



# A Life in Aikido: The Biography of Founder Morihei Ueshiba

*Kisshomaru Ueshiba*

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The history of Japan's martial traditions is replete with many outstanding individuals, but few have attained the legendary status of Morihei Ueshiba. Throughout his extraordinary life, Ueshiba mastered an array of martial arts and techniques, including jujutsu and kendo, and endlessly devoted himself to the philosophies of Japan's martial schools. He also had a deep knowledge of the practice of Shinto. Refining these traditions into a wholly new system, he founded Aikido--the way of harmony. Aikido goes far beyond simple methods of attack or self-defense, seeking to dispel aggression by creating a sense of oneness, thus ultimately promoting peace. Through its unique aspect of both preserving the heritage of the classical fighting arts and applying them within the context of contemporary society, Aikido has quickly become one of the most respected martial arts in the world.

In this engaging and compelling biography, the Founder's son Kissomaru Ueshiba (the second Aikido Doshu) details the life of this remarkable man, from his early years as a youth in the turbulent Meiji era to his death in 1969. Incorporating many first-hand accounts and anecdotes as well as historical documents, the author weaves a fascinating narrative of the Founder's life, and with great fondness tells of his own memories of the man who would come to be known as O Sensei--great master.

Ueshiba reveals much about the character and temperament of his father, painting a picture of a man of formidable commitment and spirituality, in both his practice of Aikido and his message of peace. Indeed, his dedication to his art was so strong that through his techniques he was able to attain *kami-waza*; an ability that transcends the human and reaches the divine. This book will appeal to any reader with an interest in the life of Morihei Ueshiba and a desire to discover the real person behind the legend.

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