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The Handbook (The Encheiridion) (Hackett Classics)



Synopsis

From the Introduction: "Stoic philosophy, of which Epictetus (c. a.d. 50–130) is a representative, began as a recognizable movement around 300 b.c. Its founder was Zeno of Cytium (not to be confused with Zeno of Elea, who discovered the famous paradoxes). He was born in Cyprus about 336 b.c., but all of his philosophical activity took place in Athens. For more than 500 years Stoicism was one of the most influential and fruitful philosophical movements in the Graeco-Roman world. The works of the earlier Stoics survive only in fragmentary quotations from other authors, but from the Renaissance until well into the nineteenth century, Stoic ethical thought was one of the most important ancient influences on European ethics, particularly because of the descriptions of it by Cicero, through surviving works by the Stoics Seneca, Marcus Aurelius, and also Epictetus--and also because of the effect that it had had in antiquity, and continued to have into the nineteenth century, on Christian ethical views. Nowadays an undergraduate or graduate student learning about ancient philosophy in a university course may well hear only about Plato and Aristotle, along perhaps with the presocratics; but in the history of Western thought and education this situation is somewhat atypical, and in most periods a comparable student would have learned as much or more about Stoicism, as well as two other major ancient philosophical movements, Epicureanism and Scepticism. In spite of this lack of explicit acquaintance with Stoic philosophers and their works, however, most students will recognize in Epictetus various ideas that are familiar through their effects on other thinkers, notably Spinoza, in our intellectual tradition."

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Customer Reviews

Text: English, Greek (translation)

Nicholas P. White is Professor Emeritus of Philosophy, University of Utah.

I read this book for a class, but it uncovered my love for Stoic philosophy. Everyone knows about Socrates, Aristotle, and Plato, but the philosophers of Rome have some incredible insights as well. Epictetus's handbook is one of my favorite works of all time. The author gives insights about life that are applicable to ancient and modern readers alike. Plus, it's super short. It's literally just a handbook. It's fantastic.

Incredible book. Should be read by all young adults. Always teaches me more the older I get. I gave it as a gift to all of my groomsmen for my wedding.

For school it served its purpose

Half of the book is introduction such as authors perspective. Actual subject of translation is about 40%. Follow by long bibliography. Reminds me of double spaced term paper.

Awesome read!

One of the most inspiring and life-affirming books I have read in my life. If you are at a point in life where you are feeling stuck and in a rut, give this pithy gem a go.

Love this little book. I got 2 and gave one away. I would like to purchase these in dozens :)

Regardless of your faith or beliefs, Epictetus and the stoics deliver messages that, if heeded, help us keep some inner peace in an irrational world.

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