



# Where Martiality and Religion meet: Health, Sport, War

Gabriel Facal, Laurent Chircop-Reyes

## ► To cite this version:

Gabriel Facal, Laurent Chircop-Reyes (Dir.). Where Martiality and Religion meet: Health, Sport, War. 12, In press, 10.18573/issn.2057-5696 . hal-03694323

**HAL Id: hal-03694323**

**<https://hal.science/hal-03694323>**

Submitted on 13 Jun 2022

**HAL** is a multi-disciplinary open access archive for the deposit and dissemination of scientific research documents, whether they are published or not. The documents may come from teaching and research institutions in France or abroad, or from public or private research centers.

L'archive ouverte pluridisciplinaire **HAL**, est destinée au dépôt et à la diffusion de documents scientifiques de niveau recherche, publiés ou non, émanant des établissements d'enseignement et de recherche français ou étrangers, des laboratoires publics ou privés.



Distributed under a Creative Commons Attribution - NonCommercial - NoDerivatives 4.0 International License

**ISSUE 12**

Summer 2022

ISSN 2057-5696

**EDITORS**

Paul Bowman

Lauren Miller Griffith

Benjamin N. Judkins



# MARTIAL ARTS STUDIES

**SPECIAL ISSUE**

## WHERE MARTIALITY AND RELIGION MEET: HEALTH, SPORT, WAR

EDITORIAL

GABRIEL FACAL AND  
LAURENT CHIRCOP-REYES

THE KALARIPAYATTU  
SALUTATION: MOVEMENT  
MAKES MEANING  
GITANJALI KOLANAD

MEDIEVAL MARTIAL ETHIC AS  
A CONCEPTUAL REPOSITORY  
FOR JUST WAR THEORY  
MACIEJ TALAGA

TRANSLATING CHINESE  
TRADITIONAL CULTURE  
INTO INSTITUTIONAL SPORT  
PIERRICK PORCHET

FRAMING SPIRITUALITY  
IN MARTIAL ARTS: AN  
EMBODIED COMPREHENSION  
THROUGH PHENOMENOLOGY  
THABATA C.B. TELLES

TAILORED FORMS OF  
TAIJI FOR DEPRESSION  
JOAN LISTERNICK

## ABOUT THE JOURNAL

**Martial Arts Studies** is an open access journal, which means that all content is available without charge to the user or their institution. You are allowed to read, download, copy, distribute, print, search, or link to the full texts of the articles in this journal without asking prior permission from either the publisher or the author.

The journal is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-NoDerivatives 4.0 International License.

Original copyright remains with the contributing author and a citation should be made when the article is quoted, used or referred to in another work.



Cardiff University Press  
Gwasg Prifysgol Caerdydd

**Martial Arts Studies** is an imprint of Cardiff University Press, an innovative open-access publisher of academic research, where 'open-access' means free for both readers and writers.  
[cardiffuniversitypress.org](http://cardiffuniversitypress.org)

### Journal DOI

10.18573/ISSN.2057-5696

### Issue DOI

10.18573/mas.i12

*Accepted for publication 24 May 2022*

**Martial Arts Studies**

Journal design by Hugh Griffiths

ARTICLES

- 1 Editorial  
**Where Martiality and Religion Meet: Health, Sport, War**  
Gabriel Facal and Laurent Chircop-Reyes
- 8 **'Have the Highest Righteous Fencer in Your Mind's Eye'**  
Medieval Martial Ethic as a Conceptual Repository for Just War Theory  
Maciej Talaga
- 19 **Framing Spirituality in Martial Arts**  
An Embodied Comprehension Through Phenomenology  
Thabata C.B. Telles
- 26 **The Kalaripayattu Salutation**  
Movement Makes Meaning  
Gitanjali Kolanad
- 33 **Translating Chinese Traditional Culture into Institutional Sport**  
An ethnographic study of taijiquan in China  
Pierrick Porchet
- 47 **Tailored Forms of Taiji for Depression**  
Joan Listernick
-

**Martial Arts Studies** is part of a network of projects that connect academics, practitioners and institutions as they contribute to this rapidly expanding field of studies.

MARTIAL  
ARTS **STUDIES**  
JOURNAL

Open access peer-reviewed  
journal published twice a year  
to share the latest research  
and scholarship in the field  
[mas.cardiffuniversitypress.org](http://mas.cardiffuniversitypress.org)

MARTIAL  
ARTS **STUDIES**  
RESEARCH NETWORK

Connecting and engaging  
researchers and practitioners  
to shape the multidisciplinary  
field of Martial Arts Studies  
[mastudiesrn.org](http://mastudiesrn.org)

MARTIAL  
ARTS **STUDIES**  
MONOGRAPHS

An academic book series  
of Martial Arts Studies  
monographs from Rowman  
& Littlefield International  
[bit.ly/2LsRiHf](http://bit.ly/2LsRiHf)

MARTIAL  
ARTS **STUDIES**  
CONFERENCE

The Annual International  
Martial Arts Studies  
Conferences  
[bit.ly/2Me52Xq](http://bit.ly/2Me52Xq)

Gabriel Facal is an anthropologist and research associate at the Southeast Asia Centre, CASE, Paris.

Laurent Chircop-Reyes is a researcher and chief editor for China Perspectives at the French Centre for Research on Contemporary China in Hong Kong, and is associated with the IrAsia research unit in Marseille and the CECMC, Research centre on modern and contemporary China in Paris.

## EDITORIAL

---

# WHERE MARTIALITY AND RELIGION MEET: HEALTH, SPORT, WAR

GABRIEL FACAL AND LAURENT CHIRCOP-REYES

## DOI

10.18573/mas.150

## KEYWORDS

martial arts, religion, health, sport,  
war

## CITATION

Facal, Gabriel, and Laurent  
Chircop-Reyes. 2022. 'Editorial:  
Where Martiality and Religion  
Meet: Health, Sport, War'. *Martial  
Arts Studies* 12, 1-7.  
doi: 10.18573/mas.150

## ABSTRACT

This editorial presents the main questions that drive this themed issue on the links that exist between martial arts practices and religion. How can terminological, categorical and definitional boundaries be delineated to frame the two notions? What are the contemporary dynamics that redefine their relationships, from the processes of formalisation and specialisation, to the phenomena of patrimonialization, crossbreeding, hybridisation and (re)invention? How might martial arts become a practice of peace? The various contributions in this collection provide several elements of an answer to this question, by offering insights into the violent and conflictual propensities of martial practices but also into their ethical, ritual, performative, therapeutic and regulatory dimensions.

This themed issue of *Martial Arts Studies* has its origins in a research group initiated and co-organised by Paul Bowman (Cardiff University), Laurent Chircop-Reyes, Jean-Marc de Grave, Gabriel Facal (Aix-Marseille University) and DS Farrer (Palau University). The group aimed to research the links between martial arts and religion. A first workshop was held in 2019 in Aix-Marseille Université,<sup>1</sup> entitled 'Terminologies and categories of martiality: Etymologies, religious and secular dimensions, and related practices'. The workshop sought to frame the ways that categories and terms are constructed in different socio-cultural contexts, both academic and cultural. Case studies included India, Indonesia, Brazil, France, mainland China, Taiwan, and Japan.

Inevitably, questions of an encompassing denominative category also arose. An idea was formulated to use a conceptual category that could incorporate different degrees and contexts of what the term 'martial' expresses. The term 'martiality' was proposed.

This workshop prefigured the 6th annual Martial Arts Studies International Conference, scheduled for 2020, and entitled 'Martial Arts, Religion and Spirituality'.<sup>2</sup> The conference ultimately took place online, due to the COVID-19 pandemic. This was co-organised online by Laurent Chircop-Reyes and Gabriel Facal, under the guidance of Paul Bowman, Jean-Marc de Grave and DS Farrer.<sup>3</sup>

Martial Arts Studies is an emerging field of research at the crossroads of several salient research areas of the humanities and social sciences. This research nexus includes studying questions of the transmission of knowledge and skills, embodied knowledge, physical culture and sports, relationships to authority, security, commercial exchange, ritual and initiatory activities, mystical and spiritual practices, existential philosophies, and more.

1 10–11 July 2019 at Campus Schuman, Aix-Marseille Université (AMU), Aix-en-Provence. The event was made possible thanks to generous financial and scientific supports of the Aix-Marseille University (AMU), the French Asian research unit (IrAsia/CNRS – Institut de recherches Asiatiques, UMR 7306), and the French Academic Network for Asian Studies (GIS Asie).

2 6th conference of the Martial Arts Studies Research Network, 15–16 July 2020, IrAsia, Marseille.

3 The project was funded by IrAsia, AMU, and the GIS ASIE. We are thankful to all the partner institutions, to the scientific committee as well as to the chairpersons. Around 50 participants, including presenters and discussants, were able to discuss in nine panels focused on 1) Performing arts 2) Cosmologies 3) Classical and popular representations 4) Ethics and moral values 5) Popular religions, health, globalisation 6) Asceticism 7) Channelling violence in collective rituals and sport 8) Ethno-religious identities, nationalism and politics 9) Methodological issues. For more details about this series of prefigurative events see Jean-Marc de Grave [2020].

Regarding the last themes in this list: martial arts are sometimes interpreted as paradoxical 'paths to peace' [Ueshiba 2002], following the example of religious ideologies that convey messages of peace but serve as a support for political and warlike conflicts [Judkins and Molle *forthcoming*]. This apparent dissonance may be observable in the great diversity of traditions and forms of combat. This tension between martial/peace, and violence, reveals to some extent that the martial efficiency generally invoked cannot be completely separated from social, moral, ethical and practical values. Learning is part of a process – initiatory and ritual to different degrees – aiming as much at the incorporation of techniques as at the integration of ideas and values [Svitych 2021].

It is in this general perspective of linking the apprehension of warfare and peaceful pathways that this special themed issue section seeks to question the relationship between martial arts and religion. By approaching martial practices through the notion of 'martiality', we consider a wide scope of dimensions, including codified agonistic practices, self-defence and combat sports competitions. This range and scope allows us to better reflect on the heuristic implications of the links of martial practices to religion.

To approach this second term, we chose to use the notion of 'religion' in the singular, the intention being to provide it the capacity to relate to *le fait religieux* (lit. 'the religious fact'). In *An Introduction to the Work of Marcel Mauss*, Claude Lévi-Strauss described what he had understood of the 'religious fact', through Mauss's perspective, as follows: we are dealing with an order of facts, he writes, 'which should be studied without delay: those facts in which social nature is very directly linked to man's biological nature' [Lévi-Strauss 2013: 10].

Émile Durkheim (1858–1917) defined this sociological object through a concept that 'seemed to allow him to bypass the obstacle of ethnocentrism: the sacred' [Husser 2020: 8–11]. The author of *Les Formes élémentaires de la vie religieuse* defined religion as 'a system of beliefs and practices relating to sacred, i.e., separate, forbidden things, beliefs and practices which unite those who adhere to them in a single moral community called the Church' [Durkheim 1960: 65, quoted in Husser 2020: 8–11]. Prior to any mythical or doctrinal discourse, therefore, religious beliefs, practices and institutions find their foundation in a collective emotion, the experience of an impersonal force that is projected into 'sacred things' that each culture names and organises in its own way [Husser 2020: 8–11].

Accordingly, in this themed issue, we conceptually understand religion as the essence of what is religious in different cultural contexts, beyond possible formalisation and institutionalisation. As a result, religion