



Martial Musings

A Portrayal of Martial Arts in the 20th Century - Robert W. Smith

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Robert Smith is a well-known name among followers of Internal martial arts, having written Chinese Boxing, Masters & Methods over 25 years ago and also produced 'Supreme Ultimate' with Prof. Cheng Man-Ching. A well-known name who has invested considerable years working in many aspects of martial arts. So what is the end result of these many years of study and musings?

There are a series of interesting tales of meeting and working with what are now almost legendary figures in the field of martial arts. From his early training days with eminent Japanese masters like Tahiko Ishikawa and Masahiko Kimura to his years in Taiwan studying with Hong Yixiang, Yuan Dao, Paul Guo, Gao Fangxian and with his much-adored mentor Zheng Manqing, Smith paints a vivid picture of the characteristics of these often colourful figures. The book provides an insight to the early years of what has now become a greatly enjoyed part of western culture that has deeply affected many lives.

So how has exposure to all these highly influential sources affected the author?

I do have some sympathy for those who have spent many years studying an art, only to see it hi-jacked by the young bucks who have often invested substantially less time for much higher rewards, in many ways. However I also feel the experience of age should bring some perspective and peace to one's latter years. At the age of 73 I'm afraid that Smith often comes across as a bitter old man who is greatly resentful of the end results from the seeds that he and others have sown.

"These wannabe warriors want to become masters and avoid that bane of our existence called manual labour. Most of them still live at home sponging from their parents."(!)

Ronnie Robinson



- ROBERT SMITH AT WORK