



Daodejing (Oxford World's Classics)

Laozi, Benjamin Penny

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"Of ways you may speak, / but not the Perennial Way; / By names you may name, / but not the Perennial Name." So begins the best-loved of all the classical books of China and the most universally popular, the *Daodejing* or *Classic of the Way and Life-Force*. Laozi's 2,500 year-old masterpiece is a work that defies definition. The dominant image is of the Way, the mysterious path through the whole cosmos modeled on the great Silver River or Milky Way that traverses the heavens. A life-giving stream, the Way gives rise to all things and holds them in her motherly embrace. It enables the individual, and society as a whole, to find balance, to let go of useless grasping, and to live in harmony with the great unchanging laws that govern the universe and all its inhabitants. This new translation draws on the latest archaeological finds and brings out the word play and poetry of the original. Straightforward commentary accompanies the text, and the introduction provides helpful historical and interpretative context.

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