



FACULTY OF ARTS  
OF CHARLES UNIVERSITY  
IN PRAGUE



Department of Anglophone Literatures and Cultures

**SUPERVISOR'S REPORT  
MA THESIS**

**An Analysis of Francis Fukuyama's Arguments Exemplified on Contemporary  
Dystopian Cultural Production**

Bc. Martin Šinal'

Bc. Martin Šinal' first surveys tensions between theories of human nature represented by Francis Fukuyama in *Our Posthuman Future* and insights of critics such as Michel Foucault, Donna J. Haraway and Judith Butler, whose position on posthumanism has been in general more open than that of Fukuyama. This philosophical debate is extended in the second half of the thesis with speculations from science-fiction novels that feature post-human subjects, namely Octavia E. Butler's Xenogenesis trilogy and Kazuo Ishiguro's *Never Let Me Go*. Bc. Šinal's argument is that ultimately "Fukuyama's position is harmfully exclusionary and divisive; and also counter-productive in the sense that in his pursuit of securing freedom and equality he renders potential posthuman subjects fundamentally inferior, thus principally defeating his own project and exposing his bias regarding what constitutes a morally worthy identity and subjectivity" (4). In contrast, "Ishiguro's and Butler's novels can be seen as an effort to recuperate this misfired attempt to preserve freedom, equality and moral balance into the posthuman era, by radically widening the criteria to determine who should be eligible to be recognized by these liberal principles in the first place" (70).

The thesis demonstrates the candidate's familiarity with various debates about posthumanism. Bc. Šinal' has worked exceptionally independently, considering various primary sources from Huxley's classic *Brave New World* to P. D. James's *Children of Men*, *Beggars in Spain* by Nancy Kress and David Mackenzie's film *Perfect Sense*. His choice of Butler and Ishiguro enables him to argue his point persuasively, although I wonder how the argument would change had other science fiction been used? In addition, I have had questions about several minor points in the thesis; e.g. the idea of feminism being identified with posthumanism (there are varieties of feminism so it is not accurate to talk about "feminist and transhumanist discourse" [53] as if they were one). Or, concerning Butler's Xenogenesis, I would not go as far as to argue that "[t]he trilogy rather sympathizes with human individuals who have come to reasonably conclude that integration with the Oankali is not only inevitable but also justified and who therefore accept the transhumanist view that human nature is a process or a development rather than a rigid concept" (53). In an interview that I have recommended to the candidate, Butler has argued that "[b]oth species have their strengths and weaknesses" (<http://www.depauw.edu/sfs/interviews/potts70interview.htm>), therefore where the author and the trilogy stand seems to me more ambiguous. I have also asked the candidate to conform his footnotes to the formatting requirements of our department, but some still remain unpolished. Nevertheless, on the whole, this is a well-researched and inspiring thesis.

Proposed grade: Excellent (1)

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