



Mencken and Nietzsche (Baltimore Authors Book 12)

H. L. Mencken, Frederick Nietzsche

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This volume, recently reformatted to meet current ebook standards such as having an active table of contents, contains the complete text of two books. H. L. Mencken translated the book *The Philosophy of Frederick Nietzsche* from the original German. The second book, *The Antichrist*, was written by F. W. Nietzsche and translated by Mencken, who also wrote the forward. The book has been reformatted for consistency, to produce an accurate Table of Contents, and to display well on modern e-readers. Some redundancy has been removed from available electronic editions. The original manuscripts were used to correct errors of totally garbled text that appear in all the previously published free electronic versions.

Henry Louis Mencken was born in Baltimore, September 12, 1880. His family moved to a house in the historic Union Square area of southwest Baltimore, Maryland, in 1883 where he lived until his death on January 26, 1956. The house, located at is now classified as a National Historic Landmark and is on the U. S. national Register of Historic Places. The house is not currently open to the public. He said of his house: "I have lived in one house in Baltimore for nearly 45 years. It has changed in that time, as I have—but somehow it still remains the same.... It is as much a part of me as my two hands. If I had to leave it I'd be as certainly crippled as if I lost a leg." Mencken was often called the "Baron of Baltimore."

It is surprising that anyone with such a chauvinistic view of his childhood house could have such a cosmopolitan view in other matters. Perhaps it is in the nature of his hometown city. The Union Square area of Baltimore is part of a larger area that is highly appealing to artists, having large buildings with good access to light, as well as low rents. Parts of the surrounding area have been home to an interesting eclectic community, although other nearby areas are plagued by vacant buildings.

After graduating from high school, he worked for three years in his father's cigar factory, after which he went to work for the now-defunct *Baltimore Morning Herald*. After six years, he moved to the *The Baltimore Sun* where he began writing the editorials and opinion pieces that he became famous for. In 1924, he and George Jean Nathan created and published an influential magazine, *The American Mercury*, with Mencken serving as editor until 1933.

Mencken was an admirer of Nietzsche's ideas. It appears that some of Mencken's ideas about Jews and blacks (not his term, unfortunately) became more enlightened because of the influence of Nietzsche's writings. The two men had relatively similar, but highly controversial, especially for the time, views of religion.

The Central branch of the Enoch Pratt Free Library in Baltimore contains Mencken's papers and many of his books. They are stored, fittingly, in the library's Mencken Room.

Friedrich Wilhelm Nietzsche was October 15, 1844 in the small town of Röcken, in what is now Germany, but was then considered part of the Prussian Province of Saxony. (He did not use the middle name Wilhelm in his most important writings.) He died on August 25, 1900. He was, as was Mencken, an important contributor to many disciplines. He was especially well known for his writings as a philosopher, poet, and cultural critic.

He was a Professor of Philosophy at the University of Basel for ten years, providing him with an ideal

occupation in which to pursue his writing. Where Mencken was heavily influenced by reading Twain's Adventures of Huckleberry Finn, Nietzsche may have had his views on religion influenced by the book Life of Jesus by David Strauss while a young man.

While Nietzsche was most renowned as a philosopher, and his ideas continue to be influential, in the popular culture that dominates the current era he is, perhaps, most famous for some 1960s era graffiti for both a quotation and a (purported) response.

Nietzsche: God is dead.

God: Nietzsche is dead.

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