



Dan C DeCarlo(USA)

THOUGHTS ON BECOMING A SAGE

《道德经》解读

丹·C·德卡罗 (美) 著

古滨河 (美) 译

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The Guidebook to Leading a Virtuous Life



中国对外翻译出版公司

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Interpretation of Lao Tzu's ***Tao Te Ching***

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Biography

As a student of Chinese history and culture, the author has studied many world philosophies and religions for over thirty-five years. Now known in China by his Chinese name, Kongdan, he makes his home in both the United States, in Boynton Beach, Florida and Qufu in Shandong Province here in China.

Mr. Dan DeCarlo grew up in two small towns in the state of Missouri in the middle of America. Lamar, where he lived until he was twelve and Joplin, Missouri where he graduated from high school and went to college for two years both serving to prepare him for a sense of his place in the universe at a seeming very young age. Dan gained an understanding of people, their history and culture, all before graduating from high school at the age of eighteen by broadcasting.

It was a subscription to *China Pictorial* that he began receiving in 1969 while in the tenth grade in high school that would forever begin pointing him in the direction of his passion and love for China. Later as a political science major at Missouri Southern State College in Joplin and at Southwest Missouri State University in nearby Springfield he began studying Chinese history and culture more intensely later graduating from the University with a Bachelor of Science degree in 1976. His sense of commitment to his community and politics led soon afterwards to his running for a State Representative in Missouri state government





and his serving in the Missouri House of Representatives in 1979 and 1980.

Afterwards he began a city planning career first in Springfield with the Westside Community Betterment Association as a community organizer before moving to Massachusetts in 1988 to accept a position in city planning in Fall River then later moving to Florida to become a planner in Boynton Beach where he currently resides with his wife Marie and daughters Emily and Katie. Over the years Mr. DeCarlo, now known to his friends in China as Kongdan, has written extensively about Chinese history, religion and culture. First, publishing a book in 2004 entitled *An American Journey through the I Ching and beyond* and the current book about Lao Tzu and the *Tao Te Ching*. He has become a sought after lecturer on high school and university campuses in China and continues to plan to publish his works in China and hopefully at some point in USA.

Dan activities in addition to being an author include being the President of his own multinational company known as Kongdan Enterprises, Inc., and his own foundation known as The Kongdan Foundation whose purpose is the build bridges of understanding through education showing that perceived differences between people are much smaller than our similarities. A major role of the foundation is to publish the *Daily Word*. It is because of his understanding of Chinese history, religious traditions and culture that he is well-suited to the task as an emissary building greater understanding between people and his hopes that he can bring out the best in others so that they too can find and follow their own endeavor and destiny.

作者小传

作者在过去35年间一直致力于研究世界各国的哲学和宗教。作为学习研究中国历史和文化的学者，他在中国有一个中文名字——孔丹。如今孔丹先生分别在美国佛罗里达州的波因顿比奇和中国山东省的曲阜市安了家。

丹·德卡罗先生在美国中部密苏里州的两个小镇长大。12岁以前，他生活在拉玛尔，之后住在密苏里州的乔普林，一直到高中毕业读完大学二年级。这段经历帮助他在很小的时候就在宇宙中找到自己的位置奠定了基础。丹在18岁中学毕业前，通过广播增加了对各国人民、历史和文化的理解。

1969年在他读十年级时开始订阅《中国画报》，这份杂志慢慢培养了他对中国的感情和热爱。后来他进入乔普林的南密苏里州立大学，主修政治学，之后在斯普林费尔德附近的西南密苏里州立大学以更高的热情学习中国历史和文化并于1976年毕业，获理学学士学位。很快，他对社会及政治的责任感促使他参加了密苏里州州代表的竞选，1979年至1980年间，在密苏里州众议员工作。

此后，他先是在斯普林费尔德的西区改良协会担任社区组织员，从事城市规划工作。1988年他到马萨诸塞州的福尔河从事类似工作。搬到佛罗里达州后，他在波因顿比奇从事规划工作。如今，他和太太玛丽，女儿爱米丽和凯蒂在此生活。这些年来，被中国朋友称为孔丹的德卡罗先生，撰写了许多有关中国历史、宗教和文化方面的著作。他的第一本书《一个美国人的易经之旅》于2004年出版。本书探讨了老子和他的《道德



经》。他在中国的高中和大学校园已经成为颇受欢迎的演讲嘉宾。目前，他在继续策划在中国出版自己的著作，并有望在美国出版。

孔丹先生除了写作以外，还创立了孔丹基金会和孔丹企业，目的在于建立跨文化沟通的桥梁，通过教育让人们认识到人与人之间的差别少于。该基金会的一项主要职责是出版《每日一读》。由于他对中国文化、历史、宗教传统有着深厚的理解，无疑使他成了增进人们之间相互了解的使者的最佳人选。他希望自己能够激励众人发掘自己的长处，进而找到并追随自己的人生目标。



About the Translator

Binhe Gu was born in Guangdong, China. He graduated with a Ph.D. degree from the University of Alaska-Fairbanks in 1993 and worked as a post-doctorate associate at the University of Florida between 1993 and 1997. He is currently a Senior Scientist with the South Florida Water Management District. He has been interested in Chinese history and culture, and pursued creative work on Chinese writings and English translations in his spare time.



译者简介

古滨河,原籍中国广东。1993年获美国阿拉斯加费尔班克斯大学理学博士。1993-1997年在佛罗里达大学从事博士后研究工作。现任南佛罗里达水资源管理署高级科学家。对中国历史和传统文化有浓厚兴趣。业余时间从事文学创作和中英文翻译工作。

Preface

This book represents a personal commitment to gaining a further understanding as to how Lao Tzu and his *Tao Te Ching* fits into the modern sense of what it means to be seen or considered as a sage. The traditional meaning of the sage has had a special meaning and connotation reserved for one of great insight and learning throughout Chinese history.

Usually attributed to the great Taoists teachers Lao Tzu, Chuang Tzu and Confucius, the term generally refers to one of great learning and insight who becomes a teacher of valuable lessons as to the way people should conduct their lives.

Thoughts on becoming a Sage represents the author's interpretation of the *Tao Te Ching* in a personalized style that illustrates the way of virtue and steps one would take in seeking out those attributes most resembling a "sage like" lifestyle and ways to live in the secular world. The paradox being that one cannot see oneself as a sage in the here and now... This would be seen as presumptuous. One simply aspires to see beyond himself and whatever his shortcomings may be and in doing so he can catch glimpses of his highest endeavor and destiny.

Just as there is an underlying or unity of philosophical religious teachings throughout the world, as shown by the teachings of Jesus of Nazareth, Mohammed of Medina, Buddha, Lao Tzu, Mencius, Confucius, and others, one who emulates or strives to live a life of virtue sees past self imposed religious differences and



intolerance found in the world around him. They see the likeness in everyday activities where virtue, or man's highest endeavors, are reflected and accepted as universal truths; i.e., that we are all God's children.

It is when one reflects on his or her place in the scheme of things reaching an understanding of where they fit into this unity found in nature that the journey begins for real.

In a previously published book about the *I Ching*, (*An American Journey through the I Ching and Beyond*), the author began this series about early Chinese history and philosophy in an effort to bridge seeming differences that are in reality non-existent.

In Chinese history there was an individual who lived in the sixth century during the Tang Dynasty that epitomized this universal sense of collective spirit and wisdom. Wu Daozi saw the need for Confucius teachings to be seen as compatible with Taoism, the teachings of Lao Tzu and Buddhism the teachings of Laoshan Buddhism that was prevalent at the time. He professed to an understanding that all religions followed a core belief of a singular God. All religions simply served as the mechanism to help people get to a similar place and that no one process was necessarily better than another. Each simply the process of finding and following one's natural inclination to nurture a personal relationship with God.

To begin to understand Lao Tzu's *Tao Te Ching*, you must first begin by understanding what he meant by the Tao, or what is commonly referred to as the way or path one should follow throughout one's life. The way defines one's path to ultimate reality. Although Lao Tzu continually throughout the *Tao Te Ching* re-





affirms he does not know its true name, without a name it simply becomes the way, or better known as the “way of virtue”. Albeit serving to find one’s ultimate path...

That ultimate reality is to reach a commonality or understanding of one’s place in the physical universe, known as heaven and earth, and relationship with all things in it or what is commonly referred to or known as the ten thousand things. The author’s understanding of Taoism as reflected in today’s culture and society, is illustrative of a sense that the Tao does not simply give birth to all things. It continues to remain present in each individual thing as a power or energy. In a truly religious sense we refer to it as one’s eternal spirit or soul, or qi (chi). As the Tao manifests within an individual, it can remain static or awaken the person midstream to question his or her role, and what they are to be doing once they awaken to their true endeavor and destiny. Possibly even to grow in a certain way in tune with their true nature. Finding this one can develop their religious identity identifying with the path most comfortable for each individual.

It is not the intent of the author to repeat another “interpretation” of Lao Tzu’s *Tao Te Ching* in the pages that follow. This has been done quite well and successfully by numerous other writers throughout the ages. This book focuses on the sage, the art and process of becoming the sage. Especially furthering the sense of the virtuous or “perfected man” that has been common in the writings of Chinese literature and scholars throughout the ages. It has been through the *Tao Te Ching* or “way of virtue” that the window to one’s soul has been found enlightenment through an appreciation of Taoist beliefs for over two thousand years in China. It is this continuity or connection between Buddhism, Taoism and Confucius that brings

one to understand where and how everything fits together. A true sense of heaven and earth and finding one's place in the ten thousand things remains very real today in China.

In western philosophy and religion, there has always been more intolerance and the need to convert others to a particular belief, theirs... This is illustrated best by the tendency of Christianity to feel the need to convert others as their way is the only path one could follow to God, hence the historic sense of need for missionaries. However, as Christianity in China today has grown to represent a more practical application where assimilation is more important to its ongoing current success, appreciation of and for other beliefs continues to grow.

That we are all God's children and that we each have the opportunity to seek and find our "inner virtue" or true selves is extremely relevant today. There will also be more that connects us than that may separate us. It will be those who can assist in putting it all together that may be seen as the ultimate sage today.

Dan C DeCarlo
a/k/a Kongdan
October 8, 2005



序言



这本书代表一个个人的承诺。这个承诺反映在对老子和他的《道德经》的理解，也反映在对《道德经》和圣人在现代社会的涵义更深入的理解。在中国的历史进程中，圣人这个传统称号是为那些具有伟大洞察力和非凡学识的人保留的，因此具有特别的含义。

圣人通常是指中国古代伟大的哲学大师老子、庄子和孔子，他们学识渊博，目光深邃，在处世为人等方面堪称人们的良师益友。

《成圣之思辩》代表了作者对《道德经》的诠释。此书阐述了大德之道，寻找酷似“圣人”属性的步骤和在物质世界生活的规范。荒谬的是，今天在这里他不能把自己视为圣人，否则会被认为自大妄为。他渴望能够高瞻远瞩。不管他有什么缺点，他的追求使他瞥见自己的最高努力和命运。

世界上存在着各种以哲学宗教为基础的教义，例如拿撒勒的耶稣、麦地那的穆罕默德、佛陀、老子、孟子、孔子等。那些仿效或力图以道德为生活准则的人，能够看到过去的自欺欺人的宗教差别和周围世界的不宽容。他们在日常生活中观察到一种趋向，即大德在世界上已经引起了共鸣并被认为是公理。换言之，我们都是神的后代。

正是当人们对他或她在万物中的地位进行反思时，才对他们如何适应大自然的合一有所理解。旅行真正开始了。

自早先出版了一本关于《易经》的书（《一个美国人的易经之旅》）之后，为了弥补实际上并不存在的哲学宗教表面上的差异，作者开始了一系列关于中国古代历史和哲学的创作。



在中国历史上，六世纪的唐朝是一个百家争鸣的时期。唐朝有一个名为吴道子的人看到了儒学与道学的相容，因此认为有必要推行儒学。那时崂山佛学也十分流行。他声称，所有的宗教都遵从于来自同一个神的核心信仰。所有的宗教都服务于同一个目的，即帮助人民到达同一个地方。没有一种宗教比另外一种宗教更好，每一种宗教仅仅是寻找和遵从个人的自然倾向，建立人与神的关系的过程。

要理解老子的《道德经》，你必须首先理解什么是道，或者什么是通常所讲的一生必须遵从的方式或途径。道划定了一个人人生的真实途径。尽管老子在整本《道德经》里多次声称他不知道道的真名，无名即道，或众所周知的“大德之道”。虽然道是用来寻找人生道路的……

道的最终目的是寻找一个人在被称为天地的现实世界里的地位和取得与通常所说的万物之间的关系的理解。作者对反映今天文化和社会的道学的理解说明道不仅仅创造了万物，道还作为力量或能量之源继续存在于万事万物之中。从真正的宗教角度上说，我们把道看成一个人永恒的精神、灵魂或气。当道在一个人体内表露时，它可以保持静态，或唤醒这个人的心灵，询问他或她的职责。当他们明白自己真正的理想和使命时，道则询问他们要干什么。而且，道还可能以某种方式与他们的真性协调增长。发现这一点有助于通过最适合每个人的方法来发展他们的宗教认同。

作者的目的是在此书中对老子的《道德经》再作一次“解析”。多年来已有不少作者对《道德经》作了成功而精辟的解读。此书侧重于圣人以及成为圣人的艺术和过程。特别是进一步发掘自古以来在中国文学和学术界人所共知的有品德的人或“真人”的概念。两千多年来，在中国，对道的修炼有助于照亮人们的心灵之窗。正是佛教、道教和儒教的连续或连接，人们才得以对万物在何处以何种方式组合有了了解。今天在中

国，对天地的真正理解和在万物之中寻找个人的地位仍然具有现实意义。

在西方的哲学和宗教领域中，长期以来就存在对其它宗教的排斥，并且把自己的信仰强加于他人。例如，基督教就有这样的倾向，认为该教是跟随神的唯一途径，并派遣传教士。然而，基督教在中国已经发展成为一种实用工具，同化比当前的成功更为重要。对其它宗教信仰的认同也在不断增加。

我们都是神的后代，每个人都有机会去寻找和发现自己的“内在大德”或真正的自我。这些观点与今天关系尤为密切。把我们凝聚在一起的力量将比分离我们的力量更强大。那些能够帮助整合世界的人可以被视为今天最后的圣人。

丹·德卡罗

a/k/a 孔丹

2005年10月8日



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