

GV150 Week 25 Nietzsche On the Genealogy of Morals Questions

Lecture:

1. Do you agree with Nietzsche that there is no basis for morality that is external to humans?
2. Does Nietzsche undermine his argument that all morality is constructed by apparently favouring 'master morality', or are these positions reconcilable?
3. What is the distinction between real and main suffering, and do you agree with Nietzsche's view of them as positive and negative?

Reading:

4. What is the fundamental question Nietzsche wants to ask about morality? How does he think his approach is new and unique?
5. What is the origin of words for 'good'? What sort of things did they originally designate? What sort of people would develop such words? Where do words for 'bad' come from?
6. What does Nietzsche think moral ideas are in general? What are we doing when we make moral judgements? What is the role of a philosopher moral?
7. How do the 'masters' regard themselves? How do they behave? How do they express their will? How are their situation and character reflected in their words for 'good' and 'bad'?
8. What sort of things do the 'slaves' value? What does he infer from his analogy of the lambs and the eagles? What sort of experiences form their world? Why does Nietzsche think the slave-man ressentiment will 'respect cleverness' so much?
9. What is ressentiment? What's the difference between the masters' 'triumphant saying "yes to itself" and the slave morality that 'says "no" on principle to everything that is "non-self"'? How can this difference be explained by the relative situations of the two groups?
10. In what way, for Nietzsche, did the practice of punishment emerge out of their elation of buyer and seller? What connection did it have, at this point, with morality?
11. Where does Nietzsche believe the idea of a God came from? What is the effect for the idea of guilt and for debts? How does Nietzsche contrast Greek and Christian deities?
12. Why does Nietzsche call priests the 'doctors' to the weak? What consolation do the priests offer for the unhappy slaves, to soothe their suffering? How do the slaves respond?