

Midori Yama Budokai: *Hanshi's Corner*
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Ichi go, ichi e: One life, one meeting

Kata no Ri or Principles of Forms

Following is a list of *kata* as originally used by Midori Yama Budokai. Following the name of the *kata* is a translation and the principles to be learned from that form. Changes have been made, but these are the original forms to be learned in the order they were usually taught.

1. ***Taikyoku Shodan*** means Primordial Principle of the Universe, Beginning Step. A low block and mid-level punch from a forward leaning stance are the concepts to be learned.
2. ***Taikyoku Nidan*** means Primordial Principle of the Universe, Second Step. Low blocks and upper-level punches from forward leaning stances are the concepts to be learned. Some styles use *jodan-zuki* for all punches; some only use *jodan-zuki* down the center lines. The central attacks are preparation for *sanbon kumite*.
3. ***Taikyoku Sandan*** means Primordial Principle of the Universe, Third Step. Inside-out blocks from rear-leaning (back) stances are done at the corners. The following punches and centerline techniques are the same as for the Second Step.
4. ***Chon-ji*** or Heaven and Earth is the first Tae Kwon Do form used by MYB. The *embusen*, or movement line, is in the shape of a “plus.” The beginning point and four directions represent the center of the Universe and the four cardinal points of the compass. A series of four low blocks from forward leaning stances followed by mid-level punches are succeeded by a series of inside-out blocks from back stances, followed by mid-level punches. This form reinforces techniques of the preceding *Taikyoku*, while emphasizing movement in different directions. The last two attacks are performed while retreating, giving the element of countering a strong attack.
5. ***Taikyoku Yodan*** means Primordial Principle of the Universe, Fourth Step. Blocks and attacks are at high level. All blocks were done from *sanchin dachi* and all upper-level punches were done from forward leaning stances, sometimes performed deeper than usual. One learned to block “in place” against a strong attack, then counter-attack with an equally strong attack.
6. ***Taikyoku Godan*** means Primordial Principle of the Universe, Fifth Step. Blocks and attacks are done mid-level. *Sanchin dachi* is used for blocking and [deep] forward leaning stances for attacks.
7. ***Taikyoku Rokudan*** means Primordial Principle of the Universe, Sixth Step. Every technique is done from *kiba dachi* and at low level (low-level block and low level hammer-fist). A crescent kick block prior to the finishing attack is the area of study.
8. ***Kuk Moo I*** is the second (and last) Tae Kwon Do form used. Primary emphasis is on using the blocking hand immediately as the striking hand on the corners. The horizontal knife-hand strike is used as the weapon. Inside-out blocks, as well as low-level blocks and rising blocks from forward leaning stances are used. This was one of Wilson *Kancho's* favorite forms.

9. ***Heian Shodan*** or Safety and Peacefulness, Beginning Step. This form included the rear stance, forward leaning stance, lunge punch and rising block from the previous forms. As a new area of study are the knife-hand block against a body attack and a release from a wrist grab, followed by a downward hammer-fist.
10. ***Heian Nidan*** or Safety and Peacefulness, Second Step. In addition to previous techniques, *Heian Nidan* introduces the front and side kick, changing directions as you are kicking and arm breaks (joint-locks).
11. ***Heian Sandan*** or Safety and Peacefulness, Third Step. This form included movements from the previous forms, including the forearm block, with new areas of study. There are three disengagements from holding, the stamping kick to the knee joint (shin or instep) and blocking with the elbow. A vertical back fist follows the elbow block and stamping kick. There are two-level simultaneous blocking techniques, and the study of the impossibility of retreat. This was also a favorite form of Wilson *Kanchō*.
12. ***Heian Yodan*** or Safety and Peacefulness, Fourth Step. This form is a study of finishing techniques, front kick followed by a forward jump with a vertical back fist. This form has the first study of the X-stance. *Heian Yodan* was the first *kata* learned by your *hanshi meiyō kyoju*.
13. ***Heian Godan*** or Safety and Peacefulness, Fifth Step. This form has *mizu nagare* or the hook punch, and a block from the X-stance. Together with *Heian Yodan*, the X-stance presented the adaptation of both attack and defense. *Heian Godan* has a combination of basic techniques from *Kankū* and *Bassai*.

As a group, the *Heian kata* contain the most basic and important blocks, thrusts, strikes and shifting. The purpose of these *kata* is twofold. First, the techniques may be used for self-defense. Secondly, and more importantly, the develop a calm, peaceful mind and a harmony between mind and body.

14. ***Tekki Shodan*** or Iron Horse, Beginning Step. This form contains the wave change kicking technique and the distinction of grasping and hooking blocks. *Tekki Shodan* is designed to develop a resolute attitude. This was the favorite form of Motobu Choki, and the first one he taught to his students. Motobu once commented that *Tekki Shodan* contained one-hundred killing moves. Otsuka Hironori, who founded Wado-ryu, went so far as to say *Tekki Shodan* contained deeper meanings and could be continually practiced with new lessons learned each time. In contradistinction, he also stated that *Tekki Nidan* and *Tekki Sandan* were “practically worthless.”
15. ***Tekki Nidan*** or Iron Horse, Second Step. The primary principle of this form is blocking with a reinforced arm.
16. ***Tekki Sandan*** or Iron Horse, Third Step. This form focuses on continuous mid-level blocking.

All the *Tekki* forms are done from a horse stance, using a cross-stepping sideward movement. *Tekki* forms are traditionally taught as used for fighting with one’s back to the wall. These forms are designed to take the lead in a fight by breaking away from the attacker’s lead.

17. ***Saiha*** (*Saifa*) is from the West school of China. The characters mean Destroy, Defeat, though some translate it as Big Wave. This form shows the flow from fundamental to complex techniques. It emphasizes combination techniques and

- reverse techniques. Philosophically, the principle represents a strong *bushido* spirit and determination to overcome any problem or situation.
18. ***Seiuchin*** (*Seienchin*) means fifteen battles and is named after a Chinese general. This form is long and done slowly. The primary stance is *kiba dachi* (some styles use *shiko dachi*), which develops a strong spirit and muscular strength through overcoming tiredness in maintaining the stance. *Seiuchin* is unique in that it has no kicking techniques.
 19. ***Bassai Dai*** or the Greater form of Fortress Storming. A better translation would be the Major Method of Removing Obstacles. *Batsu* (*Bas-*) means to extract or remove; *Sai* means obstacle or blockage, though usually translated as fortress. *Bassai* is a study of switching blocks, changing from one block to another to take advantage of position. Variations in technique allow agile and speedy counter blocking against combination attacks.
 20. ***Kanku Dai*** or Greater form of Viewing the Sky. *Kanku* stresses flowing motions and evasion of multiple opponents. It teaches fast and slow movements when surrounded by enemies. Stretching and contracting the body while jumping and crouching are learned. Traditionally, the first half teaches fighting in the light and the second half teaches fighting in the dark.
 21. ***Kanku Sho*** or the Lesser form of Viewing the Sky. Light and speedy movements exemplify this form. Jumping, reversals and successive punches are this form's study.
 22. ***Unsu*** means Hands Which Wave Like Clouds. This was Wilson *Kancho*'s favorite *Shotokan* form. He stated that it reminded him more of the Chinese movements than any other form. It is supposedly an extrapolation of the fifteen *kata* brought to Japan by Funakoshi Gichin *Shihan*. It is demanding in strength and accuracy for rapidly changing movements. Unique kicking movements are involved, including *mawashi geri* from the ground and jumping while grasping the wrist of a punching hand. Also included is an *ushiro geri* after a 360o aerial spin.
 23. ***Gankaku*** means Crane on a Rock. This form emphasizes kicking techniques and quick, sudden attacks and counterattacks. It contains arm locks and defenses against holding. As with *Kanku Dai*, it has the principle of fighting in the dark. *Gankaku* is characterized by one-legged stances and wing like movements of the arms.
 24. ***Enbi*** (*Empi*) means Flying Swallow. It is named for the agile and speedy movements of the barn swallow. It teaches quick reversal of body movements by first approaching the opponent, then blocking while moving away. It is the only form which teaches a rising blow with the back of the fist.
 25. ***Jiin*** means Chinese Temple. This form is a study of the old form of the rear stance, now referred to as a reverse front stance. Also studied are blocks with both hands and *kakushite*, or "hidden hand" techniques.
 26. ***Jion*** means Temple Sound. This form is exemplified by smooth, harmonious movements, *yorishiki* (simultaneous sliding of the feet) and shifting positions. It is composed of long, supple and powerful motions and was inspired by the fighting attitude of the tiger.

27. *Jitte* means Temple Hands, but is usually referred to as *Jutte*, or Ten Hands. This form was designed to build strong muscles and is traditionally done slowly. It may be performed with a *bo*, as Funakoshi was noted on Okinawa for his *bo kata*. Effective use of the hips is learned with *Jutte*'s movements.
28. *Sanchin*, or three battles, stressed the *go* (hard) portion of karate. The version used by MYB was a variation of *Uechi-ryu Sanchin*, which stressed open-hand techniques. First, it developed the mind, body and techniques. Secondly, it regulated the internal organs, blood circulation and the nervous system. Finally, it stimulated the *sanki* (three ki), *tento*, *hara* (used here to mean diaphragm) and *tanden* (lower abdomen). MYB chose this version as it did not use the forced breathing methods of *Goju-ryu*, but only natural breathing.
29. *Seisan* or Thirteen is a variation of *Uechi-ryu's Seisan*, which is considerably different from any other version. Some schools contend the name is from a Chinese martial artist, and is from the Shuu Family System. This Uechi Kanbun's favorite form and it is believed that he performed a front snap kick as he returned to the final position. Traditionally, *Seisan* is never done in group, but individually, with corrections made by the Sensei. The form is done in groups of three, one slow, one mid-speed and one fast, but all strongly focused. However, it is never done three in a row. Time is taken between each performance on other drills or calisthenics. Traditionally, the instructor would correct one mistake at a time. The student would practice until s/he did it correctly. If the same mistake was made the second time, this was an insult to the teacher, and s/he would not correct it again. With extended practice, the exponent comes to realize that the overt techniques in *Seisan* are actually contained, though hidden, in *Sanchin*. Greater study is then given to *Sanchin*, which actually contains the complete essence of combative karate. With the learning of *Sanjuroku* (Thirty-Six), overt techniques are revealed to be in *Seisan*, and consequently in *Sanchin*. Intermediate *kata* should reveal what is hidden in basic *kata*, and prepare one for advanced *kata*. Advanced *kata* return the exponent to the basic *kata*, where all techniques are present, but hidden. This progression, done correctly, enables the exponent to develop a style suited to him- or herself, and to "hear" what the forms have to say on all levels.
30. *Tensho* means Covering Hands and is the opposite of *Sanchin*. Whereas *Sanchin* is a "hard" form, *Tensho* is a "soft" form. *Tensho* stresses soft movements which contain a deceptively strong whip-like element.
31. *Yantsu* may be translated to mean "Keep Pure." In context, a better translation would be "refined," in the sense of refining ore. To Maintain Purity one must follow the "Safe Three" (another reading of *Yantsu*): 1) Maintain principles and ideals rather than compromising for expediency; also, these ideals may never be betrayed in favor of other immediate advantages; 2) One must strive daily, creating a sense of urgency to overcome weakness; 3) One must strive daily to forge a strong will and spirit.
- The movements of *Yantsu* are the essence of open hand blocks, punching and kicking. The [*Y*]an character is the same as that in *Hei – an*. *Su* is an abbreviation of *sui*, meaning purity. One should strive to maintain the purity of one's principles and ideals, rather than compromise for the expedient way. *Yantsu* can also be

- written with the characters for “8th Light.” As with other Naha forms it has numbers in its name. This form has unique footwork, feints and parries – even some crane movements. It is referred to as *Ansan* in *Motobu Ha Shito Ryu*, and is longer than the version used by MYB. Supposedly Kuniba taught the *kata* to Oyama, who then shortened it in the version we now use. This is one of three forms (in the Naha style) which begin with a cross grab, sometimes called a “Goju break.” The name is a description of the action taken – a common method of naming things in oriental languages. Supposedly, the *kata* originally came from the village of *Yansu* (original name) in Fukien (Fujian) province. It was brought to Japan by Gokenki and rarely taught, though used in many Chinese *Kenpo* styles.
32. ***Hangetsu*** means Half Moon, though usually translated as Crescent Moon. *Hangetsu dachi* is used, which is a combination of *Sanchin dachi* and *Zenkutsu dachi*. The first half of the form has strong stances, slow movements and powerful techniques. Stepping is crescent shaped with circular movements of arms and legs. Movements are coordinated with regulated breathing, and are very adaptive to grappling techniques. The feet move in *suri ashi*, or a gliding motion. The second half has fast body movements and quick techniques, reminiscent of basic movements.
 33. ***Nijushiho*** means Twenty-four Steps. Twenty-four could be interpreted as two and four, implying that a technique There are diagonal and circular body motions designed to create openings in the opponent’s guard. Emphasis is on rapid foot movements and flexible stances. This form stresses combinations of two technique combinations are worth twice as much (four).
 34. ***Gojushiho*** means Fifty-four Steps, and is based on the *Gojushiho* of *Shorin-ryu*. This version contains elements of the Chinese “Drunken Form.” This form contains simultaneous block and punch techniques, open-hand techniques and a study of the cat stance.
 35. ***Chinte*** means Rare and Unusual Hands. The unique techniques of this form include the reverse vertical fist punch while changing from *sochin dachi* to *zenkutsu dachi*, and *nihon nukite* attacks to the eyes. The motion is similar to that used in *Enbi*, as they rise upward and brush the cheeks on either side of the nose, before they are thrust into the eyes. This form consists of a series of movements which emphasize the contrast between the motion and silence of nature.
 36. ***Ten no Kata Omote*** means Outer Form of Heaven. This form contains the ten most basic techniques and combinations. As originally learned, the techniques are done without preparation of the attacking hand. Based on *Shotokan’s Ten no Kata Omote*, this version is done to eliminate “tells,” and to be able to attack from any position.
 37. ***Shichidan Renshuo Keri no Kata*** means Form of Kicking at Seven Levels Training Method. This form is designed to promote good balance and is a defense against a two-person attack from both front and rear.
 38. ***Sochin*** means Immovable Battle. It uses powerful and hard techniques, and teaches combinations of two techniques with combative breathing. These include horizontal spear-hand blows to the face and kicks and close punches designed to corner the opponent.

