
This catalog, first of a series planned by the author and the Rubin Museum of Art on the subject of Tibetan painting, provides new research into an area of artistic study that has received little attention. David P. Jackson, curator and former professor of Tibetan studies, examines the eighteenth-century revival of the Encampment or Karma Gardri style of Tibetan painting, a tradition favored by Situ Panchen (1700-1774), painter, teacher, scholar, art patron, and incarnate lama.

The book begins by introducing the reader to the historical background and the life and work of Situ Panchen based on the study of primary documents such as his diaries and writings. Jackson then continues with a detailed discussion of the iconography of the ceremonial red and black hats found in Tibetan lama portraiture, their transformation over time, and the lineage of their wearers. It is this iconographic study, along with the careful examination of the stylistic development in the paintings of the Karma Kagyü School, which provides the author with a methodology to date and classify the sets of thangka paintings that are so meticulously documented in the later chapters of the book. Karl Debreczeny, co-curator of the accompanying exhibition, closes the book by discussing Situ Panchen’s important artistic influence beyond the borders of Tibet.

Jackson incorporates a wealth of visual material obtained from numerous public and private collections from around the world. Many of the works illustrated throughout the book include a reference number that corresponds to the Himalayan Art Resource website (www.himalayanart.org), which the reader is invited to visit for more information.

In addition to the lavishly illustrated pages, this ten-chapter catalog includes several maps, an index, extensive notes, a bibliography, and helpful appendixes that trace the lineages of Black-hat and Red-hat incarnations. A checklist of the exhibition, however, was omitted from the publication. Notes on the transliteration and Romanization of terminology as well alternate transliterations included in parentheses throughout the text may prove helpful to scholars in the field, but it remains difficult to recommend this publication to a non-specialist audience without the inclusion of a glossary. Patron and Painter is strongly recommended for academic and research libraries with a focus on the fields of Asian art, religion, history, and culture.

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