

## Abstract

This dissertation deals with the relations between the philosophy of Friedrich Nietzsche and the literary work of Franz Kafka. It particularly focuses on the following issues: The uprootedness of (not only modern) human existence and the instability of interpretation of any phenomenon. It is further concerned with the themes of salvation, suffering and death. The indistinguishability of life and death, God, the death of God, and the relationship to a transcendent authority are also discussed. Moreover, the dissertation examines the concepts of the sublime and the noble in nature and in human existence, especially with regard to the relation between an individual and their community. The unjustifiability of the power of judging, uncertainty and the value of suspension of judgment are analyzed as well. It comments also on the topics of the end of life, the end of history and the conception of time exempt from the expectation of an end. Furthermore, it addresses the relations of Nietzsche and Kafka to the present and to the possible future of the world (primarily with reference to the organization of a communication space, to religion, to the concept of the sacred, and to the potential changes of human nature). The dissertation repeatedly returns to the questions of the openness of meaning of Kafka's literary work and Nietzsche's philosophy. It is also engaged with the problematic of the reception and creation of messages, and it examines the importance of attention, especially the attention to a living being and a particular life situation.

As far as the methodology of this dissertation is concerned, the individual chapters provide an elaborate analysis of texts, in which the given thematic complex is particularly strongly present. The dissertation also takes into account older interpretations of the relations between both authors and submits them to critical reflection.

The main results include: Nietzsche and Kafka share the basic starting point – there is no firm ground, because the messages of (not only religious) traditions uncover themselves as dubious, or even harmful (neither of the authors simply claims that God is dead, though – he is, even according to Nietzsche, supposed to be dying for millennia or hundreds of millennia; and the value of the death of God for humans is not yet determined). The harmfulness is in the case of Kafka less unequivocal. Even his prose distinctly indicates some threats – including the fact that the belief in message provides a basis for the authority of organizations that interpret it. Moreover, the activity of these organizations may be problematic and unjust. The world of Kafka's prose corresponds in this respect to Nietzsche's criticism of religious institutions; the difference being that Kafka is not dogmatic – even an imagined message may be identical to the message sent. Kafka's work does not express the theological certainty to which Nietzsche adhered – God may exist. It expresses a different certainty regarding religion, though – real God cannot be the source of justification of a social order. Both Nietzsche and Kafka question the conception of reality and time, according to which it is possible to reach the ultimate determination of the value of human life or any other event. Yet, in case of both Nietzsche and Kafka there should exist an eternity within multivalent world and multivalent time – considered to be a repetition of the moment that may be decisive. The conception of what is decisive differs nevertheless in Nietzsche's and Kafka's work – Kafka conceived it in the aphorisms and expressed it in his prose as the indestructible identity of living beings, Nietzsche conceived it as a life justifying fulfilling of the will, in which an individual, both for a moment and for eternity, becomes who he is. Both authors recede from one another the most by their conception of the relation between the fulfilling of an individual and lives of others. According to Nietzsche, the unfulfilled should sacrifice themselves for the fulfilled. Kafka's conception of (not only human) existence does not include the rising of an individual above the community. It is concerned with the experience of communal life that is unified, regardless of the missing or unshared myth. The source of its identity is the aesthetics of attention.