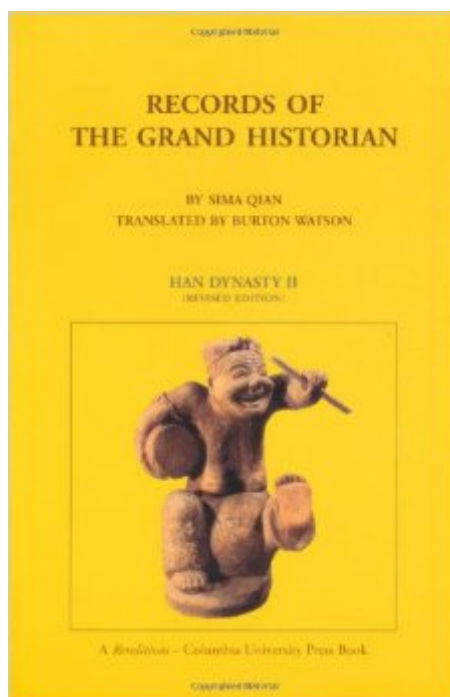


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Records Of The Grand Historian: Han Dynasty II (Volume 2)



Synopsis

This second volume of the history of the Han dynasty consists of chapters dealing principally with the reign of Emperor Wu, one of the most energetic and strong-willed of China's Rulers. Here the historian is chronicling events he has witnessed and writing of the men he personally knows or has known. In Nagano Hozan's (1783-1837) words, "He makes us see in our minds the character of the men of the time, and this is why he is a great historian.:

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

In this volume we can read the last chapters (107 to 129) of the monumental history chronicles by Sima Qian (145-86 BC), possibly the greatest, the most gifted and the most courageous of great Chinese historians who wrote the Twenty Four Histories (or Standard Histories) describing Chinese imperial history from Qin to Ming. Virtually all those chapters are related to the long and eventful reign of Han Wudi (born in 156, became emperor in 141, exercised real power 135-87BC), one of the greatest and most controversial of Chinese emperors. He humbled and tamed the Xiongnu nomads who were until then pillaging China and humiliating its rulers and by his conquests he gave to China more or less its present borders (with the exception of Tibet). He also followed into steps of First Emperor by achieving the creation of an efficient, omnipresent, unified imperial administration and reducing to almost nothing local autonomous powers of vassal kings and marquises. However, those achievements came with a high price and Han Wudi also committed some of most outrageous injustices and caused some of the most heartbreaking tragedies in whole Chinese

history - for those reasons he died cursed by his subjects and is still remembered as one of the most heartless tyrants who ever ruled the country. Perfectly translated by great Burton Watson, those chapters from "Records of the Grand Historian" tell the story of great achievements and great tragedies. We are told in detail about the great conquests, like those of Min Yue, Nan Yue, Chaoxian and Dian - and also about a fiasco disguised into a victory (the chapter about Dayuan).

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