

## **East Asian Martial Arts: Historical Development, Modernization, and Globalization**

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### **Related Materials**

- “History and Ethnography of East Asian Martial Arts” (syllabus)  
<http://www.exeas.org/syllabi/history-ethnography-martial-arts.html>
- “Chûshingura and the Samurai Tradition” (syllabus)  
<http://www.exeas.org/syllabi/samurai-tradition.html>
- “Samurai, Cowboy, Shaolin Monk: National Myths and Transnational Forms in Literature and Film” (syllabus)  
<http://www.exeas.org/syllabi/cowboy-samurai.html>
- “The Samurai Tradition in Japanese Literature and Film” (syllabus)  
<http://www.exeas.org/syllabi/samurai-japanese-lit.html>
- “Bruce Lee in Hong Kong and Harlem” (teaching unit)  
<http://www.exeas.org/resources/bruce-lee.html>
- “Law and Society: The Story of the 47 Samurai” (teaching unit)  
<http://www.exeas.org/resources/law-society.html>
- “The Place of the Samurai in 20th Century Japan: Two Teaching Units” (teaching unit)  
<http://www.exeas.org/resources/place-of-samurai.html>

### **Themes and Goals**

American students’ most common areas of contact with East Asian cultures are through martial arts, film, and food. This unit takes advantage of students’ prior interest in martial arts to teach them about East Asian history and contemporary processes of globalization. Through exploration of the historical development and spread of these practices, it seeks to develop students’ reflexivity regarding the relationships between the products (including practices and ideas) of East Asian culture that they consume, the historical processes through which these were produced, and the global processes through which they were further transformed, transmitted, and integrated into local American lives.

In both East Asia and in other parts of the world, popular views of East Asian martial arts depict them as authentic national traditions handed down intact through the mists of time, and as exotic means for the development of extraordinary power and fighting ability. These visions are disseminated through martial arts film, video games, schools, fiction, magazines, and web sites. Besides popularizing the martial arts, these representations also shape both the expectations of students entering martial arts schools, and the ways in which such schools market and teach their art.

Hoping to undermine the stereotype of martial arts as embodying timeless national essences, this unit begins with the historical emergence and development of martial arts practices and mythologies in China and Japan, focusing on the seventeenth to nineteenth centuries. It then examines the modern re-shaping and “invention” of these traditions. While rapid social, technological, and economic change threatened to make them obsolete, it also encouraged their development as methods of self-improvement and national strengthening, and their spread to new social classes.

This unit explores continuities and discontinuities in the “premodern-modern” divide, and relationships between the global and local. What more savvy students often think of as the modern corruption of pure traditional martial arts, such as competition, commercialization, influence from popular culture, and the gearing of practice toward performance rather than fighting efficacy, were also integral to the development of “premodern” martial arts. The process of “inventing traditions” is also not entirely unique to modernity, with which it is usually associated. On the other hand, there are processes, including aspects of the “invention of tradition,” that are specific to structures of capitalism, scientific values and methods, nation building, movements such as anarchism and socialism, and media such as film. The martial arts provide case studies for the ways in which these global processes were adapted in the national contexts of China and Japan, and in the spread of Chinese and Japanese cultural practices to other parts of the world.

This unit focuses on Chinese and Japanese martial arts. Martial arts, as clearly delineated and transmitted disciplines of fighting techniques, are a more recent phenomenon in Korea, and there is little reliable scholarly work on their historical development there. Instructors might adapt these materials for courses that deal only with China or only with Japan. However, the two cases in conjunction provide points of interesting comparison and contrast. For example, before the mid-nineteenth century, martial arts in China were the province of lower classes and were almost universally disdained by elites. In contrast, in Japan martial arts were the exclusive domain of the samurai ruling elite.

### **Audience and Uses**

This unit is intended for undergraduates. It can be adapted for either lower level or upper level courses on topics such as the following:

- East Asian History
- Chinese History
- Japanese History

- Globalization
- Popular Culture
- World History
- Sports Culture
- Body Culture

The unit is divided into three sections: A) Historical Development, B) Modernization, and C) Globalization. These sections were originally designed to fit into three weeks, but the instructor could choose to cover only one or two sections, adapting the material for use in a single lecture or week.

All readings are coded as follows:

- \*\*\* Highly accessible to and recommended for students.
- \*\* Useful as background for instructors, if not assigned to students. Also suitable for higher level courses or more extended treatments (such as when teaching the unit over three weeks rather than one week or one lecture).
- \* Additional readings for instructors or students who want to delve into more detail.

### **Suggestion for Introductory Reading**

Study Questions for Students:

- What varying roles or meanings can history have for participants in a martial art?
- What is the relationship between what happens historically, and the ways in which historical narratives are constructed?
- What issues does this raise for the reading and analysis of histories of the martial arts schools?

\*\*\* GREEN, Thomas A. "Historical Narrative in the Martial Arts: A Case Study." In *Usable Pasts: Traditions and Group Expressions in North America*, Tad TULEJA, ed. Logan, Utah: Utah State University Press, 1997, pp. 156-174.

This reading illustrates many of the central themes of all three sections of this unit. Readable anthropological study of the use of historical narratives in the teaching of the Won Hop Loong Chuan martial art in the United States. As practitioners train, they must learn and reproduce the history of this art; as they become teachers, they must in turn disseminate to new generations of students. Green examines the ways in which the historical narrative evolves according to the purposes of different teachers, and according to the identity they seek to create for themselves and to inculcate as practitioners of Won Hop Loong Chuan.

## **Section A: Historical Development**

For this section, instructors might consider assigning only primary sources and incorporating material from secondary sources into lectures.

### **Primary Source Readings**

#### 1. Martial Artists Portrayed in Literature

Study Questions for Students:

- What are the different types of martial characters portrayed in these works of fiction?
- What types of martial skills do they possess?
- What values do they exemplify or invert?

\*\*\* “Shi Jin the Nine-Dragoned.” In *Chinese Civilization: A Sourcebook*, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition, Patricia EBREY, ed. New York: The Free Press, 1993, pp. 226-237.

\*\*\* “from *The Romance of the Gods (Feng-shen yan-yi): Ne-zha and His Father.*” In *Anthology of Chinese Literature: Beginnings to 1911*, Stephen OWEN, ed. and trans. New York: Norton, 1996, pp. 771-806.

\*\*\* *The Tale of the Heike*, Helen Craig McCULLOUGH, trans. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1988, pp. 1-11, 17-19, 358-425.

#### 2. Writings on the Martial Arts

Study Questions for Students:

- What are the various social backgrounds of people who practiced and wrote about martial arts in sixteenth to nineteenth century China/Japan?
- What sorts of arts did they practice?
- What values did they espouse?
- How does this compare to the martial heroes of fiction?
- In what ways might different social backgrounds affect approaches to martial arts practice?

\*\*\*. DAIDÔJI, Yûzan. *Code of the Samurai: A Modern Translation of the Bushido Shoshinshu*, CLEARY, Thomas, trans. Boston: Tuttle, 1999.

Good translation of key samurai text. Useful especially if you would like to assign additional primary sources from before the twentieth century. Especially pertinent to pre-twentieth-century construction of samurai identity.

\*\*\*SATO, Hiroaki. *Legends of the Samurai*. Woodstock, NY: Overlook Press, 1995.

Good source of short translations of primary texts by and about samurai.

\*\*\*WILE, Douglas. *Lost T'ai-chi Classics from the Late Ch'ing Dynasty*. Albany: State University of New York Press, 1996.

\*\*\*---. *T'ai-chi's Ancestors: The Making of an Internal Martial Art*. New City, NY: Sweet Ch'i Press, 1999.

\*\*\*---. *T'ai-chi Touchstones: Yang Family Secret Transmissions*, Revised Edition. Brooklyn, NY: Sweet Ch'i Press, 1983.

These three books by Douglas Wile include both translations of martial arts texts from the sixteenth (*T'ai-chi's Ancestors*) and nineteenth centuries, as well as solid scholarly introductions that describe the authors and the historical contexts.

\*\*\*YAGYU Munenori. *The Sword & the Mind*. Trans. SATO Hiroaki. Woodstock, NY: Overlook Press, 1985.

By the seventeenth century fencing instructor to the Tokugawa shogunate.

### Secondary Source Readings

#### Study Questions for Students:

- What are the social backgrounds of people who practiced and wrote about martial arts in sixteenth to nineteenth century China/Japan?
- When did new social groups take up martial arts practice? What led to these developments? What institutional shifts (new types of schools, new relationships between teacher and student) did this entail?
- For Chinese elites, given previous commitments to avoid martial and physical activity, what did it mean to them to take up martial arts and advocate their practice? How did it change the way they saw their place in society? How did elite involvement change martial arts in China?
- For Japanese samurai, given the importance of performance in battle in their pre-Tokugawa positions, what did it mean to give up warfare? How did the virtual absence of warfare change martial arts in Japan?
- How did spirituality become tied to martial practice in China and in Japan?

\*\*\*CASS, Victoria. "Warriors and Mystics." Chapter 4 in *Dangerous Women: Warriors, Grannies, and Geishas of the Ming*. Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 1999, pp. 65-85.

Focuses primarily on literary representations of women as warriors and as mystics in the Ming (1368-1644 C.E.)

\*\*\*HAMM, John Christopher. "The Tradition of Martial Arts Fiction." In *Paper Swordsmen: Jin Yong and the Modern Chinese Martial Arts Novel*. Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2006, pp. 11-19.

Good brief overview of the history of Chinese martial arts fiction.

\*\*\* HURST, G. Cameron. *Armed Martial Arts of Japan: Swordsmanship and Archery*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1998, pp. 1-143.

This is an excellent monograph on the development of martial arts in Japan. Unfortunately, it focuses on two armed martial arts only, but it is useful for broader discussions as well.

\*\*\* SHAHAR, Meir. "Ming-Period Evidence of Shaolin Martial Practice." *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies* 61.2 (Dec. 2001): 359-415.

Explores the development of the mythology and practice of Shaolin martial arts.

\*\*\*WILE, Douglas (See introductory sections to readings listed in Primary Source Readings, Section 2 above)

\*\* BROWNELL, Susan. "Historical Overview: Sports, the Body, and the Nation." Chapter 2 in *Training the Body for China: Sports in the Moral Order of the People's Republic of China*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1995, pp. 34-64.

Martial arts appear here in the context of a historical overview of sports and body culture. Brownell gives a brief historical overview of the place of sports like polo in Chinese elite and popular culture from the Tang (618-907) to the Qing (1644-1911). She shows that in earlier centuries sports such as polo and hunting and martial pastimes such as archery were a part of aristocratic life. From the Song (960-1278), however, Han (ethnically Chinese) elites began to eschew such "martial" (*wu*) as opposed to "literary" or "cultured" (*wen*) activities among Han (Chinese) elites. Later non-Han (not ethnically Chinese) emperors and courts tended to maintain "martial" pastimes, and often received criticism for doing so from Han literati. During the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, reformers advocated Western models of physical exercise and sports for the strengthening of the nation. Brownell notes that these practices of disciplining the body for the nation-state were developed in Europe only recently, after the French Revolution. The introduction of these new views of the body and its relation to emerging ideas of a Chinese nation provoked shame over what came to be seen as the emasculated and weak bodies of queue- and gown-wearing sedentary Chinese elite men. In the twentieth century, indigenous martial arts came to be seen in polar opposition to western-style military technology and physical training. For example, in the 1910s and 1920s, National Essence School reformers advocated martial arts as a source of national strength, while New Culture Movement reformers opposed them as a source of backwardness and superstition. Brownell shows the diverse, conflicting, and shifting ways in which Republican (1912-1949) and Communist (1949-present) regimes tied sports, physical exercise, and martial arts to their ideologies and state-building goals.

\*\*ESHERICK, Joseph. *Origins of the Boxer Uprising*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1987. Chapter 2, "Sects, Boxers, and Popular Culture," pp. 38-67, and Chapter 8, "The Spirit

Boxers,” pp. 206-240. Definitely read pp. 216-222 and 230-240 from Chapter 8. If time is short, skim the rest of the chapter.

These chapters explore the backgrounds of the “boxers” from the Boxer Uprising of 1900 in northeast China. Esherick pulls together a wide range of sources to uncover this particular region’s martial cultures and the connections between religion and martial practice.

\*\*OWNBY, David. “Approximations of Chinese Bandits: Perverse Rebels, Romantic Heroes, or Frustrated Bachelors?” In *Chinese Femininities, Chinese Masculinities: A Reader*, Susan BROWNELL and Jeffrey N. WASSERSTROM, ed. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2002, pp. 226-250.

A broader perspective on the social and cultural origins of Chinese bandits (a major reservoir of Chinese “martial artists”).

\*\*SHAHAR, Meir. “Epigraphy, Buddhist Historiography, and Fighting Monks: The Case of Shaolin Monastery.” *Asia Major*, 3<sup>rd</sup> Series, XIII.2 (2002):15-36.

Examination of early evidence for martial practice at the Shaolin monastery.

\* BUTLER, Kenneth. “The Heike Monogatari and the Japanese Warrior Ethic.” *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies* 29 (1969): 93-108.

\* EDWARDS, Louise. “Women Warriors and Amazons of the Mid-Qing Texts Jinghua Yuan and Honglou Meng.” *Modern Asian Studies* 29.2 (May 1995): 225-255.

\* SHAHAR, Meir. “Epigraphy, Buddhist Historiography, and Fighting Monks: The Case of Shaolin Monastery.” *Asia Major*, 3<sup>rd</sup> Series, XIII.2 (2000): 15-36.

## **Section B: Modernization**

### Study Questions for Students

- What is an “invented tradition”?
- What is the link between the invention of traditions and nationalism?
- What is it about modernity that is conducive to inventing traditions?
- What does it do to the practice in question to construct them as authentically traditional, as opposed to all those things that people might do that do not get this kind of attention and construction?
- What is modern and invented about judo/kodo/kendo/Chinese martial arts? What are the values that their inventors are placing at the core of these martial arts? How are these related to national identity?

## Readings

\*\*\* BODIFORD, Willam M. "Zen and Japanese Swordsmanship Reconsidered." In *Budo Perspectives*, Alexander BENNETT, ed. Auckland, New Zealand: Kendo World Publications, 2005, pp. 69-104.

Zen is often overstated as the heart of the samurai spirit and of Japanese martial arts. Bodiford gives some background on how that came to be the case, and explores some of the historical evidence for the connection.

\*\*\* HURST, G. Cameron. *Armed Martial Arts of Japan: Swordsmanship and Archery*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1998, pp. 147-176.

Hurst explores the historical reinventions of armed martial arts.

\*\*\* INOUE, Shun. "The Invention of the Martial Arts: Kanô Jigorô and Kôdôkan Judo." In *Mirror of Modernity: Invented Traditions of Modern Japan*, Stephen VLASTOS, ed. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1998, pp. 163-173.

Inoue explores the historical reinventions of judo.

\*\*\* MORRIS, Andrew D. "From Martial Arts to National Skills: The Construction of a Modern Indigenous Physical Culture, 1912-1937." Chapter 7 in *Marrow of the Nation: A History of Sport and Physical Culture in Republican China*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2004, pp. 185-230.

Morris provides a good overview of the modern reinvention of Chinese martial arts in the Republican period.

\*\*\* SHARF, Robert H. "The Zen of Japanese Nationalism." In *Curators of the Buddha: The Study of Buddhism under Colonialism*, Donald S. LOPEZ, ed. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1995, pp. 107-60.

Examines the construction of the mythology of Zen as the heart of the Japanese and samurai spirit.

\*\* HAMM, John Christopher. "Introduction: The Literary and Historical Contexts of New School Martial Arts Fiction." In *Paper Swordsmen: Jin Yong and the Modern Chinese Martial Arts Novel*. Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2006, pp. 1-11, 19-31.

Hamm focuses on the historical revival of martial arts fiction in 1950s Hong Kong.



\* The following are richer in detail than Inoue and may be substituted or added as required reading for more extended treatments:

- CHA, Louis (JIN Yong). *The Deer and the Cauldron*, John MINFORD with Rachel MAY, ed. and trans. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002.

Highly entertaining novel by JIN Yong.

- DUARA, Prasenjit. "The Regime of Authenticity: Timelessness, Gender, and National History in Modern China." *History and Theory* 37.3 (October 1998): 287-308.

Dense for most undergraduates, but explores the relationships between constructions of authenticity and the production of national histories in China.

- HOBBSBAM, Eric. "Introduction: Inventing Traditions." In *The Invention of Tradition*, Eric HOBBSBAM and Terence RANGER, ed. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, pp. 1-14.

A seminal work on the topic.

- VLASTOS, Stephen. "Tradition: Past/Present Culture and Modern Japanese History." In *Mirror of Modernity: Invented Traditions of Modern Japan*, Stephen VLASTOS, ed. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1998, pp. 1-16.
- CHAKRABARTY, Dipesh. "Afterword: Revisiting the Tradition/Modernity Binary." In *Mirror of Modernity: Invented Traditions of Modern Japan*, Stephen VLASTOS, ed. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1998, pp. 285-296.

The Vlastos introduction and Chakrabarty afterward to *Mirror of Modernity* provide a useful overview of the problematic of modernity and "Invented Traditions," focusing on the case of Japan, but also with some comparative perspective. Vlastos and Chakrabarty also raise questions about the "Invented Traditions" model, such as whether invented traditions, while constructed as invariable, do not in fact change over time; whether the dichotomy of traditions as elite constructed products vs. customs as organic popular practice is not overdrawn (customs also being constructed things); whether the invention of traditions is entirely a modern phenomenon; and whether invented traditions only support social and political institutions, or might not also be used to subvert them.

These should work well as a general introduction for students already generally familiar with the Meiji Restoration, industrial and military modernization in Japan, and with Japan's militarization and involvement in World War II. The introduction alone could work; Chakrabarty's afterward is more densely written and difficult. These readings might otherwise be useful as background reading for the instructor and optional reading for students.

## **Section C: Globalization**

### Study Questions for Students

- What is “cultural globalization”? This is usually thought of in relation to the spread of American culture, such as through Hollywood movies, Disneyland, and the McDonald’s fast food chain, to other countries. Globalization also involves flows from other cultures into the United States. Are the dynamics of cultural globalization different for this reverse cultural flow? Who is bringing this culture to the United States? Who are the consumers of it?
- Consider Americans’ consumption of foreign cultural experiences, for example through tourism, or the domestic consumption of foreign clothing styles food, film, and martial arts. What is valued in this experience? What are these consumers looking for? To what extent are Americans seeking an authentic experience of foreign culture?

### Suggested Outside Activities/Assignments

Go to a martial arts school to watch a class and talk with the instructor. Invite an instructor to give a demonstration at your school, and to answer questions. Take the entire class on a field trip or send students to visit Chinatown, go to a Chinese or Japanese restaurant, or go to an East Asian grocery.

### Suggested Classroom Activities

Wear a Chinese or Japanese-style article of clothing or piece of jewelry, or bring in pictures or objects of popular East Asian style consumer products. Discuss why these go through periods of popularity, why someone might be attracted to purchase them, what people might be saying about themselves when they wear this kind of clothing. Use this as a point of reference for discussion of East Asian martial arts in the U.S.

Show one or both of the following films:

*Shaolin Ulysses: Kungfu Monks in America*, Martha BURR and Mei-Juin CHEN, dir. 56 minutes. DVD available for purchase (approx. \$24-\$27 as of July 2006) from retail outlets such as Amazon.com and barnesandnoble.com. Also available for purchase from Lotus Films (Phone: 800-343-5540; Fax: 845-774-2945; Email: [orders@lotusfilms.org](mailto:orders@lotusfilms.org)). Available for rental from Netflix. See <http://www.pbs.org/independentlens/shaolinulysses/> for additional information on the film.

Follows the lives of four Shaolin monks who emigrated to the United States.

*Dragon: The Bruce Lee Story*, Rob COHEN, dir. 120 minutes. DVD available for purchase (approx. \$10-12 as of July 2006) from retail outlets such as Amazon.com and barnesandnoble.com. Available for rental from Netflix.

A biography authorized by Bruce LEE’s widow.

## Readings

\*\*\* CHAN, Stephen. "The Construction and Export of Culture as Artefact: The Case of Japanese Martial Arts." *Body and Society* 6.1 (2000): 69-74. Available online through Sage Sociology Database.

\*\* CHEN, Nancy N. "Transnational Qigong." Chapter 7 in *Breathing Spaces: Qigong, Psychiatry, and Healing in China*. New York: Columbia University Press, 2003, pp. 159-184.

\*\*\* SIEGLER, Elijah. "Chinese Traditions in Euro-American Society." In *Chinese Religions in Contemporary Societies*, James MILLER, ed. Santa Barbara: ABC-CLIO Press, 2006, pp. 257-280.

Focuses on Daoism, and Taiji (T'ai-chi).

\*\*\* WINGARD, Geoffrey. "Sport, Industrialism, and The Japanese 'Gentle Way': Judo in Late Victorian England." *Journal of Asian Martial Arts* 12.2 (2003): 16-25.

\*\* BROWN, Bill. "Global Bodies/Postnationalities: Charles JOHNSON's Consumer Culture." *Representations* 58 (Spring 1997): 24-48. Available online through JSTOR.

Analysis of a short story: JOHNSON, Charles. "China." In *The Sorcerer's Apprentice: Tales and Conjurations*. New York: Penguin, 1994, pp. 61-95.

\*\* DONOHUE, John J. "Wave People: The Martial Arts and the American Imagination." In *Combat, Ritual, and Performance: Anthropology of the Martial Arts*, David E. JONES, ed. Westport, Conn.: Praeger, 2002, pp. 65-80.

\* BREIDENBACH, Joana and Ina ZUKRIGL. "Breidenbach and Zukrigl about the Dynamics of Cultural Globalization." <[http://cio.ceu.hu/extreading/CIO/Breidenbach\\_and\\_Zukrigl.html](http://cio.ceu.hu/extreading/CIO/Breidenbach_and_Zukrigl.html)>

Short and clear theoretical overview for students who already have some background in cultural theory.

\* CHEN, Nancy N. "Embodying Qi and Masculinities in Post-Mao China." In *Chinese Femininities, Chinese Masculinities: A Reader*, Susan BROWNELL and Jeffrey N. WASSERSTROM, ed. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2002, pp. 315-329.

\* PRASHAD, Vijay. *Everybody Was Kung Fu Fighting: Afro-Asian Connections and the Myth of Cultural Purity*. Boston: Beacon Press, 2001.

Pages ix-xii and 126-149 can serve as a leftist account of Afro-Asian solidarity, focusing on the popularity of Bruce LEE and kung fu in the 1970s among South Asians and African Americans. Good background to the role of Chinese martial arts among black power and anti-Vietnam War groups in the United States.

## Comparative Suggestions

### Modern Sports and Western Sports History

EICHBERG, Henning. "A Revolution of Body Culture? Traditional Games on the Way from Modernisation to 'Postmodernity.'" In *Body Cultures: Essays on Sport, Space, and Identity*, John BALE and Chris PHILO, ed. New York: Routledge, 1998, pp. 128-148.

Gives schema that can be used to place the revival, "sportization," and globalization of martial arts in global perspective, not as something unique to East Asia but as part of or parallel to processes occurring in other indigenous body cultures.

Distinguishes traditional games (festive, organic, elements of carnival), modern-style sports (specialization, standardization, isolation from other communal activities and play, and emphasis on measurement, achievement, and competition), and the "postmodern" revivals and transformations of indigenous body cultures. The discussion of postmodern revivals includes "sportization" (reshaping according to models of sports, with competition and rules), "pedagogization" (inclusion in school curricula in order to teach students about their own or others' cultures), and "folklorization" (performance for tourists and anthropologists).

EICHBERG, Henning. "The Enclosure of the Body: The Historical Relativity of 'Health,' 'Nature,' and the Environment of Sport" and "The Societal Construction of Time and Space as Sociology's Way Home to Philosophy: Sport as Paradigm." In *Body Cultures: Essays on Sport, Space, and Identity*, John BALE and Chris PHILO, ed. New York: Routledge, 1998, pp. 47-67, 149-164.

BROWNELL, Susan. *Training the Body for China: Sports in the Moral Order of the People's Republic of China*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1995.

### South and Southeast Asian Martial Arts

ALTER, Joseph. *The Wrestler's Body: Identity and Ideology in North India*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1992.

PAULKA, Kirstin. *Theater & Martial Arts in West Sumatra: Randai & Silek of the Minangbakau* (Monographs in International Studies, Southeast Asia Series, No. 103). Athens, Ohio: Ohio University Center for International Studies, 1998.

Paulka comes to the subject from the perspective of theater and is interested here in the role of martial arts as performed in theater, rather than martial arts as trained outside of theater.

ZARRILLI, Phillip B. *When the Body Becomes All Eyes: Paradigms, Discourses and Practices of Power in Kalarippayattu, A South Indian Martial Art*. Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1998.

Zarilli's anthropological study is informed by a background in performance and theater studies. See pages 201-242 for connection of historical theatrical traditions with contemporary practices and experiences of the martial art *Kalarippayattu*.

## **Further Reading**

### Resources for Student Research

DONOHUE, John J. *The Forge of the Spirit: Structure, Motion, and Meaning in the Japanese Martial Arts* (Garland Reference Library of Social Science). New York: Garland, 1991.

Anthropological study of Japanese martial arts practiced in the United States.

---. *Warrior Dreams: The Martial Arts and the American Imagination*. Westport, Conn.: Bergin & Garvey, 1994.

Reflections on the meaning of martial arts for Americans. A related essay is suggested for assigning to students, but sections of this book could also be chosen. Donohue is an anthropologist and practitioner of Japanese martial arts such as Aikido and Kendo. His research centers on the practice of Japanese martial arts in New York City. His analyses tend to make very general links between dojo life and American popular culture, with reflections based on his personal experience.

DRAEGER, Donn F. *Classical Bujutsu* (Martial Arts and Ways of Japan, vol. 1). New York: Weatherhill, 1973.

---. *Classical Budo* (Martial Arts and Ways of Japan, vol. 2). New York: Weatherhill, 1973.

---. *Modern Bujutsu & Budo* (Martial Arts and Ways of Japan, vol. 3). New York: Weatherhill, 1974.

--- and Robert W. SMITH. *Comprehensive Asian Fighting Arts*. Tokyo: Kodansha International, 1969, 1980.

Overview of and useful reference work for Asian martial arts, summarizing basic practices (sparring, kicking, weapons used) and historical origins of known styles. Draeger was a martial artist first and scholar second. He does not engage with other scholarship, and his works do not have all of the trappings, such as footnotes, that lend confidence and which we might like to have modeled for our students. Nevertheless, his work has been a starting point for other scholars, for example in their refinement of his distinction between martial techniques (*bujutsu*) and martial arts (*budo*) and their historical emergence.

FRIDAY, Karl F. *Hired Swords: The Rise of Private Warrior Power in Early Japan*. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1992.

--- with Humitake SEKI. *Legacies of the Sword: The Kashima-Shinryû and Samurai Martial Culture*. Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 1997.

GREEN, Thomas, ed. *Martial Arts of the World: An Encyclopedia*, 2 vols. Santa Barbara, Calif.: ABC-CLIO, 2001.

Short- to medium-length articles of good scholarly rigor.

IKEGAMI, Eiko. *The Taming of the Samurai: Honorific Individualism and the Making of Modern Japan*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1995.

JONES, David E. *Combat, Ritual and Performance: Anthropology of the Martial Arts*. Westport, Conn.: Praeger, 2002.

MALISZEWSKI, Michael. "Meditative-Religious Traditions of Fighting Arts and Martial Ways." *Journal of Asian Martial Arts* 1.3 (July 1992): 1-105.

Overview of various martial arts with bibliography.

Martial Arts Magazines and E-zines, Koryu.com  
<http://www.koryubooks.com/links/mags.html>

Links to several online magazines and journals.

NELSON, Randy F. and Katherine C. WHITAKER, ed. *The Martial Arts: An Annotated Bibliography*. New York: Garland, 1988.

Features an extensive, although outdated bibliography.

"Using Primary Sources on the Web." Instruction & Research Services Committee, Reference and User Service Association History Section, American Library Association.  
<<http://www.lib.washington.edu/subject/History/RUSA/>>

WILE, Douglas. *Lost T'ai-chi Classics from the Late Ch'ing Dynasty*. Albany: State University of New York Press, 1996.

---. *T'ai-chi's Ancestors: The Making of an Internal Martial Art*. New City, NY: Sweet Ch'i Press, 1999.

---. *T'ai-chi Touchstones: Yang Family Secret Transmissions*. Revised Edition. Brooklyn, NY: Sweet Ch'i Press, 1983.

## Historical Background

ESHERICK, Joseph. *Origins of the Boxer Uprising*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1987, pp. 38-67, 206-240.

Discusses the social background of the martial artists who became involved in late nineteenth century uprisings, and the religious background of martial practices that proposed to give supernatural powers and invulnerability to Chinese “boxers.”

HURST, G. Cameron. *Armed Martial Arts of Japan: Swordsmanship and Archery*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1998.

An excellent scholarly history of the development of these practices, from pre-Tokugawa battle skills to more formally taught martial arts practiced in peace-time. Hurst also plans to publish a volume on unarmed martial arts.

IKEGAMI, Eiko. *The Taming of the Samurai: Honorific Individualism and the Making of Modern Japan*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1995.

Another scholarly study of the maintenance of warrior identity for the samurai through their transition to peace-time civil bureaucrats.

## Related Material

HAASE, Bill. “Learning to be an Apprentice.” In *Learning in Likely Places: Varieties of Apprenticeship in Japan*, John SINGLETON, ed. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998, pp. 107-121.

Account by American potter of his experience of apprenticeship in Japan, including, typical of anthropological accounts, extensive misunderstandings between the aspiring student and the Japanese master and local community

RIMER, J. Thomas. “The Search for Mastery Never Ceases: Zeami’s Classic Treatises on Transmitting the Traditions of the *nô* Theatre.” In *Learning in Likely Places: Varieties of Apprenticeship in Japan*, John SINGLETON, ed. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998, pp. 35-44.

SMITH, Robert J. “Transmitting Tradition by the Rules: An Anthropological Interpretation of the *iemoto* System.” In *Learning in Likely Places: Varieties of Apprenticeship in Japan*, John SINGLETON, ed. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998, pp. 23-34.

Rimer and Smith are useful for Japanese institutions and practices of transmission of related arts.

TAKACS, Jeff. "A Case of Contagious Legitimacy: Kinship, Ritual and Manipulation in Chinese Martial Arts Societies." *Modern Asian Studies* 37.4 (2003): 885-917. Available online through Cambridge Journals Online.

Useful for institutions and norms structuring transmission and legitimacy in a modern Chinese context.

### Gender

Many students are interested in gender in dojos. There is very little good scholarship on the subject, but it is a topic that would be good to introduce to class discussion.

CASS, Victoria. "Warriors and Mystics." Chapter 4 in *Dangerous Women: Warriors, Grannies, and Geishas of the Ming*. Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 1999, pp. 65-85.

Cass looks primarily at women warriors in Chinese fiction.

HUNT, Leon. "The Lady is the Boss? Hidden Dragons and 'Deadly China Dolls.'" Chapter 5 in *Kung Fu Cult Masters: From Bruce Lee to Crouching Tiger*, pp. 117-139.

OWNBY, David. "Approximations of Chinese Bandits: Perverse Rebels, Romantic Heroes, or Frustrated Bachelors?" In *Chinese Femininities, Chinese Masculinities: A Reader*, Susan BROWNELL and Jeffrey N. WASSERSTROM, ed. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2002, pp. 226-250.

Ownby addresses the origins of Chinese bandits, historically the primary group, outside the military, in which martial arts were practiced.

TASKER, Yvonne. "Fists of Fury: Discourses of Race and Masculinity in the Martial Arts Cinema." In *Race and the Subject of Masculinities*, Harry STECOPOULOS and Michael UEBEL, ed. Durham and London: Duke University Press, 1997, pp. 315-336.

### Film

Film is a major primary source through which classes can explore both the modern re-invention and globalization of martial arts. The readings below might be used for preparation of lectures, or for student readings in higher level courses. Dozens of Japanese and Chinese martial arts films are available for purchase and rent. The instructor might choose one or two discussed in the secondary readings. See the syllabus "History and Ethnography of East Asian Martial Arts" (<http://www.exeas.org/syllabi/history-ethnography-martial-arts.html>) for an example of a two week unit on film. See also the syllabus for "Samurai, Cowboy, Shaolin Monk: National Myths and Transnational Forms in Literature and Film" (<http://www.exeas.org/syllabi/cowboy-samurai.html>) and the teaching unit "Bruce Lee in Hong Kong and Harlem" (<http://www.exeas.org/resources/bruce-lee.html>).



Study Questions for Students:

- What different types of martial arts figures are portrayed in cinema?
- What values do they exemplify or invert?
- How do these compare to the earlier fiction that we read and discussed?
- In what ways have the medium of film and technical advances shaped imaginations of martial arts?
- What are the various ways in which authenticity is constructed in the context of film?

DESSER, David. "Toward a Structural Analysis of the Postwar Samurai Film." In *Reframing Japanese Cinema: Authorship, Genre, History*, Arthur NOLLETTI, Jr. and David DESSER, ed. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1992, pp. 145-64.

HUNT, Leon. *Kung Fu Cult Masters: From Bruce Lee to Crouching Tiger*. London and New York: Wallflower Press, 2003.

YOSHIMOTO, Mitsuhiro. *Kurosawa: Film Studies and Japanese Cinema*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2000.

ZHANG, Zhen. "The Anarchic Body Language of the Martial Arts Film." Chapter 6 in *An Amorous History of the Silver Screen: Shanghai Cinema, 1896-1937*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2005, pp. 199-243.