



Tao Te Ching: Word For Word: Translation and Commentary

Carl Abbott

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I first give a poetic rendering of the chapter. This is followed by a word-for-word, line-by-line translation of the Chinese. Chinese characters can have many related synonym-like meaning. I give the main ones so that a reader can piece together something closer to the original. Normal translations, even my nearly literal poetic one, invariably lose some degree of the ancient 'original intention' due to the modern cultural context we bring to our language's words... our 'education'. In the second half of the book, I give extensive commentary that relates each chapter to various aspects of life. This more literal approach also produces some results not possible through approaches commonly used to translate this ancient text (e.g., an over concern for poetic beauty which sacrifices meaning (mostly through embellishment), and over influence of humanist views which skews meaning away from the ancient). Using this translation, along with one's favorite English translation and cross checking frequently with my Word for Word should presumably deepen one's understanding.



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