

The Book of Judo

also published as *The Art of Peace*

George Ohsawa

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Other books by George Ohsawa in English include: *Acupuncture and the Philosophy of the Far East*; *Atomic Age and the Philosophy of the Far East*; *Cancer and the Philosophy of the Far East*; *Essential Ohsawa*; *Gandhi, the Eternal Youth*; *Jack and Mitie*; *Macrobiotic Guidebook for Living*; *Macrobiotics: An Invitation to Health and Happiness*; *Order of the Universe*; *Philosophy of Oriental Medicine*; *Practical Guide to Far Eastern Macrobiotic Medicine*; *Unique Principle*; *You Are All Sanpaku*; and *Zen Macrobiotics*. Contact the publisher at the address below for a complete list of available titles.

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Publisher's Note

I am very happy this book has finally been translated into English and published, about 40 years after George Ohsawa lectured on this just after World War II.

The original title of this book is *The Book of Judo*. For its first English version we changed the title to *The Art of Peace*, because the real aim of all the martial ways, including judo and aikido, is maintaining peace. What Ohsawa basically discusses in this book is not the techniques of judo or aikido, although he began by writing on the founders of both arts.

What Ohsawa wants to discuss here is the cause or causes of war and how to realize peace on earth. Why did he want to relate judo and aikido with the establishment of world peace? In order to explain this, I have to tell you a little about the background of this book.

Around 1950, five years after the end of the war, I was going to Ohsawa's school, Maison Ignoramus, in Tokyo to study macrobiotics. One morning Ohsawa gave a lecture based on his new book, *Le Livre du Judo*. Having lost the war, Japan had lost everything—industries and businesses as well as its way of life and beliefs: the meaning of life, home, and nation which the Japanese people were so proud of. As a result, confusion prevailed. People didn't know what to do except obtain foods through the black market or earn money by selling military goods on the black market.

In those confused times, Ohsawa taught macrobiotics at his center. One day he met the renowned aikido master Morihei Ueshiba at his *dojo* because, by coincidence, Ueshiba's *dojo* was located very

close to Ohsawa's school. Ohsawa highly admired Master Ueshiba and recommended that everybody learn aikido because the principle of aikido is not fighting but rather turning the enemy into a friend. This was also Ohsawa's principle. For this reason many Japanese macrobiotic followers became aikido disciples, especially among those who went to live in Europe. One of these was Seigo Yamaguchi, head instructor at the Aikido Dojo in Shinjuku, Tokyo. He was the first of Ohsawa's students living at the center to begin studying aikido. William Gleason, who translated this book, is an American disciple of Seigo Yamaguchi.

Ohsawa understood the spirit of aikido from Master Ueshiba—the concept of changing an enemy into a friend. This understanding and his meeting Ueshiba must be what inspired Ohsawa to write this book.

Ohsawa also wanted to explain the Far Eastern “primitive mentality” at a time when Japan was rebuilding its culture and economy, and he did so in this book. World Federalism was of course aiming to establish world peace, and Ohsawa's version was based on macrobiotic spiritual and dietary principles. In reality, he united himself with the movement so that he could easily distribute macrobiotic ideas to the people of Japan, who, more than any one, wanted peace in the world. *The Book of Judo* was written under such circumstances.

“Judo is, above all, a cooperative activity where those who are opposed to each other are united by the common goal of polishing themselves as well as bringing each other to perfection through actual training,” wrote Ohsawa. “Neither peace nor freedom can be established by the elimination of the other side.”

Since that time nearly 40 years have passed. The world has experienced great peace, but it was not real peace. It was a peace protected by atomic bombs and nuclear weapons. It was a peace controlled by a winner's tyranny. Such exclusive one-person governments started to fall last year in Europe when many countries turned towards democratic governments. This is the first step to world peace. Ohsawa's *The Book of Judo* is a guiding light showing the causes of war and the way to establish true peace, spiritually and physically, starting

from the individual. At a time when the world is showing signs of establishing the unification of opposites, in other words, turning towards peace, I highly recommend reading this book. I think this is one of Ohsawa's greatest books. He prepared well for the topics he selected.

We chose Mr. Gleason as the translator because he stayed in Japan for several years studying aikido and macrobiotics and is now a fifth degree black belt teaching in Boston. He translated from the Japanese text with the help of his wife Hisako, a Japanese macrobiotic student. I appreciate their work every much. I would also like to thank Sandy Rothman for his thorough editing, Carl Ferré for text design and production, and Carl Campbell for designing the beautiful cover.

*Herman Aihara, President
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Preface

Judo is an art. It is different from activities which fall under the category of sports. It is a practical, aesthetic, physical, and psychological art. More than a means of self-defense, it should fall under the category of an art of adaptability, one of the functions of the instinct.

The adaptability of human beings is truly amazing. Our ability to adapt grows and develops in a thousand different ways. Real medicine, government, economy, education, and theory are similar to judo or aikido. They are all special characteristics of our instinctive adaptability.

If adaptability is a special characteristic of instinct, then in order to develop it the most important thing is to understand what instinct is. There is no branch of science capable of explaining either the laws which govern instinct or its mechanism. Therefore there is no education, economics, government, or medicine which is true; that is to say, unique and eternal. All these institutions are relative, limited, and temporary teachings which are constantly in a state of flux. Little by little they are all going towards their own dissolution. If a particular religion or way of medicine outlasts the others, this is proof that it has a more deeply rooted perception of human instinct. Modern Christianity is a fossilized example of this and Buddhism is another. Oriental medicine, although relatively unknown in the West, is flourishing and respected by some 400 million Chinese as well as the Japanese (who are the most Westernized people in the Far East). Some eighty years ago in Japan, Oriental medicine was completely suppressed and stamped out. Compared to the original, that which has been revived today is little more than amateurism. The doctors

of herbal medicine today are totally ignorant of Oriental medicine. In spite of this, the degree of respect which Oriental medicine receives is really amazing. Real Oriental medicine is already obscure. Those who practice it today depend on pieces of information they can pick up from old books.

From the time Western civilization was imported, the once peaceful Japan, represented by the paintings of Hiroshige and Utamaro,¹ has been turned upside down. The true judo could no longer survive. One is reminded of the story of the pitiful crow who threw away his feathers, thinking he could borrow those of the peacock. It was believed that the rifle could replace judo and kendo. It is obvious that, even at that time, judo was already thought of as no more than an art of self-defense.

Judo, however, is not so simplistic. It is both spiritual and physical, hence philosophical and physiological. It is a method of gaining intuitive understanding of the mechanism of adaptability. If this understanding is given practical application, our instinct as well as our willpower are strengthened. It is not like that conceptual or scientific knowledge which obscures the instinct. As with all the ancient teachings of the Far East, judo is straightforward, direct, and doesn't depend on any use of special or complex tools or instruments. There are no detailed explanations. Rather, the focus is on how to establish and strengthen the instinct, which is the source of our power of understanding, judgment, and will. At the *dojo* (the practice hall where the *do* is studied), students practice together under the critical eyes of the master who is preparing them for future physical, spiritual, and also biological battles. There are many *dojos* everywhere and there are many teachers here and there who make their living by teaching judo or kendo. Unfortunately, however, those who deserve the title of *shihan*, or master, are very rare.

Jigoro Kano, credited as the founder of judo, was such a master. He did not sell his techniques or his ability. He reformed and unified various styles of jujitsu which had degenerated. The morality of judo depreciates constantly because some who want to learn it are unhappy people who believe in the use of force and hope to conquer

the tangible world of data. Secondly, it takes a long time and a lot of practice, with little explanation, in order to really grasp the unwavering and unifying principle which is the barometer of humanity and the only path towards the kingdom of heaven.

Accordingly, judo was called the school which teaches nothing. Kano succeeded in creating a new school of judo called Kodokan. After his death there was no one to replace him. The tendency here towards degeneration is all too obvious. Being too busy with reformation, reconstruction, and propaganda, he had no time to deepen and spread his own understanding of the principle of judo. Some twenty years prior, Kano *sensei* (teacher) had sent his best student, Minoru Mochizuki, to study aikido with Master Morihei Ueshiba. Here we should pause and take note of a very important point. A great master like Kano at seventy years of age wanted to begin studying another art which he found superior to his own. This flexible mentality itself is the main characteristic of the principle of judo. It is also the traditional character of the samurai period of Japan which made possible the unification of the various schools of jujitsu. Ueshiba is already a free man of seventy. He continues to pass his time doing exactly as he chooses. Furthermore, he requires no special instrument to accomplish his dreams. A free person has no fear. One needs no weapons and does not immobilize an opponent with physical strength, but with that love which automatically changes the enemy into a good friend. Ueshiba *sensei* was the last and probably the greatest master in the history of Japanese *budo*.

Mochizuki studied aikido under Ueshiba for several years and earned the grade of eighth *dan* (degree) black belt. He became one of Ueshiba's top students. He is, at the same time, also a sixth *dan* in Kodokan judo. On February 2, 1951 he left for Paris on the steamer La Marseillaise, with three of his students, as an official representative of aikido. He was sponsored by the Society for the New Japanese Culture (*Shin Nihon Bunka Kyokai*) and the Japanese branch of the Association of World Federalists (*Sekai Renpo Kyokai Nihon Shibu*). He wanted to show that aikido is a physical, physiological, and spiritual application of the unique principle of Far Eastern phi-

osophy and science and that, as such, it is also the foundation of the world's three great religions. He wanted to show that it is a road to peace. Mochizuki was unable to put all of this into words, but he illustrated it by his own being and countenance.

Since neither Mochizuki nor his master explained the scientific aspects of the true meaning of judo, I will attempt to do so in their place. My ability in Western language is extremely limited and so I cannot explain the physiological, philosophical, and other scientific aspects in great detail. Nevertheless, I am overjoyed to have, at last, this opportunity to explain primitive mentality, as I promised Professor Lévy-Bruhl twenty years ago. I am sure it is worthwhile to do so for the establishment of a deeper understanding between East and West.

According to Lao Tsu, those who are free can accomplish all their dreams, at any time and to whatever degree they choose, without the need for any external tool or implement. Freedom, then, is the name given to the actions of those who do whatever they desire and as much as they desire, forever. Happiness is the internal state of such people. Judo is one of the special activities of those who have attained freedom and happiness.