

The Daode Jing

The Daode jing ("Book of the Dao and Its Virtue") is an essential work in both traditional Chinese culture and world philosophy. The oldest text of philosophical Daoism, and widely venerated among religious Daoist practitioners, it was composed around the middle of the 4th century BCE. Ascribed to a thinker named Laozi, a contemporary of Confucius, the work is based on a set of aphorisms designed to help local lords improve their techniques of government. The most translated book after the Bible, the Daode jing appears in numerous variants and remains highly relevant in the modern world. This guide provides an overview of the text, presenting its historical unfolding, its major concepts, and its contemporary use. It also gives some indication of its essence by citing relevant passages and linking them to the religious practices of traditional Daoism.

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