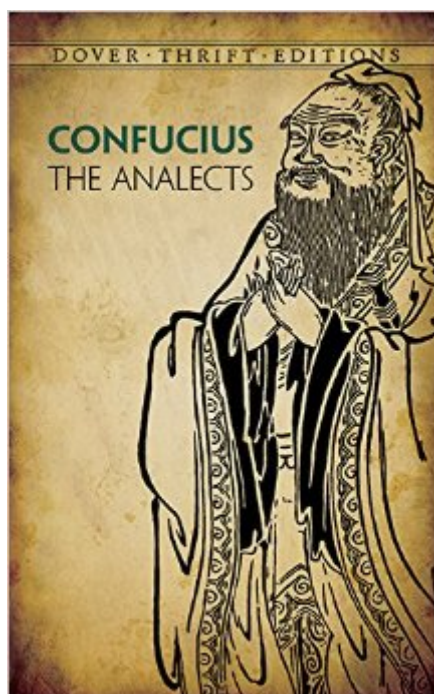


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The Analects (Dover Thrift Editions)



Synopsis

In this excellent English translation of The Analects, or Sayings, of Confucius, readers will find a rich distillation of the timeless precepts of one of history's most influential teachers and social theorists. A Chinese philosopher who lived c. 551 to c. 479 B.C., Confucius originated and taught an ethical, socially oriented philosophy that stressed proper behavior and a sympathetic, mutually supportive attitude among individuals, their families and society. From his teachings came a system of ethics for managing society that has influenced generations of politicians, social reformers, and religious thinkers. Indeed, the effect of Confucian philosophy has been so profound that it has become basic not only to an understanding of traditional Chinese civilization, but of Western society as well. Now the essence of Confucian teaching, contained in The Analects, is available in this inexpensive volume, providing inspirational and instructive reading to anyone interested in the history of social thought, Chinese philosophy, or theories of ethical behavior.

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Customer Reviews

One of the most famous philosophers in history is Confucius. This text covers various quotes and conversations with Confucius and his 36 disciples. Since many of the sayings are spoken in mystical parables and some of the thoughts might be lost in translation, it is not always clear what the message may be in many of these conversations. Nevertheless, this is an important text for anyone who is interested in the many wise sayings of Confucius. This book is broken down into

what it calls ten volumes. Volume one covers fundamental principles and government. The second volume discusses manners, morals and virtue. The third volume deals with certain disciples and other subjects. The master himself is covered in volume four. The sage in his daily life is discussed in volume five. The disciples, virtue, nobility and politics is explained in volume six. The government and certain rulers are covered in volume seven. Volume eight explains the maintenance of principles and character. The final two volumes cover recording unsuitable calls and ancient worthies, recorded saying of some disciplines and concerning the right government. In summary, this text would be of interest to anyone seeking knowledge about the sayings and philosophy of Confucius. Rating: 4 Stars. Joseph J. Truncale (Author: Haiku Moments: How to read, write and enjoy Haiku)

This book contains the essential antiquities of ancient learning that fostered the development of the philosophies in the west in a clear, easy to read format. I was amply impressed by the organization and translation, and doubly impressed by the fantastic price. I would highly recommend for anyone just curious about philosophy, or for anyone doing scholarly research on this subject. 5 stars

My nephew has gone off to college this year and some of his books were so expensive we were lucky to find some of them here on and at a way better price than a retailer Very pleased with the books we were able to find!

There were a fair number of sayings in this book that seemed pretty irrelevant or impenetrable to the modern reader, mostly dealing with references to famous leaders of the past who would have been familiar to Confucius and his target audience, but who most modern westerners will have never heard of. Also, some of the phrasing is more than a touch convoluted. But there are a surprising number of the sayings that were perfectly clear, and perfectly relevant, even halfway around the world, millennia later, including a version of the Golden Rule. ("What I do not wish others to do to me, that also I wish not to do to them." Chapter 11, Book 5) I'm not certain how many of my complaints are due to the actual text, and how many are due to having a cheap translation with few notes.

I found most translations are correct but the following one seems very strange to me. When I read it I doubt I was reading French! Now let's look this: (Chapter XII, Volume I) The philosopher Yu said, "In the usage of decorum it is naturalness that is of value. In the regulations of the ancient kings this

was the admirable figure, both great and small deriving therefrom. 2. But there is a naturalness that is not permissible; for to know to be natural, and yet to be so beyond the restraints of decorum is also not permissible." From other resource I found this same chapter so translated: The philosopher You said, "In carrying out the rules of propriety (19), harmony is a most valued pursuit. It is nice that the ancient sage kings governed in this way. But applying harmony to anything, trivial or great, is sometimes inapplicable. Harmony for harmony's sake without the regulating of the rules of propriety will not do (20)." Notes: 19. "The rules of propriety" were a set of rules and regulations to guide members of the upper class in conducting themselves or associating with each other courteously, appropriately and, above all, in accordance with each one's social status. 20. The ancient kings had already attached great importance to family and social harmony, and managed to rule their dominions harmoniously. Philosopher You highly appreciated them for pursuing harmony in their ruling, and at the same time pointed out that harmony should not be overused or misused. For instance, it would be wrong for a father to allow his son to be rude to him simply for the sake of harmony. The rules of propriety required the father to be kind to the son and the son to be respectful and obedient to the father. The father and son could only seek to establish harmonious relationship under the guidance of the rules of propriety.

In contrast with some of the free translations found online, this book's translation was somewhat odd. Certain Chinese words cannot be translated into English, or have different meanings depending on how you read it. Thus certain sentences could be translated differently. The free online translations acknowledged this problem and provided explanations to why such a word or a sentence was translated; this is missing in this book. As an example, the book uses the phrase "the nobler type of a man", while other translations refer to the concept of "nobler" as the "Tao". The other translations provide justifications for the translation, while this book does not. I would have also loved a discussion of the text and how they would be interpreted in different situations. The book lacks a proper introduction. First there is no detailed explanation on who Confucius was, what he became, and what contributed to the writing of the Analects. Similarly, there is no explanation on China, and how Confucius's work contributes in today's Chinese society. The book even fails to explain what credentials the translator has, and what sets this book apart from the thousand other translations of the Analects.

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