



The Genealogy of Morals (Dover Thrift Editions)

By Friedrich Nietzsche

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Written in response to a book on the origins of morality by his erstwhile friend Paul Rée, the three essays comprising *The Genealogy of Morals* — all three advancing the critique of Christian morality set forth in *Beyond Good and Evil* — are among Nietzsche's most sustained and cohesive work.

In the first essay — starting from a linguistic analysis of words such as "good," "bad," and "evil" — Nietzsche sets up a contrast between what he calls "master" morality and "slave" morality and shows how strength and action have often been replaced by passivity and nihilism. The next essay, looking into the origins of guilt and punishment, shows how the concept of justice was born — and how internalization of this concept led to the development of what people called "the soul." In the third essay, Nietzsche dissects the meaning of ascetic ideals. It is not Nietzsche's intention to reject ascetic ideals, "slave" morality, or internalized values out of hand; his main concern is to show that culture and morality, rather than being eternal verities, are human-made. Whether or not you agree with all of his conclusions, his writing is of such clarity and brilliance that you will find reading *The Genealogy of Morals* nothing short of exhilarating.

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From the Back Cover

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About the Author

Friedrich Nietzsche was a nihilist philosopher, critic and poet who wrote several works of philosophy which have proven strongly influential since their initial publication in the late 19th century. After beginning his academic career as an expert in ancient Greek and Latin, Nietzsche would steadily advance into philosophy, becoming more convinced and sure of his arguments as time went by. Gradually, his writings became more polemical and provocative, criticising earlier philosophers, established institutions such as the Christian church, and its moral tenets in a series of vehement and swiftly paced writings which at times veer into humorous sarcasm. Nietzsche's final work was *The Antichrist*, which was completed a short time before a mental breakdown which rendered the scholar incapacitated for the final decade of his life. By the time of his death in 1900 at the age of 55, Nietzsche had assembled a large and devoted following, particularly within academic and scholarly circles, which continues to this day.

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