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 [escap ing 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 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 Itō • Kyuzo Mifune • newaza • ura-no-kata • ura-waza

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INTRODUCTION

In the late 1980s, after having learnt of the existence of a 1955 16mm jūdō film featuring the legendary Japanese jūdō master Miﬁne Kyūzō 三船九段, a rare Kōdōkan jūdan 十段 (10th degree), we were intrigued by two kata which Miﬁne 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 Miﬁne’s Sōen goshinjutsu 三船九段創案護身術 [Miﬁne Kyūzō’s personal self-defense] first promulgated by him when he was still a 9th 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 on Confucian values, traditional Japanese martial arts, and modern Western principles developed by John Dewey, John Stuart Mill, and Herbert Spencer.

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

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

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

**Mifune Kyūzō** - a most celebrated Kōdōkan jūdō 10th dan-h Hölder, born in 1883, died in 1965.

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

with these *kata*, and who could provide instruction in it. However, on February 19, 1987 we could receive from André H.F. Le Capitaine, the General Secretary of the International Martial Arts Federation – Europe (IMAF-Europe), a photocopied 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 6th dan, at that time the Secretary-General of the worldwide International Martial Arts Federation (IMAF) or Kosukai Budōin – Kosukai 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 9th 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* 突技 [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 Toshiyus 鬼 chai Toshiyus, nephew and former student of the late Kuhara Yoshiyuki 久原義之 (1906–1985), Kōdōkan 9th 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 JUDO KATA VIS-À-VIS OFFICIAL KÔDÔKAN JUDO 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 *jūjō 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 *jūdō* 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 *jūdō* realize.

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

- *shōbu-no-kata* 内観の形 [Forms of Combat] by Uchida Ryōhei 内田良平 (1873-1937) around 1900 [4]
- *gonosen-no-kata* 増千の先の形 [Forms of Post-Attack Initiative Counter Throws] by Takahashi Kazuyoshi 高橋数良 (1885-1942) around 1920

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 Budōkwai members performing *Nage-no-kata,* and then Mr. Gunji Koizumi and Mr. Yukio Tani performing *Ji-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].

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.* 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 *jūdō* 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, *tsutsu-no-kata* was, not finished and could be completed in the following recorded incident:

> Dr. Kanō watched two English Budōkwai members performing *Nage-no-kata,* and then Mr. Gunji Koizumi and Mr. Yukio Tani performing *Ji-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 …

1. See part 1 of this paper. It has been claimed by some that there would exist a *kaeshi-no-kata* 仕返の形, a *kata* supposedly older than *gonosen-no-kata* and introduced to the UK by Tani Yukio 丹野幸儀 (1885-1930). This is, however, highly unlikely. Tani’s *jūdō* history is obscure and believed to be in *Fuse-nō-ryū* 不破流 and *Shin’i-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 *nage-waza na-kendo* 投業の研究 [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* as 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 小泉治敬 (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 Kawaishi 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.

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

3. 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 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 博技 博技 rather than技艺. 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 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 10th dan, such as for example:


[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 or his biog-

6 Original title: Shōshi Mifune jūdan [hanzenbon]: Jūdō no Shinzui (神技 十段 [完全版]: 與道の真髄) [Mifune 10th dan [complete edition]: The Essence of Jūdō], minite 46’50”-47’51”.

7 Shōshi Mifune jūdan (神技 十段) なじみの地技 (same ni) [escape from crossed-control armbar [second option]] at 47’35” is identical to Itō’s Oshi-kaeshi-ura-gatame 押し反技 準一式 [pushing over scarf hold].
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, Kōdōkan 6th dan, gave a lengthy interview for the Japanese martial arts magazine Hiden Budo & Bujutsu Monthly [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 (Ito Kazuo) and Mifune Kyūzō. In his interview Satō leaves no doubt about it that not Mifune, but Ito 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之形もあり、抑え込み技、締め技、関節技に対する返し技がそれ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箇を伊藤師範が引き継いだ軌跡ということになるが、技数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 Ito’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 Ito to whom master Mifune handed over the results of his research into the art of technique, and master Ito 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 Ito Kazuo synthesized the information and created the kata, the actual source of inspiration to Ito 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 Ito is based on evaluating the following considerations:

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8 Satō Shizuya was promoted to rokudan [6th degree black belt] by the Kōdōkan in 1965; but when he parted ways with the Kōdōkan he assumed the rank of IMAF kōkudan [8th degree black belt] in the organization he cofounded in 1952. At the time of his death he held the judo ranks of 6th dan Kōdōkan and 9th dan IMAF.
While studying under Mifune, Itō successfully obtained his secondary school teacher license from the Ministry of Education [2]. He continued studying at the Kata Judo Kyōin Yoseiijo (Higher Training School for the Formation of Judo 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 1st postwar Ministry of Education. Several of Itō's books from the 1960s and later list him with the academic credential 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 Kyōtsu Gyoji Kenkyūjo [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 know Itō personally and whom we have been in contact with expressed surprise hearing about the possible association between Itō and a doctoral credential.

The Kōdōkan promoted several people with the name Itō to 9th dan raising the possibility for confusion. Besides Itō Kazuo, also Itō Tadayoshi (1891-1971) in 1971, Itō Yoshio, and Itō Kazuo (1900-1978) in 1978, Itō Tokoji (1913-1992) in 1984, and Itō Hideo (1922-2002) in 1988. Also well-known was Itō Takane (1887-1981), Kōdōkan 8th dan, who was a former secretary to Kanō Jigorō and member of the original 1952 Kōdōkan Goshinjutsu-Committee, and who like Mifune Kyōzō and Itō Kazuo was also a member of IMAF, which subsequently promoted him to 10th dan with the title of meijin [grandmaster].

Mifune Kyōzō too had been a jūdō instructor at Nittaidai from around 1910 when he was still a godan 5th dan [5th degree black belt] [13, 21].

Itō Kazuo was also a jūdō instructor at Nittaidai or Nippon Tsūitsu Daigaku [Japan University of Science and Technology] and at Meiji Gakuin Daigaku [Meiji University]. He was a kōshi [university lecturer] at Kōdōkan Daigaku [Kōdōkan University], a member of the Zen Nihon Jūdō Kōdanshakai, and a member of the Kōdōkan Coaching Committee [Figure 3(36)], a jōnin sōdanyaku [permanent counselor] to the Tōkyō-Bu Jūdō Renmei [Tōkyō Jūdō Federation], and a professor from the 1st postwar Ministry of Education [2]. He continued studying at the Kata Judo Kyōin Yoseiijo (Higher Training School for the Formation of Judo 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 1st 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 [Scientific Doctor]) [22-24]. In 1958 the Kōdōkan elevated Itō Kazuo to Kōdōkan 9th dan. Professionally, Itō also was a jūdō instructor at Nittaidai or Nippon Tsūitsu Daigaku [Japan University of Science and Technology] and at Meiji Gakuin Daigaku [Meiji University], and a kōshi [university lecturer] at Kōdōkan Daigaku [Kōdōkan University]. At the Kōdōkan he was a Kōdōkan Shidō Shingi-in [Chairman of the Kōdōkan Technical Committee Member] (Figure 3(36)), a jōnin sōdanyaku [permanent counselor] to the Tōkyō-Bu Jūdō Renmei [Tōkyō Jūdō Federation], and a professor from the 1st postwar Ministry of Education [2]. He continued studying at the Kata Judo Kyōin Yoseiijo (Higher Training School for the Formation of Judo 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 1st 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 [Scientific Doctor]) [22-24]. In 1958 the Kōdōkan elevated Itō Kazuo to Kōdōkan 9th dan. Professionally, Itō also was a jūdō instructor at Nittaidai or Nippon Tsūitsu Daigaku [Japan University of Science and Technology] and at Meiji Gakuin Daigaku [Meiji University], and a kōshi [university lecturer] at Kōdōkan Daigaku [Kōdōkan University]. At the Kōdōkan he was a Kōdōkan Shidō Shingi-in [Chairman of the Kōdōkan Technical Committee Member] (Figure 3(36)), a jōnin sōdanyaku [permanent counselor] to the Tōkyō-Bu Jūdō Renmei [Tōkyō Jūdō Federation], and a professor from the 1st postwar Ministry of Education [2]. He continued studying at the Kata Judo Kyōin Yoseiijo (Higher Training School for the Formation of Judo 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 1st 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 [Scientific Doctor]) [22-24]. In 1958 the Kōdōkan elevated Itō Kazuo to Kōdōkan 9th dan.

The Kōdōkan promoted several people with the name Itō to 9th dan raising the possibility for confusion. Besides Itō Kazuo, also Itō Tadayoshi (1891-1971) in 1971, Itō Yoshio, and Itō Kazuo (1900-1978) in 1978, Itō Tokoji (1913-1992) in 1984, and Itō Hideo (1922-2002) in 1988. Also well-known was Itō Takane (1887-1981), Kōdōkan 8th dan, who was a former secretary to Kanō Jigorō and member of the original 1952 Kōdōkan Goshinjutsu-Committee, and who like Mifune Kyōzō and Itō Kazuo was also a member of IMAF, which subsequently promoted him to 10th dan with the title of meijin [grandmaster].

Mifune Kyōzō too had been a jūdō instructor at Nittaidai from around 1910 when he was still a godan 5th dan [5th degree black belt] [13, 21].

Itō Kazuo was also a jūdō instructor at Nittaidai or Nippon Tsūitsu Daigaku [Japan University of Science and Technology] and at Meiji Gakuin Daigaku [Meiji University], and a kōshi [university lecturer] at Kōdōkan Daigaku [Kōdōkan University]. At the Kōdōkan he was a Kōdōkan Shidō Shingi-in [Chairman of the Kōdōkan Technical Committee Member] (Figure 3(36)), a jōnin sōdanyaku [permanent counselor] to the Tōkyō-Bu Jūdō Renmei [Tōkyō Jūdō Federation], and a professor from the 1st postwar Ministry of Education [2]. He continued studying at the Kata Judo Kyōin Yoseiijo (Higher Training School for the Formation of Judo 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 1st 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 [Scientific Doctor]) [22-24]. In 1958 the Kōdōkan elevated Itō Kazuo to Kōdōkan 9th dan. Professionally, Itō also was a jūdō instructor at Nittaidai or Nippon Tsūitsu Daigaku [Japan University of Science and Technology] and at Meiji Gakuin Daigaku [Meiji University], and a kōshi [university lecturer] at Kōdōkan Daigaku [Kōdōkan University]. At the Kōdōkan he was a Kōdōkan Shidō Shingi-in [Chairman of the Kōdōkan Technical Committee Member] (Figure 3(36)), a jōnin sōdanyaku [permanent counselor] to the Tōkyō-Bu Jūdō Renmei [Tōkyō Jūdō Federation], and a professor from the 1st postwar Ministry of Education [2]. He continued studying at the Kata Judo Kyōin Yoseiijo (Higher Training School for the Formation of Judo 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 1st 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 [Scientific Doctor]) [22-24]. In 1958 the Kōdōkan elevated Itō Kazuo to Kōdōkan 9th dan. Professional
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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 budo author and historian Donn F. Draeger (1922-1982), Kōdōkan 5th dan, women’s multi-budōka Miyake Tsunao 三宅綱子 [born 1926], Kōdōkan joshi 5th dan, and former IMAF general secretary Šatō Shizuya 佐藤静雄 (1929-2011), Kōdōkan 6th dan & IMAF 9th 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: kuki-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) [5, 6]. In 1906 both Takahashi and Mifune were 3rd dan

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In addition to Waseda University he was also the jūdō head-instructor at the Rikugun Yosen Gakkō 陸軍幼年学校 [School for children of the military] and an instructor at the Keishichō 警視庁 [Tōkyō 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.
[3rd 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), 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 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 Yokō-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 benefited from the inspiration of Takahashi Kazuyoshi, Oda Jōin, Toku Sanbō, and Kawakami Chū17, 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 …

17 Kawakami Chū 川上忠 (1897-1985), 9th 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 Setuo. Kawakami was nicknamed “newaza no Chūsan” 新技の忠さん and also gained fame because of his unique tokui-waza 得意技 [specialty technique], a hybrid throw called hane-seoi-nage 跳背負投 [spring-back-carry throw].
kata implies adherence to and performance of appropriate action in conformance with combat theory of that discipline and that specific exercise. It means that jūdō katas 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、みずからの人格の陶治ともなるのです。" (…) [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.”]

“そこでいうと、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ると思います。” (…) [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 [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 renshin” [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 [unexplainable superhuman skill], the only difference being that the ura-kata contrary to 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]°. 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

° Notably on pages 8, 11, and 13.
extent it is possible that Ito decided to drop the suffix "no-kata" [Forms] in its entirety and settled for simply using "kenkyu". 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 uro-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 uro-no-kata.

Reihō in katame-waza ura-no-kata

With regards to the reihō 礼法 [bowing procedures] in nage-waza uro-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 judō goshinbō, Kodokan goshinjutsu and koshiki-no-kata. We wrote 'likely' because there is no text in Ito'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 uro-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 Ito and attests to this kata truly being a form of training rather than intended for exhibition for spectators.

At the time that Ito introduced the kata, the initial distance between both judōka (tori and uke) was very limited. The pictures in Ito's book suggest that the initial distance between both judōka was not more than one tatami length (1.82m - 2.00m) [2, p. 52]. Later in the 1970s the Kodokan 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 Kodokan kata, to also adjust the starting distance for katame-waza uro-no-kata to 5.45m (derived from the original Japanese norm of 3 ken 甲間, the old Japanese measure of length of surfaces commonly used in architecture, in which 1 ken is 1.818m or 5.965 feet)\(^1\).

The pictures in Ito'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 judōka 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 judō as a new discipline was introduced to a non-judōka 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 judōka bowing to each other. Hence, both partners should make a quarter turn in standing position, heels together, and bow to the shōmen performing ritu-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 坐礼 [bowing in seated position] towards each other.

After completing the bowing procedure both judōka 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-kneeled position termed by Ito chigoji no yoka 中膝の構え [half-raised position], and more commonly known as kyushi-no-kamae 膝姿の構 [squared ready-position], usually abbreviated to ko-kyoichi 小膝姿 [minor squared 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 judōka 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

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\(^1\) 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. 5.4cm. 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'.

\(^2\) This position is derived from Kitō-ryū's kurai-dori 膝取位取 [half-kneeded position of situational awareness], a position that mechanically is similar to ko-kyoichi.
left knee and moves to slide his right foot to his right side again to take the posture of ko-kyoshi or chigoshi. The movement in katame-no-kata and katame-waza ura-no-kata where you slide forward on one knee is called shibito 腕行. 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.

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 [wrist-control arm overstretching] 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 (kanetsu-waza) tori will be in ko-kyoshi for biza-gatame, and during the final technique of the kata both judōka will be in standing position for ashi-garami.

Similarly 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

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21 The sliding forward movement or shibito 腕行 should not be confused with the movement in sumo where the sumotori 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]).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>KATAME-WAZA URA-NO-KATA</th>
<th>[FORMS OF REVERSING CONTROLLING TECHNIQUES]</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I. Dai ikkyu 第一教 [First group]: Ose-komi-waza 押さえ込み技 [Pinning techniques]</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Kesa-gatame 裏装締め → Ude-dori-kuzure-gaza 裏取崩れ裏袈裟 [Modified scarf hold with arm hold]</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Kata-gatame 肩締め → Kesa-uki-ose-komi (h) 逆手裏締め [Reverse basic scarf]</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Yokoi-shiō-gatame 横四方締め → Ude-kuzure-kata-gatame 腕挫ぎ裏十字固め [Arm overstretching with shoulder control]</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Kuzure-kame-shiō-gatame 倒れ上四方締め → Ude-kuzure-jūji-gatame 腕挫ぎ十字固め [Cross-control arm overstretching]</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

II. Dai ninkyö 第二教 [Second group]: Shime-waza 絞め技 [Strangulation techniques]

| 6. Kata-jūji-gatame 片十字締め → Ude-garame 腕絞め (arm twisting) |
| 7. Hadaka-jime 裸締め → Gyaku-te-kusa-gatame 逆手裏腹部締め [Arm overstretching with lever control] |
| 8. Oshi-eri-jime 送り襟締め → Ude-kuzure-keko-gatame 腕挫ぎ十字固め [Arm hold reverse scarf] |
| 9. Katahata-jime 片羽締め → Ude-dori-chohara-kesa 裏取後ろ袈裟 [Arm hold reverse scarf] |
| 10. Gyu-juji-gatame 縦十字締め → Ude-garame 腕絞め (arm twisting) |

III. Dai sankyö 第三教 [Third group]: Kansetsu-waza 関節技 [Joint techniques]

| 11. Ude-garame 腕絞め → Ude-garame 腕絞め (arm twisting) |
| 12. Ude-kuzure-jūji-gatame 腕挫ぎ十字締め → Kaeri-uki-ose-komi (h) 逆手起き押さえ込み [Reverse basic scarf] |
| 14. Ude-kuzure-hō-gatame 腕挫ぎ袈裟締め → Ude-kuzure-ude-gatame 腕挫ぎ袈裟締め [Arm overstretching with arm control] |
| 15. Ashi-gatame 足締め → Hata-shiō-gatame 頭裏十字締め [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 締き in the book authored by the creator of this kata [2], indicate that the pronunciation is to be 'kujiki' [overstitching, crushing], which is also the normal pronunciation of this kanji. We point out that for hitherto unknown reasons, the same kanji 坂, in Kodokan jūdō, is usually pronounced 'bōgi' [overstretching], even though the standard kanji for 'bōgi' is 坂. It is impossible to conclude whether the grammatically correct, yet from Kodokan 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, Ito pointing out that the ura-usawaza to kazure-kame-shiō-gatame is to be ura-kuzure-jūji-gatame [2, p. 94], in the actual description of the ura-usawaza Ito instead indicates, demonstrates and explains ura-kuzure-jūji-gatame 裏十字締め [arm overstretching with shoulder control] [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 shikke while in ko-kyoshibi position, followed by tori sliding backwards a single step in ko-kyoshibi.

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

1970 – Ito Kazuo 伊藤四男

Judō no nage-to katame-no-ura-waza [2]

Ito 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 Ito-sensei, Kodokan 9th dan, in the role of tori, and Satō Shizuya佐藤静弥 (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 Kodokan’s International Department since 1949.

22 See also the Introduction section of this paper. Furthermore, Satō Shizuya佐藤静弥 (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 Kodokan’s International Department since 1949.
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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, sei-ryoku 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].
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 Kobukai Budōin ~ Kobukai Budō Renmei 国際武道院・ 国際武道聯盟 [International Martial Arts Federation [IMAF]] after Ito’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 Ito’s former deshi, the late Satō Shizuya (1929-2011), Kōdōkan 6th dan and IMAF 9th 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)). However, the 2015 annual training plan of the Dōyūkai (道友会) [Friends of the Way Society] for the first time ever

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23 However, the author of this paper was assured that John B. Gage, IMAF jūdō 4th dan renshi 練士 [fourth-degree black belt senior teacher], the current program director of the American Embassy Jūdō Club (アメリカ大使館道場) in Tokyo, who was a long-time disciple of the late Satō Shizuya, on occasion 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, Tokyo, March 6th, 2013].
officially listed a katame-waza ura-no-kata training session, which took place on May 7th, 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 8th dan, nephew and former student of the late Kuhara Yoshiyuki 久原義之 (1906-1985), Kōdōkan 9th dan, who, similarly to Itō Kazuo, was a direct disciple of Mifune. In addition, a number of senior Dōyukai 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.\footnote{Ikimono 生き物.}
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 judo have become increasingly diluted in the light of the ever increasing emphasis on judo as a performance sport and popular media circus, katame-waza ura-no-kata helps explaining and restoring what judo 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 Ito 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.

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.

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COMPETING INTERESTS

The author declares having no competing interests.

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.