

DAOIST SELF-STUDY GUIDES #1
Self-Study Guide to Daoist Scripture Study

Louis Komjathy 康思奇, Ph.D., CSO
Center for Daoist Studies 道學中心

Scripture study (*jīngxué* 經學) is an essential aspect of Daoist practice-realization, with scriptures (*jīng* 經) being a specific genre of Daoist literature and one of the external Three Treasures (*sānbǎo* 三寶) of the Daoist tradition as such. Not all texts have the authoritative and revered status of scriptures, and Daoists tend to view these works as revealed and/or inspired. They are usually anonymous and/or attributed to specific gods, immortals, or Perfected. Generally speaking, different Daoists often emphasize different scriptures, specifically as associated with specific movements, lineages, and sometimes revelations. In our approach, informed by the general contours of Daoist tradition, an inner cultivation focus, and the Quánzhēn 全真 (Complete Perfection) movement, we study and teach the *Lǎozǐ* 老子 (Book of Venerable Masters) and *Zhuāngzǐ* 莊子 (Book of Master Zhuang) as foundational. This is followed by various other important texts, including the three core texts of Complete Perfection, namely, *Dàodé jīng* 道德經 (Scripture on the Dao and Inner Power), which is the honorific title of the *Lǎozǐ*, *Qīngjìng jīng* 清靜經 (Scripture on Clarity and Stillness), and *Yīnfú jīng* 陰符經 (Scripture on the Hidden Talisman). With the exception of the *Zhuāngzǐ*, these are translated in Louis Komjathy's *Handbooks for Daoist Practice* 修道手冊 (2023 [2003]), which is our primary sourcebook and was recently published in the Twentieth Anniversary Edition (TAE).

(1.A) **Lǎozǐ** 老子 (Book of Venerable Masters; abbrev. LZ). Honorific title: *Dàodé zhēnjīng* 道德真經 (Perfect Scripture on the Dao and Inner Power; DZ 664; LZ*4; ZH 553; abbrev. DDJ). Attributed to the legendary Lǎozǐ 老子 (“Master Lao”/“Old Master”; trad. dat. 6th c. BCE).

Conventionally understood as “poetry,” containing 81 (9x9) untitled “verse-chapters” in the standard received edition (via Wáng Bì 王弼 [226-249 CE]). Anonymous multi-vocal anthology consisting of historical and textual layers from at least the fourth to second centuries BCE. Contains the teachings and practices of various anonymous elders of the inner cultivation lineages (ICL) of classical Daoism. Especially important for understanding foundational Daoist views, principles, values, and qualities. Includes key information on Daoist apophatic and quietistic meditation (chs. 10, 16, 20, 28, 37, 48 & 57), including *bàoyī* 抱一 (“embracing the One”), and on qualities associated with realized Daoists (chs. 8 & 15). Became one of the most important texts of the classical Daoist textual corpus and eventually one of the most influential scriptures in the larger Daoist tradition. The first of the three core texts of Quánzhēn 全真 (Complete Perfection) Daoism. Handbook #2: Book of Venerable Masters is a partial translation of select chapters, about half of the received text, especially relevant for Daoist inner cultivation. The complete translation, titled *Dàodé jīng: A Contemplative, Contextual, and Annotated Bilingual Translation*, was published by Square Inch Press 方寸書社 in 2023. This is the standard translation utilized in the Daoist Foundation community and recommended for Daoists more generally. See our independent “Self-Study Guide to the *Dàodé jīng*” for additional guidance.

(1.B) *Zhuāngzǐ* 莊子 (Book of Master Zhuang; abbrev. ZZ). Honorific title: *Nánhuá zhēnjīng* 南華真經 (Perfect Scripture of Perfected Nanhua [Southern Florescence]; DZ 670; ZH 616; abbrev. NHJ). Attributed to Zhuāng Zhōu 莊周 (“Master Zhuang;” ca. 370-ca. 290 BCE), whose honorific name is Nánhuá and some of whose teachings and perhaps writings are contained in the so-called Inner Chapters (1-7).

Primarily written in prose, containing 33 titled chapters in the standard received edition (via Guō Xiàng 郭象 [252-312 CE]). The latter produced his redaction from an earlier, lost 52-chapter edition, with the editorial process and accompanying expulsions being unclear. Anonymous multi-vocal anthology consisting of historical and textual layers from at least the fourth to second centuries BCE. Contains the teachings and practices of various anonymous, pseudonymous, and named elders of the inner cultivation lineages (ICL) of classical Daoism. From a revisionist perspective, there are at least five distinct lineages or “schools,” so the text should ideally be read in both the received order and a revisionist order based on lineage clusters. Especially important for understanding foundational Daoist views, principles, values, and qualities. Includes key information on Daoist apophatic and quietistic meditation (chs. 4, 6, 11, 23, & 33), including *xīnzhāi* 心齋 (“heart-fasting”) and *zuòwàng* 坐忘 (“sitting-in-forgetfulness”). Also contains seminal stories and related “(non)skill passages” including qualities associated with realized Daoists. Our preferred translation is by Burton Watson, but A.C. Graham and Victor Mair are also reliable. See our independent “Self-Study Guide to the *Zhuāngzǐ*” for additional guidance.

(2) *Nèiyè* 內業 (Inward Training; abbrev. NY). Proposed honorific title: *Nèixiū jīng* 內修經 (Scripture on Inner Cultivation; abbrev. NXJ).

Anonymous, possibly multi-vocal composition dating to around 350 BCE, so possibly the oldest classical Daoist text. Survives as chapter 49 of the received *Guǎnzǐ* 管子 (Book of Master Guan), a collection of miscellaneous works named after Guǎn Zhòng 管仲 (d. 645 BCE), an ancient Chinese philosopher and politician who was considered the greatest minister of the state of Qí 齊 (present-day Shāndōng). The collection effort itself is associated with the famous Jìxià 稷下 (lit., “below the Ji Gates”) Academy (fl. ca. 340-ca. 260 BCE), and the received edition was compiled by Liú Xiàng 劉向 (79-8 BCE). In terms of Daoistic texts, the *Nèiyè* is one of the so-called Xīnshù 心術 (Techniques of the Heart-Mind [THM]/Arts of the Heart) chapters, with the other three being chapters 36-38. In Harold Roth’s (Brown University) text-critical edition, the *Nèiyè* consists of 26 untitled verse-chapters. This text is especially helpful for providing technical details on Daoist apophatic and quietistic meditation, representing a more technical sister-companion to the *Dàodé jīng* in certain respects, including complementary passages that clarify the latter. Includes the earliest known reference to *shǒuyī* 守一 (“guarding the One”) and emphasizes the “four alignments” (*sìzhèng* 四正). Largely unknown in Daoist circles before the pioneering work of A.C. Graham and Isabelle Robinet, and especially the definitive study and translation of Harold Roth. Handbook #1: Inward Training.

(3) **Huángdì nèijīng sùwèn** 黃帝內經素問 (Yellow Thearch's Inner Classic: Basic Questions; DZ 1018; ZH 884; abbrev. *Sùwèn* & SW). Often inaccurately referred to as the *Yellow Emperor's Classic of Internal Medicine*.

Anonymous multi-vocal anthology containing material from at least the 3rd c. BCE to the 3rd c. CE, approximately 200 BCE-200 CE. Technically one of four known *Yellow Thearch's Inner Classics*, with the other three, in order of importance, being the *Lingshū* 靈樞 (Numinous Pivot), *Tàisù* 太素 (Great Foundation), and *Míngtáng* 明堂 (Hall of Light). The latter two are only partially extant. Without qualification, use of the primary title refers to the *Sùwèn*. The latter is primarily presented as a dialogue between Huángdì 黃帝 (Yellow Thearch; a.k.a. Yellow Emperor) and Qí Bó 岐伯, and a *revelation* from the latter to the former. One of the foundational works of classical Chinese medicine, with various Daoist elements. One hint about the latter connection is the reference to Qí Bó as the Celestial Master (*tiānshī* 天師). The standard received edition, primarily edited by Wáng Bīng 王冰 (fl. 760s), consists of 81 (9x9) titled chapters, with the titles themselves offering major insights. Important for gaining a foundational understanding of traditional Chinese naturalistic views, including as related to cosmology, dietetics, philosophy, psychology, and somatics. Provides practical instruction on somatic and cosmological harmony, including through seasonal attunement. Handbook #3: Yellow Thearch's Basic Questions contains a translation of chapters 1 and 2. Other reliable translations include those of Ilza Veith (chs. 1-34) and the complete, two-volume definitive and annotated one by Paul Unschuld and Hermann Tessenow.

(4) **Tàishàng Lǎojūn shuō cháng qīngjìng miào jīng** 太上老君說常清靜妙經 (Wondrous Scripture on Constant Clarity and Stillness as Spoken by the Great High Lord Lao; DZ 620; ZH 350; abbrev. *Qīngjìng jīng* & QQJ).

Anonymous eighth-century Daoist scripture of unclear provenance. Written in verse paragraphs and divided into two major sections. Presented as a revelation from Lǎojūn 老君 (Lord Lao), the deified Lǎozǐ 老子 ("Master Lao"), high god of early Daoism, and personification of the Dao. Part of what may be referred to as "Clarity-and-Stillness Literature" (CSL), with this text being the most influential. Develops many of the views, values, and principles contained in the *Dàodé jīng*, including additional instructions on Daoist apophatic and quietistic practice. Focuses on the heart-mind as our psychospiritual center. As the title indicates, emphasizes the cultivation of clarity and stillness (*qīngjìng* 清靜/清淨), as contemplative states and qualities, with the aspiration for the (non)attainment of "constancy" (*cháng* 常), or meditative absorption (*dìng* 定; Skt.: *samādhi*). The second of the three core texts of Quánzhēn 全真 (Complete Perfection) Daoism. Also influential in other internal alchemy (*nèidān* 內丹) circles. Handbook #4: Scripture on Clarity and Stillness.

(5) **Tàishàng Lǎojūn jīnglǜ** 太上老君經律 (Scriptural Statutes of the Great High Lord Lao; DZ 786; ZH 540; abbrev. *Lǎojūn jīnglǜ* & LJL).

Anonymous sixth-century Tiānshī 天師 (Celestial Masters) Daoist precept collection. Presented as a revelation from, or at least associated with, Lǎojūn 老君 (Lord Lao), the deified Lǎozǐ 老子 ("Master Lao"), high god of early Daoism, and personification of the Dao. Opens with the Nine

Practices (*jiǔxíng* 九行), which are derived from the *Dàodé jīng* and probably the oldest extant “precepts” (*jiè* 戒), actually Daoist practice principles and guidelines. These are divided into three sets of three (3x3=9). They are followed by the “Twenty-Seven Xiǎng’ěr Precepts,” which are conduct guidelines derived from the *Lǎozǐ xiǎng’ěr zhù* 老子想爾注 (Commentary Thinking Through the *Laozi*; DH 55; LZ* 9; S.6825; TK 56; ZH 557; abbrev. *Xiǎng’ěr zhù* & XE). The latter is the sixth of the seven earliest Daoist commentaries and most likely written by Zhāng Lǔ 張魯 (d. 216 CE), the 3rd Celestial Master. The Twenty-Seven Xiǎng’ěr Precepts are divided into three sets of nine (3x9=27). As applicable to the entire Daoist community, these two sets of precepts provide insights and guidance concerning foundational Daoist views, values, and principles. They also offer at least one expression of baseline Daoist ethics. The *Lǎojūn jīnglǜ* also contains the more complex and specialized “180 Precepts of Lord Lao,” which were intended for Celestial Master libationers (*jìjiǔ* 祭酒), community leaders basically equivalent to parish priests. Handbook #5: Scriptural Statutes of Lord Lao contains a translation of the Nine Practices and Twenty-Seven Xiǎng’ěr Precepts. The 180 Precepts of Lord Lao have been translated by Barbara Hendrichske and Benjamin Penny, Kristofer Schipper, and Livia Kohn. See our independent “Reading the *Dàodé jīng* through the Nine Practices” for additional guidance.

(6) ***Tàishàng Lǎojūn nèi rìyòng miào jīng*** 太上老君內日用妙經 (Wondrous Scripture for Internal Daily Application of the Great High Lord Lao; DZ 645; ZH 787; abbrev. *Nèi rìyòng jīng* & NRYJ).

Anonymous, possibly thirteenth-century Daoist scripture of unclear provenance. Written in verse paragraphs. Presented as a revelation from Lǎojūn 老君 (Lord Lao), the deified Lǎozǐ 老子 (“Master Lao”), high god of early Daoism, and personification of the Dao. (Are you noticing a pattern?) Based on internal evidence, the *Nèi rìyòng jīng* appears to be a later Quánzhēn 全真 (Complete Perfection) text, as “daily application/daily practice” (*rìyòng* 日用) was a shared contemplative approach among many of the first-generation teachers. Drawing on the *Qīngjìng jīng* and the Clarity-and-Stillness sub-tradition, the text emphasizes Daoist apophatic and quietistic meditation with an internal alchemy (*nèidān* 內丹) dimension. Provides additional clarification on the state and quality of clarity-and-stillness. There also is a paired scripture on “external daily external application” (*wài rìyòng* 外日用) (DZ 646; ZH 788), which emphasizes ethics. Handbook #6: Scripture for Internal Daily Application. Both the internal and external versions have been translated by Livia Kohn.

(7) ***Huángdì yīnfú jīng*** 黃帝陰符經 (Yellow Thearch’s Scripture on the Hidden Talisman; DZ 31; ZH 642; abbrev. *Yīnfú jīng* & YFJ).

Anonymous sixth-century Daoist scripture of unclear provenance. Written in verse paragraphs and divided into three major titled sections. Presented as a revelation from Huángdì 黃帝 (Yellow Thearch; a.k.a. Yellow Emperor), here associated with Daoist inner cultivation. Recalling chapter five of the *Zhuāngzǐ*, the text emphasizes the *yīnfú* 陰符, here translated as “hidden talisman,” but also rendered as “dark/hidden agreement/contract/tally,” as the center of Daoist practice. This phrase consists of *yīn*, in the sense of *yīnyáng* 陰陽, which is associated with darkness/receptivity/stillness, and *fú*, which technically refers to a talisman. The latter originally were forms of communication, guidance, and agreements, in which an object was broken apart and

kept by the two associated parties. Two halves, when rejoined, revealing original unity. Reunification. This is the heart-mind (*xīn* 心) and innate nature (*xìng* 性) as the pivot (*jī* 機), our psychospiritual center. Although the text has been interpreted in various “non-Daoist” ways, including as military strategy, it is clearly about inner cultivation, with an emphasis on an apophatic and quietistic approach, through which we (re)discover our original and inherent connection with the Dao. The text also includes important information on the process of purifying consciousness and overcoming difficulties in practice. The third of the three core texts of Quánzhēn 全真 (Complete Perfection) Daoism. Also influential in other internal alchemy (*nèidān* 內丹) circles. Handbook #7: Scripture on the Hidden Talisman.

(8) *Chóngyáng lìjiào shíwǔ lùn* 重陽立教十五論 (Redoubled Yang’s Fifteen Discourses to Establish the Teachings; DZ 1233; ZH 1010; abbrev. *Chóngyáng shíwǔ lùn*, *Lìjiào shíwǔ lùn*, *Shíwǔ lùn*, & SWL). Attributed to and most likely written by Wáng Zhé 王嘉 (Chóngyáng 重陽; 1113-1170), the founder of Quánzhēn 全真 (Complete Perfection) Daoism.

Just what the title suggests, with each discourse being separately titled. A primer in foundational Complete Perfection approaches, concerns, and practices. Of the early Complete Perfection textual corpus, probably the most influential work, partially due to its accessibility and frequent translation. Widely disseminated and read in the contemporary Daoist community. Includes important insights about eremitic seclusion, scripture study, spiritual companions, quietistic meditation, and spiritual realization. Interestingly, Discourses 7, 8, 9 and 13 (3b-5b) appear in the fourteenth-century *Qúnxiān yàoyǔ zuǎnji* 群仙要語纂集 (Collection of Essential Sayings from Various Immortals; DZ 1257, 2.2b-4a) as a guide to Daoist meditation. Handbook #8: Redoubled Yang’s Fifteen Discourses.

(9) *Tiānyǐnzǐ* 天隱子 (Book of Master Celestial Seclusion; DZ 1026; ZH 993; abbrev. TYZ). Proposed honorific title: *Zhēnyī jīng* 貞一經 (Scripture of Pure Unity).

Anonymous eighth-century work. Consists of eight titled sections, including on sitting-in-forgetfulness (*zuòwàng* 坐忘). Contains a preface attributed to Sīmǎ Chéngzhēn 司馬承禎 (Zhēnyī 貞一 [Pure Unity]; 647-735), the 12th Patriarch of Shàngqīng 上清 (Highest Clarity) Daoism and author of the influential *Zuòwàng lùn* 坐忘論 (Discourse on Sitting-in-Forgetfulness; DZ 1036; ZH 992). According to Sīmǎ’s preface, he received teachings from the text’s namesake, about whom he had no biographical information. He then edited the text so that it could be disseminated. The *Tiānyǐnzǐ* is part of a series of related works on the Daoist meditation practice of observation (*guān* 觀), influenced by Buddhist *vipassanā/vipaśyanā* (insight meditation), and realizing the Dao (*dédào* 得道). Involves developing non-discriminating awareness and detachment. This text has also exerted some influence in contemporary Qìgōng 氣功 (Energy Work/Qi Exercises) circles. Handbook #9: Book of Master Celestial Seclusion.

FURTHER READING

(1) Bokenkamp, Stephen. 1997. *Early Daoist Scriptures*. Daoist Classics 1. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Important anthology of annotated academic translations of early and early medieval Daoist literature. Largely historical artifacts with little contemporary relevance and with the potential to create confusion among the uninformed and undiscerning. Bokenkamp also adheres to the problematic Strickmannian view of Daoism, centering on the Tiānshī 天師 (Celestial Masters) as source-point, which creates lineal confusion. Includes an annotated translation of the *Lǎozǐ xiǎng'ěr zhù* 老子想爾注 (Commentary Thinking Through the *Lǎozǐ*; DH 55; LZ* 9; S.6825; TK 56; ZH 557; abbrev. *Xiǎng'ěr zhù* & XE), with *xiǎng'ěr* rendered by Bokenkamp as “thinking of you” (remote libationers or Daoist diaspora). Most likely written by Zhāng Lǔ 張魯 (d. 215 CE), the 3rd Celestial Master, this text is the sixth of the seven earliest Daoist commentaries. Lost before the discovery of a Dūnhuáng 敦煌 manuscript around 1907 and dating to about 500 CE. Provides insights into the ways in which early Daoists read and applied the *Dàodé jīng* in the context of Daoist community.

(2) Cahill, Suzanne. 2006. *Divine Traces of the Daoist Sisterhood: Records of the Assembled Transcendents of the Fortified Walled City*. Cambridge, MA: Three Pines Press.

Annotated academic translation of the *Yōngchéng jíxiān lù* 壙城集仙錄 (Record of Assembled Immortals from the Walled City; DZ 783; ZH 1435; abbrev. *Yōngchéng lù* or YCL). This text is a collection of hagiographies (biographies of saints) of accomplished female Daoists and Daoist immortals/transcendents. Compiled by the Daoist scholastic Dù Guāngtíng 杜光庭 (Guāngchéng 廣成 [Expansive Completion]; 850-933). Offers important examples and potential models of female participation and embodiment in the Daoist tradition.

(3) Company, Robert. 2002. *To Live as Long as Heaven and Earth: A Translation and Study of Ge Hong's Traditions of Divine Transcendents*. Daoist Classics 2. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Annotated academic translation of the *Shénxiān zhuàn* 神仙傳 (Biographies of Divine Immortals; JY 89; JH 54; ZH 1430; abbrev. SXZ). This text is one of the most important and influential Daoist hagiographies. It is attributed to and was at least partially compiled by Gé Hóng 葛洪 (Bàopǔ 抱朴 [Embracing Simplicity]; 283-343), author of the seminal *Bàopǔzi nèipiān* 抱朴子內篇 (Inner Chapters of Master Embracing Simplicity; DZ 1185; ZH 980; abbrev. BPZ). Conforming to dominant Sinological models, the book itself is hyper-text-critical and overly philological. It might have benefitted from a separate edition with just the introductory materials and the annotated translation itself. Like the other titles in this series, adheres to the problematic (mandated?) Strickmannian view of Daoism, centering on the Tiānshī 天師 (Celestial Masters) as source-point, which creates lineal confusion. Nonetheless helpful for providing information on many important early Daoist personages and immortals, including associated teachers, practices, and lifeways.

(4) Cleary, Thomas. 1991. *Vitality, Energy, Spirit: A Taoist Sourcebook*. Boston: Shambhala.

Early, second-generation sourcebook of Daoist literature intended for a popular audience. Supersedes earlier deficient and similar installments, like Frederic Henry Balfour's *Taoist Texts: Ethical, Political, and Speculative* (1884) and James Legge's *The Texts of Taoism* (1891; 2 vols.). Helpful for accessibility and readability of often complex and difficult internal alchemy texts, including some Quánzhēn 全真 (Complete Perfection) and Lóngmén 龍門 works. Like Cleary's translations in general, lacks sufficient background information and annotations. The English renderings also frequently stray far from the original Chinese source-text, representing more of a paraphrased approximation than a reliable translation as such. Also propagates some problematic popular and misguided views of Daoism. Nonetheless remains the best non-academic, general-audience sourcebook, especially for individuals interested in Daoist inner cultivation.

(5) Hendrichske, Barbara. 2007. *The Scripture on Great Peace: The Taiping jing and the Beginnings of Daoism*. Daoist Classics 3. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Annotated academic translation of the *Tàipíng jīng* 太平經 (Scripture on Great Peace; DZ 1101; DH 86; ZH 475). Of unclear provenance, the text is one of the earliest Daoist scriptures, although the received version is complex in terms of historical and textual layers. It became the basis of the Tàipíng 太平 (Great Peace) movement, also known as the so-called Huángjīn 黃巾 (Yellow Kerchiefs ["Turbans"]), which was one of the earliest forms of organized Daoism basically contemporaneous with the Celestial Masters. The book is often highly text-critical and philological. Like the other titles in this series, adheres to the problematic (mandated?), albeit modified Strickmannian view of Daoism, centering on the Tiānshī 天師 (Celestial Masters) as source-point, which creates lineal confusion. Still, the translation is helpful for providing access to early Daoist views, especially with respect to cosmology and theocratic politics.

(6) *Kohn, Livia. 1993. *The Taoist Experience: An Anthology*. Rev. ed. Albany: State University of New York Press.

Pioneering and foundational sourcebook of translations of a wide selection of Daoist literature. Located somewhere between an academic and popular publication. At the time, Kohn was a prominent academic, and the publisher is an academic press, but the translations themselves are aimed at a larger audience and lack annotations. The absence of the latter is somewhat compensated for with helpful, framing introductions to both the larger thematic sections and the specific texts. The selection includes important materials on the entire spectrum of Daoist practice (e.g., dietetics, ethics, meditation, Yangsheng), so especially helpful for Daoist practitioners. Contains some problematic views about Daoism, specifically a lack of recognition of the inner cultivation lineages of classical Daoism. Still the best general anthology of Daoist source-texts in translation. Also provided a model, albeit often unacknowledged or worse, for many of the other sourcebooks in Daoist Studies. Somewhat problematic title, as it is a selection of *texts*. Kohn has subsequently published other helpful, thematic sourcebooks, including on Daoist ethics and Yangsheng.

(7) *Komjathy, Louis. 2013. *The Way of Complete Perfection: A Quanzhen Daoist Anthology*. Albany: State University of New York Press.

Important anthology of annotated academic translations of Quánzhēn 全真 (Complete Perfection) Daoist literature, with a specific focus on the earliest works. Authoritative and comprehensive, includes the largest selection to date of literature associated with a specific Daoist movement. Also noteworthy for including *complete* translations, rather than selections. Dedicated to Chén Yǔmíng 陳宇明 (b. 1969), Komjathy's "master-father" (*shīfu* 師父; root-teacher), former vice-abbot of Yùquán yuàn 玉泉院 (Temple of the Jade Spring), and 25th-generation member of the Huàshān 華山 (Mount Hua) lineage of Complete Perfection Daoism. Partially intended as a resource for Complete Perfection Daoists in order to develop an informed textual root in their own sub-tradition. Perhaps overwhelming and overly technical for many readers. For members of the Daoist Foundation, may be used as a more advanced and movement-specific supplement to the *Handbooks for Daoist Practice* 修道手冊 (9).

(8) *Komjathy, Louis. 2022. *Primer for Translating Daoist Literature* 道文翻譯入門. Auckland, New Zealand: Purple Cloud Press 紫雲出版社.

The first and only introduction to translating Daoist literature and a theme-based bilingual sourcebook of Daoist literature. Quasi-textbook for learning Daoist classical/literary Chinese. Contains an informative and pioneering introduction, including advocacy of what Komjathy refers to as "New Daoist Studies" (NDS). This is an egalitarian, inclusive and collaborative approach rooted in a Daoist study-practice model (SPM). The core of the book consists of twenty-eight "lessons" focusing on bilingual engagement with a wide variety of Daoist texts, accompanied by Komjathy's translations and technical glossaries. Contains various helpful appendices, including the foundational "Daoist Character Etymology." Foundational reading for Daoist translators and for members of the Daoist Translation Committee 道教翻譯學會. For members of the Daoist Foundation, may be used as a supplemental Daoist sourcebook to the *Handbooks for Daoist Practice* 修道手冊 (9).

(9) *Komjathy, Louis. 2023 (2003). *Handbooks for Daoist Practice* 修道手冊. Twentieth Anniversary Edition (TAE). 3 vols. Ravinia, IL: Square Inch Press 方寸書社.

The only Daoist anthology selected and translated by a Daoist scholar-practitioner and ordained Daoist priest (*dàoshi* 道士) and specifically and unapologetically intended for Daoist adherents and associated communities. Foundational sourcebook for the Daoist Foundation 道教基金會, Clarity-and-Stillness Order (Qīngjìng dào 清靜道; CSO), and affiliated Daoist associations (*dàohuì* 道道). See above for details. Now widely disseminated in Western Daoist circles, often without attribution or acknowledgment. Has also become the basis of various plagiarized versions, including by individuals who do not know classical Chinese.

(10) *Komjathy, Louis. 2023. *Dàodé jīng 道德經: A Contextual, Contemplative, and Annotated Bilingual Translation*. Ravinia, IL: Square Inch Press 方寸書社.

Landmark annotated bilingual Chinese-English translation and interpretive study of the classical Daoist *Dàodé jīng 道德經 (Tào-té chīng; Scripture on the Dao and Inner Power)*. The first book to locate the multivocal anthology in the inner cultivation lineages of classical Daoism and the first contemplative translation rooted in a Daoist scholar-practitioner approach (SPA). Also contains helpful appendices that enable readers to engage the text in a variety of ways, including applied and lived Daoist approaches.

(11) Miller, James. 2008. *The Way of Highest Clarity: Nature, Vision and Revelation in Medieval China*. Magdalena, NM: Three Pines Press.

Anthology of annotated academic bilingual translations of *Shàngqīng 上清 (Highest Clarity)* Daoist literature. Noteworthy for including the Chinese source-texts. Somewhat deficient due to the idiosyncratic nature of the selection, which is more a reflection of Miller's personal interests than representative of Highest Clarity per se. For example, neither the *Dàdòng jīng 大洞經 (Scripture of Great Profundity; DZ 6; ZH 1; abbrev. DDJ)* nor the *Huángtíng jīng 黃庭經 (Scripture on the Yellow Court; DZ 331/ZH 896; DZ 332/ZH 897; abbrev. HTJ)* are included. May be supplemented by consulting the scholarship of the late Isabelle Robinet (1932-2000).

(12) Pregadio, Fabrizio. 2019. *Taoist Internal Alchemy: An Anthology of Neidan Texts*. Mountain View, CA: Golden Elixir Press.

Just what the title suggests. Anthology of annotated academic translations of various internal alchemy (*nèidān 內丹*) texts, with a specific focus on foundational works and the early period. Helpful for providing access to complex and difficult technical manuals. However, in application, may lead to confusion and even serious psychospiritual problems without training and guidance under a reliable Daoist teacher, including accompanying oral instruction (*kǒujué 口訣*). May be thought of as a more academic version of much of the earlier work of Thomas Cleary and others. Lacks a sophisticated understanding of *Quánzhēn 全真 (Complete Perfection)* Daoist literature, for which interested readers should consult Louis Komjathy's *Cultivating Perfection* (2007) and *The Way of Complete Perfection* (2013) (7). Also exhibits some problematic, popular influence, such as the inclusion of the *Tàiyǐ jīnhuá zōngzhǐ 太乙金華宗旨 (Ancestral Decrees of the Golden Flower of Great Unity; JY 170; XB 1; JH 94; ZW 334; abbrev. Jīnhuá zōngzhǐ or JHZZ)*, the so-called *Secret of the Golden Flower*, possibly via Richard Wilhelm (1873-1930).

(13) Robson, James, ed. 2017. *The Norton Anthology of World Religions: Daoism*. New York and London: Norton.

Helpful, albeit excessive and unbalanced selection of Daoist literature. Requires additional education, discernment and refinement on the part of readers. Has a wide variety of deficiencies. Misleadingly presented as James Robson's work, when he is, in fact, only the compiler and editor. Lacks a sophisticated understanding of the Daoist tradition, as Robson is primarily a Sinological scholar of Chinese Buddhism. Fails to document the inner cultivation lineages of classical Daoism

and to provide a representative selection of Quánzhēn 全真 (Complete Perfection) Daoist literature, a deficiency easily avoided or rectified through simple consultation with specialists (e.g., Stephen Eskildsen, Vincent Goossaert, Louis Komjathy). See (7). Although monumental in scope, like “Norton Anthologies” in general,” proves impractical and in need of distillation in lived application. Also contains highly problematic materials on so-called “modern Daoism,” which actually represent various (non-Daoist) forms of cultural appropriation and Orientalist colonialism that should be expunged from future editions. Livia Kohn’s *The Taoist Experience* (6) is superior for Daoist practitioners.

(14) *Roth, Harold. 1999. *Original Tao: Inward Training (Nei-yeh) and the Foundations of Taoist Mysticism*. New York: Columbia University Press.

Annotated academic translation and study of the mid-fourth century BCE “Nèiyè” 內業 (Inward Training; abbrev. NY) chapter (ch. 49) of the received *Guǎnzǐ* 管子 (*Kuǎn-tzǔ*; Book of Master Guan; abbrev. GZ). The latter is traditionally associated with Guǎn Zhòng 管仲 (d. 645 BCE), an ancient Chinese philosopher and politician who was considered the greatest minister of the state of Qí 齊 (present-day Shāndōng). Part of the so-called “Xīnshù 心術” (Hsīn-shù; Techniques of the Heart-mind [THM]/Arts of the Heart) chapters (chs. 36-38 & 49), “Inward Training” may be the oldest extant classical Daoist text. In addition to explicating Daoist contemplative and mystical praxis as documented in “Inward Training,” Roth connects this text to the *Lǎozǐ* 老子 (Book of Venerable Masters) and locates both in the larger textual corpus and training regimen associated with the inner cultivation lineages of classical Daoism. An essential orientation-point to Roth’s pioneering revisionist scholarship on this earliest period of Daoist history.

(15) Wong, Eva. 1997. *Teachings of the Tao*. Boston: Shambhala.

Another sourcebook of Daoist literature intended for a popular audience, with Eva Wong basically being the Chinese version of Thomas Cleary. Like her books in general, lacks necessary and accurate background information and the translations are often unreliable. Includes inaccurate, popular views about Daoism as well as an idiosyncratic selection, partially due to Wong’s Hong Kong Daoist background and training. For popular translations Thomas Cleary’s *Vitality, Energy, Spirit* (4) is a better, albeit still deficient choice.