



# **The Grand Scribe's Records, Vol. 7: The Memoirs of Pre-Han China (Volume VII)**

*Ssu-Ma Ch'ien*

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This volume is part of the first complete translation (in nine volumes) of the Shih chi (The Grand Scribe's Records), one of the most important narratives in traditional China. Compiled by Ssu-ma Ch'ien (145-c. 86 B.C.), it draws upon most major early historical works and was the foremost model for style and genre in Chinese history and literature through the eleventh century A. D., and through the early twentieth century for some genres.

Volume 7, The Memoirs of Pre-Han China, translates twenty-eight Lieh-chuan or "memoirs" which depict more than a hundred men and women: sages and scholars, recluses and rhetoricians, persuaders and politicians, commandants and cutthroats of the Ch'in and earlier dynasties. Although the memoirs also begin with what is now often considered myth?an account of the renowned recluses Po Yi and Shu Ch'i?the emphasis in these texts is on the fate of various states and power centers as seen through the biographies of key individuals from the seventh to the third centuries B. C.

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