



# Chinese Martial Arts Training Manuals: A Historical Survey

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## Chinese Martial Arts Training Manuals: A Historical Survey

Secret training manuals, magic swords, and flying kung fu masters—these are staples of Chinese martial arts movies and novels, but only secret manuals have a basis in reality. Chinese martial arts masters of the past did indeed write such works, along with manuals for the general public. This collection introduces Western readers to the rich and diverse tradition of these influential texts, rarely available to the English-speaking reader.

Authors Brian Kennedy and Elizabeth Guo, who coauthor a regular column for *Classical Fighting Arts* magazine, showcase illustrated manuals from the Ming Dynasty, the Qing Dynasty, and the Republican period. Aimed at fans, students, and practitioners, the book explains the principles, techniques, and forms of each system while also placing them in the wider cultural context of Chinese martial arts. Individual chapters cover the history of the manuals, Taiwanese martial arts, the lives and livelihoods of the masters, the Imperial military exams, the significance of the Shaolin Temple, and more. Featuring a wealth of rare photographs of great masters as well as original drawings depicting the intended forms of each discipline, this book offers a multifaceted portrait of Chinese martial arts and their place in Chinese culture.

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