

The
Book
of
Balance

Lao Tzu's TAO TEH CHING

a translation by Yasuhiko Genku Kimura

foreword by Ashok Gangadean, Ph.D.

afterword by Herbert Guenther, Ph.D., D. Litt

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A NEW TRANSLATION

BY

YASUHIKO GENKU KIMURA

PARAVIEW

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The Book of Balance

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Dedicated to the Sages of the world _____
who throughout the ages
have kept timeless wisdom alive.

FOREWORD

The Logos of Tao: Translating the *Tao Teh Ching* in a Global Age

Ashok K. Gangadean, Ph.D.

Upon entering the 21st Century and facing an unprecedented global age, two powerful themes have emerged which challenge any attempt to authentically render an ancient classical text such as the *Tao Teh Ching*. One is the recognition that every translation is also, at the same time, an interpretation that is shaped and colored by the worldview, mental ecology, or interpretive lens of the translator. This vital consideration brings into sharp relief the challenge of interpreting and translating across wide diverse worldviews, ideologies, cosmologies, or cultural perspectives. If the translator is lodged within a particular cultural ecology or worldview, there is an obvious challenge to gain sufficient critical distance from and access to the indigenous worldview and conceptual ecology of the text or script being translated. How is it possible to translate authentically across diverse worldviews?

The second theme, which provides a vital clue to answering this question, is the recognition that there is and must be a Primal Logos that is the common ground and generative source of diverse worldviews, perspectives, and cultural traditions. This theme is distilled from a long tradition of perennial philosophy that has now matured with the maturation of global reason. This powerful theme suggests that when we step back from any particular worldview or cultural lens and enter a truly global perspective where diverse worldviews and traditions co-originate and arise, a global horizon opens wherein it becomes more evident that there is a Primal First Principle, a Primal Infinite Word or Unifying Field that is the common global source of diverse worldviews, scripts, perspectives and forms of life.

In crossing into this global perspective it becomes more evident that this fundamental Logos is essentially global in scope and power, and as the common ground of diverse worlds, is a key to authentic translation and interpretation across worldviews and textual traditions. Indeed, this global perspective and global Logos reveal that there has been a latent global tradition of diverse scripts and texts through the ages which co-express this Infinite Word in diverse creative ways. Here it becomes evident that the global power of this Logos is the key to translating and interpreting across diverse worldviews.

In this brief Foreword I would like to focus on these two themes (which are developed more systematically and in depth elsewhere) and indicate why I believe this excellent translation of the *Tao Teh Ching* by Yasuhiko Kimura meets the highest standards of philosophical translation and is an important contribution to Global Philosophy. I shall make clear that this classical Chinese script is a powerful expression of the Primal Logos that is the common source of great scripts across philosophical and cultural traditions through the ages. For this reason, making clear the Tao of Logos and the Logos of Tao will help to bring out the global and perennial power of this classical text, and make clear why this script has profound relevance for readers facing the challenges of life in a global

age.

Entering a Global Perspective: The Logos of Tao

As we enter a global age where diverse worldviews are increasingly in intensified encounters it is of the utmost importance to cultivate a global awareness wherein diverse worldviews and cultural perspectives may mutually engage in authentic dialogue. But entering this expanded global consciousness calls forth profound transformations in how we conduct our minds. And we shall soon see that the Text of Tao essentially addresses and invokes such expanded rational awareness. So how do we cross from our more localized perspectives and mental lenses into this global lens?

It is found that when we stand back from any one cultural, philosophical, or disciplinary orientation and cross into the global perspective where widely variant worldviews originate and intersect, striking patterns emerge that are not as readily seen (perhaps can't be seen) from more localized narrative forms of life. In this global space of diverse cosmologies and grammars of reality it is found, for example, that diverse worldviews through the ages have gravitated to some Ultimate First Principle Presiding Reality that is the source of its form of life.

This global transformation taps a deeper inter-perspectival dimension of rational consciousness, and becomes apparent that the vast spectrum of diverse cultural and philosophical narrative attempts through the ages to name and express "What is First" converge on the same Primal Infinite Source. For example, the discourse of TAO in classical Chinese thought is one magnificent attempt at "First Philosophy"-the enterprise of developing a grammar and narrative to express the most fundamental Reality. Again, the grammar of AUM in the Hindu Vedic tradition is another example of this quest for the primal universal grammar.

This is certainly true of the Judaic biblical script as it seeks to name the Infinite First Principle YAHWEH; and this tradition unfolds in the emergence of Christianity in its attempt to express an ultimate narrative in the form of The Infinite Word and Christ, and in the birth of Islam as it seeks to express the Primal Name of ALLAH, and so on. Ranging further, it is clear that in the development of Buddhist thought the radical attempt to disclose ultimate truth as beyond all names and forms, SUNYATA-Absolute Emptiness-likewise qualifies as an alternative grammatical strategy in approaching What-is-First.

And, of course, it is no accident that a continuing deep drive throughout the birth and evolution of European philosophy since Greek origins to express the fundamental Logos, to uncover the missing primal Logic, to tap the missing universal grammar of Logos is yet another great chapter in the perennial and global quest to express what is Ultimate. This certainly appears in the striving of the sciences to uncover the fundamental laws and patterns of the Universe, to name and express the "Ultimate Stuff" be it "Energy," "Force," "First Cause," or Nature.

For our purposes here in inquiring into the global source and resource of interpretation and translation across and between worldviews, it is essential to acknowledge that these diverse narratives of the Ultimate Ground are alternative co-expressions of What-is-First. This can only become clear entering the multi-perspectival and inter-perspectival rational space of the global perspective. For crossing into this higher-order dimension of global consciousness there is a "dilation" of rational

awareness and a profound "inversion" of perspectivity into an Integral, Nondual, and Holistic dynamism of minding (a Primal Logic) that reveals that the Infinite First is and must be the same generative source of all realities-of all perspectives, all worldviews, all cosmologies, grammars, narrative disciplines, of all experience. This suggests that a qualified translator of a Logos Script, such as the Tao, must have competence and be literate in the global grammar of Logos.

Indeed, in crossing into this global rational space and technology or logic of minding, another striking pattern becomes evident. It becomes clear that diverse First West and other-converge toward a global consensus that we humans are as we mind-our experience, our lifeworlds, our cultural identities, our disciplinary narratives, the phenomena that make up our living realities are all profoundly co-shaped by our thought processes, by how we conduct our mind. And a potent global theme across worldviews recognizes that humans tend to become lodged, ensnared, obsessed, blocked, and locked into egocentric or monocentric patterns of minding or processing reality that have devastating consequences for the human condition and are the common source of existential and rational pathologies of all sorts. This theme resonates throughout the Tao.

This profound rational theme-that we are as we mind-brings into sharp relief the method, logic, technology of "minding" as being of ultimate importance. It becomes clear that "egocentric" patterns of minding reality typically separate the thinking subject from the "object" of what-is-thought-perceived, or experienced. In thus objectifying all that appears to its consciousness egocentric reason proceeds to "package" and "process" all phenomena, including itself, in artificially constructed language, classifications, and categorizations that inevitably deform whatever appears. And egocentric minding typically tends to be "monocentric" (rather than dialogic), processing its world from its own reductive perspective, ideology, worldview, or narrative form of life. This tendency to privilege one's own worldview or localized lens is one of the primary flaws in approaching a text like the Tao.

In this way, any and every worldview, ideology, discipline, or narrative (whatever the content) that is processed in egocentric thought patterns will share the same deep structural rational and existential pathologies. This global perspective also makes clear that there are diverse alternative strategies to advance beyond egocentric reason toward the integral and hologistic dynamics of global reason. Indeed, it becomes evident that the great philosophical and spiritual teachings of the ages all converge on this common rational prescription-that the key to human flourishing and to the authentic encounter with Reality comes with this overcoming of the adolescent and dysfunctional habits of egocentric minding and maturing into the integrative, nondual, and dialogical patterns of natural global reason.

It is of the highest importance for us in the present context of exploring the conditions of authentic translation and interpretation that we bring into the open the distortions of the egocentric lens. An authentic translation of the Tao must step back from the egocentric lens and enter a holistic and integral mental lens that expresses the Logos of Tao.

It becomes clear in crossing into the global lens that there is a Primal Logic of What-is-First, and in my earlier work in developing global first philosophy I have suggested that it would help accelerate research, understanding, the rational enterprise and cultural advancement for planetary well-being to introduce a global name for this Primal Word to help humanity recognize more clearly a recurring global insight that the Primal Infinite Principle must be one and the same generative source of all worldviews, perspectives, cultures, traditions, disciplines, narratives, and first philosophies. And

have proposed Logos (taken from Greek classical attempts to tap the ultimate structure and dynamics of natural reason and discourse) as such a global name to help remind us that there is, after all, fundamental Universal Grammar or Logic of the Infinite Word which is the universal rational context for all discourse and experience.

Thus I am suggesting that the Tao Teh Ching is best placed in this global perspective as a wonderful and classical rendering of this global Logos. This means, of course, that the Tao is integral to a global tradition of diverse Logos scripts and illuminates the Primal Word in unique and powerful ways. It deepens and further illuminates the Grammar of Logos.

Translating the Tao: Competence and Qualifications

We have been suggesting that it takes a global consciousness to render adequately a global script such as the text of Tao. It is of the utmost importance that the translator have a true understanding of the script, the philosophical imagination to commune with it, and the philosophical grammar to render it.

Yasuhiko Genku Kimura is eminently qualified to present us with a philosophically sensitive and insightful translation of this rich and illusive text. His years of training and experience in the meditative arts are invaluable in gaining depth and literacy in the global grammar of Logos. And his extensive work in seeking to integrate Western science with Eastern philosophy further adds to his qualifications in the integral and holistic logic of the Unified Field which plays out in the Logos of the Tao. Kimura is keenly aware of the dynamic of egocentric thought patterns and his rich experience with the integral logic and thought patterns of the Unified Field places him in a unique position to open new depths to the Tao.

There are numerous translations available in the marketplace, but this one stands out for me in its conceptual lucidity, philosophical accessibility and textual fidelity. The Logos of the text is beautifully rendered without sacrificing the poetics. The spiritual gems of this great perennial text shine forth for the reader in a global light. This is an important contribution to global philosophy which taps the global power of the Tao.

Ashok K. Gangadean, Ph.D.

Professor of Philosophy, Haverford College

TRANSLATOR'S NOTE

1. TAO

Understanding the Undefinable

TAO TEH CH[NG begins with the statement: The Tao Eternal is beyond definition. No name given can capture its eternality.

This statement can be translated more literally: The Tao that can be defined is not the Eternal Tao. The Name that can be assigned is not the Eternal Name.

The same statement can also be translated more hermeneutically: The Tao that is atemporally cannot be reduced to any finite description or predication in language. The naming in language that is temporal and finite cannot capture the atemporally abiding Tao in its atemporal abidingness.

Thus, no matter how one translates this statement, the undefinable and unnamable nature of the Tao remains explicitly clear. However, this does not mean that the Tao is beyond comprehension. The Tao is comprehensible, communicable, and applicable. The eighty-one passages of Tao Teh Ching, taken individually and as a whole provide us with the powerful and thorough understanding of the Tao, assuming that we know how to read this classical text and how to understand the undefinable. The question therefore is how to understand that which is by definition undefinable.

A Unique Feature of the Sinic Thought

Reading TAO TEH CHING and other classical Chinese texts requires an understanding and innerstanding of the unique features of the Sinic Mind, which is different from both the Western Mind and the Indic Mind.

In general, what characterizes the Western Mind is its proclivity for the ordered, the rational, and the male with an aversion or suspicion of the non-ordered, the intuitive, and the female. The Western Mind's main theme has been the transformation of chaos (non-order) into cosmos (order). Therefore, throughout the history of Western thought and culture, the primary value has been placed upon reason, rationality, and linear logic. For the Western Mind, Reality is rational and should be comprehensible through rational means.

By contrast, what generally characterizes the Indic Mind is its proclivity for the mystical that transcends order, rationality, and linear logic. The Indic Mind's main theme has been the transcendence from cosmos (mundane order) to chaos (transcendental mystery). The Indic Mind, in its advanced state, is trans-rational and supra-logical, which, while remaining supremely rational and logical-Indians are great mathematicians and logicians-uses logic and rationality mainly to point toward that which transcends logic and rationality. For the Indic Mind, Reality is transrational and can be understood only through our "mystical union" with it.

To the Sinic Mind, as the yin-yang symbol represents, cosmos and chaos, order and non-order, rationality and transrationality, the male and the female are complementary, and their coupling

interplay constitutes the essential dynamics of life and the universe. Therefore, the main theme of the Sinic Mind and Thought has been the attainment of balance or balanced complementarity between the ordered and the non-ordered, the rational and the transrational, the physical and the metaphysical, and the male and the female. In the Sinic culture, the primary value is placed upon creating and maintaining balance and harmony between the opposites. For the Sinic Mind, Reality is both rational and transrational, and should be understood through the complementary workings of reason and intuition.

By way of contrast, of the two greatest sages of antiquity, Confucius' teaching focuses on how to attain balance and harmony in society, where diverse and opposing forces dynamically interact to often create discord and conflict, while Lao Tzu's teaching focuses on how to attain balance and harmony between the inner and the outer dimensions of human life through the attainment of inner balance and harmony in accordance with the immutable principles of the Tao, dynamically manifesting in Nature within and without.

Ultimately, the term Tao points to the same Reality or Being to which the terms Logos (Greek) and Brahman (Sanskrit) point. However, while Logos designates the Ordering Logic aspect and Brahman the Primordial Dynamic aspect, Tao signifies the Integral Balance aspect of this Reality. Whereas Logos led the Western civilization to the physics of the outer universe and Brahman led the Indian civilization to the metaphysics of the inner universe, Tao led the Sinic civilization to the ethics of both the outer and inner worlds, of both this world and the other.

Reading the Tao Teh Ching

Therefore, to read and to comprehend Tao Teh Ching, and other ancient Chinese texts, requires the reader to think complementarily and to understand rationally and to innerstand transrationally. Tao Teh Ching is not written in a linear manner, like most treatises in Western philosophy, that is, one chapter logically building upon the argument made in the previous chapter. Each of the eighty-one passages of Tao Teh Ching holographically contains the whole of Tao Teh Ching.

Transrational innerstanding arises when the reader contemplates into the whole of a passage as well as of the text vertically, whereas rational understanding arises when the reader contemplates upon the totality of the text horizontally. Wholeness is indivisible, while totality is divisible. Through the contemplation upon the totality of the text, rational understanding comes as the symbols, representations and the conceptual distinctions of the Tao. Through the contemplation into the wholeness within the passage and the entire text, transrational innerstanding comes as the direct experience of the Tao and the experiential knowing of the undefinable. Together these two modes of knowing complementarily benefit our balanced, integral spiritual and intellectual development.

2. TEH

The Chinese word teh (in Japanese toku) is variously translated in English as virtue, power, integrity, none of which really captures its full meaning. The Chinese character teh consists of three subcharacters, which individually mean (1) "to go around"; (2) "to inspect"; and (3) "the heart (awareness)." Teh originally depicted the action of the government sending high officials to provinces around the country for inspection. As a result of such inspection, a provincial political order was

developed and maintained. Hence the power of inspection was order-generating, which was understood to be the power of consciousness, and thus the third subcharacter, the heart of awareness was added to complete the formation of the character and the meaning matrix of teh.

Therefore, teh signifies the order-generating awareness and the order generated by such awareness. Teh is the virtue based not on outer codes of morality but on inner self-awareness and independent inspection of oneself and the world that engenders order within and without. When teh is wholly in accord with the Tao, it becomes Tao Teh, the Virtue of the Tao. Tao Teh Ching is the book on the Kosmic Virtue of the Tao (ethics) as well as on the Tao itself (metaphysics).

In this translation, teh is usually translated as virtue in the above meaning. However, depending on context, the meaning of the English term "virtue," as the term "teh" in the original Chinese, may mean more traditional virtue that is based more on external moral codes than inner awareness. For instance, in the thirteenth passage, the teh in the sense of self-originating virtue is designated by the term "authentic virtue," while the teh in the more traditional sense is designated by the term "inauthentic virtue."

3. CHING

Ching designates a sacred classic in the Chinese canon. Of the three canonical Taoist texts, I Ching has sixty-four parts, while Tao Teh Ching and T'ai Hsuan Ching have eighty-one parts. The ancient Chinese Taoist sages intuitively knew that there were two sets of logic operative in the universe: binary (yin-yang) logic and ternary logic. They further knew that the binary logic is primarily operative in the physical-phenomenal universe, the universe of effect, while the ternary logic is primarily operative in the spiritual-noumenal universe, the universe of cause, inclusive of the physical-phenomenal universe.

I Ching is primarily a book of life in the visible and phenomenal plane, and therefore is based on the binary logic of yin and yang with the ternary logic as its substratum. Hence, it is expressed in the combinations of hexagram, a mathematical diagram consisting of six lines, each line being either solid (yang-positive) or broken (yin-negative). There are sixty-four possible arrangements of the two types of lines. Thus, I Ching consists of sixty-four parts, which are sixty-four facets of life lessons of this world.

Tao Teh Ching is a book of life both in the invisible, noumenal, spiritual plane and in the visible, phenomenal, material plane, and therefore is based on the ternary logic of t'ien, ti, and with the binary logic as its substratum. Hence, it is expressed in the combinations of tetragram, a mathematical diagram consisting of four stacked lines of three types—solid (Wien-positive), broken (tinegative), and twice-broken (jen-indeterminate/free-will element). There are eighty-one possible arrangements of these three types of lines. Thus, Tao Teh Ching consists of eighty-one parts, which are eighty-one facets of life lessons of both this (visible-phenomenal) and the other (invisible-noumenal) worlds.

Tai Hsuan Ching, The Book of Great Invisible, is primarily a book of life in the invisible, noumenal, spiritual plane, and therefore is based on the ternary logic as Tao Teh Ching and is likewise expressed in the combinations of tetragram and in eighty-one parts. To study Taoism in its totality, the translator suggests that the reader study all three of these canonical Taoist texts.

The reader may read Tao Teh Ching randomly, instead of linearly from one passage to the next. The reader may also use tetragram for reading Tao Teh Ching, just as people use hexagram in the form of divination for reading I Ching. No matter in what order one reads it, Tao Teh Ching can remain a continual source of perennial wisdom for the rest of one's life. As the eighty-one passages of the book contain the great sage's lifetime of wisdom, it is worthy of a lifetime of study.

4. TRANSLATION

This translation is unique in the following ways:

The whole text has been translated based on the translator's sound knowledge in the esoteric Taoist science and philosophy.

The translator consulted the latest etymological study of ancient Chinese words done by the foremost Japanese scholar and recognized authority of the Chinese language, Professor Shizuka Shirakawa, which contains a considerable amount of new findings, shedding light on the deeper etymological meanings of key concepts throughout the text.

The original Chinese text available to us today does not appear to be the work of a single author. It is the translator's understanding as well as the opinion of many reputable scholars that following the writing of the original, several Taoists subsequently added their commentary to the text, which was passed on as the official text attributed to Lao Tzu, the legendary Taoist Master, a contemporary of Confucius, who is the likely author of the original.

This translator translated these inserted comments in the context of the original so that each passage is coherently structured, conveying a coherent meaning. When we read many of the other translations, as fine as they are as translations, we encounter paragraphs that do not fit into the whole passages in which they appear. In this translation, such incoherence in text has been minimized or eliminated without changing textual meaning.

This is not the one-for-one transposition of words but the re-creation in another language of the whole matrix of meaning that is the original text. Especially between two languages as different as Chinese and English, no metaphrase or word-for-word transposition-qua-translation is possible. Therefore, this translation is definitely a paraphrase in English of the original Chinese text.

The translator reads ancient Chinese in the form of Kanbun, which is the ancient Japanese way of reading Chinese. Each Chinese character has a set of meanings. Therefore, the learned reader can comprehend Chinese texts, if he or she knows meanings of words, without knowing how the words are pronounced in Chinese in its various dialects. While lack of knowledge of Chinese proper may be a certain disadvantage, the knowledge of Kanbun and of Japanese has given this translator the advantage of benefiting from the scholarship of both Chinese and Japanese scholars, which is reflected in this translation.

It is my sincere wish and my reason for translating Tao Teh Ching that the reader of The Book of Balance may find not only enjoyment and insight but also inspiration for his or her own spiritual and character development, as I have found through reading the original.

THE BOOK OF BALANCE

LAO TZU'S TAO TEH CHING

ONE

The Tao Eternal is beyond definition.
No name given can capture its eternality.
Nameless, it is the origin of the Kosmos.
Named, it is the beginning of all things.
Nothingness, it is the inner being of the Kosmos.
Thingness, it is the outer distinctions of the Kosmos.
These two, though different in names,
 arise from the same source:
The source called the Invisible.
Invisible beyond the invisible,
It is the entry into the myriad wonders
 of the Eternal Kosmos.

道可道章第一

Two

When the world recognizes beauty as beauty, ugliness arises.
When the world recognizes good as good, evil arises.

Being and non-being create each other. _____

Difficult and easy define each other.

Long and short form each other.

High and low support each other.

Tone and voice accompany each other.

Before and after follow each other.

Hence, the sage lives in the state of non-action—
of eternal balance,

And teaches by the precept of silence—
and through his silent deed.

He accepts things as they arise,

Creates without possessing,

Performs without depending,

Accomplishes without claiming credit.

Because he does not claim credit for himself,

His virtues endure forever more.

天下皆知章第二

THREE

When the learned is not over esteemed,
There will not be unnecessary competition
amongst people.

When the treasure is not over valued,
There will not be acts of stealing amongst people.

When we do not show people things
that stir up their wants,
Their minds will not be disturbed.

Therefore, the sage governs the people by
Restoring balance in value and worth, through
Emptying people's minds and filling their essence,
Weakening their ambition and strengthening their character,
Freeing them from knowledge and wants, and
Keeping the learned from over exercising their authority.

Act in accordance with the principle of non-action—
of eternal balance,
Then order will arise of itself.

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三

FOUR

Empty of all doctrines,
The Tao is wisdom eternally inexhaustible.
Fathomless for the mere intellect,
The Tao is the law wherewith all things come into being.

It blunts the edges of the intellect,
Untangles the knots of the mind,
Softens the glare of thinking,
And settles the dust of thought.

Transparent yet invisible,
The Tao exists like deep pellucid water.
Its origin is unknown,
For it existed before Heaven and Earth.

道冲真第四

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