



Zuo Tradition / Zuozhuan: Commentary on Spring and Autumn Annals (Classics of Chinese Thought)

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Zuo Tradition (Zuozhuan; sometimes called The Zuo Commentary) is China's first great work of history. It consists of two interwoven texts - the Spring and Autumn Annals (Chunqiu, a terse annalistic record) and a vast web of narratives and speeches that add context and interpretation to the Annals. Completed by about 300 BCE, it is the longest and one of the most difficult texts surviving from pre-imperial times. It has been as important to the foundation and preservation of Chinese culture as the historical books of the Hebrew Bible have been to the Jewish and Christian traditions. It has shaped notions of history, justice, and the significance of human action in the Chinese tradition perhaps more so than any comparable work of Latin or Greek historiography has done to Western civilization. This translation of Volume One, accompanied by the original text, an introduction, and annotations, will finally make Zuozhuan accessible to all.

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Editorial Review

Review

Whether considered as a work of history or literature, *Zuo Tradition* is surely one of the masterpieces of world literature, and the translators and publisher are to be applauded for making it more accessible to readers everywhere in this handsome and readable new complete translation. The translation is crisp and lively, the introduction straightforward and informative, and the notes and indexes invariably helpful. In every respect, *Zuo Tradition* is a realization of Confucius's maxim 'Use words that are adequate to the intent; use ornamentation that is adequate to the words.'

(Edward Louis Shaughnessy, University of Chicago)

Zuozhuan has anchored the entire corpus of Chinese historical writing for the last two millennia. Its canonical status as the work of Confucius has given it enormous authority not just in determining how Chinese historians should record past events, but in shaping how the Chinese imagine that history itself unfolds. Now that we have this meticulously researched and carefully considered translation, this foundational text can finally take its place among the core classics of early historical writing worldwide.

(Timothy Brook, University of British Columbia)

It would not be an exaggeration to say that with the publication of this new translation, *Zuozhuan* will become accessible to an incomparably larger audience, benefiting Western studies of ancient Chinese history, thought, and culture. . . . This translation will establish new professional standards for future translations in the field.

(Yuri Pines, author of *Foundations of Confucian Thought: Intellectual Life in the Chunqiu Period*)

About the Author

Stephen Durrant is professor of Chinese language and literature at the University of Oregon. He is the coauthor of *The Siren and the Sage: Knowledge and Wisdom in Ancient Greece and China*. **Wai-ye Li** is professor of Chinese literature at Harvard University. She is the author of *The Readability of the Past in Early Chinese Historiography*. **David Schaberg** is professor of Asian languages and culture at UCLA. He is the author of *A Patterned Past: Form and Thought in Early Chinese Historiography*.

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