



BRITISH WADOKAI KARATE  
Standardisation Wado Karate Course Part 2 – *Kata*.

KATA

型 形

Rigid Form – Flexible Form

'Form', 'position', 'single'. Encompasses many interpretations, depending on the written Kanji, including 'rigid-form', and/or 'flexible-form'. Generally refers to the 'Formal exercises' practised within Japanese martial-arts. The nearest English for Kata is 'form', 'pattern', 'shape', etc. The Kanji meaning for Kata is made up of three simple characters. The one in the upper left means 'Shape'. The one on the upper right means 'Cut'. The one on the bottom means 'Ground'. So therefore a Kata is a shape that cuts the ground. The kata is an artistic presentation in which all movement is defence and counter attack, and put together in a refined manner with no wasted effort. It is a sequence of movements, which are both defensive and attacking, performed as a result of several attackers. Kata is a Japanese term meaning mould, model, style, shape, form, or data-type. A karate kata is a set number of basic techniques arranged in order. Each kata has its own character. Some kata have a very heavy, solid, and robust feeling to them. While performing them you can imagine that you are ploughing through the enemy like a bull that cannot be stopped. Other kata have a quick, light feeling to them and require acrobatics. When performing these kata you can imagine yourself moving about from enemy to enemy so quickly that you never even get a good look at whom you are fighting. Some are more graceful and flowing in nature, and others are performed very slowly with great muscle tension. Each and every technique is executed as if it were the only technique to be performed and maximised to its fullest. Rather, it is the shape of the techniques, the speed at which they are performed, and the rhythm of the kata itself that lends it character. Interpretations of each Kata would reflect on the concepts of the written (kanji) form. Basically a Kata is a set of prearranged fighting techniques put into a set, pattern or form.

Karate Kata can be split into three schools: SHURI-TE: Pinan (Heian) Shodan, Nidan, Sandan, Yodan, Godan. Naifanchi (Tekki) Shodan, Nidan, Sandan. Passai (Bassai) Dai, Sho. Ku-Shanku (Kanku) Dai, Sho, Shiho-ku-shanku. Ji-tte (Jutte). Ji-in. Ji-han (Jion). Gojushi-ho Dai, Sho. NAHA-TE: Sanchin. Tensho. Gekisai-Dai-ichi, Gekisai-Dai-ni. Saifa (Sai-hawah). Seisan. Seipai. Sanseiru. Shisochin. Kururunfa (Kururun-hawah). Seienchin. Suparinpei. TOMARI-TE: Chinto (Gankaku). Rohai (Meikyo). Wanshu (Enpi, Empi). Wankan (Matsukaze). Others; Niseishi (Nijushi-ho). Sochin. Ananku. Unsu. Seishan (Hangetsu). The above-mentioned Kata have some variations. For example, Passai Kata has not only Dai and Sho, but also Matsumura no Passai (Passai of Matsumura), Tomari no Passai and Ishimine no Passai. In Uechiryu, although a Naha-te style, they developed a different series of Kata. These include Sanchin, Kanshiwa, Seishan, Seirui, and Konchin. Karate Kata which possess numbers as names are considered originally of Chinese and/or Buddhist origin, and passed into the Okinawan-te systems during the 1800's. The numbers have been referred to as many interpretations and factors in modern martial-arts, either as the amount of steps, techniques etc. However, it is my personal belief that they have their history within the original teachings of acupoint striking within the Kata. For example, there are considered 36 'killing' points on the human body (Sanseiru). From personal research I have found that many of the 'numeric' Kata have their foundations within the original Chinese acupoint striking system practised in the mid 1500's. It was considered the original method of 'numeric strike-point' combat was created by the Chinese Shaolin martial-artist Feng-Yiquan at that time. Other Chinese martial-artists who studied this form of combat included the famous Xie-Zhongxiang. These 'numeric' Kata also include; Suparinpei (108), Gojushi-ho (54), Sanshiru (36), Nipaipo (28), Niseishi/Nijushi-ho (24), Seipai (18), Seishan/Seisan (13), etc., all, I believe, linked to the acupoint science. In Buddhism, however, numbers hold great symbolic



importance, specifically referring to the 108 desires of man. This is very interesting as many of the Kata hold factors of 108, as: Suparimpei (108), Gojushi-ho (54), Sanseiru (36), Seipai (18), etc. Karate Kata lineage can be based on the following: Aragaki; Ni-sei-shi, Sochin, Unsu. Chatanyara; Ku-Shanku. Gokenki; Hakucho, Nipaipo, Papuren. Higaonna; Kururunfa, Saifa, Sanchin, Sanseru, Seienchin, Seipai, Seishan, Shisochin, Suparinpei. Ishimine; Bassai. Itosu; Pinan Shodan, Pinan Nidan, Pinan Sandan, Pinan Yodan, Pinan Godan, Bassai-dai, Bassai-sho, Chintei, Chinto, Gojushi-ho, Ji-tte, Ji-han, Ji-in, Kosokun-dai, Kosokun-sho, Naifuanchin Shodan, Naifuanchin Nidan, Naifuanchin Sandan, Rohai Shodan, Rohai Nidan, Rohai Sandan, Shiho-Kosokun. Mabuni Kenwa; Aoyagi, Juroku, Miyoko. Matsubayashi; Annanko. Matsumura; Bassai, Seishan, Rohai. Matsumora; Rohai, Wankan (Matsukaze), Wanshu. Miyagi; Gekisai-ichi, Gekisai-ni, Tensho. Mabuni/Ueichi; Shinpa. A further note regarding 'numeric' Kata. All of the Kata that are named with numbers, for example; Niseishi (24), Seis(h)an (13) and Kata from other styles; Sanshiru (36), Suparimpei (108), Nipaipo (28), Seipai (18), Gojushiho (54) etc., were practiced in China and passed to Okinawa in the 19<sup>th</sup> century and earlier. However, historians debate the significance of numbers as Kata names. There are several theories, the simplest being that the number was the number of movements in the Kata when it was created. However, in ancient China, a charting system was created numbering the vital points on the human body and sets of movements were created to attack these points. As with most cultural phenomenon in China, there is a definite Buddhist influence on some Kata names. In Buddhism, the number 108 has great significance, specifically referring to the 108 defilements. This is reflected with the Kata as many of the Kata names are factors of 108, i.e. Gojushiho (54), Sanshiru (36), Seipai (18). Please remember that in many cases, kanji representations of Kata names are often very recent. Many Kata names were unwritten until late in the last century. Prior to this, Kata names were often passed through oral tradition alone. When karate-ka wanted to write the kanji down, it may have been the case that the writer didn't know the meaning, and used kanji that he thought represented the Kata in some sensible way (phonetic sound of the Kata name is an obvious possibility), it may not be the original name at all. Because of this, there can sometimes be different kanji for the same Kata, or incorrect kanji altogether.

#### MAIN FEATURES OF KATA

1. Good for all ages.
2. Builds the body and helps the practice of self defence in areas such as speed, focus, awareness, mental concentration, spirit, strength, and stamina, etc.

A kata may be regarded as an integration of offensive and defensive techniques, but it is more than that. One should try to understand the spirit of the master karate-ka who created the kata, for it has a life of its own and requires many years to be mastered. Due to changes that may have taken place within the kata over many years, in technique etc., the underlying spirit (even though their general layout has not changed considerably), the technical rhythm and speed may have been modified.

The basic 'principles' of Kata practise;

1. Ikita-kata - Performing a Kata as a real fight.
2. Inen - Performing a Kata with real fighting spirit.
3. Chikara-no-kyo-jaku - Variation in hard and soft technique.
4. Waza-no-gankyu - Variation in quick and slow movement.
5. Ki-soko-no-donto - Controlling breathing.
6. Kinto - Balance.

#### KATA HITETRU SANNEN

Means kata requires three years of practice to understand and perform properly.

PINAN



'Peace', 'peaceful period', 'tranquillity'. The five Kata developed by Itosu-Yasutsune in 1903. First taught in Public Schools in Okinawa. The five Pinan Kata are Pinan Shodan, Pinan Nidan, Pinan Sandan, Pinan Yodan and Pinan Godan. Pinan Kata are the fundamental Kata significant to the Shuri-te Karate styles as Wado-ryu, Shito-ryu, Shorin-ryu and Shoto-ryu. Pinan forms were developed by Itosu-Yasutsune (AD1830-1914) in 1903 and were the first Kata ever taught and incorporated into Okinawan public schools. His ideas for these Kata are said to have stemmed from either Chiang-nan or Ku-shanku (there is some debate as which). Known also as Ping-an or Heian (during the Heian 'peace & prosperity' period). In Wado-ryu Pinan Nidan is taught prior to Pinan Shodan, as a general

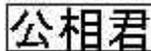


rule, due to (so it is said) Pinan Nidan is easier to learn as a 'first' Kata. In Shotokan, Funikoshi-Gichin changed the names around, so his students would not be confused by the 'practising' order. In traditional Wado, however, the name has remained the same, and Pinan Nidan is still generally taught first. Also known as Ping-an, Ping-yan, and Hei-an.

#### SHURI-TE-KATA

The Kata practised within the 'Shuri' based styles of Karate-do are as follows: Pinan (Heian) Shodan, Nidan, Sandan, Yodan, Godan. Naifanchi (Tekki) Shodan, Nidan, Sandan. Passai (Bassai) Dai, Sho. Ku-Shanku (Kanku) Dai, Sho, Shiho-Ku-Shanku. Ji-tte (Jutte). Ji-in. Ji-han (Jion). Goju-shiho Dai, Sho. See also Kata.

#### KU-SHANKU



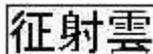
A Karate Kata created by Sakugawa-Kanga and named after the famous Chinese Shaolin martial-artist, Kung-Hsiang-Chung (Kung-Shian-Chun, Kun-Shang-Kwan), who visited Okinawa in 1762. Later developed by the Shorin-ryu school of Okinawa. Known also as Kosokun, Ku-sanku, Ku-sankun, and Kanku. Kusan (or Kushu, sometimes Kosho) translates as "foreign attaché" or similar government official. In many historical references, Kusanku is said to be the name of a Chinese sailor who taught tote in Okinawan in 1756. It is likely that the Kata is based on his teachings, or perhaps a Kata that he taught while in Okinawa. Many Shorin lineage styles include a version of Kusanku and most are fairly similar. Funakoshi Gichin renamed this Kata and Shotokan lineages call the Kata 'Kanku', which translates as "To View the Sky" (this name is in reference to the opening move in Kusanku). Chito-ryu Kusanku looks very similar to many other versions of Kusanku at the beginning (*opening the arms wide followed by 2 open handed blocks*), but otherwise is very different from other versions.

#### NAI-HANCHI



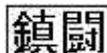
'Stealth stepping', 'inside moving'. A Kata practised within the Wado school of Karate, based on the original movements of Naifanchi, which was developed by Motobu-Choki. The original version of this Kata has links with the White Crane system of Fukien, China. The Kata was created to practise techniques designed to protect from side and frontal attack, utilising all the principles of karate training.

#### SEISHAN



'Thirteen'. Refers to thirteen techniques. Also known as 'Formal position', 'correct posture', by some schools of Okinawan Karate, depending on the interpretation of the Kanji. An Okinawa-te Kata that was generally taught as the first Karate Kata in the 1900's, during the period of time Itosu-Yasutsune taught at the public school system. Seishan is still practiced in China, in one form or another, by numerous schools of Kungfu. Nowadays Pinan Kata are generally considered to be the 'introductory' Kata. Practised within numerous Karate schools in Okinawa and Japan. Also known as Seisan. Known as Hangetsu in Shotokan. Not only is it practiced in multiple Okinawan styles of karate (both Naha-te and Shuri-te lineages), it continues to be practiced in China by several schools of martial-arts (Arhat or Monk Fist boxing, Lion Fist boxing and Tiger Fist boxing). The kanji that represent Seisan, also translates as "correct arrangement" or as is traditionally understood, "correct posture". The Kanji was changed, in some styles, to reflect the requirement for correct posture in order to perform the Kata properly. The second character is 'correctly' pronounced as "sei" in Japanese, not "san" as in Okinawan, so the two kanji together would normally be pronounced as "sei-sei".

#### CHINTO



'Quell the east', 'fighting to the east', 'winning sword'. A Kata named after the shipwrecked Chinese martial-artist who was responsible for bringing the form to Okinawa. Further developed by Itosu-Yasutsune in the Shorin-ryu school of Okinawa. Renamed Gankaku by Funikoshi-Gichin in 1922. The Kata is characterised by one leg stances included with one leg kicking techniques. Traditionally, "Chinto" translates as "fighting to the east", which could be interpreted from these characters, i.e.



quelling a disturbance to the east. Chinto is a Shuri-te and Tomari-te lineage Kata and found in many current styles, including Shotokan (they call it "Gankaku", or "crane on a rock"), as well as many Shorin Ryu schools. According to Karate historians, the oldest forms of Chinto were performed to the right and left, unlike the current version performed forward and back. Chinto Kata, being performed in Shuri-te time, had the techniques performed forward and back (as in Gankaku).

#### BASSAI

拔塞



'Thrust asunder', 'penetrating a fortress'. Also translates as 'remove an obstruction'. The Karate Kata developed by Karate master Matsumura-Soken. Practised within the Shorin-ryu schools of Okinawan Karate. Some styles practice two versions of this Kata, within their syllabus, known as Bassai-dai and Bassai-sho. However, there is also a third lesser-known version of Bassai, known as Passai-Guwa, which was passed down to a very select amount of individuals by Motobu-Choki. Only two individuals are now known to teach this, Shimabukuro-Zenpo and Miyahira-Katsuya. So in conclusion there are numerous versions of the Kata Bassai, some having little differences from each other as they come from the similar originating source. These variations include (as well as the differing terminologies) Bassai (including Bassai-sho & Bassai-dai), Batsai, Ishimine-no-Passai, Passai (including Passai-sho & Passai-dai), Patsai, Matsumora-no-Passai, Oyadomari-no-Passai, Passai-Guwa, and Tomari-no-Passai. Traditionally, Bassai translates as "to penetrate a fortress", or "to storm a fortress". From the translation from these kanji, it seems to mean, "To remove an obstacle". Possibly, the Kata means "uprooted fortress", as in a fortress that is uprooted and mobile like a phalanx, this would be in the spirit of the Kata, as it incorporates quick motions but then roots for solid attack and defence portions like a fortress. The oldest known version originated in the mid 1800's in Nishihara village on the east side of Shuri. The original kanji (and original meaning) could easily have been lost over the last 150 years.

#### WANSHU

晚愁

'Wang Xiu'. A Karate Kata that had its roots originating in Taiwan, China, and introduced into Okinawa in 1683AD. Named after a Chinese emissary, Wang-Xiu, and developed as an Okinawan Tomari-te Karate Kata by Karate master Matsumura-Soken. Practiced within numerous Okinawan and Japanese Karate schools. Later renamed Enpi (flying swallow), in some Japanese styles, due to translation difficulties. Also known as Empi, Enbi, and Enpi.

#### NI-SEI-SHI

二十四

'Twenty four'. (Okinawa). Refers to the twenty-four acupoint contacts, within the Kata. A Karate Kata practised within numerous schools of Karate including Wado-ryu, Shito-ryu, Sanku-kai, Ryuei-ryu, Kobayashi-ryu etc. The name of the Kata was changed by Gichin-Funikoshi, and is now known as Ni-ju-shiho (twenty four steps/moves) in Shotokan and numerous other styles of Karate. Niseishi is Chinese for the number 24. In Japanese, it translates as Nijushi, the "ho" character (in this case) means "move" and hence Nijushiho translates as "24 moves". The Chinese and Japanese Kanji are identical. Chito-ryu Niseishi is not the same Kata as Niseishi from Shuri-te lineage styles; even the Embusen (stepping pattern) is different. The complete origin of Chito-ryu Niseishi is unknown, however some pieces of our Niseishi can be found in other Okinawan Kata. Some Goju-ryu schools, specifically those in the line of Higa Seiko (a student of Higashionna Kanryo and later Miyagi Chojun) practised a Kata they call "Hakutsuru" (some Japanese pronounce this Hakaku, in either case, it means "White Crane") which contains the "cut, front kick, slide forward, x-block, back to square stance, ridge hand strike, repeat" sequence. It seems that Seiko Higa obtained this Hakaku



Kata from Gokenki (1886-1940), the Chinese tea merchant who taught White Crane Gungfu in Okinawa from 1912/13 until his death.

RO-HAI

老梅

'White heron', 'vision of a crane', 'crane sign', 'heron sign'. A Kata of the Tomari-te and practised in many schools of Karate in Okinawa and Japan. Developed by Karate master Matsumura-Soken. In the Matsumura-Shorin-ryu school of Okinawa the three versions taught are Rohai-ge, Rohai-chu, and Rohai-jo. Also known as Lo-hai or Gankaku.

Rohai translates as "heron sign" or "heron mark". The name "Rohai", with identical kanji, is the name of a traditional Okinawan Kata. 'White heron', 'vision of a crane', 'crane sign', 'heron sign'. A Kata of the Tomari-te and practised in many schools of Karate in Okinawa and Japan. Developed by Karate master Matsumura-Soken. In the Matsumura-Shorin-ryu school of Okinawa the three versions taught are Rohai-ge, Rohai-chu, and Rohai-jo. Also known as Lo-hai or Gankaku. The traditional Okinawan Kata is not the same Kata as the Chito-ryu Rohai and includes the signature moves of standing on one leg to avoid leg attacks. The origins of Chito-ryu Rohai are unknown.

*Excerpts taken from the 'Wado Comprehensive' and an 'A to Z of Martial-arts', written by GE Swift (8th Dan) Kyoshi.*

The objectives with the British Wadokai Standardisation Course is to ensure that all members within British Wadokai are practising and teaching the correct form of Wado as laid down by Ohtsuka Hironori Meijin and Suzuki Tatsuo Hanshi.

The techniques of British Wadokai, which include, Kata, Sanbon-gumite, Ohyo-gumite, and Kihon-gumite were introduced into the UK in 1964 and are the most important primary foundations of British Wadokai Karate-do. There should be no modification or deviation from these principles and techniques. *It is not Wado if these primary training elements are not practised correctly.*