

Budo: Teachings of the Founder of Aikido

Containing over 400 photographs, and including an introduction by his son and successor Kisshomaru, *Budo* is the only book of its kind written by Morihei Ueshiba.

Not published until years after his death, this ‘secret’ instruction manual is unique in being the only Aikido book offering technical instruction directly from the founder of the art. It was written in 1938, at a time when the middle-aged Ueshiba was at his physical peak, and offers not only practical instructions in the application of various Aikido techniques, but also an insight into the philosophy behind them. It includes step-by-step instructions for both tori *and* uke, with photographs of Ueshiba performing each stage for reference, and dozens of techniques being covered, armed and open-handed, standing and sitting. The subsequent section, entitled ‘Noma Dojo Techniques’, is a selection of photographs taken of Ueshiba on his visit to a dojo in 1936. Interestingly, the book often compares them, frame by frame, with similar photographs of him demonstrating the same techniques post-war, allowing any change in emphasis to be observed. All this is preceded by the first of the book’s three sections, in which Kisshomaru offers a largely objective, occasionally personal, and very detailed biography of his father.

Ultimately, then, those who wish to distil the man from the myth, as I constantly seek to do, will not be disappointed with *Budo*. Whilst it certainly carries almost unparalleled credence as a martial arts manual, it also holds a place as historical record, unique in its nature. Those wishing to see the founder himself in action, to see Ueshiba as a man, demonstrating techniques now carried out by millions around the world, need look no further.

9 sausages out of 10.

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