

Faculti Summary

<https://faculti.net/like-water/>

The speaker originally intended to write a quick sabbatical book on Bruce Lee after completing their second publication. However, their fascination with Lee expanded the project over a decade, culminating in a book released in 2022. The speaker, an Asian American who grew up in the 1970s, found Lee to be a significant role model and an iconic figure whose life illustrates broader cultural and migratory themes.

The process involved extensive research, including watching all Lee's films, reading biographies (notably Matthew Polly's), and exploring martial arts records. The central metaphor of the book is water, reflecting Lee's adaptability and fluidity, both in martial arts and philosophy, famously encapsulated in his quote about being "formless, shapeless like water."

The speaker emphasizes that Lee's global appeal stemmed from his unique heritage—being biracial and raised in a British-occupied Hong Kong—coupled with the influence of American culture during his time in the U.S. Although Lee faced racism that limited his Hollywood opportunities, he successfully revolutionized Hong Kong cinema by blending various cultural influences.

Ultimately, the speaker hopes readers recognize the importance of Lee's legacy beyond his cinematic contributions, understanding how his life story reflects larger societal dynamics and the potential for cultural hybridity. They encourage celebrating cross-cultural exchanges, asserting that learning from one another is essential for human connection and creativity.