

Tao Te Ching: The Unity of Moral and Social Action for Peaceful Life

Pattamawadee Sankheangaew, Ph.D.¹

¹Department of Religion and Philosophy, Mahachulalongkorn
Rajavidyalaya University, Thailand,
ORCID iD 0000-0002-1925-3644
Patthamawadee.san@mcu.ac.th

Abstract

Tao Te Ching sacred text, written in China around 600 BC, recommends cultivating non-action by observing the nature of the world. Tao Te Ching first articulated the idea of Wu Wei which means do that which consists in taking no action and order will prevail. The text explains the idea that we should stop trying to force action and get comfortable doing less. Taoism is widely understood to be a single (unity), unitary philosophy, social movement, and natural act. Then, when we do move, our actions are natural and energetic. It can be summarized that Taoist principles are inaction or non-action, simplicity, and living in harmony with nature then everything accomplished the desired result. Tao Te Ching delivered a treatise on how to live in the world with goodness and integrity. Perhaps if we were more aware, we would worry less and could see better what actually needs doing. Therefore, Tao Te Ching reminds us that everyone has a choice to practice self-awareness and exercise their own power in and over the world for a present peaceful life.

Keywords: Tao, Non-action, Wu Wei, Harmony, Self-awareness, Peaceful life.

Introduction

The Tao Te Ching is one of the classics of ancient Chinese thought. It is attributed to an elderly sage called Lao Tzu, said to have lived around 600 years BC. The name daoia, “Tao family” or “school of the Tao” was a creation of the historian Sima Tan (110 B.C.E.) in his Shi ji (Records of the Historian) written in the 2nd century B.C.E. and later completed by his son, Sima Qian (145-86 B.C.E.). In Sima Qian’s classification, the Taoists are listed as one of the Six Schools that are Yin-Yang, Confucian, Mohist, Legalist, School of Names, and Taoists [6,7]. So, Taoism was a retroactive grouping of ideas and writings which were already at least one to two centuries old, and which may or may not have been ancestral to various

post-classical religious movements, all self-identified as daojiao or teaching of the Tao beginning with the reception of revelations from the Laozi by the Celestial Masters (Tianshi) lineage founder, Zhang Daoling, in 142 C.E. This article accepts contemporary Taoists assertion of continuity between classical, philosophical, social, and religious movements and texts. Taoism, in its philosophical form can be seen to have had its first awakening with Tao Te Ching, a poetic text of some five thousand words written in a mystical poetical style [2,3]. Supposedly composed around seventh century BCE., The author is named as Lao-tzu, a literal translation of which is “the Old One” [3]. With this in mind, being aware that the only biography available of him was written in the first century BCE and is a composite of three characters, it is possible that the piece was actually a compilation of acquired wisdom. Either way, it makes no difference to the content. It is a literary manifestation of Tao that is simultaneously both coherent and obscure. Such is the way of Tao indeed its opening stanza is a perfect description of Tao and such a paradox is possible.

Lao Tzu and Tao Philosophy

Lao Tzu: The Old Master

According to Lao Tzu, “All things carry Yin and hold Yang, with the interacting energy to balance the relationship” [8]. Namely, the paradigm of the unity of opposites operates in both the natural world and human domain. It includes the oneness of feminine and masculine forces, internal and external, water and fire, night and day, passive and active, as well as receiving and approaching [9]. It indicates that all apparently separate or opposite systems (e.g., self, others, nature) are part of the whole universe and are governed by the same oneness or Tao that transcends the boundaries of all individual entities. It should be noted that although Taoist philosophy influenced the formation of Taoist religion and the two are frequently perceived as synonymous, their contents and practices are not exactly the same. The Taoist religion which integrated a belief in immortality, meditation, and the practice of alchemy with some notions of Taoist philosophy, was formed in China around 100–200 BC. Tao philosophy represents a much broader scholarly system than Taoist religion. It was also instrumental in creating Zen (Chan) Buddhism in China by modifying Buddhist ideas introduced from India between the second to the sixth centuries.

The Tao Te Ching sacred text

The Tao Te Ching is a work of mystical poetry and paradox that cannot be understood by the rational mind, but must be accepted, absorbed, and assimilated at a deeper level of consciousness. It is a literary manifestation of Tao that is simultaneously both coherent and obscure [9]. Such is the way of Tao, its opening stanza is a perfect description of Tao, if again such a paradox is possible.

The Dao that can be expressed
 Is not the eternal Dao
 The name that can be named
 Is not the eternal name

(Chapter 1)

The Chinese character Tao (道) contains the radical/root of “to walk” connected to the character for “head.” It conveys elements of these meanings of morality, resolute direction, alignment, to explain, and a road or a path. It also links to the abilities to consider critically and govern justly. The left-hand side of the character—辵—indicates the act of resolutely walking a path. The right-hand side of the ideogram—首—depicts a male human head, with hair tied in two topknots (a historically common practice in East Asia.) Combining 辵 with 首, the concept of 道 (Tao) forms, suggesting a wise teacher who has already trodden a path and now can lead by example. Tao refers not just to superior leadership but also to its accompanying “path” for living with optimum wisdom. The Chinese character for Te is 德, translated most often as “virtue,” “character,” or “moral power. [19, 20]” Te’s top-right sector means “straight” or “flawless,” which rests on the “heart-mind” character. Te’s character’s root or radical, on the left, means “walking forward.” So Te suggests proceeding with a straight heart-mind or flawless action proceeding from one’s psychic center. The cultivation of virtue is at the foundation of Taoist practice. Virtue, Te (德), is cultivated through the sincere practice and acting with integrity throughout the actions of one’s life both in public and private. The cultivation of de is what creates the foundation, the frame upon which all other cultivation depends. Without de, true attainment is not possible. When integrated with Tao, Te turns Tao’s blueprints into deeds and wombs into fulfillment. The Chinese character for Ching is 經, meaning “scripture,” “book,” or even “classic text.” The earliest documented meaning of 經 is “to weave,” suggesting an entwining process whereby the classic Chinese texts and their commentaries were woven into the culture’s history. Something there is without form and complete,

Born before heaven and earth,
 Solitary and vast,
 Standing alone without change,
 Everywhere pervading all things,
 Mothering all beneath heaven.
 I don't know its name;
 I call it Tao,
 And for want of a name call it great.

(Ch.25)

The Tao te ching is divided into 81 chapters consisting of slightly over 5,000 Chinese characters, depending on which text is used [1,9,15]. In its received form from Wang Bi, the two major divisions of the text are the dao/tao jing (chapters. 1-37) and the de jing (chapters. 38-81). Actually, this division probably rests on little else than the fact that the principal concept opening Chapter 1 is Tao (way) and that of Chapter 38 is De/Te (virtue). The text is a collection of short aphorisms that were not arranged to develop any systematic argument. The long standing tradition about the authorship of the text is that the “founder” of Taoism, known as Laozi gave it to Yin Xi, the guardian of the pass through the mountains that he used to go from China to the West in some unknown date in the distant past. But the text is actually a composite of collected materials, most of which probably originally circulated orally perhaps even in single aphorisms or small collections. These were then redacted as someone might string pearls into a necklace. Although D.C. Lau and Michael La Fargue had made preliminary literary and redaction critical studies of the texts, these are still insufficient to generate any consensus about whether the text was composed using smaller written collections or who were the probable editors. For almost 2,000 years, the Chinese text used by commentators in China and upon which all except the most recent western language translations were based has been called the Wang Bi, after the commentator who used a complete edition of the DDJ sometime between 226-249 CE. Although Wang Bi was not a Taoist, his commentary became a standard interpretive guide, and generally speaking even today scholars depart from it only when they can make a compelling argument for doing so. Tao Te Ching sacred text as 300 B.C.E. There are two main concepts of the text

Naturalness

Naturalness is an important concept of Lao Tzu’s philosophy. It refers to a natural state of being an attitude of following the way of nature. Lao Tzu emphasized that everything in the world has its own way of being and development. Bird fly in the sky, fish swim in the water, flowers bloom and flowers fall. All these phenomena occur naturally without following any human will, and humans should not try to change anything natural. Lao Tzu admonish people to give up on any desire to control the world. Following the way of nature is the way to resolving conflicts between humans and the world

Non-action (Wu-wei)

Tao never does anything,
And everything gets done.

(Ch.37)

Another important concept of Lao Tzu's philosophy. It is the guarantee of Naturalness. Act through non-action, by which he did not mean one should do nothing and passively wait for something to be achieved. Wu-wei (Chinese, literally non-doing) means natural actions or in other words, action that does not involve struggle or excessive efforts. Wu-wei is the cultivation of the mental state in which our actions are quite effortless in alignment with the flow of life. This is going with the flow, although it may be greatly productive, is still characterized by great ease where we spontaneously act perfectly. These often-quoted words denoting the Taoist doctrine of wu-wei should not be taken literally to mean inertia, laziness, laissez-faire, or mere passivity. Wu-wei can be generally defined as the act of following the natural order following in the current of Tao, something that refers to as "refraining from activity contrary to nature". While Chuang-Tzu "Non-action does not mean doing nothing and keeping silent. Let everything be allowed to do what it naturally does, so that its nature will be satisfied [21]. Neither did he deny human creativity. What he meant is that human should act on the basis of naturalness and not on any interrupt the rhythm of nature. Human creativity should be in compliance with the ways of nature.

Taoism and Peaceful Life

The Tao Te Ching itself consists of 81 chapters, and to consider each of them individually here would be far too huge a task. Throughout the work is a consistent theme of peace. As "The Tao that can be named is not eternal or true Tao" (chapter 1) therefore an exercise in defining and analyzing the Tao is clearly foolish. My only excuse is one of respectful playfulness, and the hope that a dialogue between Taoism, peaceful life can be fruitful or at least interesting at least it can do no harm. Taoism and peace keeping and building for peaceful life according to the Taoist classics, the sage cultivates "virtue" (Te), historically in Chinese culture, the quintessence of positive characteristics that the combination of refined personal traits and skillful abilities. The sage is characterized by an ability to identify phenomena including potential conflicts, at an early stage of manifestation. Therefore he/she is making limited and strategic interventions in order to guide developments in a fruitful manner and direction rather than waiting until disaster has struck or fruit has already overripened. The cultivation of skillful perception regarding the deep causes, dynamics, and unfolding of events. It may be likened to conflict sensitivity and analysis in the field of peacebuilding. Taoism is widely understood to be a single, unitary philosophy, movement and natural act but several recent scholars has emphasized the diversity of philosophies, religious movements, and political tendencies [4]. There has been an overreaction to popular, broad-brush characterizations of Taoism when revisionist scholars deny that there are any unifying features of Taoism. Only a careful and well-informed reading of contexts and conditions at the local level in particular but also nationally and globally can produce an analysis sufficiently attuned to the possibilities

of emerging conflict. As a body of practice and reflection, the Taoist approach fits well with peacebuilding (internal and external) understood as a multifaceted and flexible art rather than just a toolkit of techniques. In society, peacebuilding interventions must be carefully timed. There are times and places in which intervention is unlikely to produce a successful outcome and may expose would be peacebuilders to harm even physical danger therefore skillful interventions need to be timed and targeted depending on the dynamics of conflict and peace. In some contexts, a realistic assessment may lead to the conclusion that no positive intervention is possible rather, it is necessary to wait for the right circumstances and the best location. It is far better, therefore, to intervene early at the first signs of trouble than wait until large scale violence and conflict have already attracted media and political attention, by which time violent conflicts may be far more intractable and difficult to resolve. Peace is as an essentially contested concept which means different things to different actors. “Peace” looks rather different to a villager in a war zone, to a refugee, to a government or rebel soldier, to a businessperson looking to invest, to an NGO aid worker, or to an international diplomat. Definitions of peace often include notions of tranquility and calm; a more limited definition, and the primary one adopted here, is the idea of peace as the absence of violence. Peace does not imply lack of conflict but, rather, the nonviolent management (and potential resolution) of differences. Then it compares Taoist and rationalist thinking about global security, defined first in more general, ‘human’ security terms, and second in more particular, politico-strategic terms [22]. The significance of the Taoist concept of wu-wei (no unnatural action/non action), and of Taoism as one way in which to contextualise the rationalist construction of global security. The Taoist also contributed to the peace debate. Contrary to the general view today, their legendary founder Laozi did not reject the world or advocate withdrawing from it altogether. His advice rather was to conform with what was spontaneous and harmonious and therefore peaceful in individual and social life.

Moral and social action for peaceful life

There are five principles of Taoism for purpose-driven leadership: self-awareness for mindful leadership; self-cultivation for authentic leadership; transcending ego for servant leadership; humble to serve for Level 5 leadership, and doing the right things rights for holistic and sustainable leadership. The five principles are interconnected and interdependent. Being a sustainable leader, one of the most important qualities is to develop self-awareness, to be self-aware requires self-cultivation of the virtues [23].

If you wish to shrink it, you must certainly stretch it.

If you wish to weaken it, you must certainly strengthen it.

If you wish to desert it, you must certainly work closely with it.

If you wish to snatch something from it, you must certainly

give something to it. This is called the Subtle Light.

The submissive and weak conquer the strong.

Fish should not be taken out of the depths.

The state's sharp weapons should not be

shown to the people."

Another aspect of the Taoist awareness emphasizes that the internal system that misrepresents the reality of interaction and its patterns does not have the power to transcend the boundary and invalidation generated by the self, others, and/or adverse conditions. The true uniting power for our mental and interpersonal relationships involves discerning and rectifying the cognitive distortion for the self and others, and connecting our microcosm with the transforming macrocosm. In addition, instead of using an internal belief system or categories as the Tao to evaluate and explain one's experiences, the Taoist awareness applies the types of interactions. Incongruous and congruous between the cognitive system and the reality to define, evaluate, explain, predict, maintain, and/or adjust our mental and interpersonal activities and experiences.

Live in a good place.

Keep your mind deep.

Treat others well.

Stand by your word.

Make fair rules.

Do the right thing.

Work when it time.

(Chapter 8)

It is possible to change distorted cognitions through human interactions because of two reasons. To begin with, although the contents of the cognitive system vary with each individual, they are presumed only to be the substitutes of the reality of interaction and its patterns. People must revise their perceptions of Tao and of their relations with Tao when their conceptions are incapable of making sense of their experiences. Therefore, individuals must rely on the interactions that validate or invalidate their perceptions of the reality to verify, and revise their cognitions of the reality and adjust their behavior. Furthermore, people possess the motivation and capacity to reach greater awareness of human reality.

Self-awareness for understanding conflict and peace

Self-awareness views human activities and experiences as determined by the interactions of the mental system and evolving human reality. In contrast, the personal awareness assumes that the use of self's belief systems or categories can understand and overcome invalidations generated by the self, others, and situations, with the unawareness of the incongruity between the mind and the reality. This suggests that we can transform our personal awareness into self-awareness through interacting with human reality, because the mind intends to understand, predict, and balance mental and interpersonal experiences. The mind must reexamine its relation with Tao when it encounters invalidating interactions. In addition, the growth and operation of the mind are shaped and expanded by its connection with the evolving reality. It should be noted that the paradigm examined here is a Taoism-based cognitive model, which is stimulated and enriched by the research of several forerunners on cognitive approaches. For example individual use hypotheses derived from their personal experiences and construct systems about themselves and the world to balance their interactions to make sense of their experiences, and to predict life events. Individuals think differently because the contents and organizations of their personal constructs differ. Individuals with more complex cognitive systems have better well-being because their personal constructs allow for more opportunity for alternative ways of construing and acting. The Taoist related peace model differs from other cognitive approaches in several ways. The Taoist model views the content and organization of a cognitive system as consisting of three basic components, as follows

1. The mental representation of the self, others, events, and nature
2. The mental Tao or perceived patterns that regulate the social and natural entities
3. Perceived relations between the self, others, and the Tao.

The principle of the unity of opposites regards the perceived Tao as the most vital component of the cognition that regulates psychological experiences and activities, because the mind attempts to balance the mental and interpersonal relationships by mirroring the universal patterns or oneness of yin and yang in the larger cosmos [24]. Specifically, our cognition includes our perceived opposing entities that are self, others, social situations, and nature and their interplays and evolutions. The Taoist unity of opposites represents a unique holistic approach to cognitive research. Although early Western psychological researchers, such as Gestalt psychologists and Kurt Lewin, emphasized some holistic approaches to psychological issues. There are few recent attempts to integrate various social cognitive issues, such as self, attitude, outgroup, person perception, attribution, prejudice, social inference, attention and encoding, decision making, goal directed

behavior, affect and emotions, memory, social categories, and information processing from the perspective that emphasizes how these cognitions are interrelated [25,26]. According to Lao Tzu, the greatest Te, self-awareness, is to follow Tao both in the process of perception and in the course of interaction. Therefore, self-awareness involves the insight that our incongruous and congruous relations with Tao that the evolving reality and its patterns determine our actions and experiences. The misrepresentations include the unawareness of the distorted cognitions of the self and/or others that regulate the psychological activities and how human interactions corroborate or nullify the cognitive distortions. Consequently, individuals experience mental, interpersonal, and other types of conflict because they use their distorted cognitions of human reality to evaluate, explain, and modify the self and others attributes and actions [15]. Self-awareness views psychological activities and experiences as determined both by the mental system and by the two types of interaction which are congruent and incongruent between the cognition and reality [15]. It uses two types of interaction to define, evaluate, explain, maintain, and adjust the mental and interpersonal experiences of action.

TAO: The unity

The Unity of Yin-Yang

The core concepts of Peace Studies originated from non-Western countries, In particular, non-violence in India, balance of Yin and Yang in China, and Ubuntu in Africa and other concepts are included, although peace science originated in Europe and the United States after World War II.

Something there is without form and complete,
 Born before heaven and earth,
 Solitary and vast,
 Standing alone without change,
 Everywhere pervading all things,
 Mothering all beneath heaven.
 I don't know its name;
 I call it Tao,
 And for want of a name call it great.

(Ch.25)

We must understand that two philosophies, two eras of civilization, are wrestling with one another and that a vigorous new spirit is supplanting the blatant and threatening old. No longer weak and formless, this promising new life is already widely established and determined to

survive. Quite apart from the peace movement, which is a symptom rather than a cause of actual change, there is taking place in the world a process of internationalization and unification. Factors contributing to the development of this process are technical inventions, improved communications, economic interdependence, and closer international relations. The instinct of self-preservation in human society, acting almost subconsciously, as do all drives in the human mind, is rebelling against the constantly refined methods of annihilation and against the destruction of humanity. There are two fundamental questions which should be raised here: 1) Did Taoists believe in individual agency? 2) What was the relationship between the individual and the society in Tao Te Ching? It is essential to understand that the polarities of yin and yang are not good and evil. What is good is a natural tendency towards balance and harmony between yin and yang. What is bad is human interference the process and its homeostatic mechanisms. This is the reason why Taoist sages avoid excesses and extravagances. For instance, Laozi practiced moderation and advised leaders to be more yin that is more softer, more feminine, like water in order to counterbalance yang, which predominates in a patriarchal society.

The Unity as peace of Wu-Wei

The essence of Taoism is expressed in the quality known as wu-wei. As with most Taoist terms its true meaning is beyond definition, but it can loosely be translated as non-action. This does not mean a sense of disengagement. Spontaneity is an essential aspect of Tao and, in particular, of wu-wei. That is, to be able to respond to the moment as a natural occurrence rather than taking account of the implications of the outcome of such action. Although this may seem at first, to the Western mind, an irresponsible way to conduct oneself, it is a perfectly natural response to a perfectly natural movement which environmental flux and flow of nature. It is the attachment to the events of the world which cause concern not the events themselves. As it is necessary to have respect for nature and its expression, so the individual would be advantaged to respect his or her own inner response to the Tao and allow life to flow naturally in and through him. Any action, then, undertaken after deliberation and with reflection, is an act of will, therefore is not as a response to Tao, and is out of harmony. Creation acts effortlessly and continuously with no pause for calculation or speculation. Tao Te Ching advised people to relax and follow the natural rhythm of life. It should not be forgotten that they also advised each person to be moral courage and think for oneself.

The Unity: Philosophy and Practice for Peaceful life

Peace thinkers and actors from the earliest time have understood the importance of persuasion, their rulers had to be convinced that the cost of war will almost always be higher than the cost of any compromise necessary to avoid war. For example, the Education of a Christian Prince,

the effects of war are so damaging that the wise prince will sometimes prefer to lose a thing by not fighting than to gain it through war. And even more bluntly in his the complaint of peace. Hardly any peace is so bad that it is not preferable to the most justifiable war. In modern terms, we might say this is a question of accurate cost-benefit analysis, with the problem that too often the short term gains of war are not properly measured against the long-term dis-benefits. In seeking to persuade potential war-makers of the dangers of seeking “peace through war”, one also has to combat the arguments of those with a vested interest in arguing the opposite. The Confucian peace advocates of the Warring States period made no secret of their loathing for the Strategists and Legalists who urged their rulers to make war. “The so-called good ministers of today who advise their prince to go to war would have been called robbers of the people in olden days,” commented Mengzi. His successor Xunzi, when asked by the ruler of his native state what was the best way for a king to manage his army, replied dismissively that “such detailed matters are of minor importance to Your Majesty, and may be left to the generals”. Xunzi shared Mengzi’s insistence that what was of real importance was to rule with humanity and justice, and that unity between the ruler and the people was the best way to resist aggression. “For a tyrant to try to overthrow a good ruler by force would be like throwing eggs at a rock or stirring boiling water with your finger.” Peace advocates of the Enlightenment, in the age when armies were becoming professional and the military establishment gained more power in the courts of the nation-states, recognized the growing strength of the vested interests for war, and the difficulty experienced by kings and princes in resisting their pressure. The dilemma was eloquently put by Denis Diderot, author of the great Encyclopedia in which peace was given its own entry and definition. The sovereign has need of unalterable firmness, and an invincible love of order and the public good, to resist the clamour of those warriors who surround him. Their tumultuous voice constantly stifles the cry of the nation whose sole interest lies in tranquility. One major challenge to this experience of unity and wholeness is our own human consciousness which can be regarded as a double-edged sword. Taoism is one of the most influential philosophies in the world, and the Taoism’s wisdom has inspired and guided people with precepts of compassion, harmony, cooperation, integrity, humility and prudence. Taoism’s thought as the master virtue allows individuals, organizations, and society to live in peaceful life, and as well directs leaders to pursue a basic blueprint of not only doing good, but also being good. On the one hand we are able to separate, distinguish, and evaluate. While this allows us to understand our world, make decisions, and take actions, it can also restrict us to only seeing everything as separate from ourselves, blocking the experience that we are part of a larger whole. We end up soiling our oceans, destroying natural habitat, and polluting the air. On the social level we allow history, geography, language, culture, race, gender, and

politics to create a sense of otherness with our fellow humans, which often leads to alienation, conflict, and war. Even on an intrapersonal level we reject our own wholeness by judging, repressing, and denying painful or misunderstood parts ourselves, bringing about depression, shame, and low self-worth. However, our universal consciousness as part of the energy that is the Tao, can also experience itself as an integral part of the whole. This sense of wholeness allows us to function in a manner that promotes balance and harmony internally as well as on a larger scale. We then see that the needs of others and of our environment are in accord with our own needs. When our awareness attains this level, we naturally become a part of the circle of Tao. By increasing self-awareness and reducing the influence of ego which is often at the heart of conflict, therefore Taoism promotes the unity or oneness peace.

Conclusion

Tao 道 is the term borrowed to represent what cannot be wholly represented because it is the whole and all of its parts. Taoist Cultivation for peaceful life practices include stillness meditation, internal alchemical meditation, ritual, martial arts, life nourishing through diet, qigong and living in harmony with the seasons and calendar. The hallmark of Taoist cultivation is spiritual-nature and life-fate, physical health and vitality that cultivated together. The Tao Te Ching does not present specific instructions or techniques for becoming what it calls a sage who has realized the Tao. However, it does describe how a sage behaves. For example, it states that one should not force things instead, one should be tranquil, have no desires, behave naturally, and live simply. This will in turn affect the sage in social and political environment.

Factors that contributing to the development of peaceful one life and society are technical inventions, improved communications, economic interdependence, and closer international relations. Taoism in its philosophical form can be seen to have had its first awakening with Tao Te Ching, a poetic text of some five thousand words written in a mystical poetical style.

Can you balance your life force

And embrace the One

Without Separation?

Can you control your breath

Gently

Like a baby?

Can you clarify

Your dark vision
Without blemish?
(Chapter 10)

The peaceful life in Tao Te Ching is universal without any boundaries. It has boosted cultural exchanges and mutual learning. The reason why western people like Taoism so much is mainly because Taoism has no barriers. Chinese culture emphasizes co-existence, and that can be found in Taoism. Wide hearts embrace all, and all rivers run into the sea. That is the unity of Tao.

Bibliography

1. Byrns, Tormond. 2020. The Tao Te Ching by Lao Tzu. . <https://terebess.hu/english/tao/byrn.html>.
2. Chan, Alan K.L. 2014. "Laozi." In Edward N. Zalta, ed., <https://plato.stanford.edu/archives/spr2014/entries/laozi/>
3. Chan, Alan. 1997. Laozi. Article published December 15, 2001; The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy. Stanford University. <https://tinyurl.com/y3au3bqt>.
4. Ching, J., 2002. (2nd Ed). World Religions; Eastern Tradition Canada. Oxford University Press.
5. Cooper, J.C.,1990. Taoism, The Way of the Mystic, Welling borough, England; Crucible.
6. E. Brindley, Individualism in Classical Chinese Thought. Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy, <https://www.iep.utm.edu/ind-chin/>
7. Giles, Lionel (1917). Wisdom of The East, The Sayings of Lao Tzu. London.
8. Girardot, N.J. 1974. Myth and Meaning in Early Taoism, The Theme of Chaos, University of California Press.
9. Henricks, R.G. 1990. Lao-Tzu Te-Tao Ching, The Bodley Head.
10. Holy Bible, 1952. Revised Standard Version; NY: Collins.
11. Gusic, Ivan, 2022. Journal of Intervention and State building. Published by Taylor & Francis (Routledge).
12. Kipling, R., 1999. "If"; In: Rhys Jones G (ed.); The Nation's Favourite Poems; London, UK; BBC Worldwide Ltd.
13. Lao-tzu; (tr Richard Wilhelm 1978). Tao Te Ching: Richard Wilhelm Edition; London, UK; Penguin.
14. Laozi, Tao Te Ching, transl. W.-T. Chan.<https://terebess.hu/english/tao/chan.html>
15. Liangrong Zu. 2022. Responsible and Sustainable Business. *The Taoism's Perspective*. Five Principles of Taoism for Purpose-Driven Leadership.
16. Mackenzie, D; 1994. China and Japan; London, UK; Senate.
17. Mark S. Schwartz. 2005. Universal Moral Values for Corporate Codes of Ethics. Journal of Business Ethics. Springer.
18. Martin, William. 2005. A Path and a Practice: Using Lao-tzu's Tao Te Ching as a Guide to an Awakened Spiritual Life. New York: Marlowe.
19. Mears, Isabella. 2003. Tao Te Ching. San Diego: Book Tree.

20. Miller, James. 2003 *Daoism: A Beginner's Guide*. New York: Oxford One World.
21. Mitchell, Stephen. 2009. *The Second Book of the Tao*. New York: Penguin.
22. R Pettman. 2005. Taoism and the concept of global security. *International Relations of the Asia-Pacific*. Published by Oxford University Press. Online ISSN: 1470-4838.
23. Rothbard M., *Libertarianism in Ancient China*, <https://mises.org/library/libertarianism-ancient-china>.