



Martial Arts as Embodied Knowledge: Asian Traditions in a Transnational World

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A wide-ranging scholarly consideration of the martial arts.

This landmark work provides a wide-ranging scholarly consideration of the traditional Asian martial arts. Most of the contributors to the volume are practitioners of the martial arts, and all are keenly aware that these traditions now exist in a transnational context. The book's cutting-edge research includes ethnography and approaches from film, literature, performance, and theater studies.

Three central aspects emerge from this book: martial arts as embodied fantasy, as a culturally embedded form of self-cultivation, and as a continuous process of identity formation. Contributors explore several popular and highbrow cultural considerations, including the career of Bruce Lee, Chinese *wuxia* films, and Don DeLillo's novel *Running Dog*. Ethnographies explored describe how the social body trains in martial arts and how martial arts are constructed in transnational training. Ultimately, this academic study of martial arts offers a focal point for new understandings of cultural and social beliefs and of practice and agency.

“...a significant and very innovative piece of work that is a must read for everyone interested in martial arts studies. *Martial Arts as Embodied Knowledge* shows that traditional martial arts cannot be studied as static entities; the social, cultural and historical context needs to be taken into consideration ... this book provides insights for further work in several directions ... offers food for deep thought and adds substantially to our understanding of traditional Asian martial arts.” — idrottsforum.org

“The book successfully demonstrates that martial arts and other traditional art forms are not static entities. Instead they respond to changing environments by a process of constant reinvention.” — Thomas A. Green, coeditor of *Martial Arts of the World: An Encyclopedia of History and Innovation*

“Taken together, these essays give a new picture of Asian martial arts as a transnational phenomenon, ranging from Singapore’s preservation of Chinese traditions to British adaptation of Indian martial arts for the stage and African usage of Okinawan traditions. Since martial arts are one of the most famous traditions to have originated in Asia, it is useful to see exactly how they are viewed or practiced around the world, from a scholarly perspective.” — Margaret B. Wan, author of *Green Peony and the Rise of the Chinese Martial Arts Novel*

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