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During the late imperial era (1500-1911), China, though divided by ethnic, linguistic, and regional differences at least as great as those prevailing in Europe, enjoyed a remarkable solidarity. What held Chinese society together for so many centuries? Some scholars have pointed to the institutional control over the written word as instrumental in promoting cultural homogenization; others, the manipulation of the performing arts. This volume, comprised of essays by both anthropologists and historians, furthers this important discussion by examining the role of death rituals in the unification of Chinese culture.

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Review

"An excellent book, a valuable resource for students of Chinese society, religion, and the roles of women. . . . Highly recommended."--Daniel L. Overmyer, "Pacific Affairs

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