

Department of Philosophy and Religious Studies

MA thesis: opponent's report

The student's name: Mohammad Ali Pour

The title of the thesis: Nietzsche's Will to Power as the Principle of Revaluation:
 Toward a Power Centered Ethics

The opponent:¹ Niklas Forsberg

I. Formal criteria	yes	partially	no
1. The overall project: - the thesis corresponds to the proposed topic - the topic is outlined adequately and not overly broadly	√		
2. Methodical and systematic quality - the text is logically and clearly structured	√		
3. Introduction and conclusion - the introduction duly states the aims and projected steps of the thesis, the state of the arts in the chosen topic, and the key works of existing scholarship - the conclusion adequately summarizes and evaluates the problem, and states the author's position and contribution	√		
4. The author met all the formal requirements of a Master's Thesis: - statement of the topic, the declaration, Introduction, the body of the work, Conclusion, Summary - word count/number of pages is appropriate	√		

Further comments

¹ Delete as appropriate

The thesis is well-written, well-structured, and well-argued. Overall, this is a high-quality MA thesis.

II. Contents-related criteria	yes	partially	no
1. The thesis shows the author's comprehension of the problem	√		
2. Cohesion and continuity of the text: - is satisfactory - the argumentation is adequate and does not lack foundation	√		
3. The thesis works with relevant resources		√	
4. Working with resources: - the thesis clearly shows that the author has worked with relevant academic literature and theses and arguments presented there - the author properly introduced their referred resources, compared, paraphrased, and cited them - clearly distinguished their own ideas and claims from those made by the cited authors		√	
5. The thesis is a philosophical text: - the author proved to be able to work analytically with concepts and ideas - the author did not only summarise or retell (in different words) the used resources - the thesis is not overburdened with non-philosophical (biographical, historical, etc.) contents	√		
6. The thesis shows the author's own contribution and individual framing of the topic	√		

Further comments

The student is a competent and careful reader of Nietzsche's texts, which are often difficult to read and assess. My hesitation (grading questions 3 and 4 above as "partially") on the question about how the student deals with the resources has to do with two things. First, the candidate moves back and forth between texts by Nietzsche that are written from different periods in his life, and makes no comments about possible lines of development between these. I also think a more thorough discussion of Nietzsche's style would have been in place (particularly with regard to *Zarathustra*, where it often is unclear to what extent Nietzsche can be said to "stand behind" the words by Zarathustra). This is not a very serious problem for the thesis as a whole, but I think some comments about these things are recommended. Second, the most central text, *The Will to Power*, is, in itself, a problematic source, since it was not compiled by Nietzsche himself. I therefore think that some discussion about how that text came into existence would have made the text better.

It should also be said that the author proves himself to be very competent and carries through a serious discussion in an elegant and powerful way. It is very clear

that the thesis is a valuable contribution to a discussion that is large and has been going on for a long time now. That alone is impressive.

III. Language and grammar**yes partially no**

	yes	partially	no
1. The thesis is flawless grammatically and stylistically and in other related respects (such as avoiding typos or unfinished sentences)	√		
2. The thesis is written in a proper academic language	√		
3. Terminology - the thesis uses its terminology with comprehension - it uses its terminology as needed and introduces its terms as needed	√		
4. References, citations and notes - referencing is adequate - the thesis uses a suitable citation format and sticks with it - footnotes/endnotes are used properly		√	
5. Citing - citations are neither too scarce nor overexcessive - quotations are sensibly chosen and illuminating	√		
6. Graphics - the thesis uses a suitable font, style of TOC, headings, paragraph styles, and so forth	√		

Further comments

Overall, the language and academic formalities are very good in this thesis. There are no grammatical problems, and there are very few typos. The text is, in that respect, "clean." Complicated concepts and terms are carefully discussed. The referencing is done well. The one formality that could have been better is the lack of "block quotations." There are quite a few longer quotes (above 50 words) that are in text, but should have been indented block quotations. This is a very small problem. With respect to the content of the thesis, quotations are sensibly chosen and illuminating, and are neither too scarce nor excessive.

IV. Resources used

	yes	partially	no
1. a sensible and topic-adequate selection of primary texts		√	
2. a sensible and topic-adequate selection of secondary resources	√		

Further comments

The resources are used very well. There's a nice balance between primary and secondary texts. In terms of Nietzsche scholarship, one can always ask questions about the selection of secondary sources, since Nietzsche scholarship is such a huge discipline. But, in general, I think the candidate has chosen wisely.

Further recommendations:

Cooperation between the student and the supervisor (to be stated by the supervisor):

Overall evaluation:

The thesis is fit for defence:

YES

Suggested grade:

/A – B – C – D – E – F; F means "fail" /

B

But this is a very strong B, and I think that it could easily be raised to an A if the defense is successfully and competently carried out.

Proposed questions and topics for the defence discussion:

I will restrict myself to more general questions here. There are, of course, more detailed questions that will be relevant to discuss during the defense.

1. One of the most central questions I want to discuss concerns the problem formulation that drives the whole thesis. The thesis argues that there appears to be a fundamental tension between Nietzsche's notion of "the will to power" and "Nietzsche's broader epistemological commitments." One of my concerns here is that I find it difficult to actually see this tension as real. In fact, I think the intuitive idea would be the opposite of what the candidate suggests: the will to power fits perfectly with Nietzsche's anti-foundationalist epistemology. (At the end of the day, the candidate will come to that conclusion as well, so we are in factual agreement here. But I do find it problematic that the initial, leading question relies on a supposed contradiction that is hard to see.)
2. I will also want to hear more about how the candidate sees the development of Nietzsche's thought. The thesis treats Nietzsche's oeuvre as a unified whole, which enables him to move back and forth between different texts and periods. This approach makes the question of change and/or development of Nietzsche's thought invisible. This question pertains to the question of method as well. This thesis suggests, or seems to suggest, that there is one method that is Nietzsche's and that is the genealogical method. (See e.g. p. 52). This is a claim that is contestable, and one may also wonder to what extent a work like *Thus Spracht Zarathustra* or *The Will to Power* actually are "genealogical," methodologically speaking.
3. I am also curious to hear what the candidate thinks about the fact that one of the most central sources under discussion here is the book *The Will to Power*, given that that particular work was published posthumously, compiled and heavily edited by Nietzsche's sister and her husband.
4. Some questions about Nietzsche's style are also necessary to raise. His texts are, after all, not only very stylistically driven, but also full of question marks, obvious hyperbole, and on many occasions, it is clear that there are many different "voices" in the texts as well (which raises the question about which one is Nietzsche's own.)
5. I think the author's understanding of Nietzsche's "will to power" is very good. It is clear, thoughtful, and, on its own, a really valuable piece of Nietzsche scholarship. But I want to ask some questions about how this will work, in practice, in relation to the revaluation of (all) values. How, more precisely, do "new" (or altered) values come about? Is it possible to give concrete examples here?
6. Nietzsche's philosophy, like almost all other philosophies, is written in response to previous philosophies, as well as to concrete (often moral) problems encountered

in everyday life. I think that the problems that Nietzsche is responding to merit a broader discussion. What, according to Nietzsche, more precisely, is wrong with the kinds of moral thinking that he is reacting against. (There is some discussion, particularly in section 1.7, but there are more questions that deserves some conversation here.)

7. The connections between themes like objectivity, subjectivity, perspectivism, interpretation, truth, and grounding are many and intricate. Thus, some questions about the extent to which Nietzsche is vulnerable to the charge of relativism should also be raised.

As I said, there are some of the more general topics that deserve some conversation, and elaboration. There are many more detailed questions that should be discussed as well.

That being said, I should repeat that I think this thesis is very good. It is clearly written and well-argued. And the author provides a well-grounded reading of Nietzsche and presents subtle and important observations regarding some of the more notoriously difficult and (presumably) problematic concepts of Nietzsche's philosophy. Thus, the fact that there are questions and difficulties to discuss should not be seen a reason to doubt the quality of this work. The quality is high.

In Pardubice, date:
16/01/2026

Opponent

Niklas Forsberg