

Itsutsu no Kata (The Five Forms)

By Noboru Saito

Itsutsu no Kata was included as part of Kodokan Kata in 1887 by Dr. Jigoro Kano. Dr. Kano studied at the Tenjin Shinyoryu Jujitsu School, first under Hachinosuke Fukuda, under M. Iso and also Keitaro Inoue for eight to nine years before he established Kodokan Judo. Dr. Kano learned Itsutsu no Kata from Tenjin Shinyoryu Jujitsu School. This kata was taught as “Okuden” (last skill to be taught) and by individual instruction by the master of the school. According to the record of Tenjin Shinyoryu Jijitsu School, the names of the techniques are as follows:

1. Oshikaeshi (Continuous Pushing)
2. Eige (Draw Drop)
3. Tomowakare (Separation)
4. Roin (Pulling Tide)
5. Settsuka no wakare (Instant Separation)

Dr. Kano recognized that the Itsutsu no Kata demonstrated the principle of Maximum Efficiency, yet the graceful movements were evocative of the movements of the universe. Dr. Kano kept this kata as a part of Judo. Dr. Kano was thinking to rename the techniques but he died before giving them a name. Therefore the five forms in Itsutsu no Kata are identified only by number. The way Kodokan performs this kata is slightly different from Tenjin Shinyoru School.

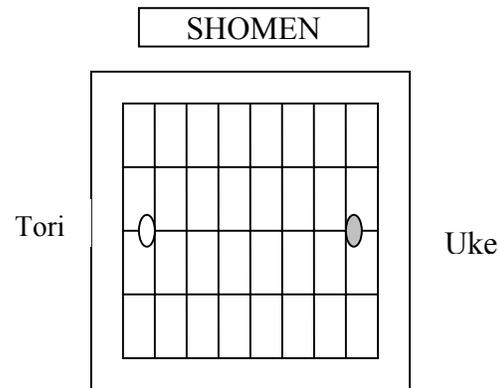
Ippon me	Demonstrates the principle that rationalized, continuous attack will bring defeat, even against a strong power
Nihon me	Demonstrates the principle of using the energy of opponent's attack to defeat them
Sanbon me	Demonstrates the principle of the whirlpool, wherein the inner circle controls the outer circle
Yonhon me	Demonstrates the power of ocean's tide: the tide will draw everything on the shore into the ocean, no matter how large
Gohon me	Demonstrates the principle of yielding: when unlimited energies collide with each other, one yields to avoid destroying both.

Begining of Kata:

Tori (right side as seen from shomen) and uke stand apart about 5 meters (about 3 mats lengths).

They perform a standing bow to shomen and to each other.

They step forward with the left foot and then the right foot to the shizen hontai.

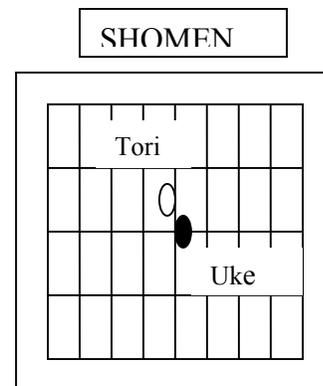


There is no stopping between each technique.

Ippon me:

Uke advances forward with ayumi-ashi, starting with left foot, to the center of the dojo and takes shizen hontai.

Then *tori* slowly approaches uke with ayumi-ashi, starting with the left foot, raising the right palm as he moves. Then he continues forward, on a slight angle to his left, until his right shoulder and his right foot almost touches uke's, then places his palm gently on uke's chest, thumb out to the side.



Tori starts to push uke backward with using tori's little finger side of his right hand and his thumb side alternately.

Uke starts taking small steps backward from uke's left foot and right foot to maintain his balance.

As uke starts to taking steps backward, *tori* takes a step forward with the right foot and then left foot while tori continuously pushes uke's chest with right hand. Tori continues advancing with small steps and gradually increasing the pace.

Uke, unable to keep up with tori, finally loses his balance.

At that point, *tori* steps forward with his right foot, and pushes hard with his right arm.

Uke falls straight back, slaps with both hands while uke keeping the legs apart about the shoulder width and the feet on the mat, this fall is called Jido daore (stone statue of a guardian deity of children fall).

Nihon me:

After finishing the Ippon me, **tori** draws his right foot back and takes shizen hontai. As **tori** draws his right foot back, he draws his right hand back to his side.

Uke sits up as tori draws his right foot back (HINT: Uke sets up as if he were attached to tori's right hand by a marionette's string) and put uke's right knee on the mat and raises uke's left knee. While standing up, Uke holds his right shuto hand at his waist, with the fingers pointing straight toward tori. Then he stands, and lunges forward on his right foot, as if to stab the middle of tori's abdomen with his right hand.

Tori steps back with his left foot, turns his body to the left, and grabs uke's right wrist with the left hand from outside of uke's right wrist and places his right hand on inside of uke's forearm and pulls uke off balance to uke's front. As tori pulls, he drops to his left knee and throws uke down on the mat.

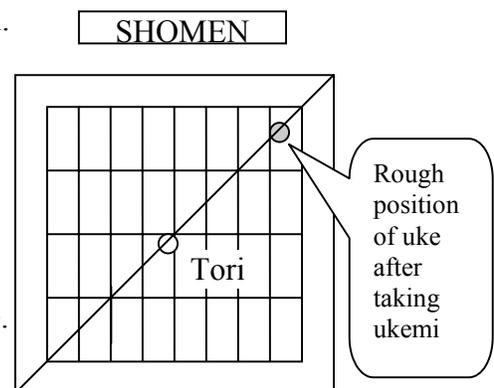
Uke rolls sideways over uke's right toes and slaps the mat with his left hand.

Sanbon me:

Immediately, tori with his left knee on the mat spreads his arms to his side, like a Chinese phoenix, and leans forward slightly while standing up. At the same time, uke without stopping from rolling sideways ukemi for Nihon me, raises his right knee up and his left knee on the mat spreads his arms to his side, like Chinese phoenix, and leans forward slightly while standing up. Their palms facing forward and fingers apart naturally.

They circle around each other, to the left, in a small spiral. When they reach the center of the dojo, they should meet face to face, shomen is on tori's left front corner. They let their arms cross, left arms on top. Tori and uke push up with their right arms and push down with their left arms. They continue rotating to their left, picking up speed, then **tori** makes **uke** off balance to uke's right front corner, at this moment **tori** slips his feet past uke's right foot and tori drops on his left side. As **tori** falls, he pulls down in an arc with his left hand, and pushes up and over with his right.

Uke flies over tori's body and takes big right zenpo kaiten ukemi toward right corner of the dojo.

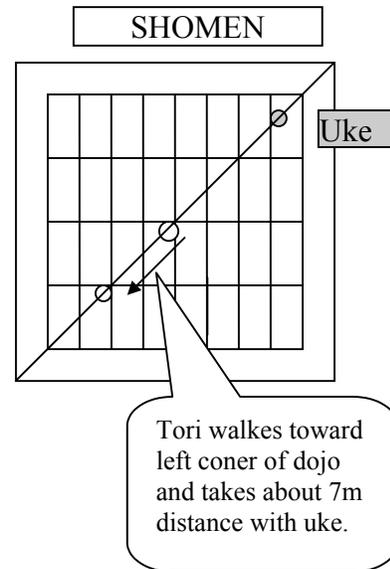


Yonhon me:

Uke is now standing at the right corner of the dojo in shizen hontai.

Tori slowly stands up and walks to the corner of the dojo about 7m from uke. Then tori faces uke in shizen hontai.

Tori keeps his eyes on uke and draws his left foot back to his left corner, lowering his body and swinging his arms back to his left, as if casting a net, and bends forward. Then running toward uke with ayumi-ashi, and gradually increasing speed, tori lets his arms swing forward. Tori runs past uke about 1 meter, bringing his arms up high, palms facing forward, and stretches his body fully, with both heels up. He takes one breath, then brings his arms to his side at his shoulder height while bringing his heels on the mat, then slowly moves back a couple of steps from the right foot. Tori places his right elbow area on uke's chest and tries to push uke backward.



Uke starts moving backward with small steps from the right foot.

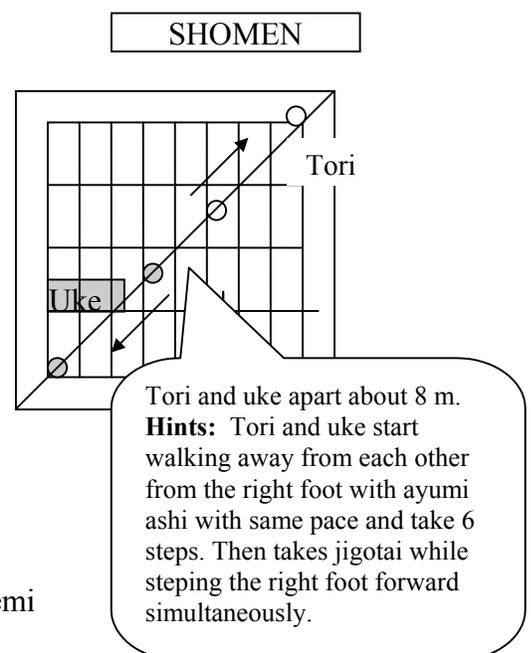
Tori continues pushing uke with right arm by taking small steps. When uke can no longer maintain his balance, tori drops his left knee to the floor and throws uke backward. Simultaneously, tori brings his left arm to his side.

Uke takes a normal backward ukemi and sits up.

Gohon me:

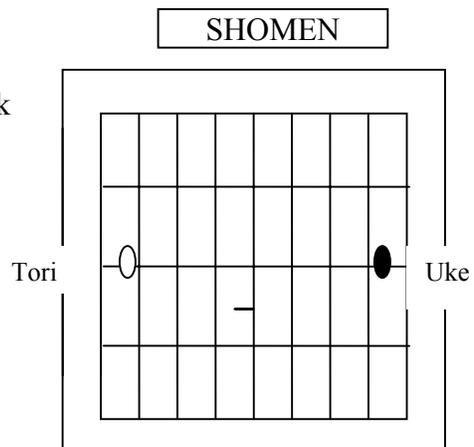
Tori and Uke stand up. Tori walks to the right back corner and uke walks to the left front corner of the dojo. They are 8 meters apart. They stand with backs to each other, shizen hontai. After taking one breath, tori and uke step forward with their right feet, taking right jigotai, while simultaneously spreading their arms out to their sides like holding a large ball. They turn their bodies to the left while pivoting on their left feet, and completely face each other. As soon as facing each other, tori and uke start running toward each other from their right foot, with increasing speed. Just before colliding each other, tori slides from his left foot and right foot just outside of uke's right foot, while turning his body to the left, and landing on his left side, hands on his abdomen.

Uke jumps over tori's body and takes a right zempo kaiten ukemi and stands.



Ending of Kata:

Tori and uke go back to their original position and step back with right foot and then left foot and perform standing bow and bow to shomen.



Reference books:

Kodokan Itsutsu no kata - Japanses published Heisei 4 nen, June 15.

Kodokan Judo-Jigoro Kano by Kodokan

Judo no Kata by Sumiyuki Kotani

Hitsuroku Nippon Judo by Ryusuke Kudo