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NIETZSCHE'S PHILOSOPHY OF RELIGION

In his first book, *The Birth of Tragedy*, Nietzsche observes that Greek tragedy gathered people together as a community in the sight of their gods, and argues that modernity can be rescued from 'nihilism' only through the revival of such a festival. This is commonly thought to be a view which did not survive the termination of Nietzsche's early Wagnerianism, but Julian Young argues, on the basis of an examination of all of Nietzsche's published works, that his religious communitarianism in fact persists through all his writings. What follows, it is argued, is that the mature Nietzsche is neither an 'atheist', an 'individualist' nor an 'immoralist': he is a German philosopher belonging to a German tradition of conservative communitarianism – though to claim him as a proto-Nazi is radically mistaken. This important reassessment will be of interest to all Nietzsche scholars and to a wide range of readers in German philosophy.

JULIAN YOUNG is Professor of Philosophy at the University of Auckland and honorary Research Professor at the University of Tasmania. His many publications include *Heidegger: Off the Beaten Track* (2002) edited and translated with Kenneth Haynes, *Heidegger's Later Philosophy* (2002) and *Heidegger's Philosophy of Art* (2001, 2004).

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*For
David Montgomery*

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Abbreviations

Nietzsche's works are cited using the following abbreviations: roman numerals refer to major parts of the works; arabic numerals refer to sections, not pages. The exceptions to this are (i) references to extraneous material included in translations of Nietzsche's published works (generally editorial comments and excerpts from the *Nachlass*) in which case I cite page numbers, and (ii) references to KSA which I cite by volume number followed by the notebook number and, in brackets, the note number (e.g. 13 14 [204]). For bibliographical details of the works cited see pp. 216–17 below. Sometimes I have preferred my own translation to that provided in the translation cited.

A	<i>The Antichrist</i>
BGE	<i>Beyond Good and Evil</i>
BT	<i>The Birth of Tragedy</i>
D	<i>Daybreak</i>
EH	<i>Ecce Homo</i>
GM	<i>On the Genealogy of Morals</i>
GS	<i>The Gay Science</i>
HH	<i>Human, All-too-Human</i>
KSA	<i>Sämtliche Werke: Kritische Studienausgabe in 15 Bänden</i>
NCW	<i>Nietzsche contra Wagner</i>
TI	<i>Twilight of the Idols</i>
UM	<i>Untimely Meditations</i>
WC	<i>The Case of Wagner</i>
WP	<i>The Will to Power</i>
Z	<i>Thus Spoke Zarathustra</i>

Schopenhauer's works are cited as follows:

FR	<i>The Fourfold Root of the Principle of Sufficient Reason</i>
PP	<i>Parerga and Paralipomena</i>
WR	<i>The World as Will and Representation</i>

Nietzsche spoke of "the death of God," and foresaw the dissolution of traditional religion and metaphysics. Some interpreters of Nietzsche believe he embraced nihilism, rejected philosophical reasoning, and promoted a literary exploration of the human condition, while not being concerned with gaining truth and knowledge in the traditional sense of those terms. Nietzsche's intense association with Wagner no doubt enhanced his orientation towards the philosophy of Schopenhauer, and it probably promoted his work in aesthetics and cultural criticism. These biographical elements came to bear on Nietzsche's first major works, while the middle period amounts to a confrontation with many of these influences.

