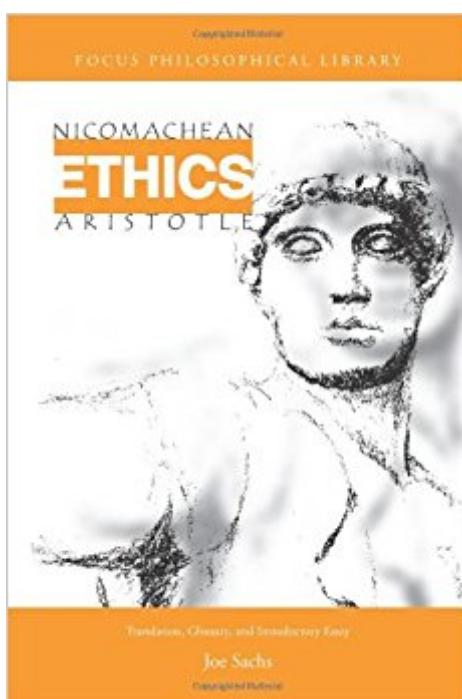


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Aristotle's Nicomachean Ethics (Focus Philosophical Library Series)



Synopsis

Focus Philosophical Library's edition of Aristotle's Nicomachean Ethics is a lucid and useful translation of one of Aristotle's major works for the student of undergraduate philosophy, as well as for the general reader interested in the major works of western civilization. This edition includes notes and a glossary, intending to provide the reader with some sense of the terms and the concepts as they were understood by Aristotle's immediate audience. Focus Philosophical Library books are distinguished by their commitment to faithful, clear, and consistent translations of texts and the rich world part and parcel of those texts.

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A study in itself.

I bought this book for honors ethics and it was very helpful. this is the book you need to get for ethics.

Good book.

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I have been researching Aristotle's Nicomachen Ethics for the past 6 years, and I own +10 different translations of the text into english, portuguese, german and spanish. I came across Sachs work only recently and I must say am I very surprised.1 - The translation is clear and makes the reading fluent.2 - The footnotes are very helpful and useful in pointing out the connections within different parts of the text as a whole, and with other works by Aristotle.3 - In the same vein, his choices for translating the main concepts try to bring about the different connections with the other works by Aristotle, such as De Anima, Politics, Metaphysics and Physics.4 - The introductory essay is very, very, good. (It is called "Three little words" and it is also available online elsewhere).The best thing I can say about this work (and about the work of any translator in general) is this: he really managed to bring the text to life.

Mr. Joe Sachs has made something of a name for himself by means of his translations of Aristotle's most important treatises: the Physics, De Anima, Metaphysics, and Nicomachean Ethics have all come under his pen. Most well-known is Mr. Sachs' preference for a new Aristotelian terminology, which frequently, if not totally, eschews the traditional Latin terminology for words he feels are truer to our Anglo-Saxon tongue. Mr. Sachs' translations are generally accurate and readable. I have read them all and have only a few, though not unimportant, complaints. First, and most grievous, he mistranslates in a few important locations; in the Ethics, he does not distinguish between the Greek words 'airesis' and 'proairesis', but renders them both as 'choice'. Aristotle makes a distinction between the two, with the first characterizing children and animals ('inclination', 'uninformed choice', etc), the second belonging to men alone; for 'proairesis' names the process of identifying the end and the good of man (happiness) and choosing among the many means that which effects the good. This practiced, careful deliberation Aristotle calls 'choice', and it is of central importance to work like the Ethics, and therefore troubling that Mr. Sachs' does not translate more carefully. The second complaint is that I do not share Mr. Sachs' contention that the traditional terms used to translate Aristotle's technical vocabulary are misleading. Some reviewers refer to the encrusting 'sediment applied by the medieval scholastics' or other less flattering phrases. In the introductions to the Metaphysics and the Ethics, Mr. Sachs makes the rather bold claim that words like 'actuality', 'activity', 'essence', etc. are misleading and opaque; that his new terms - 'being-at-work-staying-itself', 'being-at-work', 'what-it-is-to-be', etc. - are more immediately clear. I suspect this is false. Aristotle employed technical vocabulary, no doubt about it, but to think we can sidestep the difficulty of wrestling with his Greek words - 'entelexeia', 'energeia', 'to ti en einai', etc. - is mistaken. Translation is ultimately a convention and the medieval terms used for centuries are still worthwhile choices, yet intelligible for the serious student who is willing to work hard. For these reasons, Mr. Sachs' translation, while not without its merits, lacks the precision and clarity of other editions; most notably the H.G. Apostle translation from the late twentieth century, and the new Bartlett and Collins translation, new this year. Buy it if you wish, but there are far better alternatives to consider.

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