

The Conduct of Life: A Collection of Essays

The Conduct of Life

A COLLECTION OF ESSAYS



RALPH WALDO EMERSON

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THE CONDUCT OF LIFE: A COLLECTION OF ESSAYS

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Createspace, United States, 2015. Paperback. Book Condition: New. 254 x 203 mm. Language: English . Brand New Book ***** Print on Demand *****.The Conduct of Life is a collection of essays by Ralph Waldo Emerson published in 1860 and revised in 1876. In this volume, Emerson sets out to answer the question of the times: How shall I live? It is composed of nine essays, each preceded by a poem. These nine essays are largely based on lectures Emerson held throughout the country, including for a young, mercantile audience in the lyceums of the Midwestern boomtowns of the 1850s. The Conduct of Life has been named as both one of Emerson s best works and one of his worst. It was one of Emerson s most successful publications and has been identified as a source of influence for a number of writers, including Friedrich Nietzsche. While some critics like Harold Bloom place The Conduct of Life among Emerson s best work-Bloom calls it a crucial last work for Americans -it has only been paid little critical attention. As The Conduct of Life is, in parts, thematically grouped around practical life issues (e.g. Power , Wealth), it has been discussed as participating in the aspirations of the contemporary conduct-of-life literature while opening up possibilities of gender fluidity. Also, despite the stronger reconciliation between self and society compared to Emerson s previous, more individualistic works, The Conduct of Life is in no way a one-sided affirmation of American society, especially 19th century capitalism. Rather, it can be seen as a holistic attempt to develop principles for a good, natural, adequate conduct of life. As the dialectic approach of these essays often fails to come to tangible conclusions, critics like Ellen Vellela have described the whole book as weakly structured and repetitive....

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