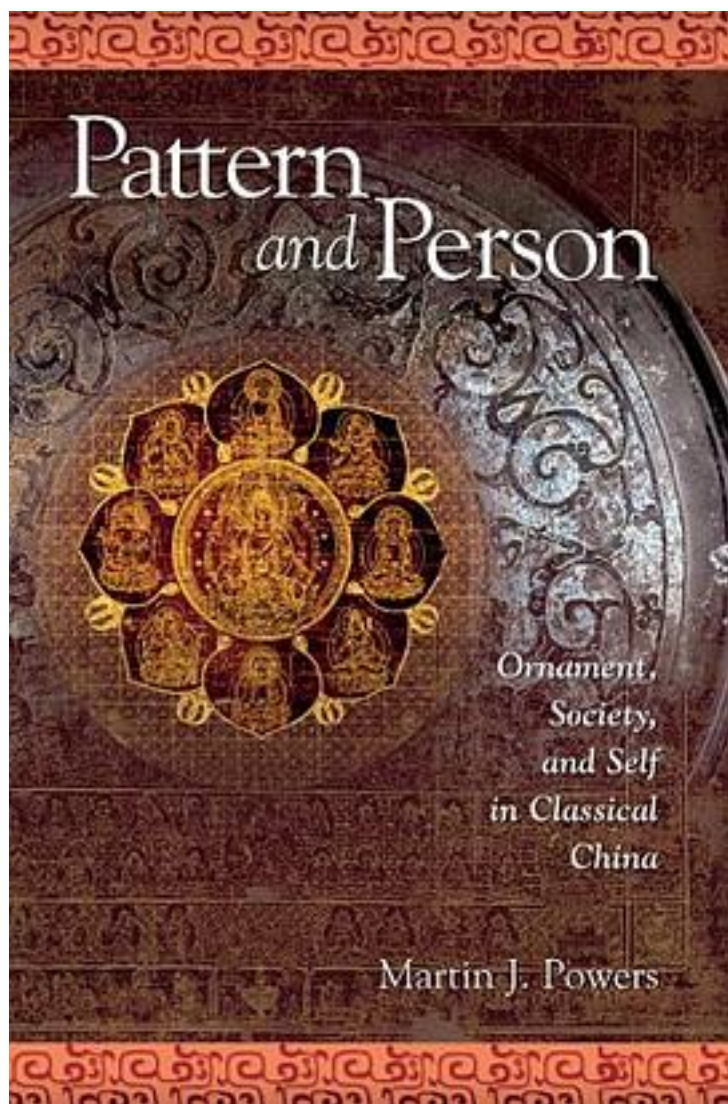


Pattern and Person



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In Classical China, crafted artifacts offered a material substrate for abstract thought as graphic paradigms for social relationships. Focusing on the fifth to second centuries B.C., Martin Powers explores how these paradigms continued to inform social thought long after the material substrate had been abandoned. In this detailed study, the author makes the claim that artifacts are never neutral: as a distinctive possession, each object—through the abstracting function of style—offers a material template for scales of value. Likewise, through style, pictorial forms can make claims about material "referents," the things depicted. By manipulating these scales and their referents, artifacts can shape the way status, social role, or identity is understood and enforced. The result is a kind of "spatial epistemology" within which the identities of persons are constructed. Powers thereby posits a relationship between art and society that operates at a level deeper than iconography, attributes, or social institutions. Historically, *Pattern and Person* traces the evolution of personhood in China from a condition of hereditary status to one of achieved social role and greater personal choice. This latter development, essential for bureaucratic organization and individual achievement, challenges the conventional opposition between "Western" individuals and "collective" Asians.

作者介绍:

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书评

《早期中国的艺术和政治表达》是包华石教授早年代表作，书中详尽而生动地阐述了作为视觉艺术的画像石如何传达出汉代的政治信息。此书在1991年被美国亚洲研究协会评为20世纪最优秀的著作，并获得了利文森奖。20多年后,包华石写成《模式与个人：古典中国的装饰、社会与自我》一书...

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