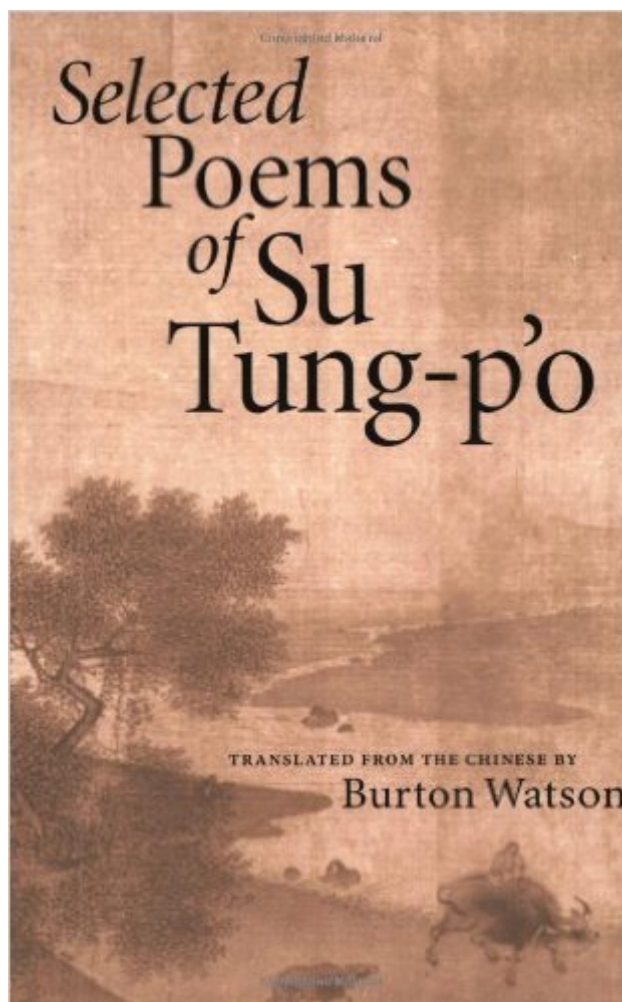


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Selected Poems Of Su Tung-p'o



Synopsis

Gathers poems about travel, nature, daily life, friendship, and exile by the eleventh-century Chinese poet, who wrote under the name Su Tung-p'o.

Book Information

Paperback: 145 pages

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Average Customer Review: 5.0 out of 5 stars [See all reviews](#) (5 customer reviews)

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Customer Reviews

SELECTED POEMS OF SU TUNG-P'O : Translated from the Chinese by Burton Watson. 148 pp. Port Townsend, WA : Copper Canyon Press, 1994. ISBN 1-55659-064-4 (pbk.) Burton Watson has always struck me as an eminently civilized scholar and as a fine translator. Unlike certain others, he wears his scholarship lightly, and doesn't overburden the text with extraneous matter. His many translations from Chinese and Japanese Literature are of uniformly high quality, and are well worth having as they are books one often wants to return to. The present book, after a typically brief but interesting and informative introduction which provides all we really need before diving into the poems, gives us translations of 105 of Su Tung-p'o's poems, lightly annotated and beautifully printed on spacious pages. Su Tung-p'o is one of China's greatest poets, and Watson has outdone himself here. The wrapper includes a highly laudatory appreciation by Gary Snyder, and it's easy to see why. Watson has always been a brilliant translator, and a true artist with words, but in this book he has lifted himself into the ranks of the very best, and has produced translations indistinguishable in quality from those of Snyder himself. Here, as an example of his marvelous control of tone, thought, feeling, image, rhythm, and sound, are the opening lines of poem 52 (with my obliques added to indicate line breaks) - 'Reading the Poetry of Meng Chiao' : "Night : reading Meng Chiao's poems, / characters fine as cow's hair. / By the cold lamp, my eyes blur and swim. / Good passages

I rarely find - / lone flowers poking up from the mud - / But more hard words than the Odes or Li Sao
- / jumbled rocks clogging the clear stream, / making rapids too swift for poling. / My first impression
is of eating little fishes.

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