



Nietzsche, Psychology, and First Philosophy

Robert B. Pippin

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Friedrich Nietzsche is one of the most elusive thinkers in the philosophical tradition. His highly unusual style and insistence on what remains hidden or unsaid in his writing make pinning him to a particular position tricky. Nonetheless, certain readings of his work have become standard and influential. In this major new interpretation of Nietzsche's work, Robert B. Pippin challenges various traditional views of Nietzsche, taking him at his word when he says that his writing can best be understood as a kind of psychology.

Pippin traces this idea of Nietzsche as a psychologist to his admiration for the French moralists: La Rochefoucauld, Pascal, Stendhal, and especially Montaigne. In distinction from philosophers, Pippin shows, these writers avoided grand metaphysical theories in favor of reflections on life as lived and experienced. Aligning himself with this project, Nietzsche sought to make psychology "the queen of the sciences" and the "path to the fundamental problems." Pippin contends that Nietzsche's singular prose was an essential part of this goal, and so he organizes the book around four of Nietzsche's most important images and metaphors: that truth could be a woman, that a science could be gay, that God could have died, and that an agent is as much one with his act as lightning is with its flash.

Expanded from a series of lectures Pippin delivered at the Collège de France, *Nietzsche, Psychology, and First Philosophy* offers a brilliant, novel, and accessible reading of this seminal thinker.



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