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The Comparison of Selected Fairy Tales by Hans Christian Andersen and Oscar Wilde with Regards to Plot, Characters and Motifs

Diploma thesis

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TECHNICKÁ UNIVERZITA V LIBERCI
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Komparace vybraných pohádek Hanse Christiana Andersena a Oscara Wilda se zaměřením na zápletky, postavy a motivy

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Zásady pro vypracování:

Jak uvádí James (James 2006,1) angličtina Hanse Christiana Andersena byla na velice nízké úrovni. Andersenovy pohádky, romány a povídky začaly být překládány do angličtiny už ve 40. letech 19. století. Od té doby se datují téměř neustálé snahy o moderní anglický překlad jeho děl. (Frank and Frank 2006,2). Proto můžeme předpokládat, že Andersenova literární tvorba ovlivnila dílo Oscara Wilda a nikoliv naopak.

Cílem práce je ověřit pravdivost tohoto předpokladu analýzou a komparací vybraných Andersenových a Wildových pohádek se zaměřením na zápletky, postavy a motivy.
Kromě obsahové analýzy a komparace bude použit narratologický přístup, strategie detailního čtení a kulturně-antropologická analýza s cílem rozlišit běžné literární topoi v textech vybraných pohádek a rozeznat možné intertextuální vazby mezi vybranými texty.

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Abstrakt

Cílem práce je porovnat podobnosti a rozdíly mezi pohádkami Oscara Wilda a Hanse Christiana Andersena. Srovnání je provedeno analýzou motivů lásky, smrti pýchy a několika náboženských motivů zejména ve vybraných pohádkách obou autorů a zhodnocením přístupu obou spisovatelů k těmto motivům. Vybranými texty jsou: „Malá mořská víla", „Slavík" a „Císařovy nové šaty" Hanse Christiana Andersena a „Rybář a jeho duše", „Slavík a růže" a „Podivuhodná raketa" Oscara Wilda.

Podobnosti mezi vybranými texty existují, ale zdají se být pouze všeobecné, zatímco rozdíly jsou dosti výrazné, což dovoluje zpochybnit obecně přijímanou tezi o Wildově inspiraci Andersenovými příběhy.

Klíčová slova

pohádky, Hans Christian Andersen, Oscar Wilde, podobnosti, rozdíly, motiv posmrtného života, motiv lásky, motiv pýchy, náboženské motivy, inspirační zdroje

Abstract

The aim of this thesis is to compare selected fairy-tales of Hans Christian Andersen and Oscar Wilde. The comparison is done through the analysis of motifs of love, death, pride and of several religious motifs primarily in 'The Little Mermaid', 'The Nightingale' and 'The Emperor's New Clothes' by Hans Christian Andersen and 'The Fisherman and His Soul', 'The Nightingale and the Rose' and 'The Remarkable Rocket' by Oscar Wilde but also in other relevant texts.

The similarities found in analysed stories are real but too generic while the differences are substantial enough to cast serious doubts on the widely accepted hypothesis of Andersen's influence of Oscar Wilde's fairy-tales.

Keywords

fairy-tales, Hans Christian Andersen, Oscar Wilde, similarities, differences, motif of afterlife, motif of love, motif of pride, religious motifs, sources of inspiration

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Contents

Introduction

The works of both Hans Christian Andersen and Oscar Wilde – and their fairy-tales in the first place – have become a constant to which I repeatedly return and always find something new. Having become intimately familiar with their stories, I could not help noticing certain similarities in them and I wished to know more about both writers and about any possible correlation between their fairy-tales.

1 Background and Methodology

Connecting the works of Hans Christian Andersen with the writings of Oscar Wilde may appear surprising at first, as these two writers were divided by place, language, social standing, and to some extent even time. Despite all these reasons for finding differences in their works, the fairy-tales of Hans Christian Andersen and Oscar Wilde have been linked many times since the first publication of 'The Happy Prince and Other Tales', albeit usually without further elaboration of the phenomenon.

Among those who make such connection yet give little evidence for it are for example Isobel Murray (1980, pp. 10–11) in her introduction to *The Complete Shorter Fiction of Oscar Wilde*, Christopher Naassar (1995) with his otherwise very insightful contrastive analysis of Wilde's 'The Fisherman and his Soul' and Andersen's 'The Shadow', or Jacqueline Banerjee (2008) in her article 'The Impact of Hans Christian Andersen on Victorian Fiction' or Jack Zipes ([1983] 1991, p. 118) in *Fairy Tales and the Art of Subversion: The Classical Genre for Children and the Process of Civilization.*

Anne Markey (2011, chapters on the respective fairy-tales: 'The Nightingale and the Rose', 'The Fisherman and His Soul' and 'The Remarkable Rocket') at least proceeds to give a more detailed analysis of concurrences between both author's stories in her monograph 'Oscar Wilde's Fairy Tales', but she never goes beyond listing motifs that appear in both Andersen and Wilde, nor she tries to determine the degree of probability with which Wilde might have read Andersen's work, even though she does so with every other Wilde's source she found.

The belief that Wilde wrote many of his fairy-tales as a response to Andersen's stories or as a play with their motifs seems to be largely based only on Wilde's use of the same motifs – but the motifs of love, death or suffering are very common in themselves and in my opinion their presence in Wilde's tales does not necessarily suggest that Andersen's stories needed to be a source of inspiration to him. It is not possible to simply assume the influence of one writer on the other only because they employ similar motifs. Taking into consideration Oscar Wilde's profound education and his perfect knowledge of both contemporary and classical literature and the frequency of the above mentioned motifs, it is somewhat surprising that the apparent correspondence between Andersen's work and some of Wilde's texts should be explained away almost solely by Wilde's assumed inspiration from Andersen's fairy-tales.

That is not to say that Oscar Wilde could not have been familiar with the works of Hans Christian Andersen. Andersen's stories have gained immense popularity in Britain in the middle of 19th century and have been promoted even by Dickens himself, despite the flaws and changes in their early translations to English.

Wilde could have had access to several of these translations, especially to Bushby's (1853) and Dulcken's (in circulation from the sixth decade till the end of 19th century) but all of these translations have, in various degrees, transformed Andersen's stories into moralities (Malmkjaer 1995) that would have been unlikely to hold any appeal to Wilde.

Jaqueline Banerjee (2008) tries to explain the fact that both authors focus on similar motifs because of assumed parallels between the lives of Hans Christian Andersen and Oscar Wilde. However, when their lives are examined for parallels, the semblances are very generic[1] and it could be argued whether the influence of the elements Wilde and

1. Out of the wide range of biographical literature available for both Andersen and Wilde, I chose Bredsdorff's *Hans Christian Andersen: The Story of His life and Work, 1805–75* and Jackie Wullschlager's monograph *Hans Christian Andersen: The Life of a Storyteller* as my sources of information about Andersen's life. Jack Zipes's *Hans Christian Andersen: The Misunderstood Storyteller*, a well-received title, is a thought provoking collection of essays that dares to challenge traditional and cliché images of Andersen both as writer and as a man. However, I decided not to use it as a reference as, in my opinion, Zipes did

Andersen did have in common could really be so forming that it would have caused Wilde's writings to mirror Andersen's, as has been implied by Banerjee (2008).

Their family background was very dissimilar in social and financial standing, Andersen's family even had a significant genetic load (Bredsdorff 1975, p. 16), but both boys were always taken care of and well-loved (See Bredsdorff 1975, chapter 'The Swamp Plant'; Wright 2009, chapter 'Hear the Song of Oscar!'; and Ellmann 1987, chapter 'Toil of Growing Up').

Andersen had begun his education at a later age than Wilde but the notion that he was an uneducated man, which sometimes still persists in general public, is misleading and incorrect. While Andersen had never quite mastered Latin, an important part of higher education of the time, and the depth and range of his education could not rival Wilde's, Andersen had managed to overcome the disadvantage posed by the belated start of his schooling and even studied a semester of philology and philosophy at the Copenhagen University with acceptable results[2] and thanks to his own extensive reading he had a good knowledge of both classical and contemporary literature and drama.

Both Wilde and Andersen had a rather problematic love life but for quite different reasons. Andersen found it impossible for himself to establish a functional intimate relationship primarily due to his great, almost pathological, shyness but also for other, less desirable traits of character. Oscar Wilde, on the other hand, entered relationships with the ease of a social butterfly. His problem lay in being involved in too many relationships, rather than in an inability to establish one (cf Ellmann 1987, chapter 'Advances'; and Bredsdorff 1975, pp. 280–282).

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not give enough reasons, sources and or evidence for his otherwise very interesting conclusions. The most comprehensive of Wilde's biographies is still Ellmann's *Oscar Wilde* but *Oscar's Books: A Journey around the Library of Oscar Wilde* by Thomas Wright is a worthy addition to the number of Wilde's biographies, especially for providing detailed insights into Wilde's artistic tastes. The *Unmasking of Oscar Wilde* by Joseph Pearce offers very interesting and quite well founded theories about Wilde's religious inclinations but the author neglects to properly answer to possible counterarguments to his theories.

2. After one semester, Andersen quit the university on his own request. Any exams caused him great stress and anxiety and he felt he had sufficiently fulfilled his duty to his benefactors and supporters by staying at the university for so long (Wullschläger 2001, p. 86).

It would appear that if Hans Christian Andersen and Oscar Wilde had anything in common outside of their literary work, the semblance would be in their characters and opinions rather than in their background and experiences. Both had been instilled during their up bringing a sense of greatness, of being destined for something exceptional that will amaze the world. The chapters their biographers dedicate to the childhood of Wilde and Andersen are very enlightening in this regard, especially when the relationships between them and their parents are described. (Again, refer to Bredsdorff 1975, chapter 'The Swamp Plant'; Wright 2009, chapter 'Hear the Song of Oscar!'; and Ellmann 1987, chapter 'Toil of Growing Up').

Aware of the problematic evidence for the existence of the links between the fairy-tales of Oscar Wilde and Hans Christian Andersen, I decided to examine their similarities and differences, using a selected number of tales by each author. The selection is a necessity given by the scope of this work.

Choosing the titles for comparison was complicated by the disproportional numbers of fairy-tales written by Andersen and Wilde. Andersen wrote more than one hundred and fifty tales and stories (Andersen 1949), while Wilde wrote nine fairy-tales (Wilde 1908) and six short stories (Wilde 1980).

Eventually I chose 'The Little Mermaid', 'The Nightingale' and 'The Emperor's New Clothes' by Andersen and 'The Fisherman and his Soul', 'The Nightingale and the Rose' and 'The Remarkable Rocket' by Wilde, where the resemblances appear to be strongest, as the primarily compared texts. Other tales will be added whenever relevant for a deeper understanding of the motifs[3] and on the contrary if any of the primary texts cannot provide additional insights for the analysis of a given motif, they will not be mentioned.

3. A collection of Andersen's stories in translation of Jean Hersholt, the most comprehensive translation available in English, which is sometimes regarded as the standard translation into English (Andersen 1949), served as the sources of the texts.

For Wilde's fairy-tales, I used a 1908 edition published by Methuen and Co., which is the oldest edition of both fairy-tales collections that I could find, available here: https://archive.org/details/ahousepomegranaoowildgoog. I always tried to find the oldest edition, preferably one published during Wilde's life whenever a definitive edition of a work was not available.

I will focus primarily on motivic similarities and differences, as these have been most often used as arguments in favour of linking Wilde's fairy-tales to those of Andersen. There is a great number of motifs that can be found in either author's fairy-tales so I shall limit myself to comparing and contracting religious motifs present in them, especially the motif of death and afterlife and of love and pride, approached from a religious and philosophical point of view.

The religious motifs in the works of Hans Christian Andersen and Oscar Wilde are many, diverse and often even contradictory. Despite the abundance of primary materials, few of them have been critically examined. The smaller religious motifs chosen for analysis are: God, Sacrifice (Suffering) and Atonement (Repentance). The remaining motifs of Death and Afterlife, of Love and of Pride, are analysed in the respective chapters.

The theoretical background for analysing the chosen motifs provide *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, a modern source, *The Catholic Encyclopedia*, published in 1910, and for comparison also *The Lutheran Cyclopaedia* and *Luther's Small Catechism Developed and Explained*, published in 1899 and 1893, respectively, to give an overview of theological opinions of the time.

Aware that Oscar Wilde remained formally an Anglican nearly till the end of his life, I strove to find a reliable contemporary Anglican source similar to the Catholic and Lutheran encyclopaedies to use for comparison of the Anglican and Lutheran teachings of the time, without success. However, both *The Catholic Encyclopedia* and *The Lutheran Cyclopedia* list differences of opinion found in other major Christian denominations in the text of each relevant entry. Therefore, I chose to assume that no major differences existed unless the text of any of the secondary sources stated otherwise.

The Catholic theology is taken into account for two reasons. One of them is Wilde's attraction to Catholicism which, with various intensity, lasted through his life, making him even consider conversion several times till he eventually became a Catholic on his deathbed.

The second reason is that Christian dogma has been preserved in the teachings of the Catholic Church without substantial changes through the history, especially where core articles of faith such as the ones relevant for this research are concerned.[4] This fact allows easy comparison of the original dogmata against the Lutheran ones, facilitating a contrast analysis of the chosen religious motifs.

In order to learn how Wilde's and Andersen's contemporaries understood the central terms of each analysed motif, I will also use the *Stanford Encyclopaedia of Philosophy* to verify the relevant opinions of Plato, who had profoundly influenced Oscar Wilde.

4. More radical changes of the customs of the Catholic Church took place only after the closure of the Second Vatican Council in 1965. However, the council proposed no changes of dogmatas.

2 Selected Religious Motifs: An Introduction

2.1 The Motif of God

Whenever God appears in any of the selected fairy-tales, be they Wilde's or Andersen's, it is a distinctly Christian god and therefore no attention will be paid to the definitions given by the Greek philosophers of antiquity. *The Stanford Encyclopaedia of Philosophy* gives the following general definition of a maximally great being (God): 'The object of attitudes valorized in the major religious traditions is typically regarded as maximally great. Conceptions of maximal greatness differ but theists believe that a maximally great reality must be a maximally great person or God. Theists largely agree that a maximally great person would be omnipresent, omnipotent, omniscient, and all good. They do not agree on a number of God's other attributes, however' (*Concepts of God* 2013).

The Catholic Encyclopedia expands the definition with features specific to the Christian god, that is infinity, unicity, simplicity and especially perfection, elaborated as follows:[1]

> When we say that God is infinite, we mean that He is unlimited in every kind of perfection or that every conceivable perfection belongs to Him in the highest conceivable way. … Obviously there can be only one infinite being, only one God. If several were to exist, none of them would really be infinite, for, to have plurality of natures at all, each should have some perfection not possessed by the others. … God is a simple being or substance excluding every kind of composition, physical or metaphysical. … When we say that God is a personal being we mean that He is intelligent and free and distinct from the created universe. Personality as such expresses perfection, and if human personality as

1. All ellipses thorough this work are my own.

> such connotes imperfection, it must be remembered that, as in the case of similar predicates, this connotation is excluded when we attribute personality to God (*Nature and Attributes of God* 1909).

A list of other divine attributes that are considered to be of fundamental importance for a better comprehension of God is also given, though the list is not meant to be inclusive. Of these eternity, omnipresence and immutability are crucial and deserve a precise definition to prevent a confusion of terms.

The eternity of God does not refer to God's existence for an infinite amount of time but to the fact that: 'He is altogether beyond temporal limits and relations. He has neither beginning, nor end, nor duration by way of sequence or succession of moments. There is no past or future for God – but only an eternal present. … Eternity, therefore, as predicated of God, … means the total exclusion of the finiteness which time implies.' (*Nature and Attributes of God* 1909)

God's omnipresence means that God is not a subject to spacial limitations and that he is truly present in every place or thing. Finally, God's immutability means that there is no change in the infinitely perfect God (*Nature and Attributes of God* 1909).

The Lutheran Cyclopaedia gives no definition of God, completely lacking this entry, but the authors of *Luther's Small Catechism Developed and Explained* view God similarly to Toner as an invisible, uncreated and perfect spirit, one in three persons. Surprisingly, unlike Luther's Small Catechism, *The Catholic Encyclopaedia* does not include love and mercifulness as divine attributes. Other than that, there are no significant differences between the Catholic and Lutheran definition of God.

It is known that Andersen's concept of God was Unitarian, that is, he never accepted the Trinitarian dogma that has developed during centuries (*The Blessed Trinity* 1912). His God was one (Bredsdorff 1975, p. 298; cf. Bom and Aarenstrup 2013a), he never mentioned the Holy Spirit and he considered Jesus to be a chosen man, not a son of God (Bredsdorff 1975, p. 299).

Oscar Wilde rarely spoke of God but there is an apparent and long-lasting fascination with Christ through his life. Wilde's opinions on him perpetually developed and refined. He had considered Christ to be an archetype of Artist, the supreme individualist, the origin of romance (Goodenough 1999, p. 339) and an artist to be Christ's most notable imitator (Willoughby 1993, pp. 27, 34–35).

His opinions on the nature of Christ – whether or not he was only a man – seem to never have been explicitly declared. His claims in public were deigned to shock, and as such they were often contradictory. However, Wilde appears to have been conflicted about this issue even in private.

After his release from prison, Wilde expressed a belief that Christ did not come to save the mankind but to teach people how to save each other (Wilde [1898] 1898, p. 329). It is uncertain if this was his belief about Christ at the time of writing of either volume of his fairy-tales, or if it even was the dominating view of Christ to which he adhered. Many years earlier, however, he wrote in a letter to William Ward: 'you don't see the beauty and necessity for the *incarnation* of God into man to help us to grasp at the skirts of the Infinite [emphasis in original]' (Wilde 1876, p. 8).

Such opinion is well in accordance with the established beliefs of any major denomination about Christ. Aside from these two opposing opinions, separated by more than twenty years, there is no clearly defined known belief of Oscar Wilde about Christ with which the analysis of the stories could operate. Wilde's beliefs changed and develop during the time and the current state of research does not facilitate determining those that may have influenced the creation of *The Happy Prince and the Other Tales* and *The House of Pomegranates*.

Therefore, the goal of the analysis of the motif of God in Wilde's fairy-tales will be to find out whether and to what extent the God featured in them corresponds to the above described official Christian beliefs, while the fairy-tales of Hans Christian Andersen will be examined for an influence of his personal beliefs about God.

Among the primarily analysed Wilde's fairy-tales, the motif of God is most apparent in 'The Fisherman and His Soul'. The God in 'The Fisherman and His Soul' is again a decidedly Christian God, which is emphasised by Satan's presence in the story and also by the existence of the false idol, whose priest the Soul meets during its exile.

It is because the God of the story is a Christian one that he causes a miracle which shows to every one that He is God who is Love and not God full of wrath like his Priest had believed. By explicitly making the Priest preach about God whose name is Love, Wilde effectively and in a very orthodox manner, makes Love and God become one.

In a striking contrast not only to 'The Fisherman and His Soul' but to most other Wilde's tales, God appears to be absent in 'The Nightingale and the Rose', which lead some critics to believe that God completely deserted the universe of this particular story (Killeen 2007, p. 41). However, the tale does feature a leading Christ-like figure, who offers a 'redemption', that is, offers to save the Student from the seeming unhappiness and pain of unrequited love. This figure is the Nightingale. The rose that she created out of her love, commitment and blood is to become the Student's key to the paradise of true love – but her offer of redemption is rejected.

The fairy-tale of 'The Remarkable Rocket' leaves out the motif of God entirely but unlike 'The Nightingale and the Rose', no critics appear to have been disturbed by this fact, perhaps because the story is clearly centered around the very worldly Rocket and his foolish pride.

In none of the selected fairy tales of Hans Christian Andersen does God appear explicitly. In 'The Little Mermaid' he is barely mentioned. Andersen talks only about the kingdom of God and about God's Sun, then finally he makes God take the initiative in shortening or prolonging the trials of the daughters of Air.

However, Andersen was not averse to including God in his work. The Hans Christian Andersen Center provides a complete list of all his works in which the motif of God is present (Bom and Aarenstrup 2013b). Perhaps the most interesting of these works,

with regards to the goals of this particular analysis, are the stories 'The World's Fairest Rose' and 'On the Judgement Day'.[2]

In 'the Nightingale' there is no mention of God at all. God is not even listed among religious motifs registered that appear in the tale at the dedicated page of The Hans Christian Andersen Center (Bom and Aarenstrup 2013b). The same situation arises with 'The Emperor's New Clothes'.

In 'The World's Fairest Rose' Andersen directly proclaims that the Love of Christ, who allowed himself to be crucified for the salvation of mankind, took a form of a miraculous rose growing out of his blood, and is the one thing that can save a human being, in this case a Queen, from death. Yet Andersen states this without even once alluding to divine or human nature of Christ – which is an indirect evidence in favour of Johan de Mylius's claim that Andersen saw Jesus as a chosen man. Andersen would have been more likely to mention Christ's divine nature if the case was different.

In this Andersen's story, just like in Wilde's 'The Nightingale and the Rose', the most beautiful rose in the world, a thing of perfect beauty is the symbol of the brightest and purest love (Andersen 1843).

Contrary to Wilde Andersen does not veil his message into any more symbols than the rose and does not dwell on the importance of beauty or art at all, neither playing any role in his retelling of the legend. It is because Andersen made it clear that the tale is about Christ, that he had to give it a happy ending, which also becomes the greatest difference when the story is compared with Wilde's 'The Nightingale and The Rose'.

Among Wilde's stories and Andersen's fairy-tales are two texts that feature God as a central character. Wilde's 'The House of Judgement', a short story Wilde wrote

2. Available here http://www.andersen.sdu.dk/vaerk/hersholt/OnJudgmentDay/_e.html. Wilde's 'The House of Judgement' is available here: http://archive.org/details/spiritlampserialoodoug, both in a way prefiguring Wilde's 'The Nightingale and The Rose' and 'The House of Judgement.' I will give their summary in the chapter on the motif of Death and Afterlife, to which they are most relevant.

in 1893[3] and Andersen's 'On The Judgement Day' present the reader with an identical motif almost completely reversed and so they clearly illustrate their respective authors' thoughts about God.

While Wilde's Man in 'The House of Judgement' has filled his life with evil acts and does not deny them, Andersen's man in the story 'On the Judgement Day' has precisely followed God's law and he is very sure of himself, certain that he will be admitted to Heaven.

It is only in the very last moment, when he realises how much evil he had done and, most importantly, that he has had no love for his neighbours, that he is saved though the mercy of God. Wilde's Man, on the other hand, refuses the offered mercy when he stands before God's judgement. He refuses the chance to enter Heaven, because he is not able to imagine it.

The analysed fairy-tales appear to allow for the following conclusions, although the validity of these conclusions is necessarily limited by the lack of available critically processed primary sources.

Oscar Wilde considered God to be one with Love, about which, however, he wrote much more and in greater detail than about God. In 'The Fisherman and His Soul', Wilde's God clearly marks his preference for true love, even love that is seemingly unacceptable, over pride and wrath.

Perhaps a more tangible way for Wilde to deal with divine motifs in his writing was through his long lasting fascination with Christ and Christ-like figures, which found its way into many of his fairy-tales as well, 'The Nightingale and the Rose' being a prominent example among the selected stories.

Besides featuring the Christ-like figure, the story also shows that even the greatest gifts and the greatest love cannot help anyone if they are not accepted – an idea that Wilde later presented from a different angle in his parable 'The House of Judgement.'

3. More about it in the chapter on the motif of death and afterlife, where the story belongs thematically.

Andersen, contrary to Wilde, always rewards his characters for behaving in a truly Christian manner, even if their reformation is belated and often enforced by a punishment. 'The Little Mermaid', 'The Girl Who Trod on the Loaf' or 'The Red Shoes', to name just a few, are the examples of this principle. 'The World's Fairest Rose' also accentuates Andersen's Unitarian views.

Andersen also nearly always allows God to save the characters of his tales from Hell, and he keeps offering them chances to work on themselves and so to be redeemed, sometimes at their mere word, like the man in 'On the Judgement Day'. It would have appeared naïve and forced but Andersen does not allow the God of his fairy-tales to save any character without first letting them comprehend their sins and mistakes. Only when they do not want to be saved, despite having been shown what they did wrong, like the Emperor in 'The Emperor's New Clothes', they are left to their fate.

Both Wilde and Andersen pay little to no attention to the Holy Spirit, giving it no role in any of the fairy-tales.

2.2 The Motif of Sacrifice and Suffering

Sacrifice is not a term that would bear solely Christian connotations. It is a universal phenomenon appearing in all religions through the history, naturally including the religion of ancient Greeks, with which Oscar Wilde was intimately familiar and of which Hans Christian Andersen would have at least basic information, having attended a grammar school at Slagelse, at the time led by a prominent classicist Meisling[4] (Wullschläger 2001, chapter 'Aladdin at School').

4. Though Andersen's results in subjects dealing with classic languages were not very satisfactory, I find it reasonable to believe he remembered at least the basics, as references to classic texts do in some measure appear through his works.

According to Mikalson (2010, p. 25) for the Greeks sacrifice was a ritual process through which a profane, non-sacred object or an animal was given to a deity to honour it, gain its favour or show one's[5] gratitude.

The Catholic Encyclopedia defines a sacrifice in the following way: 'By sacrifice in the real sense is universally understood the offering of a sense-perceptible gift to the Deity as an outward manifestation of our veneration for Him and with the object of attaining communion with Him. Strictly speaking however, this offering does not become a sacrifice until a real change has been effected in the visible gift (e.g. by slaying it, shedding its blood. burning it, or pouring it out)' (*Sacrifice* 1912).

The author also notes that Protestantism has no real sacrifice, probably because of the difference of opinions on the transformation of Eucharist into the Body and Blood of Jesus Christ.

The apparent lack of sacrifice in the religious sense of the word in both Wilde's and Andersen's tales may seem odd and unsettling, given that so many scholars operate freely with the term in their analysis of the two stories.[6]

The confusion probably arose from compromising the meaning of the term sacrifice in its strict, religious sense as it was defined above and its meaning in the common language, which is defined in the Oxford dictionary as: 'An act of giving up something valued for the sake of something else regarded as more important or worthy' (*Sacrifice: Definition of Sacrifice in Oxford Dictionary (British & World English)* 2014).[7]

Yet, while this understanding of sacrifice is perfectly acceptable and applicable for analysing both Andersen's and Wilde's works, the arguments I gave before show that it it cannot constitute a religious motif as which it is sometimes treated.

5. I use the words 'he', 'his', 'one' and 'one's' even when referring to human beings in general, whether they are male or female. This is done in order to keep a uniform style with the quoted sources, which due to their age use this style of reference and should not be understood as a discrimination of either gender.

6. See for example (Nassaar 2002; Goodenough 1999; Killeen 2007; Markey 2011)

7. It is curious to note that the Oxford dictionary lists this meaning of the word sacrifice as the last possible meaning, the religious definitions taking precedence, thus making the order clear enough to prevent the confusion of terms even if one used nothing else than a dictionary to define them.

In neither the Catholic, Lutheran or even the ancient Greek definition, there is a mention of a possibility of understanding giving one's life for another, as Andersen's the little Mermaid or the Nightingale in Wilde's 'The Nightingale and the Rose' did, to be a sacrifice, however frequently the word may be used when the stories are analysed.

That is understandable as there is little intention to venerate God, communicate with him or to make penance for their sins in what either of the characters did. Their reason for choosing to give their lives was love, which at once differentiates them from a sacrifice, despite the fulfilment of the condition of change, and what makes them an example of another motif with strong religious overtones, the motif of Love. The little Mermaid and the Nightingale die to ensure the happiness of another.

Therefore, the death of the little Mermaid in Andersen's 'The Little Mermaid' can not represent a sacrifice in a strictly religious sense. It is not a sign of veneration of a deity, it is not an attempt to communicate with a deity and lastly, it is not and cannot be a satisfaction for sins because no sins were committed in the tale.

Yet her death is not altogether without a religious meaning. It may not be a sacrifice in its proper sense but it is a proof of her highest love for the Prince, love as a virtue. Her death is a perfect illustration of Jesus's words 'Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends' (John 15:13).

The Nightingale in Wilde's 'The Nightingale and the Rose' does not try to give a satisfaction for any sins either – no sins were committed in the story until after her death, if the rejection of the rose may be considered a sin. Likewise, she is not trying to communicate with a deity, even though her death is coming close to the religious meaning of a sacrifice because it is a veneration of Love, both through her song and ultimately in giving her life for a rose in order to help true love (or what she thinks is one) prevail.

For these reasons both deaths, that of the little Mermaid and that of the Nightingale in 'The Nightingale and the Rose', are, in my opinion, first and foremost examples of

love, love unto death, love that compels one to give one's life for another. Even the last thoughts of both characters, the little Mermaid and the Nightingale are on those they love (the Prince) or on Love itself (the Nightingale is singing about Love with her dying breath).

However, the claim that the death of the Nightingale in Wilde's 'The Nightingale and the Rose' is not a sacrifice in the strict religious meaning of the word appears unsettling for one more reason. The bird's death apparently bears strong and intentional resemblances, as well as more subtle reminders, of Christ's sacrifice on the Cross.

Despite that, it should not be considered a sacrifice. The Nightingale's death may represent a sacrifice in the common meaning of the word but even with the resemblance to Christ's death, it does not constitute a sacrifice in the religious meaning of the term.

Understanding the Nightingale's death instead as *imitatio Christi*, that is the imitation of Christ up to and including death, in which the bird's devotion to art and love blend into one in this act (Willoughby 1993, pp. 27–28) not only justifies the liberal use of Christian imagery and symbolic but it also explains why the rose had to be rejected – because Christ's death has been often rejected and misunderstood as well.

Lastly, when the Fisherman sends away his soul in Wilde's 'The Fisherman and His Soul', it cannot be a sacrifice in the religious understanding of the term because he is not trying to venerate a deity or communicate with one through this act. It is difficult to regard it even as a sacrifice in its common meaning, because the Fisherman does not care what his soul may be worth and sees it only as an obstacle to having his desires fulfilled.

If there is no sacrifice in the strict religious sense in Andersen's 'The Little Mermaid' and if only one aspect of such sacrifice is adhered to in Wilde's 'The Nightingale and the Rose', there appear to be no instances of a sacrifice, be it in the strict or common meaning, in 'The Nightingale', 'The Emperor's New Clothes' or in 'The Remarkable Rocket'.

Having established that there is little to no justification in treating deaths that appear in the tales as a motif of religious sacrifice and having explained the most acute problems arising with such claim, it would be remiss to overlook the significant role of suffering in the selected stories of both Andersen and Wilde.

In the contemporary understanding of the Catholic Church suffering is one of the fruits of a wilful disobedience of God, that is of a sin (*Evil* 1909). This is also in agreement with the doctrine described in *The Lutheran Cyclopaedia*, in its entry on atonement, that Christ had to bear the penalty of sin – suffering and death (*Atonement* 1899a).

Neither Andersen nor Wilde attempt to determine the source of suffering in their texts. They focus more on its potential value for either the growth of the soul (Andersen) or for creation of Beauty (Wilde).

Andersen even made suffering, or rather enduring and overcoming it, a necessary condition that would enable the little Mermaid to attempt – attempt not succeed in – her quest for love and immortal soul. His idea of incessant development of soul is not one of a simple, unrestrained growth.

In Andersen's universe, it is necessary to suffer in order to open the way from one stage of development to another (Mylius 2007, pp. 31–32). The Little Mermaid is a precise illustration of that. She first needs to suffer the pain of having her tongue cut out and of drinking the witch's brew just to be able to ascend from the sea among human beings (1837). Having transferred into this stage, she is to experience the pain of walking 'on the blades and points of sharp knives' (Andersen 1837) with each step she takes and then an even greater pain when the Prince announces his intent of marrying another. The ultimate pain of her earthly life, of her taking her own life, finally allows her to enter another, higher stage of her development – she becomes a daughter of air and can now reach Heaven through her own effort, just as Andersen had intended.[8]

8. See (Wullschläger 2001, p. 165)

In Andersen's 'The Nightingale', on the other hand, suffering is only hinted at. Andersen introduces it in the characters of the poor fisherman and the little kitchen girl when he mentions their hard life but he does not elaborate on the topic. The reader may deduce that the Emperor is suffering when his life is on the stake and when he can see all his good and evil deeds. The Nightingale then promises to sing to the Emperor of 'those who are sorrowful and those who are gay' (Andersen 1843) but there is no sign of any especial power attributed to suffering in the text.

Two notable cases of suffering can be found among the selected Wilde's fairy-tales. The first is the Nightingale in 'The Nightingale and the Rose'. Elizabeth Goodenough (1999, p. 338) argues that Wilde considered pain to be the 'redemptive heart of life', and that is certainly true of the Nightingale's pain.

It is only through her suffering that the red rose can be created, a concept that Wilde ([1897] 2000, sheet 28, page 1) later expressed very clearly in his 'De Profundis' when he wrote that 'the secret of life is suffering'. That is why the Nightingale needs to let the rose grow from her own life blood – her suffering is the true heart of life, creating a living rose.

That she follows through its creation until her own death proves her commitment to Love and, as Willoughby (1993, pp. 27, 29) convincingly claims, to Art as well. Just as Love is perfected by Death (Wilde 1908, p. 195) so is the beauty of a work of art perfected by suffering and pain.

It may be rightfully argued that Wilde was very suspicious of great acts of charity, philanthropy or suffering for greater good as they were, in a sense, promoted by the society of his time (Wilde 1915) and that, being so disapproving of it, he wrote 'The Nightingale and the Rose' in an attempt to show futility of such attitudes.

Nevertheless, Murray (2000, p. x) pointed out, Wilde was ' equally moved by dramatic inequalities, by poverty, by oppression and hunger'. What worried him were not the values of the society but the means of promoting these values, of making them abso-

lute, too rigid, too mindlessly followed and this fear contributed greatly to his ridicule and satire on them.

However, Wilde wrote his fairy-tales for those who 'have kept the childlike faculties of wonder and joy, and who find in simplicity a subtle strangeness' (Wilde 1888b, 1888c). With such readers he did not have to worry about a mindless applications of values and moral rules.

It is also worth noting that, while critical of remedies of social evils through unsystematic means such as charity, Wilde did not condemn individual acts of kindness, though in his opinion those served more to the bettering of one's self than to improving the conditions of the poor and oppressed (Wilde [1897] 2000, sheet 30, page 2).

For these reasons, it is just as justified to interpret 'The Nightingale and The Rose' as a parable of unappreciated and in a way futile suffering as it is to interpret it as the exact opposite, that is as the suffering that can create beauty and make it become alive.

The open end of the fairy-tale and its whole structure allows for a whole range of interpretations, up to and included the two most extreme ones just mentioned. Wilde himself confirmed that allowing for the greatest number of possible interpretations of 'The Nightingale and the Rose' was his aim from the very beginning: 'in writing it, and the others, I did not start with an idea and clothe it in a form but began with a form and strove to make it beautiful enough to have many secrets, and many answers' (Wilde 1888a; cf. Markey 2011, p. 104).

The second instance of suffering among the selected Wilde's fairy-tales, this time with a slightly different purpose, is in 'The Fisherman and His Soul'. The Fisherman's suffering culminates in the moment when finds his lover dead. He is as one smitten with pain and that pain is full of strange gladness. (Wilde 1908, p. 125).

If the Nightingale's suffering in 'The Nightingale and the Rose' illustrates the aspect of pain which is the source of creation, it is its redemptive aspect which is emphasised in the suffering of the young Fisherman. His suffering perfects his love for the now

dead Mermaid. It also makes his love reach its fullness and through it break his heart, allowing the Fisherman's Soul to reunite with him without diminishing any of his love for the Mermaid (cf. Nassaar 2002, p. 144).

2.3 The Motif of Atonement and Repentance

The terms atonement and repentance are often confused[9] because they are very closely related. Consequently, it might be useful to make the distinction clear, even though only one of them constitutes a motif that actually appears in the selected fairy-tales. Atonement is defined in *The Catholic Encyclopedia* as:

> the Satisfaction of Christ, whereby God and the world are reconciled or made to be at one. … It is essentially a sacrifice, the one supreme sacrifice of which the rest were but types and figures … It was by this inward sacrifice of obedience unto death, by this perfect love with which He laid down his life for His friends, that Christ paid the debt to justice, … it was by this that He wrought our Atonement and Reconciliation with God, 'making peace through the blood of His Cross' (*Doctrine of the Atonement* 1907).

The authors of *The Lutheran Cyclopaedia* hold a similar view, stating that: 'This catastrophe [the original sin] Christ came to undo. (1 Jno. 3:8). He … reconciled the Creator and the creature and re-established personal communion between God and man (Heb. 10:20). This achievement is called the atonement, which means satisfaction for an offense or reconciling parties who were estranged' (*Atonement* 1899a).

Both definitions clearly show that the only religious meaning of the term is the satisfaction for an offence of God, or in other words, a satisfaction for a sin, which in Christianity refers solely to the death of Christ on the cross.

What is commonly understood as atonement, making amends for one's wrongdoing (*Atonement: Definition of Atonement in English from the Oxford Dictionary* 2014), is rather a sign of contrition and penance. Contrition is defined by *The Catholic Encyclo-*

9. A good example of the blending of the terms, based on their everyday usage, is in the otherwise brilliant article by Elizabeth Goodenough (1999, p. 337) 'Oscar Wilde, Victorian Fairy-tales and the Meaning of Atonement'.

paedia as 'a sorrow of soul and a hatred of sin committed, with a firm purpose of not sinning in the future. Etymologically it implies a breaking of something that has become hardened' (*Contrition* 1908). It is seen as a necessary condition for the forgiveness of sin that, in Catholic teaching, follows the contrition prompted by Grace of God.

The Lutheran Cyclopaedia presents a slightly different view of contrition (repentance) and penance.

> Repentance has its inception in the love of righteousness and the desire for a new heart, and it is wrought by the Word of God … Repentance is not a passing act once performed, but a state of mind to be continually cultivated … Forgiveness is, furthermore, not granted because of contrition, but because of the promise of Christ. … All merit is absolutely excluded. Therefore faith and Christ's Word are sufficient, but faith is brought into exercise by contrition (*Repentance* 1899b).

Penance is then an act through which the sentiment of repentance is demonstrated and which corresponds to the common understanding of atonement as making amends. In the Catholic church the specific act of penance is usually decided upon by the priest who is to give the absolution of sins (*The Sacrament of Penance* 1911). It may be anything, ranging from a command to give money to the poor or to pay for the caused damage, to fast or pray. In Lutheran churches, acts of penance are usually not performed.

Taking in consideration all of the previously given definitions, the confession which the young Fisherman makes to his dead lover in Wilde's 'The Fisherman and His Soul' is not an atonement as a religious Christian motif. If this act is to be understood through a religious prism, as the text suggests, then it is a manifestation of contrition and not an example of atonement.

The Fisherman is confessing and grieving his sins but he cannot give any satisfaction for them, as there is only one satisfaction for all sins – the death of Jesus on the cross. Wilde appears to have adhered to this view even when he had tried to proclaim Jesus to be an archetype of Artist, or when he occasionally identified himself with Jesus, on the basis of his own suffering (Stevens 2010, pp. 170–171).

It is the Fisherman's painful, grieving repentance, combined with yet another pain of his loss and with his great love, which finally allows his soul to be reunited with him. Moreover, his repentance is, as Wilde later wrote when speaking about repentance in general, 'the means by which one alters one's past' (sheet 32, page 1, Wilde [1897] 2000) – and that is what happens: the Fisherman, through his repentance undoes his having sent away his own soul, as well as evilly leaving his lover.

If the Fisherman in 'The Fisherman and His Soul', the most clear illustration of repentance, is not making an atonement, then the motif is even more noticeably absent from 'The Nightingale and the Rose'. While the Nightingale's suffering and death imitate Christ, it lacks the dimension of a satisfaction for sins, which is the very foundation of atonement. The Nightingale did not die to give a satisfaction for them but for what she believed to be a true love.

Applying the respective definitions of atonement and contrition to Andersen's story of 'The Little Mermaid' reveals that these motifs are completely absent from the tale, which is in harmony with Andersen's idea of perpetual growth of the soul and with the traditional idea of mermaids lacking a soul, which Andersen included in the fairy-tale.

The lack of a soul is the reason why the little Mermaid can have no sins to repent. Furthermore, she dies because her love for the Prince is so great that she values his happiness higher than her own life. Consequently, not even her suicide can be seen as an act of repentance.

Unlike Andersen, Wilde put more emphasis on repentance and especially on suffering connected with it, even though as Elizabeth Goodenough (1999, p. 343) correctly pointed out, he rather ascribed the redemptive power, usually associated with acts of repentance, to suffering. Even so, repentance does not constitute an important motif in his fairy-tales, with the exception of 'The Fisherman and His Soul'. The reason of this is probably that Wilde had already explored this motif in 'The Picture of Dorian Gray'.

3 The Motif of Death and Afterlife: An Introduction

The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy states that traditionally death has not been seen positively, as a liberation or a passage into a better world which was the case with later philosophers such as Seneca, but that it was feared as a way to even greater suffering in the Underworld (*Seneca* 2013).

Many proofs of this attitude can be found in the classical Greek myths and tragedies. The suffering of Tantalus or Sisyphus are proverbial and became their punishment after death, thus making Death a gateway to even greater suffering (Mikalson 2010, pp. 177–178). This can be explained by the belief of ancient Greeks that death and afterlife is an indeterminate state of being where souls continue to exist but their existence is neither joyous nor torturing and on which their deeds during life do not have impact, with the exception of great sinners such as Tantalus or Sisyphus. The afterlife of most other souls resembled oblivion (pp. 178, 180).

In Christianity, death is usually seen as a bridge between this life and the afterlife, with an undefined amount of time that the soul will spend in an intermediary state lasting from the moment of death till the moment of judgement, be it a particular judgement or the Last one. The length of the duration of the intermediary state is not given and nothing certain is known of its nature either.

The Catholics believe that every soul receives its judgement right after death and that those who die in perfect friendship with God will enter Heaven immediately. Those who refused and defied God in their life will go to Hell, also immediately.

The intermediary state would only apply for those who died in friendship with God but still have some venial sins on their conscience. For them the intermediary stare would be spent in the Purgatory where they would suffer to become holy and thus be able to enter Heaven (*Heaven* 1910a; *Hell* 1910b).

Most Protestant denominations reject the notion of Purgatory and along with it usually also any notion of an intermediary state that could be understood as a temporary or provisional form of afterlife. If they comment on the nature of the intermediary state, it is usually described as a time when the soul awaits its judgement, of which it already knows the result (*The Intermediate State* 1899c).

The view of Christian theology on afterlife differs substantially according to various denominations[1] but there are several main points that all of them have in common.

The Stanford Encyclopaedia of Philosophy states that: 'whereas heaven is in general thought of as a realm in which people experience the bliss of perfect fellowship and harmony with God and with each other, hell is in general thought of as a realm in which people experience the greatest possible estrangement from God, the greatest possible sense of alienation, and perhaps also an intense hatred of everyone including themselves' (*Heaven and Hell in Christian Thought* 2014).

This is a slightly modernised definition of Heaven and Hell that, despite having been hinted at through the history, was refused by majority of Christians during the lifetimes of both Hans Christian Andersen and Oscar Wilde. At that time, as testified by a definition in *The Catholic Encyclopedia* in 1910 (*Hell* 1910b), Hell was perceived to be a place of unknown location, with very definitive features that include real fire in which the damned suffer.

They were thought to suffer not only from the fire but also, even more profoundly, from the sense of loss, that is, from the knowledge that they can never attain the perfect happiness of those who reside with God in Heaven. The amount of their suffering would

1. The beliefs of the Orthodox churches will not be discussed here because they most likely did not influence either Andersen or Wilde due to cultural distance.

be proportional to the severity of their sins but it will last eternally. Moreover, they would be unable to experience even the slightest joy and, most likely, will not have even the smallest reprieve in the intensity of their torment.

Heaven, on the other hand, is described by the same source, *The Catholic Encyclopedia*, in much less specific terms. There was general consensus that Heaven ought to be a separate location, as opposed to an also popular belief that Heaven was present everywhere. It was a home in which the blessed can return, even though they are free to move about this world.

They experience perfect happiness, having an immediate perception of God, distinct and clear, even though the exact nature of their state of happiness in heaven, is unknown. In addition to perfect happiness, these blessed people would never experience the least pain or sadness (*Contrition* 1908).

The joy of those who dwell in Heaven is believed to be everlasting, just as the suffering of the damned in Hell. This is assured also by their confirmation in good, that is, inability to commit even the slightest sin any more (*Heaven* 1910a; *Hell* 1910b).

Similarly to the various degrees of suffering of those damned in Hell also the happiness of those in Heaven would be still perfect, and everlasting yet proportionate to their merits.

The views of most Protestant denominations of the time were – with the exception of Purgatory – similar, differing in opinions on the eternity and intensity of suffering in Hell or happiness in Heaven but not substantially differing in opinions on their nature (*Repentance* 1899b; Luther 1893, pp. 77–78).

For an exact analysis of the motif of death and afterlife in the selected fairy-tales, it is just as important to know the personal opinions and beliefs of their authors about death and afterlife. Johan de Mylius argues that Andersen regarded death as:

> … a moment of exclusiveness, intensity and enlightenment very similar to experiences known from mystic literature, but in his case connected with an idea of the soul as basically immortal and as being on an eternal

> journey, even qualifying and developing through and after death. … in Andersen's texts death subsequently opens a door to another world, to a rebirth or to a further journey of the soul, a development or even an education surpassing the visible borders of life (Mylius 2007, 31–32).

Andersen shared the opinion of his friend and mentor B. S. Ingemann on two crucial dogmata of faith concerning death and afterlife, in which both of them, Andersen and Ingemann, differed substantially from the official belief of Danish Lutheran Church (p. 31). The dogmata in question consisted of the previously mentioned intermediary state (the time between death and the Last Judgement) and the resurrection of body. Andersen, as described above, viewed death and especially the afterlife as merely the means of development and perfection of soul.

He considered such chance of progress to be a worthy fulfilment of the intermediary state, which, as was already mentioned, according to the Protestant beliefs either did not exist at all or it was just an indescribable, indeterminate period of waiting for the Last Judgement.

Despite its in determinate nature, it certainly was not filled with suffering in Purgatory or a similar place where the pain would cleanse the sinners of venial sins as taught by the Catholic Church. Andersen, although familiar with the idea, did not believe in any sort of Purgatory and torment in it, just like the mainstream Danish Lutherans of his time. Nonetheless, Andersen differed from them in his treatment of Hell, in whose existence he fully believed, as is apparent from some of his tales.[2]

His opinions on the function of Hell are rather well summarized in the description of the motif of Hell on The Hans Christian Center website. According to this source, Hell is not a very important motif in Andersen's fairy tales because when people die in them and are not worthy of entering Heaven, they do not go directly in Hell, or even some sort of Purgatory as an alternative but they undergo the quest for qualification as described above.

2. Hell is mentioned for example in 'The Girl Who Trod on the Loaf' or in a story called 'On Judgement Day'.

If they do enter Hell at all it is only a temporary and transient state, the sole purpose of which is to allow them to comprehend the need to reform themselves. Then they are again sent on their quest to perfect themselves enough to be allowed to enter Heaven (Bom and Aarenstrup 2013c).

Andersen's treatment of death as an opportunity for maturing of soul, through which it could even be saved from Hell, logically resulted in his refusal of the dogma about the resurrection of body as well (Mylius 2007, p. 32).

Oscar Wilde, owing to his elite education, was intimately familiar with the attitude of ancient Greeks towards death and afterlife, as well as with the Christian doctrine, Protestant or Catholic. Even though he did not care much for the disputes on some of the most passion inciting theological issues of his time, his interest in various theological perspectives on a variety of problems was enduring. His reading on the matters suggests unusual open-mindedness (Stevens 2010, p. 144), and indicates a lack of firm position on issues such as afterlife.

However, there is a little known Wilde's story, more of a parable than a fairy-tale, called 'The House of Judgement', which offers a glimpse into Wilde's thoughts on the topic. It is about a Man[3] facing the partial judgement of God. The Man's deeds are tallied and the Man is sentenced to Hell. The Man resists, claiming he cannot be sent to Hell because 'in Hell I have always lived.' (Douglas 1892–1893, p. 53).[4] God then decides to send the Man to Heaven but he resists again, saying that 'never, in no place, I have been able to imagine Heaven.' (p. 53)

The story allows for the following basic conclusions about Wilde's vision of afterlife as it has already been formed in 1892: Heaven and Hell exist. Hell is easy to define and imagine, as the Man knows he has been in Hell for all his life. Heaven, on the other hand, is very difficult, and in the case of this particular story, impossible to imagine. There are

3. The word man has a capital letter in the original, which is no doubt intentional, perhaps denoting an archetype or the universality of the judgement.

4. Those who wish to do so may compare the published story with the manuscript available here: http://www.themorgan.org/collection/oscar-wilde/manuscripts-letters/

cases where no simple straightforward decision can be ruled, not even by God. The final conclusion, and perhaps most relevant one for the analysis of the selected Wilde's fairy-tales is that it is possible to carry Hell within one's self.

This was an opinion the Catholic Church of the time did not denounce but which it did discourage (*Hell* 1910b), and on which the authors of The Lutheran Cyclopaedia did not comment, they themselves calling Hell alternately a place and a state (*Repentance* 1899b).

The predicament that God is forced to face in 'The House of Judgement' and his inability to give the Man full justice might be understood as Wilde's wish for a state or place 'in between' Heaven and Hell. That state or place may or may not resemble the Catholic Purgatory but there is not enough evidence in available materials to either support or deny this claim.

3.1 The Motif of Death and Afterlife in the Selected Fairy-tales of Hans Christian Andersen

The motif of Death and afterlife in 'The Little Mermaid' has been already brilliantly analysed by Johann de Mylius (2007, pp. 23, 26) in 'Religious Views in Hans Christian Andersen's Work – and Their Literary Implications'. He claims that there are two possible approaches to the story: a 'realistic' one, which views it as a 'problematic story of unfulfilled love'[5] and the 'metaphysical' one, seeing the story as a story of nature of the soul and of desire for eternal life. These two approaches should naturally complement each other.

However the one de Mylius calls 'realistic' has been studied in much greater depth than the metaphysical one. Consequently, the realistic approach is often seen as the most important key to the meaning of the tale. Even Nassaar in his 'Andersen's "The Shadow"

5. This approach is utilised for example in the psychoanalytical analysis of the story by Sabrina Soracco in (Dahlerup et al. 1990, pp. 147–149)

and Wilde's "The Fisherman and His Soul": A Case of Influence' study summarises the text in passing from this point of view: 'a beautiful mermaid abandons the sea for the dry land and acquires legs and an immortal soul for the sake of marrying a human' (Nassaar 1995, p. 218).

This implies that the little Mermaid's striving to gain an immortal soul was actually not intentional and happened only as a by-product of her desire to marry the Prince. Such claim is quite problematic because it is not supported by the text itself. The desire of the little Mermaid to gain an immortal soul and along with it an eternal life is apparent in, for example, this quote: 'Why weren't we given an immortal soul? … I would gladly give up my three hundred years if I could be a human being only for a day, and later share in that heavenly realm' (Andersen 1837).

As Andersen (1837) informs us, the mermaids live long but their death means that they merely turn into sea foam and vanish. The humans live short lives and die but their souls can see the eternal beauty of the heavenly realm. This brief description shows that there are so far two ways of death in the story. One that has no impact on after-life, because it provides no chance for it and so it resembles the oblivion of the Greek underworld.

The second way was believed to be reserved for human beings because its necessary condition is the possession of an immortal soul. Only its possession offers a hope of being admitted to Heaven and that is why, despite the short lifespan of human beings, the little Mermaid longs to have an immortal soul and the love of the Prince. Soon the latter is revealed to be crucial for gaining the former: the two desires are inseparable.

The little Mermaid is not trying to gain a soul in order to marry the Prince as Nassaar claims. It is the other way around: she needs to gain the Prince's love, as is stated several times in the text (Andersen 1837), in order to gain an immortal soul. It is the intensity of her desire and the genuineness of her efforts what makes the last instance of death in the story, her own, so powerful and at first tragic.

When the little Mermaid decides to kill herself instead of the Prince and his bride, it is an apparent failure of her quest for both love and soul. However, in the moment of the ultimate failure she is offered another chance to gain an immortal soul, a more reliable one than the fickle love of humans (Wullschläger 2001, p. 165). She is transformed into a daughter of air and is given three hundred years to earn her immortal soul.

The transformation itself and the idea of earning a soul even more truly steer the reader towards understanding death as the door opening to a further growth and development. As de Mylius (2007, p. 32) describes it: 'She qualifies – and she has to go on qualifying'.

It is this last instance of death in the story through which Andersen expressed the hope of growth and progress of a soul towards salvation, which he had connected with death. Yet this hope is not offered for free. It is conditioned by a strenuous, wholehearted effort and selflessness that the Little Mermaid had shown in allowing her Prince to live (or like in the story 'On the Judgement Day' by an act of repentance). Only that can make death meaningful.

This conclusion also reaffirms the hypothesis of Johan de Mylius that Hans Christian Andersen perceived death as a part of the eternal journey of the soul, the means through which it matures and perfects itself (pp. 23–27).

Death in 'The Nightingale' (Andersen 1843) is a curious occurrence in Andersen's fairy-tales because, contrary to most of his other stories, Death assumes a physical existence, a reminder of the appearance of Death (Grim Reaper) in folk-tales. Although Andersen never gives a description of Death in the tale, there is something very real in the way it sits on the Emperor's chest, wearing his jewels and staring at him through its hollow eyes, surrounded by all Emperor's good and bad deeds. Such depiction of the situation at the Emperor's deathbed does not correspond much with the Christian beliefs about death and afterlife described in the theoretical introduction of the motif (*Contrition* 1908; *Heaven* 1910a; *Hell* 1910b; *Particular Judgment* 1910). In Andersen's time particular

judgement was believed to happen right after death, or after some time from the death but never while the person about to die is still alive (*Particular Judgment* 1910).

The fact that Death wears the crown, handles the Emperor's sword and wields the Emperor's banner may be interpreted as a warning that a man cannot take his possessions with him to grave and that not even the highest rank in society will save him from being judged.

When the Nightingale saves the Emperor by trading his life for its song, it is an act of mercy and it gives the Emperor a new chance to qualify and develop, thus somewhat supporting de Mylius's hypothesis of eternal journey of the soul. However, the impression favourable to his hypothesis is weakened by the fact that this 'qualification and development' or rather the possibility of it does not take place in the afterlife but in this life.

On the whole, Death's role in this story seems to be to evoke the judgement of one's deeds and warn that nor wealth nor rank will aid in it. The only thing through which one can redeem himself are acts of penance, illustrated by the Emperor's tears, and acts of mercy, illustrated by the Nightingale's willingness to help the man who had all but forgotten him.

The ambiguity of both Death's description and of the afterlife prepared for the Emperor seems to be intentional. Andersen, similarly to Wilde in 'The Nightingale and the Rose', leaves this issue open to the reader's interpretation.

3.2 The Motif of Death and Afterlife in the Selected Fairy-tales of Oscar Wilde

The motif of death in 'The Fisherman and His Soul' is a central part of one of the most powerful scenes of the story. The Fisherman finds the dead body of his lover and, after making his confession to it, dies from the greatness of both his pain and his love.

While it is not the first instance of dying in the story, the first being the Fisherman committing a crime in killing his host, it is the most important one, combining the

tragedy of death with the cleansing power of love and of repentance, which are the only powers that can reunite the Fisherman and his Soul, as is explicitly shown in the text of the Fisherman's confession to the dead mermaid.

> 'For evilly had I left thee, and to my own hurt had I wandered away. Yet ever did thy love abide with me, and ever was it strong, nor did aught prevail against it, though I have looked upon evil and looked upon good.' … And his Soul besought him to depart, but he would not, so great was his love. And as through the fulness *[sic]* of his love his heart did break, the Soul found an entrance and entered in, and was one with him even as before. And the sea covered the young Fisherman with its waves (Wilde 1908, pp. 125–126).

Although Wilde does not even hint at the nature of the afterlife of the Fisherman and his Mermaid, it is apparent from the miracle that marked their grave that they are not condemned.

They most likely are not even in Purgatory, in the existence of which Wilde may or may have not believed, but which he certainly found to be a powerful poetic image, having long been fascinated with Dante and his Divine Comedy (Ellmann 1987, pp. 41, 52). He had transformed the Purgatory into a poetic image of his own, 'the dim twilight house which lies in between [Heaven and Hell]' (Wilde 1908, p. 87), the nature of which remains a mystery. Considering the miracle through which God showed that he favoured the love of the Fisherman and the Mermaid over the wrath and pride of the Priest, it may be assumed that the Fisherman and his Mermaid are in heaven but they have certainly found mercy in the eyes of God.

In making the reader realise this, Wilde goes significantly against the expectations instilled in wide public of his time by the dogmata of faith, Catholic or otherwise, represented in the story by the Priest. Had Wilde embraced these dogmata, the Fisherman and his Mermaid would have to be damned into Hell.

It may be objected that in the Catholically orthodox version of the tale the Fisherman should have at least a chance of being redempted through a stay in the Purgatory because he had made a confession before his death and repented. However, the Fisher-

man had made his confession to the dead body of his lover and not to God, thus from an orthodox point of view he had committed idolatry and condemned himself once again.

As such, Wilde's unravelling of the story still goes against expectations. It is not clear if he challenged those expectations only to ridicule the society of his time or if the unexpected ending of the story might serve yet another purpose. Wilde needed an audience, even though he loved to play elaborate games with his readers, up to and including ridiculing them (Schmid 2002, pp. 86–87). Therefore, it appears likely that Wilde wished to upset his contemporaries as well as to lead the more open-minded readers to modify their beliefs.

Wilde's treatment of the Fisherman's and the Mermaid's death emphasises on the power of Love, which can overcome even the ultimate condemnation by the human society and the mercy of God, who through a miracle clearly shows that he truly values and prefers love, even love that is not standard in human eyes, over pious pride and unforgiving anger.

This glorious and exalting conclusion of the tale does not mean, however, that Hell would be completely omitted from the story. It is not directly mentioned or explicitly described, just as Heaven is not described but if we consider the characters through a belief Wilde entertained in 'The House of Judgement' (Douglas 1892–1893, pp. 52–53), that one can carry Hell within himself, then Hell is present in the story.

First explicitly in the character of Satan, then in a less straightforward manner through Hell that is apparently locked up within the Soul that had turned evil. The Soul then causes the young Fisherman to endure a never relenting torment of temptations, relishing in making him commit evil deeds and tempting the young man but it is also desperate to regain its old place and have a heart again. Thus, it is apparent that the Soul is tortured in its own private Hell that it carries in itself.

There is however, a problem of the previously quoted Fisherman's words: 'and there is Heaven also, and Hell, and that dim twilight house that lies between' (Wilde 1908, p. 87). These would suggest that Wilde, at least in the tale, understood Heaven and Hell as places not states.

In my opinion, it is possible that he believed – or at least entertained the idea – that Hell or Heaven may be both a state within one's soul and a place. 'The House of Judgement' shows it explicitly – God intends to send Man to Hell, which then must be a place, and the Man states he has been in Hell for all his life, which is clearly a state of being. Nothing in the text of 'The Fisherman and His Soul' prevents the idea of Hell being at once a place and a state to be applied to it as well.

The death of the Nightingale in 'The Nightingale and the Rose', itself the only instance of death in the story, is much less unequivocal in its role and purpose than in 'The Fisherman and His Soul' or in any of the Andersen's tales selected for comparison. The Nightingale dies having sacrificed her life in order to help the Student win the heart of his beloved. The way her death is understood ultimately depends on whether one considers the Nightingale's sacrifice useless or not.

If the sacrifice is regarded as useless, the bird's death is a symbol of a wasted life and potential, a cruel and vain loss, which is not only unappreciated but which is, in fact barely taken notice of. If it is perceived as still retaining some higher purpose and meaning, despite the refusal it meets, then it symbolises the highest form of love, hope and selflessness, and in its produce, the rose, also the highest form of beauty.

Wilde meticulously avoided including his opinions about the death of the Nightingale in the text of the tale. It is true that the end is grim, revealing the rejection of the rose but that the rose was the most beautiful rose in the world remains true, even when it is thrown in the gutter and ran over.

It could be pointed out that the plot of his other fairy-tales proves that Wilde considered true love to be indeed '…a wonderful thing. It is more precious than emeralds,

and dearer than fine opals. Pearls and pomegranates cannot buy it, nor is it set forth in the market-place. it may not be purchased of the merchants, 'or can it be weighed out in the balance for gold.' (Wilde 1908, p. 188) and also that there is 'Love that is perfected by Death, … Love that dies not in the tomb' ('The Nightingale and the Rose', 195).

This would imply that the love which led the Nightingale to her sacrifice was perfected in death and so it cannot be defeated by it, even if the shallow Student casts the fruit of her sacrifice away.

However, the text may just as well be understood as a question whether there really is a Love so great and powerful as the one about which sung the Nightingale, whether it is not just a foolish idea dismissed in the everyday life on which it has no influence. It seems that Wilde intentionally does not provide answer to the question, leaving it open to interpretations and inviting the reader to discover the meaning of the Nightingale's death – or whether it had any – for himself.

It is interesting to note that Death has little impact in the story of 'The Remarkable Rocket'. When the Rocket dies (goes out) he still believes he had been a great success (p. 255) and the vicinity of death does nothing to change his opinion. He can be understood to represent people who are not aware of their flaws and folly even at time of Death but as the text ends with the Rocket's last breath, little evidence supporting this claim can be found.

4 The Motif of Love: An Introduction

There are many different kinds of love but not all of them are relevant for the analysis of this motif. The following ones are the most significant: Agape, Plato's Uranian love, Eros and philia.

The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy states that Eros was originally perceived as a passionate desire of an object, often associated with sexual desire by the Greeks. It was understood to be an acquisitive kind of love and by extension a selfish, egocentric one. It is a kind of love that needs reasons (*Love* 2013).

Agape, another important kind of love, in contrast to Eros, does not require any reason for loving its object. Its definition, strongly influenced by Christian tradition, says that it is the kind of love God has for persons as well as love human beings feel or ought to feel for God and by extension for each other. Aside from being unmotivated, that is requiring no reason to love its object, Agape is also capable of creating value in its object (*Love* 2013).

The Greeks also distinguished 'philia', a filial love, that could also include love for one's homeland. This kind of love is mentioned in passing in Andersen's 'The Little Mermaid', when the Mermaid misses her family and the sea kingdom but it has no impact on the plot of the tale.[1]

Catholic theology defines love as 'a divinely infused habit, inclining the human will to cherish God for his own sake above all things, and man for the sake of God'

1. A motif closely connected to philia as love for one's homeland is alienation, which appears in many Andersen'stales. Philia is then often a result of alienation, as it is the case with the main characters of the fairy-tales 'The Silver Shilling', 'The Fir Tree' or 'The Teapot'.

(*Love (Theological Virtue)* 1910). Sollier proceeds to describe five main characteristics of Agape: its origin is always in God, its seat is always in human will, it manifests itself specifically in love of benevolence and friendship, its motive is the goodness of God that is revealed to human being through faith and its object is God as much as a man because human beings as images of God share Divine goodness (*Love (Theological Virtue)* 1910). Such definition, dating shortly after Wilde's death, is compliant with the more modern definition of Agape in the Stanford Encyclopaedia.

The Lutheran Cyclopedia does not have an entry on Love. In *Luther's Small Catechism Developed and Explained* Love is presented as one of the divine attributes, the origin of human salvation and the fulfilment of Hebraic Law.

Besides this, no definition of Love is given, which allows for the assumption that the main points of the Catholic definition would be acceptable for the Lutherans as well. The crucial differences between the major Christian denominations are about the inclination and freedom of human will, which are not relevant for the currently analysed issue. It can then be reasonably claimed that the Catholic understanding of Love is in its main points identical with the way in which Love is viewed in Lutheran denomination to which belonged Hans Christian Andersen.

The personal opinions of both writers, Wilde and Andersen, might, however, differ substantially from the mainstream religious definitions of the day and thus they may be more important for correct interpretation of the motif of love in the texts.

Oscar Wilde's opinions about love can be found scattered in two sources, his personal notes and letters, and in his works, where he usually obscured them with his wit and irony. The topic has not been studied in depth yet, except for examining the claims of Wilde's homosexuality and such analyses are usually fully focused on that aspect and not generalising enough to lend their conclusions general validity.

A small study on Wilde's concept of Love by Stefan Lange (2002) is, however, available in the 'The Importance of Reinventing Oscar'. Thomas Wright (2009) dedicated quite

a lot of space to Wilde's fascination with classical Greek, especially Plato's, concepts of Love but limited it only to his time at Trinity College and later at Oxford and did not follow the possible changes of Wilde's opinions in his later life.

The theme of Love has been appearing through all of Wilde's work. It can be traced in his Poems, published in 1882, in his two volumes of fairy tales (published in 1888 and 1891, respectively) and, lastly, in his 'De Profundis' (written in 1897, published in various posthumous editions).[2] It seems to have held a fascination for him, not unlike his fascination with Christ and Christ-like figures.

Lange (2002, p. 147) does not fail to mention that Wilde's concept of love originated mainly from his understanding of Greek mythology and philosophy and asserts that the similarities between Wilde's and Shakespeare's concept of love are striking but he does not introduce Shakespeare's concept of love in greater detail. That is understandable considering the limited space of his contribution but it makes the comparison complicated.

Love as Wilde understands it, is 'fed by the imagination, by which we become wiser, better than we feel, nobler than we are: by which we can see life as whole: by which and which alone we can understand others in their real as in their ideal relations' (Wilde [1897] 2000, sheet 11, page 1; cf. Lange 2002, p. 144).

Wilde continued to develop his thoughts on Love: 'Hate blinds people … That faculty which love would have fostered, hate poisoned and paralyse'. (Wilde [1897] 2000, sheet 11, page 1; compare with Lange 2002, p. 148). This implies a reversed relationship between Love and imagination, as now it is Love which inspires imagination.

Based on this quote, Lange repeats that for Wilde Love is the power that inspires imagination and empathy, while Hate as the opposing force prevents these capabilities from developing. He further claims that in Wilde's concept of Love, Love is a brother of empathy and that a of deeper insight and that both Love and empathy are children of

2. Out of the many different editions of 'De Profundis', that are often incomplete or erroneous, I have decided to refer to its copy in The Selected Letters of Oscar Wilde, edited by Rupert Hart-Davis in searching for relevant material and to use a facsimile of the original manuscript for verifying the quotations, edited by Merlin Holland.

imagination, thus further emphasising the connection of Love with imagination.

Lange tried to reconcile the seeming contradiction by explaining that Wilde actually divided the process of loving in two stages. The first would be a 'willingness to establish a relationship' (Lange 2002, p. 148) with something or some one because it appears to be loveable or it pleases us aesthetically.

This may be followed by the second stage, when there is a true recognition, which makes one marvel about the impressions of goodness and love that one experiences through the subject of one's love. Consequently, the love for the object of one's affections grows more mature. Its subject is no longer loved merely for the pleasure or other benefits it may bring, but it is loved in itself.

In Lange's opinion, the first stage of Love described by Wilde, corresponds to the imaginative capacity of Love as Wilde described it in his 'De Profundis', while the second stage is a direct result of the first. It is the result of the creative and imaginative capacity of Love (p. 148).

Yet, it is unclear whether this second stage is also a necessary result of the previous one. Considering the Platonic roots of this idea, it is tempting to consider this higher form of Love a mandatory step in one's evolution. However, Wilde's treatment of love in his works suggests that he was aware of its complexity and realised that few people are capable of selfless love.

It is known that Wilde tried to incorporate and re-enact various aspects of classical culture in his own life. Wright (2009, p. 89) proposed that Wilde tried to reinstate the institution of paiderastia (i. e. the love between an older and a younger man) as a part of these efforts. Wright presented convincing support for this claim, having traced Wilde's fascination with the idea through the books Wilde had read and Wilde's own notes on these texts.

Wright's research was complicated by the fact that from the vast heritage of books that belonged to Oscar Wilde, only a few copies that are relevant for exploring the birth

and growth of the idea of resurrecting this ancient institution within him survived. Using these fragmented materials, Wright managed to compose a likely picture of Wilde's opinions and thoughts on homosexual love thorough his life.

Already as a Trinity College student Wilde was provably influenced by a treatise *Social Life in Greece*, written by one of his tutors, J. P. Mahaffy, which he had proofread (Ellmann 1987, p. 29). The treatise was, among its other qualities, for its time unusually open about the homosexuality in ancient Greece.

The homosexual relationships of ancient Greeks were characterised in it as 'an ideal attachment between a man and a handsome youth' and asserted that the Greeks 'regarded it as superior to the love of man and woman' and that it was 'no more offensive even to our tastes than sentimental friendship' (p. 29).

It appears that Wilde's attitude towards homosexual love was formed not only through reading the works of his teachers and on the subject but also by reading the original texts of Greek philosophers. Foremost among these philosophers was Plato, who had the greatest formative influence on Wilde and on the way he began to perceive the homosexual love.

Love is a central topic of Symposion, one of the most well-known of Plato's dialogues, though much is said about it also in a dialogue called Lysis, which was probably composed first (*Plato on Friendship and Eros* 2011) and focuses on friendship. Important notes on the topic can be also found in the dialogue Phaedrus.

Wilde was perfectly capable of reading the dialogues in original already during his time at Trinity College but he also read them in translation, as required by his school courses (Wright 2009, p. 85). He preferred to use a translation by Benjamin Jowett, an immense and detailed edition with introductions and analyses, most of which Wilde marked, annotated and commented on in his copy of the work (p. 89).

In Symposion, Plato describes paiderasteia as a form of love, which can be divided in two categories: one is a Uranian, good or noble love, aiming for the cultivation of the

soul – essentially the ideal love between an older man and a youth that has already been described above.

The second one was called Pandemotic love. It was considered bad and thought to be primarily, if not exclusively, an interest of the older lover in the physical attractiveness and sexual satisfaction which younger man could provide. The Pandemotic love was often subversive, hidden beneath the mask of the more spiritual Uranian love (*Plato on Friendship and Eros* 2011).

This belief had an immense effect on Wilde. He accepted the notion of two stages of Love, which had a significant impact on his works. The discord between the noble, 'spiritual' love and the carnal love becomes one of the major problems Wilde tried to approach in most of his works, even though he does not offer his readers a solution.

Perhaps the most famous and widely studied Wilde's description of what is feels like being trapped in between these two contrary and powerful emotions is 'The Picture of Dorian Gray'. However, the same central problem that Wilde presented in the novel already begins to emerge in his fairy-tales: the division of a man's affection into two strongly opposed kinds of love – be it homosexual or not – creates, when one of these two kinds of love is not accepted by the society, a pressure to disguise a sexual desire as a desire for something nobler.

As is apparent from the previous text, Wright's and Lange's main conclusion are nearly identical, especially when they show the influence of classical ideas on Wilde. Unfortunately, neither Wright nor Lange attempted a detailed examination of the topic, which would have been beneficial for any future research about Oscar Wilde but in which they would need include a greater number of his works or of his letters and notes.

Trying to asses the opinions of Hans Christian Andersen on love is even more difficult than in Wilde's case. There is a similar lack of scholarly studies but the situation is made worse by no existing complete translations of primary materials, especially of Andersen's diaries. There is a vast database of Andersen's letters but a search among the letters that have an English version returned no results.

4.1 The Motif of Love in the Selected Fairy-tales of Oscar Wilde

Love is one of the central motifs in Wilde's 'The Fisherman and his Soul'. The most powerful illustration of it seems to be the feeling of the Fisherman for the Mermaid. The Fisherman is at first drawn to the Mermaid because of her beauty, then because her singing makes fishing easier for him but eventually her songs begin to awaken new desires and feelings in his heart. The Fisherman suddenly cares no more about fish; he only listens to the marvellous songs and one day confesses his love for the Mermaid.

Her refusal causes a dramatic and profound change in the nature of the young man's love for the Mermaid. For the first time ever, he is forced to ponder the strength and value of his feelings and whether he would be willing to bring sacrifices for it.

However, this moment is not the real turning point of the plot yet because the young Fisherman does not consider giving up his soul a great sacrifice. It is apparent that he has never given the matter a deeper thought until now and he is not certain at all that a man needs his soul. Furthermore, he is not giving up his soul for love in itself but because he expects joy, happiness and pleasure once he is able to reside with his beloved. 'And the young Fisherman said to himself, "Of what use is my soul to me? I cannot see it. I may not touch it. I do not know it. Surely I will send it away from me, and much gladness shall be mine"' (Wilde 1908, p. 72).

Even when he is driven mostly by his desires and his attraction, thus illustrating the Eros or Pandemotic Love of the ancient Greeks, the Fisherman's love nevertheless begins to mature from a purely physical attraction made even stronger by a desire to profit by using the Mermaid in his fishing, to something more, even though it is not yet quite the ideal selfless love. This gradual evolution, together with his refusal of his soul is the first sign of the suffering and change he is destined to go through in the future.

The Fisherman does not suspect that there could be anything sinful in his love and he is truly shocked when the Priest condemns it and him as well. Still he chooses to

disregard the warning and eventually manages to get rid of his soul. At that moment he does not realise the full implications of sending his soul away from him, even though it makes him tremble in fear.

His love stays merely a strong attraction, a desire which he longs to fulfill at any price. He remains blissfully unaware of the effect that his action have on his exiled soul, of how damaging its inability to love will prove.

That the Fisherman's love is, despite his subjective happiness, at the moment far from being the ideal Uranian love shows when he is being tempted by Riches and Wisdom. He resists, knowing that Love is greater than both Wisdom and Riches but his corrupted Soul, manages to tempt the Fisherman rather easily using his desire for what the Mermaid lacks.

The easiness with which he is tempted, talking himself into believing it is nothing important, reveals that his love was great and deep but not pure enough to protect him from desire and lust. The young Fisherman, having agreed to leave his beloved Mermaid, becomes very susceptible to other kinds of temptations, as well.

Still, in his naivety, it takes no less than a robbery and a murder to make him realise what has become of himself and of his soul. The Fisherman makes it his penance for the crimes that he was made to commit to return to his beloved Mermaid and confess his sins to her. On his way back, he is forced to put up with the constant company of his corrupted Soul and so he binds his hands and seals his lips to make sure he does not give in to the temptation again.

Yet, it is not the end of his suffering. Upon finally returning, he finds no sign of his Mermaid. He waits for her patiently for two years which are filled with even worse temptations, temptations by all that is good and evil from his Soul.

However, now that the Fisherman has come to know the true state of things and can differentiate between good and evil, his great love purifies through his suffering and serves to protect him much better against all the temptations and his Soul finally

concedes defeat in face of love that is greater than good or evil and it merely pleads with the fisherman to let it enter his heart again, not trying to cheat him any further. The Fisherman takes pity on his soul and its suffering and allows it to enter his heart but the soul is still unable to do so due to the greatness of love that encompasses the fisherman's heart.

It is only when the fisherman learns of the Mermaid's death and finally makes his confession to her dead body, disregarding the danger to his own life, that the pain he is suffering and the fullness of his love make his heart break, allowing his soul take its place in it again.

In other words, as Nassaar (2002, p. 144) pointed out, his love finally grows even greater through his suffering, great enough to encompass both the Mermaid and his soul that he had repudiated. Not long after the confession, the young fisherman dies, embracing the body of his beloved. They are condemned by the priest and buried in an unmarked grave in the Field of Fullers.

The Priest's condemnation was a hateful one and he is proved wrong in time. In three years the previously unmarked grave in the Field of Fullers is covered in strange flowers of a sweet scent, as is the altar in the church. The Priest who had known only an unforgiving, punishing God, suddenly preaches about God whose name is Love. Accompanied by a large crowd of humans, he blesses all the wild things, including the Sea-folk, effectively reconciling the two worlds through the power of a great love, which conquered not only an unmarked grave but more importantly also the heart of a man, the strict Priest.

The story of the Fisherman and his Soul shows that, in Wilde's fairy tale universe, hate and corruption can be overcome by repentance, suffering, mercy and above all, by Love – love so great that it bridges what has been alienated, remedies what has been corrupted and conquers the concepts of Good and Evil itself.

Concurring with Markey's reading, the story of 'The Nightingale and the Rose' does appear to promote a spiritual, selfless love (Agape) over a physical, sexual love (Eros) (Markey 2011, p. 108)

Nevertheless, Love's presentation in the story is much more complex. The reader can observe at least three of its form in the story, beginning with the young Student. He represents infatuation, being in love with the idea of being in love. He says all the things a young man in love is expected to say but his love stops short of any action.

The Student only weeps and complains but he does nothing to gain the red rose he needs, which, presumably, would have been fairly easy when other kinds of roses were ready to bloom, if only he had ventured beyond his garden. Yet, he does not even try and just retires into his room, where he continues to think about the girl. The Student's inaction is in a striking contrast with the determination of the young Fisherman in 'The Fisherman and His Soul'.

The Student is not willing to undertake even such a trivial task as finding a red rose, revealing the shallowness of his love. This difference alone would be enough to show that not everything that is generally considered to be love is really love.

The contrast between inactivity and determination is made even more striking when comparing the Student to the central character of the Nightingale. It is she who, unknowingly, represents the true lover in the story. She is willing to give everything, even her own life for love. She proceeds from praising love with words to attesting it with action, while the Student only weeps or lies in his room.

The rose the Nightingale created with her lifeblood is as much, and perhaps mainly, a work of love as it is a work of art. Willoughby (1993) reads the Nightingale's death as a re-enactment of Christ's crucifixion. The major difference is that the Nightingale, in the position of Christ, perfects her Love not through a sacrifice that would bring universal salvation but through the creation of a perfect work of art.

This is correct in so far that in Wilde's tale the Nightingale does give her life herself to create a flawless red rose but her only reason to want to create a rose, especially considering the high price she has paid for it, is the desire to help the Student gain his true love.

Even though Willoughby did not overlook these reasons in his analysis, they were not given sufficient weight and attention. It was not the Nightingale's primary goal to create a work of art, as Willoughby had assumed (1993, p. 27). Her aim was to help true love prevail and the way to ensure it was to find a red rose for the Student. The Nightingale's own works of art are not roses but songs which she initially offers in exchange for the flowers.

That is not say that the Nightingale cannot or should not be seen as an allegory for the Artist and the rose for the art, which Willoughby so convincingly argued. It is a very astute reading of the story that merely caused its author to overlook the Nightingale's original goal. If she indeed is an allegory of the Artist, she is an artist who is not primarily interested in creating a flawless work of art but in promoting Love.

Nevertheless, Willoughby (1993, p. 27) identified the Nightingale – who is a Christ-like figure – with an Artist. He founded the assumption on Wilde's opinion that Christ 'realised in the sphere of human relation that imaginative sympathy which in the sphere of art is the sole secret of creation' (Wilde [1897] 2000, sheet 29, page 2) . Willoughby saw the quote as equalling Christ and the artist. That led him to understand the fairy-tale of the 'Nightingale and the Rose' primarily as a parable of an artist creating a work of art.

The meaning that Willoughby ascribes to these words is fully justified. However, I believe it is not their only possible explanation. If Wilde said that imaginative sympathy had been realised by Christ in the sphere of human relation, then this feeling of 'imaginative sympathy', which Lange (2002, p. 148) understands as one with Love, can not be restricted only to the sphere of art. It can be extended also – and by the Nightingale

who is acting as a Christ-like figure even primarily – to the realm of human relations as well. Therefore, even when Wilde had intended for the Nightingale to create a rose of perfect beauty, a masterpiece literally growing from her own heart, her main goal is to make the "imaginative sympathy" – Love – happen in the human world.[3]

Wilde himself confirms this view of Christ in 'De Profundis': '[And certainly, if] Christ's place is among the poets, he is the leader of all the lovers. He saw that love was the first secret of the world for which the wise men had been looking, and that it was only through love that one could approach either the heart of the leper or the feet of God' (Wilde [1897] 2000, sheet 30, page 2). These words can easily be extended to Christ-like figures in his works as well, especially to the Nightingale. She understands the secret and nature of Love better than the Student, the self-proclaimed true lover.

Her praise of Love is reminiscent of the fisherman's repeated assurance that Love is better than worldly Riches, Power or Wisdom in 'The Fisherman and His Soul.' The Nightingale's praise is even greater than that of the Fisherman as the little bird considers Love 'better than Life itself' (Wilde 1908, p. 192).

In her song the Nightingale describes the three stages of Romantic Love. A true love is supposed to develop. It cannot survive if it never grows past the shallow infatuation embodied by the Student. The last stage, which it can reach, is Love that is perfected by Death but is not conquered by it. To the contrary it is Love that defeats Death and which 'dies not in the tomb' (p. 195).

The exaltation of the Nightingale's song is, however, marred by what Killeen calls the 'the narrative pessimism': the Student is rejected and the Rose is thrown away. Even worse, unlike in the story of the Happy Prince, God does not intervene in the end of the story and does not reward the sacrifice. (Killeen 2007, p. 41)

The apparent waste of the Nightingale's life has caused many difficulties in the interpretation of the story. One way of understanding this unexpected turn of the plot is

3. Because, as Wilde wrote in 'De Profundis', imagination is simply a manifestation of love (Wilde [1897] 2000, sheet 32, page 2)

to analyse the tale as a story without any religious annotations, taking place in a world that is cruelly indifferent to any higher aspirations. This has led some critics to believe that 'God has deserted the Nightingale's world', exposing the Nightingale's beliefs about Love as 'mere delusions' (Killeen 2007, p. 41)

Such reading is understandable and even correct if we contrast this fairy tale with some more explicitly Christian ones, such as 'The Young King'. However, if the tale is examined on its own, that claim begins to appear too strong.

The perceived uselessness of the Nightingale's death can be argued. Markey (2011, pp. 108–109) demonstrates its possible meaningfulness by agreeing with the claim that the moment when a thorn pierces the Nightingale's heart should be read as a sexual act, which, despite not being reproductive, is the most fulfilling relationship featured in the story.

Nevertheless, when piercing herself to the rose bush, the Nightingale sings of Love that grows beyond sexual passion and touches the heart of the lovers, thus indicating that the importance of physical love in the story is going to be limited. If the thorn penetrating the bird's heart depicted a sexual act, it would have to represent a very brief and shallow affair because the Nightingale and the rose bush are complete strangers, which that would go against the very concept of Love introduced in the Nightingale's songs.

Consequently, it appears to be more correct to read the passage about the rose's creation not as a veiled description of a sexual act but as a parable about the value and power that Love may have. It is a power so great that it can give birth to things never imagined before and breathe life in them, similarly to what an artist strives to achieve through his art.

The Christian imagery in 'The Nightingale and the Rose' is expressed in a much subtler way than in the majority of Wilde's fairy-tales and thus demands a reader who, besides being very receptive, is familiar with a great number of sources and cultural and religious references used thorough the story (see Killeen 2007, p. 43; Willoughby 1993).

The kind of Love embodied by the Nightingale is consciously self-giving, as befits a Christ-like figure, and corresponds to Christian Agape (See *Love* 2013; *Love (Theological Virtue)* 1910). The Nightingale is aware of how great Love can be and proves it in her praise of Love both before her trial and during it. What she does not realise is that the one whom she wants to help might not be mature enough to know the value of both her gift and of Love itself.

It feels as if the tale was a complement to 'The Fisherman and His Soul': while in that story of the young Fisherman Wilde showed that Love can conquer and overcome everything, if one is willing to have it in one's life despite having to pay high price for the privilege. The tale of 'The Nightingale and the Rose' amends that no matter how great love may one have, it cannot benefit one who chooses to reject and neglect it.

4.2 The Motif of Love in the Selected Fairy-tales of Hans Christian Andersen

Andersen's 'The Little Mermaid' develops several main themes, one of which is Love. While Andersen strives to evoke the image of a happy royal family of the sea king in the introduction, he mentions love only once when he says that the mother of the sea king was extremely fond of her granddaughters (Andersen 1837). Then he proceeds to describe the palace, its gardens and lastly the little Mermaid.

The little Mermaid falls in love with the Prince when she saves him but the tale indicates that she would not love him if she did not come to love the 'upper world' of humans first. Her love for him is foreshadowed also by the marble statue of a boy who looks remarkably like the Prince standing in the little Mermaid's garden (Andersen 1837).

Unlike her sisters, the little Mermaid's desire for the upper word does not wane with time, even when she is already allowed to visit it as she pleases. On the contrary, her love of it grows, becoming intertwined with her love for the Prince.

In opposition to the previously discussed portrayal of love in Wilde's 'The Fisherman and His Soul', the little Mermaid's love is neither joyful nor easy, in any phase of

its existence. She knows from the very beginning that the Prince had accidentally fallen in love with someone else and she soon learns that she needs to suffer through a great deal in order to be with him. Moreover, the danger of having to pay the ultimate price if she fails to win his love forever looms above her head.

Every day at the Prince's court the Little Mermaid's suffering is constantly renewed, due to the pain of walking and her muteness. An even greater test of her love comes when she realises that the Prince will never love her as a woman. It puts her into a position where she knows she will die but she still chooses to spend her last days near the Prince, the man whom she loves despite his love for another. Her love is such that when she is given an option to save herself at the cost of the Prince's life and the life of his wife, the little Mermaid overcomes her natural love of herself and gives up her own life for them.

In this moment all her suffering and her love may appear to have been in vain, similarly to the apparently meaningless death of the Nightingale in Wilde's 'The Nightingale and the Rose', but the reader is soon comforted.

The little Mermaid is rewarded for her great persistence in love by being given another chance to gain an immortal soul as a daughter of air. She is to try with her whole heart to do all the good she can for the next three hundred years and if she succeeds in that, she would be rewarded with a soul.

This ending felt ever since the first publication of the story to be unnatural and it was often criticised as a compromise to the publisher or the readers (Böggild and Heegaard 1993). However, the first sketch of the story, nothing more than a rough idea, named 'The Daughters of Air', would suggest that the daughters of air were to play a more prominent role in the story and that Andersen's revision of the later fairy tale version's ending was not much out of line of his initial intentions.

Sadly, all that is known about this first version comes from a few scarce mentions in his letters to a friend (Mylius 2013) and does not shed any light on the actual content of

the story. Besides this version, there is only one heavily edited and re-edited manuscript of what was in 1837 published as 'The Little Mermaid'.[4]

The motif of love as it appears in the tale is another supporting evidence in favour of the revised ending. The story teaches the reader about what it means to love. What the little Mermaid feels for the Prince is not ideal love in the sense of being free from sexual desire, for the little Mermaid longs to marry the Prince.

However, her love develops from a longing to be with a beloved person, even at the cost of great sacrifices, to a love so great that the little Mermaid puts the happiness of her beloved Prince not only above her own but even above her own life. Although her love changes through the tale, the little Mermaid always loves her Prince with her whole heart, and for that she is offered a new chance to gain an immortal soul.

Andersen shows the reader a kind of love which is passionate but selfless at the same time, but he also warns against relying on human love that is too fickle and unstable (Wullschläger 2001, p. 165) and encourages to rely on the love and mercy of God that anyone can deserve if one tries with one's whole heart.

It may seem unexpected and bold to try to analyse the motif of Love in Andersen's 'The Nightingale', because there is barely a mention of it. Yet, even a motif so conspicuously absent from the story can play an important role in it.

At a first glance, the only mentions of love seem unimportant, merely informing the reader that the poor like the Nightingale's song or that the Nightingale loves the Emperor's heart better than his crown.

Even if love is not the central motif of the fairy tale, it is absolutely necessary for the development of the plot. Love is implicitly present in the character of the Emperor. It is an imperfect, immature kind of Love, a fickle one even, which becomes deeper and perfected only through the experience of nearness of Death.

4. The manuscript facsimile photocopy is available online on the website of Odense City Museum, http://hca.museum.odense.dk/manuskript/visning.asp?inventarnr=HCA/XVIII-58-A&sprog=engelsk.

The Emperor is first introduced as a lover of beautiful, rare and famous treasures. He only learns of the Nightingale because the bird is praised in a world-wide famous book. When the Nightingale sings for him, the Emperor's admiration, which can be considered a form of love, manifests itself in his desire to own the bird.

Despite that desire and the deep impression the Nightingale's song made on the Emperor, he is willing to put an artificial bird first, just because the toy is more beautiful and adorned with jewels. Finally, he completely forgets about the real Nightingale. It is only when the bird proves his faithfulness and saves him from Death that the Emperor slowly begins to understand that he cannot own another living being and his love ceases to be possessive and selfish.

The Emperor is, similarly to the Fisherman in Wilde's 'The Fisherman and His Soul', an illustration of how a man's love evolves from a fierce, selfish and greedy passion that is easily swayed by attractive appearance into a deeper, more understanding and less egocentric feeling.

5 The Motif of Pride: An Introduction

The understanding of pride has always been an ambiguous one, for the concept encompasses two different, even contradictory, emotions.

One is that of man being worthy of great things and being aware of his worth, in Aristotle's words 'a person is thought to be great-souled[1] if he claims much and deserves much' (Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics*, 1123b1). Pride of such person is necessarily accompanied by other virtues, mainly by nobility and an overall goodness of character. In Aristotle's understanding of pride as a positive emotion or even a virtue, pride is what makes the effect of all the other virtues stronger. However, because pride as a virtue cannot exist in man void of other virtues, it is also truly difficult to be proud.

Another concept closely related to pride in Aristotle's writing is vanity. Vain is 'he who claims much but does not deserve much' (Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics*, 1123b1). If somebody vainly claims more than he deserves, it is nothing more than a distorted notion of the kind of pride that Aristotle had defined as a virtue, and it bears very negative connotations.

It is this negative aspect of pride, which Aristotle calls vanity, that will be examined in the fairy tales of H. C. Andersen and Oscar Wilde. The concept of pride as a positive emotion or a virtue seems to be absent from the stories, with the exception of the little Mermaid who is proud of her beautiful voice and her dancing but the instance is not worked with further and plays little role in the story.

1. Variously translated in different editions as pride, greatness or as in this case, great-souledness. All these terms refer to what is called pride in this chapter.

It is also necessary to mention yet another concept closely related to Pride, and perhaps most famously defined by Aristotle, which is hubris. While it does not appear in either Andersen's or Wilde's stories, defining hubris will be helpful in order to prevent confusing various aspects of Pride together.

Aristotle defines hubris as: ' … the idea that, in ill-treating others, they [those who insult] are more fully showing superiority'. (Aristotle, *Rhetoric*, 1378b).

More specifically, hubris in its narrow sense meant wanton violence used to shame and disgrace another person. For its connection with violence and shame it was often used also for a description of rape (*ὕβρις* 2014).

However, because archaic and classical Greek had no word for sin, hubris was sometimes used instead to describe a wilful action against divine order, (*hubris* 2015) which is how the word acquired its most widely known meaning. Such a wilful, provoking action against divine order never failed to elicit the wrath of gods, most often ending in a tragedy – a painful death of the trespasser and or his closest ones.

There are many examples of in Greek myths or classical Greek drama: Achilles desecrating the corpse of Hector (closest to the original, strict meaning of hubris), Creon denying the burial to Polynices in Sophocles's Antigone or Tantalus, who dared to test the omniscience of gods.

Aristotle's definition is, of course, not the only one that can be used to describe Pride. Another of its definitions that has been very influential through the ages, and on which especially Oscar Wilde seemed to draw, is given by *The Catholic Encyclopedia* as follows:

> Pride is the excessive love of one's own excellence. A less atrocious kind of pride is that which impels one to make much of oneself unduly and without sufficient warrant … he unreasonably looks to be put ahead of others. … Vainglory, ambition, and presumption are commonly enumerated as the offspring vices of pride, because they are well adapted to serve its inordinate aims … It should be noted that presumption does not here stand for the sin against hope. It means the desire to essay what exceeds one's capacity (*Pride* 1911).

Both these definitions are alike in dealing not only with Pride in itself but also in making us implicitly aware of one interesting characteristic of Pride, which is a distortion of our view of reality.

Aristotle, in defining vanity as the undesirable form of Pride, wrote that it is claiming much when one does not deserve much. For asking more than one deserves, one needs to act in contradiction with the reality, to deny it in order to make a claim on more than one is rightfully entitled to. Therefore a vain person has to lie to the others and or himself and distort the truth to gain what he desires.

Similarly, the Catholic definition indicates that Pride understood as excessive love of one's self also distorts the way in which one sees himself because excessive and exaggerated self love is always unreasonable and unfounded.

It is unfounded because no man in existence is as great as his Pride makes him believe and it is unreasonable because his perceived, unrealistic greatness makes him behave in a foolish manner that does not correspond to reality. The Catholic definition also suits very well to all instances of Pride in the chosen fairy-tales of Hans Christian Andersen, despite the fact that he was a Lutheran.

5.1 Pride in the Selected Fairy-tales of Hans Christian Andersen

In Hans Christian Andersen's fairy tale 'The Emperor's New Clothes' (Andersen 1843), Pride seems to be the central theme, along with a ridicule of the society. The Emperor is obsessed, or as Andersen calls it, extremely fond of new clothes (Andersen 1843), so much so that he spends all his money on them.

This complies with Aristotle's definition of vanity as a distorted pride because the Emperor claims more than he deserves no one deserves to have so many new clothes as to have a different set of clothes for each hour of everyday. It also corresponds with the

Catholic view of Pride because the Emperor also loves his own excellence, expressing it through his very obsession with new clothes.

However, it is not the only instance of pride in the tale. The officials sent by the Emperor to examine the magical cloth manifest their pride as well when they do not dare to admit that they cannot see the cloth for fear of appearing foolish or unfit for their office to the others. Again in harmony with the Catholic definition, the 'honest' officials love themselves and their positions more than the truth, thus making their love of themselves excessive, identical with Pride.

Andersen might be ridiculing the manners of high society in the story by displaying the weakness of highly positioned officials and, eventually, of the Emperor himself, but he does not spare the common people either.

The townsfolk are just as anxious to hide their perceived foolishness and lack of qualification for their positions as their noble ruler (Andersen 1843), thus only further emphasising the satirical effect. Again they act in accordance with Aristotle's definition, seeking to claim qualities they do not possess, if only because they fear the consequences of revealing the truth.

They even make the Emperor's parade in his non-existent clothes his greatest success to date. The pretence would probably go on and on but Andersen offers a solution. Truthfulness and innocence, personified by a child who reveals the true state of matters to the public, gives the people a chance to free themselves from the lie and from the obligation to preserve it. The whole town chooses this offered solution and frees themselves from their lofty pretence, thus making Andersen's ridicule of the Emperor and his court even harsher in comparison.

The Emperor and his noblemen, on the other hand, chose to continue pretending in order to preserve their excessive love of themselves, which would be damaged by admitting the truth and exposing their real foolishness. By choosing to keep their pride, they lose a chance to change their life and the lives of all their subjects but that is not

the greatest tragedy of this story. The greatest tragedy is that they do realise something is wrong there but no one, not the Emperor, not even the honest officials or the courtiers mind it enough to wish for a change (Andersen 1843).

They love themselves, their positions and life in luxury too well to exchange it for the truth and a chance to be freed from pretence. Their love for themselves is, again identically to the Catholic definition of Pride, too great, excessive. They make much of themselves unduly and without sufficient warrant (*Pride* 1911). The Emperor and his courtiers are being unreasonably put above others (*Pride* 1911) and they do not mind it even when they begin to suspect it is not right. This unwillingness to reform themselves, even though they are offered a way to do it, makes them an illustration of Pride that cannot be redempted.

There are very few instances of pride in the story of 'The Little Mermaid' (Andersen 1837). The Little Mermaid's grandmother, the mother of the Sea King is proud of her rank but this attitude never affected the development of the plot or any of the characters.

The Sea Witch is certainly conscious of her worth but she does not demonstrate it. The Little Mermaid takes pride in her beautiful voice and her dancing skills but that does not prevent her from sacrificing it for the hope of winning the Prince's love and has no impact on the plot.

It may be assumed that one of the reason why the Prince does not feel romantic love for The Little Mermaid is his pride, which would make him see her merely as a young, vulnerable and poor girl of questionable origin but the text of the tale in Hersholt's translation gives no indication of pride being the reason.

While it is surely more befitting his station to marry a noble woman who has been brought up in a temple than a poor ward, Prince's love seems to be misled more by the appearance of the foreign princess than her wealth or rank. He marries the princess because he believes it was she who saved his life and pride plays little role in his decision.

Similarly to the tale of 'The Emperor's New Clothes', the Pride is again one of the main motifs in Andersen's story of 'The Nightingale' (Andersen 1843).

From the way in which Andersen describes the Emperor, the reader can deduce that he would probably never care about a small, relatively common bird if he had not read such a high praise of his singing in a book that was world-famous. Once the Emperor learns of its existence, he will stop at nothing to have the bird brought before him, not for the desire to her the singing but simply because it does not correspond with his position and his rank not to know the best thing in his realm.

There is a direct proof of it in the exchange the Emperor has with his Lord-in-Waiting: '"They say there's a most remarkable bird called the nightingale," said the Emperor. "They say it's the best thing in all my empire. Why haven't I been told about it?" … "I command that he appear before me this evening, and sing", said the Emperor. "The whole world knows my possessions better than I do!"' (Andersen 1843).

A threat from the Emperor makes the whole court search even harder but they cannot succeed. It is a poor and humble kitchen girl who at last tells them where to find the Nightingale.

Her award is remarkably similar to the reward of the Page in Wilde's 'The Remarkable Rocket', whose non-existent salary was doubled. The kitchen girl was rewarded with the certainty of keeping her job for life, where she would have probably been forced to stay regardless, and a permission to watch the Emperor while he dines, which is of no use to her and only robs her of remaining time off-work.

Unlike the Emperor in 'The Emperor's New Clothes', or The King in Wilde's 'The Remarkable Rocket,' the pride of the Chinese Emperor is momentarily overcome by the beauty of the Nightingale's singing. The tears in his eyes showed that he meant no evil in his pride but his next action also shown that the Emperor still lacks understanding of humility and freedom (Andersen 1843). He still wants to own the Nightingale, to have the bird for himself. That, despite the change of heart the Emperor went through, is still a sign of pride.

Eventually, the Nightingale manages to regain his freedom when the Emperor and all of his court become infatuated with an artificial bird and forget about him. The reader is not explicitly told what caused them to forget about the real nightingale but it can be assumed that pride – in this case as an instance of excessive love of one's self – played a role in it, as an artificial, expensively adorned bird that cannot disobey flattered that excessive love and high opinion of himself that the Emperor had much better that any common, living being ever could.

The Emperor gradually becomes very obsessed with the mechanical nightingale and he never remembers the living bird any more. It is only when his situation becomes dire, when he falls deathly ill and the toy bird breaks down while the Emperor is being tortured by his good and bad deeds that he is reminded of the real Nightingale.

The bird comes to the Emperor's aid and persuades the Death to let the Emperor live. What is more, this time his singing, together with the experience of the nearness of the Death, achieves a more profound change in the Emperor's heart.

The Emperor of China begins to understand that he cannot own the little nightingale and assents not only to letting him sing at will but also come and leave as the bird pleases. The nightingale agrees and promises to sing to him of all good and evil, sorrow and joy he sees, thus helping the Emperor become a better sovereign as well as a better man.

The reader never finds out if the Emperor indeed managed to get rid of his pride and became a wise and caring ruler but out of all the characters suffering from pride and vanity that were introduced in this chapter, the Chinese emperor has the greatest chance to be reformed.

5.2 Pride in the Selected Fairy-tales of Oscar Wilde

Tracing the concept of Pride and its satire seems to be the most apparent way of reading and understanding Wilde's The Remarkable Rocket (Wilde 1908, pp. 235–256).

However, the most apparent readings tend to blind the interpreters and make them not notice details that would have suggest other possible interpretation of a given text, which is perhaps the reason why some scholars, as for example Ann Shillinglaw (2005), vigorously oppose to reading 'The Remarkable Rocket' as a tale of Pride. Her arguments for a different understanding of the fairy tale are very sound and inspiring but, in my opinion, do not exclude the possibility of explaining the story as a parable on Pride and Vanity.

The kind of Pride portrayed in the story is almost exclusively Pride corresponding to the Catholic definition of Pride as an excessive love of one's own excellence. It is most apparent in the Rocket himself but he is not the only, or even the first example of it in the text.

In the beginning of the story, the reader can register Pride first exhibited by the King, who doubles the non-existent salary of a young Page, and even repeats the gesture further drawing attention to both his own vanity and narrow-mindedness.

Just like the Emperor in Andersen's fairy-tale 'The Emperor's New Clothes', the King in 'The Remarkable Rocket' represents a foolish, prideful and oblivious ruler but unlike the Emperor, he is never presented with an opportunity to question the notion of his own self-importance. There is no 'magic' cloth to prove his foolishness and inadequacy as a sovereign and no child declares the truth in front of him. The King remains a prisoner of his own views and of his own lofty opinion of himself, imprisoned even more thoroughly for failing to realize the truth.

Another notable illustration of the vice of Pride, often considered even the central one, is the remarkable Rocket himself. In contrast to the King, the position of power (within the limits of the storage stand) and the noble ancestry of the Rocket are self-ascribed. The contrast with the King is further reinforced by the fact that the Rocket is actually a master of language (Markey 2011, p. 128)), while the King is a master of no skill. The Rocket could rightfully pride himself in his oratory skills but he deludes himself into thinking his qualities are derived from his parents and from his, again self-

ascribed, position of power and he uses his command of language merely for pompous declarations of his own greatness and blatant distortions of truth that, once more serve as proofs of his own uniqueness.

This is not to imply that all of the Rocket's aphorisms are untrue and invalid in themselves. Many of them are thought-provoking and astute, most are playful and some are wise, such as 'BAD and GRAND sound very much the same, indeed, they are very often the same' (Wilde 1908, p. 248). What makes them foolish and inappropriate is how the Rocket connects what is said with his own perceived greatness, in a way similar to this part of the Rocket's speech: '"That is a very selfish reason", said the Rocket angrily. "What right have you to be happy? You should be thinking about others. In fact, you should be thinking about me. I am always thinking about myself, and I expect everybody else to do the same. That is what is called sympathy. It is a beautiful virtue, and I possess it in a high degree"' (p. 242).

Wilde uses this distortion of wisdom with pride and shallowness, which strikes the reader as odd, to give the reader hints about the true nature of the Rocket and by relation also the true nature of the King or the Frog, the last example of Pride in the tale. The apparent illogicality of this claim and of many similar ones may amuse the reader but also reveals the qualities of the individual characters.

The Rocket's distorting Pride also protects it from suffering. In all of the moments that the Rocket saw as humiliating and that could therefore cause him pain, he chose to misinterpret the situations as being actually flattering to him (the misheard words 'bad' and 'old') (pp. 248,254) or least contributing to his superiority (the discussions with the Frog in the pond).

Wilde uses language and humour not only to reveal pride and foolishness but also to make fun of society, high and low alike, very often by ridiculing the actions of the characters – the King can only play two melodies on his flute and he never knows which one he is playing, the Frog, similarly to the Rocket but without his skills, monopolises

every conversation (Wilde 1908, pp. 235–255). The witty, humorous descriptions of the characters serve the same purpose, for example when the reader is told that the King 'always answered questions that were addressed to other people' (p. 237).

However, while the King embodies Pride that may be shallow but is nonetheless powerful and the Rocket shows that Pride may be, for all its faults, charming and amusing, the Frog harbours yet another kind of Pride – Pride that is and limits one's capacities.

In the tale of 'The Fisherman and His Soul' Oscar Wilde described various dangers and temptations a man faces when he decides to dedicate his life – and indeed his very soul – to love. The fisherman is threatened with eternal damnation if he follows through with his intentions, then he is tempted alternately with Riches, Wisdom and finally with his own lust (pp. 67–129). Yet, one of the pitfalls he needs to avoid is not explicitly named and that is Pride, personified by the parish Priest.

This claim may come as a surprise because the Priest does not appear to be proud at first. He seems to be strict, unforgiving and quick to condemn others but he is also ascetic and so he may be presumed to be humble.

The reader can only try to guess what are the roots of the priest's coldness and arrogance. Wilde offers no insight in the personality of the priest but when recalling Aristotle's definition of hubris a parallel with the Priest's actions may be seen. By making the people of his parish tremble in fear of God's wrath, by admonishing and eventually condemning the fisherman, he makes his own moral superiority stand even higher above these sinners, he makes his believed holiness shine even more.

The Catholic definition of pride could apply to his behaviour in that the priest puts himself above others on basis of his ascetic life and avoidance of sin. Yet he does so unreasonably as the foundation of his claim for excellence is made void by the fact that he priest does not realize that is living in a sin of pride. His pride prevents the priest to understand that God forgives sins and, above all, that God is Love.

Fortunately for the Priest, he is soon given an opportunity to experience God's love and forgiveness himself. It takes nothing less than a miracle to cure him from his pride and a miracle really happens.

The Priest is made to preach of God that is Love instead of talking about God's terrifying wrath and he feels confused but glad about it. Being told that the mysterious flowers which caused the change in him come from the grave of the sinners he had previously damned, the priest trembles, seeing the error of his ways, and goes to pray. He even blesses all the living things in the sea and the forest in the name of God as a conciliatory gesture.

Of all prideful characters in all analysed stories, the Priest in 'The Fisherman and His Soul' is the only one about whom the reader can say that he had been absolved of his sin and who is no longer full of Pride. That gives the ending of the story yet another tentatively hopeful and joyous tone, despite the death of the lovers. The tone, rather uncharacteristic for Wilde's tales, is dimmed only by the mention of the Sea-folk leaving the sea near the village.

There is one more act in the tale that may at first resemble hubris as it was defined by Aristotle. It is the moment when the Fisherman casts away his own soul. Traditionally, this would be viewed as an act of ultimate revolt against God, a case of hubris, and it is seen as such by the Priest, who is convinced that the Mermaid is lost and the young Fisherman would be lost with her (Wilde 1908, p. 76).

However, contrary to the very definition of hubris as a wilful act against divine order that elicits immediate punishment, the young Fisherman is not punished, immediately or otherwise. His actions are even explicitly approved by God who causes a miracle to show everyone that the Fisherman and his lover found mercy in his eyes.

The tale of 'The Nightingale and the Rose' does not focus on Pride in itself but portrays shallowness and vanity, that are often associated with Pride, when it is understood as vice.

The young Student takes pride in his accomplishments as a learned man and in lamenting his unrequited love as he thinks a real lover ought. He suffers from delusions of his own greatness, a fault he shares with the girl he thinks he loves. The delusion of his own greatness causes him to claim for himself more recognition than he deserves as either a learned man or a lover. This behaviour complies perfectly with Aristotle's definition of vanity as claiming more than one deserves.

The Student also exceedingly relies on the opinions of others to form his own, despite his education. When he first sees the red rose, he is aware that it is unique, even if he does not know its true value and based his evaluation on its external beauty. He is sure that 'I have never seen any rose like it in all my life. It is so beautiful that I am sure it has a long Latin name' (Wilde 1908, p. 196). Yet, in the moment his beloved pronounces the rose worthless, the student throws it away without hesitation, declares love useless and returns to his books.

The Professor's daughter, whom the Student believes himself to be in love with, is also very proud. The nature of her Pride is not shown in detail but it is apparent that she wants the best she can get, not just better than she deserves but the best. That would hint on her excessive love of herself, (*Pride* 1911) portraying Pride according the Catholic definition and thus creating a counterpart to the Student as an illustration of Pride according to Aristotle. (Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics*, 1123b1). However, the text does not reveal enough to sufficiently support this theory.

5.3 Similarities and Differences in the Motif of Pride in the Fairy-tales of Oscar Wilde and Hans Christian Andersen

In all of the analysed fairy tales, Wilde's as well as Andersen's, where Pride plays an important role, it is, in accordance with both the definition by Aristotle and with the Catholic definition of the vice, inseparably connected with the concept of truth.

All the fairy tales where Pride appears make it possible for the reader to see the way Pride can deform and bend truth to make it suit our desires and imaginations. Both Andersen and Wilde use language to demonstrate the extremes which these deformations can reach.

The major difference between them in this regard seems to be the level of the characters' awareness of the fact that they manipulate others by their use of language. The swindlers in Andersen's story are very much aware that they are lying to people around them. So are the so far honest officials, who decide to lie to the swindlers, the Emperor and to each other.

The remarkable Rocket lies so successfully abut his own excellence that he deceives not only those around him but himself as well. On the other hand, the Student, together with the girl he loves, is not even aware that reality might be different from how their Pride presents it to them.

Both Wilde and Andersen use language and humour not only to reveal pride and foolishness but also to make fun of society – primarily high society – and also to amuse the reader, be it by ridiculing the King's ability to play the flute in 'The Remarkable Rocket', by letting the courtiers mistake a cow's mooing for the Nightingale's singing in Andersen's 'The Nightingale' or by amusing descriptions of the of characters.

However, Andersen appears to be more benevolent to common people than Wilde, at least in the fairy-tales selected for comparison. He offers them chances to redeem themselves and is sympathetic to their lot, which maybe the result of his personal experience with poverty in his youth.[2]

Wilde's typology of Pride seems to be more detailed than Andersen's. He introduces prideful characters who are foolish and narrow-minded (the Frog and the King) or who are in fact brilliant (the Rocket), then those who, while being proud are learned

2. See (Bredsdorff 1975, chapter 'The Swamp Plant'). However, there are fairy-tales of Andersen where he is more critical of common people, such as The 'Girl Who Trod on the Loaf' or 'The Red Shoes' and there are fairy-tales of Wilde where he is benevolent to common poor people as well, especially towards children, such as 'The Happy Prince' or 'The Young King'.

and pious, such as the priest, in contrast to those who are vain and shallow (the Student and the girl he thinks he loves).

Andersen, on the other hand, seems to focus rather on they way prideful people act and behave than on their types and he always offers them a chance to reform themselves, though we are never told if the characters succeeded at reforming themselves or if they even considered it.

6 Specific Similarities and Differences in the Selected Fairy-tales of Hans Christian Andersen and Oscar Wilde

6.1 Motivic Similarities and Differences

As my previous research (chapters 2–5) shows, there are not many similarities in the way Hans Christian Andersen and Oscar Wilde treat the selected motifs in their fairy-tales, while the differences are substantial. I will recapitulate them here to put the findings in a perspective. This general account of the writers' approach to the motifs should allow for more balanced evaluation of these similarities and differences.

6.1.1 Religious Motifs of God, Sacrifice and Suffering

Both authors put great emphasis on God's love for individual human beings but they differed fundamentally in almost everything else that concerned God. Hans Christian Andersen never let God act directly in his stories. He always made angels act as the messengers of God (Bom and Aarenstrup 2013b). Oscar Wilde has allowed God to make a direct action in only two of his tales, that were not selected for comparison here.[1]

Probably the single most dividing difference between Andersen and Wilde is their understanding of the person of Christ. Hans Christian Andersen did not believe in the Trinity. He therefore did not acknowledge Jesus to be also a God, he considered him to be a perfect man, chosen by God. Andersen's opinions also prevented him from even considering the existence of the Holy Spirit.

1. The first story is 'The Happy Prince', where God commands his angels to bring two most precious things in the city. The second one is 'The House of Judgement', where God and Man lead a dialogue at a trial.

Oscar Wilde, however, saw Christ as the archetypal Artist, the first and supreme Individualist, as well as the true precursor of the romantic movement. Although Wilde's religious opinions developed in several phases, his adoration for Christ only become greater in time.

6.1.2 The Motif of Sacrifice

As I stated in the chapter dedicated to this motif, the motif of sacrifice present in the compared tales should not be treated as a religious motif. The moments of sacrifice in the texts of either author do not correspond to the religious meaning of the term and because of that they should rather classified as the motif of suffering.

6.1.3 The Motif of Suffering

The main similarity between Andersen's and Wilde's approach to this motifs is that neither of them attempt to determine the source of suffering in their texts. They both focus more on its potential value. For Andersen its value lies in the ability of suffering to mature one's soul. Wilde believed that suffering is central to creating Beauty, which he demonstrated in 'The Nightingale and the Rose', and also that it can redeem and heal a condemned and desperate heart, as it happens in 'The Fisherman and His Soul'.

6.1.4 The Motif of Love

The most common instance of love in all the fairy tales seems to be that of Agape, with an occasional mention of Eros as a temptation for the hero. Neither Andersen nor Wilde attempt to speculate on the origin or nature of Love. Their understanding of it in the primarily analysed tales is, however, distinctly Christian.

Both Wilde and Andersen are interested the most, and perhaps exclusively, in the effect that Love or its lack may have on human heart and soul. Andersen emphasises the fickleness and immaturity of human love that its potential virtues, with the exception of maternal love, which he held in high regard, as the tales 'The Elder-tree Mother' and 'The Story of a Mother' show.

Wilde had no such prejudices against human love. In the 'The Fisherman and His Soul', he introduced a human who eventually grows capable of true love, love rejected by mankind but approved by God. That, of course, does not mean that Wilde would not be aware of the existence of imperfect and selfish love, which is much more common. He described this kind of love in the characters of the Student and the Professor's daughter in 'The Nightingale and the Rose'. Love, as Wilde understood it, can connect different worlds. It can even change a man's heart, but at the same time, it has to concede defeat in front of human shallowness and selfishness.

6.1.5 The Motif of Death and Afterlife

Andersen's idea of afterlife as an eternal quest of the soul for perfection is most explicitly articulated in his 'The Little Mermaid'. It is only concerning the soul because Andersen did not believe in the resurrection of the body.

In its consequences it also strips Hell of its importance because in this eternal quest the soul of every one who does not refuse God's mercy will be eventually perfected and saved.

Oscar Wilde's opinions on death are not expressed as clearly yet it seems reasonable to say that both Heaven and Hell exist in his fairy-tales as concepts, the nature of which is uncertain but which can be both a place or a state. Such an opinion would largely conform with contemporary beliefs.

6.1.6 The Motif of Pride

All of the fairy tales,where Pride plays an important role, are an illustration of the way in which Pride can distort truth to make it suit our desires and imaginations. Both Andersen and Wilde demonstrate the extremes which these deformations can reach through their use language. In order to reveal pride and foolishness but also to make fun of society – primarily high society – both Wilde and Andersen use language and humour.

Wilde's typology of Pride seems to be more detailed than Andersen's. He introduces prideful characters who are foolish and narrow-minded (the Frog and the King)

or who are in fact brilliant (the Rocket), then those who, while being proud are learned and pious, such as the priest, in contrast to those who are vain and shallow (the Student and the Professor's daughter). Nevertheless, the major difference between Andersen and Wilde seems to be the level of the characters' awareness of the fact that they manipulate others through their speeches.

7 Possible Other Sources for the Motifs That Can Be Found in the Fairy-tales of Both Oscar Wilde and Hans Christian Andersen

It has been long considered a constant that Oscar Wilde in his fairy-tales replied to Andersen's stories and recreate themes and motifs he found in them as he saw fit. The demonstrations of that belief range from an outright proclamation of the influence, as is the case with Murray (Wilde 1980, pp. 10–11) and to a lesser degree Markey (Markey 2011), to its unquestioning acceptance (Nassaar 1995; Banerjee 2008).

The problem of Andersen's possible influence on Wilde's fairy-tales is inseparably connected with comparing their stories and so I could not avoid it in my research. In the following I will briefly summarize what I have learnt and explain the problematic points of this hypothesis.

Anne Markey (2011, p. 106), for example, considers 'The Nightingale and the Rose' to be a strong evidence of Wilde's engagement with a number of Andersen's fairy tales. In her opinion the tale can be connected to 'The Nightingale', from which it takes the theme of appreciation of the artificial more than the natural, 'The Swineherd', from which continued the previous theme and added to it the female heroine's character flaws, very similar to the character flaws of the Professor's daughter. The list continues with 'The World's Fairest Rose' and 'A Rose from Homer's Grave'.

Markey concedes that nearly all the aspects of Andersen's stories are reversed and played with but does not try to support her claim with any other evidence or to explain

why these similarities, which do exist, should stem only from Wilde's presumed reading of Andersen's tales.

As an illustration of both how long established the argument about Andersen's influence on Wilde is and of its problematic points, I will now analyse the hypothesis as it appears in the introduction to 'The Complete Shorter Fiction of Oscar Wilde' by Isobel Murray.[1]

Murray establishes as a fact that Wilde had doubtlessly 'saturated himself in Andersen before producing *The Happy Prince* – and also *A House of Pomegranates*, although more and different impulses are at work there' (Wilde 1980, p. 10).

However, despite her strong conviction about Wilde's intimate familiarity with Andersen's stories, she fails to give any explanation of how Wilde came across Andersen's work[2] and which of the flawed and strongly moralistic contemporary translations of Andersen in English (see Bredsdorff 1975, chapter 'The Whole World and a Pair of New Skates') could have appealed to a man of Wilde's peculiar character, tastes and opinions. Moreover she fails to give a piece of evidence for her claim or at least a source for it.

Instead she merely provides a brief description of a few of the similarities between the fairy-tales of Oscar Wilde and Hans Christian Andersen, asserting they are too many to describe more of them. Unfortunately, Murray never explains why, in her opinion, these similarities can only have roots in Wilde's presumed reading of Andersen's tales and why they can not come from the sources Wilde was using in writing his fairy-tale.

1. I have chosen her approach to the problem as a model because, excluding the contemporary newspaper reviews (Stead 1888), she was one of the first scholars to propose and promote the hypothesis, which was then accepted by many others. See the overview in the chapter Methodology and Background.

2. It is indeed quite possible, given Andersen's immense popularity and the depth and range of Wilde's knowledge about literature, that he was retold the stories by some friends, or that he encountered them in another form that would have diminished the problematic aspects of the translations – one of such sources could be for example the fairy-tales of George McDonald, whose sense of humour is much more like that of Oscar Wilde than the sense of humour of Hans Christian Andersen – but in that case it could hardly be called saturating one's self in Andersen.

This reluctance considerably weakens Murray's argument. The strength of it is further reduced by Murray's failure to list any of Andersen's tales as an inspiration or influence for Wilde's stories, although she enumerates all other inspirations, influences and even puns and parodied texts meticulously.[3]

The quality – or rather a lack thereof – of the early translations of Andersen's tales further speaks against a direct connection between the two authors. Aside from an often flawed rendition of the stories, the early translators put exceeding emphasis on morality in the tales, often even greater than the author himself (again see Bredsdorff 1975, chapter 'The Whole World and a Pair of New Skates'), exaggerating the moral values in the manner that Oscar Wilde later often ridiculed in his works. It is, therefore, unlikely that these versions of Andersen's fairy-tales would appeal to him very much.

It is not my intention to deny the possibility of the existence of a connection between the two authors. I merely wish to show that the similarities between the texts, namely the use of the same basic motifs, may have as well have had roots in their use the same sources for their stories, rather than in Wilde's assumed familiarity with Andersen's works.

Having analysed the ways in which Hans Christian Andersen and Oscar Wilde treated the selected motifs of religion, death, love and pride, I consider the similarities in their approach very generic and the differences substantial enough to further emphasise the originality of each writer.

Furthermore, I found no similarities that could only be explained by the influence of Andersen's work on Oscar Wilde's writing. To the contrary, many of the assumed influences could be explained away by a more attentive analysis of Wilde's and Andersen's use of the same or very similar other sources in their writing. I will explain my claim and present some evidence for it in the following chapter by introducing a few of these other sources that could have been used by both Andersen and Wilde.

3. An example would be the first note to 'The Fisherman and his Soul' where the romance 'Phantastes' is given as an inspiration for the relationship of the Fisherman and his Soul and no mention of Andersen is made(Wilde 1980, p. 271).

7.1 Possible Common Sources for Andersen's 'The Little Mermaid' and Wilde's 'The Fisherman and His Soul'

One of the major sources that is actually attested as having been used by both Andersen and Wilde is the novel 'Undine' by Friedrich de la Motte Fouqué. Andersen used it as a direct inspiration for his own tale – there is evidence for it in his letter to a friend (Wullschläger 2001, p. 165). Oscar Wilde was certainly familiar with Fouqué's story too, at the very least from his mother's poem that used the fable's plot and from Matthew Arnold's variation of it, but he probably knew either Fouqué's original text or the opera based on it as well because it was very famous at the time.[4]

7.2 Possible Common Sources for Andersen's 'The Nightingale' and Wilde's 'The Nightingale and the Rose'

Hans Christian Andersen wrote a short story called 'The World's Fairest Rose', in which a deathly ill Queen is restored to health by the sight of a rose that blossomed under the Cross of Christ from his own blood, a motif that has been correctly recognised in an altered form in Wilde's 'The Nightingale and the Rose'.

One of Wilde's sources for the story of 'The Nightingale and the Rose' could have been the poetry of a Persian poet Hafiz, who repeatedly tells the story of a nightingale colouring the originally white rose red with his blood.

4. The popularity of the story is easily attested by the number of other works it inspired, even when limiting the choice to those that profess the inspiration by naming the mermaid Undine, such as: 'Undine', an opera by E. T. A. Hoffmann and de la Motte Fouqué, 'Ondine', a piano prelude by Claude Debussy, 'Undine and Huldbrand', a painting by Henry Fuseli, 'Ondine', a painting by Paul Gauguin or 'Undine with Harp', a sculpture by Ludwig Michael von Schwanthaler.

Wilde might have found out about the motif of love between a nightingale and a rose from the opening line of Andersen's 'A Rose from Homer's Grave' (Markey 2011, p. 108) but he could also have become acquaintanced with Hafiz through the works of Goethe and Emerson and then read them in translation. [5]

This possibility of becoming familiar with the motif seems more likely to me than that Wilde would learn of it from Andersen's story, especially considering his high esteem of Emmerson and Goethe (Markey 2011, pp. 68,70; Ellmann 1987, p. 167) and only a generic resemblance between the fate of the two birds in the respective tales.[6]

The Persian poetry is another source to which both writers may have had access because Andersen himself hints at his familiarity with it when he says that 'through all the songs of the east, the eternal theme is the nightingale's love for the rose' (Andersen 1842).

It is likely that more sources known to both Wilde and Andersen would emerge if their fairy-tales were analysed from this point of view. Sadly, I am not aware of the existence of any such study, useful as it would be. Markey had devoted a lot of space to the sources Wilde might have been using for his tales in her monograph but it is more of a general overview and not a detailed analysis, which would have exceeded the scope of her work.

5. The most widely accepted translation of Hafiz's poetry into English by Gertrude Bell was published in 1897 and therefore could not have been used in writing of the tale.

6. The nightingale in 'A Rose from Homer's Grave' dies from singing himself to death to an indifferent rose and that is the only information about its death, which Andersen offers.

Conclusion

Through comparing selected motifs in several fairy-tales of Hans Christian Andersen and Oscar Wilde I found that existing similarities between the authors, which have been the object of many literary analyses, are factual and real but at the same time too generic and broad.

There is a pair of tales where Andersen's influence on Wilde, if there was one, would appear stronger than in and most direct – Andersen's 'On the Judgement Day' and Wilde's 'The House of Judgement'. Wilde in his story condensed and reversed the same basic motif on which Andersen developed his tale. That is true of more of their respective texts but the semblance is closest and most straightforward between these two tales.

Andersen's tale 'The Story of a Mother' (1847), in which a mother warms a prickly bush on her bosom, in exchange for its help in finding her child, and the warmth of her heart, together with her blood make the bush bloom again is also reminiscent of Wilde's 'The Nightingale and the Rose'. However, the similarity is not specific enough to form a connection between the two texts.

Consequently, at the current state of knowledge about the sources and formative influences on both Andersen and especially Wilde, the claim that Oscar Wilde wrote his fairy-tales as a response to Andersen's texts, which were an inspiration to him, appears to be untenable in this form and calls for further research.

There are many more aspects of both Andersen's and Wilde's lives and work that would deserve a detailed research and or re-evaluation but the following appear to be

the most neglected and at the same time crucial for any subsequent research about the two authors.

For a better estimation not only of the differences and similarities between the writings of Hans Christian Andersen and Oscar Wilde but also of the possible roots of these similarities and differences, I believe it would be most fruitful to focus research on the opinions of each writer on social issues, aesthetics and ethics as they would appear in primary materials. Establishing with certainty the range and scope of education and literary interests of both Andersen and Wilde would greatly contribute to a comparative analysis of their works as well.

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