

# Contents

Foreword / 1

*The Book of Songs* / 5

“Folk Songs of 15 Regions” (“Guofeng”) / 7

The Epic of the Western Zhou People / 9



Prose Writings of Various Schools of Thought during  
the Spring and Autumn and the Warring States Period / 13

*Tao Te Ching* / 15

*The Analects* / 19

*Mencius* / 23

*Zhuangzi* / 26

Qu Yuan and the Elegies of the State of Chu / 31

Qu Yuan / 32

*The Lament on Encountering Sorrows* / 34

Elegies of the State of Chu / 36



*Records of the Historian*—“The First and Last Great Work by  
Historians, *Li Sao* without Rhyme” / 41

Pre-Qin Historical Books / 42

About *Records of the Historian* / 44

The Characterization in *Records of the Historian* / 46

History and Literature / 50



Literature in the Wei and Jin Period and Tao Yuanming / 53

Li Bai—A Romantic Genius Poet / 61



Du Fu—A Compassionate Sage Poet / 73

“Li and Du the Junior”—Late Tang Poems in the Sad, Plaintive and Beautiful Style / 83

Li Shangyin / 84

Du Mu / 88

Ci Poetry—Poems That Can Be Sung / 93

Su Shi / 97

Li Qingzhao / 102

Xin Qiji / 106



Two Outstanding Playwrights of the Yuan Opera / 111

Guan Hanqing / 112

Wang Shifu / 116

Brief Outline of Chinese Classical Fictions / 121



Early Classical Fictions in Chapter-titled Style: *Romance of the Three Kingdoms*, *Outlaws of the Marsh* and *Journey to the West* / 127

*Romance of the Three Kingdoms* / 129

*Outlaws of the Marsh* / 132

*Journey to the West* / 135

*Strange Tales from Make-Do Studio*—Pinnacle of Classical Chinese Fiction / 139

*A Dream of Red Mansions* / 145



Appendix: A Brief Chronology of China / 157