

International Kwanmukan  
Technical Congress Sessions  
February 15, 2013



關武館

# Kwanmukan Technical Congress

*Session 1 Saturday October 6, 2012 from 9 am to 5 pm*

*Sunday Morning October 7, 2012 from 9 am to noon.*

*Saturday January 12, 2013 from 9 am to noon*

*Sunday Morning January 13, 2013 from 9 am to noon*

*Friday February 16, 2013*

## Purpose of Session 1

The purpose of this session was to define karate and then extract from this definition what the Kwanmukan is as an organization and as a style. To do this, an understanding of the forces that affected the karate during its introduction and acceptance into the Japanese culture was needed. This period of karate prior to its acceptance in Japan was referred to as classical karate - that which was created in Okinawa. Modern karate was the term used to define that karate designed for introduction into the Japanese educational system. This session ended by learning how to gain an understanding of the meaning of kata using a Rosetta stone to translate. The Heian kata were used as they are the basic kata of our style.

## General Agenda

### **Definition of Karate**

What is Karate?

Today

Self-defense, self-control, self-discipline

Healthy Exercise

Philosophical

Blocking, Timing, Kiai, Breathing, Striking – is this real karate or just sport. Taekwondo meets this definition

Classical Karate included a whole bunch of things

What is Judo? Jujitsu? Aikido? Tomiki Aikido? Kendo? Iaido? Jodo? Kobudo?

What was the impact of Judo on Karate?

Judo was approved for use in the schools in Japan and karate wanted to follow suit. Kano tried to get karate in as part of Judo, but the karate people wanted karate to stand on its own.

Remember, Judo initially had 3 parts, Nage Waza, Ne Waza and Atemi Waza. Karate became punches and kicks to define itself as not part of judo and the throws and grappling were taken out of karate to distinguish it from Judo. Judo was already a simplification of Jujitsu without certain dangerous techniques (throws which land you on your head or dislocate the arm or shoulder).

What is tradition in karate?

What is traditional in Karate?

How far back does tradition go?

What is Classical karate?

How did Karate come to the USA?

When did karate become a sport? In the 1930's.

When did competition change karate? In the 1930's

There is concern today that sport will change karate from what we know today, but it was already changed from what it was prior to 1930's. Karate changed to become a sport and to have a high school curriculum. There is concern that the new sports rules will change karate, but this is a reaction from the seniors who have been cut out of the refereeing – which will change the sport as the younger set have a different perspective. The inclusion of bunkai is an attempt to redefine karate and put life back into it. But this is only for kata which has already lost ground as being a competitive performance only.

## ***Purpose and Use***

What is the purpose of Karate?

Current karate uses systems designed to teach in public schools.

Progress of class was established by warm-ups, line drills, ippon kumite (waza), kata, kumite.

After class - fool around time. (Warm ups, basics, moving basics, kata, kumite is Shotokan standard.)

What are the implications of a martial art/karate as a defensive art?

Karate designed to put someone on the ground.

## ***Karate Style***

Karate, what is style and what does style mean?

Prescribed way people perform technique according to school or teacher

What does style mean in relation to kata?

What does it mean to train in the style and apply yourself?

Do you bunkai in style?

Do you kumite in style?

How do we get from style to application to actual use?

Can you combat in style?

## ***Karate Philosophy***

When was philosophy introduced to karate?

What was the purpose of introducing philosophy?

What are the aspects of karate?

Karate ni sente nashi. What is it, what does it mean?

It means there is no second strike. The fight is over. To have a first implies a second.

What is meant by one killing blow?

Means technique properly applied does not need another technique.

One killing blow is a myth in sparring to gain attention to the sport by engaging the mind.

## ***Kwanmukan***

How did the Kwanmukan come about?

Is Kwanmukan a style?

Where did the style of Kwanmukan derive?

What is Kwan Mu?

What is Kwanmukan?

What is Kwanmudo?

What is Kwanmukai?

What is Kwanmuzendokai?  
What is “Ha”? How does “Ha” apply to the Kwanmukan?

### ***Direction***

Where are the modern Martial Arts going?  
Sports, Combatives  
Where is modern karate going?  
Where the Kwanmukan should be going?

### ***Kwanmukan Tradition***

What is tradition in the Kwanmukan?  
What is traditional in Kwanmukan?  
Where does tradition come from?

### ***Kata***

What is needed to understand kata?  
What is kata?  
What does kata mean?  
What does kata do?  
What is kata good for?  
How is kata exemplified?  
Where did kata come from? How did kata get started?  
If kata is a book, how do you read it?  
In order to understand kata you need a Rosetta stone.  
Does karate kata have blocks? Strikes? Locks? Throws? Tai Sabaki?

### **Design of Kata**

Takes a combination and create a flow by breaking the action into smaller parts for understanding. This is what we see when we perform the kata. In reading the kata, we cannot use our preconceived notions. Not all similar movements say the same thing. A movement is what it is when it is.

### ***Kwanmukan Kata***

Kata in the Kwanmukan  
What do we know about the kata?  
From our heritage  
From other heritage  
From direct experience

### ***Purpose of Taikyoku and the Heian Kata***

Purpose of Taikyoku  
First Cause – what was before heaven and earth and what is after heaven and earth?  
Additionally even development of the body, ability to bear body soundly. Done in 5 seconds at the advanced level, 45 at the beginner level.  
Purpose of the Heian Kata

To have the ability to defend oneself completely in most situations. Allows you to have a peaceful mind knowing you can take care of yourself. They are named after the peaceful Heian period of Japan.

Developed to teach karate in the grade and high schools in Japan

Which style is the original form of the kata?

Why are there so many ways to do it when it is only about 80 years old?

Developed to teach self-defense that does not annihilate the opponent.

## ***Purpose of the Kwan Mu Kata***

### **Kwan Mu First Effort**

What is its purpose, why was it created, how was it designed and what is its meaning?

If one anticipates, who has made the first attack?

### **Kwan Mu Second Effort**

What is its purpose, why was it created, how was it designed and what is its meaning?

What is the purpose of a block?

What is the purpose of an attack?

### **Kwan Mu Third Effort**

What is its purpose, why was it created, how was it designed and what is its meaning?

To be is to see.

To see is to know.

To know is to be.

If then what have you?

It is already too late!?

Thirty Spokes form the hub of a wheel, but the use of the wheel is the part that is empty.

## ***Understanding Kata***

Original kata were designed to show strategy and tactics in life and death confrontations.

The original kata may just show a sample of the movements within the theme of the kata.

We must consider both written and oral explanation of kata.

What do we mean by the theme of a kata?

The theme of the individual kata is the kata's strategy, tactics, and method of movement.

The strategies for use of the movements is contained in each individual kata

How does theme dictate the application of the movements contained within the kata?

Individual movements are considered within the particular kata theme, not the theme of another kata.

## ***Hidden Movements***

Do hidden movements exist?

If so, what is meant by hidden movements/

What are the hidden movements in the kata we study?

## ***Combat Karate – Not self-defense or sport***

Does Combat Karate exist?

If so where is it?

Is it in the kata?

What is the difference between individual verses group combat?

Which kata are for individual combat and which are for group combat? Does it make a difference?

## ***Teaching System Used Today***

Should kata be taught first: the correct movement and application or should the “basics” be taught first and the kata follow?

In Kwanmukan, we teach the body to move correctly, and then we learn how to use the body. That is, we learn proper body mechanics first, and then apply the mechanics.

## ***Two Purposes of Kata***

1. Correct body dynamics
2. Collection of combat techniques in practice format

## ***Bunkai (Application)***

What is Bunkai?

Bunkai (分解?), literally meaning "analysis"[1] or "disassembly",[2] is a term used in Japanese martial arts referring to the *application* of fighting techniques extracted from the moves of a "form" (kata).

What is the purpose of Bunkai?

What is the result of Bunkai?

Definitive result – opponent out and on the ground every time (at the end of each bunkai)

## ***Kenka***

What is Kenka?

Kenka means a drunken brawl or a fight.

## ***Rules Understanding Application of Kata***

1. There is no first strike (from either you or the opponent)
2. Names of movements have been disguised or at least misnamed (incorrect labels)
3. Only one opponent and that opponent is to the front
4. Front hand is attacking hand – shortest distance.
5. Block with both hands – preparatory hand is defend in the block (cross block)
6. Block equals stop
7. Understand the switch step
8. Technique in two counts can be performed in one count
9. Immobilize attacker before striking
10. Use both hands together
11. Grabbing hand is pulling hand – grab and twist
12. Supporting hand is a grabbing hand
13. No technique ends with a block
14. Set position can be an invitation
15. Break balance to the tip of the triangle
16. Knife hand can cut
17. Take opponent’s back
18. Use double twist for throws

19. Use leverage
20. Kicks are low especially when grabbing
21. Crossing legs stance is a body shift or a joint kick
22. Crossover with turn is a throw
23. Jumps and body shifts represent throws
24. Some techniques are following when primary technique fails
25. Up equals down, down equals up for throws (Hang opponent to the sky)
26. Movements practiced in one count are performed in one count
27. Connective movements (Repetition left and right may not mean both sides)
28. To release from a hold or grip, study the direction of the fingers
29. Re-block and re-grip
30. Draw opponent in to turn him upside down with palm
31. Extend the opponent's elbow.

## ***Rules of Combat***

Strike the quickly immobilizing where possible

Move to gain and maintain advantage and dispatch quickly

## ***Main Points of the Kata***

### **Heian Kata**

#### **Shodan**

Essentials of karate defense, proper body dynamics. No attacks except to the head, no kicks except to the groin. Introduces switch step, grabbing and punching, outside hand, cross counter and eye gouge.

#### **Nidan**

Get there first. Immediate response. Uses counter technique, connective techniques, strike from closest possible distance and cross counter.

#### **Sandan**

In-close fighting. Mixing it up. Uses switch step, grab and punch, outside hand, three types of throws, twisting arms for takedowns.

#### **Yodan**

Abstracted from Bassai, Kusankyu, and Jion. Movements interrelate within the kata. Various kicks – front, side, knee – methods of intersecting the hands, pulling opponent around and striking, grab and kick, knee strike anywhere.

#### **Godan**

Abstracted from Chinto, Bassai, and Kusankyu. Movements interrelate within the kata. Look for neck throws, grabbing hand, stopping, one arm back throw, and defense against a kick.



## **Tekki**

Is it side fighting? Fighting with your back to a wall? Fighting on a boat? Or is it simply Tai Sabaki with strikes, kicks, and locks? Look for Joint kicks, throws, foot sweep, grabbing and punching.

## **Jion**

Greeting was school specific. Helped prevent fights within a school. Identified who trained with whom. Block with both hands and kick, cross counter punch, front hand is the attacking hand, and lure, then counterattack.

### ***Question - What is a block?***

Block versus defend. Block = stop, defend means to fend off.

The current concept of block comes from sport karate from the 1930's.

### ***Ways to move the arm/hand***

How many ways are there?

Up, down, left, right, around, pull, push

Arm can be straight or bent

Fists can be open or closed

Use front or back of hand or fist (side also possible)

# Kwanmukan Technical Congress

*Saturday January 12, 2013 from 9 am to noon*  
*Sunday Morning January 13, 2013 from 9 am to noon*

## Purpose of Session 2

This session dealt with the forces that affected karate in the period prior to its introduction in Japan and how these forces were used by Ankoh Itosu to impact the karate that was brought to Japan. It was explained that the Heian Kata were the fundamentals created by is such a way as to reduce the time period required to be proficient in karate. Those fundamentals progressed in the Heian kata series both through more advanced skill and through the design of the particular Heian kata to express a given idea. Underlying this was the concept that the physical development (practice of the kata) and the application of the kata are both important and both within the design of the kata. Practice and application are necessary to master the kata. This session also presented the application of Jion and Tekki Sho. These are more advanced kata and some of the applications expressed expand those learned from the Heian kata. A more expanded Rosetta stone was used to understand the application of these two kata.

### *What is classical karate?*

- 1) No relation to Buddhism, Confucianism or Taoism. Karate is not religion or philosophy.
- 2) The dojo shrine started in Japan based on Japanese customs (Shinto Shrine)
- 3) Not Related to philosophy – this came later in Japan
- 4) Shorin and Shorei were probably Chinese concepts or styles developed in Okinawa. Shuri-te and Naha-te (and tomari-te) were probably coined 1926 or so. Itosu created Shuri-te kata.

### *Itosu's Impact*

- 1) Preserved the original kata
- 2) Created new kata selecting technique from traditional kata
- 3) Extracted the essence of the fundamentals
- 4) Introduced measures to shorten the process of advancement
- 5) Opened karate to the public and worked towards its dissemination
- 6) Used oral instruction for the application of the kata

We could say Itosu took traditional Tote (Tode) kata and created new kata using the term "karate."

### **Itosu's Precepts help define classical karate**

- 1) Practice Method
  - a. Physical Development
  - b. Strengthen the sinew and bond, harden, the body and use the hands and feet as weapons
  - c. Postures are very important
  - d. Practice as if on the battlefield – as if you need to use it.
  - e. Train relative to one's strength to avoid injury
- 2) Process of Advancement
  - a. Two hours per day to be effective in 3-4 years.
  - b. Hit a makiwara 100-200 times with correct posture per day
- 3) Kata

- a. Preserve as they are written
  - b. Divided into those for training and application and those practiced separately
  - c. Practice often after learning their meaning
  - d. Learn the oral instruction
- 4) Effectiveness of karate
- a. Naturally become brave (Gain Confidence)
  - b. Good for health and promotes long life (if you actually practice)
  - c. Mastering karate will allow one to “take ten opponents.” Practicing karate will not lose its applicability.
- 5) Contribution to society
- a. Serve one’s parents and country – follow the moral authority of your time
  - b. Useful as soldiers
  - c. Helps develop a militaristic society (this notion was considered important to the society in Japan including Okinawa at that time.)
- 6) Dissemination
- a. If introduced into public schools, it will spread all over – what karate was trying to accomplish in the period up to the 1930’s.

## **Purpose of Karate according to Itosu**

- 1) Physical development
- 2) Public defense – one’s family or country, not personal fights (fist of virtue)
- 3) Not to use karate kicks and punches to inflict injury unless unavoidable

We are taught to not injure someone with karate and to avoid fighting at all costs? What does this mean? We need to learn techniques other than just strikes and kicks such as restraining techniques, throws, joint holds. These are part of karate and found in the curriculum. Itosu stated to not use karate kicks and punches to injure people unless unavoidable. He meant that we should use karate techniques other than punching and kicking as much as possible.

## ***What does karate do for you?***

- 1) Develops the body
- 2) Ability to protect one’s family and country
- 3) Use for defense trying not to injure
- 4) Strengthen the muscles and bones, harden the body
- 5) Develops confidence and courage
- 6) Correct practice is good for health and promotes long life
- 7) Mastery will allow you to use it successfully

## ***How do I get the benefits of practicing karate (Master it)?***

- 1) Train 3-4 years 2 hours a day
- 2) Hit the makiwara 100-200 times a day (use good posture)
- 3) Stances are important so develop them
- 4) Learn the meaning of the moves in kata
- 5) Practice according to your strength to not injure the body

## What are the important aspects of training?

- 1) Postures/Stances –The upper and lower body must connect through the core. The core is GET FROM PAM. Lower shoulders and relax having the feeling of opening out your chest. Keep the back straight, strength in the legs and energy lowered to the abdomen.
- 2) Breathing - Lower the breathing to the abdomen and feel the movement coming from the abdomen.
- 3) Relaxation (Remove Power) Muscles can only flex and contract – taking power means removing power away or relaxing. You relax by taking power away. Taking power away allows the body to relax so that it can move more quickly and powerfully. For example, we use the biceps contraction when grabbing or asserting strength. Most strikes require the expansion (flex) of the biceps. Relaxing the biceps avoids using the biceps as a brake when performing technique.
- 4) Practice in earnest with the intent of going into a fight. If someone were standing outside the dojo with a baseball bat waiting for you to leave, how would you practice? Train with that mind.
- 5) Partner practice is important. Partner practice is not a social event. You must strike at your partner in earnest so your partner develops the correct mind.
- 6) Exaggerating your strength and power can lead to injury. Practice within your capabilities. Examples,
  - a. When kicking and not striking something, do not use the knee joint to stop the kick, retract with the surrounding muscle. This reduces the chance of knee injury in the future. The same thing for punches. Do not lock the elbow on a punch. Withdraw all punches with the surrounding muscle tissue.
  - b. Stances should not let the knee extend out over the foot. Especially in low stances. This stresses the knee unacceptably.
  - c. If you turn the hips forward in your stances, make sure the foot holding your weight is set to move forward as in walking forward, otherwise you put undue stress into the forward (bracing) hip.
  - d. Forcing a kick by turning the hips creates the same type of stress in the standing hip joint. Instead, pivot appropriately and keep your kicks within a comfortable height.

## ***Itosu on Advancement***

There are two adages that we hear about how long it takes to become proficient. It takes three years to learn a kata and if you practice 2-3 hours a day for 3-4 years you will become proficient. These two adages are contradictory. Prior to Itosu a kata was practiced for many years to master it. Little explanation was given in the fundamentals and the individual learned through continued effort. Itosu expressed that learning the fundamental concepts would speed up the training curve. If you understood the fundamentals, you could more easily and quickly learn the basics. When he developed the Heian kata he had this mind: Unify kata in the Shuri styles to speed advancement and understanding of the more advanced kata. In effect, the Heian kata became the fundamentals of learning the more advanced kata.

*(Itosu also created other kata. He indicated this by how he named the kata. Dai is the original version, Sho a new version created by Itosu. This allowed the preservation of the original version.)*

## **Judo verses Karate Advancement**

Judo also adopted the idea of teaching/explaining the fundamentals to increase advancement. Judo introduced the use of a foot sweep through developing the concept of off balancing – kuzushi.

Fundamentals in Judo taught to help advancement are off balancing, entry and execution. In karate, the essence is in the posture including lowering the shoulders, breathing, strength in the legs, and connecting the upper and lower body through the core. Additionally, karate taught a combative method whereas in Judo the concept was to throw the opponent. It was natural that the fundamentals in Judo explain the concept of throwing, whereas in karate the fundamentals were the striking and kicking. In karate, use of the Heian kata helped learn the technique of defense (not individual movements although a more simple kata allowed the student to master correct body movement fundamentals in an easier environment.)

## ***Comparing the development of modern karate to judo***

### **Structural Comparison**

|  |   |
|--|---|
| Judo – physical education, martial arts, moral education.  | Karate  |
| Essence of fundamentals  | Essence of fundamentals (posture)   |
| Shortening of the advancement process  | Shortening of the advancement process   |
| Adoption of new kata such as the Nage no Kata  | Adoption of new kata (Heian, Gekisei, etc.)                                       |
| Unification of moral education, martial and physical education   | Unification of moral education, martial and physical education                    |
| Spiritual development competition and physical education   |   |
| Mind; spiritual Development, Instruction question and answer method                                    | Mind Spirit of Loyalty and of not killing   |
| Techniques differed between competition and kata removing dangerous techniques in the competition only | Techniques preserved in the original kata – one can take 10 opponents             |
| Body: Physical Development (used Randori)  | Body: Develop the body to live a long life (train every day)                      |
| Randori started from the beginning   | Competition started later on with dangerous techniques removed.                   |
| Kata included dangerous techniques   | Techniques other than punches and kicks were discarded.                           |
| Competition eliminated dangerous techniques  | (Competition eliminated dangerous techniques but the impact of this was later on) |
| Service to society – mutual welfare and benefit (worthy use of human effort and mutual prosperity)     | Service to a militaristic society   |
| Spread into public schools would spread it throughout Japan.   | Spread into public schools would spread it throughout Japan                       |

### **Technical Comparison**

|   |   |
|---|---|
| Judo  | Karate  |
| Techniques clearly delineated in the kata   | Techniques not clearly specified in writing                         |
| One explanation for each kata               | Many explanations for each movement limited only by the imagination |
| Randori started from the inception allowing | Competition between schools did not appear until                    |

|  |   |
|--|---|
| competition  | 1957  |
| Other styles were sought out to test actual skill in competition | Competition with other styles was discouraged (banned.) |
| New Techniques were actively introduced                          | Techniques other than punches and kicks were discarded. |

## ***Judo and Karate Development***

Both changed their names. Jujitsu was the forerunner of Judo and Judo was created from jujitsu. The name Judo was used to differentiate this new martial art. It is unclear whether the phrase karate was used instead of Tode (Tote) by Itosu to indicate: that which came after his changes thus indicating a new direction rather than a new martial art. It is possible the change may have had more to do with the Chinese Sino wars. We can think of Tode as classical and karate as referring to traditional karate as we know it. Judo did incorporate technique appropriate for a barehanded martial art and did not develop those techniques for use against full armor or while carrying a sword, which was the backbone of jujitsu technique as these techniques were not in keeping with the changing times. Karate on the other hand did not have major changes in technical knowledge. Thus Judo was created as a synthesis of many different barehanded martial arts such as the over the shoulder throw from wrestling. The Judo Kodokan also included other styles such as aikido, which they called Kodokan goshenjutsu and added a technical body consisting of karate's kicks and punches. Karate came later to Japan and to make itself different than other martial arts eliminated techniques rather than incorporating outside techniques.

## **Style Names**

Two organizations vied for supremacy in the martial arts – the Kodokan of Judo in Tokyo and the Butokukai of Kyoto. Interestingly enough, Funakoshi was connected with the Kodokan and did not take a style name, whereas those such as Kenwa Mabuni and Miyagi Chojun were nearer to Kyoto and the Butokukai and registered style names through them.

## ***Omotegie***

This was the original word for what we know as *kata*. The word *kata* began to be sometime used after 1908 as Itosu did not use the word *kata*. Funakoshi first used the word *kata* in print in 1922.

## ***Kata***

There is a difference between the function of the kata and the application of kata. Kata as a function trains the body, whereas application is for use of the technique. Application today is called bunkai. Both function and application are important to master karate. First, in training the body, correct body mechanics is a must. However, we need to start practicing the correct application so we can become better karateka. Use of correct application is important today, as the modern kata explanation does not give rise to fully practicing karate. The application is insufficient or simply wrong for the long-term serious karateka. Nothing important will be learned otherwise.

## ***Reading the Kata***

- 1) There is no first attack. In karate there is almost always a counter. Practice needs to be come so proficient that the block and counter become simultaneous which is the essence of karate technique. What this means is that the blocking hand becomes the attacking hand. If an attack is thusly countered correctly, there is no need of further attack.

- 2) Immobilize the opponent before striking. Put your opponent into a position where he cannot attack again.
- 3) Names of movements are disguised. Much of the terminology we use today came about with the evolution of textbooks and use in the educational system. This occurred after coming to Japan. Thus references were made to actions of the body that did not fully represent what the meaning of the movement was.
- 4) No techniques end with a block. There is always a counteroffensive movement. Most blocks are really attacks and hidden movements were not left out of the kata.
- 5) Block with both hands. The preparation for the block by crossing the arms (used in many blocks) is itself a natural action of defense and should be taught that way. Using this natural reaction will help understand the nature of the double block found in most actions.
- 6) The grabbing and pulling hand. The hand is pulled to the hip to pull the opponent to that position. This not only pulls the opponent off balance but can reduce the distance of a punch increasing its speed from point to point. Thus, you are quicker, prevent the opponent from escape, and remove his ability to strike further. In addition it helps set up the understanding of how to throw and joint lock. Twisting while pulling enhances the effect dramatically.
- 7) The front hand is the attacking hand. One benefit is that you attack from the closest possible distance. e.g. First movement of Heian Nidan
- 8) Movements practiced in two counts are often performed in one count. Two counts is the breaking down of the step into parts to learn. The parts are then reassembled into the whole.
- 9) Switch Step. Most kata are done with walking steps, but use of a stitch step allows the kata to be adjusted for defense. (Fumi Kae) e.g. Beginning of Heian Shodan
- 10) Kicks are performed low while grabbing the opponent.
- 11) There is one opponent and that opponent is to the front. The line of performance is a separate thing.
- 12) Hang the opponent to the ski. Use of a forearm twist off balancing the opponent upward.
- 13) Reblock and Regrip. This is a controlling concept shutting down the opponents attack using both hands. e.g. Beginning of Heian Sandan
- 14) Take the opponents back. Most difficult position for the opponent.
- 15) Cross legged stance represents a body shift or a joint kick.
- 16) Jumps and body shifts represent throws.
- 17) Throw your opponent off balance in a triangle whose base is the base of the opponent's feet.
- 18) You can use both hands together – supporting hand is the grabbing and pulling hand.
- 19) Cut the forearm. Consider striking the opponents arms using your hands and arms as a sword.
- 20) Kamae is an invitation to draw the opponent into where you want them to be.
- 21) Release from holds. Study the directions of the fingers. This will indicate different conditions to break the opponents balance. Consider that we mainly either use the index or little finger to grab.
- 22) Empty one's sake cup. Armlocks while standing up as in Bassai.
- 23) Draw the opponent in and turn him upside down. Using the palm heel turn the opponent upside down. Extend the opponents arm in most instances. This can also be used to dislocate.
- 24) Extend the opponents elbow. E.g. Jitte where you extend the elbow making it easier to take the staff from the opponent.

# Kwanmukan Technical Congress

Friday February 16, 2013

## Purpose of Session 3

This session dealt with Mythology and its relation to society as expressed within the Society of the Kwanmukan. It discussed the life of the practitioner, how the Kwanmukan exists as an organization, and the member's relationship within that existence. This session also presented the application of Gankaku (Wanshu, Amhoc, and Chinto) which is said to be a Tomari-Te style kata. The application of this kata is separate and distinct from that of the Heian Kata and the kata used to create the Heian kata. While there may be similarities, they are not intentional as Gankaku derives from a different perspective.

## General Agenda

### *What is the Society of the Kwanmukan?*

Hanshi Anderson often referred to the Society of the Kwanmukan. Some of you perhaps have certificates using the word society. As members of the Society of the Kwanmukan it is helpful to gain an understanding of what he meant.

### Social Myth

The social myth of the Kwanmukan reconciles the individual, I whether it is a student, practitioner, black belt, instructor, sensei, shihan or hanshi, to the social order of the organization in a positive manner. This myth also allows the organization to have meaning (merit) to the individual and these two images prolong the life of the organization. Myths historically provided the function of telling how to live within the society in which you find yourself, thus providing a socially acceptable order that assures the on-going viability of that society - in this instance, the Kwanmukan.

### Myth provides 4 functions – mystical, physical (scientific), sociological and psychological

1. Myth gives images that render a reason for being part of an organization – the mystical function – so you can experience being part of something more than yourself.
2. Myth provides a physical or scientific function in the sense of providing a structure in which to play your role within the Kwanmukan.
3. Myth validates and maintains the social system by defining proprieties and improprieties – the order and law that cannot be denied within the societal structure.
4. Myth provides the stages of life within the organization in accordance with a social structure or order that provides for the continued existence of the organization.

### Organism Survival

For any organization to survive, it must provide to its members a clear direction and give the tools to participate fully in the interests and experiences of that organization. There must also be something that binds the group (society) together. Mythology suggests that a responsible individual must stay within the norm of society in order to keep that society healthy. The notion of responsibility is to accept the question of moral order without tolerance of deviation. In the Art of War by Sun Tzu it is said that if



there are great penalties for small faults, there will be no great faults. The Kwanmukan is bound by a common mind (common aspersions [sic]) as Hanshi Anderson has said many times. The norms of the Kwanmukan provide direction and the structure the rules to participate fully.

## Western verses Orient

Our American society is different than oriental society. In the oriental society the virtue of a student is the absolute faith in the teacher or guru – one whose authority is absolute. In the American society the goal is to develop a self-responsible individual who can act from their own sense of responsibility and not just go along docilely in the interests of the organizational organism. (Going from being the “I want” as an infant to the “thou shalt” of an adult.) This clash of Individuality with mythology presents the problem of being self-responsible as individuals (initiators of creative actions) without deviating from social norms required to keep an organization healthy (becoming a human individual and not simply a cell of an organization.) Conflict arises between being an individual cell which cannot deviate from the social norm of society and being individually self-responsible entity within that society not beholden to that society without becoming a cancer cell to that society.<sup>1</sup>

## Expectation of the Society of the Kwanmukan

The Kwanmukan cannot and does not define how you exist within your daily living. It hopes to have a positive impact on your life outside the Kwanmukan. Within its structure, the Kwanmukan allows for growth in the martial arts passing from the infant student through latency (the beginner) to developing an ego or sense of I (self) by the attainment of the black belt. At black belt level you enter into the phase of understanding the reality of karate where you learn to have a discriminating mind and make correct judgments, thereby becoming mature practitioners. This process normally takes about 3-4 years to reach black belt and 10 to 12 years after that to reach the maturity of the higher level 4th-5th black belts. It is at this time that the black belt in America, as opposed to the oriental, reaches the point at which he can be a responsible initiator of action with no need to seek affirmation from an instructor.

## The Promotional Assembly

In the Kwanmukan, black belt ranks are recognized in a promotional ceremony that serves as a “rite of passage” into the Kwanmukan shaping one to be a part of the organization. Through our assembly the

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<sup>1</sup> Mythology suggests how we relate to others. They provide the rules or direction to follow to be a part of the society that is driven by the myth. In the old societal myths the role of the individual was defined from dependency to responsibility to senility to death. That is, the myth defined the role in society so that man is carried from beyond infancy to adulthood to death. The goal of myth was not to be reasonable, responsible or true – just comfortable.

Mythology suggests how we relate to others for the survival of society and to give meaning or direction for our life. Myths also provide the rules or direction to follow to be a part of the society that is driven by the myth. In the old societal myths the role of the individual was defined from dependency to responsibility to senility to death. That is, the myth defined the role in society so that man is carried from beyond infancy to adulthood to death. The goal of myth was not to be reasonable, responsible or true – just comfortable.

The rational man has no myth to uphold. Maslow gives us values: personal survival, security, personal relationships, prestige, and self-development. These are not mythological values. The myth provides the reason for living such that society is predominant. Maslow's values are what you live for when you have nothing to live for. Myth's reasons for staying within the societal order are a common aspiration, such as providing for the survival of the organism, and the terror of not doing so. In American culture, the reality or scientific becomes the predominating development of the individual. That is, within our educational system we teach a scientific method. This is at a disaccord with myth. Becoming a mature responsible individual still requires an understanding of how to fit within the world in which we live. This is provided by our commitment to our institutions and not directed by society as a whole. This is some sense is the freedom of living in our society and for which our American culture is founded. Accepting those myths/beliefs that allow you to be a productive member of society, or not.

black belt is asked to voluntarily accept the obligation of our organization so that our organization can remain knit and healthy. In return the individual receives the affirmation of the society – acceptance into the society as a contributing organism to society the symbol of which is the black belt. When individuals are recognized at higher black belt levels or at the organizational sensei level, they receive affirmation of their ability to act of their own initiative in the interests of the organization. They in turn, accept the rules of the society and agree to operate within those rules as far as the Kwanmukan is concerned. The individual, thus of their own accord, agrees to behave in a manner consistent with the expectations of the group to insure its continued existence. For those higher black belt ranks and senior sensei and shihan, those who have passed the age of maturity into seniority, the Kwanmukan provides a place where these senior individuals have a defined role for continued contributions to the legacy of the Society of the Kwanmukan, and are in turn, respected for the guidance and experience that they provide.

## ***Gankaku***

Gankaku (Wanshu, Amhoc, and Chinto) is said to be a Tomari Te style kata. The Japanese character for Manji is pronounced as wan in Chinese suggesting Chinese roots (卍 character). However, wan is also reflective of the Manji Kamae found within this form that is repeated in a number of actions in the kata. Funakoshi called this kata Gankaku, meaning “crane on a rock.” This is reminiscent of a crane standing one-legged. The original name Chinto was probably the name of a Chinese martial artist who designed the kata, and the name may have been changed by Funakoshi to remove the Chinese element as China was in disfavor in Japan following the war Japan had with China. The name “crane on a rock” (Gankaku) may be more descriptive of its posture of standing on one leg than a fighting style based on the movements of a crane.

## **Gankaku Style**

In the last few technical sessions the Heian Forms and Tekki Shodan were reviewed. These kata are different from Gankaku and Gankaku was not used in the design of the Heian kata. So the interpretation of the Gankaku kata is its own and not dependent on other kata. Thus, similar circumstances are handled in a different manner. Gankaku performance has been affected tremendously by style. For example, the side kick is a Shotokan style variant as the kicks were originally front kicks. The moves of this kata can be broken out and combined in various ways within the context of the application of Gankaku. While one may be inclined to also combine movements of Gankaku with other kata moves, this is not the understanding of Gankaku but the application of your individual training which are two different phenomena. Neither is inherently wrong. Just be aware of what is Gankaku if you wish to be an expert of the Gankaku kata. From a development basis, standing on just one leg, the forward pivoting action, and the sidekicks define the characteristics of this kata. These features help develop balance and the ability to pivot smoothly on one foot and provide the difficulty of performing this kata in a correct manner.

## ***Reading Gankaku***

### **What are the important aspects of Gankaku?**

1. The hand change after the cross block in first sequence leading to a throw
2. Applying a lock without grabbing
3. Study of Manji Kamae - Three Consecutive Manji are a throw
4. Shaking loose from a hold from the rear
5. Study of Manji Kamae - Reversing Body Direction
6. What is a Kamae - posture
7. What is Manji Kamae (What is Manji)

### **What are the important things to understand to correctly interpret Gankaku?**

1. Only one opponent to the front, except when behind
2. Block with both hands
3. Grabbing hand is pulling hand
4. Immobilize the opponent before striking
5. Kick while holding the opponent
6. Break balance to tip of triangle

7. Shifts of body direction signify throws
8. Manji Kamae - Front hand is attacking hand
9. Changing the grip
10. Names of techniques are disguised
11. Nothing ends with a block
12. Movements shown as two counts are often performed as one count
13. Combine parts of the kata in different ways for various stratagems

The next time we get together we will review the aspects of grappling within the various karate kata.

# Kwanmukan Technical Congress

Friday February 16, 2013

## Purpose of Session 4

This session began with a discussion of the pitfalls of coming up with your own interpretations, what needs to be avoided or at least carefully considered before you publish anything. This session went back over some of the kata we have studied and abstract those elements that can help understand the non-punching and kicking aspect of karate. You can call these throws and grappling or not, but the general intent is to see what movements from different kata can suggest using the rules of reading the kata - insights on more than the punching and kicking aspects. We have already seen a little of this, but this session went more in depth.

## General Agenda

### *Pitfalls of Your Own Interpretations*

The kata explanations I present are original explanations and provide the general content of the kata movements. They are not necessarily the techniques of choice for me or anyone. You may wish to explore the kata and come up with your own understanding. Hopefully, I have provided some guiding principles. Should you attempt to design your own interpretation, there are some pitfalls you should consider.

1. Do not assume the techniques are labeled correctly. Just because something is referred to as a “block” does not necessarily mean that it is a block or can only be a block.
2. In designing a kata interpretation, you can design for yourself or for others. In other words, if you are big and presume all your opponents will be physically weaker, then this is an error if you expect a technique that works for you to work for a person smaller than his opponent. Your study would be better, and probably more historically accurate, if your concepts worked regardless of the relative size and strength of the opponent.
3. Do not get caught up with tiny details. There are many ways to “grab” with the hand. You can use the forefingers to grip, the back ring and little finger, all four fingers, you can grab with your thumb opposing or not, you can create a circle with the thumb and middle finger similar to handcuffs to hold the arm. Since you cannot know how you will be grabbed, an universal interpretation that works regardless of the grip used is better. Styles that limit to one particular way provide a natural limitation to understanding – something you should not want. If you are doing the “grabbing” you may wish to use different gripping solutions in different situations or.
4. Hotshot secret technique does not exist. “Hidden” technique is not some ultimate and devastating fighting solution. “Hidden” technique is simply something that you do not want the other guy to know about. It does not exist in kata except where the public explanation may be different than the private explanation of teacher to direct student.
5. Any technique needs to engage the whole body top and bottom connected through the core and have equal and opposite balance of within the body correctly creating and dissipating energy.
6. Some kata are more for public group practice and physical development while others are more a fighting kata. The manner of performance (which I call style) should not determine the meaning of the movement.

7. Do not assume that a movement in one kata is the same as a similar looking movement in another kata.
8. Taking a portion from a kata and studying that portion may reveal something different than taking in a particular kata as a whole. Most kata provide a system of fighting within the format of the kata. If you wish to have an understanding of a particular kata, you should consider interpretation in the contemplation of the kata as a whole, not as independent parts.
9. Finally, remember the presentation of karate from the 1930's is different than the previous period. Some movements were eliminated or not repeated once shown in the kata. A study of earlier versions of the kata from other grandfather styles will give insight into what the kata was intended to record and how the movements may go together into a cohesive fighting strategy of a particular kata.