



Walter Gjergja (Shi Xing Mi)

Walter Gjergja – Shaolin Temple secular monk Shi Xing Mi – is a Shaolin Master, trainer, adviser, coach, speaker and author, with a rather unusual mix of “prior lives” initially as martial arts athlete and then as strategy consultant and CEO in the technology sector.

Born in Italy with mixed European origins, Walter began to practice Kung Fu WuShu as a child in the mid '80s in Italy, whilst from the early '90s Walter then traveled for over 18 years, studying in China (with frequent study stays in the Shaolin monastery) and Australia, as well as achieving wins and placements in many national and international competitions (Kung Fu WuShu forms and Sanda combat) including three consecutive Asia-Pacific championships.

In parallel to his deepening Shaolin studies, Walter eventually interrupted the competitive martial arts pursuits to complete university studies in Economics (honors degree) and Philosophy (undergraduate) in Australia, at the prestigious La Trobe and Melbourne Universities.

Following university graduation, Walter then embarked in an extremely rapid and successful corporate career, starting within one of the largest media groups in Australia to then become the youngest member of a leading investment fund. Soon after the partners appointed him as CEO of a technology start-up, which in one year he grew from a business plan and one – himself – employee to a team of sixty, culminating after just two years with a listing on the Australian stock exchange, which saw him become at age 28 the youngest CEO of a publicly listed company in that country.

However Walter remained somewhat restless despite such remarkable success; he took time out to continue his Shaolin studies at the monastery and soon after decided he wished to return to Europe, where he moved in 2000 becoming the youngest associate partner of a leading strategy consulting firm in Milan.

Bt life, destiny or “karma” had other plans for him; after another visit to the monastery as well as a number of other interlinked personal and professional events, Walter courageously decided to abandon the corporate career to complete his Shaolin Temple education and then focus entirely on training and sharing his unique mix of competencies.

Shaolin Temple Grand Master Shi De Yang formalized him as disciple (the first non-Chinese), descendent of the 32nd Shaolin warrior monks generation. The rare traditional ceremony, performed in the Shaolin Temple with elder monks and relatives of the Master, officialized his entry in the Shaolin genealogy with the monastic name Shi Xing Mi, which has also been inscribed on a stele in the Pagoda Forest.

In 2005 Shi Xing Mi founded the first Shaolin cultural center in Milan (Italy), today active also in other cities and one of the principal Shaolin cultural centers in Europe, but he dedicated most of his efforts toward creating a practical and highly effective method of mind and body development, drawing from his unique and diverse educational, professional and then teaching experiences.

During the following decade he created a number of specific mindfulness-based training systems, which he tested and perfected in a great variety of personal and professional contexts, across all kinds of cultures and demographics, addressing a myriad of individual or corporate challenges: what he calls “ancient wisdom for the modern times” was born.

Shi Xing Mi's approach has gained substantial media exposure and popularity in several countries; today he interacts annually with tens of thousands of people, conducting workshops, seminars, keynote speeches and media activities at cultural conferences and corporate events, coaching the management of leading international organizations, holding regular programs and lessons at university faculties, authoring books and articles, collaborating as adviser and trainer in a very diverse range of fields.

He has been called by leading organizations and media a "cultural acrobat", "monk of strategy", "the master of effectiveness" and "the wellness master".