



ANCESTRAL PORTRAIT

\$880

c. 1930 • China • Paper, Pigment • Collection #CMK039

W: 36.0" D: 1.25" H: 46.0"

Believing that the departed continue to hold influence over the lives of the living, many Chinese households honor their ancestors in private family rituals, invoking their spirits for long life, health, and prosperity. Commemorative portraits, which came into vogue in the late Ming and Qing dynasties, were commissioned specifically for ancestor worship and were believed to house the spirits of the deceased. This early 20th-century painting depicts a high-ranking ancestor, and takes care to document her honor and prestige through her clothing and posture. Continued...



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Conforming to convention, the figure is depicted in a seated, frontal pose, while dressed in luxurious garments and surrounded by opulent furnishings.



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