

Notes on *Dàodé jīng* 道德經 Lineation

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These are some notes related to my forthcoming *Dàodé jīng* 道德經: *A Contextual, Contemplative, and Annotated Bilingual Translation*[©], which will be published by Square Inch Press 方寸書社 in mid-2023. This will be the first “contemplative translation,” rooted in and informed by a Daoist scholar-practitioner approach (SPA). The *Lǎozǐ* 老子 (*Lǎo-tzǔ*; Book of Venerable Masters), more commonly known by its honorific title of *Dàodé jīng* 道德經 (*Tào-té chīng*; Scripture on the Dao and Inner Power), is a multivocal anthology containing historical and textual material from at least the fourth to second centuries BCE. In my way of analyzing, understanding, and translating the text, it includes diverse teachings and practices associated with various anonymous elders of the inner cultivation lineages of classical Daoism. During my prolonged engagement with and extensive research on this classical Daoist composition, I began to recognize that said historical/textual layers were preserved in the received text as three distinct linguistic patterns and grammatical structures, namely, regular prose; parallel prose, which is often rhymed in Old Chinese; and aphorisms, poetry, and sayings. I in turn developed the following new, innovative format utilizing a tripartite lineation:¹

- (1) Left-margin justified for prose
- (2) Single indent/tab for parallel prose
- (3) Double indent/tab for aphorisms, poetry, and sayings

This approach to the *Dàodé jīng* is informed by my parallel analysis of the so-called “Xīnshù 心術” (Techniques of the Heart-mind) chapters of the *Guǎnzǐ* 管子 (*Kuǎn-tzǔ*; Book of Master Guan). Here I offer a paradigmatic example, including my bilingual translation. Interestingly, the present chapter also contains a quasi-commentary layer. Readers should note that not every chapter includes each type of textual layer. I also have included line numbers and rhyme symbols, all of which should be engaged and cited as my intellectual property.

五十二		- 52 -	
1	天下有始， ^ˇ 以為天下母。 ^ˇ 既得其母， ^ˇ 以知其子。 ^ˇ	1	The world had a beginning; We regard it as the world's mother. By coming to attain the mother, One can know the child.
5	既知其子， ^ˇ 復守其母。 ^ˇ 沒身不殆。 ^ˇ 塞其兌， 閉其門， [˘]	5	By coming to know the child, One can again guard the mother. To the end of life, there will be no danger. Block the passages; Close the doorways.
10	終身不勤。 [˘] 開其兌， 濟其事， [˘] 終身不救。 見小曰明； [˘]	10	To the end of life, there will be no fatigue. Open the passages; Attend to affairs. To the end of life, there will be no relief. Perceiving the subtle is called illumination.
15	守柔曰強。 [˘] 用其光。 [˘] 復歸其明。 [˘] 無遺身殃； [˘] 是謂習常。 [˘]	15	Guarding softness is called strength. Apply the brightness; Return once again to illumination. Do not bring calamities on yourself. This is called practicing constancy.

¹ This discovery was partially influenced by my earlier collaboration with Harold Roth (Brown University), specifically through our co-organization and co-facilitation of the *Dàodé jīng* Translation Seminar (DDJTS; 2017-2019).