

What No One Laughs At Cannot Be Dao: On What Kind of Garbage is the Dao?

Coffee Time Talks on Chinese Thought at Saint Louis University
Sponsored by the Center for Asian and Middle Eastern Studies at Saint Louis University
10:00-11:30AM Central Time, Wednesday, 21 September 2022
Zoom ID: 984 9500 6071



Dr. Brook Ziporyn

Mircea Eliade Professor of Chinese
Religion, Philosophy and Comparative
Thought

University of Chicago Divinity School

What is meant by Dao in the *Daodejing*? By tracking the master metaphor of the hewn and the unhewn in this text, we will explore the way this text depicts the relation between value, naming and determination on the one hand and their opposites—valuelessness, the unnamed, the indeterminate—on the other. What we will find is that far from being the *summum bonum*, Dao is in one sense much more like the opposite: absolute garbage. And yet, paradoxically, this is perhaps just what makes it the *summum bonum*. How and why this can be so will be our focus in this talk.

Questions? Email pauline.lee@slu.edu or filippo.marsili@slu.edu