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# MEDITATIONS

by

Marcus Aurelius

沉思录

[ 罗马皇帝 ] 马可·奥勒留 著



Liaoning People's Publishing House, China

辽宁人民出版社



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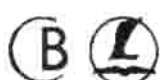
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## Marcus Aurelius

Marcus Aurelius (April 26 121 AD-17 March 180 AD) was a Roman Emperor from 161 to 180. He ruled with Lucius Verus as co-emperor from 161 until Verus' death in 169. He was the last of the Five Good Emperors, and is also considered one of the most important Stoic philosophers.

Marcus Aurelius' Stoic tome *Meditations*, written in Greek while on campaign between 170 and 180, is still revered as a literary monument to a philosophy of service and duty, describing how to find and preserve equanimity in the midst of conflict by following nature as a source of guidance and inspiration.

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## General Preface

Millions of Chinese are learning English to acquire knowledge and skills for communication in a world where English has become the primary language for international discourse. Yet not many learners have come to realize that the command of the English language also enables them to have an easy access to the world literary classics such as Shakespeare's plays, Shelley's poems, mark Twain's novels and Nietzsche's works which are an important part of liberal-arts education. The most important goals of universities are not vocational, that is, not merely the giving of knowledge and the training of skills.

In a broad sense, education aims at broadening young people's mental horizon, cultivating virtues and shaping their character. Lincoln, Mao Zedong and many other great leaders and personages of distinction declared how they drew immense inspiration and strength from literary works. As a matter of fact, many of them had aspired to become writers in their young age. Alexander the Great (356-323 B.C.) is said to take along with him two things, waking or sleeping: a book and a dagger, and the book is Iliad, a literary classic, by Homer. He would put these two much treasured things under his pillow when he went to bed.

Today, we face an unprecedented complex and changing world. To cope with this rapid changing world requires not only communication skills, but also adequate knowledge of cultures other than our own home culture. Among the most important developments in present-day global culture is the ever increasing cultural exchanges and understanding between different nations and peoples. And one of the best ways to know foreign cultures is to read their literary works, particularly their literary classics, the soul of a country's culture. They also give you the best language and the feeling of sublimity.

Liaoning People's Publishing House is to be congratulated for its foresight and courage in making a new series of world literary classics available to the reading public. It is hoped that people with an adequate command of the English language will read them, like them and keep them as their lifetime companions.

I am convinced that the series will make an important contribution to the literary education of the young people in china. At a time when the whole country is emphasizing "spiritual civilization", it is certainly a very timely venture to put out the series of literary classics for literary and cultural education.

Zhang Zhongzai  
Professor  
Beijing Foreign Studies University  
July, 2013 Beijing



## 总序

经典名著的语言无疑是最凝练、最优美、最有审美价值的。雪莱的那句“如冬已来临，春天还会远吗？”让多少陷于绝望的人重新燃起希望之火，鼓起勇气，迎接严冬过后的春天。徐志摩一句“悄悄的我走了，正如我悄悄的来；我挥一挥衣袖，不带走一片云彩”又让多少人陶醉。尼采的那句“上帝死了”，又给多少人以振聋发聩的启迪作用。

读经典名著，尤其阅读原汁原味作品，可以怡情养性，增长知识，加添才干，丰富情感，开阔视野。所谓“经典”，其实就是作者所属的那个民族的文化积淀，是那个民族的灵魂缩影。英国戏剧泰斗莎士比亚的《哈姆雷特》和《麦克白》等、“意大利语言之父”的但丁的《神曲》之《地狱篇》《炼狱篇》及《天堂篇》、爱尔兰世界一流作家詹姆斯·乔伊斯的《尤利西斯》及《一个艺术家的肖像》等、美国风趣而笔法超一流的著名小说家马克·吐温的《哈克历险记》以及《汤姆索亚历险记》等，德国著名哲学家尼采的《查拉图斯特拉如是说》及《快乐的科学》等等，都为塑造自己民族的文化积淀，做出了永恒的贡献，也同时向世界展示了他们所属的民族的优美剪影。

很多著名领袖如林肯、毛泽东等伟大人物，也都曾从经典名著中汲取力量，甚至获得治国理念。耶鲁大学教授查尔斯·希尔曾在题为《经典与治国理念》的文章，阐述了读书与治国之间的绝妙关系。他这样写道：

“在几乎所有经典名著中，都可以找到让人叹为观止、深藏其中的治国艺术原则。”

经典名著，不仅仅有治国理念，更具提升读者审美情趣的功能。世界上不同时代、不同地域的优秀经典作品，都存在一个共同属性：歌颂赞美人间的真善美，揭露抨击世间的假恶丑。

读欧美自但丁以来的经典名著，你会看到，西方无论是在漫长的黑暗时期，抑或进入现代进程时期，总有经典作品问世，对世间的负面，进行冷峻的批判。与此同时，也有更多的大家作品问世，热情讴歌人间的真诚与善良，使读者不由自主地沉浸于经典作品的审美情感之中。

英语经典名著，显然是除了汉语经典名著以外，人类整个进程中至关重要的文化遗产的一部分。从历史上看，英语是全世界经典阅读作品中，使用得最广泛的国际性语言。这一事实，没有产生根本性变化。本世纪相当长一段时间，这一事实也似乎不会发生任何变化。而要更深入地了解并切身感受英语经典名著的风采，阅读原汁原味的英语经典作品的过程，显然是必不可少的。

辽宁人民出版社及时并隆重推出“最经典英语文库”系列丛书，是具有远见与卓识的出版行为。我相信，这套既可供阅读，同时也具收藏价值的英语原版经

典作品系列丛书，在帮助人们了解什么才是经典作品的同时，也一定会成为广大英语爱好者、大中学生以及学生家长们的挚爱的“最经典英语文库”。

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北外公共外交研究中心  
欧美文学研究中心主任  
全国英国文学学会名誉会长

张中载 教授  
2013年7月于北京

# Is this book for you?

## 修身治国方法论的典范著作

马可·奥勒留（121-180年），是古罗马帝国“五贤王时期”的最后一位贤王。作为储君，他7岁入学于罗马的萨利圣学院，17岁成为罗马的执政官，凡所修习无不精专，为同辈之首。作为帝王，他夙兴夜寐，励精图治，虽统治期间战争不断，国内自然灾害频发，国库空虚，他却战无不胜，战功赫赫，承袭先人余烈，尽力守成，防止腐化。作为哲学家，他致力于古罗马斯多亚派哲学三大门类中的伦理学，在鞍马劳顿中写下《沉思录》，被称为“帝王哲学家”、“自古以来独一无二的以一世英主而身兼苦修的哲学家”。

这本《沉思录》，不仅仅是古罗马斯多亚派哲学最后一部重要典籍，更是待人处世、品悟人生、修身养德、提升自我的绝佳作品。正如梁实秋所说，“我们借此可以想见其为人，窥察其内心，从而对于为人处世律己待人之道有所领悟，这部书不能不说是人间至宝之一”。

斯多亚派哲学信守“一个人必须按照理性和自然而生活”的准则，而阅读《沉思录》，能使人感受到奥勒留在自然（本性）、理性与实现超我之间的克己与选择。他没有挣扎，他早已将罗马人的注重实践、性格坚强和崇尚理性与斯多亚派哲学融为一体。他自发自愿地遵守着父母师长的教诲，在自然与理性有所冲突的时候，自己与自己对话，自己说服自己，时时自省，身体

力行。

在柏拉图设计的理想社会的政治结构中，哲学家应该处于各种等级结构的顶端，应用正义、理性的理论来统治世界。《庄子·天下篇》说的“圣有所生，王有所成，皆原于一”，即“内圣外王之道”和《礼记·大学》说的“格物、致知、诚意、正心、修身、齐家、治国、平天下”，即以修身为本的循序渐进的“大学之道”，同本书理念殊途同归，而本书更注重方法论层面。阅读《沉思录》，你会发现，东西方哲人对于统治者和哲学家的理想，在古罗马的这位哲人皇帝身上几乎实现了。

在《沉思录》中，奥勒留并无意将自己打造成一位哲学家，写下一部完整体系的哲学著作。整部书只是作者与自己的对话，是自然的本性与沉思的理性之间的对话，是行动之后的反刍再思考，是作者内省的辑录，是这位古罗马皇帝对人类生存、价值指向、道德原则、善恶荣辱、苦乐祸福等问题的思考和探究。

如果您是英文爱好者中的一员，希望您通过阅读英语原文，来欣赏这部作品，这无疑是种无法替代的精神享受。

如果您是学生家长，建议您给上中学或大学的孩子准备一套“最经典英语文库”，放在书架上。它们是永远不会过时的精神食粮。

如果您是正在学习的大中学生，也建议您抽空读读这些经时间检验的人类精神食粮文库里最经典的精品。一时读不懂不要紧，先收藏起来，放进您的书架里，等您长大到某个时候，您会忽然发现，自己开始能读，而且读懂了作品字里行间的意义时，那种喜悦感，是无法言述的，也是无与伦比的。您可能也会因此对走

过的人生，有更深刻的感悟与理解。

关于这套图书的装帧设计与性价比：完全按欧美出版规则操作，从图书开本，到封面设计，从体例版式，到字体选取，但价钱却比欧美原版图书便宜三分之二，甚至更多。因此，从性价比看，它们也是最值得收藏的。

——尹文卉



## INTRODUCTION

**M**ARCUS AURELIUS ANTONINUS was born on April 26, A.D. 121. His real name was M. Annius Verus, and he was sprung of a noble family which claimed descent from Numa, second King of Rome. Thus the most religious of emperors came of the blood of the most pious of early kings. His father, Annius Verus, had held high office in Rome, and his grandfather, of the same name, had been thrice Consul. Both his parents died young, but Marcus held them in loving remembrance. On his father's death Marcus was adopted by his grandfather, the consular Annius Verus, and there was deep love between these two. On the very first page of his book Marcus gratefully declares how of his grandfather he had learned to be gentle and meek, and to refrain from all anger and passion. The Emperor Hadrian divined the fine character of the lad, whom he used to call not Verus but Verissimus, more Truthful than his own name. He advanced Marcus to equestrian rank when six years of age, and at the age of eight made him a member of the ancient Salian priesthood. The boy's aunt, Annia Galeria Faustina, was married to Antoninus Pius, afterwards emperor. Hence it came about that Antoninus, having no son, adopted Marcus, changing his name to that which he is known by, and betrothed him to his daughter Faustina. His education was conducted with all care. The ablest teachers were engaged for him, and he was trained in the strict doctrine of the Stoic philosophy, which was

his great delight. He was taught to dress plainly and to live simply, to avoid all softness and luxury. His body was trained to hardihood by wrestling, hunting, and outdoor games; and though his constitution was weak, he showed great personal courage to encounter the fiercest boars. At the same time he was kept from the extravagancies of his day. The great excitement in Rome was the strife of the Factions, as they were called, in the circus. The racing drivers used to adopt one of four colours—red, blue, white, or green—and their partisans showed an eagerness in supporting them which nothing could surpass. Riot and corruption went in the train of the racing chariots; and from all these things Marcus held severely aloof.

In 140 Marcus was raised to the consulship, and in 145 his betrothal was consummated by marriage. Two years later Faustina brought him a daughter; and soon after the tribunate and other imperial honours were conferred upon him.

Antoninus Pius died in 161, and Marcus assumed the imperial state. He at once associated with himself L. Ceionius Commodus, whom Antoninus had adopted as a younger son at the same time with Marcus, giving him the name of Lucius Aurelius Verus. Henceforth the two are colleagues in the empire, the junior being trained as it were to succeed. No sooner was Marcus settled upon the throne than wars broke out on all sides. In the east, Vologeses III. of Parthia began a long-meditated revolt by destroying a whole Roman Legion and invading Syria (162). Verus was sent off in hot haste to quell this rising; and he fulfilled his trust by plunging into drunkenness and debauchery, while the war was left to his officers. Soon after Marcus had to face a more serious danger at home in the coalition of several powerful tribes on the northern frontier. Chief among those were the Marcomanni or Marchmen, the Quadi (mentioned in this book), the Sarmatians, the Catti,



the Jazyges. In Rome itself there was pestilence and starvation, the one brought from the east by Verus's legions, the other caused by floods which had destroyed vast quantities of grain. After all had been done possible to allay famine and to supply pressing needs—Marcus being forced even to sell the imperial jewels to find money—both emperors set forth to a struggle which was to continue more or less during the rest of Marcus's reign. During these wars, in 169, Verus died. We have no means of following the campaigns in detail; but thus much is certain, that in the end the Romans succeeded in crushing the barbarian tribes, and effecting a settlement which made the empire more secure. Marcus was himself commander-in-chief, and victory was due no less to his own ability than to his wisdom in choice of lieutenants, shown conspicuously in the case of Pertinax. There were several important battles fought in these campaigns; and one of them has become celebrated for the legend of the Thundering Legion. In a battle against the Quadi in 174, the day seemed to be going in favour of the foe, when on a sudden arose a great storm of thunder and rain the lightning struck the barbarians with terror, and they turned to rout. In later days this storm was said to have been sent in answer to the prayers of a legion which contained many Christians, and the name Thundering Legion should be given to it on this account. The title of Thundering Legion is known at an earlier date, so this part of the story at least cannot be true; but the aid of the storm is acknowledged by one of the scenes carved on Antonine's Column at Rome, which commemorates these wars.

The settlement made after these troubles might have been more satisfactory but for an unexpected rising in the east. Avidius Cassius, an able captain who had won renown in the Parthian wars, was at this time chief governor of the eastern provinces. By whatever means