



Possible Origins: A Cultural History of Chinese Martial Arts, Theater and Religion

Scott Park Phillips

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Possible Origins presents for the first time an in depth cultural history of Chinese martial arts. It offers fresh perspectives and the latest research to show how martial arts have preserved religious and theatrical traditions hidden inside martial skills. It connects previously unexamined elements of Chinese cultural history directly to the arts people practice today. Everyone wants to know where their martial art came from and how it was created—here, for the first time, is the authentic story. Find answers to questions like: What is a sworn brotherhood? How do talismans work? Why does Tai Chi have so much mime in it? Why does Baguazhang look like a guy riding around on roller skates? Was the Shaolin Monastery a performing arts center? How can you tell if a martial art is Daoist or Buddhist? And what is so important about emptiness? Master practitioners, beginning students, and serious scholars will discover parts of their practice they didn't know were there.

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