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Sommario/riassunto	This is the first book to systematically study the Hepu Han Tombs. Covering an area of about 68 square kilometers, the Hepu Han Tombs is one of the largest-scale and best-preserved ancient tombs in China. In 2001, the remains of 1,056 grave mounds could be seen on the earth surface and it was estimated that almost 10,000 tombs still survived underground. In the last 60 years, over 1,200 tombs have been excavated at Hepu, with approximately 20,000 artefacts unearthed which include pottery, bronze, iron, gold and silver ware, jade, lacquer, glass and bead ornaments. Especially to deserve to be

mentioned, a large amount of artefacts can be related to the Maritime Silk Road. From the 2nd century B.C. to the 3rd century A.D., the Hepu Port served as the eastern starting point of the Maritime Silk Road, opening up trade and cultural exchange with countries in Southeast Asia, South Asia, West Asia, and the Mediterranean world, which resulted in a vast maritime trade network between China and the West. And these artefacts provide important evidence about this route, which also confirm the records of Chinese official history books. Therefore, the Hepu Han Tombs is of great significance to the study of ancient Chinese history and cultural exchanges between China and the West.
