

Mockeries and Metamorphoses of an Aztec God



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This is a masterful study of Tezcatlipoca, one of the greatest but least understood deities in the Mesoamerican pantheon. An enigmatic and melodramatic figure, 'the Lord of the Smoking Mirror' was both drunken seducer and mutilated transgressor and, although he severely punished those who violated pre-Columbian moral codes, he also received mortal confessions. A patron deity to kings and warriors as well as a protector of slaves, Tezcatlipoca often clashed in epic confrontation with his 'enemy brother' Quetzalcoatl, the famed 'Feathered Serpent'. Yet these powers of Mesoamerican mythology collaborated to create the world, and their common attributes hint toward a dual character. In a sophisticated and systematic tour through the sources and problems related to Tezcatlipoca's protean powers and shifting meanings, Olivier guides the reader skilfully through the symbolic names of this great god, from his representation on skins and stones to his relationship to ritual knives and other related deities. Drawing upon iconographic material, chronicles written in both Spanish and the native Nahuatl, and the rich contributions of ethnography, *Mockeries and Metamorphoses of an Aztec God* -- like the mirror of Tezcatlipoca in which the fates of mortals were reflected -- reveals an important but obscured portion of the cosmology of pre-Columbian Mexico.

作者介绍:

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