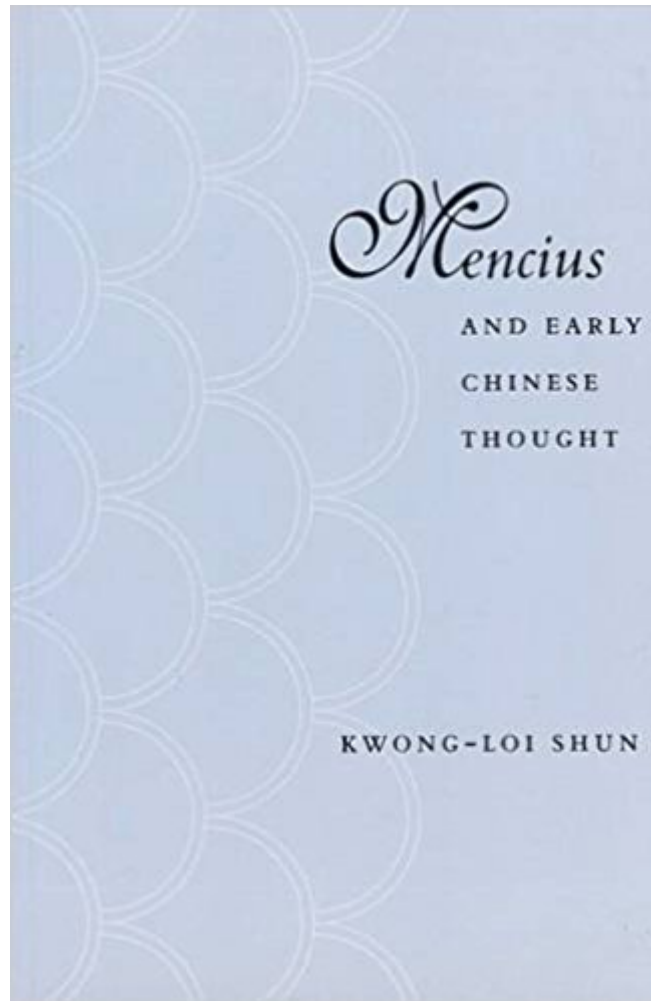




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Mencius And Early Chinese Thought



Synopsis

Throughout much of Chinese history, Mencius (372-289 b.c.) was considered the greatest Confucian thinker after Confucius himself. Following the enshrinement of the Mencius (an edited compilation of his thought by disciples or disciples of disciples) as one of the Four Books by Sung neo-Confucianists, he was studied by all educated Chinese. This study begins a reassessment of Mencius by studying his ethical thinking (how one should live) in relation to that of other early Chinese thinkers, including Confucius, Mo Tzu, the Yangists, and Hsün Tzu. It is the first of three planned studies on Mencius: the second volume will examine the reception and development of Mencian ideas by later thinkers, and the third will be a general philosophical discussion of Confucian ethics.

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Customer Reviews

Everyone in the West has heard of Confucius. But in East Asia, Mencius is known as the "second sage" of Confucianism, and has been almost as influential. This book is a serious scholarly study of Mencius as a philosopher. Shun (a professor in the philosophy department at U.C. Berkeley) carefully argues for his interpretations of key terms and claims in the sayings of Mencius, always considering the intellectual context in which Mencius thought and lived. Shun has well-defended positions regarding Mencius's views on the key virtues (benevolence, righteousness, wisdom and propriety), and the relationships among the human heart-mind, human nature, and ethical cultivation. This is a real tour de force as a work of scholarship, although it may be heavy going for the general reader at times.

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