



# **Excavating the Afterlife: The Archaeology of Early Chinese Religion (Art History Publication Initiative Books)**

*Guolong Lai*

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## **Excavating the Afterlife: The Archaeology of Early Chinese Religion (Art History Publicatoin Initiative Books)** Guolong Lai

In *Excavating the Afterlife*, Guolong Lai explores the dialectical relationship between sociopolitical change and mortuary religion from an archaeological perspective. By examining burial structure, grave goods, and religious documents unearthed from groups of well-preserved tombs in southern China, Lai shows that new attitudes toward the dead, resulting from the trauma of violent political struggle and warfare, permanently altered the early Chinese conceptions of this world and the afterlife. The book grounds the important changes in religious beliefs and ritual practices firmly in the sociopolitical transition from the Warring States (ca. 453–221 BCE) to the early empires (3rd century–1st century BCE).

A methodologically sophisticated synthesis of archaeological, art historical, and textual sources, *Excavating the Afterlife* will be of interest to art historians, archaeologists, and textual scholars of China, as well as to students of comparative religions.

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