



The Kano Society Bulletin



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In This Edition

This edition of the *Bulletin* is principally focused on *kata*. The headline article, curated by editor Llyr Jones, explores the role of *kata* in enhancing technical skills, promoting safe self-defence, and fostering continuous learning, especially among older *judoka*. Also included is a piece by Lance Gatling and Llyr Jones on *Katame-no-Ura-Waza* – the counter techniques to *Katame-no-kata*, as well as an article by Midori Chiba on the personal attraction of *kata* as part of a journey through a lifetime of *judo*. Concluding the issue, Brian Watson presents a short piece on Jigoro Kano's appointment as the first Asian member of the International Olympic Committee (IOC).

Editor's Comments

I'm pleased to present the latest issue of *The Bulletin*, featuring content I hope you'll find interesting.. Any errors are solely my own.

Contributions

The backbone of the Kano Society's activities is this on-line publication. We welcome contributions in the form of articles or photographs etc. to *The Bulletin*.

Dr Llyr Jones

Kata – A Path to Lifelong Learning and Proficiency Edited by Llyr Jones



Kata

Introduction

Kodokan Judo (judo) is an all-round education system and pedagogy developed by Jigoro Kano-*shihan* and based among other things on Neo-Confucianist values, traditional Japanese martial arts, and modern Western educational principles.

Judo emphasises the holistic educational value of training in attack and defence, so that it can be a “path,” or way of life, that all people can participate in and draw benefit from. It encompasses physical and mental education, self-defence methods, medical emergency treatments, and intellectual philosophy. Arguably, the most significant aspect of *judo* is its blend of physical and mental education helping its practitioners [*judoka*] develop a well-balanced body and mind in a respectful manner. In this way, *judo* is neither a “martial art” nor a “combat sport.”

Judo focuses on humanity and human dignity through an ethos of generosity and reciprocal support – components that can contribute to building ideal communities. Kano envisioned that by applying *judo* principles in daily life, a *judoka* attains balance and self-mastery, enhancing their ability to navigate everyday societal pressures, and engage with others in a positive and mutually beneficial manner. He expressed these principles through the phrases *seiryoku zen'yo* [“good use of mind and body” or “maximum efficient use of energy”] and *jita kyo ei* [“mutual welfare and benefit”] and it is these fundamental tenets that claim to elevate *judo* above the level of ordinary sport and make it a distinctive cultural and physical activity.

Randori and Kata

Judo's physical practice is composed of *randori* and *kata*, with its techniques [*waza*], consisting of throws, holds, chokes, locks, blows (and kicks), being derived primarily from the *Tenjin Shinyo-ryu* [Divine True Willow School], *Kito-ryu* [School of the Rise and Fall] and *Yoshin-ryu* [School of the Willow Heart] styles of *koryu* [old-school] *jujutsu*.

Judoka should dedicate effort to properly studying the entire spectrum of *judo* techniques, including *ukemi* [breakfalls], and avoid exclusively focusing on a limited set of skills. Teaching and studying the *Gokyo no Waza* [standard syllabus of throwing techniques] is essential, and there is also value in the controlled exploration of specialised areas such as *kansetsu-waza* [joint locks] beyond those permitted in *shiai* [competition] *katsu* [resuscitation methods], *atemi-waza* [striking techniques], and *goshin-waza* [self-defence techniques].

The *kanji* for *randori*, 乱取り, literally translates to “chaos against an opponent” and emphasises practicing techniques in a dynamic, unscripted situation where the *judoka* is looking for the possibilities to apply a technique themselves. This is compared to the prearranged movements of *kata* 形 [forms] that focus on fundamental, and even aesthetic, principles.

In its most basic sense, *kata* simply involves deciding, and pre-arranging in advance, the actions between a *judoka* and their training partner. The *judo* pair may make these decisions themselves, or someone else, like their teacher can decide. With this fundamental understanding of *kata*, it becomes apparent that everyone has been doing *kata* since their initial days in *judo* – being presented with a specific scenario, given a technique, and guided on how to respond.

Kata has a fundamental role in training, and can be considered as the grammar of *judo*, with *randori* being the prose. In *randori*, the story is written in its own language (*waza*) following grammatical principles (*kata*). Exploring *kata* offers a chance to explore the historical roots of numerous *judo waza*, examining their origins and understanding the philosophical underpinnings of each movement. The various *kata* encompass all fundamental elements and principles of *judo*, offering ideas of how to solve problems, in attack and defence, through learning by example. They are also useful as a teaching tool.

There is a tendency among some *judoka* to pay excessive attention to *kata*, however developing proficiency in *judo* depends significantly on practicing both *randori* and *kata*. Without any *randori* experience, achieving a high skill level in *kata*, that is underpinned by proper *judo* principles, becomes challenging.

On the Creation of *Kata* in *Judo*

Kano explains the creation of *kata* in various articles within early *Kodokan* journals such as *Yuko-no-katsudo* [loosely, *The Efficiency of Movement*] and various lecture transcripts. Regrettably, only a limited number of these works have undergone translation and so summarising all the *shihan*'s insights on *kata* would be a formidable task. Furthermore, Kano's work is mainly anecdotal and as such lacks a systematic presentation of his thoughts on the topic. Although the concept of *judo* itself represents a unified system, a genuine grasp of its individual composite elements is also important.

Scope of this Article

This article will now explore some crucial facets concerning the role of *kata* in *judo*, specifically:

- Developing technical refinement;
- Safely practicing self-defence skills;
- The order in which *kata* should be learnt;
- Practice for the ageing *judoka*.

Technical Refinement

The fundamental principles of *judo* can be developed through the study of *kata*, all *kata*, with their essence lying in the innate ability to intuitively perceive and sense an opponent. Certainly, engaging in the practice of *kata* plays a crucial role in cultivating a *judoka*'s technical skills, and while *randori* can be executed without this tactile awareness, and instead rely on surprise, speed, and force, such an approach, while effective, does not fully incorporate the concept of *judo*, and would potentially be unsustainable as a sole, long-term, tactic.

Successfully throwing an opponent through sheer surprise and speed might yield results, but it raises the question of whether this truly embodies *judo* if the action is not based on sensory awareness and response to an opponent's movements. Ideally, actions should be reactions to what one senses and form a dynamic interplay. While it can be debated whether a throw relying solely on surprise and speed truly represents *judo*, the efficient use of physical energy could argue for its acceptance as genuine *judo*. This interpretation also emphasizes the multidimensional nature of *judo*, where technical refinement, sensory awareness, and the principle of maximum efficiency converge.

Kata, collectively, have been sorted into different categories, such as:

- *Randori-no-kata* – *Nage-no-kata*, *Katame-no-kata*, and the unofficial *Ura-waza* and *Gonosen-no-kata*;
- *Shobu-no-kata* – *Kime-no-kata*, *Kodokan Goshin-jutsu*, *Kime-shiki* and *Joshi Goshinjo*;
- *Rentai-no-kata* – *Ju-no-kata*, *Go-no-kata* and *Kodomo-no-kata*;
- *Ri-no-kata* – *Itsutsu-no-kata* and *Koshiki-no-kata*.

Certain implications can be drawn from this categorisation. It is logical to infer that practicing a *Randori-no-kata* should develop skills closely connected to *randori*, while a *Shobu-no-kata* should reflect what is essential when engaged in *shinken shobu* [a serious and real fight]. Even practicing other *kata*, which may initially seem distant from *randori*, such as *Ju-no-kata*, *Itsutsu-no-kata*, and *Koshiki-no-kata*, can significantly contribute to developing a “sense of feeling”, a “sense of breaking balance”, and “sense of *tsukuri*” when practiced and understood correctly. However, a general absence of *gokui* [deepest teachings] coupled with a low understanding of *judo*'s fundamental principles can adversely affect one's comprehension of these *kata* and how they can contribute to *judo*'s primary objectives.

During Kano's era, *judo* training included in-depth lectures, a feature that has now vanished entirely. Currently, beyond Japan, it is only a few individuals that can provide a thorough and detailed explanation of the essence and practicality of *Itsutsu-no-kata* or *Koshiki-no-kata*, and how seamlessly they integrate with the entire *judo* curriculum.

Safety and Self-defence

In developing a safe yet realistic practice method for *judo*, Kano had to seek an alternative to the intense combat of *shinken shobu*. *Randori* emerged as an excellent solution, making *judo* distinctive with a realistic practice system that provided for effectiveness, while still maintaining safety.

To balance effectiveness and safety, Kano excluded certain high-risk techniques, such as kicks, strikes, locks on joints other than the elbow, and weapons practice from *randori*. However, recognising the practical importance of such self-defence techniques in a comprehensive system, he required a safe method for their inclusion – hence he confined their use to *kata*.

While *kata* can be presented as a series of formal demonstrations for audiences, it was never intended that the demonstration aspects, with complete ceremonial showcasing of entire series, would be to the fore. In Kano's vision, *kata* were not to be about showing and demonstrating something, but rather about learning something. Indeed, the original purpose for *kata* was to regularly incorporate one or two selected sequences from a particular exercise into everyday practice, as a practical and realistic activity for learning techniques. Prescribed movements and defences were executed in response to prearranged hypothetical attacks, in keeping with the principle “if you attack like this, then I can defend like that”. Misunderstanding the fundamental purpose of *kata*, and viewing it as extended, end-to-end formal displays, has led to its dislike with certain *judoka*. This misinterpretation has, to some degree, compromised *judo*'s self-defence capabilities and its practical applications in real-world scenarios.



Kime-no-kata

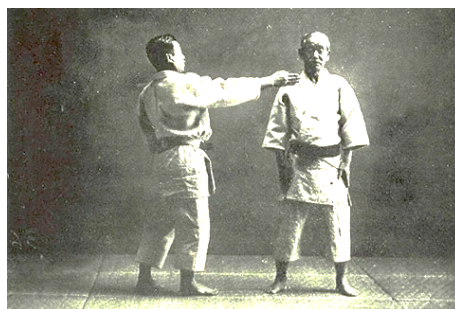
On the Order of Learning Kata

Kata training is adaptable to various experience levels, much like *randori*, which can accommodate practitioners of any expertise level. Nevertheless, certain *kata* may prove more suitable for beginners to commence their training journey. Writing in 1921, Kano-shihan shared his insights on “The order of *kata* practice” in *Yuko-no-katsudo*:¹

“Concerning the sequence in which *kata* should be learned, it is appropriate to start with *Ju-no-kata*. It may be in the future that more and more new *kata* will be made but today, according to two reasons, I think that *Ju-no-kata* should be learned first.

First, this *kata* is the most important aspect of *judo*. The convenience is good to understand the principle of adapting to (your) opponent's strength to control winning. Next, not being thrown, moreover, because it's a quiet exercise, it's good to be studied by beginners.

Next is *Nage-no-kata* for *randori* then *Katame-no-kata*, *Kime-no-kata*, *Itsutsu-no-kata*, *Koshiki-no-kata*, *Go-no-kata* and so on.”



Ju-no-kata

Ju-no-kata [Form of Gentleness and Flexibility] is comprised of intentional, unhurried movements designed to teach the fundamental principles of *judo*, notably the concept of *ju* [yielding]. This *kata* allows its practitioners to perform in everyday clothing, omitting completed throws and the necessity for *ukemi* [breakfalls]. Consequently, it stands as an invaluable tool for introducing beginners to *judo*, developing flexibility, and building foundational skills. Beyond its practical benefits, *Ju-no-kata* is a captivating display of graceful gymnastic prowess, showcasing intricate attack and defence techniques in a visually compelling manner.

Another *kata* that can be learned very early in a *judoka*'s career is *Sei-ryoku Zenyo Kokumin Taiiku* [Maximum-Efficiency National Physical Education]. Introduced in 1924, this set of exercises aims to foster the development of robust, healthy minds and bodies in an engaging and practical manner. It comprises two sets of movements – eight *Tandoku*-

¹ *Yuko-no-katsudo*, Volume 7, Number 11, November 1921 where Kano-shihan writes about “The order of *kata* practice”.

renshu for solo practice and nine *Sotai-renshu* for duo practice. *Tandoku-renshu* emphasises *ate-mi-waza*, with strikes, thrusts, and kicks, while *Sotai-renshu* is further divided into *Kime-shiki*, focusing on combative style, and *Ju-shiki*, emphasising slow and moderate movements. Like *Ju-no-kata*, *Seiryoku Zenyo Kokumin Taiiku* requires minimal prior knowledge of *judo*, making it accessible to beginners.



Seiryoku Zenyo Kokumin Taiiku

Judo for the Ageing Judoka

As *judoka* age, various physiological factors like cardio-respiratory function, muscle mass, anaerobic and muscular power all decline, and place older practitioners at a physical disadvantage compared to their younger counterparts. Older *judoka* are also more susceptible to injuries, and their recovery tends to be prolonged. While specific “Masters”/“Veterans” events cater to those older *judoka* motivated by *randori* and *competition*, these activities are not universally appealing, as not everyone is interested in *shiai*.

Kata can therefore assume a significant role for ageing *judoka*. After many years in *judo*, *kata* can offer them a platform for acquiring new skills, as well as providing other fresh dimensions to their training – including learning self-defence methods and obtaining insights into *koryu*. Of course, it is not necessary to fully execute the decisive technique or throw every time during the practice of any *kata*.

While *kata* is often a component within various promotion syllabi (particularly for the higher *dan* grades), older *judoka* are also altruistically seeking new opportunities for learning. However, when it comes to *kata*, these learning requirements are best addressed by delving into the deeper essence and fundamental principles of *kata*, rather than the all too frequent focus on refining trivial technicalities, such as making minor adjustments to foot positioning.

Whereas engaging in *kata* represents a natural progression with age and can represent a path towards *judo*'s more advanced stages, it is however essential to recognise that *kata* and *randori* are not mutually exclusive. One time proficiency

in *randori* is often a prerequisite for executing *kata* effectively, and while some may attempt *kata* without having developed prior *randori* skills, the resulting *kata* can be an empty and superficial, marked by static movements and *kuzushi* that stem from memory rather than natural action-reaction dynamics.

It is worth mentioning that Kano-*shihan* himself notably moved away from *judo* activities not centred on *kata* at a relatively young age, quitting *randori* in his forties. Even within *kata*, he exhibited a preference for *Koshiki-no-kata*, with this particular exercise encapsulating a significant portion of *judo* theory, and also conveying the intricate philosophies outlined in the *Kito-ryu* syllabus. Kano understood the depth of *Koshiki-no-kata*'s significance, and for him, the practice of even a select few techniques from the *kata* was adequate to sustain and enhance his abilities.



Koshiki-no-kata

Indeed, when considering *judo* as a lifelong pursuit, *kata* stands out as a crucial and valuable element of the practice. It serves as a means to consistently engage in and enhance one's *judo* journey over time.

Conclusion

Jigoro Kano envisioned *judo* as a path to balance and self-mastery, guided by the principles of *seiryoku zen'yo* and *jita kyo ei*. The article has explored selected aspects of the significance of *kata* within *judo* – emphasising its contribution to technical refinement, safe self-defence practice, and life-long learning, especially for older practitioners.

Kata practice also allows *judoka* to continuously deepen their connection to *judo* and develop a sense of decorum and mindfulness. This makes *judo* a pursuit that enriches their lives beyond the competitive arena.

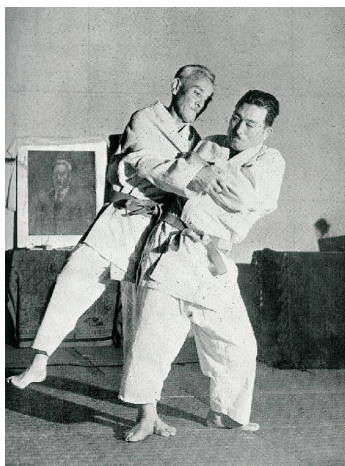
Note

This article has been edited and synthesised by Llyr Jones and incorporates earlier material from various online *judo* discussion fora, with prominent contributions by Lance Gatling, Carl De Créé and Michael Hanon. Any errors are Llyr Jones' alone.

Katame-no-Ura-Waza – Reversals to Grappling or Holding Techniques Lance Gatling and Llyr Jones

Introduction

The techniques of *Katame-no-Ura-Waza* [Reversals or Counters to Grappling or Holding Techniques] are a series of refined counters to the techniques of *Katame-no-kata* [Forms of Grappling or Holding]. Though never officially designated, or labelled, as a 'kata' the exercises were developed at the *Kodokan* by the caucus of Kyuzo Mifune (1883-1965) *Kodokan* 10th dan.



Kyuzo Mifune and
Kazuo Ito

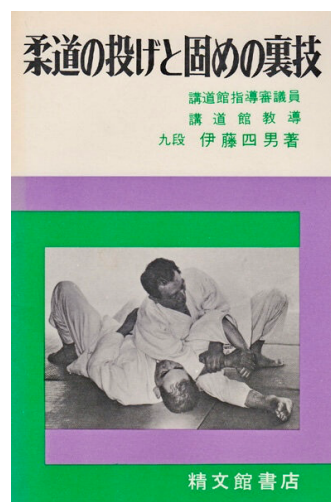
One of Mifune's disciples [*deshi*] who had a prominent role in this effort was Kazuo Ito (1898–1974), *Kodokan* 9th dan. Ito dedicated his life to promoting *judo* and traditional Japanese culture, and his work significantly helped to restore *judo* to the Japanese national educational curriculum following the Second World War (WWII). He was awarded the *Kunsho*, Japanese national medal for outstanding cultural contributions, by the Japanese Government. Ito was also the inaugural Director of the International Martial Arts Federation (IMAF) *Kokusai Budoin* where he held the title of *Meijin* [Brilliant Man] and the rank of *Kokusai Budoin Judo* 10th dan.

Drawing inspiration from Mifune, Ito meticulously crafted *Katame-no-Ura-Waza* as an enjoyable and educational exercise which could be practiced in an open and flexible way. He incorporated various techniques, and introduced additional moves, collaboratively developed with fellow senior *judo* practitioners.

Notably, there exists only one original book [2] – *Nage to Katame no Ura-waza* [Counters to Throwing and Pinning Techniques] – documenting the entire *Katame-no-Ura-Waza*, written by Ito, and printed in limited quantities in 1972. The book contains black and white photographs of the exercise's mechanical movement with the demonstrators being Ito himself as *Tori*, and Shizuya Sato (1929-2011), the late IMAF Chief Director as *Uke*. Regrettably as

with many Japanese *judo* books of that vintage, the printed photographs are of low quality.

The book notes that *Katame-no-Ura-Waza* can be practiced as a *kata* but makes clear that its original intent was not solely for *kata* purposes. The text in the book also contains ambiguities and at times mismatches with the accompanying photographs. The book itself is only available on the pre-owned market, and given its historical significance, the asking price is often high. For these reasons its major usefulness is mainly for reference and research purposes, rather than a practical text for studying *Katame-no-Ura-Waza*.



Nage to Katame no Ura-waza by Kazuo Ito

Ito and Sato practiced *Katame-no-Ura-Waza* together for decades, and demonstrated it at many IMAF events, with Sato continuing its instruction at the American Embassy *Judo* Club in Tokyo [3]. Ito told Sato that Mifune would supposedly see counter-techniques in his dreams and then try them out in the *dojo* [4]. Despite having many counter techniques, Mifune never organised them, and it was Ito who arranged them into the form provided in the book.

Note that further biographical details of Ito-sensei and Sato-sensei will be provided later.

Structure and Content of *Katame-no-Ura-Waza*

The structure of *Katame-no-Ura-Waza* is identical to that of *Katame-no-kata* and contains counters to the five model techniques drawn from each of three *Katame-waza* areas – *Osaekomi-waza*, *Shime-waza* and *Kansetsu-waza*.

The techniques in the exercise are as follows, where “c/b” stands for “countered by”:

Osaekomi Waza

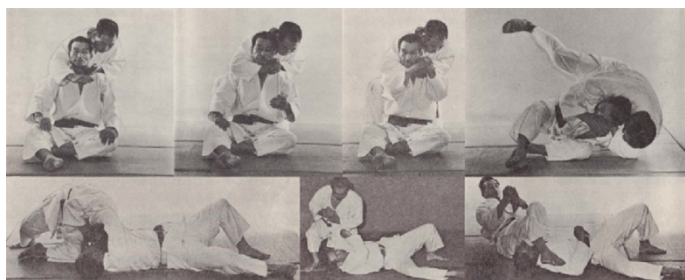
- *Kesa-gatame* c/b *Ude-tori Kuzure-kesa-gatame*
- *Kata-gatame* c/b *Kaeshi Hon-kesa-gatame*
- *Kami-shiho-gatame* c/b *Gyaku-te-hadaka-jime*
- *Yoko Shiho-gatame* c/b *Ude-hishigi-ude-gatame*
- *Kuzure-kami-shiho-gatame* c/b *Ude-hishigi-juji-gatame*

Shime Waza

- *Kata-juji-jime* c/b *Ude-garami*
- *Hadaka-jime* c/b *Gyaku-te-seoi-otoshi* to *Juji-gatame*
- *Okuri-eri-jime* c/b *Ude-hishigi-teko-gatame*
- *Kata Ha-jime* c/b *Ude-tori-ushiro Kesa-gatame*
- *Gyaku-juji-jime* c/b *Ude-garami*

Kansetsu Waza

- *Ude-garami* c/b *Ude-garami*
- *Ude-hishigi-juji-gatame* c/b *Kaeri-oki-osaekomi* (*Kesa-gatame*)
- *Ude-hishigi-ude-gatame* c/b *Oshi-taoshi-kesa-gatame*
- *Ude-hishigi-hiza-gatame* c/b *Ude-hishigi-hiza-gatame*
- *Ashi-garami* c/b *Tate-shiho-gatame*



Hadaka-jime c/b *Gyaku-te-seoi-otoshi* to *Juji-gatame*
sequence as shown in the book *Nage to Katame no Ura-waza*

The following points should also be noted.

- The first *osaekomi* has two more alternative *ura-waza*. *Ude-tori-kuzure-kesa-gatame* may be replaced by either *Ude-hishigi-juji-gatame* or *Hidari-kata-sumi-ho*.
- The third *osaekomi* has one more alternative *ura-waza*. *Kami-shiho-gatame* may be followed up also by *Kata-juji-jime* instead of *Gyaku-te-hadaka-jime*.
- In the second *shimewaza* the *ura-waza* consists of two successive techniques, namely *Gyaku-te-seoi-otoshi* followed-up by *Juji-gatame* - both being performed to the left [*hidari*] side.
- The fourth *shimewaza* has one more alternative *ura-waza* as *Kata Ha-jime* may be followed up by either *Ude-tori-makikomi-ushiro-kesa-gatame* or *Ude-tori-kuzure-kesa-gatame*.

[Nage to Katame no Urawaza](#)

In the foreword to the text *Nage to Katame no Ura-waza*, Ito wrote (paraphrased):

I summarised the Nage to Katame no Urawaza [Counters to Throwing and Pinning Techniques] in judo into one book.

For those that have learnt the techniques of judo, it is natural to want to understand them fully, explore their intricacies, and master them deeply.

Having immersed myself in the world of judo for over 60 years, diligently studying these intricacies

and accumulating extensive research, I firmly believe that yudansha [dan holders] who delve into the powerful techniques presented in this book will find them beneficial in both randori (free practice) and shiai (competitive matches).

Ultimately, judo is a discipline that you must personally execute. Improving your technique becomes an integral part of training, cultivating your mind, and contributing to the journey of refining your personality.

I weighed 60kg and was 1m 60cm in height, so when I was young, I liked to ask giants and very strong men for a practice. Fortunately, even today, I cannot sleep when I don't train, so I am getting along well with young students, sweating together on the mat.

However, young people these days seem to be thinking about getting stronger and more skilful without too much trouble, but nevertheless the techniques are always mastered by training, so I hope this mental attitude is not lost. By doing so I think you can gain so-called exquisite or magical skills and open up the path to technique that happens in a state of selflessness.

Kazuo Ito
10th dan

An endorsement to the *Nage to Katame no Urawaza* was written by Ishii Mitsujirou 石井光次郎, the then Chairman of the Japan Amateur Sports Association, now the Japan Sports Association, which was founded and chaired in July 1911 by Jigoro Kano. Ishii was the former Speaker of the House of Representatives of Japan, an *aikidoka*, and a 6th dan in *Kodokan Judo*.

[Kazuo Ito](#)

Kazuo Ito, born in 1898 in Shinjo city, Yamagata Prefecture, immersed himself in the study of *jujutsu* from an early age under the guidance of his father. After completing his education at Meiji University and the High-Grade *Judo* Instructor School of the *Kodokan*, he joined the *Kodokan* as a *judo shodan* (1st dan) in April 1920. In May 1922, he enrolled in the *Mifune juku* [special private school] to train under Kyuzo Mifune, later a *Kodokan* 10th dan holder, who would later serve as the senior instructor of the *Kodokan* for an extended period.

In the post-war era, Ito was one of the first group of *judo* instructors granted certification by the Japan Ministry of Culture and Education, enabling them to reintroduce *judo* into public schools after the ban imposed during the occupation. Recognising his significant contributions, the *Kodokan* promoted him to 9th dan in May 1958. Serving as a senior instructor and a member of the *Kodokan* Council, he also held positions including Vice Chairman of the *Zen Nihon Judo Ko-*

dansha Kai 全日本柔道高段者会 [All Japan High-rank *Judoka* Society], advisor to the Tokyo *Judo* Association, and advisor to the American Embassy *Judo* Club in Tokyo [3].



Kazuo Ito (1898–1974)

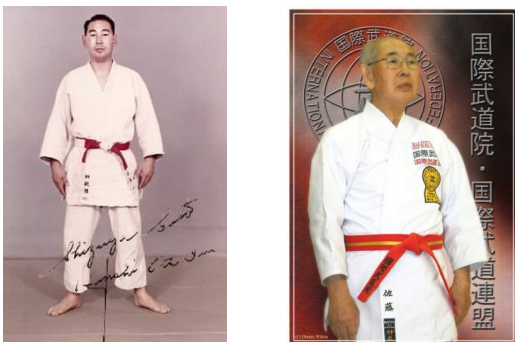
Beyond his *judo* expertise, Ito was a professor at Seijo Gakuen (now Seijo University), Meiji University, and Nippon Athletic University (now Nippon Sport Science University). Additionally, he shared his knowledge as a lecturer at Kogakuin University and Toyoko Gakuen Women's College.

Besides *Nage to Katame no Ura-waza*, Kazuo Ito wrote and released four other (distinct) *judo* books, with one further book being an English translation of a work (by him) in Japanese [5 – 9] – his later texts noting his academic distinction as Doctor of Science (理学博士).

Kazuo Ito died in 1974, aged 75.

Shizuya Sato

Shizuya Sato was born in Tokyo in 1929. His father, a senior *judo* instructor for the Tokyo Metropolitan Police, cultivated connections with prominent *judoka* such as Kyuzo Mifune, Hidekazu Nagaoka, and Sumiyuki Kotani. Following his father's death in 1945 at an early age, these influential figures, along with Kazuo Ito, provided unwavering support to young Sato. In particular, Ito, who had no children of his own, and Sato formed a very close personal and professional connection, with Sato becoming Ito's *deshi* and long-term assistant – essentially an adopted son, with their bond lasting until Ito's death in 1974.



Shizuya Sato (1929-2011)

Graduating from Meiji Gakuin University in 1949, Sato joined the *Kodokan's* International Division, simultaneously teaching at US military bases in Tokyo until 1952, contributing to the Strategic Air Command training program. In 1951, he co-founded the IMAF, *Kokusai Budoin*, aiming to expand interest in Japanese Martial Arts and foster global understanding.

Serving as *Shihan* for the Meiji Gakuin University *Judo* Club from 1955 to 1978, Sato, and Ito, embarked on the inaugural *Kokusai Budoin*, IMAF World Tour in 1968, promoting *judo* in 12 countries. Assuming the Chief Director role in 1982, he dedicated over fifty years to spreading traditional Japanese martial arts globally. This commitment was evident through roles like directing the American Embassy *Judo* Club, leading workshops, seminars, and initiatives for *Kokusai Budoin*, IMAF across Asia, Europe, and the Americas.

Shizuya Sato died in 2011, aged 82.

Mitsujiro Ishii



Mitsujiro Ishii (1889-1981)

Mitsujiro Ishii was born in Kurume city, Fukuoka Prefecture in 1889, and emerged as an early disciple of Morihei Ueshiba, the founder of *aikido*. His journey commenced around 1927, a period when Ueshiba gained prominence with the support of Admiral Isamu Takeshita in Tokyo. In 1933 Ishii had a pivotal role in facilitating Ueshiba's appointment as the martial arts instructor at the Osaka branch of the *Asahi News*. As a managing director of the *Asahi News* company in Tokyo, Ishii held considerable influence within the organisation. He acted as a mentor and supporter to Takuma Hisa, contributing to the establishment of the *Daitoryu Aikijujutsu Takumakai* after World War II.

Beyond his martial arts involvement, Ishii transitioned into a significant figure in Japanese post-war politics. In 1957, he stood as a prominent candidate for the position of prime minister in Japan. Ishii served as a cabinet member in various administrations from the late 1940s to the early 1960s. He also had a passion for golf and was the sometime President of the Japan Golf Association. Notably, Ishii was the father of Yoshiko Ishii, a renowned Japanese chanson singer who achieved stardom in Japan and France, performing at major European venues.

Mitsujiro Ishii died in 1981, aged 82.

Modern Learning Material for *Katame-no-Ura-Waza*

Current learning resources covering *Katame-no-Ura-Waza* consistently call the exercise *Katame-waza ura-no-kata*.

In 2016, Belgian *judoka* and researcher Carl De Créé, produced a bilingual French-Dutch oeuvre entitled *Kodokan judo Go-no-kata and Katame-waza ura-no-kata*. No more is known about this work.



Toshiyasu Ochiai



**Kodokan judo Go-no-kata and
Katame-waza ura-no-kata –
C. De Créé**



**Katame Waza Ura
no Kata –
J. Caracena &
B. Bethers**

Similarly, in 2020, Spaniard Jose Caracena and American Bruce Bethers, self-published a text on *Katame Waza Ura no Kata* via the Blurb platform [11]. The book is available in both English and in Spanish and is illustrated with, non- crisp, colour photographs of the reversal techniques. It should be noted that the concise instructional narrative on how to perform the techniques, would benefit from better structuring and alignment with the photographs. Notwithstanding these limitations, the book is the only readily available written resource on *Katame-no-Ura-Waza*.

Toshiyasu Ochiai *Kodokan* 8th *dan*, is the nephew of the late Yoshiyuki Kuhara, a highly regarded *judoka* who attained the rank of 9th *dan* and was a disciple of Mifune. Ochiai learnt *Katame-no-Ura-Waza* from his uncle, who diligently preserved many lesser-known *judo kata*. Ochiai is known to teach *Katame-no-Ura-Waza* within the auspices of the *Doyukai*, a collective of senior *judoka* dedicated to safeguarding lesser-known *judo kata*. Multiple (33 in total) very short film clips capturing Ochiai teaching *Katame-no-Ura-Waza*, with Masahide Yamada as *Uke*, are accessible on YouTube [12]. The clips were filmed at the Yushima Dojo, Bunkyo-ku Sogo Sports Facility in Tokyo by dedicated French *kata* expert, Patrick Bigot FFJDA 7th *dan*, *Kodokan* 6th *dan*.

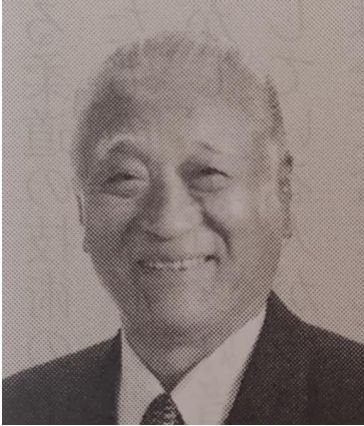
A film of a complete rendition of *Katame-no-Ura-Waza* featuring an obscure *judoka* John Fischer as *Tori* [13] is also available. The demonstration was filmed at DOCS Gym dojo in Minneapolis, Minnesota.

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The Attraction of *Kata* – A Journey through a Lifetime of *Judo*

Midori Chiba¹



Midori Chiba, *Kodokan* 9th dan

As enthusiasts of *judo*, we are told that *kata* and *randori* are like cartwheels, both moving *judo* forwards, equally. During training it is explained to us that they are indispensable to learn the right techniques. However, in our relentless pursuit of *randori*-focused training, *kata* tends to be overlooked, viewed merely as a promotion requirement.

During my youth competing in *judo*, I never seriously thought about *kata*. I did not know anything about it and therefore it did not interest me. However, at the age of 28, a new chapter began when I enrolled in the Martial Arts Teacher Training Department at the National Police Academy (*Judo*). It was a fantastic opportunity for me as an instructor to familiarise myself with the basic principles of *judo*. Because I learned *kata* directly from great teachers, I developed an interest that I had never felt before, and I found myself on a new path where *kata* became integral to my life.

I performed *kata* demonstrations at the Japan *Judo* Championships and took part in the production of *kata* instructional films where I took on the role of *uke* so often that I got bruises on the back of my thighs. Teaching *kata* abroad also provided invaluable and much-needed experiences. Without *kata*, I wouldn't be the person I am today. The more I learn, the more I discover. *Kata* has truly captured my heart.

Jigoro Kano teaches us, “If *kata* is the grammar of *judo*, then *randori* is the prose”. By learning how grammar works and how to write prose, you will learn to construct beautiful sentences. It is the same with *kata* and *randori* – by practicing them together you improve your technique.

Judo includes many methods and techniques for both attacking and defending. From this rich repertoire, combinations of typical sequences and methods have been extracted

into fixed sets to make practical forms of *kata*. Through *kata* practice, you learn the theory behind the proper execution of techniques, facilitating mastery.

Yet, I have the feeling that many *judo* enthusiasts assume that *judo* techniques are solely composed of the *nage-waza* and *katame-waza* found in *randori*. However, *judo* has developed from *jujutsu* and thus includes all martial techniques. *Kata* enables you to practice these techniques comprehensively, particularly the often-overlooked *ate-mi-waza*.

If your experience is only within Japan, an immersion in *judo* culture may seem normal, but as you get more involved in teaching abroad you hardly notice anything different, with the intensity remaining consistent. People everywhere are deeply engrossed in *judo*, and do not complain about less-than-ideal conditions such as worn-out *tatami* and *judogi*. Time seems irrelevant, they remain fully engaged, always asking questions, and taking *kata* practice very seriously.

When abroad people even request me to assess their *kata* as if it were an actual *dan* examination. I strongly sense that this attitude differs from that of the Japanese, for whom training in *kata* is almost instinctive. Forgetting the heat of the *dojo*, and enjoying ourselves, it would be wonderful if young *judoka* in Japan became more aware of the ideal conditions we are fortunate to have. That should make us even more excited and thankful.

This year marks the twentieth holding of the national *kata* tournament – the All-Japan *Kata Judo* Championships. This tournament aims to promote the dissemination and promotion of *judo* through *kata*, which, along with *randori*, forms the pillars of *judo* training. Since the founding of the *Kodokan*, our predecessors strove for the national unification of the nine *kata*, which led *judo* undergoing all sorts of changes – one of the wonderful results being this *kata* tournament. I can only hope that such development continues.

The spread of *kata* is also beginning to yield tangible results overseas. Over the past few years, there has been a growing international interest in *kata* to the point that it is becoming increasingly difficult for Japan to win gold medals in all categories. The progress made across the world at the World *Kata* Championships is therefore remarkable.

Trainees from abroad participating in *Kodokan kata* seminars often express their desire to learn *kata* in Japan, citing the country as the birthplace of *judo*. It pleasantly surprises me when some respond with a sober and accurate observation that *judo* instruction transcends mere competition. Their motivation for learning *judo* lies elsewhere.

I organise a seminar and *kata* tournament in Iwate prefecture three times a year, aiming to enhance and strengthen *kata* for the development of *judo*. Interest in *kata* is growing, with more participants each year at the seminar.

¹ Midori Chiba writing as President of the Iwate Prefecture *Judo* Association on 20 August 2017.

Although the goal has been achieved, we have yet to witness the integration of *kata* into competitive practice. As far as *kata* tournaments are concerned, we will organise a seminar and a preliminary round on the same day, for the events of the All-Japan Judo *Kata* Championships in which the Tohoku [Northeast] region competes. During other-day events, we also showcase demonstrations of various *kata*, with participation limited to 10 couples at a time. It will likely take some time for individuals to adjust to the distinct approach of *kata* compared to *randori*. *Kata* places an emphasis on acquiring understanding and refining motor skills, and also delving into the fundamental principles behind the form.

Finally, it is regrettable that older students, who can no longer do *randori*, feel they do not have a place in the *dojo*, and drift further and further away from *judo*. However, I notice that older people, in other sports, shift their focus to be more on technical studies. Do we not want this in *judo*, along with approaches and venues that focus on veterans? *Kata* can play a crucial role in addressing this.

Learning *kata* can greatly enhance one's understanding of *judo* as one gets older. I hope for *kata* to become more integrated into *judo*, allowing individuals to practice the sport throughout their lives. Moreover, I aim to train numerous teachers who can elevate the position of *kata* within *judo*. Through my own efforts in Iwate Prefecture, I aim to make a small contribution toward this objective.



From the *Itsutsu-no-kata* and *Koshiki-no-kata* Kodokan Instructional Films, with Shiro Yamamoto (*Tori*) and Midori Chiba (*Uke*)

Vintage Advertisement for *Kata*

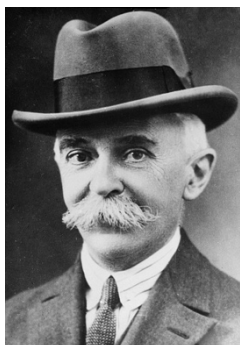


The First Asian Member of the International Olympic Committee Brian Watson



Jigoro Kano – Japan's Olympic Team Manager (1912-1936)

The Baron of Coubertin (aka Pierre de Coubertin and/or Baron de Coubertin), founder of the modern Olympics, asked the French ambassador to Japan to find a suitable person to be the first Asian member of the International Olympic Committee (IOC). On hearing that this was Baron de Coubertin's wish, Jigoro Kano accepted the honour of being the first Asian IOC member. Jigoro Kano was then 49 years old and continued as a member of the IOC until his passing at the age of 77.



Pierre de Coubertin
(1863 – 1937)

The following are the Olympic Games in which Kano participated as a member of the IOC:

- 1912: Games of the V Olympiad, Stockholm Olympics in Sweden (age 51 – first participation).
- 1920: Games of the VII Olympiad, Antwerp, Belgium (age 59);
- 1928 Games of the IX Olympiad, Amsterdam, Netherlands (age 67);
- 1932: Games of the X Olympiad, Los Angeles, United States (age 71);
- 1936: Games of the XI Olympiad, Berlin, Germany (aged 76).



Jigoro Kano at the 1936 Berlin Olympics

At the tenth Olympics in Los Angeles in 1932, both lacrosse and American Football were demonstration sports. *Judo* was chosen as a demonstration sport for the 1940 Olympic Games, which never took place because of the Second World War.

“Judo is the way to achieve the most efficient use of physical and spiritual strength. By training in both attack and defence, you can refine your body and soul and help make judo the spiritual essence of your being. In this way, you will be better able to improve yourself and contribute positively to the world. This is the ultimate goal of judo.”

Jigoro Kano (1860-1938)

Points to Ponder

“One’s strength of character is revealed more in defeat than in victory.”

Brian Watson

“An evil man will burn his own nation to the ground to rule over the ashes.”

Sun Tzu (c.544 – c.496 BCE)

“A dojo is an area of confined conflict where we confront an opponent who is not an opponent but rather a partner engaged in helping us understand ourselves more fully.”

Joe Hyams

Author, *“Zen in the Martial Arts”*

“The proud do not endure, they are like a dream on a spring night; the mighty fall at last, they are as dust before the wind.”

Heike Monogatari – *The Tale of the Heike*

“Judo should not be practiced merely for a sporting outcome but for self-improvement. The benefits accruing from training hard in judo can lead one to excel in other areas of life as well.”

Brian Watson

“A chain is only as strong as its weakest link.”

Proverb

“He who does not know himself and does not know his enemy will lose all his battles. He who knows his enemy but does not know himself should accept that for every victory he acquires he will lose one. And he who does know himself and knows his enemy will win up to 100 battles without losing one.”

Sun Tzu (c.544 – c.496 BCE)

“The secret of freedom lies in educating people, whereas the secret of tyranny lies in keeping them ignorant.”

Maximilien Robespierre (1758 – 1794)

“You cannot convince a believer of anything, for their belief is not based on evidence, it is based on a deep-seated need to believe.”

Carl Sagan (1934 – 1996)

“When the student is ready the teacher will appear. When the student is truly ready, the teacher will disappear.”

Laozi (c. 600BC)

Tao Te Ching

“True happiness is a contented mind.”

Brian Watson

Renjuku Academy

The Kano Society is pleased to endorse the *Judo* Black Belt Association's (JBBA) "Renjuku Academy" programme as an exceptional offering in *judo* education – <http://www.judo-blackbelt.com>. The Academy provides a distinctive experience through its immersive home-study curriculum in *judo* and leadership education. The distinct modules on the 12-month study programme emphasise five vital areas of *judo*:



1. Biomechanics of *Judo*;
2. *Judo* as Physical Education;
3. *Kata*;
4. *Judo* History and Philosophy;
5. *Judo* Terminology.



The demanding programme concludes with the submission of a formal dissertation on any aspect of *judo*.

Judo Collections



UNIVERSITY OF
BATH

The "Bowen Collection" at the University of Bath Library, contains the extensive *judo* archive amassed by *judoka* and scholar Richard Bowen during the course of individual research for his many books and publications.

Alongside the "Bowen Collection" is the personal book collection of Syd Hoare which includes many rare texts, some in the Japanese language, given to Syd by Trevor Leggett. As well as the books, there is a bound compendium of the educational articles and lectures written and delivered by Syd. Also residing at Bath is the "Woodard (*Judo*) Collection" – a compilation of archival material relating to the history of women's *judo* assembled by Marion and Graham Woodard.

All these collections represent a wonderful resource for present and future *judo* researchers. They are for reference use only (not available for loan) and can be viewed between 0900 and 1700 hrs.

