

## Doshinkan remembrances

Renshi 7-dan Jair A. Marques de Souza

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I came to Vienna, Austria in 1980 to take a post as a technical professional officer at a specialized agency of the United Nations. I began training karatedo the Doshinkan way in early 1981 with Dean Lillard (then Sandan, now Shihan 8-dan) at the UN building in Vienna. At that time Hanshi Isao used to come regularly to the UNO city to lead trainings and examine members for promotions. Following Dean's recommendation, I soon added to my schedule, trainings at Honbu Dojo. When Dean left Vienna to take his PhD in Economics at the University of Chicago, Rex Santoro (now Shihan 8-dan) assumed his place to train a small group of the UN. At that time I was already Renshi and Rex asked me to lead some of the weekly trainings. That was quite an experience and I learnt a lot by teaching.

After the death of Hanshi Isao in February 1996, his brother Nobuo Ichikawa assumed the leadership of Doshinkan as Hanshi.

August 2020 will mark 25 years since the last special summer training led by Hanshi Isao Ichikawa. Two memories of this training stand out. First, during that week, Hanshi Isao gave us the opportunity to review all seven Kyoku katas. Second, at the end of this training, Hanshi Isao promoted me to Renshi Roku-dan.

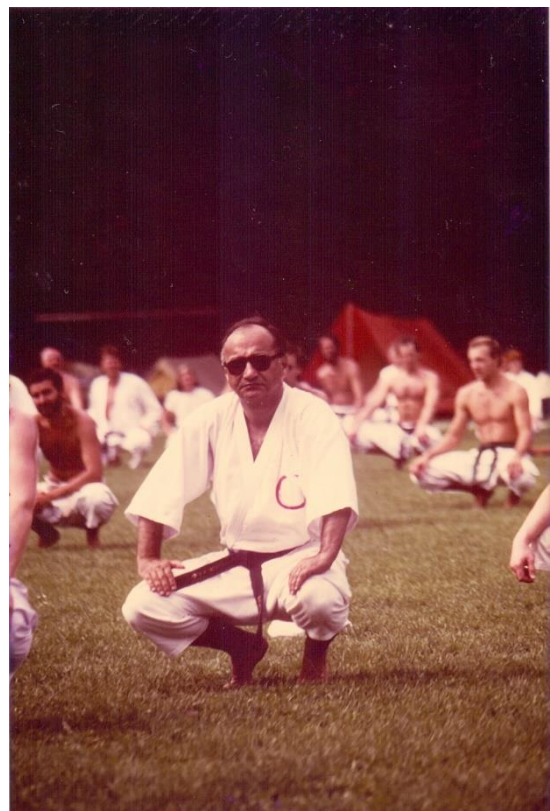
Hanshi Isao was always very kind towards me. When I was a 1. Kyu, I used to open and close ceremonies at the Honbu Dojo. After one training, Hanshi came to me to tell me that the sound of my voice, when calling the ceremonial commands (Shomen ni rei, Hanshi ni rei,..) reminded him of the voice of his master Kanken Toyama. Although it was a small thing, that observation surprised me. At the same time, though I had no control over it, the knowledge that my voice was like that of Kanken Toyama made me proud.

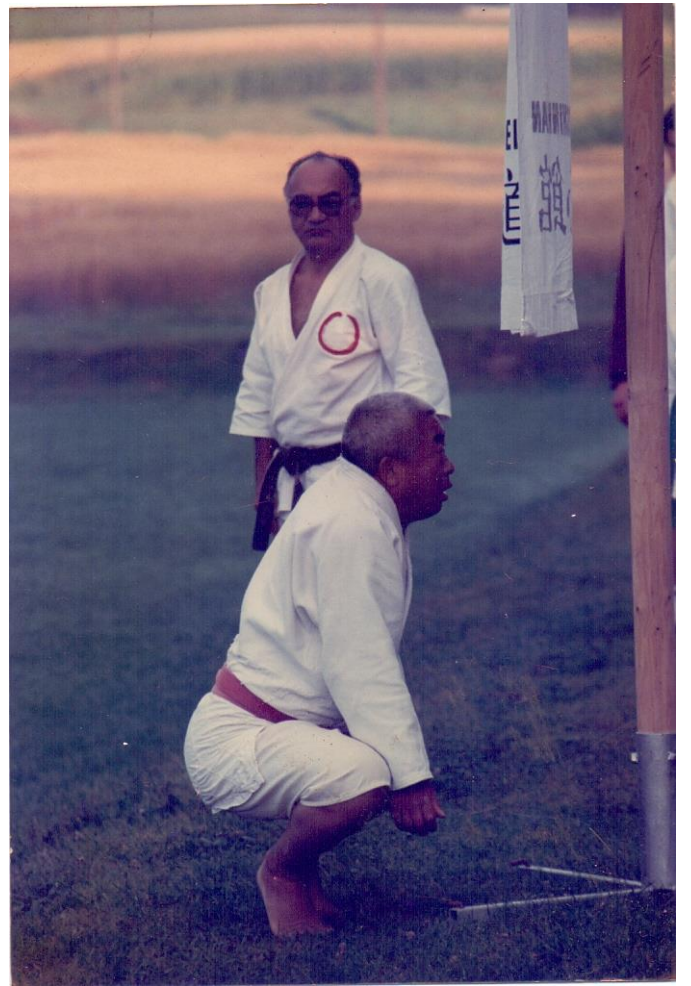
Learning of this similarity with Kanken Toyama also somehow made me feel more comfortable asking Hanshi questions I had previously held inside. In the ensuing time, I asked Hanshi many questions concerning all the aspects of Doshinkan. I asked him about how, why and when he decided to come to Austria to establish his Dojo, the meaning of some katas, and many other topics. Once, during a private conversation with him, I dared to complain that there were too many katas in Doshinkan. I observed that, even over the span of a lifetime, a person could not master the order and practical applications of all of them. Hanshi listened and then patiently explained something that I remember until now and that I try to apply as much as I can. He told me to not worry and that he would be very much satisfied if I would know well nine basic katas of Doshinkan. Those nine were the seven Kyoku katas and the two Shichi-sei katas. Until today, at about 80 years of age, I try to review those katas regularly and to understand their movements.

In 2013, health and other issues led me to a decision that I regret very much - I have decided that I should no longer travel abroad. I regret that decision because it meant I would no longer be able to participate in special Doshinkan group trainings. I try to keep training by myself at home to keep the Doshinkan spirit alive in body, mind and spirit.

My farewell training was in Hawaii in 2012. After that I very much miss those group trainings and the company of my Doshinkan friends from all over the world. My last promotion was by the end of a summer training in Tittling, Germany in August 2007. Hanshi Nobuo promoted me to Renshi 7-dan.

I am very much indebted for the gifts provided to me by Doshinkan for more than 30 years such as respect for loyalty, honor, ethic, seriousness, integrity, honesty, comprehension, responsibility, friendship, companionship, respect for someone else opinion and so on. All of that I started to treasure from the first moment I started training with Sensei sandan Dean Lillard (now Shihan hachi dan Dean) back in 1981, and polished by Rex Santoro (now Shihan hachi dan Rex) and mainly by Hanshi Isao and Hanshi Nobuo. I am sure that all the traditions of Doshinkan history is and will be followed by Hanshi Fujimoto-Stock Masako. The examples I got from all my Doshinkan instructors and friends changed my private life for the better and improved my behavior professionally. I keep all deeply in my heart and regret very much that I am not able to have the opportunity to train under the leadership of Hanshi Fujimoto-Stock Masako. I keep training by myself at home, as much as possible, to keep the Doshinkan spirit alive in body, mind and spirit.









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号数 BR 107R7130

右ノ者 DI Jair A.  
Marques de Souza  
空手道 RENSHI 7 DAN ニ認ム

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**KARATEDO DOSHINKAN**

空手道 道心館

日本伝沖縄正統空手道総本部

範士十段 市川信夫

市川信夫

