

The Opinion of Examiner

Student: Sebastian Abdou

Bachelor thesis title: The Problem of Free Will in Nietzsche's Works

Faculty of Humanities, Charles University, 2020

The title of Sebastian Abdou's thesis reflects his authentic and not artificially invented interest in entering into dialogue with Nietzsche's way of doing philosophy, and his youthful ambition to treat "The Problem of Free Will in Nietzsche's Works" via the format and the genre of bachelor thesis. It seems to me obvious, that Sebastian's thesis mostly demonstrates excellent bachelor level of competences in reading primary sources of utmost complexity and hear arguments of others as exposed in various secondary sources. Moreover, the style and language of the thesis is clear and elegant, and even some thoughts not only in conclusion are original, but true novelty and merit should be judged of by Nietzsche scholars.

All this praise of bachelor level competences does not mean that Sebastian's thesis are immune of questions or criticism relevant for his progress not only in Nietzsche studies. Is the accusation of contradiction in Nietzsche addressed to Janaway well thought or even relevant when one is carefully reading the abstract of the chapter 7 Free Will, Autonomy, and the Sovereign Individual in Christopher Janaway's famous book? The abstract in question (<https://www.oxfordscholarship.com/view/10.1093/acprof:oso/9780199279692.001.0001/acprof-9780199279692-chapter-7>) reads: "This chapter distinguishes a conception of 'free will' that Nietzsche opposes (that of the pure, neutral agent unaffected by contingencies of character and circumstance) and one that he supports. In *Human, All too Human*, Nietzsche propounds the 'total unfreedom' of the will. But in *Beyond Good and Evil* and the *Genealogy*, he is more concerned with the project of genealogy, tracing the affective psychological states underlying beliefs in both free will and 'unfree will', and secondly with a positive conception of free will that might be attained by certain individuals, associated with his conception of the 'sovereign individual', which embraces a wholeness of character, acceptance of what constitutes and constrains oneself, and creation of one's own values. The chapter explores the kind of autonomy required in agents who would participate in a revaluation of values, and argues that Nietzsche must conceive them as having a kind of autonomy." Compare this to final part of concluding paragraph of thesis: "To answer the initial question of Janaway's of whether there is a contradiction in Nietzsche's writings or not: No there is not, for it is true that Nietzsche denounces the indetermined will, however, the will he conceives in the sovereign individual as an individual who has *become* free can be explained by the process of *becoming* free-willed, or in other words, *becoming* strong-willed. The sovereign individual is free for such individual mirrors the *becoming*, *self-surpassing*, and *bodying forth* essence of the world." (p. 60) Just think if Janaway's chapter is properly treated as an "accusation" and how far is his text similar in consequences with the thesis.

The examiner is recommending thesis for defence and is of the opinion that might be defended and marked as „excellent“.

In Prague on the 16th June 2020

PhDr. Tomáš Kunca, Ph.D.

