities was focusing more on *Nihon Jūjutsu* than on *jūdō*, and on public relations and administrative tasks for his organization, the *Kokusai Budōin ~ Kokusai Budō Renmei* of IMAF, so that in the end we were never able to learn the *kata* directly from him either. However, we continued our research into the *katame-waza ura-no-kata* over the next 20 years and were struck by how unfamiliar everyone was with it. Whilst we were able to vastly expand our knowledge on the *nage-waza ura-no-kata*, no one seemed to be able to tell us anything about the *katame-waza ura-no-kata*.

Many years later in Japan we were provided with an opportunity to collaborate with Ochiai Toshiyasu 落合俊保, *Kōdōkan* 8<sup>th</sup> *dan*, nephew and former student of the late Kuhara Yoshiyuki 久原義之 (1906-1985), *Kōdōkan* 9<sup>th</sup> *dan*. Ochiai enthusiastically shared his knowledge with us on the *nage-waza ura-no-kata*, which he had learnt directly from his uncle Kuhara, who in turn had learnt directly from Mifune Kyūzō 三船久蔵 (1893-1965), the *kata's* creator. However, despite Ochiai's extensive knowledge about some of the unusual *kata* of *jūdō* he himself was neither teaching nor practicing *katame-waza ura-no-kata*.

With the development of the Internet, *jūdō* information became accessible to almost everyone, and freely accessible channels such as *YouTube* brought both common and less common *jūdō* techniques to anybody's computer screen who cared to log on to a *jūdō*

site. That being said, despite this significant development no material new information about the *katame-waza ura-no-kata* emerged, and to this day there is not a single recorded demonstration of this *kata* available on the Internet, despite several practical demonstrations of *nage-waza ura-no-kata* being there. This illustrates the rarity of this *kata* even among the most committed *jūdō kata* enthusiasts.

It is the purpose of the present paper to provide a comprehensive study of *katame-waza ura-no-kata* and reflect on what extent they have or have not established themselves as a common part of *jūdō* practice in Japan and abroad. We aim to address this acute shortage of information regarding both of these *kata*.

Our research questions are as follows:

- Under what circumstances and by whom was *katame-waza ura-no-kata* created ?
- What are the contents and theoretical foundations of *katame-waza ura-no-kata* ?
- Who practices *katame-waza ura-no-kata* and where can it be observed and studied ?
- Why is *katame-waza ura-no-kata* so rare and why are they not included in most *kata* records, *kata* teaching curricula and instructional texts ?

To address these questions and achieve our purpose, we offer a critical evaluation of the available literature and source material on this *kata*. Rare material drawn from original and reliable sources will also be introduced to support the drawing of definitive conclusions. In this way, this paper offers an important contribution to the existing knowledge base of *Kōdōkan jūdō* with implications for the current *jūdō* syllabus. Furthermore, it represents the only critical scholarly study of this *kata* in both Western languages and Japanese.

## THE POSITION OF NON-OFFICIAL JŪDŌ KATA VIS-À-VIS OFFICIAL KŌDŌKAN JŪDŌ KATA

We have previously explained that within the official list of the *ten kata* of *Kōdōkan jūdō* only two *kata* were conceived after the death of Kanō in May 1938 and thus were never formally approved by him. These two *kata* were added in 1943 and 1956 respectively, when the *Kōdōkan* introduced its Self-Defense Methods for Women, called *joshi jūdō goshinhō* 女子柔道護身法 and a modern *Kōdōkan* Self-Defense Method, called *Kōdōkan goshinjutsu* 講道館護身術, both of which were the result of a concerted effort of two separate committees of *Kōdōkan* experts [3].

There are only few documented attempts by Japanese *jūdōka* to create additional *jūdō kata* outside of the

framework of officially recognized *kata*. This is in sharp contrast to the West where there are dozens such attempts. This difference likely has to do with the Japanese better understanding the meaning of *kata*, whereas many Westerners erroneously believe that it suffices to come up with some set of techniques preceded and followed by a ceremony of two *jūdōka* bowing to each other and to some kind of virtual jury. Evidently, this has nothing to do with the concept of *kata*, which within *Kōdōkan jūdō* is considered very critical as they need to properly fit within the principles of Kanō Jigorō, principles that in reality appear far more difficult to fully grasp than many *jūdōka* realize.

The following nine *jūdō kata* are known to have been conceived by Japanese *jūdōka* outside the official set of *Kōdōkan kata*:

- *shōbu-no-kata* 尚武の形 [Forms of Combat] by Uchida Ryōhei 内田良平 (1873-1937) around 1900 [4]
- *gonosen-no-kata* 後の先の形 [Forms of Post-Attack Initiative Counter Throws] by Takahashi Kazuyoshi 高橋数良 (1885-1942) around 1920<sup>1</sup>
- *nage-waza ura-no-kata* 投業裏の形 [Forms of Reversing Throwing Techniques] by Mifune Kyūzō (1883-1965) around 1930-1935 [2]
- *Mifune jūdan sōen goshinjutsu* 三船九段創案護身術 [Tenth Dan Mifune's Personal Self-defense] by Mifune Kyūzō around 1930-1935 [7]
- *bandō-no-kata* 反動の形 [Forms of Reactions] by Hirano Tokio 平野時男 (1922-1993) around 1960 [8]
- *jōge-no-kata* 上下の形<sup>2</sup> [Forms of Up- and Downward Movement] by Hirano Tokio [8]
- *endō-no-kata* 円動の形<sup>3</sup> [Forms of Circular Motion] by Hirano Tokio [8]
- *katame-waza ura-no-kata* 固技裏の形 [Forms of Reversing Controlling Techniques] around 1965-1970 [2]
- *shōnen jūdō-no-kata* ["Forms of Jūdō for Juveniles"] proposed by Magara Hiroshi 真柄浩 from Juntendō University 回天堂大学 in Tōkyō around 1992 [9]

During his life Kanō himself appeared quite intolerant regarding anyone 'touching' his *kata*, as is documented in the following recorded incident:

*"Dr. Kanō watched two English Budokwai members performing Nage-no-kata, and then Mr. Gunji Koizumi and Mr. Yukio Tani performing Jū-no-kata. Koizumi had introduced some of his own ideas into the kata, and I heard that Dr. Kanō remarked: 'That is a modification of Ju-no-kata.' (...)"* [10].

The term 'modification' clearly was not intended as a friendly encouraging expression of support ...

Kanō's relative intolerance did not appear to be limited to the *kata* that already existed and which were the result of his creation, editing or approval, but also towards new *kata*, as reflected by his apparent rejection of Mifune Kyūzō's *nage-waza ura-no-kata*.<sup>4</sup> Mifune was not exactly a dilettante and the techniques he devised reflected a deep understanding of technical *jūdō* and were characterized by a considerable degree of sophistication.

Because of this specific history Japanese *jūdōka* and the *Kōdōkan* in particular have a somewhat ambiguous attitude towards *jūdō kata*; from one hand since *jūdō kata* represent the fundamental yet historic grammar of *jūdō* there exists a narrow view that argues that there can be no new *jūdō kata* after the death of Kanō as they would lack authenticity and authority in the absence of his personal approval, although, new 'methods' have been added to its syllabus, at least in the days that there were still direct students of Kanō involved in such decisions. These have now all passed away leaving little hope of new *kata* being added to the *jūdō* syllabus at anytime soon. On the other hand Kanō, was very well aware and made it also clear that, for example, *itsutsu-no-kata* was, not finished and could

<sup>1</sup> See part 1 of this paper. It has been claimed by some that there would exist a *kaeshi-no-kata* 返の形, a *kata* supposedly older than *gonosen-no-kata* and introduced to the UK by Tani Yukio 谷幸雄 (1881-1950). This is, however, highly unlikely. Tani's *jūdō* history is obscure and believed to be in *Fusen-ryū* 不遷流 and *Tenjin Shin'yō-ryū* 天神真楊流 [The Divine True Willow School] *jūjutsu* 柔術 [the art of giving way]. Tani originally had no *Kōdōkan jūdō* history and was awarded a black belt in *jūdō* only in 1920 by Kanō Jigorō during a visit to the UK. Despite his experience in *jūjutsu* it is highly unlikely that at that point Tani would already have developed a pure *jūdō kata*. Only in 1919-1920 did Takahashi Kazuyoshi publish his series of *waza-no-kenkyū* 技の研究 [research on techniques] articles in *Yūkō-no-Katsudō* 有効の活動 on *ura-waza* [reversing techniques] or *kaeshi-waza* [counter techniques], two terms used interchangeably [5, 6]. Many throws were proposed, but these were not integrated in an actual *kata*. We are not aware of any authentic historic documentation whatsoever that there ever existed any such thing as this "*kaeshi-no-kata*". Instead, these were likely simply prior described loose techniques which someone at some point in time decided to precede and follow up by bowing procedures. That, however, does not make it a *kata*. Likely, Tani's inspiration to integrate *kaeshi-waza* in his teaching may have come from Ishiguro Keishichi 石黒敬七 (1897-1974) with whom Tani was well acquainted. There exists a famous 1938 picture of Ishiguro, Tani and Koizumi Gunji 小泉軍治 (1885-1965) taken in Frankfurt, Germany. Ishiguro visited many countries in Europe where he taught *jūdō*. Ishiguro's origin was Waseda University where he had been captain of the university's *jūdō* team and where he must have had Takahashi Kazuyoshi as a teacher. Ishiguro more likely than Kawaiishi brought *gonosen-no-kata* to Europe. We are strengthened in this view because *gonosen-no-kata* popped up in countries which Ishiguro had visited and taught *jūdō*, such as France, Germany and UK. There is no trace of Tani and any "*kaeshi-no-kata*" preceding him getting acquainted with Ishiguro.

<sup>2</sup> This is a set of preparatory moves intended for study and practice, but not really suitable for formal demonstration.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>4</sup> See part 2 of this paper.

in future be expanded to containing more techniques [11, p. 65]. However, he was far less clear about who would be authorized to do so, especially after his death.

In any case, probably the most elaborate and long-existing non-*Kōdōkan kata* of which we also know that Kanō personally saw it being demonstrated is Mifune's *nage-waza ura-no-kata*. This *kata* was created by Mifune as an additional *randori-no-kata* hence supplementing *nage-no-kata* and *katame-no-kata*. It appears that after Mifune's death in 1965 his *kata* was followed up by a *katame-waza ura-no-kata* to complete the *kaeshi-waza* component he had wanted to the previously existing *randori-no-kata*.

#### KATAME-WAZA URA-NO-KATA

*Katame-waza ura-no-kata* means "Forms of reversals to controlling techniques". Itō in his book on both the *nage-waza ura-no-kata* and the *katame-waza ura-no-kata*, contrary to Mifune, uses the modern *kanji* for *waza*: 技 rather than 業. Although very little if any information exists about *katame-waza ura-no-kata* in the West, there does seem to be some controversy about the authorship of *katame-waza ura-no-kata*. Its date of creation has not been accurately established, nor is it well known under what circumstances it was created or what its sources of inspiration were. Previously, one tended to hear that *katame-waza ura-no-kata* similarly to *nage-waza ura-no-kata* was the intellectual product of the late Mifune Kyūzō (1883-1965), *Kōdōkan* 10<sup>th</sup> *dan*, such as for example:

*“Weniger bekannt ist, dass Mifune auch erie Kata mit Gegentechniken zu Katame-waza ('Katame-waza-ura-no-Kata') entwickelt hat. Diese ist in Europa — und auch in Japan — weitgehend unbekannt.” (...)* [12].

[Transl.: Less well known is that Mifune has also developed a *kata* with counter techniques to *katame-waza* ('*katame-waza ura-no-kata*'). It is largely unknown in Europe — but also in Japan.]

However, it is not clear if similar deductions were justified and supported by any sources. We will now test if the assumption of Mifune being the author of *katame-waza ura-no-kata* is correct.

#### The authorship of *katame-waza ura-no-kata*

One of the first things we did was to consult all books and known writings by Mifune Kyūzō<sup>5</sup> or his biog-

<sup>5</sup> Mifune Kyūzō 三船久蔵 is one of the best known *jūdōka* in history, and his background has been widely detailed in the half a dozen of books he authored as well as in the numerous publications by others. Mifune was born on April 21<sup>st</sup>, 1883 in Kuji City 久慈

rappers about *katame-waza ura-no-kata*, as well as other authoritative Japanese reference works on *jūdō*. Much to our surprise Mifune nowhere mentions this *kata* either as a consolidated exercise or as a project under construction [13-15]. In fact, Mifune writes very little about *newaza* and seems to have largely focused on *tachi-waza* 立技 [standing techniques]. Mifune was no doubt a leading individual for decades when it came to *nage-waza* 投げ技 [throwing techniques], but he is rarely mentioned in the context of *newaza* 寝技 [ground fighting techniques]. In fact, when Mifune dealt with *katame-waza* it was often in standing position, as shown in the personal *goshinjutsu* 護身術 [Self-defense techniques] he developed and in *joshi jūdō goshinhō* 女子柔道護身法 [Jūdō female self-defense methods] to which he was a major contributor [16]. On the other hand, *newaza* in those days really was an area of expertise that in terms of technique was largely dominated by Oda Jōin 小田常胤 (1892-1955) [17-18] and Kanemitsu Yaichibei 金光弥一兵 (1890-1968) [19] (Figure 1(34)).

That does not mean at all that we are implying that Mifune's *newaza* skills would be merely of average standard. In fact, in the 1955 film *The Essence of Jūdō*<sup>6</sup> that was later released on videotape and DVD there is a chapter included where Mifune shows *nige-waza* 逃技 [escape techniques] in ground fighting [7]. Really, it is more than just escaping techniques and what he shows constitutes *katame-no-kaeshi-waza* or *katame-no-ura-waza* because Mifune continues with a control technique. However, he certainly does not show these techniques in *kata* form. Only one of the techniques he shows<sup>7</sup> is nearly identical to a technique that appears in *katame-waza ura-no-kata*. Some are very different and several of them end in *ashi-kan-setsu-waza* 足関節技 [leg locking techniques], which in *katame-waza ura-no-kata* are never used as counter techniques.

市, Iwate Prefecture 岩手県. Mifune entered the *Kōdōkan* at age 20 on July 26<sup>th</sup>, 1903, with the help of *Yokoyama Sakujirō*, 6<sup>th</sup> *dan* and the *Kōdōkan*'s senior instructor, and he became *shōdan* 初段 [first-degree black belt] the year after in October 1904. In 1932, then 49 years old, Mifune was appointed as head-instructor of the Metropolitan Police Jūdō Department. He also became head-instructor to the *jūdō* department of Meiji University and several other colleges and schools. On December 12<sup>th</sup>, 1937, Mifune was promoted to 9<sup>th</sup> *dan* [ninth-degree black belt] by Kanō Jigorō in person, and on May 25<sup>th</sup> of 1945 he was promoted by to *jūdan* by Nango Jirō 南郷次郎, the *Kōdōkan*'s second *kanchō* [president], and he became one of the youngest (62 yrs) and probably the most famous and longest serving 10<sup>th</sup> *dan* ever, until his death at the age of 82 years, on January 27<sup>th</sup> of 1965.

<sup>6</sup> Original title: *Shingi Mifune Jūdan [kanzenban]: Jūdō no Shinzui* (神技 三船十段『完全版』柔道の真髓) [Mifune 10<sup>th</sup> *dan* [complete edition]: The Essence of Jūdō], minute 46'50"-47'51".

<sup>7</sup> Mifune's *jūmonji-gatame-no-nige (sono ni)* 十文字固の逃げ(その二) [escape from crossed-control armbar [second option]] at 47'35" is identical to Ito's *Ude-kyūjiki-ude-gatame* 腕挫き腕固め → *Oshi-daoshi-kesa-gatame* 押し倒し袈裟固め [pushing over scarf hold].



**Figure 1(34).** Kōdōkan newly promoted 9<sup>th</sup> dan holders on May 1, 1948 depicted with the then 10<sup>th</sup> dan holders and the Kōdōkan kanchō (president). On the first row, from left to right: Amano Shinaichi 天野品市 (1884-1966), 9<sup>th</sup> dan, Oda Jōin 小田常胤 (1892-1955), 9<sup>th</sup> dan, Iizuka Kunisaburō 飯塚国三郎 (1875-1958), 10<sup>th</sup> dan, Kanō Risei 嘉納履正 (1900-1986), kanchō, Mifune Kyūzō 三船久蔵 (1883-1965), 10<sup>th</sup> dan, Samura Kaichirō 佐村嘉一郎 (1880-1964), 10<sup>th</sup> dan, Okano Yoshitarō 岡野好太郎 (1885-1967), 9<sup>th</sup> dan (later 10<sup>th</sup> dan); back row: Kurihara Tamio 栗原民雄 (1896-1979), 9<sup>th</sup> dan (later 10<sup>th</sup> dan), Aki Kyotoshi 安芸清利 (1890-1953), 9<sup>th</sup> dan, Kanemitsu Yaichibei 金光弥一兵 (1892-1966), 9<sup>th</sup> dan, Kurata Taichi 蔵田太一 (1892-1969), 9<sup>th</sup> dan, and Nakano Shōzō 中野正三 (1888-1977), 9<sup>th</sup> dan (later 10<sup>th</sup> dan).

We find it hard to believe that if *katame-waza ura-no-kata* would indeed be Mifune's creation that it would have been totally absent from all of his works. Other than the fact that Mifune's approach to *newaza* [ground fighting techniques] is similar to his approach to *tachi-waza* [standing techniques] *i.e.* also very technical, we could find no direct association whatsoever between Mifune and *katame-waza ura-no-kata*.

In 2000, Satō Shizuya 佐藤静彌, Kōdōkan 6<sup>th</sup> dan,<sup>8</sup> gave a lengthy interview for the Japanese martial arts magazine *Hiden Budo & Bujutsu Monthly* 秘伝 [20]. Really, Satō features prominently in the only hitherto published book on *katame-waza ura-no-kata*, and he had personally known both the senior author of the book (Itō Kazuo) and Mifune Kyūzō. In his interview Satō leaves no doubt about it that not Mifune, but Itō Kazuo who was the creator of *katame-waza ura-no-kata*:

“この他、伊藤師範が創意工夫した固め技裏の形もあつり、抑え込み技、締め技、関節技に対する返し技がそれぞれ五本ずつ制定されている。言わば三船師範の技術研究鑽を伊藤師範が引き継いだ軌跡ということになるが、寝技が巧みだ

ったという伊藤師範の面目躍如たるものがある。” (... ) [20, p. 16-17].

[Transl.: Furthermore, there also exists the Forms of Reversing Controlling Techniques which resulted from master Itō's creativity, who in this way established countering techniques in response to each of 5 holding techniques, strangulation techniques, and joint techniques. It is, so to speak, master Itō to whom master Mifune handed over the results of his research into the art of technique, and master Itō then continued this trajectory further organizing everything, in doing so living up to his reputation for being skilled in ground fighting techniques.]

Thus, the above statement deals with both the authorship and the inspiration that led to *katame-waza ura-no-kata*. While Itō Kazuo synthesized the information and created the *kata*, the actual source of inspiration to Itō was Mifune Kyūzō, at least according to Satō. So far no other well-informed source that is either referenced, or citing from primary sources, has offered a credible contradictory view. Based solely on hearsay, one may, on occasions, hear the erroneous view that Mifune himself might have constructed the *kata*, for which, as we have shown, there exists no evidence whatsoever.

Attribution of the authorship of *katame-waza ura-no-kata* to Itō is based on evaluating the following considerations:

<sup>8</sup> Satō Shizuya was promoted to *rokudan* [6<sup>th</sup> degree black belt] by the Kōdōkan in 1965, but when he parted ways with the Kōdōkan he assumed the rank of IMAF *hachidan* [8<sup>th</sup> degree black belt] in the organization he cofounded in 1952. At the time of his death he held the *jūdō* ranks of 6<sup>th</sup> dan Kōdōkan and 9<sup>th</sup> dan IMAF.

- The *kata* is not introduced to the general *jūdō* public anywhere in Mifune's own books, but instead in Itō's book which was published 5 years after the death of Mifune.
- The oldest known resource mentioning *katame-waza ura-no-kata* is Itō (see further).
- No other historic *jūdō* master has disputed the attribution of authorship to Itō.
- The specific skills and inventiveness of the choice of counter are not to the same degree of refinement as Mifune's stylistic approach to *jūdō* as evidenced in *nage-waza ura-no-kata*.
- The claim of one of Itō's direct students attributing *katame-waza ura-no-kata* to Itō is far more convincing than a similar claim regarding *nage-waza ura-no-kata*.

### Itō Kazuo

Itō Kazuo 伊藤四男 was born in 1898 in Shimo-Kanezawa-machi 下金沢町 in Shinjō 新庄市, Yamagata Prefecture 山形県 in Japan's Tōhoku region 東北地方. It has been suggested that as a child he studied a (not further defined) style of *jūjutsu* with his father. Itō, as a child, attended the *Nissin Shōgakkō* 日新小学校 [Nissin Elementary School], and afterwards went to high school at the *Ritsu Sasebo Chūgakkō* 長崎県立佐世保中学校 in Nagasaki Prefecture. He then studied at the Department of Politics and Economics of Meiji University 明治大学政経科, but similarly to Mifune, dropped out<sup>9</sup> [2]. Itō entered the *Kōdōkan* in April 1920, and obtained his *shodan* 初段 [first-degree black belt] that same year. In May 1922 Itō became a disciple of Mifune Kyūzō at the *Mifune Juku* 三船塾 [Mifune Coaching School] [2], who at the time held 6<sup>th</sup> *dan* and was a fierce *jūdō* competitor and already a leading technician and instructor (Figure 2(35)). Mifune describes his first meeting with Itō in his *Jūdō kaikoroku* [13, p. 87-88].

While studying under Mifune, Itō successfully obtained his secondary school teacher license from the Ministry of Education [2]. He continued studying at the *Kōtō Jūdō Kyōin Yōseijo* 高等柔道教員養成所 [Higher Training School for the Formation of Jūdō Instructors] and graduated in 1938, when he was 40 years old. He also became a *Kōdōkan* instructor and obtained a qualification as university *jūdō* professor from the 1<sup>st</sup> postwar Ministry of Education. Several of Itō's books from the 1960s and later list him with the academic credentials of Doctor of Science (*Rigaku Hakase* 理学博士) [22-24]<sup>10</sup>. In 1958 the *Kōdōkan* elevated Itō

Kazuo to *Kōdōkan* 9<sup>th</sup> *dan*.<sup>11</sup> Professionally, Itō also was a *jūdō* instructor at *Nittaidai* or *Nippon Taiiku Daigaku*<sup>12</sup> 日本体育大学 [Nippon Sport Science University] and at *Meiji Gakuin Daigaku* 明治学院大学 [Meiji Gakuin University], and a *kōshi*<sup>13</sup> 講師 [university lecturer] at *Kōgakuin Daigaku* 工学院大学 [Kōgakuin University]. At the *Kōdōkan* he was a *Kōdōkan Shidō Shingi-in* 講道館指導審議員 [Kōdōkan Teaching Committee Member] (Figure 3(36)), a *jōnin sōdanyaku* 常任相談役等 [permanent counselor] to the *Tōkyō-Bu Jūdō Renmei* 東京都柔道連盟 [Tōkyō Division Jūdō Federation], a member of the *Zen Nihon Jūdō Kōdanshakai* 全日本柔道高段者会 [All Japan Jūdō High-Grade-Holders Association] [2], and an advisor to the American Embassy Jūdō Club in Tōkyō. In addition, Itō in 1952 was also a cofounder of the *Kokusai Budōin ~ Kokusai Budō Renmei* 国際武道院・国際武道聯盟 [International Martial Arts Federation [IMAF]], of which in April 1963 he was appointed as the organization's first chief-director. In 1968, Itō (accompanied by his student Satō Shizuya and *Kōdōkan* secretary Fuji Hiroshi) had made a world tour visiting 12 countries<sup>14</sup> to teach *jūdō* and introduce some of his pedagogical ideas to enthusiastic *jūdōka* worldwide [25]. Itō's large tour was followed up by an invitation from the government of Panama to take a one-month national *jūdō* tour throughout their country. In 1971, six years after the death of Mifune Kyūzō in 1965, IMAF promoted Itō to 10<sup>th</sup>

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curriculum lists neither any doctoral training, nor the name of the university which issued the credential, and when. In one of his books Itō indicates that he acquired the degree in 1971: “昭和46年理学博士の学位を受ける。” (...) [23, p. 153]. It is somewhat odd that Itō does not provide any further details about what would then represent his most important academic qualification. It is also unclear if perhaps the title mentioned by Itō instead refers to an honorary degree given that he was already 73 years old at that point. We were unable to locate a record for Itō's doctorate in the *Kyōiku Gyōsei Kenkyūjo* 教育行政研究所 [Record of Doctorates in Japan], nor could we find a record of the mandatory dissertation he would have defended in order to obtain this qualification. A number of senior *jūdōka* in Japan who knew Itō personally and whom we have been in contact with expressed surprise hearing about the possible association between Itō and a doctoral credential.

<sup>11</sup> The *Kōdōkan* promoted several people with the name Itō to 9<sup>th</sup> *dan* raising the possibility for confusion. Besides Itō Kazuo, also Itō Tadayoshi 伊藤正良 (1891-1971) in 1971, Itō Yoshiyuki 伊達義行 (1900-1978) in 1978, Itō Tokuji 伊藤徳治 (1913-1992) in 1984, and Itō Hideo 伊藤秀雄 (1922-2002) in 1988. Also well-known was Itō Takasue 居藤高季 (1887-1981), *Kōdōkan* 8<sup>th</sup> *dan*, who was a former secretary to Kanō Jigorō and member of the original 1952 *Kōdōkan Goshinjutsu*-Committee, and who like Mifune Kyūzō and Itō Kazuo was also a member of IMAF, which subsequently promoted him to 10<sup>th</sup> *dan* with the title of *meijin* 名人 [grandmaster].

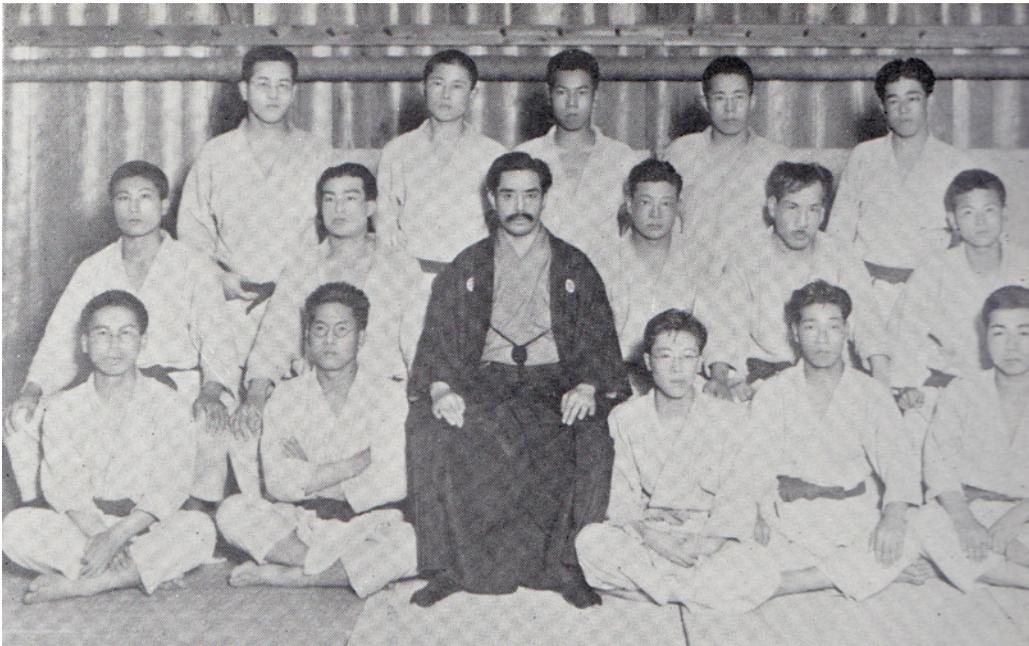
<sup>12</sup> Mifune Kyūzō too had been a *jūdō* instructor at *Nittaidai* from around 1910 when he was still a *godan* 五段 [5<sup>th</sup> degree black belt] [13, 21].

<sup>13</sup> *Kōshi* or lecturer is lowest academic rank at a Japanese university.

<sup>14</sup> Denmark (Copenhagen), Egypt (Cairo), France (Paris), Germany (Berlin, Frankfurt), Italy (Rome), Lebanon (Beirut), the Netherlands (Amsterdam, Velp), Portugal (Lisbon), Spain (Madrid), Sweden (Stockholm), Switzerland (Basel, Zurich), US (California, Colorado, D.C., Hawai'i, Illinois, Massachusetts, Michigan, Nebraska, New York, Pennsylvania, Washington).

<sup>9</sup> “明治大学政経科中退”(…) [2, p. 111].

<sup>10</sup> This credential remains somewhat obscure given that Itō Kazuo never finished his graduate education at Meiji University, given that he did not have any education in science, and given that his



**Figure 2(35).** Mifune Kyūzō 三船久蔵 (1883-1965), then about 55 years old, still looking extremely vigorous and already a *Kōdōkan* 9<sup>th</sup> *dan*, is pictured in the center dressed in *haori* 羽織 [Japanese formal dress], with to his right side seated in the second row, Itō Kazuo 伊藤四男 (1898-1974), at that point *Kōdōkan* 6<sup>th</sup> or 7<sup>th</sup> *dan*, and to Mifune's left side, Kan Kenshirō 菅健次郎 (1897-1946), famous for starting up the public bus system component of *Nihon Kokuyū Tetsudō* 日本国有鉄道 [Japanese National Railways], abbreviated to *Kokutetsu* 国鉄 or JNR. The picture was taken at the company's own *Kokutetsu Jūdō-bu* 国鉄柔道部 [JNR's Jūdō Department] in 1938, the year of Kanō Jigorō's death (From [21], by permission).

*dan* and also awarded Itō its highest honor in the form of the title of *meijin* 名人 [grandmaster]. In 1973, Itō's birth town Shinjō 新庄市 awarded him the title of *meiyoshimin* 名誉市民 [honorary citizen]. Itō died in 1974, at the age of 75 yrs. Among Itō Kazuo's most well known students were the late *budō* author and historian Donn F. Draeger (1922-1982), *Kōdōkan* 5<sup>th</sup> *dan*, women's multi-*budōka* Miyake Tsunao 三宅綱子 (born 1926), *Kōdōkan joshi* 5<sup>th</sup> *dan*, and former IMAF general secretary Satō Shizuya 佐藤静彌 (1929-2011), *Kōdōkan* 6<sup>th</sup> *dan* & IMAF 9<sup>th</sup> *dan*. Itō also authored three books in Japanese [2, 22, 23], of which two were subsequently translated into English [24].

### The intellectual sources of inspiration for *Katame-waza ura-no-kata*

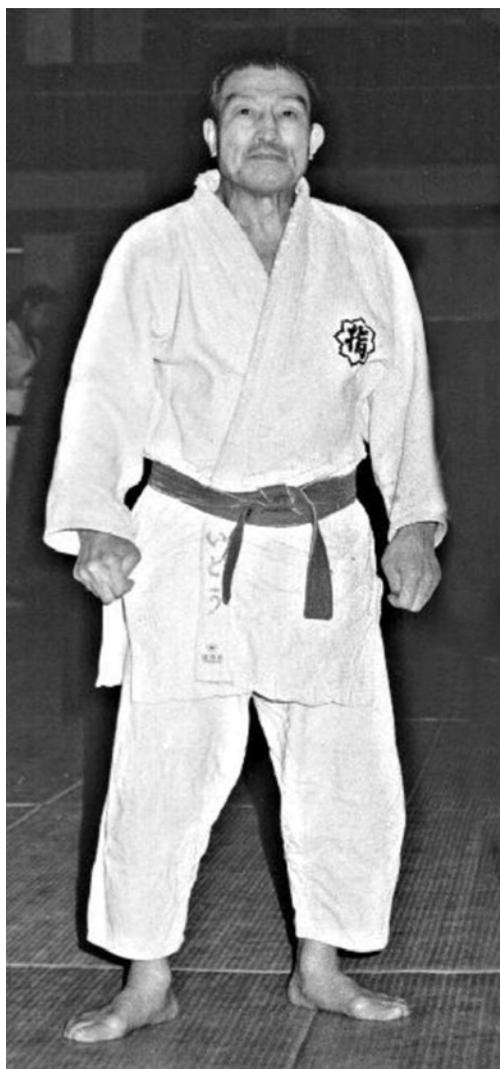
To what extent Mifune is the original source of these *kaeshi-waza* which Itō learnt from him is another question. As much as Mifune nowhere identifies any external source to his inspiration for the techniques which Itō assembled and compiled into the *Katame-waza ura-no-kata* 固技裏の形 [Forms of reverse throwing techniques], this does not mean that such source does not exist. There exists unverified hearsay where it is suggested that Mifune would have dreams or visions of new techniques which he would later try out. This seems, however,

an extrapolation of what is sometimes suggested as being the origin of Mifune's most famous new throw which he developed: *kūki-nage* 空気 [Throw in a void] [7, 15, 26-29], and Mifune himself does nowhere in any of his many published writings identify such a mechanism as being the origin of his *newaza*.

As previously indicated, it is far more likely and realistic that much of his research into *newaza* was inspired by Oda Jōin (1892-1955) who was acquainted with Mifune (Figure 1(34)). The existence of Oda's voluminous +1,400-pages *Jūdō Taikan* since it was first published in 1929 [Oda 1929], and which to this day in Japan is regarded as the "Bible of *jūdō newaza*", shows that Oda's research into *newaza* was already extensive when Mifune was still competing and focusing mostly on *tachi-waza* [17, 18].

As to the theory of *kaeshi-waza*, this is pretty much the work of Takahashi Kazuyoshi 高橋数良 (1885-1945)<sup>15</sup> [5, 6]. In 1906 both Takahashi and Mifune were 3<sup>rd</sup> *dan*

<sup>15</sup> In addition to Waseda University he was also the *jūdō* head-instructor at the *Rikugun Yōnen Gakkō* 陸軍幼年学校 [School for children of the military] and an instructor at the *Keisibichō* 警視庁 [Tokyo Metropolitan Police] and the *Kōdōkan*. In 1920 Takahashi received the title of *hanshi* 範士 [master] from the *Dai Nippon Butokukai*, which attested to the recognition of his skills.



**Figure 3(36).** The late Itō Kazuo-sensei 伊藤四男 (1898-1974), *Kōdōkan* 9<sup>th</sup> dan (since 1958) and *Kokusai Budōin* ~ *Kokusai Budō Renmei* 国際武道院・国際武道聯盟 [International Martial Arts Federation [IMAF]] 10<sup>th</sup> dan, here depicted as instructor at the *Kōdōkan* in Tōkyō.

[3<sup>rd</sup> degree black belt] holders, and both were students of Yokoyama Sakujirō 横山作次郎, (1864-1912), with Takahashi becoming the *shihan* 師範 [head teacher] of Waseda University 早稲田大学 in Tōkyō [19]. We know that Mifune had been a student in Waseda University's preparatory course in 1904, even though he dropped out of the program [19, 27-30]. Given Mifune's strong connection with Toku Sanbō 徳三宝 (1887-1945)<sup>16</sup>, who too was Waseda University-based and who would become a *shihan* there in 1924, Mifune would be very well aware of what was happening there in terms of *jūdō* regarding eventual new techniques or

<sup>16</sup> Toku Sanbō later upon his premature death on March 10, 1945, due to an air raid in war time Tōkyō, was promoted to 9<sup>th</sup> dan.

theories. It is Takahashi, not Mifune, who, then, would become nationally famous for his *kaeshi-waza* (the focus of his research), and who between May 1919 and January 1922 authored not less than twelve different articles that were all published in *Yūkō-no-Katsudō* 有効の活動, the *Kōdōkan*'s official magazine [5, 6]. The articles dealt with the principles or *ura-waza* although the explanations in detail on some techniques were limited to throws rather than ground fighting. Nevertheless, the principles remain the same, and hence, even though Itō may identify Mifune as the source to the majority of the techniques included in *katame-waza ura-no-kata*, it is likely that Mifune himself may also have benefitted from the inspiration of Takahashi Kazuyoshi, Oda Jōin, Toku Sanbō, and Kawakami Chū<sup>17</sup>, rather than from divine inspiration in dreams or visions ...

### Creation and first appearance of *katame-waza ura-no-kata*

We have been unable to find any articles, papers or records of public or official demonstrations of *katame-waza ura-no-kata* preceding the first publication of Itō's book on this topic in 1970 [2]. There also is no reference to such a *kata* anywhere in the writings of Mifune currently known. To the best of our knowledge Itō does not identify anywhere when exactly he created *katame-waza ura-no-kata*. For that reason we cannot but consider the publication date of Itō's book as the year *katame-waza ura-no-kata* was both 'created' and 'established' — in case one attributes a distinctive meaning to either term. According to the data recorded in the book it was published on July 12, 1970, but printed on June 20, 1970. For that reason, the earliest date we have that the completed *katame-waza ura-no-kata* existed, is: June 20, 1970 (Figure 4(37)).

### *Riai* and objectives of *katame-waza ura-no-kata* practice

The term *riai* 理合 [harmony of principles] in Japanese when referring to *budō* in general and the *kata* of *jūdō* in particular. Ōtaki and Draeger [31] offer further insight into the *riai* of the *randori-no-kata*, which is further applicable to *katame-waza ura-no-kata*. Furthermore, according to Ōtaki and Draeger [31]:

*“When Kodokan Judo was to be demonstrated to a distinguished audience, Kano favored kata as the medium. Despite such displays of Judo kata, Kano never meant kata to be exclusively a showpiece or to be exhibitionary*

<sup>17</sup> Kawakami Chū 川上忠 (1897-1985), 9<sup>th</sup> dan, was another known *newaza*-expert in Mifune's close vicinity. Kawakami was, however, fourteen years Mifune's junior, and also was at Meiji University with Sugata Setsuo. Kawakami was nicknamed “*newaza no Chū-san*” 寝業の忠さん and also gained fame because of his unique *toku-i-waza* 得意技 [specialty technique], a hybrid throw called *hane-seoi-nage* 跳背負投 [spring-back-carry throw].

in nature. Ideal as kata is for demonstrating Kodokan Judo in its total scope, Kano emphasized its practical applications to training.” (...) [31, p. 25-26].

Riai implies adherence to and performance of appropriate action in conformance with combat theory of that discipline and that specific exercise. It means that *jūdō kata* have to be performed according to the principles and meaning it aims to convey. The way the International Judo Federation (IJF) and Kōdōkan currently approach *kata* also raises similar risks for *nage-waza ura-no-kata*. These approaches have evolved into *kata* being expressed in terms of mistakes and points that are subtracted for deviations from some scripted text or taped performance, and where the ideal is supposed to be a copy-cat demonstration of supposed gold standard. Such approach differs considerably from the aims of *kata* as defined by Kanō Jigorō who considered the objectives of *kata* practice similar to those of *randori* [free improvised exercise], i.e. improvement of one's *jūdō* skills and realizing the goals of *jūdō*. Itō Kazuo summarizes these goals as follows:

“柔道は、あくまでも実践躬行すべきもので、行を積み重ねることによって技が進み、精神修養ができ、みずから的人格の陶冶ともなるのです。” (...) [Itō 1970, p. 3].

[Transl.: “In the end, advancing your technique and cultivating your own mind and personal character according to the circumstances should be the principles in judo that we live according to.”]

“そのことによって、いわゆる妙技を得、神技に達し、無我の境地における「技」の道を切り開くことができますと思います。” (...) [2, p. 4].

[Transl.: “At its ultimate goal, I think that it is about reaching the level of unexplainable, sophisticated technique, and achieving such divine technique becomes possible only when one is able to open up the path towards technique that occurs during a mental state of no-self.”].

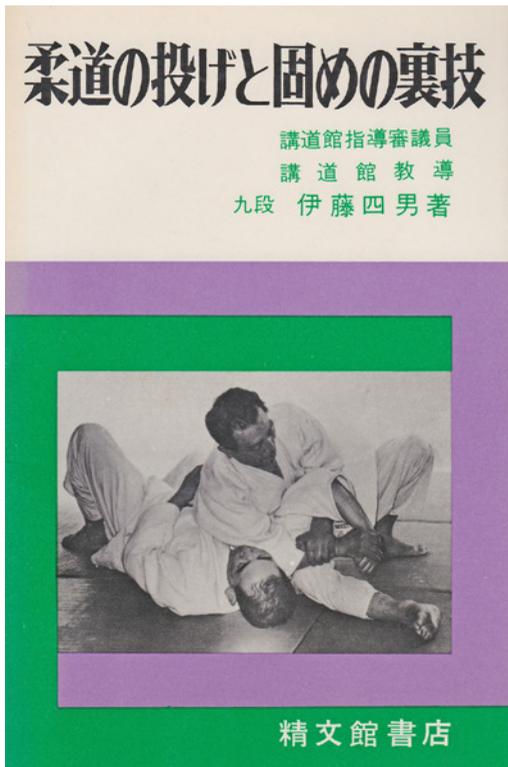
As one can promptly notice, these *kata* objectives are very, very different from “repeating an exercise exactly as done (by another) and without mistakes”. In fact, no criteria of a mechanical nature are provided, nor anything that is to be expressed in scores or in right vs. wrong or good vs. bad. *Myōwaza* 妙技 [unexplainable sophisticated technique] is the goal, not endlessly and senselessly copying a certain performance or standard. The emphasis of the objective *myōwaza* is not surprising given Mifune's own famous maxim “*Omyō zai rensin*” 奥妙在練心 [The unexplainable sophisticated technique is the result of training your heart]. This objective in essence is not different from one of the major objectives of *itsutsu-no-kata*, i.e. *nyūshin shinmyō* 入神神妙 [unexplainable superhuman skill], the only difference being that the *ura-kata* contrary as a *kata* is not metaphoric in nature.

#### TECHNICAL CONTENTS OF KATAME-WAZA URA-NO-KATA

##### Names of *katame-waza ura-no-kata*

In the title of Itō Kazuo's book — the oldest known source for this *kata* — the *kata* is referred to as *katame-no-ura-waza* 固めの裏技 [Control-reversal techniques] without the word ‘*kata*’ being mentioned. In addition, Itō Kazuo seems to have often utilized the term *katame-no-ura-waza kenkyū* [Control-reversal technique research] [2]<sup>18</sup>. The text in Itō's book is too convoluted to conclude with certainty whether when using that term he was referring to the research that preceded the formulation of the actually *kata*, or to the *kata* itself. To that

<sup>18</sup> Notably on pages 8, 11, and 13.



**Figure 4(37).** Front cover of the 1970 book by Itō Kazuo (伊藤四男), Kōdōkan 9<sup>th</sup> dan, entitled *Jūdō no nage-to katame-no-ura-waza* 柔道の投げと固めの裏技 [Jūdō's throw- and control-reversing techniques], published by Seibunkan Shoten (精文館書店) [2], and one of the most prominent learning resources for *Nage-waza ura-no-kata* (投業裏の形) [Forms of reversing throwing techniques] and the first and so far the only published book containing the *Katame-waza ura-no-kata*.

extent it is possible that Itō decided to drop the suffix “*no-kata*” [Forms] in its entirety and settled for simply using “*kenkyū*”. That being said, towards the end of the book after detailing the techniques, sometimes offering several options, he formally lists the final techniques under the name *katame-waza ura-no-kata* 固め技裏の形 [Forms of reversing controlling techniques] [2, p. 94]. This name is consistent with the name given by Mifune to the equivalent forms containing throws, with the only difference that Mifune consistently uses the old *kanji* for the word *waza*: *nage-waza ura-no-kata* 投業裏の形 [Forms of counter throws]. For this reason, we recommend that the *kata* is referred to as *katame-waza ura-no-kata*.

### Reihō in *katame-waza ura-no-kata*

With regards to the *reihō* 礼法 [bowing procedures] in *nage-waza ura-no-kata*, the position of both partners likely is reversed, thus contrary to how it is in the more well-know *nage-* or *katame-no-kata*, and thus with *tori* having the *shōmen* 正面 [main front side] to his right, just like in *jū-no-kata*, *joshi jūdō goshinhō*, *Kōdōkan goshinjutsu* and *koshiki-no-kata*. We wrote ‘likely’ because there is no text in Itō’s book with details of the proper *reihō* for this *kata*, which is reflected by just two photographs. In both, *tori* and *uke* are depicted taking up the same position and side of the *tatami* as they do at the start of *nage-waza ura-no-kata*. While initially this may sound logical, the advantage of doing so is less convincing since it implies that *uke* performs most of his displacements and initial attacks while having his back pointing to the *shōmen*. This problem of orientation is not always resolved by *tori*’s countering action which is sometimes performed to *uke*’s right side and sometimes to *uke*’s left side. These relative complex movements may cause the action to be not optimally visible from the side of the *shōmen*. This does not seem to represent a major concern of Itō and attests to this *kata* truly being a form of training rather than intended for exhibition for spectators.

At the time that Itō introduced the *kata*, the initial distance between both *jūdōka* (*tori* and *uke*) was very limited. The pictures in Itō’s book suggest that the initial distance between both *jūdōka* was not more than one *tatami* length (1.82m - 2.00m) [2, p. 52]. Later in the 1970s the *Kōdōkan* revised and standardized distances for nearly all of its *kata* to conform to the larger IJF-size *shiai tatami* with the broad red borders. For that reason, we opine that it is reasonable and logical, in accordance with the majority of *Kōdōkan kata*, to also adjust the starting distance for *katame-waza ura-no-kata* to 5.45m (derived from the original Japanese norm of 3 *ken* 間, the old Japanese measure of length

of surfaces commonly used in architecture, in which 1 *ken* is 1.818m or 5.965 feet)<sup>19</sup>.

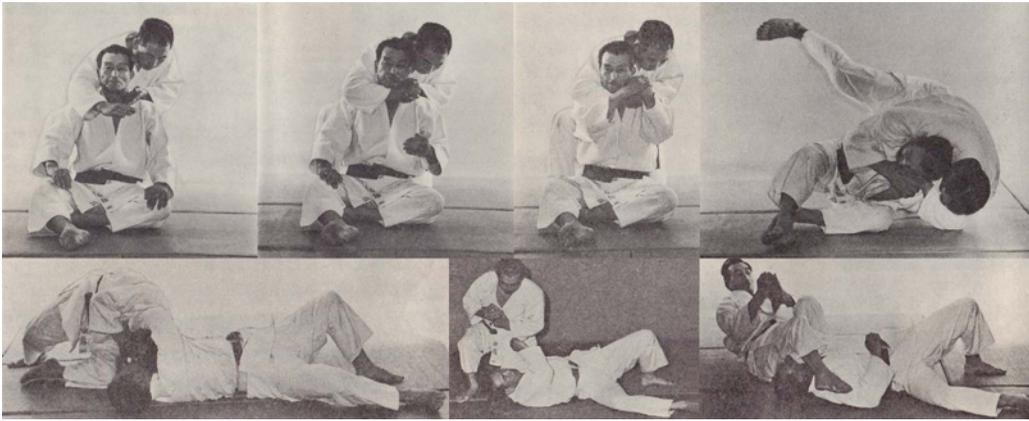
The pictures in Itō’s book include neither a bow to the *shōmen*, nor any standing bow. The reason for this likely is the correct understanding that *kata* originally was simply a way for two *jūdōka* to train together, and not at all intended for public demonstrations. Therefore, a bow to a *shōmen* where dignitaries may be seated was likely only as rarity for those occasions where *jūdō* as a new discipline was introduced to a non-*jūdōka* audience. Today, it is, however, standard to perform a bow to a *shōmen* even if no dignitaries or audience are present. For that reason, we recommend that similarly to the other *kata* such a bow is performed prior to both *jūdōka* bowing to each other. Hence, both partners should make a quarter turn in standing position, heels together, and bow to the *shōmen* performing *ritsu-rei* 立礼 [bowing in standing position]. They then turn back to each other, heels still together, and assume the seating position first lowering their left knee, then their right knee. They then perform *zarei* 座礼 [bowing in seated position] towards each other.

After completing the bowing procedure both *jūdōka* rise, first with their right knee, then with their left knee, both heels still together, and make one large step forward ending in *shizenbontai* [natural position] to each other to signify “opening the *kata*”. They then lower their left knee and assume the half-kneeling position termed by Itō *chūgoshi no yoko e* 中腰の横え [half-raised position], and more commonly known as *kyoshi-no-kamae*<sup>20</sup> 踞姿の構 [squatting ready-position], usually abbreviated to *ko-kyoshi* 小踞姿 [minor squatting position]. To do so, they put their left knees on the spots previously taken by their left heels while keeping their left toes raised. Both *jūdōka* then slide their right feet to their right sides, maintaining their lower right leg at an angle of approximately 90° with their right thigh, while putting their right palms on their right knees. Their left hands remain down in a natural position.

Then, *tori* moves his right foot to the inner side, takes one step forward with his right foot following on his

<sup>19</sup> In the West it is generally believed that the starting distance in *kata* is 6m, but this is actually not quite correct. This error was caused as a consequence of using the number of *tatami* in-between, because Japanese *tatami* are typically 1.82m, while Western *tatami* are 2m in length. When counting 3 *tatami* this causes a difference of approx. 54cm. However, since practically it is helpful to be able to quickly count *tatami* when determining distance rather than having to take a tape measure, the error has remained in place and Western publications therefore will usually continue claiming that the starting/ending distance in *kata* should be ‘6m’.

<sup>20</sup> This position is derived from *Kitō-ryū’s kurai-dori* 位取 [half-kneeling position of situational awareness], a position that mechanically is similar to *ko-kyoshi*.



**Figure 5(38).** The late Itō Kazuo-sensei 伊藤四男 (1898-1974), Kōdōkan 9<sup>th</sup> dan (tori), and Satō Shizuya 佐藤静彌 (1929-2011), Kōdōkan 6<sup>th</sup> dan (uke), performing *gyakute-seoi-otoshi (hidari)* 逆手背負い落とし + *jūji-gatame* 十字固め [reversed-hand shoulder drop to cross-controlled arm lock] as an *ura-waza* [reversal technique] in response to an attack with *hadaka-jime* 裸絞め [naked strangulation] in *katame-waza ura-no-kata*.

left knee and moves to slide his right foot to his right side again to take the posture of *ko-kyoshi* or *chūgosbi*. The movement in *katame-no-kata* and *katame-waza ura-no-kata* where you slide forward on one knee is called *shikkō* 膝行<sup>21</sup>. *Tori* then takes up his position in *gyōga-no-shisei* 仰臥の姿勢 [lying on his back position], head directed towards the center of the axis of the *kata*, in the same manner that one goes from *ko-kyoshi* to lying on the back in *katame-no-kata*.

### Structure and technical contents of *katame-waza ura-no-kata*

The structure of Itō's *katame-waza ura-no-kata* shows obvious similarities to Kanō's *katame-no-kata* 固めの形 [Forms of control]. Both contain fifteen techniques, and are organized similarly. Thus, like *katame-no-kata*, *katame-waza ura-no-kata* instead consists of three groups (*osae-komi-waza* 押さえ込み技 [pinning techniques], *shime-waza* 絞め技 [strangulation techniques] (Figure 5(38)), and *kansetsu-waza* 関節技 [joint techniques]) of five techniques each. The attacking techniques in *katame-waza ura-no-kata* are identical and in the same order as the techniques of *katame-no-kata*, but are now initiated by *uke* instead of *tori*, while *tori* responds by a countering technique. The reversing action applied by *tori* is either *osae-komi-waza* (six times), *shime-waza* 絞め技 (only once), or *kansetsu-waza* 関節技 (eight times). A schematic overview of the structure of *nage-waza ura-no-kata* is provided in (Table 1(3)).

*Katame-waza ura-no-kata* is not free of inconsistencies. On at least two occasions Itō in his book actually performs a different reversing technique than the one he lists in the overview of the *kata* authored by him. For example, *kuzure-kami-shibō-gatame* is supposed to be countered by *ude-kujiki-jūji-gatame* [2, p. 94], but Itō instead performs what seems to be *ude-kujiki-waki-gatame* with wrist control, which he calls *ude-kujiki-kote-gatame* [wrist-control arm overstretching] [2, p. 66-67] (Figure 6(39)).

Similarly to *katame-no-kata*, all techniques are performed to only one side although several of the counters must be performed left in response to a controlling technique from the right in order to be effective. *Tori* and *uke* do not switch positions, and after each technique take up the same starting position as the corresponding technique in *katame-no-kata*; this implies that during the second through the fourth technique of the second group (*shime-waza*) *tori* will be in seated position, during the fourth technique of the third group (*kansetsu-waza*) *tori* will be in *ko-kyoshi* for *hiza-gatame*, and during the final technique of the *kata* both *jūdōka* will be in standing position for *asbi-garami*.

Similar to *nage-no-kata* after concluding each series, *tori* and *uke* return to their starting position after opening the *kata*, and while facing the inside of the *tatami* have an opportunity to adjust their clothing, before making half a turn and continue with the next series, or after the third series follow-up by closing the *kata*.

Itō does not provide guidelines as to the closure of the *kata*, but it is logical to assume that it is identical to the *reihō* in the beginning of the *kata*, but in

<sup>21</sup> The sliding forward movement or *shikkō* 膝行 should not be confused with the movement in *sumō* where the *sumōtori* at the start of the contest ceremonially raise one leg, then the other, and stomp on the ground, which has the somewhat similar sounding name of *shiko* 四股.

**Table 1(3).** Structural and functional overview of the techniques contained in *katame-waza ura-no-kata* (after [1]).

<b>KATAME-WAZA URA-NO-KATA</b> 固め技裏の形 [FORMS OF REVERSING CONTROLLING TECHNIQUES]	
<b>I. Dai ikkyō 第一教 [First group]: Osae-komi-waza 押さえ込み技 [Pinning techniques]</b>	
1.	<i>Kesa-gatame</i> 袈裟固め → <i>Ude-dori-kuzure-gesa</i> 腕取り崩れ袈裟 [Modified scarf hold with arm hold]
2.	<i>Kata-gatame</i> 肩固め → <i>Kaeshi-hon-gesa</i> 返し本袈裟 [Reverse basic scarf]
3.	<i>Kami-shihō-gatame</i> 上四方固め → <i>Gyakute-hadaka-jime</i> 逆手裸絞め [Reversed-hand naked choke]
4.	<i>Yoko-shihō-gatame</i> 横四方固め → <i>Ude-kujiki-kata-gatame</i> 腕挫き腕固め [Arm overstretching with shoulder control] †
5.	<i>Kuzure-kame-shihō-gatame</i> 崩れ上四方固め → <i>Ude-kujiki-jūji-gatame</i> 腕挫き十字固め [cross-control arm overstretching] †‡
<b>II. Dai nikkyō 第二教 [Second group]: Shime-waza 絞め技 [Strangulation techniques]</b>	
6.	<i>Kata-jūji-jime</i> 片十字絞め → <i>Ude-garame</i> 腕緘め [arm twisting]
7.	<i>Hadaka-jime</i> 裸絞め → <i>Gyakute-seoi-otoshi (hidari)</i> 逆手背負い落とし + <i>jūji-gatame</i> 十字固め [Reversed-hand shoulder drop to cross-controlled armlock] §
8.	<i>Okuri-eri-jime</i> 送り襟絞め → <i>Ude-kujiki-teko-gatame</i> 腕挫きテコ固め [Arm overstretching with lever control] †
9.	<i>Kataha-jime</i> 片羽絞め → <i>Ude-dori-ushiro-kesa</i> 腕取り後ろ袈裟 [arm hold reverse scarf] †
10.	<i>Gyaku-jūji-jime</i> 逆十字絞め → <i>Ude-garame</i> 腕緘め [arm twisting]
<b>III. Dai sankyō 第三教 [Third group]: Kansetsu-waza 関節技 [Joint techniques]</b>	
11.	<i>Ude-garame</i> 腕緘め → <i>Ude-garame</i> 腕緘め [arm twisting]
12.	<i>Ude-kujiki-jūji-gatame</i> 腕挫き十字固め → <i>Kaeri-oki-osae-komi (kesa-gatame) (h)</i> 返り起き 押さえ込み (袈裟固め) [flipping over getting up hold [scarf hold]] †§
13.	<i>Ude-kujiki-ude-gatame</i> 腕挫き腕固め → <i>Oshi-daoshi-kesa-gatame</i> 押し倒し袈裟固め [pushing over scarf hold] †
14.	<i>Ude-kujiki-hiza-gatame</i> 腕挫き膝固め → <i>Ude-kujiki-ude-gatame</i> 腕挫き腕固め [arm overstretching with arm control] †
15.	<i>Ashi-garame</i> 足緘め → <i>Tate-shihō-gatame</i> 縦四方固め [lengthwise 4-point hold]

† *Furigana* 振り仮名振り仮名 [*kana* over or beside *kanji* to indicate pronunciation] that accompany the *kanji* 挫き in the book authored by the creator of this *kata* [2], indicate that the pronunciation is to be ‘*kujiki*’ [overstretching, crushing], which is also the normal pronunciation of this *kanji*. We point out that for hitherto unknown reasons, the same *kanji* 挫, in *Kōdōkan jūdō*, is usually pronounced ‘*hisbigi*’ [overstretching], even though the standard *kanji* for ‘*hisbigi*’ is 拉ぎ. It is impossible to conclude whether the grammatically correct, yet from *Kōdōkan* standards deviating pronunciation, really was the wish of the author or is on account of his book’s copy editor.

‡ Despite in his overview of the *kata* Itō pointing out that the *ura-waza* to *kuzure-kame-shihō-gatame* is to be *ude-kujiki-jūji-gatame* [2, p. 94], in the actual description of the *ura-waza* Itō instead indicates, demonstrates and explains *ude-kujiki-kote-gatame* 腕挫き小手固め [wrist-control arm overstretching] [2, p. 66-67].

§ These techniques are performed to the left.

reverse order. Updated with the procedures common today in *katame-no-kata* (but taking into account that the positions of *tori* and *uke* are reversed), this would also imply that after the final technique *uke* slides two steps backwards in *shikkō* while in *ko-kyoshi* position, followed by *tori* sliding backwards a single step in *ko-yoshi*.

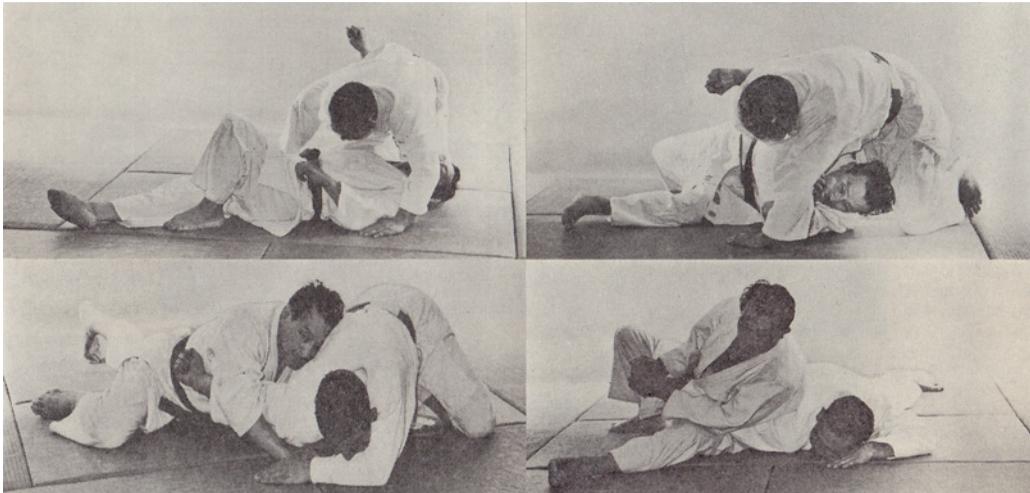
#### LEARNING TEXTS AND AUDIOVISUAL MATERIALS FOR STUDYING *KATAME-WAZA URA-NO-KATA*

##### 1970 – Itō Kazuo 伊藤四男 – *Jūdō no nage- to katame-no-ura-waza* [2]

Itō Kazuo’s book in Japanese, published in 1970, devoted to both the *nage-waza ura-no-kata* and the *katame-no-ura-waza kenkyū*, remains, almost 45 years later, to the best of our knowledge, still the only published resource on *katame-waza*

*ura-no-kata*. All techniques are demonstrated by Itō-sensei, *Kōdōkan* 9<sup>th</sup> *dan*, in the role of *tori*, and Satō Shizuya<sup>22</sup> 佐藤静彌, *Kōdōkan* 6<sup>th</sup> *dan* as *uke*. The book has been out of print for quite some time. The photographs are not of high quality and because the text is in Japanese only, most Westerners will be just examining pictures and possibly ending up with different interpretations of what exactly is being shown. Contributing to this concern is the absence of detailed pictures of the *reihō* steps. In many cases the pictures are not self-explanatory; essential sequences are missing or final position may be missing leaving the reader somewhat at loss as to how exactly perform the

<sup>22</sup> See also the Introduction section of this paper. Furthermore, Satō Shizuya 佐藤静彌 (1929-2011) later became celebrated because of his role in the creation (1951) and management of I.M.A.F., and he also used to be a secretary to the *Kōdōkan*’s International Department since 1949.



**Figure 6(39).** The late Itō Kazuo-sensei 伊藤四男 (1898-1974), Kōdōkan 9<sup>th</sup> dan (tori) and Satō Shizuya 佐藤静彌 (1929-2011), Kōdōkan 6<sup>th</sup> dan (uke) performing *ude-kujiki-kote-gatame* 腕挫き小手固め [wrist-control arm overstretching] as an *ura-waza* [reversal technique] in response to *kuzure-kame-shihō-gatame* [modified top-four-point-control hold] in *katame-waza ura-no-kata*. Itō's own list of techniques in *katame-waza ura-no-kata*, however, points that the *ura-waza* to *kuzure-kame-shihō-gatame* is to be *ude-kujiki-jūji-gatame* [cross-control arm overstretching] [2, p. 94] hence creating a certain degree of confusion.

technique. Sometimes Itō provides an alternative reverse technique, but the organization of the pictures does not always make it clear whether it is an alternative or a sequence of one and the same technique. Despite these concerns, because it is the sole source available, and because it is the word directly from the mouth of the *kata*'s creator, it remains the most authoritative source on *katame-waza ura-no-kata*.

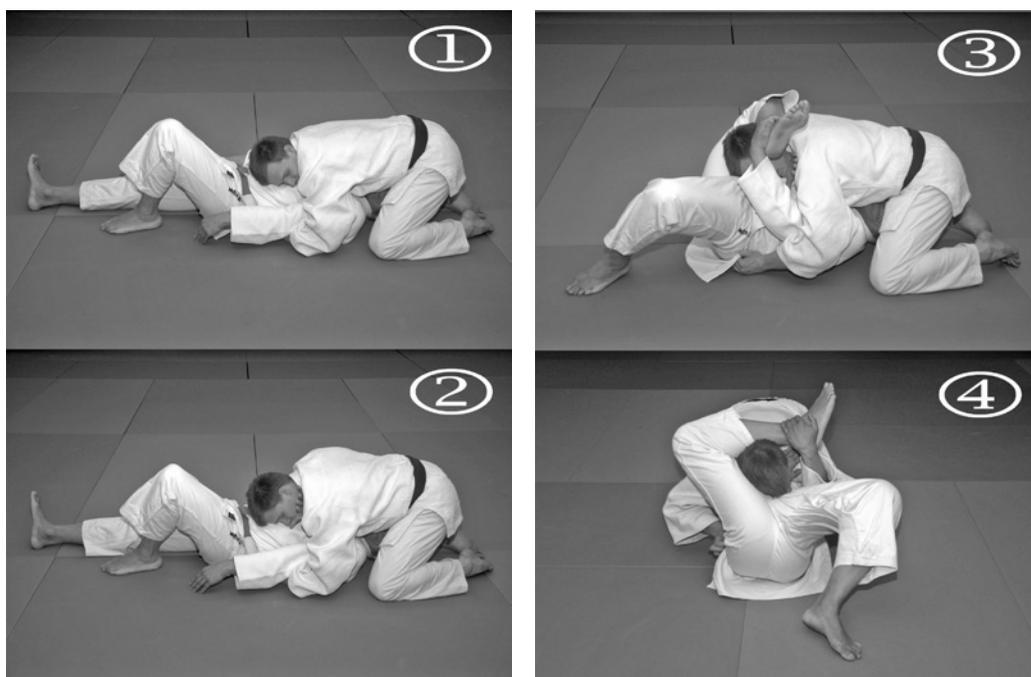
To the best of our knowledge, there are neither any didactic audiovisual materials, nor any recorded public demonstrations of *katame-waza ura-no-kata* in the public domain, nor have there ever been any. As to any potential private recordings that might exist, this cannot be excluded, but we are certainly not aware of any. Neither are there currently any meaningful Internet resources available on *katame-waza ura-no-kata* except one or two queries on *jūdō* discussion forums.

#### INSTRUCTION AND AVAILABILITY OF NAGE-WAZA URA-NO-KATA INSTRUCTORS AND POPULARITY OF THE KATA

Since knowledge of even the existence of *katame-waza ura-no-kata* among *jūdōka* is very limited, it also prevents the *kata* from being popular. But even among *kata* enthusiasts who are aware of the existence of *katame-waza ura-no-kata*, interest generally has not evolved into actually practicing the *kata*. There are several likely reasons for this. Firstly, it is almost impossible to find

an instructor knowledgeable in the *kata* irrespective of whether one is in Japan or in the West, and the single printed resource exists in Japanese only and has been out of print for decades. The unavailability of rigid mechanical standards which Western *jūdōka* tend to believe need to be replicated or stringently adhered to, seem to exert a discouraging effect, in particular because there is no tradition to approach *kata* as an essential exercise to improve one's *jūdō* as Kanō Jigorō envisaged. When Westerners practice *kata*, their objective is of a comparative nature and usually intended to impress someone, whether a *dan*-promotion jury or *kata* judges, instead of simply improving their *jūdō*. *Katame-waza ura-no-kata* not being part of any *dan*-promotion program provides no option to impress juries and promotion boards. This is the same reason why official Kōdōkan *kata* such as *jūdō joshi goshinhō*, *seiryoku zen'yō kokumin taiiku*, and *gō-no-kata* sadly attract little of no interest from most *jūdōka*. Despite the noble goals of Kanō Jigorō [32, 33], unless there is a material reward, *jūdōka* tend to show little interest in most *kata*.

Performances of *katame-no-kata* in most cases lack spectacle, unless the approach is really from a *randori-no-kata* angle, as it should be. *Katame-waza ura-no-kata* is even more at risk for lacking spectacle now that contrary to *katame-no-kata* where three different escaping attempts are being made, only a single escape is performed. Furthermore, most *jūdōka* are not well familiar with Kōdōkan *jūdō*'s structure of *newaza* 寝技 [ground fighting techniques] and oftentimes erroneously substitute the term with *katame-waza* 固技 [controlling techniques].



**Figure 7(40).** Professor Carl De Créé-kyōshi 教士 [senior teacher], jūdō 7<sup>th</sup> dan (tori) and Tim Spellemans jūdō 2<sup>nd</sup> dan (uke) performing the *katame-waza ura-no-kata* [Forms of reverse controlling techniques] at the *Royal Jūdō and Karate Academy Bushidō-Kwai*, Belgium's oldest jūdō club, in May 2015. Shown here is *kami-shihō-gatame no kaeshi-waza* 上四方固めの返し技 [counter technique to top-four-point-control hold], the third technique of the *kata*, i.e. *gyakute-hadaka-jime* 逆手裸絞め [reversed-hand naked choke]. To apply this choke, tori slides the right forearm in front of uke's throat, while bringing his right lower leg across the back of uke's neck parallel with uke's shoulders. Tori, with his left hand, while his right foot by the heel or ankle, and applies the choke by pulling down his right lower leg. This type of choke, historically, is also known under the name *kamakiri-jime* 螳螂絞 [praying mantis choke], which is non-approved *Kōdōkan* terminology; in the Kawaiishi method, it is usually called *kami-shihō-ashi-jime* 上四方足絞 [top-four-point leg-control choke].

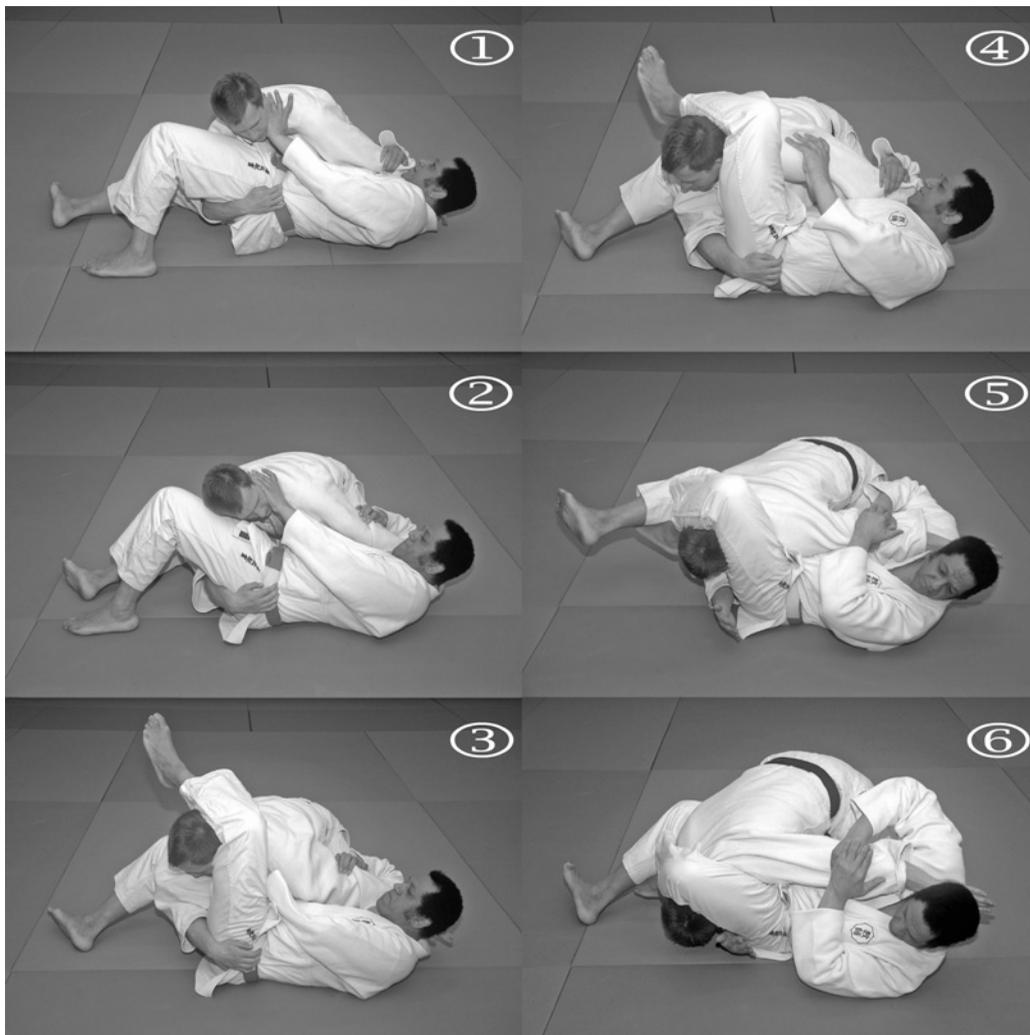
*Kōdōkan jūdō's newaza*, on the contrary, contains subdivisions such as *nige-waza* 逃げ技 [escaping techniques] and *nogare-kata* 逃れ方 [ways of escaping], for which *katame-waza ura-no-kata* is an excellent learning tool. However, without being aware of the existence and importance of those subdivisions it may be difficult to fully appreciate the contributions to developing skills in these categories by practicing *katame-waza ura-no-kata*.

As a relative exception to the rarity of *katame-waza ura-no-kata* among IJF jūdō practitioners or *Kōdōkan jūdōka*, the *Kokusai Budōin ~ Kokusai Budō Renmei* 国際武道院・国際武道聯盟 [International Martial Arts Federation [IMAF]] after Itō's death made some effort to keep this *kata* alive by apparently occasionally putting it on the program of its seminars. To that extent, it is said that Itō's former *deshi*, the late Satō Shizuya (1929–2011), *Kōdōkan* 6<sup>th</sup> dan and IMAF 9<sup>th</sup> dan, was known to keep *katame-waza ura-no-kata* as an active subject in his jūdō teaching portfolio [20] (Figure 7(40)). Scrutiny of the programs of IMAF's yearly international seminars held over the last decade in either Europe or the Americas, however, do not show this *kata* ever

having been on the program; in fact, what these programs showed, is that after 2005 the jūdō component as whole was mostly phased out with the only disciplines remaining being *aikidō*, *iaidō*, *karatedō*, *kendō*, *kobudō*, and *Nihon jūjutsu*. In other words, despite Satō's obvious familiarity with the *kata*, it does not seem that in recent years any transfer of Satō's knowledge regarding this *kata* took place at any significant scale.

The author of this paper, at the time of writing, was unable to identify any other jūdō instructor besides himself, who currently has the *katame-waza ura-no-kata* in his teaching portfolio (Figure 8(41)).<sup>23</sup> However, the 2015 annual training plan of the *Dōyūkai* (道友会) [Friends of the Way Society] for the first time ever

<sup>23</sup> However, the author of this paper was assured that John B. Gage, IMAF jūdō 4<sup>th</sup> dan *renshi* 練士 [fourth-degree black belt senior teacher], the current program director of the American Embassy Jūdō Club (*Amerika Taishikan Dōjō* アメリカ大使館道場) in Tōkyō, who was a long-time disciple of the late Satō Shizuya, on occasions served as uke to Satō Shizuya and on special request can provide some teaching of *katame-waza ura-no-kata* [personal communication, spokesperson American Embassy Jūdō Club, Tōkyō, March 6<sup>th</sup>, 2013].



**Figure 8(41).** Professor Carl De Créé-kyōshi 教士 [senior teacher], *jūdō* 7<sup>th</sup> dan (*tori*) and Tim Spellemans *jūdō* 2<sup>nd</sup> dan (*uke*) performing the *katame-waza ura-no-kata* [Forms of reverse controlling techniques] at the *Royal Jūdō and Karate Academy Bushidō-Kwai*, Belgium's oldest *jūdō* club, in May 2015. Shown here is *yoko-shihō-gatame no kaeshi-waza* 横四方固めの返し技 [counter technique to side-four-point-control hold], the fourth technique of the *kata*, i.e. *ude-kujiki-kata-gatame* 腕挫ぎ腕固め [arm overstretching with shoulder control]. In accordance with today's *Kōdōkan* terminology, this counter technique now would be considered *ude-hishigi-ude-gatame* 腕挫腕固 [arm overstretching with arm control].

officially listed a *katame-waza ura-no-kata* training session, which took place on May 7<sup>th</sup>, 2015, though somewhat conspicuously, no name of a specific instructor was mentioned; instead, under 'instructor' it read "*kata shidōbu*" 形指導部 [*kata* instructors division] [34]. However, the workshop, attended by approximately 30 senior Japanese instructors (Figure 9(42)), in the end was led by Ochiai Toshiyasu 落合俊保, *Kōdōkan* 8<sup>th</sup> dan, nephew and former student of the late Kuhara Yoshiyuki 久原義之 (1906-1985), *Kōdōkan* 9<sup>th</sup> dan, who, similarly to Itō Kazuo, was a direct disciple of Mifune. In addition, a number of senior *Dōyūkai* members admitted their interest in this *kata* and starting this February have been noticed to have discreetly started practicing some of its movements in the *Kōdōkan* Grand

*Dōjō*. So far, *Kōdōkan* instructors have turned a blind eye, but it remains to be seen if this exciting development can and will continue. Given that the *Kōdōkan* has not accepted any new *kata* since nearly half a century — the last being *Kōdōkan goshinjutsu* approved in 1956 — and given that it still has not accepted Mifune's far more well-known *kata* to the list of the existing ten *Kōdōkan kata*, it is unlikely that the *Kōdōkan* will soon — or even 'ever' — officially incorporate Itō's *katame-waza ura-no-kata* in its *kata* syllabus. This should, however, not be felt as restraining us from welcoming and practicing *katame-waza ura-no-kata*, since *jūdō* and *jūdō kata* are foremost a living thing<sup>24</sup>.

<sup>24</sup> *Ikimono* 生き物.



**Figure 9(42).** Dōyūkai (道友会) *katame-waza ura-no-kata* workshop, led by Ochiai Toshiyasu 落合俊保, *Kōdōkan* 8<sup>th</sup> dan, and held at the *Kōdōkan* in Tōkyō on May 7<sup>th</sup>, 2015 (photograph courtesy of Mōri Osamu 毛利修).

## CONCLUSIONS

Research into the *katame-waza ura-no-kata* is not a simple endeavor due to the paucity of sources, most of which exist in Japanese only and have long been out of print. We, as authors of this paper, advocate the practice of *katame-waza ura-no-kata*, and we do so for all of the reasons explained above, as well as because we believe that in a time when the message, aims and principles of Kanō's *jūdō* have become increasingly diluted in the light of the ever increasing emphasis on *jūdō* as a performance sport and popular media circus, *katame-waza ura-no-kata* helps explaining and restoring what *jūdō* is and was about. In that context, it cannot be emphasized enough that the objective of this *kata* is not to copy some supposed standard or recommended version, or to simply meet a number of mechanical criteria. As Itō has stated by iterating the words of Mifune, instead the objective is *myōwaza* 妙技 [unexplainable sophisticated technique]. It is the level where mechanics are transcended by spiritual principle to the extent that it flows out itself, assumes the rhythm of the opponent who will feel like his is fighting his own shadow.

## NOTES

Japanese names in this paper are listed by family name first and given name second, as common in traditional Japanese usage and to maintain consistency with the order of names of Japanese historic figures.

For absolute rigor, long Japanese vowel sounds have been approximated using macrons (*e.g.* *Kōdōkan*) in order to indicate their Japanese pronunciation as closely as possible. However, when referring to or quoting from Western literature, the relevant text or author is cited exactly as per the original source, with macrons used or omitted accordingly.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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## COMPETING INTERESTS

The author declares having no competing interests.

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