Hi,

my name is Timo Klemola. Thanks for downloading my book about Wado-Ryu Kumite Gata. I decided to release this book free to educate all the Wado-karate people in the very basic concepts of our style. Studying Kumite Gata revolutionized my Wado. Understanding the concepts behind Kumite Gata will change your Wado completely. At least it did this for me. You cannot understand the most subtle techniques thorough the book alone. You have to find a teacher who can show you.
I have a history of about forty years in Wado. I no longer teach. Why, it's a long story. I hope you'll enjoy the book.

There were persons who helped me enormously with my English language. I thank them with all my heart. I decided not to mention their names in the book, in order not to cause any harm to them. Those of you who understand … will understand.

As I said, the book is free. You are not allowed to sell digital or printed versions of this book, that right is strictly reserved.

But if you prefer to pay something about the book, you are free to choose the price for it! My banc account number is:
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Thanks again!

Timo Klemola

36 KUMITE GATAS
OF
WADO-RYU

TIMO KLEMOLA

36 KUMITE GATAS OF WADO-RYU

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www.visioi.net
timo.klemola@uta.fi

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Models: Petri Myllyniemi ja Timo Klemola
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INTRODUCTION

Wado-ryu is one of the biggest karate-styles in the world but only a few books have been written about it. These books can be counted with the fingers of one hand, but why is that?

Wado-ryu is not a typical karate-style. In Japan it is called *Wado-ryu Jujutsu Kempo*. Even the word "karate" does not exist in this phrase. Wado is classified in Japan as belonging to so called old budo, koryu-budo. Wado-ryu is part of the **Nihon Kobudo Kyokai**, the association of *koryu-budo*. In Japanese koryu-budo there still exists a kind of veil of secrecy. There are styles that protect their ways of practise so that lower belts are not allowed even to see the practise sessions of black belts. This is far from books or videos being published about these arts

It has always been typical to koryu-budo that their curriculums have not been open. They are opened to the practitioner at the same pace as advancing from one level to another. The last techniques (*okuden*), the most advanced principles, are kept in the family circles or are revealed only to the most advanced students. Wado-ryu karate is part of this tradition.

Kumite gata is a paired exercise that the founder of the style, **Hironori Ohtsuka**, developed already in the 1920's. There are 36 of them, three series of 12 katas. They include the most essential elements and techniques of the Wado-style. In his Wado style Ohtsuka combined Japanese S**hindo Yoshin ryu jujutsu** with Okinawan karate and created a unique Japanese karate style rooted deeply in old bujutsu schools.

In the West, kumite gatas have been taught only casually. Part of the system is taught in Wado-ryu Karate-do Organisation lead by **Jiro Ohtsuka**, the son of the founder. You can find ten kumite gatas in their curriculum. These ten katas are no more than a random collection of the original 36 katas where all the principles of Wado are systematically practised. In this shortened version of the kumite katas the levels of timing are mixed and the highest level, *sente*, is not introduced at all.

During the last twenty years karate has changed totally from the karate we knew, for example, in the 1970's, when I myself started to train. Especially many Western teachers began to research the historical roots of karate and thereby the knowledge about the applications (*bunkai*) of different katas began to spread among karate practitioners all around the world. We know now that karate has radically changed in its way from China to Okinawa, from Okinawa to Japan, and from Japan to the West. Always some things were dropped and something else was added. Karate has changed from a comprehensive self-defence art to modern sport. Particularly the parts of karate that have been forgotten have been under extensive study by karate historians. It has been exposed how the Okinawan teachers did not reveal everything to their Japanese students, not to mention the American occupation forces. And the same still applies: the Western students are not taught the same way as the Japanese.

This book is about one of those practise methods that are not taught openly to us Westerners but still contains the core of Wado-ryu karate. Hironori Ohtsuka created the kumite gata method already in the 1920's based on his knowledge of old Japanese bujutsu. The 36 kumite gatas contain all the basic elements and deepest principles of Wado-ryu karate: i.e.; simultaneous parry and counterattack; systematic way of avoiding the attack to the outer or inner side of the attack line; three categories of timing; etc. These principles became the core ideas of Wado-ryu that can easily be seen applied in the paired exercises developed later: *kihon-kumite; sanbon-kumite*; etc. This book is a reconstruction of Hironori Ohtsuga's genious method based on the authors research and 40 years experience in Wado-ryu karate.

Chapter one of the book deals with the structure of kumite gatas in a more general level. For the reader it is important first to understand, how these katas are structured. In the structure of the 36 katas you can see the genius of the wado-ryu founder and the beauty of the system. In a fast glimpse the system seems to be complicated and difficult. Well, technically

they are not easy, but the structure is always the same and the katas always follow a certain logic. Be patient and your effort will be rewarded.

In chapter two I present the evasive techniques of Wado, the so called *taisabaki*. What I call the taisabaki-katas. The whole Wado-ryu, and kumite gatas especially, are based on skilled evasion from the attack line of the opponent. It is reasonable to practise these evasions and their principles separately so that they become second nature before you apply them in more complicated situations.

Chapter three is a systematic and exact presentation of the whole kumite gata system containing all the katas, 1–36. The first series, 1-12, is presented in more detail and many variations and ideas that are borne from these katas are brought up.

In the fourth chapter I'll show you how kumite gatas are constructed of elements and how by altering the form of the elements you can create an endless amount of new and different paired exercises of Wado-ryu. In this chapter I'll show you how Wado-ryu as a style consists of endless possibilities of kumite gatas.

In the fifth chapter I'll analyse in more detail one of the elements of kumite gata: unbalancing techniques, *kuzushi*. Here we can most clearly see the intimate connection of Wado-ryu and old *jujutsu*.

The sixth and last chapter is an analysis of the *kyusho-jutsu* of kumite gata. At the same time it is an analysis of kyusho-jutsu of Wado-ryu as a style. The kyusho-jutsu, the art of attacking the vital points of the human body, has been debated in karate at least during the last twenty years. In Wado-ryu this discussion has been avoided. It is strange when you know that Wado-ryu has a kyusho-jutsu theory of its own based on old Japanese jujutsu. In the sixth chapter I'll open the theory for you.

Kumite gatas are a series of techniques created by Hironori Ohtsuka even before he officially registered his style. Practising kumite gatas we are really deep in the historical roots of Wado-ryu. After practising these exercises for a while the reader will soon notice that what he is doing consists of the technical core of Wado-ryu karate.

Chapter 1

THE SYSTEMATIC STRUCTURE OF KUMITE GATAS AND THE PRINCIPLES OF WADO-RYU

It is a common conception among Wado-ryu practitioners that Hironori Ohtsuka built into *kihon kumites* the most essential principles of Wado and by practising these exercises repeatedly you'll learn the essence of Wado. Unfortunately this is a misconception. It is true that kihon kumites do include some of the most important principles of Wado, but not nearly all.

In truth, all the real principles of Wado-ryu are included in the *kumite gata* series that Hironori Ohtsuka invented already in the1920's. In kumite gatas these principles are practiced in all possible situations:

- Systematic evasion technique to the outer and inner sides of the line of attack avoiding the head on collision with the force of the opponent
- Simultaneous parry and counterattack
- Three timings: reactive; simultaneous; and pre-emptive
- *Kuzushi*: unbalancing the opponent and controlling his centre of gravity
- Exact directing of the counterattacks to the vital points of the opponent

From the point of view of karate this set of katas is exceptional. Its design is not based on Okinawan karate but Japanese old budo, so called *koryu budo*. Just as the *idori* and *tantodori* techniques of Wado-ryu, kumite gatas are based on the *kata* sets of *Shindo Yoshin ryu jujutsu*, more precisely its so called *Kuzushi-no-kata* (the kata of unbalancing). As it happens, kuzushi is one of the most important principles of kumite gata and Wado-ryu. I go through the technicalities of kuzushi in chapter six.

After practising kumite gatas for a while you'll understand how the other paired exercises of Wado ryu (kihon kumite, *sanbon kumite*) are all based on principles and techniques familiar from kumite gata.

The kumite gata set was specially created by Hironori Ohtsuka to train the essential principles of Wado-ryu karate. The core of the style is formed by its principles. The same principle can be applied through many techniques. The principles are the foundation that defines the style. When the

ATTACK	DEFENCE						
	BODY SHIFT	TIMING					
		Go-sen-no-te		Sen-sen-no-sente		Sente	
		Ai-hanmi	Gyaku-hanmi	Ai-hanmi	Gyaku-hanmi	Ai-hanmi	Gyaku-hanmi
Jodan	Uchi	1	7	13	19	25	31
Chudan	Uchi	2	8	14	20	26	32
Gedan	Uchi	3	9	15	21	27	33
Jodan	Soto	4	10	16	22	28	34
Chudan	Soto	5	11	17	23	29	35
Gedan	Soro	6	12	18	24	30	36

Diagram 1. The Structure of Kumite Gatas

practitioner has become well aware of the principles and practised them so that they have become part of his automatic reactions he can easily create an infinite number of technical variations based on them.

The techniques of kumite gatas seem mostly based on the hand techniques of *Naihanchi*-kata. The principles involved in body movements (*taisabaki, nagashi, irimi*) and timing (*go sen no te, sen sen no sente, sente*) come from *koryu budo* - old *jujutsu* and *kenjutsu*. Especially the three timings highlighted in kumite gatas have been extensively researched in relation to old Japanese swordsmanship.

Before going to the detailed explanation of the kumite gatas I'll explain the overall structure of the whole system. After understanding the structure of the system, it is much easier to memorize all the katas.

The different categories of kumite gatas are given in the table above. In the left column you'll see the attack, in the other columns the defence. You will not understand the table at first glance, but patiently familiarizing yourself with this method will surely open a new dimension to your Wado-ryu karate.

1. Ai-hanmi.

2. Gyaku-hanmi.

Kamae, the fighting position
Ai-hanmi ja gyaku-hanmi

There is an interesting aspect connected to the fighting position of Wado-ryu. In kumite gatas the defender always stands with his right foot in front: that is, in *migi hanmi kamae*. In the first six katas the attacker attacks from migi hanmi kamae (right foot in front) and the situation is ai-hanmi: both have the same foot in front. The next six katas are done with the attacker's left foot in front: the situation being gyaku-hanmi. In kihon kumite the defender always starts with his right foot in front. In a fighting situation the defender can choose which side he wants in front to receive the attack, but he has to be prepared that the attack can come from whatever position. That's why all the techniques of kumite katas are first done in ai-hanmi situation and then repeated in gyaku-hanmi situation.

But where does the systematic use of the right sided position, migi hanmi kamae, come from? In this position you can clearly see the history and the way of thinking of Wado-ryu. First of all we have to understand that kumite gatas do not represent a boxing like attitude to the fighting situation. We are dealing with a classical bujutsu here and especially Japanese fencing, kenjutsu. The fencer always puts his right leg in front. In western boxing, even in Chinese boxing I think, a right handed person takes the opposite stance. This is most important. The basic kamae in kumite gata gives the impression that the defender has a sword in his hands. In a way he is not preparing for a boxing fight, he is preparing to a duel with swords. This attitude and kamae is not usual in Okinawan karate, which emphasi-

zes more or less a boxing attitude. Even though we know that in Okinawa there were masters that instructed their students to practise with a feeling that their hands were like swords.

In Wado-ryu the basic attitude of fencing gives the most important concepts of how to shift the body away from the line of attack. You can not block the sword with your hands but you can avoid it by moving away (taisabaki, irimi). Hironori Ohtsuka created 36 kumite gatas to show us how to do this body evasion in all the different situations and timings. If the basic approach to bare hand fighting is this, it is easy to understand that in Wado-ryu karate you'll use the same body shifting techniques against a knife or a sword. Kumite gata drills give you all the necessary avoiding techniques that can be used against unarmed and armed opponents as well. This is a basic concept that is based on old bujutsu: jujutsu and kenjutsu.

Categories of attack

Categories of attack are clear. Attack can be performed on three different levels: j*odan; chudan; and gedan*. These levels are represented by *jodan zuki, chudan zuki* and *maegeri* (maegeri represents the gedan area). The same logic is maintained throughout the whole series: The attack goes systematically from up to down: first jodan-attack, then chudan-attack, and then maegeri, and then the same again. After that the attacker changes the left foot forward and repeats the same.

Body shift

In Wado we talk much about nagashi and irimi. In 36 Kumite gatas the nagashi and the irimi are practised in a systematic way in every possibly defence situation. There are two options: you can parry and avoid the attack to the inner side of attack line or to the outer side of the attack line. When both options are combined with the categories of attack levels as described above, we'll get 12 variations. That's why the whole kumite gata series is divided into three sets of twelve katas. There are three sets because

3. Kata1.

4. Kata 2.

5. Kata 3.

6. Kata 4.

7. Kata 5.

8. Kata 6.

all situations are practised with three different timings.

The katas 1–6 are performed in ai-hanmi where both people are right leg forward. The attacker performs three attacks (1- 3): first jodan zuki, then chudan zuki, and then maegeri. These attacks are dealt with using nagashi/irimi which is performed to the outer side of the opponent's attack line. Then there follows the same three attacks (4-6). Now the nagashi/irimi is performed to the inner side of the attack line. The following six katas repeat the same idea and almost the same technique with minor changes, but this time in gyaku-hanmi situation - the attacker starts with his left foot in front.

9. Reactive timing.

10. Simultaneous timing.

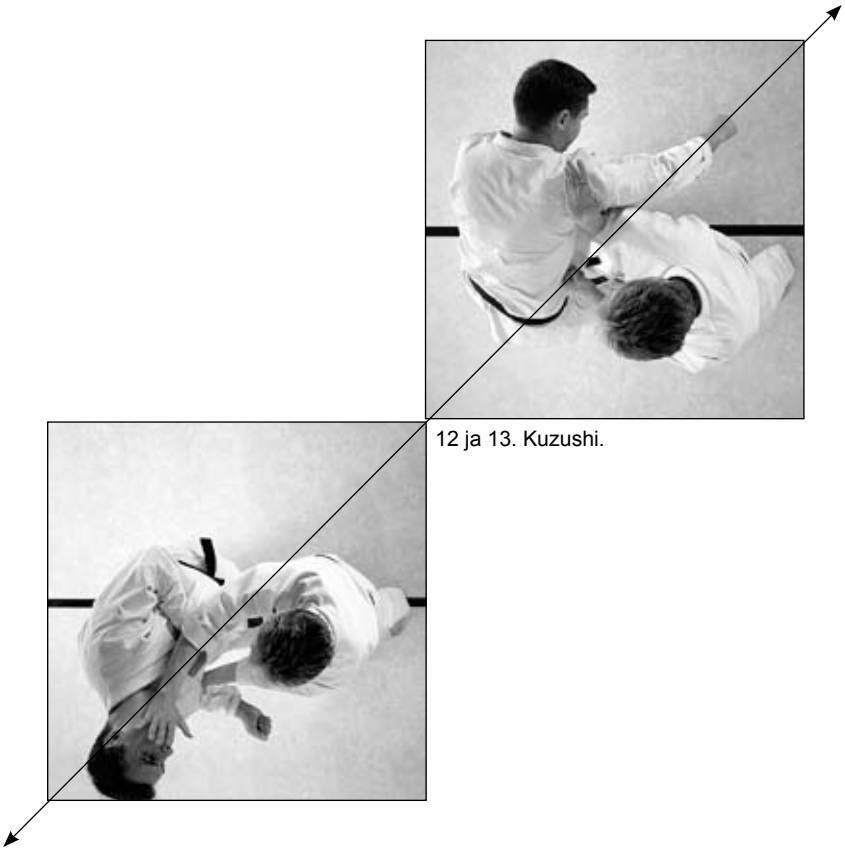
11. Pre-emptive timing.

Timing

So far you can say that this is a beautiful system. But then follows the whole idea of Wado: the timing. This whole structure as described above is repeated three times in three different timings. The first series (1-12) is performed in *go-sen-no-te* –timing. This means reactive timing. The opponent performs an attack and the defender reacts to this and deals with it with the help of a body shift and simultaneous parry and counterattack. There are two rhythms connected to this timing. The rhythm can be one-two, for example in a case of dealing with maegeri, or it can be one, which means that parry and counter attack are performed at the same time.

The second set, katas 12-24, repeats the first set technically almost the same. There are some minor technical changes, because the timing changes. In the second set the defender performs his movements in *sen-sen-no-sente* timing. This means simultaneous timing. This needs a different state of mind. The defender tries to sense the intention of the attacker and starts to move simultaneously with him.

The last set of 12 techniques, katas 25-36, repeats the set described above, but now the timing is *sente*. This means pre-emptive timing and it is the most demanding to perform. To perform it correctly would mean that the defender should be able to feel the movement of the attacker before it takes any material form. In Japanese budo there is lots of material to be found about this timing: to pre-emptive strike at the point when the attacker is still planning his own attack. In this level you take the initiative when you sense the intention of the attack in the opponent's mind or in his ki, as the Japanese say. This is the highest level of Ohtsuka´s Kumite gata. This



12 ja 13. Kuzushi.

reminds me of a difference of opinion between Ohtsuka's teachers, **Gichin Funakoshi** and **Choki Motobu**. Funakoshi liked to emphasize that "there is no first attack in karate", *"karate ni sente nashi"*. Motobu thought differently: in his book he writes clearly: "karate is sente". Ohtsuka agreed with Motobu based on his expertise in old Japanese bujutsu and raised the sente principle to the highest position in Wado-ryu. Unfortunately in modern Wado-ryu this principle has been almost totally forgotten.

Unbalancing the opponent, principle of kuzushi

Ohtsuka's kumite gatas also have a systematic way to practise to unbalance the opponent (kuzushi). After stepping in (irimi) there always follows an unbalancing technique - a certain kind of *irimi nage*, which is not finished within the kata. The technique is stopped after the opponent has lost his secure balance. Even here the practise of the principle is emphasized. The kuzushi practise in kumite gata includes the sway of the opponent to the weakest side of his body and manipulating his back and hand or shoulder, which all together break his balance. In this movement the knee is actively used, too. The principle is very familiar from jujutsu and judo, but also

from taiji and yi quan, where the practitioners practise a lot of push-hands drills. In chapter six I'll go through the principle of kuzushi in detail.

How do the ten kihon kumites, the ten kumite gatas and ippon kumites that are taught in some Wado-organizations look in this light? Basically they are a collection of techniques which are based on the kumite gata system. But most of the important aspects and principles can not be seen at all or are made almost invisible. Without the systematic practise of kumite gata the most important concepts and principles will never open up to you. These are the systematic practise of taisabaki in every possible situation, the three timings, etc.

San-mi-ittai, "Holy Trinities"

Before finishing this chapter I want to say a few words about some "Holy Trinities" found in Wado-ryu in addition to the three timings dealt with above. There are two others which are all connected to the kumite gatas.

Three principles related to the taisabaki of Wado ryu are called *ten-i, ten-tai and ten-gi*. "Ten" means a change and these three concepts refer to: the way the body position is changed in relation to the line of attack (ten-i); changing the alignment of the body by twisting or leaning it so that the target surface will become smaller (ten-tai); and change in the technique (ten-gi). All these things happen simultaneously. In the first kumite gata the attack is jodan zuki. The defender moves his body weight stepping to the left and twisting to the right. Thus he changes the position of his body to the outer side of the attack line. At the same time he twists to the right and leans a little backwards to better avoid the attack. Finally he does a simultaneous parry with his right hand and counter attack with his left hand. So the change of the technique is supported by all these body movements.

The other Trinity is formed by the concepts of *nagasu, inasu* and *noru*. Nagasu means flowing like a river. If you watch a fallen leaf float in a river and see how it bypasses a rock, you'll get the idea of nagasu at work. In Wado technique it means avoiding the attack so that you move away from

the attack line and guide the punch of the opponent to the side. Thus you can use the power of the opponent against him in your counter. There exist two possibilities here: the opponent collides with his power to the counter attack; or the defender can join the movement of the opponent and channel it to a throw, for example.

Inasu refers to blocking so that you cling to the attacking hand or foot so that it changes only slightly its direction - it runs past. This is usually done with a whole body shift and sometimes the movement of upper body is emphasized, e.g., in kumite gatas 4 and 7.

Noru means riding: being in harmony with the movement of the opponent; sharing the same thing; listening to the movement; etc. Especially when the bodies are in contact noru is always present. You listen to the power of the opponent and "ride" on it. This principle is explored in all kumite gatas. The best way to learn all these concepts is to do the "push-hands" exercises of taijiquan or yi quan, or maybe the so called *tegumi*-exercises that they do in Patrick McCarthy's koryu karate.

Before we enter the core of this book, the kumite gatas themselves, let's have a closer look at one of the most important principle of kumite gatas and Wado-ryu in general: *taisabaki*. Only a fluent control of taisabaki makes it possible to acquire the other advanced techniques and principles of kumite gatas.

14. Kuzushi showing the element of noru.

Chapter **2**

EVASION PRACTICE
TAISABAKI NO KATA

TAISABAKI NO KATA

One of the essential features of Wado-ryu where you can recognize the practitioner of the style from a distance is a fluent evasive movement combined with a simultaneous block and counterpunch. Kumite gatas systematically teach these principles. The *taisabaki* of Wado is based on classical bujutsu: jujutsu and kenjutsu. It is not seen as such in Okinawan karate. Evasion techniques have always been practised as their own category in classical bujutsu and budo. The practitioner of Wado karate should learn the evasive techniques of his style in the same way and practise them in kata form. You can see this way of practise in modern Aikido where they usually practise their taisabaki techniques at the beginning of their training sessions. In classical bujutsu there is a connection in armed and unarmed techniques which is particularly seen in evasions. The same taisabaki can be used when parrying an armed or unarmed attack, sword or empty handed. The same taisabaki can also be used connected to one's own armed or unarmed technique. This is also the case in Wado-ryu: the taisabaki katas can be done empty handed or armed with a sword.

The taisabaki of Wado-ryu is based on fluently turning around the centreline. The last movements of Pinan Sandan kata train these taisabaki movements. There are many evasion methods or systems that can be taken out of Wado-ryu and be called taisabaki katas. Taisabaki, body movement, is based on different foot movements called *ashi-sabaki*.

There are special drills to practise the turning around the centreline that are introduced first. These drills train you in relaxation, consciousness of the centreline, and ability to turn around the centreline so that you still maintain good control and unity of your whole body.

1–3. Centerline and Relaxation Drill 1.

I Preparatory Drills

Centreline and Relaxation Drill 1

Take a good posture and be aware of the optimal alignment of your body. Flex your knees a little, hold your back straight, and relax. Imagine your centreline going down through the top of your head, stretching down through the centre point of your body and onwards between your legs and through the floor. Begin slowly to rotate left and right around this centreline. Relax your arms and let them slap to your back and sides (photos 1-3).

You can feel the relaxation increasing in your arms and how it reaches, little by little, the shoulders, too. The blood is rushing to the finger tips and you feel your hands heavy and warm when the capillaries open. Let your arms relax and swing from side to side. The little slap of the hands to the body increases the relaxation in your fingers and arms.

Notice: hold the centreline of the body still and turn around it: do not let it move from side to side; keep the knees flexible; imagine that your hands are ropes that swing from side to side; don't let your hip swing sideways; don't tense your shoulders.

4–6. Centerline and Relaxation Drill 2.

7–9. Centerline and Relaxation Drill 3.

Centreline and Relaxation Drill 2

Do the previous drill in hanmi kamae posture and during the movement shift your weight back and forth (photos 4-6). In this exercise one element is added to the previous drill: the weight shift which is combined to the rotation movement. Notice the connection with this drill and the taisa-baki kata number 6. When your weight is back you should slightly sink and feel the straightness of your lower back: you should have the feeling of fullness in your lower back.

Centreline and Relaxation Drill 3

This drill is a further development of the previous ones. Rotate your body around the centreline, shift the weight to the right leg and sink. Let your arms swing downwards so that the right hand touches your chest and the left hand your lower back. Return to the middle by straightening up and swinging your arms up and repeat to the left (photos 7-9). Be aware of the three movements of the centreline in this exercise: rotation; weight shift; and sinking. Notice the connection of this drill and taisabaki kata numbers 5 and 6.

II The Evasion System of Pinan Sandan

There are two important ideas of evasion related to the last movements of the kata Pinan Sandan: rotational movement around the centreline; and evasion by sliding.

There are distinct similarities between this evasion method and the basic taisabaki exercise of Aikido, *irimi-tenkan*, and it can be practised the same way. Diagram 1 presents the first phase of the movements at the end Pinan Sandan where you step the back foot next to the right foot and then cross the left foot behind and turn. This is actually one version of irimi-tenkan.

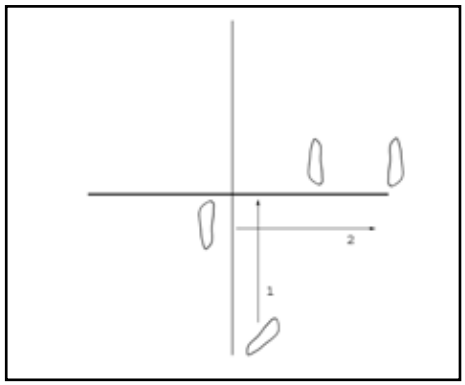
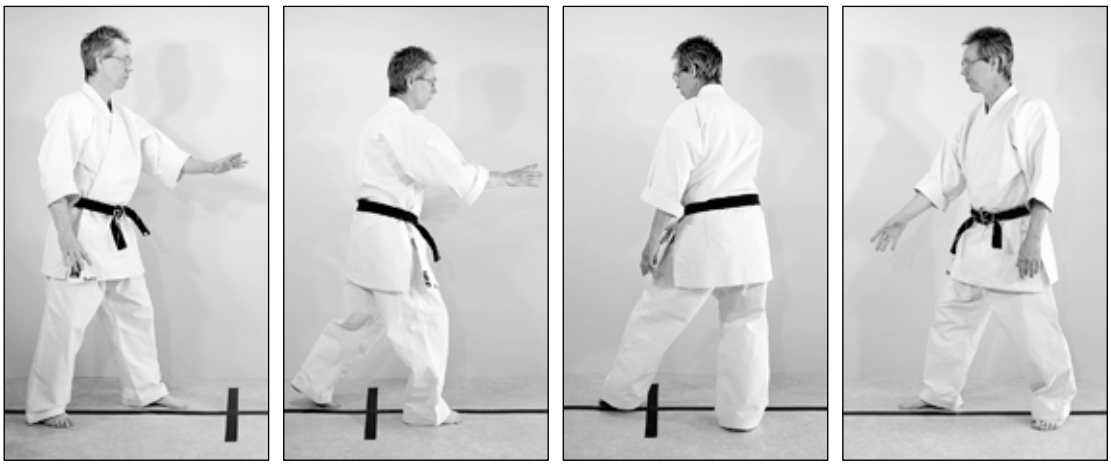


Diagram1. The Evasion System of Pinan Sandan.



10–13. Irimi-tenkan.

Taisabaki-Kata 1, Irimi-Tenkan

Instead of stepping the right foot next to the left foot, step past and then do the same rotation, then irimi-tenkan is borne. Thus, this basic taisabaki exercise of Aikido is also one of the foundational movements in Wado-ryu karate (photos 10-13).

(1) Stand with the left leg forward. Take a step with your right foot passing the left foot.

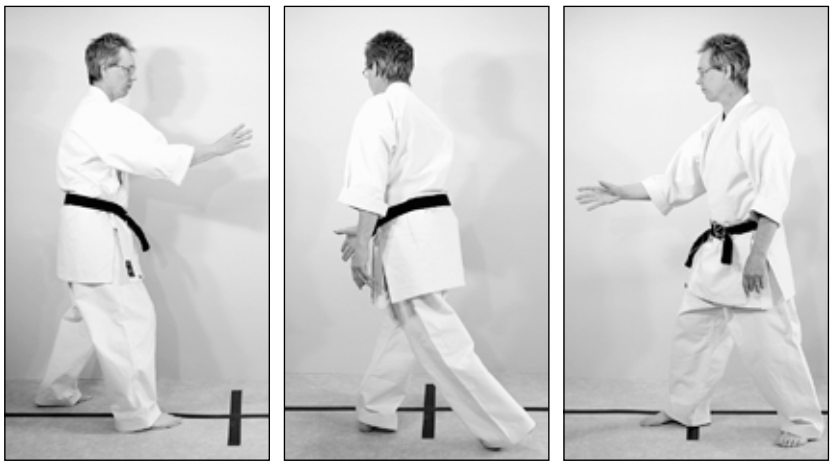
(2) Turn left by using the right foot as a pivot by crossing the left foot behind the right foot. Rotate your body 180 degrees. Repeat the drill by stepping forward with your left foot and turning the opposite direction .

This stepping method is used in many jujutsu based arm throws that can be found, for example, among the knife defence techniques of Wado-ryu (example in photos 14-17).

Taisabaki-Kata 2, Tenkan

If we take only the last movement from the previous exercise, crossing the

14–17. Arm throw using irimi-tenkan.



18–20. Tenkan.

leg and turning 180 degrees, the *tenkan* movement, also familiar from Aikido, is borne (photos 18-20).

(1) Shift your weight to the front leg and begin to rotate, pivoting on your front foot. Cross the back foot behind and turn 180 degrees. Repeat the drill with the other foot in front

This is an important movement when moving away from the attack line of the opponent and taking control.

Taisabaki-Kata 3, Sliding Evasion, Tsuriashi-Taisabaki

The last movement of Pinan Sandan is the same sliding evasion that we use in the first movement of the kihon kumite series (photos 21-23).

21–23. Tsuri-ashi.

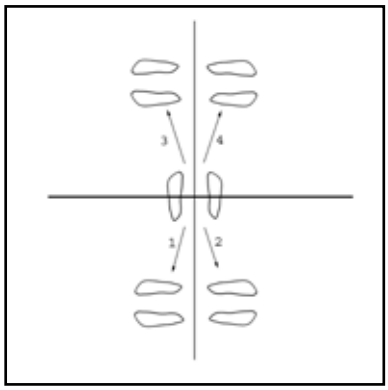
III The Evasion Methods of Kumite

In kumite gata there is a systematic practise of evasions stepping in or slightly retreating to the outer and inner sides of the attack line depending on the timing of the kata.

Avoiding the maegeri attacks in kumite gata opens up the following taisabaki kata where the back is turned against the attack line. The evasions done by stepping forward (including irimi) relate to the simultaneous and pre-emptive timing. The movements directed backwards relate to the reactive timing.

Taisabaki-Kata 4.

Start from the *hajichi dachi* and execute four evasions one after another: back left corner; back right corner; front left corner; and front right corner (photos 24–28).



Piirros 2. Taisabaki-Kata 4.

(1) The first movement is directed to the back left corner. Step the left foot back and left, rotate the body to the left and let the right foot follow. Imagine there is a kick and you'll avoid it by sliding back and left and block it with a right gedan barai. Return to the starting position with two steps: first with the right leg; then with the left leg.

(2) Do the same evasion to the back right corner as a mirror image to the previous movement. Even though in kumite gatas the defender performs all the techniques in migi kamae, in evasion katas it is important to practise both sides. For instance, in sanbon kumite this is the way the evasions are practised.

(3) In the next phase take a step to the front left corner with your right foot, rotate to left and let the left foot follow. Imagine that you step in and avoid a kick and at the same time you drop your right hand to block. Return to the centre with two steps.

(4) Repeat the same to the front right corner.

24–28. Taisabaki -Kata 4.

Taisabaki-kata 5: Nagashi

Nagashi is an evasion done as if you would open a door for the opponent. Your body rotates and avoids the attack by pivoting on the front foot (photos 29-33). Also, in this kata, as in the previous one, the evasions done by stepping forward relate to the simultaneous and pre-emptive timing. The movements directed backwards relate to the reactive timing. Notice the connection between *Pinan Godan* and nagashi. Naturally the *nagashi-zuki* of Wado-ryu is done using this evasion, too.

(1) Use the ball of the left foot as a pivot, rotate to the right and let the right foot swing back and left. Use the power of the turning movement of the whole body. Return to the centre by bringing the right foot back.

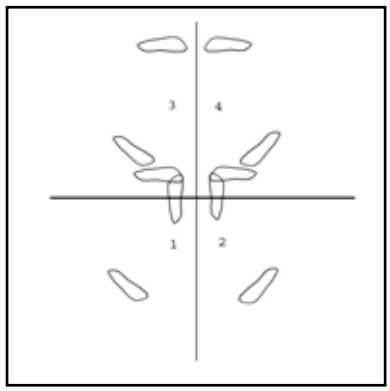
(2) Do the same as a mirror image rotating to the left using the ball of the right foot as a pivot. You can see this evasion, for example, in kumite

29–33. Taisabaki -Kata 5. Nagashi.

gatas 6 and 9.

(3) Take a step forward with the left leg, then rotate on the ball of the left foot. The right foot swings to the left. Return to the middle by two steps.

(4) Do the same as a mirror image taking a step with the right foot. This evasion is used, for example, in kumite gatas 18 and 21.



Piirros 3. Taisabaki kata 5.

34–36. Turning Evasion, Hiraki-ashi.

Taisabaki-Kata 6: Turning Evasion, Hiraki-Ashi

The trademark of Wado-ryu, in addition to nagashi, is the turning evasion familiar from the kihon kumite one, where you slide, turn, and do the simultaneous block and counter (photos 34-36). You can practise this movement as a kata alternating the right and left sides. It is the same sideways sliding movement as in Pinan Sandan but now the rotation of the body is added. In Japanese swordsmanship the movement is called *hiraki-ashi*.

(1) Start from the basic posture. Do a sliding step to the left with your left foot, rotate the body to the right and let the right foot follow. In the final posture the weight is slightly more on the left foot than on the right.

(2) Repeat the same to the right. Do the drill stepping left and right in turn.

IV Taisabaki Combinations

You can combine all the above six evasion katas and create an infinite number of different evasion exercises. In kihon kumites you can find some example of these. In the first kihon kumite there is the combination of sliding evasion, suri-ashi, and turning evasion, hiraki-ashi. In the sixth kihon kumite you'll find the combination of the taisabaki katas, 4 and 6. Next, I'll give you only a few simple examples of these ideas and leave the more complicated ones for you to find.

37–40. Combined Suri-Ashi and Hiraki-Ashi.

Combination 1: Suri-Ashi + Hiraki-Ashi

In the first kihon kumite the defender executes two basic evasions of Wa-do-ryu one after another: suri-ashi; and hiraki-ashi. These movements can easily be combined into a kata and then practised as a flowing movement to the left and right in turn.

(1) Start from the basic posture , hajiji-dachi. Do exactly as in the first kihon kumite: step back and left with your left foot and let the right foot follow.

(2) Continue as in the first kihon: step further left with your left foot, turn right and let your right foot follow.

(3) Repeat the same to the right as a mirror image: step with the right foot to the right and let the left foot follow.

(4) Step again with your right foot, turn left and let the left foot follow. Continue as in step 1 (photos 37-40).

Combination 2; Suri-Ashi + hiraki-Ashi + Tenkann

Continue the previous drill by adding in one phase: add tankan evasion to the end by turning 180 degrees through the back (photos 41-42).

41–42. Continue with Tenkan ...

43–45. ... or with Irimi-Tenkanilla.

Combination 3: Suri-Ashi + Hiraki-Ashi + Irimi Tenkan

Do the previous drill but replace tenkan with irimi-tenkan. Instead of just turning 180 degrees, first take a step forward and then turn (photos 43–45.)

46–47. Combined Nagashi and Hiraki-Ashi

Combination 4: Nagashi + Hiraki-Ashi

The same way we did with the previous kata we can connect nagashi and hiraki-ashi. It can be done in several ways. You can stand in hanmi kamae and execute nagashi evasion and hiraki-ashi in turn, always rotating on the ball of the front foot. The body rotates left and right but the front foot stays in place (photos 46-47).

You can also do the same combination by starting from hajiji-dachi and do the movements alternately left and right and always coming back to the starting position.

Here I have given you only some examples. You should analyse and find all the possible combinations of these six taisabaki katas and practise them intensively.

***

I recommend that you make a habit of always practising these taisabaki katas at the beginning of your training sessions. When practising the evasions, always take care that you maintain the unity of your body: good upright alignment; and a feeling of relaxed power. Be aware of your centreline and rotate around it. As you advance in your practise the evasions become second nature to you and make possible the fluent and flexible execution of the more deep and difficult techniques and principles of Wado-ryu karate.

Chapter 3 KUMITE GATAS 1 - 36

I REACTIVE TIMING, GO SEN NO TE KATAS 1–12

The kumite gata series consists of three sets of katas which all have the same structure but different timing. We start with the easiest one: the reactive timing. The defender receives the attacks with his right foot forward: migi hanmi kamae. The attacker performs the first six attacks from migi hanmi kamae and the the last six attacks from hidari hanmi kamae

The beginnings of katas 1-6 are all the same. Both the attacker and the defender start from *musubi-dachi*. The attacker steps his right foot forward and the defender steps his left foot back, both then would be in migi hanmi kamae. This, then, is aihanmi situation.

Katas 7-12 represent the *gyaku-hanmi* situation, which means that the attacker steps his left foot forward, the defender still steps his left foot back. The distance is corrected with zanshin maintained continually.

Logically, the katas are divided into sets of three. First the defender does three techniques to the outer side of the attack line. The attacks are jodan, chudan, and gedan. The same is repeated to the inner side of the attack line. The attacker changes to the other foot forward and the same is repeated: three techniques to the outer side of the attack line, then three techniques to the inner side.

It is useful for the defender to first practise the evasive movements, and actually whole katas, without a partner. The evasions at the first phase of the katas are perhaps the most important material of Wado-ryu and they should be practised so they become automatic.

There are six basic evasions: three to the outer side of the attack line; and three to the inner side.

In the first katas the defender moves to the outer side of the attack line.

Katas 1-3, Ai-hanmi, The Defence to the Outer Side of the Attack Line

KATA 1

The first kata familiarizes you to most of the evasion, entering, and unbalancing principles of kumite gatas. You also learn to do many changes in the roles of the hands (hente), still keeping yourself on the same side of the attack line. The basic theme of the kata is how to receive a jodan attack by avoiding it to the outer side of the attack line. In the first katas I'll describe in detail the finer points and variations that can then be applied to the other katas.

More accurate analysis of the kyusho-jutsu of kumite gatas will be found in Chapter 7. Here, I'll only give the names and order of the atemi-points, and the surface which is used in the attack . For example: *shuto – matsu-kaze.*

Attack: Right Jodan Zuki. The attacker slides forward to close the distance and performs a straight punch with his front hand to the face level of the opponent.

Defence: *Phase 1:* The defender avoids the attack by moving back and left by stepping with his left foot and letting the right foot follow. At the

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same time, he turns his body to the right. The punch is blocked by the back of his right hand and at the same time he punches with his ipponken to the armpit of the attacker (1-2; 5-6).

This evasion technique is familiar from kihon kumite numbers one and six. In kihon kumite six it is done exactly as here, blocking the jodan-attack. This evasion technique is practised in the taisabaki kata six introduced in the previous chapter.

The gliding movement is done obliquely left, not straight back. The body twists to the right, the weight is shifted slightly to the left leg, and the upper body leans back a little. The back is still kept straight. The right hand slides, relaxed, along the punching hand and stays there to control it. This enables the defender to grip the hand if needed. The right side of the body and the right hand are very relaxed and the left side, the counter attack side, is powerful. The power is released with a sudden change of relaxation and tension. After the punch, the tension is immediately released in order to be ready for the next move.

Phase 2: The defender steps in (irimi) and controls the attacking arm of the opponent by pushing it to the right with his left hand. During the changes of the hands (hente), the contact should not be lost: the left hand takes its control first. It is not until then that the right hand disconnects for the punch. The defender hits the lower ribs of the opponent with his right ipponken. At the same time, the right knee of the defender controls the right knee of the attacker from inside (3;7). The knee control can be done at the front of the knee, too (10).

Phase 3: Unbalancing: The defender steps in and destabilizes the attacker (kuzushi) by pressing with his right arm to the right, and with his right knee to the left. He finishes the kata by hitting the lower ribs of the

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attacker with his right ipponken (4; 8-9). During this movement there is another change of hands, hente, where contact to the opponent should not be lost. The knee movement in the kuzushi is always done with a correct alignment of the knee and foot, and by bending the knee. Sideways movement of the knee should be carefully avoided because it can result in a torn meniscus. The knee should bend as a hinge above the foot. When the right leg is turned inside, it should be done using the hip as a pivot point. The actual unbalancing movement is done by dropping the weight and bending the knee. In the end position, keep the contact to the opponent alive and if necessary move forwards with little movements of the feet and toes.

Kuzushi is one of the most essential elements of kumite gatas. In chapter six I'll do more detailed analysis of it. One of the basic ideas of this kind of movement is to open some part of the opponent for atemi-attack. Practising this kata I cannot avoid thinking that the last technique here fits perfectly for opening armour in its armpit, one of its most vulnerable points. If that would be the case, the counter attack would be a stab with a knife to the armpit. This kind of idea of koryu budo should always be kept in mind as we know that the unbalancing techniques of kumite gatas are based on Shindo Yoshin ryu jujutsu.

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Notice

- coordinate the weight shift, body twist, evasion and counter attack to one fluid movement
- the defending hand is *in* and relaxed, the attacking hand is *yo*: powerful (Chinese yin/yang)
- be aware how this *in/yo* change is felt in your whole body
- *hente*, the change of the hands, changes the *in/yo* sides, too
- maintain the relaxation during the whole kata
- move from relaxation to tension and from tension to relaxation fast and sharply
- take power from weight drop, especially at the second and third phases of the kata

Details

- be carful about the position of your back: the small of the back straight; feeling of roundness in the whole back
- keep your weight low, hips and knees bent
- lean backwards at the first phase, evading also with your head
- maintain contact during changing the hands and use the contact point to sense the centre of weight and movements of the opponent. Be ready to react to them: this is noru

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- in kamae, keep your heels only slightly on the ground. This way moving becomes more sensitive
- when stepping in, keep the heels even more slight on the floor

Atemi: ipponken - kyoei, ipponken - denko, ipponken - inazuma.

Variations:

1. When you are controlling the hand of the opponent at the first phase of the kata, be aware of the possibility to grasp with the right or the left hand:

a) if the right hand grasps, ikkyo is borne (11,12)

b) if the left hand grasps the karate-gi at the shoulder and draws backwards, a fall from ohyo kumite is borne (13,14).

Always be aware of possibilities to perform locks or throws in all the phases of the kata.

2. Notice all the time the possibility of hente: changing the hands. Hente makes it possible to change from one side of the attack line to the other, as in kata number two. After phase one you could do hente and change from the outside to the inside of the attack line, going under the arm of the opponent (15-18).

Also, be aware of all the atemi-possibilities of the situation. There are

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always several of them even though the kata shows only one. For instance: the first counter-attack can be directed to the inazuma-point instead.

KATA 2

The second kata teaches you how to avoid chudan zuki to the outer side of the attack line. There is also hente, which is used to move from the outside to inside of the attack line. This is an important principle of kumite gatas which makes possible many variations.

Attack: Right Chudan Zuki.

Defence: *Phase 1:* The defender avoids the attack by moving back and left by stepping with his left foot in that direction and letting the right foot follow. At the same time, he turns his body to the right. He blocks the punch at the same time with a right gedan barai and punches upwards to the armpit with his left ipponken (1-2; 6-7).

The evasion movement is the same as in kata number one. The body twist is the same, but now the stomach is drawn in a little which makes the back more round. The blocking hand drops down, relaxed, and blocks in

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the direction of the punch.

Phase 2: Then follows hente and moving from the outside to the inside of the attack line. The defender steps with his left foot behind his right foot, crossing it, and at the same time grabs the wrist of the opponent. The grabbing movement is a sliding movement from above and against the arm of the opponent towards his wrist, which is finally grasped. Then the defender steps in with his right foot then strikes with a shuto to the side of the opponent's neck. An alternative strike could be a teisho to the chin (3--4; 8-9).

Phase 3: Unbalancing: The defender destabilizes the attacker to the attacker's back and left using three points: the right wrist; the inner side of the right knee; and the chin of the opponent. He pushes with his left hand, right knee and right heel of the palm. Finally, he strikes the centre-line of the opponent with his elbow/arm and withdraws. This last movement is done with a short movement of the whole body. This, together with the knee action, can throw the opponent down to his back if wanted (5; 10-11).

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Notice

- separate "in" and "yo" at the first phase of the kata as in kata number one
- when grabbing the wrist of the opponent, open your hand fully and let it slide down the arm before taking hold of the wrist. This movement is a kind of kake-uke directed downwards from above
- coordinate the movements of the entering step of the right foot and the right shuto so that the power of the movement comes from the step, the weight shift, and the body shift. Remember relaxation
- before the unbalancing movement, take a small step in with the right foot
- when pushing the wrist of the attacker you have to find the right direction
- drop your weight when using your knee

Atemi: ipponken - kyoei, shuto - matsukaze, empi - suigetsu.

Variations

1. This kata can be done without the hente and moving to the inside of the attack line. In that case, the second phase is done by entering straight in and doing the unbalancing movement by the right palm at the chin, the left hand at the lower back, and the right knee at the right knee of the opponent (12-13).

2. The pushing movement at the wrist can be done by bending the arm of the opponent to a locked position (14).

3. Notice natural possibilities of atemi: instead of shuto there can be teisho to the side of the jaw.

4. If the right hand grips the wrist of the opponent from underneath, a jujutsu-type arm throw is naturally born (cf. knife defence techniques) (15-18).

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KATA 3

The third kata is a defence against a gedan attack. For European Wado practitioners this technique is familiar from the Sanbon Kumites of Wado-ryu created by Tatsuo Suzuki.

Attack: Left Maegeri to the Lower Stomach.

Defence: *Phase 1:* The defender withdraws his left foot then right foot obliquely to the back and left, at the same time twisting his body to the left while blocking the kick with his right hand. The block can be made with a relaxed hand in the direction of the kick, or it can be a shuto strike to the calf of the attacker's leg (next page: 1-2; 7-8).

This movement is similar to kihon kumite number two. There are some differences, but the principle is the same. This evasion technique and all its variations were practised in the taisabaki kata number four in the previous chapter. There is a sliding movement of the body back and left. The left foot takes the step first and the right foot follows. The body twists to the left and the right hand relaxes and drops down to block the attack.

Phase 2: The defender steps in with his right foot and at the same time strikes with a nukite to the eyes of the opponent. Then immediately strike uraken to the temple (3-4; 9-10).

Phase 3: Unbalancing: The defender continues to step in and unbalances the attacker with his right knee at the inside of the left knee of the attacker and with his right arm at the shoulder. Then he strikes a left ipponken to the solar plexus. After withdrawing the hand, he leaves it on top of the right arm of the attacker to control it. The defender stays in contact with the attacker and controls the unbalancing movement by nijiri-ashi, familiar from kihon kumite. In this technique you creep forward using your toes: nijiri-ashi(5-6; 11-13).

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Notice

- don't step further than necessary when avoiding the attack. If you step too far, it is more difficult to step in and do the counter-attack
- if you keep your right hand totally relaxed, it is easier to do several whip-like movements with it
- when doing the unbalancing movement with your knee, turn the right foot outwards, pivoting on the heel
- do the unbalancing movement with the whole body while dropping the weight, then you'll get the power of the whole body behind the hand movement
- you should stick together with the opponent in order to be able to sense his movements (noru). If he moves, you should follow as in the nijiri-ashi technique of kihon kumite
- the final strike with the left ipponken should be aimed to the centreline of the opponent which is opened with the unbalancing movement

Atemi: nukite - gansei, uraken - kasumi, ipponken - suigetsu.

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Variations

1. At the first phase be aware of the many possibilities of atemi-strikes with the right hand.

2. What happens if you grip the belt of the opponent with your left hand (14)?

3. What happens if you slide your right hand under the collar of the karate-gi of the opponent and tighten up the opponent's karate-gi with the left hand? A natural shime-waza situation in the upright position is created (15).

4. Notice the possibility to do an o-uchi-gari in the final position (16).

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Katas 4-6, Ai-hanmi; The Defence to the Inner Side of the Attack Line

In the following three katas, the attacker repeats the same attacks: jodan; chudan; and gedan. In these katas the defender now avoids the attacks to the inner side of the attack line. This means three more evasion techniques. Actually, there is only one principle: nagashi, which is done attached to three different situations and techniques. In the previous chapter we practised all the variations of this evasion in taisabaki kata number five.

KATA 4

Attack: The same as in kata number one: right jodan zuki. The attacker slides forward to close the distance and does a straight punch to the face level of the opponent with his front hand.

Defence: *Phase 1:* The defender avoids the attack by rotating left using the ball of the right foot as a pivot point. This is nagashi evasion. At the same time, he strikes with a right shuto to the neck of the opponent and blocks the attack with the back of his left hand. The movement is done with the rotation of the whole body, which is combined to the simultaneous block and counter-attack. The same principle is used in katas five and six when avoiding a chudan zuki and a kick (1-2; 5-6).

Phase 2: The rest of the movements are the same as in the third phase of the second kata. There follows the unbalancing movement: the defender steps in a little and destabilizes the attacker to the back and left using three points: the right wrist; the inner side of the right knee; and the chin of the opponent. The defender pushes with his left hand, right knee and right heel of the palm. Finally striking the centreline of the opponent with the elbow/arm, then withdrawing (3-4; 7-8).

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Notice

- imagine that your right foot is nailed to the floor through the ball of the foot, rotate around this point . This ensures that you do not move backwards or do other extra movements

- lean a little backwards with your upper body, avoiding the punch also slightly with your head

Atemi: shuto - matsukaze, empi - suigetsu.

Variations

The variations of kata number two apply here as well, as the final situation is the same.

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KATA 5

Attack: Right Chudan Zuki.

Defence*: Phase1:* The defender avoids the attack by rotating left using the ball of the right foot as a pivot point, as in the previous kata. At the same time he blocks the attack with left gedan barai and strikes simultaneously with his ipponken to the centreline of the opponent. Now follows another ipponken, now with the left hand. At the same time he controls the left hand of the opponent with his right hand 1-3; 6-8).

Phase 2, Unbalancing: The defender steps in and destabilizes the attacker the same way as in the previous kata. Now the left hand of the defender takes control of the elbow, not the wrist of the opponent. The movements and the feeling are similar to mawashi-uke. Finally, the defender strikes the centreline of the opponent with his elbow/ arm and withdraws 4-5; 9-10).

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Notice

- keep the blocking hand relaxed
- concentrate the power to the right side of the body and to the striking hand; remember the "in-yo" principle
- keep the power release short
- when moving to the second strike, use your front leg as a spring. During the first strike the spring contracts, then it opens and throws the right leg a little to the right, causing a fast release of the right hand strike

Atemi: ipponken - tanden, ipponken - kyosen/ tanchu, empi - suigetsu.

Variations

1. Be aware of all the possible target areas for the atemi-strikes. If the rear hand of the opponent covers the solar plexus area, hit the centreline above it or below it. Also, the area of the lower ribs is open for attack. This applies to targeting both strikes.
2. After the second strike continue with a *kaiten-nage* (11-13).

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KATA 6

Attack: Left Maegeri to the Lower Stomach.

Defence: *Phase 1:* The defender performs the nagashi-evasion as in the previous katas. At the same time he blocks the kick with his right hand. The block can be made softly or it can be made with a striking shuto to the calf area of the opponent's leg. After the block an immediate counter-attack follows to the face with uraken or shuto (1-3; 5-7).

Phase 2, Unbalancing: The technique is basically the same as in the first kata, but now the attacker has his left leg in front. Step in and place your right knee against and behind the left knee of the attacker. At the same time put your right arm over the front arm of the opponent and against his shoulder. Do the unbalancing movement with your knee and arm so that the opponent is forced to bend backwards to an awkward position. This opens his rib area where you finally strike with your left ipponken (4-5; 8-9).

Notice

- do the evasion by rotating around the ball of the front foot
- do the block and counter in one fluid movement
- notice the connection between the last movement and the kata Naihanchi

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Atemi: uraken/ shuto - uto, ipponken - ganka.

Variations

1. Notice the possibility to do ashi-barai at the end of the kata or immediately after blocking the kick (10, 13)).
2. Be aware of the possibility to grip the foot and throw (11-12).

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Katas 7-9, Gyaku-hanmi, the Defence to the Outer Side of the Attack Line

KATA 7

Attack: Left Jodan Zuki.

Defence: The defender performs the nagashi-evasion as in kata number four. At the same time he strikes with a right ipponken to the armpit of the opponent(1-2; 5-6).

Phase 2, Unbalancing: The defender grips the left wrist of the opponent, steps in, and performs a control similar to ikkyo. At the same time, he pushes the left knee of the attacker with his right knee. In the final position, the defender pushes with his right shuto the extensor muscle of the opponent, keeping him in control (3-4; 7-8).

Notice

- lean the body slightly backward during the evasion
- control the opponent using three points: the wrist; the knee; and the extensor

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Atemi: ipponken - kyoei, shuto - wanjun.

Variations

1. Break the arm of the attacker by a sudden body drop and hitting with the arm.

2. If the attacker stands up, reverse the movement to ude-garami (cf. knife defence technique) (9-12).

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KATA 8

Attack: Left Chudan Zuki.

Defence: *Phase 1:* Same as in kata number five: the defender avoids the attack by rotating left using the ball of the right foot as a pivot point. This is nagashi. At the same time, he blocks the attack with left gedan barai and strikes simultaneously with his ipponken to the armpit of the opponent. There follows another ipponken, now with the left hand to the left ribs of the attacker. The movement continues with a teisho to the chin. At the same time, he controls the left hand of the opponent with his right hand (1-4; 7-10)

Phase 2, Unbalancing: The defender steps with his right foot behind the left knee of the opponent and presses it with his knee towards the left. At the same time, he unbalances him by pushing on the chin with his left hand and on the lower back with his right hand. The kata can be finished by hitting the solar plexus of the attacker with an empi from above (5-6; 11-12).

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Notice

- the unbalancing technique is demanding. When doing it drop the weight to use the knee. The powers of the hands are directed to opposite directions
- the position of the right hand at the lower back of the opponent is crucial: if it is too high, the movement does not work. Hold your right hand against your side during the movement so that the power of the whole body comes through to your hand
- the right hand movement can also be done as a strike
- you can find a model for these movements in the kata Pinan Yondan, for example

Atemi: ipponken - kyoei/ inazuma, ipponken - ganka, teisho - mikazuki, teisho - ushiro denko.

Variations

1. In the first phase a hand breaking technique is sometimes used. The break is done by hitting the elbow of the attacker with the straight right hand at the same time as the evasion is done. The left hand of the defender grips the wrist of the attacker from above (13).

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KATA 9

Attack: Right Maegeri to the Lower Abdomen.

Defence: *Phase 1:* The evasion and block is the same as in kata number six. Hit the face of the attacker immediately after the block with uraken/ shuto. Control the left hand of the attacker with your right hand and strike left ipponken to his centreline (1-4; 7-10).

Phase 2, Unbalancing: The defender steps in and does the unbalancing technique as in kata number five. The left hand takes control of the elbow. The defender finishes the technique with hitting the centreline with his elbow/ arm and withdraws (5-6; 11).

Notice

- perform the block and counter attack as one movement
- the left hand punch follows immediately after the right hand strike
- step in and unbalance the attacker using three points: the knee; the elbow; and the chin

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Atemi: uraken/ shuto - uto, ipponken - suigetsu, empi - suigetsu.

Variations

1. During the evasion you can strike with an ipponken to the inner side of the thigh of the opponent as in kihon kumite number eight. Continue at once with uraken to the face (12).

2. You can do a series of atemis with your right hand. For example, nuki-te, shuto and uraken, one after another (13-15).

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Katas 10-12, Gyaku-hanmi, the Defence to the Inner Side of the Attack Line

KATA 10

Attack: Left Jodan Zuki.

Defence: *Phase 1:* the same as in kata number one: The defender avoids the attack by moving back and left by stepping with his left foot and letting the right foot follow. At the same time, he turns his body to the right. The punch is blocked by the back of his right hand and at the same time he punches with his ipponken to the chin of the attacker(1-2; 5-6).

Phase 2: The defender strikes the neck of the attacker with a shuto, steps with his right foot outside of the attackers left foot and unbalances him to the back and right, twisting his body to the left. The unbalancing is done from the chin, wrist, and behind the knee (3-4; 7-8).

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Notice

- notice the connection to kihon kumite number six
- you can do several atemi strikes with your left hand

Atemi: uraken - mikazuki, shuto - matsukaze.

Variations

1. Perform the first movement as in kihon kumite number one, continue with the right shuto and move to the phase 2 (9-10).

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KATA 11

Attack: Left Chudan Zuki

Defence: *Phase 1*, as in kata number two, the defender avoids the attack by moving back and left by stepping with his left foot and letting the right foot follow. At the same time, he turns his body to the right. He blocks the punch at the same time with a right gedan barai and punches to the centreline with his left ipponken (1-2; 5-6).

Phase 2: The defender continues with a left teisho to the chin of the attacker from below; then he steps outside of the left leg of the attacker and unbalances him back and to the right by twisting his own body to the left. . The unbalancing is done from the chin, the elbow, and behind the knee (3-4; 7-8).

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Notice

- there is the possibility of several atemis being done with the left hand. For example, you can add a shuto before unbalancing the attacker

Atemi: ipponken - suigetsu, teisho - mikazuki.

Variations

1. Perform a kaiten-nage after entering (9-12).

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KATA 12

Attack: Maegeri to the Lower Abdomen.

Defence: *Phase 1,* as in kata number 3. The defender withdraws his left foot and then right foot obliquely to the back and left, at the same time twisting his body to the left. He blocks the kick with his right hand. The block can be made with a relaxed hand in the direction of the kick or it can be a shuto strike to the calf of the attacker. The defender steps in with his right foot and at the same time strikes with uraken /shuto to the temple of the opponent (1-3: 6-8).

Phase 2: Unbalancing: The defender slides in, puts his right knee against the front knee of the opponent and unbalances him to the back and left. The movement is done at the chin, the knee, and the lower back (4-5; 9).

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Notice

- don't lose the unity of your body when avoiding the kick; control your centreline and don't let it break at the lower back
- when doing the unbalancing movement with your knee, rotate your leg out using the heel as a pivot point and let the leg rotate from the hip. Don't bend your knee sideways
- hand movements can be done as strikes to the chin and lower back

Atemi: uraken/ shuto - kasumi, shuto - ushiro denko, teisho - mikazuki.

Variations

1. After the uraken, step forward with your left foot, twist to the right, and strike the lower ribs of the attacker with your left ipponken. Then do the unbalancing from behind at the chin, shoulder, and knee (10-11).

II THE SIMULTANOUS TIMING, SEN SEN NO SENTE KATAS 12–24

The twelve katas you have just learned are repeated in this set, but now the timing changes to simultaneous, which means a faster kata. In the previous set the defender is always a little late: he is forced to react to the attack of the opponent and avoid the attack obliquely back in relation to the attack line. In this set the defender does not take any steps backwards. Every evasion is done stepping in toward the opponent, at the same time avoiding the attack. The issue is about a very fast and aggressive response to the attack of the opponent. It is easier to remember the katas if you practise one kata at a time with different timings.

Katas 13-15, Aihanmi, the Defence to the Outer Side of the Attack Line

KATA 13

Attack: Right Jodan Zuki.

Defence: *Phase 1:* The evasion is directed towards the opponent and to the left of the line of attack. The defender tries to sense the movement of the attacker and initiate his own movement simultaneously with the opponent's movement.

Both the evasion and entering (irimi) happen at the same time. A simultaneous counterattack is connected to the movement. This is a punch that blocks the attacking hand on its way to the target. This means that the evasion, entering, blocking, and counterattacking are all done at the same time.

The evasions of this set of katas all move towards the opponent and either to the inside or to the outside of the line of attack. In a way, the attack line of the opponent is cat toward him by the defender simultaneously stepping inside or outside of the attack line. In kata 13 this cut is done

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to the outside of the attack line. The defender performs a straight punch simultaneously guiding the arm of the attacker to the side with his own arm (1-2; 5-6).

Phase 2: The defender takes a step to the left with his left leg, twists his body to the right, and strikes with a left urazuki to the lower ribs of the opponent (3, 7).

Phase 3: Unbalancing: The defender steps further behind the attacker with his left foot and unbalances him towards the back by pulling at the chin and pushing at the shoulder and knee (4, 8).

Notice

- the simultaneous timing requires intense concentration while keeping the mind open and empty. This attitude is extensively dealt with in the literature of budo
- the defender can also do the counter attack with a teisho. Then the block is done with the back of the hand (10-11)
- during the urazuki counter the defender controls the right hand of the opponent with his own right hand
- the defender puts his left hand on the right shoulder of the attacker, pulling with it, and using his arm as a cushion for his left hand

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Atemi: seiken/ teisho - mikazuki, uraken - inazuma.

Variations

1. The first counter attack can be done with a right straight punch under the arm of the attacker to his lower ribs (9). The defender blocks and controls the attacking arm with his left palm. The evasion movement remains the same.

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KATA 14

Attack: Right Chudan Zuki.

Defence, *phase 1:* The evasion is the same as in kata 13. The defender slides obliquely towards and to the left of the opponent. At the same time, he blocks the punch with his left palm, from left to right, and strikes with an ipponken over the attacking arm and to a point under the chest muscle of the attacker (1-2;6-7).

Phase 2: Unbalancing: The defender continues with a teisho to the chin of the attacker and does the unbalancing movement as in kata 12. He slides forward and bends the attacker backwards by pushing at the chin while blocking the knee and lower back. He finishes with an empi to the centre-line of the opponent 3-5; 8-9).

Notice

- there is a connection between these movements and Pinan Yondan
- the unbalancing movements can be done as strikes to the chin and lower back

Atemi: ipponken - ganka, teisho - mikazuki, shuto - ushiro denko, empi - suigetsu.

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KATA 15

Attack: Left Maegeri to the Lower Abdomen.
Defence: The defender avoids the attack and does a fast series of counter attacks with his right hand. This is typical Wado. This type of combination of techniques requires the ability to relax and the fast release of power.
Phase 1: The defender steps in towards the attacker and slightly to the left, at the same time twisting his body to the left. He ends with his right side pointing towards the attacker. At the same time, he strikes with his right uraken to the inner side of the knee of the attacking leg. The movement continues as an ipponken to the centreline, and finally as a teisho to the chin. There is the same feeling in the evasion movement as in the previous kata, but now the rotation

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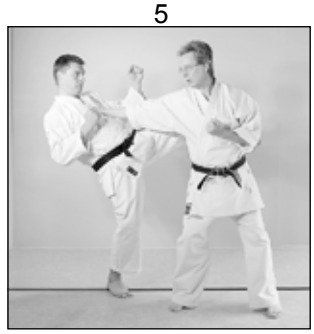
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movement to the left is bigger, the hip movement is bigger, and the side is turned more towards the opponent (1-4; 1-4).

Phase 2: Unbalancing: The defender slides in and does the same unbalancing movement as in kata 3, destabilizing the attacker at the shoulder and the knee. Finally, he strikes an ipponken with his left hand to the centreline of the attacker and leaves his left hand to control the right hand of the opponent (5-6; 5-7).

Notice

- you can add another punch to the inside of the thigh of the attacking leg

Atemi: uraken - kekkai, ipponken - tanden, teisho - mikazuki, ipponken - suigetsu.

Variations

1. Step in and perform right teisho to the chest or chin of the opponent. Continue with an ipponken to the centreline. The opponent returns his kicking leg to its original position (8).

2. Do as in kihon kumite 3: step in and strike a simultaneous left ipponken to the inner side of the knee of the opponent and right ipponken to the centreline. The opponent lowers his kicking leg before completing the kick (9).

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Katat 16–18, ai-hanmi, puolustus hyökkäyslinjan sisäpuolelle

KATA 16

This kata is almost technically identical to kata number 4. Only the timing at the first movement is different. This makes the evasion a little different, too.

Attack: Right Jodan Zuki.

Defence: *Phase 1:* The defender performs nagashi evasion as in kata 4, but now he steps slightly forward before twisting his body to the left. In practise the step is usually directed forward and slightly right. The feeling of the movement is that you step straight into the attack. At the same time, the defender blocks the punch with the back of his left hand and strikes a right shuto to the neck of the opponent. The movement of the left hand is different, too. Now grip the wrist of the opponent at the same time as you block. The movement is a kake-uke: the back of the hand touches the attacking hand first and turns suddenly gripping the wrist.

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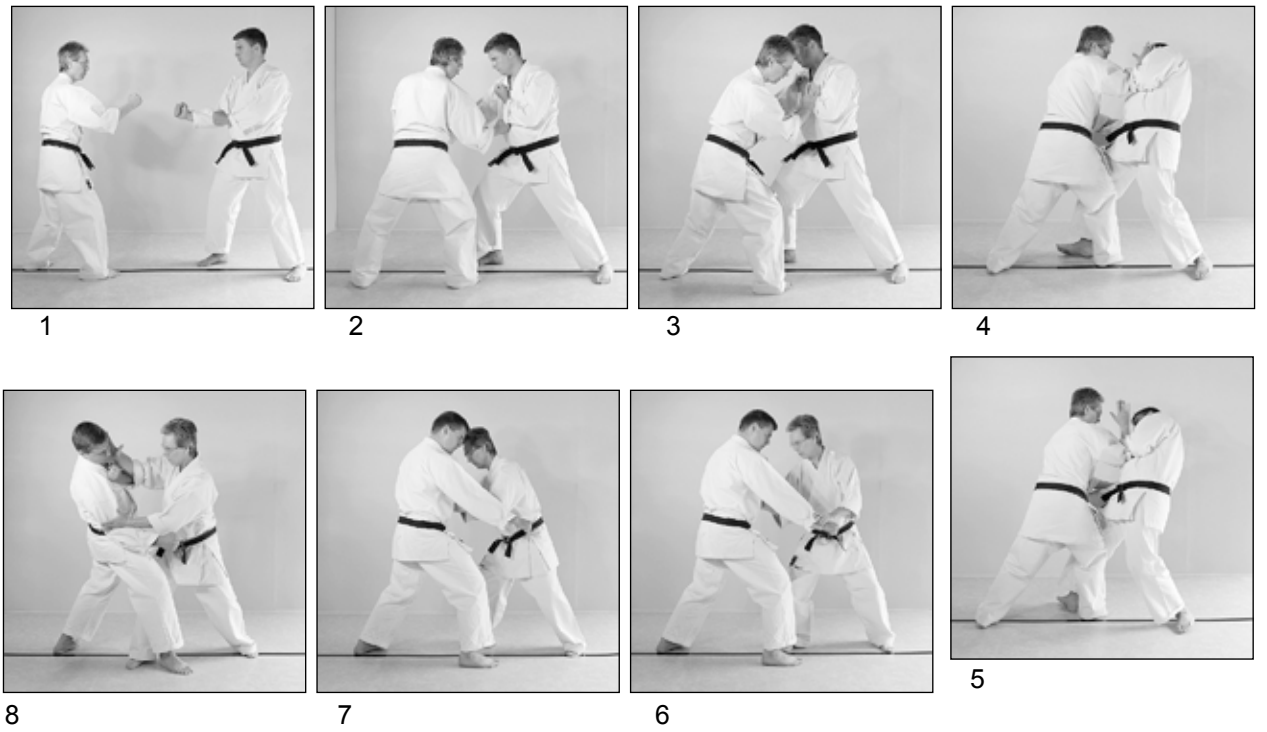
When the right shuto reaches its target, the left hand has already taken its grip (1-2; 5-6).

Phase 2: Unbalancing: The defender steps in a little and destabilizes the attacker to the back and left using three points: the right wrist; the inner side of the right knee; and the chin of the opponent. The defender pushes these points with his left hand, right knee, and right heel of the palm. Finally, he strikes the centreline of the opponent with his elbow/arm and withdraws (3-4; 7-8).

Atemi: shuto - matsukaze, empi - suigetsu.

Variations

1. Step straight in and block the punch to the left with your right palm. Change the hands (hente), crossing the left hand under the right, and take hold of the opponents wrist with your left hand. Finish the evasion movement by striking a shuto to the neck of the opponent (9-11). Continue with the kuzushi.



KATA 17

Attack: Right Chudan Zuki.

Defence: *Phase 1:* The defender avoids the attack by taking a short step towards the opponent, rotating left using the ball of the right foot as a pivot point as in the previous kata. At the same time he blocks the attack with left gedan barai and strikes simultaneously with his ipponken to the centreline of the opponent. As an alternative, the left hand can do a kake-uke as in the previous kata. There follows another ipponken, now with the left hand. At the same time, he controls the left hand of the opponent with his right hand (1-3; 6-7).

Phase 2: Unbalancing: The defender steps in and destabilizes the attacker the same way as in kata number 5. Finally, the defender strikes the centreline of the opponent with his elbow/arm and withdrawsti (4-5; 8).

Atemi: ipponken - tanden, ipponken - kyosen/ tanchu, empi - suigetsu.

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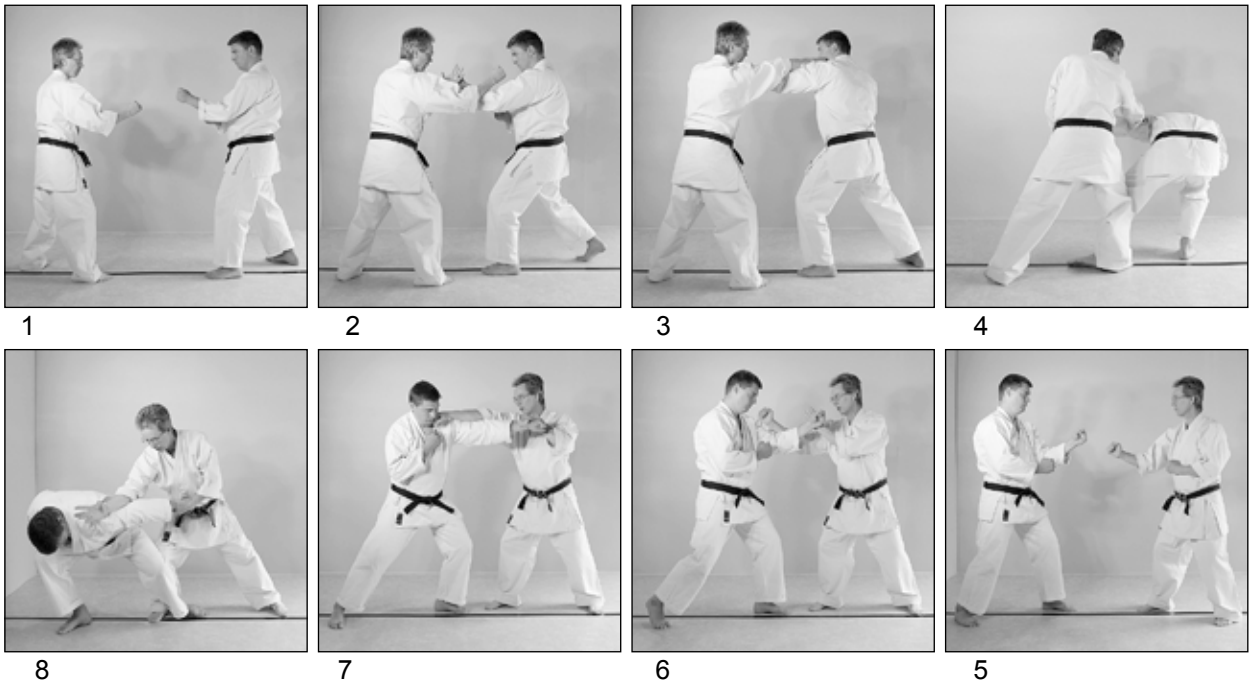
KATA 18

Attack: Maegeri to the Lower Abdomen. Because the defender moves towards the opponent and stops the kick, the attacker withdraws the leg and lowers it to the original position. This means, also, that the unbalancing phase is omitted.

Defence: The defender does the same nagashi evasion as in katas 16 and 17, adding a short step forward. Now the step is forward and a little to the right. At the same time the defender strikes a straight shuto to the left collar bone of the opponent. This kind of shuto is like a straight punch, only the striking surface is different. The left hand drops down to block the kick as in kihon kumite 7. The alternative is to strike a horizontal shuto to the bridge of the nose. The counter continues as a left ipponken to the ribs of the opponent. Because the attacker draws his foot back, there is no unbalancing movement (1-3; 4-6).

Atemi: shuto - murasame/ uto, ipponken - ganka.



Katas 19-21, Gyakuhanmi, the Defence to the Outer Side of the Attack Line

KATA 19

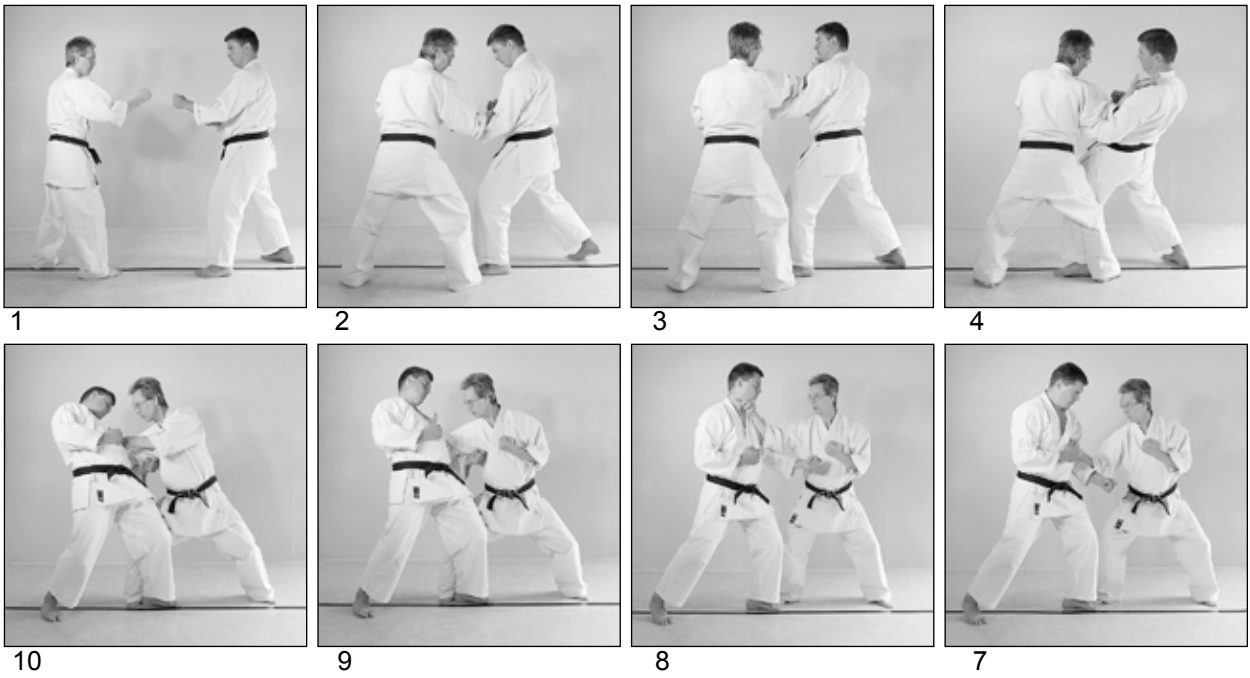
For European Wado practitioners this technique is familiar from the Jodan series of Sanbon Kumite created by Tatsuo Suzuki.

Attack: Left Jodan Zuki.

Defence: *Phase 1:* The defender steps in and does a nagashi evasion as in kata 16. At the same time, he strikes right jodan zuki/teisho to the face of the opponent, letting his hand ride on top of the attacking arm. Simultaneously grab the opponent's left wrist with left kake-uke (1-3; 5-7).

Phase 2: Unbalancing: The defender steps in and makes an arm control reminiscent of ikkyo: with the side of his arm he pushes behind the elbow so that the opponent bends forwards. Then the defender moves his shuto to the extender muscle of the opponent and presses it down, simultaneously pushing the opponent's knee with his own knee (4;8).

Atemi: seiken - mikazuki, shuto - hijizume, wanjun.



KATA 20

Attack: Left Chudan Zuki.

Defence: *Phase 1:* The defender takes a short step toward the opponent and performs the nagashi evasion as in the previous kata. At the same time, he strikes a right ipponken to the chest of the opponent over the attacking arm so that the strike stops the movement of the arm. The counter attack continues as a haito upwards to the chin or neck of the attacker (1-3; 6-8).

Phase 2: Unbalancing: The movement is the same as in kata 6. Step in and place your right knee against and behind the left knee of the attacker. At the same time put your right arm over the front arm of the opponent and against his shoulder. Do the unbalancing movement with your knee and arm so that the opponent is forced to bend backwards to an awkward position. This opens his rib area where you finally strike with your left ipponken (4-5; 9-10).

Atemi: ipponken - ganka, haito - mikazuki, ipponken - ganka.

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KATA 21

Attack: Maegeri to the Lower Abdomen. Because the defender stops the attack in the middle of its execution, the opponent's foot is returned without completing the kick.

Defence: The defender takes a short step in and does a nagashi evasion as in kata 18. At the same time, he strikes with a right teisho to the chest/chin of the attacker. In practise it is easier to direct the hit to the chest where it easily stops the forward movement of the opponent. The defender continues with an ipponken to the centreline of the attacker (1-3; 4-6).

Atemi: teisho - mikazuki, ipponken - suigetsu.

Variation

1. The defender does a nagashi and hits with a right ipponken to the thigh of the opponent, as in kihon kumite 8. The defender continues as in kata 9: right ipponken and kuzushi. (See kata 9, variation 1.)

Be aware of the possibility of different sets of hits: a) after the ipponken to the thigh, do a haito upwards to the neck and finish with left ipponken; b) as in kihon kumite 8, after the ipponken, do an empi, then haito to the neck, then kuzushi.

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Katas 22-24, Gyakuhanmi, the Defence to the Inner Side of the Attack Line

KATA 22

This kata is also familiar from Tatsuo Suzuki's Jodan series of Sanbon Kumite.

Attack: Left Jodan Zuki.

Defence: *Phase 1:* The defender steps forward and left as in kata 13. At the same time, he makes a punch to the face of the opponent so that the punch blocks the attack on its way. He continues with uraken to the temple or to the bridge of nose of the opponent (1-3; 6-9).

Phase 2: Unbalancing: The defender steps further in and destabilizes the opponent with his right knee on the inside of the opponent's left knee, and with his right hand at the elbow of the attacker's left arm. At the same time, he performs a left ipponken to the centreline of the opponent (4-5; 10-11).

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Notice

- the defender can do several kinds of atemi series with both of his hands. For example: after the first punch, the right hand changes into a haito to the neck; continues as an uraken to the bridge of the nose; and drops to the joint of the elbow for the kuzushi. This kind of series of three fast techniques with one hand is typical Wado. It requires relaxation and whip like use of power.

Atemi: seiken - mikazuki, uraken - uto/ kasumi, ipponken - suigetsu.

Variation

1. Step you right leg outside of the opponent's knee to unbalance him.

KATA 23

Attack: Left Chudan Zuki.

Defence: *Phase 1:* The evasion and counter attack is done at the same time, just as in kata 14. The defender slides in and to the left of the line of attack. He blocks the attack with his left palm, from left to right, and hits with his own ipponken to the centreline of the opponent. He continues at once with a teisho to the chin (1-3; 7-9).

Phase 2: Unbalancing: The defender steps further in and destabilizes the opponent with his right arm at the shoulder and right knee at the left knee of the opponent. Finally, he strikes a left ipponken to the centreline of the attacker (4-6; 10-12).

Atemi: ipponken/ seiken - suigetsu, teisho - mikazuki, ipponken - suigetsu.

Variation

1. Step you right leg outside of the opponent's knee to unbalance him.

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KATA 24

Attack: Maegeri to the Lower Abdomen. Because the defender stops the attack at the beginning of the technique, the foot is returned without completing the kick.

Defence: The defender steps straight into the kick and slightly to the left. The technique is basically the same as in kihon kumite 3. The defender hits the outside of the thigh/knee of the attacker with his left ipponken and the lower ribs/centreline with his right ipponken. In practise, the left hand movement should be done with the palm instead, in order not to damage the knee of the opponent (1-4).

Atemi: ipponken - fukuto, ipponken - denko/ suigetsu.

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III PRE-EMPTIVE TIMING, SENTE KATAT 25–36

This set of katas repeat, again, the 12 kata combinations, but now the timing is even faster. The defender starts his counter attack as soon as he senses the intention of an attack. The attacker may get around to move a little, or not at all. The issue is about sente, the pre-emptive timing: taking the initiative when the intention of the attack has been detected. This timing is very difficult and in practise it is a good idea to train it together with simultaneous timing. You strive to sense the start-up moment of the attack and do your own counter immediately. In this case the situation may develop in two directions: if the attacker has time to start his attack, sen sen no sente kata is borne; if the opponent does not have time to start his movement, sente kata is borne. You can also practise the timings of the same kata alternately: sen sen no sente – sente – sen sen no sente – sente etc.

We are talking about a very subtle and demanding practise here, which develops the timing ability of the practitioner to the extreme. In principle, the sente set repeats the sen sen no sente set, only the timing of the first movement changes so that the opponent has no time to really start his attack. That's why the first element of the kata changes a bit. The rest of the kata remains the same.

Katas 25-27, Aihanmi, the Defence to the Outer Side of the Attack Line

KATA 25

Attack: Right Jodan Zuki. The intention of the attacker is jodan zuki, but the punch has no time to depart because the defender already steps in.

Defence: *Phase 1:* Step in forward and left as in kata 13. At the same time perform an uraken to the temple of the opponent. An alternative is a straight punch to the chin (1-2; 5-6).

Phase 2: Continue as in kata 13 (3-4; 7-8).

Atemi: uraken - kasumi, ipponken - inazuma.

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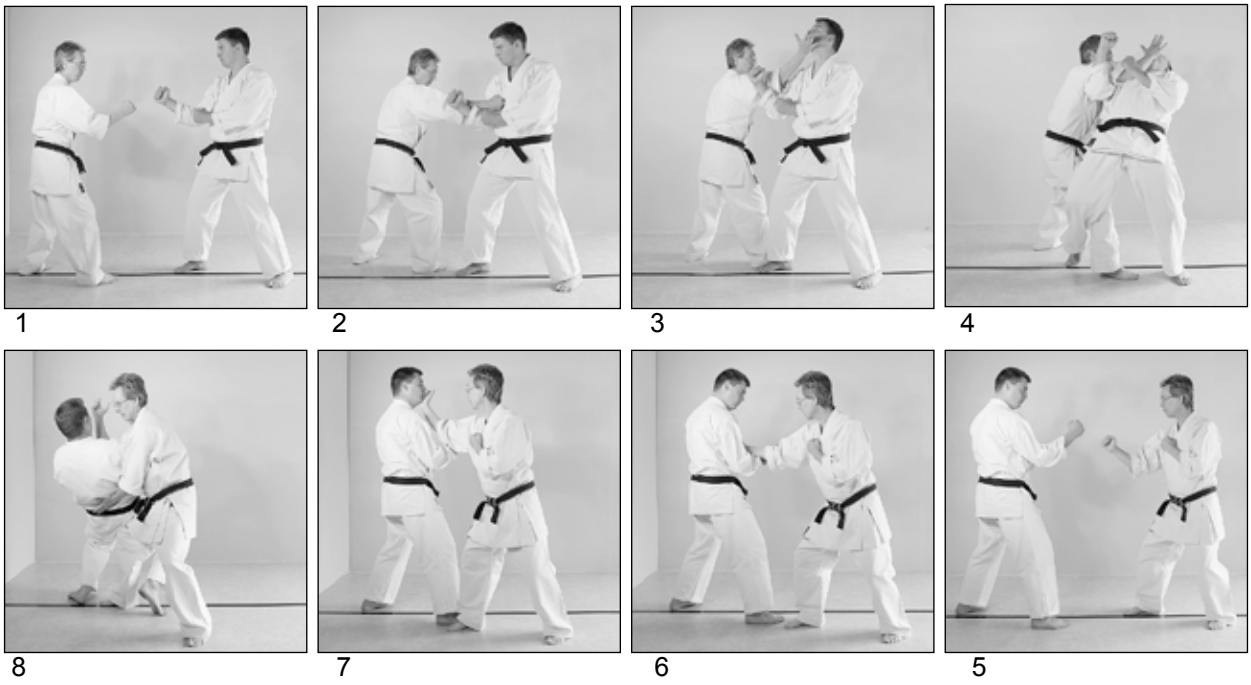
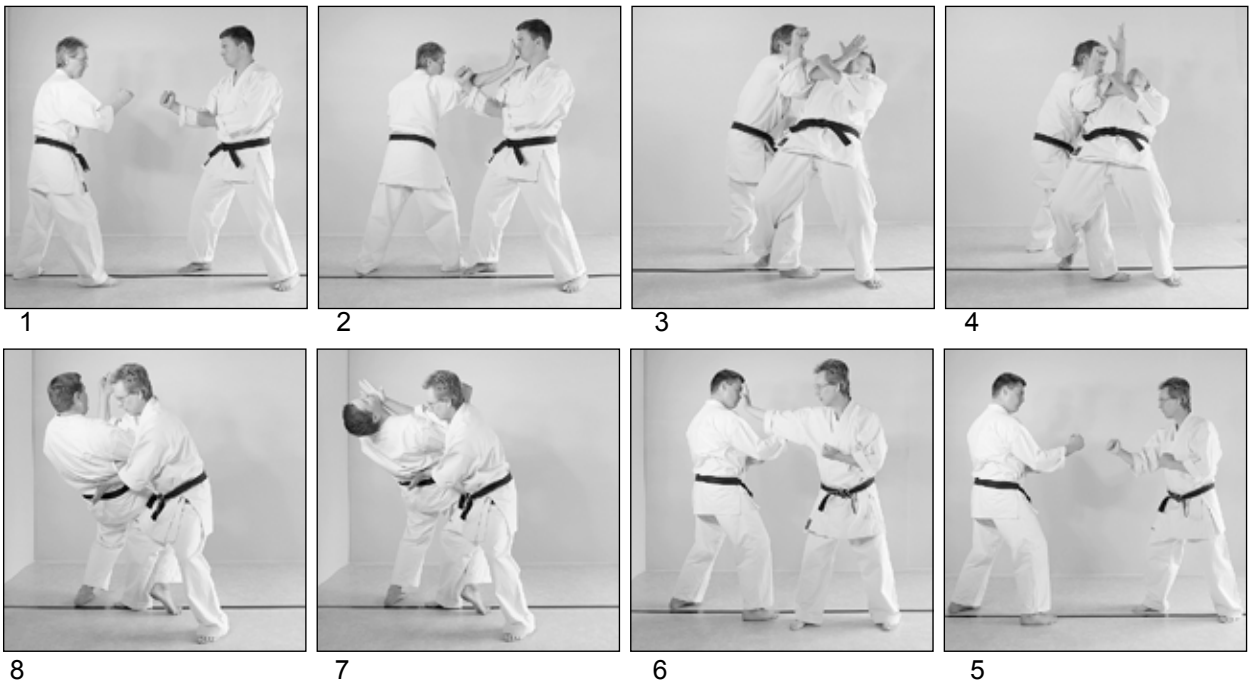


KATA 26

Attack: Right Chudan Zuki.

Defence: *Phase 1:* Step in forward and left as in kata 14. At the same time strike with a right ipponken to the chest of the opponent passing over his front hand. Continue with a teisho to the chin (1-3; 5-7).
Phase 2: Continue as in kata 14 (4;8).

Atemi: ipponken - ganka, teisho - mikazuki, shuto - ushiro denko.



KATA 27

Attack: Maegeri.

Defence: *Phase 1:* Look at the first variation of kata 15: step in forward and left passing the front leg of the opponent and twist your body to the left. At the same time strike him with a teisho to the chin/chest (1-2; 5-6).
Phase 2: Continue as in the previous kata: unbalance him at his chin, knee and lower back and finish with an elbow strike (3-4; 7-8).

Atemi: teisho - mikazuki, shuto - ushiro denko.

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Katas 28-30, Aihanmi, the Defence to the Inner Side of the Attack Line

KATA 28

Attack: Right Jodan Zuki.

Defence: *Phase 1:* Step straight in towards the opponent, do nagashi by twisting your body to the left. At the same time grip the wrist of the attacker with your left hand (kake-uke) and strike with a right shuto to his neck (1-2; 4-5).

Phase 2: Continue with unbalancing him as in katas 4 and 16 (3; 6-7).

Atemi: shuto - matsukaze, empi - suigetsu.

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KATA 29

Attack: Right Chudan Zuki.

Defence: *Phase 1:* This kata is identical to kata 17, in the same way as the previous kata was with kata 16. Step straight in, do a nagashi evasion, grip the front wrist of the opponent and at the same time strike with a right ipponken to his centreline (1-2; 5-7).

Phase 2: Continue with the left strike and unbalancing as in katas 5 and 17 (3-4; 8-9).

Atemi: ipponken - tanden, ipponken - kyosen/ tanchu, empi - suigetsu.

KATA 30

Attack: Maegeri.

Defence: *Phase 1:* Step in as in kata 18 and do the nagashi evasion. At the same time, strike with a shuto to the collar bone or neck, or a teisho to the chin of the opponent (1-2; 6-7).

Phase 2: Step in and continue with a strike and unbalancing as in kata 9 (3-5; 8-10).

Atemi: shuto - murasame, ipponken - suigetsu, empi - suigetsu.

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Katas 31-33, Gyakuhanmi, the Defence to the Outer Side of the Attack Line

KATA 31

Attack: Left Jodan Zuki.

Defence: *Phase 1:* This kata is identical with kata 19. Because the timing is faster, the defender takes hold of the front hand of the opponent before he has had time to initiate his movement. At the same time, the defender performs the nagashi evasion and strikes a right straight punch/teisho to the face of the opponent (1-2; 4-5; 3;6).

Phase 2: Continue as in katas 7 and 19.

Atemi: seiken/ teisho - mikazuki, empi - hijizume, shuto - wanjun.

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KATA 32

Attack: Left Chudan Zuki.

Defence: *Phase 1:* This kata is identical with kata 20. Because of the faster timing, the punch of the opponent has no time to depart before the defender already steps in and strikes with his right ipponken over the front hand of the opponent to his chest ((1-2; 6-7).

Phase 2: Continue as in the kata 20 with haito to the chin and unbalancing (3-5; 8-11).

Atemi: ipponken - ganka, haito - mikazuki, ipponken - ganka.

5

6

1

1

2

2

3

3

4

4

KATA 33

Attack: Maegeri.

Defence: *Phase 1:* The beginning of the kata is similar to kata 31. The defender steps in with nagashi and punches a right zuki/teisho to the face of the opponent (1-2).
Phase 2: Continue as in katas 20 and 32 (3-4).

Atemi: seiken/ teisho - mikazuki, ipponken - ganka.

1

2

3

4

8

7

6

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9

Katas 34-36, Gyakuhanmi, the Defence to the Inner side of the Attack Line

KATA 34

Attack: Left Jodan Zuki.

Defence: *Phase 1:* In principle the kata is the same as kata 22. The timing being faster, the defender steps straight in and left, and punches a right zuki to the face of the opponent. Now the counter attack does not block the coming punch because the punch does not occur (1-2; 5-6).

Phase 2: Continue as in the kata 22. (3-4; 7-9)

Atemi: seiken - mikazuki, uraken - uto/ kasumi, ipponken - suigetsu.

1

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KATA 35

Attack: Left Chudan Zuki.

Defence: *Phase 1:* The kata is the same as kata 23. The timing being faster, there is no need to block the attacking hand, thus the defender steps straight in and strikes with his right hand(1-2; 5-7). The first puch can be an uraken to the wrists, too.

Phase 2: Continue as in the kata 23 (3-4; 8-10).

Atemi: ipponken/ seiken - suigetsu, teisho - mikazuki, ipponken - suigetsu.

1

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3

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9

KATA 36

Attack: Maegeri.

Defence: *Phase 1:* The defender steps in forward and left, and strikes with a right teisho to the chin/chest of the opponent. Immediately he turns his fist to an uraken to the bridge of the nose (1-2; 5-6). *Phase 2:* Continue with unbalancing as in the kata 3 (3-4; 7-9).

Atemi: teisho - mikazuki, urkaen - uto, ipponken - suigetsu.

Chapter 4

THE ELEMENTS OF KUMITE GATAS AND WADO-RYU AS A STYLE

The Three Elements of Kumite Gata

In what follows I'll present a technical analysis of kumite gata number 1. In this kumite gata the attack is jodan zuki and the defender moves to the outside of the attack line, and the timing is go sen no te. My point is that the first kumite gata represents well enough the structure of the other katas in the whole kumite gata series in the first level of timing: go sen no te, numbers 1 to 12. In analysing the first kumite gata I hope to be able to show how Wado-ryu as a style is constructed.

To start with I'll introduce you to the **concept of a structural element** as a basic component of kumite gata. The first kumite gata is composed of three consecutive structural elements. See photos 1, 2, and 3.

The concept of an element does not mean a technique. An element can be composed of many techniques and principles of body movement. This is essential for Wado-ryu as a style. It is not composed of techniques; it is rather composed of the elements that kumite gatas show to us. If you have a chance to look at the movements of the present grandmaster of Wado-ryu, you can see these elements flowing and changing. Including these elements with your own way of moving, you can create the special "Wado flavour". Kumite gata teaches you all these elements and their variations. Without these elements there is no Wado

The first and very basic element of Wado is represented by the first movement in kumite gata (photo 1). It is the most important because it shows how we respond to an attack. It is our initial response. In kumite gata this

1–3. Three basic elements of kumite gatas.

fist response is analysed in 12 situations and three timings. This first basic element contains, at once, the very basic concepts of Wado: ten-i, ten-tai, ten-gi; and nagasu, inasu, and noru. These concepts help to explain how the body shift (taisabaki) is done, and how the avoiding or controlling of the attack is connected to a simultaneous counter attack, etc. I already explained these concepts in chapter one. Here it suffices to say that they are the most basic concepts describing the characteristic features of this Wado-element.

Photo 2 represents the second element of kumite gata 1. It represents stepping in, irimi, and entering close to the body of the opponent so that further atemi can be executed. An element like this can be done in several ways, the kumite gata shows only one possibility. Here we have stepping in, control with the left hand and right knee, and simultaneous right ipponken as atemi.

Photo 3 shows the third element which is basically an attack to unbalance the opponent. The technique is based on old jujutsu. You break the balance of the opponent by attacking against several points which are crucial to maintaining posture and balance. Unbalancing the opponent prevents him from continuing his attack; it opens atemi points for counter attack; and by destabilizing him he can easily be thrown to the ground if wanted. I'll go to the element of kuzushi in detail in the next chapter.

These three basic elements of kumite gata represent the three basic maai, or distances, and intervals, too. By interval in this connection I mean the timing within the kata; the "inner timing" of the kata; the rhythm of the kata.

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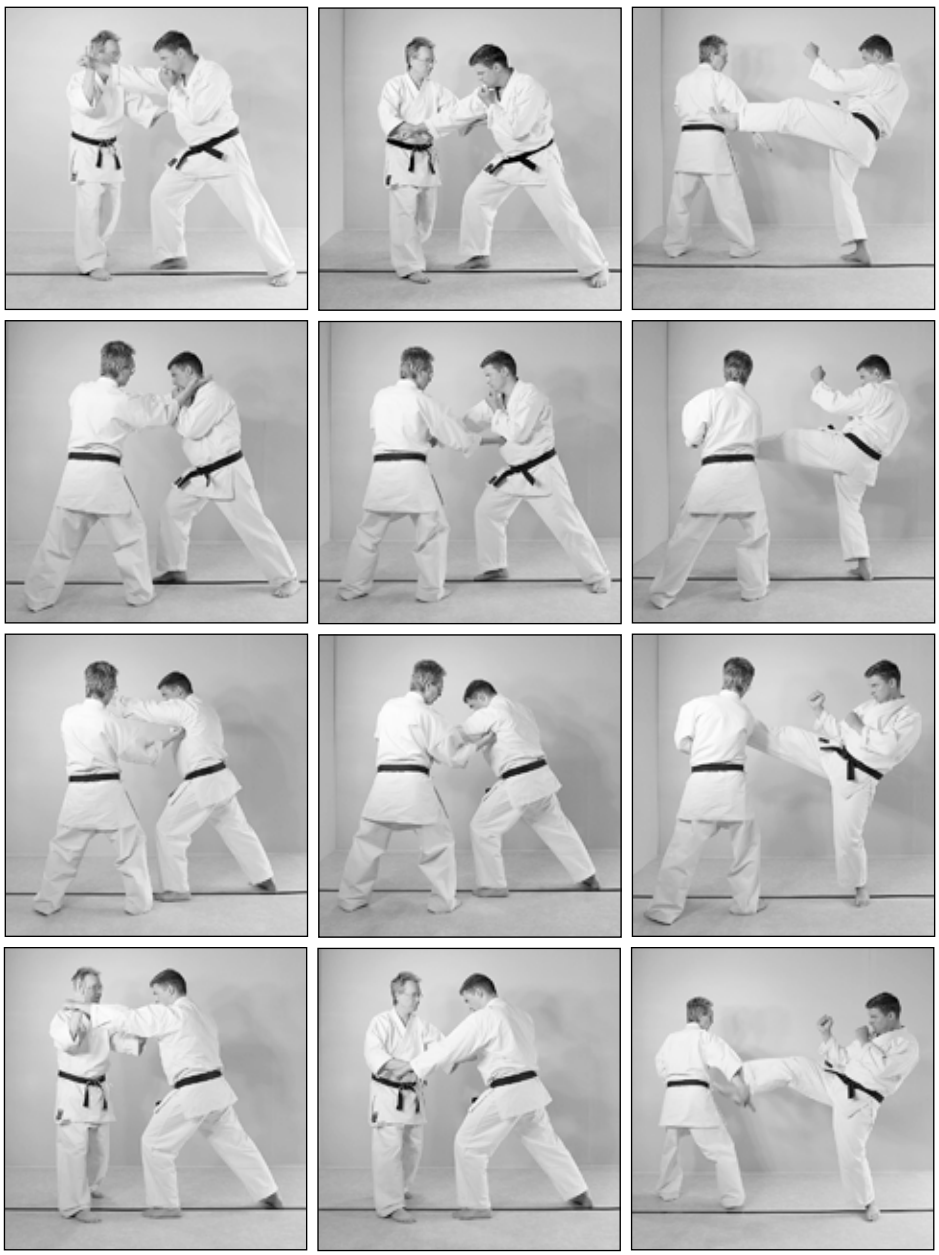
Variations of the elements

First element

Because the first element of the kumite kata represents the first response to the attack, it is most important. The first twelve kumite gatas show this element and how it is done in the twelve basic situations in go sen no te timing. In photos 4-15 you can see this element in the 12 basic situations already described in the previous chapter in katas 1-12.

In the next level of kumite gatas (no 13 - 24) the timing is sen sen no sente and this initial element is done differently because of the difference in timing. In sen sen no sente series there is an irimi, entering move, included. This requires changes in other aspects of the first element, too. The third set, katas 25-36, repeat the same situations again but now with the fastest timing possible, the pre-emptive, or sente, timing.

When talking about the variations of techniques or elements in Japanese bujutsu, there are two concepts that are used. Namely, the concepts of omote and ura. What the standard kumite gata shows is its ”omote” side. Omote means the obvious; that which can be seen; outside. The photos 13-24 show this omote side of the first element of the first twelve kumite gatas. In Japanese bujutsu there is always the ”ura” side, too. Ura means reverse side; backside; inside; and usually refers to variations of the omote. There are always fighting situations where the omote does not work and the practitioner has to change his technique to the ura side. The idea is about adapting with the ever changing situations and changing techniques accordingly. Ura techniques and principles are variations that are complementary to the omote side.



4–15. The first element at go sen no te -timing.

16–18.

I'll explain this using as an example the first element of kumite gata 1. There are a number of variations inside this element depending on which hand does the controlling and which one the attacking movement. At least four variations naturally follow:

1. The basic or omote side, which is seen in photo 1. There, the front hand is doing the parry, the back hand is doing the attack.
2. The role of the hands can be changed: we can do a hente. So in the variation or ura side of this, the back hand is doing the parry and the front hand is attacking (photo 16).
3. The third possibility is that the front hand is doing the parrying as in kihon kumites (photo 17). Then you can proceed straight to element 2 as in photo 2. It means that your front hand both blocks and attacks.
4. And the fourth obvious possibility is the opposite: the back hand is doing the parry, as in kihon kumite 4 (photo 18). If you now go to the second element (photo 2) you are actually doing a variation of kihon kumite 4.

The same idea about how to figure out the variations applies to all twelve basic responses, but this task I'll leave to you.

This playing with the variations is very interesting. Now if we think that each of the three elements has variations in the same way I demonstrated above with the first element, we get a very interesting result. Let's look at the case that each of the elements can be done in, let's say, four different ways (representing variations: "ura" side). Now if we put these elements together with a kumite gata sequence, we get 4x4x4 possible kumite ga-

19–21.

tas: altogether, 64. And now I am talking about the variations of the first kumite gata out of 36!! I hope you understand the point: this is the way a style is born. If you master the basic elements of kumite gata and some of the variations, the possibilities are endless.

To open up the idea for you, I'll give you four variations to the second and third elements, too.

Then you can at once begin to practise the 64 variations of the first kumite gata!

Second element

1. The basic or omote movement is shown in photo 2.

2. The first variation could be a haito to the groin (photo 19).

3. The second variation could be adding a second atemi to phase one (photo 2). Let's do it as a haito to the side of the neck (photo 20). If you add one more atemi to this, which could be uraken under the nose, you'll get the feeling of the "fine actions" of Ohtsuka's Wado-ryu. Here we have three fast atemis done with the right hand.

4. Of course the atemi can be a kick, too. The third variation could be right mawashigeri to the lower abdomen (photo 21).

22–24.

Third element

The third element is kuzushi: unbalancing the opponent. Here we have four ways of doing it. I hope you remember that four ways is just an example, there may be more.

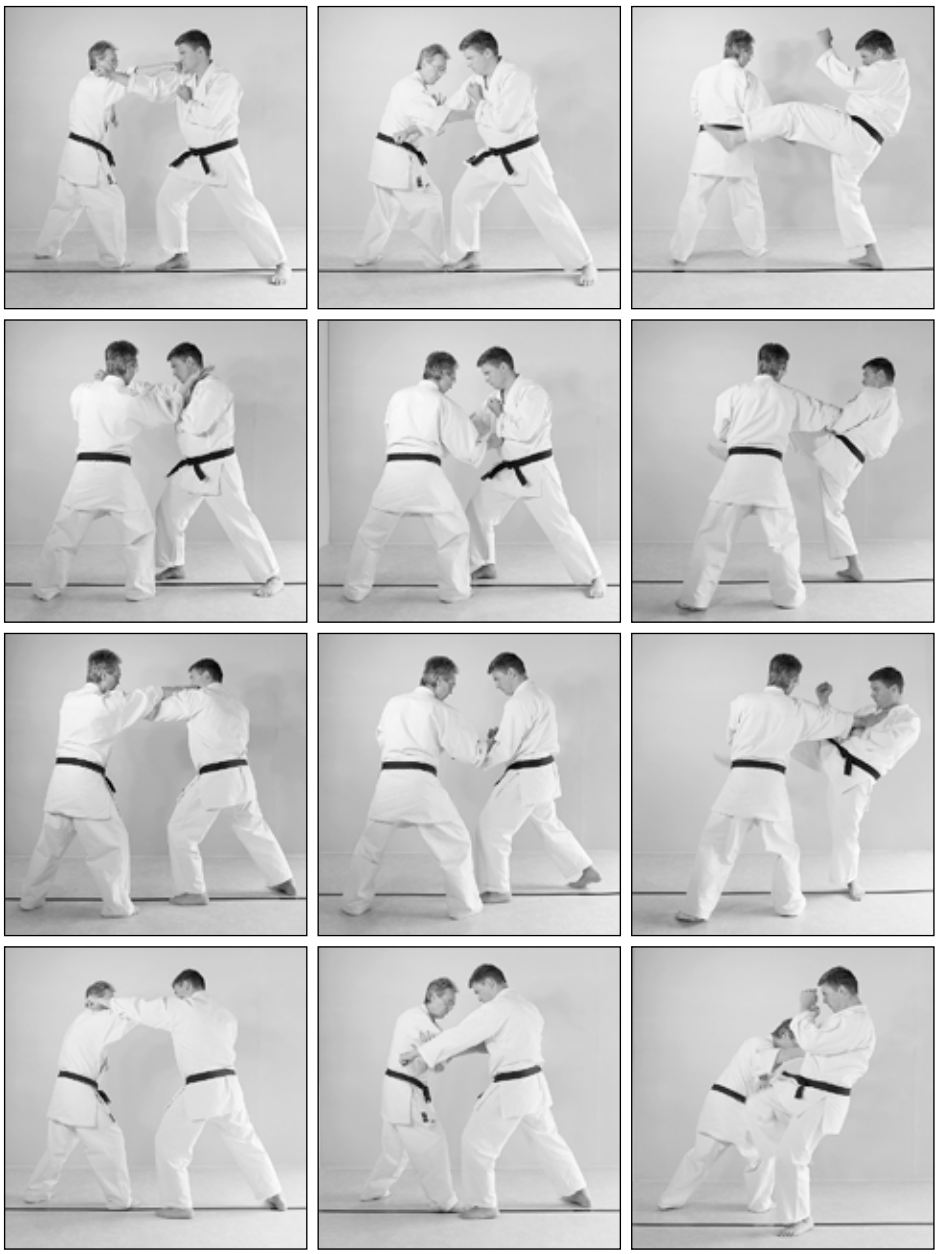
1. The first one is shown in kumite gata 1 (photo 3). Don't forget the knee action.
2. Let's add a sweep as in Naihanchi to reinforce the unbalancing action (photo 22). I hope you see how the whole element is connected to Naihanchi. Actually, you should see how all three basic elements are connected to this kata!
3. We can do an irimi-nage with teisho on the jaw (photo 23).
4. We can do it also by pressing at the shoulder (photo 24).

Now you have all you need to combine these elements to 64 variations of kumite gata number one!

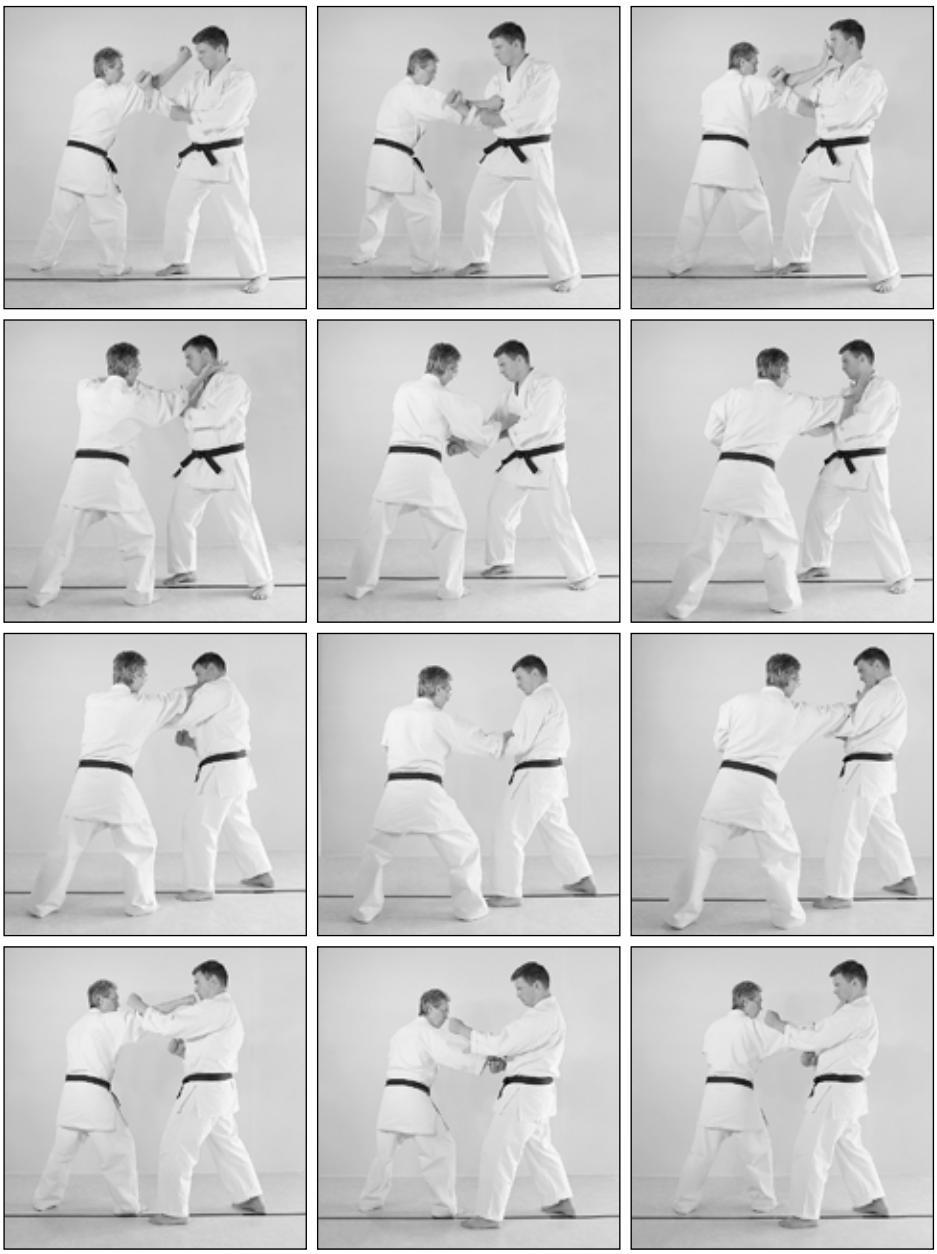
This reminds me of what Hironori Ohtsuka writes in his book, Wado Ryu Karate. First you have to remember that when Ohtsuka talks about kata, he does not mean exclusively one man forms. In the old jujutsu, katas were two man forms like Wado's kumite gatas. In the chapter "Enter into Kata, then Withdraw from Kata" (pp. 19-20) he writes:

"The martial arts have numerous varieties of kata. Predecessors, over long periods of time, created kata through experience, changes and imagination. It is obvious that these kata must be trained and practised sufficiently, but one must not be 'stuck' in them. One must withdraw from kata to produce forms with no limits or else it becomes useless. It is important to alter the form of the trained kata without hesitation to produce countless other forms by training. (...) Martial arts training has no end. This is because one can never stop training."

When you finally remember that all this is also practised with the other two timings, the package begins to be ready. The following series of photos (25-36) and (37-48) give you the first elements of simultaneous and preemptive timing. They are there to help you expand the ideas of this chapter to these more advanced levels of timing.



25–36. The first element at sen sen no sente -timing.



37–48. The first element at sente -timing.

Wado-ryu as a style

Finally, I want to briefly introduce the idea about Wado-ryu as a style based on the previous analysis.

The three elements I described above are more generally connected to the overall analysis of a fighting situation. There is an attack directed towards us, and we respond according to the circumstances and our abilities. Different martial arts have basically the same elements, but their contents and number may vary. For example, for aikido it is typical that: the first element consists of stepping away from the attack line following a grip; the second element is an atemi; and the third element is a control or a throw. This is very much the same as in Wado's kumite gatas. The technique is more flowing of course. If someone attacks a judo-man, the judo-man probably would parry the punch and make a throw at once.

In Wado-ryu the fighting situation and the adequate technical elements could be seen to consist of the following parts (technically and historically):

I element	II element	III element
Taisabaki; irimi; and other body techniques connected to defence and immediate counterattack. This is based on kenjutsu and old jujutsu	Attacking techniques connected to entering. This is based on the atemi of old jujutsu and okinawan karate	Controlling and throwing techniques: nage-waza; kansezu-waza; etc. Basically, old jujutsu

When you see the style formed like this, you can better understand where the techniques you practise are situated. You can also see how the style is degenerated if you basically practise only, let's say, the second element: the basic punching and kicking techniques of karate. The "sport karate" or

49–53.

”general karate” is situated here. If we want to practise Wado-ryu as a style, we have to include in our practise the first and third elements, too. Only by combining all three elements can we recreate the type of movement that was created by Hironori Ohtsuka and called the style of Wado-ryu, in which he synthesized the Japanese and Okinawan fighting arts he himself had mastered.

The above scheme also helps us understand how in Wado-ryu we should practise, for example, the throwing techniques (nage-waza). You should not practice the throw by itself, but always combine it with the other two elements, too. At least practise it with the first one. I'll give you an example with kote-gaeshi. You should practice kote-gaeshi, for example, as follows: the attacker performs a chudan zuki; avoid the attack to the outer side of the attack line as in kumite gata number 2, performing a left ipponken as a counter punch. The second element could be a reverse haito to the neck of the opponent; finally, and as a last element, you'll do the kote-gaeshi by twisting your body to the left (photos 49-53).

I want to finish this chapter by an illustrative multiplication. Let's construct the first element of the 24 initial techniques of the 24 kumite gatas. Now we have 24 variations of the first element. Then we construct the second element of the basic techniques of karate. We take junzuki and gyakuzuki, 3 urakens, 4 different shutos, 4 haitos, 4 empis, let's say, two different teishos, and two ways of doing nukite. And let's take, say, five different kicks. Now this second element has 20 different techniques. The third and the last element we construct of ten throws and ten locks. All black belts should know much more of this stuff!

Let see now what happens if we put these elements together. An interesting multiplication is borne: 24x20x20= 9600. With these technical elements we can create 9600 series of movements which are all different and are constructed of three elements. Now - this really is the way the style is borne! And this style is Wado-ryu!

Chapter **5**

KUZUSHI
THE PRINCIPLE OF UNBALANCING

Background

Kuzushi means unbalancing the opponent and it is an essential feature of kumite gata. In the previous chapter I analysed the three structural elements of kumite gata. Kuzushi is included in the last element after the initial element and the second element, irimi. It was the creator of modern judo, **Jigoro Kano** (1860-1938), who strongly emphasized this principle as a central idea of old jujutsu. **Kenji Tomiki**, the creator of the so called Tomiki-Aikido, has written two interesting articles about the principles of old jujutsu and their connection to modern budo. You can find both of them on the internet. In his article, On Jujutsu and its Modernization, he writes that the deep secret of ancient jujutsu is embodied in the saying, "True natural posture is the manifestation of mushin. Control strength through gentleness. These are the principles of jujutsu." He also writes that Jigoro Kano succeeded well in explaining these principles when creating the principles of his judo. Jigoro Kano analysed this aphorism and formulated three principles of judo:

1. The principle of natural body (shizentai no ri), which concerns posture. This is a natural, unrestricted posture from which it is possible to attack and defend, adapting to any kind of attack.
2. The principle of gentleness (ju no ri), which concerns the position of defense. It says: do not oppose the offensive power of any kind of antagonist with force. Rather, render that force ineffective by moving your body out of the way (taisabaki).
3. The principle of breaking balance (kuzushi no ri), which concerns the position of attack. This says to increase the chances of winning by taking advantage of the breaking of your opponent's balance, or by adhering to his body.

You should at once see the connection of these principles to Wado-ryu karate as a style, and especially to kumite gata. I'll come to this later. Tomiki further writes that the secret principle of jujutsu is moving your body out of the way (taisabaki). When we analyse the essence of attacks, according to Tomiki, they fall into two general categories:

1. An opponent from close in tries to topple (taosu) or restrain (osaeru) you by using his legs and hips;

2. An opponent from a distance tries to strike, lunge at, kick, or with a weapon he tries to cut or stab you.

Tomiki goes on to describe how Jigoro Kano went on to develop practice methods suitable for the situation described in the first point. That means concentrating on nage-waza and katame-waza, which became eventually the essential categories of modern judo. The situation in point two was not developed in modern judo. Tomiki wants to emphasize that taisabaki is a technique that can be used in every situation, when facing any strong attack, and the natural stance (shizentai) can be used to avoid an attack from any direction. Further, Tomiki analyses atemi-waza and kansetsu-waza in the history of bujutsu and finds two characteristics:

1. Atemi-waza means controlling an opponent by hitting, thrusting into, or kicking the physiological weak points of the body (the vital areas). The kansetsu-waza controls an opponent by inflicting a sprain or by dislocation of a joint. That is to say, these techniques were devised with the purpose of maiming or killing.

2. The atemi-waza topple an opponent by grasping the mechanical weak points of his body (the principle of kuzushi: breaking balance) and pushing him in one direction. The kansetsu-waza restrain an opponent with a minimum of force by utilizing the limits of joint movement.

I have cited Tomiki extensively to put the principles of Wado-ryu, and

especially the principle of kuzushi in kumite gata, in historical and technical context. I have emphasized how Wado-ryu as a style is very much based particularly on the principles of classical bujutsu, jujutsu and kenjutsu Here the connection becomes still more clear. The principle of shizentai, the natural stance, is clearly present in Wado. The kamae in Wado-ryu is very natural, never deep and long. You can see this principle working in all the formal kumites of Wado, including knife-defence and sword defence, where even the hands are hanging at the sides in a natural stance and attitude. In this way taisabaki becomes easier to do.

The second principle, the principle of gentleness or softness, is clearly present in the first element of kumite gata, where the attack is avoided by taisabaki. This may be the most important principle of Wado-ryu.

The third principle, breaking balance (kuzushi no ri), is clearly present in the last element of kumite gata. Not only is it present, but it is one of the core teachings in the way of practicing kumite gata. The same element can be found in some of the kihon kumites, too. But in kumite gata this element is analysed and practised in a much more detailed and deeper way.

In his article, Kenji Tomiki made a distinction between two fighting distances: the distance of doing atemi by striking or kicking; and the grappling distance. He is longing for randori, free practise, in judo and aikido, where both of these distances could be practised. He thinks that an art is not a "complete budo" if it does not include practise in both distances.

Now, if we look at the kumite gatas developed by Hironori Ohtsuka, this condition is clearly fulfilled. In kumite gatas you practise the distance of atemi and taisabaki connected to that. But you also practise the grappling distance and the most important principle connected to that: kuzushi. This certainly is a special feature of Wado-ryu and is rooted in old jujutsu and Hironori Ohtsuka's expertise in jujutsu. So we can say that in Wado-ryu, taisabaki and kuzushi are the basic principles connected to the two basic fighting distances. Also, if the grappling distance and situation is not practised, it is not the deficiency of the style, but it is a flaw of the practitioner himself.

I want to cite Kenji Tomiki once more about the principle of kuzushi, because from the point of view of kumite gata it is most illuminating. In his article, *Fundamental Principles of Judo*, he writes:

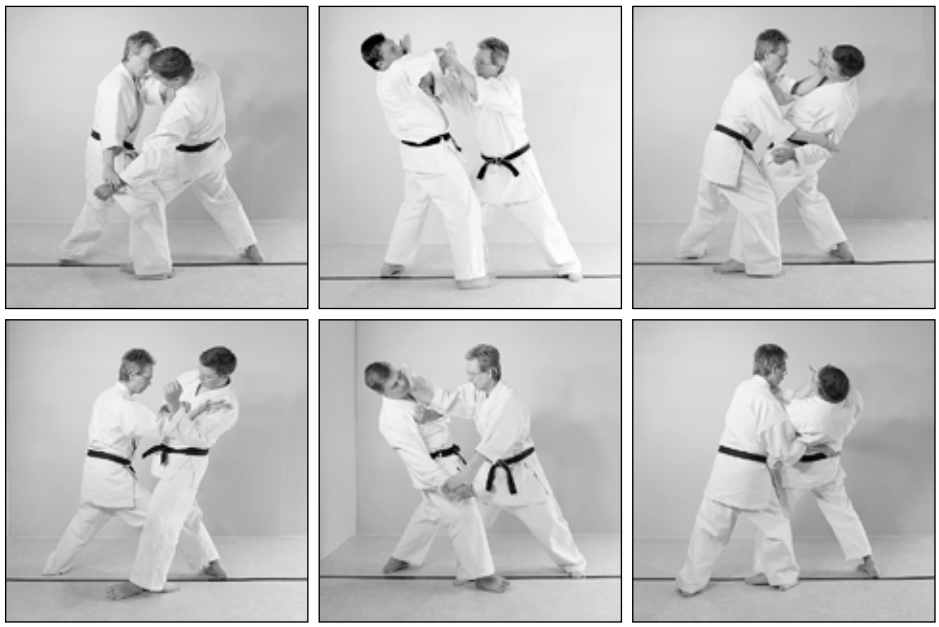
"The Kodokan Judo found that the principle of the techniques (either with naked fists, or using a weapon like the sword, spear, club, etc.) of the old-school jujutsu consists in breaking the condition of the body which has lost equilibrium. It is called kuzure-no-jotai (state of broken balance). Sometimes the opponent himself loses the balance, and at other times you positively destroy the opponent's balance, leading him to a vulnerable posture. In Judo each technique is analyzed into tsukuri (preparatory action) and kake (attack). Preparatory action is further divided into aite-no-tsukuri (preparing of the opponent) and jibun-no-tsukuri (preparing of self). Preparing of the opponent consists in destroying the opponent's balance before performing a technique and putting him in a posture where it will be easy to apply it. At the same instant the contestant himself must be in a posture and position in which it is easy to apply a technique. This is the preparing of self. (...)In the case of the preparing of the opponent, the theory and practice of the principle of breaking the balance must be studied, while as regards preparing of self it is necessary to study the natural posture and also the theory and practice of ma-ai (space condition)."

Then Tomiki goes on to describe the basic training in his aikido style, where these old principles of jujutsu are practised. The description turns very interesting when he comes to kuzushi. He writes:

"The principle of breaking balance (kuzushi no ri) (concerning attacks): a method of building a chance of victory by taking advantage of breaking an opponent's balance or of adhering to his body. 1.Controlling the elbow, a. high level (jodan), b. low level (gedan). 2. Controlling the wrist, a. high level (jodan), b. low level (gedan). 3. Controlling the chin: a. Avoiding an opponent's cuts or stabs from a distanc, b. Flowing with a force which you have grasped and with which you cooperate."

Kumite Gatas and the Principle of Kuzushi

Tomiki's description is at once familiar to you if you have done kumite gata where kuzushi is practised containing very much the same elements. Tomiki lists controlling of the elbow and wrist in two levels, and controlling the chin. You can find all of this and more in kumite gata. In addition to these, there are controls of the knee, shoulder, and back, to unbalance the opponent. As a matter of fact, it seems to me that Ohtsuka planned



Kuvat 1–6.

the kuzushi element of kumite gata so that it includes all the relevant biomechanical points of the human body where the opponent, who is in contact with you, can be unbalanced. One special feature of the kuzushi in kumite gata is that it is done in two or even three points at the same time: you attack the knee and chin or shoulder, or lower back and chin at the same time. This is reasonable of course from the point of view of the structure of the human body.

Actually you can list the points of kuzushi in kumite gata in the same way as Tomiki does giving the biomechanical weak points where the attack is directed. Doing this gives the following categories (only one example is given):

1. Wrist: gedan and jodan levels. For example, kumite gatas 10 and 2 (photos 1 and 2).
2. Elbow, number 11 (photo 3).
3. Shoulder, number 3 (photo 4).
4. Chin, number 2 (photo 5).
5. Lower back, number 8 (photo 6).
6. Knee. You can see this in all kumite gatas.

There are at least five aspects that can be considered with kuzushi. These are:

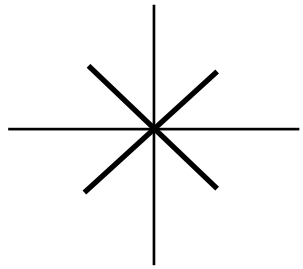
1. Kuzushi done with atemi;
2. kuzushi which opens the way to atemi;
3. kuzushi that prepares a throw;
4. kuzushi that prevents the opponent of attacking;
5. the direction of kuzushi.

All these aspects are present in kumite gata and give possibilities of variations. I do not go into details here. You can figure them out by yourself. Briefly, you can say that, for example, all the kuzushis done through the chin can be atemi-strikes because you can naturally push up the chin or hit it. In many kumite gatas the kuzushi opens the way to atemi, which is done when the body of the opponent is bent back to a bad position. It is obvious that, for example, the atemi done to the area of suigetsu is more effective when done to a body that is bent backwards. This is the kuzure-no-jotai principle cited above. Obviously all kuzushis done in kumite gata prepare the opponent for a throw or take-down. You can see this best if you throw an occasional foot sweep into the game. After the kuzushi the opponent is usually in such a bad position that he is at least temporarily unable to continue his attack. This gives the defender time to do what the situation demands.

Kuvat 7–10. Kumite gatojen pääasialliset horjutussuunnat.

Kuva 11.

In judo there is the concept of happo no kuzushi, which means the eight directions of unbalancing the opponent. These basic directions are usually described with patterns, that represent the compass points as follows:



As for the direction of kuzushi in kumite gata, we can say that it is basically four-directional as represented in photos 7-10. So we are not dealing here with a "happo no kuzushi", as in judo. We are considering the four most sensitive directions of unbalancing an upright human body. There is an exception, though: a kuzushi done straight backwards at the knee. This can be applied, for example, at the second element of kumite gata 1 (photo 11).

Some More Aspects about Using the Knee

Many techniques of kumite gatas seem to be based on the movements of Naihanchi. The active use of the knee is very interesting in this respect. We have learned from the history of Wado-ryu that Hironori Ohtsuka learned Naihanchi from Choki Motobu. He also learned many of the application principles from Motobu. If you look carefully at Motobu's 1926 book, Okinawa Kempo Karate-jutsu, you can see the connection of his applications and Wado techniques. In this book, Motobu also shows exactly the same use of the knee that we see in use in Ohtsuka's kumite gatas. Look at McCarthy's translation of Motobu's Watashi no Karate-jutsu (1932), "Karate, My Art", which also contain the photo material of Motobu's 1926 book. On page 56, in photo 4b, you can see Motobu's knee in action.

In the same book there is an interesting story where Motobu's student, Marukawa Kenji, writes about his teacher. On page 29 he writes:

> "His ippon-ken was extremely powerful and he used it a lot in sparring. His position always changed according to his opponents. Such things were not in fashion during those times, but they were second nature to Motobu sensei. The master was an innovator. He had a way of sliding in on an opponent's position and dropping down on the side of the leg with his knee and taking an opponent down that I had never seen before or after."

Here we learn that the knee action Ohtsuka took as an essential element of his kumite gatas was one of the favourite techniques of Motobu. I don't think this is a coincidence. Marukawa Kenji's story gives us a hint about the power of this technique: you can easily drop your opponent down with it. Ohtsuka realized the value of this technique from the point of view of kuzushi because he had learned the same principle in old jujutsu.

Kuvat 12–15.

The following four photos, 12–15, show the four basic variations of this technique: inside and outside in aihanmi; and two gyakuhanmi situations.

It is important to be cautious when doing this kind of technique: a bad performance can injure the meniscus. You have to carefully figure out how to do it without bending the knee sideways, especially when you put your weight on the leg at the same time. The point is that you have to move the whole leg pivoting from the hip joint. If the heel is kept in place it is easier to move the whole leg toward the inside or outside. Stabilize the knee and heel and turn the leg.

Kihon Kumites and the Principle of Kuzushi

In Wado-Ryus's kihon kumites you can find several cases of kuzushi, too Here I'll give you only the number of the katas and a short description and leave the rest for your homework:

Kihon kumite number:

2. The right knee of the defender pushes the right knee of the attacker. If you do this so that you first push, then suddenly retreat for a take-down, you'll see the effect of this kind of unbalancing.

4. When you step in for the counter-attack, push with your left hand to the right at the right arm of the attacker. You can add a sudden change of the direction and take-down here, too.

5. Before throwing with gote-gaeshi, there is a kuzushi by drawing the attacker's hand. You can reinforce this with an elbow lock.

8. There is a kuzushi as in kumite gatas from the knee and the body.

10. Before the throw, make a kuzushi with your right hand by pulling up and diagonally forward as in judo.

***

I think the old way of Wado, "koryu Wado", is perfectly represented by the kumite gata. We can find the principles of Shindo Yoshin ryu jujutsu; the principles of classical Japanese kenjutsu; and Okinawan karate. And we can practise the favourite technique of Choki Motobu, too! Practising kumite gatas, I think, is a real journey into the history of Wado-ryu karate – maybe the best there is!

Chapter **6**

THE KYUSHO-JUTSU OF WADO-RYU

Background

At the same time as the understanding of karate katas has been increasing during the last twenty years, the jintai kyusho aspect of the katas has also become familiar to the West.

Jin means "a human being", tai means "a body", kyu means "fast", and sho means "place". The expression is usually rendered as "the vital points of the human body". A literal translation would be "the fast points of the human body". "Fast", in this connection, probably means that if a blow is directed to these points, the struggle is over fast.

The vital points of the human body have been investigated in the Japanese bujutsu tradition as long as the fighting arts in any organized form have existed. This kind of knowledge of the human body has always been an important part of fighting in close quarters. The old bujutsu schools use the terms atemi and atemi-jutsu to refer to the attacks to the vital points of the human body.

A karate historian, Harry Cook, has written about the relationship between karate and classical Japanese bujutsu in his article, Jujutsu and Karate. In the article Cook quotes a 7th dan Kodokan judo master, Yasushi Yamada, who has made an extensive study of the old Japanese jujutsu schools and their atemi techniques. Yamada traces the Japanese atemi fighting back to a story told in the Kojiki dating back about 2000 years. It is told in the story that on the seventh of June during the reign of emperor Suinin, there was a fight arranged at the court between two solders: Nomino Sukune and Tomano Kehaya. It is described in the story how Sukune struck with his fist to the chest of his opponent, Kehaya, so that Kehaya fell down. Sukune finished the fight by kicking his opponent to death. Yamada tells us this story of the ancient Kojiki is the first description of a Japanese ate-

mi fight. He continues to say that these techniques have a history of about 2000 years in Japan, and all the bujutsu schools have their own methods and secrets in this art. Yamada also tells us that according to his research, in Japan 106 jujutsu schools have studied atemi principles.

Against this background I don't think Shindo Yoshin Ryu, Ohtsuka's jujutsu school, with its atemi techniques was anything special. After carefully analyzing and categorizing the atemi techniques, Yamada found about 80 different atemi targets. If you compare them with the points of acupuncture, they are basically the same, Yamada writes. He also did a categorizing according to the method of attack and came to the following conclusion: A blow to the atemi point was performed with the:

- Fingers: 13 targets
- Fist: 10 targets
- The ulna, palm, and elbow: 7 targets
- Foot: 5 targets; and
- Head: 3 targets.

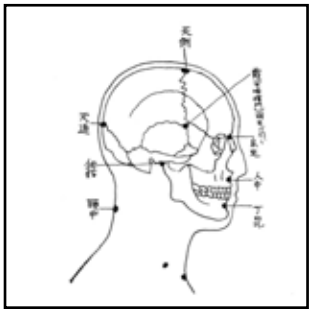
When we compare the kyusho-jutsu of Okinawan karate and Wado-Ryu, we have to consider the two different starting points of these arts. In the previous chapters I have noticed several times that Wado-Ryu does not represent Okinawan karate. Its main principles are based on Japanese bujutsu; especially on Shindo Yoshin Ryu jujutsu and swordsmanship. The roots of Okinawan karate are in China; the roots of Wado-Ryu are in Japan. However, from the point of view of kyusho-jutsu, they both share

their roots in Chinese medicine, inasmuch as the Japanese old medical culture was based on that, too. That's why also in Wado-Ryu the atemi points are the same as used in acupuncture. These points are called tsubo in Japan.

The manual of the kyusho-jutsu of Okinawan karate was Bubishi. At the beginning of the last century, it was still transferred as a secret, hand written manuscript from teacher to student. Bubishi was naturally based on Chinese traditional medicine and its meridian theory. Nowadays many western karate practitioners are excited about Bubishi. They learn traditional Chinese medicine and investigate the theories of the qi cycling around the body, etc. At the same time they are trying to learn the theory of kyusho jitsu. However, it is worth remembering that even in the East, when the Western medical science spread there, the teachers of kyusho-jutsu began to use more advanced anatomical and physiological concepts when explaining its theory.

All the important kyusho points are anatomically located at the most vulnerable areas of the human body. There is no need for Chinese medicine to explain this. They are located on top of the nerves or internal organs; or other points that are anatomically easy to damage or cause pain. Already in his 1935 book, Karate-do Kyohan, Gichin Funakoshi explained the kyusho points referring to the anatomy and physiology of the human body, not to traditional Chinese medicine. This is the way it is regularly done also in modern Japanese jujutsu.

As an example I'll refer to the point kasumi at the temple (drawing 1).



Drawing 1. Kasumi-point.

Drawing 1 is a typical example of a Japanese kyusho map, where you can see how the point is located exactly at the area of the temple. Here the bone structure is at its weakest, connecting different parts of the scull. The same applies to many other atemi points located on the skull. It's important to have this kind of knowledge in order to be able to understand the effects of kyusho-jutsu in general. Knowledge about Chinese medicine is not necessary. Rather, knowledge about human anatomy is beneficial.

As an interesting detail it could be mentioned that the kumite gatas of Wado-Ryu contain all the essential kyushos of the old jujutsu-school, Tenjin Shinyo ryu. Tenjin Shinyo ryu is one of the root styles of Shindo Yoshin ryu. Serge Mol, a researcher of the history of classical jujutsu, has written an interesting book named Classical Fighting Arts of Japan, A Complete Guide to Koryu Jujutsu. In the book he reveals the kyusho catalogue of Tenjin Shinyo ryu:

1. Matszukaze
2. Murasame
3. Den (denko)
4. Tsukikage (inazuma)
5. Ganka
6. Myojo (tanden)
7. Uto
8. Suigetsu

This connection makes sense if we remember that Ohtsuka also took the knife defence katas (tantodori) of Wado-ryu straight from this old jujutsu style. The fast series of atemi done with one hand, typical to kumite gata, is based on exact knowledge of the vital points of the human body. This knowledge in Wado-ryu is based on Shindo Yoshin ryu jujutsu. More accurately, on one of its root styles: Tenjin Shinyo ryu.

The ability to perform fast but relaxed, accurate, and powerful movements is possible only if you practice what is called "the mechanics of the internal strength". It's interesting that some of the Wado-ryu teachers, Ma-

safumi Shiomizu, for instance, have introduced in their seminars one of the basic kiko exercises through which this ability is built up: that is, "pole-standing" exercise (Jap. rizuzen; Chin. zhan zhuang). Describing this way of power production would demand a separate book, so, I will leave it as mentioned for the present.

The Kyusho Theory of Wado-ryu

The kyusho theory of Wado-ryu is based on classical jujutsu and it has three aspects to study:

1. The kyusho points or areas.

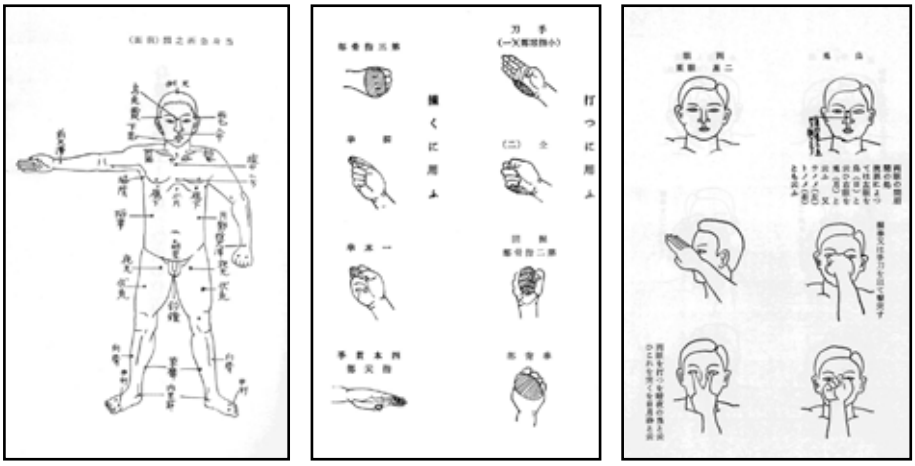
You have to study and learn the most essential kyusho points and areas. For example: mazukaze, the side of the neck; suigetsu, the solar plexus; etc. Many of the books about Wado-ryu contain kyusho maps. Maybe the most thorough map is in Gichin Funakoshi's book, Karate-do Kyohan, from 1935. Funakoshi's book is obviously about Shotokan-style, but it is known that the kyusho map he published in this book was given to him by his student, Hironori Ohtsuka. Dynamic Kicking Method, by Masafumi Shiomizu, contains one map of Wado-ryu's kyushos, as well as does Karate-do, by Tatsuo Suzuki.

2. The forms of the hands and contact points.

You have to learn different forms of the hand and their contact points: You strike with ipponken, nukite, haito, teisho, shuto, uraken, etc.

3. Connecting the kyusho point with a proper hand form and contact point.

You have to learn the proper hand forms for different kyushos. Not all the hand forms are suited equally well for different vital areas or points. If you attack the eyes, nukite is used; for suigetsu ipponken is used; etc. The vital point or area we try to reach in kumite gata defines the technique and attacking surface for the defender. The most common hand form used is ipponken, which is used basically to all the areas of the trunk. Other attack surfaces are: seiken; shuto; uraken; teisho; nukite; and empi. Kumite



Drawings 2, 3 ja 4.

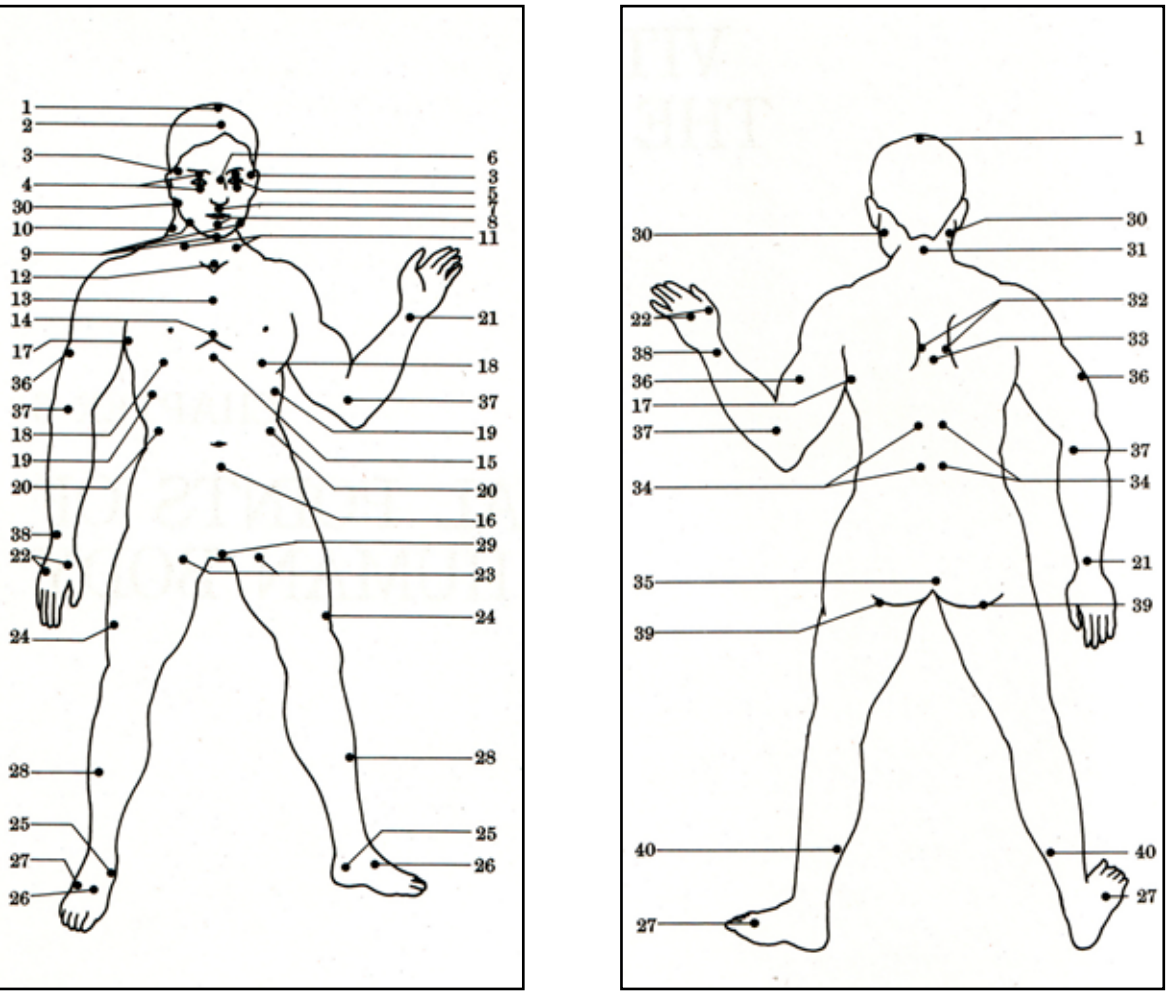
gatas teach us to always use the most appropriate attacking surface and technique for the most vulnerable points of the human body.

Drawings 2, 3, and 4 show these principles in action. The drawings are taken from a book of a classical jujutsu school and its kyusho theory. The whole structure of the book is based on the three aspects mentioned above. First, there are most detailed drawings about the vital points of the human body. In many of the drawings the body is opened so you can see the anatomical structure below the point. The second part of the book shows the attacking surfaces of the hands and feet. The third part connects the two, as in drawing 4. In the final chapter, the classical resuscitation techniques, called kuatsu, are described. Even these you can find in the original curriculum of Wado-ryu at the time of its registration as a style.

The above structure is always maintained in books about Wado-ryu. You can find it in the Dynamic Kicking Method, by Masafumi Shiomizu, as well as Tatsuo Suzuki's Karate-do.

In kumite gatas all these elements are combined in a logical and easily learned system. Therefore, we can say that the kumite gata series of Wado-ryu is also a systematic method to learn the kyusho theory of Wado-ryu as a style.

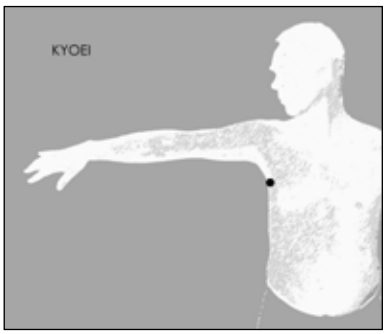
Next I'll explain the kyusho that can be found in kumite gatas. The title of the point contains three elements. First there is the Japanese name of the point and an alternative name in parenthesis, if there is one. Then there is a code like F 17. This code refers to the kyusho map in drawing 5. This is actually the kyusho map Funakoshi used in his 1935 book and was given to him by Ohtsuka. Finally, there is the name of the hand form usually used to attack the point. For example: ipponken; or nukite; etc.



Drawing 5. Gichin Funakoshis kyusho-point map.

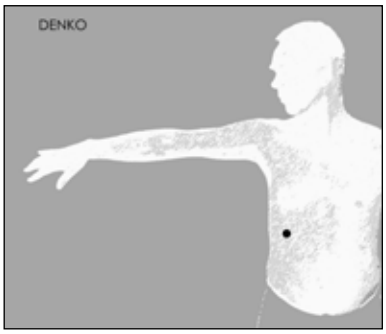
The Kyusho Points of the Kumite Gatas

1. Kyoei; F 17; ipponken



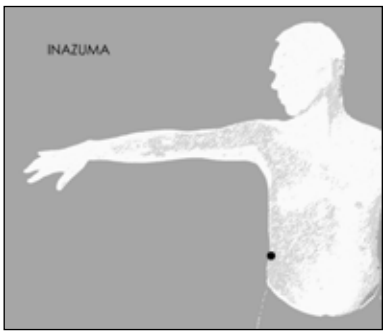
This is one of the most common kyusho used in kumite gatas. The first counter punch is often directed here. It is located between the fourth and fifth ribs under the armpit. The attack is usually done with ipponken.

2. Denko F 19; ipponken; uraken



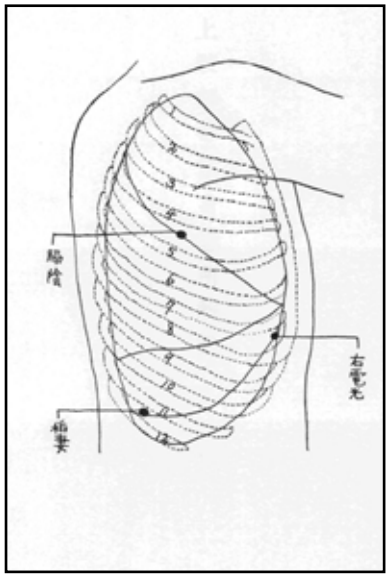
The point is located between the seventh and eighth ribs. The point is usually attacked with ipponken. If it is hit with urazuki, the contact can be made with the uraken surface of the fist.

3. Inazuma (tsukikage); F 20; ipponken, uraken



The point is located at the side, between the eleventh and twelfth ribs. Typical attack surface is ipponken or uraken.

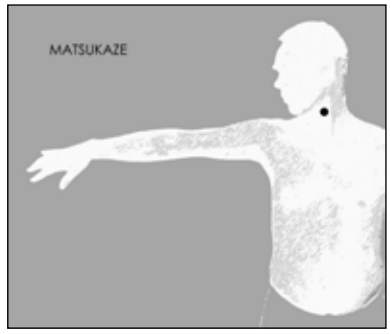
The first kumite gata teaches you these three kyushos. The first counter



Drawing 6. The Kysho-points of the first Kumite Gata

is directed under the arm, the second to denko and the last, the third, to inazuma. All the punches are done with ipponken (drawing 6).

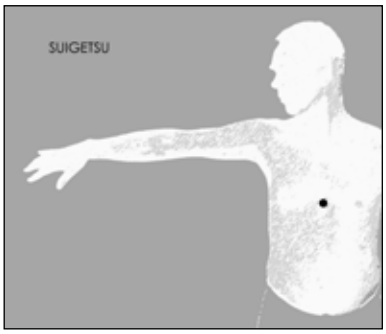
4. Matsukaze; F 10; shuto, haito



The side of the neck with a bundle of nerves and veins is maybe the most well known of the vital points of the human body. There is actually a lot of literature about this point, which is called "stomach nine". We are talking about a very dangerous area here, where there are nerves controlling the function of the heart and lungs, as well as the large veins carrying blood to the brain. A strike to this area could paralyze both the functions of the heart and lungs. A special caution should be applied while practising strikes to this area. No contact should be made while practicing strikes to this area.

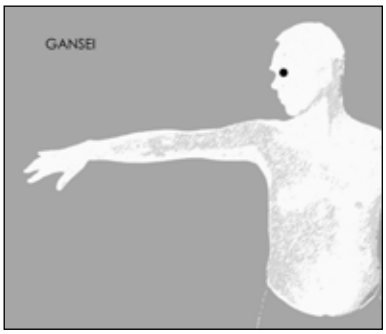
Kumite gata 2 teaches you this point. The first counter is directed under the arm, then there is the change to the inside of the attack line (hente), and finally mazukaze point is hit with the right shuto.

5. Suigetsu; F 15; ipponken, seiken, uraken, empi



Suigetsu, or solar plexus area, is another well known and used kyusho. Even a slight punch to this area can paralyze breathing and disable the opponent. Kumite gata 2 teaches you this point, too. After the shuto to the side of the neck and kuzushi, your arm rests on the chest of the opponent so that the elbow points straight to the solar plexus. You finish the kata by a slight hit to suigetsu with the elbow.

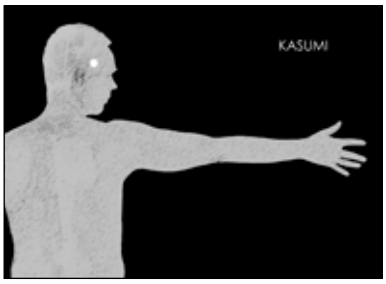
6. Gansei; F 5; nukite, shuto, ipponken



Eyes are very sensitive and even bringing the fingers close to the eyes causes the opponent to step back by reflex.

Kumite gata 3 teaches this way of countering. First you block the kick of the attacker, and then you hit him with a nukite to his eyes. In this kata the defender can do a series of two to three hits to the kyusho points of the opponent's head before going to kuzushi. The nukite strike is usually followed by an uraken to the temple.

7. Kasumi; F 3; uraken, ipponken, shuto

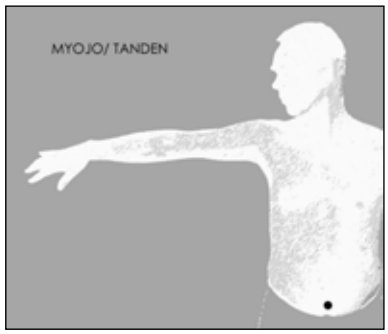


In addition to the side of the neck, the temple is a typical point of attack at the side of the head. It is easily reached with uraken. The structure of the scull is weak here, which makes the point very dangerous. In practise there should be no contact made to this point. This applies to all the points of the head.

In the third kumite gata, after nukite, the right hand continues at once to kasumi. Execution of nukite is done with a short withdrawal of the hand; the hand turns immediately to a whip like uraken. An alternative is to hit with uraken to the uto-point at the bridge of the nose. Also, the combination of three atemis is possible: nukite to the eyes; shuto to the side of the neck; and finally, uraken to the temple or to the bridge of the nose.

After the kuzushi the left ipponken is directed to suigetsu. If the hand of the attacker covers the solar plexus area, the punch is directed either lower, to tanden, or above, to the sternum, where the kyosen and tanchu points are located.

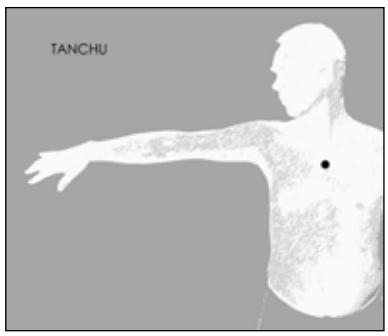
8. Myojo (tanden); F 16; ipponken, seiken, uraken, nukite



A significant number of the most vulnerable points of the human body are located on the centre line. Kumite gata 5 contains three of them: tanchu; kyosen; and tanden.

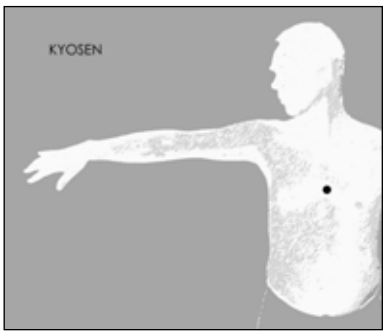
Tanden is located about two inches lower than the navel. A hit to this point should be directed slightly downwards. Even a slight hit to the lower stomach creates a powerful pain reaction and could disable the opponent.

9. Tanchu; F13; and 10. kyosen, F 14; ipponken, seiken, uraken



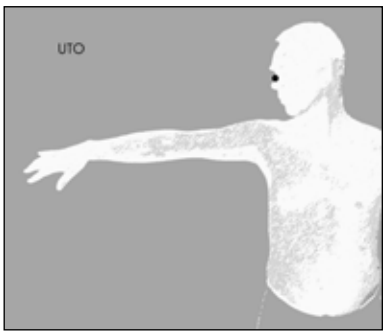
Tanchu and kyosen are both situated at the sternum; kyosen at its lower end, a little above the solar plexus; and tanchu at the centre. A hard punch to the sternum can paralyze the breathing and cause dysfunction of the heart.

The first two punches of kumite gata 5 are directed to the centre line of the body. Usually the attacker covers his solar plexus, in which case the first counter punch is done to tanden. After that the defender controls the back hand of the opponent with his right hand and pushing it a little downwards, he opens the way to the points of the sternum. The second punch is then directed either to kyosen or tanchu. In a situation where the opponent has turned so much sideways that the centre line does not properly expose any targets, the second punch can be done to the ganka point under the chest muscle.



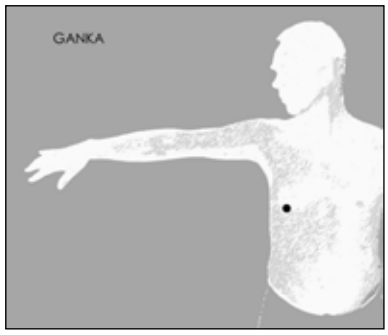
10. Uto; F 6; uraken, shuto, teisho

Of the centre line points of the body, the nose and the bridge of the nose are very sensitive. Even a slight tap to these points will normally disable an attacker. Uto is located at the middle of the bridge of the nose and is easily reached by shuto from the side or uraken from the front.



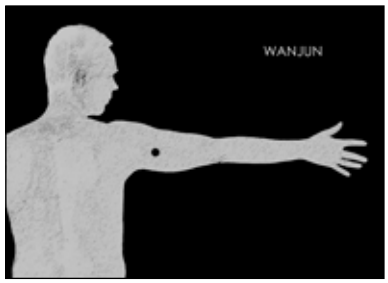
In kumite kata 6, after blocking the kick, a counter is done to the uto-point. Uraken is usually used here, but also shuto is possible

11. Ganka; F 18; ipponken



Ganka is situated under the chest muscle between the fifth and sixth ribs, just under the nipple. In kumite kata 6, after the strike to the uto-point, the opponent is unbalanced towards his back. The right arm of the defender bends the body of the attacker backwards. This causes the ganka-point to become open for a left ipponken.

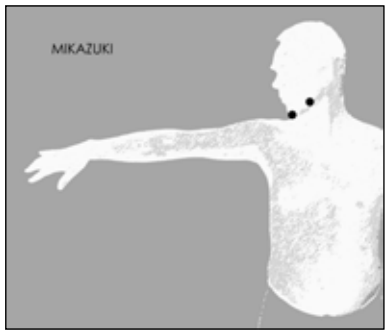
12. Wanjun; F 16; shuto, hiraken



Outside the arm, where the extensor muscle ends, is the wanjun-point. Pushing the point excites the nerves of the arm. The point is usually used in arm controls.

In kumite gata 7, the defender presses this point at the same time he makes an ikkyo-technique. Simultaneously, he controls the opponent's knee with his own knee.

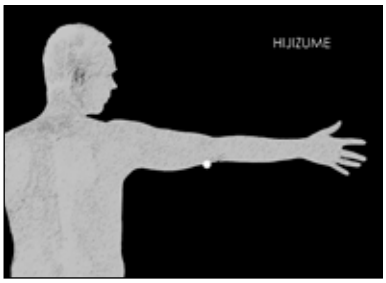
13. Mikazuki (jingei); F 9; teisho, uraken, seiken



A hit to the jaw is a common knockdown technique in boxing. The effect of this punch comes from the biomechanics of the neck. A hit to the jaw causes a sudden jolt of the head and a fast change in the pressure inside the skull and to the brain. Unconsciousness usually follows immediately.

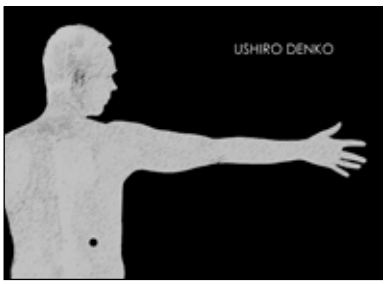
In kumite gata 8, after the ipponken to the ganka-point, there is an immediate follow up with teisho upwards to the jaw.

14. Hijizume; F 37; hiraken, kote



Just above the elbow joint is the hijizume-point. It is used in many arm controls and take downs. In one variation of kumite gata 8, the arm of the opponent is broken by hitting this point powerfully with the side of the arm (kote).

15. Ushiro denko; F 34; teisho, shuto, hiza



The kidney area at the back of the body is an important kyusho in Wado-ryu. You can find it in kumite gatas 8 and 12, connected to kuzushi. From the point of view of body biomechanics, this area is extremely important. By hitting this point you can disrupt the connection between the upper and lower parts of the body. The same area is important also for the defender. To secure the whole body connection, this area should be kept "full"; the lower back straight or even arching a little backwards.

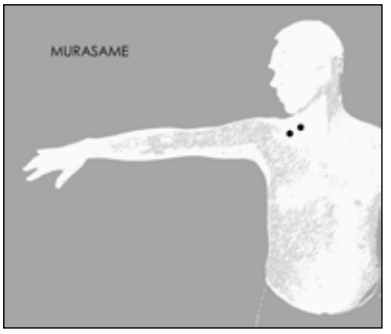
Kumite gatas 1-12 teach us these 15 vital points of the human body. Even though we can say, that black belts should have a general knowledge of about 40 vital points, I would say that in practise maybe ten points is a realistic amount that you can actually master so well that you can use them automatically in any situation. Regularly practising kumite gatas shall do just this: teach you the most easily reached and potent vital points of the human body.

Kumite gatas 13-24 add only three points to this catalogue. These are the side of the knee, the side of the thigh, and the collar bone.

16. Kekkai; uraken, ipponken

Kekkai-point is located at the inside of the thigh, about two inches above the knee. In kumite gata 15 you hit this point with uraken. You can find the same point used in kihon kumite 3, where it is hit by the left ipponken. You can also hit this point with your own knee while doing kuzushi from the inside of the attack line.

17. Murasame; F 11; shuto, ipponken



A strike to the collar bone area can be done to two points: straight to the collar bone in order to break it; or to the socket just at the root of the neck.

In kumite gata 18 you step in to the kick of the opponent as you do nagashi, and at the same time hit the opponent's collarbone with a right shuto. An alternative is a sideways shuto to the uto-point at the bridge of the nose.

18. Fukuto: F 24; ipponken, hiza, shinbone

Probably the most used point of the leg is fukuto-point. In contact matches you see this point regularly attacked by round kicks made with the shinbone. If you let your hand hang by your side, the fukuto point is situated under the tip of your middle finger. It is also attacked with the knee or ipponken.

In kumite gata 24 you step in and slightly to the left of the attacker's kick avoiding it. At the same time you punch the fukuto-point with the ipponken of your left hand.

The Kyusho Points of Kumite Gatas, a Summary

In the following table the kyusho points are mentioned in the order they appear in the kata: first, the target of the first counter attack; second, the target of the second counter; etc.

Kumite gatas 1 – 12

Kata	Kyusho
1	kyoei, denko, inazuma
2	kyoei, matsukaze, suigetsu
3	gansei, kasumi, suigetsu
4	matsukaze, suigetsu
5	tanden, kyosen/ tanchu, suigetsu
6	murasame/uto, ganka
7	kyoei, wanjun
8	kyoei/ inazuma, ganka, mikazuki, ushiro denko
9	uto, suigetsu, suigetsu
10	mikazuki, matsukaze
11	suigetsu, mikazuki
12	kasumi, ushiro denko - mikazuki

Kumite gatas 13 – 24

Kata	Kyusho
13	mikazuki, inazuma
14	ganka, mikazuki, ushiro denko, suigetsu
15	kekkai, tanden, mikazuki, suigetsu
16	matsukaze, suigetsu

17 tanden, kyosen/ tanchu, suigetsu
18 murasame/ uto, ganka
19 mikazuki, hijizume, wanjun
20 ganka, mikazuki, ganka
21 mikazuki, suigetsu
22 mikazuki, uto/ kasumi, suigetsu
23 suigetsu, mikazuki, suigetsu
24 fukuto, denko/ suigetsu

Kumite gatas 25 – 36
Kata Kyusho

25 kasumi, inazuma
26 ganka, mikazuki, ushiro denko, suigetsu
27 mikazuki, ushiro denko
28 matsukaze, suigetsu
29 tanden, kyosen/ tanchu, suigetsu
30 murasame, suigetsu, suigetsu
31 mikazuki, hijizume, wanjun
32 ganka, mikazuki, ganka
33 mikazuki, ganka
34 mikazuki, uto/ kasumi, suigetsu
35 suigetsu, mikazuki, suigetsu
36 mikazuki, uto, suigetsu