THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO

THE *DAODE JING* AS AMERICAN SCRIPTURE: TEXT, TRADITION, AND TRANSLATION

A DISSERTATION SUBMITTED TO
THE FACULTY OF THE DIVINITY SCHOOL
IN CANDIDACY FOR THE DEGREE OF
DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

BY
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CHICAGO, ILLINOIS
JUNE 2017

ABSTRACT

The understandings most Americans have of the *Daode jing* 道德經 (Tao Te Ching) and Daoism (Taoism) have been deeply conditioned by the reception of this text in its most circulated English forms: popular translations. Because of their acute reliance on previous interpretations and emphasis on relevancy to their own historical contexts, popular translations are a valuable, underutilized resource for understanding both the specifics of this text's reception and more universal processes of textual transmission. To propose "The *Daode jing* as American scripture" is to consider both the Americanization of this text and the interpretation of all texts received as "classics" or "scriptures." To do so, this dissertation first critiques assumptions contributing to the academic neglect of popular translations and proposes the utility of Hans-Georg Gadamer's reconfiguration of the concept of "text" not as a historical object to be recovered but as a "traditionary text" or "text-tradition" that operates in history through an ongoing dialogue with its interpreters. To Gadamer's thought, this dissertation suggests a new attention to translations as records of previous interpretations intersecting with new contexts and affecting subsequent transmission. Subsequent chapters summarize the transmission of the *Daode jing* in China and survey its early European reception before focusing on the translations of Herbert Giles (1886), Paul Carus (1898), Witter Bynner (1944), and Gia-fu Feng (1972). These translations document the development of five popular conceptions about the *Daode jing* that have conditioned the general features of its otherwise diverse reception in America. They emerged chronologically and continue to influence popular translation and understanding today: 1) the *Daode jing* is the principal scripture of Daoism; 2) its wisdom is universal and timeless; 3) its meaning is

accessible through a populist hermeneutic heavily influenced by lay Bible reading; 4) its teachings can correct and ameliorate contemporary American problems; and 5) it can contribute to a more complete "Way of Life." This examination advances existing scholarship by providing a more comprehensive and detailed analysis of paradigmatic texts and dominant trends in the American popular reception of the *Daode jing*, by suggesting implications for related fields, and by proposing that the reception of this text evidences a hermeneutic that is more universal than unique in the historical transmission of canonical texts.

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INTRODUCTION: The Echo Chambers of Popular Translation

Section 1: The Problem

In October 1971, a newlywed couple arrived at Alfred A. Knopf Publishers in New York City without an appointment. They carried the manuscript of yet another translation of the *Daode jing* 道德經 (*Tao Te Ching*),[1] a short canonical text of Daoism (Taoism) that had already been rendered nearly sixty times into English.[2] The couple's new translation was the product of their small international community of religious seekers called Stillpoint, which had for the prior year embraced the collaborative daily activity of translating verses from the *Daode jing* in relation to their eclectic interests in *Taijiquan* 太極拳 (T'ai-chi ch'uan), dietetics, the Human Potential Movement, ancient Chinese thought, and Gestalt psychotherapy.[3] That autumn, they were in the process of relocating from the hills above the Esalen Institute in California, from which they had split in 1966, to the base of Pikes Peak in Colorado, where they would remain active until the death of their leader, Gia-fu Feng 馮家福 in 1985. By that time, Feng would be well established as a *Taijiquan* teacher, an author, and a "Taoist Master"—all roles that he came to occupy long after an early career as a banker in Chiang Kai-shek's Nationalist China and a post-Second-World-War journey to America for a graduate degree in international finance.[4]

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[1] This dissertation uses the Pinyin Chinese Romanization standard developed in the 1950s and adopted by the International Organization for Standardization (ISO) in 1982, rather than the older Wade-Giles system, except in the case of direct quotations, published titles, and the self-chosen Anglicization of personal names. For clarification, traditional Chinese characters are generally included, and well-known Wade-Giles Romanizations appear in parenthesis when a Pinyin term is introduced.

[2] For the publication details of prior and subsequent translations, see appendixes. For the relationship between the *Daode jing* and the Daoist religion, see chapter two.

[3] Carol Ann Wilson, *Still Point of the Turning World: The Life of Gia-fu Feng, Author of the best-selling translation of the Tao Te Ching* (Oregon: Amber Lotus, 2009), 151.

[4] For the single biography of Feng, see Wilson, *Still Point of the Turning World*.

The translation Feng and his wife Jane English brought that day to Knopf would go on to sell more than any other in English: well over one-million copies in North America alone.[5] Its overwhelming success is nearly rivaled by several other eclectic and non-scholarly English versions of the *Daode jing*, at least six of which were recently among the top one percent of books sold through Amazon.com in America.[6] Among them, the 1988 text of Stephen Mitchell, a poet who admits to knowing no Chinese, has been reported to have nearly one-million volumes sold.[7] In 2007, American "self-development" counselor Wayne Dyer's translation was among the top 100 books sold by Amazon for the entire year.[8]

Designating these texts and the overwhelming bulk of *Daode jing* translations as "popular" is accurate in four ways: firstly, in their opposition to the "elite" nature of academic historical-critical translation; secondly, in their related populist appeal to "simple and natural" interpretations and language; thirdly, in their reliance on previous popular texts; and lastly, in the popular successes of their efforts on the translation market. The seemingly obvious observation that "popular" translations of the *Daode jing* are in fact the most *popular* translations of this text is necessary because, in spite of their dominance and influence, they are almost entirely unstudied among scholars of Daoism, Asian religions in America, translation, or any other field that could benefit from engaging with the fact that the understandings most Americans have of

[5] Gia-Fu Feng, Jane English, and Tointeet Lippe, *Tao Te Ching* (New York: Random House, 2011), vii.
[6] Amazon.com/Best-Sellers-Books-Tao-Te-Ching/zgbs/books/297525/ref=zg_bs_nav_b_4_12757#1. Accessed 6/17/16. Of the dozen authors selling in this top percentage point, only two are scholars trained in Chinese language and religion: D.C. Lau and Chad Hansen. The bulk of the texts are by authors who admit to knowing little or no Chinese: Aleister Crowley, Wayne Dyer, Ursula Le Guin, Jonathan Star, Brian Browne Walker, and Witter Bynner. Two coauthors are scholars working outside of their primary fields: Stephen Addiss and Stanley Lombardo. Two are associated with Chinese speakers without academic training: Derek Lin and Gia-fu Feng.
[7] The estimated copies sold of Mitchell's text were recollected in an interview with Toinette Lippe 9/23/13.
[8] Amazon.com/gp/bestsellers/2007/books. Accessed 6/17/16.

the *Daode jing* and Daoism have been deeply conditioned by the reception of this text in its most circulated English forms.[9]

Foremost among them is the Stillpoint text brought to Knopf in 1971. The skeptical senior editor who took the meeting with Gia-Fu Feng and Jane English was Tionette Lippe, who surprised everyone involved by accepting the manuscript, though she found it in need of significant correction. Because she did not know Chinese herself, Lippe relied on "a dozen translations ranging from Arthur Waley's historically accurate version to Witter Bynner's lyrical poem, which seemed to take liberties with the text while perfectly expressing its spirit."[10] Based on her reading, Lippe began to re-author the Stillpoint manuscript to reflect the sense of the *Daode jing* that she gained through her perusal of the text's various earlier renderings into English. In her words:

> I would study how each of the twelve translators had rendered a particular sentence and then return to Gia-fu's translation to see what he thought it meant. Then I would find a way to express his understandings in a simple natural way and in words that had not been used by other translators. It was the opposite of plagiarism! Finally, I would read each page aloud to a young Mexican friend and if it did not read well or if she looked puzzled, I would adjust the words or the cadence until the meaning was clearly delivered. I then sent batches of the new text to Gia-fu who would approve (or occasionally disapprove) of what I had done. I have the suspicion that he thought that this was the normal editorial process, which it is not.[11]

Her unusually heavy editorial hand is acknowledged in the forward to the 2011 edition of the translation, where Lippe is included, by Jane English's request, along with Feng and English as a co-translator.

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[9] The limited previous scholarship is confined to brief articles or chapters and tends to ignore or dismiss popular reception or to address individual texts rather than the general phenomenon. This scholarship is reviewed in chapter one.

[10] Feng, English, and Lippe (2011): vi.

[11] *Ibid*.

In general, Lippe smoothed and improved rough phrasing, but in so doing, she also left her mark on the text's interpretation. Consider the following among many selections:

Manuscript	Chapter 5	Published text
Between heaven and earth,	天地之間	The space between heaven and earth
Is it not like a bellows?	其猶橐籥(龠)乎	is like a bellows.
It yields but is not bent.	虛而不屈	The shape changes but not the form
The more it moves the more comes out.	動而愈出	The more it moves, the more it yields

Manuscript	Chapter 13	Published text
What do you mean by "welcome disgrace with awe"?	何謂寵辱若驚	What do you mean by "Accept disgrace willingly"?
Welcome being lowly.	寵為下	Accept being unimportant
Gain with awe; lose with awe.	得之若驚 失之若驚	Do not be concerned with loss or gain.

Manuscript	Chapter 16	Published text
Destiny is the way it is.	復命曰常	The way of nature is unchanging.
Knowing the way it is is insight.	知常曰明	Knowing constancy is insight.
Not knowing the way it is leads to disaster.	不知常妄作凶	Not knowing constancy leads to disaster.
Knowing the way it is, you have room for everything.	知常容	Knowing constancy, the mind is open.
Having room for every thing [sic], you will be open.	容乃公	With an open mind, you will be openhearted.
When you're open, you'll be king.	公乃王(全)	Being openhearted, you will act royally.
Being the king, you're heavenly.	全乃王(全)	Being royal, you will attain the divine.
Being heavenly, you're with the Tao.	天乃道	Being divine, you will be at one with the Tao.[12]

While the extent of Lippe's activities as an editor may be unusual, this dissertation argues that her activities as a participant in the translation and transmission of the *Daode jing* in America are not. Historical-critical efforts to reconstruct the text's original meaning have dominated academic translations, yet these are relatively few in number. Of the over three

[12] In an interview on 9/23/13, Lippe shared these and other handwritten corrections to the original manuscript that were exchanged between her, Feng, and English.

hundred eighty English versions of the text produced since the first in 1868, the large majority have not been authored by scholars trained in either ancient Chinese history or language.[13] Rather, they have been written by a diverse collection of individuals relying heavily on previous translations to determine the meaning of the text, then attempting to express their understandings of that meaning, like Lippe, "in a simple and natural way and in words that had not been used by other translators."

As bizarre as the creation of the Stillpoint translation may seem—a non-Chinese speaking editor using previous English editions and the ear of a Mexican friend to correct the collaborative manuscript of a community with eclectic New Age interests and led by a former Chinese banker—it was overwhelmingly successful. Recall that this version of the *Daode jing* went on to sell over one million copies in North America alone. According to its publisher, by 2011 it had sold more copies than any other English translation and continued to sell several hundred each week.[14] The second best-selling translation in 2011, which was nearing the one-million mark at that time and has likely surpassed it by now, was the 1988 rendering by Stephen Mitchell.

[13] Knut Walf provides the best published bibliography to date, with 206 English translations and 437 translations into other languages: *Westliche Taoismus-Bibliographie* (Essen: Die Blaue Eule, 2010), 11-66. This impressive collection, however, relies heavily on electronic catalogues such as WorldCat, and is both demonstrably incomplete and includes significant errors. Principal among these errors is the acceptance of an incorrect catalogue entry for a Japanese-English text that does not use the 1933 publication date included only in Japanese, but rather the mistaken 1861 date that appears in the text's English description of the James Legge translations it includes (see Appendix A, n. 2). This mistake makes Legge's text appear to be the first English translation published (it was actually published in 1891) and would significantly alter our understanding of the *Daode jing*'s Anglophone reception history. It also indicates that while Walf has done a remarkable job gathering and collating the various editions appearing in electronic catalogues, he has not always been able to verify the details these catalogues provide. Many of these texts are, however, available in digital or print form. Many are also described or referenced in other works. Limiting myself to English versions of the *Daode jing*, I have been able to view and verify the contents and bibliographic details of nearly all titles I list in my appendixes. In addition to correcting minor bibliographical errors, I note significant errors and omissions. In total, I find that 13 texts should be removed from Walf's list, and 196 should be added (5 before 1950, 19 between 1950-2000, 47 between 2000-2009, and 125 between 2010-2016). The total number of English translations of the *Daode jing* through the end of 2016 is 380! The increased ease of self-publication through venues such as Amazon.com's CreateSpace Independent Publishing Platform has increased the production rate of new English versions of the *Daode jing*, and I expect the eighteen new texts per year average since 2010 will continue to accelerate. See Appendix A.

[14] Feng, English, and Lippe (2011), vii.

Similar to the members of Stillpoint and Lippe, Mitchell "consulted dozens of translations into English, German, and French."[15] Like Lippe, he also cannot read Chinese. His closest access to the Chinese text was a reductive, character-by-character "crib" translation first published by Paul Carus in 1898.[16] Other than his reliance on previously published texts, Mitchell offers that "the most essential preparation for my work was a fourteen-years-long course of Zen training, which brought me face to face with Lao-tzu and his true disciples and heirs, the early Chinese Zen Masters."[17] The non-Chinese speaking self-help author Wayne Dyer claims no special training in his best-seller when he writes, "these pages were pasted together from what I *personally* felt were the most useful aspects of those ten different translations I studied."[18] In addition to Mitchell and Dyer, five other authors selling among the top twelve translations—and top one-percent of books sold on Amazon.com—admit to knowing little or no Chinese. All twelve describe having read previous texts as a part of their translation process.[19]

Such texts continue to proliferate at an impressive rate. In 2014, at least fourteen new English translations were published in print and a similar number in electronic format. Among them we find *Tao Te Ching: A Poetic Version in Sonnet Form* (Granville 2014), *The Haiku Tao Te Ching* (Uharriet 2014), *Dao De Jing: Ancient Immortal's Theory of Everything* (Archangelis

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[15] Mitchell (1988), ix.
[16] *Ibid*. Carus, his translation, and this crib are discussed at length in chapter three.
[17] Mitchell (1988), ix-x. While Japanese Zen Buddhism has its roots in Tang dynasty China (618-907), these roots are a millennium removed from the composition of the *Daode jing*, and the tradition has evolved for over eight-centuries in Japan. The problem here is not that Mitchell advances an interpretation of the text based on his understanding of Zen teachings, but that he uses his experience with one aspect of contemporary Asian culture to claim authority over and collapse the historical distance between now and a time of "true disciples and heirs."
[18] Dyer (2007), xii. Italics in original.
[19] Amazon.com/Best-Sellers-Books-Tao-Te-Ching/zgbs/books/297525/ref=zg_bs_nav_b_4_12757#1. Accessed 6/17/16. Here have included only print versions and excluded those that present themselves as obvious adaptations such as John Heider's *Tao of Leadership* and William Martin's *The Parent's Tao Te Ching,* though these texts are included under the heading "Tao Te Ching" on Amazon.com. and are listed in my appendix as English "versions" of the *Daode jing* (see Appendix A, note 1). In order of popularity, the authors who know little or no Chinese among the top twelve "translations" considered here are Aleister Crowley, Wayne Dyer, Ursula Le Guin, Jonathan Star, Brian Browne Walker, and Witter Bynner. The other bestselling authors are Gia-fu Feng, D.C. Lau, Stephen Addiss and Stanley Lombardo, Derek Lin, and Chad Hansen.

2014), and *My Tao Te ching – A Fool's Guide to Effing the Ineffable: Ancient Spiritual Wisdom Translated for Modern Life* (Briers 2014). These texts join a similar number newly published in the years before and after, forming a lengthy chain of English translations frequently described as second only to the Bible in number.

This Bible comparison does justice to the exceptional number of *Daode jing* translations, and indicates the strong association that the text has long had with America's paradigmatic scripture. It also provides an instructive example of the power of repetition and precedent in the *Daode jing*'s reception. In her 1972 jacket copy for the Stillpoint translation, Lippe repeats the unattributed claim that "The *Tao Te Ching*, the esoteric but infinitely practical book written most probably in the sixth century B.C. by Lao Tsu, has been translated more frequently than any work except the Bible." This is similarly asserted without attribution in the jacket copy of Stephen Mitchell, Wayne Dyer's preface, and in the preliminary texts of the large majority of popular and academic translations published since the mid-twentieth century. Academic authors occasionally provide a citation for the claim, but never to a source that provides actual evidence.[20] Its earliest discoverable appearance in print occurs in Lionel Giles' foreword to the 1937 translation of Ch'u Ta-Kao 初大告 (1898-1987): "No book in the world, *perhaps* [italics added], with the exception of the Bible, has been translated so often as the *Tao Tê Ching*."[21] Ten years later, Giles repeats a similar claim in a brief, dismissive review of the translations of Witter Bynner and Hermon Ould: "*Probably* [italics added] more translations have been made of Lao

[20] For example, in the first chapter of the voluminous *Daoism Handbook*, Alan Chan cites the introduction to Victor Mair's 1990 translation, where no evidence is provided (1). However, Mair does make a notable mark on the observation by including a third text: "Next to the Bible and the *Bhagavad Gītā*, the *Tao Te Ching* is the most translated book in the world" (xi). This unsupported assertion is presumably the unattributed source of similar observations in later texts such as the 1996 translation by Bill Porter (xxi), and *The Divine Library: A Comprehensive Reference Guide to the Sacred Texts and Spiritual Literature of the World* (65).

[21] Ch'u Ta-Kao (1937). Lionel Giles was accomplished Sinologue, author of a translation of the *Daode jing* published in 1904, and son of Herbert Giles, who is discussed at length in chapter one.

Tzu's *Tao Te Ching* than of any other book in the world except the Bible."[22] Ten years after that, conjecture had become conclusion for at least one eminent sinologist, and it is applied specifically to English translations: Holmes Welch declares in *Taoism: The Parting of the Way*, "No other book except the Bible has been translated into English as often as Lao Tzu's."[23] Welch neither attributes this conclusion to Giles, nor provides evidence for its validity. Though frequently repeated since, in academic and popular works alike, it remains unverified today. Rather, it is a truth closely related to the general reception history of the *Daode jing* in America: one that is achieved through repetition in the echo chambers of multiplying English translations rather than vouched for by any external reality.[24] The concern here is not to quibble over exact numbers, nor object to the general assertion that the *Daode jing* is among the most translated texts worldwide, but to highlight that the shared certainty of a nearly universal opinion on the *Daode jing* in English was achieved predominately, if not exclusively, through suggestion and repetition.

As English versions of the text continue to multiply, the volume of their echoes only increases. In concert, hundreds of available versions of the text prefigure every new encounter. Regardless of how original a new translation may attempt to be, it does so only against the chorus of previous voices, even in an effort to be different from them, and it does so always with notions of the text that have been shaped—directly or indirectly—by its precursors. Mainstream perceptions of the *Daode jing* have become so conditioned by prior translations that texts

[22] Review in *Aryan Path – Volumes 18-19* (Bombay: Theosophy Co., 1947), 272.
[23] Holmes Welch, *Taoism: The Parting of the* Way (Beacon Press, 1957), 4.
[24] I have done my best to provide an accurate count of English translations in my appendix, and I yield to scholars of the Bible and *Bhagavad Gītā* to produce accurate numbers for their respective texts—activities that have not been undertaken to my knowledge. A full proof of the claim for English translations would also need to account for other frequently translated and adapted classic works. Proof of the claim for all languages would require even more contemporary and historical evidence, with close attention to the copious translations produced by religious organizations such as the Jehovah's Witnesses' Watch Tower Society.

constructed entirely from previous versions without any direct access to the original Chinese now account for the majority of bestsellers. They are accepted as translations by readers, publishers, and authorizing institutions such as the Library of Congress and the U.S. Copyright office. As a result, the text of Stephen Mitchell sits next to that of James Legge, Lionel Giles, Gia-fu Feng, Wayne Dyer, and dozens of others in libraries and bookstores across America all claiming to be translations of the same text into English.[25]

Because of their success and ubiquity, popular English translations of the *Daode jing* have shaped widespread understandings of both the text and the Daoist tradition in America. The intricacies and effects of their production and reception demand an investigation they have not yet received. They present problems that challenge any understandings of translation or interpretation that envision these processes only as encounters between reader and text, author and audience, or original and contemporary—and instead evidence a neglected hermeneutics of the traditionary text (text-tradition) and its effective history.[26] These texts bedevil scholars of Chinese understandings of the *Daode jing* and Daoism—yet suggest methods for Sinology. They appear to lie on the margins of American religiosity—but simultaneously reveal some of its

[25] Most of these texts, including those by Stephen Mitchell and Witter Bynner, are classified under the call number BL1900.L26 E5, which is reserved for English translations of the *Daode jing*. Strangely, the Feng-English-Lippe text is classified under BL1900.L3, which is reserved for the English translations of *selections* of the *Daode jing*, though their text is complete. While the LOC does not have a classification for indirect translation, they do reserve BL1900.L35 for criticism and commentary; the text of Wayne Dyer is classified here. Janis L. Young, Senior Cataloging Policy Specialist, Policy and Standards Division, Library of Congress explains, "Catalogers cannot research every author to determine his/her background. Instead, we take the author's (or publisher's) statements at face value: if a book calls itself a translation, we classify it that way. The title page verso of Stephen Mitchell's 'Tao te ching: a new English version' says that the translation is copyright 1988, for example… According to the publisher's description, Dyer's work consists of 81 essays on how to apply the wisdom of Lao-tzu to the modern world, so it fits the definition" (email communication 5/13/15). This logic is not followed in the case of the Feng-English-Lippe text, which announces itself not as a "version" but as a "translation." Young suggests that catalogers do in fact make judgements beyond "face value," writing, "it's harder to know the rationale for classifying a book as selections when it appears that the entire text of the Dao de jing is present, but I can guess that the catalogers were not sure if the entire text was indeed present and decided to play it safe" (*ibid*.).

[26] Hans Georg Gadamer's concepts of traditionary text (*Überlieferung*) and effective history (*Wirkungsgeschichte*) are introduced below and discussed in detail in chapter one.

central operations. They force perspectives that have been raised occasionally in the study of religious texts—yet have been left barely explored.

Section 2: Argument and Implication

This dissertation focuses on popular translations of the *Daode jing*, where the echo chambers of previous interpretations ring with particular clarity, but argues that these texts demonstrate a hermeneutic that is more universal than unique. Identifying and analyzing the salient features of these texts will contribute most directly to the study of Daoism in America (both the Chinese tradition and American constructions of it), but the reception of the *Daode jing* also charts currents in American religiosity that bear on other aspects of its study and on the reception of other texts. As popular translations of the *Daode jing* have increasingly been received and produced under the influence of—and often entirely from!—previous translations, they evidence a still too often ignored feature of all transmission, translation, and interpretation: these processes are never isolated from their historical contexts and are never direct, unmediated encounters between readers and texts.[27]

To draw out these implications and establish the value of attention to popular translation requires a hermeneutic that valorizes historical reception and provides a rationale for its analysis. Of several potential approaches to re-contextualizing "new" interpretive acts within a history of

[27] While this observation accords with the much recent scholarship in many areas of religious studies, the persistence of older models of interpretation in the study of the *Daode jing* is demonstrated below primarily in relation to the widely-cited theories of Michael LaFargue. More broadly, Roger Chartier and Guglielmo Cavallo indicate the persistence of decontextualized approaches to text when they open their introduction to *A History of Reading in the West* with an argument that "In contrast to a purely semantic definition of the text—which has permeated not only all the variants of structuralist criticism, but also the sorts of literary theory keenest on reconstructing the reception of works—we need to hold that forms produce meanings, and that a text is invested with a new meaning and a different status with every change in the support that makes it available to reading. Any history of the practice of reading is thus necessarily a history of both written objects and the testimonies left by their readers" (Translated by Lydia Cochrane, University of MA Press: Amherst, 1999, 2).

reception,[28] Hans-Georg Gadamer's conceptions of the "traditionary text" and "effective history" are particularly well-suited to placing the reader and text in a productive relationship that forestalls the objectification of the text, the subjectification of the reader, and the collapse of the interpretive distance between these two.[29] Attention to Gadamer's hermeneutics are suggested not only by the dynamics of popular translation, but also by the explicit rejection of his thought by Michael LaFargue, director of East Asian Studies at the University of Massachusetts Boston and translator of the *Daode jing*, who has recently revived the distinction between "historical" and "scriptural" translations first made by Arthur Waley in 1934.[30] Based in a "historicist" hermeneutic that views the text as a stable historical object and the untrained reader as an arbitrarily subjective interpreter, this long-standing distinction has perpetuated not only an illusion of "objectivity" in the historical-critical recovery of original meaning among many scholars of the *Daode jing*, but has also contributed to the neglect of scholarship on the text's many "subjective" interpretations throughout its reception history in China and abroad.[31]

Moreover, the distinction between "historical" and "scriptural" translations, with a marked academic preference for the former, partially re-encodes a disdain for so-called "religious" Daoism that plagued early Sinology and led to the initial valuation of ancient, elite

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[28] E.g. drawing from Foucault's discourse analysis (*L'archéologie du savoir*: 1969), Said's representations of Orient (*Orientalism*: 1978), Barthes distinctions between "work" and "text" or between "author" and "scriptor" (in *Image—Music—Text*: 1977), Jameson's Marxist hermeneutics (*Marxism and Form*: 1971), or Bloom's six "revisionary ratios" (*Anxiety of Influence*: 1973).

[29] Gadamer's hermeneutics will be analyzed in greater detail in the first chapter, and is briefly introduced here to relate it to larger currents in the study of religion.

[30] Arthur Waley, *The Way and Its Power* (London: George Allen & Unwin, 1934), 12-14.

[31] Both LaFargue and I follow Gadamer's basic definition of a "historicist" approach to text as the attempt to recover its "original" meaning, though LaFargue rejects Gadamer's critique of the futility and fundamentally ahistorical nature of this attempt. I, however, find Gadamer convincing on this point, and elaborate on it in my first chapter. While the definition of "historicism" is open to debate, and work done under that label has shifted in recent decades (eg. the "New Historicism"), I find considerable residual impulses towards "original" meaning in the interpretation of the *Daode jing* (and many other texts) and too little appreciation of the contextually situatedness of all interpretation in many approaches to history. Thus, I continue to use "historicism" in Gadamer's sense and elaborate on his critique of it as part of my effort to find an approach to the interpretation of text that better situates the text and interpreter in the actual processes of history through which they are connected. See discussion in chapter one.

"philosophical" texts over contemporary practice. To be sure, popular practice and "religious" Daoism have enjoyed significantly increased attention in recent studies, announced most clearly in the publication of *Le corps taoïste* by Kristofer Schipper in 1982.[32] In fact, the turn toward the body, practice, and contemporary that is marked in Schipper's text has so completely reversed previous definitions of the Daoist tradition that the material he covers is no longer regarded as "popular," but rather has become central to current understandings of Daoism as a whole. This reversal is a marked improvement on earlier approaches. Yet, while most sinologists today understand Daoism to include much of what earlier generations dismissed, the term "popular" is still used to scorn perceived misunderstandings, now in the Euro-American context of *Daode jing* translation. Ironically, what is now dismissed under that label are often the very text-based, philosophical interpretations of Daoism that Sinologists once embraced and promulgated.

This reversal, and consequential move of many in the field away from an earlier focus on canonical texts, is not unique to the study of Daoism, but rather participates in larger shifts in the field of Religious Studies. Thomas Tweed has recently noted attention to the "local, popular, or lived" as part of a "Quotidian Turn" in the study of religion since the 1960s.[33] While this disciplinary shift recognizes the value of the popular in its attention to "ordinary people and everyday life,"[34] it tends to position the popular not only in opposition to the elite, but also in opposition to canonical texts. Part of Tweed's critique of the "Quotidian Turn" includes that it maintains previous academic binaries even in its reversal of them:

The redirected focus corrects for earlier academic blind spots, but the appeal to

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[32] Kristofer Schipper, *Le corps toaïste,* (Paris: Fayard, 1982). Karen C. Duval, trans., *The Taoist Body* (Berkeley: UC Press, 1993).
[33] Thomas A. Tweed, "After the Quotidian Turn: Interpretive Categories and Scholarly Trajectories in the Study of Religion since the 1960s," *The Journal of Religion* 95:3 (July 2015): 361-385. To be clear, Tweed does not advocate for or argue against this turn so much as diagnosis its effects and question its underlying assumptions.
[34] *Ibid*., 362.

> everyday, popular, or lived religion also wittingly or unwittingly replicates binary pairs and implies value hierarchies, usually privileging one element of the pair as the analysis reverses earlier interpretive patterns.[35]

Thus, a reconsideration of religion that privileges it as "more about the body than the mind, about practices and artifacts more than beliefs and values, about ordinary people more than institutional elites," does so in opposition to earlier attention to "beliefs, elites, institutions, *sacred texts* [italics added], organized rituals, consecrated spaces, and the public realm."[36] Similarly, among scholars who "never much cared for the approaches…aligned with the Quotidian Turn," Tweed lists as examples those with research foci in "canonical texts, intellectual history, or institutional leaders."[37]

In broad strokes, the result in the study of Daoism of the trends Tweed notes more widely in Religious Studies has been that work on canonical texts is too frequently separated from, remains largely unaffected by, and is often seen in opposition to the "quotidian" concerns for the "local, popular, or lived." Whereas the latter is readily recognized in "spaces, participants, or actions,"[38] the study of canonical texts remains too often focused on the elite, ancient, and generally static textual object—in short, a "historicist" perspective that Gadamer would reject and LaFargue, among others, defend.[39] Thus, while the study of Daoism has generally embraced what were once disdained as "quotidian" practices, the study of the *Daode jing* has generally remained focused on its historical origins and elite interpretations rather than its lived realities.[40]

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[35] *Ibid*., 376.
[36] *Ibid*., 377.
[37] *Ibid*., 379.
[38] *Ibid*., 365.
[39] See n. 31, above, and discussion in chapter one.
[40] Evidence for this assertion is provided in the next chapter. Here I should note that Schipper himself turned from the "Taoist body" to decades of work on the "Taoist Canon." The resulting, collaborative volumes are invaluable for increasing scholarly knowledge of and access to the massive numbers and rich varieties of Daoist texts beyond the *Daode jing*, as described in my second chapter. However, these volumes have not yet resulted in significant attention being paid to the popular interpretations or lived realities of the *Daode jing* or any other text in the Daoist

This type of focus on historical origins was critiqued in religious studies a generation ago by Wilfred Cantwell Smith in his landmark 1994 comparative study of "scripture." Concerned with the lived realities of scripture, W. C. Smith noted the historicist impulse behind a focus on origins as both a relatively recent academic attitude and one that had come to dominate scholarship on canonical religious texts by the mid-twentieth century:

> The academic study of these texts had long since, and on principle, and proudly, treated them as any other literature. Indeed, it studied the texts, Biblical or Vedic or whatever, primarily as historical documents to be used chiefly for reconstructing the ancient situation out of which they came.[41]

Against the persistence of this attitude in recent scholarship, Smith redefines "scripture" as an embodied, on-going historical phenomenon that plays a central role in daily life. For him, "scripture is a human activity."[42] Using a sense of "historical" that extends far beyond historicism's focus on origins, he writes of scripture as an activity or "role":

> To observe that role accurately is to recognize its fundamentally historical character: its quality of changing over time—and place; of being ever enmeshed in the particular contexts of those in whose lives and societies the role has been played. To observe the situation accurately is to recognize that that coalescence with the actual—the many diverse actuals—that fact of continuous change, that active participation as an integrated part of the flux of an on-going historical process, are not an accidental modifying of some higher or more stable reality. These matters are not something that we must set aside or get beyond or behind in order to understand scripture itself, uncluttered by the vicissitudes. Rather, it is they that are responsible for this or that given text's being scripture; they that constitute scripture's essential character.[43]

Here, W. C. Smith's vocabulary is not that of Thomas Tweed's, but he advances a "quotidian" approach to scripture that participates in the trend Tweed notes. Smith relocates the essential character of scripture not in its historical origins or theological purity, but in the ever-changing,

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Canon. See Kristofer Schipper and Franciscus Verellen, eds., *The Taoist Canon: A Historical Companion* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2004).

[41] W.C. Smith, *What is Scripture: A Comparative Approach* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1993): 15.

[42] *Ibid*., 18.

[43] *Ibid*., 4.

enmeshed contexts of human activity and everyday life. After this reframing, the interests and concerns of a wide array of contemporary scholarship can perhaps be productively returned to the canonical texts that were left comparatively fallow in the widespread "quotidian" efforts to remedy previous deficiencies and break new ground in the study of religion.

In his 2008 presidential address to the Society for Biblical Literature, Jonathan Z. Smith uses the work of W. C. Smith to make a similar point, though he characteristically grounds it in a foundational text of religious studies. J. Z. Smith recalls "an originary moment in the modern enterprise of the study of religion": the publication of *The Sacred Books of the East* (1879-94) by Friedrich Max Müller.[44] He does not note that this seminal collection included James Legge's 1891 translation of the *Daode jing*—an influential version and an early example of a new translation which begins with a survey of its predecessors.[45] Rather, J. Z. Smith raises the more fundamental question of how the editors of the series determined what might constitute a "sacred book" deserving of inclusion. By first noting Müller's "deep frustration" that neither the Old nor New Testaments were included because of "intense lobbying on behalf of Christian exceptionalism before the delegates of the University Press at Oxford," Smith makes clear that the proposed criteria for "sacred book" should be understood to include Christian scriptures.[46] He then quotes Müller:

> It was suggested that those books only should be considered sacred which profess to be revealed, or to be directly communicated by the Deity to the great teachers of mankind. But it was soon found that very few, if any, of the books themselves put forth that claim. Such a claim was generally advanced and formulated by a

[44] Jonathan Z. Smith, "Religion and Bible," *Journal of Biblical Literature* 128:1 (2009), 12. For a sharper critique of Müller than Smith provides, see Tomoko Masuzawa, *The Invention of World Religions: Or, How European Universalism was Preserved in the Language of Pluralism* (Chicago: UC Press, 2005).
[45] Legge's translation and the precursors he references are reviewed in chapter two. For a thorough and fascinating account of Legge as a translator, including his work with Müller, see Norman J. Girardot, *The Victorian Translation of China: James Legge's Oriental Pilgrimage* (Berkley: Univ. of California Press, 2002).
[46] *Ibid*., 19.

> later generation…So we agreed to treat as Sacred Books all those which had been formally recognized by religious communities as constituting the highest authority in matters of religion…and might therefore be appealed to for deciding any disputed points of faith, morality, or ceremony.[47]

Here, Smith notes that Müller adopts a functional rather than substantive definition of sacred texts, an under-recognized shift in Müller's approach from the nature of the text to its "posterior usage."

Driving the point home to his audience at the Society for Biblical Literature, J. Z. Smith advances that "what Müller proposes in his definition of sacred books—and I affirm—is that the object of study, in the case of sacred, canonical books, is not so much the text itself as it is its tradition, its trajectories."[48] From this perspective, what is important in the study of "scripture" is less its theological significance, than the history of its reception. Furthermore, the history concerned here is not the stagnant historical moment of the text's origin, but the dynamics of its "trajectories": the way it has been received and handed down.

Smith has long advocated for such a shift in biblical studies, writing twenty-five years earlier:

> I look forward to the day when courses and monographs will exist in both comparative exegesis and comparative theology, comparing not so much conclusions as strategies through which the exegete seeks to interpret and translate his received tradition to his contemporaries.[49]

In connection with the "Quotidian Turn" noted by Tweed, the concerns of W. C. Smith and J. Z. Smith have been taken up by many scholars, but their adoption has been uneven, and particularly limited in the study of the *Daode jing*.

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[47] Original in F. Max Müller, "Forgotten Bibles" (1884), reprinted in *Last Essays, Second Series: Essays on the Science of Religion* (London: Longmans, Green, 1901), 1-35.
[48] J. Z. Smith "Religion and Bible," 21.
[49] J. Z. Smith, "Sacred Persistence: Toward a Redescription of Canon," in *Imagining Religion: From Babylon to Jonestown* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1982): 52.

To propose "The *Daode jing* as American Scripture: Text, Tradition, and Translation," then, is to take up several related tasks with arguments and implications extending well beyond the study of this text and Daoism in America. It is grounded in a close reading of how popular translators have interpreted and translated their received texts to their contemporaries; in J. Z. Smith's words, it is "not so much the text itself as it is its tradition, its trajectories." It takes up the *Daode jing* not in the purity of its historical origins or elite interpretations, but in its lived, quotidian, and, in the words of W. C. Smith, "many diverse actuals—that fact of continuous change, that active participation as an integrated part of the flux of an on-going historical process." It considers the *Daode jing* as American "scripture" to emphasize both the Americanization of the text in its popular interpretations and the inevitable popular interpretation and application of texts that become, to use W. C. Smith's phrase, "enmeshed in the particular contexts" of lives and societies.[50]

Once afforded scholarly attention, popular translations of the *Daode jing* can teach us about this text in America, about American religiosity, about the lived realties of the *Daode jing*, and about scripture, with implications for many other acts of transmission, interpretation, and translation. This study is preliminary, and as much as it attempts to accomplish, it leaves many aspects of the phenomenon too little explored. But even in its incompleteness, it aims to persuade the reader at minimum of the utility of close attention to popular translations as valuable resources for exploring the lively, complex, and ever-changing realities of textual transmission, reception, and interpretation.

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[50] I recognize that for many the *Daode jing* might be considered a "wisdom text" or "spiritual classic" rather than a "scripture," but I maintain the utility of considering the text as "scripture" in order to connect it to academic and non-academic approaches to the Bible, which subsequent chapters will demonstrate to have been a consistent and pervasive influence on *Daode jing* reception and interpretation. For more on this point, see the conclusion of Chapter 2.

Section 3: Chapter outline

Translations provide rich records of transmission and reception that are grounded both in their particular sociohistorical contexts and in the text's previous interpretations. However, as evidenced by limited previous scholarship—both what has been studied and what has been ignored—to take popular translations of the *Daode jing* seriously requires both a revaluation of the "popular" and a new approach to "text." To do so, the first chapter critiques the dismissal of popular translations and proposes the utility of Gadamer's "traditionary text" and "effective history" for opening an uncollapsible interpretive space for all aspects of a text's tradition and trajectories.

Subsequent chapters focus primarily on the first century of Anglophone translation and reception (1868 to 1972). Among dozens of versions of the *Daode jing* used for context and counterpoint, these chapters analyze four paradigmatic translators and their texts in depth: Herbert Giles (1886), Paul Carus (1898), Witter Bynner (1944), and Gia-fu Feng (1972). This heuristic reduction of the phenomenon allows for close readings of their texts and social contexts. These popular texts were chosen not because they offer better interpretations of the *Daode jing* than those found in the academy, Chinese history, institutional Daoism, or anywhere else. Instead, they were chosen because they are understudied, together they record the central, ongoing trends in the reception of this text in America, and each has had a significant impact on latter interpretations. While chapters will address fidelity to the Chinese text, they attempt neither to judge nor to labor over the quality of the popular translations in this regard. Rather, their task is to document the widespread and influential ways the text has been received in English, the lasting developments on its transmission, and the factors that continue to impact how the *Daode jing* and Daoism are understood in contemporary America.

While not exhaustive, these translators demonstrate the development of five popular conceptions about the text that have conditioned the general features of its otherwise diverse reception in America. These conceptions have become central to popular translation and understanding: 1) the *Daode jing* is the principal scripture of Daoism; 2) its wisdom is universal and timeless; 3) its meaning is accessible through a populist hermeneutic heavily influenced by lay Bible reading; 4) its teachings can correct and ameliorate contemporary American problems; and 5) it can contribute to a more complete "Way of Life." With the 1972 translation of Gia-fu Feng and Jane English—originating in a community calling itself a "Daoist utopia," basing most of its practices in ancient Chinese texts, and spending hours on daily readings of the *Daode jing*—these features had emerged in full. They contributed heavily to this particular translation's popular appeal and impressive sales figures, and they continue to dominate the popular reception of the *Daode jing* and Daoism in America today.

There is significant overlap in the development of the five features of popular translations listed above. While they are all present in the final translation analyzed, they are explored and contextualized, in the order given, in chapters two through five. Preliminary to these chapters, however, the first chapter considers why popular translations of the *Daode jing* have been hitherto ignored in scholarship, even in the handful of works that have addressed other aspects of the popular reception of Daoism in Europe and America. Analysis suggests that residual elements of an elitism which once led sinologists to focus on ancient texts over contemporary practice in China persist in the dismissal of American popular understandings of the *Daode jing*. This elitism contributes to the division of "historical" and "scriptural" translation adopted by Waley and LaFargue, an influential approach that lays bare persistent historicist understandings of "texts" as historical objects whose real meanings are fixed at their origins. Such an approach

locates objective truth in this supposedly recoverable text and sees only subjective departures from this objective truth in the text's later reception. Against this, the first chapter proposes an alternative model of text based on Gadamerian hermeneutics, which reconfigures the idea of "text" to include its tradition of reception and history of effects.

Chapter two begins with a brief study of the diversity of Chinese interpretations of the *Daode jing*, its relation to and place within Daoism, and the status of the text and tradition during the early encounters between China and Europe. It then surveys nineteenth-century translations of the *Daode jing*, with a focus the text's signal term *Dao* 道. The chapter closes with an analysis of the translation of Herbert Giles and the "popular" roots of academic Sinology. While popular translations are a more exclusive focus of later chapters, this chapter highlights how early popular translations were similar to and different from contemporaneous missionary and academic efforts. A key feature shared by all three types of early translations was the idea that the *Daode jing* was the principal if not exclusive "scripture" of Daoism. This misconception emerged from bibliocentric European understandings of religion in conjunction with strong Confucian influence and weak imperial support for Daoism in China during the colonial encounter. Privileging the *Daode jing* as the essence of Daoism contributed to an impoverished and inaccurate view of the tradition that dominated early translations and persists among non-specialist today.[51] This continues to be a prominent feature of popular translations and is clearly announced in the short introduction of the 1972 Feng-English-Lippe translation: "the essence of Taoism is contained in the eighty-one chapters of the book." It reoccurs on the back cover of the

[51] "Laoism" has been used as an alternative term to Daoism for the narrow focus on the ideas found in the *Daode jing* rather than the vast and varied realities of the Daoist religion; see A. C. Graham, *Studies in Chinese Philosophy and Philosophical Literature* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1990), 118-124. However, while heuristically useful, too neat a separation of Laoism and Daoism would obscure the frequent overlap and confusion between the terms in the reception of the *Daode jing* and the Daoist religion. No study of either this text or tradition can ignore the history and influence of this confusion.

2011 edition: "for nearly two generations, Gia-fu Feng and Jane English's translation of the *Tao Te Ching* has been the standard for those seeking access to the wisdom of Taoist thought."

Lippe's praise in 1972 that "This fresh translation of the ancient Chinese classic offers the essence of each word and makes Lao Tsu's teaching immediate and alive," evinces the second feature of popular translations of the *Daode jing*: their focus on what they imagine to be the universal and perennial "essence" of the text. As described in chapter two, early missionary efforts concentrated on identifying portions of the text that corresponded to Christian revelation, and early academic efforts sought to identify the text's historical meaning. Early popular efforts, however, begin to treat the text's "wisdom" as timeless and universal. This approach emerges only when the *Daode jing* and other works are grouped together with the Bible as "scriptures," "sacred texts," or "religious classics." Linked with the emergence of "world religions" as a concept and Comparative Religion as an academic field, the stress on the universal and perennial aspects of the *Daode jing* are particularly marked in Theosophical thought and clearly recorded in the translation of Paul Carus, which is analyzed in chapter three. For Carus, whose interest in Asian religions can be dated to his participation in the 1893 World Parliament of Religions in Chicago, "it is on account of the similarities which, in spite of many differences, obtain between the teachings of Lao-Tze and those of Buddha and Christ that the Tao-Teh-King is an indispensable book; and no one who is interested in religion can afford to leave it unread."[52] This perennialist view that all religions are ultimately expressions of the same fundamental truths was, for him, part of a monism that also stressed the compatibility of religion and science. His translation, *The Canon of Reason and Virtue*, is an early example of interpreting the *Daode jing* as a perennial spiritual text well suited to a modern "scientific" worldview. Chapter three

[52] Carus (1898), 3.

analyzes Carus' monism and its effects on the production and reception of his translation with respect to the presentation of Daoism at the World Parliament of Religions, growing religious diversity in America, and William James' critique of monism in favor of pluralism.

As Carus and others increasingly treated the *Daode jing* as a sacred text of world religions, they extended to it not only a status akin to the Bible, but interpretive strategies rooted in biblical hermeneutics. The third framing conception of popular translations—that the meaning of the *Daode jing* is accessible through a populist hermeneutic heavily influenced by lay Bible reading—has roots in the text's early reception and becomes increasingly clear as American interpretations proliferate. Among other historical influences, the early translations analyzed in the second chapter track the changes and increasing diversity of approaches to biblical criticism that filtered through the ranks of missionaries, scholars, and the general public in the late nineteenth century. Comparisons with the Bible and connections to Bible reading also appear in the translation of Paul Carus analyzed in chapter three, but it is with the emergence of the first translation by an author who freely admits to knowing no Chinese, Witter Bynner, in chapter four, that the far reaching effects of what David Hall calls a "distinctive mode of literacy" and Nathan Hatch terms "populist hermeneutics" are most clearly evident.[53] These popular, lay approaches to the Bible in colonial and post-Revolutionary America rejected established authorities, required no special training to justify interpretation, emphasized common-sense meaning as the essence of the text, and prized communication in plain language.[54] Chapter four

[53] David Hall, *Worlds of Wonder, Days of Judgment: Popular Religious Belief in Early New England* (New York: Knopf, 1989), 18. Nathan Hatch, *The Democratization of American Christianity* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1989), 179-183.

[54] These generally Protestant Christian approaches to the Bible have their roots in the Reformation refrain "*sola scriptura*," but several scholars have pointed out that earlier uses of the term referenced more restrictive principles that the liberal modes of interpretation with which it is later associated. E.g. Jean-Franćois Gilmont, "Protestant Reformations and Reading," in Cavallo and Chartier, *History of Reading in the West*, 219-220.

argues that this mode of reading has been extended to the interpretation of "scriptures" other than the Bible in America. This is particularly clear in the claims of Witter Bynner—and other authors who know no Chinese—to be able to transmit the "spirit" if not the "letter" of the *Daode jing* in English. It is also evident in Lippe's praise of the 2011 edition of Gia-fu Feng and Jane English's text for "the simple clarity of the original rendering of a sometimes seemingly obtuse spiritual text, a clarity that has made this version a classic in itself, selling over a million copies."

Both editions of this translation also record praise by Alan Watts for "conveying Lao Tsu's simple and laconic style of writing" and his conclusion that "This is a most useful, as well as beautiful, volume—and what it has to say is exactly what the world, in its present state, needs to hear." Watts, who officiated the marriage of Feng and English, here expresses a globalized view of the fourth feature of popular translations proposed by this dissertation: the teachings of the *Daode jing* were increasingly viewed in the twentieth century as able to correct and ameliorate contemporary American problems. This trend in the text's later reception is entirely absent in Carus' turn-of-the-century translation, which evinces a deep melioristic faith in human progress centered in a Euro-American worldview. Present to a degree in some earlier appraisals of Confucianism, this opinion on the *Daode jing* solidifies only after critiques of modernity, militarism, and Euro-American morality emerge in the aftermath of the First and Second World Wars. Writing at the height of the Second World War, Witter Bynner, among others, came to believe that "the Western world might well temper its characteristic faults by taking Laotzu to heart."[55] However, an analysis of Bynner's text makes clear that his understanding of the *Daode jing* and its potential contributions to "the Western world," are based far more on preexisting understandings of America's strengths and weaknesses than the specifics of the Chinese text.

[55] Bynner (1944), 12.

Chapter four connects Bynner's conclusions to his approach. His preference for the "familiar spirit" over the "foreign letter" is demonstrated through a comparison with Ezra Pound, is related to lay Bible reading in America, and is situated in the contexts of the popular reception and production of translations by other authors who do not know Chinese.

Bynner titled his 1944 translation "The Way of Life According to Lao-Tsu: An American Version," indicating his participation in the final feature of popular translation here proposed: the idea that the *Daode jing*, in its English translations, can inform a more complete "Way of Life." Bynner's use of the phrase "Way of Life" participates in its increasing appearance in English works beginning in the wake of the First World War, and peaking in the mid-1960s.[56] This trend combines longstanding appeals to the Bible as a guide to the proper way of living with a growing desire to define a particularly "American way of Life."[57] Noting—and participating in—this trend, sociologist of religion Will Herberg posits in 1955 the "American Way of Life" as the "common religion" of American society underlying its apparent religious diversity.[58] In the same year, the military adopts its "Code of Conduct for Members of the United States Armed Forces,"

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[56] Google Book's Ngram Viewer shows appearances of the phrase as early as 1500 with a pronounced spike in the mid-1960s. (Going from an average occurrence in .0002% of titles to .00125% before declining again to .00075% in 2008, the last year for which they calculate records.) Books.google.com/ngrams/graph?content=way+of+life&year_start=1500&year_end=2008&corpus=15&smoothing=10&share=&direct_url=t1%3B%2Cway%20of%20life%3B%2Cc0. Accessed 6/17/2016. Original Ngram paper: Jean-Baptiste Michel, Yuan Kui Shen, Aviva Presser Aiden, Adrian Veres, Matthew K. Gray, William Brockman, The Google Books Team, Joseph P. Pickett, Dale Hoiberg, Dan Clancy, Peter Norvig, Jon Orwant, Steven Pinker, Martin A. Nowak, and Erez Lieberman Aiden. *Quantitative Analysis of Culture Using Millions of Digitized Books*. Science (Published online ahead of print: 12/16/2010).

[57] E.g. John Cotton. *The Way of Life: Or, God's Way and Course, In Bringing the Soule into Keeping it in, and Carrying it on, in the Wayes of Life and Peace* (London: 1641).

[58] Will Herberg, *Protestant, Catholic, Jew: An Essay in American Religious Sociology* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1955). Among other quotations: "The American Way of life is the symbol by which Americans define themselves and establish their unity…If the American Way of Life had to be defined in one word, 'democracy' would undoubtedly be the word, but democracy in a peculiarly America sense. On its political side it means the Constitution; on its economic side, 'free enterprise'; on its social side, an equalitarianism which is not only compatible with but indeed actually implies vigorous economic competition and high mobility. Spiritually, the American Way of Life is best expressed in a certain kind of 'idealism' which has come to be recognized as characteristically American. It is a faith that has its symbols and rituals, its holidays and its liturgy, its saints and its sancta; and it is a faith that every American, to the degree that he is an American, knows and understands" (78-79).

which begins, "I am an American, fighting in the forces which guard my country and our way of life. I am prepared to give my life in their defense." These attempts to define and defend an "American Way of Life," seem to grow mid-century as threats to it are perceived and a consensus on it can no longer be assumed. For his part, while Bynner rejects militarism, he held a deep faith in liberal democratic humanism, and would have accepted and celebrated most of what Herberg proposes as America's "common religion." The *Daode jing* can ameliorate America's faults, for Bynner, primarily by reinforcing its strengths.

However, a host of cultural shifts in the decades after the Second World War eroded much of Herberg's proposed cultural consensus. For many Americans, the *Daode jing* came to be understood to be expressing an *alternative* "Way of Life" that held considerable countercultural appeal. In subsequent decades, the Stillpoint group and other American individuals and communities began not only to attempt to live according to popular understandings of the precepts of the *Daode jing*, but also to consider reading from translations of the text among their foremost practices.[59] Chapter five investigates Gia-Fu Feng's involvement in the American countercultural movements of the 1960s and 1970s, his synthesis of ancient Chinese teachings and contemporary American concerns, and the activities of the Stillpoint community that eventually produced America's bestselling translation of the *Daode jing*. As stated above, the five features proposed as central to popular understandings of the *Daode jing* and Daoism in America are visible in their full forms and impacts in both the production and popular reception of this 1972 text.

Aside from marking the full emergence of these five features, there is an additional reason to pause, at least temporarily, the investigation of popular translations with this final text.

[59] See discussion of Elijah Sielger and "American Daoism" in chapter one.

Published not long after the 1965 comprehensive immigration reforms, the Feng-English-Lippe translation represents something of a high-water mark for text-based understandings of both the *Daode jing* and Daoism. While these waters may not have receded significantly among some communities of readers—and it is a fundamental contention of this dissertation that they are still the waters in which all American interpretations of the text and tradition must swim—immigration reforms changed the currents of Daoism in America when significant numbers of Chinese people began to arrive for the first time since the Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882. New immigrants' knowledge of Daoism and their understandings of the *Daode jing* varied considerably, but many had more direct experience with the tradition and text in contemporary China than did Gia-fu Feng, who learned most of what he knew about both only after meeting Alan Watts in San Francisco. Well trained Daoist teachers have been rare throughout the history of Daoism in America, but their numbers too slowly increased with immigration reform. In his brief survey of Daoist teachers in America Louis Komjathy adopts a "lineage-based" criteria for inclusion, and lists only one "identifiable and self-identified Daoist priest, whether Chinese or non-Chinese, in North America" who arrived before 1970.[60]

A study of Daoism and the *Daode jing* in America that looks past the 1970s must attend to the many changes introduced by immigration reform. However, when Chinese immigrants arrived in America, text-based understandings of the *Daode jing* and Daoism were long established, widespread, and deeply influential. Just as new translations of the *Daode jing* are

[60] Louis Komjathy, "Tracing the Contours of Daoism in North America," *Nova Religio: The Journal of Alternative and Emergent Religions* 8:2 (Nov 2004): 5-27. Komjathy adopts a lineage-based criterion for inclusion, and lists only one "identifiable and self-identified Daoist priest, whether Chinese or non-Chinese, in North America" who arrived before 1970. This first "Daoist priest," Share K. Lew (1918-), entered the U.S. in 1948 (the year after Gia-fu Feng) under an earlier, limited relaxation of Chinese immigration policy in response China's position as an American ally during the Second World War. Lew accepted his first non-Chinese student in 1959. In 1970, he cofounded the Taoist Sanctuary in Los Angeles (now based in San Diego), which became the first Taoist religious organization to receive federal status as a church (Komjathy,10).

produced and received in relation to their predecessors, the new understandings of Daoism brought by immigrants were heavily inflected by the pre-existing *Daode jing*-centric conceptions of Daoism in popular circulation through English translations. Necessary to understand all that comes after immigration reform, in its analysis of popular English translations of the *Daode jing* from 1868-1972, this dissertation advances existing scholarship on the American reception of this text by providing a more comprehensive and detailed analysis both of its dominant trends and paradigmatic translations. The next chapter begins with a review of relevant scholarship, elaborates a new approach to popular translations of the *Daode jing*, and sets the stage for the close readings that follow.

CHAPTER 1: Popular Translation in Practice and in Theory

This chapter reviews existing scholarship and expands on arguments introduced above. Section one advances the importance of attention to early popular translations of the *Daode jing* as conditioning text-based understandings of Daoism that persist long after 1965 immigration reforms. Section two critiques an academic elitism that dismisses popular translations and therefore pays too little attention to their ubiquity and influence. Section three relates this elitism to theories of translation, with sustained attention to the separation of translations as either "historical" or "scriptural" among prominent scholars of the *Daode jing*. Section four proposes the utility Hans-Georg Gadamer's reconfiguration of "text" as "text-tradition" in overcoming the blind spots of previous scholarship and redirecting our attention towards the entirety of the reception history of the *Daode jing* rather than continuing to focus primarily on its origins.

Section 1: The Marks of a Text-Based Understanding

Elijah Sielger, the only scholar to have completed a monograph on Daoism in America, separates his doctoral thesis into three principal time periods, and concentrates his analysis on the last: 1817-1948, when American conceptions of Daoism were dominated by a historicism that privileged ancient texts; 1948-1976, when early immigration reforms allowed a handful of "displaced Chinese literati" like Gia-fu Feng to enter America and form the first Daoist organizations and communities; and 1976-present, when, with the large influx of Chinese immigrants after 1965, "the kind of Chinese person who became a 'Daoist teacher' changed…and they brought a more diverse range of experience to America."[1] Emphasizing a

[1] Elijah Siegler, "The Dao of America: The History and Practice of American Daoism" (PhD diss., University of California, Santa Barbara, 2003), 158-160. Coming after the dissolution of Feng's community and before the publication of his biography by Carol Wilson, Feng is barely noted in Siegler's narrative. Siegler's paradigmatic examples of early teachers and communities are The Taoist Sanctuary co-founded in 1970 by Share K. Lew and

"contact model" that draws on the work of Catherine Albanese,[2] Siegler presents the results of these stages of encounter as the formation of a "new religious movement" that he terms "American Daoism." He argues that even after increased immigration this movement is "fundamentally different from the Chinese tradition, its general characteristics owing more to the distorted image of Daoism held by Western scholars and Chinese literati than to the historical phenomenon of religious Daoism in China."[3] Based on extensive fieldwork, Sielger's arguments are persuasive, and his efforts are pioneering in a field that will continue to grow—as has the study of American Buddhism and, more recently, American Hinduism.[4]

However, in spite of his recognition of a "distorted image of Daoism held by Western scholars and Chinese literati," Siegler argues that it is only during the second-half of the nineteenth century that "American Daoism" begins. While this may be accurate to the new religious movement he seeks to define, it leaves the early, persistent, and more general history of American understandings of Daoism and the *Daode jing* unanalyzed and only briefly described. To the degree that this history is addressed, Siegler's focus on "Western scholars and Chinese

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Khigh Alx Dhiegh (Kenneth Dickerson: 1910-1991) and the Living Tao Foundation founded in 1976 by Al Chungliang Huang.

[2] See Catherine Albanese, "Exchanging Selves, Exchanging Souls: Contact, Combination, and American Religious History," in Thomas Tweed, ed., *Retelling U.S. Religious History* (Berkely: UC Press, 1997).

[3] Siegler, "The Dao of America," 382.

[4] For Buddhism in America, e.g. Charles S. Prebish, *American Buddhism* (North Scituate, MA: Duxbury Press, 1979). Stephen Prothero, *The White Buddhist: The Asian Odyssey of Henry Steel Olcott* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1996). Thomas A. Tweed, *The American Encounter with Buddhism, 1844–1912: Victorian Culture and the Limits of Dissent* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1992). Charles S. Prebish and Kenneth K. Tanaka, eds., *The Faces of Buddhism in America* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1998). Richard Hughes Seager, *Buddhism in America* (New York: Columbia University, 1999). Charles S. Prebish and Martin Baumann, eds. *Westward Dharma: Buddhism beyond Asia* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2002). Paul David Numrich, ed. *North American Buddhists in Social Context* (Boston: Brill, 2008). For Hinduism in America, e.g. Thomas A. Forsthoefel and Cynthia Ann Humes, eds., *Gurus in America* (Albany: SUNY Press, 2005). Prema Kurien, *A Place at the Multicultural Table: The Development of an American Hinduism* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers, 2007). Lola Williamson, *Transcendent in America: Hindu-Inspired Meditation Movements as New Religion* (New York: NYU Press, 2010). Ann Gleig and Lola Williamson, *Homegrown Gurus: From Hinduism in America to American Hinduism* (Albany: SUNY Press, 2013). Amanda J. Lucia, *Reflections of Amma: Devotees in a Global Embrace* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2014).

literati" leaves a significant gap between their elite understandings and the decidedly popular movement he describes.

The strengths and weaknesses of Siegler's contributions are the result of his methodology. Seeking to correct the text-based historicism of Orientalist scholarship and the minimally populated landscapes of intellectual history, he pursues "an ethnographic survey of contemporary Western Daoist teachers and groups."[5] Focusing his ethnography—and thus his conclusions—on institutionalized organizations allows him to evidence claims about American Daoism as a new religious movement, but limits his contributions to the larger issue this dissertation engages: the development and influence of widespread and diffuse popular conceptions of Daoism and the *Daode jing*. Simultaneously, Siegler takes on the many beliefs, practices, figures, and histories of the organizations he surveys, and therefore can devote little sustained attention to the text that he too recognizes as central to the American Daoists with whom he is concerned. All eight of the general characteristics of "American Daoism" as a new religious movement, identified in his introduction, are rooted in popular understandings of the *Daode jing*, and three mention the text explicitly.[6] Yet, while the text's title is studded throughout his thesis, he offers only one four-page section which engages American conceptions of the text directly.[7] When he then turns to "a History of American Daoist Practices," Siegler

[5] Siegler, "The Dao of America," 118.
[6] "(1) American Daoism has few external boundaries: it is nonexclusive (Daoists may join another religion) and non-dogmatic; (2) American Daoism recognizes Laozi as its founding figure and the book he gave his name to as its scripture; (3) American Daoism is not geographically specific: it is a religion that is taught and practiced in homes and parks, and not tied to any natural feature; (4) American Daoism is historically unreflective, not making use of figures and movements from its past, other than Laozi; (5) American Daoism uses few written texts, again, other than Laozi's Daodejing; (6) American Daoism is apolitical and consciously avoids acting in worldly affairs; (7) American Daoism is not concerned with either conventional social ethics (which it aspires to transcend) or religious ritual (which it condemns); (8) American Daoism is nonsectarian and nondenominational, with no internal divisions" (*Ibid*., 17).
[7] *Ibid*., 66-69.

recognizes the preeminence of "Reading as Practice (including the *Daodejing* and the *Yijing*)," [8] yet offers only the following analysis of the *Daode jing*'s popularity and frequent translation: "The Daodejing's popularity in America, as well as its status as the second most translated text in the world, after the Bible, can be attributed to its brevity, its lack of proper names, and its multiplicity of possible meanings."[9] Observations that could serve as the starting points of productive investigations are instead presented, in this context, as conclusions that forestall them.

As the first ethnographer of "Daoist" communities in America, Siegler's attention is understandably elsewhere.[10] However, given the underdeveloped state of scholarship on Daoism in America, even the focus of a doctoral thesis can be consequential.[11] When Catherine Albanese draws on Siegler's work in her innovative argument for the centrality of what are often sidelined as "alternative religions" in America, Siegler's focus on the late twentieth century pushes Daoism to the end of her chronological presentation.[12] A discussion of Daoism appears not in Albanese's chapter "Metaphysical Asia," which occupies itself primarily with Buddhism in America, but rather at the conclusion of her last chapter, "New Ages for All," directly before the book's *coda*. Here Albanese focuses on the popularization of the macrobiotic diet and related philosophies of Michio Kushi 久司道夫 (1926-2014), a Japanese student of politics and law who left graduate study at Columbia University in the 1950s to teach and publish. Referencing the *East West Journal* Kushi founded in 1970, Albanese writes, "He began to invoke the 'Tao' (read

[8] Siegler describes this as "the first American Daoist practice to enter North America," before two others: "Moving as Practice (including taiji, qigong and other exercises, and meditation)" and "Healing as Practice (including Chinese Medicine)." *Ibid*., 310.
[9] *Ibid*., 312.
[10] Louis Komjathy has also produced seminal work on this topic. See bibliography.
[11] I hope my own focus on popular translations in this dissertation will be a productive counterpoint to previous scholarship and be balanced by work to come.
[12] Catherine Albanese, *A Republic of Mind and Spirit: A Cultural History of Metaphysical Religion* (New Haven-London: Yale University Press, 2007). Albanese was the chair of Siegler's thesis committee at the University of California Santa Barbara.

as 'way,' or spiritual path,' or 'practice,' or 'cosmic absolute,' that was both transcendent and within the self), identifying his ideas with the Chinese Daoist philosopher Lao-Tsu (Laozi)."[13] Though written primarily in the 1970s and 1980s, for Albanese, "Whatever it did for diseased livers and gall bladders, the American Daoist rhetoric of Kushi's teaching—easily available because of the plethora of inexpensive books that Kushi, with the aid of his students, published—brought familiarity with Daoist language to America."[14] Albanese may be correct that Kushi and the new religious movement "American Daoism" as described by Sielger participate in the tradition of American Metaphysical Religion that she seeks to trace and define. However, as a direct result of adopting Siegler's dating of American Daoism to the late twentieth century, her conclusion that Kushi "brought familiarity with Daoist language to America" is inaccurate and misleading.

The evocation of Daoism by Michio Kushi and the macrobiotic movement did not, as Albanese presents it, "provide early introductions to what American and metaphysical Daoist themes could be,"[15] but rather was a late *entrée* into an established field of *Daode jing*-based understandings of Daoism established through popular translation and already long circulating in American vernacular culture. Albanese highlights, for example, that Kushi quotes "from Lao-Tsu (Laozi)" the line "The substance of the Great Life / completely follows the Tao."[16] This is not, however, an original translation, but a quotation from the twenty-first chapter of a 1985 English translation of a 1925 edition of Richard Wilhelm's German text, which was originally published

[13] *Ibid*., 485.
[14] *Ibid*., 487.
[15] *Ibid*., 489.
[16] *Ibid*., 487.

in 1911.[17] Moreover, as the date of the English translation would suggest, the quotation does not appear in the original 1978 edition of Kushi's *Book of Macrobiotics*, but only in the 1987 revised edition which Albanese cites.[18] At this late date, a quotation from a translation of a translation does not serve to introduce Americans to Daoist themes, but rather attempts to authenticate itself by a reference to them and their already established authority.[19] Certainly not an introduction, it is also not so much, as described by Albanese, a quotation from Laozi and an evocation of Chinese Daoism, but is better understood as a quotation from the echo chambers of previous American and European translations of the *Daode jing* and an evocation of the widespread understandings of the text and Daoism that their precedent and repetition had long established and reinforced in popular culture.

It is an important truth that Komjathy, Siegler, and Albanese have observed: "Daoist practitioners did not become a noticeable presence in the United States until after the change in the immigration law in 1965 brought a visible increase in the numbers of Chinese immigrants and especially of the well-educated and privileged classes."[20] Their work on these communities

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[17] *Tao te ching: the book of meaning and life*. Translation and commentary by Richard Wilhelm, translated into English by H.G. Ostwald (London ; Boston : Arkana, 1985): 35. Corresponding lines in the original at *Tao te king : das Buch des Alten vom Sinn und Leben* (Jena: Diederichs, 1911): 23. The 1911 edition reads: "Des großen LEBENS Form folgt ganz dem SINN." The 1925 edition has a slight change reflected in the English translation: "Des großen Lebens Inhalt folgt ganz dem Sinn." *Leben* is Wilhelm's rendering of *de* (德), and *Sinn* his choice for *dao* (道). The latter unusual choice he justifies in his forward in quintessentially German references to both the *logos* of the New Testament and Goethe's *Faust*: "Dies geschah im anschluß an de Stelle im Faust I, wo Faust vom Osterspaziergang zurückkehrt, sich an die Übersetzung des Neuen Testaments macht und die Anfangsworte des Johannesevangeliums u. a. mit: 'Im Anfang war der Sinn' wiederzugeben versucht. Es scheint das die Übersetzung zu sein, die dem chinesischen 'dao' in seinen verschiedenen Bedeutungen am meisten gerecht wird. Das chinesische Wort geht von der Bedeutung 'Weg' aus, von da aus erweitert sich die Bedeutung zu 'Richtung', 'Zustand', dann 'Vernunft', 'Wahrheit.'"

[18] Michio Kushi and Alex Jack, *The Book of Macrobiotics: The Universal Way of Health, Happiness, and Peace*. (New York: Japan Publications, 1987).

[19] In an appendix to *The Book of Macrobiotics*, "East West Reading and Viewing List," Kushi and his co-author recommend Ostwald's English translation of Wilhelm as "one of the best Western versions," but also suggest that "two or three other translations should be consulted for comparison" (383). They then recommend three of the best-known popular translators of the time: Paul Carus, Witter Bynner, and R.B. Blakney.

[20] Albanese, *A Republic of Mind and Spirit*, 484.

and peoples are valuable contributions to the study of Daoism, Asian religions in America, and American religions more broadly. However, when Chinese (and other Asian) immigrants arrived in America, text-based understandings of the *Daode jing* and Daoism were already long established, widespread, and deeply influential. The attention paid here to popular translations, therefore, is neither a turn away from the social nor a return to historicism. Rather, it is a turn towards the lived realities and ongoing effects of the popularization of the *Daode jing* in America.

Section 2: The Elite and the Popular

Johnathan Herman is one of only a few established sinologists to defend the value of attention to popular translations of the *Daode jing*, a position he elaborates in a brief introduction to his essay on the 1997 version by science fiction writer Ursula K. Le Guin.[21] Here, Herman notes the centrality of popular translations of the *Daode jing* to what he calls "popular Western Daoism," and comments on the "varying degrees of indifference, amusement, and derision," with which the "sinological community…has generally greeted this overall phenomenon."[22] Against such responses, Herman asserts that "scholars of Chinese religion would be well-served to take some of this material seriously,"[23] and that "we might even learn something from these

[21] Ursula K Le Guin with Jerome P. Seaton., *Lao Tzu: Tao Te Ching – A Book About the Way and the Power of the Way* (Boston: Shambhala, 1997). In her introduction, Le Guin readily admits to knowing no Chinese and steadfastly calls her text a "rendition" of the *Daode jing* created from previous English texts and her personal understanding of Daoism, though it is classified along with many similar texts as a translation by the Library of Congress, as noted in the introduction.

[22] Jonathan R. Herman, "Daoist Environmentalism in the West: Ursula K. Le Guin's Reception and Transmission of Daoism." In *Daoism and Ecology: Ways within a Cosmic Landscape*. N. J. Girardot, James Miller, and Liu Xiaogan, eds. (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press: 2001), 391-406: 392. Louis Komjathy has adopted similar terminology, "Popular Western Taoism," that he suggests should be "pronounced with a hard 't' sound" (*Daoism: A Guide for the Perplexed*, 206-210). Komjathy also records the paucity of scholarship on the topic and "dismissive comments about its inauthenticity" in "Tracing the Contours of Daoism in North America," n. 18, p. 22.

[23] *Ibid*., 392.

transformations."[24] Breaking new ground, he offers fewer conclusions about what will be learned than initial rebuttals to some of the reasons why the study of these materials has been hitherto ignored or dismissed.

To the objection that translations like that of Bynner, Mitchell, and Le Guin are the products of "self-indulgent dilettantes who deceive the public by publishing pseudo-translations of the Tao Te Ching, without having actually read the text in its original language,"[25] Herman responds, "while a determination of questionable scholarship would be sufficient for rejecting a scholarly work, popular Western Taoism is not exclusively or even primarily a scholarly phenomenon. Rather, it is an *aesthetic*, *cultural*, and *religious* phenomenon."[26] Here he recalls, though not with a citation, an earlier conclusion by Julia Hardy, that while "Western" interpretations of the *Daode jing* are often based on "bad scholarship," they frequently make for "good religion."[27]

Hardy, in one of few essays on the history of the text's interpretation in Europe and America, focuses on academic scholarship rather than on popular translation or the intriguing idea of "good religion" she briefly suggests. Nowhere in her essay does she discuss the specifics of any translation, and popular understandings of the *Daode jing* are theorized only as a product of the trickle-down influence of earlier scholarship.[28] In this top-down model, previous scholarship becomes popular through its dissemination over time, and current scholarship seeks

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[24] *Ibid*., 394.
[25] Russell Kirkland, "Teaching Taoism in the 1990s," *Teaching Theology and Religion* 1:2 (June 1998): 113. Quoted in Herman, "Daoist Environmentalism in the West," 392.
[26] *Ibid*.
[27] Julia M. Hardy, "Influential Western Interpretations of the *Tao-te-ching*." In *Lao-tzu and the Tao-te-ching*. Livia Kohn and Michael LaFargue, eds. (Albany: SUNY, 1998), 165-188: 184-185.
[28] Hardy described only four early translations, all published before 1891. She then discusses ten twentieth-century Sinologists, only three of whom published translations, none of which are addressed. Her section on recent scholarship introduces four additional scholars, two of whom have published translations, though she again focuses only on their general theories about the text.

to correct the mistakes of its academic antecedents and resultant popular opinion. Siegler largely follows Hardy in this regard: recall that for him, the general characteristics of American Daoism are rooted in "the distorted image of Daoism held by Western scholars and Chinese literati."[29] This focus on elite scholars and literati is accurate to part of the text's reception history, but does little to account for the massive numbers and successes of popular translations and interpretations. Moreover, the analyses of Herbert Giles (Chapter 2) and Paul Carus (Chapter 3) will demonstrate that academic interpretations in Europe and America participate in the text's popular reception rather than guide it.

In his essay on Le Guin's "rendition," Herman notes the elitism underlying the academic inattention to and dismissal of popular interpretation as similar to the elitism which contributed to the rejection of so-called "religious" Daoism (*Daojiao* 道教) by earlier scholars and Chinese literati:

> To deem popular Western Daoism unworthy of study because it is not sufficiently continuous with the Chinese tradition is to repeat the kind of parochialism that once relegated *Daojiao*—China's oldest indigenous institutional religion—to the status of a corrupt degradation of original Daoism.[30]

One worries that scholarly preferences were then, as perhaps they are now, taken to accord with "real" Daoism while the "popular" was then, as perhaps now, dismissed as "a corrupt degradation." As noted in the introduction and expanded below, the current academic preferences for the scholarly over the "popular" expressed in the historical-scriptural split may partially re-encode the religious-philosophical divide that most contemporary scholarship has otherwise overcome.

[29] Siegler, "The Dao of America," 382.
[30] Herman, 393.

Against the persistence of this vestigial reflex, Herman recommends that "it is simply unrealistic to expect religious history—even modern religious history—to conform to scholarly expectations."[31] Rather, scholars should acknowledge that "religious resources continually undergo reinterpretation and recontextualization" and attend to these hermeneutical processes.[32] For Herman, this follows recent developments in the study of religious history:

> To a great extent, the history of religions is a history of (sometimes unintentional) hermeneutic decisions, and it is most appropriate not to judge and dismiss a modern phenomenon because of its lack of authenticity but to identify its hermeneutic and situate it properly in its own historical and thematic contexts.[33]

Building on these insights, Herman exhorts scholars of Daoism to attend to the present as well as the past and to acknowledge the context, theories, and methods of interpretation involved in the phenomenon at hand rather than insisting on contemporary scholarly ideals (which however much they may look to the past are also based in their own particular contexts and hermeneutics). This does not mean uncritically accepting "popular Western Daoism" or popular translations of the *Daode jing* on their own terms. Many of the individuals and texts involved are potentially claiming contexts and hermeneutics that do not reflect their actual "(sometimes unintentional)" activities and interpretations. Rather, Herman's point is that studying the "reinterpretation and recontextualization" of "religious resources" is a more appropriate occupation for scholars than "to judge and dismiss a modern phenomenon because of its lack of authenticity." Such a study of popular translations of the *Daode jing* in America has yet to occur in any comprehensive fashion. As appropriate as Herman's stresses on context and hermeneutics

[31] *Ibid*., 392.
[32] *Ibid*.
[33] *Ibid*., 393.

may be to the entirety of the phenomenon, he applies them in his analysis only to the text of Ursula K. Le Guin.[34]

To begin to comprehensively address popular translations of the *Daode jing* in America may require not only reframing popular translations as research-worthy interpretations, but also rethinking the notions of "text" that have informed many previous approaches to transmission and reception. Even as some awareness of the importance of addressing popular understandings of the *Daode jing* has grown, many scholars have inherited—and often reaffirmed—notions of texts as objects whose meanings are best understood in relation to their original historical contexts. Hence, many scholars have little appreciation for or patience with non-academic readers (and translators) whose interpretations often seem to emphasize contemporary, subjective relevancy at the expense of historical, objective accuracy. For those who consciously or unconsciously accept them, these conceptions of readers and texts undercut the ability to theorize and address the majority of any text's historical reception as anything but reflections of its readers' preoccupations.

To the point, in the introduction to the recent American Academy of Religion sponsored volume *Teaching the Daode Jing*,[35] Hans-Georg Moeller begins by highlighting the widespread existence of "popular approaches" to the text with which "students will unavoidably have been exposed," from movies to martial arts and *feng shui* to popular translations.[36] Moeller then identifies a division and tension between "academic and popular approaches" as the first of three

[34] Herman finds Le Guin to have had a "lifelong engagement with the Laozhuang tradition" and to employ a hermeneutic that "is perhaps less interested in recovering the motivations *behind* the text than…in imagining what awaits *beyond* it." Her version of the *Daode jing* further "insists on an egalitarian reading," and "is naturalistic without being primitivistic," "utopian without being romantic," and "deconstructionist without being nihilistic."
[35] Gary D. DeAngelis and Warren G. Frisina, eds., *Teaching the Daode Jing* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2008).
[36] Notably that of Stephen Mitchell, *ibid*., 4.

recurring themes of the volume, and he is correct both about its ubiquity and its formulation as a binary opposition throughout most chapters. Yet, while many contributors note the proliferation and impact of understandings "premeditated by the mass media and popular culture,"[37] few explore even the most basic features of the phenomenon. Instead, it is generally seen as something academics must overcome. On occasion, it is more charitably presented as expressing an alternative approach to the text, but one still inappropriate to academic study.[38]

However, even the staunchest defender of "old-time historicism," his phrase, in the volume readily concedes that these non-academic approaches to the text are not exclusive to contemporary America; rather, they have dominated—and continue to dominate—the reception of the *Daode jing* for the last two millennia.[39] However, even among Daoists, non-academic approaches have a shared "popular" failing:

> So far as I can see, Daoists were totally uninterested in the project of recovering the original meaning of texts, or challenging themselves by wrestling with sympathetically reconstructed views of the world fundamentally at odds with their own.[40]

The logic between acknowledging and then dismissing the "popular" approaches of both American and Chinese interpreters lies in the particular "historicism" that continues to be brought to the text by a surprising number of its academic interpreters and the related historicist assumptions that inform many of the remainder. Several contributors cite a model of text and

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[37] *Ibid*., 3.

[38] For his part, Moeller offers a conciliatory vision of the "productive tensions" "and "coexistence" of these contrasting approaches: "Popular Daoism can certainly not claim a monopoly on reviving the true spirit of the *Daode jing* that is supposedly lost in, for instance, 'dry' philological translations, but neither can academic research claim the *Daode jing* as an exclusive object of scholarly investigations" (5). "Popular Daoism" refers here to American popular understandings, and the absence of many other potential approaches to the text is notable, primary among them that of contemporary Daoist practitioners. The vast swaths of historical interpretations by countless communities between those of the American academic and the New Age dabbler are eerily silent.

[39] See discussion of Michael LaFargue below.

[40] Michael LaFargue, "Hermeneutics and Pedagogy: Gimme That Old-Time Historicism," in *Teaching the Daode jing*, eds. Gary Delany DeAngelis and Warren G. Frisina (Oxford: Oxford Univ. Press, 2008): 167-192, 173.

translation inherited from an earlier scholar and translator of the *Daode jing*, Arthur Waley, and reaffirmed in several works by Michael LaFargue, the author of the quotation above.[41] This model relies on a division between "Historical" and "Scriptural" translations that not only corresponds to the division between "Academic" and "Popular" approaches to the text, but also partially re-encodes the elitist divisions between "Philosophical" and "Religious" Daoism noted above.[42] These divisions are artificial and ultimately untenable. To clear a space for an alternative approach to the *Daode jing*, subsequent sections detail the assumptions about texts and readers that underlie these binaries and introduce Hans-Georg Gadamer's alternative conception of the "traditionary text" and its effective history to correct them.

Section 3: The Historical and the Scriptural

Concern over the transmission, interpretation, and translation of texts is not new, particularly when it comes to the canonical texts of religious traditions. Philo of Alexandria's ancient assurance of seventy-two independent, yet identical translations of the Torah into Greek speaks clearly to fundamental anxieties surrounding textual transmission that become increasingly acute with every new English *Daode jing* published. Consider the translations of the following lines from the first chapter, "無名天地之始 / 有名萬物之母," as they appear in three early popular translations and three recent scholarly efforts:

> For the God which can be defined or named is but the Creator, the Great Mother of all those things of which our senses have cognizance (Alexander 1895).
>
> The Unnameable is of heaven and earth the beginning. The Nameable becomes of the ten thousand things the mother (Carus 1898).

[41] LaFargue, *Tao and Method: A Reasoned Approach to the Tao-te-ching*. Albany: State University of New York Press, 1994. LaFargue, "Recovering the *Tao-te-ching's* Original Meaning: Some Remarks of Historical Hermeneutics," *Lao-tzu and the Tao-te-ching* (1998): 255-276. LaFargue, "Hermeneutics and Pedagogy: Gimme That Old-Time Historicism," in *Teaching the Daode jing* (2008): 167-192.

[42] The nature, origin, and consequences of this division are addressed in detail in chapter two.

> In the beginning of heaven and earth there were no words, Words came out of the womb of matter (Bynner 1944).
>
> Nameless, it is the source of the thousand things *(named, it is 'Mother' of the thousands of things*) (LaFargue 1992).
>
> The nameless is the fetal beginning of everything that is happening, while that which is named is their mother (Ames and Hall 2003).
>
> 'Absence' names the cosmic horizon, 'Presence' names the mother of 10,000 natural kinds (Hansen 2009).

Unlike Philo's Septuagint, no two translations of the Chinese text have emerged as identical, and, while in Greek there may have been only one Torah, in English we find many versions of the *Daode jing*. The impulse of scholars to turn away from this variety towards the presumed stability of the original text is not unrelated to the impulse behind Philo's tale, and is a further expression of the history of Bible transmission as a regulative influence on the *Daode jing* in America.[43] Yet no text—Bible, *Daode jing*, or otherwise—exists apart from its transmission, whether we mean by "transmission" the leap from marks on the page to impressions upon the reader, the expansion from small communities to larger audiences, the migration across geographic, cultural, and linguistic boarders, or the handing down through successive generations. At each step, the stability of previous interpretation is threatened by the influence of new readers, their new concerns, and their new contexts.

In considering this threat, transmission, interpretation, and translation are frequently envisioned as contests between original texts and contemporary readers. These contests may occasionally reach compromise, but they are generally imagined to result in the triumph of one

[43] The more direct relationships between biblical studies and scholarly approaches to the *Daode jing* are explored in chapter two. The links between lay approaches to the Bible and popular interpretations of the *Daode jing* are introduced in chapter two, and developed in chapter four. We can note here that before turning his attention to the *Daode jing*, Michael LaFargue completed his doctorate at Harvard Divinity School with a dissertation on Gnosticism and the *Act of Thomas*.

side or the other. In 1934, the prolific translator of Chinese and Japanese texts Arthur Waley proposed that translations could therefore be divided as either "historical" or "scriptural."[44] The latter celebrate a "magical elasticity" and "aim only at telling the reader what such a text means to those who use it today."[45] Here is a triumph of the reader in the present over the text from the past. In opposition stand "translations which set out to discover what such books meant to start with": a victory of the original text.[46] Waley proposes his own well-received translation, *The Way and Its Power*, as the first interpretation of the *Daode jing* to aim for its "historical" meaning.

Among scholars of the *Daode jing*, Waley's distinction continues to hold sway. It has recently been reiterated and further developed by Michael LaFargue, who in his 1994 *Tao and Method* explains: "for historical hermeneutics an interpretation is a 'good interpretation' insofar as the interpreter's understanding of the text approximates that of the original author and audience…For scriptural hermeneutics, an interpretation is a 'good interpretation' insofar as the reading it gives is meaningful for a modern audience."[47] In the 2008 collection *Teaching the Daode jing*, LaFargue reiterates this model in his contribution "Hermeneutics and Pedagogy: Gimme That Old-Time Historicism."[48] The title is both humorous and revealing, and the historical/scriptural distinction he perpetuates in this essay is frequently cited and generally approved of by other scholars in the volume.

The attraction of this model for these scholars seems to arise in large measure from the clear delineation of two distinctive modes of reading: the specialized, scholarly investigation of a

[44] Arthur Waley, *The Way and Its Power* (1934), 12-14.
[45] *Ibid*., 13.
[46] *Ibid*.
[47] LaFargue, *Tao and Method*, 7.
[48] LaFargue "Hermeneutics and Pedagogy," 2008.

text as a historical object and the widespread, popular practice of subjectively reading a text for contemporary relevance. While the two modes are in tension—and the latter is not the approach of academic Sinology—both are acknowledged as *possible* ways of reading. Moreover, against scholars openly hostile to modern "appropriations" of the *Daode jing*,[49] admirers of LaFargue's restatement of Waley's earlier model tend to accord some legitimacy to "scriptural" readings. For LaFargue himself, not only is there "merit" to this approach, but, as noted above, he readily admits that the goal of drawing from the *Daode jing* ideas of contemporary interest and value "has been and probably continues to be by far the dominant one among the majority of readers."[50] This is not merely the case among its foreign translators: "Different Chinese commentators throughout history each interpreted the *Tao-te-ching* in accord with their own worldview, and this approach continues among modern Western interpreters."[51]

In his formulation, the "scriptural" approach is given a long history, but this model simultaneously links together interpreting the *Daode jing* from its earliest transmission down to the present *and* fragments this history of reception into a series of subjective triumphs of contemporary readers over the objective meaning of the historical text. The result is an enormous, chaotic tradition of "scriptural" readings that are linked primarily, if not exclusively, by their subjectivity rather than their shared referent.[52] LaFargue indicates some sympathy for these readings, but it is not hard to understand how Rudolf Wagner concludes a review by

[49] E.g. Eugene Eoyang, Paul Goldin, Michael Sasso, and Russell Kirkland.
[50] Livia Kohn and Michael LaFargue eds. *Lao-Tzu and the Tao-Te-Ching* (Albany, NY: SUNY, 1998), 255.
[51] *Ibid*., 256.
[52] By contrast, when the historical text wins over the contemporary reader, subjectivity is limited and the text provides a comparatively stable, objective foundation for analysis. The historical text has its own complications, but the promise of its supposed stability and preeminence may account for the vast amount of scholarship on the original meaning of the *Daode jing* and the minuscule amount of work on interpretations of the text in China or America, past or present.

lamenting that LaFargue dismisses "the entire range of earlier Chinese *Tao-te-ching* commentators as 'scriptural' and therefore 'useless.'"[53]

The fundamental problem here is that the historical-scriptural model seems to recognize two approaches to the text, but it locates the "text" in only one. The more "historical" the approach, the more the "text" itself is understood. The more "scriptural" the approach, the more the "text" is replaced by subjective fancy. Rather than two ways a text might be read, they are actually split as one recent and correct way that a text should be accessed and a host of ways it has long been obscured by popular "misreadings." The widespread existence and appeal of such misreadings is acknowledged, but these are viewed as the triumphs of various readers over the text, and are valuable only for what they reveal about the readers themselves. For LaFargue, this splits the study of the *Daode jing* into two "completely different" disciplines: "studying 'the interpretation of scriptures'" and "inquiry into the meaning of the *Tao Te Ching* in its original context."[54] Outside of the original context of its composition and immediate reception, all subsequent inquiry cannot be into the text (properly understood) but only into its interpreters.

For LaFargue, "the study of the way medieval Chinese Taoists understood the *Tao Te Ching*, for example, belongs to the study of medieval Chinese culture."[55] Against such a view, this dissertation proposes that such a study can certainly be focused on medieval Chinese culture, but it also "belongs" to the long history of *Daode jing* reception from the text's earliest appearance down to the present. This text did not appear to medieval Daoists without a history of interpretation, and their particular interpretations did not disappear without effects. Moreover, the questions we ask of their interpretations cannot be separated from our current understandings

[53] Rudolf Wagner, "Lao-tzu and the Tao-te-ching," *Journal of Asian Studies* 58:3 (1999) :804-806, 806.
[54] Michael LaFargue, *Tao and Method*, 12.
[55] *Ibid*.

of the *Daode jing*, which, in turn, cannot be separated from the previous understandings that have conditioned current opinion.[56] The point, developed with assistance from Gadamer below, is that all understandings "belong" not to moments but to ongoing traditions of reception.

In spite of all evidence to the contrary—the millennia of interpretations that are linked only to be set aside—the *Daode jing* remains in the historical-scriptural model a static textual object, the meaning of which is fixed at the time of its origin. Even more remarkable than this supposedly "historical" preference for a moment that is separated from us by 2,500 years of actual history, is the idea that the contemporary scholar can (and should) set this history aside in search of an unmediated encounter with the original text—what LaFargue celebrates as the ideal of "historical hermeneutics" and Wagner laments as LaFargue's blithe return to "the titanic The Modern Scholar and The Urtext dyad."[57]

Articulated first by Waley and now restated by LaFargue, this model inherits earlier philological conceptions of the text as an object whose meaning is most reliably sought at its origins, theological assumptions about the purity of revealed texts, and Orientalist preferences for ancient texts over lived traditions. It operates with an exaggerated fear of subjective relativism against which it defines its methods and defends its objectivity. In LaFargue's words, "either one is trying as best one can to reconstruct what the *Daode jing* meant to its original authors and audience, or one is not. If one is not, then there is no basis for placing any limits to what can be considered a legitimate interpretation."[58] The model sees only two options: the fixed objectivity of the text at its origin or the free subjectivity of readers throughout its reception

[56] While the focus here is on the text, the same argument applies to the understanding of "Taoists," of "Chinese," "medieval," or any other conceptual construct.
[57] Wagner, *ibid*.
[58] LaFargue "Hermeneutics and Pedagogy," 2008, 170.

history. In the hermeneutics it envisions, the distance between text and reader is collapsed by interpretation, and one will inevitably dominate the other.

Section 4: Traditionary Texts and Effective History

As marked in the title of his opus, *Tao and Method*, LaFargue develops his hermeneutics primarily in response to Hans-Georg Gadamer's *Truth and Method*, a work which delves deeply into the problems of textual encounter and the interpretive distance between original texts and contemporary readers.[59] Gadamer's understanding of this distance and the nature of hermeneutics is taken by LaFargue to result in an overly "scriptural" focus on the contemporary reader at the expense of the historical text.[60] LaFargue is correct that Gadamer rejects historicism's notion that careful attention to method can insulate a scholar from the prejudices that arise from their own historical context and allow a "disinterested" investigation and recovery of an original text.[61] Gadamer is equally skeptical of Romantic hermeneutics that attempt to recover the "mind" of the author and thereby understand his or her original intentions.[62] In both cases, recovering the original text/author cannot be separated from the interests of the reader/scholar, nor can the historical and interpretive distances between them be collapsed. LaFargue is therefore also correct that Gadamer insists on the historicity of the reader and the importance of attending to the reader's unavoidable "prejudices as conditions of understanding."[63]

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[59] Hans-Georg Gadamer, *Wahrheit und Methode,* Tübingen: 1960. Translated as *Truth and Method* by Garrett Barden and John Cumming, New York: Seabury, 1975; revised translation by Joel Weinsheimer and Donald Marshall, New York: Crossroads, 1989.
[60] LaFargue, *Tao and Method*, 7.
[61] See "The connection between the historical school and romantic hermeneutics": 194-212; "Dilthey's entanglement in the aporias of historicism": 213-233; and, on prejudice and correcting historicism, "The elevation of the historicity of understanding to the status of a hermeneutic principle": 267-276.
[62] See "The questionableness of romantic hermeneutics": 174-212.
[63] See "The elevation of the historicity of understanding to the status of a hermeneutic principle": 267-304.

Where LaFargue has Gadamer wrong is in supposing that the latter's rejection of the text as a historical object and insistence on the unavoidable prejudices of the historically-situated reader leads to a hermeneutic that authorizes a subjective interpretive victory of contemporary readers over original texts. LaFargue's historical/scriptural model attends to the historical and interpretive distances between texts and readers only as something to be overcome and collapsed into a direct encounter of text and reader in which the objective meaning of the text is in contest with the subjectivity of the reader. He therefore understands the rejection of historicism in favor of the historicity of all interpretation to lead only to a "scriptural" victory of readers over texts.[64] These are neither the conditions nor results proposed by Gadamer, who has very different notions of texts, readers, and the relationship between them.

It is, however, a not uncommon misreading of Gadamer that arises, in part, from misinterpreting Gadamer's dialogical model and his related idea that understanding occurs in a "fusion of horizons" (*Horizontverschmelzung*).[65] This misinterpretation seems to be shared even by some sympathetic scholars, including one of "Western Taoism," J. J. Clarke, who prefers his understanding of Gadamerian hermeneutics to "the more reductive versions of Said's orientalist critique… shoehorned into a simple model of Western power imposed on a passive East, or into the old binarism which constructs the East as wholly alien and other."[66] On Gadamer's alternative model, Clarke writes:

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[64] LaFargue writes that it is because of the works of Gadamer, Ricoeur, and Derrida that "the word *hermeneutics* today has come to mean for many people the rejection of any attempt to reconstruct historical meanings, and a focus on giving readings the interpreter regards as most appropriate and meaningful for her modern audience" (LaFargue, *Tao and Method, 7)*.

[65] To be fair to the hermeneutics developed below, LaFargue's is not a "misreading" of Gadamer, but a "reading" that arises out of the intersections of different traditions than the reading of Gadamer pursued here.

[66] J. J. Clarke uses Gadamer to argue for a more complex relationship between "Western" interpreters and Daoist texts in *The Tao of the West: Western Transformations of Taoist Thought* (London: Routledge, 2000). In this text, Clarke moves considerably beyond the work of historicists focused on the origins and original meanings of ancient

> Particularly relevant to our present study is his notion that all human understanding has to be construed, not as an impersonal interaction of disembodied ideas or passive recording of information, but as a kind of dialogue, an ongoing encounter in which a text or tradition is addressed and which answers questions, or itself questions the interpreter. It is a dialogue which involves 'the interplay of the movement of tradition and the movement of the interpreter' (1975: 261), a continuing exchange in which the sense of a text is sought by reiterative interplay or conversation between interpreter and interpreted, and in which meaning is a function of the interaction between the two, not a mystery that lies hidden beneath the text.[67]

The question here is how Clarke and Gadamer understand "text" and "tradition," and it should be noted that the direct quotation from Gadamer uses the latter term, while Clarke prefers to substitute the former in his explanations.

A key, under-recognized, and often misunderstood contribution of Gadamer's thought rests not in his reconfiguration of hermeneutics as a dialogue between a text and a reader, but rather in his reconfiguration of what is meant by "text" and "reader" as necessarily involving "tradition." Clarke and many others perhaps understand Gadamer to suggest "an ongoing encounter" with "a text or tradition," wherein an example of a text might be the *Daode jing* and an example of a tradition might be Daoism. A closer reading of Gadamer suggests more of an equivalency between the terms, where the *Daode jing* should be understood as a text-tradition, and Daoism is available to be "read" in a similar fashion.

To reflect the entwinement of text and tradition in Gadamer's thought, the 1989 translators of *Truth and Method* use the phrase "traditionary text" rather than the more typical "tradition" to render Gadamer's use of the German word *Überlieferung*. They explain:

> English has no corresponding verb, nor any adjective that maintains the active verbal implication, nor any noun for what is carried down in 'tradition.' We have therefore admitted the neologism 'traditionary text,' and have sometimes used the

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Chinese texts to engage their reception and impact on European and American intellectual history. However, similar to other previous work on the reception of Daoism and the *Daode jing*, Clarke pays minimal attention to translation.

[67] Clarke, 10.

> phrase 'what comes down to us from the past' or 'handed down from the past' to convey the active sense of the German.[68]

The neologism is necessary because the "traditionary text" of Gadamerian hermeneutics is neither the "tradition" nor the "text" of LaFargue, Clarke, or many of Gadamer's other interpreters. Rather, the text itself is an ongoing tradition of interpretation: a historical unfolding of meaning in relation to its interpreters. The text does participate in this tradition, it *is* this tradition.

Gadamer sees an unfolding tradition—a traditionary text—as the reader's partner in dialogical understanding, not the text as a historical object nor the author as a historical figure. Similarly, he sees the reader as participating in this tradition and inseparable from it, hence his appeal to the analogy of an "I-Thou" relationship:

> Hermeneutical experience is concerned with *tradition*. This is what is to be experienced. But tradition is not simply a process that experience teaches us to know and govern; it is *language*—i.e., it expresses itself like a Thou. A Thou is not an object; it relates itself to us. It would be wrong to think that this means that what is experienced in tradition is to be taken as the opinion of another person, a Thou. Rather, I maintain that the understanding of tradition does not take the traditionary text as an expression of another person's life, but as meaning that is detached from the person who means it, from an I or a Thou. Still, the relationship to the Thou and the meaning of experience implicit in that relation must be capable of teaching us something about hermeneutical experience. For tradition is a genuine partner in dialogue, and we belong to it, as does the I with a Thou.[69]

Interpretation enfolds both text and reader, holding them in an active relationship wherein they can be neither separated nor collapsed. The I-Thou relationship is mutually determined. A "Thou" is only a "Thou" in relation to an "I," and Gadamer holds the reverse to be equally true: "the understanding of the Thou is still a form of self-relatedness."[70] What Gadamer intends here,

[68] Gadamer, *Truth and Method*, (2004) xvi.
[69] *Ibid*., 352. Italics in original.
[70] *Ibid*., 353.

as with the conclusion of the quotation above that we belong to tradition "as does the I with a Thou," becomes clearer when we turn to his analysis of effective history.

For Gadamer, historical interest should be directed not only toward "the historical phenomenon and the traditionary work," but also toward "their effect in history."[71] He recognizes that historians do occasionally take note of this latter history, but observes that "the history of effect is generally regarded as a mere supplement to historical inquiry."[72] What is new in Gadamer's argument is not an attention to the history of a text's effects, but rather that, as a consequence of reconfiguring "text" as a text-tradition, its history of effects is repositioned from an ancillary interest to an essential requirement to be pursued "every time a work of art or an aspect of the tradition is led out of the twilight region between tradition and history."[73]

Moreover, this requirement is not for Gadamer "a kind of inquiry separate from understanding the work itself,"[74] but is fundamental to such understanding because the interpreter of the work has already been conditioned by the history in which the work takes part before his or her investigation even begins. He writes:

> If we are trying to understand a historical phenomenon from the historical distance that is characteristic of our hermeneutical situation, we are always already affected by history. It determines in advance both what seems to us worth inquiring about and what will appear as an object of investigation, and we more or less forget half of what is really there—in fact, we miss the whole truth of the phenomenon—when we take its immediate appearance as the whole truth.[75]

Through his analysis of the history of effects, not only is the text reconfigured as a "traditionary text" (an unfolding tradition encountering the reader in and through its previous interpretations),

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[71] *Ibid*., 299.
[72] *Ibid*.
[73] *Ibid*.
[74] *Ibid*.
[75] *Ibid*., 300.

but the reader is similarly reconfigured as a "traditionary" reader (one whose preconceptions of the text are already informed by this tradition before any reading occurs).

In this traditionary formulation, neither the text nor the reader is firmly fixed, and neither is entirely free. They are instead in a relationship, in a dialogue during which each is subject to change. Hence, *"Understanding is to be thought of less as a subjective act than as participating in an event of tradition,* a process of transmission in which past and present are constantly mediated."[76] Mediated here is not the past text and the present reader, but the past and present of the tradition of interpretation that envelops the text and reader.

This formulation allows access to a text-tradition that can never be fully objective while simultaneously forestalling total subjectivity:

> The anticipation of meaning that governs our understanding of a text is not an act of subjectivity, but proceeds from the commonality that binds us to the tradition. However, this commonality is constantly being formed in our relation to tradition. Tradition is not simply a permanent precondition; rather, we produce it ourselves inasmuch as we understand, participate, and hence further determine it ourselves.[77]

As much as Gadamer's dialogical model unites the traditionary text and traditionary reader, it also insists on the hermeneutical distance between them that other models would collapse. Tradition is what envelops, but also what separates. It fills the gap between text and reader with a history of effects: a history of transmission, translation, and transformation through which, and only through which, all texts and readers interact.

The importance of the history of effects helps explain why even though Gadamer insists that there is only "the one horizon, whose bounds are set in the depths of tradition" he still refers to a "fusion of horizons" (*Horizontverschmelzung*) to reflect "the experience of a tension

[76] *Ibid*., 291.
[77] *Ibid*., 293.

between the text and the present."[78] This tension is experienced across and through the interpretive distance between text and reader, which proves productive for understanding, but should not be taken to mean that they actually exist independently:

> Historical consciousness is aware of its own otherness and hence foregrounds the horizon of the past from its own. On the other hand, it is itself, as we are trying to show, only something superimposed upon continuing tradition, and hence it immediately recombines with what it has foregrounded itself from in order to become one with itself again in the unity of the historical horizon that it thus acquires.[79]

This model is not that of LaFargue where an original text might triumph in a victory of the historical or a spiritual reader might rest undisturbed in the currently relevant. Rather, Gadamer stresses the distance between the traditionary text and the traditionary reader as at once unavoidable and productive: "In fact the important thing is to recognize temporal distance as a positive and productive condition enabling understanding. It is not a yawning abyss but is filled with the continuity of custom and tradition, in the light of which everything handed down presents itself to us."[80] With a concept of tradition that unites text and reader and fills an uncollapsible space between them, Gadamer's hermeneutic is not one with an objective text and subjective reader, but a mutually constituting historical relationship where neither text nor reader are independent of the other.

It is ironic that the holdouts for "historical understanding" often have such an impoverished view of history and skepticism towards our place in it. Recognizing ourselves as situated in history and subject to historical forces undercuts simplistic notions of "historical" objectivity, but hardly leaves us with only "spiritual" subjectivity. Being in history is a condition of both text and reader that unites them and holds them apart. They can be neither separated nor

[78] *Ibid*., 305.
[79] *Ibid*.
[80] *Ibid*., 297.

collapsed, and they mutually condition each other. This is expressed in the twofold meaning of Gadamer's "historically effected consciousness" (*wirkungsgeschichtliches Bewußtsein*): firstly, being conscious of the effective history of traditionary texts and, secondly, being aware of the effects of this history on the consciousness of all readers, including oneself. For Gadamer, "In relying on its critical method, historical objectivism conceals the fact that historical consciousness is itself situated in the web of historical effects."[81] This insight is the essence of Gadamer's traditionary model and his response to the "naïveté of so-called historicism." He writes:

> Real historical thinking must take account of its own historicity. Only then will it cease to chase the phantom of a historical object that is the object of progressive research, and learn to view the object as the counterpart of itself and hence understand both. The true historical object is not an object at all, but the unity of the one and the other, a relationship that constitutes both the reality of history and the reality of historical understanding.[82]

The "real" historical text is the traditionary one with which readers are always in relation, and not the abstracted "phantom" of an original, objective text free of contemporary interests. The "historical" translation is thus part of this tradition as much as the "scriptural" one, and it is as naïve of historicism to think that it can be free of this tradition as it is to fear that readers can interpret the text free from any constraints. Rather, historicists, like all readers, are conditioned by the histories through which they encounter the text.

Contrary to the fears of LaFargue and other holdouts for "old-time historicism," what emerges from Gadamer's critique and from attention to "scriptural" interpretations—from those of medieval Daoists to those of New Age Americans—is not a rejection of the historical for the subjective, but an expanded understanding of the text that is *actually* historical (functioning in

[81] *Ibid*., 300. For more on the historically-effected consciousness, see pages 299-306.
[82] *Ibid*., 299.

history) rather than transhistorical, as claimed in many popular translations, or "original," as pursued in many scholarly investigations. While this undercuts the "naïveté of so-called historicism," it can in fact support and enrich the historical-critical investigation of received texts as they are handed down through the successive interpretations and reinterpretations of individuals and communities. For two and a half thousand years, the traditional *Daode jing* has not been that of its original context, but that constituted by its transmission, interpretation, translation, and transformation. It is past time to turn more scholarly—and *actually* historical—attention to these living motions.

This dissertation uses the logic of Gadamer's traditionary text and its effective history to overcome the artificial divide between historical and scriptural hermeneutics, to suggest that attention to historical reception is as important to understanding the "real" text as investigations into its origins, and to argue that the English translations of the *Daode jing* in popular circulation are worthy of study not only as records of interpretation, but also as expressions of this text in America. They are part of the effective history of the *Daode jing* in its ongoing transmission, and should be studied as such. They have obvious importance to understanding American engagements with and constructions of Daoism, but also have significant implications for the study of the *Daode jing* in any setting—implications ultimately relevant to the study of all texts in dialogue with readers across the temporal, linguistic, and cultural gaps that are filled always with the uncollapsible histories of interpretations through which they are encountered.

To treat the *Daode jing* as a traditionary text is to begin to attend to the customs and traditions "in the light of which" it is presented to readers. These customs and traditions are inscribed in the Chinese commentaries that participated in the reception of the *Daode jing* in China and accompanied its transmission abroad. They are also inscribed in the English

translations of the *Daode jing* that have both recorded and shaped the transmitted text's reception in Europe and America. Together, the commentaries, translations, and other recorded interpretations *document* the transmission of the *Daode jing* and fill the space between the original text and the contemporary reader.

The following chapters summarize the text's transmission in China, survey early European interpretations, and then focus in depth on the translations of Herbert Giles (1886), Paul Carus (1898), Witter Bynner (1944), and Gia-fu Feng (1972). As noted in the introduction, these translations record the development of five widespread conceptions of the *Daode jing* that emerged chronologically and continue to influence English translations and American understandings today. Here we can begin to consider them as five prevalent features of the developing text-tradition of the *Daode jing* in America: 1) it is the principal scripture of Daoism; 2) its wisdom is universal and timeless; 3) its meaning is accessible through a populist hermeneutic heavily influenced by lay Bible reading; 4) its teachings can correct and ameliorate contemporary American problems; and 5) it can contribute to a more complete "Way of Life."

CHAPTER 2: Early Encounters & Herbert Giles, *The Remains of Lao Tzu: Retranslated*

This chapter begins with a brief overview of the reception history of the *Daode jing* in China, its place within institutional Daoism, and its status in the Chinese court during its first encounters with Europeans and Americans. Subsequent sections address the impact of the different missionary, academic, and popular perspectives brought to these early encounters. The resulting translations of the *Daode jing*, influential well into the twentieth century, both expressed and shaped developing impressions of Chinese religion, philosophy, and culture in Europe and America. They reflected changing perceptions of scripture, religion, and translation arising from missionary activity, developments in Biblical criticism, the increasing prominence of philology, the rise of academic Sinology, and the popularization of Asian traditions in what one scholar has termed an "Oriental Renaissance."[1]

The translations produced prior to 1900 document the variety of interests brought to the *Daode jing* during this early period, but also the display clear trends that would influence and remain visible in later works: firstly, the positing of the *Daode jing* as the principal text of the Daoist tradition and best representation of its essential characteristics; secondly, the growing divide between an emerging academic historicism that privileged origins and a popular hermeneutic that prized contemporary relevancy; thirdly, a related turn away from much of the Chinese commentarial tradition that had shaped the reception of the text in China; and lastly, a clear correspondence between the translators' attitudes towards the Bible and their approaches to the *Daode jing* as a potential non-Christian "scripture."

[1]Gene Patterson-King and Victor Reinking trans., *Oriental Renaissance* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1984) from Raymond Schwab, *La Renaissance Orientale* (Paris: Payot, 1950).

Section 1: The *Daode jing* in China and the Daoist Canon

If our idea of "text" is reconfigured according to Gadamerian hermeneutics, the "traditionary" *Daode jing* encompasses potentially any and certainly all influential interpretations that have participated in its transmission and reception. In this collection, the long pursued *Urtext* has limited significance both because the date of its emergence and its earliest form are ambiguous and because we have limited evidence that the earliest recoverable texts were widely circulated. While its reputed author Laozi 老子 is traditionally dated to the sixth century BCE, the earliest archeological evidence for the text dates to about 300 BCE and stands in ambiguous relation to received editions.[2] The three groups of excavated bamboo slips that were entombed together at that time in Guodian 郭店 include roughly two-fifths of the received text, but their sequence is markedly different, and one of these groups contains a large section absent from current editions. While it is possible that this material was derived from an existing copy of the text more similar to our own, the discrepancies lead at least one scholar to the conclusion that these bamboo slips "were compiled from a common source of the material shared with the *Daode jing* before it reached its current form."[3] The discovery of this bamboo text is of understandable interest to those attempting to recover early arrangements and understandings of the material, but its influence on the traditionary *Daode jing* dates less to 300 BCE when it was entombed, and more to 1993 when it was exhumed and began to be widely read and alter some readers' reception and understandings of the traditionary text. The versions of the text that have

[2] See Sarah Allan and Crispin Williams, eds. *The Guodian* Laozi: *Proceedings of the International Conference, Dartmouth College, May 1998* (Berkeley: Society for the Study of Early China and the Institute of East Asian Studies, 2000).

[3] Sarah Allan, The Great One, Water, and the Laozi: New Light from Guodian, *T'oung Pao* 89:4/5 (2003): 237-285, 253. The next evidence from the archeological record dates to 168 BCE where the text is much more similar to received versions though the chapter order is still markedly different; for a detailed analysis see Rudolf Wagner, *A Chinese Reading of the Daodejing: Wang Bi's Commentary on the Laozi with Critical Text and Translation*, (Albany: SUNY, 2003).

accompanied later well-known interpretations are far more significant because they have remained relatively stable, available, and influential for the last two millennia. They have also been received with commentaries (and sub-commentaries) that have shaped the *Daode jing*'s interpretation and reception.[4] The standard, received edition of the text is frequently referred to by the names of the principal commentators with which it has been transmitted: Heshang gong 河上公 and Wang Bi 王弼, discussed below.[5]

A plethora of interpretations is not unique to the *Daode jing* in English translation, and is evident throughout the Chinese commentarial tradition. From their earliest appearance, these commentaries document increasingly diverse interpretations of the text as they grow in number. The partial commentary by Han Fei 韓非 (d. 233 BCE), is the first known work to include a record of how the *Daode jing* was interpreted. In the portions he treats, Han Fei understands the text in relation to teachings associated with the legendary Yellow Emperor (*Huangdi* 黃帝). He expresses a Huang-Lao (黃老) synthesis common to his time and conducive to the "Legalist" (*fa jia* 法家) theory of government he and many others in the Qin and early Han Dynasties preferred.[6] Two centuries later, Yan Zun 嚴尊 (fl. 83-10 CE) understands the *Daode jing* to be focused less on Legalism's systems of reward and punishment than on natural spontaneity (*ziran* 自然).[7] In the second century CE, the first extant commentary on the entire text, attributed to Heshang gong 河上公, evinces a shift away from politics and society to an emphasis on

[4] See n. 13 below.
[5] See Wagner, *A Chinese Reading of the Daodejing*, for a detailed argument demonstrating that the text of the *Daode jing* that now accompanies Wang Bi's commentary is not the version that he actually used in the third century CE.
[6] A.C. Graham, *Disputers of the Tao* (La Salle, IL: Open Court, 1989): 285-292.
[7] Alan Chan, "The *Daode jing* and its Tradition," *The Daoism Handbook*, Liva Kohn ed., (Leiden: Brill, 2000): 12-13.

longevity.[8] At the turn of the third century, a partial commentary linked with the emergence of the institutional Daoist religion promises that devotion to self-cultivation and compliance with the precepts of the *Daode jing* will assure all individuals boundless blessings in this life and beyond.[9] In the middle of the third century, the young intellectual Wang Bi 王弼 (226-249) authors the second extant commentary on the full text. He makes no mention of self-cultivation or soteriology; instead he pursues a metaphysical inquiry into the "radical otherness" of the Dao and the text's cosmogony.[10] By the eighth century, Zhang Junxiang 張君相 cites thirty commentaries in his own study. Two-hundred years later, Du Guangting 杜光庭 (850-933) lists sixty-one, and speculates that the text contains an "inexhaustible wealth of meaning."[11] By the late thirteenth century, commentator Du Daojian 杜道堅(1237–1318) could only conclude, "The coming of the Way to the world takes on different forms each time."[12]

This proliferation of interpretations has only continued over the last eight centuries, and the results are now estimated to have appeared in thousands of volumes and at least seven-hundred commentaries.[13] The concerns over transmission outlined in the previous chapter are

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[8] Jan De Meyer, "Daode zhenjing zhu," *The Taoist Canon: A Historical Companion*, Schipper and Verellen eds., (Chicago: Univ. of Chicago Press, 2004): 72-74.

[9] See Stephen Bokenkamp, "The *Xiang'er* Commentary to the *Laozi*," Early *Daoist Scriptures* (Berkeley: Univ. of California Press,1997) 29-148.

[10] Chan, "The Daode jing and its Tradition," 15-16. See also: Alan Chan, *Two Visions of the Way*, (Albany: SUNY, 1991); Rudolf Wagner, *The Craft of a Chinese Commentator: Wang Bi on the Laozi*, (Albany: SUNY, 2000).

[11] Alan Chan, *Two Visions of the Way*, 9. Quotation is taken from Du Guangting's *Daode zhenjing guangsheng yi* 道德真經廣聖義, which appears in the Ming Dynasty Daoist Canon discussed below: title 725 (fasc. 440-448).

[12] *Ibid*., p. 4. Quotation is taken from Du Daojian's *Daode xuanjing yuanzhi* 道德玄經原旨, which appears in the Ming Canon: title 702 (fasc. 390).

[13] J.J. Clarke, *The Tao of the West: Western Transformations of Taoist Thought* (London: Routledge, 2000), 51. Similar estimate by Wing-tsit Chan. For more information on influential commentaries of the DDJ see Kristofer Schipper and Franciscus Verellen, *The Taoist Canon: A Historical Companion ot the Daozang,* (Chicago: Univ. Chicago Press, 2005); Isabelle Robinet, *Les commentaires du Tao tö king jusqu'au VIIe siècle* (Paris: Collège de France, 1977); *Id*., "*Polysé*misme du texte canonique et syncrétisme des interprétations: Étude taxinomique des commentaires du *Daode jing* au sein de la tradition chinoise." *Extrême-Orient—Extrême-Occident* 5 (1985): 27-47. Revised English versions: "Later Commentaries: Textual Polysemy and Syncretistic Interpretations," in Kohn and LaFargue, *Lao-tzu and the Tao-te-ching*: 119-42; and Robinet, "The diverse interpretations of the Laozi," Mark

therefore clearly not resolved by recourse to a "Chinese understanding" of the *Daode jing*. Chinese readers are as "traditionary" as any other, and opinions on the *Daode jing* vary widely in China today as they have throughout history. The text is remote from all its contemporary readers, and modern Chinese editions are invariably accompanied by some combination of commentary, explanatory notes, paraphrase, or translation into contemporary Chinese vernacular (*baihua* 白話).

Even a brief survey makes clear that throughout Chinese history interpretations have occurred within and outside of Daoist institutions. This diversity of Chinese interpretations demonstrates that organized Daoism does not encapsulate the entirety of the traditionary *Daode jing*, just as this text does not capture all of Daoism. The fact that it is often asked to fulfill this latter function—to represent the essence of Daoism in classes, books, and translations[14]—is a result of weak imperial support for Daoism during the Qing Dynasty (1644-1912) and the impact of philological, orientalist, and religious assumptions that were brought to the text by European and American interpreters. These assumptions heavily influenced later interpretations and contributed equally to historicist preferences for the original text and to popular understandings of the text as the essential scripture of Daoism's "timeless" wisdom.

The shared notion underlying both the historicist and popular approaches—that the *Daode jing* is the fundamental text of Daoism—is undercut by even a cursory look at the Daoist Canon (*Daozang* 道藏). Daoist organizations have long collected and catalogued their texts, and when imperial favor has provided adequate funds, they have published and disseminated

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Csikszentmihalyi and Philip J, Ivanhoe, eds., R*eligious and Philosophical Aspects of the Laozi*, (Albany: SUNY, 1999): 127-61.

[14] See Jeffrey Dippmann, "The Tao of Textbooks: Taoism in Introductory World Religion Texts." *Teaching Theology & Religion* 4.1 (2001): 40-54

successive editions of the *Daozang*. The surviving edition was commissioned in 1406 and published in 1445, during the Ming Dynasty 明朝 (1368-1644). Kristoffer Schipper provides context:

> The Ming *Daozang* remains the last. The Qing dynasty (1644-1912) did not undertake any endeavor of this kind. Instead, it sought to reduce the status of Taoism in Chinese culture. The repressive measures instigated by the Manchu rulers and continued by their successors were so effective that in the 1920s only two or three copies of the Ming canon remained extant.[15]

Before considering the impact this decline had on the reception of the *Daode jing*, the text's position in the *Daozang* while Daoism still enjoyed imperial favor will be described.

The Ming dynasty *Daozang* contains two different versions of the *Daode jing* presented as original texts and at least fifty-five different commentaries.[16] A seemingly impressive number, these account for little more than a quarter of the two-hundred texts generally associated with so-called "philosophical" Daoism and less than four percent of the 1,500 total titles. While the *Daode jing* and its commentaries are undoubtedly important to Daoism, this can be put in some perspective by noting that more than half of the texts (and two-thirds of the volume) of the Daoist canon are focused on liturgy. An additional one third of the titles focus on alchemical practices including medicine and dietetics, on works of cosmology, and on hagiographies among

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[15] Kristofer Schipper and Franciscus Verellen, *The Taoist Canon: A Historical Companion to the Daozang* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2005), 2.

[16] The first is titled *Daode zhenjing* 道德真經, or "The True Scripture of the Way and Its Virtue. The word *zhen* (true) clearly reflects the fact that other editions of the text were in circulation. This version is closest to that which accompanies the Heshang gong commentary from the Later Han Dynasty. The second text is the *Daode jing guben pian* 道德經固本片, or "Ancient Recension of the Book of the Way and Its Virtue," which is based on a manuscript discovered in 574 CE in a the tomb of a concubine of Xiang Yu 項羽 (233-202 BCE), a prominent warlord during the late Qin dynasty (221-206 BCE). The text has clearly been changed from the manuscript find: its current character count of 5,556 does not accord with that given by the Tang dynasty historiographer Fu Yi 傅奕 (554-639) of 5,722. In its current form, it has 300 more characters than the *Daode zhenjing* and more closely resembles the text associated with the Wang Bi commentary (see Schipper and Verellen pages 57-58). Commentaries are separated *in The Daoist Canon: A Historical Companion* by time period, with four early ones likely completed by the mid-third century, twelve written between the 6th and 10th centuries, and thirty-nine written after.

similarly diverse topics. The *Daode jing* is an important text in this canon, but it is clearly one of many, and represents only a fraction of the Daoist tradition.

Furthermore, while the commentaries included in the *Daozang* do begin to help us better understand how the text has been received within Daoism, they are not exhaustive. These fifty-five commentaries represent only a small fraction of the total number that the text has received in China. Thus, the *Daode jing* and its commentaries represent a tiny fraction of the Daoist tradition, Daoist commentaries are but some of hundreds of Chinese interpretations, and were we to recover the understandings of the text's original author(s) or audience they would be few among many. This is not to say that any of these small fractions are unimportant, but rather that they should not speak for the whole. The *Daode jing* does not speak for the whole of the Daoism, just as neither Daoism nor the text's original context speaks for the whole of the traditionary *Daode jing*. While the importance of the connection between the *Daode jing* and Daoism in China should be acknowledged in any study of the text or tradition, these two should not be collapsed.

The interpretive space between the text and tradition present in the Ming *Daozang* grew even wider with the decline of Daoism during the Qing Dynasty (1644-1912). Schipper notes of Daoist priests (*daoshi* 道士) that "as early as 1663, the Kangxi 康熙 emperor assimilated daoshi with shamans *(wushi* 巫師) and mediums *(tiaoshen* 跳神), prohibiting their exorcistic rites on pain of death. The foremost persecutor, however, was Qianlong 乾隆."[17] The Qianlong Emperor (1711-1799) first prohibited the recruitment of disciples by the previously imperially sanctioned Way of Orthodox Unity (*Zhengyi dao* 正一道) order of Daoism in 1739. A year later the head of

[17] Schipper and Verellen, *The Taoist Canon,* 40.

the order, the Heavenly Master (*Tianshi* 天師), was banned from the court. In 1742 Daoists were dismissed from their role in state rituals. Finally, in 1821, the Heavenly Master was barred from the capital entirely. Schipper further notes that "The hostility of the literati, encouraged by the Qing policy toward Taoism, became a factor in their programs for national renewal."[18] Long before the damages of the Cultural Revolution (1966-1976), this hostility led to a 1898 decree by the penultimate emperor of China to "do away with temples to open schools (*feimiao banxue* 廢廟辦學) [which] opened the door for the gratuitous confiscation of temple property and the destruction of their valuable patrimony."[19] It is important to observe that the decline of institutional Daoism during the Qing coincides with the European and American encounter with the religion and the *Daode jing*, heavily influencing the Euro-American interpretations of both.

While Daoism was pushed out of the capital and severely critiqued by the government and literati with whom the visitors to China were most likely to interact, the text itself was not treated as harshly. As noted above, the *Daode jing* had long been read outside of the boundaries of the Daoist tradition. It was seen as a classic text of ancient China as well as a religious one, and was enjoyed by many of the Confucian literati who remained in favor. Even as the Qianlong Emperor suppressed institutional Daoism, he continued to prize the *Daode jing*. Schipper relates that the Daoist books held by the imperial library during the reign of Qianlong were reduced to forty titles, "virtually all of them commentaries of the *Daode jing* or the *Zhuangzi*." While these types of texts are only a tiny fraction of the *Daozang,* they became almost the entirety of imperially-acceptable Daoism. In spite of the size and diversity of the complete canon, many travelers to China were thereby introduced to the *Daode jing* and *Zhuangzi* as the best of

[18] *Ibid*.
[19] *Ibid*.

acceptable Daoism: a pure, "philosophical," text-based, and elite tradition that stood in clear contrast to the "religious" institutions and popular practices of the time. These opinions were readily accepted because they also aligned with Christian-based assumptions about religion and scripture that many Europeans and Americans brought to their encounters with the canonical texts of Chinese traditions. The nature and effects of these assumptions are further analyzed in the remaining sections of this chapter.

Section 2: Jesuit Figurists

The existence of Daoism was known in Europe soon after the Jesuit missions began in the late sixteenth century, but the *Daode jing* was introduced relatively late to European audiences. The first transmitted text was a Latin translation presented to the Royal Society of London on January 10th 1788 by Matthew Raper (1705-1778), a scholar with family connections to the East India Trading Company. It had been given to Raper by Father Joseph de Grammont (1736-1812), an official Jesuit mathematician and musician to the court at Beijing.[20] James Legge, discussed below, comments that "in this version Tâo is taken in the sense of Ratio, or the Supreme Reason of the Divine Being, the Creator and Governor."[21] He also notes that the "chief object of the translator or translators was to show that 'the Mysteries of the Most Holy Trinity and the Incarnate God were anciently known to the Chinese nation.'"[22]

In its general intent, as reported by Legge, and in its interpretation of *dao* as *ratio*, this translation follows a precedent established by the Jesuit Figurist movement, whose members were the first Europeans to make note of the *Daode jing*. In *Curious Land: Jesuit*

[20] The Latin manuscript was not circulated, has been little studied, and its authorship is unproven, though it is currently held in the British Library, India Office Library Collection, under the title: *Daode jing* with 'Latin translation, paraphrastic rendering and notes' by Joseph de Grammont.
[21] James Legge, *The Texts of Taoism*, Part I (New York: Dover, 1962), 12.
[22] *Ibid*., 13.

Accommodation and the Origins of Sinology, David Mungello relates that "the Figurists argued that if one were able to trace far enough back in the history of a culture, one could find the point at which it diverged from the primary Judeo-Christian tradition."[23] For this reason, "the Figurists applied themselves assiduously to the study of ancient Chinese records, but as symbolic works which contained the deepest mysteries of Christianity."[24] Searching for traces of Christian revelation, Figurists were the first Europeans to devote detailed attention to ancient Chinese texts outside of the Confucian Four Books. However, they did not stray far, and primarily focused on the *Yijing* 已经, one of the Confucian Five Classics. Oliver Grasmueck notes that Father Joachim Bouvet (1656-1730) did make note of the *Daode jing*, particularly the central term *dao*, which he interpreted as "way, eternal, celestial law, deepest origin, abyss of all things (abyssus omnium rerum)," and "divine reason (ratio).'"[25]

Both institutional Daoism and popular Daoist practices seemed to the Figurists and other Jesuits to consist of little more than idolatry and superstition, and was either denounced or ignored. When they eventually took notice of the *Daode jing*, they seized upon the distinction already made by Confucian literati between acceptable early Daoist "philosophical" texts, part of so-called Daoist philosophy (*daojia* 道家), and the questionable later developments in popular Daoist "religious" practice (*daojiao* 道教).[26] As the principal disseminators of early knowledge

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[23] David Mungello, *Curious Land: Jesuit Accommodation and the origins of Sinology* (Stuttgart: Steiner-Verlag-Wiesbaden-GmbH, 1985), 310. References Claudia von Collani, *Die Figuristen in der Chinamission* (Frankfurt am Main, 1981).

[24] Mungello, 310. References *Virgle Pinot, La Chine et la formation de l'esprit philosophique en France (1640-1740)* (Paris, 1979).

[25] Grasmuek, Oliver. "Dao's Way to the West. Past and Present Reception of Daoism in Western Europe and Germany." Paper presented at "Daoism and the Contemporary World. An International Conference on Daoist Studies," sec. 2.1. Boston University, June 5-7, 2003. Available online at http://rels.queensu.ca/dao/papers.grasmuek.pdf.

[26] For more on the lasting effects of this problematic distinction, see the conclusion of this chapter. Most, if not all, specialists have now rejected this division, but it continues to persist among non-specialist academics and general audiences. Louis Komjathy suggests that "Any use of the terms 'philosophical Daoism' and 'religious Daoism'

about Daoism and the *Daode jing* in Europe, their adoption of this distinction and preference for ancient texts over contemporary practices long influenced both academic and popular reception.

The Figurists had entered China at the height of the Rites Controversy, an outgrowth of the accommodation strategy of the earliest Jesuit missionaries, centering on whether the ceremonies honoring Confucius and family ancestors were compatible with Christian doctrine. It had been difficult for Jesuits to gain access to China, and their position within China's borders was guaranteed by no treatises or colonial power. Due in part to this tenuous status, they adopted a careful strategy of "accommodating" European learning to Chinese culture and emphasizing the compatibility of Christianity and Confucianism.[27] When newly arrived missionaries of different Catholic orders contested this Jesuit tolerance at the end of the seventeenth century, a series of edicts and Papal bulls demanded the cessation of all forms of Confucian worship among Christian converts. Working with the Jesuits, the Qing emperor Kangxi (noted above as part of the Qing dynasty's turn away from Daoism) had attempted to explain and defend Confucian rituals to Pope Clement XI, and was offended by the latter's subsequent decision to prohibit them. The position of missionaries had already been weakened by a resurgence in orthodox Neo-Confucian beliefs among the literati, and they now lost the support of Kangxi and subsequent Qing Emperors. Missionaries suffered repeated persecution, and those not employed by the government in scientific pursuits were officially expelled in 1724. Although some continued their religious activities in secret, China did not officially allow missionary activity to resume until after the forced concessions following the Opium Wars of the mid-nineteenth century.[28]

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should be taken *ipso facto* as indicative of misunderstanding and inaccuracy with respect to Daoism" (*Guide for the Perplexed*, 5).

[27] Mungello, *Curious Land*, 14-17, 56-65. Cf. John W. O'Malley, *The Jesuits: A History from Ignatius to the Present* (Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield, 2014): 63-68.

[28] Cf. Kenneth Scott Latourette, *A History of Christian Missions in China* (New York: Macmillan, 1929), 131-156.

Section 3: The Founding of French Sinology

With limited missionary activity and restricted trade in China until the Opium Wars, knowledge about Chinese religions matured slowly in Europe. Based in the libraries initially stocked by Catholic missions and slowly increased by other travelers, the roots of the modern study of China are found in France towards the end of this period of limited interaction between China and Europe. In 1815, Jean Pierre Abel Rémusat (1788-1832) assumed the newly established Chair of Chinese Language and Literature at the Collége de France, becoming the first European professor of Sinology. In 1823, he published the first partial translation of the *Daode jing* in a modern European language: *Mémoire sur la vie et les ouvrages de Lao-Tseu, philosophe Chinois du VI. siècle avant notre ère, qui a professè les opinions communément attribuées à Pythagore, à Platon et à leurs disciples*.[29] As the full title indicates, Rémusat understood the text in relation to European philosophical discourse, and he emphasized connections to European traditions throughout his interpretation. His partial translation and commentary demonstrate clearly the attempt to fit the arriving Chinese materials into existing European theological, philosophical, and historical frameworks.

Although Legge records that Rémusat was unaware of the existence of the Latin version of the *Daode jing* in Britain,[30] his translation echoes many of the earlier Jesuit efforts and interests. He writes of the character *dao*, "Ce mot me semble ne pas pouvoir être bien traduit, si ce n'est par le mot *λόyos* dans le triple sens de souverain étre, de raison, et de parole."[31] His identification of *dao* as *Logos* reflects earlier Figurist attempts to locate Christian doctrine in the ancient Chinese texts. While Rémusat draws more explicit parallels to "le *λόyos* de Platon," his

[29] Rémusat, *Mémoire sur Lao-Tseu* (Paris: Imprimerie Royale, 1823).
[30] Legge, *Texts of Taoism*, 12.
[31] Rémusat, *Mémoire sur Lao-Tseu*, 24.

explanation of the term evokes Christian teachings and ensures the continued influence of this Bible-laden association.

Rémusat also provides new seemingly historical and philological grounds for Figurist impulses when he claims that the three concluding characters of the opening lines of chapter fourteen (*yi* 夷, *xi* 希, and *wei* 微; then romanized as I, Hi, and Weï) represent the essential articulated letters of the Hebrew Jehovah (for Rémusat: I, H, V). Jesuits had previously identified these lines as evidence for an awareness of the triune nature of God, and Rémusat goes beyond them in his early efforts at comparative philology.[32] Although the connection to Hebrew was explicitly discounted by many later translators and Sinologists, it continued to exert an influence on European readings of the *Daode jing*, most notably on the German translator Victor von Strauß (discussed below). In 1882 at least one English historian still referenced the idea, writing that Rémusat "has not only argued for some actual intercourse between philosophers of Eastern and Western Asia, but has also found in the supposed transcription of the Hebrew name 'indisputable traces of the route which the ideas we call Pythagorean and Platonic had pursued on their migration into China.'"[33] Far more likely, demonstrated here is not a connection of Chinese and Hebrew, but the reverberations of earlier Jesuit assertions about the *Daode jing* in the new, nascent contexts of comparative philology and comparative religions. Rémusat's

[32] In his rebuttal of Rémusat, Stanislas Julien references the works of Jesuit missionary Joseph Henri Marie de Prémare (1666-1736) and the summation of Jesuit opinion by Italian Sinologue Antonio Montucci (1762-1829): "L'objet principal du *Tao-te-king*…est d'établir une connaisance singulière d'un ÊTRE SUPRÊME EN TROIS PERSONNES. Beaucoup de passages parlent si clairement d'un Dieu trine, que quiconque aura lu ce livre ne pourra douter que le MYSTÈRE DE LA TRÈS-SAINTE-TRINITÉ n'ait été révélé aux Chinois plus de cinq siècles avant la venue de Jésus-Christ." Julien then cites Jesuit missionary Jean Joseph Marie Amiot (1718-1793) on the passage in question: "Celui qui est comme visible et ne peut être vu se nomme KHI (lisez I); celui qu'on ne peut entendre et qui ne parle pas aux oreilles se nomme HI; celui qui est comme sensible et qu'on ne peut toucher se nomme WEÏ," before wryly concluding that "M. Rémusat est allé plus loin que ce savant missionnaire." Stanislas Julien, *Le livre de la voie et de la vertu* (Paris: Imprimerie Royale, 1842), iv-v.

[33] Charles Hardwick, *Christ and Other Masters* (London: Macmillan, 1882), 315. See also *Legge, Sacred Texts*, 57-58.

echoing of Jesuit interpretations demonstrates their history of effects and ensured their continued influence. As Gadamer suggests, Rémusat both read the text from his own historical context and read it as it had come down to him, replete with the marks of previous understandings.

Almost twenty years later, the first full translation of the *Daode jing* into a modern European language appeared in French in 1842, authored by a student of Rémusat and the successor to his chair at the Collége de France, Stanislas Noël Julien (1799-1873). Its introduction begins with a review of Rémusat's interpretations and those of Catholic missionaries and amateur sinologues. Attempting to correct perceived errors in earlier understandings, it also evokes a wealth of Chinese commentaries with a thoroughness that remains remarkable to this day. Julien's translation was based on extensive philological study, contained detailed annotations, and was printed with a complete Chinese version of the text.[34] It was far more thorough and comprehensive than Rémusat's speculations, and reveals both Julien's impressive abilities and the rapid pace of development in European Sinology.

Library holdings were gradually increasing, and Julien was able to work from no less than eight Chinese texts, several of which contained multiple commentaries.[35] Of these, he adhered most closely to the commentary of Heshang gong (2nd c.), but consulted many others, including later interpretations—he noted, for example, that the collection of over sixty commentaries in the *Laozi yi* 老子翼 (printed in 1588 by Jiao Hong 焦竑) were "the most extensive and most important contribution to the understanding of Lâo-tze, which we yet possess."[36] Remarks on the commentaries appear in is introduction, and they are used throughout

[34] Stanislas Julien, *Lao-Tseu Tao-Te-King, Le livre de la voie et de la vertu; traduit en français, et publié avec le texte chinois et un commentaire prepétuel* (Paris: Imprimerie Royale, 1842).
[35] *Ibid*., xxxix-xlv.
[36] *Ibid*. Quoted in Legge, *Texts of Taoism*, xv. Julien relates that the edition of the *Laoziyi* he consulted was printed in 1588 by Jiao Hong (1541-1620).

the text in footnotes to each chapter. His attention to them is quite ordinary for an interpretation by a Chinese scholar, but is remarkable in Europe not only during his time, but even among works on the *Daode jing* down to the present. It is dramatically different than the narrow historicism that emerges by the end of the century in the work of British Sinologist Herbert Gilles, discussed below.

Through his use of Chinese commentaries, Julien participates in a rich traditionary *Daode jing* emerging from China, but his interpretation is also clearly influenced by the newly emerging traditions surrounding the text's reception in Europe and later America. If only to refute them, he devotes considerable attention to the ideas of early Jesuits and Rémusat. In his introduction, Julien uses Chinese commentaries to protest particularly strongly against many of Rémusat's earlier interpretations. Citing the commentary of Heshang gong, he argues against the "Hebraic theory" and concludes that "La première syllabe, I, signifie *dépourvu de couleur*; la seconde, HI, *dépourvu de son* ou *de voix*; la troisième, WEÏ, *dépourvu de corps*."[37] In addition, Julien was convinced that Laozi's *dao* was devoid of action, of thought, of judgment, and of intelligence. It should not be understood as "the Primordial Reason, or the Sublime Intelligence which created, and which governs the world," as Rémusat had claimed.[38] He notes that philosophies which reject (*condamnent*) religion and reason often use the word "nature" to designate a primary cause which is devoid of thought and intelligence. However, in his French text, he generally leaves *dao* untranslated, other than using *voie* (way) in the opening lines of the first chapter and in his title: *Le livre de la voie et de la vertu*. His interpretations of *dao* as "nature" and "way" were not universally accepted, as we shall see below, but they did exert an influence on the traditionary text and appear with increasing frequency in later translations.

[37] *Ibid*., vii.
[38] Rémusat *Lao-Tseu*. Quoted in Legge, *Taoism*, 13.

Ironically, Julien may have best ensured the lasting influence of his French translation by including Chinese characters with each chapter. This made a complete Chinese text available to the general public for the first time, and for half a century it was the most easily available Chinese version of the Daode jing in Europe and America. It allowed readers to check his and others' translations against their own knowledge of Chinese (rare at the time) and against the Chinese dictionaries that were becoming increasingly available.[39] The combination of the Chinese text and Chinese dictionaries helped lower the barrier for the production of new translations, which accelerated rapidly in the second-half of the nineteenth century. Importantly, for those who relied on Julien's Chinese text, it came not alone, but with his translation, notes, and commentary. Thus, the text Julien included allowed for easier access to a Chinese edition of the *Daode jing* and simultaneously ensured that his interpretation became part of its dissemination. Even those with independent access to Chinese editions would have been sure to read the translation of Europe's preeminent sinologist, and Julien's voice echoed loudly through nineteenth and early twentieth-century interpretations.

Along with his pioneering scholarship, Julien also perpetuated a problematic Orientalism with lasting effects on Sinology and the popular reception of Chinese materials. Norman Girardot notes this influential scholar was "supremely confident that China as an Oriental civilization could be fully understood from the sanctuary of his library in Paris."[40] Girardot connects this confidence to the "relentless domination of textuality" in Orientalism, a phrase he borrows from Philip Almond's *British Discovery of Buddhism*.[41] This well-recognized feature of Orientalism is perhaps less recognized as an academic relative of the similar aim of earlier

[39] Notable early Chinese-English dictionaries include those by Robert Morrison (1823), Walter Henry Medhurst (1842) and Samuel Wells Williams (1874).
[40] Girardot, *Victorian Translation*, 422.
[41] Philip Almond, *The British Discovery of Buddhism* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988).

missionaries to confine the value and truth of Asian cultures to their ancient texts rather than contemporary people and institutions. Girardot's conclusions about Orientalist scholars echo their missionary forbearers: "Exposure to the people of the village and streets, to the vernacular, and to the actual social institutions and practice of the living tradition was largely irrelevant, or even misleading, in the scholarly quest to understand the definitive and essential meaning of Oriental civilization."[42] Missionaries, academics, and other participants in the colonial enterprise all contributed to the development of strategies for undercutting the authority of contemporary Asian institutions and people by declaring an imperial authority over the "essential" nature of Asian cultures through the investigation of their historical artifacts, texts, and traditions.[43]

It is important to note, however, that in the case of Daoism, this exercise of imperial authority was not limited to European and American colonialists, but had also been exercised by Qing emperors and court officials. They too had dismissed the authority of contemporary Daoist institutions and asserted their own interpretations of ancient Daoist texts. Elite Confucian literati, or "Ruists" after the Chinese for a traditional Confucian scholar (*rushi* 儒士), introduced foreign travelers to their understandings of Daoism and the *Daode jing*, and commentaries that supported their views dominated the relevant documents transported back to Europe and consulted by scholars like Julien. Thus, many European scholars perpetuated and reinforced earlier notions that the *Daode jing* was the quintessential text of an original, "pure" Daoism that had declined into the corruption of contemporary popular practice. Although his concern is not directly with

[42] Girardot, *Victorian Translation*, 422.
[43] Foreshadowing academic developments in the study of religion at the close of the nineteenth century, Girardot observes the aims of comparative religions were "not really so very different from the Jesuitical unveiling of occult Christian allegories…it was mostly a matter that the hidden theological 'meanings' were only transposed by the 'science of comparison' onto a more universally 'impartial' or 'essential' frame of reference (Girardot, *Victorian Translation*, 321).

the history of effects pursued in this dissertation, Girardot provides a nice summary of this particular conjunction of Ruist, missionary, and academic interests:

> The power of this construct within sinological Orientalism was, first of all, related to the fact that it was so strongly reinforced by the elite commentarial tradition of the native Ruist scholars. Equally important was that this perspective could be assimilated (and sometimes unconsciously or surreptitiously) into the old biblical model of the Noachide dispersal and degeneration of ancient civilizations while maintaining its secular academic credibility by appealing to the documentary record of ancient texts and history.[44]

The initial arc of these attitudes towards Daoism and the *Daode jing* is sketched in the transmission from Confucian literati to Jesuit missionaries to French sinologists, but its lasting influence was ensured when it was reinforced by subsequent Protestant missionaries, early popularizers, and additional developments in the study of Chinese religions.

Section 4: Protestant Missionaries

The publication of Julien's translation coincides with the end of the first Opium War (1839-1842), when forced concessions began an era of unprecedented expansion of Western imperialist power in China.[45] As increasing numbers of foreigners gained access to China, European interest in all things Chinese steadily grew and translations of the *Daode jing* multiplied. Like the Jesuits before them, Protestant missionaries became important disseminators of knowledge about China, and their members produced influential translations of numerous Chinese texts. Among them, the Reverend John Chalmers (1825-1899) published the first

[44] *Ibid*., 423.

[45] The devastating economic, political, and military strife of the following decades, go far beyond the scope of this chapter, but it is important to note that foreign interest in China during this time was largely unsympathetic and far from benign. Among other things, while most translators of the *Daode jing* felt that they were engaged in a genuine attempt to understand an important part of Chinese culture, the frequently employed distinction between ancient Daoist thought and modern Daoist religion was appropriated to justify imperial policies towards a stagnate and degenerate China. See Clarke, *Tao of the West*, 44.

English translation of the *Daode jing* in 1868.[46] Although his translation appears over twenty years before that of James Legge, Chalmers inscribes his work to Legge "in affectionate acknowledgement of great obligation." The two men were natives of the same county in Scotland and both went to China under the auspices of the London Missionary Society. Chalmers served under Legge as the superintendent of the Hong Kong Mission Press from 1852-1858 and was a missionary to Canton from 1859-1879, before heading the Hong Kong mission until his death in 1899.

Chalmers' first translation of the *Daode jing* in English prefigures later interpretations in at least four ways. The first is in the propagation of the (mistaken) idea that the text is not only central to Daoism but also superior to its contemporary practice. Chalmers writes:

> As a matter of fact, Lau-tsze stands the acknowledged head of the Tauist sect; and his followers have scarcely added anything valuable to what he left them in this little book. Speculation there has been, and wild dreaming—superstition and blasphemy too in abundance; but scarcely aught that is worth the knowing.[47]

Introduced to European audiences by Jesuit missionaries, with minimal modifications, this view has conditioned the history of popular reception down to the present.

In considering how to translate *dao*, Chalmers demonstrates a second connection between previous and subsequent receptions of the *Daode jing* in Europe and America: explicit consideration of the work's relationship to Christian thought, though not with as firm a conclusion as some of his predecessors. On the eleventh page of his introduction, Chalmers discusses the difficulties surrounding the word *dao* and his reasons for not translating it in his text. He raises and dismisses three possibilities. First is "the Way," which he feels would come nearest to the original etymology of the character, but is too "materialistic." Second is "Reason,"

[46] John Chalmers, *The Speculation on Metaphysics, Polity and Morality of "The Old Philosopher" Lao-tsze*. (London: Trubner, 1868).
[47] *Ibid*., viii.

which "seems to be more like a quality or attribute of some conscious being than *Tau* is." Third is "'the Word,' in the sense of the Logos," but for Chalmers, "this would be settling the question which I wish to leave open, viz.—what amount of resemblance there is between the Logos of the New Testament and this *Tau*, which is its nearest representative in Chinese."[48] While the conclusion of this statement makes his bias clear—wherein the Figurist impulse and Rémusat's identification of the *dao* and the *logos* remain evident—Chalmers writes that he would like to "leave Lau-tsze to be judged by his English readers."[49]

The final way in which this first English translation prefigures those that will come after is in his acknowledgement of the use of a previous translation in the production of his own: that of Julien. Characteristically caustic, Herbert Giles will later write "Now I make Mr. Chalmers' version to be more or less a verbatim rendering of the French, with little original touches here and there, about seven-tenths of which are unsuccessful."[50] This is too harsh. Chalmers does appear to follow Julien at many points, but his text is rarely a verbatim translation from the French, and of his frequent departures from his predecessor it is unclear which would appear to Giles as unsuccessful. Compare, for example, the opening of chapter two:

Julien (1842)	Chapter 2	Chalmers (1868)
Dans le monde, lorsque tous les hommes ont su apprécier la beauté (*morale*), alors la laideur (du vice) *a paru*.	天下皆知美之為美斯惡已	When in the world beauty is recognized to be beautiful, straightway there is ugliness.
Lorsque tous les hommes ont su apprécier le bien, alors le mal *a paru*.	皆知善之為善斯不善已	When in the world goodness is recognized to be good, straight way there is evil.

[48] *Ibid*., xi.
[49] *Ibid*., xix.
[50] Herbert A. Giles, "The Remains of Lao Tzu Retranslated," *The China Review* 14 (1885/86): 231-81, 233

Julien stays closer to the Chinese when he opens the first line with “Dans le monde” (天下) and omits this in the second line, while Chalmers opens both with “When in the world.” Julien also includes “tous les hommes” (皆), while Chalmers does not translate this character. However, Chalmers’ “beauty is recognized to be beautiful” is closer to the Chinese 知美之為美 than Julien’s “ont su apprécier la beauté” and Julien’s parenthetical suggestion “(*morale*)” is added not because of a directly corresponding Chinese character, but because of the interpretation he arrives at by translating 恶 in the double sense of “la laideur (du vice)” rather than Chalmers’ “ugliness.” The character 惡 often does mean “evil,” and is an antonym for 善 (good). However, because the text here opposes 善 (good) and 不善 (not good) in the second line and 美 (beautiful) and 惡 in the first line, the character 惡 is generally taken by translators in this context to mean “ugly” or “ugliness” without specifying an explicitly moral dimension as Julien has done. Compare these later examples:

> All in the world know the beauty of the beautiful, and in doing this they have (the idea of) what ugliness is (Legge 1891).
>
> When in the world all understand beauty to be beauty, then only ugliness appears (Carus 1898).
>
> It is because everyone under Heaven recognizes beauty as beauty, that the idea of ugliness exists (Waley 1934).
>
> The whole world recognizes the beautiful as the beautiful, yet this is only the ugly (Lau 1963).
>
> Under heaven all can see beauty as beauty only because there is ugliness (Feng, English, and Lippe 1972).

For his part, when Herbert Giles writes his translation, he is concerned with separating the historical text from its later accretions—a historicist impulse that will be discussed in greater detail below. Because the first of these two lines does not appear along with the second in a

section of the *Huainanzi* 淮南子 (2nd c. BCE) and because Giles finds it "palpably weak in itself," he pronounces that "we may safely consign it without further ado to the region of pious fraud." He translates only the second line, which he avers "was simply this: *All the world knows that the goodness of doing good is not (real) goodness*." The reading of 善之為善 as "the goodness of doing good" rather than "the good as the good" is plausible, but it is Giles here, and not Chalmers who makes a departure from previous readings that most would regard as "unsuccessful." It is, in any case, not followed in subsequent translations.

Giles is correct, however that Chalmers' relied on Julien's text when determining his own translation, and Chalmers is happy to admit this in his introduction:

> The French translation by M. Julien has been very helpful to me, and I have much pleasure in acknowledging my obligations to its author, whose more elaborate work I have no wish or intention to supersede by this attempt to put the thoughts of Lau-tsze into a readable English dress.[51]

Thus begins both ongoing acknowledgments of the use of previous translations in the production of new ones and a final prefiguring of later Anglophone translations: the ongoing efforts to put the *Daode jing*, "into a readable English dress." Here, this claim may assert nothing more than his is the first translation into English. Subsequent evocations of "readable English," however, make clear that this declaration is often linked to either a domesticating hermeneutic that minimizes historical distance by assimilating the text to the receiving culture's "positions of intelligibility," or a populist hermeneutic with roots in lay Bible reading where simple and "common sense" meanings are as prized in the interpretation of Christian scripture as they come to be in translations of the *Daode jing*.[52]

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[51] Chalmers, *Speculation*, xix.
[52] See discussions of Lawrence Venuti, Nathan Hatch, and David Hall in chapter four.

Between Chalmers' first English translation in 1868 and that of his fellow Congregationalist missionary and friend James Legge in 1891, several influential translations were published. However, because of their similarities in background and profession, Legge's text will addressed here, before returning to the intervening translations below. Legge (1815-1897) was a missionary to China for just over three decades, before serving as the first professor of Chinese at Oxford from 1876-1897. In his detailed study of Legge as a "Victorian translator," Norman Girardot locates this "hyphenated missionary-scholar" between "an old theological hermeneutics of trust and a more thoroughly suspicious, destructive, and modern method of shifting symbolic sands."[53] Legge's hermeneutics are perhaps more "historical" than "scriptural" in his Romantic attempts to recover the thoughts of Laozi, but he is not as skeptical of traditional authorities and textual integrity as later generations of sinologists. He liberally consulted commentaries throughout the Chinese tradition, though always in an effort to bring his mind "*en rapport"* with that of the originary Chinese author. Commenting on the difficulty of some passages, Legge makes his Romantic hermeneutics clear: "many passages of the book seem to be obscure, till a fuller sympathy with the writer is established in the mind of the student."[54] To achieve this, he would copy the original text multiple times and produce several translations before settling on a final version. He ultimately published translations of over twenty Chinese texts and an even greater number of articles on Chinese topics between 1841 and 1895.[55]

In 1891, his version of the *Daode jing* was included in the thirty-ninth volume of Max Müller's widely read *Sacred Books of the East,* to which Legge also contributed several other

[53] Norman J. Girardot, *The Victorian Translation of China: James Legge's Oriental Pilgrimage* (Berkley: Univ. of California Press, 2002) 515.
[54] James Legge, "A Critical Notice of 'The Remains of Lao Tsze, Retranslated'" *China Review* 16 (1887/88): 195-214.
[55] For a complete listing of these titles see Girardot, *Victorian Translation*, Appendix C.

titles.[56] For his translation, Legge notes that he consulted six primary sources, among them the text and commentaries of Heshang gong, Wang Bi, and Wu Cheng 吳澄 (1249-1333).[57] In his introduction, Legge also provides a synopsis of ten previous translations of the *Daode jing* into European languages, with attention to each translator's interpretation of *dao*. For his part, Legge concludes that the *dao* "is a phenomenon; not a positive being, but a mode of being."[58] In a general treatment the *Daode jing* published earlier, Legge had also referred to the *dao* as a "method or style of action," and concluded: "if Methodism and Methodist had not been so well appropriated in English, I should have recommended their employment for Tâoism and Tâoist."[59] These speculations aside, like several of his contemporaries, in his final text he chose to leave *dao* untranslated.

While Legge avoids any identification between *dao* and God, writing that "the old Tâoists had no idea of a personal God,"[60] he does highlight ideas ecumenical to Christian doctrine in his notes and introduction, and he had previously identified his bias as that of a Christian engaged in an "endeavour to fulfil the counsel of Paul, to 'prove all things and hold fast that which is good."[61] In his translation's description of "The Tâo and its characteristics" he comes to the congenial conclusion that what ties together the "Tâoistic system" of the *Daode jing*, "for men individually and for the administration of government," is the value of humility. While not linking this directly to Christian teachings, he does make a point of drawing readers'

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[56] James Legge, *The Texts of Tâoism* in: *The Sacred Books of the East*, vol. 39 (London: Oxford University Press, 1891).
[57] Legge, *Taoism*, xiv-xviii. On the last text and author, Legge comments that "this has been of the highest service to me. Wû *Kh*ang was the greatest of the Yüan scholars" (*Taoism*, xvii).
[58] Legge, *Taoism*, 15.
[59] Legge, *The Religions of China: Confucianism and Tâoism Described and Compared with Christianity* (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1880), 220.
[60] Legge, *Taoism*, 18.
[61] Legge, *Religions of China*, 243.

attention to the sixty-third chapter where he translates 抱怨以德 as "recompense injury with kindness" and avers, "Here is the grand Christian precept...I have been surprised to find what little reference to it I have met with in the course of my Chinese reading...There, however, it is in the Tâo Teh *K*ing. The fruit of it has yet to be developed."[62] In his use of "recompense," Legge suggests Romans 12:17-21 of the King James Bible: "Recompense to no man evil for evil…but overcome evil with good." However, in the text of Romans 12 he supplies in his introduction for comparison, Legge chooses to follow the recently released English Revised Version: "Render to no man evil for evil..."[63] Two points can be made here: firstly, that Legge establishes an explicit parallel between the *Daode jing* and Christian scripture and, secondly, that towards the end of the nineteenth century the effects of changing approaches to Christian scripture were becoming increasingly visible in translations of the *Daode jing* and Bible alike.[64]

In relation to the *Daode jing*, both points are born out in the debate between Legge and Herbert Giles, what one later sinologist dubbed the "grand Taoist war."[65] In this debate, Norman Girardot sees an important transition:

> A passage from a semiexegetical or commentarial mode of an idealistically inclined comparativism or "hermeneutics of trust"…to a more fully historiographical, pluralistic, analytical, fragmented, academic, scientistic, rationalistic, naturalistic, polygenetic, noncomparative, relativistic, and secularly

[62] Legge, *Taoism*, 31. For these lines, Chalmers has a nearly identical "recompense injury with virtue (kindness)," and Julien adopts a similar "Il venge ses injures par des bienfaits." The Chinese text does not have a clear subject here, and the biggest difference between the three translators is in their solutions to this aporia. For Julien, the lines refer to "le sage" or "le Saint," for Chalmers, they are directed to the reader, and for Legge, they indicate "the way of the Tao." Julien and Legge both leave their chapters untitled, but Chalmers marks the significance of the passage by supplying the title: "*The beginning of Grace*."

[63] *Ibid*.

[64] On related developments in New Testament textual criticism, see Eldon Epp, "Critical editions and the development of text-critical methods, part 2: from Lachmann (1831) to the present," in John Riches, ed., *The New Cambridge History of the Bible: From 1750 to the Present***,** Volume IV (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015), 13-48. For a rejection of received meaning in addition to the rejection of the *textus receptus*, see Wayne A. Meeks, "The History of Religions School" in the same volume, 127-138.

[65] Edward Harper Parker (1849-1926) in the *Dublin Review* 133 (1903). Norman Girardot references this quotation, and has described this contest in detail in his work on Legge, and only the most salient points will be repeated here. See Girardot, *Victorian Translations*, 430-435.

> irreverent "hermeneutics of suspicion" concerning ancient civilizations, texts, and authors.[66]

As scholars like Giles increasingly questioned the integrity of received texts and traditional interpretations, Legge's approach lost its academic credibility and, despite his erudition and training, appeared increasingly "spiritual" against the emerging "historical" mode. In his reply to Giles' aggressive critique of the received *Daode jing* (see section seven below), Legge, with a telling appeal to the four Gospels, argues that the appearance of only portions of an otherwise unverifiable text even several centuries later should strengthen rather than weaken the case for its authenticity. He writes that if excerpts from most sections of the Gospel of Mark were found in "two Greek volumes, by different authors of our 3rd and 4th centuries," the results for "all critical students of the New Testament…would be to confirm their faith in the whole of the old Gospel, and not destroy it."[67] In his rejoinder, Giles rebukes Legge for this "unhappy" parallel, writing: "The books of the New Testament can be traced back to a certain point, and to a certain point only,—the second century after Christ. There is not one particle of evidence, save faith, that they were in existence until 120 years after the Crucifixion."[68] Evident here and in the further discussion of Giles below, these scholars' approaches to the *Daode jing* were closely linked to their positions on the Christian Bible, and therefore heavily influenced by developments in both "higher" (meaning) and "lower" (textual) criticisms.[69]

For Legge, the *Daode jing* was best understood in relation to his Christian faith, but was itself enough of a scripture that should be treated with a respect bordering on reverence and

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[66] *Ibid*., 430.
[67] Legge, "A Critical Notice of 'The Remains of Lao Tze, Retranslated,' by Mr. Herbert A. Giles," *The China Review* 16:4 (1888): 195-214, 196.
[68] Giles, "Dr. Legge's Critical Notice of the Remains of Lao Tzu." *The China Review* 16:4 (1888): 238-41, 239.
[69] For an overview of many of these developments, see John Riches, ed., *The New Cambridge History of the Bible: From 1750 to the Present***,** Volume IV (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015), particularly the contributions of Eldon Epp on text-critical methods (13-48), and Wayne Meeks on the History of Religions school (127-138).

approached with what Girardot characterizes as a "hermeneutics of trust." As much as Legge participated in Romantic attempts to recover the mind of the author, and interpreted through a missionary lens, he trusted the integrity of the text and read it as a potential source of relevant truths, though always subordinate to those of the Bible. For Giles, neither the *textus receptus* nor traditional interpretations of the Bible or the *Daode jing* were to be trusted, and scholars, including translators, must focus on the texts' origins and earliest interpretations to uncover their true forms and meanings.

In the decades surrounding the debate between Legge and Giles that spurred the professionalization of British sinology, four translations were published that are the best candidates for a nineteenth century application of the label "popular." Their authors do not share the skepticism or historicist interests of Giles, but neither do they share the missionary faith of Chalmers and Legge. Rather, we will see that they take a general notion of scripture rooted in the Christian Bible, and generally undisturbed by critical developments in biblical studies, and extend it to the *Daode jing* without subordinating it Christian teachings. While the Bible still exerted a strong normative force over their ideas of "scripture," and Christianity over their ideas about religion, for these translators, and like-minded readers, the Bible was increasingly one scripture among a multitude and Christianity one religion among many. In this transition, the *Daode jing* became a possible scripture not for the demonstration of Christian truths, but in its own right, and not just for those in China, but also for those in Europe and America.

Section 5: Early Popular Translators

The first translation into German was published in 1870 by Friedrich Viktor von Strauß (1809-1899) and is perhaps the first "popular" version of the *Daode jing* in a European language. It exerted a strong influence among German speakers, and remains in print today. Strauß was a

German diplomat and politician before turning to writing in his later years. He became a poet, playwright, and novelist, occupations which perhaps contributed to the "readability" of his translation, which won him praise for its "literary" style.[70] The editors of the *China Review* conclude that "thanks to his classical taste and extensive reading, he has succeeded in doing what few others could have done: he has made Lao-tze's aphorisms readable, and popularised his speculations."[71] For perhaps the same reason, the philologist Georg von der Gabelentz lauds, "it seems that the great Chinese philosopher has found in Victor von Strauss his first congenial expositor."[72] In addition to "readability," "congeniality" became a feature of many English translations that have popularized the *Daode jing*. Both are analyzed further in chapter four in relation to Witter Bynner and the populist hermeneutic that has come to dominate American translations.

As with many later popularizers, Strauß's scholarship was not as universally acclaimed as his literary skills. While he reportedly worked from a Chinese text (likely that of Julien) and had read both the translations of Julien and Chalmers, he also revived Rémusat's argument for the presence of Jehovah in the fourteenth chapter. Strauß supports this hypothesis with the growing historical evidence for an ancient Jewish community in Kaifeng, though he admits that the dates for this community are unclear.[73] Beyond expressing skepticism over his arguments for the presence of Jehovah, the Holy Trinity, and other references to the Old Testament in the Chinese text, the editors of *The China Review* are most concerned that Strauss "translates the, strictly

[70] Viktor von Strauß, *Lao-Tse's Tao Te King* (Leipzig: Fleischer, 1870). Strauß added his wife's maiden name to his own in1872 and thereafter published as Strauß und Torney.
[71] *China Review* 1 (1872/73), 59.
[72] Georg von der Gabelentz, "The Life and Teachings of Lao-Tse," *China Review* 17 (1888/89), 198.
[73] *China Review* 1 (1872/73), 59. For more information on this Jewish community in Kaifeng, see Michael Loewe, "The Jewish Presence in Imperial China," *Jewish Historical Studies* 30 (1988): 1-20. There is little evidence of such a community in China before the eighth century CE, about one thousand years after the *Daode jing* had been in circulation.

speaking, untranslatable term Tao by 'God.'"[74] To be fair, this translation is only suggested in his notes, and he leaves "Taò" untranslated throughout his text. However, Strauß felt that the religious development of the Chinese people had left their language without "an appellative term for the Supreme Being," and that "if they wished to give to such a Being a proper name, they would have to describe God either as a person, or as a Supreme Lord or in a more abstract way, and for the latter purpose the name Tao would be especially appropriate."[75]

His translation further suggests a growing identification of the *Daode jing* with European mysticism, which contributed to later translations published by the Theosophical Society (founded 1875).[76] *The China Review* stresses that Strauß "understands the Chinese sage to be an essentially German theosophist and mystic, and frequently compares him with Eckhart, Boehme and other philosophic dreamers."[77] While his translation predates the founding of the Theosophical Society by five years, Strauß does note what he sees as connections to diffuse "theosophical" currents in European mysticism and esotericism. When he translates the references to the "Valley Spirit" (*gushen* 谷神) in chapter six, he explicitly connects it to "okzidentalische theosophische Spekulation als Weisheit, Idee oder Magia."[78]

With Strauß, then, we find the first expression of key markers of "popular" translation: praise for its readability and congenial exposition, as well as criticism for its emphasis on connections to European thought and lack of scholarly rigor. As with many popular translations to come, it was also well received, widely read, and remains the "quintessential German

[74] *China Review* 1 (1872/73), 59.
[75] Gabelentz provides this summary of Strauss' argument (Gabelentz, "Life and Teachings," 192).
[76] The Theosophical Society is discussed further below and in the next chapter.
[77] *China Review* 1 (1872/73), 59.
[78] Strauß, notes on chapter 6.

translation" in the opinion of German bibliographer Knut Walf.[79] Just as the praise reveals key expectations of popular translation, the criticisms disclose developing sinological demands. Whereas explicit comparisons to Christianity and classical philosophy had been the norm in earlier generations, they were beginning to be seen as unprofessional and recognized as likely misrepresenting ancient Chinese understanding of the text. The goal of academic translators was increasingly more to *recover* than to *compare*, and the distance between what Waley and LaFargue would come to call the "historical" and the "scriptural" was becoming increasingly visible.

As the *Daode jing* began to circulate in Europe and America, in French, English, and German translations, it increasingly intersected with other traditions both hostile and friendly to foreign texts. Of the latter, Theosophy was particularly interested in Asian religions, and the Theosophical Society published two additional popular translations before the end of the 19th century. The first, in 1894, was *The Book of the Path of Virtue* by Walter Gorn Old (1864-1929).[80] Old, who also went by "Sepharial" after an angel in the apocryphal Book of Enoch, was an English journalist and astrologer with a strong interest in mysticism and the occult. He was a close companion of Madame Blavatsky, and in 1889 became a founding member of the Theosophical Society in Britain. Although they focused primarily on Indian thought, the society believed that universal concepts of God, nature, and humanity could be found in the teachings of all religions.[81] Approaching texts from this perspective, they advocated for the study of comparative religion and philosophy with an emphasis on mystical experience and esoteric doctrines.

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[79] Knut Walf, *Westliche Taoismus-Bibliographie*.
[80] Walter Gorn Old, *The Book of the Path of Virtue* (Madras: Theosophical Publishing Society, 1894).
[81] As will be explored in greater depth in the next chapter on Paul Carus, the idea that the *Daode jing* contains universal and timeless teachings becomes an increasingly explicit feature of popular translations in America.

The second translation from a member of the Theosophical Society was published in 1897 by Franz Hartmann (1838-1912).[82] Hartmann, a German, had joined the society while traveling in America. He then went to India for several years when the society moved its international headquarters to Madras, where it is still located today. After his return home, he founded the German Theosophical Society in 1896 and soon published *Theosophie in China. Betrachtungen über das Tao-Teh-King*.[83] This may be the first translation produced without the aid of a Chinese text: despite the claim on the title page, "Aus dem Chinesischen des Lao-tze übersetzt von Dr. Franz Hartmann," it appears to be a more-or-less direct German translation of Walter Gorn Old's English text. Hartmann's version is notable, however, for one significant departure from Old: he translates *dao* as "Gott" (God) throughout.

Published between the two theosophical translations of Old and Hartmann, the 1895 popular work of George Gardiner Alexander (1821-1897) is the first English version of the *Daode jing* to consistently employ "God" for *dao*.[84] Like Strauß, from whom he quotes a long passage on the nature of translating Chinese, Alexander substituted "a free rendering, approaching in many cases to a paraphrase, for a close literal translation."[85] He found the weight of evidence against the "ingenious theories" suggested by Rémusat and others for the presence of Jehovah in the fourteenth chapter, but he remained convinced that Laozi was a "Chinese 'Seeker after God.'"[86] Furthermore, in Alexander's opinion the use of *dao* supports his assertion:

> It impossible to deny that the single word by which it could be best expressed in our own language would be God. Amongst many other meanings it has that of 'a path,' 'a way'—therefore inferentially, *the* Path, *the* Way—of, to, and from, God,

[82] Franz Hartmann, *Theosophie in China. Betrachtungen über das Tao-Teh-King* (Leipzig: Fleischer, 1897).
[83] *Ibid*.
[84] G.G. Alexander, *Lao-tsze: The Great Thinker with A Translation of His Thoughts on the Nature and Manifestation of God* (London: Trubner, 1895).
[85] G.G. Alexander, *Confucius, The Great Teacher* (London: Trubner, 1890), ix.
[86] *Ibid*., 307.

> and so, by a natural substitution with which our language is familiar, it is employed metaphorically, by Laou-tsze, for God.[87]

In his chapters, Alexander translates Dao as "God" and "Divine Intelligence" and adds subjects like "First Cause," "Perfect Reason," or most often "He," when the Chinese lacks a subject or could be rendered as "it."[88]

In their connections to earlier missionary efforts to identify traces of Christian revelation, popular translations at the end of the nineteenth century increasingly mark and contribute to the emergence of the *Daode jing* as a potentially relevant "scripture" for Europeans and Americans. This shift arises from the implicit influences of Christian frameworks and hermeneutics, the explicit use of Christian terminology, and the gradual repositioning of Christianity as one religion among many and the Bible as one scripture among several. Interestingly, missionaries and some early academics had attempted to find indications of monotheism in ancient China, but had refrained from a direct identification of the *dao* as God. Meanwhile, in their popular translations, more liberal spiritualists were the first to promote a direct correspondence between the *dao* and a more cosmopolitan conception of God present in, but not exclusively defined by, the Christian Bible.

Section 6: An Outlier

In 1881, Frederic Henry Balfour (1846-1909), a British newspaper correspondent in China, published a unique "religious" interpretation of the *Daode jing* that he felt rejected the Christian biases of popular and missionary works as well as the Confucian biases of scholarly

[87] *Ibid*., 306-307.
[88] *Ibid*., 93-96.

interpretations.[89] In previous efforts, Balfour finds a common fault: "One prime defect lies at the root of every translation that has been published hitherto; and this is, that not one seems to have been based solely and entirely on commentaries furnished by members of the Taoist school."[90] While Julien and later Legge consulted numerous commentaries, many of them were authored by Confucian literati rather than Daoist practitioners. Balfour shared a generally negative opinion of contemporary Daoist practices with many of his day, but he also held the unusual opinion that "the canons of Taoism proper are still open to us, and they are deserving of careful study."[91] He saw most of the commentaries on which other scholars had relied as overly influenced by the Confucian literati (儒家 *rujia*), writing that "It is as a grammarian rather than as a philosopher that a member of the Ju-chia [*rujia*] deals with the Tao Te Ching; he gives the sense of a passage according to the syntactical construction rather than according to the genius of the philosophy itself."[92] For these reasons, Balfour chose to rely entirely on a commentary he felt captured an authentically Daoist interpretation—even when its interpretations seemed "far-fetched and obscure" for passages that in other commentaries and translations appeared to have "plain, clear, unmistakable meaning."[93] Balfour offers his results with confidence because he was "under the guidance of a disciple, and not a critic, of the Master."[94]

While Balfour's logic seems sound, his choice of "master" may appear less so. He writes that his version is based "solely upon the commentaries of Lü Ch'un-yang, commonly called Lü Tsu, the well-known Taoist patriarch of the eighth century of our era; and his guidance I have

[89] F. Henry Balfour, *Taoist Texts, Ethical, Political and Speculative* (London: Trübner; Shanghai: Kelly and Walsh, 1884).
[90] *Ibid*., 1.
[91] *Ibid*., vi.
[92] *Ibid*., 1.
[93] *Ibid*., 2.
[94] *Ibid*.

followed throughout."[95] Lu chunyang 呂純陽 or Luzu 呂祖 is perhaps best known by another name, Lu Dongbin 呂洞賓, as a legendary figure in Chinese popular religion with little evidence for his historical existence. He is celebrated as one of the famous Eight Immortals (*baxian* 八仙) and considered a patriarch of most of the internal alchemy (*neidan* 內丹) schools, after being canonized in the late 13th century by the Quanzhen 全真 order.[96] He is undoubtedly an important figure in Daoism, but very unlikely to be the author of the text Balfour consulted. Moreover, while *Daode jing* commentaries attributed to Lu Chunyang are in circulation, they are not part of the Ming *Daozang* (Daoist Canon) discussed above. If Balfour was interested in an authoritative Daoist interpretation of the *Daode jing*, there were perhaps better potential sources.

However, recall from the first section of this chapter that the Ming *Daozang* existed in only a few copies during Balfour's time in China, and it is impossible to know if he had ever seen or heard of another Daoist interpretation of the text. The preferences of the literati during the Qing Dynasty meant that more Confucian-friendly interpretations of the *Daode jing* were far more likely to be in circulation. Rejecting these, Balfour did succeed in transmitting a different and arguably more Daoist, if unorthodox, interpretation of the text associated with a popular, if legendary, Daoist figure. In this way he provided access to an aspect of the traditionary *Daode jing* in China that had been previously ignored—and continues to be ignored today. Despite their continued circulation, the commentaries associated with Lu Chunyang/Lu Dongbin have received no further scholarly attention in Europe or America.[97] As observed in the first chapter,

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[95] *Ibid*.
[96] Schipper and Verellen, *The Taoist Canon* vol. 3, 1269. For more on Quanzhen Daoism, including Lu Dongbin, see Louis Komjathy *Cultivating Perfection: Mysticism and Self-transformation in Early Quanzhen Daoism* (Boston: Brill, 2007).
[97] On the figure of Lu Chunyang, but not the commentary associated with him, see Paul R. Katz, *Images of the Immortal: The Cult of Lu Dongbin at the Palace of Eternal Joy* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 1999).

European and American academics who take note of Chinese commentaries on the *Daode jing* generally focus on a small selection of early texts most relevant to the "philosophical" interpretations long preferred by missionaries, academics, and Chinese literati. These texts and a small selection of others that have been studied in relation to the emergence of Daoism as an organized religion maintain an elite association perhaps lacking in the more popular commentary Balfour consulted, and the more popular receptions of the *Daode jing* in China and abroad continue to be under-acknowledged and under-studied.

Section 7: The Birth of British Sinology

To the point, Balfour's source is derided as "spurious" and "ridiculous" by Herbert Allen Giles (1845-1935) in the introduction to his then unique and controversial treatment of the *Daode jing*.[98] On the text used by Balfour, Giles opines:

> That this work explains the *Tao Tê Ching* in a sense different from the accepted explanations, is beyond all doubt; but this result is achieved at a sacrifice not only of grammar or logic, but also of whatever else would make the *Tao Tê Ching* valuable in the eyes of a sane public.[99]

Giles distrusted the esoteric and obscure not only in commentaries, but in the received text of the *Daode jing* as well. While working in the China Consular Service (1867-93), before serving as Professor of Chinese at Cambridge (1897-1932), he published an 1885 article advancing an argument unprecedented in the European study of the *Daode jing*: while he accepted that Laozi was a historical figure, he mistrusted the authenticity of the text Laozi is said to have authored. For Giles, "The work in question is beyond all doubt a forgery. It contains indeed much that Lao Tzu did say, but more that he did not."[100]

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[98] Giles, "Remains of Lao Tzu," 231-280.
[99] *Ibid*., 234.
[100] *Ibid*., 235.

Giles contrasted the received text of the *Daode jing* with what he believed were genuine quotations from Laozi found in other ancient works, primarily the *Hanfeizi* 韓非子 (3rd c. BCE) and *Huainanzi* 淮南子 (2nd c. BCE), whose authenticity he did not doubt.[101] He eliminated all portions of the *Daode jing* that were not directly ascribed to Laozi in these works, as well as any quotations that appeared to Giles to have come from earlier identifiable sources. This resulted in the jettison of the large majority of the text—sections that he regarded as "padding" inserted by a third century CE compiler of Laozi's sayings.[102] They are often obscure passages, and without the explanations of the *Hanfeizi* or *Huainanzi*, Giles variously referred to them as "beneath contempt," "absurd," "gibberish," or "rigmarole." He translated the remainder of the *Daode jing*, but uses the bulk of his text to contrast and generally disparage the translations of his predecessors. His work is an aggressive polemic, and he seemed to enjoy the lively debate that followed its initial publication.[103]

Giles' approach demonstrates a shift towards Girardot's "hermeneutics of suspicion" that grew out of developments in Biblical criticism, particularly German higher criticism, and increasingly came to dominant academic sinology.[104] The mistrust of received texts and traditional interpretations led to increasingly historiographic and analytical treatments of the *Daode jing*. In the last translation of the nineteenth century, T.W. Kingsmill (1837-1910) goes a

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[101] For a roughly contemporary parallel in the study of Christianity, see Albert Schweitzer, *Von Reimarus zu Wrede: eine Geschichte der Leben-Jesu-Forschung* (Tübingen: J.C.B. Mohr, 1906). Translated by William Montgomery, *The Quest for the Historical Jesus* (London: Adam and Charles Black: 1910).

[102] The *Mawangdui* manuscript and other archeological discoveries push the date of the text back almost five centuries before Giles' estimate. However, his skepticism was not entirely ill-founded. The *Daode jing* is now considered by most scholars to be a collection of ancient sayings assembled into its present form around 200 BCE.

[103] There are numerous back-and-forth articles in sinological journals of the time (notably *The China Review* articles discussed in section four of this chapter). Karl-Heinz Pohl notes that Giles' work also had a great impact in German-speaking countries with a selection in German published by Martin Buber in 1910." Karl-Heinz Pohl, "Play thing of the Times: Critical Review of the Reception of Daoism in the West," *Journal of Chinese Philosophy* 30 (September/December 2003): 469-486, 471.

[104] See end of section four in this chapter.

step beyond Giles by doubting that Laozi was ever a historical figure.[105] In his preface, Kingsmill argues that "the form and the doctrines" of the *Daode jing* are "essentially Indian," and the work is a failed attempt to unite the various sayings of an "apocryphal Laotsze" in imitation of recently introduced Buddhist sutras.[106] Kingsmill also makes explicit a critique that underlies Giles' deletion of much of the "unverified" text: these sections of "padding" are by a "comparatively feeble writer," are often "incapable of being literally translated," and, most revealingly, "in all cases lack the true ring of the undoubted classics."[107] Skepticism about the existence of a historical Laozi and about the correspondence of the received text to an original text are widespread in Sinology today, and, according to available evidence, historically well founded. While some scholars do hold out hope for "traditional authorship," the more significant loss caused by this skepticism towards tradition is not the questioning of the text's earliest form and authorship, but rather the turn away from and neglect of traditional interpretations of the *Daode jing* in favor of the historicist investigations that such questioning has inspired. To better understand this shift, and to locate it in its own historical context, a closer look at Herbert Giles is required.

H. A. Giles was a widely read and respected Sinologist during his time, but rarely recalled today. In a 1943 survey of British "Orientalists," A. J. Arberry writes that "perhaps the most famous name in the history of British sinology is that of Giles."[108] Lionel Giles (1875-1958), is given brief mention as a scholar, a translator, and the Keeper of the Department of Oriental Books and Manuscripts in the British Museum. However, it is his father, Herbert Allen, who is given attention equal to that received by James Legge, Robert Morrison, and Walter

[105] T.W. Kingsmill, "The Taoteh King" *China Review* 24 (1899/1900): 147-155, 185-196.
[106] *Ibid*., 147-148.
[107] *Ibid*., 195.
[108] Arthur J. Arberry, *British orientalists* (London: Wm. Collins, 1943), 46.

Medhurst. He is rightfully located among the founding figures of British sinology: in addition to nearly thirty years in the Consular Service and more than thirty years as Professor of Chinese at the University of Cambridge, he received the Triennial gold medal of the Royal Asiatic Society in 1922 and was twice awarded the Prix St. Julien by the French Academy, of which he was made a member in 1924.

Despite his accomplishments, there is very little secondary scholarship on Giles, his works, or his influence in the field. Apart from a few obituaries, ancillary references, and brief mentions in general surveys, only three articles attend to him in any significant fashion.[109] In spite of his accomplishments and standing among early scholars of China, these articles reveal that Giles was later only vaguely remembered as a decent translator and "amateur" academic. In his day, however, Giles was no amateur. He demanded rigorous attention to detail, believed that only through vigorous critique would the field of Sinology mature, and was infamous for his vitriolic attacks on weak scholarship. He insisted that "the common object of Sinologues should be accuracy of translation. There should be no respect of persons."[110] Reputation, seniority, and other marks of traditional authority must make way for new definitions of "accuracy"—a demand shared by later generations of China scholars that marked the professionalization of academic sinology in Britain and later America.

With respect to more recent accomplishments and standards in Sinology, Giles' work may seem amateur to those who bother to look back at the origins of the field, but it was a significant advancement at the time and marked clear trends that continue today. Primary among

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[109] Shang-Ling Fu, "One Generation of Chinese Studies at Cambridge," *Chinese Social and Political Science Review* 15 (1931–2): 78-91; Philip. R. Marshall, "H. A. Giles and E. H. Parker: Clio's English servants in late nineteenth-century China," *The Historian* 46:4 (1983–4): 520-538; and D. E. Pollard, "H. A. Giles and his Translations," *Renditions* 40 (Aut. 1993).

[110] Giles, "Notes: Dr. Legge's Critical Notice of the Remains of the Lao Tzu," *The China Review* 16 (1888): 238-241, 239.

them was his adoption of critical methods originating in nineteenth-century biblical criticism. This shift is rooted as much in Giles' biography as in his research. His father, John Allen Giles (1808-1884), was a priest, educator, and translator of classical literature with nearly two-hundred published works, many on his own press. J. A. Giles also served as the curate of several parishes, though he admitted to feeling unsuited to the clergy.[111] In 1854, he was required by the bishop of Oxford to suppress his *Christian Records: on the Age, Authorship, and Authenticity of the New Testament*, which argued that the Gospels and Acts did not originate with the Apostles and were assembled no earlier than 150 CE. Contemporaneous with the dissemination of German Higher Criticism in England, this rejection of traditional dating and authorship demonstrates a skepticism towards received texts that gradually filtered into many disciplines. Thirty years later, Herbert Giles brought similar approaches to bear on the *Daode Jing* and his rebuttal of James Legge.

A review of his scholarship makes clear that Giles' skepticism towards the *Daode jing* is rooted in the development and spread of historical criticism and not in any prejudices against China or ancient Chinese texts that he would not bring equally to any other cultures or texts, including the Christian Bible. While he questioned the integrity of the received *Daode jing*, he was an ardent admirer of and advocate for Chinese language and culture. When he was elected to succeed Sir Thomas Wade (1818-1895) as the second professor of Chinese at the University of Cambridge, the program in Chinese studies was underdeveloped and underfunded. D. E. Pollard notes that the "lack of institutional support was symptomatic of the prevailing neglect and

[111] John Blair, "Giles, John Allen (1808-1884)," *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, Oxford University Press, 2004.

ignorance of China in Britain."[112] With few students, popularizing his field and encouraging interest in China became one of Giles' primary occupations.

The first works he published concerned the study of the Chinese language, where he made a lasting mark on the romanization of Chinese. While learning the language he had become a "reluctant admirer" of a handbook of the Beijing dialect, *Tzu Erh Chi*, written by his predecessor at Cambridge, Sir Thomas Wade.[113] When Giles assembled his own influential dictionary, he chose to build on Wade's orthography and "continue in a grove which, though imperfect, is familiar."[114] The names of both scholars survive in the resulting "Wade-Giles" system of Chinese transliteration which has only recently been supplanted by the modern standard, *Pinyin*.[115] Wade-Giles transliterations still appear in many English works on China and it is the system in which *Daode jing* is written as *Tao Te Ching*.[116]

The majority of Giles' other works are translations, but he also penned several general surveys of Chinese culture, including *Chinese Sketches* (1876), in which he makes many generalizations and dated remarks, but leaves few nineteenth-century biases against China unchallenged. He notes that "we have no wish to exalt China at the expense of European civilization, but we cannot blind ourselves to the fact that her vices have been exaggerated, and her virtues overlooked."[117] His sketches of Chinese life attempt to counter, in particular, the opinion that "only the forcible diffusion or Christianity can save the empire from speedy and

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[112] Pollard, Giles and his Translations," 104.
[113] Herbert Giles, "The Tzu Erh Chi: Past and Present," *China Review* 16 (no. 4), 214-225: 214. Thomas Wade, *Tzu Erh Chi* (London: Trübner, 1867).
[114] Quoted from 1st edition of Giles' dictionary in Marshall, "Clio's English Servants," 525.
[115] See Introduction, n. 1.
[116] Because academics have nearly universally switched to using "*Daode jing*," a new work using "*Tao Te Ching*" marks itself as heavily indebted to previous scholarship, to the tradition of *Daode jing* translation into English, or to both.
[117] Herbert Giles, *Chinese sketches* (London: Trübner, 1876) 201.

overwhelming ruin."[118] Many readers applauded him as an impartial observer, while others were offended by his harsh treatment of Christian missionaries. P. J. Marshall finds that Giles "enabled the average reader to counterbalance the insidious Sinophobic literature that had dominated mid-nineteenth-century popular histories,"[119] and he notes Giles' citation by the Royal Asiatic Society in 1922 for having "humanized Chinese studies."[120]

Cognizant of the difficulties of translation, Giles also took an active interest in the lively debates at the turn of the century over Chinese translations of the Bible and signal Christian terms such as "God." In his criticisms of the collaborative translation of the New Testament known as "The Delegates' Version," Giles suggests that a literal translation rarely, if ever, conveys the full meaning and various connotations of the original. For him, phrases like the "Lamb of God" are "simply and solely figurative," and lose their figurative associations in a new culture. He writes: "In China, the lamb is not an emblem of anything, certainly not of spotless purity."[121] Noting that lambs are unknown in much of China, and the closest literal translation would be understood by most to mean a baby goat, he argues that its meaning is lost "upon people who associate nothing with the kid beyond the prospect of pecuniary gain."[122] In a defense against Giles' criticisms, F. J. Masters references Giles' harsh treatment of missionaries in *Chinese Sketches* and warns his readers that Giles applies "the same principles to the translation of the Bible as he would to the translation of Shakespeare or of national proverbs."[123] This critique is quite accurate and speaks to the relative novelty at that time of Giles' historical

[118] Giles, *Chinese Sketches*, preface.
[119] Marshall, "Clio's English Servants," 538.
[120] *Ibid*.
[121] Herbert Giles, "The New Testament in Chinese," *The China Review* 10:3 (1881): 150-158, 157.
[122] *Ibid*.
[123] F. J. Masters, "'The Delegates Version' and Mr. Giles," *The China Review* 10:4 (1882): 259-265, 261.

approaches to both Christian scripture and to the *Daode jing*—approaches which have long since become academic norms.

Despite the novelty and impact of his historical-critical approach, as early as 1955, Giles' scholarly contributions were dismissed by a successor to his chair at Cambridge, E. G. Pulleyblank. In a retrospective on the development of sinology that forms part of his inaugural lecture, Pulleyblank states that the work of Giles "suffers very much, however, from the disease of amateurism, a fundamental lack of serious scholarly discipline, which has affected too much of Chinese studies in England."[124] More than anything, this criticism indicates the impressive speed of Sinology's development. In two generations Giles' scholarship went from expert to amateur. By the standards of his time Pulleyblank is critical of earlier scholarship, but his retrospective judgment obscures the importance of foundational developments in the field. Like several of his contemporaries, Giles worked tirelessly to popularize Chinese materials and to correct misconceptions about Chinese culture that plagued European presentations. Unlike his contemporaries, he chose to do this work in a newly emerging historical-critical mode that departed from the hermeneutics of earlier missionary efforts, library-bound philology, and increasingly popular translations.

The first translator of the *Daode jing* to question the integrity of the received text, Giles launched the historical-critical search for its *Urtext*, a task that would come to dominate academic interest in the text down to the present. Foreshadowing the historical/scriptural divide, he not incorrectly linked an earlier trust in the integrity of the text to a religious perspective. In connection with Giles' arguments, the editors of the *China Review* point out that this might

[124] Edwin George Pulleyblank, *Chinese History and World History: An Inaugural Lecture* (Cambridge: Cambridge Univ. Press, 1955), 3.

explain the inattention in previous translations to any historical evidence that might have undercut the text's reliability:

> To translators, like Dr. Chalmers, the Tao Têh King seemed to approach, in its lofty morality and spirituality, the sacredness of the Bible itself, and therefore any thought of referring to writers like Han Fei Tzu or Huai Nan Tszu as guides either to the understanding of Lao Tzu's meaning or to the disparagement of the authenticity of the Tao Têh King would have appeared to them preposterous.[125]

Doubting the recieved text, Giles did rely on historical evidence for his interpretation, including commentaries, but only the earliest ones most useful in determining the text's original form and composition. Like many historicists to come, Giles, too, was ultimately uninterested in the many subsequent commentaries that accompany the received text's later transmission and might also have served "as guides" to the meaning of the *Daode jing*. For Giles, the last eighteen-hundred years of the text's interpretation were irrelevant to the historical text because they had uncritically accepted, and even celebrated, "padding" inserted by a third century CE compiler of Laozi's original sayings.

Section 8: Historical Effects, Trajectories, and Traditions

In the retrospective judgement of Giles as an "amateur scholar," he might be included by some among the *Daode jing*'s "popular" translators. However, if it is the bringing of contemporary concerns to ancient texts that marks a "popular" or "scriptural" translation, as Waley and LaFargue have proposed, then it is actually Giles' historicism that emerges as the most "scriptural" aspect of his approach, and the distinction between the "historical" and the "scriptural" begins to self-destruct. As demonstrated above, Giles' contributions to the study of China, the Chinese language, and Chinese texts arose from a fundamentally biographical and culturally-situated historical context. In both his early adoption of historical-critical methods

[125] Giles, "Remains of Lao Tzu," 280.

originating in biblical criticism and his rapid eclipse by later sinologists, we see undeniable evidence of the historical *development* of sinology. Development observed also in Julien's earlier eclipse of Rémusat in France. Yet each of these scholars, like their successors, thought their work was more methodologically sound and historically accurate than their predecessors. This is the very pursuit of method that Gadamer critiques as misleading historicism into a quest for the "phantom" of the objective text while failing to recognize its own historicity. For Gadamer, this failure prevents an actual understanding of the text-tradition that comes down to its historically-situated contemporary readers and addresses them within a history of effects.

This is not to say that the historicist approaches to the *Daode jing* and Daoism that occurred with increasing frequency among sinologist did not have effects of their own. On the contrary, like any other participants in traditionary reception, historicists were historically affected by and created historical effects on this tradition. Primarily, they had the clear and dramatic effect of turning most scholarly attention away from later commentaries, communities, and individuals as guides to the meaning of the *Daode jing* and even as guides to Daoism, which was primarily defined through the historical reconstruction of its earliest texts. Select early commentaries continued to receive some attention as helping to establish the contents and format of the earliest recoverable text and tradition, and occasionally as helping to approximate the earliest recoverable context for establishing original meaning. Later commentaries, however, became valuable only in what they revealed about their authors. They are irrelevant to a historicist notion of text. So too are people and institutions including Daoists and Daoism—recall LaFargue's example that the interpretations of medieval Daoists do not "belong" to the study of the *Daode jing*. This had the unfortunate effect of continuing and reinforcing earlier biases

against "religious" Daoism in favor of the "philosophical" Daoism supposedly expressed in ancient texts.

The distinction between so-called Daoist philosophy (*daojia* 道家) and so-called Daoist religion (*daojiao* 道教) continues to affect the reception of the *Daode jing* and Daoism both in China and abroad.[126] It is not emic to Daoism. The associated Chinese terms are used inconsistently throughout Chinese history as evidenced by the Ming *Daozang* where they are practically interchangeable.[127] The distinction was introduced and defended not by Daoists, but by Confucians, including the principal figure in "neo-Confucian" reforms, Zhu Xi 朱熹 (1130-1200).[128] In Kristopher Schipper's view, "the distinction has no taxonomic value and serves no other purpose than to divide Taoism into an acceptable and a disdained form—to fundamentalist Confucians."[129] This is, however, how early travelers to China were introduced to Daoism by their predominantly non-Daoist, Confucian hosts and minders, and they were generally happy to propagate the distinction for their own purposes, as it provided a way to delimit ancient "philosophical" texts from subsequent "religious" traditions. This was acceptable and useful to the missionary, the philologist, the businessman, and the politician alike. It participated in larger imperial forces that eventually turned equally against the Chinese Confucians and other people across Asia: the Orientalist recovery and control of ancient cultural resources that could be held against a stagnant or degenerate present.[130] While China never came under full colonial control, it

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[126] See Komjathy, *Guide for the Perplexed*, 3-5 for a similar critique and relevant scholarship.
[127] Schipper and Verellen, *Taoist Canon,* 6. See also Nathan Sivin, "On the Word 'Taoist' as a Source of Perplexity," *History of Religions* 17:3/4 (Feb-May, 1978): 303-330.
[128] Schipper and Verellen, *Taoist Canon, 6*. Schipper references Zhu Xi's "Lun daojiao 論道教," *Zhuzi yulei* 125.3005.
[129] *Ibid*., 8.
[130] See Said, *Orientalism* (1978) and the wealth of critiques of Orientalism and *Orientalism* in its wake. For an overview of the debates surrounding Said, see A. L. Macfie, *Orientalism* (Routledge, 2002). For relevant sympathetic developments of Said's critique, see Philip Almond, *The British Discovery of Buddhism*

was affected by the same Orientalist operations that damaged much of the rest of the globe. Even as twentieth-century portrayals of China became increasingly favorable—with seemingly sympathetic interpreters emphasizing select elements of Chinese culture as correctives to perceived problems in Europe and America—many of these portrayals continued to privilege a reified, ancient, and generally text-based understand of China and Chinese culture.

While this division between "philosophy" and "religion" has gradually been abandoned in recent Sinology, it was long perpetuated by historicist inclinations, and remains effective in the ongoing preferences for "historical" texts over "scriptural" interpreters. As a corrective, rather than continuing to rely on modified, problematic, and outdated binaries that privilege the "original" historical comtext of a text's creation, scholars can better ask what has affected historical interpretations and what effects have they had? As a tradition that canonized the *Daode jing* over two-thousand years ago, Daoist interpretations of the text become immediately invaluable in the traditionary text's history of effects—not only the earliest Daoist interpreters, but the countless numbers between the text's first appearance and its continued reception today. Confucian interpreters become key to understanding the history of the text's reception among the literati and the court. Missionary interpretations become necessary to understanding the text's early transmission to Europe. Popular English translations become essential for analyzing the history of the *Daode jing*'s reception and construction in America. The effective history of the traditionary-text as it comes down to us today is marked by all of these interpretations and transmissions.

(Cambridge, 1988); Lisa Lowe, Critical Terrains: French and British Orientalisms (Cornell University Press, 1991); J. J. Clarke, *Oriental Enlightenment* (Routledge, 1997); Richard King, *Orientalism and Religion* (Routledge, 1999), Colin Mackerras. *Western Images of China* (Oxford University Press, 1999); Eric Hayot, Haun Saussy, and Steven G. Yao, eds. *Sinographies: Writing China* (University of Minnesota Press, 2008).

What then are the effects of the histories detailed above on the tradition of popular English translations? Among them is clearly the establishment of the first feature of popular translations proposed in this dissertation: the idea that the *Daode jing* is the principal scripture of Daoism and the related focus on and privileging of "philosophical" text-based Daoism over the practices, institutions, and people associated with the "religious" tradition. Critiqued above, in relation to sinology, popular translations do not so much inherit this bias from academics as continue its earlier appearances in Chinese religious politics and in missionary translations. In the echo-chambers of popular translation, this opinion grew only louder, and until the second-half of the twentieth century received little discouragement from academics or any other source. It persists in popular and non-specialist academic understandings of the text and tradition today.

Also visible in early popular translations is the second feature of their ongoing production: a focus on the text's perennial wisdom. While early missionary efforts concentrated on identifying portions of the text that corresponded to Christian revelation and early academic efforts sought to identify the text's historical meaning, early popular efforts began to treat the text's "wisdom" as timeless and universal. This approach fully emerges only when the *Daode jing* and other works are grouped together with the Bible as "scriptures," "sacred texts," "religious classics," "wisdom literature," and the like. Linked with the emergence of "world religions" as a concept and academic field, the stress on the universal and perennial is particularly marked in the Theosophical interpretations above and in the translation of Paul Carus analyzed in the next chapter.

Lastly, these early translations evidence connections between the attitudes and methodologies translators brought to the *Daode jing* and the diverse attitudes towards the Christian Bible and approaches to biblical criticism that filtered through the ranks of European

missionaries, scholars, and the general public in the nineteenth century. How translators felt about one "scripture" exerted considerable influence on their approach to the other, whether it be the early historicism of Herbert Giles, the "hermeneutics of trust" employed by James Legge, or the Theosophists' search for perennial mystical truths.

In her summary of "Influential Western Interpretations of the *Tao-te-ching*" prior to 1905, Julia Hardy observes "explicit comparisons with Christianity to be the norm."[131] While these comparisons and related biases are certainly present, it is important to note that they are based on a wide variety of understandings of Christianity and of the Bible, and they are used to considerably different effects. These differences increasingly divided the interpretations of the missionary, academic, and popular translators. Most notably, while academic translators became increasingly focused on a historical-critical investigation into the original form and meaning of the text, trying to recover what the text meant in the past, popular translators became increasingly comparative and focused on uncovering the text's timeless relevance to the present day.

[131] Julia Hardy, "Influential Western Interpretations of the Tao-te-ching," in *Lao-tzu and the Tao-te-ching*, ed. Livia Kohn and Michael LaFargue (Albany: SUNY, 1998).

CHAPTER 3: Paul Carus, *The Canon of Reason and Virtue*

The 1898 translation of Paul Carus (1852-1919) was the first edition of the *Daode jing* to be published and widely disseminated in America.[1] As noted in the introduction, for Carus "it is on account of the similarities which, in spite of many differences, obtain between the teachings of Lao-Tze and those of Buddha and Christ that the *Tao-Teh-King* is an indispensable book."[2] Carus' project of identifying Christian parallels in the *Daode jing* is not pursued for the Figurist goal of claiming it as a partial record of Christian revelation, nor Rémusat's goal of documenting the spread of European philosophy and religion in Asia, nor Legge's goal of preserving its integrity, nor Giles' goal of questioning its authenticity. Rather, it is for Carus part of his commitment to what he termed "philosophical Monism." Carus' lifelong project was to articulate the principles of this Monism, which embraced equally Daoism and Christianity, religion and science, society and nature, and any other apparent divides as expressions of a unified, universal, and timeless paradigm. As with many popular translators before and after, Christianity continues to exert a strong normative influence over his "universal" conceptions, but Carus turns towards philosophy, science, and other religious traditions as equally valid sources for overarching truths.

As popular translations increasingly treated the "wisdom" of the *Daode jing* as universal and timeless, they did not always share the same understandings of what this "wisdom" might entail. This shared feature of popular translations does not, therefore, indicate a single solution to the translation of *dao* (which continues to appear as God, nature, the way, reason, etc.) or any

[1] As an important figure in the turn-of-century dissemination of works on Asian traditions in America, Carus appears in several books and articles, primarily those focused on Buddhism in America. His translation of the *Daode jing* has received far less attention. For general scholarship on Carus, see Harold Henderson, *Catalyst for Controversy: Paul Carus of Open Court* (Carbondale, Southern Illinois Univ. Press, 1993), and Carl T. Jackson, "The Meeting of East and West: The Case of Paul Carus," *Journal of the History of Ideas* 29:1 (Jan-Mar, 1968): 73-92.

[2] Paul Carus, *Lao-tze's Tao-teh-king: Chinese and English with Introduction, Transliteration, and Notes* (Chicago: Open Court Publishing, 1898), 3.

other aspect of the text. Rather this is a shared *approach* to the text that takes its meaning to be transhistorical and transcultural in a way that can speak to all audiences at all times. While this bears a superficial similarity to the traditionary text's ongoing dialogue with its interpreters, the crucial difference is that for perennialist readers, the universal meaning they arrive at today is projected back on the text as also its "original" meaning or essence, thus collapsing the variety of ways that the text has been and continues to be received. The idea of the traditionary text, on the other hand, is that, in speaking to a variety of interpreters throughout history, the text-tradition has no fixed or transhistorical meaning, but is an ongoing unfolding of meaning in different contexts. This includes the context of the text's composition, but does not privilege that context as fixing the text's "true" meaning, and a traditionary approach remains skeptical of the possibility of recovering that meaning unaffected by the text's historical transmission and the interpreter's historical context.

Section one of this chapter examines Carus' intellectual commitments to Monism, Meliorism, and Perennialism. Section two addresses his involvement in the Chicago World's Parliament of Religions as an advocate for the harmony of science and religion, and the positive impressions he formed there of Asian traditions as strategically presented by some Asian delegates. Section four turns to the production of his translation of the *Daode jing*, with the aid of D. T. Suzuki, and its distinctive features. The final section considers the implications of Carus' approach against William James' articulation of Pluralism, and suggest that Carus' *Canon of Reason and Virtue* is an expression of ongoing efforts to address the aspects of Chinese religion that best fit with European and American modernity, the compatibility of religion and science, and unity amid increasing cultural and religious diversity.

Section 1: Monism, Meliorism, and the Religion of Science

Born and educated in Germany, Carus' engagement with the *Daode jing* can be dated to 1894 when he first makes mention of the text in an article comparing Buddhism and Christianity. The article appears in *The Monist*, a journal founded by Carus and Edward Hegeler, who met after the latter read and appreciated Carus' *Monism and Meliorism* (1885). Hegeler made his fortune manufacturing zinc and had become a devout and financially generous advocate for Monism and the "harmonizing" of science and religion. In 1886, he founded *The Open Court* journal and a publishing company of the same name. Both remain in operation today. At their founding, their stated purpose was to "give to the world a philosophy in harmony with all facts (the monistic philosophy) which will gradually become a new religion to it, as it has to me."[3] Carus took over as editor of *The Open Court* in late 1887. In his first issue, he added a new standing notice:

> This Journal is devoted to the work of conciliating Religion with Science. The founder and editor have found this conciliation in Monism, to present and defend which will be the main object of THE OPEN COURT.[4]

This goal continued to unite the two men, and to unify Carus' growing literary corpus, which eventually totaled seventy-five books, several hundred long articles, and over a thousand short notices.[5]

In 1898, Carus made a significant addition to his description of *The Open* Court when he began to advertise it as "Devoted to the science of religion, the religion of science, and the extension of the Religious Parliament idea."[6] A participant in the 1893 World Parliament of Religions, discussed below, Carus was deeply affected by the experience and the people he met there, especially those representatives of Asian religions who had presented their traditions as

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[3] Henderson, *Catalyst for Controversy*, 27.
[4] *Ibid*., 44.
[5] See Paul Carus, *Philosophy as a Science: A Synopsis of the Writings of Paul Carus* (Chicago: Open Court, 1909).
[6] Quotations taken from an advertisement at the back of Paul Carus, *Lao-tze's Tao-teh-king*.

rational faiths compatible with a modern, "scientific" worldview. This strategy was used to good effect by several representatives to undercut criticism and position their traditions as equal to or even better suited than Christianity as religions for the industrial modern age that the surrounding Chicago World's Fair so exuberantly celebrated. Described in more detail below, these strategic presentations of Asian traditions were generally well received and particularly effective with those who shared Carus' sympathies and interests. After the Parliament, Carus increasingly dedicated himself and all organs of Open Court Publishing to interreligious dialogue and to introducing and disseminating the texts and teachings of Asian religions in America.

While Carus never held an academic position, he shared the ambitions of a large number of late nineteenth and early twentieth-century professional and amateur scholars of the humanities: to bring the clear light of scientific truth and methods to bear on the murky problems of human existence. This ambition, critiqued later by Gadamer for its misdirected pursuit of objectivity in the inescapably situated realms of human understanding, led Carus to a lifelong endeavor "to build up a sound and tenable philosophy, one that would be as objective as any branch of the natural sciences."[7] For Carus, as for many others, science can be clearly, if broadly defined: "Science is the search for truth, and truth is the adequacy of a description of facts."[8] Truth is also universal and everlasting:

> We may see old truths in a new light, we may better and ever better learn to understand their significance and also the relation between several truths; but a truth will always remain true. In other words, the consistency of the world is both universal and eternal. What is true here is true everywhere, and what is true now is true forever.[9]

[7] *Ibid*., 1.
[8] *Ibid*., 2.
[9] *Ibid*., 4-5.

This faith in the truth of science and its applicability to all aspects of human life was complemented by a faith in progress shared by many of his day and labeled by Carus, William James, and others as "Meliorism." For Carus:

> The spirit of the Middle Ages, with its penal code of barbaric punishments, its cruelty in pedagogy, its narrowness in nationalism and religion, retreats step by step, while truer and broader views that are being more and more universally recognized, herald the advent of an age of science.[10]

Carus first announced his views in *Monism and Meliorism*, published in 1885. Both brash in his ambition and humble in his method, Carus claims in his introduction to have "succeeded so far as to have realized what David Hume and Immanuel Kant planned, and to have brought to a certain consummation what they intended to do."[11] Carus claims to accomplish this less through original contributions than through combination and summary: "Original ideas often allure and dazzle with a fine brilliancy, but they are treacherous owing to the very subjectivity which tenders them so attractive. Objectivity in philosophical research does not create a sensation, as it does not take men's fancy; yet, its results, if true, will stand forever."[12]

Philosophical Monism, Carus asserts, is "as a conception of the world which traces all things back to one source, thus explaining all problems from one principle."[13] In addition to providing "a unity of source" and "a unity of principle," it drives all things forward towards "a unity of its finis. There is everywhere the same goal, whither the development of evolution tends."[14] This development is progressive, leading to the improvement of the world: an evolutionary meliorism that locates "the purpose of living in the aspiration of a constant progress

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[10] *Ibid*., 9. According to Henderson, this faith was crushed by the deterioration of relations during WWI, particularly between Germany and America.
[11] Paul Carus, *Monism and Meliorism, a philosophical essay on causality and ethics* (New York: F.W. Christern, 1885), 6-7.
[12] *Ibid*., 6.
[13] *Ibid*., 5.
[14] *Ibid*., 62.

to some higher state of existence."[15] It guides equally the natural world and the moral development of humankind: "It is a power of reality, pervading the universe as a law of nature; and with regard to humanity it points out to man the path of progress."[16] For Carus, both Monism and Meliorism were essentially scientific, but they also provided him with a large degree of the certainty in regard to moral and natural truths and a faith in the future that were traditionally associated with religious teachings. Combined, they informed the sincere belief in the adequacy of his "religion of science" and his devotion to the "science of religion."

Based more in his understanding of science than the esoteric or occult, Carus' monism nevertheless inclined him towards the perennialism already observed in early popular translations by Theosophists. In her survey of "metaphysical" religion in America, Catherine Albanese, notes this tendency in the Theosophical Society, though not in relation to their translations of the *Daode jing*.[17] Regarding the founder of Theosophy, Albanese writes that "Blavatsky absorbed it all—Vishnu, Hermes, popularized science, and even Christian narrative of the original sin and fall of humanity—in the comprehensive unity of her account."[18] Albanese points out that much of this unity was based on "misreadings" of Asian texts and traditions, "but the misreadings themselves constituted the creative aspect of Blavatsky's work."[19] She also notes that monistic, perennialist, and "theosophizing" concerns permeated the World's Parliament of Religions, which "promoted perennialism under the rubric of comparative religions."[20]

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[15] *Ibid*., 5.
[16] *Ibid*.
[17] Catherine Albanese, *Republic of Mind and Spirit*, 338-344. Albanese does not discuss Carus' translation of the DDJ, but she does devote a substantial section to him, his involvement in the World's Parliament, and his interests in Buddhism: pp. 388-392.
[18] *Ibid*., 342.
[19] *Ibid*., 344. Recall here Julia Hardy's suggestion that much of popular interpretations "may be the product of 'bad scholarship,' [but] may be at the same time 'good religion.'" ("Influential Western Interpretations," 184).
[20] *Ibid*., 332.

Section 2: The Parliament of Religions

At the 1893 World's Parliament of Religion, Carus contributed a characteristic paper titled "Science: A Religious Revelation," in which he expressed his understanding of a single truth that unites religion and science:

> The nature of religious truth is the same as that of scientific truth. There is but one truth. There cannot be two truths in conflict with one another. Contradiction is always, in religion not less than in science, a sign that there is somewhere an error.[21]

During the Parliament, at least two other papers were presented on similar topics, including "The Religion of Science" by Sir William Dawson and "Man in the Light of Revelation and of Science" by Prof. Thomas Dwight. Carus' contribution was well received, but did not make a particularly deep impression on observers. As indicated above and analyzed below, like many spectators of the proceedings, Carus himself was most impressed by the representatives of Asian religions. While his faith in the compatibility of religion and science remained unshaken, he emerged from the event with a new curiosity about Asia and a desire to integrate their religious teachings into his comprehensive—and ultimately singular—worldview.

Numerous scholars have addressed the Protestant agenda of the event—the ways, consciously or not, the definitions assumed, questions posed, schedules arranged, and more placed Protestantism at the center of the Parliament's religious topography and its notions of cosmopolitanism.[22] After surveying the speeches, Richard Seager concludes: "for all that had been said and done over the course of the Parliament's seventeen days, there is little question

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[21] John Henry Barrows, *The World's Parliament of Religions* Vol. II (Chicago: Parliament Publishing Co., 1893), 980.

[22] E.g. Tomoko Masuzawa, *The Invention of World Religions: Or, How European Universalism Was Preserved in the Language of Pluralism* (Chicago: Univ. of Chicago Press, 2005); Richard Hughes Seager, *The Dawn of Religious Pluralism: Voices from the World's Parliament of Religions* (La Salle: Open Court, 1993); William R. Hutchison, *Errand to the World: American Protestant Thought and Foreign Missions* (Chicago: Univ. of Chicago Press, 1987); Eric Ziolkowski, ed., *A Museum of Faiths: Histories and Legacies of the 1893 World Parliament of Religions* (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1993).

that in the minds of its main promoters the assembly was meant to mark a global triumph for Christianity."[23] He notes that the last day of the Parliament was devoted "to the question of religious universalism, with the issues cast more often than not wholly in Christian terms."[24] The last speaker of the Parliament, George Boardman titled his address "Christ the Unifier of Mankind." His final thoughts include: "Jesus is the one universal man; and therefore it is that the first Parliament of Religions is meeting in a Christian land, under Christian auspices."[25]

Under such "Christian auspices," few could have anticipated how well many non-Christian participants were able to upset the biases of the event and to impress lay and professional audiences alike.[26] It remains true that for the delegates from Asia the call for the Parliament was, as Seager describes: "cast wholly in western, Christian terms and partaking of an often smug largesse that depended upon the West's racial, political, economic, and religious hegemony."[27] However, the response from the "Asian delegation" to this call, while not uniform was also not a passive acceptance of the "West's" hegemony but an active renegotiation:

> Both a qualified acceptance and a kind of counter-invitation. Many Asians embraced the hopeful prospect of religious harmony and shared with western liberals a global and inclusive vision, but they did so while delivering an outspoken critique of western racism, imperialism, and materialism. They also defended their own ancient faiths, called into question the finality of the Christian religion, and offered to their American audience alternative religious visions with roots struck deep in Asian religious history.[28]

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[23] Seager, *Dawn of Religious Pluralism*, 453.
[24] *Ibid*.
[25] *Ibid*., 474.
[26] E.g. Judith Snodgrass, *Presenting Japanese Buddhism to the West: Orientalism, Occidentlism, and the Columbian Exposition* (Chapel Hill: Univ. of North Carolina Press, 2003).
[27] Richard Hughes Seager, "Pluralism and the American Mainstream: The View from the World's Parliament of Religions," *Harvard Theological Review* 82:3 (July 1989): 301-324, 317.
[28] *Ibid*., 318. While Seager emphasizes authenticity here, others scholars have proposed that Christianity was strategically engaged to strengthen the novel ideas and marginal status of some delegates in their home countries as much as Chicago. See Ziolkowski, *A Museum of Faiths*.

Many in their audiences heard these critiques and were impressed by their presentations. While the Chicago Tribune continued to emphasize the centrality of Christianity in its perennialist vision that "all are searching for the truth, though in different ways," it also concluded that the importance of the Parliament consisted "first, in the fact that a clear statement of belief has been made by those who are authorized to do so, and, second, in the fact that those whom we have been accustomed to call heathens are not so much heathens as we imagined."[29] For numerous observers, this was the first time they heard Asian traditions described and defended by adherents and practitioners rather than outsiders and ancient texts, and it won the sympathy if not assent of many in the audience. The St. Louis Observer worried about the effect of figures such as Sri Lankan Buddhist Anagarika Dharmapala:

> With his black curly locks thrown back from his broad brow, his keen, clear eye fixed upon the audience, his long brown fingers emphasizing the utterances of his vibrant voice, [Dharmapala] looked the very image of a propagandist, and one trembled to know that such a figure stood at the head of the movement to consolidate all the disciples of Buddha and to spread 'the light of Asia' throughout the civilized world.[30]

These worries were not ill-founded. Dharmapala was a popular Buddhist advocate in America during the decades following the Parliament, and immediately after its conclusion presided over the ceremony wherein Charles Strauss became the first American to take formal Buddhist vows on American soil.[31]

Daoism did not, however, have such a charismatic proponent. The ten bells that rang at the beginning of the Parliament included one chime for Daoism as a member of the ten great

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[29] *Chicago Tribune*, September 24, 1893. Quoted in Seager, *Dawn of Religious Pluralism*, 354.
[30] *St. Louis Observer*, September 21, 1893. Quoted in Seager, *Dawn of Religious Pluralism*, 420.
[31] See Rick Fields, *How the Swans Came to the Lake: A Narrative History of Buddhism in America* (Boston: Shambhala, 1992), 119-129. For an account of the ceremony, see *Journal of the Mahabodhi Society* 2:8 (Nov. 1893).

"world religions."[32] However, no Daoist attended the event and the single paper that was presented on Daoism was the winner of an essay competition judged by the Parliament's organizers and conforming to their expectations. The author's name was lost by the time the essay was presented, and has remained a mystery since that time.[33] Its critique of modern Daoist

[32] For more on this list of religions at the Parliament, see Masuzawa, *Invention of World Religions*, 265-273.

[33] In 1913 Carus suggested an arresting possible author for the essay based on a report of a meeting with the leader of the Zhengyi Daoist sect in Shanghai where Timothy Richard "incidentally mentioned that twenty years ago he had written to ask him to send an explanation of Taoism to the Parliament of Religions, then about to be held at Chicago, and Chang T'ien She had graciously complied with the request" (The Open Court, 27:9; Sept, 1913, 567). Carus delights in the attribution Dr. Richard provides not only because would resolve the text's authorship, but also that it would vouchsafe for the authority of the text at the highest level: "Accordingly we can state definitely that the article received at that time (and now republished on another page of this issue) comes from no less an authority on Taoism than the pope himself" (*Ibid*., 573). The title translated by Carus and many others of his time as "pope" is *tianshi* 天师 *(*Celestial Master), a hereditary title that goes back to the founding of organized Daoism at the end of the Han Dynasty first as the leader of the Way of the Celestial Masters (*tianshidao* 天师道) and then as the leader of the Way of Orthodox Unity (*zhengyidao* 正一道). This tradition and the Way of Complete Perfection (*quanzhen* 全真) remain the two dominant sects of Daoism in China today. In 1914, Carus introduces an ambiguity in his previous attribution of which he may have been unaware: he writes that his September 1913 edition of *The Open Court* "contains 'An Exposition of Taoism,' contributed to the Parliament of Religions in 1893 by the predecessor of the present Chang T'ien She" (*Ibid*., 707). If true, this would mean the essay was written not by the 62nd Celestial Master, Zhang Yuanxu (张元旭 1862-1924), but by his father, Zhang Renzheng (张仁政 1841-1903). This points to a possible confusion on the part of Carus or Dr. Richard, who might have made his request to the office of the Celestial Master and not to the person of Zhang Yuanxu. Dr. Richard, however, was a knowledgeable and experienced missionary in China when he made his comments in 1913, and while confusion over the events twenty years prior is possible, it is just as possible that he made the request of Zhang Yuanxu before he became the Celestial Master in 1904. Vincent Goossaert, a leading scholar on 19th and 20th century Daoism in China currently researching Zhang Yuanxu, evaluates the essay and its authorship as follows: "Something of this kind could have been produced around 1912-1915 in the context of the Shangxiantang and other venues, where interreligious discussions involving Zhang Yuanxu, T. Richard and other people, was taking place and where, given the reformist atmosphere of the early Republic and the scramble to get Daoist (and other) associations recognized by the new government, such talk was almost *de rigueur*. The few elements we have (Zhang Yuanxu published extremely little) from his public lectures then (1912-15) provide some similarities to your text – but by no means in every aspect. But in 1893? No. In 1893, Zhang Yuanxu was only 30, and we know very little of his activities then. The Heavenly master was his father Zhang Renzheng, who was rather friendly to missionaries (there was (and is) a large Catholic church a stone's throw away from the Heavenly Master Residence), but certainly not to the point where he would talk or write such language. Maybe T. Richard asked a text from Zhang Renzheng in 1893, rather radically rewrote it, and then 20 years later thanked Zhang Yuanxu for it, because Renzheng had passed away (in 1902). Back in 1893 it would have been extremely bizarre to ask the Heavenly master's son rather the Heavenly master himself for an important doctrinal statement" (personal email communication 4/3/14). An additional ambiguity in Carus' understanding of Dr. Richard's original comments to Zhang Yuanxu is that Richard never makes clear that the essay requested from Zhang was the one eventually selected to represent Daoism at the Parliament and published by Barrows in 1893. It is strongly implied, but not actually stated, and Carus' confusion on other points undercuts the "definitive" attribution he celebrates in 1913. At present then, the connection of the Parliament essay to Celestial Master Daoism must remain an intriguing, suggestive possibility, but one that awaits further evidence.

practice and closing plea has led several to speculate that it was written or heavily edited by a non-Daoist:

> Oh! that one would arise to restore our religion, save it from errors, help its weakness, expose untruth with truth, explain the mysteries, understand it profoundly and set it forth clearly, as Roman Catholics and Protestants assemble the masses to hear, and to explain the doctrines that their followers may know the ends for which their churches were established!"[34]

While other religious sects had elegant spokesmen able to defend their traditions as equals to Christianity, the essay on Daoism relates:

> If Taoists seek Taoism's deep meaning in earnest, and put unworthy desires aside, they are not far from its original goal. But in after generations the marvelous overclouded this; Taoists left the right way, and boasted wonders of their own. Legends of gods and genii became incorporated with Taoism…Taoism and the genii-religion have deteriorated. Taoists only practice charms, read prayers, play on stringed or reed instruments, and select famous mountains to rest in. They rejoice in calling themselves Taoists, but few carry out the true learning of the worthies and the holy genii of the past. If we ask a Taoist what is taught in the *Yin Tu King*, he does not know. If you kneel for explanation of the *Tao Teh King*, he cannot answer.[35]

With a telling appeal to the *Daode jing*, text-based Daoism is once again advanced at the expense of lived religious practice, and the widespread belief that the *Daode jing* represents the essence of Daoism is reaffirmed. The essay closes with: "If the coarse influences with which custom has obscured them were removed, the doctrines of Lao-tsze, Chang-tsze, Yin Hi, and Lie-tsze might shine forth brightly. Would not this be fortunate for our religion?"[36] Although the dates for the texts associated with these semi-legendary figures vary, the teachings of Laozi 老子, Zhuangzi 莊子, Yin Xi 尹喜, and Liezi 列子 are traditionally dated to over two-thousand five-hundred

[34] Barrows, *World's Parliament of Religions*, 1355-1358. On the authorship of this essay, Louis Komjathy writes "A number of conjectures are possible. From my perspective, the least likely is that the person was an ordained or linage-based Daoist" ("Tracing the Contours of Daoism in North America," *Nova Religio* 8:2, 2004).
[35] Barrows, *World's Parliament of Religions*, 1355-1358.
[36] *Ibid*.

years ago.[37] The Daoism presented at the Parliament was, thus, very much in accord with other nineteenth century presentations that privileged ancient texts over contemporary practice and philosophy over religion.

As noted in the previous chapter, this representation of Daoism at the Parliament is due in part to the decline in its status during Qing Dynasty China (1644-1912), which increasingly attempted to modernize by turning away from the "superstitious" religions of its past. Therefore, Chinese Buddhism was also poorly represented at the Parliament. Only Confucianism had an official Chinese delegation, headed by Pung Kwang Yu 彭光譽 (Peng Guangyu), then First Secretary of the Chinese Legation, Washington D.C. In his presentation on Confucianism, Ambassador Pung refers to Daoism and Chinese Buddhism only to dismiss their "perpetuation of falsehood by slavishly clinging to errors that deserve condemnation."[38] In a second presentation, critical of missionary efforts in China, he recalls the Rites Controversy of the 17th century when he proclaims that it is on account of "paying due homage to their parents and of offering sacrifices to their ancestors," that Chinese people prefer even Buddhism and Daoism to Christianity."[39] However, he praises here only the Confucian element of filial piety, and he dismisses "images of celestial and terrestrial deities, Buddhas and genii and the like," as of little consequence.[40]

This was the "Daoism" to which Carus and others at the World's Parliament were exposed, and it did little to challenge the prevailing trends in nineteenth-century understandings

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[37] On Zhuangzi, see Burton Watson, *The Complete Works of Chuang Tzu* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1968). On Yinxi, see Livia Kohn, *Taoist Mystical Philosophy: The Scripture of Western Ascension* (Albany: SUNY, 1991. On Liezi, see A.C. Graham "The Date and Composition of the *Lieh-Tzu*," *Studies in Chinese Philosophy and Philosophical Literature* (Albany: SUNY, 1990): 216-282; and A.C. Graham, *The Book of Lieh-tzu* (New York: Columbia Univ. Press, 1960).
[38] Barrows, *World's Parliament of Religions*, 485.
[39] *Ibid*., 436-438.
[40] *Ibid*.

of the religion and its best-known text. Fourteen years later, Carus would still quote the Parliament's "prize winning essay" and use it to justify his focus on the *Daode jing* and disregard for the remainder of the Daoist religion:

> While there is much good in Taoism, we must not forget that the general ignorance which prevails in the middle and lower classes of China, and also among the Taoist priests, favors the development of superstition, and the practice of Taoism is not as pure as one ought to expect from so profound a leader as Lao Tze and such noble principles as are contained in their sacred books.[41]

The text-based understanding of Daoism current at the turn of the century therefore continued to privilege the *Daode jing* as the essence of the tradition in both academic and popular texts. This allowed the text to be interpreted as generically religious even as the specifics of the Daoist religion were marginalized. Without these specifics, the contents of the generic category "religious" tended to rely heavily on the interpreter's domestic (Christian) preconceptions of the term rather than the foreign tradition or text. While this was also the case for the ancient texts of other non-Christian traditions, organized Daoism of the time was particularly unable to defend its own interpretations on the international stage.

The delegates that fared best at the Parliament were able to articulate their own interpretations of their traditions in strategic relation to Euro-American interests and vocabularies. The two most remembered and well-suited to this task, Hindu delegate Swami Vivekananda (1863-1902) and Sri Lankan Buddhist Anagarika Dharmapala (1864-1933), both had extensive experience with the Theosophical society and were well versed in its opinions and interests (noted above as an exaggerated, esoteric versions of the perennialist views held by Carus and many other Parliament attendees).[42] Cognizant of these interests, both delegates

[41] Paul Carus, *Chinese Life and Customs* (Chicago: Open Court, 1907), 51.
[42] On Dharmapala, see Stephen Prothero, *The White Buddhist: The Asian Odyssey of Henry Steel Olcott* (Bloomington: Indiana Univ. Press, 1996) and David McMahan, *The Making of Buddhist Modernism* (Oxford:

defended their faiths as universal and uniquely compatible with the truths of modern philosophy, science, and comparative religions. Embracing a similar strategy, the Buddhist delegation from Japan also successfully navigated the event's ethnocentrism by presenting carefully curated aspects of Meiji era (1868-1912) "new Buddhism," which had already been "shaped by the tension inherent in defining a distinctive Japanese modernity when the West was the model and measure of the modern."[43] The specifics of the presentations and receptions of Vivekananda, Dharmapala, and the Japanese delegation deserve fuller treatment than space allows, but it should be stressed that their successes were due in large measure to their abilities to strategically articulate their traditions as universal, rational, and scientific faiths compatible with developing European and American interests in and preconceptions about the place of religion in the modern world.

Carus was deeply impressed by the Asian delegates, and none more than Japanese Rinzai master Soyen Shaku 釈宗演 (1860-1919). For many years after the event, Carus and Soyen stayed in communication and helped to publish each other's work in their respective countries. Facilitating this process, first as a translator and later as an interlocutor, was Soyen's student, D.T. Suzuki (1870-1966). Best known as a twentieth-century popularizer of Zen Buddhism, Suzuki first came to America to live with Carus as an assistant translator. Carus had begun publishing Buddhist-related materials immediately after the Parliament, including *The Gospel of Buddha* in 1894, which Suzuki had translated into Japanese.[44] As Carus' attention focused

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Oxford Univ. Press, 2008). On Vivekananda, see Carl Jackson "The Founders," in *Vedanta for the West: The Ramakrishna Movement in the United States* (Bloomington: Indiana Univ. Press, 1994).

[43] Judith Snodgrass, "Publishing Eastern Buddhism: D.T. Suzuki's Journey to the West," in *Casting Faiths: Imperialism and the Transformation of Religion in East and Southeast Asia*, ed. Thomas Dubois (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillian, 2009), 47. See also Snodgrass, *Presenting Japanese Buddhism to the West*.

[44] See Judith Snodgrass, "Budda no fukin: The deployment of Paul Carus's Gospel of Buddha in Meiji Japan," in *Defining Buddhism(s)*, eds. Karen Derris and Natalie Gummer (London: Equinox, 2007).

increasingly on East Asia, he took note of the *Daode jing*, and began a translation. When Suzuki arrived in America in February of 1897 he immediately began to help Carus complete this text. In 1898 it became the first published translation of the *Daode jing* in America and exerted an often acknowledged influence on subsequent reception.[45]

Section 3: The Canon of Reason and Virtue

Carus' progress before Suzuki's arrival is difficult to judge, and the final work must be regarded as a joint effort—complicating the already complicated task of teasing out the influences on interpretive decisions. However, Carus did publish some reflections on the text and its reputed author before Suzuki's arrival, and they provide an indication of his initial interpretations of the received text. In 1894, as noted above, Laozi and the *Daode jing* were mentioned by Carus in his *Monist* article on Buddhism and Christianity.[46] While there is a chance that he had begun working on his own translation by this point, the quotations he includes in this article appear to have been drawn primarily from the first English version of the text, written by John Chalmers in 1868. Five of nine total quotations agree exactly, and the remaining four have only minor differences. These differences are, however, suggestive. When he quotes from the first chapter, Carus adds a list of alternative translations after *dao* when it is used as a noun: "Tao (word, reason, path, or briefly logos)"; and when it is used as a verb: "can be taoed (reasoned, argued with, walked on, or spoken)." Chalmers too had left "tau" untranslated, but his parenthetical suggestions are limited to "(reason)" and "(reasoned)." Carus later settled on this same interpretation and, in his own translation, writes "The reason that can be reasoned is not the

[45] Carus biographer Harold Henderson notes a discrepancy between Suzuki's recollection of the initial reason for his stay with Carus and the letters between Carus and Soyen at the time: the letters seem to indicate that Soyen was eager for Suzuki to improve his English and to make connections in America, while Suzuki recalled that Carus was eager for assistance in translating the *Daode jing*.

[46] Paul Carus, "Buddhism and Christianity," *The Monist* 5:1 (Oct. 1894): 65-103. Pages 90-97 titled "Parallelism with Lao-Tsze."

eternal Reason." In 1894, however, the meaning of *dao* for Carus was apparently an open question. The list of possibilities he includes suggests that, in investigating Chinese terms, he had begun to consult Williams' *Syllabic Dictionary of the Chinese Language* (1874). He later acknowledges the utility of this dictionary in his published translation, where he includes a crib translation that provides readers with page numbers to entries for every character in the *Daode jing*.

In a second, minor departure from Chalmers, Carus has solidified the previous translator's suggestions in the forty-second chapter. Chalmers had written, "Tau produced one (unity); one (unity) produced two (duality); two (duality) produced three (trinity); and three (trinity) produced all things." In Carus' 1894 article, this line is presented as "Tao produced unity; unity produced duality; duality produced trinity; and trinity produced all things." The parentheses employed by Chalmers accurately mark the small interpretive leaps from the Chinese characters of one (一), two (二), and three (三). These leaps are obscured in Carus' version, and were not taken by the translator Carus later acknowledges as supreme: Stanislas Julien. Here, Julien's French translation has *un*, *deux*, and *trois*, with no reference to these numbers' metaphysical implications.

However, in the final two quotations Carus gives from the *Daode jing*, his minor departures from Chalmers do show some similarity to Julien. Carus quotes from the seventy-seventh chapter that "The Tao of Heaven may be compared to the extending of a bow. It lowers that which is high, and it raises that which is low." The second sentence here bears more of a resemblance to Julien's "*Qui abaisse se qui set élevé, et élève ce qui set bas*" than it does to

Chalmers' "It brings down the high, and exalts the low."[47] When Carus quotes from the sixty-third chapter "Recompense injury with goodness," he is perhaps drawing on Julien's "*Il venue ses injures por des bienfaits*" when he alters Chalmers' "Recompense injury with virtue (kindness)." Although these departures are small, they are suggestive both of Carus' willingness to occasionally depart from the English translation on which he relied and of his possession of Julien's work, which would have given him both an alternative translation and a Chinese text prior to Suzuki's arrival in 1897.

Carus gives additional attention to Laozi and the *Daode jing* in three articles that appeared in *The Open Court* journal in 1896.[48] In these articles, he stresses that the *Daode jing* is "worthy to be compared with the sacred scriptures of the Buddhists and the New Testament." For him, the *Daode jing* was a "sacred scripture" akin both to the paradigmatic scripture for his audience, the New Testament, and to the Buddhist texts increasingly important to Carus after the World's Parliament. Carus further stresses the similarities of three key concepts in these "scriptures": the *logos* of Christianity, the *bodhi* of Buddhism, and the *dao*. In these articles, Carus references two earlier translators in addition to Chalmers and Julien: Victor von Strauss (German, 1870) and James Legge (English, 1891). With the help of their translations and likely Williams' dictionary, Carus developed a sense of the meaning and importance of *dao* that was largely determined by his Monism and apparently unchanged by D. T. Suzuki's involvement in the production of his final translation.

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[47] In his 1894 selections, there is no indication that Carus had a copy of Legge's 1891 text. Here Legge has: "May not the Way (or Tâo) of Heaven be compared to the (method of) bending a bow? The (part of the bow) which was high is brought low, and what was low is raised up."

[48] Paul Carus, "Lao-Tsze's Tao-The-King I: The Author of the Tao-The-King & II. Lao-tsze's Philosophy," *The Open Court* 10:48 (Nov. 26, 1896): 5136-5139; *Id*., "Lao-Tsze's Tao-The-King III: Lao-tsze's Ethics" *The Open Court* 10:49 (Dec. 3, 1896): 5146-5149; *Id*., "Taoism," *The Open Court* 10:50 (Dec. 10, 1896): 5155-5157.

While Carus' understanding of *dao* and his commitment to a monistic hermeneutic were firmly in place before Suzuki's arrival, his access to the Chinese text was greatly facilitated by Suzuki's training in classical Chinese. In his 1898 translation, published the year after Suzuki came to live with him near Chicago, Carus thanks "Mr. Teitaro Suzuki, a young Buddhist of Kamakura, Japan, who assisted me in both the comparison of the various editions at my command and in the transliteration of the text."[49] Carus passed this assistance on to his readers by including the resulting edition of the Chinese text and "transliteration" along with his translation. This was particularly useful to those readers interested in the Chinese text but with limited knowledge of classical Chinese—much like Carus himself. For each chapter, he provides the Chinese, character-by-character pronunciations, English equivalents, and page numbers for each character's definition in William's *Syllabic Dictionary of the Chinese Language*.

Here, Carus goes well beyond Julien by providing not only a Chinese text and accompanying English translation, but also a basic interpretation of each Chinese character and guide for finding additional meanings in a Chinese-English dictionary, a procedure that is nearly impossible without at least some familiarity with the language. Thus, he lowered the barriers to popular translations of the *Daode jing* even further than had Julien. Now, with Carus' text and Williams' dictionary, readers with little or no knowledge of Chinese could locate a list of potential meanings for each character in the text and settle on their own interpretations. However, the limitations of this piecemeal treatment of the Chinese language should be acknowledged. What Carus calls a "transliteration" is generally referred to as a "crib" translation: a simplified, word-for-word, and supposedly "literal" translation that provides English "equivalencies" for Chinese characters. Crib and dictionary provide readers the ability to

[49] Carus, *Lao-tze's tao-teh-king*, 46.

double-check the Carus-Suzuki translation and to create an independent version of the text only if it is assumed that Chinese words can be defined in relative isolation. However, when isolated from surrounding context, substantial ambiguity is an inevitable result in any language. This ambiguity plays into a second assumption: that the translated pieces can be flexibly recombined in the absence of established rules of grammar in classical Chinese. Both of these assumptions are problematic and generally false, but were (and to a great extent continue to be) popular opinions about the Chinese text.

As recently as 1997, Carus was thanked for his crib "transliteration" by Ursula Le Guin in her own version of the *Daode jing*: "To have the text thus made accessible was not only to have a Rosetta Stone for the book itself, but also to have a touchstone for comparing other English translations one with another…Without the access to the text that the Carus edition gave me, I would have been defeated by the differences among the translations, and could never have thought of following them as guides towards a version of my own."[50] The next chapter focuses on the first translator to admit, like Le Guin, to not knowing any Chinese: Witter Bynner. Here, we can only speculate as to the degree that Carus' own access to the Chinese text was similarly facilitated by the crib created with Suzuki's "assistance." While not all authors are as open as Bynner and Le Guin about their language abilities, many readers and translators of the *Daode jing* could access increasing numbers of prior translations and long benefited from the apparatus Carus and Suzuki provided.

With his lengthy introduction, Chinese text, crib and notes, Carus' English translation totaled only 41 of his volume's 345 pages. It was later published as a separate work titled *The Canon of Reason and Virtue* in 1903. Two of the most distinctive features of his translation have

[50] Ursula K. Le Guin, *Lao Tzu: Tao Te Ching: An English Version* (Boston: Shambhala, 1997), 119. Stephen Mitchell also indicates his use of Carus' crib (Mitchell, ix).

already been indicated: the interpretation of *dao* as "Reason" and his emphasis on Monism within an apparently comparative framework. In editions of the text after 1913, Carus' introduction brings these features together:

> We translate Tao by 'Reason,' and we capitalize the word in order to remind the reader that it is not the reason of the rationalist, nor the rationality of argument, but the universal world-order, or in other words, the eternal Reason of the divine dispensation, the Logos, to which man looks up with reverence.[51]

Carus' "Reason" is defined as justification, motive, or cause more than as the intellectual power of orderly thought. He connects it to the *logos* and relates both to the universal monistic principle that for him underlies and animates all things, as "the eternal rationality that conditions the immutable laws of the world-order."[52]

Carus informs his readers that this is the first of two kinds of *dao* distinguished in the text: "the Tao that was in the beginning, that is eternal and immutable, the divine presence, which can be on the right hand and at the same time on the left hand, which is bodiless, immaterial, and not sense-perceptible." The second kind of *dao* is "the Tao that is individualized in living creatures, especially in man."[53] He notes that the difference between "eternal Reason" and "human Reason" is emphasized repeatedly throughout the *Daode jing*. This is not inaccurate. From its opening lines, the text is animated by a series of contrasts and tensions, including that between a universal, all-pervading *dao* and our limited, human abilities to understand, express, and harmonize with it.[54] However, when this is described as "The Reason that can be reasoned is

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[51] Carus, *The Canon of Reason and Virtue* (Chicago: Open Court, 1913), 15.
[52] Carus, *Lao-tze's Tao-teh-king*, 13.
[53] *Ibid*., 11-12.
[54] Other notable contrasts and tensions include those between activity (為) and inactivity (無為), the existent (有) and the non-existent (無, the yang (陽) qualities assumed to dominate and the yin (陰) qualities that offer hidden strength, and grasping (執) or striving (爭) and the natural (自然). Much of the logic of the text operates on the connections, distinctions, and productive tensions between and among these terms.

not the eternal Reason," it creates a different impression and series of connections than choices made in previous translations. Compare:

> *La voie qui peut être exprimée par la parole n'est pas la Voie éternelle* (Julien 1842).
>
> The TAO, or Principle of Nature, may be discussed [by all]; it is not the popular or common Tao (Balfour 1884).
>
> God (the great everlasting infinite First Cause from whom all things in heaven and earth proceed) can neither be defined nor named (Alexander 1895).

For Carus, these are no doubt expressions of the same principle that could equally be called *dao,* the way, the principle of nature, *logos,* or God. However, the specifics of each of those terms as a designation of the universal evokes very different traditions and associations that influence the resulting conceptions of it and its relation to human lives.

Similarly, Carus' translation of the closing lines of chapter four, "Before the Lord, Reason takes precedence," is a plausible translation of the Chinese 象帝之先, but so too are the following:

> *Il semble avoir précédé le maître du ciel* (Julien 1842).
>
> It appears to have been before God (Chalmers 1868).
>
> Its εἴδωλον [*eídōlon:* image] existed before God was (Balfour 1884).
>
> He would appear to have existed before the Lord of Heaven was (Alexander 1895).
>
> But as a substanceless image it existed before the Ancestor (Waley 1934).
>
> This image of no other sire (Bynner 1944).
>
> It is the forefather of the gods (Feng and English, 1972).

Each of these renderings reflect different conceptions of *dao* and here also of *di* 帝, with different implications and associations.

What marks the popularism of Carus' approach in this chapter is less the specifics of his diction than how he draws his readers' attention to this line's apparent contrast but, for him, ultimate compatibility with the opening of the Fourth Gospel (KJV: "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God"). Seeking to align both *dao* and *logos* with his universal monistic principle, Carus insists that "is not after all the fundamental significance in either case the same?"[55] He elaborates: "the highest laws of reason are universal and intrinsically necessary; we cannot even imagine that they ever had been or ever could be non-existent or invalid; they have not been fashioned or ordained, they have not been made either by God or man, they are eternal and immutable."[56] With this guiding hermeneutic, he is willing to creatively alter both the *Daode jing* and the Bible to assure their compatibility with each other and his "religion of science." Carus repeatedly emphasizes unity and compatibility amid variety. Differences might be acknowledged, but truth is located in their resolution. While the assumption of underlying unity has long informed many positive responses to pluralism, this approach runs the risk of opening a seemingly tolerant space that is immediately filled with preconceptions that can easily go unexamined.

Section 4: Monism and Pluralism

Near the end of his career, William James shed stark light on the implications of Monism when he characterized the contrast between Monism and Pluralism as "the most pregnant of all the dilemmas of philosophy," asking "does reality exist distributively? or collectively?—in the shape of eaches, everys, anys, eithers? or in the shape of an all or whole?"[57] Referred to

[55] Carus, *Lao-tze's Tao-teh-king*, 13.
[56] *Ibid*.
[57] William James, "Chapter VII: The One and the Many, Pluralism vs. Monism," in "Some Problems of Philosophy: A Beginning of an Introduction to Philosophy," in *William James: Writings 1902-1910*, ed. Bruce Kuklik (New

elsewhere by James as the contrast between the "each-form" and the "all-form," the distinction is used to discuss how things are, how we know them, and how they should be. It is not hard to guess where the author of *The Varieties of Religious Experience* lands on these issues: in Michael Slater's words, "James was a pluralist not only in his metaphysical views, but also in his epistemological, ethical, and religious views."[58] Carus' position is also clear, if diametrically opposed. While they would disagree on the truth and value of monism, the two would likely agree on most of James' descriptions of it, including the idealistic response to variety and diversity: "Monism must mean that all such apparent disconnections are bridged over by some deeper absolute union in which it believes, and this union must in some way be more real than the practical separations that appear upon the surface."[59]

Neither Carus nor James explicitly frame their perspectives in terms of hermeneutics, but the distinction between them has clear implications on the discussions of transmission, interpretation, and translation explored in this dissertation. Carus' position helps clarify that behind the text-as-historical-object approach of historicism and text-as-timeless-wisdom approach of popular perennialist hermeneutics is the shared assumption of a single text that leads either to a "one-form" rejection of all other readings or to an embrace of an "all-form" ideal that is imagined to underlie and be more real than the evident variety of surrounding interpretations.[60] Both close the distance between text and reader: the first by rejecting all intermediary readings, and the second by collapsing them. To the degree that the specifics of an "all-form" ideal are

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York: Penguin Literary Classics, 1987): 1040-56. James' objections to monism appear in several volumes, but are most developed and most clear in this text, evidenced from the first page where he dedicates the text to Charles Renouvier: "but for the decisive impression made on me in the seventies by his masterly advocacy of pluralism, I might never have got free from the monistic superstition under which I had grown up."

[58] Michael R. Slater, "William James's Pluralism," *The Review of Metaphysics* 65 (September 2011): 63-90, 90.

[59] James, *Writings*, 1041.

[60] James does not discuss what I call "one-form." His focus is on the "all-form" of Monism and the "each-form" of pluralism."

elaborated, it becomes a "one-form" interpretation. To the extent that a "one-form" interpretation is claimed to represent the real text, it becomes the ideal "all-form" against which all other interpretations are judged. In both cases, interpretative distance collapses into a single monist result.

Against this, we can turn to James' argument for pluralism. James emphasizes the "each-form" where "things are 'with' one another in many ways, but nothing is able to include everything or to dominate over everything." For James, "Pluralism lets things really exist in the each-form or distributively," while monism turns away from the evident diversity of reality to singular ideal that "allows of no taking up and dropping of connexions."[61] If applied to the interpretation of texts, James' sense of pluralism supports and is supported by Gadamer's traditionary model, where "the practical separations that appear upon the surface" of historical reception might be reconfigured as the "real" text rather than any underlying ideal, be it historicist or transhistorical. It also makes clear that "the phantom of the historical object" is itself an unattainable ideal, and the only textual objects to which we have access are marked always by difference as much if not more than similarity. Locating the real text in its variations unites them in a pluralistic tradition of reception, and prevents the monistic collapse of this tradition into a single reified ideal. James' argument against monism and its search for an ideal form behind apparent differences inspires the unconventional idea that the "real" *Daode jing* is not in a reified "all-form," but in the "each-forms" of the traditionary text. In short, these are not variations of the text, rather the variations are the text.

The author of *Monism and Meliorism* would of course reject such a formulation. Recall from his Parliament speech that for Carus, "There is but one truth. There cannot be two truths in

[61] James, "A Pluralistic Universe," in *Writings 1902-1910*, 625-820: 777.

conflict with one another. Contradiction is always, in religion not less than in science, a sign that there is somewhere an error."[62] Carus lived in an America of increasing religious pluralism and scientific modernization, and his response was to emphasize similarity and continuity amid the apparent contradictions and potential conflicts of increasing diversity. Similar to the Parliament by which he was inspired, Carus' attempt to locate unity among diversity was heavily influenced by the preconceptions he brought to the task. As Stephen Prothero has recently suggested in *God Is Not One*, Carus' response is not uncommon down to today.[63] Noting the particular conceptions of Christianity, religion, and scripture that underlie different nineteenth and twentieth-century comparisons of Christianity and Daoism not only helps us better understand the ways these ideas influenced interpretation, but also the diversity and changes in the religious landscapes of Europe and America during this period.

Prothero identifies the "God is one" response to religious diversity among figures as different as Gandhi, Aldous Huxley, and "New Atheist" thinker Richard Dawkins. Particular attention is paid to Huston Smith and his metaphor of different religions as many paths up the same mountain, all leading to a single destination.[64] Influential since it first appeared in print in 1958, Smith's metaphor expresses a monistic and perennialist approach to religious diversity with deep roots in European and American thought. Since the mid-twentieth century the term "perennial philosophy" has perhaps been most associated with Aldous Huxley and his 1945 work by that title.[65] Scholars have, however, traced the phrase to as early as the sixteenth century,

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[62] Barrows, *World's Parliament of Religions*, 980.
[63] Stephen Prothero, *God is Not One: The Eight Rival Religions that Run the World and Why their Differences Matter* (New York: HarperOne, 2010).
[64] *Ibid*., 12 and 19-23.
[65] Aldous Huxley, *The Perennial Philosophy* (New York: Harper, 1945).

when it appears in the title of Agostino Steuco's (1497-1548) *De Perenni Philosophia*.[66] Drawing on even earlier Neoplatonic thought, Steuco elaborates on "one principle of all things, of which there has always been one and the same knowledge among all peoples."[67] Charles Schmitt notes that Steuco asked a question that also plays through the early Euro-American interpretations of the *Daode jing*:

> To what extent are the Christian Scriptures unique, teaching truths which are to be found nowhere else; and to what extent are they the most perfect expression of truths which have been known throughout history to men of all philosophies, all religions, all ethnic backgrounds?[68]

The early missionaries to China were clear about the relative superiority of Christianity that is assumed on either side of Schmitt's formulation of this question. However, the end of the nineteenth century saw both an increasing number of academic translators who bracketed the question in early historical-critical efforts and an even larger number of popular translators who rejected the uniqueness of Christian scripture all together, even while remaining indebted to Biblical Studies and hermenutics. For many, the Bible came to be increasingly treated as one among many expressions of underlying truths shared at least in part by many scriptures and classics.

As noted in the previous chapter, the different preconceptions concerning Christianity and the Bible brought to the encounter with the *Daode jing* significantly affect interpretation, and thereby modify Julia Hardy's finding of "explicit comparisons with Christianity to be the norm" in the reception of the *Daode jing* during the nineteenth century.[69] The goal of early missionaries to demonstrate that Christian revelation was nascent in the *Daode jing* is very different than

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[66] Charles B. Schmitt, "Perennial Philosophy from Agostino Steuco to Leibniz," *Journal of the History of Ideas* 27:4 (Oct-Dev, 1966), 505-532.
[67] *Ibid*., 517.
[68] *Ibid*., 527.
[69] Julia Hardy, "Influential Western Interpretations of the Tao-te-ching."

Carus' attempt to demonstrate that the *Daode jing*, Buddhist teachings, and the Bible all evidence the same monistic principles. Similarly, for Carus scripture was not as radically questioned as with Giles, but it was also not as elevated as with Legge. Rather it was one potential source among many for evidence of universal truths that underlie apparent differences.

This chapter suggests a second modification to Hardy's presentation of "Influential Western Interpretations of the *Tao-Te-Ching*": her over-riding assertion that popular interpretations follow on the heels of those by academics, an assertion followed by Elijah Siegler, among others. As an example, Hardy suggests that Fritjof Capra's 1975 *Tao of Physics* was derived from the early academic efforts of Joseph Needham begun in 1954, with the first volume of *Science and Civilization in China*. While Needham's series is a remarkable achievement, a closer look at the popular reception of the *Daode jing* renders Hardy's top-down structure untenable. Works emphasizing the compatibility of Daoism and science appear long before Needham. Carus' *Canon of Reason and Virtue* is one, and it is an expression of even earlier trends concerned with the compatibility of religion and science more broadly, with the "philosophical" components of Chinese religion that best fit with European and American modernity, and with perennialist attempts to locate the universal amid increasing diversity. Rather than academic interests gradually filtering down to popular interests, both are expressions of larger cultural trends that condition the academic as much as the popular. Needham's expression of these trends was certainly different than that of Capra, but the text of Capra is not a popularization of Needham's text any more than the religious practices of the masses are a

popularization of the teachings of the elites, as proposed by early theories of "folk vs. elite" or "great vs. little" traditions.[70]

In conclusion, the *Canon of Reason and Virtue* continued and reinforced the idea that the *Daode jing* is the principal scripture of Daoism and that the text-based "philosophical" tradition is preferable to its degraded "religious" practices. Carus' monism also strongly inclined him towards the second emerging feature of popular translations: an emphasis on the text's "universal truths." The specifics of different popular conceptions of these "truths" vary, but popular translations generally attempt to locate, fix, and transmit what they feel to be the perennial wisdom of the text. Like translators before him Carus' approach to the *Daode jing* is closely linked to his approach to the Bible, and he exhibits traces of the influence of a populist hermeneutic that becomes an increasingly pronounced third framing feature of American popular translations and is on full display in the translation of Witter Bynner analyzed in the next chapter. Lastly, while Carus looks to add the "Truth" of the *Daode jing* to the Monism for which he advocated, he did so less because it offered anything particularly unique, but rather because its teachings were for him perennial, and advanced, like all "Truth," the harmonizing of religion and science. When Witter Bynner turns to the *Daode jing*, he does so because he believes it will offer unique contributions to contemporary political problems, though analysis of his *Way of Life* will show that his perceptions are rooted more in his social context than the text he translates.

[70] When Catherine Bell examined the academic study of popular religion in China, she proposed that it could be divided into three stages: in the first, society and religion are bifurcated into elite and non-elite levels with an emphasis on their differences (analogous to Waley and LaFargue's historical/scriptural divide); in the second, the connections between these levels are emphasized as one generally developing from the other (analogous to Hardy's top-down model); in the third, "culture is presumed to involve the internal generation of both distinctions and unities, and its holism is described as a function of either underlying structures of some sort or the imposed limits of geography as they moderate the degrees of similarity and difference." Catherine Bell, "Religion and Chinese Culture: Toward an Assessment of 'Popular Religion," *History of Religions* 29:1 (Aug, 1989), 35-57: 43. This dissertation aims at something of a third-stage approach to the *Daode jing,* where the artificial bifurcation of academic and popular approaches is abandoned for a more attentive and nuanced approach to the underlying cultural trends that have influenced the text-tradition in America.

CHAPTER 4: Witter Bynner, *The Way of Life According to Laotzu: An American Version*

In his introduction, Witter Bynner offers the following qualifications for offering a new interpretation of the *Daode jing* in 1944:

> Though I cannot read Chinese, two years spent in China and eleven years of work with Dr. Kiang in translating The Jade Mountain have given me a fair sense of the 'spirit of the Chinese people' and an assiduity in finding English equivalents for idiom which literal translation fails to convey.[1]

When writing *The Way of Life According to Laotzu: An American Version,* Bynner relied heavily on this "sense of the 'spirit of the Chinese people'" and his abilities as a poet. He also was able to work from Carus' text and thirteen other English translations of the *Daode jing*.[2] His reading emerges from the increased access to the text in English enabled by previous translations, and is a perhaps unexpected result of the success of these earlier efforts to popularize the text in Europe and America. It also begins a trend that has come to dominate the current translation market: texts by authors who do not know Chinese now account for more than half of the dozen versions of the *Daode jing* that sell among the top 1% of all books on Amazon.com.[3] Collectively, they may outsell all other English versions combined.[4]

Among the growing number of texts that participate in the traditionary *Daode jing* in America, these bestselling interpretations present the most extreme contrasts to historicist preferences dominant among scholars and academic translators for the last century. They are the most popular of popular translations in all senses of the word. A fascinating group of texts that

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[1] Witter Bynner, *The Way of Life According to Laotzu: An American Version* (New York: John Day, 1944), 14.
[2] *Ibid*., 16.
[3] See introduction n. 15.
[4] Because of Lippe's extensive involvement in the production of the Stillpoint translation, discussed in the introduction and next chapter, I argue it too participates in this category, but I do not count it here. While reportedly higher, its one-million-plus sales numbers are almost equaled by the text of Stephen Mitchel. I am also not relying here on the sales figures of authors like Paul Carus, whose knowledge of Chinese was minimal, but who never admitted this fact. Exact numbers are unavailable, but my review of all published translations leads me to believe this estimation holds true even if we count only those text whose authors freely admit to knowing little if any Chinese: Bynner, Mitchel, Dyer, and Le Guin leading the pack.

express and influence contemporary American understandings of the *Daode jing*, they are virtually ignored in current scholarship. While they are occasionally noted, they are generally just as quickly dismissed, and only one scholar has devoted sustained attention to them in even a few of them in a short article.[5] In it, the author criticizes their limited correspondence with a Chinese text to which they had no access, remains baffled by their massive popularity, and dismisses them from further consideration.

Scholars should neither ignore these texts nor dismiss their popularity. To do so blinds us to the majority of the *Daode jing*'s reception and circulation in contemporary America. Whether they are considered "good" or "bad" translations (and they are judged to be both by different readers) is ultimately irrelevant to their undeniable participation in the realities of the popular reception of the *Daode jing*. Absent any recourse to the Chinese text, they push the concept of "translation" to its breaking point, but that philological boundary falls well within the larger boundaries of interpretation, reception, and transmission. *The Way of Life* is the first of these texts to be published, has been well received by the majority of its readers for seventy years, and remains a bestseller today. It is paradigmatic of its genre, and this chapter focuses on this text and its translator to better understand its creation, distinctive features, and popularity as well as the genre it inaugurates. While all interpretations of the *Daode jing* participate in its text-tradition, those by authors who know no Chinese arguably best reflect the *Daode jing* that has actually been carried over for most English readers across the linguistic and cultural gaps between ancient China and modern America.

Section one reviews the social contexts affecting Bynner's poetic and political interests in the *Daode jing*. Writing at the height of the Second World War, he and others came to believe

[5] Paul Goldin, "Those Who Don't Know Speak: translations of the DDJ by people who do not know Chinese," *Asian Philosophy* 12:3 (2002): 183-195.

that "the Western world might well temper its characteristic faults by taking Laotzu to heart."[6] Section two, looks back to the First World War, during which Bynner began a collaborative translation of a collection of Tang dynasty poetry. The fundamentals of his approach to translation are demonstrated through a comparative analysis of three of these poems with the markedly different translations of the same material by Ezra Pound. Section three examines Bynner's construction of his *Way of Life* using previous translations as his only approximations of the original text. Section four addresses the distinctive features of Bynner's text that result from understandings of both "the spirit of the Chinese people" and the "spirit" of liberal democratic humanism. Section five links Bynner's approach to a Bible-based "populist hermeneutics" suggested by Nathan Hatch that rejected established authorities, required no special training to justify interpretation, emphasized common-sense meaning as the essence of the text, and prized communication in plain language. The final section connects this populist hermeneutic to other features of translations by authors who know no Chinese to better understand their success and relation to the popularization of the *Daode jing* in America.

Section 1: Social Contexts

Harold Witter Bynner was born August 10, 1881 in Brooklyn, New York and died June 1, 1968 in Santa Fe, New Mexico. During his lifetime he met and corresponded with a dizzying array of luminaries ranging from W. B. Yeats to Frank Lloyd Wright and from Henry James to Aldous Huxley. At Harvard (1898-1902) he was the first member of his class to be asked by Wallace Stevens to join the editorial board of the *Harvard Advocate*. At *McClure's* magazine (1902-1906) he was responsible for the first publication of A. E. Housman in America and became a friend and early champion of O. Henry. He advised Ezra Pound's father to send his son

[6] Bynner (1944), 12.

on a trip to Europe, and later arranged the publication of Pound's first three American volumes. He met Kahlil Gibran before he was known to the American public, encouraged him to assemble English translations of his work, and introduced him to Alfred A. Knopf—who later published *The Prophet*. Bynner marched for women's suffrage with John Dewey, and visited with the Russian revolutionary Leon Trotsky. He served as the president of the Poetry Society of America from 1920-1922. He spent significant time with D.H. Lawrence in Mexico, and was the inspiration for a minor character in Lawrence's work *The Plumed Serpent*. He was photographed at his home by a visiting Ansel Adams, was the humorous subject of what Mark Twain claimed to be his only attempt at poetry, and once poured a mug of beer over Robert Frost's head.[7]

In his works, concerns, and associations, Bynner exemplifies what historian David Hollinger has called the "national, secular, ethnically-diverse, left-of-center intelligentsia" that emerged in America during the early twentieth century.[8] Hollinger highlights the inclusive, cosmopolitan desire of this American liberal intelligentsia to "transcend the limitations of any and all particularisms in order to achieve a more complete human experience and a more complete understanding of that experience."[9] As the Phi Beta Kappa poet at Harvard, in 1911 Bynner delivered a poem titled "An immigrant," which he later expanded and published as his second book, *The New World* (1915). The poem expresses a Whitmanesque democratic idealism that Bynner characterizes as "a declaration of the divine creativeness of the spirit of democracy."[10] Bynner's lone biographer, James Kraft, sees in the poem a "growing awareness of

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[7] James Kraft, *Who is Witter Bynner?: A Biography* (Albuquerque: Univ. of New Mexico Press, 1995). Aside from the continued popularity of Bynner's translation of the *Daode jing*, Kraft is almost single-handedly responsible for preserving the name and other works of Bynner since the 1960s.
[8] David Hollinger, "Ethnic Diversity, Cosmopolitanism and the Emergence of the American Liberal Intelligentsia." *American Quarterly* 27:2 (May, 1975): 133-151, 134.
[9] *Ibid*., 135.
[10] James Kraft, *The Works of Witter Bynner*: *Selected Letters* (New York: Farrar, Straus, Giroux, 1981), 36.

the changing America that was taking shape around him, the new order he saw coming into existence as the vast immigrant population took its place in America and set the tempo for the new century."[11]

While immigration from Asia was heavily restricted at the time, the series of circumstances described below contributed to Bynner taking a strong interest in traditional Chinese culture and modern Chinese politics. Like many Americans of the time, these interests in and resulting impressions of China were heavily inflected by the First and Second World Wars. Bynner wrote his version of the *Daode jing* during the height of WWII after stepping down from his position as New Mexico's state chairman for United China Relief, an umbrella organization that became the largest American philanthropic effort to aid Chinese people up to that time.[12] James Kraft relates that during his official tenure from 1941-1943, Bynner "worked diligently to arrange for fundraisers in the major cities and towns and then publicized these activities in Albuquerque with an exhibition of his Chinese paintings and a lecture on Chinese people and poetry."[13] He withdrew from his position in order to write a book on the same topic, a project which he felt "ought to serve China better in the end than the few extra dollars I might scare up for her in the relief campaign."[14]

In a letter to a UCR colleague, Bynner indicates his personal interest in the project and the larger value he sees in contributing to a better understanding of China in America: "The one

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[11] Kraft, *Who is Witter Bynner*, 37. Bynner's commitment to equality and democracy also extended to sustained support of the women's suffrage movement. He helped organize the undergraduate suffrage league of New Hampshire in 1911, and led the men's section of the first suffrage parade in New York City. At the time, Bynner wrote in a letter, "The leveling of privilege and the setting up of justice is the best business I know of for God, poet and man" (Kraft, *Selected Letters*, 36).

[12] Founded in 1941, by 1946 UCR had raised 46.8 million dollars in donations for China ("United Service to China Archives," Dept. of Rare Books and Special Collections, Princeton University; available at http://infoshare1. princeton.edu/libraries/firestone/rbsc/ finding_aids/usc.html).

[13] Kraft, *Selected Letters*, 170 note.

[14] *Ibid*., 177.

possible good positive outcome of the war seems to me to be a bettering of race relations. So, for my own sake too, I am turning back, as I did during the other war, to the deepest of the live civilizations."[15] Bynner's earlier turn to China during the First World War had established lasting influences on his understanding of the *Daode jing* as central to Chinese culture and poetry. When he was unable to find a suitable translation for his larger project on "Chinese people and poetry," he set that project aside and began his efforts to write a version of the *Daode jing* that would better introduce Americans to the text as he had come to understand it.

Bynner first visited China in 1917 with a friend from Harvard who collected Asian art. While there, the United States entered the First World War, and he expressed his dismay over the conflict in a letter: "No force on earth could make me kill; and you may yet have the privilege of doling me bread and water twice a day."[16] In lieu of military service, Bynner arranged in 1918 to teach at the University of California at Berkeley in the Students' Army Training Corps as a professor of Oral English. When the government military school was discontinued in January 1919, he was asked by the English Department to stay and teach the university's first poetry writing workshop. However, Bynner's antiwar sentiments soon led to his departure: in February, 1919 after the war had ended, he signed a petition that asked for the release of still imprisoned conscientious objectors. Under pressure from a local citizen's league, supporters of the petition were harassed and publically criticized in the newspapers. At the close of the school year, Bynner chose to leave Berkeley and the incident behind him.[17]

Before leaving, however, Bynner met Dr. Kiang Kang-Hu (Jiang Kanghu 江亢虎, 1883-1954), and was attracted both to Kiang's political fervor and to his deep knowledge of Chinese

[15] James Kraft, *The Works of Witter Bynner: Chinese Translations* (New York: Farrar, Straus, Giroux, 1978), 314.
[16] Kraft, *Selected Letters*, 60.
[17] *Ibid*., 70-73.

culture.[18] He later remembered that what Kiang "had recently done as a man of principle and brave action was enough to evoke my interest even before I learned to know him as a gentle scholar and stimulating companion."[19] Kiang and Bynner soon began collaborating on the translation of a volume of Chinese poetry (the results of which are addressed in section two). A fascinating figure who deserves further scholarly attention, Kiang was a founder of the first Socialist group in China in 1911 and the Chinese Socialist Party in 1912.[20] According to one source, Mao Tse-tung (Mao Zedong 毛澤東, 1893-1976) worked for him as an office assistant during this time in order to learn more about Socialism.[21] The party was suppressed and its thirty members of the newly elected Chinese parliament expelled in 1913 by order of Yüan Shih-k'ai (Yuan Shikai 袁世凱, 1859-1916), the first president of the Republic of China.[22] Kiang was forced to flee China, and eventually found refuge as a teacher at Berkeley.

Kiang's influence on Bynner's politics is unclear, but evidence shows they shared a belief that the First World War revealed a dangerous militarism in modern "Western" countries

[18] The Wade-Giles spelling of Kiang's name and those of other figures are used in this chapter because this is the Anglicization they chose and under which they published. For reference, I have included Chinese characters and *pinyin* spellings.

[19] Kraft, *Chinese Translations*, 3.

[20] Aside from encyclopedia and dictionary entries like "Chiang K'ang-hu," in the *Biographical Dictionary of Republican China* (1967), he receives some attention in Arif Dirlik and Edward Krebs, "Scoialism and Anarchism in Early Republican China," *Modern China* 7:2 (Apr, 1981), 117-151. His own publications in English include "Socialism in China," *The Masses* (October, 1917); *On Chinese Studies* (Shanghai: Commercial Press, 1934); *Chinese Civilization: an introduction to Sinology* (Shanghai: Chung Hwa Books, 1935); and *Such a life: Autobiography of Kiang Kang-hu* (self-published, 1948).

[21] Kraft, *Selected Letters*, 68.

[22] Sun Yat-sen (孫逸仙 1866-1925) founded the Republic of China in 1911 and served as its provisional president from 1911-1912. Authority was then handed over to Yüan Shih-k'ai who, as an Imperial minister and military leader, had agreed to help protect the weak republic until the Qing emperor abdicated on February 12, 1912. Yüan was then "elected" president on February 14. In "Remembering a Gentle Scholar," Bynner claims that Kiang served as "secretary" to Yüan Shikai and that "when in 1916, Yüan schemed to make himself emperor, Dr. Kiang, denouncing the plot and instrumental in blocking it, had to flee for his life" (Kraft, *Chinese Translations*, 4). Yüan did attempt such a plot, but, given Kiang's involvement with the proscribed Socialist Party, his serving as Yüan's secretary seems unlikely. Bynner does, however, provide accurate information about Kiang's final days a death in prison after serving in the Japanese provisional government of occupied China, verified by Kiang's family, while the 2004 *Encyclopedia Britannica* among other sources maintains that "his whereabouts and fate as a collaborator after the Japanese surrender in 1945 remain unknown."

supposedly absent in traditional Chinese culture. For Kiang, the conflict forced the "West" to question "their type of civilization," and to look for other models, particularly in China.[23] When later serving as the founding head of the first department of Chinese studies in Canada (McGill University), Kiang proposed the following reason for the rapid growth of Chinese Studies in the West:

> China has produced and represents an indigenous culture which is of high standard yet simple and practical, old yet living, non-aggressive yet prevailing, perpetrating, and enduring…Moreover, this civilization, because it is unlike the modern Western type, with all its defects, may yet be a remedy to the present world ailments.[24]

Such sentiment is not accurate to the realities of Chinese history, which has seen ample militarism, but it was widely shared in the wake of "Great War," about which Winston Churchill once observed, "When all was over, torture and cannibalism were the only two expedients that the civilized, scientific, Christian States had been able to deny themselves: and they were of doubtful utility."[25] As critiques of modernity, militarism, and the morality of the "civilized, scientific, Christian Sates" emerge in the aftermath of the First and later Second World Wars, the popular reception of the *Daode jing* increasingly emphasized its teachings as offering correctives. For his part, Bynner came to believe that "the Western world might well temper its characteristic faults by taking Laotzu to heart."[26] It is notable, though, that the contributions which China might offer the "Western world" continued to be drawn more from interpretations of its ancient texts than its contemporary practices.

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[23] Kiang, "Chinese Studies," in *On Chinese Studies*, 8.
[24] Kiang, "What Chinese Studies mean to the West," *ibid*.: 17.
[25] Quoted in Dana Goioa, David Mason, and Meg Schoerke, eds., *Twentieth-Century American Poetry* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 2003): 83; see also Paul Johnson, *Modern Times: The World from the Twenties to the Nineties* Revised ed. (New York: HarperCollins, 1991): 13-14.
[26] Bynner, *Way of Life*, 12.

Like others of his time, Bynner was skeptical of "religious" Daoism, but he believed that the "philosophical" Daoism of the *Daode jing* was "the foundation of China's age-long survival."[27] He writes, with a blithe Orientalism:

> Apart from the superstitious and the misled who have taken over the name for religious sects and have perverted its meaning into alchemy, geomancy, occultism, church tricks generally, a majority in the Oriental world has been fundamentally informed by Taoist quietism, whether or not they realize the source of the patience, forbearance and fortitude which characterize them.[28]

Bynner felt that writing *The Way of Life* was necessary because no previous translations had clearly transmitted Daoism as he understood it. Other works were clouded by misunderstandings of Laozi as being essentially Buddhist or overly reclusive, or by poor presentations of his text as "dry and stiff, pompous and obscure."[29] Apart from the translations that he dismisses as "over-colored with Buddhism," religious interpretations of the *Daode jing* had led to an "abuse of Taoist philosophy" even in China, where religious sects "have perverted its meaning into alchemy, geomancy, occultism, [and] church tricks generally."[30] As we have seen, the trope that Daoist philosophy had been corrupted by Daoist religion was widespread among both Chinese and foreign observers and a persistent feature of popular understanding.

In his introduction, Bynner quotes Kiang Kang-hu's endorsement of this position: "'The Taoist religion,' writes Dr. Kiang, 'is an abuse of Taoist philosophy. We find nothing essentially in common between them and, in many respects, they are conflicting.'"[31] Bynner adds that Kiang "elaborates on this abuse, as he might have done upon ecclesiastical abuse of the philosophy of Jesus, but he does not, in my Occidental judgment, sufficiently emphasize the disservice done

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[27] *Ibid*., 11.
[28] *Ibid*.
[29] *Ibid*., 14.
[30] *Ibid*., 16, 11.
[31] *Ibid*., 16.

Laotzu by academicians."[32] For Bynner, both the pedant and the priest distance readers from Laozi's "original intent and integrity." He distrusted not only organized religion but also scholars, and not only Europen and American interpretations, but also many that the *Daode jing* had received in China. Yet, he remained confident that he could uncover Laozi's transhistorical wisdom, and that "All the deadening paraphernalia wished on him by priests and scholars cannot hide him."[33]

Bynner's confidence was rooted in his understanding of the perennial nature of the *Daode jing*. He took Laozi to be engaged in a project not only similar to Jesus and Buddha but also to Abraham Lincoln and others who "sought to keep the roots of democracy clean" by "respecting all that is individual/common."[34] Similar to Paul Carus, there is a reductive monism in Bynner's approach, which collapses the *Daode jing* into an expression of "one human spirit," even if this perspective is employed to advocate for seemingly noble ends:

> Before there can be political equity in the world, there must be human equity, an end of racial ignorance and snobbery on all sides, an end of the superstition that superficial differences of skin and mold mean fundamental differences of mind and spirit. East and West, there is only one human spirit in the world, though knaves and fools would keep it divided. And it is the nearest thing we know to what we confidently call the divine spirit. At its best it is the spirit of beauty, whether in nature, in art or in the conduct of man. And still, through the centuries, the poets are its heralds.[35]

The presumed universality of the human spirit is a key warrant for Bynner's transhistorical, transcultural, populist approach to the *Daode jing*. It is his response to religious and cultural diversity, and very much based in the progressive contexts and politics of liberal democratic humanism.

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[32] *Ibid*., 16-17.
[33] *Ibid*., 13.
[34] *Ibid*., 20.
[35] Witter Bynner, "On Translating Chinese Poetry," *Asia*, vol. 21 (Dec. 1921).

Despite his desire to voice the "wisdom and spirit of the East," Bynner believed that, in the end, this wisdom and spirit was fundamentally similar to that of the West and of all people. He was not interested in communicating unique and challenging aspects of the *Daode jing*, but rather in communicating a simple and accessible philosophy of life to an American audience, writing that "Laotzu should, I am convinced, be brought close to people in their own idiom, as being beyond race or age."[36] Above all, Bynner prioritized this accessibility. In his rendition of the *Daode jing*, he therefore uses clear and simple language to offer his readers a congenial "American Version" of a simple and relevant "Way of Life." This motivation led to a conscious effort to remove the *Daode jing* from its historical context, to minimize alienating references and concepts, and to make his version as recognizable and relevant as possible.

While his contact with Chinese people and culture was far more extensive than most Americans of his day, it was heavily filtered through the English speakers and English language sources to which he had access, as well as his own preconceptions and interests. Bynner seems to have collapsed much of what he learned into a singular perspective, thus the "spirit of the Chinese people" also explains for him "the warm, live presence of the Chinese poets," and "the quality by which the T'ang poetry endures."[37] This spirit is further aligned with the apparent Daoist elements of Tang poetry, with Laozi as a historical figure, and with the essence of *Daode jing*. By the time he writes *The Way of Life According to Laotzu*, Bynner calls Laozi a "Chinese poet," takes Daoism to be synonymous with "the spirit of the Chinese people," and declares "a majority in the Oriental world has been fundamentally informed by Taoist quietism."[38] When Bynner sets aside his intended book on "Chinese people and poetry" in order to provide a new

[36] *Ibid*., 15.
[37] James Kraft, *The Selected Witter Bynner: Poems, Plays, Translations, Prose, and Letters* (Albuquerque: Univ. of New Mexico Press, 1995), 197-198.
[38] Bynner, *Way of Life*, 11.

English version of the *Daode jing*, he is not pursuing a side interest, but rather feels he is going directly to the heart of the matter.

Close readings of *The Way of Life According to Laotzu: An American Version*, and the additional volume Bynner produced from Chinese materials, *The Jade Mountain*, in the following sections of this chapter evidence that Bynner's approach to the *Daode jing* consistently privileges the spirit over the letter and the familiar over the foreign.[39] He relies heavily on his sense of the "spirit of the Chinese people" and the "spirit" of the text, and looks past the letter when finding "English equivalents for idiom which literal translation fails to convey." As much as he wants to bring attention to "the heart of a Chinese poet," this effort is for the benefit of "Western readers," and he prefers "the clearest and simplest English expression [he] could discover." His preference for the familiar over the foreign and the spirit over the letter determines his approach to the *Jade Mountain* and to the *Daode jing* and conditions his interpretations of both texts.

Section 2: Bynner's *Jade Mountain* and Pound's *Cathay*

Bynner's version of the *Daode jing* is rooted in his earlier collaboration with Kiang Kang-Hu on *The Jade Mountain*.[40] Intrigued by Kiang and Chinese culture, while at Berkeley Bynner proposed that they work together on a translation of Chinese poetry. He later wrote that he regretted not taking this unique opportunity to translate the *Daode Jing*, explaining:

> I had tried to find Laotzu in translations of his sayings; but the translations only clouded him for me, whereas Kiang's oral Anglicizing of T'ang poets, and of their Taoism, illumined him. So I asked Kiang if he and I might not try

[39] I use the somewhat vague terms "spirit" and "letter" because they are used by Bynner, because they appear in and are connected to various earlier statements of hermeneutics, and because they can only be made adequate descriptors through a careful examination of Bynner's texts in contrast to those of others.
[40] Witter Bynner and Kiang Kang-hu, *The Jade Mountain: A Chinese Anthology, Being Three Hundred Poems of the T'ang Dynasty 618-906* (New York: Knopf, 1929).

> collaborating in translating poems by Wang Wêi. I wish we had then thought of trying to translate the source, the *Tao Teh Ching* itself.[41]

Here, at least in retrospect, Bynner identifies the *Daode jing* as the source for some of China's best poetry as well as the culture's "age-long survival." Instead of translating only a few poems, Kiang suggested they attempt the first translation of a complete standard Chinese anthology of poetry.[42] The project eventually took ten years, with Kiang providing English cribs by mail that Bynner developed largely without Kiang's direct assistance. The final result was published in 1929.

Bynner's use of cribs to translate Chinese poetry recalls a more famous figure in modernist poetry: Ezra Pound. He never produced a version of the *Daode jing,* preferring Confucian materials, but Pound and Bynner overlap on four poems by Li Bai 李白 (701-762) that appear in Pound's 1915 *Cathay* and Bynner's 1929 *Jade Mountain*. When producing these texts, both Pound and Bynner knew no Chinese and relied entirely on the rough word-for-word crib translations provided by more qualified scholars. While their conditions of production were similar, the results are dramatically different, with Pound privileging foreign and disruptive images, words, and sounds while Bynner prefers the smooth, familiar, and congenial. Bynner's poetics emphasize the message and "spirit" of the poems, while Pound delights in the jarring effects of a closer adherence to the sounds and images of the Chinese characters, sometimes at the expense of coherence all together. In short, without direct knowledge of Chinese, Pound emphasizes the "foreign letter" while Bynner prefers the "familiar spirit" in their English renderings of these Tang Dynasty poems. The contrast between the poets suggests consistent interpretive strategies that shape both authors' translations of Li Bai and their future works.

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[41] Kraft, *Chinese Translations*, 5-6.

[42] The popular *Three Hundred Tang Poems* (唐詩三百首) compiled by Sun Zhu (孫洙 1722-1778).

In late 1913, Pound received from Ernest Fenollosa's widow hundreds of pages of notes on Japanese drama and Chinese Poetry. Fenollosa, an American academic, had spent considerable time in Japan and had worked closely with Japanese scholars before his premature death in 1908. His widow collected and published some of his manuscripts as *Epochs of Chinese and Japanese Art* in 1912. She felt that Pound was particularly well qualified to inherit the remainder of her husband's unfinished works.[43] These were edited by Pound and published as *"Noh" or Accomplishment: A Study of the Classical Stage of Japan* (1916) and *The Chinese Written Character as a Medium for Poetry* (1918). The posthumous works (and their association with Pound) established Fenollosa and his theories at the forefront of modernist interest in East Asia. They also launched Pound's career as an amateur orientalist.

Among the various papers, Pound received were two large notebooks containing "cribs, glosses, and scholarly apparatus" for sixty-four Chinese poems by the Tang dynasty poet Li Bai.[44] Selections from these poems form the majority of Pound's 1915 volume of free-verse poetry, *Cathay*. Debates continue as to the quality of Pound's Chinese translations, but none doubt their importance to modernist literature.[45] Pound scholar Hugh Kenner defends *Cathay* as good poetry rather than good or bad translation, arguing that attention to translation obscures the real import of the text:

> Its real achievement…consisted in maximizing three criteria at once, criteria hitherto developed separately: the *vers-libre* principle, that the single line is the unit of composition; the Imagist principle, that a poem may build its effects out of things it sets before the mind's eye by naming them; and the lyrical principle, that words or names, being ordered in time, are bound together and recalled into each

[43] Hugh Kenner, *The Pound Era* (Berkeley: Univ. of California Press, 1971), 197.
[44] *Ibid*., 198. Li Bai is also known to the West as Li Bo or Li Po. Fenollosa uses a transliteration of the Japanese pronunciation "Rihaku," which is followed by Pound.
[45] See Eric Hayot, "Critical Dreams: Orientalism, Modernism, and the Meaning of Pound's China," *Twentieth Century Literature* 45:4 (Winter, 1999): 511-533.

other's presence by recurrent sounds.[46]

Kenner provides an apt explanation of Pound's poetic contributions, but given Pound's continued involvement with Chinese materials for the remainder of his life, the connection between the material from which he worked and his achievements in poetry should not so quickly be dismissed.

Examining the overlapping poems below makes clear that, while both poets knew no Chinese and worked from similar character-by-character cribs, Bynner's preferences lead him to assemble smooth, accessible, and comprehensible poems, while Pound's results emphasize the distinctive and disruptive.[47]

"The Jewel Stair's Grievance"	玉階怨	"A Sigh from a Staircase of Jade"
Ezra Pound	李白	Witter Bynner
The jewelled steps are already quite white with dew,	玉階生白露	*Her jade-white staircase is cold with dew;*
It is so late that the dew soaks my gauze stockings,	夜久侵羅襪	*Her silk soles are wet, she lingered there so long…*
And I let down the crystal curtain	卻下水晶簾	*Behind her closed casement, why is she still waiting,*
And watch the moon through the clear autumn.	玲瓏望秋月	*Watching through its crystal pane the glow of the autumn moon?*

In this poem, Pound's version is much closer to the original Chinese, which contains four separate images expressed in four pithy lines of five characters each. Pound adds very little to the Chinese, and translates nearly every character. Bynner, on the other hand, drops at least one character from each line, introduces "cold" into the first line, "she lingered there" in the second, and "why is she still waiting" in the third. Bynner also shifts "white" to modify the stairs when it should modify the dew in the first line, and removes all action from the third line, where if she

[46] Kenner, *Pound Era*, 199.

[47] The analysis is limited to the three shorter poems. The fourth is too long to treat in full, but the poets' treatments are consistent with the analysis below.

does not "let down the crystal curtain," she should at least *close* the "crystal pane" or "casement." Based on their proximity to the original Chinese we can surmise that in this poem Pound stayed close to Fenollosa's notes while Bynner strayed further from those he received from Dr. Kiang.

Pound's poetics are explicit in a play of sounds that disrupt a smooth reading with "quite white," "soaks…stockings," and "crystal curtain." With the exception of a similar "closed casement," Bynner's alliterations glide smoothly across "silk soles…she…so," "lingered…long," and "why…waiting…watching." The chop of Pound's diction is consistent with his imagism, and he juxtaposes without explicit connection. The image of each line is distinct, with only the repetition of "dew" to link the first two lines and the presence of a subject to link the last three. Bynner may end with a question mark, but he does not rely on his readers to connect his phrases, and carefully locates each image in logical and spatial relation to the others: "she lingered there," "behind her," "watching through." Bynner also makes sure that his images are easily understood, while Pound seems happy to let us puzzle over the mysterious "crystal curtain," the "jeweled steps," and the thought of watching "through" autumn.

Pound's unusual images lend a foreign quality to the poem that Bynner generally avoids; the steps for Bynner are merely jade colored, and his curtain an understandable "crystal pane" through which the glow of the moon is observed. Readers of both poems know they are translations from the Chinese, but Bynner makes his China as accessible and comprehensible as possible, while Pound's choppy diction and disconnected images suggest a distant China and draw our attention to the foreignness of Chinese poetics. Eric Hayot comments that the *Times Literary Supplement'*s review of *Cathay* was "highly aware of the estranging effect of Pound's meter and syntax," and he quotes from it: "But is the Chinese language, we wonder, as unusual

as Mr. Pound's? If not, he does misrepresent the effect upon a Chinese reader, though he may deliberately do that so as to enable us to understand the Chinese method."[48]

Similar preferences by both Pound and Bynner influence their versions of the next overlapping poem, though this slightly longer verse is more suited to Bynner's style and he therefore stays closer to the Chinese original than does Pound:

"Taking Leave of a Friend"	送友人	"A Farewell to a Friend"
Ezra Pound	李白	Witter Bynner
Blue mountains to the north of the walls,	青山横北郭	*With a blue line of mountains north of the wall,*
White river winding about them;	白水遶東城	*And east of the city a white curve of water,*
Here we must make separation	此地一為别	*Here you must leave me and drift away*
And go out through a thousand miles of dead grass.	孤蓬萬里征	*Like a loosened water-plant hundreds of miles…*
Mind like a floating white cloud,	浮雲遊子意	*I shall think of you in a floating cloud;*
Sunset like the parting of old acquaintances	落日故人情	*So in the sunset think of me.*
Who bow over their clasped hands at a distance.	揮手自兹去	*…We wave our hands to say good-bye,*
Our horses neigh to each other as we are departing.	蕭蕭班馬鳴	*And my horse is neighing again and again.*

In the second line, Bynner leaves the water in its correct place, curving around the eastern city walls, while Pound transports it to the mountains and ignores the city entirely. Pound's third line, "Here we must make separation," gives a translation so literal that the language is bizarre in a way that would be foreign to any audience. This line is very much like what Pound must have

[48] Hayot, "Critical Dreams," 520. Pound is undoubtedly aware of and assiduously cultivates this "estranging effect." He maintains it throughout *Cathay*, though in the case of this poem, it is further accentuated by the lack of explanation in the poem and the presence of an explanatory note—one of only two in the book, which seemingly serves to educate readers as to how the might fill in the story suggested by the stark images: "Jewel stairs, therefore a palace. Grievance, therefore there is something to complain of. Gauze stockings, therefore a court lady, not a servant who complains. Clear autumn, therefore he has no excuse on account of weather. Also she has come early, for the dew has not merely whitened the stairs, but has soaked her stockings. The poem is especially prized because she utters no direct reproach" (Cathay, 13).

seen in Fenollosa's notebooks, and he chooses to leave it unstrung on the page. Bynner's version, "Here you must leave me and drift away," flows as we would expect in a smooth, familiar idiom. Both poets preserve the feel of the fourth line, though they disagree on the nature of the plant, which in the standard version of the Chinese poem is a type of shrub: 蓬 *peng*. A related character 莲 *lian* means "lotus," which might account for Bynner's less exotic "water-plant."

While we might expect that Bynner has made his version of the seventh line less foreign-seeming by westernizing the Chinese act of bowing, he has actually followed his crib closely. Here Bynner did not domesticate the foreign—the Chinese reads "wave hands"—rather Pound has introduced a mark of "foreignness" by having his friends "bow over their clasped hands." In his introduction to a recent reissue of *The Jade Mountain*, translator Burton Watson writes, "Bynner never gave in to the fashion, still widely prevalent in his time of patronizing his material by investing it with a deliberately quaint or exotic tone."[49] We can contrast this evaluation to Hayot's judgment that "Pound translated via a kind of cultural shorthand, in which elements easily recognizable as "Chinese"—willows, courtesans, peach blossoms—established the authenticity of the Eastern setting."[50]

The differences between the poets are perhaps made clearest when we compare their versions of a final overlapping poem:

"Separation on the River Kiang"	送孟浩然之廣陵	"A Farewell to Meng Hao-jan on His Way to Yang-chou"
Ezra Pound	李白	Witter Bynner
Ko-jin goes west from Ko-kaku-ro,	故人西辭黃鶴樓	*You have left me behind, old friend, at the Yellow Crane Terrace,*
The smoke flowers are blurred over the river.	煙花三月下揚州	*On your way to visit Yang-chou in the misty month of flowers.*

[49] Bynner, *Jade Mountain*, 30.
[50] Hayot, "Critical Dreams," 522.

His lone sail blots the far sky.	孤帆遠影碧空盡	*Your sail, a single shadow, becomes one with the blue sky,*
And now I see only the river, The long Kiang, reaching heaven	惟見長江天際流	*Till now I see only the river, on its way to heaven.*

The most striking contrast in these poems is their use of transliteration. Bynner's poem preserves in transliteration two of the five proper nouns that appear in the Chinese: "Meng Hao-jan" (孟浩然) and "Yang-chou" (揚州). He offers an accurate translation of a third proper noun, "Yellow Crane Terrace" (黃鶴樓), replaces a more specifically named location in the title with the more general "Yang-chou" that also appears in the second line, and ignores the name of the river in the last line. When Bynner can generalize, he does. When he can provide English equivalents, he does. Only when a proper noun cannot be translated does he resort to transliteration.

In contrast, Pound's poem delights in the transliterations, which come from Fenollosa's training in Japanese rather than Chinese. He has "Kiang" in the title and last line, and has "Ko-jin" and "Ko-kaku-ro" in the second. All of these appear as proper nouns, but only the last one is based on the Japanese transliteration of a proper noun that appears in the text: 黃鶴樓 (which Bynner translates as "Yellow Crane Terrace"). Pound's "kiang" in the title and closing line is a transliteration not of a proper noun, but of the generic word "river" (江 *jiang*). Pound must have been aware of this since he translates it in his title before immediately repeating it in transliteration to achieve "the River Kiang." In his final line, he translates the single appearance of 江 as "river" before repeating the character again in translation to achieve "the long Kiang," which ought to be the "Long River": the Chinese name for what Americans generally know as the Yangtze (長江 *Changjiang*). For his part, Bynner chose here not to use even the familiar proper noun "Yangtze" in preference for a generic and singular "river." Similarly, in the first line

of Bynner's version, "Old friend" may appear to be a generic replacement for Pound's proper noun of "Ko-jin," until we recognize that like, "kiang," this term has also been left untranslated and corresponds to two Chinese characters, 故人 *guren*, which taken together have the exact meaning Bynner provides.

While we might be tempted to blame Pound's irruptions of transliteration on Fenollosa and his notebooks, Hugh Kenner's analysis makes clear that Pound was well aware of the actual meanings of these characters and that he consciously decided to leave them untranslated and out of place. Having examined Fenollosa's cribs, Kenner relates that Pound chose to preserve the choppy "Ko-kaku-ro," Fenollosa's gloss of which was "discarded as overly picturesque."[51] Both "ko-jin" and "kiang" fit in with this unique staccato of foreign sounds and were likely left in transliteration for lyrical effect. In his notes, Fenollosa had clearly written "old acquaintance" underneath "ko jin." Kenner excuses Pound's choice not to "open a poem with so bleak a periphrasis," and notes that he chose to treat "Ko-jin" as a proper name "apparently with his eyes open."[52] However, "Old acquaintance" does not seem an overly long or indirect "periphrasis," nor does it seem particularly "bleak." Moreover, Pound's effort and occupation in all these translations was to turn Fenollosa's notes into poetry. There are many ways to poeticize "old acquaintance," and Pound chose an extreme one when he knowingly promoted a transliteration to apparent personhood. In all, Pound ignores three of the five proper nouns in the Chinese poem, and each of the apparently proper nouns that he leaves in transliteration have clear English equivalents, as Bynner's version of the poem demonstrates.

[51] Kenner, *Pound* Era, 204. Kenner further notes that this was "just as well since it was erroneous anyhow."
[52] *Ibid*.

In the three poems above, we see in ever sharper relief that Bynner consistently prioritizes clarity, simplicity, equivalency, and familiarity; while Pound delights in the suggestive, the disruptive, the novel, and the foreign. Bynner will bring a similar hermeneutic to his later work on the *Daode jing* when he focuses on conveying its "essential spirit" in "clear English idiom." Conversely, Pound's hermeneutics will lead him deeper into a "literal" exploration of the Chinese character. While few critics would characterize Pound's later translations as literal, evidence suggests that they might accurately be described as "hyper-literal." As he became more familiar with Chinese, Pound became increasingly focused on the graphic elements that in combination make up Chinese characters, and he developed an "ideographic method" based on what Eric Hayot characterizes as "an aesthetic theory rooted in an ontology of Chinese writing."[53] It is important to note that Pound's preference for the "foreign letter" did not lead him to the historical-critical recovery of his texts' original meanings. Pound did delve further and further into the foreign letter, but his interests remained rooted in the reinvigoration of contemporary English poetics. This is a more elite interest than Bynner's populist efforts to render ancient Chinese texts in a "familiar idiom," but both poets differ from most academic approaches by emphasizing their own forms of relevancy over concerns for historical accuracy.

Pound's method is described and critiqued by the prolific translator Wing-tsit Chan (陳榮捷 1901-1994) in his 1954 review of Pound's *Confucius: The Great Digest and Unwobbling Pivot*.[54] Chan praises Pound's beautiful poetry, but criticizes his style of translation: "Pound's

[53] Hayot, "Critical Dreams," 511.
[54] Wing-tsit Chan, "Review of *Confucius: The Great Digest and Unwobbling Pivot*," *Philosophy East and West* 3:4 (Jan. 1954): 371-373.

ideographic interest has led him astray and has made his version unnecessarily complicated."[55] Chan uses Pound's misreading of a variant for the character meaning "crowd" (衆 *zhong*) to show the danger of assuming that characters have always been written with the same combination of ideographic elements. Based on his hyper-literal method Pound concludes that "I think this ideogram has an original sense of the people gathered at its tribal blood rites."[56] Chan points out that "none of the numerous Chinese commentators and none of the many Western translators ever made such a wild suggestion."[57] He explains that Pound drew his conclusion from the apparent construction of the character from one component which represents blood (血) and another which represents three people (氺). Further research ("one look at the *K'ang-hsi Dictionary*") would have revealed that the "blood" component was originally written as a visually similar component representing the eye (罒). The more accurate ideographic interpretation would have been something like "all of the people in view."

Even when one gets the ideographic components right, a translation based on a dissection of a character's elements will often be incorrect, because most characters are not ideographic but phonetic compounds or phonetic loans. Even rendering true ideograms become unnecessarily complicated. Chan points out that a key, three-character phrase "manifest bright virtue" (明明德) from the classic Confucian text *The Great Learning* (大學 *Daxue)*, becomes in Pound's translation "intelligence comes through the process of looking straight into one's heart and acting on the result."[58] The first three words of his translation, "intelligence comes through," correspond to the first two Chinese characters. The remaining thirteen words of his translation, "the process

[55] *Ibid*., 372.
[56] *Ibid*.
[57] *Ibid*.
[58] *Ibid*.

of looking straight into one's heart and acting on the result," are extracted from the single character for "virtue." This is an evocative conception of virtue, but not one that is authorized by the character's components, nor one that is present its diverse applications. While some of Pound's hyper-literal explorations and expansions of individual characters may be interesting, Chan argues that "no one doubts that to Confucius and his pupils, as to students of the Chinese language today, *tê* simply meant virtue."[59]

Given Wing-tsit Chan's harsh treatment of Pound, it is perhaps surprising that in an article published the same year he treats Bynner far more generously.[60] "Chinese Philosophy, a Bibliographic Essay" provides an annotated bibliography of works "intend as an aid to those who plan for an introductory study of the history of Chinese philosophy."[61] Pound is not mentioned in the section on Confucianism, or elsewhere in the book. However, in the section on Daoism the large majority of Chan's attention is devoted to the "translations" of Arthur Waley and Witter Bynner. Waley's text, *The Way and Its Power*, is praised as "the most authoritative translation, from the historical and textual points of view," but criticized as "at times too literal in translation."[62] On the other hand, Chan advises, "if one prefers readability to critical scholarship, Witter Bynner's 'American version,' *The Way of Life According to Laotzu*, is delightful and in many respects conveys the Taoist feeling more successfully than Waley's work."[63] This is a bit of a backhanded compliment to be sure, but one Bynner would likely have been happy to accept.

[59] *Ibid*.
[60] Chan would go on to author his own translation of the *Daode jing* in 1963.
[61] Wing-tsit Chan "Chinese Philosophy, a Bibliographical Essay," *Philosophy East and West* 3:4 (Jan. 1954): 337-357, 337.
[62] *Ibid*., 348.
[63] *Ibid*.

Chan goes on to conclude, "In spite of linguistic deficiencies…the book is good as a supplement to Waley's, and even better as an introduction."[64]

Chan acknowledges that Bynner's version is "so free that it should have been offered as a commentary instead of a translation," and he points out that it fails to bring out some basic Daoist concepts.[65] However, Chan selects Bynner's text for comment and praise from over forty available English translations.[66] His generosity likely comes from two sources: he was looking for "introductory" material and he had already recommended Waley's "authoritative," "critical," and "at times too literal" translation. Bynner's translation satisfies the first criteria, and is the antithesis of the latter qualities. In his introduction to *The Way of Life According to Laotzu*, Bynner bemoans the "absence of a forthright and congenial translation,"[67] and would likely have been pleased to see his text recommended by Wing-tsit Chan as an introduction and offered as a supplement to the scholasticism of Waley. In the vocabulary of the model of translation first proposed by Waley and later adopted by Michael LaFargue and other scholars of the *Daode jing*, Chan suggests Waley's own translation as paradigmatically historical and Bynner's as paradigmatically scriptural. It is notable that Chan recommends readers to consult both.[68]

Section 3: Assembling The Way of Life

Twenty years after working on *The Jade Mountain*, when Bynner's attention turned to the *Daode jing* as the key text of "Chinese people and poetry," he began by consulting fourteen

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[64] *Ibid*.
[65] *Ibid*.
[66] By my count, forty-one English translations of the *Daode jing* had been published before 1954, some admittedly more obscure than others.
[67] Bynner, *Way of Life*, 342.
[68] Similarly, A.C. Graham will later advise that "the reader whom Bynner has roused to an interest in Lao-tzu had better move on to more demanding translators such as D.C. Lau." A.C. Graham, "Two Notes on the Translation of Taoist Classics," in *Interpreting Culture Through Translation*, ed. Roger T. Ames et al. (Hong Kong: Chinese Univ. Press, 1991): 119-144, 130.

previous translations. As noted above, he found these texts to misunderstand and poorly present Laozi, whom Bynner understood as a poet "neither occult nor complex but open and simple, neither pontifical nor archaic but lay and current, in his calm human stature."[69] Dissatisfied with all previous offerings, Bynner began a yearlong project of comparing them and creating a new version that better communicated his understanding of the text. When finished, he informed his readers that "through various and varying English versions of the *Tao Teh Ching* I have probed for the meaning as I recognize it and have persistently sought for it the clearest and simplest English expression I could discover."[70] He also related to his readers the opinion of previous translator Walter Gorn Old, one of the Theosophists discussed in chapter two:

> Any translation from the Chinese is capable of extreme flexibility and license, of which, indeed the translator must avail himself if he would rightly render the spirit rather than the letter of the text; and the spirit, after all, is the essential thing, if we follow the teaching of Laotzu. It is safe to say that the more literal the translation may be the more obscure its meaning.[71]

Having absolved himself from the demands of literal translation in favor of "the spirit rather than the letter," he announces that "Laotzu should, I am convinced, be brought close to people in their own idiom, as a being beyond race or age." Here we see clearly the operations of a popular translation and the preference for the "familiar spirit" that Bynner brought first to his translations of Li Bai and other Tang Dynasty poets and now applied to the *Daode jing*.

A close reading of a representative chapter of *The Way of Life According to Laotzu* in comparison to earlier translations illuminates how this preference affected the text's construction. Bynner mentions fourteen previous translations, but only identifies half of them: those by Paul Carus, Issac Heysinger, Lionel Giles, Walter Gorn Old, Dwight Goddard, Arthur

[69] Bynner, *Way of Life*, 21.
[70] *Ibid*., 14.
[71] *Ibid*., 15.

Waley, and Lin Yutang.[72] These seven will be used below as representative of the texts he read. Following the suggestion of Wing-Tsit Chan, Arthur Waley provides an initial counterpoint to Bynner's version of chapter thirty-three:

Arthur Waley (1934)	Chapter 33	Witter Bynner (1944)
To understand others is to have knowledge;	知人者智	*Knowledge studies others,*
To understand oneself is to be illumined.	自知者明	*Wisdom is self-known;*
To conquer others needs strength;	勝人者有力	*Muscle masters brothers,*
To conquer oneself is harder still.	自勝者強	*Self-mastery is bone;*
To be content with what one has is to be rich.	知足者富	*Content need never borrow,*
He that works through violence may get his way;	強行者有志	*Ambition wanders blind:*
But only what stays in its place/ Can endure	不失其所者久	*Vitality cleaves to the marrow.*
When one dies one is not lost; there is no other longevity.	死而不亡者壽	*Leaving death behind.*

Bynner and Waley both depart from Bynner's other sources by eliminating a person as the grammatical subject of each line. Following the Chinese grammar more closely, the others take the verb phrase in each line to modify a person who is of a certain type or has a certain quality: "He who knows others is learned" (Lin), "He who conquers himself is mighty" (Old), "One who knows sufficiency is rich" (Carus), *etcetera*. However, while Waley also drops this grammar, Bynner follows him neither in his overall structure nor in his vocabulary. For Bynner,

[72] Full publication details in appendix. We cannot be sure of the editions Bynner consulted, but the original publication dates are as follows: Carus (1898), Heysinger (1903), Giles (1904), Old (1904), Waley (1934), Goddard (1939) and Lin (1942). In addition to the seven Bynner mentions by name, I have examined seven more to which he would most likely have had access. Together these fourteen demonstrate a range of interpretations with considerable overlap. Following the most common choices of vocabulary, valance, and syntax within this range results—rather remarkably—in a text identical to the first English translation of this chapter (Chalmers, 1868) for the first four lines of the poem and a nearly identical fifth and eighth lines. Only in the sixth and seventh line is there not a clear majority among varying interpretations. This suggests both the influence and adequacy of Chalmers' initial translation as well as specific sites within the text that have proven most ambiguous and fertile for interpretation.

Waley may have served as an excuse to depart from convention, but does not then serve as a guide.

In the second line, Bynner and Waley are both attempting to avoid what the majority of previous translations render as "enlightened," a term heavily associated with Buddhism. However, Waley is comfortable with a stilted "illumined," while Bynner opts for the comfortable "wisdom." In the next line Bynner introduces "brothers" for "others," to vary the rhyme, but "brothers" also introduces a social commentary that is not present in earlier translations and can be seen as related to his belief in a universal human spirit that unites all people in a "brotherhood of man." "Muscle" is taken from Lin Yutang, who moves from the standard "strong" or "strength" to "power of muscles." Continuing the imagery of the previous line, Bynner introduces "bone" where Lin has "strong" and most others have an escalation of "strong" such as "mighty." After using "muscle," Waley's "harder still" may have suggested "bone," and Bynner prefers this natural, visceral imagery to the abstractions of all other translations and of the original that underlies them.

The vocabulary Bynner uses in the last four lines is linked to the unusual grammatical structure he adopts by opposing lines five and six. With the exception of Waley, all previous translations give the sixth line a positive valance, while Bynner emphasizes the reverse. To accomplish this, he radically changes the line, which was generally read, "He who is determined has strength of will" (Lin), "He who acts with energy has strength of purpose" (Giles), or "One who pushes with vigor has a will" (Carus). There is nothing like "ambition wanders blind" in any of his predecessors. However, the *Daode jing* is generally understood to advocate for the benefits of passivity over the drawbacks of forceful action, and, likely with this larger context in mind, Bynner chooses to interpret it here as criticizing ambition and leaves out any praise of willpower.

Bynner also couples lines seven and eight: "Vitality cleaves to the marrow/ Leaving death behind." With "marrow" he returns to the imagery of "muscle" and "bone." "Marrow" does not appear in any previous translation, nor does the concept it suggests: that vitality depends upon staying close to the center of the self-mastery described as "bone." None of the translations he consulted explicitly connect the conclusions found in the seventh and eighth lines with the observations above them, and half do not even see them to be connected phrases. While previous translations take this chapter, and many others, to be a loosely connected series of aphoristic observations, only Bynner and Heysinger treat the entire chapter as a single sentence, and Bynner goes beyond Heysinger in unifying the passage through sustained imagery that explicitly connects self-knowledge, self-mastery, contentment, and vitality.

While elegant, this tidy unification the chapter's ideas recalls A.C. Graham's criticism that "Bynner is always reluctant to risk obscurity by presenting naked insights without explaining, abstracting, qualifying, diffusing. He likes a smooth flow, not the abrupt confrontations and juxtapositions of the Chinese."[73] Bynner believed that he was transmitting the essence of Laozi's teachings, but his departures from the majority of previous translations in syntax and diction reveal a frequent disregard both for their attempts at more literal translation and for their approximations of the underlying complexity of the *Daode jing*. He seems comfortable using the range of previous translations as inspiration rather than restraint, and following his general sense of the text's spirit rather than the specifics of his predecessors as guide.

[73] Graham, "Two Notes," 125.

Section 4: The Spirit of the Chinese People

Examining his departures from previous translations makes clear that when he compiled his version of the *Daode jing*, Bynner went about the project with a supreme confidence in his ability to discern the spirit behind the letter and to communicate it in a familiar idiom. While Bynner smooths over many of the details, the larger contours of his text falls well within the general boundaries of the traditionary *Daode jing* received in English. He relies less on any particular previous translation than on finding a unique phrasing for his text that falls within or not far beyond previous efforts (similar to the method of editing later adopted by Toinette Lippe). Thus, the previous translations provide some limits to his interpretive efforts rather than the original language. Yet, even without the difficulties inherent in crossing vast linguistic, historical, and cultural distances, considerable ambiguity remains in the modern English translations he consulted. Bynner took this ambiguity as evidence for "extreme flexibility and license, of which, indeed the translator must avail himself if he would rightly render the spirit rather than the letter of the text."[74] He therefore freely departs from the letter of previous translations when they conflict with his sense of the text's spirit. Given his extensive involvement with China relief efforts, if Bynner had felt it was necessary to have the assistance of a Chinese scholar in the production of his translation, or to have a Chinese speaker check the fidelity of his final product, it would have been relatively easy to secure access to such a person. It is not that Bynner was without such resources, but rather that he was confident that he did not need them.

[74] Bynner uses this sentence quoted from previous translator Walter Gorn Old in his introduction to justify his preference for the spirit over the letter based on the ambiguity of Chinese evident in the diversity of previous translations (*Way of Life*, 15).

This confidence is expressed in the statement that begins this chapter and appears in the introduction to *The Way of Life According of Laotzu*:

> Though I cannot read Chinese, two years spent in China and eleven years of work with Dr. Kiang in translating The Jade Mountain have given me a fair sense of the 'spirit of the Chinese people' and an assiduity in finding English equivalents for idiom which literal translation fails to convey.[75]

The quotation marks that set off the phrase "the spirit of the Chinese people" provide a crucial clue to Bynner's conception of this spirit and his confidence in identifying it. In his critical review of "pseudo-translations," Paul Goldin writes, "It is striking that Bynner felt obliged to put the phrase 'spirit of the Chinese people' in quotation marks; his own conscience seems to have balked at such a self-serving platitude."[76] What Goldin misses, or does not acknowledge, is that "The Spirit of the Chinese People" is the title essay of a book by Ku Hung-ming (Gu Hongming 辜鴻銘, 1857-1928).[77] Aside from the subtle quotation marks, Bynner does not specifically refer to this text or its author in his introduction to *The Way of Life*, but he does acknowledge its influence on his understanding of Chinese culture in his introduction to *The Jade Mountain* and in an article titled "Translating Chinese Poetry."[78]

Bynner is overly generous in his calculation of "two years spent in China," but in addition to his 1917 trip with his art-collecting friend he did make a long trip to China in 1920 with Kiang Kang-hu. There, Bynner met the "queued and aged" Ku Hung-ming in Beijing and found him to be "a witty opponent of foreign influence and a doughty upholder of traditional Chinese culture."[79] In his introduction to *The Jade Mountain*, Bynner specifies that the "simple

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[75] Bynner, *Way of Life*, 14.
[76] Goldin, "Those Who Don't Know Speak," 184.
[77] Ku Hung-ming, *The Spirit of the Chinese People* (Beijing: Commercial Press, 1915).
[78] Bynner, "Translating Chinese Poetry." Appears in Kraft, *Selected Witter Bynner*, 188-199.
[79] Kraft, *Selected Witter Bynner*, 197.

secret" of the Tang dynasty poets is revealed in Ku Hung-ming's text.[80] However, "The Spirit of the Chinese People," addresses not poetry, but the "gentle humanity" of the "real Chinaman," which Ku argues is the product of a "true human intelligence" that comes from "a working together in harmony of the heart and head. In short it is a happy union of soul with intellect."[81] Ku parallels a "life of the heart" with the "life of a child," and maintains that the "wonderful peculiarity of the Chinese" is that they live also as "a nation of adult reason."[82] In this union of heart and head, soul and intellect, the qualities of a child and the qualities of an adult, Ku locates the human intelligence and "gentle humanity" that characterizes the Chinese people and has maintained their culture throughout the ages in a "spirit of perpetual youth, the spirit of national immortality."[83] In his introduction to *The Spirit of the Chinese People*, Ku also writes that the "real Chinaman," therefore offers an "invaluable and hitherto unsuspected asset," which he wants "to call the attention of the people of Europe and America to, just at this moment when civilisation seems to be threatened with bankruptcy."[84]

Ku Hung-ming, Kiang Kang-Hu, and many other Chinese intellectuals of the time were actively redefining traditional Chinese culture in relation to Euro-American notions of modernity, the collapse of the Qing dynasty, repeated military defeats, and internal uprisings. Both men's English works should be understood as strategic attempts to promote Chinese interests and appeal to foreigners who like Bynner were disenchanted with the militarism of WWI, concerned about the faults within their own societies, and interested in Asia as a source for widening their

[80] Kraft, *Chinese Translations*, 40.
[81] Ku, *Spirit of the Chinese People*, 4 and 13.
[82] *Ibid*., 12.
[83] *Ibid*., 13.
[84] Ku, *Spirit of the Chinese People*, viii.

cosmopolitan worldviews.[85] In Europe and America, the *Daode jing* was increasingly received as a text capable of ameliorating contemporary faults in "western" civilization, and Chinese and non-Chinese authors alike responded strategically to this belief. Bynner was happy to accept Ku's and Kiang's simplifications of Chinese culture and history, which occurred already in relation to "western" culture, and he fit what they presented as best about China into what he found best in America. Thus, Whitman and Thoreau appear in the first paragraphs of his introduction to the *The Way of Life* "whether or not consciously" as Laozi's "more eminent Western disciples," and Laozi is described as being "as natural, as genial, as homely as Lincoln."

Bynner felt secure in his literary skills and his understanding of Chinese culture, Daoism, and the *Daode jing* based on his travels, reading, earlier experiences translating Chinese poetry with Kiang Kang-hu, and his interaction with Ku Hung-ming. The influence of Kiang is pervasive and *The Way of Life According to Laotzu* is dedicated to him. The influence of Ku is less acknowledged, but evident in multiple chapters. James Kraft writes that Bynner would often quote Ku's opinion that the "real Chinaman" has "the head of a grown-up man and the heart of a child."[86] "Head" and "heart" therefore have a very specific valence for Bynner when used in association with Chinese thought, and lead to some of his more distinctive departures from his predecessors.

In the second half of chapter three, the *Daode jing* suggests that a sage-ruler reduces the knowledge and ambition of his people, satisfies their basic needs, and keeps the knowledgeable from meddling with the ignorant. Here we encounter a line that is translated by Waley as "By emptying their hearts," by Lin Yu-tang, as "He keeps empty their hearts," and by Isaac Heysinger, as "unloads the people's hearts." Walter Gorn Old and Dwight Goddard stray from

[85] See Jonathan Spence, *The Search for Modern China* (New York: Norton, 1990).
[86] Kraft, *Who is Witter Bynner*, 45.

literal translation by specifying that "desire" should be removed from the heart. Through the influence of Ku Hung-ming, however, Bynner saw the heart as integral to the Chinese spirit, as the source of true humanity, intelligence, and vitality. He therefore avoids any reductive verb like "empty," "remove," or "unload," and departs from all his predecessors (and the underlying text) with the phrase, "A sound leader's aim/ Is to open people's hearts." Similarly, in chapter ten of Bynner's version, we read "Can your learned head take leaven/ From the wisdom of your heart?" There is no mention of "heart" in previous translations of this chapter, and this advice is inserted where Waley's translation has a more literal "Can your mind penetrate every corner of the land, but you yourself never interfere?" The influence of this conception of head and heart is again visible in chapter sixty-five. Bynner writes that leaving people to themselves is an ancient "key" to government, which "If modern man would use it, he/ Could find old wisdom in his heart." Both "heart" and "modern man" are absent in previous translations, and their additions emphasize Bynner's desire to acquaint America with the ancient wisdom found in "the spirit of the Chinese people," as well as his reliance on his sense of this spirit to guide his interpretations.

Even while relying on Ku Hung-ming's presentation of the "spirit of the Chinese people," Bynner held to his earlier conviction that this spirit was universal: "East and West, there is only one human spirit in the world…and it is the nearest thing we know to what we confidently call the divine spirit."[87] His translation of the *Daode jing* is therefore marked also by his preexisting understandings of this spirit both popular and democratic. For Bynner, this sprit is universally shared as "the fundamental sense commonly inherent in mankind,"[88] and as "a fundamental expression of everything in the heart and mind of men which respects, enjoys and serves the

[87] Bynner, "On Translating Chinese Poetry," 1043.
[88] Bynner, *Way of Life*, 12.

individual good by respecting, enjoying and serving the common good."[89] This opinion, first articulated in his introduction, finds further expression in chapter eight of *The Way of Life*. The first four lines read:

> *Man at his best, like water,*
> *Serves as he goes along:*
> *Like water he seeks his own level,*
> *The common level of life.*

The seven translators mentioned in his introduction generally agree with Bynner's first two lines. In the third line, he departs from them by writing "his own level," when the others express that water seeks low places which others avoid or disdain. In so doing, previous translators agree that in the fourth line that water comes near to, or is like the 道 *dao*. Bynner chose to depart from these translations by first interpreting *dao* as "life," and then by locating its superiority not in the low, but in the common. The privileging of the low, the soft, and the useless is one of the defining characteristics of the *Daode jing* and one of its greatest contributions to Chinese thought. Here, Bynner' sense of the spirit of the text leads to an idiosyncratic interpretation that emphasizes not the low and disdained but the democratic and common good.

We find a similar departure by Bynner in chapter sixty-six. He writes, "The common people love a sound man/ Because he does not talk above their level." The translations he read are generally represented by that of Arthur Waley: "Therefore the Sage/ In order to be above the people/ Must speak as though he were lower than the people." In addition to replacing the low with the common, Bynner here displays an aversion to "sage" that proves to be a sustained and unique feature of his text emerging from his preferences for the common, the democratic, and the universal. Previous translations generally favor the term "sage," with a few choosing "holy

[89] *Ibid*., 21.

man," for the Chinese term 聖人 *shengren*, which appears over thirty times in the received *Daode jing*. Bynner avoids both terms entirely, and whenever they occur he substitutes "sound man," "sensible man," or "sane man." He demystifies and demotes the sage to emphasize his familiar and universal qualities. He felt that these qualities were best exemplified by Laozi himself, who the reader will recall was for Bynner "as natural, as genial, as homely as Lincoln."[90] Despite his desire to voice the "wisdom" and "spirit" of China, Bynner believed that at its best this wisdom and spirit was fundamentally similar to what he found best in American culture. Ultimately, his appeal to the universal only masks an unrecognized or unacknowledged ideology, and Bynner emphasizes what he finds Laozi to have in common with liberal American politics.

Section 5: American Populist Hermeneutics

Bynner's confident reading of the text for its common-sense wisdom recalls a "distinctive mode of literacy" identified in colonial New England by David Hall. Coupled with Bynner's rejection of traditional and learned interpretations, his approach recalls even more strongly a post-Revolutionary "populist hermeneutics" proposed by Nathan Hatch. The latter hermeneutic also rejects established readings, requires no special training to justify interpretation, emphasizes common-sense meaning as the essence of the text, and prizes communication in plain language. Both hermeneutics are briefly described in this section to suggest that, by rejecting established authorities in preference for an immediate apprehension of common-sense meaning, Bynner parallels a significant populist tradition of lay-Bible reading in America. His approach to the *Daode jing*, the widespread praise for his results, and a similar approach by other authors to this

[90] *Ibid*., 20.

and other texts, further suggests that a "populist hermeneutics" has been accepted by many Americans in their readings of texts identified as non-Christian "spiritual classics" or "wisdom text," which, still influenced by conceptions of the Bible, come to be read as non-Chrisitian "scripture." Firmly in place in popular Christianity by the mid-nineteenth century, this Bible-based hermeneutic remained influential even as increased globalization gave greater access to non-Christian texts and as increased immigration began to diversify the American religious landscape.

In his analysis of popular religious belief in colonial New England, David Hall draws attention to "a distinctive mode of literacy":

> A mode originating, like much else, in the Reformation, and transported to New England with the colonists. This mode of literacy was keyed to a pervasive cultural myth. Imaging themselves as the 'Lord's free people," the godly in England and New England valued direct access to the Word of God as the most precious of their privileges.[91]

"Direct access to the Word of God" was achieved through Bible reading, and proper interpretation was increasingly understood to be secured by the divine Spirit. Hall notes that in responding to the Catholic doctrine that the church confirms the meaning of the Word, a martyr under Mary Tudor (r. 1553-1558) argued:

> So after we come to the hearing and reading of the Scriptures showed unto us…we do believe them, and know them as Christ's sheep—not because the church saith they are the Scriptures, but because they be so; being thereof assured by the same Spirit which wrote and spake them.[92]

[91] David Hall, *Worlds of Wonder, Days of Judgment: Popular Religious Belief in Early New England* (New York: Knopf, 1989), 18.
[92] *Ibid*., 24.

The Spirit behind the Word provides much of the necessary ground for increasing reliance on *sola scriptura* reading.[93] While the *logos* has long been a concept uniting spirit and letter in biblical interpretation, in this increasingly populist hermeneutic, the dominance of the Spirit begins to overwhelm the specifics of the letter and by extension its translation. Hall relates, "Elizabethans perceived Scripture as untouched and uncorrupted by the medium of print," and that "To read or hear the Bible was to come directly into contact with the Holy Spirit. Scripture had no history, its pages knew no taint of time. Its message was as new, its power as immediate, as when Christ had preached in Galilee."[94] Immediacy was both guaranteed by Spirit, and marked in a plain style that drew inspiration from the plain speech of Jesus and his disciples:

> In Christ's own speech, moreover, he used the 'humble style,' the vernacular of the people. The leaders of the English church argued that the Word of God was 'easy and plain for the understanding.' The Word was plain in that its meaning was immediately available. Plainness undercut the distance between text and audience.[95]

As we have seen, Bynner privileges the plain simplicity of the "familiar idiom" and his sense of "the spirit over the letter" as the cornerstones of his similar approach to the *Daode jing*.

Nathan Hatch sees an intensification of what he off-handedly yet perceptively terms "populist hermeneutics" at the end of the nineteenth century that takes Hall's "distinctive mode of literacy" to new extremes.[96] Hatch argues that prior to this time, from the beginnings of the Reformation through The Great Awakening, calls for *sola scriptura* did not set the Bible against theology, history, and tradition. In the early years of the American republic, however, he

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[93] Much closer to the time period with which we are concerned, Noah Porter, president of Yale University from 1871-1886, makes this clear when he writes: "the Holy Spirit inspired readers as well as writers of sacred texts." Quoted in Leslie Howsam and Scott McLaren, "Producing the text: production and distribution of popular editions of the Bible," in in John Riches, ed., *The New Cambridge History of the Bible: From 1750 to the Present***,** Volume IV (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015): 49-82, 61.
[94] *Ibid*.
[95] *Ibid*., 25.
[96] Nathan Hatch, *The Democratization of American Christianity* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1989), 179-183.

identifies a widespread rejection of established authority and an increased weight placed on private judgment—a "frontal assault upon tradition, mediating elites, and institutions" in which the "common people, Bibles in hand, relished the right to shape their own faith and submit to leaders of their own choosing."[97] Popular religious movements widely embraced a rhetoric of "no creed but the Bible," and Hatch suggests that Unitarian Noah Worcester's arguments were typical of his time when he challenged readers to slough off a "passive state of mind" that deferred to great names in theology, arguing instead that "The scriptures were designed for the great mass of mankind and are in general adapted to their capacities."[98] Hatch proposes a populist and democratic approach to scripture that has continued to this day and strongly parallels Bynner's approach to the *Daode jing*:

> Americans have refused to defer sensitive matters of conscience to the staid graduates of Harvard, Yale, and Princeton. They have taken faith into their own hands and molded it according to the aspirations of everyday life. American Christianity continues to be powered by ordinary people and by the contagious spirit of their efforts to storm heaven by the back door.[99]

In Hall's description of colonial New England we find early expressions of a hermeneutic that privileges the Spirit over the letter and the plain over the adorned. In Hatch's analysis we see further populist developments that emphasized the democratic and the common. While "common" retains the sense of ordinary, Hatch makes clear that what it opposed was not just the elaborate, but also the elite, the traditional, and the learned.[100] The evidence in this

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[97] *Ibid*., 182-183.
[98] *Ibid*., 182.
[99] *Ibid*., 219.
[100] Mark Noll has similarly proposed that "North American biblical interpretation has also always been influenced by general social and cultural values, especially a strong democratic impetus," but he immediately adds that "Yet in America there has also been a history of deference counteracting the democratic tendency—deference to ecclesiastical authority, especially among Catholics and traditional Protestant denominations; to academic authorities, especially during the last century among mainstream Protestants; and to the populist leaders of sectarian movements, especially among evangelicals, fundamentalists and Pentecostals." Mark Noll, "The Bible in North America," in John Riches, ed., *The New Cambridge History of the Bible: From 1750 to the Present*, Volume IV

chapter suggests that this Bible-based hermeneutic may inform popular approaches to non-Christian religious classics in America. Bynner brings a similar hermeneutic to the *Daode jing*, confidently approaching and interpreting a text to which he had no direct access, and then inscribing his interpretations in a "familiar idiom" which is "readily understood" as "being beyond race or age."[101] In the encounter with foreign materials, the populist hermeneutic arising from lay Bible reading finds expression in the preferences shared by Bynner, many of his readers, and the authors of similar texts, despite the clear differences between Euro-American and Chinese socio-historical and religio-cultural contexts.

Section 6: Pseudo-Translations and Popular Reception

The uninterrupted popularity of Bynner's text since its initial publication suggests that a large audience of American readers continues to share similar approaches to and resulting interpretations of the *Daode jing*. Yet, because they are generally dismissed by academics as bad scholarship, there has been little systematic attention paid to Bynner's text and others like it. This leaves a significant blind spot in our understanding of how the *Daode jing* has been received in America. By any technical definition of the word, they may be bad "translations" but they retain considerable value as interpretations, both as specific readings and as examples of a mode of reading with deep roots in American religiosity and prevalent in the popular reception of other texts and hybrid "spiritualities."

The number and popularity of *Daode jing* texts written by authors who do not know Chinese has only increased since Paul Goldin first took note of them as "pseudo-translations" in

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(Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015): 391-426**,** 417. It is interesting to note that in the case of the *Daode jing*, the weak institutional authority of Daoism removes at least one of these stopgaps of populism.

[101] Bynner, *Way of Life*, 15.

his article "Those who Don't Know Speak."[102] Noting their impressive sales, he proposed that "the central question is not why presses are publishing them, but why people are buying them."[103] Looking at Amazon.com reviews, he found three answers:

> The respondents like the pseudo-translations because of the available choices, these are the most easily adaptable to their own experience…They explicitly prefer the simplicity of the pseudo-translations…[and] Above all, these reviewers applaud language that is readily understandable.[104]

In Goldin's selections of Amazon.com reviews, one of these texts "speaks subtly to the reader and lingers in the heart" and another "shows the modern westerner how to truly comprehend and embrace this wise and simple philosophy."[105] These texts are easily adaptable to previous, current, and future experiences. Bynner aimed for just such an adaptive, and potentially transformative reading. His and the other "pseudo-translations" appeal to a large audience that looks to the *Daode jing* for current, practical import more than historical accuracy. That is, a popular audience that has increasingly approached the text as offering a "way of life." This approach is inscribed in the texts as the other two populist features that reviewers praise: "simplicity" and "language that is readily understood." These are the very results of a populist hermeneutic that emphasizes the democratic, common, and relevant in its approach to scripture.

All of the "pseudo-translators" Goldin critiques admit in their introductions that they don't know Chinese. Le Guin's preferred term is "rendition" and she happily explains the personal nature of her interpretations and her reliance on Paul Carus among other translators. Mitchell comes closest to suggesting that his text is a "free" translation, but makes clear that "If I

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[102] Paul Goldin, "Those Who Don't Know Speak: translations of the DDJ by people who do not know Chinese," *Asian Philosophy* 12:3 (2002): 183-195. Louis Komjathy sees the more pressing questions here to be on the ethics and politics of appropriation. See Komjathy 2014, among his various other publications.
[103] *Ibid*., 192.
[104] *Ibid*.
[105] *Ibid*.

haven't always translated Lao-tzu's words, my intention has always been to translate his mind."[106] As his subtitle indicates, Bynner consistently calls his text a "version." However, these admissions do not prevent many readers, including the Library of Congress, from classifying these works as translations.[107] This surprising misclassification may reflect an over-burdened administration, but likely results from the style and presentation of the works as well. The texts look and, more importantly, read like translations, and so they are treated as such. This effect is aided by paratextual resemblances between genuine translations and the "pseudo-translations" such as covers and title pages that reference Laozi or the *Daode jing*, chapter numbers matching the original text, explanatory footnotes, and the like.[108] It is also aided by the traits of the texts that sympathetic readers consistently praise and Goldin deplores: the "simplicity of the pseudo-translations" and "language that is readily understood." These are the marks of what Lawrence Venuti has called a "regime of fluency" that he argues has come to dominate contemporary translation practices in England and America.

Venuti is particularly concerned with the invisibility of the translator achieved by "fluent" translation strategies:

> A translated text, whether prose or poetry, fiction or nonfiction, is judged acceptable by most publishers, reviewers and readers when it reads fluently, when the absence of any linguistic or stylistic peculiarities makes it seem transparent, giving the appearance that it reflects the foreign writer's personality or intention or the essential meaning of the foreign text—the appearance, in other words, that the translation is not in fact a translation, but the "original.[109]

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[106] Mitchell, *Tao Te Ching* (New York, Harper & Row, 1988), x.
[107] See page 9, note 25.
[108] The utility of Genette's term "paratext" and his research into its various elements is unfortunately undercut by his insistence that they remain under the control of the author or her proxies and consistently support the intended meaning of the text they surround. While they may support a particular interpretation of their text, I see no need to link this to authorial intent, since the determination of many of these elements are made by publishers and frequently change from edition to edition. See Gérard Genette, *Seuils* (Paris: Éditions du Seuil 1987); translated by Jane E. Lewin as *Paratexts: Thresholds of Interpretation* (Cambridge: Cambridge Univ. Press, 1997).
[109] Lawrence Venuti, *The Translator's Invisibility: A History of Translation* 2nd ed. (New York: Rutledge, 2008), 1.

Key to "fluency" is an avoidance of "linguistic or stylistic peculiarities" which leads to "the translator's effort to insure easy readability by adhering to current usage, maintaining continuous syntax, fixing a precise meaning."[110] Venuti worries that this "fluency" leads to an "illusion of transparency" in which the translation ceases to appear to readers as a translation and will be taken to be equivalent to the "original." For him, such an equivalency is impossible, and he argues for the necessity of restraining and marking translations' inevitable domestication through a disruptive, "foreignizing" mode of writing which "resists dominant values in the receiving culture so as to signify the linguistic and cultural differences of the foreign text."[111]

Immersed in the politics of translation, Venuti does not consider the possibility that any text which references a foreign original and corresponds with the expectations of a "fluent" translation might become elevated to the status of an actual translation. Like "fluent" translations, the "pseudo-translations" smooth over difficulties, present themselves in a familiar idiom, and make every effort to be easily understood. Their domestication of the *Daode jing* is more complete than in other translations, but readers have come to expect and accept a large degree of domestication while simultaneously assuming that they still have access to an "original" text. Venuti does not connect this to lay Bible reading in America, but with the aid of Hatch and Hall the populist hermeneutics of "fluent" translations are evident in the shared expectation that an original text is most transparently accessible when it adheres to common-sense meaning and is communicated in plain language.

Venuti rejects these assumptions. For him, ensuring "easy readability by adhering to current usage, maintaining continuous syntax, fixing a precise meaning" inevitably domesticates the foreign text. The translation is "imprinted by the receiving culture, assimilated to its positions

[110] *Ibid*.
[111] *Ibid*., 18.

of intelligibility, its canons and taboos, its codes and ideologies."[112] He allows no room for a hermeneutic that would ignore the situated subjectivity of the translator and the inevitable distortion of a foreign text. This limits even the "foreignizing" hermeneutic that Venuti argues might "restrain the ethnocentric violence of translation."[113] Despite his preference for this translation strategy, ultimately even "foreignization does not offer unmediated access to the foreign—no translation can do that."[114] However, it can disrupt the illusion of transparency:

> A translated text should be the site where linguistic and cultural differences are somehow signaled, where a reader gets some sense of a cultural other, and resistancy, a translation strategy based on an aesthetic of discontinuity, can best signal those differences, that sense of otherness, by reminding the reader of the gains and losses in the translation process and the unbridgeable gaps between cultures.[115]

Venuti's preferences are diametrically opposed to Bynner's (and those of much of the American popular audience) but his understanding of fluency does much to explain why, in spite of Bynner's explicit admission of knowing no Chinese, many readers, publishers, and authorizing institutions continue to treat *The Way of Life* as a translation. While Bynner is not a translator in anything but the loosest sense of the term, his hermeneutical preferences land him squarely in the dominant mode of Anglophone translation strategy, revealing some of the promises and perils therein.

In general, the texts produced by authors who know no Chinese are intensely "fluent" because they are, in effect, translated multiple times. The first series of translations occur in the production of the multiple English language texts upon which the later authors rely, and the second series of intra-language translations occur in the rendering of new texts from these

[112] *Ibid*., 14.
[113] *Ibid*., 16.
[114] *Ibid*., 19.
[115] *Ibid*., 264.

previous offerings. The results have thus been smoothed and fixed multiple times. In the echo-chambers of popular translation, the text is thoroughly and repeatedly imprinted by and assimilated to American interests and expectations, becoming ever more popular and readable. Venuti alerts us to the possibility that these translations thereby might ironically be perceived as increasingly accurate to the original, at least among readers who favor a populist hermeneutic and have limited access to the foreign text.

In his caustic critique of the production of these translations, Paul Goldin prefers a more visceral metaphor: "the standard *modus operandi* of these pseudo-translators is to imbibe a broad selection of scholarly translations, digest their import, and expectorate a new rendition of one's own."[116] Setting aside the fact that "scholarly translations" are only a small fraction of those available and read in this process, Goldin's metaphor seems to allow little room for the legitimacy of any interpretation not based in a direct experience with the Chinese text, and excludes the vast majority of American readers, who will encounter the *Daode jing* always and only in English, even if they stick to scholarly translations. It appears that no matter how many translations one might read, the process of digesting their import yields a phlegm that "pseudo-translators" simply lack the proper manners to keep private. Moreover, even with access to the Chinese text, do scholars not "imbibe a broad selection" of texts and commentaries, "digest their import," and then produce ("expectorate") a new rendition of their own? Perhaps the point is merely that scholars have better hermeneutical digestive tracts than "pseudo-translators," but Goldin suggests here a historicist aim critiqued by Gadamer and a model of translation critiqued by Venuti, whereby an ancient Chinese text is somehow carried over into English with so little intrusion by the methodical translator that it remains the author's original text in new idiom.

[116] Goldin, "Those Who Don't Know Speak," 183.

While not exempting academic translation, Goldin would likely get more support from Venuti in his conclusion that the gravest defect of *The Way of Life* and other "pseudo-translations" is that they "distort and simplify the philosophy of the *Daode jing*."[117] Here he echoes the judgment of A.C. Graham that Bynner consistently oversimplifies, overdetermines, and therefore fails to transmit the ambiguous passages, paradoxes, and complex juxtapositions that characterize the Chinese text and the essence of the philosophy it describes.[118] Bynner runs afoul by over-interpreting. His resolutions to the various difficulties of the text "systematically disburdens the original of its complexity."[119] In so doing, however, Bynner provides his readers with the very qualities they've praised since the *Way of Life* was first published. Indicating the pervasiveness of populist appeals to an ameliorative *Daode jing*, even the 1944 *New Yorker* review concludes that "A fresh simplicity and humane common sense prevail here, as they are said to prevail in the original, and the poems provide a delightful coolness for our present discordant times."[120] The *Far Eastern Survey*, characterizes it as an "unstilted translation,"[121] and the *Far Eastern Quarterly* compliments its "exceptionally appealing form."[122] Although they differ in their evaluations of the effect of Bynner's style, admirers and critics agree on its nature: Bynner is a poet of the smooth, the accessible, the relevant, and the congenial.

Texts are always received in context, and texts received as "classics" and "scriptures" perhaps more than any others are expected to bridge the divides between the particular and the universal, the foreign and the familiar, the historical and the relevant, the challenging and the congenial. The "pseudo-translations" in general, and *The Way of Life* in particular, emphasize the

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[117] *Ibid*., 188.
[118] Graham, "Two Notes," 119-144.
[119] Goldin, "Those Who Don't Know Speak," 188.
[120] "Review of *The Way of Life According to Laotzu*," *New Yorker* (Nov. 18, 1944): 96.
[121] B.L. "Review of *The Way of Life According to Laotzu*," *Far Eastern Survey* 14:1 (Jan. 17, 1945): 11.
[122] Meribeth E. Cameron, "Book Notes." *The Far Eastern Quarterly* 4:3 (May 1945): 300-302.

latter halves of these pairs, and are roundly rewarded for it in the modern spiritual marketplace (to the extent such a thing can be measured by sales figures on Amazon.com). This success is partially a result of widespread understandings of translation as critiqued by Venuti, but also of longstanding approaches to scripture in American religious history.

In admitting that he knew no Chinese, Bynner's text is the first that we can conclusively say accessed the text of the *Daode jing* only through its history of prior translations. However, as other chapters have demonstrated nearly all translators acknowledge reading at least some of the previous translations available to them. As their numbers grew, such translations not only became increasingly easy to locate, but they also began to define a range of accepted interpretations of the text in English. New versions could always depart from their predecessors, but they could do so only against the backdrop of previous texts, even in the effort to be different from them. This ever growing corpus of previous interpretations not only weighed on the activities of translators, with dozens of texts at their fingertips, but also impressed itself on more diffuse preconceptions brought the *Daode jing*, to the reception of other aspects of Chinese culture, and to the interpretation of other texts.

While the translation discussed in the next chapter distinguishes itself by its relationship to the *Daode jing* as a lived practice—as an actual "Way of Life"—Bynner's translation already evidences the key features of American popular conceptions: 1) the *Daode jing* is the principal scripture of Daoism; 2) its wisdom is universal and timeless; 3) its meaning is accessible through a populist hermeneutic heavily influenced by lay Bible reading; 4) its teachings can correct and ameliorate contemporary American problems; and 5) it can contribute to a more complete "Way of Life."

CHAPTER 5: Gia-Fu Feng, *Tao Te Ching: A New Translation*

While Bynner's text embraces all of the five features of popular translation focused on in this dissertation, the text produced by Gia-Fu Feng (Feng Jiafu 馮家福) and Jane English in 1972 was the first to emerge from a community that was actually attempting to *live* this "Way of Life." Through meeting Alan Watts in 1954, studying with him and others at the Academy of Asian Studies in San Francisco (1954-1956),[1] and being part of the founding of the Esalen Institute in 1961,[2] Feng came to embrace an Americanized, text-based, and thoroughly popularized conception of "Daoism" as the basis for his community's "Daoist" practices. To mark this turn, this chapter proposes that the features which emerged in popular translations of the *Daode jing* gave rise to a text-tradition that can heuristically be labeled "American Philosophical Daoism" (APD) to reflect the transmission processes through which it was created and to differentiate it from two other, more recent "Daoisms" in America: the reviving Chinese-based, organized tradition that we might call "Daoism in America," and the hybrid, immigration-influenced "American Daoism" proposed as a late twentieth-century new religious movement by Elijah Siegler.[3]

Even with the introduction of these latter traditions, "American Philosophical Daoism" remains a text-based conception of Daoism popularized through English translations of the *Daode jing*, conforming to the general features outlined in previous chapters, and reinforced by the ongoing production of popular translations today. "American Philosophical Daoism" is the

[1] Later the California Institute of Integrated Studies.
[2] See Jeffrey J. Kripal, *Esalen: America and the Religion of No Religion*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2007.
[3] C.f. Komjathy's proposal of "Popular Western Taoism" (PWT) in *Guide for the Perplexed*, 206-210.

popular tradition that most fully embraced the *Daode jing* as American "scripture,"[4] and the phrase labels the popular conceptions of Daoism that arose from previous translations' history of effects not just on the interpretations of the text but also its associated tradition. The latter two "Daoisms" are described in more detail below, with "American Daoism" reflecting the impacts of immigration reform described in chapter one, and "Daoism in America" indicating new developments in the more comprehensive, organized, and living Daoist tradition in China. Currently, these all circulate as "Daoism" in America, and the confusion between them is a fundamental feature of the reception of this tradition and of the *Daode jing*. However, differentiating these traditions for analysis allows a comparison between them that makes clear the ongoing influence of popular translations after immigration reforms and new anxieties over the authentic transmission both of the *Daode jing* and of Daoism in its more complete forms.

This chapter will show that, as part of the earlier transmission of the *Daode jing* that gave rise to "American Philosophical Daoism," Feng himself exhibits none of the more recent anxiety unmistakable in a biography of Feng by one of his students, Shi Jing. Less concerned with an authentic transmission of Daoism, Feng celebrated the productive possibilities he saw in the combination of his understandings of ancient Chinese thought and contemporary American interests. As an early participant in the new wave of immigration from China, he brought a greater familiarity with Chinese language and culture to these interests than the figures examined in previous chapters, but his understandings were deeply conditioned by the American reception of the *Daode jing*. In addition to his lack of anxiety over transmission, this chapter will show that Feng's success as an "American Daoist Master" comes less from his training in China than his abilities to synthesize popular understandings of Chinese thought and American culture within

[4] My use of "scripture" is meant to incorporate other terms like "wisdom literature" or "spiritual classic." See introduction, conclusion to chapter two, and the conclusion to this dissertation below.

the framework of "American Philosophical Daoism." Similarly, the success of the translation he helped craft into a bestseller may have less to do with its unique features than with its near perfect accord with what Americans had come to expect from English translations of the *Daode jing*.

Section one looks at the impact of mid-century immigration reforms that dramatically increased the population of Asian immigrants and Asian Americans and the presence of Asian religions in the United States. While popular conceptions of Daoism based in English translations of the *Daode jing* continue to condition the reception of the text and tradition, immigration reforms strengthened alternative voices and interest in additional aspects of Daoism and Chinese culture. Section two introduces Shi Jing's 1997 biography of Feng and a 1975 radio interview from which it was constructed to establish an increased anxiety about "authentic" Daoism that illustrates the competing pressures of Feng's "localized" Daoist tradition ("American Philosophical Daoism") and a "globalized" Daoist tradition recently emerging after sustained immigration reforms, cultural shifts, and religious revival in China. Section three compares the biography and the radio interview to demonstrate the effects of this anxiety and to uncover the sources of Feng's understandings of Daoism and the *Daode jing* in America rather than China.[5] Section four looks at the composition and editing of the Stillpoint manuscript in conformity with previous popular translations, over which it reportedly now reigns supreme as the single bestselling English version of the *Daode jing*.[6] The final section returns to the lasting effects of popular translations on the ongoing reception and construction of the *Daode jing* and Daoism in America and Europe.

[5] Cf. the biographies and autobiographies of T.T. Liang, Ni Hua-ching, Stuart Olson, Eva Wong, etc.
[6] Gia-Fu Feng and Jane English with Toinette Lippe, *Tao Te Ching*, New York: Random House (2011), vii.

Section 1: Immigration Reform

The text produced by Gia-Fu Feng and his community was heavily influenced by earlier understandings of Daoism and the *Daode jing* in America, but America in 1972 was significantly different from the 1944 America of Witter Bynner or the 1898 America of Paul Carus. The interests in Asia expressed by these earlier authors had grown dramatically in America after the Second World War, and were accelerated by major reforms to U.S. immigration policies culminating in the 1965 Immigration Act. Earlier economic and racial tension in California had led to the 1882 Chinese Exclusion Act, which drastically limited Chinese immigration and prevented naturalization. This act was soon extended to other Asian and South Asian groups, all of which were defined as "non-white" and retroactively stripped of citizenship if it had been granted. Further immigration concerns in the wake of the First World War led to the 1924 Johnson-Reed Act, which established a national-origin quota system for white immigrants and prevented any further immigration of the Asian peoples already declared ineligible for naturalization. In 1943 this restriction was removed for Chinese and Philippine citizens in recognition of their status as allies in the war against Japan, but the numbers of immigrants allowed from each country was still heavily restricted to miniscule numbers. In 1952, the Immigration and Nationality Act eliminated race as a consideration in both immigration and naturalization, but maintained restrictive quotas based on nineteenth century population data. It was only in 1965 that this antiquated national-origin quota system was finally abolished by the Hart-Celler Act. It was replaced by a "categorical preference system," which remains in place today and provides preferences for skilled labor and for relatives of U.S. citizens and lawful permanent residents. While certain numerical restrictions continued to apply, the 1965 reforms allowed large numbers of Asian immigrants and their families to enter the country for the first

time. This dramatically increased the population of Asian Americans and the presence of Asian religions in the United States.[7]

While Paul Carus and Witter Bynner both had contact with people from Asia on American soil, these contacts were brief and unusual for their time. Moreover, Carus and Bynner, like the vast majority of their countrymen, had almost no opportunity to observe the practices of the religious traditions associated with the texts they prized. This contributed to their perpetuation of the artificial distinction between "religious" and "philosophical" Daoism and text-based understandings of all Asian traditions. Their presentations of Daoism were thus based on very little other than the text of the *Daode jing*, and their understandings of the text were more likely to be challenged by another American or western European than by anyone from Asia. Even when they were able to interact with Chinese or Japanese individuals somewhat familiar with Daoism, none of these figures identified as Daoist, and their knowledge of the tradition was that of outsiders evaluating the *Daode jing* in isolation from most historical and contemporary Daoist practices and understandings.

After mid-century immigration reforms, this situation began to change. Louis Komjathy names Share K. Lew (1918-2012) as possibly the "earliest identifiable and self-identified Daoist priest, whether Chinese or non-Chinese, in North America."[8] Under 1943 immigration laws, Lew came to San Francisco in 1948, and accepted his first non-Chinese student in 1959. In 1970 he cofounded the Taoist Sanctuary in Los Angeles (now based in San Diego), which became the

[7] See Thomas Tweed, *The American Encounter with Buddhism 1844-1912: Victorian Culture & the Limits of Dissent* (Bloomington: Indiana Univ. Press, 1992); Tweed and Prothero, *Asian Religions in America: A Documentary History* (New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1998); Diana Eck, *A New Religious America: How a 'Christian Country' has Now Become the World's Most Religiously Diverse Nation* (New York: HarperCollins, 2002).
[8] Komjathy, "Tracing the Contours of Daoism in North America," 10.

first Daoist organization to receive federal status as a church.[9] Komjathy goes on to chronologically identify several other "lineage-based" Daoist teachers, the next of whom did not arrive in North America until 1970. Gia-fu Feng does not appear on this list because of his lack of affiliation with or training in a recognized Daoist lineage, but it is important to note that he entered America during this time of rapid changes in immigration and rising interest in and exposure to Chinese culture and traditions. The *Daode jing* produced by his spiritualist community was published during a time when a significant number of Americans had just begun to take a more comprehensive view of Daoism as a potential religious practice rather than focusing exclusively on the *Daode jing*. The remainder of this chapter focuses on Gia-fu Feng and his translation to better understand these transitions and the continued influence of earlier *Daode jing* translations in this new context of interpretation. It argues that the success of Gia-fu Feng as a translator and leader of an early American "Daoist" community is largely due his conformity with the prior text-tradition of English *Daode jing* translations. This tradition still dominates popular conceptions of the text and of "Daoism" today, even as increased scholarship, immigration, and religious revival in China have led to competing visions of the tradition and of the *Daode jing*.

Section 2: The American Daoist Master

While Louis Komjathy does not include Gia-fu Feng in his list of lineage-holding Daoist teachers in the United States, prominent American and British Daoists recognize him in their constructions of their own lineages. One such construction occurs in a 1997 article from *Dragon's Mouth* magazine, a publication of the British Taoist Association. Dedicated to "making Taoist traditions more accessible in the West," the BTA was founded by British Taoist priests

[9] *Ibid*.

who were ordained in 1995 into the Dragon Gate (Longmen 龍門) lineage of Complete Perfection Daoism (Quanzhen Dao 全真道).[10] The article is presented as "an amalgamation of three separate interviews recorded with Gia-fu Feng" and transcribed by founding members of the BTA, Shi Jing (Alan Redman) and Shi Dao (Peter Smith).[11] The contents are especially relevant to Shi Jing, who long before his ordination was a student of Gia-fu Feng, and through Feng was first exposed to Daoist ideas and practices.[12]

In the article, Feng is presented as an eclectic Chinese teacher well versed in Daoism. He is acknowledged here and elsewhere as Shi Jing's first teacher and an informal member of his "lineage." As such, Feng is positioned as a transitional figure in the transmission of Daoism to Euro-American audiences: a teacher who came from Asia and passed on his "eastern wisdom" to a new generation of western students who now carry on his tradition. He is, in this construction, an excellent example of what Jane Iwamura has described as the "icon of the Oriental Monk."[13] In this construction, he is also a fraud. Feng is more accurately, if reductively, described as Chinese banker who met Alan Watts and subsequently reinvented himself as a Daoist popularizer.

This reality is, however, no secret. If Shi Jing was somehow unaware of his teacher's history before drafting his article, he would certainly have learned it by listening to the 1977 New Dimensions radio interview that forms over sixty percent of his "transcribed" text.[14] Comparing the original interview and the later article will demonstrate that the editing of the

[10] Article available at http://abodetao.com/an-interview-with-gia-fu-feng/; accessed 10/30/16.
[11] *Ibid*.
[12] A short biography of Shi Jing is provided at http://taoists.co.uk/main_files/shijing.htm; accessed 10/30/16.
[13] Jane Naomi Iwamura, *Virtual Orientalism: Asian Religions and American Popular Culture* (New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 2011).
[14] Recording of interview provided by Carmen Baehr, onetime resident of Stillpoint. New Dimensions Radio is still in operation, see http://newdimensions.org, though their online archives do not go back to 1977.

interview conforms to what Elijah Siegler refers to as an "anxiety of authenticity" that he finds to characterize American Daoism as an emergent religious movement.[15] In the pages of *Dragon's Mouth*, this anxiety leads to a systematic reduction of Feng's cosmopolitan experiences and hybrid teachings until his life story can be made to fit Iwamura's narrative of the Oriental Monk. What this reveals is not that Feng was a fraud, *per se*, but that he and others can be made to seem frauds by their own actions or by the actions of others when their lives and teachings are manipulated to conform to a narrative that privileges certain conceptions of authenticity and the transmission of orthodoxy.

The concerns over authenticity that led to this manipulation are signals of a later stage of transmission, and they were rarely present in earlier text-based encounters. That they exist now is an indication that the transmission of Daoism to America and Europe has moved beyond the initial stages of encounter and we are beginning to be able to take stock of its past, present, and future. In addition, as Daoist institutions have revived in modern China, they have done so in a globalized context, and the recent transmissions of organized Daoism to America and Europe (of which the British Taoist Association is an example) are part of a new emergence of Daoism as a global religion on an unprecedented scale. Only in the last few decades has it become possible for Americans and Europeans interested in Daoism to follow a path in their own countries towards affiliation with and even ordination in traditional Chinese Daoist institutions and movements.

In a recent work on a three-centuries old Catholic community in northern China, Henrietta Harrison describes the standard model of religious transmission as one of "acculturation," which begins with assumed cultural differences that are reduced as a foreign

[15] Elijah Siegler, "Back to the Pristine: Identity Formation and Legitimation in Contemporary American Daoism," *Nova Religio: The Journal of Alternative and Emergent Religions* 14:1 (Aug. 2010): 45-66.

religion gradually adopts elements of the domestic culture.[16] She argues that her study reveals quite the opposite: "there is significant overlap between Christianity and Chinese religious culture, and in this area the differences between Catholic practice and local folk religion have actually increased over the centuries."[17] She proposes that these differences have increased as "local Catholicism has gradually been bound into global networks and institutions,"[18] and suggest a constant tension between the processes of localization and globalization. It is, of course, hard to overestimate the force of the Catholic church as a global institution, and it is perhaps unsurprising that Harrison concludes that in the village she studied, it is "the forces of globalization that have come to dominate."[19]

Institutional Daoism has only recently recovered some of its historical prominence in China, and is emerging as a global institution for the first time.[20] The struggle between localizing and globalizing forces in the transmission of Daoism to Europe and America have just begun. Harrison's observation that "there has been a constant tension for Chinese Christians between adapting to Chinese culture and seeking authenticity as members of transnational institutions,"[21] is not hard to relate to our current discussion, and it indicates a long path ahead for Daoism in America as these tensions play out over coming generations.

Gia-fu Feng is best understood in these terms not as a transmitter of globalizing institutional understandings of Daoism that began to enter America towards the end of his life,

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[16] Henrietta Harrison, *The Missionary's Curse and Other Tales from a Chinese Catholic Village* (Berkeley: Univ. of California Press, 2013).
[17] *Ibid*., 5.
[18] *Ibid*., 6.
[19] *Ibid*., 9.
[20] See Lai Chi-tim, "Daoism in China Today," *The China Quarterly* 174 (July 2003): 413-427; Julian Pas, ed. *The Turning of the Tide: Religion in China Today* (Hong Kong: Royal Asiatic Society, 1989); David Palmer and Xun Liu, eds. *Daoism in the Twentieth Century* (Berkeley: Univ. of California Press, 2012); Komjath. *Daoism: A Guide for the Perplexed* (New York: Bloomsbury, 2014).
[21] Harrison, *Missionary's Curse*, 207.

but rather as a prominent teacher of the American understanding of Daoism that flourished earlier and continues to dominate popular understanding today. To draw out these differences, it is useful to distinguish between global, institutionally based Daoism, which we might call "Daoism in America," recently localized American versions of this tradition, which following Elijah Siegler we might call "American Daoism," and a third tradition that emerged earlier out of the popular American encounter with the *Daode jing*, which we might call "American Philosophical Daoism."[22] Interpretations of the *Daode jing* dominate the last of these three traditions, play a disproportional role in the second, and only a limited role in the first. It is the tension between these three understandings of Daoism and the role of the *Daode jing* that will determine the future of the religion and text in America, and that makes the current state of transmission a fascinating and complex study.[23]

Following Harrison's vocabulary, we might also consider "popular" Daoism as fundamentally localized and propose that the text-based transmission of so-called "philosophical" Daoism formed the core of the initial popularization and localization of Daoism in America through popular English translations of the *Daode jing*. Depending on the scope of the term "local," connecting it to "popular" helps to link the various meanings of "popular" that might otherwise obfuscate our task: widespread, current, non-specialized, well-liked, public, etc. Where these meanings overlap is *localized*, be it to a village, an age group, a social class, or a country. To pay attention to what is 'popular' is to pay attention to local context and the situatedness of interpretation. Among other things, forming this connection between "popular"

[22] Similar to the "popular Western Daoism" proposed by Jonathan Herman (see chapter 1).
[23] The real contest is between what I call "Daoism in America" and "American Philosophical Daoism." Siegler's "American Daoism" emerges out of this contest, and is far more similar to the latter than the former. I don't collapse "American Daoism" and "American Philosophical Daoism," however, because of Siegler's focus on it as an institutionalized movement and his dating of its origins to the late 1970s. I use "American Philosophical Daoism" to mark its earlier history and more diffuse forms.

and "local" might help to link work on "popular" Daoism in China and popular Daoism in America which otherwise have very different references in contemporary scholarship: the first generally referring to localized practices in China that incorporate and modify various aspects of Daoist rituals, deities, and symbols; while the second generally refers to localized practices in America that incorporate and modify various early Daoist texts and occasionally ancillary Daoist-influenced practices from the wider Chinese cultural sphere like T'ai-chi Ch'uan (*Taiji quan* 太極拳).

As documented in previous chapters, until well into the second half of the twentieth century, the study of "popular" Daoism in China was neglected in Europe and America along with the majority of phenomenon that were seen to fall under the maligned heading of "religious" Daoism. Meanwhile ancient texts were celebrated as "philosophical" Daoism and presented to Euro-American audiences as the essence of the tradition. Just as attitudes towards the Bible conditioned the reception of the *Daode jing* as scripture, attitudes towards Christianity led many to dismiss non-"philosophical" Daoism as either irreverent religion or irrelevant religion. For nearly a century, Daoism was localized in Europe and America only in terms of its so-called "philosophical" elements. The remainder of the tradition—the vast bulk of what scholars understand by the term "Daoist" today—was not transmitted at any significant scale until recently. Only then could a more complete understanding of Daoism begin to exert a counter, globalizing pressure against local acculturation in Europe and America.

As the tensions between localization and globalization have emerged, anxiety about the authenticity of American understandings of Daoism have slowly increased. The early history of Daoism in America shows some anxiety about the growing numbers of translations of the *Daode jing*, but very little concern over the assumption that the *Daode jing* contains the essence of

Daoism. Popular translations further stressed their perennial understandings of this text, its accessibility, and its applicability to modern contexts. As an artificial tradition with no institutional reality, "philosophical" Daoism could exert no subsequent globalizing force against American localization, and "American Philosophical Daoism" both academic and popular flourished relatively unchecked for several generations., This American Daoism, propagated primarily through popular translations of the *Daode jing*, is the Daoism of Gia-fu Feng, despite his birth and education in China. This assertion is clearly demonstrated by his 1977 radio interview, by all of his publications, and by all documented elements of his teachings and thought. It suggests both the underdeveloped state of Daoism as a global institution during his time, and the power of the localized understanding of Daoism that Feng encountered in America.

While later anxieties lead Shi Jing and his co-author Shi Dao in their article to emphasize Gia-fu Feng's Chinese heritage and to exaggerate his knowledge of more orthodox Daoist teachings, Feng betrays no such anxiety in the interview from which the article was constructed. Instead, he emphasizes the overlap between China and America in his life, in his education, and in his teachings. He comfortably inhabits and propagates the fundamentals of American Philosophical Daoism in a way that reflects its origins, its resiliency, and its potential ability to continue to exert a localizing force against the recently revived and growing globalizing force of the more comprehensive Chinese tradition.

Section 3: The *Dragon's Mouth*

Shi Jing and Shi Dao begin their article with a brief biographical sketch, the first lines of which read:

> Gia-fu Feng was born in Shanghai in 1919 into a fairly wealthy family of some influence. He was educated privately in his own home in the classics of the Chinese tradition, learning such things as the teachings of Taoism and Confucianism, art, calligraphy, poetry and tai chi.

This is a serviceable summary of one aspect of Feng's upbringing, but in the interview upon which it is based, Feng begins, "the circumstances in which I was brought up [were] very much a conglomeration of the East and West in the city of Shanghai. I was brought up in the city, which is very cosmopolitan." He goes on to relate that his father spent considerable money hiring private tutors during the summer and other school holidays to provide a "classical education…however we were terribly aware of the invasion of western culture. Really what I grew up in was a mixture of East and West." He provides the following example:

> When I was in the fifth grade, my English was already advanced such as to study the biography of Abraham Lincoln, for instance, in English, as well as the Chinese studies, which include calligraphy, the classics of the ages like Tang poetry, and so on and so forth.

His comments are in response to the interviewer's initial request for Feng to elaborate on the differences between his upbringing in China and his impressions of America. Rather than contrast these experiences and clearly establish his Chinese credentials, as in the *Dragon's Mouth* summary, Feng instead emphasizes his cosmopolitan experience and early fluency in both American and Chinese cultures—the beginning of a hybrid narrative, the complexity of which is systematically reduced by Shi Jing and Shi Dao.

The *Dragon's Mouth* biography continues: "His family were followers of Taoism. In the springtime, they traveled to a temple in the mountains of Hang-Chou for the spring festivals. When Gia-fu stayed at the temple for longer periods, he was trained in Taoist practices." In the New Dimensions interview, which takes place after the publication of his translation of the *Daode jing*, the interviewer presses Feng to describe the portions of his "classical" education that included "teachings of the Dao." Feng responds:

> For instance, during that period we still had an old tradition of spending some time in monasteries every year, in the springtime, where the whole family will go into the shrine. Places like Hangzhou, where we can spend a week with monastery

> people, but of course not really working very hard, something like a tourist, but still we get some influence.

He does not specify that his family was Daoist here or anywhere in the historical record, nor does he claim training in Daoist practices. His exposure to Daoism in China was that of many Chinese who attend occasional services at temples, here most likely during Qingming 清明 (Pure Brightness), also known as the Tomb Sweeping Festival. As a member of an elite family, he may have had more access and received more consideration than other festival participants, but there is little evidence that he ever received Daoist training or thought of himself as a Daoist until well into the 1960s after having come to America.

Moreover, in this interview and other sources, Feng consistently uses "Daoism" only to refer to teachings contained in the *Daode jing*, the *Zhuangzi*, and loosely related practices like Taiji quan (T'ai-chi Ch'uan). Feng responds to the direct question "within Daoism is there a god image?" with "No, no. Laozi's picture was never on anyone's wall. Really what comes down to it, you are the center; you and me are the centers." To clarify, the interviewer begins "so there is no personification of god other than…" and Feng finishes, "your own center, which is permeating in the universe." It is hard to imagine that Feng ever visited a Chinese Daoist monastery or temple without seeing dozens of images and statues of deities including prominent ones of Laozi, who is understood by nearly all Daoist movements and lineages to be part of a vast Daoist pantheon.

Here what is most important to note is not the inaccuracy, though such statements do continue to mislead and should be corrected, but rather that Feng, like many others in America, is operating with a fundamentally different definition of "Daoism." For Feng, Laozi in no god, though he remains central as the author of the *Daode jing*. While the exchange above is not recorded in the *Dragon's Mouth* article, the article does include Feng's opinion that "I think *all*

of Daoism is the summation of the old verbal tradition and I think it's real Chinese stuff."[24] He goes on to link the *Daode jing* and *Yijing* not because they are both Daoist, but because they are both records of ancient teachings:

> The *Yijing* is also a summation of old wisdoms come along by word of mouth. Duke Zhou is the founder or the one who really put it into words in a book. So I tend to think that Duke Zhou, together with Laozi, are the summation of the ancient teachings of China, of the northwestern part especially, where civilization was born thousands of years ago.[25]

In spite of any familiarity he may have had with Daoist practice in China, Feng embraces a definition of Daoism based only on interpretations of ancient texts—an understanding of the tradition rooted in his elite, classical education in China, reinforced by the English scholarship he read, encouraged by American popular reception, and ultimately propagated through his own teachings and his community's translation.

Immediately following Feng's description of his exposure to Daoism as a youth, where Shi Jing and Shi Dao write he "was trained in Taoist practices" while Feng maintains that he was "something like a tourist," Feng elaborates:

> Now, my real education, however, in the United States came only after, in the early fifties, when I found myself being stranded in this country because the political fortunes had been changed in China.

At this time, Feng had just received his MBA in International Banking from the Wharton School of the University of Pennsylvania. He had been planning to return to China and resume the banking career he had begun in the southwest during the war, and where he had established deep ties to the government of Chiang Kai-shek (Jiang Jieshi 蔣介石). When the Chinese Nationalist

[24] Emphasis mine.

[25] Here, the *Dragon's Mouth* transcription that reads "a formation" three times, while in the interview, which is otherwise identical, Feng clearly uses "the summation" in each case. Although the difference is subtle, "a formation" indicates a temporary state that might be reformulated by and connected to the later Daoist traditions, while Feng's original words indicate a stasis that is easily disconnected from later developments. This disconnect between an early set of ancient teachings and later cultural developments is a hallmark of the supposed distinction between "philosophical" and "religious" Daoism.

Party was defeated, most of Feng's business connections disappeared, and he realized "I couldn't do any kind of regular business which I was doing in China." He continues:

> I was forced to be a dropout, at age of thirty-one, shall we say, so I started wandering all over country, and by the early fifties I was on the west coast, [and] by chance met Alan Watts, and Kerouac, and North Beach San Francisco crowd. I really, then, started to wake up, started to feel the essence of our purpose of living, really. So I kind of became pursued in the field of spiritual values, and that opened up my new path of searching for the Daoism, again.

In his version of events, Feng maintains a connection to his early experiences with Daoism, but also makes clear the importance of his experiences with American counterculture pioneers in his transformation from Chinese banker to Daoist teacher. The interviewer comments: "So it took westerners to open you to your own tradition, your own heritage," and Feng replies: "Exactly. Exactly." The *Dragon's Mouth* article edits this portion of the interview down to a list of figures Feng met when he began "teaching Taoism in America" at the Esalen institute, leaving out any mention of their influence on what he called his "real education." The article also leaves out any mention of Feng's career in finance, and his MBA is described only as "a master's of arts degree" from the University of Pennsylvania.

Without any of the anxiety manifest in the article version of these events, Feng goes on to express deep gratitude that he was one of "the very few Chinese people who really had the chance of mixing with those very high-powered figures," whom he calls the "avant-garde" of the sixties, including Watts and Kerouac, but also psychologists Fritz Perls and Abraham Maslow, and theologians James Pike and Paul Tillich. However, Feng does not directly credit these figures or others for the knowledge they imparted so much as for helping him form a new perspective of himself through their impressions of China and Chinese religions:

> I got a chance to really see from the western point of view, and suddenly I become naked, in other words, all my garbage of ancient learning, traditions, and Confucianism, and limitations of traditions and so on, were kind of stripped

naked, by encountering a westerner.

It is this cross-cultural, psychological experience that caused him to start to "wake up" and "feel the essence of our purpose of living," and it left a deep impression on him and his understanding of "Daoist" teachings.

Feng became increasingly convinced that the wisdom of Daoism as he understood it was compatible with and best taught in conjunction with modern psychology, particularly gestalt therapy, which he experienced with Fritz Perls in the early days of the Esalen Institute. In portions of the interview not included in the *Dragon's Mouth* article, he argues that contact between missionaries and "Eastern thought" never "flowered into the practical flow of the general population. But today, especially, in the East where we have so much of Communism and such going on, it seems that it thrives now on western soil, but not through the churches—the organizations of the spiritual realm—but rather through the field of psychotherapy."

This understanding puts an interesting twist in the binary of "religious" and "philosophical" Daoism inherited from Confucians and propagated in early academic and popular representations of Daoism in Europe and America. While Feng's understanding of Daoism is grounded in "philosophical" Daoism, he puts it into practice not by moving toward so-called "religious" Daoism, but by articulating a "psychological" Daoism. "American Philosophical Daoism" may still be the best descriptor of popular Daoism in America—in large part because it signals the actual process of transmission and encounter—but this psychological turn is important to note in order to understand some of the appeal of these popular understandings particularly when they are put into practice as a "way of life." Feng may be correct when he states: "Taoism has been coming into contact with American culture especially through the door of the psychotherapist." Among other things, this intersection helps to explain

the success of "self-development" counselor Wayne Dyer's version of the *Daode jing*, which readers will recall was among the top one hundred books sold by Amazon.com in 2007.

In 2004, Louis Komjathy observed that "the predominant model in American Daoism centers on self-cultivation, focusing particularly on personal heath and healing."[26] Understanding a large part of this health and healing to be psychological is helpful in elaborating the connections between popular Daoism and contemporary self-help movements in America, as well as in understanding some of the larger shifts in the modern American religious landscape. Attention to psychology places a new inflection on Komjathy's conclusion that "in contrast to a soteriological or ritualistic orientation…American Daoism as a health and fitness movement may be largely determined by Euro-American concerns and demands."[27]

Soon after hearing a lecture by Alan Watts in 1954, Feng became a student of and resident at the Academy of Asian Studies, which Watts administered until 1956. During the next five years, Feng studied, formally and informally, Daoism and psychology among other topics, and he became close with many of the leading figures in the San Francisco Renaissance not mentioned in the interview above, including Gary Snyder, Lew Welch, and Kenneth Rexroth, as well as Michael Murphy and Dick Price who went on to found the Esalen Institute. About his role as a founding member of Esalen, biographer Carol Wilson writes:

> Around the end of 1961, Gia-fu joins Dick, Michael and others at Big Sur Hot Springs. Armed with his own abacus, Gia-fu fills the role of accountant in addition to keeper of the baths, as well as what some describe as resident Oriental mystic.[28]

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[26] Komjathy, "Tracing the Contours of Daoism in North America," abstract. Komjathy has since adjusted the views and interpretations in this early article based on his further research.
[27] *Ibid*., 19. It also seems to support Elijah Siegler's recent use of Wade Clarke Roof's theories in his article "Back to the Pristine: Identity Formation and Legitimation in Contemporary American Daoism," especially the obviously psychological "wholeness hunger" that characterizes members of Roof's "quest culture." See Wade Clark Roof, *Spiritual Marketplace: Baby Boomers and the Remaking of American Religion* (Princeton University Press, 1999).
[28] Wilson, *Still Point of the Turning World,* 119.

While employed initially as an accountant, as part of this latter role of "resident Oriental mystic," Feng soon began teaching Taiji quan (T'ai-chi ch'uan) courses and practicing acupressure.

At Esalen, Feng also delved deeper into psychotherapy, particularly the Gestalt method of Fritz Perls, who began teaching there in 1964.[29] Despite his appreciation of Gestalt therapy, Perls took a dislike to Feng that observers struggled to explain. Wilson relates that "some hypothesize it's Perls's distrust of anything hinting at mysticism," others thought it "Perls's domineering manner and Gia-fu's reaction to an overbearing patriarchal figure," and some saw Feng as "both an admirer and rival."[30] Whatever the reasons, when Ida Rolf arrived as a bodywork practitioner at Esalen in 1965, Perls reportedly told his students to "forget this Chinaman" and attend her workshops and therapies instead of his.[31] The growing conflict led eventually to Feng's departure in 1966, and to the founding of his own community, Stillpoint.

The community was located first in the hills above nearby Los Gatos, California, from 1966 to 1971, then in Manitou Springs, Colorado, from 1972 to 1977, and finally near the base of Pike's Peak, Colorado, from 1978 until Feng's death in 1985. Feng envisioned Stillpoint as a "Daoist utopia," with "Daoist" understood as the popularized philosophical teachings found in the *Daode jing* and other ancient texts, and "utopia" understood psychologically not as something which can "be found in the external world; [but] must come from within, from calmness of mind, an internal attitude."[32] In the 1977 New Dimensions radio interview, he describes it as "A Daoist retreat, and Daoist kind of philosophy put into practice, mainly centered on the flowing of qi…and through studies as well." The community of Stillpoint embraced American Philosophical Daoism as a complete practice, and it is one of few communities to

[29] *Ibid*., 127-129
[30] *Ibid*.
[31] *Ibid*., 129.
[32] *Ibid*., 133.

transform this popular, hybrid, text-based understanding of Daoism into a living practice. At Stillpoint, the popular reception of the *Daode jing* as a "Way of Life" was realized in full.

Section 4: Stillpoint and the *Daode jing*

It is difficult to know the number of people who visited Stillpoint. A particularly enthusiastic student and friend, Richard Bertschinger, estimates that "thousands upon thousands of individuals passed through Stillpoint's doors," but he admits that "not many stayed."[33] According to Carol Wilson's more measured estimation, many people did pass through Stillpoint, but the resident community stayed closer to about twenty students with seasonal increases as high as fifty.

An early visitor described the community's activities as follows: first a four a.m. mediation gathering, "which seems chaotic with the fifteen or so Stillpointers, dressed in loose, comfortable clothing, sitting on the floor on cushions around the large room, doing whatever kind of meditation they want and making whatever sound they want to make"; then a group meeting, "some of which concerns logistics for the day, but mostly it is devoted to group dynamics and issues within the group…If anyone has a problem or concern, this is where it comes out—directly, face-to-face, and most often, emotionally"; then free time during the day for exercise, chores, and communal dining.[34]

Wilson relates that in January of 1971, Feng was in search of something more to do in the daily meetings, and decided to collaboratively translate the *Daode jing*, working at length over one chapter each day. While Wilson does not provide a reason for this decision, this text-based practice corresponded well to the community's understanding of Daoism, which arose primarily

[33] Richard Bertschinger, "*Stillpoint of the Turning World* – Book Review by Richard Bertshinger," *Dragon's Mouth Magazine* (2011).
[34] Wilson, *Still Point of the Turning World,* 138-139.

from the popular reception of the *Daode jing* in America and the text-based understanding of "philosophical" Daoism that continues to dominate popular conceptions of Daoism today. First and foremost, the act of translation was a daily practice for the community in which they actively attempted to interpret the text in light of their experiences and to interpret their experiences in light of the text. They approached the *Daode jing* as a scripture, and this activity can be seen as a sort of Bible-study, where Stillpoint residents aimed for a better understanding of the text and its applicability to their lives. The lack of an established text and the variety of existing translations likely contributed to the subsequent impulse not only to interpret, but also to translate and, then, to publish the results.[35] The interpretation of classic texts soon became one of the groups' primary practices, and continued after the publication of their first collaborative translation in 1972 of the *Daode jing*, with a new translation of the *Zhuangzi* published in 1974, an unpublished translation of *Sunzi*, and an unpublished translation of the *Yijing*, which was being reworked each day at the time of Feng's death in 1985. These translations were less about the final product than the communal process, and the texts were frequently revisited and reinterpreted even after publication.

Working over their translation of the *Daode jing* for several hours each day, the group also consulted previous English and German renderings, and had access to the Chinese text through Feng's oral explanations of two manuscripts.[36] Wilson narrates: "The project begins,

[35] Financial considerations likely contributed to the text's publication as well. Recall that the manuscript was submitted during the community's relocation from California to Colorado.

[36] In an interview on 9/23/13, the editor at Knopf, Tionette Lippe, shared the handwritten corrections to the original manuscript that were exchanged between her, Feng, and English. On a note to the thirteenth chapter Feng and English identify "both copies of the Chinese original we have." They are the modern Chinese translation and commentary by Jialuo Yang 楊家駱 (1912-1991), *Laozi* 老子 (Xianggang 香港: Wanguo Shudian 萬國書店, 1961) and the English translation by John C. H. Wu (1961), a revision of a translation that first appeared in the *T'ien Hsia Monthly* (1939). Publication details in appendix. In chapter thirty-nine, they reference the translation of D.C. Lau (1963), and in chapter forty-three the collaborative translation by Paul Carus and D.T. Suzuki (first published without an accompanying Chinese text in 1903). In an interview on 7/6/13, community member Carmen Baehr

Gia-fu reading a chapter and then translating it into very rough English. The group then takes it up, considering the meaning, discussing it in depth, and figuring out the best way to express it…Gradually the idea of the translation becoming a book evolves."[37] While the resulting translation is the only text produced by a self-identified community of American "Daoists," it does not owe its success only to this process of production nor to the specifics of the translation that emerged from Stillpoint in late 1971.

At least two additional factors must be considered. The first is the aesthetic cultural overlap that is captured in Jane English's photographs and augmented by Feng's calligraphy. Married not long before the translation project began, theirs was the first version of the *Daode jing* to include photography or a significant amount of images of any kind, making for an attractive coffee table book. Furthermore, the combination of photographs and calligraphy generally capture identifiably American nature scenes in a fashion consistent with a generic Chinese aesthetic. The effect reinforces the familiar foreignness of the translation and its applicability in a modern American context. They complement the text well and were the first aspect of the manuscript to capture the attention of their editor at Knopf, Toinette Lippe.[38]

The second additional factor leading to the unprecedented success of the text was the extensive editing of the manuscript by Lippe. Comparing the original submission and published text attests to her assertion that she "rewrote almost every sentence of that text."[39] Not knowing Chinese, Lippe made her changes to the text based on her ear for language and on previous

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recalled the group using several English texts and drawing on her abilities in German to reference the translation of Richard Wilhelm, *Tao te king: das Buch des Alten vom Sinn und Leben* (Jena: Diederichs, 1911). Wilhelm's German text was later translated into English by H.G. Ostwald (1985), and appears in Catherine Albanese's presentation of Daoism analyzed below.

[37] Wilson, *Still Point*, 151.

[38] *Ibid*., 162.

[39] Personal email communication 9/4/13.

English translations. If "American Philosophical Daoism" might be said to have a canon, it would consist primarily of various popular translations of the *Daode jing* with a few translations of the *Zhuangzi* and a handful of American commentaries on these texts. As the size of this canon has grown, it has increasingly conditioned the transmission of Daoism in America and all new translations of its most referenced text. While editing, Lippe participated in the quintessential phenomenon of popular translation: the production of a new text based primarily if not exclusively on other translations by authors who know little or no Chinese. Recall Lippe's description of her editorial process:

> I would study how each of the twelve translators had rendered a particular sentence and then return to Gia-fu's translation to see what he thought it meant. Then I would find a way to express his understandings in a simple natural way and in words that had not been used by other translators. It was the opposite of plagiarism! Finally, I would read each page aloud to a young Mexican friend and if it did not read well or if she looked puzzled, I would adjust the words or the cadence until the meaning was clearly delivered. I then sent batches of the new text to Gia-fu who would approve (or occasionally disapprove) of what I had done. I have the suspicion that he thought that this was the normal editorial process, which it is not.[40]

Although Gia-fu Feng and Jane English's text would not generally be included on this list, because of Lippe's active participation it perhaps should be.

The original Stillpoint manuscript generally lacks definite articles, copula verbs, and conjunctions. It has a sparse, blunt, and frequently jarring quality that approaches what Lawrence Venuti would call a "foreignizing" translation. Recall that to draw attention to the role of the translator, the distance of the foreign text, and the hegemony of "fluent" translations, Venuti advocates for translations that disrupt readers' complacency and challenge the tendency to view the translated text as providing an unmediated, transhistorical encounter with a foreign original. The manuscript submitted by Feng and English goes some way towards a "foreignizing"

[40] Feng, English, and Lippe (2011): vi.

translation by using a stilted grammar closer to the original Chinese than most of the previous translations Lippe read and adjusted the published text to reflect. This is evident throughout the translation from its opening chapter:

Manuscript	Published text
Tao that can be told, not eternal Tao.	The Tao that can be told is not the eternal Tao.
Name that can be named, not eternal name.	The name that can be named is not the eternal name.
No name, beginning of heaven and earth.	The nameless is the beginning of heaven and earth.
Have name, mother of ten-thousand things.	The named is the mother of ten thousand things.
Ever desireless, then see the mystery.	Ever desireless, one can see the mystery.
Ever desiring, then see manifestations.	Ever desiring, one can see the manifestations.
These two: same source, different name, all called darkness.	These two spring from the same source but differ in name; this appears as darkness.
Darkness within darkness,	Darkness within darkness.
Gate to all mystery.	The gate to all mystery.

Blunt, jarring, and ungrammatical texts may give a sense of the foreignness of the original, but they lack a fluency publishers and readers have come to expect from translation. The also lack the simple language and plain, common-sense meanings that popular readers have come to expect from scripture. Sales figures indicate that Lippe was likely correct in her assessment that the language of the original manuscript needed considerable smoothing before it might appeal to a broad audience. The corrections she submitted to Feng and English were extensive, but were rarely challenged, and the "foreignizing" marks of the original manuscript was not maintained in its published form.

In addition to making the text more “fluent,” Lippe also shows an aversion to “sage,” a key concept and term in the Chinese text and Chinese Daoism, which recalls Bynner’s democratic impulse in the *Way of Life* and reflects a widespread demotion of the figure of the Chinese sage in American popular interpretations. When used by Feng and English, Lippe generally replaces “sage” with “the wise.” She changes the line in chapter three, “Therefore, sages govern by emptying hearts, stuffing bellies,” to “The wise therefore rule by emptying

hearts and stuffing bellies." She similarly changed a line in chapter five from "Sages are not kind; They take the people as dummies" to "The wise are impartial; They see the people as they are." This is one of the few edits that Feng and English protested, writing on the last line of the final chapter that "We have translated this as 'sage' all along!" It was, however, changed throughout most of the published text. After Feng's death, when English and Lippe collaborated on additional edits to the 2011 edition, "sage" was eliminated entirely.

While the final version of the text was based on the initial manuscript, it was significantly altered by Lippe to read as more simple, natural, accessible, and fluent, as well as to conform in meaning with other successful translations. Reconsider the following selections from this dissertation's introduction to popular translations:

Manuscript	Chapter 5	Published text
Between heaven and earth,	天地之間	The space between heaven and earth
Is it not like a bellows?	其猶橐籥(龠)乎	is like a bellows.
It yields but is not bent.	虛而不屈	The shape changes but not the form
The more it moves the more comes out.	動而愈出	The more it moves, the more it yields

Manuscript	Chapter 13	Published text
What do you mean by "welcome disgrace with awe"?	何謂寵辱若驚	What do you mean by "Accept disgrace willingly"?
Welcome being lowly.	寵為下	Accept being unimportant
Gain with awe; lose with awe.	得之若驚 失之若驚	Do not be concerned with loss or gain.

Manuscript	Chapter 16	Published text
Destiny is the way it is.	復命曰常	The way of nature is unchanging.
Knowing the way it is is insight.	知常曰明	Knowing constancy is insight.
Not knowing the way it is leads to disaster.	不知常妄作凶	Not knowing constancy leads to disaster.
Knowing the way it is, you have room for everything.	知常容	Knowing constancy, the mind is open.
Having room for every thing [sic], you will be open.	容乃公	With an open mind, you will be openhearted.
When you're open, you'll be	公乃王(全)	Being openhearted, you will act

king.		royally.
Being the king, you're heavenly.	全乃王(全)	Being royal, you will attain the divine.
Being heavenly, you're with the Tao.	天乃道	Being divine, you will be at one with the Tao.

In addition to the photography and calligraphy, the success of the text should be attributed to its initial production by a community that embraced American Philosophical Daoism and its subsequent editing to conform to the existing canon of popular translations. Heavily influenced by popular conceptions of the *Daode jing* and Daoism at all levels of its production, it has proven to be massively popular, by 2011 it had sold well over one-million copies in North America alone.[41] While translations continue to proliferate, this version may be American Philosophical Daoism's most paradigmatic scripture.

Section 5: A Literal Daoist Sage

The success of this translation played a large part in elevating Feng to international fame, and he began leading workshops across Europe in 1974. In an interview with Carol Wilson, Shi Jing (author of the *Dragon's* Mouth article discussed above) recalled first meeting Feng at a European Taiji quan seminar in 1978, which he attended after reading the Stillpoint translations of the *Daode jing* and *Zhuangzi*. The encounter fits neatly within the frame of popular Euro-American conceptions of Daoism and at the outermost fringe of the traditional Chinese Daoist movement Shi Jing would later join. At this seminar, Shi Jing, then Alan Redman, was so struck by Feng's discussion about circulating qi and mediation, that he approached Feng to ask how he might become a Daoist. Feng reportedly replied that the young man was already a Daoist, telling him, "it's those people who often don't fit in who are Taoists, that the important thing is to

[41] Feng, English, and Lippe (2011), vii.

become who you are, not to try to be like somebody else. Everyone is unique—not special."[42] He then advised Shi Jing to look to nature where "the trees don't try to imitate each other, nor do they compete with each other. Each follows its own course."[43] Shi Jing was intrigued enough by this description of individual cultivation and other of Feng's teachings that he continued to practice Taiji quan and remained a student of Feng through 1985.

Shi Jing and Shi Dao's selective editing of Feng's biography was detailed above to demonstrate the anxieties of authenticity that accompany the tensions between localization and globalization in later stages of religious transmission. Shi Jing's early experience with Feng is related here not to disparage it or call his current credentials into question, but to recall the early stage of Daoism's Euro-American transmission in which they first met. At this stage, literary and philosophical conceptions of Daoism still dominated local acculturation with little or no global counter pressure. The year Shi Jing and Gia-fu Feng met, 1978, was the same year that Nathan Sivin wrote his benchmark article, "On the word 'Taoist' as a source of perplexity," arguing for a more consistent delineation of the term even among experts.[44] It was only a year after Feng's radio interview where he speaks with open enthusiasm about the Chinese and American sources for his hybrid understandings of Daoism and its applicability to modern life.

In their interaction, Feng indicated to Shi Jing that his Daoism was not the Daoism of China. When Shi Jing ventured to call him "Master," Feng responded: "No, I'm not your master. Your master has to be traditional. I'm not traditional."[45] Here we might correct that Feng did not follow the traditions of Chinese Daoism, but he very much did follow the popular tradition of the

[42] Wilson, *Still Point of the Turning World*, 215
[43] *Ibid*.
[44] Nathan Sivin, "On the word 'Taoist' as a Source of Perplexity. With Special Reference to the Relations of Science and Religion in Traditional China." *History of Religions* 17:3/4 (1978), 303-330.
[45] Wilson, *Still Point of the Turning World*, 217.

Daode jing in America and was, in a peculiar way, "traditional." Rather than the traditional "Master," Shi Jing settled on descriptions of Feng drawn from the second ancient text most dear to American Philosophical Daoism: Feng was "like a character who had just jumped out of a Zhuangzi story, a Daoist sage, who wanders freely, happy to allow things to arise in a spontaneous and effortless way."[46] Here we can agree with Shi Jing, that Feng was remarkably similar to a character that had just jumped out of a classic text, precisely because Feng practiced a "Daoism" that emerged from the popular reception of these same works. He was a figure that lived and helped a community to live a text-based tradition that emerged out of the intersection of contemporary American cultural interests and popular understandings of Daoism conditioned by English translations of the *Daode jing*.

This "Daoism" is now counterbalanced by more comprehensive and accurate scholarship on Chinese Daoism, by a reviving Daoist tradition in China, and by various technologies and political reforms that have increased transnational mobility. Yet the legacies of this earlier tradition still dominate the popular understandings of Daoism and the ongoing production of popular translation of the *Daode jing*. These translations continue to reinforce the idea that this text is the essential scripture of Daoism containing a simple and universal wisdom that can improve the American way of life. As globalizing forces continue to balance this particular localization of Daoism, its dominance and the specifics of its understandings may change, but it will continue to exert a strong influence on popular preconceptions, changing how Daoism is globalized and certainly how that global Daoism will be received in America.

[46] Shi Jing, "Free and Easy Wandering with Gia-fu Feng Part 1," *Dragon's Mouth Magazine* (2011).

CONCLUSION: The *Daode jing* as American Scripture

While some would prefer the terms "wisdom text" or "spiritual classic," popular English translaitons of the *Daode jing* can be usefully considered from the vantage of "American Scripture" to reflect both the influence of conceptions of the Bible on their production and to propose an approach to the *Daode jing* not as a historical object but rather with W. C. Smith as a "human activity."[1] Such a perspective is not without dangers and critics. Russell Kirkland writes:

> The common assumption that the *Daode jing* ought to be interpreted as a text applicable to our own lives actually reflects our lingering Judeo-Christian faith in the eternal relevance of scripture. Having rejected Church as interpreter of Scripture, then the validity of the Bible itself, many moderns have searched for a replacement—for a classic text that can be appropriated and reinterpreted as a Bible for the non-Christian modern believer. Following the lead of early sinologists, decades of Westerns have ripped the *Daode jing* from its moorings in Chinese culture and society, and re-created it in their own idealized image, resulting in a plethora of 'Daos' perfectly suited to the tastes and prejudices of modern and postmodern minds.[2]

While the evidence in previous chapters suggests a modification to the ongoing academic bias against popular translations as derivative of previous scholarship, these chapters have also demonstrated much of Kirkland's critique as accurate to the text-tradition as it has been handed down to American readers. Rather than dismiss popular English translations and the popular reception of the *Daode jing* from study, however, Kirkland's critique points to how rich and valuable such a study might be: contributing directly to understanding these complex processes of transmission and to the "lingering" attitudes towards scripture that arose in nineteenth and

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[1] W.C. Smith, *What is Scripture: A Comparative Approach* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1993): 18.
[2] Russell Kirkland, "Hermeneutics and Pedagogy: Methodological Issues in Teaching the *Daode jing*," in *Teaching the Daode Jing*: 145-166, 152. See also "The Taoism of the Western Imagination and the Taoism of China: De-colonizing the Exotic Teachings of the East." Paper presented at the University of Tennessee 20 October 1997. https://faculty.franklin.uga.edu/kirkland/sites/faculty.franklin.uga.edu.kirkland/files/ TENN97.pdf. Accessed May 8, 2017.

twentieth-century America and affect the ongoing interpretations of many non-Christian texts today.

Furthermore, to examine a text "ripped" from its cultural moorings forces the contextual nature of interpretation into stark relief. In the preceding chapters, the influence of context and preconceptions on the interpretation of the *Daode jing* has been made clear, but so too have the ways these contexts and preconceptions been shaped by earlier interpretations and, in turn, affected (even effected) subsequent understandings and translations. While the *Daode jing* may have been "ripped" from Chinese moorings, that process has a specific history that affected its transmission. While it was introduced into "lingering Judeo-Christian faith in the eternal relevance of scripture," that too has a fascinating and important history which shaped interpretation. Such interpretations are instructive on not only processes of cultural exchange, but also the history of Euro-American receptions (and constructions) of "Asian religions." The resulting patterns are key to understanding American religious history itself.[3]

Because the large majority of English readers have no direct access to the Chinese text nor familiarity with anything but the most basic elements of the text's transmission history in China, many preconceptions of the *Daode jing* do prevail in their interpretations. Because they can only read this text in English translation, the history of these translations is the context in which many of their preconceptions are formed, confirmed, and occasionally challenged. While this may initially seem odd, unfortunate, or even deplorable to many scholars, careful thought reveals that the hermeneutics of this situation are more universal than unique. They apply also in China, where historical interpretations have their own history of effects. They apply also to the transmission of other texts, perhaps none more so than the Bible itself.

[3] Thanks to Louis Komjathy for suggesting adding this observation here, and for his many other helpful comments on an earlier draft.

The danger identified in this process by Kirkland is one this dissertation also critiques, namely that interpreters of the *Daode jing* have "re-created it in their own idealized image." However, different from Kirkland, this is not taken to be a danger unique to the text's popular interpretations, or only to this text. All readers who do not attend to the text as a tradition that has come down to them through history run the risk of seeing only an "idealized" image. Gadamer develops the ideas of the "traditionary text" and its "effective history" to explain the inescapably situated nature of all understanding. In the process, he alerts scholars to the possibility that they too pursue an "idealized" text: "the phantom of a historical object that is the object of progressive research." Insisting on the historicity of interpretation, he critiques any claim for a method that would excuse itself from his hermeneutics.

To reception history and other developments on Gadamer's thought, this dissertation does, however, suggest attention to translations as productive for research. While investigation into translations may appear to border on a pursuit of "the phantom of a historical object that is the object of progressive research," translations undercut the historicist quest for objectivity in their ambiguous relationship to the original which they claim to represent. A translation can never be the original, and, when acknowledged, stands always between a reader and an original text, calling attention to the distance between them and preventing its total collapse.

Perhaps the most cited model of translation in hermeneutics is that of Friedrich Schleiermacher, who proposes that "Either the translator leaves the writer alone as much as possible and moves the reader toward the writer, or he leaves the reader alone as much as possible and moves the writer toward the reader."[4] Here, the mind of the author is more

[4] Friedrich Schleiermacher, "On the Different Methods of Translating," in *Theories of Translation* edited by Rainer Schulte and John Biguenet (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1992): 36-54, 42. Originally part of an 1813 lecture to the Academy of Sciences in Berlin: "Ueber die verschiedenen Methoden des Uebersezens."

Schleiermacher's Romantic concern rather than the object of the text, but it is still a model that threatens to collapse translation into an immediate encounter between original author and contemporary reader in which only one might emerge victorious. However, Schleiermacher goes on to indicate that the translator can never be entirely successful: "The two separate parties must either meet in the middle at a certain point, which will always be that of the translator, or one party must completely link up with the other. Of these two possibilities, only one falls into the area of translation."[5] He does not further address the latter, rhetorical possibility, and the point of the argument is that the translator always remains between the original author and contemporary reader. This puts them in a relationship that prevents both a collapse and the illusion of an immediate encounter by insisting on the translator's mediating role.[6]

Lawerence Venuti is rightly concerned that "fluent" translation strategies serve to erase the presence of the translator and create an illusion of immediacy in the domestic reader's encounter with a foreign text. To this concern, we might add populism's privileging of direct language and common sense meaning, which also serves to minimizes interpretive distance. The collapse of this distance in the illusion of immediacy occurs as readers lose sight of the activities of translation, hence Venuti's advocacy of a "foreignizing" strategy, not to better transmit the foreign so much as to insist on returning the activities of translation to visibility. We would do well to attend to Venuti's critique. Rather than turn away from translations as "popular," "scriptural," "amateur," or otherwise, we can take the opportunity to examine translations' visible effects. We can turn that lens on the previous translations on our fields, on popular reception, and our own understandings and interests.

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[5] *Ibid*., 43.

[6] Schleiermacher's model is taken up by Lawerence Venuti, which may account for a renaissance of interest in this aspect of the former's hermeneutics. See *The Translator's Invisibility* 83-99.

In addition to their mediating role, translations suggest always an instructive impermanence, even when they aim at the perennial, and a persistent parochialism, even when they aim at the universal. They are attempts to bring texts into new contexts, and are marked always by that transition. In their understandings of meaning, in the details of their diction, grammar, form, paratext, and more, translations demonstrate their situatedness and ephemerality. While new translations are repeatedly offered as improvements to their predecessors, they are just as quickly eclipsed. If only in retrospect, the context-bound nature of their interpretations is readily apparent to all who do not share their prejudices and assumptions.

T. S Eliot's opinion is often quoted alone that "Pound is the inventor of Chinese poetry for our time." The lines that follow are regularly omitted:

> I suspect that every age has had, and will have, the same illusion concerning translations, an illusion which is not altogether an illusion either. When a foreign poet is successfully done into the idiom of our own language and our own time, we believe that he has been "translated"; we believe that through this translation we really at last get the original…His translations seem to be—and that is the test of excellence—translucencies: we *think* we are closer to the Chinese than when we read, for instance, Legge. I doubt this: I predict that in three hundred years Pound's *Cathay* will be a "Windsor Translation" as Chapman and North are now "Tudor Translations": it will be called (and justly) a "magnificent specimen of XXth Century poetry" rather than a "translation." Each generation must translate for itself.[7]

When these texts are studied not as "translucencies" but as translations, they tell us about their times and their authors, but also about how they received the past and affected the future. Pound's translations are indeed available to us now for critique, and they tell of a compex history that has permanently changed how English and Chinese poetry are understood in America.

With inspiration from Gadamer's conceptions of the "text-tradition" and its "history of effects," this dissertation suggests that translations and pseudo-translations alike *document* a

[7] T. S. Eliot, Introduction to *Ezra Pound: Selected Poems* (Faber & Gwyer, 1928), 14-15.

text's reception and history of effects: they record what has come before and they influence what comes after. Popular texts were chosen not because they offer better interpretations of the *Daode jing* than those found in the academy, Chinese history, institutional Daoism, or anywhere else, but because they are ubiquitous and dominate a market flooded now with nearly four hundred English versions of this text. As noted in the introduction, mainstream perceptions of the *Daode jing* have become so conditioned by the bulk of prior translations that the texts constructed entirely from previous versions without any reference to the original Chinese now account for the majority of bestsellers. To help understand this phenomenon, the preceding pages have attempted to documented the most widespread and influential ways the text has been received in English, the lasting developments on its transmission, and the factors that continue to impact how the *Daode jing* and Daoism are understood in contemporary America.

By placing multiple commentaries, interpretations, and translations between the original text and its contemporary reception, preceding chapters have attempted not only to detail the effects of transmission, but also to create a sense for the uncollapsible series of interpretations that stand between all readers and all texts. We are historically situated in the very histories through which these texts have been and continue to be transmitted. To attempt to collapse this history into a direct encounter with an "original" text is not only to idealize and remove that text from the ongoing operations of history, but also, as Gadamer argues, to remove us from our very abilities to understand it as a text that has addressed its historical readers for millennia and continues to address us today, not as something objective or transhistorical, but as something operating in history and deeply human.

While many an interpreter have dwelt at length on *dao* 道 or *de* 德, few have attended as much to the third character in the text's title *jing* 經. Yet, here we find an indication that this text

was from an early point conceived of in relation to its commentaries. The word *jing* is generally translated as "classic," "canon," or "scripture" and is the same character used in the titles of Confucian classics and Buddhist sutras. In *Writing and Authority in Early China*, Mark Lewis relates that it began to appear in titles and to be applied to certain bodies of works in the late Warring States period (3rd c. BCE).[8] This roughly corresponds to the emergence of the *Daode jing* in the archeological and commentarial records. Lewis goes on to argue that as *jing* emerged as a textual category, not only were these texts "regularly paired with an 'explanation' (*shuo* 說) or a 'tradition/commentary' (*zhuan* 專) that articulated the significance of the master text," but also that "the addition of a commentary certified a text as a constant, fundamental norm by showing its hidden depths or polyvalent applications to many situations."[9] Commentary and classic emerged together in interdependent relation: the commentary assures the designation of *jing*, and the classic assures the importance of the commentary. As its history of transmission demonstrates, it makes little sense to study the *Daode jing* apart from its commentaries, especially not after its official canonization by Emperor Jing of the Han dynasty (188-141 BCE).

Stephen Bokenkamp acknowledges this understanding of *jing*, but offers a different analysis of Daoist "scripture":

> Daoist conceptions of scripture are markedly different from those of Confucianism or Buddhism. The Daoist view is based on the nature of written Chinese and on the idea that the cosmic ordering of the Dao, though perverted in the present world, is still recoverable in the patterns it has laid down. Scripture is made up of *wen*, a word that means 'patterns' or 'markings' and, by extension, 'Chinese characters,' 'writing,' 'text,' and even 'cultured,' 'civilized,' or 'ordered.' Each Daoist text (*wen*) defines itself as a historical concretization of the eternal, divine patterns (*wen*) of the Dao inhering in the cosmos. The individual scripture is therefore regarded as part of a whole, finally unobtainable, truth—a representation of the timeless frozen in time and congealed in debased human

[8] Mark Lewis, *Writing and Authority in Early China* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1999).
[9] *Ibid*., 301-303.

> writing (*wen*) that can, by its very nature, only point to what lies beyond. Because of this, there is the possibility of countless scriptures expressing the truths of the Dao.[10]

As scripture, *jing* 經 indicates a constant, fundamental norm that is accessible only through commentary that reveal its "hidden depths," and "polyvalent applications." As scripture, *wen* 文 aims for "a whole, finally unobtainable, truth," but proliferates in its countless partial expressions of what can never be fully or permanently expressed in writing. Both posit idealized truths, but also suggest that these truths are available to us only in their variations. We are, after all, discussing a text that, in its received form, opens with 道可道非常道, 名可名非常名: "The *dao* that can be spoken of is not the constant *Dao*, The names that can me named are not the constant names."

However, lest we think that we have fully captured the import of these initial lines, we do well to remember the wide variety of ways that they have been interpreted and translated, and should perhaps add one more English version. We close, temporarily, with what Venuti would celebrate as a "foreignizing" translation of the *Daode jing*'s first chapter by Peter Boodberg, whose meticulous but seemingly bizarre choices send us running for dictionaries both English and Chinese and remind of us the distances this text continues to cross:

> Lodehead lodehead-brooking : no forewonted lodehead;
> Namecall namecall-brooking : no forewonted namecall.
> Having-naught namecalling : Heaven-Earth's fetation,
> Having-aught namecalling: Myriad Mottlings' mother.
> Affirmably,
> Forewont
> Have-naught
> Desired—for to descry in view *the* minikin-subliminaria,
> Forewont
> Have-aught
> Desired—for to descry in view *the* circut-luminaria;

[10] Stephen Bokenkamp. *Early Daoist Scriptures* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1997), 20-21.

These pairing ones at-one
Egressing,
Diverse namecall :
At-one—bespeak such : Darkling,
Adarkling such, again adarkling
The thronging subliminaria's gate.[11]

[11] Peter Boodberg, "Philological Notes on Chapter One of the *Lao Tzu*," *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies* 20:3/4 (Dec 1957): 598-618, 618.

APPENDIX A: 380 English Versions of the *Daode jing* Chronologically Arranged[1]

X 1861 Legge, James. *The Original Chinese texts of the Work of Laou-tsze, the Great Leaning, the Doctrine of the Mean; With Their Japanese Translations & Notes by O. Shimizu & M. Hirose and Their English Translations & Notes by James Legge*. Hong Kong.[2]

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[1] My interests in the reception history of the *Daode jing* lead me to include texts here that might be labeled "interpretations," "adaptations," "appropriations," etc. However, they all link themselves closely to the Chinese original by presenting themselves as an English version of the text, by referencing and/or following the chapter divisions of the received text, by adhering to the general ideas, grammar, and vocabulary of the received text, and by claiming to transmit its "teachings," "knowledge," "wisdom," or the like. While assembling this bibliography, I have made extensive use of Knut Walf's *Westliche Taoismus-Bibliographie* (Essen: Die Blaue Eule, 1986, revised 2010) and of the appendix to Archie Bahm's *Tao Teh King* (New York: Frederick Ungar, 1958, revised 1996), among other shorter bibliographies assembled be previous scholars and authors. Publication details have been verified whenever possible with physical texts or scanned copies available through Google Books, Amazon.com, and similar services. Reprints have not been included, but entries do list new editions and new publishing houses. I have included only texts available in print and not those available only in electronic formats. Because Walf's bibliography is by far the most comprehensive to date, all significant changes to it have been marked and footnoted. An "X" in the leftmost column indicates a text that should be removed from Walf's list, and a "+" indicates one that should be added. "NE" indicates a new edition that has been significantly altered, but remains similar enough to a previous edition that it has not been counted it as a separate translation. Minor corrections to Walf have not been noted. Whenever possible, I have supplied traditional characters for Chinese author names and titles. Because I am interested in translation into English, I have prioritized the names of the English translators, but have noted when their texts are based on existing works in other languages such as French, German, or modern Chinese. In 2010, Walf lists 206 English translations and 437 translations into other languages. In total, I find that 13 texts should be removed from his list, and 196 should be added (5 before 1950, 19 between 1950-2000, 47 between 2000-2009, and 125 after 2010). The total number of English versions of the *Daode jing* through the end of 2016 is 380.

[2] The date of this publication is incorrect, but it is included by Walf in both 1986 and 2010 as the earliest English translation of the *Daode jing*. The mistake is an instructive example of the complex transnational circulations of texts and the dangers of an overreliance on existing catalogues and scholarship. The work in question does not contain the "original Chinses texts" promised in the English title, but rather Japanese and English translations of the three classical Chinese texts: the *Daode jing*, the *Daxue* 大學, and the *Zhongyong* 中庸. It was authored by Shimizu Okimasa 清水起正 and Hirose Mataichi 廣瀨又一, who are responsible for the Japanese text, and it includes the English translations of James Legge. However, only Legge's translations of the *Daxue* and *Zhongyong* date to the year 1861, and their notes have been heavily edited. They were originally published in *The Chinese Classics* (London: Trübner, 1861), the title page of which includes a second location of publication: "Hongkong: at the Author's." This is the most likely source for the information included on the English title page of Shimizu and Hirose's work, which, in addition to the title and authors listed in Walf's entry, gives 1861 as its date and "at the Author's in Hongkong, China" as its location of publication. This information was understandably taken to apply to the whole book and entered into bibliographic catalogues including WorldCat.org by readers more familiar with English than Japanese, where it remains today to be followed by Walf among others. However, the English title page also describes Legge as "Professor in the Oxford University," a position he did not assume until 1876, the same year Shimizu Okimasa was born, and the included English translation of the *Daode jing* is nearly identical to the one first published by Legge in 1891 (see entry four). Correct publication information for Shimizu and Hirose's Japanese-English book appears only in Japanese, and it is not 1861 in Hong Kong, but 昭和八年 (8th year of the Shōwa period, or 1933) with the publisher 二三子堂書店 (Nisanshidō Shoten) in Tokyo. Thus, we find Legge's translations from two different sources edited and repackaged along with Japanese translations and published in 1933 but misidentified in English as being published in 1861 and accepted as such by numerous catalogues and the best extant academic bibliography of translations of the *Daode jing*. The multilayered production and confused reception of this Japanese-English text is not dissimilar to many other repackagings of public domain translations of the *Daode jing*, most often that by Legge, which continue to proliferate with poor attribution and limited fidelity in print and, increasingly, electronic forms.

1. 1868 Chalmers, John. *The Speculations on Metaphysics, Polity and Morality of "The Old Philosopher" Lau-tsze*. London: Trübner; Shanghai: Kelly and Walsh.

2. 1884 Balfour, Frederick Henry. *Taoist Texts, Ethical, Political and Speculative*. London: Trübner, 1884; New York: Gordon Press, 1975.

3. 1886 Giles, Herbert Allen. *The Remains of Lao Tzu*. London: John Murray, 1886. Originally published as "The Remains of Lao Tzu Retranslated." *The China Review* 14 (1886): 231-81.[3]

4. 1891 Legge, James. "Tao-Teh King." *Sacred Books of The East 39: The Sacred Books of China: The Texts of Tâoism*, 47-124. London: Oxford University Press, 1891; New York: Julian Press, 1959; New York: Dover, 1962; Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1966; New York: Gordon Press, 1976; Singapore: Graham Brash, 1989; New Delhi: Atlantic, 1990. Also appears in *Sacred Books and Early Literature of the East* 12, 32-74. New York: Parke, Austin and Lipscomb, 1917.[4]

5. 1894 Old, Walter Gorn (Sepharial). *The Book of the Path of Virtue, or a Version of the Tao Teh King of Lao-tsze, the Chinese Mystic and Philosopher*. Madras: Theosophical Publishing Society.[5]

6. 1895 Alexander, George Gardiner. *Lâo-tsze: The Great Thinker, with a Translation of His Thoughts on the Nature and Manifestation of God*. London: Kegan Paul, Trensch, Trübner & Co., 1895. First half reprinted as "Tao-Teh-King or Book of the Values of Tao." *Sacred Books and Early Literature of the East*, Vol. 12: 15-31. New York: Parke, Austin and Lipscomb, 1917.

7. 1897 Carus, Paul. "Lao-Tsze's Tao-Teh-King." *The Monist* Vol. 7 No. 4 (July 1897): 571-601. Published with minor edits and additions as *Lao-tze's Tao-teh-king: Chinese and English with Introduction, Transliteration, and Notes*. Chicago: Open Court Publishing, 1898.[6]

8. 1898 Maclagen, P. J. "The Tao Teh King." *China Review* 23 (1898/99): 1-14,75-85,

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[3] A partial, but significant translation missing from Walf's bibliography (see chapter 2). It is listed by Walf in his section on secondary literature. It is included by Bahm as well as LaFargue/Pas, among others.

[4] While his 1891 translation was in progress, Legge published portions of chapters 2, 4, 5, 8, 11, 14, 20, 25, 57, 63, 67, 78, 80 in *Religions of China: Confucianism and Taoism described and compared with Christianity*. London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1880; New York: Scribner, 1881; Folcroft, Pennsylvania: Folcroft Library Editions, 1976; Norwood, Pennsylvania: Norwood Editions, 1977. He also published portions of chapters 2-4, 6, 8, 10-11, 14-15, 17-20, 22-23, 25, 27, 38, 40, 42-43, 49, 51, 53, 55, 57, 61, 65, 67, 69, 73-74, 78, 80 in "The Tao Teh King." *The British Quarterly Review* 78 (July/October 1883): 41-59.

[5] Old, born Walter Richard Old, published a second translation, *The Book of the Simple Way,* in 1904. Both are listed by Walf and Bahm, but only the latter by LaFargue/Pas. Compare Old (1904).

[6] Also republished as *The Canon of Reason and Virtue* in 1903. Bahm lists Carus' first publication as 1896; Walf and LaFargue/Pas as 1898. Compare Carus (1903) and (1913).

125-142, 191-207, 261-264; *China Review* 24 (1899/1900): 12-20, 86-92.

9. 1899 Kingsmill, Thomas William. *The Taoteh King*. Shanghai: Shanghai Mercury, 1899. Also as "The Taoteh King literally translated with notes" in *China Review* 24 (1899/1900): 149-155, 185-194.

NE 1903 Carus, Paul. *The Canon of Reason and Virtue*. Chicago: Open Court; London: K. Paul, Trench Trübner.[7]

10. 1903 Heysinger, Issac Winter. *Light of China, The Tâo Teh King of Lâo Tsze: An Accurate Metrical Rendering*. Philadelphia: Research Publishing, 1903; Whitefish (MT): Kessinger, 2003.

11. 1903 Parker, Edward Harper. "Tao Teh King." *The Dublin Review* (July 1903, January 1904). Also in id. *China and Religion,* 271-301. New York: Dutton, 1905. Also in id. *Studies in Chinese Religion,* 96-131. New York: Dutton; London, Chapman & Hall, 1910.

12. 1904 Giles, Lionel. *The Sayings of Lao Tzu*. London: Orient Press, John Murray, 1904; New York: E. P. Dutton, 1908.

13. 1904 Old, Walter Gorn (Sepharial), *The Book of the Simple Way of Laotze: A New Translation from the text of the Tao-Teh-King*. London: Philip Wellby; Philadelphia: David McKay, 1904. After first edition, retitled *The Simple Way: Laotze (The 'Old Boy')*. London: Philip Wellby, 1905; London: William Rider, 1909; Philadelphia: David McKay, 1939. Published with the title *Laotze: The Tao Teh King*. London: Rider & Co., 1929.[8]

14. 1905 Medhurst, Charles Spurgeon. *Tao Teh King, A Short Study in Comparative Religion*. Chicago: Theosophical Book Concern; Wheaton (IL): Theosophical Publishing House, 1905. Reissued without changes to the original translation as *The Tao-Teh-King: Sayings of Lao-tzu*. Wheaton, IL: Theosophical Publishing House, 1972.

X 1911 Bjerregaard, Carl Henrik Andreas, *The Inner Life and the Tao-Teh King*. London and New York: Theosophical Publishing Co.[9]

X 1912 Tolstoy, Leo. *The Sayings of Lao-Tze*. London: Free Age Press.[10]

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[7] Edited version of 1897 text above. Published without notes, Chinese text, or transliteration/crib. Edited again and republished in 1913 with a new introduction, new notes, and a corrected Chinese text, but without the character-by-character transliteration/crib. Compare Carus (1897) and (1913).

[8] Compare Old (1894).

[9] Listed by both Walf and Bahm. It is not a version of the *Daode jing*, but rather a collection of lectures given to the New York Theosophical Society.

[10] There is ample evidence that Tolstoy read, admired, and even translated significant portions of the *Daode jing*: by 1884 he had begun translating from Julien's manuscript (Derk Bodde, *Tolstoy and China*, p. 13), and in 1913 he co-published a Russian translation with a Japanese convert to the Greek Church who studied in the Kiev Theological

NE 1913 Carus, Paul. *The Canon of Reason and Virtue*. Chicago: Open Court, 1913.[11] Revised by Jim Pym and republished as *The Teachings of Lao-Tzu: The Tao-Te Ching*. London: Rider, 1999; New York: St. Martin's Press, 2000.

+15. 1916 Crosby, Summer, trans. *The Road and the Right Way of Lao Tse; From the German Text of Alexander Ular*. Boston.[12]

16. 1916 Mears, Isabella. *Tao Teh King by Lao Tzu: A Tentative Translation from the Chinese*. London: Theosophical Publishing House, 1916. Reset with corrections and revisions 1922; Quest Books, 1995; Aeon, 2000; Book Tree, 2003; Wilder 2009.

+17. 1919 Goddard, Dwight, and Henri Borel. *Lao Tzu's Tao and Wu Wei*. New York: Brentano.[13]

18. 1920 Anderson, A. E. "The Tao Teh King; A Chinese Mysticism." *University Chronicle* 22. Berkeley: University of California (October 1920): 394-404.

+19. 1921 Johnston, Charles. "Tao-The-King: An Interpretation of Lao Tse's Book of the Way and of Righteousness." Serialized in *The Theosophical Quarterly*, vol. 18 (April 1921) 346-353; vol. 19 (July 1921) 50-54; (October 1921) 162-168; (January 1922) 236-243; (April 1922) 350-360; vol. 20 (July 1922) 32-38; (October 1922) 163-169; (January 1923) 203-208. Collected as id. *The Tao Teh King: Lao Tse's Book of the Way and of Righteousness*. Kshetra Books, 2014.[14]

20. 1923 Weiss, John Gustav. *Lao-tze's Tao-te-king with Comments*. Typewritten copy in British Library, London.[15]

21. 1924 Stephens, James and Iris Clare Wise. *The Simple Way of Lao Tsze, An Analysis of the Tao-Têh Canon with Comments by the Editors of the Shrine of Wisdom*. London: Shrine of Wisdom.

Academy, Daniel Pavlovich Konissi, first in the journal *Voprosy filosofii i psikhologii*, and then as a separate pamphlet titled *Dao de Tszin ili Pisaniye o Nravstvennosti* (Rose Strunsky, trans., *The Journal of Leo Tolstoi,* 326 n. 129). However, the existence of the 1912 translation by Tolstoy into English seems highly unlikely and cannot be verified.

[11] See note 6 above. D.T. Suzuki is occasionally acknowledged as a co-author of this translation, which is accurate to its production but not its title page.

[12] An obscure text that does not appear in the bibliographies of Walf and Bahm. It is listed in the 1926 library catalogue of the Essex institute, and is still listed in the catalogues of the Peabody Essex Museum in Salem and in the library of Brown University.

[13] This title is listed by Walf only as a secondary source, but it contains an "interpretive translation" of the entire text which was later extensively revised with Bhikshu Wai Tao in 1935. Henri Borel is also the author of *Wu Wei: A Phantasy Based on the Philosophy of Lao-Tse*, translated from the Dutch by M. E. Reynolds (London: Luzac 1903; New York: Theosophical Publishing, 1911). Compare Goddard (1935).

[14] Missing from Walf and Bahm.

[15] The same author published a German translation in 1927: Weiss, John Gustav. *Tao-te-king*. Leipzig: P. Reclam jun, 1927.

22. 1926 Mackintosh, Charles Henry. *Tao: A Poetic Version of the Tao Teh Ching of Lao Tsze*. Chicago: Theosophical Press; Wheaton Illinois: Theosophical Publishing House.

23. 1926 Phelps, Dryden Linsley and Mr. Shae (Wu-wu-tze). *The Philosophy of Lao-tzu*. Chengtu: Modern Industrial Society, Jeh Hsin Press.[16]

24. 1927 MacInnes, Thomas Robert Edward. *The Teachings of the Old Boy*. London: J. M. Dent & Sons.

+25. 1928 Inouye, Shuten 井上秀天. *Laotse, Tao Teh King*. Tokyo: Daitokaku.[17]

26. 1934 Waley, Arthur. *The Way and Its Power: A study of the Tao Tê Ching and Its Place in Chinese Thought*. London: George Allen & Unwin, 1934; New York: Macmillan, 1934; Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1935; New York: Grove Press, 1958. Beijing: Foreign Language Press, 1994.

27. 1935 Goddard, Dwight and Bhikshu Wai Tao. *Laotzu's Tao and Wu-Wei: A New Translation*. Thetford, VT: D. Goddard, 1935. Also as "Tao-Teh-King." In *A Buddhist Bible*, edited by Dwight Goddard, 407-437. Thetford, VT: D. Goddard, 1938; New York: Dutton, 1952; Boston: Beacon Press, 1970.[18]

28. 1936 Hu, Tse-ling 鬍子霖. *Tao Teh Ching*. Chengtu, Szechwan: Canadian Mission Press.[19]

29. 1936 Kitselman, Alva LaSalle. *Tao Teh king (The Way of Peace) of Lao Tzu*. Palo Alto, CA: The School of Simplicity.

30. 1937 Ch'u, Ta-Kao 初大告. *Tao Tê Ching*. London: Buddhist Society of London, 1937; London: Allen & Unwin, 1959; London: Mandala Book (Unwin Paperbacks), 1970; New York: Samuel Weiser, 1973; New Delhi: Vikas, 1978.

31. 1938 Ou-Yang, Hsin-Nung (Sum Nung Au-young), and Merton Stark Yewdale. *Lao Tzu's Tao Teh King: The Bible of Taoism*. New York: March & Greenwood.

32. 1939 Wu, John Ching-Hsiung 吳經熊. "Lao Tzu's The Tao and Its Virtue." *T'ien*

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[16] Walf mistakenly identifies these two authors as the same person.
[17] Listed by Bahm (1958, 1996), but not by Walf.
[18] Compare Goddard (1919) above. Goddard's 1935 translation was extensively revised and republished by Sam Torode in 2009, creating a new text; see Torode 2009 below. Goddard's translation was also used by Abdullah Dougan, who provides commentary on each of Goddard's chapters in *The Call of Silence: Reflections on the Tao-Teh-King*. Gnostic Press, 2010. Because it doesn't change Goddard's translation, I do not include this text as a separate version of the *Daode jing*.
[19] Bahm repeats this same author and title in 1936 and 1939.

Hsia Monthly (November 1939): 401-423; (December 1939): 498-521; (January 1940): 66-99. Also in *Journal of Oriental Literature* 4 (1951): 2-33.[20]

+33. 1942 Hughes, Earnest Richard "*Tao Te Ching*: a Text-book on Man's Freedom in his Natural Environment" In *Everyman Library 937: Chinese Philosophy in Classical Times*, 144-164. London: J. M. Dent; New York: E. P. Dutton.[21]

34. 1942 Lin, Yutang 林語堂. "The Wisdom of Laotse." In *Wisdom of India and China,* 583-624. New York: Random House, 1942. Also as *The Wisdom of Laotse*. London: Michael Joseph, 1944; New York: Random House, 1948; Westport CT: Greenwood, 1979; New York: Modern Library 1983.[22]

35. 1944 Bynner, Witter. *The Way of Life According to Laotzu*. New York: John Day, 1944; London: Editions Poetry, 1946; New York: Capricorn, 1962; New York: Putnam, 1962; London: Lyrebird Press, 1972; New York: Farrar, Straus, & Giroux, 1978; New York: Perigee, 1995.

36. 1945 Erkes, Eduard. "Ho-Shang-Kung's Commentary on Lao Tse." *Artibus Asiae* 8 (1945): 119-196; 9 (1946): 197-220; 12 (1949): 221-251. Also as *Ho-Shang-Kung's Commentary on Lao-Tse*. Ascona, Switzerland: Artibus Asiae, 1950.

37. 1946 Ould, Herman. T*he Way of Acceptance: A New Version of Lao Tse's Tao Te Ching*. London: Andrew Dakers.

38. 1948 Manners, Dorothy, and Margaret Ault. *The Book of Tao & Teh: Being the Tao Teh King of Lao Tse*. Meopham Green, Kent: Order of the Great Companions.

39. 1948 Thomas, Frederick Benjamin. *The Tao Teh of Laotse*. Oakland: no publisher.

40. 1949 Cheng, Lin 程琳. *The Works of Lao Tzyy, Truth and Nature: Popularly known as Daw-Der-Jing by Lao Dan*. Shanghai: World Publishers 1949; Taipei: World Book, 1953; Tsai Fong Books, 2000.[23]

41. 1949 Poynton, Orde. *The Great Sinderesis: Being a translation of the Tao Te Ching*. Adelaide, Australia: Hassell Press.

42. 1954 Duyvendak, Jan Julius Lodewijk. *Tao Te Ching: The Book of the Way and its*

[20] Walf mistakenly identifies this text as the one reprinted in 1989 by Shambhala, rather than its 1961 revision. Compare Wu (1961).
[21] The 1986 edition of Walf's bibliography lists this text, but as *Everyman Library* 973 rather than 937. Bahm 1958 & 1996 have the same error. In Walf's 2010 edition it has been removed from his list of translations and categorized as a secondary source, but is in fact an English version of the *Daode jing*.
[22] Walf misses the 1942 publication of this text and lists its first publication as 1944. Bahm lists its first publication as 1948.
[23] Bahm lists the first publication of this text as 1953.

Virtue. London: John Murray, 1954; Boston: C.E. Tuttle, 1992.

43. 1955 Blakney, Raymond Bernard. *The Way of Life: Tao Te Ching by Lao Tzu*. New York: The New American Library; London: Mentor Books, 1955; New York: Signet Classics, 2007.

44. 1958 Bahm, Archie J. *Tao Teh King – Interpreted as Nature and Intelligence*. New York: F. Ungar, 1958; New York: Crossroad-Continuum, 1985; Albuquerque: World Books 1996.

X 1958 Nivison, D. S. *Tao Teh king*. New York: Friedrich Ungar.[24]

+45. 1959 Ogata, Sōhaku 緒方宗博. "A Zen Interpretation of the Tao Te Ching." In *Zen for the West*, appendix. New York: Dial Press.[25]

46. 1960 Hsu, Chao 徐照. *The Lao Tze*. *The Tao-Te-Ching*. Taipei.

47. 1961 Hurvitz, Leon. "Translation of A Recent Japanese Study of Lao-Tzu by Eiichi Kimura." *Monumenta Serica* 20 (1961): 311-367.

48. 1961 Wu, John Ching-Hsiung 吳經熊, and Paul K. T. Shi 薛光前, ed. *Tao Teh Ching*. New York: St. John's University Press, 1961; Boston: Shambhala, 1989. Reprinted without Chinese text, Boston: Shambhala, 1990.[26]

49. 1962 MacHovec, Frank J. *The Book of Tao*. Mount Vernon, NY: Peter Pauper Press.

50. 1963 Chan, Wing-Tsit 陳榮捷. *The Way of Lao Tzu (Tao-tê ching)*. Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill, 1963. Adapted from chapter seven, "The Natural Way of Lao Tzu," of *A Source Book in Chinese Philosophy*, 136-176. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

51. 1963 Lau, D. C. 劉殿爵. *Tao Te Ching*. New York: Penguin; Hong Kong: Chinese University Press.[27]

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[24] This text appears in Walf's bibliography, but is likely in error. David Shepherd Nivison (1923-2014) was a well-known Sinologist, and I can find no record of him publishing a translation of the *Daode jing*. It is not mentioned in his 1965 review of D. C. Lau's translation (*Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies* 28:2 (1965): 418-420). It is also not listed in the bibliography of Nivison included in *Chinese Language, Thought and Culture: Nivison and his Critics*, edited by P. J. Ivanhoe, 342-348. Peru, IL: Open Court, 1996. The publication details Walf provides match those of Archie Bahm's text, published in the same year.

[25] A Zen-inspired English version included by Bahm, but listed by Walf only as a secondary source.

[26] In addition to the original, unrevised journal article that appears separately in a 1939 entry above, Walf has this single 1961 translation listed three times: once under Jingxiong Wu, once under Paul K.T. Shi, and once under John C.H. Wu. Bahm lists it twice: once in 1961 and once in 1990.

[27] Significantly revised in 1982. Compare Lau (1982)

X 1966 Leary, Timothy, *Psychedelic Prayers After the* Tao Te Ching. Kerhonkson, NY: Poets Press New Hyde Park, NY: University Books, 1966; Laguna Beach, CA: Mystic Arts Bookshop; London: Academy Editions, 1972. Revised in *Psychedelic Prayers & Other Meditations*. Berkeley, CA: Ronin, 1997.[28]

52. 1967 Chang, Constant Chi-chun 張起鈞. "Lao Tzu." In *Religions of the World*, edited by James Dye and William Forthman. New York: Meredith Publishing.[29]

+53. 1968 Ko Lien-hsiang 葛連祥. *Commentaries on Lao Tzu's Tao Te Ching*. Taipei.[30]

54. 1969 Tang, Zi-Chang 唐子長. *Wisdom of Dao*. San Rafael, CA: T.C. Press.

55. 1970 Yu, Tinn-hugh 余天休. *The Philosophy of Taoism*. San Francisco: Falcon Publishers, 1970; Hong Kong: World Wide Publications, 1989.

56. 1971 Sims, Bennett B. *Lao-Tzu and the Tao Te Ching*. New York: Franklin Watts.

57. 1972 Bowen, Elisa. *Celebration of Life*. Millbrae, CA: Celestial Arts.[31]

58. 1972 Feng, Gia-fu 馮家福, and Jane English. *Tao Te Ching*. New York: Knopf, Random House. Revised and Toniette Lippe added as a coauthor in 2011.

59. 1972 Finley, Robert. *The Bible of the Loving Road: Lao Tzu's Tao Teh Ching*. Carbondale, IL: Bliss Press.[32]

60. 1972 Home, A. Roger. *The Great Art of Laotse*. Exeter: Newbard House.

61. 1972 Runes, Dagobert D. "Lao Tzu Tao Te Ching." Chapters 1-30. In *Classics in Chinese Philosophy*, edited by Wade Baskin. New York: Philosophical Library.

62. 1972 Wood, Robert Aldace. *Echoes from the Orient: Wisdom of Lao-Tse with Parallels in Western Thought*. Kansas City, MO: Hallmark.

63. 1974 Lloyd, Alicia Dawn. "A Rhetorical Analysis of the Tao Te Ching. Some

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[28] This text is not listed by Walf or Bahm, but is often referenced as a translation of the *Daode jing*. It does contain "a series of 55 poems divided in six sections, adapted from the 37 chapters of Book I of *Tao Te Ching (Way of Life)*" (*Psychedelic Prayers* 1997, 23). However, these poems have little relation to the half of the *Daode jing* by which they were inspired.

[29] Unclearly related to id. "Wisdom of Taoism." *Bulletin of National Taiwan University* 15 (June 1970): 241-386.

[30] Listed by Bahm, but not Walf.

[31] Published the same year as the translation by Feng and English, this text is also accompanied by a collection of photographs. Missing in Bahm.

[32] Unclear if this is the same author as Robert D. Finley (2000), below. There is also 1981 Ph.D. dissertation by Robert Finley that contains an original translation: "*Tao Te Ching*: A Guiding Image for Humanistic Psychology and Education" (Mississippi State University). Missing in Bahm.

Taoist Figures of Speech." Appendix, 144-181. Dissertation: Ohio State University.

64. 1975 Chang, Chung-Yuan 張鍾元. *Tao: A New Way of Thinking*. New York: Harper & Row.

65. 1975 Karlgren, Bernhard. "Notes on Lao Tse." *Bulletin of the Museum of Far Eastern Antiquities* (*Östasiatiska Museet*) 47 (1975): 1-18.

66. 1975 Muller, Léone. *Tao-Teh-Ching: Lao Tzu's Book of Life*. Translated from the German of Karl Otto Schmidt (1961). Lakemont, GA: CSA Press.

XB 1975 Watts, Alan and Al Chung-Liang Huang, *Tao: The Watercourse Way*. New York: Pantheon.[33]

67. 1976 Crowley, Aleister (Ko Yuen, pseud.). *The Tao Teh King; Liber CLVII; A New Translation*. Kings Beach, CA: Thelema Publications, 1976. Also as *Aleister Crowley's Tao Teh King*, edited by Stephen Skinner. London: Askin; New York: Samuel Weiser.[34]

X 1976 Rajneesh, Bhagwan Shree (Osho). *Tao: The Three Treasures – the Tao Te Ching of Lao Tzu*. Also appears as *Absolute Tao: Subtle is the Way to Love, Happiness, and Truth*. Poona: Rajneesh Foundation, 1976; Osho International, 1977.[35]

68. 1976 Yen, Ling-feng 嚴靈峰 with Chu Ping-yi 朱秉義, trans., and Ho Kuang-mo 何光謨, ed. *A Reconstructed Lao Tzu with English Translation* / 中英對照老子章句新編. Taipei 臺北: Ch'eng Wen 成文.

69. 1977 Burtt, George. *The Explicated Tao*. Los Angeles: Vector Counseling Institute.[36]

+70. 1977 Dougherty, Ching-Yi Hsu. *Lao Tzu Made Easy*. Santa Cruz.[37]

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[33] Included by Bahm, but not Walf. Watts' text was influential in popular interpretation, but does not present itself as an English version of the *Daode jing*.

[34] Walf has two entries for this text, the first under Yuen Ko in 1975 and the second under Crowley in 1976. They are one in the same. According to the introduction, the text was composed in 1918 by Crowley with the help of "an Adept named Amalantrah," allowing Crowley to "paraphrase" Legge's translation and "disperse the obstinate obscurity of prejudice, and let loose a fountain and flood of living light, to kindle the gnarled prose of stolid scholarship into the burgeoning blossom of lyrical flame." While it may have been composed in 1918 and circulated among Crowley's students, it was first published in 1976. Both Walf and Bahm list the publication date of this text's proofs: 1975.

[35] This title is included by Walf, but it is a commentary by the Indian guru generally known as Osho (1931-1990). The portions of the *Daode jing* it contains appear to be direct quotations from Lin Yutang's 1942 translation.

[36] Missing from Bahm.

[37] This "booklet" is in the collection of the Wing Luke Museum of the Asian Pacific American Experience in Seattle and in the library of the University of California at Santa Cruz, where Dougherty taught from 1967-1981. It appears to have limited distribution, and is used as an "unpublished" translation by Kenneth Kramer in *World Scriptures: An Introduction to Comparative Religions* (Mahwah, NJ: Paulist Press, 1986), p. 128, n. 9. Missing from both Bahm and Walf.

71. 1977 Hsiung, Y. T. "Lao Tzu, Tao Te Ching," *Chinese Culture* 18:2 (June 1977): 1-48, 18:3 (September 1977): 13-56.

72. 1977 Lin, Paul J. *A translation of Lao Tzu's Tao Te Ching and Wang Pi's Commentary*. Ann Arbor: Center for Chinese Studies, University of Michigan.[38]

73. 1977 Scamahorn, Charles Leroy. *Tao and War: Translations of Sun Tzu's "Art of War" and Lao Tzu's "Tao The Ching."* West Coast Print Center.[39]

74. 1977 Young, Rhett Y. W. 楊有維 and Roger T. Ames. *Lao Tzu: Text, Notes, and Comments, by Ch'en, Ku-Ying*. Translated and adapted from the Chinese text by Chen Guying 陳鼓應 (1970). San Francisco: Chinese Material Center.[40]

75. 1979 Ni, Hua-Ching 倪清和. *Complete Works of Lao Tzu: Tao teh ching & Hua hu ching*. Santa Monica, CA: Shrine of the Eternal Breath of Tao.[41]

76. 1979 Rump, Ariane and Wing-tsit Chan 陳榮捷. *Wang Pi, Commentary on the "Lao Tzu"*. Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press.

+77. 1979 Yang, Ju-Chou 楊汝舟. *Lao-Tze Tao Teh Ching* 老子道德經通俗中英文本*: Chinese/English Spoken Language*. Taipei: 老莊學術基金會.[42]

78. 1980 Canole, Christopher C. (Lao C'en). *The Way of the Day: An Interpretation of the Writings of Lao Tzu*. La Jolla, CA: Day Press.[43]

+79. 1980 Leebrick, John R. *Tao Teh Ching: Classic of the Way and Its Nature*. Urbana, IL: Afterimage Book Publishers.[44]

80. 1981 Gibbs, Tam C. *Lao-Tzu: My Words are Very Easy to Understand*. From the

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[38] Credited as the first English translation of Wang Bi's commentary by Holmes Welch in his review: *Journal of Asian Studies* 40:2 (February 1981): 359-361.

[39] Walf does not date this 1977 translation, nor include Scamhorn's 1982 revision; see below. Both are missing in Bahm.

[40] Bahm mistakenly identifies this translation as being published in 1935, the year Chen Guying was born. He also errors in counting the text twice by listing it again under the correct publication date, in English, of 1977.

[41] Ni Hua-ching, a Chinese-born American Daoist teacher, published a second translation in 1992: *Esoteric Tao Teh Ching* (Santa Monica, CA: Shrine of the Eternal Breath of Tao).

[42] Appears in Bahm as *Lao Tzyy Dow Der Jing* with Edward K Chook as a co-author.

[43] Canole's website, http://canole.com/tao.html, explains he wrote and illustrated the "Tao of the Day" for the MGM movie "Warriors of Virtue," released in 1997 (http://www.imdb.com/title/tt0120479/). However, Canole's name does not appear in the movies credits, and while a "Manuscript of Legend" in the "Land of Tao" is a central feature of the movie, the only lines that are read from it bear no resemblance to the *Daode jing*: "To take a life you lose part of yourself."

[44] In Bahm, but not Walf.

Chinese of Cheng Man-ch'ing 鄭曼青. Richmond, CA: North Atlantic Books.[45]

81. 1981 Hoff, Benjamin. *The Way to Life: At the Heart of the Tao Te Ching*. New York: Weatherhill.[46]

82. 1982 Lau, D. C. 劉殿爵. *The Tao Te Ching*. Hong Kong: The Chinese University Press, 1982; revised 1989.[47]

83. 1982 Maurer, Herrymon. *Tao Teh Ching – The Way of the Ways*. Princeton: Fellowship in Prayer, 1982; New York: Schocken, 1985.[48]

84. 1982 McCarroll, Tolbert. *The Tao: The Sacred Way*. New York: Crossroad.

+85. 1982 Scamahorn, Charles Leroy. *The Tao Teh Ching Revealed by Lao Tzu*. Berkeley. CA: The Imperfect Way.[49]

86. 1982 Taplow, Alan B. *Lao Tzu Talks to "Be": An Interpretation of the Tao Te Ching*. Plainfield, VT: Omlet Publications.

87. 1982 Wei, Henry. *The Guiding Light of Lao Tzu*. Wheaton, IL: Theosophical Publishing House.

+88. 1983 Iyer, Raghavan Narasimhan. *Tao Te Ching*. New York: Concord Grove Press.[50]

89. 1984 Bryce, Derek. *Wisdom of the Daoist Masters: The Works of Lao Zi (Lao Tzu), Lie Zi (Lieh Tzu), Zhuang Zi (Chuang Tzu)*. From the French of Léon Wieger (1913). Lampeter, UK: Llanerch Press; Amerystwyth, UK: Cambrian News, 1984. Republished in id. *Tao-te-ching: With Summaries of the Writings of Huai-nan-tzu, Kuan-yin-tzu and Tung-ku-ching*. Lampeter, UK: Llanerch Press, 1991; York Beach, ME: Samuel Weiser, 1999; New York: Gramercy Books, 2005.[51]

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[45] Tam Gibbs was an American student of Cheng (1902-1975), a teacher of T'ai Chi Ch'uan in New York after immigrating in 1964.

[46] Hoff's better known work *The Tao of Pooh* was published the following year (New York: Penguin).

[47] Part One is reprint of Lau's 1963 translation, "because the so-called Wang Pi text has been for centuries the most widely used version." Part Two is a "fresh translation" based on the manuscripts on the *Daode jing* discovered in 1973 at *Mawangdui* (馬王堆). 1982 text missing from Bahm. Compare Lau (1963). Republished without "Part One" and with a new introduction, bibliography, and chronology in 1994. See Lau (1994)

[48] Maurer also published an earlier fictional biography of Laozi: *The Old Fellow*. New York: The John Day Company, 1943.

[49] Compare Scamahorn (1982).

[50] Listed by Bahm but not Walf. Contains a unique version of the *Daode jing* but it is unclear if it was authored by Iyer, who was the editor of the "Sacred Texts" series of which it is a part, and who is only explicitly identified as the author "Choosing the Tao," an foreword on "the import and relevance of the *Tao Te Ching*."

[51] Listed twice by Bahm (1984 and 1992) both under the name "Leon Weiger."

90. 1984 Chang, Francis F.Y. 張發榕. *Lao-Tze in English Version from the Chinese*. Taipei: Author.

91. 1984 Li, Samuel S.K. *The Ageless Wisdom (According to Lao Tze)*. San Francisco: Dr. Marian Y. M. Li.

92. 1984 Shim, Victor. *The Secrets of Eternal Life: Toa Teh Ching* [sic]. Xerox Reproductive Centre, 1984. Reprinted as id. *The Secrets of Eternal Life: Tao Teh Chieng* [sic]. Edmonton: Aurora Printing & Graphics, 1985.

+93. 1985 Heider, John. *The Tao of Leadership: Lao Tzu's Tao Te Ching Adapted for a New Age*. Atlanta: Humanics New Age.[52]

94. 1985 Ostwald, H.G. *Tao Te Ching: The Book of Meaning and Life*. From the German by Richard Wilhelm (revised 1925). London: Arkana (Routledge & Kegan Paul).

95. 1985 Trapp, Jacob. *Tao Teh Ching: The Wisdom of Lao Tzu: A Version and Interpretive Essay*. Santa Fe NM: Satoshi & Jeanette Oishi.

96. 1986 Aero, Rita (Wing, R. L., pseud.). *The Tao of Power – Lao Tzu's Classic Guide to Leadership, Influence, and Excellence*. New York: Doubleday, 1986: Broadway Books, 2001.

97. 1986 Kim, Unsong (William). *Lao Tzu's Tao-te Ching*. Seoul, Korea: One Mind Press.[53]

98. 1987 Hwang, Paul (Shifu). *Tao Teh Chin: The Taoist's New Library*. Austin: Taoism Publisher.[54]

XB 1988 Cleary, Thomas. *Awakening to the Tao*. Translation of Liu I-Ming (劉一明). Boston: Shambhala.[55]

X 1988 Da Liu. *Tao Te Ching*. New York: Penguin.[56]

99. 1988 Mitchell, Stephen. *Tao Te Ching*. New York: Harper and Row, 1988; London: Macmillan, 1989; London: Kyle Cathie, 1990; New York: Harper Collins, 1991. London: Frances Lincoln 1999.

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[52] Walf does not include this text as a translation, but it is an English version created by "comparing many different translations until their apparent contradictions were reconciled and made sense." It is included by Bahm.
[53] Walf has first publication in 1991. Missing in Bahm.
[54] Walf has first publication in 1991. Missing in Bahm.
[55] Included by Bahm, but not Walf. This is a translation of Liu Yiming's writings on the Dao, but not a translation of the *Daode jing*. Compare Cleary (1991).
[56] This title appears in Walf, but is likely in error. Da Liu (1904-2000) was an author and early T'ai Chi teacher in New York, but I can find no record of him authoring a translation of the *Daode jing*. In 1988, Penguin did issue a reprint of Da Liu's, *The Tao of Health and Longevity*, originally published in 1978 by Routledge & Kegan Paul.

100. 1988 Star, Jonathan. *Tao Te Ching*. Princeton: Theone Press, 1988. Id. *Tao Te Ching: Definitions, Concordance, and Etymologies*. Princeton: Theone Press, 1999.[57]

101. 1989 Chen, Ellen Marie. *The Tao Te Ching: A New Translation with Commentary*. New York: Paragon House.

102. 1989 Grigg, Ray. *The Tao of Being: A Think and Do Workbook*. Atlanta: Humanics.[58]

103. 1989 Henricks, Robert G. *Te-Tao Ching – A New Translation Based on the Recently Discovered Ma-wang-tui Texts*. New York: Ballantine Books (Random House).[59]

104. 1989 Koh, Kok Kiang 許國強 and Wong Lit Khiong. *The Silence of the Wise – The Sayings of Lao Zi*. From the Chinese illustrated interpretation by Tsai Chih Chung (Cai Zhizhong) 蔡志忠, *Laozi Speaks* 老子說. Singapore: Asiapac Comic Series; Book 1, 1989; Book 2, 1992.[60]

105. 1989 Wu, Yi 吳怡. *The Book of Lao Tzu (The Tao Te Ching)*. San Francisco: Great Learning Publishing.

+106. 1990 Brennan, Paul. *A Tao Te Ching for Christians*. Odos Books.

X 1990 Dreher, Diane. *The Tao of Peace: A Guide to Inner and Outer Peace*. New York: HarperCollins, 1990. Retitled *The Tao of Inner Peace*. New York: Harper, 1991; New York: Plume (Penguin), 2000.[61]

+107. 1990 Japikse, Carl (Waldo Japussy pseud.). *The Tao of Meow*. Columbus, Ohio: Enthea Press.[62]

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[57] Theone Press appears to be a self-publishing organ for Jonathan Star. These two texts have minimal distribution, and I was unable to verify their relationship to each other and to Star's later work *Tao Te Ching: The Definitive Translation* (New York: Tarcher/Putnam, 2001); see below. 1988 text missing from Bahm.

[58] Grigg loosely follows the received text, but his work as "not a translation of the Tao Te Ching but an application of its spirit to thinking and doing." He has published a variety of "Tao" titles, including *The Tao of Relationships*, *The Tao of Sailing*, and *The Tao of Zen*, as well as a second translation: Griggs, *The New Lao Tzu: A Contemporary Tao Te Ching* (Rutland, VT: Charles E. Tuttle, 1995); see below. Walf lists both of Griggs versions of the *Daode jing* under one entry, but they are distinct works. Both are missing in Bahm.

[59] Compare below: Henricks, *Lao Tzu's Tao Te Ching – A Translation of the Startling New Documents Found at Guodian* (2000).

[60] Missing from Bahm. Compare Bruya, *The Tao Speaks* (1995).

[61] Walf includes an entry for Dreher's text. While it contains passages from the *Daode jing*, it is not presented as an English version of the text.

[62] Self-described as "a collection of 81 reflections on life and the way to total self-gratification as only a cat can tell it. Any resemblance between these verses and the Tao Te Ching by Lao Tzu is entirely deliberate and indicates that you are a discerning reader." It is listed as a translation by Michael LaFargue and Julian Pas, but not Walf or Bahm.

108. 1990 Mair, Victor H. Tao Te Ching: *The Classic Book of Integrity and The Way: An Entirely New Translation Based on the Recently Discovered Ma-Wang-Tui Manuscripts*. New York: Bantam Books.

109. 1991 Byrne, Patrick Michael. *The Old Sage's Classic of the Way of Virtue*. Santa Fe: Sun Publishing, 1991. Garden City Park, NY: Square One Publishers, 2002.

XB 1991 Chan, Alan Kam-leung. *Two Visions of the Way: A Study of the Wang Pi and the Ho-shang Kung Commentaries on the* Lao-Tzu. Albany: State University on New York Press.[63]

110. 1991 Cleary, Thomas. *The Essential Tao: An Initiation into the Heart of Taoism through the Authentic* Tao Te Ching *and the Inner Teachings of Chuang Tzu*. San Francisco: Harper Collins, 1991; revised 1993.

+111. 1991 McClure, Vimala Schneider, *The Tao of Motherhood*. Willow Springs, MO: Nucleus, 1991; Novatoa, CA: New World Library, 1994.[64]

112. 1992 LaFargue, Michael. *The Tao of the Tao Te Ching: A Translation and Commentary*. Albany: State University of New York Press, 1992. Reprinted in id. *Tao and Method: A Reasoned Approach to the* Tao Te Ching. Albany: State University of New York Press, 1994.

113. 1992 Miles, Thomas H. *Tao Te Ching: About the Way of Nature and Its Powers*. Garden City Park, NY: Avery.

114. 1992 Ni, Hua-ching 倪清和. *Esoteric Tao Teh Ching*. Santa Monica, CA: Shrine of the Eternal Breath of Tao.[65]

115. 1993 Addiss, Stephen, and Stanley Lombardo. *Lao Tzu: Tao Te Ching*. Indianapolis: Hackett, 1993; Boston: Shambhala, 2007.

116. 1993 Denby, Edwin Orr. *Edwin's Tao: Being a Rough Translation of Selections from Lao Tze's* Tao Teh Ching. New York: Crumbling Empire Press.[66]

117. 1993 He, Guanghu 何光滬, Gao Shining, Song Liao, and Xu Junyao. *A Taoist*

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[63] Included by Bahm, but not Walf. While Chan's text does include substantial sections from the *Daode jing*, it is not a translation of this text, but rater, as the title suggests, a comparison of the ideas and texts of two commentators.

[64] A loose adaptation of the *Daode jing* not listed by Walf or Bahm, but nevertheless presented as being written by "a mother and teacher of meditation and yoga" who "was inspired to meditate with each of the concise, profound teachings of the *Tao Te Ching* and capture its spirit and wisdom in words specifically directed to an audience close to her heart—mothers."

[65] Compare above: Ni, *Complete Works of Lao Tzu* (1979). Ni (1992) text is missing from Bahm's revised bibliography, which ends in this year.

[66] Published posthumously from a manuscript described as being produced from a German translation c. 1935.

Classic: The Book of Laozi. From the modern Chinese translation 老子新譯 by Ren Jiyu 任繼愈 (1985). Beijing: Foreign Languages Press.[67]

118. 1993 Kaminski, Gerald. *Another Way: The Tao of Lao Tzu*. Belmont, CA: Core View.

119. 1993 Kwok, Man-Ho, Martin Palmer, and Jay Ramsay. *Tao Te Ching: A New Translation*. Rockport, MA: Element, 1993. Barnes & Noble, 1994. Penguin, 1997.

+120. 1993 LaTorra, Michael A. *A Warrior Blends with Life: A Modern Tao*. Berkeley, CA: North Atlantic Books.

121. 1993 Moran, Patrick Edwin. *Three Smaller Wisdom Books: Lao Zi's Dao De Jing, The Great Learning (Da xue), and The Doctrine of the Mean (Zhong yong)*. Lanham, MD: University Press of America.

+122. 1993 Reynolds, David K. *Reflections on the Tao Te Ching: A New Way of Reading the Classic Book of Wisdom*. William Morrow.

+123. 1993 Trevino, Haven. *The Tao of Healing: Meditations for Body and Spirit*. Novato, CA: New World Library, 1993; revised edition 1999.[68]

124. 1994 Dalton, Jerry O. Backward Down the Path: *A New Approach to the Tao Te Ching*. Atlanta, GA: Humanics.

NE 1994 Lau, D. C. 劉殿爵. *The Tao Te Ching*. New York: Knopf.[69]

125. 1994 Mabry, John R. *God as Nature sees God: A Christian Reading of the Tao Te Ching*. Rockport, MA: Element, 1994. Berkeley, CA: Apocryphile Press, 2012. Selections republished in id. *The Little Book of the Tao Te Ching*. Rockport, MA: Element books, 1995. Full text republished as id. *Tao Te Ching: The Book of the Way and Its Power*. Berkeley, CA: Apocryphile Press, 2004

126. 1994 Silver Dragon, Michael (Michael McKain). *Tao Te Ching: Of the Way and Integrity*. Jemez Pueblo, NM: Silver Dragon Publications.

+127. 1994 Streep, Peg. *Tao Te Ching: An Illustrated Journey, Edited by Peg Streep from the Translation by James Legge*. Boston: Bulfinch Press. [70]

128. 1995 Bruya, Brian. *The Tao Speaks – Lao-Tzu's Whispers of Wisdom*. From the

[67] Walf has a repeat entry for this text in 1995 with Ren Junyi as the only author. The texts are most likely identical, and I only count them as one translation.
[68] An "adaptation" of the *Daode jing* missing in Walf and Bahm.
[69] Compare Lau (1963) and (1982).
[70] Described as "a newly modernized text adapted from a highly respected translation."

Chinese illustrated interpretation by Tsai Chih Chung (Cai Zhizhong) 蔡志忠, *Laozi Speaks* 老子說. New York: Anchor.[71]

129. 1995 Cleary, Thomas. *Sex, Health, and Long Life: Manuals of Taoist Practice*. Boston: Shambhala.[72]

130. 1995 Freke, Timothy. *Lao Tzu's Tao Te Ching*. London: Piatkus, 1995. London: London Bridge Trade, 2000.

131. 1995 Grigg, Ray. *New Lao Tzu: A Contemporary Tao Te Ching*. Boston, Tuttle.[73]

132. 1995 Gu, Zhengkun 辜正坤. *Lao Zi: The book of Tao and Teh*. Beijing: Peking University Press, 1995. Beijing: China Translation Press Company, 2007.

X 1995 Ren, Jiyu 任繼愈. *A Taoist Classic: The Book of Lao Zi*. Beijing: Foreign Language Press.[74]

133. 1995 Walker, Brian Browne. *The Tao Te Ching of Lao Tzu*. New York: St. Martin's.

134. 1996 Allen, Rupert C. *The Yin-Yang Journal, an Alternative Reading of the* Tao Te Ching. Tucson, AR: Inner Eye Press.

135. 1996 Arnold, Gary N. *The Way of Life: A New Translation*. Metairie, LA: Windhorse.

136. 1996 Chiang, Lena 汪珊媚. *The Treasures of Lau-tze*. Taipei: Beatitudes Press.

X 1996 Huang, Paulos Zhanzhu. *Lao Zi: The Book and the Man*. Helsinki: Finnish Oriental Society.[75]

137. 1996 Porter, Bill (Red Pine). *Lao-Tzu's Taoteching: With Selected Commentaries of the past 2000 Years*. San Francisco, Mercury, 1996. Revised Port Townsend, WA: Copper Canyon Press, 2009.

138. 1997 Le Guin, Ursula K., with Jerome P. Seaton. *Lao Tzu: Tao Te Ching – A Book About the Way and the Power of the Way*. Boston: Shambhala.

+139. 1997 Smock, M. L. *Tao-Bible: A New Interpretation for Our Times Revealing the*

[71] Compare above: Koh, *The Silence of the Wise* (1989/1992).
[72] In addition to other texts, this work contains a translation of the *Daode jing* influenced by the 1993 Guodian archeological finds and different from Cleary (1991)
[73] Compare above: Grigg, Ray. *The Tao of Being: A Think and Do Workbook* (1989).
[74] Repeat entry in Walf. Compare He Guanghu et al. (1993)
[75] Listed in Walf, but not an English version of the *Daode jing*.

Relationship of the Tao Te Ching and the Holy Bible.

X 1997 Yang, Shu'an. *Laozi: A Novel Based on the Life of the Author of Dao De Jing*. Beijing: Chinese Literature Press.[76]

+140. 1998 Kaufman, Stephen F. *The Living Tao: Meditations on the Tao Te Ching to Empower Your Life*. Boston: Tuttle, 1998; Hanshi Warrior Press, 2006; CreateSpace Independent Publishing Platform, 2014.

141. 1998 Liu Yijun. *A New Translation of the Tao Scriptures, Lao Tzu's Tao De Jing*. Barnaby B.C.: Galaxy Hall.[77]

142. 1998 Morgan, Judith and André de Zanger. *The Tao of Living on Purpose*. Atlanta: Humanics.

143. 1998 Palden, Yeshe. *Lao Zi: The Book of the Way and* Virtue. Santa Cruz: Seven Hawk.

144. 1998 Petulla, Joseph. *The Tao Te Ching and the Christian Way*. Maryknoll, NY: Orbi.

145. 1998 Richter, Gregory C. *The Gate of All Marvelous Things: A Guide to Reading the* Tao Te Ching. San Francisco: Red Mansions.

146. 1998 Wang, Keping 王柯平. *The Classic of the Dao. A New Investigation*. Beijing: Foreign Language Press.

147. 1999 Chen, Lee Sheng 陳麗生 (Lee Sun Chen Org). *Lao Tzu, Tao Te Ching: Translation Based on His Taoism* 老子的道德經 – 中英白話句解與老學研究. San Jose: toExcel; iUniverse.[78]

148. 1999 Cheng, David Hong 鄭鴻. *On Lao Tzu*. Belmont: Wadsworth/Thomson Learning.

+149. 1999 Damascene, Hieromonk. *Christ the Eternal Tao*. From the Chinese of Shien Gi-ming. St. Herman Press, 1999; Platina, CA: Valaam Books, 2012.

150. 1999 Degen, Richard. *Tao Te Ching for the West*. Prescott, AZ: Hohm Press.

151. 1999 Ferrini, Paul. *The Great Way of All Beings*. Greenfield, MA: Heartways Press.

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[76] As the full title indicates, this is not a translation, but it is listed as one by Walf with the shortened title *Laozi*.
[77] This entry in Walf appears to be based on one record in Worldcat for a limited-edition text held by only one library. The author's name suggests, perhaps, 劉怡君.
[78] Chen has a second translation not in Walf; see Chen (2011).

152. 1999 Lynn, Richard John. *The Classic of the Way and Virtue: A New Translation of the Tao-Te Ching of Laozi as Interpreted by Wang Bi*. New York: Columbia University.

+153. 1999 Martin, William. *The Couple's Tao Te Ching: Ancient Advice for Modern Lovers*. Cambridge, MA: Da Capo Press.[79]

+154. 1999 Martin, William. *The Parent's Tao Te Ching: Ancient Advice for Modern Parents*. Cambridge, MA: Da Capo Press.[80]

155. 2000 Finley, Robert. *Tao Te Ching: Poetry and Paradox*. Xlibris.[81]

156. 2000 Henricks, Robert G. *Lao Tzu's* Tao Te Ching: *A Translation of the Startling New Documents Found at Guodian*. New York: Columbia University Press.[82]

157. 2000 Hinton, David. *Lao Tzu: Tao Te Ching: Translated and with Commentary*. Washington, D.C.: Counterpoint, 2000. Republished in id. *The Four Chinese Classics*. Washington, D.C.: Counterpoint, 2013.

+158. 2000 Martin, William. *The Sage's Tao Te Ching: Ancient Advice for the Second Half of Life*. New York: The Experiment Publishing, 2010.[83]

159. 2000 McDonald, John H. *Tao Te Ching*. Washington D.C.: Counterpoint, 2000. New York: Chartwell, 2007; London: Arcturus, 2010.[84]

+160. 2000 Metz, Pamela K. *The Tao of Loss and Grief: Lao Tzu's Tao Te Ching Adapted for New Emotions*. Atlanta, GA: Humanics.[85]

161. 2000 Omura, Richard S. *The Tao of God: A Restatement Based on the Urantia Book*. Lincoln, NE: Writers Club Press.

162. 2000 Rasmussen, Jeff. *Spirit of Tao Te Ching*. Indianapolis, Nisi Sunyyata.

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[79] Walf only has one listing for Martin, *A Path and a Practice* (2005), but Martin is responsible for multiple other, unique adaptations of the *Daode jing* including *The Parent's Tao Te Ching* (1999), *The Sage's To Te Ching* (2000), *The Caregiver's Tao Te Ching* (2011), and *The Activist's Tao Te Ching* (2016). Each text offers targeted interpretations that Martin calls renderings rather than translations.

[80] See Martin (1999). Compare Martin (2000), (2005), (2011), and (2016).

[81] Compare Finley (1972).

[82] Compare Henricks, *Te-Tao Ching – A New Translation Based on the Recently Discovered Ma-wang-tui Texts* (1989).

[83] See Martin (1999). Compare Martin (1999), (2005), (2011), and (2016).

[84] Walf has the first publication of this text as 2007.

[85] Metz is responsible for at least seven "Tao of…" titles. I have included the four that most closely follow the structure, ideas, and grammar of the *Daode jing*: Metz 2000, 2001, 2002, and 2003. I have not included three earlier texts that, while having eighty-one chapters, demonstrate little to no relation to the Chinese text: *The Tao of Women* (Green Dragon, 1995), *The Creative Tao* (Green Dragon, 1998), and *The Tao of Learning* (Green Dragon, 1998).

163. 2000 Sawyer, Ralph D. *The Tao of Peace*. Boston: Shambhala, 2000. From the Chines of Wang Zhen 王真 (9th c.). Republished as *The Tao of War: The Martial Tao Te Ching*. Boulder: Westview, 2002.[86]

+164. 2000 Schoenewolf, Gerald. *The Way According to Lao Tzu, Chuang Tzu, and Seng Tsan: A New Poetic Interpretation with Illustrations*. Jain Publishing.

X 2000 Huang, Tao 黃濤. *Laoism: The Complete Teachings of Lao Zi*. Atlanta: Humanics.[87]

165. 2000 Xiaozi 小子. *The Book of Thou Does, The Virtuous Way as Human in a Wordy Life, Originally Authored and Partly Released by St. Laozi B.C. 600 as Tao Te Jing or known as Dao De Jing, Examined, Completed, Authored and Translated by Xiaozi A.D. 2000*. Book of Thou Does Publishing; New York: iUniverse.

166. 2001 Ivanhoe, Philip J. "*Laozi (The Daodejing)*." In *Readings in Classical Chinese Philosophy* edited by Philip J. Ivanhoe and Bryan W. Van Norden. New York: Seven Bridges, 2001; Indianapolis: Hacket, 2003. Revised as id. *The Daodejing of Laozi*. New York: Seven Bridges, 2002; Indianapolis: Hackett, 2003.

167. 2001 Li, David H. 李祥甫. *Dao de jing: A New-Millennium Translation* 千禧年英譯本. Bethesda: Premier.

+168. 2001 Metz, Pamela K. The Tao of Gardening: A Collection of Inspirations Adapted from Lao Tzu's Tao Te Ching. Atlanta, GA: Humanics.[88]

169. 2001 Roberts, Moss. *Dao De Jing: The Book of the Way*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

+170. 2001 Star, Jonathan. *Tao Te Ching: The Definitive Translation*. New York: Tarcher.[89]

171. 2001 Tran, Tien Cong. *Phenomenological Interpretation of Lao Tzu's Tao Te Ching*. Bloomington, IN: 1st Books; Authorhouse.

172. 2002 Beck, Sanderson, "*Way Power Book (Dao De Jing) by Lao-zi*," in *Wisdom Bible*, edited by Sanderson Beck. Ojai, CA: World Peace Communications.

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[86] Translation based on the included ninth-century commentary by Tang military commander Wang Zhen 王真. Walf lists *The Tao of War*, but not *The Tao of Peace*, which is the same text under a different title and published earlier.

[87] Included by Walf, but not a translation of the *Daode jing*. Huang Tao did, however, publish a separate translation in 2002; see below.

[88] Compare Metz (2000), (2002), and (2003).

[89] Compare Star (1988). Walf lists both of Star's works as a single translation.

173. 2002 Chohan, Chou-Wing, Abe Bellenteen, Ashikaga Yoshiharu, and Rosemary Brant. *Tao Te Ching: The Cornerstone of Chinese Culture, Newly Translated for Contemporary Readers*. Hod Hasharon, Israel: Astrolog.

174. 2002 Dale, Ralph Alan. *Tao Te Ching. A New Translation and Commentary*. London: Watkins, 2002. New York: Sterling (Barnes & Noble), 2004; New Age Books, 2009. Also as *The Tao Te Ching: 81 Verses by Lao Tzu with Introduction and Commentary*. London: Watkins, 2006.

175. 2002 Duncan, Anthony D. *The Tao of Christ: A Christian's Reading of the Daodejing of Laozi, from an Original Translation by Lin Yutang*. Oceanside, CA: Sun Chalice Books.

+176. 2002 Hassett, Brian Michael. *Walking the Mystery Path: Poetic Variations on the Tao Te Ching*. Meadow Vista, CA: Hidden River Press.

177. 2002 Hemenway, Priya. *Wisdom of the Tao, Adapted and Interpreted*. San Francisco: Chronicle Books.[90]

178. 2002 Hodge, Stephen. *The Illustrated Tao Te Ching: A New Translation and Commentary*. Old Alresford, UK: Godsfield; Hauppauge, NY: Barron's.

+179. 2002 Huang, Tao 黃濤, and Edward Brennan. "Lao Tzu's Tao Te Ching." In *Door to All Wonders* by Mantak Chia and Tao Huang. Thailand: Universal Tao, 2002. Retitled *The Secret Teachings of the Tao Te Ching*. Rochester, VT: Destiny Books, 2005.

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[111] Burgess is also the author of *Be Enlightened! A Guidebook to the Tao Te Ching and Taoist Meditation: Your Six-Month Journey to Spiritual Enlightenment* (CreateSpace Independent Publishing Platform, 2010), which contains "meditations" on *Daode jing* "verses."

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APPENDIX B: 380 English Versions of the *Daode jing* Alphabetically Arranged[1]

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