Essay Topics For Final Exam—Nietzsche

You will be given TWO out of the six topics below and asked to pick ONE to write on during the final exam. You will have approximately one hour to write, and it will be CLOSED BOOK (no notes or texts). You can prepare as much as you want in advance, but you may not bring anything into the exam with you. You should consult with your GSI about the best strategies for preparing. Remember that the essay is designed to let you demonstrate your understanding of Nietzsche, so you should formulate your response accordingly.

1. What does Nietzsche mean by God, and why does he claim that God is dead? Does either Dostoevsky or Kierkegaard (pick one) provide a way to resist Nietzsche’s conclusions?

2. Give an account of how Nietzsche might view each of the 3 brothers in The Brothers Karamazov. Which aspects of these characters would Nietzsche find attractive and which aspects would he criticize, and why?

3. Compare and contrast the Grand Inquisitor’s account of the role and value of religion in human life with Nietzsche’s. (Remember to emphasize Nietzsche’s position in your answer.)

4. Kierkegaard’s Knight of Faith performs a teleological suspension of the ethical. Could Nietzsche see the Knight of Faith who suspends the ethical as a free spirit?

5. What is the highest form of human existence for Nietzsche? How does Nietzsche criticize Kierkegaard’s view on this question?

b To what extent do Nietzsche and Kierkegaard make the same diagnosis of human sickness? How do they differ in the remedy they offer?