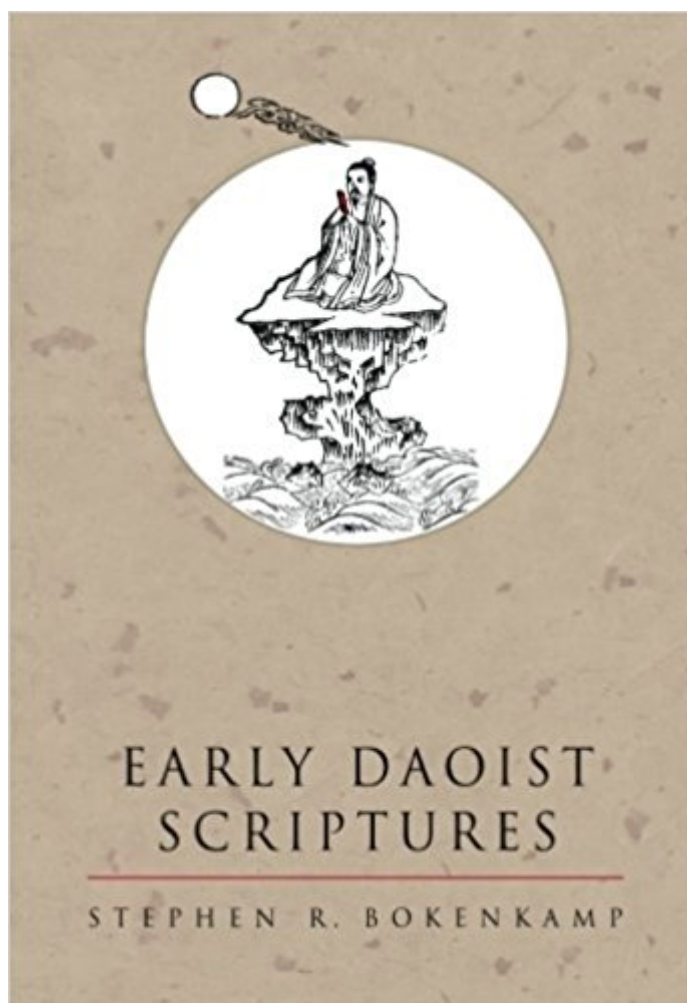


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Early Daoist Scriptures (Daoist Classics , No 1)



Synopsis

For centuries Daoism (Taoism) has played a central role in the development of Chinese thought and civilization, yet to this day only a few of its sacred texts have been translated into English. Now Stephen R. Bokenkamp introduces the reader to ancient scriptures never before published in the West, providing a systematic and easily accessible introduction to early Daoism (c. 2nd-6th C.E.). Representative works from each of the principal Daoist traditions comprise the basic structure of the book, with each chapter accompanied by an introduction that places the material within a historical and cultural context. Included are translations of the earliest Daoist commentary to Laozi's Daode jing (Tao Te Ching); historical documents relating the history of the early Daoist church; a petitioning ritual used to free believers from complaints brought against them by the dead; and two complete scriptures, one on individual meditation practice and another designed to rescue humanity from the terrors of hell through recitation of its powerful charms. In addition, Bokenkamp elucidates the connections Daoism holds with other schools of thought, particularly Confucianism and Buddhism. This book provides a much-needed introduction to Daoism for students of religion and is a welcome addition for scholars wishing to explore Daoist sacred literature. It serves as an overview to every aspect of early Daoist tradition and all the seminal practices which have helped shape the religion as it exists today.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

What do we know about Daoism (Taoism) beyond Laozi and that slightly more obscure fellow Zhuangzi? A complex and colorful religious system grew up in China paralleling the developments of Buddhism and Confucianism, and yet there have been next to no translations of its key scriptures--until now. Scholar Stephen Bokenkamp has brought us six religious texts dating from the 3rd to the 6th centuries CE. These works, originally meant for secret transmission, span the concerns of the Daoist cosmos. They delineate sect origins, describe the unfolding of the universe, and tell the story of Laozi's journey to India and his influence on Buddhism. There are petitions to the vast bureaucracy of deities; guided meditations and visualizations; alchemical recipes for achieving longevity; and serpents, dragons, and gods galore. Given the intricacies and specialized terminology of religious Daoism, it is little wonder that more texts have not been translated. Bokenkamp's copious notes and extensive introductions make this volume all the more valuable and a necessary addition to any budding Daoist's bookshelf. --Brian Bruya

"A diligent search of previous scholarship would turn up much of this information, but it heretofore has not been gathered together in a single volume and never with the immediacy of the Daoists' own words. This book will surely lead to a greater understanding of Daoism among Sinologists and scholars of religion."--Terry Kleeman, "Journal of Asian Studies

I have sat through 2 lectures of Prof. Bokenkamp and found that his knowledge of Eastern thought has followed through in this book. Though not for a person looking for an introduction into Taoist thought, this book is informative in the fact that it has content I have not found in other books. Also, the book is written more for a western audience, which isn't necessarily bad, but Prof. Bokenkamp has taken some liberties with the English language that may have been better kept in Chinese context. For those with a background in Taoism, I recommend this book. Others might want to try the Tao Te Ching first to gain insight into what Taoism is about.

This is a very good book and has A LOT of material for a deep study of Daoism as a religion. Will be very useful for those who take this beautiful and ancient Path seriously.

IOTS OF INFORMATION ON SANGQING.LINGBAO AND CLESTIAL MASTERS

This is a well laid out and practical guide to discovering the scriptures. I highly recommend it to all beginners of the practice.

ahhhh...sent to the Religious Studies Department where it may be more appreciated.

The temporary relativity is difficult to overcome in works as this one. I celebrate and appreciate the patience of the translator.

This is a collection of Taoist canon books from the early Mao shan, Showing the Spiritualistic roots of the Taoist religion before it was sanitized by those who could not trance or perform as the founders did. It is easy to say and think that everyone is the same but some have improved themselves so much we say they are myths. History is a joy when you can see the ideas of the best minds that lived and the poetry of their lives expressed in these texts. I enjoyed the Purple texts especially as a map to the higher mind. To those of you who study the Source enjoy, I did.

These scriptures were translated for scholars that study and teach Daoist history. I would say this isn't a book for the layman, or those regular consumers that want East Asian theory philosophy stuff.... Stephen Bokenkamp, Livia Kohn, Stephen Little are all university grade texts.

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