

# Nietzsche: Philosopher, Psychologist, Antichrist

Friedrich Nietzsche was a German philosopher, psychologist, cultural critic, poet, and composer who is considered one of the most influential figures of modern intellectual history. He was a controversial figure in his own time and his work has been the subject of extensive debate and interpretation.



## Nietzsche: Philosopher, Psychologist, Antichrist (Princeton Classics Book 3)

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Word Wise : Enabled  
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## Early life and education

Nietzsche was born on October 15, 1844, in Röcken, Saxony, Germany. His father, Carl Ludwig Nietzsche, was a Lutheran pastor, and his mother, Franziska Nietzsche, was the daughter of a farmer. Nietzsche had two younger sisters, Elisabeth and Helene. The family moved to Naumburg in 1850 when Nietzsche's father became a pastor there.

Nietzsche attended school in Naumburg and Pforta, where he excelled in his studies. He entered the University of Bonn in 1864 to study theology

and classical philology. However, he soon abandoned his theological studies in favor of philology. In 1865, he transferred to the University of Leipzig, where he studied under the classical philologist Friedrich Ritschl.

Nietzsche graduated from Leipzig in 1869 with a doctorate in classical philology. He then began his career as a professor of classical philology at the University of Basel in Switzerland. However, his health was poor, and he suffered from severe headaches and digestive problems.

### **Philosophical career**

Nietzsche's philosophical career began in the early 1870s with the publication of his first book, *The Birth of Tragedy*. In this work, Nietzsche argues that Greek tragedy is a product of the Dionysian and Apollonian instincts. The Dionysian instinct is characterized by passion, intoxication, and excess, while the Apollonian instinct is characterized by reason, order, and form. Nietzsche believed that the interplay of these two instincts is essential for the creation of great art.

Nietzsche's other major works include *Human, All Too Human* (1878), *Thus Spoke Zarathustra* (1883-85), *Beyond Good and Evil* (1886), and *The Genealogy of Morals* (1887). In these works, Nietzsche develops his critique of traditional morality, religion, and philosophy. He argues that morality is a product of the weak and powerless, that religion is a crutch for the weak-willed, and that philosophy is a tool of the ruling class to maintain its power.

Nietzsche's philosophy is often characterized as nihilistic. However, Nietzsche himself rejected the label of nihilist. He believed that the purpose of human existence is to create one's own values and to live in accordance

with them. He called this process "self-overcoming." Nietzsche believed that the individual is responsible for his own life and that he should not be subject to the dictates of society or morality.

## **Later years and death**

Nietzsche's health continued to deteriorate in the late 1880s and early 1890s. He suffered from severe headaches, digestive problems, and mental illness. In 1889, he had a nervous breakdown and was forced to resign from his professorship. He spent the last years of his life in care of his mother and sister in Weimar and Turin.

Nietzsche died on August 25, 1900, at the age of 55. He is buried in Röcken, Germany.

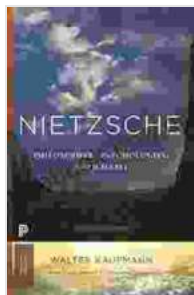
## **Legacy**

Nietzsche's philosophy has had a profound impact on Western thought. His ideas have been used to justify both fascism and communism, and he has been hailed as both a prophet and a madman. However, there is no doubt that Nietzsche is one of the most influential thinkers of the modern era. His work continues to be studied and debated today, and he remains a source of inspiration for people all over the world.

## **Further reading**

- The Cambridge Companion to Nietzsche, edited by Bernd Magnus and Kathleen Marie Higgins
- Friedrich Nietzsche, by Rüdiger Safranski
- Nietzsche: A Philosophical Biography, by Julian Young

- The Portable Nietzsche, edited by Walter Kaufmann



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