



# The Shaolin Monastery: History, Religion, and the Chinese Martial Arts

*Meir Shahar*

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"The Shaolin Monastery" charts, for the first time in any language, the history of the Shaolin Temple and the evolution of its world-renowned martial arts. In this meticulously researched and eminently readable study, Meir Shahar considers the economic, political, and religious factors that led Shaolin monks to disregard the Buddhist prohibition against violence and instead create fighting techniques that by the twenty-first century have spread throughout the world. He reveals the intimate connection between monastic violence and the veneration of the violent divinities of Buddhism and analyzes the Shaolin association of martial discipline and the search for spiritual enlightenment.

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