

The "Wado" story officially began in May 1934 when Hironori Ohtsuka registered his own style of Karate, which he called "Wado Ryu" and was recognized as an independent style. However, its origins were developed by Ohtsuka's continuous study of all martial arts, formulating the "Wado" techniques by combining his own innovations and natural movements found in the other martial arts.

The full "Wado" story began on 1<sup>st</sup> June 1892 when Hironori Ohtsuka was born. He was born in Shimodate City, Ibaragi, Japan, the first son of Dr. Tokuiuro Ohtsuka, a Doctor of Medicine. Ohtsuka was first introduced to the Martial Arts by his great uncle Chojiro Ebashi who began teaching him Jujitsu. This marked the starting point of his life-long fascination and obsession with the Martial Arts.

Until the 1960s Martial Arts and especially Wado-Ryu karate remained upon the small islands of Japan. It was hardly recognised outside of the East. This was soon to change. In 1963 a three-man team left Japan to conquer America and Europe. The team was composed of Mr. Arakawa, Mr Takashima and Mr. T. Suzuki. The impressions they left upon America and Europe were tremendous, Wado-Ryu Karate became recognised worldwide for its true merits.

Ohtsuka Sensei's personalised style of Karate was officially registered in 1938 after he was awarded the rank of "Renshi-go". He presented a magnificent demonstration of "Wado" Karate for the Japan Martial Arts Federation who were impressed with his style and commitment and successfully acknowledged him as a high-ranking instructor. The next year the Japan Martial Arts Federation asked all the different styles of Karate to register their names. Ohtsuka registered the name of "Wado-Ryu". Other styles to register included Shotokan Ryu, Goju Ryu and Shito-Ryu. The next few years witnessed Wado Ryu karate growing from strength to strength, new dojos were opening and karate was being taught at the Universities. Ohtsuka himself was becoming a recognised figure within the World of Martial Arts. In 1942 he was awarded the title of Kyoshi-go. During that year a future great master Tatsuo Suzuki began training in Wado-Ryu Karate. In 1943 Ohtsuka the 2<sup>nd</sup> began his pursuits in the field of the Martial Arts. He began Kendo under the strict instruction of an army officer called Miyata Sensei. In 1944 Ohtsuka Sensei was appointed Japans Chief Karate instructor and in 1945 Ohtsuka the 2<sup>nd</sup> began to receive expert instruction from his father. In 1947 Teruo Kono began Karate but did not start training with Ohtsuka Sensei until 1951 and in 1955 the first all Japan Wado-Ryu Karate championships were held.

Back in Japan in 1966 Ohtsuka Sensei was awarded the title "Kun Goto Suokuo Kyoku jujitsu Shou" by the late Emperor Horohito. It was presented by the Emperor for his dedication to the introduction and teaching of karate.

In 1980 Ohtsuka Meijin began to think about retirement as the head of Wado Karate and wanted his son to succeed him as Grand Master. However other high level Wado Karateka were not in favour of this and wished for a different leader to be appointed. Although many negotiations took place no agreement could be reached and some of these Wado Karateka broke away and formed their own association.