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Nota di contenuto	Steppe Highway: Rise of Pastoral Nomadism as a Eurasian phenomenon -- Bronze, Iron and Gold: Evolution of nomadic cultures on the Northern frontier of China -- Beasts and birds: Historical context of early Chinese perceptions of northern peoples -- Walls and horses: Beginning of historical contacts between horse-riding Nomads and Chinese states -- Those who draw the bow: Rise of the Hsiung-nu Nomadic Empire and the political unification of the Nomads -- From peace to war: China's shift from appeasement to military engagement -- In search of grass and water: Ethnography and history of the North in the Historian's Records -- Taming the North: Rationalization of the nomads in Ssu-ma Ch'ien's historical thought Conclusion.
Sommario/riassunto	Relations between Inner Asian nomads and Chinese are a continuous theme throughout Chinese history. By investigating the formation of nomadic cultures, by analyzing the evolution of patterns of interaction

along China's frontiers, and by exploring how this interaction was recorded in historiography, this looks at the origins of the cultural and political tensions between these two civilizations through the first millennium BC. The main purpose of the book is to analyze ethnic, cultural, and political frontiers between nomads and Chinese in the historical contexts that led to their formation, and to look at cultural perceptions of 'others' as a function of the same historical process. Based on both archaeological and textual sources, this 2002 book also introduces a new methodological approach to Chinese frontier history, which combines extensive factual data with a careful scrutiny of the motives, methods, and general conception of history that informed the Chinese historian Ssu-ma Ch'ien.

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