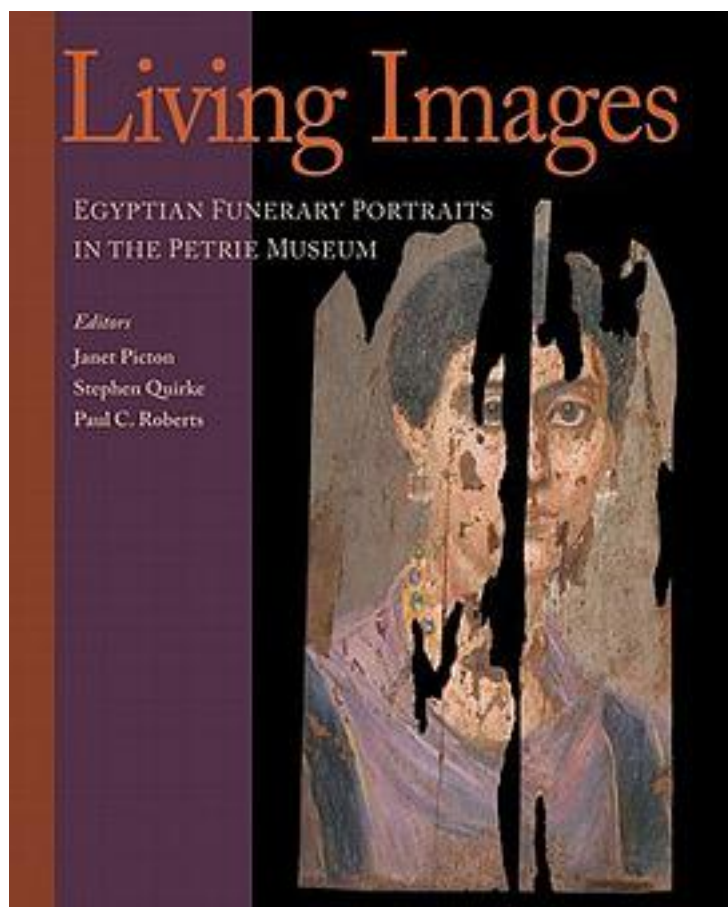


Living Images



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Buddhist images are ubiquitous in Japan, yet they are rarely accorded much attention in studies of Buddhist monastic traditions. Scholars of religion tend to regard Buddhist images as mere symbols or representations of religious ideals, commemorations of saints and patriarchs, ancillary aids to meditative practice, or the focus of lay piety. Art

historians approach these images as works of art suitable for stylistic and iconographic analysis. Yet neither of these groups of scholars has adequately appreciated the centrality and significance of images and image worship in Japanese monastic practice.

The essays in this volume focus on the historical, institutional, and ritual context of a number of Japanese Buddhist paintings, sculptures, calligraphies, and relics—some celebrated, others long overlooked. Robert H. Sharf’s introduction examines the reasons for the marginalization of images by modern Buddhist apologists and Western scholars alike, tackling the thorny question of whether Buddhists were in fact idolators.

The essays by Paul Groner and Karen Brock document and explicate the crucial role that sacred images played in the lives of two eminent medieval clerics, Eison and Myoe. James Dobbins looks at Shin representations of Shinran, founder of the Shin school of Pure Land Buddhism, and finds that early Shin piety was centered as much on Shinran and his images as on the Buddha Amida himself. Robert H. Sharf’s essay on the use of Tantric mandalas reveals that, contrary to received opinion, such mandalas were not used as aids to ritual visualization but rather as vivified entities whose presence ensured the efficacy of the rite.

In each case, the authors find that the images were treated, by elite monks and unlettered laypersons alike, as living presences with considerable apotropaic and salvific power, and that Japanese Buddhist monastic life was centered around the management and veneration of these numinous beings.

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Robert H. Sharf is Associate Professor of Buddhist Studies at the University of Michigan. He is the author of *Coming to Terms with Chinese Buddhism: A Reading of the “Treasure Store Treatise.”* Elizabeth Horton Sharf is Master of Arts Program Advisor at the Center for Japanese Studies, University of Michigan.

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标签

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=海东

评论

[資格考補標] 這本雖然是論文合輯，但是質量還是中上層的。講觀尊和明惠的兩章很驚喜。之前好像還沒有讀過有關聖僧像裡藏經卷的分析。Sharf那篇關於密宗mandala的好像還是挺有爭議性的，得查一下再紀錄。

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书评

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