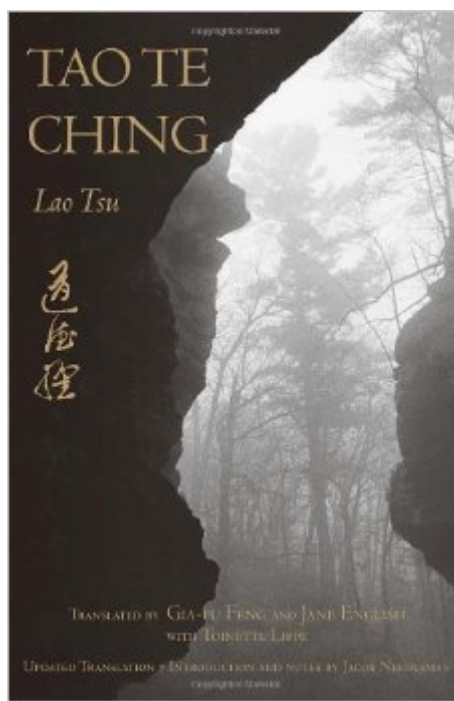


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Tao Te Ching: Text Only Edition



Synopsis

For nearly two generations, Gia-fu Feng and Jane English's translation of the Tao Te Ching has been the standard for those seeking access to the wisdom of Taoist thought. Now Jane English and her long-time editor, Toinette Lippe, have revised and refreshed the translation so that it more faithfully reflects the Classical Chinese in which it was first written, taking into account changes in our own language and eliminating any lingering infelicities. They have retained the simple clarity of the original rendering of a sometimes seemingly obtuse spiritual text, a clarity that has made this version a classic in itself, selling over a million copies. Written most probably in the sixth century B.C. by Lao Tsu, this esoteric but infinitely practical book has been translated into English more frequently than any other work except the Bible. Gia-fu Feng and Jane English's superb translation "the most accessible and authoritative modern English translation" offers the essence of each word and makes Lao Tsu's teaching immediate and alive. This edition includes an introduction and notes by the well-known writer and scholar of philosophy and comparative religion, Jacob Needleman.

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Customer Reviews

I was born and raised in China and have lived in the US for over 20 years (came in my adulthood). I have liked the philosophical Taoism (please don't confuse it with the religious Taoism, which started much later with quite different belief systems) since my late teens. And I have been interested in the art of translation for some years. I just compared a few lines of the English translation of this version

(by Gai-Fu Feng, Jane English) with the one by John C. H. Wu (1899-1986, according to Wikipedia), published in 1961, and started to notice some differences. For example, at the beginning of chapter 2, in this book it translates: "Under heaven all can see beauty as beauty because there is ugliness. All can see good as good only because there is evil." While in John C. H. Wu's translation, there two lines go as: "When all the world recognizes beauty as beauty, this in itself is ugliness. When all the world recognizes good as good, this in itself is evil." I feel the John C. H. Wu's version is much more accurate or closer to the meaning of the original Chinese text. Another example, in Chapter 7, the last three lines: "The wise stay behind, and are thus ahead. They are detached, thus at one with all. Through selfless act, they they attain fulfillment." John C. H. Wu's translation goes as: "Therefore, the Sage wants to remain behind, But finds himself at the head of others; Reckons himself out, But finds himself safe and secure. Is it not because he is selfless That his Self is realized?" Here I feel Wu's version is more accurate, and shows much better understanding of the ancient Chinese culture and philosophy.

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