

Abstract

In my master thesis, I will concentrate on Oscar Wilde's usage of William Shakespeare's work and its influence on some of his chosen texts. Special attention will be paid to *The Picture of Dorian Gray*, *The Portrait of Mr. W. H.*, and the essay *The Truth of Masks*, one of Wilde's earliest known works. My thesis will methodologically make use of intertextuality, especially based on the concept of artistic influence written by Harold Bloom in *The Western Canon* and possibly other publications, too. Bloom describes William Shakespeare as the core of the Western canon to whom younger authors, including Wilde other Victorians, and also Joyce, refer to either polemically or in agreement. If needed, comparisons might be used in my thesis as well. Oscar Wilde vastly references the plays and poetry of William Shakespeare in his work. Simultaneously, Shakespeare influenced Wilde in his personal life – for example in his defence during his trials or when he partook in the opening of Shakespeare's memorial. The goal of my thesis is to map Oscar Wilde's understanding of the character of William Shakespeare and the difference in his approach to Shakespeare in the comparison of the traditional Victorian perspective. I wish to examine how did Oscar Wilde agree and disagree with the traditional Victorian idea through analysing his works, and to see whether he did or did not attempt to create unusual picture of Shakespearean themes and the character of Shakespeare.

Keywords

Wilde Oscar, Shakespeare William, Victorian Era, English literature, 19th century, intertextuality, comparisons