



The Philosophy of Aikido

By John Stevens

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At last, a clear and insightful look at the system of beliefs that is the basis for the practice of Aikido. *The Philosophy of Aikido* is an invaluable guide for practitioners-whether beginning or advanced-wishing to know more about the context in which Aikido was developed and Aikido's implications for the world today.

Some of the ideas discussed are:

- the relation of Aikido to such Asian traditions as Shinto, Shingon Buddhism, Omotokyo esotericism, Taoist mysticism, and Tantra
- points of correspondence between Aikido and Western philosophical and religious systems-Greek philosophy, Christianity, Kabbalah, alchemy, and modern scientific theories
- links between Aikido and art
- ways that Aikido thought can be used to advance the causes of such urgent issues as health and healing, conflict resolution and environmental responsibility

The Philosophy of Aikido will be of vital interest to all those who are drawn to a dynamic philosophy centered on harmony, peace, and spiritual strength. The book includes 70 black-and-white illustrations of woodblock prints, calligraphy, and photographs from the author's extensive collection.

John Stevens lived in Japan for thirty-five years, where he was a professor of Buddhist studies at Tohoku Fukushi University in Sendai. Stevens is a widely respected translator, an ordained Buddhist priest, a curator of several major exhibitions of Zen art, and an aikido instructor. He has authored more than thirty books and is one of the foremost Western experts on aikido, holding a ranking of 7th dan Aikikai. Stevens has also studied calligraphy for decades, authoring the classic *Sacred Calligraphy of the East*. Other John Stevens titles that are likely to be of interest include *Extraordinary Zen Masters* and *The Marathon Monks of Mount Hiei*.

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The Philosophy of Aikido By John Stevens Bibliography

- Sales Rank: #1102281 in Books
- Published on: 2013-02-28
- Original language: English
- Number of items: 1
- Dimensions: 9.02" h x .28" w x 5.98" l, .41 pounds
- Binding: Paperback
- 132 pages

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Editorial Review

Review

"... excellent educational tool into the study of Aikido, its principles, lifestyles, roots, and philosophy behind Aikido, the martial art." -- *Cheryl Matrasko, Aikido World*

"Highly recommended for undergraduates, graduate students, and professionals and practitioners." -- *Choice*

"The revelation of this book is that Aikido philosophy is a philosophy of life."--Henry Hirai, *The East -- The East, Vol. XXXVII No. 1*

From the Publisher

An Online Interview with the Author

What motivated you to write this book?

"I have done three books on Aikido for Kodansha International. The first was a translation of Budo, a technical manual by Ueshiba Morihei, the founder of Aikido. The second was *The Essence of Aikido*, a compilation of Master Ueshiba's spiritual teachings. In both these books, I was very careful to translate Master Ueshiba's teachings as literally and objectively as possible. In *The Philosophy of Aikido*, however, I present my own views on Aikido, based on my experiences practicing and teaching Aikido both in Japan (where I have lived since 1973) and in many different parts in the rest of the world. We have entered the age of the Global Village, and there is really no 'east' or 'west' anymore. Even in Japan, the birthplace of Aikido, there are a number of non-Japanese Aikido instructors. Aikido is becoming an important element of international culture, and Aikido principles--harmony, integration, cooperation, non-violence--are just what the world needs in the 21st century."

Could you tell us something about the contents of the book?

"The book has two parts: I. Theory 11. Practice. Part I presents the essential principles of Aikido, and how those principles parallel teachings found in Western philosophy, world religions, aesthetics, and scientific thought. Chapters include 'Aikido and Nature,' 'Aikido as Tantra,' 'Aikido and Art,' and 'Aikido and Global Society.' Part II is not a technical manual but rather a visual portrayal of Aikido in action, illustrated with many different kinds of photographs."

Why is the book important?

"I believe that this is the first book on Aikido written from an 'international perspective.' It does not present Aikido as a 'Japanese martial art' or as a kind of 'Oriental mysticism.' It shows that Aikido is a dynamic philosophy that can be applied anywhere, to all kinds of problems, and that its message is universal. In Aikido, we do not look for the things that are different; we look for things that are the same. Aikido philosophy helps us tie things together, to place things in their proper perspective, to live in harmony with our fellow human beings and nature."

About the Author

John Stevens is the foremost Western expert on Aikido. A professor of Buddhist studies and Aikido instructor at Tohoku Fukushi University in Sendai, Japan, he is the author of more than thirty books on Aikido, Buddhism, Zen and Asian culture. Previous works on Aikido include *The Essence of Aikido*, *The*

Secrets of Aikido and Aikido: The Way of Harmony.

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Darren Marshall:

A lot of people always spent their particular free time to vacation or even go to the outside with them family members or their friend. Do you know? Many a lot of people spent these people free time just watching TV, or even playing video games all day long. If you would like try to find a new activity that's look different you can read the book. It is really fun to suit your needs. If you enjoy the book that you read you can spent all day every day to reading a guide. The book The Philosophy of Aikido it is quite good to read. There are a lot of those who recommended this book. These people were enjoying reading this book. In case you did not have enough space bringing this book you can buy typically the e-book. You can m0ore simply to read this book out of your smart phone. The price is not too costly but this book offers high quality.

Elizabeth Parker:

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Antonia Wagner:

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Emma Peterson:

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