

STÈLES

古今 碑錄

by Victor Segalen

Volume 2

Chinese Sources and Contexts

translated, edited, and annotated by
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PREFACE TO VOLUME 2

The second volume of this translation and facsimile critical edition of Victor Segalen's *Stèles / 古今碑錄* is published electronically by Wesleyan University Press as a convenient and cost-effective method of providing a large amount of supplementary material intended primarily for scholars and advanced students who are interested in pursuing further the Chinese sources and intertexts of Segalen's poetry. For this volume, we have identified and culled extended passages in Chinese and French from the now relatively rare bilingual sinological editions that Segalen used so that a broad readership may begin to appreciate how he transformed this scholarly material for his own poetic ends. English translations have been provided for all French passages, which are themselves usually translations of the Chinese passages that follow. Readers of Chinese may thus notice occasional differences between the original Chinese passages and their French (or English) translations; but we have not found these sufficiently significant to provide yet another English translation directly from the Chinese in every case.

While attempting to strike a balance between comprehensiveness and selectivity, we have tried to provide ample material to enable a new level of appreciation for *Stèles / 古今碑錄*, especially among those scholars and students who do not have easy access to the resources of a library such as the Bibliothèque Nationale in Paris. This edition also assumes a continually growing bilingual readership of a kind that Segalen could only have dreamed of having. Since the goal of this edition is to supply a much-needed detailed treatment of Segalen's use of Chinese materials, we have not attempted to compete with what other editions already do so well: Doumet offers masterful *explications de texte* for each stèle; and Bouillier reviews with great sensitivity the evolution of Segalen's drafts in the process of revision, in addition to indicating contexts among Segalen's own published

writing. Readers interested in those aspects of the work should consult those editions.

We have tried to limit ourselves in this volume to providing the raw material for readers with only the necessary amount of explanation, but in a few instances we have indulged in slightly longer commentaries where we thought it appropriate to do so. As in volume 1, we use the monosyllabic French word *stèle* for references to Segalen's unique genre of prose poems, and the English word *stele* (disyllabic and without an accent) for references to actual inscribed stone monuments. Like any such distinction, this one is profitably to be deconstructed from time to time but remains useful.

The material in these critical notes contains a number of literary sources for the stèles that are identified for the first time in any edition—including those designated by the numbers S03, S05, S11, S16, S21, S24, S28, S29, S33, S35, S55, S60, S64—and a number of fresh contexts for the stèles—including those for S14, S20, S47, S49. Since the resources in this volume are intended as supplements to the critical notes in volume 1, in a few cases nothing further is provided here. Detailed commentaries on the Chinese epigraphs as well as discussions of Segalen's manuscript notes, translations and brief summaries of the poems, an introduction to Segalen's life and work, and a foreword by Haun Saussy will all be found in volume 1 along with a photofacsimile of the original edition printed in Beijing in 1914.

Abbreviations Used in This Volume

(See the bibliography for complete citations.)

AC: Couvreur, *Chou King: Les Annales de la Chine* (1897)

AL: Pétillon, *Allusions littéraires* (1895)

CK: Couvreur, *Cheu King: Les Odes* (1896)

LK: Couvreur, *Livre des rites* (1899)

OC: Segalen, *Oeuvres Complètes* (1995)

TH: Wieger, *Textes historiques* (1903–1905)

(Imperial reign dates generally follow Wieger, as Segalen would have seen them.)

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hope to correct from time to time at www.steles.org along with the posting of other supplementary material that time brings to light. We would also like to acknowledge Maura High for her cheerful, masterful, and conscientious editing of very complicated copy; Chris Crochetière for a lovely book design and for her boundless patience in typesetting fixes to the proofs as well as for graciously yielding to Timothy's design for the cover; the webpage designers at Wesleyan University for formatting volume 2; and Anna Bautista for her work on the manuscript as part of an undergraduate independent study. Our indebtedness to the work of Gloria Bien and Qin Haiying is acknowledged throughout this edition, but we also wish to recognize them here since their contributions to the field of Segalen studies are too often taken for granted. Of course, every student of Segalen owes a debt to Henri Bouillier for his pioneering work, and to Christian Doumet, Charles Forsdick, and Michael Taylor, as do we.

Finally, next to our parents themselves (to whom we owe everything, in filial piety), we are most indebted to Natasha Chang and Soo La Kim, partners and fellow intellectuals whose critical acumen, patience, and companionship have made every hour of this work possible.