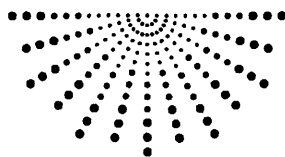


CONFUCIUS
THE SECULAR AS SACRED



HERBERT FINGARETTE



APOCRYPHILE
PRESS

PRAISE FOR CONFUCIUS: THE SECULAR AS SACRED

Fingarette's *Confucius, the Secular as Sacred* caused a shock when it came out in the seventies. His reference to magic in the interpretation of Confucius' thought, his insights in the workings of everyday rituals, and his challenging claims on the lack of moral choice in *Confucius' Sayings* were not only very refreshing but also extremely inspiring. It was a milestone in the study of Confucius, written by a philosopher far removed from ongoing sinological debates. Fingarette's thought-provoking little book is still a must-read for anybody interested in Confucianism and Chinese philosophy.

—Carine Defoort, Professor in Sinology, University of Leuven, Belgium and the editor of *Contemporary Chinese Thought*.

When I first read the *Analects*, I really didn't like its emphasis on *li*, "rituals," which I thought defined proper conduct in an emphatically rigid manner. I switched off, as they say. Then, I discovered Herbert Fingarette's *Confucius: The Secular as Sacred*, which discloses the transformative power of *li* in engendering an ethical community. I have been reflecting on this ever since. Fingarette's seminal study has made a lasting impact on students of Chinese thought and comparative philosophy. I think it is because it not only deepens our understanding of the *Analects* but also compels fresh interrogation of our assumptions about what makes us human and the ideal society. This reissue is both welcome and timely. Perhaps not unlike the time of Confucius, the world today certainly could use a stronger

dose of *li* and *ren*, humaneness, in the hope of rebuilding trust, understanding and mutual respect across cultures.

—Alan K.L. Chan, provost and J.S. Lee Professor of Chinese Culture, The Chinese University of Hong Kong.

The continual printing of a book proves its originality. Professor Herbert Fingarette's *Confucius: The Secular as Sacred* is such a seminal classic that not only has a far-reaching impact in the English academic circle but also inspires more students of Confucianism in the Chinese-speaking world. As the translator of its Chinese version, I have especially witnessed the latter.

—Guoxiang Peng, Qiu Shi Distinguished Professor of Chinese Philosophy, Intellectual History and Religions, Director of International Xueheng Center for the Studies in Humanities, School of Philosophy, Zhejiang University, Hangzhou, China.

Rarely has such a thin unassuming book had such a worldwide and age long destiny. Published fifty years ago, it has sparked off an intellectual revolution, and inspired generations of sinologists, although Herbert Fingarette wasn't one himself. Just as it takes a true poet to understand another poet, it took a true philosopher like Fingarette to reach to the very core of Confucius' teaching – possibly in even fewer words – and the heart has been beating steadily ever since. Long live Fingarette's Confucius, the secular as well as the sacred !

—Anne Cheng (who was lucky enough to come across this little book before she recklessly started grappling with her own rendition of the Analects into French), Collège de France, Chair of Chinese intellectual history.

In the 1970's, Herbert Fingarette sat down to reread the *Analects* and to his surprise discovered in Confucius not "a prosaic and parochial moralizer," as he had imagined, but a philosopher ahead of his times, telling us distinctive "things not being said elsewhere; things needing to be said." This "little classic" still has lessons to teach —modern lessons concerning the shape and misshape of human relationships, the loss and recovery of Nature, and the flowering of humanity. In Fingarette's words, Confucius gives us a vision of a "noble person who has given up self, ego, obstinacy and personal pride...a perspective of man and society which illuminates and deepens our vision of man's distinctive nature and dignity." Now, fifty years later, those *things* are in even more urgent need of being said again—even louder.

—Martin J. Verhoeven, *Professor of Buddhist Classics, Dharma Realm Buddhist University.*

Herbert Fingarette didn't identify with any school of philosophy. He remained an independent thinker all of his life. He wrote on topics that were unusual in philosophy - like alcoholism, what makes a disease, and self-deception. And he wrote, most notably, on Confucius, using contemporary Western notions to open up the ideas of the ancient thinker. He exemplified in this way what it means to be a philosopher.

—Hans Sluga, *William and Trudy Ausfahl Professor Emeritus of Philosophy at UC Berkeley*

Fingarette's is a rare accomplishment: he lets the *Analects* teach us something new, rather than show how it confirms views we already hold. To do so we must listen and read carefully, or risk losing the lessons Confucius has the potential to convey. Never have we needed these insights more than in the present moment. This re-issue of Fingarette's classic work of scholarship will introduce these resonant lessons for a new readership.

—Leigh K. Jenco, *Professor of Political Theory, London School of Economics and Political Science, Department of Government.*

This is the first book I recommend to anyone interested in Confucius's thought and one that I return to, again and again. Fingarette is attuned to the moral, social, political, and even religious, aspects of the *Analects*. He is able, in a way that never ceases to delight and amaze, to make sense of all of them together. It is as though he holds a magical key of his own to Confucius' vision.

—Loubna El Amine, *Assistant Professor, Department of Political Science, Northwestern University.*