

England Karate-Do Wado-Kai



Guide to

Kushanku クーシャンクー

Naihanchi ナイハンチ

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Foreword

The England Karate-Do Wado-Kai is proud to present the Association's official guide to the Kushanku and Naihanchi kata. It is intended to act as a model methodology of how these kata should be performed not only in normal class activity but more importantly in both Kyu and Dan gradings.

This guidance is the accumulation of many years of training and research by both the Chief Instructor Dave Swalwell 6th Dan and the Chief Coaching Officer John Stephenson 6th Dan. Their combined knowledge and understanding and having the experience of training with most of Hironori Otsuka remaining students, as well as other well renowned karate-ka, has enabled the Association to publish this extensive guidance document.

The technical updates in this guide amount to the traditional way in which the Pinan kata was taught by the founder Hironori Otsuka and is in line with the EKW's constitutional commitment to "*foster and develop the art of Wado Ryu along traditional lines.*"

The EKW acknowledges that initially some of the updates will be new to some, but in time these will become embedded into the Association's training and become the normal way.

It is with great pleasure that the EKW presents its Guide to the Kushanku and Naihanchi kata.

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The Kushanku Kata (クーシャンクー)

Introduction

Kusanku (also known as kushanku, Kosokun or Kwang Shang Fu Kwang Shang Fu), was the name of a Chinese martial arts expert, a master of the northern Shaolin-Quanfa, coming in 1756 as an ambassador of the Chinese Ming-Emperor to Okinawa, who lived during the 18th century. He is credited as having an influence on virtually all karate-derived martial arts.

The name Kushanku/Koshokun consists of the letter *Ko* (public, official), *Sho* (minister) and *Kun* (a suffix for persons, means also "master, ruler"). This shows, that it may be a title. But it is also possible, that it may be used as a normal name.

Kusanku learned the art of Ch'uan Fa in China from a Shaolin monk. He was thought to have resided (and possibly studied martial arts) in the Fukien province for much of his life. Around 1756, Kusanku was sent to Okinawa as an ambassador of the Qing Dynasty. He resided in the village of Kanemura, near Naha City. During his stay in Okinawa, Kusanku instructed Kanga Sakukawa.

Sakugawa trained under Kusanku for around six years. After Kusanku's death (around 1762), Sakugawa developed and named the Kusanku kata in honour of his teacher.

Some families ("The 36 families") were elected by the Chinese emperor at this time to send them to Okinawa. These families consisted of experts of different professions and arts and had the order to teach their abilities. They settled in the village Kumemura near Naha. Kushanku was probably one of them.

His name can be found firstly in the so called *Oshima Hikki* (Notes of Oshima). In 1762 a tribute-ship of the Satsuma crashed near Tosa in Shikoku-province, due to a storm. There it stayed about one month. The scholar Tobe Ryoen (1713-1795), who lived on Tosa, wrote down the talks of the sailors of this ship. These notes became famous later under the name *Oshima Hikki*.

According to these notes a man called Shionja Peichin was on that ship, and told about a Chinese martial artist named Koshanku. In the notes is written "*A Chinese called KO SHANG KUN brought name students with him. I was really impressed by the demonstrations of kempo... I saw how a little person easily defended against bigger and stronger persons. He kept on hand close to the trunk and just used kata-te und nuki-ashi and the more little man defeated the bigger enemy without using power.*"

Kushanku was famous for his fighting abilities. He influenced the development of the Shorin ryu a lot by introducing the Kata Kushanku, which plays an important role in many styles of Shorin ryu and Shuri Te schools. Also it is said, that he introduced Hikite, to pull back of the fist to the body. Also he first taught Kumiai jutsu, a form of Kumite, in Okinawa.

It is believed that Kushanku had three students on Okinawa Shionja, Chatan Yara and Sakugawa.

The existence of Shionja could till today not be validated. Just the *Oshima Hikki* give some reference on his existence. It is also uncertain if he was a student of Kushanku.

Chatan Yara (1740-1812) stayed for many years in China before he became a student of Kushanku. If he got to know Kushanku in China is not uncertain. It is known that he had a profound knowledge of martial arts (especially Xing Yi and Qi Gong) when he met Kushanku. That enabled him to understand the difficult martial arts system that Kushanku taught, especially when it dealt with Qi. So he understood the Kata he learned from Kushanku in its full depth. Due to this the original content of the Kata Kushanku was kept and taught on the line Chatan Yara Kushanku. The original form of the Kata, the Kuniyoshi no Kushanku is taught in Matsubayashi ryu. Chatan Yara became as the inner student (Uchi deshi) successor of Kushanku and received the Menkyo Kaiden.

Another student of Kushanku was Sakugawa Kanga (1733-1815), also known under the name Tode Sakugawa. It thought that Sakagawa became a student of Kushanku about 1756. The story how Kushanku and Sakugawa got to know each other is written down in the book "The Weapon less Warriors" by Richard Kim. Sakugawa was not this experienced in Chinese martial arts as Chatan Yara and did not know the principles of Qi. Due to this he could not reach the depth of the martial arts knowledge that Kushanku had, even though he learned from Kushanku for over six years. So he modified the Kata he learned from Kushanku just as Chatan Yara did and replaced many techniques he did not understand by techniques of his own. By this he changed the Kata heavily and the original content was not taught on the line of Kushanku's original techniqu.

Kushanku probably died in 1790 in China.

Kusanku may be translated as "To View the Sky." The kata is supposedly performed at night and uses many deceptive manoeuvres to confuse the attackers. Referred to as Kanku Dai in Shotokan Karate, it is also part of Shorin-Ryu and Shuri-te schools.

Kusanku is an intricate and lengthy kata. It consists of about 60 or so movements. The kata is thought to enact an encounter taking place in a large field at night with numerous opponents. It involves perfecting the ancillary senses of hearing and touch due to the difficulty of seeing clearly at night. Kusanku involves swift stance shifting, low defensive postures, as well as the development of the "sixth sense".

Kusanku's requirement of constant alertness and unpredictable combinations bind immediate applicability to kumite. It moves both on the ground and in the air. In the opening movement of the kata, the hands circle in front of the body in a wide arc. This arc symbolizes the moon because the kata was performed at night. It might also symbolize Yin and Yang and the shielding of the eyes from the blinding flash resulting from the splitting of the cosmos.

Through working with this kata and being worked on by it, the karate-ka develops a feel for oncoming attack, and understanding of distance, and a resourceful relative to response. An karate-ka proficient in Kusanku no longer over-reacts to threat nor adopts rigid defensive postures physically, psychologically, or mentally. Kusanku teaches the karate-ka to activate the senses, to employ the mind in sensing danger and devising strategy, and to adapt.

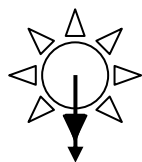
Kushanku gave a crucial influence in the development of the extensive art of Te. Nevertheless, the most important contribution was the mediation and introduction of a Kata, named to the traditional way with the name of the "carrier" Kushanku and that had a great influence to the Shorin-ryu and later to the different schools that of started off there.

Kusanku is a cornerstone of many styles of karate. It is characterized by the use of flowing techniques that resemble those found in White Crane Kung Fu; it also has a wide variety of open-handed techniques. The kata is known for its flying kick and its "cheating" stance, which robs the opponent of opportunities to attack by extending one leg along the ground and squatting as low as possible on the other (ura-gamae).

Kushanku Kata (クーシャンクー)

Kushanku is one of the longest and oldest kata in karate-do. There are some 60 movements and many changes of direction and height, as well as a diversity of techniques. It has a distinctive dropping motion that occurs 3 times in the kata, a jumping kick and throwing techniques.

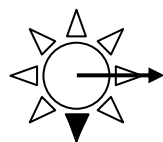
1. Firstly move the left foot to the left then the right foot to the right and have the feet just wider than shoulders width apart. The left hand should be on top of the right as shown below. There should be no tension in the hands. Otsuka sensei says "*do not cross the thumbs..the left palm covers the right knuckles*"



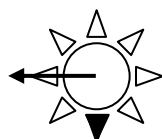
2. Raise both arms upwards to point above the head, but slightly in front of it, so that your vision is no longer obscured by the arms. Open them naturally sideways as if drawing a circle with them. Continue to move the arms down until they come together in front of the lower abdomen with the little and ring fingers touching.



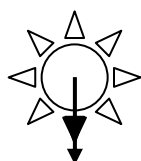
- Moving the left foot to the left with the body movement into mahanmi neko ashi and perform hidari haishu uke with the right arm across the upper abdomen, turning the head to the left.



- Pull the left foot back to its start position, step out with the right leg into mahanmi neko ashi and perform migi haishu uke with the left arm across the upper abdomen, turning the head to the right.



- Pull the right foot in so that the feet are shoulders width apart into shizen hontai dachi and have the hands on the right side of the body in koshi game (like pinan yondan movement #5).



6. On the spot execute hidari chudan harai (6a) followed by a migi chudan zuki (6b).



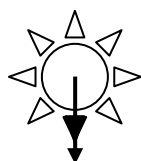
6a



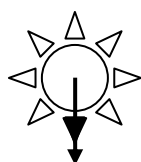
6b



7. The left foot moves to the left wide into heiko dachi, twist the upper body to the left and perform a migi jodan soto uke. The defence occurs at the same time as the body twist.



8. Pulling the left foot using the body, punch with a left chudan zuki.



9. The right foot moves to the right wide into heiko dachi, twist the upper body to the right and perform hidari jodan soto uke. The defence occurs at the same time as the body twist.

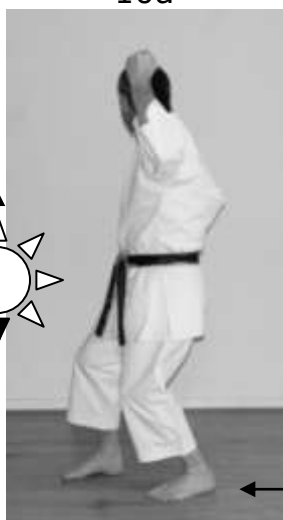
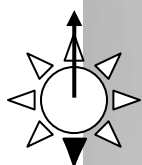


10. Pull the left foot half in toward the right foot (10a), perform a migi jodan soto uke and a migi chudan yoko geri (10b) looking to the rear. The right arm arm **is not lowered**.

10a

10b

10c – Side View



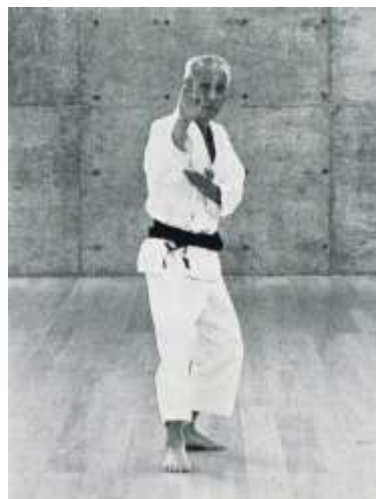
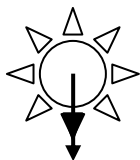
11. Turn the body towards the front direction and perform hidari shuto uke jodan in mahanmi neko ashi dachi.

11a - INTERMEDIATE

11b



12. Step forward with the right leg and perform migi shuto uke jodan in mahanmi neko ashi dachi.



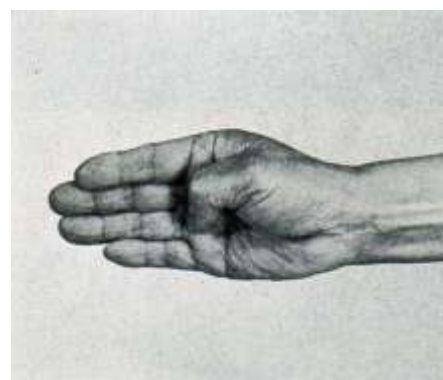
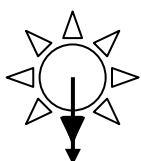
13. Step forward with the left leg and perform hidari shuto uke jodan in mahanmi neko ashi dachi.



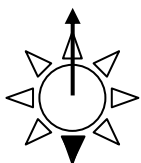
14. Step forward with the right leg and perform migi nukite chudan in migi junzuki dachi (14a). Note the position of the thumb in nukite hand (14b)

14a

14b



15. Turn the body to the left. Moving the left foot wide into gyaku no tsukkomi dachi (but with no lean forward), perform *migi tenohara uke* (right palm hand defence) and at the same time bring the left hand up to the head with *hidari shuto jodan uke* (15a). This whole movement uses the single moment principle. This movement is similar to *pinan yondan*.



15a



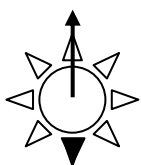
15b – Rear View



Otsuka sensei says

"Twist the upper body to the left..Unless the upper body is twisted..the body will lose its balance."

16. Kick with *migi chudan maegeri*.



16a



16b – Rear View

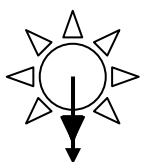


17. Turn the body to the left, lower the right leg and bend at the knee lowering the whole body downwards. Place the right fist at the forehead and at the same time have the left arm performing hidari gedan barai. **Lift the heel of the back foot slightly off the ground** and point the right toes slightly inwards (17a).

17a



17b – Side View

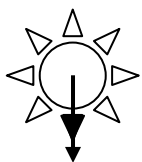


18. On the spot strike with a migi tetsui uchi pulling the left arm back crossing it with the right arm placing it over the right arm (18a). Note that both fists are facing palm upwards.

18a



18b – Side View

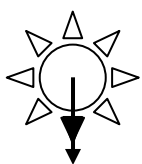


19. Pull the left leg in first, stand up in shizen hontai dachi striking with a left tetsui uchi to the lower abdomen pulling the right hand back hikite.

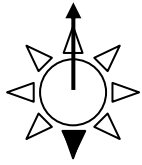
19a



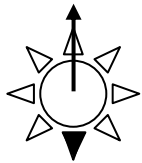
19b – Side View



20. That 5 technique combination is then repeated by moving the left foot wide into *gyaku no tsukkomi dachi* (but with no lean forward), perform *migi tenohara uke* and at the same time bring the left hand up to the head with *hidari shuto jodan uke* (20a).



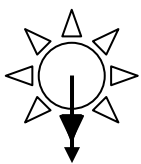
21. Kick with *migi chudan maegeri*.



22. Turn the body to the left, lower the right leg and bend at the knee lowering the whole body downwards. Place the right fist at the forehead and at the same time have the left arm performing *hidari gedan barai*. Lift the heel of the back foot slightly off the ground and point the right toes slightly inwards (22a).

22a

22b – Side View

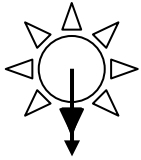


23. On the spot strike with a *migi tetsui uchi* pulling the left arm back crossing it with the right arm placing it over the right arm (23a). Note that both fists are facing palm upwards.

23a



23b – Side View

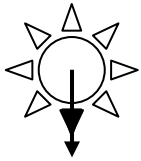


24. Pull the left leg in first, stand up in *shizen hontai dachi* striking with a left *tetsui uchi* pulling the right hand back *hikite*.

24a



24b – Side View

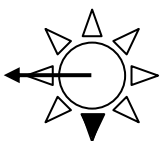


25. Turn the body to the left and pull the left leg back placing the feet together in *musubi dachi*. Place the hands on the right side of the body in *koshi gamae* with your left hand palm facing down on top of the right with the fists touching lightly. The left forearm touches the body. Look to the left.

25a



25b – Hand Detail

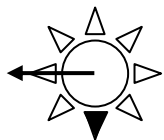


26. On the spot, perform hidari chudan harai and hidari yoko maegeri chudan. This is the same as pinan yondan.

26a



26b -Rear View

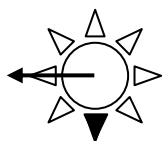


27. Land the kick in gyakuzuki dachi and strike with migi empi chudan into the palm of the left hand.

26a



26b - Rear View

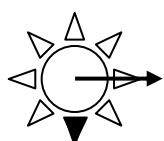


28. Turn the body to the right, pulling the right left leg back placing the feet together in musubi dachi. Place the hands on the left side of the body in koshi gamae

27a



27b -Rear View

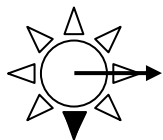


29. On the spot, perform migi chudan harai and migi yoko maegeri chudan. This is the same as pinan yondan.

29a



29b -Rear View

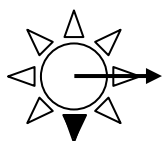


30. Land the kick in gyakuzuki dachi and strike with hidari empi chudan into the palm of the right hand.

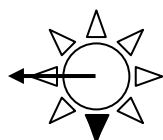
30a



30b - Rear View



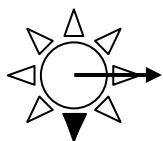
31. Turn the body 180° to the left into mahanmi neko ashi dachi and perform hidari shuto uke jodan.



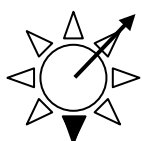
32. Moving forward with the right leg and 45° to the right into mahanmi neko ashi dachi and perform migi shuto uke jodan.



33. Turn the body 135° (i.e. 90° + 45°) to the right into mahanmi neko ashi dachi and perform migi shuto uke jodan.



34. Moving forward with the left leg and 45° to the left into mahanmi neko ashi dachi and perform hidari shuto uke jodan.

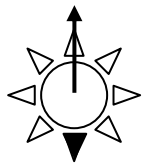


35. Move the left leg across wide into gyaku no tsukkomi dachi (but with no lean forward), perform migi tenohara uke and at the same time bring the left hand up to the head with hidari shuto jodan uke (35a).

35a



35b – Rear View

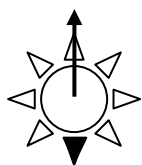


36. Kick with migi maegeri chudan.

36a



36b – Rear View



37. As you land the kick, adopt gyaku neko ashi dachi, strike with hidari otoshi uke then continue the movement into hikite. At the same time strike with migi otoshi uraken.

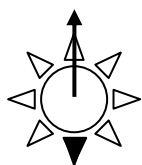
37a



37b – Rear View
INTERMEDIATE



37c – Side View
COMPLETED

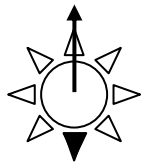


38. Slide back with the whole body using suri ashi (sliding step) into migi junzuki dachi and perform a migi jodan soto uke.

38a



38b – Side View

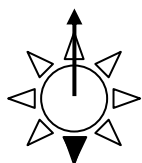


39. On the spot, punch renzuki (alternate punch) with hidari gyakuzuki (39a) followed by migi choku zuki (straight punch) (39b).

39a



39b



40. Using the left leg as a pivot turn 180° to the left raising the right knee with hiza geri; at the same time hit above the right knee with a vertical left hand in shuto and a migi tetsui uchi. Otsuka sensei says *"the small finger of the right hand almost touches the middle and ring finger of the left hand."*

40a



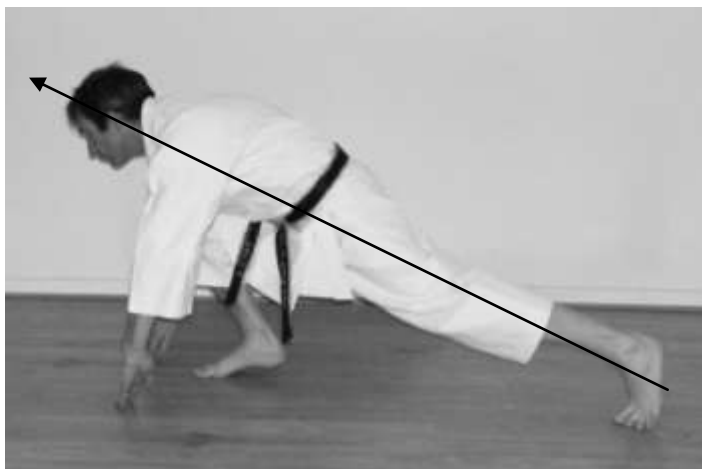
40b – Side View



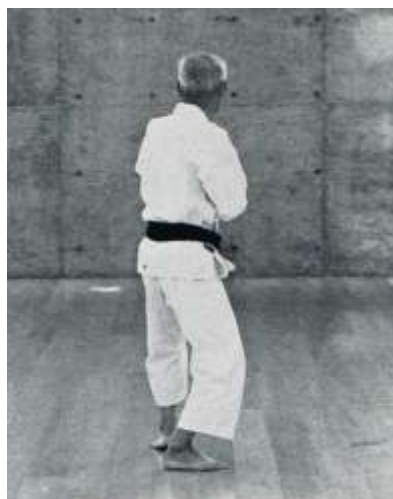
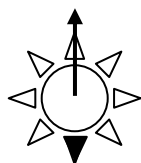
41. Move the body forward by dropping the right leg down leaning forward by standing on the ball of the right foot supporting the body weight. The fingers touch the ground lightly pointing inwards about shoulders width apart.

41a

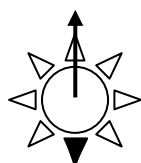
41b – Side View



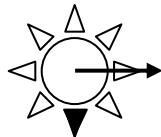
42. Stand up and turn the body to the left 180° drawing the left foot back and stand in mahanmi neko ashi and perform hidari shuto uke jodan.



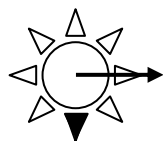
43. Step forward with the right leg in mahanmi neko ashi and perform migi jodan shuto uke.



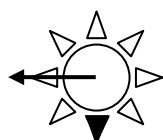
44. Using the right leg as a pivot, turn the body 270° to the left into mashomen neko ashi and perform a hidari jodan soto uke. This is the same as pinan sandan movement #1.



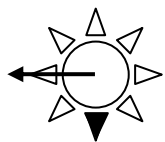
45. On the spot punch with migi gyakuzuki chudan.



46. Turn 180° to the right moving **both feet** with suri ashi into mashomen neko ashi and perform a migi jodan soto uke.



47. On the spot punch renzuki, left gyakuzuki chudan (47a) then migi choku zuki chudan (47b).



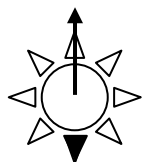
47a



47b



48. Towards the rear direction drop the right arm down, like pinan shodan movement #7, perform a migi jodan soto uke together with a migi yoko maegeri chudan.



48a



48b – Side View



49. Lower the right leg next to the left and turn to the original front in mahanmi neko ashi with hidari shuto uke jodan.



49a - INTERMEDIATE



49b



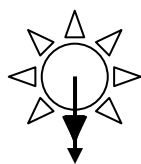
50. This next movement is a continuous technique and should not be broken down into 2 separate elements.

As you lower the left heel, the left forearm comes down with otoshi uke palm facing down across the body horizontally (50a).

Continue moving forward with the right leg into junzuki dachi and strike with migi nukite chudan. The nukite will be above the left forearm (50b).

50a - INTERMEDIATE

50b



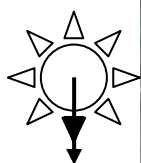
51. Lower the right shoulder and turn the body to the left (51a) dropping the right elbow and twisting the forearm inside like uchi uke.

Turn the body to the left; bring the left foot toward the front direction ending in shiko dachi, strike with hidari tetsui uchi chudan and pull the right hand back hikite (51b).

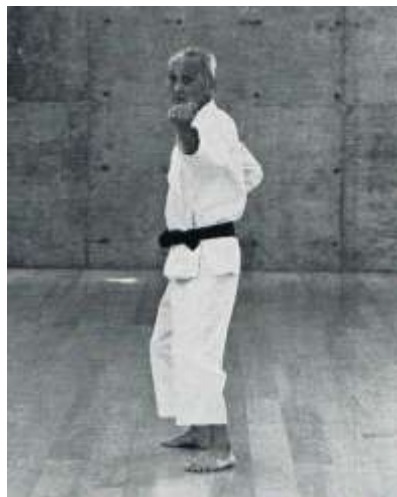
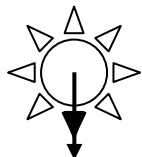
51a

51b

51c – Side View



52. Sliding the whole body forward with suri ashi, remaining in shiko dachi, and strike with hidari otoshi uraken uchi jodan.



53. Sliding the whole body forward with suri ashi, turn the body to the left and strike with migi empi into the palm of the left hand. Remember Wado empi.

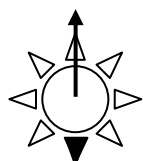


54. Turning to the right, draw the right leg towards the left leg standing up into shizen hontai dachi. Perform a migi chudan harai together with hidari soto uke jodan whilst looking to the right.

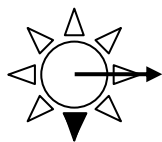
54a



54b – Side View



55. Turning the body to the right, move the left leg forward ending in shiko dachi, extend the left arm palm of the fist facing upwards striking at the middle of the body; at the same time perform migi jodan soto uke.



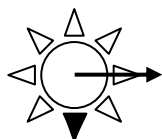
55a



55b – Side View



56. On the spot in the same stance, lower the right arm and extend it under the left arm. Both palms face upwards.



56a



56b – Side View



57. On the spot simultaneously perform a double shuto uke jodan uke. This is a jodan uke movement (57b).

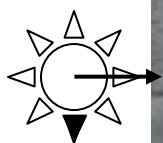
57a



57b-INTERMEDIATE



57c – Side View

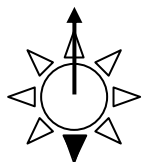


58. Move the left leg in front of the right leg turning the body 270° to the right ending in junzuki dachi. Pulling both arms downwards using both forearms to defend with double ude uke with the arms horizontal.

58a

58b

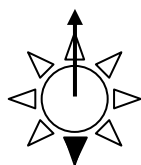
58c-Rear View



59 (1). Kick forward with a nidan geri starting with a left leg front kick (59 (1a)) and then the right leg front kick in the air 59 (1b).

59 (1a)

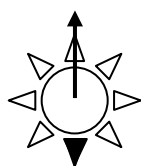
59 (1b)



59 (2). Upon landing the kick into junzuki dachi and strike with a migi otoshi uraken jodan.

59 (2)

59 (2) – Side View



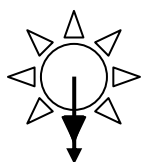
60. Moving the left leg forward and across to the right, turn the body 270° to the right to face the original front direction; landing into shiko dachi. Using the right arm starting the arm from the left side of the body low, scoop the arm up high to the right side into a jodan soto uke action. At the same time you lower the left arm to the right side of the body and scoop it from low to high in the left side also into jodan soto uke action. Both palms face inwards towards the head.

Note: One the body and arms start moving they should never stop moving until ending in jodan soto uke. The feet **do not** move during the soto uke movements.

60a - INTERMEDIATE



60b

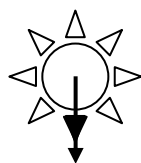


61. Pull the right foot in slightly to the left foot and lower the arms with the left palm on top of the right back of the hand (yame). The left palm covers the knuckles of the right hand as in the opening kamae. Pull the left foot in first, then the right into noare.

Yame



Noare



This completes the Kushanku kata.

The Complete Kushanku Kata

1



2a



2b



2c



3



4



5



6



7



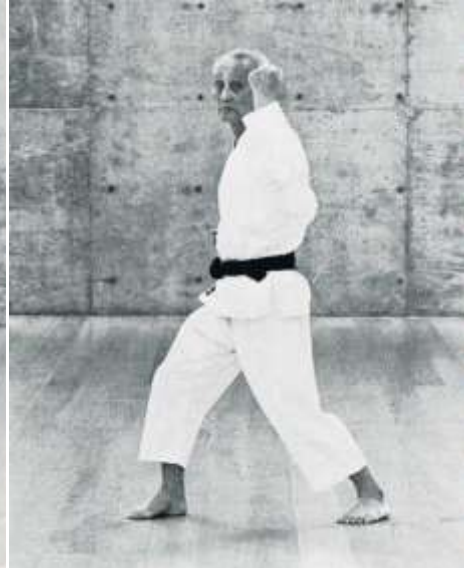
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9



10



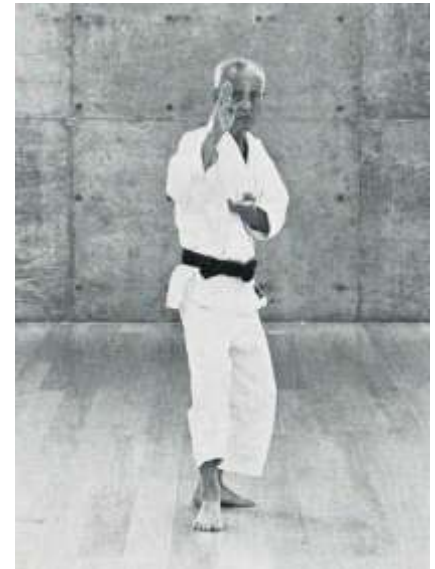
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49



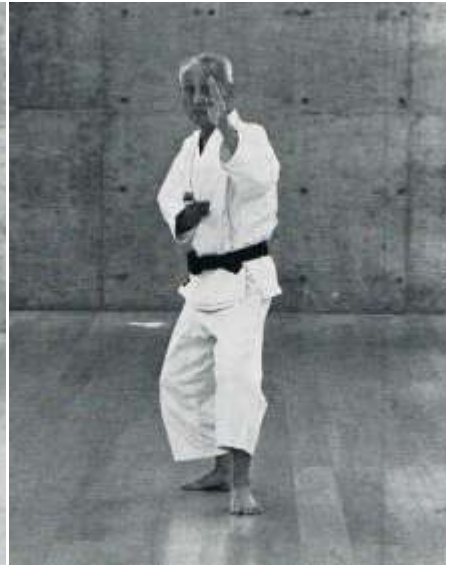
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51



52



53



54



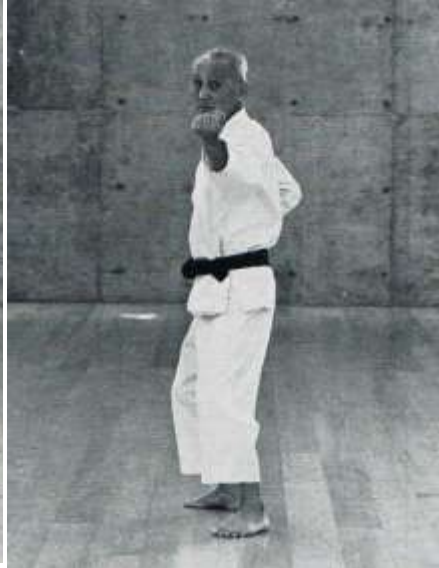
55



56



57



58



59



60



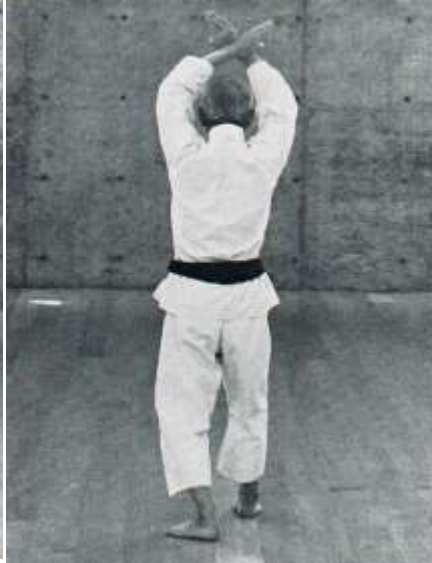
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62



63



64



65



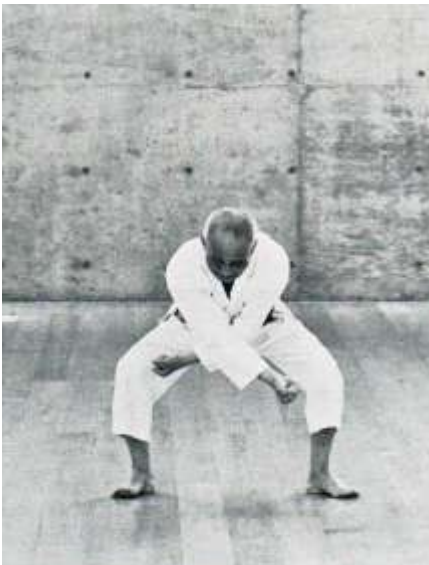
66



67



68



69



70



The Naihanchi Kata (ナイハンチ)

Introduction

Naihanchi kata in the wado-ryu system holds a fairly unique place in so much as it is linear and predominately faces the same direction, with the essence of the kata located within the "dachi" or stance. From this stance the kata required the practitioner to generate power utilising the upper body incorporating body twists and kicking techniques. It was a favourite of Hironori Otsuka who wrote: -

"Every technique has its own purpose. I personally favour Naihanchi. It is not interesting to the eye, but it is extremely difficult to use. Naihanchi increases in difficulty with more time spent practicing it; however, there is something "deep" about it. It is fundamental to any move that requires reaction. Some people may call me foolish for my belief. However, I prefer this kata over all else and hence incorporate it into my movement." p72.

Many of us practice this kata many times while often remaining unaware of its background, long history and its practicalities in real self-defence situations. Let us look at the history of the kata and looking at those individuals who have influenced its development over the years.

History

It would seem that the naihanchi kata of today come through the shorin / shuri te lineage of Okinawan te (see naihanchi through time later). However research has been made difficult because of a lack of physical documentary evidence and often researchers have relied on the unreliable word of mouth from various schools of karate do. However, there are some common threads / roots throughout.

When looking at the naihanchi kata it is important to realise right from the start that there are three naihanchi kata, shodan, nidan and sandan. They are performed as a series in a similar way to the pinan series of kata. Of course not every "ryu" or karate school has adopted them all, wado-ryu being no exception dropping nidan and sandan. Otsuka Sensei says in his book: -

"There are three naihanchi kata, shodan, nidan and sandan, but the last two are almost useless." p72

Otsuka sensei says that his version of naihanchi comes from ryu kyu in Japan from a teacher called Kibe Choki. The Ryukyu Islands contain Okinawa. "kibe" in Japanese means a play on words and Choki is Motobu Sensei's first name. A clear link is established.

Choki Motobu, who most believe taught Otsuka sensei naihanchi kata, refers to the name naifunchuan. Nai or na means name or reputation in Japanese. So is the kata naihanchi or na fun chuan translated as "name of fun chuan". This would seem to fit. Many Chinese went to Okinawa as envoys, kushanku, Iwah and Ason being the most well known; as well as the famous 36 families. Could not Fun Chuan also be an envoy or one of the 36 families teaching Chinese arts to Okinawan practitioners?

Many state that Anko Itosu learnt this kata from Sokon (Bushi) Matsumura who learnt it from a Chinese living in Tomari village. Some authors say that the first naihanchi kata (shodan) was created by Bushi Matsumura whilst the other two nidan and sandan were created by Itosu. There is a lack physical documentary and historical evidence to back up this presumption however.

Research has often stated that when certain kata moved from Okinawa to the mainland of Japan the kata were changed and altered for both safety and to conform to the way of budo. Examples might be open hand techniques (tomari bassai) were changed to clenched fists. Claw type hand for scratching and gouging were altered to grasping hands, palm heel strikes or target areas lowered or moved.

A major transformation came about the true meanings from a deadly fighting defensive art to a more spiritual and martial culture was applied to the movements. The art became "safer" and more open to the general public.

With all karate over time we have to expect that what is seen and practised today may not and is probably not exactly how the originator intended. Old masters and transmitters of the art have probably added their own "take" on the movement as well as individual mental and physical preferences. Some will argue that this has diluted the true art, whilst others would say that life goes and karate do should develop and modernise to reflect the changing times of the day.

All that can be said is that with any older addition, rituals or knowledge passed through many minds over many generations things will have been added and taken away. We cannot simply peer into the past and look at the earliest shape of the kata we see today.

What we should do as followers of the way is research as much knowledge and information from as many sources as we can in order to have an informed opinion about a technique or kata to pass on our students.

Individual Influences

It has been suggested by some researchers (such as Mark Bishop) have hinted that when questioned some Okinawan masters did not know the answers to particular questions on techniques and bunkai and often make things up as they did not want to offend the interviewer by giving a negative response. This would seem to further complicate the documentary evidence of a truer root to the real meaning of the kata.

There are three main individuals, whose names are synonymous with wado-ryu naihanchi kata, Yatsune (Anko) Itosu, Choki Motobu and Hironori Otsuka.

Itosu sensei (Yatsune Itosu below) is often credited with taking what is believed to be a large naihanchi kata (also called tekki) and breaking it into the three well-known modern versions of the original kata, subdividing it into naihanchi shodan, naihanchi nidan, and naihanchi sandan.

We would also add the "*kai*" means large so "*kai hanchi*" or large hanchi kata i.e. all three naihanchi kata are in fact one long and large kata, could easily be misquoted over the years to become naihanchi and then broken down into smaller kata through time.



Hironori Otsuka originally learned his kata from Gichin Funakoshi. To further develop his knowledge he went to Kenwa Mabuni, indeed in time, Gichin Funakoshi also studied under Mabuni to improve his kata knowledge. The teaching from Mabuni can be seen in Otsuka syllabus of kata where he kept the shorn ryu lineage when he registered his style. But Otsuka sensei also learned this kata from an Okinawan karate master Choki Motobu (1871 - 1944).



It is generally accepted that it is Motobu that had the biggest effect on Otsuka sensei's interpretation of naihanchi but there is no real evidence of exactly how he did this. Motobu called the techniques of naihanchi "*jissen*" which means to be able to use kata techniques in real fighting situations. Indeed he also says that any blocking hand or motion should be turned into an attacking hand in an instant.

It is interesting to note the stance adopted by Choki Motobu above. It is not the wado-ryu version of the stance where *"the legs are shoulders width and point the toes slightly inward with the body slightly lowered"* (Otsuka p239), here Motobu has his feet pointing straight ahead.

In his book Otsuka sensei admits that having learned the original naihanchi kata he *"added and altered"* (p239) it. Certainly there are many unique elements within the wado-ryu version of naihanchi compared to other schools.

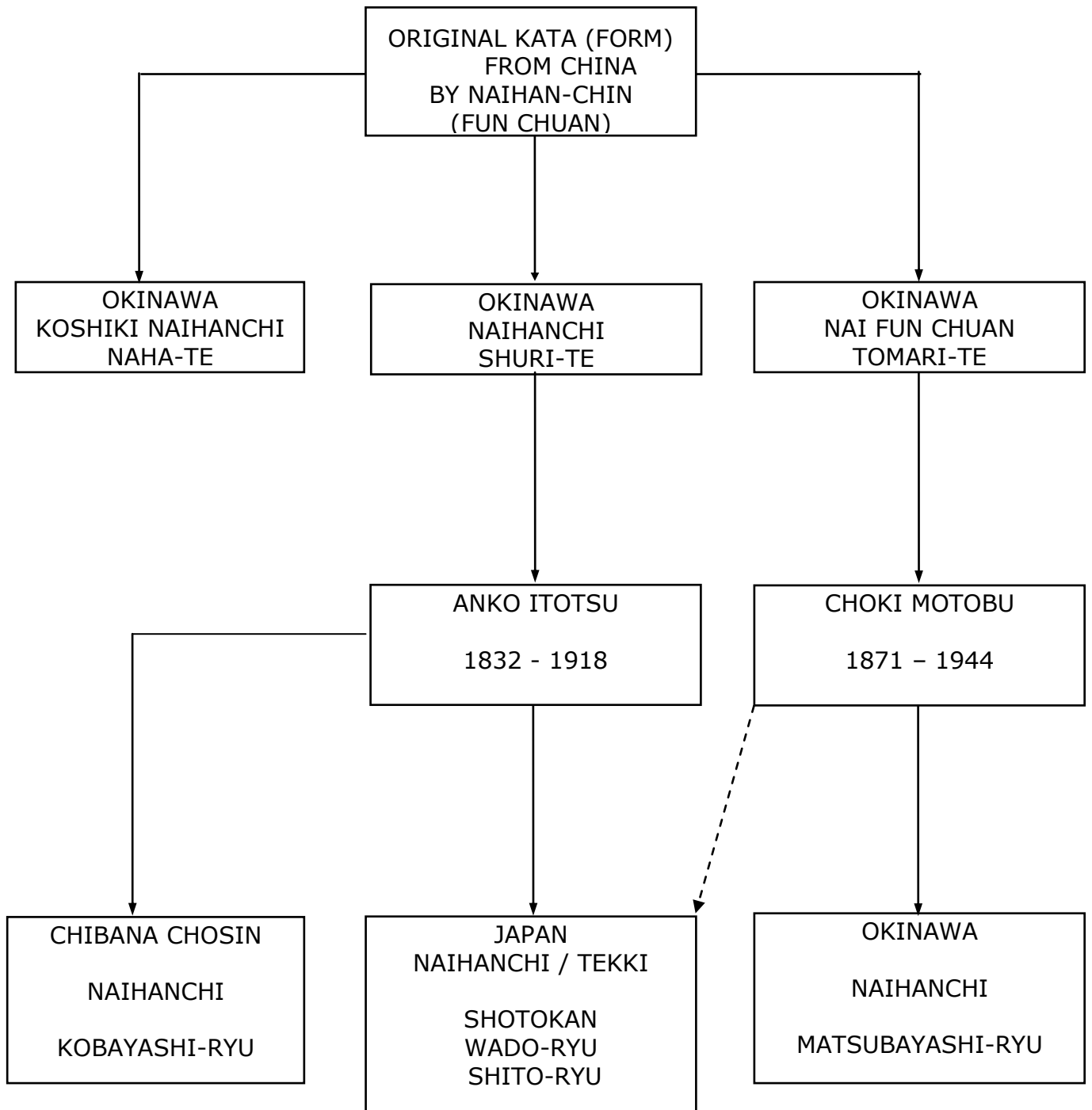
The most striking element is the opening arm and hand salutation. The circular motion of the arms up and around, then the twisting of the wrist is totally unique to wado-ryu. All other styles go straight to the strike to the right side.

The basis of all naihanchi kata are predominantly the same, showing that the roots of all naihanchi kata all come from the same place.

Note:

For historical purposes we have used shorin ryu as a main source of materials as this was the closest ancestor to Shuri-te. Shorin-ryu has been divided into Kobayashi-Ryu of Chosin Chibana, Matsubayashi-Ryu by Shoshin Nagamine, Shobayashi-Ryu from Chotoku Kyan and Orthodox Matsumura from Hohan Soken.

Naihanchi Through Time



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Naihanchi Kata (ナイハンチ)

This kata is referred to only as naihanchi in Wado ryu as Otsuka sensei thought the other two naihanchi kata were "*a waste of time*". In order to show and pass on the most authentic version of this kata we have used as our source "*Karate Do*" book 1 by Hironori Otsuka with the English translation by Shingo Ishida first published in 1997.

The words within this naihanchi are for the most part that of Hironori Otsuka himself. We have added, where necessary, additional technical details in *italics*, to aid understanding and to expand on the sometimes not obvious explanations of the movements.

Otsuka Wrote:

The "Naihanchi" stance does not exist in Japanese martial arts on its own, yet it is valid and effective. Its constituents are simple, but managing them is difficult. This kata is said sometimes to take more than one lifetime to master completely. Naihanchi has shodan, nidan and sandan, but one only needs to practice the shodan. The kata has many derivatives as well, depending on who is teaching it.

The naihanchi which will be illustrated comes from Ryu Kyu in Japan and is quite uncommon nowadays. Many in Ryu Kyu do not use it themselves. This is probably because this kata is not really appealing to the eye. However, even nowadays, there are some kata which have certain movements from this one incorporated in them which probably happened over time.

This kata was said to be taught by a Ryu Kyu master called Kibe Choki. To this, I added and altered slightly. Kibe was relatively conservative; he chose to not alter this kata too much which is fine. I also believe that this format is the most valid in my opinion. From naihanchi one may progress to seishan and furthermore to Chinto to further master Japanese indigenous arts with practice.

How to stand in Naihanchi

Open both legs to about shoulders width and point the toes slightly inward with the body slightly lowered as well; and place both fists (thumbs together, palms inward) between the knee and the upper stomach. Keep the upper body in its natural state; do not curve or bend it and "stand" with the whole body, not just the legs. The waist nor the legs are supporting the body, the body is. This "feeling" can be attained through repeated training, so practice it until it is achieved. Anything that feels awkward will become comfortable through repeated practice. What may feel comfortable to the human perception can become uncomfortable over long years of training. Some prefer to sit crossed legged, while others do not. However, it is obvious that if there is tension in the legs, then it will be difficult to move the body, for example. In naihanchi, one must not place strength unnecessarily in the legs to facilitate a turn of other movements. The waist must be used instead.

One important thing to remember is not to collapse the posture of the legs by placing strength in them. This is not the naihanchi stance. It is sometimes called a "jockey stance" and how appropriate that seems. I do not know much about riding horses, but this stance must be how one rides a horse. One does not rest his body weight on the horse itself or on his own feet completely. One should imagine being able to turn to the rear suddenly without hindering the horse's activity. Not on yourself nor on the horse. A strange expression but very true in this situation.

All hand movements are done high. In this kata, this statement is true. When the hands are held high, one concentrates about the hands and his lower body tends to collapse easily. It is with this fact in mind that one trains naihanchi without compromising his stance or posture.

In the following text you will find some anomalies. Otsuka talks about "using the whole body", but then on occasion refers to not twisting the body and using the upper body only. Through practice with Tony Heap sensei I can see this would work. To attempt a textual explanation is extremely difficult. To justify Otsuka sensei words would require in depth explanation and physical analysis of the use of the breath i.e. short sharp versus relaxed and natural; the use of the chakras; rotation of the pelvis to engage the tanden; using the vision to focus the spirit and relaxation as the key to ultimate strength.

The Naihanchi Kata

Movements - The black triangle in the diagram is the original front direction.

Kamae. Face the front with feet in heisoku dachi (closed foot stance) and the left hand is on top of the right. As natural as possible so as not to put tension in the hands or the elbows. Yoi.



1. Do as in kushanku movement 1 but with the feet together and turn both wrists so the left palm covers the right knuckles and the fingertips are lowered slightly downward.

It is interesting to note that it is only wado-ryu naihanchi that uses these opening arm circular sequences. All other styles go straight to the tate shuto uke / uchi.



- Then move the head first to face left, then to the right.



First to the left,



then to the right

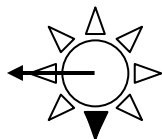
- Lower the body slightly, cross the left leg over the right leg and stand on the outer edge of the left foot (same applies for the right foot) and simultaneously, bend both elbows, then bring both palms up to the upper chest (3a). Then move your right foot to the right and enter into the *naihanchi dachi* and perform a *migi tate shuto uchi*. This style of walking is called "*chidori*". The extended arm should be below the shoulder, but the defence should occur above the chest and as straight as possible, not bent. The left fist should be pulled in beside the chest, with the forearm (beneath the left chest) horizontal.

The movements of the feet and hands must occur simultaneously. The body must move smoothly; all and every action must occur continuously. In the "*chidori ashi*" carry the whole body, not just the legs or the portion above the waist.

3a - INTERMEDIATE



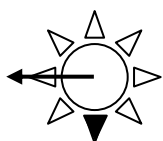
3b



The right arm should be fully extended i.e. as straight as possible so that the whole body is used in the movement.

4. Twist the upper body to the right and strike with the left elbow into the palm of the right hand. Remain in a comfortable stance even after twisting the upper body to the right.

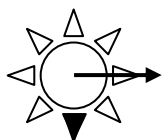
Try to make both shoulders face right and keep both forearms horizontal and below the shoulders (above the chest). The twisting of the upper body occurs via the waist.



5. Draw the right fist back to the chest, face the left palm down by moving the forearm and twist the body to the left to face forward; the face should point left. This will be referred to as Naihanchi kamae.

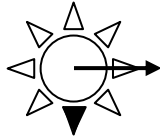
When the upper body is not fully facing forward, the face cannot point fully to the left. Be sure to maintain a correct posture. Keep both forearms horizontal and directly opposite to each other. The face looks left, but the upper body faces straight ahead.

Naihanchi Kamae



The left forearm is horizontal across the chest with the arm away from the body about 2 fist widths.

6. With the left arm do a gedan barai. If only the arms is used the posture of the upper body and neck will collapse. Execute only when the upper body is fully to the left.

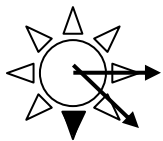


7. Punch with the right arm diagonally forward 45° (7a) at the same time the left arm is returned to the side of the body with hikite (7b). Continue moving and immediately return the left forearm so that it is horizontal in front of the chest (7c) to Naihanchi kamae.

7a - INTERMEDIATE

7b - Side View

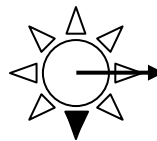
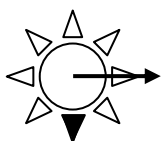
7c - Naihanchi Kamae



8. Cross the right leg over the left leg and follow with the left leg to do a "chidori ashi" to the left (8a). Landing in naihanchi dachi, simultaneously face forward and raise the right forearm to do migi jodan soto uke. The left arm remains in hikite position (8b).

8a - INTERMEDIATE

8b



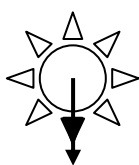
9. On the spot extended the left arm forward and the right arm is brought down inside the left arm close to the body ready for a gedan barai (9a).

The arms continue to move so we have migi gedan barai and the left fist and elbow is drawn in beside the chest with the fist pointing slightly upwards (9b).

Note: Do not let the arms cross as it becomes difficult to move the limbs.

9a - INTERMEDIATE

9b



10. With the left fist, strike with hidari uraken uchi jodan (10a) leaving the right arm where it is for now.

On the recoil of the uraken, defend with hidari nagashi soto uke; with the right arm horizontal (10b) and the right fist touches the left elbow lightly.

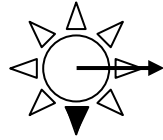
10a - INTERMEDIATE

10b



Remember to use the whole body in both the hidari uraken uchi and the hidari nagashi soto uke.

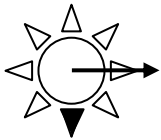
11. Turn the head quickly to the left side.



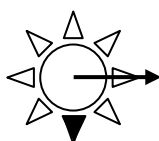
12. Lift the left lower leg in front of the right knee enough to almost be able to see the sole of the foot (12a). The foot as high as possible without straining the leg. This movement is not a foot sweep. Return the leg quickly to its origin (12b). The movement is called "*namae gaeshi*"

12a

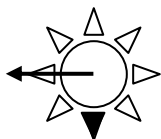
12b



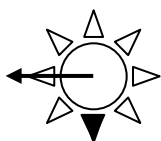
13. Twist the upper body to the left and do hidari jodan soto uke. Try to maintain the stance as much as possible. Twist the upper body without destabilizing the lower body.



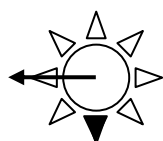
14. Turn the face completely to the right.



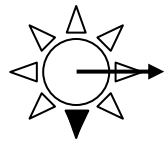
15. Without altering ones posture significantly, lift the right lower leg in front of the left knee do as in move #12. Remember this is leg movement is called "*namae gaeshi*" or "returning wave".



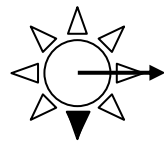
16. Maintain your posture; twist the upper body to the right and do hidari uchi uke jodan.



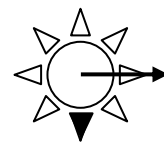
17. Turn the body back to face forward. Turn the face to the left. Place both arms in Naihanchi kamae with left arm horizontally in front of the chest and right hand hikite.



18. Without twisting the upper body or the shoulders, punch with both fist towards the left side horizontally with morote zuki. The tetsui uchi is in line with the arm pit.



19. Turn the left wrist / forearm over so that the palm facing up.



Movements 20 to 32 are the same as movements 4-19 but in the opposite directions.

20



21



22



23



24a



24b



25



26



27



28a



28b



29



30a



30b



31



32



Yame



Noare



On yame. Quietly draw the right foot back, face forward, lower both fists opened and assume the posture for preparation. Although one is about to finish, always be prepared to defend from an enemy's attack. This is zanshin called "remaining spirit" literally sanzō (zan) or remaining and **shinzu (shin) or spirit**; sometimes called empty mind "**munashi seishin**" or **mu-shin**.

End with the separation of both hands and toes from each other and assuming the posture as at the start. This kata focuses on movement – fundamental movements and variations of these according to the situation. These movements involve the usage of the body's full strength in the former and swift, quick movements with respect to the latter.

In the former (i.e. fundamental movements) distribute the body's strength equally, without becoming too tense to keep a smooth "flow" of movements. Keep in mind that all movements occur using the whole body -never the legs or arms by themselves. The fundamentals practiced in the former are then quickly executed; altered if necessary. When training with this kata, remember to be able to react in any direction at any time.

This completes the Naihanchi kata performance.

The Complete Naihanchi Kata

Yoi



1a



1b



1c



1d



1e



2a



2b



3a



3b



4



5



6



7



8a



8b



9



10



11



12a



12b



13



14



15a



15b



16



17



18



19



20



21



22



23



24a



24b



25



26



27



28a



28b



29



30a



30b



30c



31



32

Yame

Naore

