NIETZSCHE’S *ON THE GENEALOGY OF MORALITY*

*On the Genealogy of Morality* is Nietzsche’s most influential, provocative, and challenging work of ethics. In this volume of newly commissioned essays, fourteen leading philosophers offer fresh insights into many of the work’s central questions: How did our dominant values originate and what functions do they really serve? What future does the concept of “evil” have—and can it be revalued? What sorts of virtues and ideals does Nietzsche advocate, and are they necessarily incompatible with aspirations to democracy and a free society? What are the nature, role, and scope of genealogy in his critique of morality—and why doesn’t his own evaluative standard receive a genealogical critique? Taken together, this superb collection illuminates what a post-Christian and indeed post-moral life might look like, and asks to what extent Nietzsche’s *Genealogy* manages to move beyond morality.

**Simon May** is Visiting Professor of Philosophy at King’s College, University of London. His monographs include *Nietzsche’s Ethics and His War on “Morality”* (1999), a book of his own aphorisms entitled *Thinking Aloud: A Collection of Aphorisms* (2009), and *Love: A History* (2011).
CAMBRIDGE CRITICAL GUIDES

Titles published in this series:

Hegel’s Phenomenology of Spirit
EDITED BY DEAN MOYAR AND MICHAEL QUANTE

Mill’s On Liberty
EDITED BY C. L. TEN

Kant’s Idea for a Universal History with a Cosmopolitan Aim
EDITED BY AMÉLIE OksenBERG RORTY AND JENS SCHMIDT

Kant’s Groundwork of the Metaphysics of Morals
EDITED BY JENS TIMMERMANN

Kant’s Critique of Practical Reason
EDITED BY ANDREWS REATH AND JENS TIMMERMANN

Wittgenstein’s Philosophical Investigations
EDITED BY ARIF AHMED

Kierkegaard’s Concluding Unscientific Postscript
EDITED BY RICK ANTHONY FURTAK

Plato’s Republic
EDITED BY MARK L. McPHERRAN

Plato’s Laws
EDITED BY CHRISTOPHER BOBONICH

Spinoza’s Theological-Political Treatise
EDITED BY YITZHAK Y. MELAMED AND MICHAEL A. ROSENTHAL

Aristotle’s Nichomachean Ethics
EDITED BY JON MILLER

Kant’s Metaphysics of Morals
EDITED BY LARA DENIS

Nietzsche’s On the Genealogy of Morality
EDITED BY SIMON MAY
## Contents

*List of contributors* \hspace{1cm} page vii  
*Acknowledgements* \hspace{1cm} ix  
*Note on texts, translations, and references* \hspace{1cm} x

**Introduction**  
*Simon May*  
1

1 The future of evil  
*R. Geuss*  
12

2 On the nobility of Nietzsche’s priests  
*R. Lanier Anderson*  
24

3 The genealogy of guilt  
*Bernard Reginster*  
56

4 Why Nietzsche is still in the morality game  
*Simon May*  
78

5 Who is the “sovereign individual”? Nietzsche on freedom  
*Brian Leiter*  
101

6 *Resentiment* and morality  
*Peter Poellner*  
120

7 The role of life in the *Genealogy*  
*Nadeem J. Z. Hussain*  
142

8 The relevance of history for moral philosophy: a study of Nietzsche’s *Genealogy*  
*Paul Katsafanas*  
170

9 Why would master morality surrender its power?  
*Lawrence J. Hatab*  
193
# Contents

10 “Genealogy” and the *Genealogy*
    P. J. E. Kail 214

11 The promising animal: the art of reading *On the Genealogy of Morality* as testimony
    Stephen Mulhall 234

12 Nietzsche and the “aesthetics of character”
    Edward Harcourt 265

13 Nietzsche and the virtues of mature egoism
    Christine Swanton 285

14 Une promesse de bonheur? Beauty in the *Genealogy*
    Aaron Ridley 309

*Bibliography*

*Index*

326 335
Contributors


EdwaRD aRcHOUT is University Lecturer in Philosophy at the University of Oxford and a Fellow of Keble College. He has published papers on metaethics, Wittgenstein, the moral emotions, and Nietzsche’s moral philosophy, among other subjects.

Lawrence J. HataB is Louis I. Jaffe Professor of Philosophy and Eminent Scholar at Old Dominion University. His books include *Nietzsche’s On the Genealogy of Morality: An Introduction* and *Nietzsche’s Life Sentence: Coming to Terms with Eternal Recurrence*.


P. J. E. KaIL is University Lecturer in the History of Modern Philosophy at the University of Oxford and Fellow in Philosophy at St. Peter’s College. His publications include *Projection and Realism in Hume’s Philosophy* (2007).
List of contributors


Brian Leiter is Karl N. Llewellyn Professor of Jurisprudence and Director of the Center for Law, Philosophy and Human Values at the University of Chicago, and also Visiting Professor of Philosophy at Oxford University. He is the author of *Nietzsche on Morality* (2002) and co-editor of Nietzsche’s *Daybreak* (1997), *Nietzsche* (2001), and *Nietzsche and Morality* (2007).

Simon May is Visiting Professor of Philosophy at King’s College, University of London. His monographs include *Nietzsche’s Ethics and his War on “Morality”* (1999), a book of his own aphorisms entitled *Thinking Aloud: A Collection of Aphorisms* (2009), and *Love: A History* (2011), and he is co-editor, with Ken Gemes, of *Nietzsche on Freedom and Autonomy* (2009).


Peter Poellner is Professor of Philosophy at the University of Warwick. He is the author of *Nietzsche and Metaphysics* (1995) and has published articles on various topics in continental philosophy, ethics, and the philosophy of mind.

Bernard Reginster is Professor of Philosophy at Brown University. He is the author of *The Affirmation of Life: Nietzsche on Overcoming Nihilism* (2006) and articles on nineteenth-century philosophy.

Aaron Ridley is Professor of Philosophy at the University of Southampton. His books include *Nietzsche’s Conscience: Six Character Studies from the Genealogy* (1998) and *Nietzsche on Art* (2007).

Christine Swanton is Professor of Philosophy at the University of Auckland. She is author of *Virtue Ethics: A Pluralistic View* (2003) and *Freedom: A Coherence Theory* (1992).
Acknowledgements

I am grateful to Hilary Gaskin, senior commissioning editor for philosophy at Cambridge University Press, for inviting me to undertake this book and for her unstinting encouragement and invaluable counsel; to Anna Lowe, assistant editor at the Press, and her predecessor, Joanna Garbutt, for their superb support; to Christina Sarigiannidou, my production editor, for so efficiently seeing the book through to publication; to Geoff Bailey for creating the index; to Chris Sykes for help in compiling the bibliography; to James Thomas for his careful copy-editing; to Andrew Godfrey for meticulously checking and proof-reading the final text; and, of course, to all my co-authors for their contributions.

SIMON MAY
All authors in this volume refer to Nietzsche’s works by the same abbreviations, listed below. References to and citations from *On the Genealogy of Morality* are taken from the English translation by Carol Diethe (Cambridge University Press, 1994), with very occasional departures from it in the form of an author’s use of another translation, modification of a translation, or provision of their own. For other works of Nietzsche the particular English translations used by each author are given in a footnote at the beginning of his or her chapter. All secondary literature to which reference is made is listed in the bibliography.

References to secondary literature are made in the Harvard style.

A  The Antichrist
BGE  Beyond Good and Evil: Prelude to a Philosophy of the Future
BT  The Birth of Tragedy
CW  The Case of Wagner
D  Daybreak (also translated as Dawn)
EH  Ecce Homo
GM  On the Genealogy of Morality
GS  The Gay Science
HAH  Human, All Too Human
KGW  Werke: Kritische Gesamtausgabe
KSA  Sämtliche Werke: Kritische Studienausgabe in 15 Einzelbänden
TI  Twilight of the Idols: or How to Philosophize with a Hammer
UM  Untimely Meditations (also translated as Unfashionable Observations)
WP  The Will to Power
Z.  Thus Spoke Zarathustra: A Book for Everyone and No One