



Worshiping the Ancestors: Chinese Commemorative Portraits

Jan Stuart, Evelyn Sakakida Rawski

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Despite their compelling presence and often exquisite quality, Chinese ancestor portraits have never been studied as a genre. This richly illustrated book (85 portraits in full color, 81 in black and white) is the first to explore in depth the artistic, historical, and religious significance of these remarkable paintings and to place them in context with other types of commemorative portraiture. Since the sixteenth century, portraits were commissioned in China in great number and variety. Depictions of individual men and women range from formal, iconic poses to the very casual, offer fascinating glimpses of Chinese life and culture. The riveting, realistic ancestor portraits supremely powerful likenesses were important objects of veneration, and the practice of making memorial portraits continued into the twentieth century, when paintings were gradually replaced by photographs.

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