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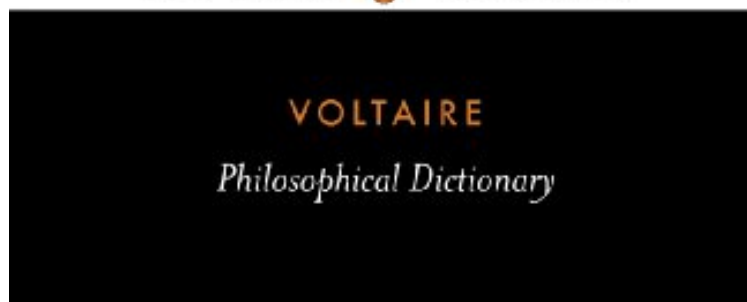
## Philosophical Dictionary (Classics)

*Von Francois Voltaire*

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**Von Francois Voltaire : Philosophical Dictionary (Classics)** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Philosophical Dictionary (Classics):

KundenrezensionenHilfreichste Kundenrezensionen0 von 0 Kunden fanden die folgende Rezension hilfreich. Essential Reading for Thinking ReadersVon Bruce KendallI have kept this book by my bedside at many points in my life. I should first acknowldege that I also refer to the Bible occasionally, so I tend to draw strength and inspiration from dispirate sources. Voltaire was one of the true intellectual giants of his age, as well-read, erudite and witty as any

personage in literary history. This book represents a distillation of all his writings, his "encyclopedic" entries, his treatises, his histories, etc. Reading these musings, you will well understand his occasional need to flee France for more liberal principalities (Prussia and Geneva, primarily). Voltaire (the pen-name for Francois-Marie Arouet (1694-1778), like Gibbon, is no champion of Christianity. As a case-in-point, the Emperor Julian, who attempted unsuccessfully to restore the ancient cults in early Byzantium, and opposed the newly state-sanctioned "cult" of Christ, was Voltaire's paragon. For those readers interested in an interesting account of Julian's rule and of this era, Gore Vidal's "Julian" is a very well-written, but slightly flawed (in terms of its scholarship) account of the 4th Century ruler. I particularly love Voltaire's take on "enthusiasm,": "Or was that word enthusiasm, from disturbance of the entrails, first given to that Pythia who, on the tripod at Delphi, received the spirit of Apollo through a part which seems made only to receive bodies?...It is the rarest of thing to unite reason with enthusiasm." No doubt the religious wars and persecutions that were a part and parcel of his era and French history for the preceding two centuries no doubt had some bearing on his analysis. To me, Voltaire is the precursor of Nietzsche. In fact, Nietzsche, though he rarely acknowledges Voltaire, makes practically the identical points that Voltaire makes here in his "The Anti Christ" and "The Twilight of the Idols." They were definitely on the same page in defining faith, vs. skepticism. There are term-papers and research papers galore out there waiting to be explored in this area. This is not the only area that Voltaire investigates in this wide-ranging book. Ever wonder about the account of Gog, Magog, of which you might be only vaguely familiar? Voltaire is here to explain it to you. World Religions, the "Chinese Catechism," "Miracles," "Anthropophages," "Liebniz," "the souls of animals," "the tower of Babel," "Apis," "The Great Flood," and "The Spanish Inquisition;" all are covered and much more. If you do not complete this book marvelling at how truly encyclopaedic a mind you are dealing with (who better, together with Diderot to compile the first truly meaningful one in the Western World?), then you might not be as open-minded as you think. Even though some of Voltaire's statements of fact are dubious in light of subsequent discoveries, one must still marvel at the range of his intellect and curiosity.

0 von 0 Kunden fanden die folgende Rezension hilfreich. Voltaire's masterpiece! Von Roger Burks This volume is the great culmination of Voltaire's beliefs. The humor, honesty, cynicism, and perspective that Voltaire is noted for comes shining through in this excellent work. It is a series of articles on subjects important to philosophers of Voltaire's time, such as religion, humanism, and ethics. This book is about 350 pages in Penguin's typical trade-paperback format. I treasure my copy of this book, and I think you will too if you at all like philosophical discussion.

0 von 1 Kunden fanden die folgende Rezension hilfreich. Not quite what the title suggests Von Manuel Haas The title "Philosophical Dictionary" might lead you to expect something quite different from Voltaire's actual book: Far from being a systematic overview of the most important philosophical terms of his time, irreverent Voltaire included anything which could be used as the subject of a polemic article. It is not by chance that Voltaire has come to be known as Christianity's or Catholicism's most famous adversary, for almost half of the entries are about the Bible and Christianity; in these, Voltaire is busy pointing out faults or absurdities. With regard to these articles I can only stress what is my general view of Voltaire: He is mostly right about what he says, but not all of it is as entertaining today as it may have seemed to his contemporaries. The other half of the dictionary consists of the truly philosophical entries; and these, too, are as different in form as could be: little stories, dialogues and fairly abstract and ordered expositions. Some of these are masterpieces and tell us a lot about philosophy in the 18th century. All in all, however, this book proves once again that Voltaire was more of a journalist and a writer than a truly original philosopher. (Comparing him to Nietzsche, that most original of philosophers, is hardly appropriate.)

Kurzbeschreibung Voltaire's Philosophical Dictionary, first published in 1764, is a series of short, radical essays - alphabetically arranged - that form a brilliant and bitter analysis of the social and religious conventions that then dominated eighteenth-century French thought. One of the masterpieces of the Enlightenment, this enormously influential work of sardonic wit - more a collection of essays arranged alphabetically, than a conventional dictionary - considers such diverse subjects as Abraham and Atheism, Faith and Freedom of Thought, Miracles and Moses. Repeatedly condemned by civil and religious authorities, Voltaire's work argues passionately for the cause of reason and justice, and criticizes Christian theology and contemporary attitudes towards war and society - and claims, as he regards the world around him: 'common sense is not so common'.

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