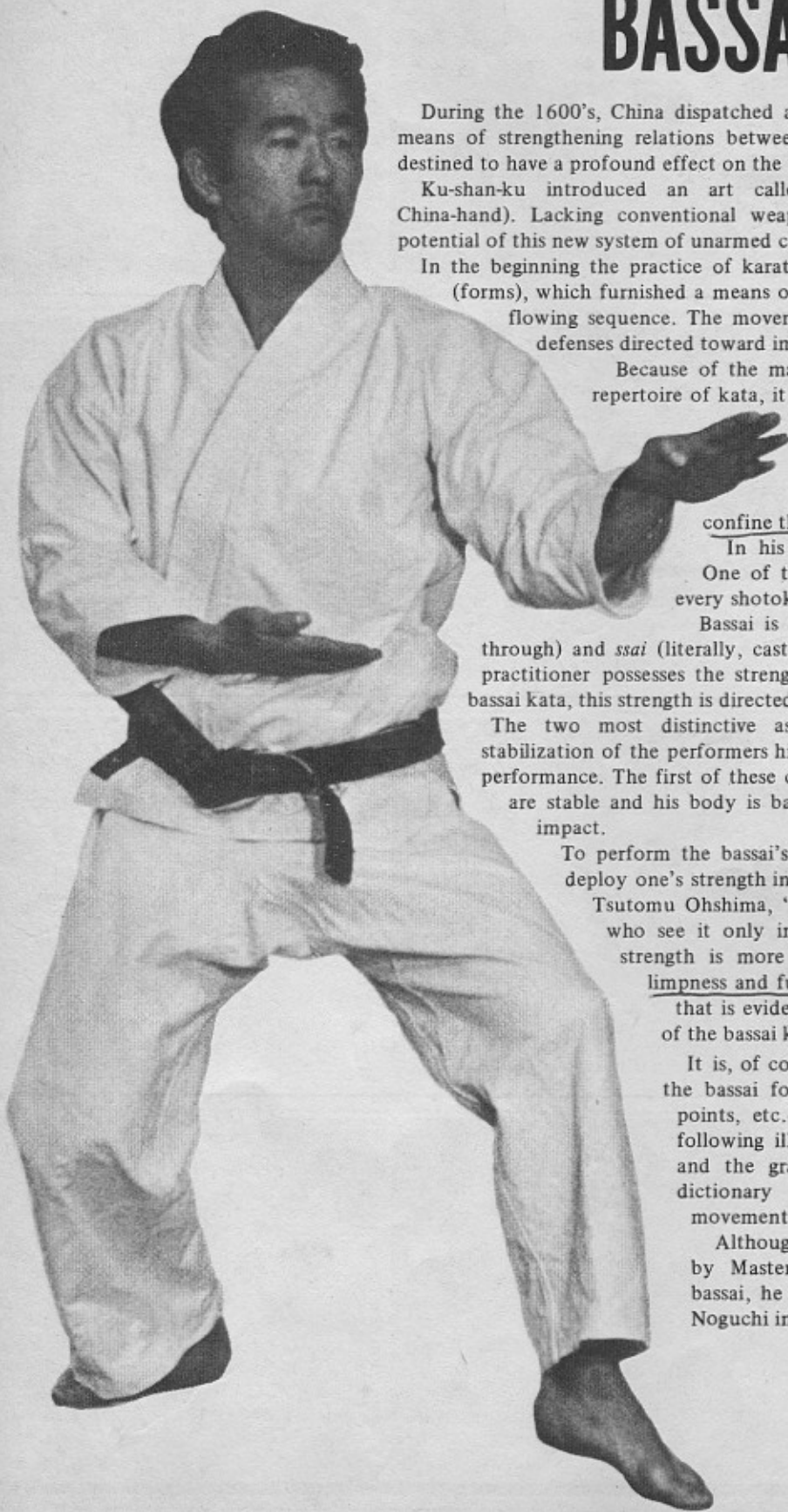


# BASSAI KATA



During the 1600's, China dispatched an attache named Ku-shan-ku to Okinawa as a means of strengthening relations between the two lands. The ambassador's visit was destined to have a profound effect on the culture of the tiny Pacific island.

Ku-shan-ku introduced an art called kara-te (the original character meaning China-hand). Lacking conventional weapons, the Okinawans were quick to see the potential of this new system of unarmed combat.

In the beginning the practice of karate was confined largely to the practice of kata (forms), which furnished a means of learning the movements of karate in a logical, flowing sequence. The movements were practiced as a series of attacks and defenses directed toward imaginary opponents.

Because of the many styles of karate today, each with its own repertoire of kata, it is impossible to state precisely how many kata are practiced. Many kata seen today are self-devised by their performer.

For the staunch traditionalists, the shotokan schools of karate still rigidly confine their kata to the classical forms.

In his book *Karate-do*, Master Egami lists 50 kata. One of the most basic of these—one that is a must for every shotokan karateka—is the *bassai* kata.

Bassai is a compound of the words *ba* (literally, to go through) and *ssai* (literally, castle), producing the connotation that the bassai practitioner possesses the strength to assault a fortress. When performing the bassai kata, this strength is directed toward four or more imaginary opponents.

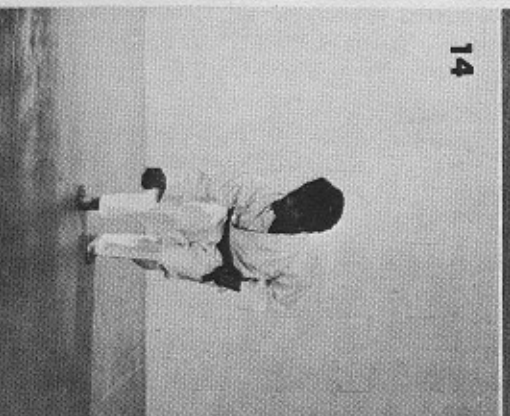
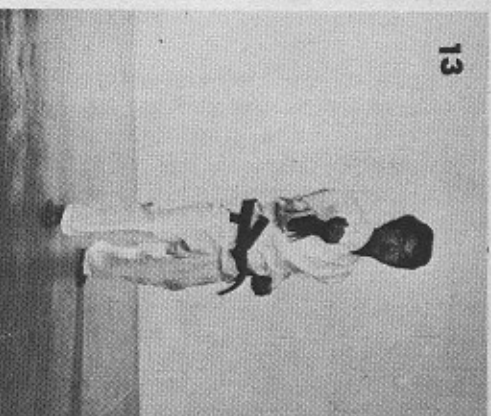
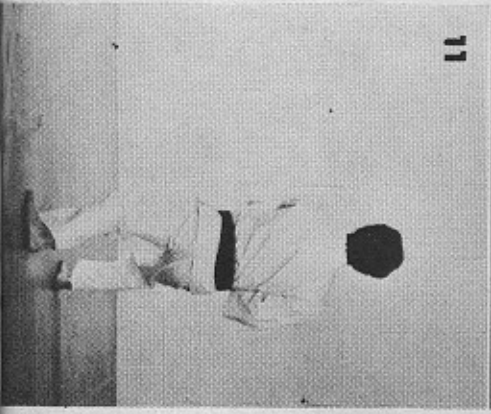
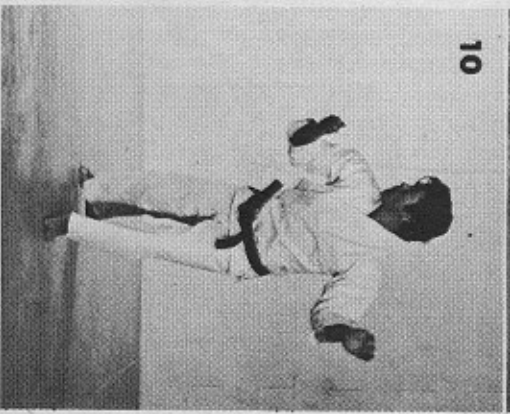
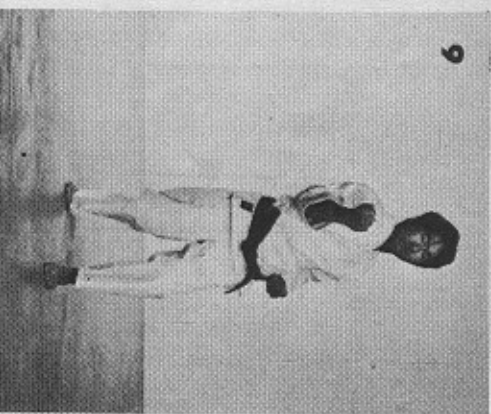
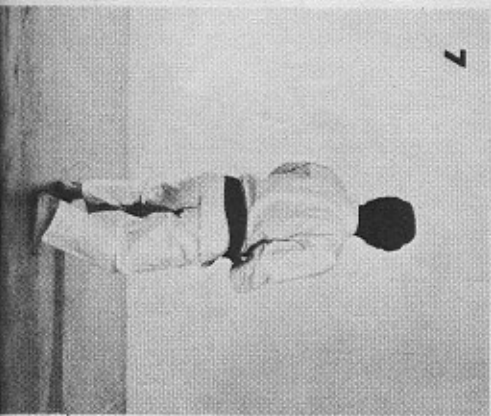
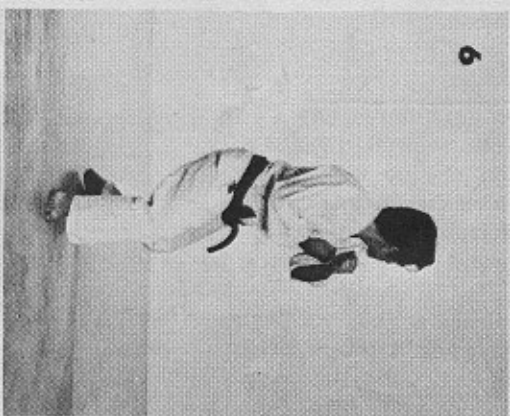
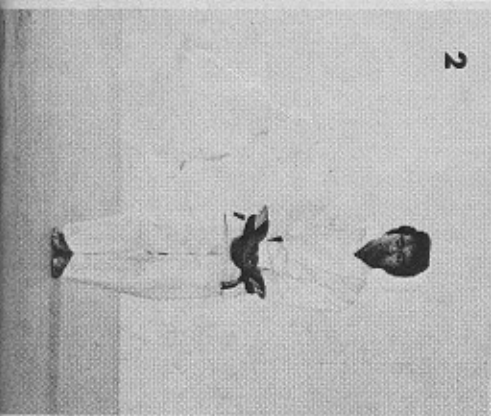
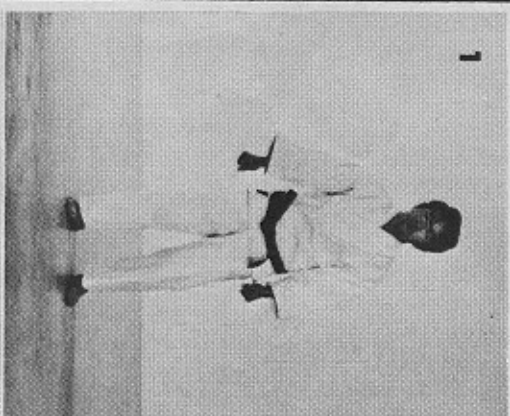
The two most distinctive aspects of the bassai kata are the dynamic stabilization of the performers hips and the ebb and flow actions essential to the performance. The first of these characteristics means that the practitioner's hips are stable and his body is balanced while in motion, even at a moment of impact.

To perform the bassai's ebb and flow movements, one must learn to deploy one's strength intelligently. "Strength," in the opinion of Sensei Tsutomu Ohshima, "is not really understood by most Occidentals, who see it only in terms of the end product. To the Oriental, strength is more apt to be found in the difference between limpness and full strength." It is this latter concept of strength that is evident in the fast-slow contractions and extensions of the bassai kata.

It is, of course, impossible to absorb all the intricacies of the bassai form—its fast and slow torque actions, its kiai points, etc.—without an expert instructor. Hopefully, the following illustrations will give some idea of the sequence and the grace of the bassai form, and also serve as a dictionary of the terms that describe the individual movements of bassai.

Although Mr. Kubota lacks the power image projected by Master Hiroshi Noguchi, the leading exponent of bassai, he has been credited with surpassing even Master Noguchi in the classical purity of his execution.

# BASSAI KATA



3



At this point Mr. Kubota has turned to proceed in the opposite direction. Our camera angle has been reversed to pick up the action.

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At this point Mr. Kubota has turned to proceed in the opposite direction. Our camera angle has been reversed to pick up the action.

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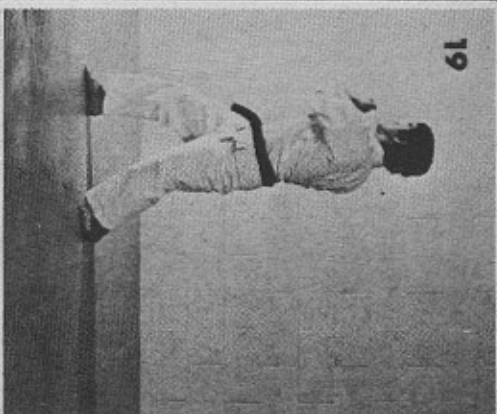
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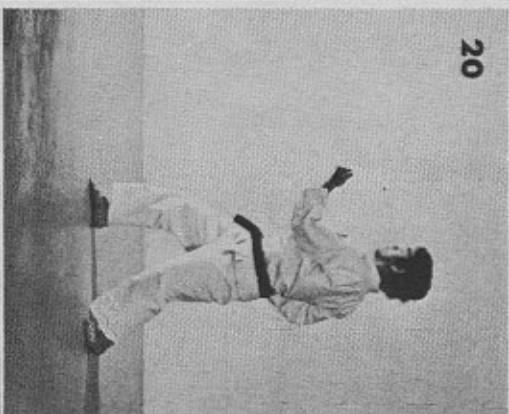
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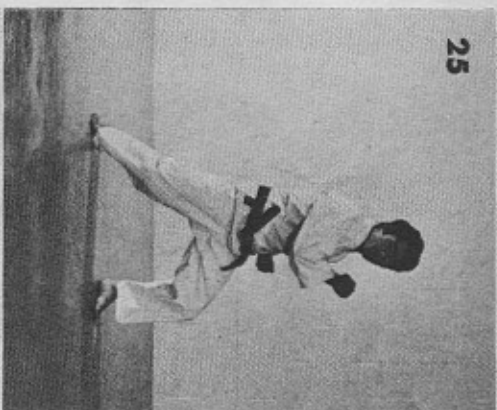
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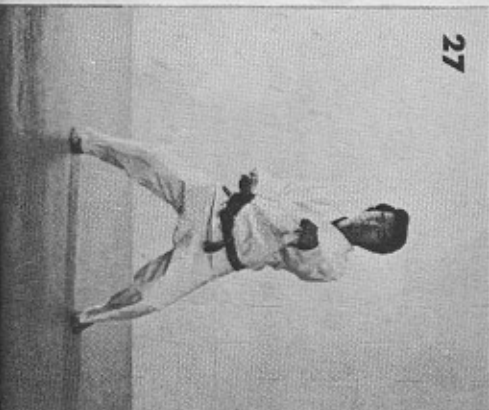
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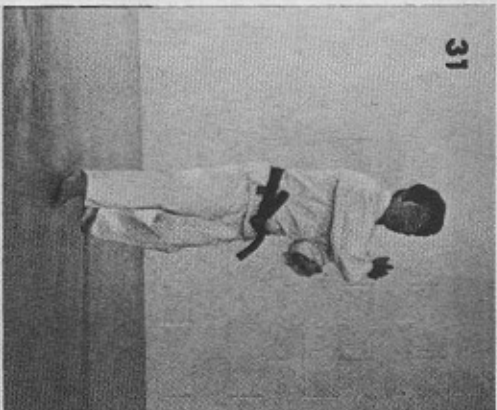
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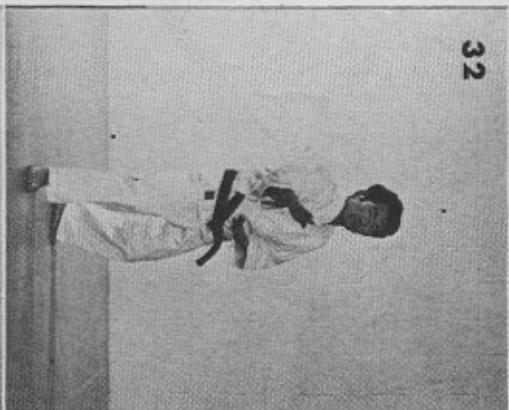
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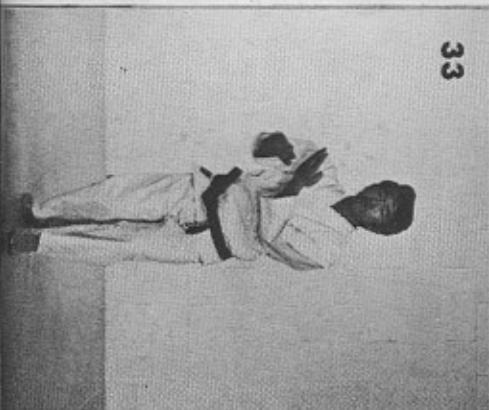
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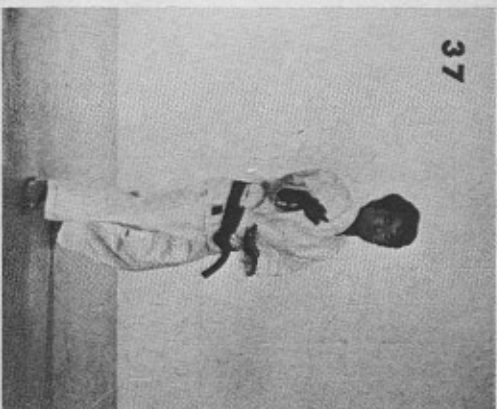
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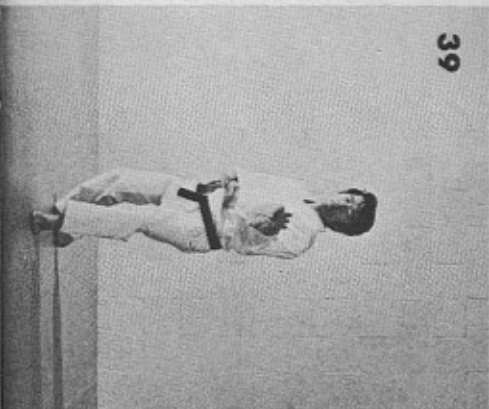
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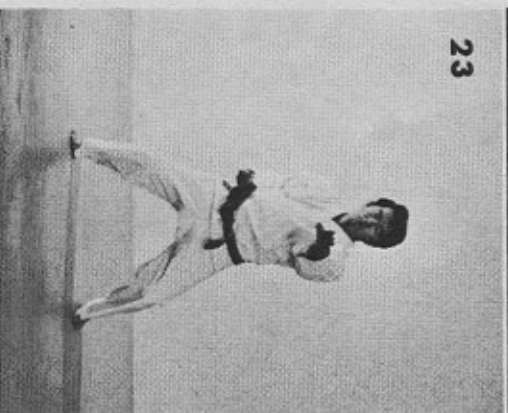
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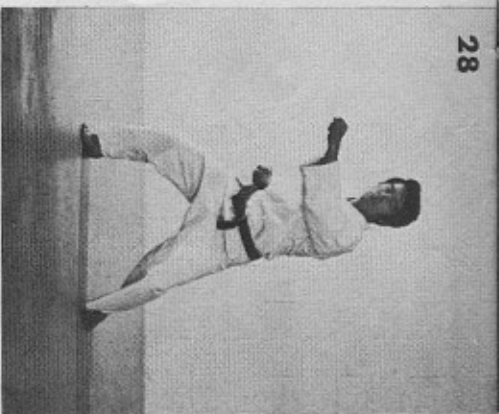
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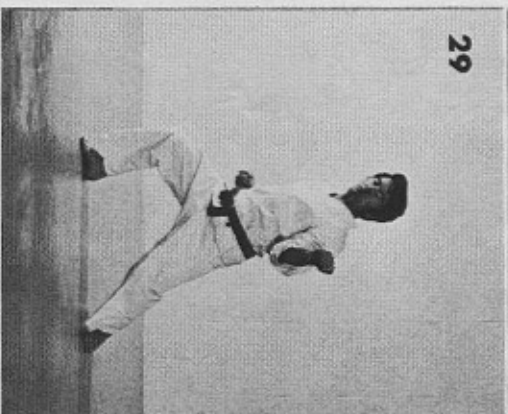
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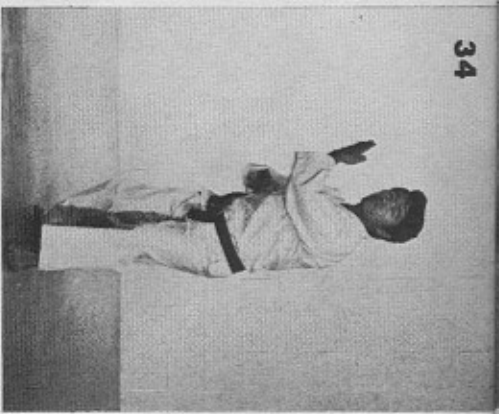
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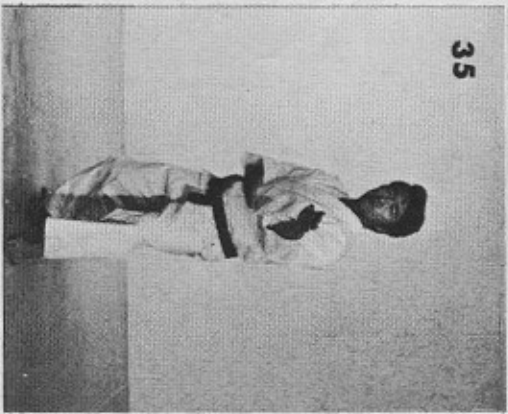
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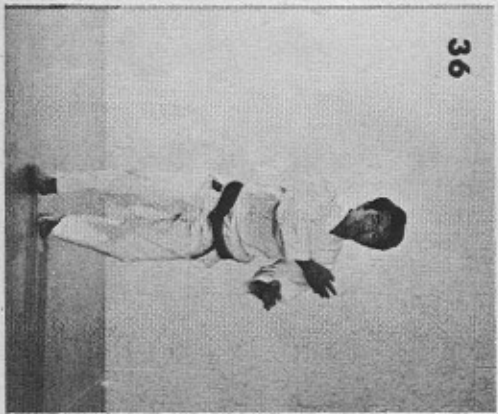
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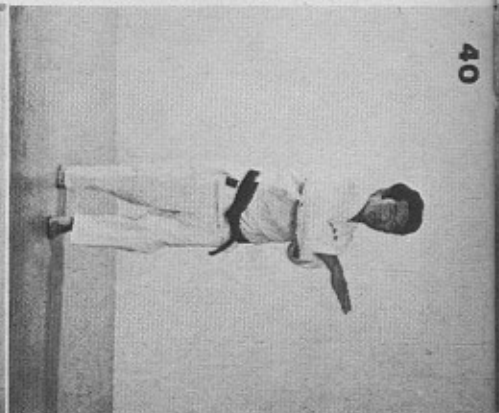
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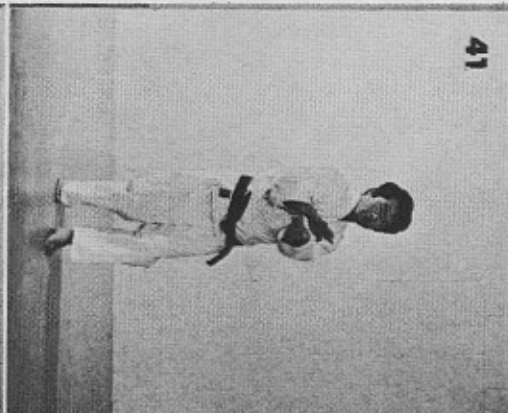
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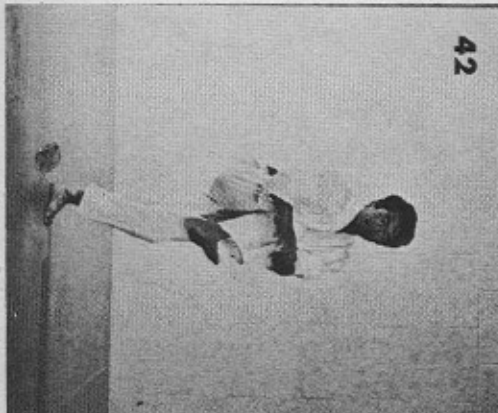
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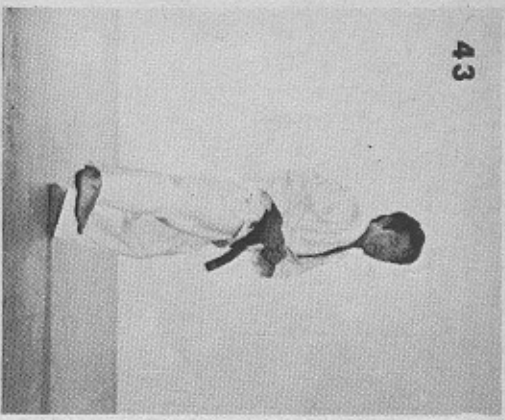
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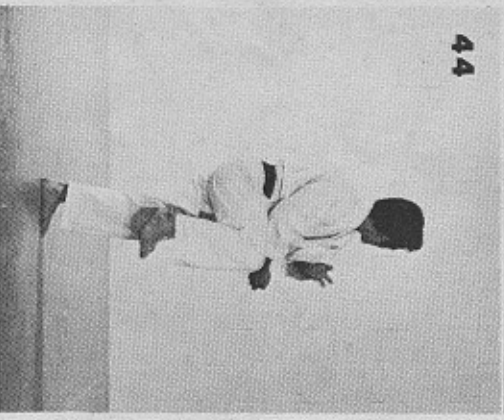
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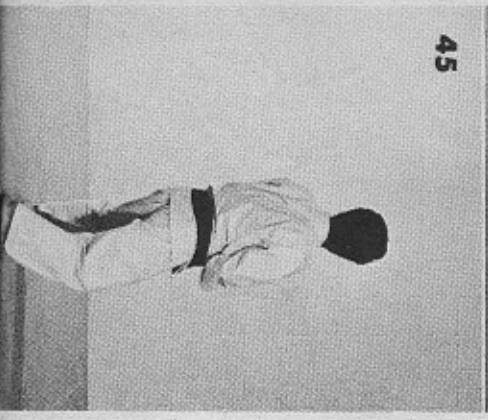
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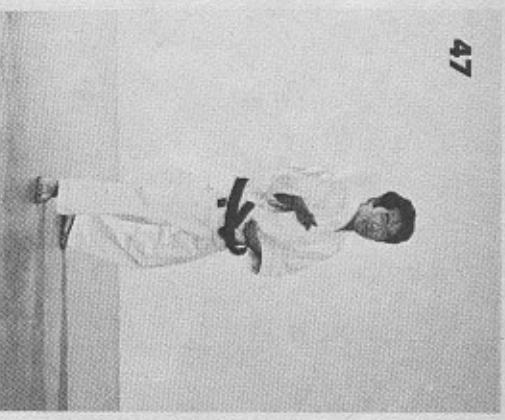
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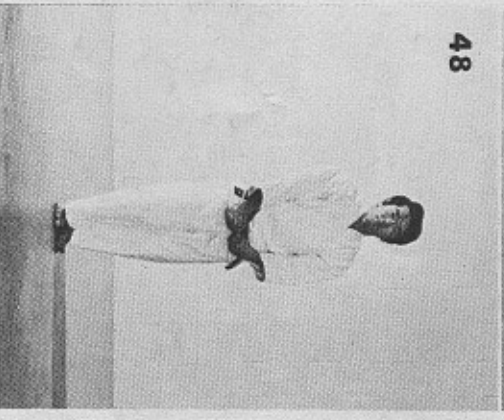
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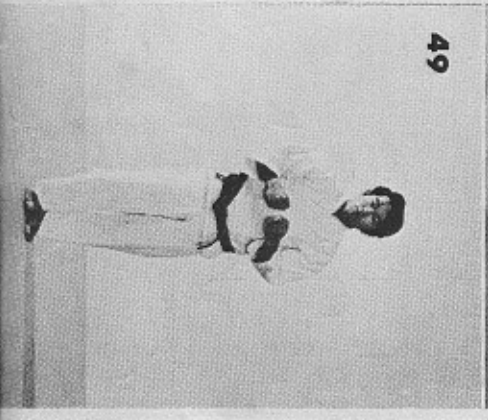
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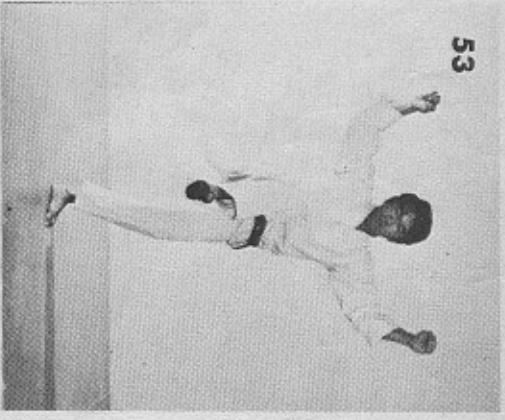


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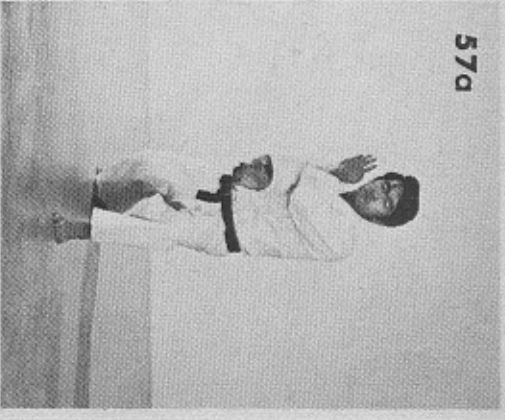


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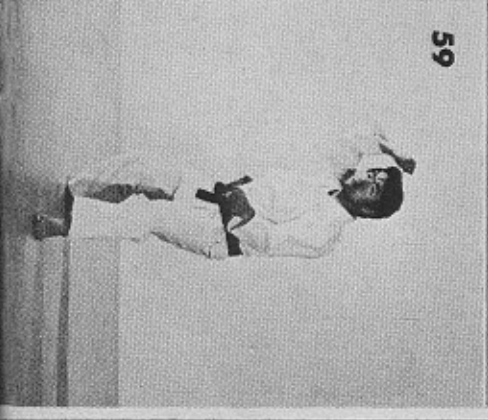
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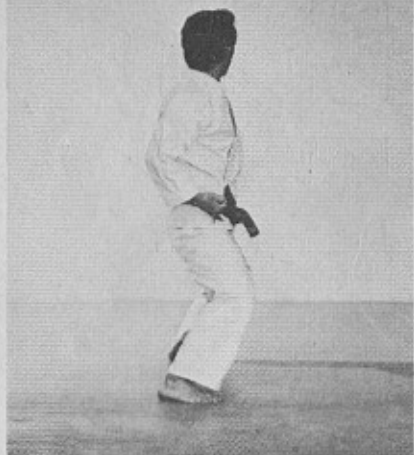


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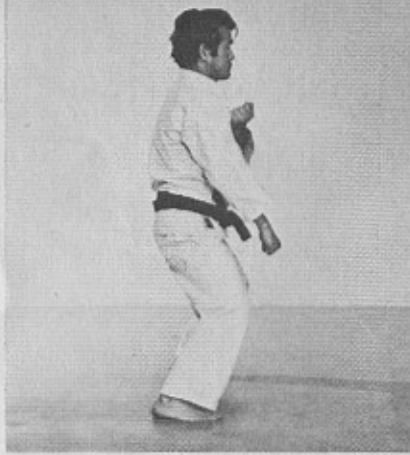




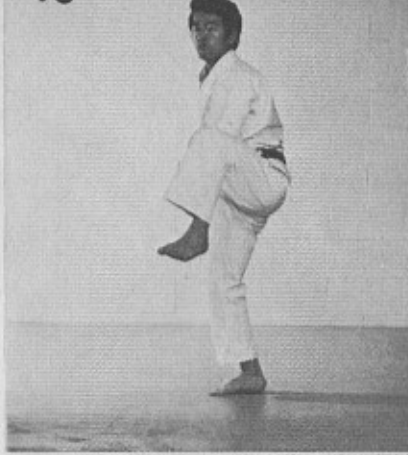
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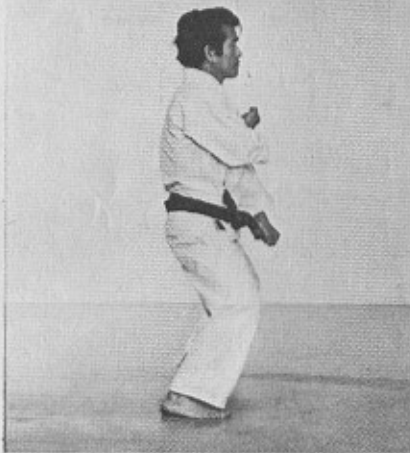


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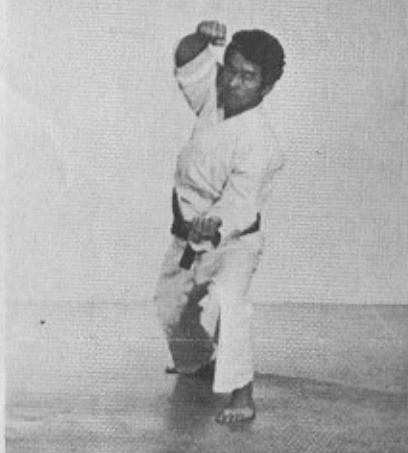


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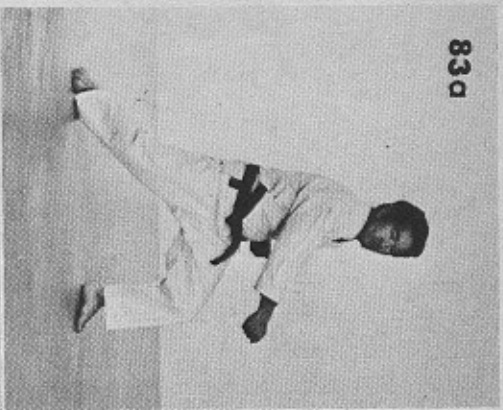


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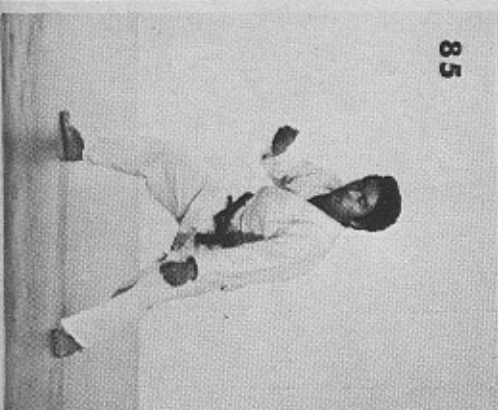
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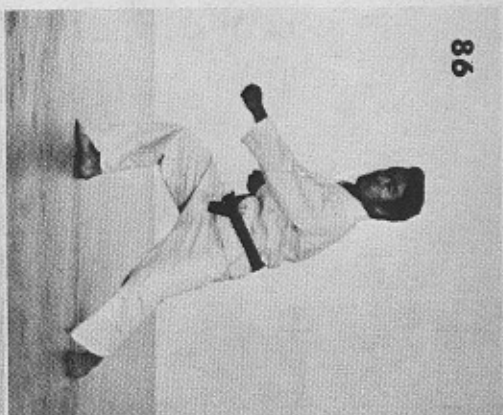
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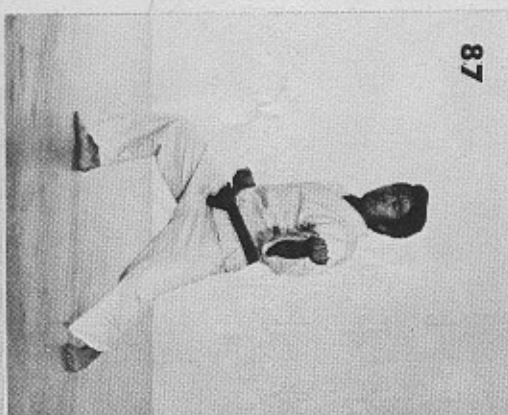
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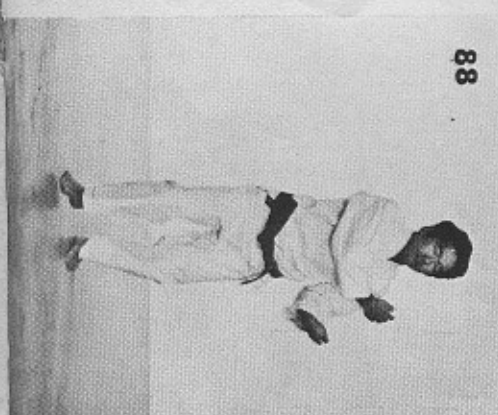
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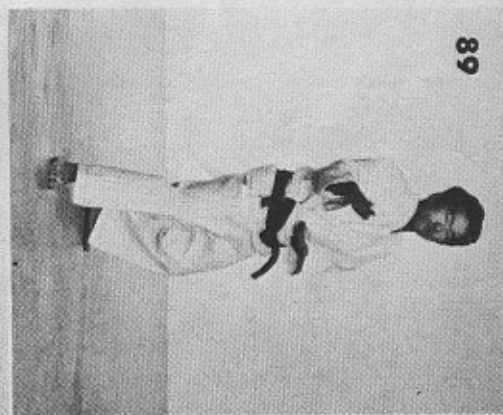
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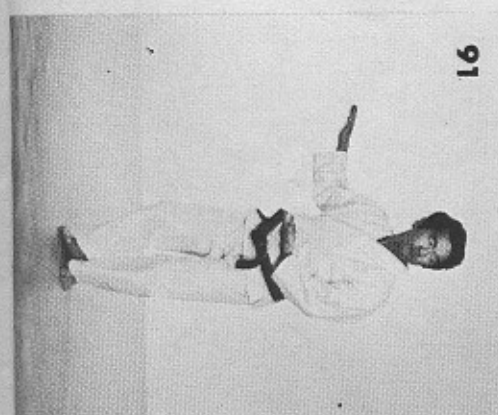
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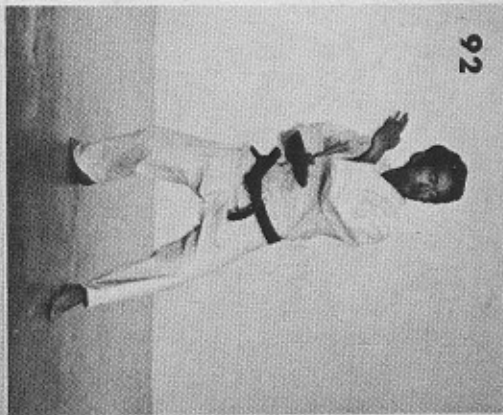
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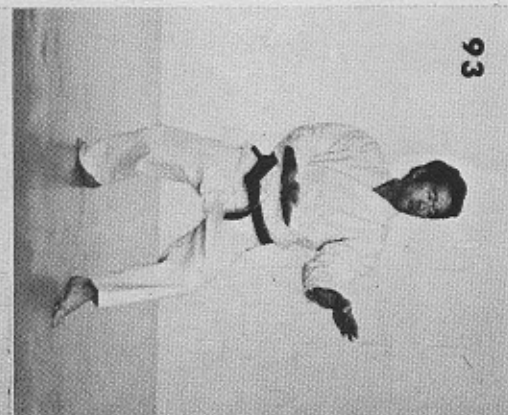
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