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Oedipal God: The Chinese Nezha and His Indian Origins

By Meir Shahar

University of Hawai'i Press. Paperback. Book Condition: new. BRAND NEW, Oedipal God: The Chinese Nezha and His Indian Origins, Meir Shahar, Oedipal God offers the most comprehensive account in any language of the prodigal deity Nezha. Celebrated for over a millennium, Nezha is among the most formidable and enigmatic of all Chinese gods. In this theoretically informed study Meir Shahar recounts Nezha's riveting tale--which culminates in suicide and attempted patricide--and uncovers hidden tensions in the Chinese family system. In deploying the Freudian hypothesis, Shahar does not imply the Chinese legend's identity with the Greek story of Oedipus. For one, in Nezha's story the erotic attraction to the mother is not explicitly acknowledged. More generally, Chinese oedipal tales differ from Freud's Greek prototype by the high degree of repression that is applied to them. Shahar argues that, despite a disastrous father-son relationship, Confucian ethics require that the oedipal drive masquerade as filial piety in Nezha's story, dictating that the child-god kill himself before trying to avenge himself upon his father. Combining impeccable scholarship with an eminently readable style, the book covers a vast terrain: it surveys the image of the endearing child-god across varied genres from oral and written fiction, through...



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