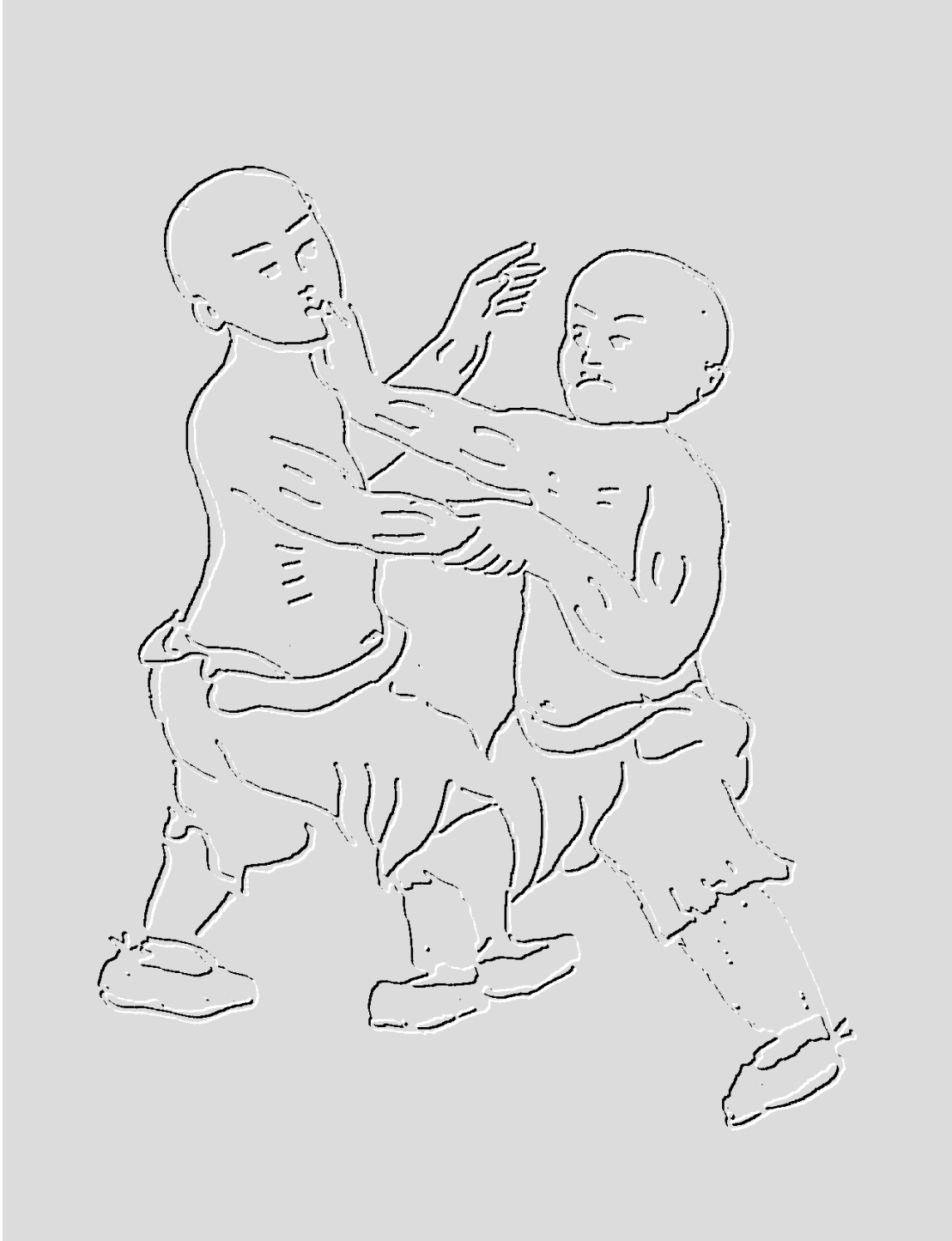


Kaki-e



the close combat practice of gojuryu
karatedo

Kakie

the close combat practice of gojuryu
karatedo

1st Edition, 6th Print

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Dedication

to all who train, research, develop and teach
for the benefit of others

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Preface

Hereby I would like to present this syllabus on *kakie*. This syllabus is an extended and translated version of a previous syllabus that was written with assistance of *Sensei* Chris de Jongh and also published under auspices of the NOGKA.

I would like to thank Miriam Gerdes, the late *Shihan* Harry de Spa and *Sensei* Remco van der Laan for commenting the concept version of this syllabus. Unfortunately this syllabus has not yet been corrected by people whose native language is English. Therefore, some mistakes in grammar and spelling are likely to be present. My apologies for this.

In this 6th print of the 1st edition, several corrections and additions were made in the text, pictures, the addresses, etc.

I sincerely hope that this syllabus will be a source of inspiration to you.

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A more extensive version of this booklet, with pictures of the exercises and techniques is expected to published before the end of 2002.

Cordially,

Wageningen, January the 28th, 2002

Sydney Leijenhorst

¹No 802974.

Introduction

The martial arts as practised by *Higaonna Kanryo* at the end of the nineteenth century and later studied by *Miyagi Chojun*, were technically still rooted in the reality of the man-to-man battlefield and still touched by the spiritual echoes of Buddhism and Daoism.

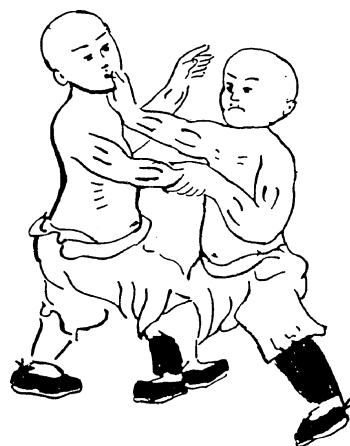
Technically these arts contained a great variety of techniques, extending way beyond the contest orientated kicking, punching and striking of mainstream modern *karate*. The martial arts of *Fujian* were structured along the lines of actual fighting, the classical knowledge of Chinese medicine and the spiritual doctrines of Buddhism and Daoism.

Fighting practice

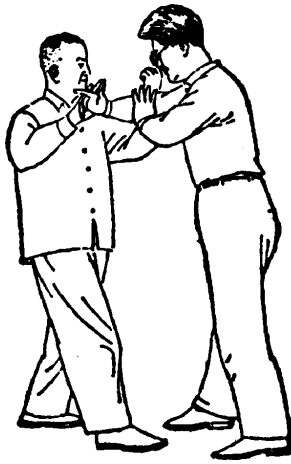
Because of their 'fresh' relationship with actual fighting, which is usually decided on one or two square meters, these martial arts contained many close combat techniques, such as the so-called *qinna* or grappling techniques, including throws, strangulations, bloodvessel attacks, jointlocks, pressurepoint attacks, etc. Techniques which, besides elbow strikes, knee kicks and headbutts, tend to play a major role in many 'streetfights' from antiquity until today.

Though still a major practice in many traditional Okinawan *karate* styles, much of this material and knowledge was lost in the development of modern *karate*. Modern *karate* is formed along the lines of international contests, rather than realistic self-defence scenarios, the elaborate and refined medical knowledge of Southeast Asia or its spiritual doctrines.

The grappling techniques mentioned above were, and still are, practised in different fighting exercises, such as *bunkai kumite* and *kakie*.



Gyakute technique from the *Bubishi* (by Patrick McCarthy, pre-release).



Pushing hand exercise from Wu-style taijiquan.

Many fighting exercises of Southern China start of from a situation in which the practitioners already have contact with certain parts of the body, mostly the lower arms. The lower arms are often called 'bridges'² since they often connect the bodies of the attacker and the defender and create the possibility to intrude the defence of the attacker. Today, still many of these exercises exist and are practised in the fighting arts of Southern China and Okinawa. Well known examples of these are *tuishou* ('pushing hands') of *taijiquan* and *chishou* of *Yongchun quan*³. In *Okinawa gojuryu karate* these kind of exercises are collected under the name '*kakie*', pronounced '*koki*' in *Fujian* dialect, and play an important role in the development of fighting abilities .

The importance of grappling techniques is also reflected in the type of sparring practice that is inherent to *Okinawa gojuryu karate*. This type of sparring is called '*iri kumi*', a term that is usually translated freely as 'continuous fight' or 'close fighting'. 'Continuous' refers primarily to the fact that the sparring practice continues when the *karateka* are at close range, grab each other or end up on the ground. The word '*iri*' means 'to enter'. Nowadays, in contests organised by the IOGKF⁴, this principle is translated to the contest rules that allow grappling and other close combat techniques such as throwing techniques, joint locks, knee kicks, etc. More precisely '*iri kumi*' means 'entering engagement', describing the tendency of the fighting style in *Okinawa gojuryu*, namely: go in and defeat.

The impact of *kakie* practice on the development of the *karateka*'s skills, both from a martial and healing perspective, can be enormous. The intense, continuous and lively feedback from a fellow practitioner that demands a balanced posture, deep breathing, flowing application of power and a high level of mental alertness and awareness. *Kakie* is an interesting meeting point of different exercises of *karatedo*. It connects the fundamental and profound healthgymnastical and meditative principles of *sanchin kata*, the technical richness of the *bunkai kumite* and the strong dynamics of *iri kumi*. Practising *kakie* will therefor strongly enhance ones ability as a martial artist.

From the perspective of '**kinetics and energetics**'⁵ *kakie* has a strong impact on the ability to ground and root one's posture, centring; regulating the breath, the absorption and extension of power, *muchimi*, *chiru nu chan chan* and other **basic qualities** that will be discussed later in this syllabus.

The grappling techniques, incorporated in *bunkai kumite* and *kakie*, and often derived from the movements of the *kata*, are called *tuite* (*tuidi*)⁶ or *gyakute*. *Tuite*

² 橋.

³ *Yongchun quan* is the mandarin pronouncuation (pinyin transcription) of *wingchun kuen*. *Quan* (拳) means 'boxing' or 'fighting' (literally: fist), similar to '*te*' (手) in *karate*.

⁴ International Okinawan Goju-Ryu Karate-Do Federation (国際沖繩剛柔流空手道連盟).

⁵ 'Kinetics and energetics' refers here to the principles of human, martial movement and the involvement of vital energy or *ki* in this phenomenon.

⁶ 逆手 (*gyakute*) and 捕手 (*tuite* or *tuidi* in Okinawan dialect; *torite* in Japanese).

can be translated as 'grappling hands'. *Gyakute* literally means 'reversing hands', explaining its defensive character and referring to reversing, weakening or releasing an opponent's grip by means of jointlock techniques, throws, strangulations and others. The same *tuite* or *gyakute* techniques are also applied against kicks and punches.

Traditional medicine and healthgymnastics

The influence of traditional Chinese medicine covers various aspects. Some examples are the use internal and external medicines for injury treatment or, preventively, in body-conditioning using ***makiwara***, ***ude tanren*** and ***tai atari*** training; the empirical understanding of the flow of *ki* or vital energy⁷ and the knowledge about the vital points⁸ of the body and the time on which they are most vulnerable.

Much of this knowledge, both martial and medical, has been collected in the '***Bubishi***', an old Chinese book on martial arts that probably dates back at least to the sixteenth century and, in the hands of several Karate masters of earlier times, found its way to Okinawa⁹.

The treatment and prevention of injuries was a branch of traditional Chinese medicine that was developed amongst practitioners of the martial arts. The experts of this medical profession did not only use herbs, but also used joint-manipulation, massage, 'cupping', and other simple but effective methods of treatment. It was called '*dieda*' or '*diedake*¹⁰, which means something like 'fall & hit medicine'. In modern western medical terms it would be classified under disciplines as traumatology, osteopathy and physiotherapy. It is also believed that the name *dieda* (*tit ta* in Cantonese) is derived from a word with a similar sound (in Cantonese) which means 'iron hitting'¹¹, probably referring to the martial toughening exercises for which some of its medicines are used.

The understanding of the subtle energies mentioned above, as a basis not only for vitality but also for effective and natural body movement, has influenced the development of the Chinese martial arts. *Kakie* is one of the exercises in which a well



Tuina, traditional Chinese massage, one of the elements of *Dieda*. Image from: *Close To the Bone*, the treatment of musculo-skeletal by Legge, David (ISBN: 0-7316-9117-2).

⁷ *Ki* also translated as 'life force', 'breath', 'breath power', 'spirit', and others. The translation depends on the context and on the *kanji* that is used: 氣 or 氣.

⁸ Called *chibu* in Okinawan dialect, but more commonly known as '*kyusho*'.

⁹ The best translation/edition in English of the *Bubishi* has been published by Patrick McCarthy, director of the IRKRS (International Ryukyu Karate Research Society: 琉球唐手術国際研究會). A new edition of this excellent piece of work will be published by Charles Tuttle Ltd towards the end of this year. The address of the IRKRS can be found in the supplement 'addresses' at the end of this syllabus.

¹⁰ 打跌 (科). A good introduction to *diedake* can be found in '*Tie Tah Ke*' from Bob Flaws (see references).

¹¹ Source: Peter *Lim Tian Tek*; internet article from the *tuite*-list; Sat, 20 May 1995.

organised energy-system clearly makes a difference between the raw and insensitive, but nevertheless powerless, movements of the beginner and the refined, effective and powerful movements of a master.

Spiritual influences

In the old days of China the spiritual doctrines of its religions or philosophies became deeply impregnated into many systems of martial arts. It is well known that several martial arts systems were developed or at least influenced by the people who lived in monasteries, of which the *Shaolin* monastery is the most famous. In these monasteries the martial arts were enriched by the results of extensive introspective research and the fruits of other spiritual practices. Because of this, insights in the functioning of our minds and consciousness, understanding of the 'mechanics' of our *ki*-system, the effects of meditative postures and movements and moral principles became an integrated part of many martial art systems and its practitioners, as well in as outside of these monasteries. Despite the fact that much of this is not understood, interpreted incorrectly or has attracted many souls with egoistic intentions, the traditional martial arts still contain much valuable spiritual insights for those who are willing to go the way. Not only in the theoretical concepts that can guide the *karateka* in the right direction, but also, as a secret to be revealed by the practitioner himself, in the practice of *karatedo* itself.



Da Mo in meditation.

Kakie and Close combat:

Basic qualities

Close combat situations require specific skills. Skills that are not always developed in long range fighting practices. Below you will find some of the characteristics of close combat, the specific abilities required to survive in it and their consequences for training.

In close combat it is more difficult to evade, even to block, attacks. Attacks are often noticed at the last instant because the attacker's body is only partially in the range of vision of the defender and because the attacks are launched from a small distance, giving only a little time to react. Because of this, a greater sensitivity towards the opponent's movements is demanded to survive. When people end up in a close combat situation they will often try to get in touch with each other. Not only to apply effective *gyakute* techniques, but also to get more information on and, subsequently, control over the opponent's actions. This is exactly the essence of *kakie* practice. In the words of *Higaonna Morio sensei*: "*Kakie is especially effective for close combat fighting. In normal kumite it is the eyes, mostly, where one is dependent on to read the opponent's moves. However, in close combat, to sense the opponent's movements through touch is particularly important*"¹².

chiru nu chan chan

The development of sensitivity, both with and without touch, is closely related to the development of what is called '*chiru nu chan chan*' in Okinawan dialect. Though *chiru nu chan chan* superficially refers to the explosive and spring-like contraction of muscles and tendons¹³ ('spring power'), it has more profound connotations, of which one is expressed in the following quote that discusses this particular fighting ability: "*Chiru nu chan chan allows anticipation of an opponent's attack by increasing sensitivity to his movement, especially in close combat when the opponent's body cannot be kept in view. Thus, it allows quicker reaction time in response to any move made by the opponent. Chiru nu chan chan muscular development can only be attained by hard, daily training and is held in high regard by Okinawan karate masters*"¹⁴.

Thus, in its extended meaning, *chiru nu chan chan* refers to both the ability to counter quickly and explosively and to the underlying sensitivity towards the opponent's movements. In its most down to earth meaning this sensitivity refers to the ability to read the opponent's movements and intentions from slight changes in his posture or, in the case of a grappling situation, from the slight changes of pulling and pushing force of the attacker. At a more advanced level this sensitivity extends to an energetical and mental level and the latter is than called '*kanken*'¹⁵, which can be translated as intuition or the 'sixth sense'.

¹² Quote from the videotape '*Kakie*' from *Higaonna Sensei* / Panther productions.

¹³ Physiologically speaking tendons don't contract but tense because of the muscular contractions and the existing resistance.

¹⁴ *Higaonna Sensei* in *Traditional Karatedo*, volume 2, page 27.

¹⁵ 感観.

Body conditioning

Despite the development of *chiru nu chan chan*, *kanken* and other abilities, reality dictates that those who engage in close combat situations should be ready to take a punch or two. In other words: one needs to develop the ability, within the boundaries of healthy human physiology, to absorb attacks in those areas that can be braced by specific muscular contraction and slight adaptations of ones fighting posture or *kamae*. *Gojuryu karate* contains many different types of exercises that 'forge' the body and extremities. Examples of these are *tai atari*, *ude tanren* and *makiwara training*. *Tai atari* and *ude tanren* exercises probably have their historical roots in *luohan quan*¹⁶ or 'monk boxing'. *Luohan quan* is, besides *hu quan*¹⁷ or 'tiger boxing' and *he quan*¹⁸ or 'crane boxing', one of the corner stones of *Okinawa gojuryu karatedo*.



Tai atari exercise. A

Sanchin

Taking blows by tensing muscles and changing one's posture however is not sufficient for effective and healthy sparring practice. Essential to this is the training of vital energy or *ki*. To be more specific: to increase one's *ki*, to collect it in the *tanden*¹⁹, to extend or circulate it from the *tanden* towards the areas of contact and to fuse the *ki* into the bones, muscles and tendons. The foundation of these energetical abilities is rooted in the practise of *sanchin kata*. *Sanchin kata*, more than the other so-called '*kaishugata*²⁰', is focused towards the unification of mind and body through enhancing and controlling one's '*breath*²¹ or *ki*. As such it should be considered as a form of *ki*-exercise or *kiko*²². The fusion of mind, body and *breath* is one of the meanings of the concept '*sanchin*'.

A particular kind of breathing practised in *gojuryu* and important in close combat exercises is the '*noon*' breathing. In this type of breathing one learns to hold one's breath during the expansion of power. One of the reasons why this breathing-pattern is learned in *gojuryu* is to be able to take blows on the body while applying power for punches, kicks, throws, etc. Breathing this way demands a high level of breathing-control, a strongly charged *tanden* and open *ki*-channels or meridians. Because *kakie* deals with close combat, learning to hold one's breath in the heat of the action is one of the elements of breath-control that one learns in *kakie* practice. From a yogic perspective this kind of breathing-control (with holding the breath) can help to free and discharge toxins (negative energy) in the body (meridians). '*Noon*'

¹⁶ 羅漢拳; Japanese: *rakan ken*.

¹⁷ 虎拳; Japanese: *tora ken*.

¹⁸ 鶴拳; Japanese: *hakkatsuru ken*.

¹⁹ 丹田.

²⁰ *Gekisai dai ichi & ni, saifa, seiyunchin, shisochin, sanseru, sepai, kururunfa, sesan and suparinpei*.

²¹ *Breath* is used here in its original meaning, not as oxygen or breathing in its modern physiological sense. The old meaning of the word *breath* is equivalent to vital energy or *ki*. In order to keep this meaning 'alive' the word *breath* will be written in italics throughout this text.

²² 氣功 Chinese: *qigong*. 'Vital energy exercises'.

breathing as explained above is also practised in some of the advanced *kata*, particularly in *suparinpei*.

kiko: vital energy exercises

mind-projection

As in other *kiko* practices, several 'tools' are used in *sanchin kata* to enhance and regulate the amount and circulation of *ki*. One of these tools is called 'I'²³ or 'idea', 'mind-intent', 'intention', 'attention', etc. A well-known adagio amongst *kiko* practitioners is, in Chinese, 'yi yi yin qi'²⁴, which means: 'the mind-projection directs the vital energy'. One of the ways this principle is used in *sanchin kata* is by constantly directing and dividing our attention to every -channels (meridians) of the body resulting in a higher level of sensitivity and neuro-motor performance²⁵.

In fact the use of the mind in *kiko* practice as discussed in the main text has two elements: a projective element (*go*) and a receptive element (*ju*). Linguistically the meaning of the word 'I' refers more to the active or projective use of our mind. Therefore it is often translated as intention or mind-intent, rather than 'reception of thought' or something of that nature. However it should be noted that the flow of *ki* is influenced through more receptive use of our mind and this too often considered to be an aspect to the above mentioned principle of 'yi yi yin qi'. In *kiko* literature the receptive mode of our mind is sometimes called 'kan'²⁶ as in 'kanken', meaning 'feeling' or 'feeling-attention'.

To give an example of the difference: in basic *sanchin* practice one is encouraged to "imagine the feet extending into the floor like the roots of a tree into the ground to create an unshakeable base"²⁷, which is distinctively different from e.g. 'sensing (*kan*) the floor below our feet'. Both however influence the flow of *ki* within our body, each in their own way.

sensitivity

The increased and equally divided sensitivity is essential in close combat situations, were attacks may start and end out of our range of sight. It will enable the *karateka* to tense up the attacked body part in time or to evade or block the attack in the last instant. In grappling situations it enhances the ability to sense the direction of the force applied by the attacker in a push, jointlock, throw, or other *gyakute* attacks.

Combined with the arousal of alertness that is evoked through *sanchin kata* practice as well, this practice, despite the superficial impression of immovability, lays the cornerstone for extreme 'readiness' in combat.

²³ 意. Chinese: *yi*.

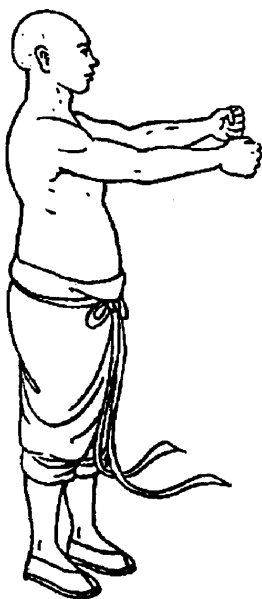
²⁴ 以意引氣.

²⁵ Coordination is regulated in our CNS through 'loops'. This means that information from the different sensors in our joints, muscles, skin, etc. is constantly used to readjust our movement and posture to the needs and goals.

²⁶ 感. Chinese: *gan*.

²⁷ Quote from the videotape 'Sanchin Kata' from Higaonna Morio Sensei / Panther Poductions.

muscular tension



Posture from the *ekkin*kyo or tendon changing exercise.

Unlike the more soft *ki*-exercises, *sanchin kata* uses (maximum) muscular contraction as a tool to fuse the *ki* deeply into the muscles, tendons and bones. In this way it enhances, amongst many other benefits, the ability to absorb punches and kicks in severe physical confrontations. The practice of fusing *ki* in the tendons, muscles and bones has a long history and, in relationship to the Chinese martial arts, dates back at least 1475 years when *Da Mo*²⁸ taught the 'tendon transforming exercises'²⁹ and the 'marrow washing exercises'³⁰ to the monks of the *Shaolin* monastery in *Henan*, China.

It is the fusion of *ki* into the bones, tendons and muscles that also gives the advanced *gojuryu* practitioners not only the ability to absorb kicks and punches and there sensitive reactions in close combat, but also their "hard yet flexible and resilient"³¹ muscles which are responsible for the strong and flowing, application of force, so characteristic for *Okinawa gojuryu karatedo*. This balanced condition of muscles (and tendons), achieved through unification of mind, body and *breath*,

is a part of the concept *chiru nu chan chan* as discussed earlier. Though the seed for this unification is planted through the training of *sanchin kata*, it is also the practice of the *muchimi* movements in the *kata* that play a major role in developing the flowing quality as mentioned above. *Muchimi* movements are usually described as 'a very heavy and sticky, but flowing action'³². From the energetic point of view, they play an important role in the development of what is called sometimes '*ki no nagare*'³³, the flow of *ki*.

regulating the breathing

Another major and one of the most obvious tools to regulate the *ki*-circulation in *sanchin kata* is the regulation of the breathing. In *sanchin kata* the breathing is regulated and harmonised with the techniques and the movement of the mind (*I*) throughout the body. Our breathing is closely connected to the state of our body (e.g. posture) and mind (e.g. stress-level). Changes in either one are reflect immediately in the process of breathing and, in reverse, regulating the breathing can influence both our posture and our mind. Obviously our *ki* and *ki*-circulation, being the substrate through which the unification of mind and body takes effect, is deeply influenced by the way we breath. Since the basic centre of our *ki*-system is located in the lower abdomen, so-called 'abdominal breathing' is one of the main features of most *kiko* exercises.

²⁸ 達磨. Japanese: *Daruma*; Indian: *Bodhidharma*.

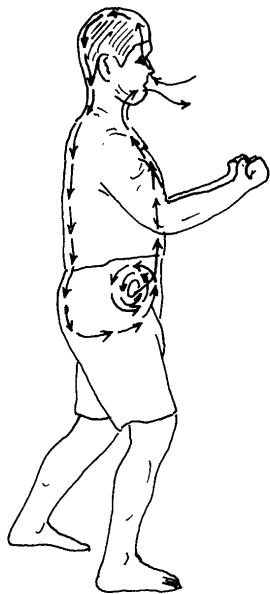
²⁹ *Yijinjing*: 易筋經; Japanese: *ekkin*kyo.

³⁰ *Xishuijing*: 洗髓經; Japanese: *senzuikyō*.

³¹ *Higaonna Sensei* in *Traditional Karatedo*, volume 2, page 27.

³² *Higaonna Sensei* in *Traditional Karatedo*, volume 2, page 27.

³³ 氣の流れ.



Figuur 1: Part of the mind-projection or *breath*-regulation used in *sanchin kata*.
 Image from: Traditional Karate by Morio Higaonna, volume 2 (ISBN: 0-87040-596-9 - Minato Research/Japan Publications – Japan).

Regulating the breathing is vital for the effective and natural application of techniques. Basic breathing in *sanchin kata* is long, deep, smooth and flowing. This type of breathing, when transmitted and adapted to other practices, for example to *kakie*, will have a 'smoothing' effect on the quality of movement. Later, when a certain level of flow or smoothness is achieved, and movement, breathing and concentration are sufficiently harmonised, a more fast type of breathing can be used. This is particularly used in the older, *Higaonna Kanryo* version of *sanchin kata*. In *kakie* both types of breathing are used and adapted according to the level of the exercise, the speed, etc.

Integrated in the regulation of the breathing is the regulation of the *breath* which, in *sanchin kata*, means that a moving ('flowing') type of mind-projection is used in order to collect the *ki* in the *tanden* and direct it from there to the mouth, feet and the anatomical weapons. This too is used in *kakie* and of course adapted to the needs.

Sanchin kata, with its long and deep breathing technique combined with maximum muscle tension, also prepares the *karateka* to take blows and to counter-attack with a higher protective muscle tension, to be used when needed. In extenso techniques are practised with the so-called '*noon*'-breathing, a particular kind of breathing evolved from close combat experience. In *noon*-breathing the breathing is stopped during the execution of a (counter)technique, though not the movement of the *breath* or *ki*.

The whole range of tools used to regulate the *inner breath* and the breathing is also used in the preparational and supporting exercises that help to strengthen and toughen the body. (*junbi* or *yobi undo* and *hojo undo*, including *ude tanren* and *tai atari*).

tension and relaxation

Important to realise is that close combat often has a stronger impact on our stress-level. This will easily lead to a higher muscle tension. Though using muscular force does not conflict with the kinetical and energetical principles, when it is the result of stress it will often impair the regulation of the breathing, the flow of *ki* and the proper application of force³⁴. It is therefore important to make sure that the balance, interaction and alternation between tension and relaxation is maintained. This, being a very tangible expression of the *goju*-philosophy, is of course relevant for every aspect of training but needs special attention in close combat practice. Also because using too much or too little force in grappling situations can be fatal when the opponent reacts fast.

³⁴ *Chikara no kyojaku* (力の強弱).

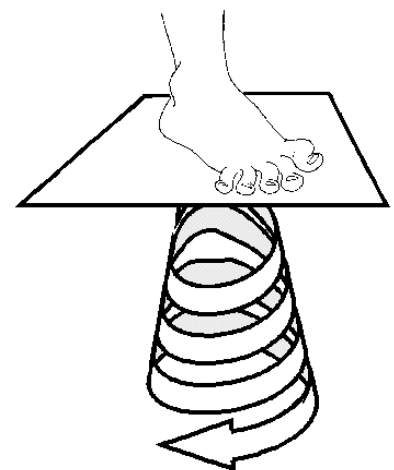
In *kakie*, though all the major principles of *sanchin kata* are used, one should use pliable force that is adapted to the force used by the opponent. The body is not locked as in *sanchin kata* but muscle power is used in accordance to the needs.

Basic fighting abilities:

control, absorb, deflect and evade

The reactions towards the opponent's attack in close combat cover a wide range of techniques and abilities. Besides the 'regular' blocking and evasion techniques against punches, strikes and kicks, that are dominant in a situation with a greater *ma ai*, close combat demands the ability to control, **absorb**, **deflect** and **evade** the force of the opponent in grappling situations. These four fundamental defence abilities are the major themes of basic *kakie* practice.

Just as surviving in close combat will often demand the ability to take a kick or punch (despite the fact we are developing our sensitivity, intuition, evasion techniques, etc.), the ability to control, absorb and deflect the opponent's force has to be backed up by the development of **steadfastness**. Even more so because steadfastness is an integral part of these defensive abilities. Steadfastness is a dynamic combination of **grounding** and **rooting**³⁵. Grounding is practised in various relaxed, technical or fundamental exercises; rooting is practised particularly in *sanchin kata*. In *kakie* practice, both these basic qualities of movement are combined dynamically and completed with **light-footedness**. As in other *go* and *ju* polarities, the *go*-aspect (steadfastness) is stressed first and later balanced and completed with the *ju*-aspect.



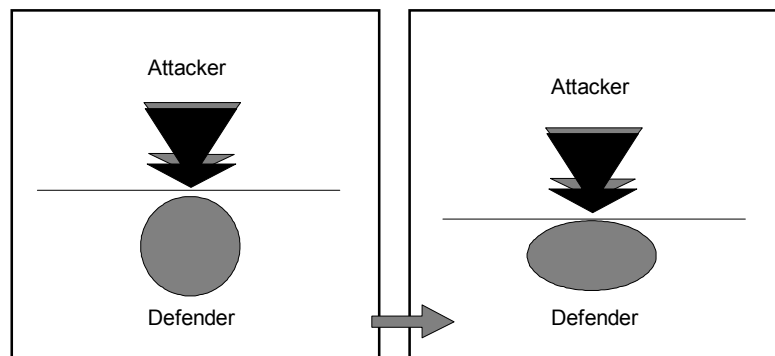
Control - muchimi

The ability to **control** the opponent's force is practised in the *kata* in the *muchimi* movements. The 'heavy and sticky, but flowing' quality of these movements relate to the strong, controlling, but dynamic application of power as used in grappling situations when one tries to take control over the opponent. *Muchimi* is also used in blocking techniques and as such these blocks not only parry the attack, but also control the opponent for a fraction of a second longer or disturb his balance, giving the defender extra time to take control of the situation. It is particular this type of power that is used and trained in the basic *kakie* exercise.

³⁵ Called 'ni' in Okinawan dialect (根; ne in Japanese).

Absorb: swallow and spit

The ability to **absorb** power, not to confuse with 'taking a punch or kick', is trained most obviously in the basic *kakie* exercise in which two *karateka* alternately push each other in a direct up and down curve. In this exercise one absorbs the power of the opponent and leads it through one's body to the ground and, subsequently, extends one's force, from the ground and from the *tanden*, towards the



opponent. The abilities used in these alternating actions are called '*tunjin*³⁶ and '*tujin*³⁷ in Chinese martial arts. *Tunjin* means 'swallowing ability'³⁸ and *tujin* means 'spitting ability'. In both phases of the exercise power is applied. In the outgoing movement the power is strong and 'overwhelming' or 'penetrating'; in the in-going movement one only uses force to control the opponent's power. At the same time one should relax inward and down in order to absorb the force and to redirect it downwards into the ground and *tanden*. In other words: the body is alternately compressed and expanded, a principle that is called *tai no shinshuku*³⁹ in *karatedo*. The power to control the opponent during the absorption phase largely comes from proper alignment with the incoming force.

The 'expansion' or 'extension' of *breath* power (*ki*) in the pushing phase (of the *kakie* exercise described in the previous alinea) is the same as in a punch or kick, though it is here combined with *muchimi*. This means that the contraction of the muscles is build up throughout the whole movement, whereas in a punch or kick the muscle tension peaks in the beginning (generation of power) and at the end (focus) of the technique.

The 'extension' of *ki* is also used in *Go* or hard blocking. 'Hard' may to off-balancing the opponent by the block it self. In other words: one invades the attacking space of the opponent. 'Hard' can also mean that one uses the block to strike a vital point on the opponent's attacking arm or leg. In the first case the contact between the block and attack is relatively soft and the type of power used is *muchimi*. In the second case the contact is hard and of the *chinkuchi kakin* type.

³⁶ 呑勁; '*donkei*' in Japanese.

³⁷ 吐勁. '*tokei*' in Japanese.

³⁸ 勁 (勁; Japanese: '*kei*') is often translated as 'power' or 'internal power' in martial arts literature. However it is also used for abilities that can not be described with the word 'power', as e.g. in the ability to 'swallow' the opponent's force. Jin always relates to a living, not a mechanical, type of force (*ki*).

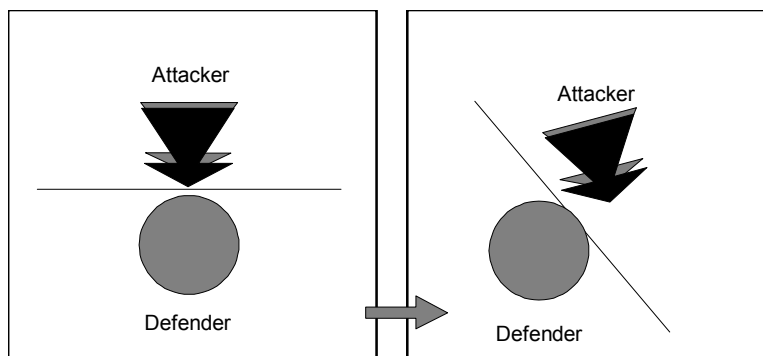
³⁹ 体の伸縮. This term can be interpreted in different ways, depending on which (combination) of elements are involved in the analysis. Compression and contraction can refer to different combinations of inhalation & exhalation, tension & relaxation, contraction & expansion of posture, in- and outgoing of force, etc., that appear as contracting and expanding phenomena.

The absorption of power, as in this basic *kakie* exercise, is also used in certain types of (*ju*-)blocking.

Ju-blocking in its most obvious form uses deflection of power and is often combined with *tenshin*, *taisabaki* and/or *taihiraki*.

Deflection

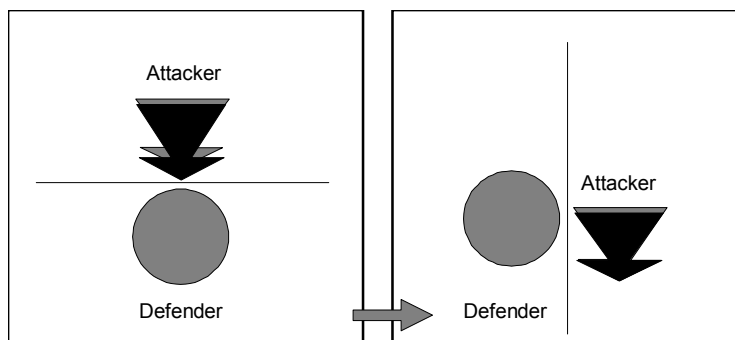
Deflection of an attack can be combined with either absorbing or bouncing away the force of the attack, making it either more *ju* or *go*. Even in blocks that encounter the attack almost 'head-on', without moving out of the way, there is a distinction in *go*- and *ju*-blocking, depending on whether one expands one's



power - on an angle - against the opponent's force (*go*), or absorbs it, without giving up or 'corrupting' one's posture (*ju*). The inner dynamics of the latter are close to the absorption phase of the basic *kakie* exercise we are discussing here. Since most blocking techniques of *gojuryu* are circular, the *go* and *ju* elements are usually combined into a more *go* or *ju* mixture.

Evasion

Evasion of punches, strikes and kicks by using *tai sabaki*, *tai hiraki* and *tenshin* saves a lot of power and bruises but, certainly in the context of close combat, hard to master. Evasion of the force of the attacker in grappling situations is relatively easier but still requires great sensitivity and swift body- and footwork.



Ideally evasion is always leads to a better strategical position or is transformed, like *yin* into *yang*, into a counter technique.

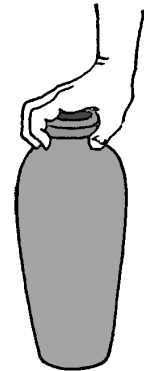
Techniques

grabbing

As explained before, grabbing is one of the most natural reactions in close combat. It can help us to control the opponent's force, off-balance him, inflict pain by applying pressure on *kyusho*, etc.

Besides the grabbing that is inherent in *bunkai kumite* and *kakie* practice, there are also a lot of specific exercises to train grabbing techniques (*tsukamiwaza*), releasing techniques (*hazushiwaza*) and techniques to reverse grabs (*gyakuwaza* or *urawaza*).

Additional strength for grabbing is developed through hojo undo, particular through *nigirigame* training. *Nigirigame* training consists of holding and lifting jars, using the same type of breathing- and *breath*-regulation as in *sanchin kata*.



Nigirigame

opening and closing

Opening and closing refers to the various ways to open and close the opponent's defence. The defence of the opponent consists of the position of his arms (and legs), his posture, distribution and flow of *ki* and his strategical position.

To open means that the attacker's body, often the arms, is manipulated in such a way that vital areas become undefended, i.e. uncovered. Opening also means 'stretching' the vital points, causing the *ki*-flow in the area to disperse, which makes the *kyusho* more vulnerable to attacks.

Closing means to manipulate the attacker's body in such a way that he can not, or hardly, defend himself. Crossing the attacker's arm over the other or pulling the head down, are two examples of this principle. Obviously this kind of action usually creates vulnerable areas for counter-attacking. Thus, opening and closing are closely related and sometimes are one and the same, or only to be discriminated by the intention of the *karateka*.

pushing and pulling

The most 'crude' techniques that arise from the four fundamental defence abilities mentioned earlier, are pushing and pulling⁴⁰, on which all the *tuite* or *gyakute* techniques are based.

Pushing and pulling can have different functions. In a few cases pulling and pushing are decisive techniques on their own. For example when pulling someone's head against the ground (almost a throw) and jerking explosively on someone's arm to injure the neck. Generally, however, disturbing the opponent's balance is the main function and is used with strategic purposes.

⁴⁰ *Oshiwaza* and *hikiwaza*.

Pushing can also create space to follow-up with a powerful long range technique. Pulling, on the other hand, can bring the attacker in close so the defender can use effective short range techniques and actually pull the attacker into the technique. For example: pulling the head of the attacker on to one's knee. Jerking is also used to weaken the *ki*-flow in the meridians and open specific *kyusho*, making the opponent vulnerable for a *kyushowaza* (for a split second).

Strictly speaking *tuite* or, *gyakute* techniques are complex variations and combinations of pushing and pulling, using additional 'technology' such as joint manipulation, vital point pressure, closing arteries, etc.

Though pushing and pulling may be 'crude' in their superficial appearance, proper pushing and pulling techniques require a precisely co-ordinated use of force and attunement to the (movements of the) centre of gravity of the opponent.

go-techniques: punches, strikes and kicks



Figuur 2: Part of the mind-projection or *breath*-regulation used in *sanchin kata*. Image from: Traditional Karate by Morio Higaonna, volume 3 (ISBN: 0-87040-596-8- Minato Research/Japan Publications – Japan).

Besides *gyakute* techniques, close combat involves striking, punching and kicking⁴¹ as well. However the technical scenario here is mainly build up from powerful short range techniques such as elbow strikes, knee kicks, short punches. Since the fighting distance, or *ma ai*, in close combat situations is short, one not only has to rely on a different spectrum of techniques, but one also has to be able to generate power within relatively short movements. An extreme example of this is the *sun zuki* in which the power is generated within one inch of movement. Generating a lot of power in a short movement requires a higher level of internal skills such as grounding, rooting, centring, *breath*-control, etc. At the 'below-the-belt-level' one has to learn to generate power

without making large steps or hip rotations, but to by making use of a sharp and short hip twist. Good examples of this 'impulsive' type of hip movements exist e.g. in *saifa kata*. A particular good example is the *ura zuki*. The 'hip snap' is also

practised in *kihon*, in particular in standing basics. Punching techniques practised from *heiko dachi*, are trained both with large hip rotations and the 'hip snap'. *Higaonna sensei* sometimes calls the latter '*tanden zuki*'. In this kind of punching-training, the power is concentrated in the *tanden*, rather than in the hips. The muscles of the *tanden* area remain slightly tensed throughout the movement and tighten strongly at the moment of impact. The muscles of the hips remain relaxed (and the hipjoints 'open') until the last moment. Concentrating the power in the *tanden* itself is strongly trained through *sanchin kata*. The application of this

⁴¹ Also referred to as 'go-techniques', in contrast to the *gyakute* techniques which are called 'ju-techniques'.

concentrated power is achieved through other exercises such as the *tanden zuki*, *saifa kata* and others.

In order to create power within such small movements, one not only has to be skilled in the sharp and concentrated hip movements, but also in relaxing the upper body and allowing the (*breath*)power to flow, before the body (not the flow of *ki*) is locked for an instant at the end of the technique (*chinkuchi kakin* or *kime*).

Ju-techniques: tuite or gyakute

The *gyakute* techniques can be divided into:

- joint manipulations (*kansetsuwaza*).
- strangulations (*shimewaza*).
- throws (*nagewaza*).
- groundtechniques (*suwariwaza* or *newaza*).
- vital point attacks (*kyushowaza*).

The fundamental *tuite* or *gyakute* techniques discussed earlier, such as: *oshiwaza*, *hikiwaza*, *tsukamiwaza*, *hazushiwaza*, etc., are an integral part of the more complex *tuite* or *gyakute* techniques of this chapter.

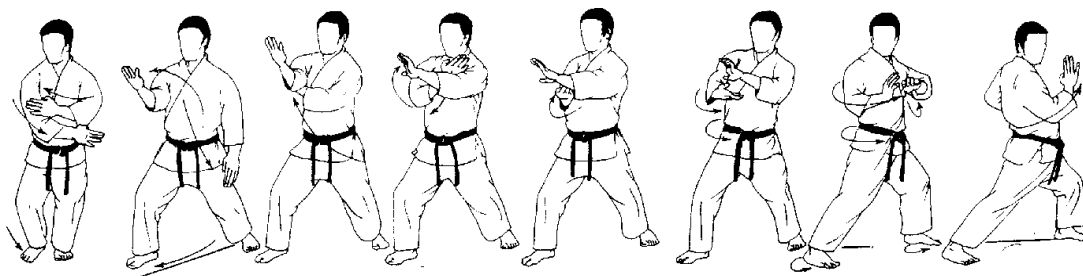


Nagewaza: ashi dori.

Joint manipulations can be used to control the opponent or to throw him, and can also include breaking joints in order to disable the attacker. Joint locks may cause pain in only one joint, they do not manipulate only one single joint. They are intended to manipulate several joints in a row in order to create control over the attacker's posture, actions, centre of gravity, etc. When applying force in a joint lock one should therefore not apply local force, but extend one's force into the opponent's body.

Strangulations are all applied to the neck area but use different mechanisms: overstimulation of the vagus nerve, closing the cervical arteries in order to block the bloodflow/oxygen transport to the brain and blocking the flow of air in the windpipe.

Throwing techniques arise from disturbing the opponent's balance, simply by pushing or pulling, or in combination with joint manipulation or pressure attacks to vital points. Ideally this is initiated by the opponent's actions (*Ju-level*).



An example of a *gyakute* technique from *shisochin kata*.

The *gyakute* techniques are encapsulated in the movements of the *kata* and, from there, unravelled to form the *bunkai kumite*, which consist of both the 'hard' punching, kicking and striking techniques and the 'soft' *gyakute* and *kyushojutsu* techniques. The techniques that form the *bunkai kumite* are transferred to basic *kakie* practice and finally integrated into free fighting practice such as *jiyu ippon kumite*, *iri kumi* and *jiyu kakie kumite*.

Groundtechniques or *newaza* are often trained as a follow-up to throwing techniques, controlling jointlocks, etc.

Ju-techniques: kyushojutsu (chibujutsu)

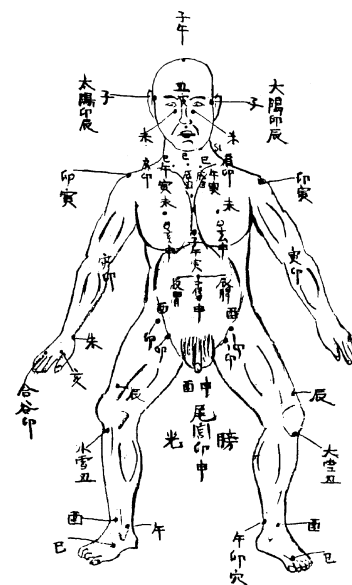
Every punch, strike or kick principally is a vital point attack or *kyushojutsu* and should always consciously practised as such. However, the term *kyushojutsu* or *chibujutsu* is mostly used for counter-attacks that are build up from two or more of the following components:

- The counter-attacks to vital points are made with a relatively soft contact.
- They are made with a relatively small amount of muscular force.
- The power is transmitted through a relatively small anatomical weapon such as *keikoken*, *nakadaka ipponken*, *ippon nukite*, etc.
- They are directed towards hypersensitive points of the body.
- They include manipulation of the *kyusho* and *ki*-flow in the meridians of the opponent.

The effects of *kyushojutsu* techniques vary according to the points being attacked, the set-up, the amount of force used and the type of counter attack. Grossly speaking the *kyushojutsu* attacks either knock the attacker unconscious or enable him to continue his technique or change uninterruptedly to another action for a certain period of time. Even if the latter is just a split second, it can be decisive in a fight.

Disabling the opponent to continue can be caused by direct disturbance of the neuro-motor control, or indirect by inflicting pain. In reality they will often occur at the same time.

According to the theory of traditional Chinese medicine - which integrated in many classical martial arts of China - the vulnerability of the vital points and meridians in general vary according to the time of the day. Much information on this topic can be found in the *Bubishi*, including guidelines for the treatment of injuries, related to vital point attacks, with (Chinese) herbs.



Kyusho -chart from the 'Bubishi', showing the location of the vital points and the time (Chinese time notation) on which they are most vital. Image from the *Bubishi* by Patrick McCarthy, pre-release).

Traditionally, there are various categorisations of the vital point attacks. Distinction is made for example between: point attack technique, sealing the breath, closing the arteries, and dividing tendon and bone.

The use of vital points or *kyusho* does not only enhance one's chances to survive in a fight but may also help to end a fight without severe damage to the opponent's body. The knowledge of the vital points can, and usually was, used for healing purposes as well.

Kakie basic exercises

There are many different *kakie* exercises. Below we will discuss three different basic *kakie* exercises.

1. 'swallow & spit'

This most basic exercise has been mentioned earlier in this booklet. It consists of a pushing phase and an absorbing phase. The movement of the hands is a straightforward up- and down-going curve. The following points describe the 'form' of this exercise.

- Both *karateka* are in *sanchin dachi*,
- facing each other slightly on an angle.
- Before starting, both *karateka* perform a strong *ura kake uke* at the same time and one of the two starts pushing.
- When pushing the *shuto* of the active hand turns and extends towards the opponent's chest.
- When absorbing the opponent's push, the *shuto* turns back in all the way to the chest.
- The *shuto* of the passive hand makes the same turn, though remains in front of the *suigetsu* point (solar plexus).
- The fingers remain straight and open without excessive tension in order to allow the *breath*-power to be extended.
- The initial part of the push is comparable to the extension of *ki* as in *sanchin kata*, at the end of the push however the push goes downwards and is accompanied with the sinking of *ki*⁴².

This exercise is first practised from a solid *sanchin dachi* and later with agile footwork in *heiko sanchin dachi*.

It can also be practised with a straight push and with two opponents.

2. 'circle and deflect'

This exercise consists of a pushing phase and a deflecting phase, performed in a horizontal plain and linked to form a circle (oval).

- Both *karateka* are in *sanchin dachi*,
- facing each other slightly on an angle.
- Before starting, both *karateka* perform a strong *ura kake uke* at the same time and one of the two starts pushing.
- The power of the push is directed towards the chest of the opponent, through the palm.
- When the push of the opponent is deflected, the palms turn inward.
- The push is deflected with the radial side of the forearm.
- When the push is performed, the 'free' hand covers the solar plexus.
- When the push of the opponent is deflected, the 'free' hand controls the elbow of the attacking arm.
- Both pushing and deflecting is co-ordinated with the rotation of the hips.

⁴² 沈勁; Chinese: *chenjin*.

A more difficult variation of this exercise is the one in which one first allows the opponent to push the chest (with one's own 'active' hand in between), before the waist turns away to deflect the incoming force.
As with the 'swallow & spit' exercise, this one can be practised with stepping as well.

3. 'Kake uke'

In this exercise one alternately performs *kake uke* and *uchi kake uke*.

- Both *karateka* are in *sanchin dachi*,
- facing each other slightly at an angle.
- Before starting, both *karateka* perform a strong *uchi kake uke* and both *karateka* change to *kake uke* at the same time.
- When changing from *uchi kake uke* to *kake uke*, the fingers turn out, back, in and out again (in a horizontal plane).
- When changing from *kake uke* to *uchi kake uke*, the fingers turn in, back, out and than in again.
- During both changes the wrists of both *karateka* remain glued to each other (*muchimi*).
- When turning the hand backward one inhales, when turning the hand forwards and in or out, one exhales.
- The *breath* is exhaled from the *tanden* as in *sanchin kata*, though breathing is done without sound.

This exercise can also be practised with two hands at the same time, or with two opponents at the same time.

Points of attention

developing the basic qualities within *kakie* practice.

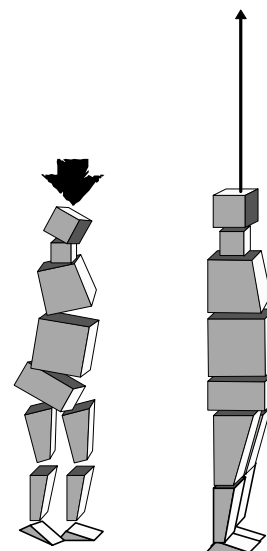
Basic qualities are the warp and the woof of martial movements, they constitute their quality. These basic qualities can, theoretically, be discussed and understood from different perspectives, such as the *goju*-philosophy (*yinyang*-philosophy), which provides interactive concepts such as tension & relaxation, inhalation & exhalation and steadfastness and light-footedness. Another major frame of thought in the oriental martial arts is based upon the experience of the presence and flow of vital energy within the human body. The energetics in which contains concepts such as vital energy (*ki*), *tanden*, and energy-channels (meridians). In Okinawan *karate* there are also various traditional terms or concepts that denote the quality of movements in *kata* and *kumite*. Examples of these are *muchimi*, *chinkuchi kakin*, *gyame* and *chiru nu chan chan*. Also in the west there are interesting frames of thought (and experience) that clarify human movement in general and martial movement in particular. The concepts used below, e.g. grounding, rooting and centring, draw on both western and eastern sources of knowledge.

For all the previously discussed basic *kakie* exercises the following points of attention are essential in order to develop proper application of force⁴³, which roots in proper grounding, rooting, centring, regulation of the *breath*(ing), etc.

1. Posture

The following remarks are general guidelines for our posture during *kakie* practice.

- Keep the hips, knees and ankles bent. The degree to which this should be done varies, however the joints should never be locked.
- Keep all parts of the body on top of each other: head on top of the neck; neck on top of the torso; torso on top of the pelvis; etc.
- Keep the tailbone upright and hanging. Don't lift the buttocks.
- Keep the shoulders down and as relaxed as possible.
- Keep the elbows down; don't lift them.
- Keep the joints of the shoulders, elbows, wrists and hands open; don't over-extend or bend any joint.



All these general remarks are related to the various basic kinetic and energetic abilities described below.

2. Grounding

Grounding⁴⁴ is build up from the following components and should be maintained throughout the exercise.

⁴³ *Chikara no kyojaku*; 力の強弱.

- Aligning the body with the force of gravity.
- Relax the body downwards (though keep up the crown of the head⁴⁵).
- Keeping the centre of gravity above the supporting plain⁴⁶.
- Optimising the contact between the soles of the feet and the floor.
- Directing one's receptive attention towards the ground.
- Lowering the *breath*.

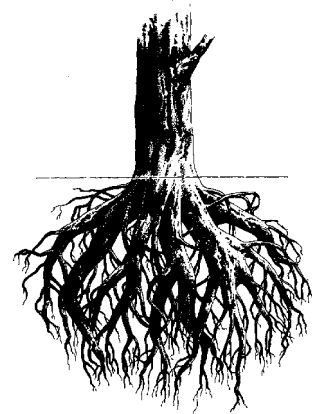
Grounding is also the basis of 'swallowing' or absorbing the opponent's force, e.g. in the 'swallow & spit' exercise. The absorbed power follows the same lines ('channels') as the force of gravity.

3. Rooting

Rooting, in a way, is an extension of grounding. It is used to overcome resistance or to remain one's feet against strong push or pull, like a tree in the storm. Since this is very common in *kakie* and close combat, it is often used in *kakie*. It should however only be used when necessary.

The main features of rooting are:

- Efficient and directed tension of muscle 'chains' in order to get a grip on the floor. This is called '*tako ashi*' or 'octopus feet'. Lifting up the anus, pulling the tailbone underneath, tightening the *tanden*, pushing and grabbing ('digging' into) the floor are the main elements of these 'chains'. The generation of power for rooting starts in the *tanden* and feet and extends from the *tanden* into the ground. At (almost) the same time it 'rebounces' from the ground, along the back side of the legs to the waist (and higher).
- If necessary: lowering of the centre of gravity more deep.
- Using projective attention. For example: imagine your feet to be the roots of a tree, reaching deep into the ground. As in *sanchin kata*, a more abstract 'idea' of the *breath* spiralling into the ground, may be used as well.



4. Centring



Centring is fundamental to almost all the exercises of *karatedo*. The following aspects of centring can be discriminated and should be applied in *kakie* as well.

- Make the centre of gravity coincide with the *tanden*.
- Support the breathing from the *tanden*.
- Concentrate one's attention in the lower abdomen (*tanden* or *hara*).
- Centre the movements in the *tanden*. This refers both to

⁴⁴ More detailed information on the kinetics and energetics can be found in other publications of the author.

⁴⁵ The *hyakue* point; 百会穴 (*hyakue sho*; Chinese: *baihui xue*).

⁴⁶ The plain beneath and between the feet.

external movements, such as the pivoting of the waist in the 'push & deflect exercise', and to internal movements, such as the expansion of *breath*-power from the *tanden* up and down, as e.g. in the (initial) pushing phase of the 'swallow & spit exercise'.

Also the line along which the force of the opponent is absorbed, runs through (not behind) the centre of gravity.

5. Generating power

Power for pushing is generated in much the same way as described above under 'rooting', except that the power is not only generated from the *tanden* downwards, but also upwards and forwards to the point of contact, to the anatomical weapon. The power that comes up from the feet is combined with the *breath*-power from the *tanden*. This is the major method of generating power in *kakie* and is the same as in *sanchin kata*. Of course in *kakie* the muscles are not constantly tensed for 99-100 % as in *sanchin kata*, nor are the hips locked.

At the end of the push in the 'swallow & spit exercise', the weight is used to lock or off-balance the opponent. So at this point another method of delivering force is integrated into the push.

The method of applying force during the absorption phase of the 'swallow & spit exercise', mainly relies upon proper alignment with the incoming force.

Generating power for pulling (down) generally combines the *sanchin* type of generating power with lowering the centre of gravity as in the end of the pushing phase of the 'swallow & spit exercise'.

6. Combining forces

As in other exercises (*sanchin kata* in particular) one should constantly strive to bundle ('combine'; 'co-ordinate') and harmonise body-movement, *breath*(ing) and mind. In the basic exercise one first learns to co-ordinate (abdominal) inhalation and exhalation with expanding - and contracting movements. Within this one learns to expand the power or 'chain of muscle contractions' from the *tanden*, a process that is guided by our mind. In basic *sanchin kata* and *kakie* practise this is predominantly practised with relatively slow movements. However, the same principles apply to fast movements, e.g. in *kata* or *kumite*. In fast movements, this process of unifying body, breath and mind is often catalysed by an intense shout or '*kiai*'. A *kiai*⁴⁷ can be used not only to strengthen explosive techniques such as kicks or strikes, but also for suddenly breaking through the opponent's 'line of resistance' in a grappling situation.

7. Regulating the breathing

Being more of a fighting exercise than for example *sanchin kata*, *kakie* uses inaudible breathing. This is done in order not to give the opponent information about when he can attack most effectively. Muscle tension and the flow of *ki* changes continuously during inhalation and exhalation, creating moments of strength and weakness.

⁴⁷ 気合.

As already explained, abdominal breathing is used in *kakie*. The basic kind of abdominal breathing used, is the so-called 'normal abdominal breathing'⁴⁸, in which the abdomen expands and relaxes during inhalation and contracts during exhalation. This type of breathing, though hidden under the continuous contraction of all the muscles, is used in *sanchin kata* as well. However also other types of breathing such as 'noon-breathing' or 'reversed abdominal breathing'⁴⁹ are used as well. In the latter, the abdomen is contracted during inhalation and expanded during exhalation. This type of breathing, often used in the so-called 'soft martial arts' and many systems of *Fujian quanfa*, facilitates relaxation during the application of power.

In the basic exercises, one exhales in the pushing phase and inhales in the absorption or deflection phase. In the 'kake uke exercise' inhalation is done during change of one type of *kake uke* to the other.

It is of utmost importance that the breathing, no matter the amount of force that is involved, doesn't halt. Breathing should remain flowing and deep.

8. regulating the *ki* or breath.

Grossly speaking the same patterns of *ki*-flow and mind-projection as is in *sanchin kata* are used in *kakie*. The regulation of the breath in *kakie* is more difficult because we have to deal with the opponent's physical and mental powers. *Shime* practise, often neglected, is an important link between *sanchin kata* and *kakie* because it teaches us to keep our *ki*-flow strong and smooth under outer resistance. In a way *Shime* is a disturbing circumstance that helps us to strengthen the bond between our inner calmness and the dynamic application of physical force, however, if applied properly, it should also help the *karateka* to strengthen this bond or, in other words, to strengthen and smoothen his *ki*-flow.

Amongst the basic exercises the 'swallow & spit exercise' is particularly difficult from the energetical point of view because allowing the opponent's force or energy to enter one's body is usually more difficult than deflecting or resisting it. Absorbing energy is particularly difficult because it is combined with an opposite outgoing controlling force. balancing these two forces is often more difficult than balancing the outgoing and grounding force.

In free and realistic practice, the stress level is usually higher and it is not easy to absorb the energy of the opponent, neither to keep your own energy-system ordered and flowing.

⁴⁸ 正息.

⁴⁹ 逆息.

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