



The Future of Post-human Martial Arts: A Preface to a New Theory of the Body and Spirit of Warriors

Peter Baofu

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Is it really true that martial arts, in spite of their popularity in this day and age of ours, have, at their deepest level, the promised land of 'self-knowledge', 'the expression of beauty', or something highly spiritual to be pursued for the human soul? Or, to put it in a different way, what exactly makes martial arts so amazing that, somehow, they will eventually lead the practitioners to the spiritual realm of self-cultivation in its highest depth? Contrary to the conventional wisdom about martial arts as held by many over the ages, this popular view about martial arts has become so legendary that their dark sides have yet to be systematically explored and that the lofty aims of martial arts are neither possible nor desirable to the extent that their proponents would like us to believe. Of course, this is not to say that the very tradition of martial arts is absolutely useless, or that the literature on martial arts hitherto existing in history is spiritually unworthy to be appreciated. Instead, this book constructively offers an alternative (better) way to understand the nature of martial arts, in special relation to the body and spirit of warriors - while learning from different views in the literature, without favoring any one of them (nor integrating them, as they are not necessarily compatible with each other), and, in the end, transcending them towards a new horizon not conceived before. This seminal view, if proven valid, will fundamentally change the legendary way that people have thought about martial arts - from the combined perspectives of the mind, nature, society, and culture, with enormous implications for the human future and what I originally called its 'post-human' fate.

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