

Kōdōkan Jūdō's Elusive Tenth Kata: The Gō-no-kata – "Forms of Proper Use of Force" – Part 3

Authors' Contribution:

- A** Study Design
- B** Data Collection
- C** Statistical Analysis
- D** Manuscript Preparation
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Carl De Crée^{ABCDE}, Llyr C. Jones^{ABCD}

International Association of Judo Researchers, United Kingdom

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Abstract

Background and Study Aim:

Kata ("Prearranged forms") represent the grammar of Japanese *jūdō*. The *Kōdōkan jūdō* syllabus typically contains eight or nine *kata*. In recent years, *Gō-no-kata* ("Prearranged forms of correct use of force"), a generally considered obsolete and reclusive 'tenth' *kata*, has become the subject of some renewed interest within *jūdō* circles. Finding accurate information on the *gō-no-kata* or locating a skilled instructor of this exercise is very difficult. The purpose of the present paper is to provide a comprehensive study of this *gō-no-kata* which once formed a part of the standard *jūdō* curriculum. We aim to remove the confusion and mystery which surrounds the *gō-no-kata*.

Material/Methods:

To achieve this, we offer a critical evaluation of the available literature and source material on this *kata*.

Results:

Gō-no-kata is the oldest *kata* of *Kōdōkan*, probably predating the two 1885 *randori-no-kata*. *Gō-no-kata* consists of ten forms, which depict a relatively primitive *jūdō*, still practiced in defensive *jigotai* position. Its aim was to serve both as an intense fitness exercise as well as to illustrate the basic principle of conquering force with giving way. Despite being popularly thought of as defunct, the *gō-no-kata* survives today – having initially been preserved in Tōkyō by a small group of senior *jūdōka*, and now also by a handful of experts abroad.

Conclusions:

The preservation of *gō-no-kata*, a 10-technique prearranged form that teaches principles of optimal use of force, is primarily the merit of the late Yoshiyuki Kuhara-sensei and his nephew Toshiyasu Ochiai-sensei.

Key words:

Gō-no-kata • Jigorō Kanō • *jūdō* • *kata* • *Kōdōkan*

Author's address:

Professor Carl De Crée, P.O. Box 125, B-2800 Malines, Belgium, e-mail: prof.cdcrec@earthlink.net

Kata: Predetermined and choreographed physical exercises, which together with free exercises (*randori*) and lectures (*hōgi*) form the three critical pillars of *Kōdōkan jūdō* education.

Jūdō: A Japanese form of pedagogy, created by Jigorō Kanō, based *inter alia* on neoconfucianist values, traditional Japanese martial arts, and modern Western principles developed by John Dewey, John Stuart Mill, and Herbert Spencer.

Kōdōkan: The specific name of his school and style of *budō* as given by its founder Jigorō Kanō (1860–1938).

BACKGROUND

Kata are intended and recognized as a valuable training drill in most Japanese *gendai budō*¹ and *koryū*² arts. *Kata* represent the grammar of *jūdō*, and without properly mastering them, *jūdō* is often reduced to a crude conglomerate of isolated throws merely based on power, endurance, and athletic achievement. There are nine *kata* in *Kōdōkan jūdō* today, as accepted by the *Kōdōkan Jūdō Institute* in Tōkyō, Japan [1–3]. Of those nine *kata* only seven are most commonly performed. Because of this

reason one will often find literature incorrectly claiming that there would be only seven or eight *Kōdōkan jūdō kata* [4,5]. However, other *Kōdōkan* and non-*Kōdōkan kata* exist in *jūdō*. Most of these *kata* are not well known outside Japan and are rarely taught or practiced [6–8]. One such *kata* that used to form part of the *Kōdōkan* curriculum, but no longer features, is the *Gō-no-kata* 剛の形 ("Prearranged forms of correct use of force"). In recent years, this generally considered obsolete 'tenth' *kata* has become the subject of some renewed interest within *jūdō* circles. However, much of the information in cir-

¹ *Gendai budō* 現代武道 are modern Japanese martial arts which were established after the Meiji Restoration (1866–1869). In that way they distinguish themselves from classical or traditional or old martial arts (*koryū*). *Gendai budō* often are rooted in *koryū*.

² *Koryū* 古流 is a Japanese term that is used in association with the ancient Japanese martial arts. The word literally translates as *old school* or *old tradition*. *Koryū* is a general term for Japanese schools of martial arts that predate the Meiji Restoration (1866–1869) which sparked major socio-political changes and led to the modernisation of Japan.

Gō-no-kata: “Prearranged forms of correct use of force”, a physical exercise created by Jigorō Kanō and presumably the oldest *jūdō* *kata*, which until recently was often considered defunct.

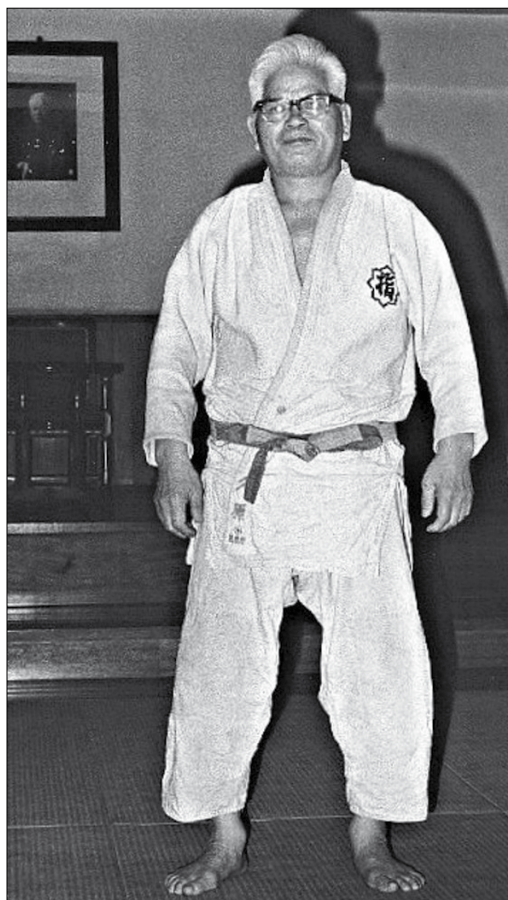


Figure 1. Yoshiyuki Kuhara (1906–1985), 8th *dan* (later 9th *dan*) and a senior *Kōdōkan* instructor, here in a picture taken towards the end of the 1970's. Kuhara-sensei devoted more than 60 years to the study of *kata*, and was instrumental in the preservation of *gō-no-kata*.

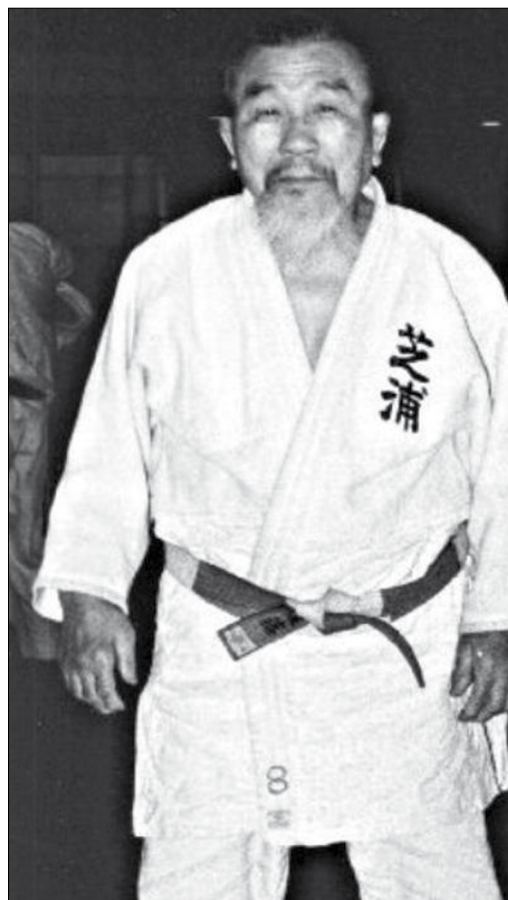


Figure 2. Shōichirō Satō (1890–1973?), 8th *dan*, known to have practiced *gō-no-kata* with Yoshiyuki Kuhara. The *kanji* on his *jūdōgi* read *Shibaura*. Satō-sensei also obtained *Kumi-uchi Mokuroku* of *Sōsuishitsuryū* in Tōkyō under Hyakutarō Matsu'i before entering the *Kōdōkan*.

culation on *gō-no-kata*, is contradictory, ambiguous, and even blatantly erroneous. The purpose of the present paper is to provide a comprehensive study of the *gō-no-kata*; specifically, we aim to remove this confusion and mystery which surrounds the *gō-no-kata*.

Our research questions are as follows:

- What is the veracity of various claims made by certain publications that what they propose as *gō-no-kata* truly represents the historic *gō-no-kata*?
- Does there exist a *gō-no-kata* in *Kōdōkan jūdō*?
- If a *gō-no-kata* exists, then what is its contents and theoretical foundation?
- If *gō-no-kata* exists, then who practices it and where can it be observed and learnt?

This final part of a series of three papers will mainly focus on the third and fourth of those four main questions. To address these questions and achieve our purpose, we offer a critical evaluation of the available lit-

erature 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. This paper offers an important contribution to our knowledge of *Kōdōkan* understanding, as it has implications for the current *jūdō* syllabus, and also represent the only critical scholarly study of this *kata* in both Western languages and Japanese.

RESEARCH INTO NEWLY DISCOVERED SOURCE INFORMATION ON GŌ-NO-KATA

1976 – Yoshiyuki Kuhara – *Jūdō Mizu-Nagare* [9]
& 1998 – Toshiyasu Ochiai (editor) – *Gō-no-kata*
(based on Kuhara's 1976 [10] text)

The most significant and detailed material on the *gō-no-kata* can be found in one of the rarest *jūdō* oeuvres in existence, namely an extensive study of *kata* completed in 1976 [9] by the late Yoshiyuki Kuhara (1906–1985) (Figure 1). It is the only work that has survived, which



Figure 3. Kazuzō Kudō (1898–1970), 9th dan (left), one of Kanō's last pupils, and Yoshiyuki Kuhara (1906–1985), 8th dan (later 9th dan), here pictured on Sunday, January 16th of 1966, shortly before one of their celebrated performances of *Koshiki-no-kata* in full armor (From [9], p. 358).

contains the original *gō-no-kata* complete with its history, pictures of each technique and explanations. The techniques are performed by Kuhara himself as *tori*, and Shōichirō Satō-*sensei*, Kōdōkan 8th dan, as *uke* (Figure 2). Unfortunately, this book was printed in very limited numbers and is *hibaihin* 非売品, i.e. not openly for sale. The book is so rare that is not even available in antique bookshops or in specialized auctions. At the time it was printed it was only available in Kuhara's *Shūdōkan dōjō* and copies were only available to those who were long-time students of Kuhara.

Kuhara is one of the most crucial figures in *jūdō kata* in the second half of the twentieth century, having personally researched the topic for some 60 years. Kuhara mostly specialized in the *Koshiki-no-kata* for which he was well acclaimed. He was also probably the most important *jūdō* performer of that particular *kata* in full armor, regularly demonstrating it during *Kagami-Biraki* celebrations and *All Japan Jūdō Championships*, initially as the *uke* for Kazuzo Kudō, 9th dan (Figure 3)³. Kuhara also recognized the importance of *koryū* and actively promoted its return. To that extent, he is known to have studied and practiced the *kata* of *iaidō*⁴.

The study of *koryū* is consistent with the fundamental aims of *jūdō* as envisaged by Kanō himself. It is understood that as his life evolved, Kanō realized that *jūdō* was not a total success, and was heading in a direction (sports competition) that was quite different from what he wanted [6, 11]. Towards the end of his life he already anticipated that the increasing emphasis on *shiai* and dilution of *kata* would endanger the very concept of *jūdō* itself. *Koryū* because of its tradition and because of the impossibility to compete (mortal peril) did not have such

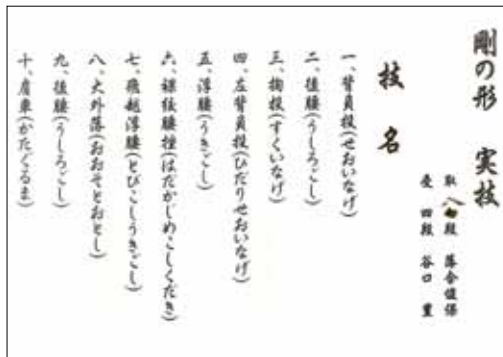


Figure 4. Facsimile with the techniques of *gō-no-kata* calligraphed by Toshiyasu Ochiai as part of his 1998 instructional booklet [10].

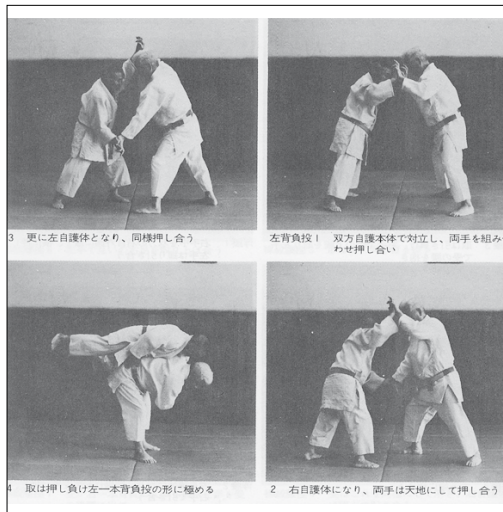


Figure 5. Yoshiyuki Kuhara (*tori*) and Shōichirō Satō (*uke*) in *hidari-seoi-nage*, the fourth technique of *gō-no-kata*. Note how forceful opposition at first, is channelled into *jū* or giving way, which provides an opportunity to successfully enter a *jūdō* throw, in this case, a left shoulder throw (*hidari-seoi-nage*) (From [9], p. 249).

a risk, and “cross-training” in *koryū* would strengthen a *jūdōka*'s character in areas beyond that covered by a *jūdō* education only.

After Kuhara died in 1985, his teachings were furthered by his pupil and nephew Toshiyasu Ochiai, now a Kōdōkan 8th dan. Although the *Kuhara Shūdōkan dōjō* no longer exists today, the tradition is continued, including the teaching of some uncommon *kata*, including *gō-no-kata* as well as Mifune's *ura-no-kata*. Kuhara's *Jūdō Mizu-Nagare* [9] had quickly sold out and Kuhara-*sensei* passed away just a couple of years later. As his *dōjō* disappeared too, his book was virtually never heard of

³ Note that Kuhara is generally referred to as being an 8th dan, however, he did receive the rank of 9th dan in 1984 shortly before his death on April 4th of 1985.

⁴ *Iaidō* – the craft, art, or science of the sword, is a Japanese martial art that uses a specific methodology to teach the use of the *katana* (Japanese sword). Generally, *iaidō* takes the form of partnered practice exercised through *kata*, as opposed to competition, solo, or freestyle practice. Yoshiyuki Kuhara was a practitioner and instructor of *Ōmori-ryū iaidō*.

again, and so no written documentation on *gō-no-kata* was available any longer. Because of this situation, and to support his continued teaching of *gō-no-kata*, his nephew Toshiyasu Ochiai-sensei, in 1998 created an instructional booklet [10] (Figure 4) that from Kuhara's *Jūdō Mizu-Nagare* only retained the *gō-no-kata*.

The booklet [10] was far easier to reproduce than Kuhara's complete oeuvre [9], and only preserved from Kuhara's book information thought to be essential. Kuhara really thus remains its original author. However, Ochiai-sensei did replace the original pictures of Kuhara and Satō-sensei (Figure 5), by pictures of himself as the *tori*⁵, and Yūtake Taniguchi, 5th *dan* (at the time, 4th *dan*), as the *uke*, presumably because the original pictures were in black and white, and because he no longer had the originals; the new pictures in the booklet are in color⁶. That being said, even this newer booklet has never been officially published with an ISBN number, and is currently also only available at Ochiai-sensei's *dōjō* to his own students. The reason for this is not to bestow a character of esoterism on *gō-no-kata*, but simply to avoid an uncomfortable situation for the *Kōdōkan*, which is where most enthusiasts and foreigners typically address their questions. Since *gō-no-kata* is no longer part of the actively taught *Kōdōkan* curriculum, and since the official version claims ... would in fact even have been removed from it by Kanō himself, the insistence, particularly of foreigners for information about this obsolete *kata*, puts *Kōdōkan* sensei and staff in a somewhat uncomfortable and awkward situation.

Because Kuhara's original oeuvre and the later booklet compiled or edited by Ochiai, as far as *gō-no-kata* is concerned, are nearly identical, we will consider their contents together here in the same section. Both Kuhara's book [9] and Ochiai's booklet [10] are written in Japanese, and the extracts cited in the present paper are original translations. Contrary to Kuhara's book, Ochiai's booklet has no page numbers.

Kuhara [9] and Ochiai [10] present the history of the *gō-no-kata* and the rationale for its development. Kuhara, unlike Kawamura and Daigo [12], does not list a creation date for the *gō-no-kata*. However, Kuhara, does opine that *gō-no-kata* may in fact be the oldest *Kōdōkan kata*. If Kuhara is correct, and *gō-no-kata* is indeed the oldest *kata* of *Kōdōkan*, then its creation date must in fact be no later than 1885, since this is the year that

Kanō-shihan conceived the original *nage*-, *katame*-, and *shōbu-no-kata* [13, p. 1168]. This is a different from what has been suggested by Kawamura and Daigo [12]. Unfortunately, Kawamura and Daigo [12] do not support their 1887 claim with any references.

The *Kōdōkan New Japanese-English Dictionary of Jūdō* in which Kawamura and Daigo make their 1887 claim [12, p. 142] is in fact a more recent, concise and bilingual Japanese/English version of the earlier *Jūdō Daijiten*, which had 670 pages and was published in Japanese only [12]. Both Kawamura and Daigo were already part of the editorial committee of the *Jūdō Daijiten*. The latter, on page 139 has an entry for *gō-no-kata*, which references two sources [12, p. 139]. The first reference is Oimatsu [15], the second is Kanō [16], neither of which contain any creation date for *gō-no-kata*, though. The only source that mentions the year 1887 in the same paragraph in which *gō-no-kata* is discussed, is indeed Kanō's biography.

We note though that Maruyama, known for his historical research into *jūdō*, does not list *gō-no-kata* as one of Kanō's achievements in his year overview for 1887 [13]. We have previously (see Part 1) explained that Daigo and Kawamura most likely obtained the year 1887 by misinterpreting a section on *jū-no-kata* and *gō-no-kata* in Kanō's biography [17]. It is our opinion that the syntaxes of the sentences used in that section, suggest that the year 1887 as date of creation only applies to *jū-no-kata*, not to *gō-no-kata*.

It is also unlikely that somebody as meticulous and exhaustive as Maruyama [13] would have forgotten to mention '*gō-no-kata*' as an important creative product of Kanō for the year 1887. In other words, Kuhara's view (*i.e.*, of *gō-no-kata* being the oldest original *jūdō kata* and predating both *nage-no-kata* and *jū-no-kata*) is very plausible.

There is no doubt that the *gō-no-kata* presents an idea of *jūdō* in a somewhat archaic form that we are no longer used to seeing. Yet, it succeeds in explaining the basic idea of *jū* in a very straightforward way understandable by both laymen and novices, where, for example, *itsutsu-no-kata* does so in a more philosophical, almost elitist way, generally incomprehensible, except to the very advanced *jūdōka*.

Kuhara explains that *gō-no-kata* is loosely⁷ derived from the *Kitō-ryū*⁸ and *Tenjin Shin'yō-ryū*⁹ styles of *jūjutsu* and was

⁵ *Tori*: the person who applies a throw or other technique... [12, p. 128]. *Uke*: the person who receives a technique... [Ibid., p. 131].

⁶ Ochiai T. Personal communication. Bunkyo Jūdōkai, Tōkyō-to Jūdō Renmei; 2006, August 3rd; Tōkyō: Kōdōkan Jūdō Institute.

⁷ Recall that the *Gō-no-kata* is Kanō's creation and did not exist as a complete form in any *jūjutsu* school.

⁸ *Kitō-ryū*: A style of classical *jūjutsu* from which the throwing methods of modern *Kōdōkan jūdō* originated [12, p. 91], and [18].

⁹ *Tenjin Shin'yō-ryū*: One of the last schools of classical *jūjutsu* to be formulated... It featured many choking and jointlock techniques, many of which form the basis of a number of techniques in *Kōdōkan jūdō*. [12, p. 127], and [18].

Table 1. Gō-no-kata: “Forms of Proper Use of Force” of Kōdōkan jūdō, as constructed by Jigorō Kanō in 1887 or earlier. From Kuhara [9], and Ochiai [19,20].

1.	<i>Seoi-nage</i>	Shoulder Throw
2.	<i>Ushiro-goshi</i>	Back Hip Throw
3.	<i>Sukui-nage</i>	Scooping Throw
4.	<i>Hidari-seoi-nage</i>	Left Shoulder Throw
5.	<i>Uki-goshi</i>	Floating Hip Throw
6.	<i>Hadaka-jime</i> → <i>Koshi-kudaki</i>	Naked Lock → Hip Crush
7.	<i>Tobi-goshi</i> → <i>Uki-goshi</i>	Jumping Hip Throw → Floating Hip Throw
8.	<i>Ō-soto-otoshi</i>	Large Outer Drop
9.	<i>Ushiro-goshi</i>	Back Hip Throw
10.	<i>Kata-guruma</i>	Shoulder Wheel

created at the turning point from *jūjutsu* to *jūdō* [9]. As such they were based on the principle of self-defense so, in that sense ... not necessarily suited to [modern] *jūdō* [9].

The motivation for the creation of the *gō-no-kata* is attributed to the rapid growth in the popularity of *jūdō*. With an increasing number of students it became impossible for Kanō to personally teach every new enrolled student and so he created a *kata* to support the correct learning of the art:

“In the beginning, Kanō-shihan personally taught this kata to his students; but as more students came to him for instruction, he found this harder to achieve. It seems that for this reason he had to establish this basic kata so that his students could learn from it, and not necessarily directly from him. In fact he used to say that there was a great need for it.” (...) [9]

The essence of the *gō-no-kata* is described and a list of the techniques that comprise the *kata* is provided (see Table 1).

“The kata consists of ten techniques, in which the two [participants] confront each other - at first with the utmost power and later [one] makes best use of the other’s power.” (...) [9]

Table 1 shows that seven distinct techniques are practiced in the *gō-no-kata*. Three of these are repeated with different *irimi* (“entry patterns”) bringing the total to ten.

In essence, the *gō-no-kata* focuses on functional strength and the application of that strength at the correct time to create the maximum amount of *kuzushi*, “balance-breaking”. After hard pushing and pulling, the *tori* surrenders to *uke*’s attack up to the point where he/she almost loses. However, the *tori* suddenly regains his position with *tai-sabaki* (proper body movement & position) and prevails (Figures 5,6). Accordingly, the *gō-no-kata* is also useful in developing sensitivity to the tension in *uke*’s

grip, thereby learning the correct timing for effectively using *uke*’s own force to either unbalance him/her or move into a position of advantage.

Kuhara [9] and Ochiai [10] explain why the grips and holds of the *gō-no-kata* are different to the classical sleeve-lapel grip used in *jūdō*:

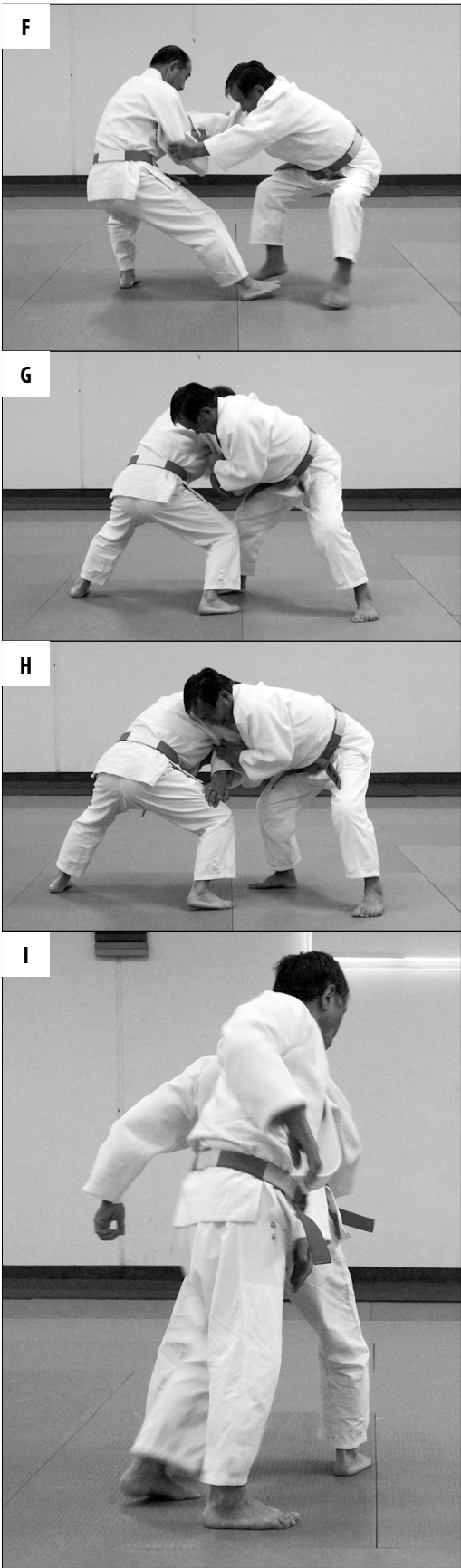
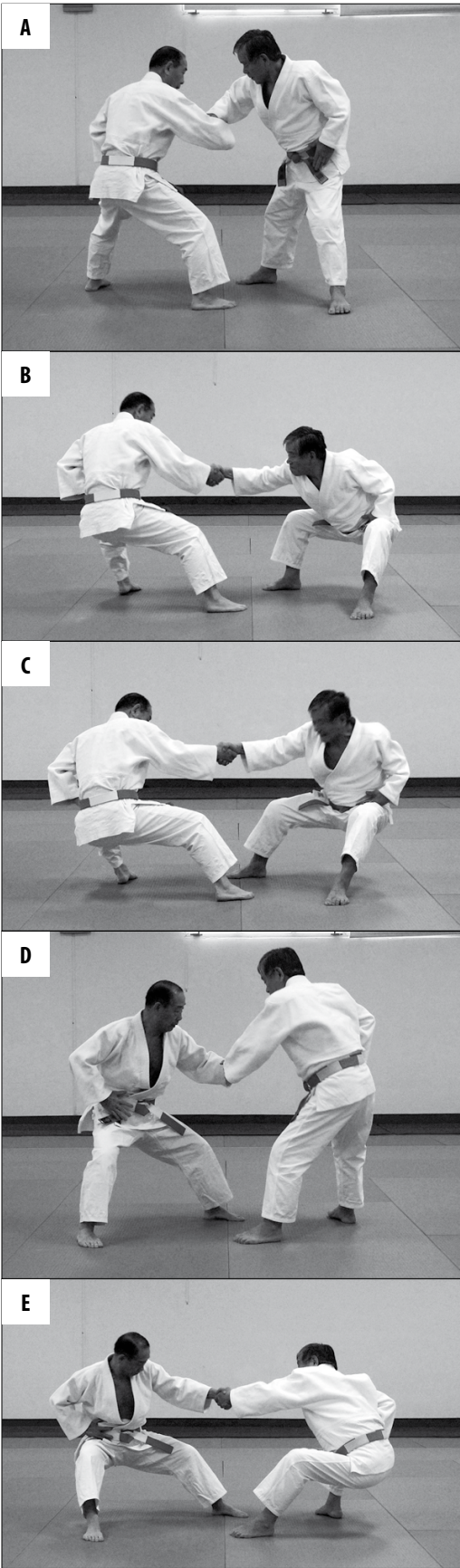
“The jūdōgi in those days were unlike those of today and did not cover the elbows or the knees, so the kamaekata (posture) and kumikata (ways of holding) were necessarily defensive ones. It often happened that four fingers of one hand were inserted into the sleeve of one’s partner with the other hand taking hold of the collar from the rear.” (...) [9,10].

It is worthy of note that many of the *kata*’s techniques start with *tori* and *uke* clasping each other’s hands in various positions, whilst forcefully pulling or pushing. Additionally, the main body position in the *kata* is the defensive posture (*jigotai*) and many of the low-hip movements therein are also evocative of *sumō*. For instance, for *sukui-nage*, “scooping throw” (the third technique in the *kata*) the starting position resembles a standing arm-wrestling match.

The sixth technique in the *kata* (*hadaka-jime/koshi-kudaki* or “naked choke/hip crush”), for example, starts with *tori* being held in *ryōte-dori* (two-hand hold) and transitions through both *tori* and *uke* using hand pressure grips in a manner similar to *sumi-gaeshi* (“corner throw”) as performed in the *nage-no-kata*, before concluding with *tori* applying the choke.

Inspection of Kuhara [9] and Ochiai [10] also confirms that (similar to the *jū-no-kata*) there are no completed throwing techniques in the *gō-no-kata*. *Tori* prepares for the throwing technique with the correct principles of *kuzushi* and *tsukuri*, “body positioning”, but there is no *kake*, “application”. As such it would have been especially suited to beginners.

Jigotai: A defensive basic body position, characterized by a wide stance and low point of gravity; that is rooted in *koryū* or traditional martial arts, probably *Sekiguchi-ryū*, and which was popular in early *jūdō* practice.



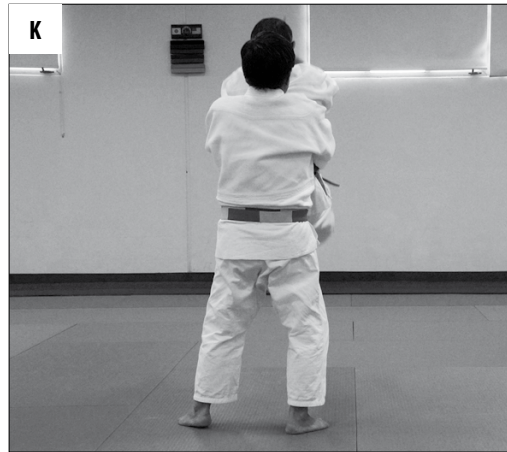


Figure 6(A–K). Makoto Hoshina, 7th dan Kōdōkan (tori) and Toshiyasu Ochiai, 8th dan Kōdōkan (uke) in *ushiro-goshi*, the second technique of *gō-no-kata* during a demonstration as part of a Judo Teachers Clinic held on Saturday, February 7th, 2008 in Norwalk, CA. Note once again how forceful opposition at first, is channelled into *jū* or giving way, which provides an opportunity to successfully enter a *jūdō* throw, in this case, a “back-hip throw” (*ushiro-goshi*). Although in this case, the *tori* for instructional purposes is gripping the *uke*’s arm, normally all exercises of *gō-no-kata*, similarly to *jū-no-kata*, should be performed without gripping the fabric of the *jūdōgi*.

The *gō-no-kata* is thought to be the only *jūdō kata* intended to assist in the development of actual physical strength (see also higher, under Uenishi) with it being written that Nagaoka-sensei recommended its use before practice as a warm-up exercise. Additionally, Nagaoka-sensei wrote that the *kata* contributes to increased willpower, physical force, and *ki*, “spiritual energy”. Kuhara writes:

“I often heard Sakamoto-sensei say that the late Nagaoka (10th dan) used to do this kata before keiko (practice). He probably did this not only for the kata practice but also to prepare himself both physically and mentally for the keiko. Actually, if you make an effort in performing this kata, you can keep yourself in good shape, with your waist becoming more stable and more energy flowing to you. I am quite sure that well before you have completed all of this kata, you will begin to sweat even in the coldest season.” (...) [9].

Kuhara [9] and Ochiai [10] then give an indication of the *gō-no-kata*’s demise, as well as of the instrumental role played by two elderly *koryū jūjutsu sensei* (Fusatarō Sakamoto 酒本房太郎 and Shōichirō Satō 佐藤昇一郎). Finally, Kuhara [9] reproduces limited relevant writings by Nagaoka- and Samura-sensei, unfortunately though without bibliographic details:

“It is true that these ten techniques were, in those days, among the best known basic forms, but conversely there are [now] relatively few people who know about them, and still fewer who can practice them.

As far as it is known, Fusatarō Sakamoto-sensei of Tōjin Shin-ryō, 9th dan (age 88), and Shōichirō Satō-sensei of Sōsuishitsu-ryū¹⁰, 8th dan (age 82), are the ones who can practice them today. It is known that those two elderly masters once exhibited the kata in public at a Butoku Festival in Kyōto.”¹¹ (...) [9].

“... thanks to the writings of Nagaoka, 10th dan, and Samura, 10th dan and thanks to the valuable advice from Sakamoto-sensei, I could manage to organize this. Fortunately, Sato-sensei and Sakamoto-sensei had the same material and additionally their bodies as well as their minds had remembered the kata very well. I wish to say ‘thanks’ to those two teachers.” (...) [9].

“In the past there were many who tried, in every way, to pass down this kata to subsequent generations as a precious heritage – but they were unsuccessful. Sakamoto-sensei regretted this and he asked me to do this [instructional book] and he was always willing to support me whenever I was in need of help.” (...) [9]

It is not a coincidence that the *sensei* involved in the preservation of the *gō-no-kata* in the past had strong ties

¹⁰ Sōsuishitsu-ryū 双水執流, or “The School of the Pure Flowing Waters” is a *koryū bōjutsu* school that focuses on *kumi-uchi jūjutsu* and *koshi-no-mawari, iaijutsu* and *kenjutsu*. The *shitsu* (執) in Sōsuishitsu in Japanese *kanji* is a more modern pronunciation from the Meiji-era, whereas Sōsuishi-ryū is the Bakumatsu-era pronunciation.

¹¹ Fusatarō Sakamoto was born in 1884 and died in 1978, whereas Shōichirō Satō was born in 1890. We do not know precisely when he died. Satō-sensei also obtained *Kumi-uchi Mokuroku* of Sōsuishitsu-ryū in Tōkyō under Hyakutarō Matsu’i 松井百太郎 before entering the Kōdōkan. It is equally unknown when exactly the demonstration took place to which Kuhara is referring.

to *koryū*, as *koryū* practitioners are much closer to what *jūdōka* were in the early 1900s than to the sports-orientated ‘grapplers’ of today.

1995 (December) – Yukata Shimizu – *Hidden koryū bujutsu* [21]

In the December 1995 issue of *Hidden koryū bujutsu*, an article appeared by Yutaka Shimizu, entitled: *Kōdōkan jūdō no kata to jissen* [The *kata* and real fighting of *Kōdōkan jūdō*] [21]. In the article, Shimizu devotes approximately three quarters of a page to *gō-no-kata*. To the best of our knowledge, this is the first modern day article which also lists all ten techniques and provides valuable background about this *kata*. The contents of the article as well as the techniques listed as part of *gō-no-kata*, are entirely in line with Kuhara [9]. Unfortunately, this valuable article is neither referenced, nor annotated, making it impossible to trace its sources. This is a pity, given that Shimizu offers an interesting point of view which seems to suggest a connection between *gō-no-kata* and *Tenjin Shinyō-ryū jūjutsu*. Since no other known document provides much insight into the origins of *gō-no-kata*, it would have been interesting to explore this link further, in particular, because *jūdō* is known to have extensively borrowed *katame-waza* from this school rather than *nage-waza*. One of the most noticeable characteristics of *gō-no-kata* is the ubiquitous presence of the *jigotai* defensive position. However, according to Maruyama [13] and Kudō [22], the *jigotai* position of *Kōdōkan jūdō* originates in *Sekiguchi-ryū*, and not in *jūdō*’s standard parent schools *Tenjin Shinyō-ryū* and *Kitō-ryū*.

1999 – Antony Cundy – *HOP-LITE* [23]

Hoplology¹² was very much the spiritual child of Donn F. Draeger, and today the *International Hopology Society* attempts to further his work. It also produces newsletter, called *HOP-LITE*. In the Fall 1999 issue of this Newsletter [23], Antony Cundy in an article describes a demonstration of the *gō-no-kata* performed by Toshiyasu Ochiai and Yutaka Taniguchi under the auspices of the *Dōyūkai*¹³ 道友会 (the “Jūdō Friendship Society”):

“In 1998, the 51st annual meeting and tournament of the Dōyūkai (“Association for Friends of the Way”) was held at the Kodokan in Tokyo, Japan. There, Ochiai Toshiyasu, 7th dan¹⁴, and Taniguchi Yutaka, 4th Dan, presented an exhibition of the Gō-no-Kata (Forms of Hardness/Inflexibility/Strength).

It was the first time in 50 years that these kata had been seen in the cradle of modern jūdō. The re-emergence of the Gō-no-Kata is a significant event in the world of modern jūdō, where it represents an important historical link between classical practices of jujutsu and the all-round educational emphasis of Kano Jigoro’s Kodokan Judo.” (...) [23, p. 1].

Cundy is correct. Indeed, the last known public performance of *gō-no-kata* at the *Kōdōkan* dates from the birth of the *Dōyūkai* back in 1948, when it was demonstrated by Fusatarō Sakamoto-sensei and Kiyochi Takagi-sensei. In his article, Cundy provides a basic general description of the *gō-no-kata*, followed by an outline description of the first technique therein:

“The Gō-no-Kata in practice is a complex of prearranged movement patterns, executed by two practitioners who engage in short bursts of strength matching exercises, which are then concluded by the application of a throwing or choking technique.” (...) [23, p. 1].

“...the exponents take a grapplers embrace, and then attempt to push each other backwards; they then reverse their efforts and attempt to pull each other forward. The pushing procedure is then resumed until the predetermined winner breaks from the pushing action, and utilizes his partner’s momentum to execute a shoulder throw.” (...) [23, p.1].

It is clear that the *gō-no-kata* being described by Cundy [23] relates to the same authentic form and based on similar sources as what was described earlier by Kuhara [9]. This is confirmed by Cundy’s list of techniques that make up the *gō-no-kata*, which is identical to the one provided in Table 1.

Cundy reports that an amateur video of a demonstration of the *gō-no-kata* had been created by Ochiai-sensei and that he (Ochiai) was apparently deluged with requests for the recording. Cundy also refers to the possible production of a *gō-no-kata* instructional manual – it is this item that was reviewed in the previous section.

It is our understanding that it was not only Ochiai-sensei who became swamped with requests for copies of the *gō-no-kata* recording. Sources suggest that the *Kōdōkan* too became overwhelmed by similar requests, whereas they were not involved, nor had they endorsed the film or even the *kata*, which “officially” for them does not

¹² “Hoplology” is a science that studies human combative behavior and performance. It began taking shape as an academic field of study in the 1960s under the direction of Donn F. Draeger.

¹³ The *Dōyūkai* is a close affiliate of the *Kōdōkan*. The *Dōyūkai* organizes *jūdō* tournaments conform to the pre-War classical format and the minor contest scores that feature in modern international championships do not count. Ample time is also given to *newaza*. Nowadays the *Dōyūkai* is placing great emphasis on *kata*, and in this subject their level of expertise is at least equal, or comparable to that found in the *Kōdōkan*. Moreover, the *kata* being studied include those which are not usually practised elsewhere such as the *Nage-no-kata-ura-waza* and the *Gō-no-kata*.

¹⁴ Ochiai-sensei is now 8th dan.

exist¹⁵. Note that it is highly delicate (*i.e.* impossible) for the *Kōdōkan* to publicly endorse something that did not meet with the full satisfaction of Kanō-*shihan* (although as shown *supra*, unlike what the *Kōdōkan* suggests, Kanō-*shihan* never rejected this *kata* or discouraged people from studying it).

Cundy concludes his article by promising that in the near future he would write a detailed follow-up paper on the *gō-no-kata*:

"In a future in-depth article on the Go no Kata, I intend to examine the kata more closely, introducing important figures involved in its preservation. Further, I will hypothesize on why the kata were developed by Kanō Jigoro, and why then it was almost lost to later generations." (...) [23, p.2].

To date, to the best of our knowledge, Cundy never realized the promise he made nearly ten years ago and no such follow-up article or any other information has been published since his brief *HOP-LITE* article. However, there can be no doubt whatsoever that the *gō-no-kata* described by Cundy is the genuine article, and no doubt that Ochiai-*sensei* is truly a master of the form. Perhaps the present paper precludes that our hope would remain in vain, and perhaps this paper might serve as a worthy sequel to Cundy's 1999 text [23]. Where precisely Cundy got his information, has remained a source of curiosity. He does not identify his sources, and the reclusiveness of the *kata* makes one wonder how he found out. Cundy does not confirm in his article that he would have been actually present himself during the demonstration in 1985. Fact is though, that in November of 1999 the *Jūdō Daijiten* was published by the *Kōdōkan* [14]. Cundy's paper [23] was published in late fall of that same year (1999).

November 1999 – Yukimitsu Kanō et al. – *Jūdō Daijiten* [12]

The *Jūdō Daijiten* or *Judo Encyclopedia* [12] is a large work (approx. 670 pages) written in Japanese, that contains numerous biographical, historical, and bibliographical entries. Unusual for works on *jūdō*, is that the Encyclopedia is actually referenced. The information it contains in its two entries, is mainly quoting the information contained in the November issue of *Yūkō-no-katsudō* [16], which we have already considered at length (*vide supra*).

Rare, however, is its detailed list of the techniques contained in *gō-no-kata* [12, p. 463]. It lists as a source for these techniques, an obscure work entitled *Jūdō Techō*

柔道手帳, which literally means "Judo Notebook", and of which the date of publication is listed as the year 1999. No author is mentioned.

Undated – Gianna Giraldi – *Go no kata* [24,25]

In an undated web-based article on the Italian website freeBudo.com, Gianna Giraldi presents an article that heavily draws on the material of Ochiai [10]. For this reason it serves no purpose to critically evaluate Giraldi's article.

The interested reader is, however, directed to view Giraldi's article as it features three-color photographs of Ochiai-*sensei* performing techniques from the *gō-no-kata*, namely *sukui-nage* ("scooping throw"), *uki-goshi* ("floating hip throw"), and also a typical opposition of force posture. These photographs also feature in the original Ochiai booklet (see [10]).

It is worthy of note that Giraldi's article has recently been unofficially translated by Llyr C. Jones [25] and made available on the *Judo Info* Internet website. In doing so, Jones has endeavored to keep his translation as faithful as possible to the Italian original, and has not corrected any factual errors; *Caveat lector* – there are some. However, when there is any ambiguity or doubt, precedence should be given to the original source [10] as presented in this paper.

Additional content found in Giraldi's article are a well balanced overview of *kata* in *jūdō* and a correct statement that the majority of the writings that generally discuss the *gō-no-kata* are full of inaccuracies.

2007 – Toshiyasu Ochiai (edited by Klaus Hanelt) – *Gō-no-kata* [19]

During a personal conversation with Ochiai-*sensei* in August of 2006¹⁶, he alluded to a new booklet in Japanese on *gō-no-kata* he was thinking of creating, that would be produced more professionally and be made commercially available. Just three months earlier, Ochiai had welcomed a group of *jūdō kata* enthusiasts from Germany in his *dōjō*. The German group expressed the wish to have an accessible study text of *gō-no-kata* to support their practice after their return home, and they were presented with a copy of Ochiai's 1998 booklet [10]. The booklet was reproduced in German under supervision of German *kata* guru, Klaus Hanelt [19], and this in a very neat way, and presented to Ochiai for approval. Despite this somewhat awkward position (= being

¹⁵ Ochiai T. Personal communication. Bunkyo Jūdōkai, Tōkyō-to Jūdō Renmei; 2006, August 3rd; Tōkyō: Kōdōkan Jūdō Institute.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*

presented with a book you have supposedly authored, yet never seen before ...), Ochiai considered that at least the advantages for the *jūdō* community would outweigh the disadvantages, so he did not object.

Thus, since 2007 a new and usable text, and this in a Western language (German) is available to the public [19]. There is little sense in further critically analyzing the text, as it is a mere translation of Ochiai's 1998 booklet, complete with pictures of the authentic *gō-no-kata* and helpful comments and notes to study the *kata*. The translation is done well. Though this 35-page booklet is officially published (Verlag Dieter Born, Bonn) and has a proper ISBN number¹⁷, it was still printed only in limited numbers and is not commonly available in a bookstore, which makes ordering it, particularly if outside of Germany, and certainly outside of Europe, not an easy thing to do. Awaiting the publication of De Créé [6], which contains detailed descriptions and history of 17 existing *jūdō kata*, including *gō-no-kata*, at the time this paper went in print, Ochiai [19] represents the best alternative.

Since the publication of Ochiai's German booklet on *gō-no-kata* [19], his privately published new Japanese booklet has appeared too [20]. This booklet [20] is very well taken care of, with the same pictures as printed in Ochiai [19], though they appear in a larger format and somewhat clearer. Unfortunately, this new booklet too, has restricted availability and cannot be purchased in stores.

For those, who desire to have just a brief guideline in English to studying *gō-no-kata*, Mōri [26] produced a short eleven-page summary of Ochiai's 2007 booklet [18], which is distributed for free, and contains both brief instructions and reproduced pictures. It has also been noted that during a recent *gō-no-kata* clinic which Ochiai-sensei taught abroad¹⁸, compact syllabi on *gō-no-kata* were distributed, which contain black-and-white handdrawings of progressive *gō-no-kata* movements [27].

THE FUTURE OF *GŌ-NO-KATA*

Through the modern medium of the Internet, knowledge that *gō-no-kata* truly exists and is not extinct, has already reached many *jūdō kata* enthusiasts, some well informed, others less well informed. For those who think that practicing *gō-no-kata* will suddenly make one win contests or that it contains some secret knowledge towards invincibility or spectacular defenses against dangerous arms, disappointment will be the outcome. For those whose commitment it is to further their lifelong learn-



Figure 7. Toshiyasu Ochiai, 7th dan, during a snapshot in Tōkyō in March 2006, about one month before his promotion to 8th dan on April 30th.

ing by improving their understanding of the concepts of *jū* and *gō*, *gō-no-kata* can be a worthwhile enrichment.

"Where can one learn *gō-no-kata*" is a frequently heard question. Indeed, this is a reasonable question, as not everybody has the financial means and practical opportunity to travel to Japan. At the time this paper went into press, *gō-no-kata* clinics have already been held abroad, in countries such as Germany. In February of 2008, a Teachers Clinic that *inter alia* featured *gō-no-kata* was held in the US in the Los Angeles area (Norwalk, CA) (Figure 6A–K). Others will follow. While Toshiyasu Ochiai (Figure 7) remains the most known proponent of *gō-no-kata* today, other *sensei* have mastered and can teach *gō-no-kata*, such as *inter alia*: Makoto Hoshina, 7th dan, Yutaka Taniguchi, 5th dan, and Sumiko Akiyama, *joshi* 7th dan at the *Kōdōkan*. Others, such as Hiromi Noguchi, 7th dan are also believed to know *gō-no-kata*. In Germany, Klaus Hanelt, 7th dan, has given a couple of basic *gō-no-kata* clinics, and Professor De Créé, one of the co-authors of the present paper, has intensively studied *gō-no-kata*, and currently teaches it.

It has been heard through the grapevine that there is some interest in the *Kōdōkan* to revisit the issue of *gō-*

¹⁷ ISBN 978-3-922006-26-8.

¹⁸ This clinic was organized by *Nanka Yūdanshakai* and sanctioned by the *United States Judo Federation (USJF)* and took place on Sunday, February 3rd of 2008 in Norwalk, CA. This was the first time ever that Ochiai-sensei taught a *kata*-clinic outside of Japan.

no-kata. Whether that implies that one day it might be taught again, is not known. As one can imagine, the *Kōdōkan* is not exactly the most progressive and liberal organ in the world, so likely somewhat more water will flow through the sea before this happens ...

Nevertheless, the fact that *gō-no-kata* is finally publicly mentioned, recognized, and given a place again as one of the existing official *Kōdōkan kata* in a recent publication by Toshiro Daigo, the *Kōdōkan*'s Chief-Instructor and foremost authority on *kata*, is encouraging [3, p. 21–22], even if that does not yet equal that it is featured again as part of the taught syllabus.

CONCLUSIONS

Serious research into the *gō-no-kata* is a very difficult endeavor. There is a dearth of major written sources on the *kata*, and what is commonly available is often unverifiable, incomplete, ambiguous or factually in error.

While research into this area remains ongoing, there exists sufficient and even ample evidence that indicates that the *gō-no-kata* is not, nor in any form has ever been a *kata* of blows, but an exercise examining the principle of efficient use of force and resistance. The literature indicates that the movements within the *kata* focused on the direct resistance of force (with force) right up until the very last moment when the force is overcome by skill, strategy and body movement. For this and other reasons, including methodological as well as their complete absence of any sources substantiating their claims, we firmly would dismiss as false any claim by Parulski [28,29], Muilwijk [31,32] and others that the *gō-no-kata* is even remotely based on a blend of *jūdō* and *karate*, and that it supposedly would have been composed jointly by Jigorō Kanō and Gichin Funakoshi. Moreover the series of exercises as presented by Parulski [28,29] and copied by Muilwijk [30–32] must be classified as a contemporary hoax lacking any historic substance or roots in either Jigorō Kanō or any of the other great *jūdō* masters of the past, or ... even in any *jūdō*-specific principle.

Based on the original comments provided by Kanō-shihan [16,33], as well as Nagaoka- and Samura-sensei, and the substantive research and notes by Yoshiyuki Kuhara-sensei and preserved by Toshiyasu Ochiai [10,19,20], it is understood beyond any doubt that the *gō-no-kata* was and is a special and never completed set of exercises (ten in total) for two people devised by Kanō-shihan, that combined several aims:

Jūdō Education: The *gō-no-kata* provided a framework for the correct learning of the basics of *jūdō* without throwing. It teaches how to use force effectively, without relying on force as one's primary means to conquer an opponent.

Physical Education: The *gō-no-kata* required using one's body with precision, especially in the practice of using both focused strength and yielding at critical timings during *jūdō* techniques.

Physical Culture: Practice of the *gō-no-kata* assisted in the development of physical strength itself, in a time that power training devices were nearly nonexistent.

Psychological Benefits: It was believed that practice of the *gō-no-kata* contributed to increased willpower and "spiritual energy" in the sense of *mens sana in corpore sano* [a healthy spirit in a healthy body].

If indeed both *kata* were established in 1887, as suggested by Kawamura and Daigo [12]¹⁹, then it is appropriate to conclude that the *gō-no-kata* and the *jū-no-kata* were created as a complementary pair, as follows:

Jū-no-kata: Simplified, in the *jū-no-kata*, the *jū* (softness) question is responded to by *jū* (softness). Specifically, the *jū-no-kata* starts with *jū* and ends in *jū*.

Gō-no-kata: Likewise, in the *gō-no-kata*, the *gō* (hardness) question is first responded to by *gō* and then subsequently by *jū* (softness). Specifically, the *gō-no-kata* starts with *gō* but ends in *jū*. Thus the *gō-no-kata* adheres to a fundamental tenet of *jūdō* namely that softness controls hardness in the end.

Both *kata* convey the meaning of *jū-no-ri*, i.e. the core principle of *jūjutsu* whereby one avoids opposing an opponent's force and power directly in favor of using it to one's advantage. They also accord with *jū yoku gō wo sei suru* 柔能く剛を制する, a core principle of *jūdō* which can be translated in a number of ways – *softness overcomes hardness, flexibility overcomes stiffness, gentleness controls strength* or *win by yielding*.

Despite being popularly thought of as defunct, the *gō-no-kata* survives today having initially been preserved in Tōkyō by a small group of senior *jūdōka* under the guidance of Toshiyasu Ochiai, and now also by a handful of experts abroad. The knowledge of two elderly *koryū jūjutsu sensei* and the writings of Nagaoka- and Samura-sensei supported its limited preservation (Figure 8).

Jigorō Kanō: The founder of *Kōdōkan jūdō*, born in 1860, died in 1938.

¹⁹ This is, however, doubtful. As suggested by Kuhara [9], *gō-no-kata* is likely the oldest *jūdō kata*, and must thus predate 1885, the year in which the old 10-technique *nagē-no-kata* was completed. *Jū-no-kata*, which is far more refined, was created years later, in 1887, and probably only then paired up with *gō-no-kata*, to form what was then known under their common name *gōjū-no-kata*.



Figure 8. Yoshiyuki Kuhara (left) visiting the retired Kaichirō Samura, 10th dan (right) and wife in Kyōto, at the occasion of Samura-sensei's 80th birthday in 1960 (From [9], p. 345).

Additionally, having been obscured for many decades the *kata* is now experiencing a minor renaissance in that it is taught and performed on an annual basis at the *Kōdōkan Jūdō Institute* by Ochiai-sensei under the patronage of the *Dōyūkai*.

Kanō's own writings indicate that he was not satisfied with elements of the *gō-no-kata* and therefore abandoned, or at least, delayed its development. Furthermore, like with *Itsutsu-no-kata*, Kanō never found the time afterwards to rework, revise or expand the *gō-no-kata* and accordingly it must be considered as unfinished. However the writings also confirm that Kanō did not reject the *kata* in its entirety or its practice, unlike what some claim; so the *Kōdōkan* is overstating the case when it suggests otherwise. It is most likely that it is precisely this which devoted *jūdō kata* practitioners such as, for

example, Ochiai-sensei, found out too, and why he continues practicing and teaching *gō-no-kata* having seriously reflected on what it entails and how it can be properly incorporated into *jūdō* training. Consequently, we as authors of this paper, advocate the practice of *gō-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* under impulse of the *International Jūdō Federation* become increasingly diluted in the light of its ever increasing emphasis on *jūdō* as a performance sport and popular media circus, *gō-no-kata* helps explaining and restoring what *jūdō* is and was about.

Finally, we applaud Toshirō Daigo-sensei's recent paper [3] in which he included *gō-no-kata* as a legitimate and existing *Kōdōkan kata*. We hope that it will soon be reintroduced in the *Kōdōkan*'s formal teaching curriculum of *kata*.

Notes

Japanese names in this paper are listed by given name first and family name second, instead of traditional Japanese usage which places the family name first.

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 the literature, the relevant text or author is cited exactly as per the original source, with macrons used or omitted as appropriate.

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