

Timeless Wisdom: Quotations from East & West

Hazem I. Kira, Compiler

Many Easts Many Wests (Jul 22, 2014)

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Every thought-provoking quote is the catalyst for in-depth analysis in this book of Eastern and Western wisdom.

This compilation of quotations to rouse and motivate will revitalize anyone living high on stress and short on time. Hazem I. Kira juxtaposes Eastern and Western concepts in *Timeless Wisdom*, a selection that will appeal to a broad cultural audience.

Kira points out the infinite similarities of Eastern and Western nature as well as the differences in outlook on numerous topics. Without imposing on the material, this perceptive editor has showcased great philosophers, spiritual leaders, and famous sages from the East and West in compatible collaboration. Snatches from religious scriptures, excerpts from political documents, and snippets from academic texts provide a solid foundation for this carefully organized book. Divided into neat sections arranged alphabetically, each of these ninety subjects is addressed from both sides of the globe, offering contradictory yet often complementary statements on intellectual ideas. Typical headings such as “knowledge,” “truth,” “freedom,” and “success” explore the familiar avenues of human life, while less traveled roads on “poetry,” “language,” and even “imagination and abstract thinking,” add special interest to the collection.

Every thought-provoking quote is the catalyst for in-depth analysis, such as this remark attributed to Peter Mwaura (Eastern): “Language influences the way in which we perceive reality.” Or, this hard-hitting assertion written by George Orwell (Western): “If thoughts corrupt language, language can also corrupt thought.”

Humor makes a frequent appearance, creating a needed respite from solemnity, evident in this Chinese proverb (Eastern): “Who stands still in mud sticks in it.” Or, in this Christian proverb (Western): “When you give, let not your left hand know what your right hand does.”

Enlightening and absorbing, *Timeless Wisdom* delves into many areas at a rapid pace. The selection is excellent, but certain sections are too sparse with barely enough material to sustain complex debate. The reading experience is like a quick commute as opposed to a long excursion. Just when a topic fires a spark of intrigue, the next takes its place, leaving an expectation for more information. This inspirational reference tool seems to hint that additional volumes may be on the horizon.

Kira’s book will appeal to the open-minded and freethinkers. Scholars and professors will appreciate the concise presentation as well as the opportunity to elaborate in a college classroom. Each quotation holds potential as a conversation piece.

Hazem I. Kira was born in Cairo and moved with his family to the United States when he was five years old. He considers himself a hybrid steeped in both worlds.

JULIA ANN CHARPENTIER (October 6, 2014)

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