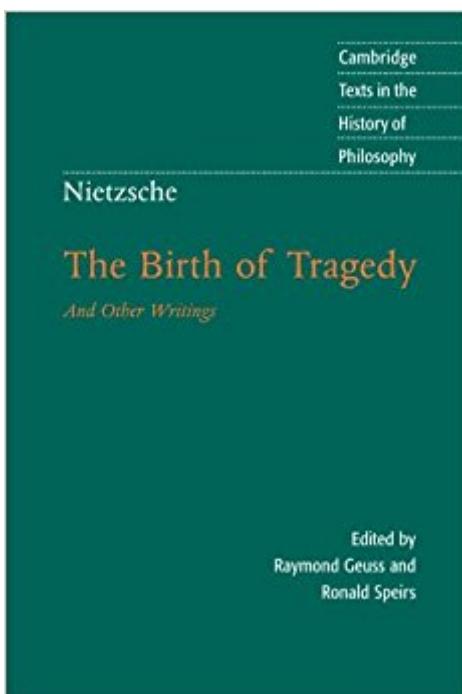


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# Nietzsche: The Birth Of Tragedy And Other Writings (Cambridge Texts In The History Of Philosophy)



## **Synopsis**

The Birth of Tragedy is one of the seminal philosophical works of the modern period. The theories developed in this relatively short text have had a profound influence on the philosophy, literature, music and politics of the twentieth century. This edition presents a new translation by Ronald Speirs and an introduction by Raymond Geuss that sets the work in its historical and philosophical context. The volume also includes two essays on related topics that Nietzsche wrote during the same period.

## **Book Information**

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## **Customer Reviews**

'The main purpose of the book was to challenge nineteenth-century idealisations of classical Greece: ancient tragedy at its greatest, Nietzsche argued, was animated not by orderliness and quite decorum but by an inebriated frenzy of music, dance and rollicking enormity.' New Humanist

Text: English (translation) Original Language: German --This text refers to the Hardcover edition.

Nietzsche's premier is a fantastic work. After reading the first chapter I was pleased to discard the combative polemic of an introduction."Singing and dancing, man expresses his sense of belonging to a higher community; he has forgotten how to walk and talk and is on the brink of flying and dancing, up and away into the air above. His gestures speak of his enchantment. Just as the animals now talk and the earth gives milk and honey, there now sounds out from within man

something supernatural: he feels himself to be a god, he himself now moves in such ecstasy and sublimity as once he saw the gods move in his dreams. Man is no longer an artist, he has become a work of art: all nature's artistic power reveals itself here, amidst shivers of intoxication, to the highest, most blissful satisfaction of the primordial unity. Here man, the noblest clay, the most precious marble, is kneaded and carved and, to the accompaniment of the chisel-blows of the Dionysiac world-artist, the call of the Eleusinian Mysteries rings out: 'Fall ye to the ground, ye millions? Feelst thou thy Creator, world?"

His writing although at times incoherent in long stretches reveals Nietzsche's interpretation , perception and the unfolding process of Greek tragedy as an aesthetic movement , If one has read Nietzsche's later published work , one can see the evolution of his thought process. it's worth the time spent.

Love this book-- but only skimmed since I'm a bad student. But I will get to it when I turn into a good student. Good was in perfect condition.

I previously wrote a review in which I attempted to identify the nature of a fetish based on the idea that Nietzsche met Isolde, the daughter of Wagner and Cosima, when she was four years old. I found the information about Wagner's kids on the page 120 of *Young Nietzsche* by Carl Pletsch, a professor of European intellectual history interested in the nature of genius. Wagner wanted Nietzsche to show his personal enthusiasm for music and drama as a combination at the big festival of Athens that brought tribute from other parts of the league of Greek cities and had a contest of tragedies. *The Birth of Tragedy* was not typical scholarly material. It has something in common with a book on *Religion Within the Bounds of Mere Reason* by Kant that identifies aspects of official religion as fetishizing political aims. The introduction in this volume tries to explain how democracy was unpopular for philosophers who expected people who know themselves to realize when the golden fleece became a fable. Archilochus was the early poet that Nietzsche characterized as having a love/hate relationship with a family because the father did not allow such a poet to marry his daughter. There is a suicide ritual cycle in Durant's *Life of Greece* that did not get mentioned by Nietzsche because he thought Wagner was more important than old grudges.

After Plato/Aristotle, the most influential (and read) Western philosopher is Nietzsche, and few of his writings continue to resonate in the mind as forcefully as "The Birth of Tragedy." It's at once a

coherent and fairly accessible text with implications far in excess of its stated, explicit meanings. Although Nietzsche's focus is, as the title indicates, on Greek drama prior to the 5th century B.C. and to the written records of Aeschylus, his setting is as much the realm of the sub-conscious, whether viewed as Jung's collective unconscious or Freud's id. "The Birth of Tragedy" could as accurately be titled "An Anatomy of Desire and Investigation of the Role of the Erotic." Anyone who has read with understanding this account of the primary agency of the Chorus in early tragedy as well as the privileging of darkness over light, of the ear over the eye, of incantation over narration, is likely to find all "texts" thereafter colored by Nietzsche's views. It's no longer a mystery why "Moon" songs outnumber "Sun" songs by a vast margin in music literature, or why writers from Chaucer and Shakespeare to Wagner and Cole Porter extoll the realm of the dark and atemporal while sparing no venomous rhetoric in relentless denunciations of a rational, brightly lit temporal order. Even a poet as calm and commonsensical as Wordsworth could write, "We murder to dissect." That which is illuminated, and hence visible and measurable, is necessarily individualized, quantified, and objectified, removing it from the vital stream that at some level we recognize as leading us to our most authentic selves. Whenever we "stop" the life-flow to examine a part--whether as an analytic scientist, a rational psychologist, or a pathological individual who finds love surrogates in the form of some fetish--we in effect "kill" the thing that had formerly embodied the living and the whole. Only by careful reconstruction can we begin to understand how the object of analysis, when experienced as part of the current, is not merely an object but a microcosm. "The Birth of Tragedy" is Nietzsche's metaphorical journey into the archetypal "heart of darkness" that has been the destination for storytellers from Homer to Francis Ford Coppola. But it also represents the challenge confronting any true mathematician or scientist engaged in the quest of exploring and representing "the real." Perhaps it goes without saying that for any lover who is capable of addressing with honesty the experience of being "in love" Nietzsche's essay is practically required reading: it may probe sores and open wounds, but it's doubtful any other text does a better job of explaining why we as humans love to love, desire to desire, and are drawn--repeatedly and against our wills--to the entrancing song from the darkness.

Oh my goodness, I love this book. I am also a fan of the series Cambridge Texts in Philosophy, my favorite being Schopenhauer's "On the Fourfold Root of the Principle of Sufficient Reason".

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