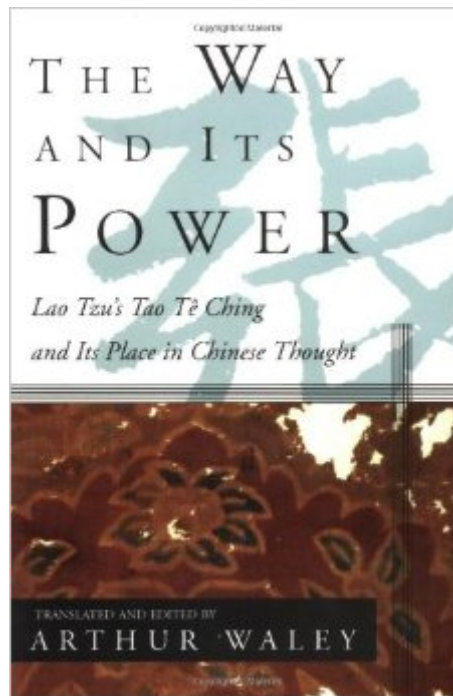


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# The Way And Its Power: Lao Tzu's Tao Te Ching And Its Place In Chinese Thought (UNESCO Collection Of Representative Works)



## Synopsis

Arthur Waley's brilliant and definitive translation of one of the foremost of all mystical books, Lao Tzu's Tao Te Ching, has become a modern classic in its own right. Unlike previous translations, it is founded not on the medieval commentaries but on a close study of all the early Chinese literature, and it provides a singular example of authoritative scholarship skillfully blended with brilliant, precise writing. In his introduction, Dr. Waley gives an extensive scholarly account of Chinese thought down to the end of the third century B.C. Here, the author presents a full picture of Chinese prehistory, early philosophy, and literature, showing the original, lofty conception of Taoism before the gradual corruption through the course of centuries, tracing this conflict of philosophies and its background of politics.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

The full title of the present book is: 'THE WAY AND ITS POWER - A Study of the TAO TE CHING and Its Place in Chinese Thought by ARTHUR WALEY. The book, which was first published in 1934 and has often been reprinted, besides containing a study of the historical and intellectual background, also contains a complete translation of the Tao Te Ching. Waley, who was one of the great Sinologists of the twentieth century, is perhaps better known to most as a translator of Chinese poetry. His 'Translations from the Chinese,' the book which contains, among other treasures, the marvelous poems of T'ao Ch'ien, Po Chu-I, and Wang Wei, has been reissued many

times. And although we have seen other excellent translations of Chinese poetry from writers such as A. C. Graham, Kenneth Rexroth, and Gary Snyder, none of them have had the impact of Waley. Chinese poetry, for most, is and always will mean Arthur Waley. His influence has been overwhelming. I would attribute his enormous success to two things. In the first place, there is the very special quality of his English, a quality impossible to describe. In the second place, Waley was a master at evoking an atmosphere, a feeling tone, that strikes one as authentically Chinese. So good was he at this that one sometimes gets the feeling, as one does when reading the poems of Emily Dickinson (whose mind had a very Chinese cast), that they must have been Chinese souls who had somehow strayed and ended up reincarnating in Western bodies. The particular beauty of Waley's style, a style which despite its age still strikes one as modern, will also be found at work in the present book. The book falls into two parts.

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