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DOUBLE LIFE IN OSCAR WILDE'S

THE PICTURE OF DORIAN GRAY AND THE AUTHOR'S LIFE

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I confirm that this thesis is my own work written using solely the sources and literature properly quoted and acknowledged as works cited.

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Poděkování

Na tomto místě bych ráda poděkovala vedoucí práce Einat Adar, M.A., Ph.D. za ochotu a rady, které vedly ke vzniku této práce.

Abstrakt

Bakalářská práce se zabývá konceptem dvojího života, konkrétně v životě Oscara Wilde a v jeho díle *Obraz Dorian Graye*. Cílem práce je porozumět dualitě v autorově životě, ve vybraném díle a poukázat na jejich souvislost. První část představuje Wildeův život se zaměřením na jeho dualitu. Té si lze všimnout především v udržování dvou vztahů najednou. Jsou zde také popsány potíže spjaté s vedením dvojího života. Druhá část analyzuje typy dualit tří hlavních postav románu, s ústředním zaměřením na hlavního hrdinu Dorian Graye. Různé typy dualit jsou prezentovány prostřednictvím Basilovy homosexuality, veřejného vystupování Lorda Henryho, lišícího se od jeho tajných tuh, a soubojem těla a duše v případě Dorian, jehož dualita je navíc podpořena existencí portrétu. Práce se dále zabývá vývojem Dorian a osobami, které jej mohli ovlivnit včetně jeho dědečka Lorda Kelsa a Lorda Henryho Wottona.

Klíčová slova: dvojí život, dualita, Oscar Wilde, *Obraz Dorian Graye*, Viktoriánská doba

Abstract

The bachelor thesis focuses on the concept of double life, concretely found in Oscar Wilde's life and one of his works – *The Picture of Dorian Gray*. The aim is to provide an understanding of duality in author's life and in the selected novel and show the connection between them. The first part of the thesis presents Wilde's life with the focus on the duality. His duality can be noticed mainly through leading two relationships at once. There are also shown the difficulties of leading a double life in this section. The second part analyses the types of dualities of the three main characters from the novel, with the main focus on the protagonist Dorian Gray. The different types of dualities are presented through Basil's homosexuality, Lord Henry's public image that differs from his secret desires, and lastly through the fight of the body and soul in the case of Dorian. The duality of Dorian is even supported by the existence of the portrait. Further, the thesis discusses the Dorian's development and how certain people could influence who he has become, including his grandfather Lord Kelso and Lord Henry Wotton.

Keywords: double life, duality, Oscar Wilde, *The Picture of Dorian Gray*, Victorian period

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1. Introduction

Oscar Wilde is one of the well-known representatives of the Victorian period thanks to his writings but also because of his life. By paying attention to his unusual lifestyle for the period, full of secret affairs with young boys or scandalous writings we are able to understand Wilde's development and its influence on his literary output. Thanks to a close examination of Wilde's biography his double life is revealed which explains some of his decisions or life situations.

Learning about the double life of Oscar Wilde can show us the hidden double aspects in the novel and can help us understand the background of Dorian's life and its destruction. I believe that the duality is an interesting aspect that presents the reality of leading a double life and reveals what the characters of the novel or the author himself keep inside themselves. Paying attention to duality help us to better understand the human psyche, the double personality. Moreover, it can affect the way we think about our lives or lead us to the conclusion that we, too, actually lead a double life.

The thesis examines of two main topics: the double life of Oscar Wilde and of the double found in *The Picture of Dorian Gray*. Nevertheless, before moving to those topics it is important to provide an insight into what is exactly meant by the double. I focus on the origin of the term, its meaning, and its connection to the Victorian era. The double life of writers is also presented. The next chapter is dedicated to Oscar Wilde, focusing on his life and its double aspects. The biography introduces Wilde's development since childhood until his last years of life together with a basic information about his literary output. The fourth chapter presents the double in the selected novel *The Picture of Dorian Gray*. First, it discusses the three main characters, Basil Hallward, Lord Henry Wotton and Dorian Gray, and their duality. The second part of this chapter focuses on the most important character Dorian Gray. It captures his development, how he was influenced

already from an early age by his grandfather Lord Kelso and his further development under the influence of Lord Henry. Finally, this chapter raises the possibility that Basil can be the representant of Lord Kelso. Together with the author's life it captures the concept of the double and provides a better understanding of it.

In this thesis I would like to answer several questions starting with Oscar Wilde and his bibliography, where I will be searching for the aspects of duality to see how it influenced him and also his writings. In connection with this I would like to present some similarities found between Wilde's life and the selected novel. Further questions would be to find out how exactly the characters in *The Picture of Dorian Gray* lead a double life with the main focus on the protagonist. Another important question is how learning about the double element can help us to better understand the novel or the author's life. Lastly, I would like to show the relevance of the double life today.

2. The double

The double, or a “doppelgänger,” according to the Germanic term defined by a novelist Jean Paul, can be seen as any dual structure. That is why it is hard to provide the double with a single definition. The doppelgänger, in English a “double-goer,” stays on the division line between the reality and imagination. Moreover, it is also closely connected to sexuality and gender, accompanied with the various desires and the lifelong search for identity, as we can see in Oscar Wilde himself. (Webber 6–12)

Paul used this term in his novel *Siebenkäs* for the first time. The story is about two almost identically looking friends, Siebenkäs and Leibgeber, who switch their names and identity. However, originally the word doppelgänger meant something else than it does today. Paul uses it in the novel to mark the two-course meal, while he used a very similar word “doppeltgänger” for someone who “goes twice,” has a dual structure. Nowadays, only the word doppelgänger is used when talking about duality and it presents any type of double. (Paul 2008)

According to Boehm-Schnitker a doppelgänger, marked as the relationship between two mirror selves, is related to the Victorian period. Its double is expressed in the various genres, texts, and characters of that age. (Boehm-Schnitker 94) At first the term doppelgänger was used only in literature, but then it has extended also to the field of psychology. From the psychological point of view the double is used to mark the possible double identity. The term appears in Freud’s theories about human behaviour and focuses on the behavioural patterns of the double. (Vardoulakis 111–114) However, during the Victorian era the double was often criticised as an act of madness, narcissism, or even evil. As Rogers states in his work *A Psychoanalytic Study of the Double in Literature*: “The conventional double is of course some sort of antithetical self, usually a guardian angel or tempting devil.” (Rogers 12) As a consequence of that view the

double personality was marked as a mental disorder, which made people doubt their own personalities. Nevertheless, because of the moral rules, that perfectly define the Victorian era, people were led to create another life which they presented in public in order not to lose their own self.

2.1. The Double Life of Writers

As stated before, the Victorian era was marked as a period of the double and this also affected people living at that time, including writers. However, it is important to express who the writer, the author of a text, actually is at first. The French literary critic Roland Barthes and French philosopher Michel Foucault discuss the role of the author in their texts.

According to Barthes it is not useful to emphasize the connection between the author and the text because then we create a limitation. The author is in a way connected to text of course, in the way he thinks about it for example. However, the point is that he is not actively connected to it, because the text is free and exists on its own. (Barthes 52) The importance of the text itself and not the author or his background was also supported by J. C. Carrier, who examined the often-misinterpreted text of Roland Barthes – “The Death of the Author” in his work “Roland Barthes’s Resurrection of the Author and Redemption of Biography.”

Further, Foucault discusses this problematic in his “What is an Author?” and supports the fact that the author is not the owner of his texts. The author relates to the discussed topics, but he is not responsible for them. (Foucault 211) Actually, the question who the author really is, is quite complicated. In modern times, literary studies present the role of the author as someone who explains what is happening in his writings. Also, there are examples of how the author can refer to himself in the text – through the style of language for example. Nevertheless, not much attention is paid to those relations and

the emphasis lies rather on the structure of the literary work than on the relationship between the author and the work. (Foucault 214–215)

After the distinction of who the author really is and what is his connection towards his works it is obvious that the text and its topics cannot be solely judged in reference to the author or his life. That is why it is not possible to certainly say that a duality found in a particular literary text comes from the writers themselves. So, being a writer does not directly mean that you lead a double life, which was supported by a French sociologist Pierre Bourdieu. “Indeed, though Bourdieu recognizes that profession of writer or artist is one of the least capable, too, of completely defining those individuals who claim it and who quite often cannot assume the function they take as their principal one unless they have a secondary profession to provide them their main income, ...” (Lahire 448) At the same time Bourdieu does not say that the double life of the writers is impossible, but he makes a distinction between two groups of writers. In the first group belong those who are writers by profession. Writers who have a second job from which they make a living are classified in the other group and these are those who are more capable of leading a double life. (Lahire 448) However, that does not mean that it applies universally. In addition, according to the information provided before we cannot rely on this distinction because it is questionable. That is why the author, and his literary work should be treated separately because each exists without being dependent on the other.

Moreover, every writer is unique, so it is impossible to separate them in two groups and also this distinction cannot always be that obvious, as in the case of Oscar Wilde. He belongs to the first mentioned group, but that does not mean that he could not lead a double life. Actually, Wilde is one of the representatives of double personality, which can be seen in his life but also in his works. In his writings, such as in *The Picture of Dorian Gray*, or in *The Importance of Being Earnest*, some characters are leading a

double life and share some similarities with Wilde himself – such as the homosexual desires, interest in art, or the interest in young handsome boys. So, there is a connection between Wilde’s life and his work in general, meaning that a life of a writer can influence what he is writing about, especially when the writer identifies with the characters, as Wilde did. “Basil Hallward is what I think I am: Lord Henry what the world thinks me: Dorian what I would like to be—in other ages, perhaps.” However, this is not the main topic of this part and more information about Wilde’s duality will be provided in next chapter.

3. The double life of Oscar Wilde

3.1. Family background & early years of Oscar Wilde

From a young age Oscar Wilde was notable for having an interest in extraordinary clothing, concretely in colourful lilac shirts supporting the style of a dandy. Like his mother he found his interest in literature. It was around the time he was studying at Portora Royal School in Enniskillen when he started to shape his personality. (Ellmann 18)

His mother, Jane Speranza Francesca Wilde (born Jane Elgee) was a remarkable person and Oscar learned a lot from her, especially the interest in poetry. She married William Robert Wilde in 1851, both coming from middle-class families. William was a very skilful surgeon and he worked in St Mark's Hospital in Dublin which became the first hospital in Ireland to provide operations of eye and ear. Before he married Jane, he begot three illegitimate children, Henry, Emily, and Mary, of whom only Henry have survived his father. (Ellmann 27–30)

Together William and Jane had three legitimate children: William Robert Kingsbury Wills Wilde (1852), Oscar Fingal O'Flahertie Wills Wilde (1854) and Isola Francesca Emily Wilde (1857). The names of the children were picked up very carefully. As Lord Henry Wotton says in *The Picture of Dorian Gray*: "Names are everything." (Wilde 200) The first son was named after his father, with added "Kingsbury" referring to the family of his mother. Both boys received the name "Wills" inspired by a playwright and a painter W.G. Wills, with whom the Wilde family shared a connection, because of his interest in art and literature. The name of the girl was picked up completely differently – Isola as Isolde and Francesca were meant to have a link to Italy. But the most important for us is the second son, for whom they chose the names "Oscar" and Fingal" from one

of the Irish legends and the “O’Flahertie” part of the name was connected to the father’s grandmother. (Ellmann 34–35)

Lady Wilde, after having her first son Willie, wanted to have a girl and that is why she treated Oscar for the first years of his life more as a girl than as a boy. This notion was supported by the memories of the family friends as well as judging from photographs, where Oscar was seen in a dress several times. However, it was quite common to dress children, of both sexes, in this way during Victorian and Edwardian period. The dressing as a girl, but more importantly the treating could have been a starting point of forming Wilde’s dual self from an early age. Nevertheless, Jane gave birth to the last child, the girl she always wanted, when Oscar was about three years old. So, treating him as a girl was not happening for a long time. On the other hand, it is not impossible that this experience could have influenced Wilde in his further development. (Ellmann 35–36)

Approaching puberty, the parents started to think about a boarding school for Oscar and Willie instead of home-schooling as they received so far. Even though, Oscar was about two years younger than his twelve years old brother, he was more easily teachable than Willie. That is why they were sent together to the Portora Royal School in February 1864. Willie became quite popular thanks to his drawings and ability to play a piano. Oscar on the other hand was endowed with a specific wit. One of Oscar’s first marked talents was his ability to read very fast. He was reading the compulsory literature without difficulties and even with pleasure. However, what differentiated him the most was his enthusiasm for the Greek and Latin literature. After two years at Portora he started to translate works by Plato, for example. That was also the time when his talent was noticed by his teachers and classmates. Nevertheless, he struggled to fit into a group

from an early age and was never a popular child, as he would later struggle in society with his extraordinary lifestyle. (Ellmann 40–42)

In 1871, Wilde and two other pupils received a scholarship that enabled them to study at Trinity College Dublin. There he met the man he later said was his best teacher, the tutor of ancient history, Reverend J. P. Mahaffy, thanks to whom he discovered his real passion for Greece. Wilde was a good student, his excellence in classics was known at Trinity. He visited the offered course in aesthetics and started to think about becoming a writer. At the same time eighteen years old Wilde was forming his own personality and he was opting for the dandiacal style. (Ellmann 47, 50–51) The term dandyism means an aesthetic style of life, a popular lifestyle of the eighteenth and nineteenth century in England. According to Albert Camus, the dandy feels the need for the audience when facing society. Because of his obsession with his own appearance, he sees the outside world as a mirror. This mirror provides him with a never-ending image of himself and allows his own self-realization. On the other hand, Baudelaire finds the dandy remarkable because of his genius, together with the interest in aestheticism and art, as we can see later in life of Oscar Wilde too. (Meinhold 113–114, 119) Another change in Wilde's behaviour was his idea to become a Catholic. However, he remained a Protestant because his father was threatening him with disinheritance. (Ellmann 56)

Soon the quality of Irish life was no longer sufficient for Wilde, also considering his future studies. He started to be interested in an English movement called the Pre-Raphaelitism that was not very popular in Dublin. (Ellmann 56) This movement, originally called the “Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood” was formed by three young men; John Everett Millais, William Holman Hunt, and Dante Gabriel Rossetti, and at first functioned as a secret society. Later four more members joined this group of artists and art critics. Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood strove to master the technical means of painting

and detail. (Gilmour 208–210) The idea of leaving for a better study opportunity actually originated from Mahaffy, who supported Wilde and even persuaded his father. So, Wilde was free to go to the Magdalen College of Oxford University in London in 1874. However, later that summer the health of his father weakened. Sir William had to reduce his practise and that influenced his income. Wilde was worried about his father, but he did not let it spoil the excitement about being accepted to Oxford. He was just in his twenties, entering one of the greatest universities in England. (Ellmann 56–59)

3.2. Oxford

Evidence of Wilde's life at Oxford is recorded thanks to one of his friends, Agnes Bodley, and his journal, called Bodley's journal. The beginning at Oxford was hard for Wilde. He came from a different social background than his classmates. They went to more prestigious school before, had more confidence and of course more money. (Ellmann 63–64) Wilde, as an Irish living in England, struggled with finding his identity, like every foreigner that comes to live in a different country. He spent a lot of time in England that influenced his development and thinking, which could help to form his duality. The influence and even the pressure from the outside world was huge and it definitely led him to change his lifestyle.

At that time Wilde started to be curious about the different kinds of activities at Oxford university and also made some changes in his appearance. He became sportier than his friends, cut his hair short and even altered his dressing style by putting aside his Dublin clothes. (Ellmann 65) With regard to academic studies, Wilde had an advantage over his classmates because he was excellently prepared at Trinity College Dublin. He attended courses of philosophy, ancient history and of course literature with great interest. On the other hand, Latin was not really his forte, but in the case of poetry he tried his best to be excited. Moreover, since building up a different image he started to

be more popular among his fellow students and they stopped considering him a freak. (Ellmann 67,70)

He made some close friends at Magdalen College. First there were his neighbours: William Walford Ward, Reginald Richard Harding, and David Hunter Blair. (Ellmann 71) Once Ward asked him what he is going to do in his life and Wilde answered: "I'll be a poet, a writer, a dramatist. Somehow or other, I'll be famous, and if not famous, notorious. Or perhaps I'll lead the life of pleasure for a time and then who knows rest and do nothing." (Ellmann 85) In other words his interest in becoming a writer was increasing while he was studying at Oxford.

By the end of the first year at Oxford his interest in Catholicism was stronger than at Trinity College, but he tried to avoid it. During his first summer break of 1875 he met some women, and shared strong feelings with the pretty Florence Balcombe. She was seventeen and Wilde twenty years old. However, Wilde was still studying, so planning a wedding was not appropriate, but they kept the idea of marriage in mind. (Ellmann 94, 96, 100) This was his first noticeable interest in a woman, which judging by the age came later than one would expect, but it was in the same period of time when Wilde questioned his sexuality.

When returning to Oxford to start a second year, Wilde had his head full of religion and love. It was also the time when he started to show interest in relationships with men. He was taking risks, even after he heard about a teacher from Eton, who lost his position after being intimate with some of his pupils, but Wilde wanted to discover his true nature. At the same time, Sir William's health declined. That is why Wilde returned to Dublin and spent the last days with his bedridden father like the rest of his family. Sir William died on 19th of April 1876. The family was about to face a financial crisis, because the head of the family and his income was the main source for their living

and the children's education expenses. Wilde focused on his studies and wisely put away the idea of becoming a Catholic. (Ellmann 101, 105–106)

In between his studies, Wilde went to Greece with his professor from Trinity College, Mahaffy. Back in London he was awaiting a crucial school examination in June 1878 on which his studies depended. Further, he started to be more interested in aestheticism and he tried to develop it at Oxford. (Ellmann 114, 134–135, 138) The Aesthetic Movement brought a different view on beauty, that simply evokes some reaction in the observer. Its beginnings are associated with the art critic and philosopher John Ruskin and the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood, a movement that was mentioned before. The members of the movement, such as painters, designers, or poets, called themselves the Aesthetes. They appreciated beauty above everything and were trying to find it in art and nature. The movement's motto was "Art for art's sake," which means that art "never expresses anything but itself." (Stankiewicz 169) One of the members, Walter Smith shared the aesthetic importance with the United States and Canada and connected the British and American Aestheticism. Later, Wilde played his role there when he went on his lecture tour in America in 1882. However, the movement was set apart in 1895 because of the sentence of Wilde for homosexual acts, which brought a huge scandal. Otherwise, this movement influenced the developments of the future movements, such as The Arts and Crafts Movement. (Stankiewicz 165–170)

Some months before the final exams he got syphilis from a prostitute and had to start a treatment. In the exams he reached first place and was awarded with the Newdigate Prize for his poem *Ravenna*. After the graduation from Oxford, he decided to go back to Dublin. There, Lady Wilde congratulated him but at the same time was worried about his future career. It was not clear what will happen. A career as a poet was not financially stable and in addition, he could not marry because of his infection. In Dublin he learnt

that Florence Balcombe, his first love, accepted a marriage proposal from Bram Stoker, later the author of *Dracula*. Disappointed at first but knowing that Stoker was a better match for her, Wilde started to think about returning to London. Moreover, he did not feel the urge to marry. (Ellmann 140–156)

Back in London, Wilde received his Bachelor of Arts and tried to find a field of study or a position at school, but unsuccessfully. (Ellmann 157, 161) In the meantime, he became a close friend of Rennell Rodd and in the summers of 1879 and 1881 they were travelling together. In order to keep the privacy of their intimate friendship away from the public and Rodd's family, they travelled under different names. (Ellmann 188–189) This shows another perfect example of duality in Wilde's life: coming up with made-up names, just as Algernon and Jack did in his own work *The Importance of Being Earnest*.

After that he began to share a house with a handsome boy called Frank Miles. During their intimate friendship a serious problem arose when Wilde wrote the work *Poems*. The volume was marked as originating from different authors as Shakespeare or Byron and furthermore, those poems were immoral. During that time Miles's father wrote to Oscar, advising a separation, because those poems presented a huge risk, and he did not want his son to be involved in any future problems in this matter. As Miles was financially dependent on his father, he did not have much choice but had to choose his father's side. That is why Miles and Wilde split up and never saw each other again. This separation was not easy for Wilde, because he could not afford a house only for himself, so he spent some time at his mother's place before finding his own and continued to write poetry which was scandalous for English audience. (Ellmann 163–164, 209–211)

3.3. Early writing & Lecture tours in America

After the unsuccessful attempt to find suitable studies or a job position, Wilde rather focused on choosing his future career. Actually, he hesitated between becoming a writer or a painter at first. (Ellmann 185) This hesitation presents the indecisiveness of his soul and its possible division. However, after the consideration of his early writings such as his successful poem *Ravenna* from Oxford and other works published in several school magazines through the years, or the scandalous collection *Poems*, he continued with writing and forgot about the idea of becoming a painter even though he loved art.

In 1880 he wrote a play *Vera*, which had a great success and one year later a poem called *Hélas*. In this poem he directly showed the double in himself. He assigned it to his parents because one was the complete opposite of another: each of them had different vision of passion, related to past or future. Wilde also admitted his indecisiveness about religious faith, concretely between Catholicism, which was more attractive for him, and Protestantism. The speaker of this poem refers to the double soul, to a secret life, precisely in this part (see below). Moreover, he was even convinced he had a triple nature. (Ellmann 199–200) In connection with this work, he once stated: “I am certain, he told Mrs Julian Hawthorne, that I have had three separate and distinct souls” (Ellmann 200).

“Methinks my life is a twice-written scroll

Scrawled over on some boyish holiday

With idle songs for pipe and virelay,

Which do but mar the secret of the whole” (Wilde 2013, 3).

Further, Wilde wanted to manage to go on lecture tours and thanks to his ideas about aestheticism he was invited to a tour in the USA in 1881. He accepted this offer, but did not go immediately, because of the opening of his play *Vera*, so he postponed the tour at the beginning of 1882. Nevertheless, the opening did not take place because aspects of it were censored. This brought a bit of sadness to Wilde, but it did not stop him in his next steps, and he prepared thoroughly for the lectures. (Ellmann 218–220) The whole tour was a great achievement for Wilde. After finishing his lectures in October 1882, he stayed in America for two more months and left at the end of December making his name through the USA and Canada. (Ellmann 294–295, 301)

Back in London Wilde was not thinking about settling down and that is how he ended up in Paris at the end of January 1883. In Paris he got intimately close with Robert H. Sherard. There he finished one of his masterpieces *The Duchess of Padua* and while he was in France the aesthetic movement, that he represented in the United States, started to develop there. Wilde even changed his image in France - dressing in the French style of the period and cutting his hair in a Roman style. Again, we can see that he changed his appearance in order to fit into society, which relates to the existence of his dual life. However, after three months in Paris, Wilde was running out of the money that he saved from the American tour. That is why he decided to return to London, like his friend Sherard. (Ellmann 305–306, 314, 325)

3.4. Marriage & Forming a family

Oscar Wilde's intimate friendships came to be noticed by society, so having a wife would take these speculations and rumours away. Since Florence Balcombe was already married, he had to think of someone else. Around 1880 he seriously thought about marrying Violet Hunt, but she refused his proposal. However, he soon met two other women: Charlotte Montefiore who also refused him and Constance Lloyd, who he met in May 1881 in Dublin, and she caught his attention immediately. Moreover, Constance was interested in art and knew Italian. While Wilde was lecturing in the USA in 1882 and then went to Paris at the beginning of 1883, Constance was studying at an art school, but before he left, they visited each other several times. In between his lectures he came to Dublin in November and after a few days he and Constance got engaged. After Wilde returned from his travels and marriage became financially possible, they married on 29th of May in 1884 at St James's Church. (Ellmann 329–331, 342–344, 349)

After a short time, they were facing financial problems and Wilde tried to get a position at school, but unsuccessfully, so he started lecturing again. However, Constance was soon pregnant and on 5th June 1885 their first child Cyril came to the world and about one year later on 5th November 1886 she gave birth to another child. Wilde was hoping for a girl this time, but it was boy again and they named him Vyvyan. These two years of pregnancy were hard for them, full of incomprehension. Wilde was often away enjoying life. He liked Constance, but he got tired of playing a husband. He could not imagine himself being a father, even though he was fond of his sons. In this period, he also re-joined the society of young men. (Ellmann 357–360, 371–372)

In the meantime, his wife was raising their children, trying to sustain their marriage without the sexual part. According to her brother Otho, she still trusted her husband until 1895, when she questioned his orientation for the first time. But she stayed with him, so it may be presumed that Wilde gave her some convincing reason why they were not having a sexual relationship. This reason probably involved a disease - catching syphilis in the past and its likely return. (Ellmann 386)

3.5. Further writing & The age of Dorian Gray

After Wilde stopped giving lectures in 1885, he tried journalism. Nevertheless, he was not fond of it, so as quickly as he started, he also stopped. He rather began to write stories – the best *The Portrait of Mr W.H.* was published in July 1889, portraying William Shakespeare as a homosexual. He used an old theory about Shakespeare's possible orientation, but the story was inspired by his own "secret life." (Ellmann 395, 407–409)

The following period from 1889 to 1895 was very important for Wilde. It was a time when the interest in the aesthetic movement was increasing and also the successful period of his writings – the most significant for us is *The Picture of Dorian Gray*. (Ellmann 420–421) In 1891 his only novel Wilde focused on the divided self with emphasis on beauty and art by creating a story about a handsome and innocent character, who ends up tragically destroying his soul. (Marshall 196) This topic of interest, the divided self, was earlier captured by Robert Louis Stevenson in his novella *The Strange Case of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde* in 1886. In this work he perfectly presents the duality by the fact that Jekyll jumps when he is talking from the first person to the third and vice versa. At the same time, it is important to say, that Stevenson and Wilde were not the only ones who expressed the theme of divided self. The concept of double life has already been presented in gothic works, in the books of Dickens or Shelly, for example. (Webber

6–7) Nevertheless, more attention to this topic will be paid in chapter Four focusing on the novel *The Picture of Dorian Gray* and its duality.

3.6. Wilde's sexuality

At the outset it is important to say that the Victorian era did not support homosexual relationships and sex with other men was illegal. So, most men who found other men attractive, struggled a lot with their sexuality and so did Wilde. The struggle made some join the church, others even committed suicide to put an end to their suffering. However, most of them found a way to act so everything was just as it should be according to the norms – a marriage. Moreover, some of the homosexual men were spending time with female prostitutes, to practise the physical contact with females or to just have the experience of this kind as Wilde did. (Mckenna 82–84)

Wilde, as many others, tried to keep his different sexuality a secret, and married a woman. Even though he married Constance and tried to suppress his homosexual desires, the marriage, as expected, did not work out. In the work *A Rebours*, Huysmans shared some thoughts related to this topic, but mostly it is about the recognition of Wilde's sexuality. Wilde realised that even if marriage can give him some kind of stability and appropriate social status it cannot take away his secret desires. (Mckenna 85–86)

The sexuality provides the best example of Wilde's double life. He was married and had children but on the other hand he was secretly spending intimate time with various men. As described before, homosexuals got married in order to avoid their homoerotic desires and mostly to lower the suspicion of the public. Nevertheless, that did not stop them from leading secret, double lives.

It is important to say, that in the Victorian period and its strict morality people could not live their lives openly as they wanted. Living under limitations, they created a version of their public and private self to live undisturbed in their own way, and Oscar Wilde is a great example of that. Thinking about this problematic, we can say that everyone, even just a little, present themselves differently in public and then in private. We all live a multiple life in a way because there are still norms we have to follow and behave according to, but in the private sphere the “second self” takes over.

In the past, talking about sexuality was not a very usual thing and this topic brought a lot of pressure. However, Foucault does not imply, that sex was always forbidden or misunderstood, but all its negative elements, such as its censorship, were also parts of its development. (Foucault 4–5) Actually, the beginning of the eighteenth century brought some changes in the view on sex, but same-sex relationships were still seen as illegal until the end of the century. Later, in nineteenth century, sex stopped to be such a taboo to talk about. (Foucault 24–26) Moreover, this brought also new views on homosexuality. Being a homosexual in the nineteenth century had a certain status and it was a part of identity, which helped in one’s development. (Foucault 43)

Even though close friendships between men were usual and tolerated in the Victorian era, the homosexual tendencies in some of those friendships changed the perspective and those relationships started to be questioned by the society. This was also supported with the trials of Oscar Wilde, which caused a huge scandal. (Weeks 135) In this relation homosexuality was marked as something different or unnatural. That is why homosexuality was presented more as a “subculture” in the past. The existence of the subculture groups in England dates to the end of the seventeenth century and in the nineteenth century this tendency even increased. Those groups provided close friendships between the homosexuals and also the sense of belonging somewhere. Actually, Wilde

was also a member of that kind of group. (Weeks 136–138) In conclusion, it is important to say, that homosexuality existed rather as “subculture” and not as a “type” of sexuality as it was not accepted as a legal sexual act in the nineteenth century.

3.6.1. **Wilde’s Affairs**

Wilde had several affairs with young handsome boys. One of them was Robert Ross, a lover but later a very good friend of Wilde, so he is mostly remembered in that way. Another of Wilde’s young lovers was John Gray, who was supposed to be the inspiration for the creation of Dorian Gray. Wilde was writing the novel at the same time he was meeting with John Gray. However, there is only one particular affair, that can be marked as love affair, because their relationship was more serious than the previous affairs of Wilde. That is the relation between Wilde and Alfred Douglas, mostly known as “Bosie”. (Ellmann 382, 423–434, 444) Things got serious when Douglas became a victim of blackmail in 1892. Wilde had some experience with blackmailers, as a consequence of his sexual activity, so he helped Douglas. In fact, in that time people like him were usually blackmailed and threatened with imprisonment for several years. (Mckenna 254–259)

Their affair soon became equally the victim of blackmail – because of their letters, in particular the Hyacinth letter. In this letter Wilde reacted to a sonnet sent by Douglas. He used a lot of expressions of love language and also called Douglas a Hyacinthus. (Wilde 1962, 326) This love letter presented a huge risk for their secret relationship. Both, Douglas, and Wilde were worried, so they shared the situation with Pierre Louÿs, Wilde’s friend from Paris, and together came up with the idea to publish this letter as a piece of literature, which Louÿs translated to French. (Ellmann 519, 526, 530)

Even when the public attention was focused on them, Wilde and Douglas did not limit their meetings or the time they spent in the Savoy Hotel. Wilde was rarely at home and that is why Constance brought him the post one day and was barely holding back the tears, when she witnessed what her husband was doing. Wilde's friend Louÿs was present at this incident and after that, disgusted with how Wilde betrayed his family, ended his friendship with Wilde. Nevertheless, the relationship between Douglas and Wilde was not ideal. Douglas was really moody and ended their relationship many times. He thought it would make their lives easier, but in the end, he always wanted to come back. Once he went to Bristol, but as usual returned very soon and begged Wilde for forgiveness. On his way back from Bristol they went to the Savoy together, but through the main entrance on which Douglas insisted so everyone could see them, which later became fateful for Wilde. (Ellmann 530–533)

Further, the troubles continued when more letters appeared, not only between the two but also between Wilde and other boys. That is why Wilde advised his lovers to leave the country and he did the same and escaped to Paris as the scandal reached the public attention in 1894. Douglas was sending him letters, but he did not answer, because he knew that some of the charges were actually committed by Douglas. Moreover, Douglas emotionally blackmailed him, which was the hardest harassment for Wilde. That is why he even refused the meeting set up by Douglas in Paris. However, Wilde had to return to London soon because he ran out of money and also because the scandal involving him, and Douglas was rising there. (Ellmann 551, 558–562)

Back in London Wilde's crimes were multiplied because of the Criminal Law Amendment Act of 1885, which forbade intimate relationships between men. Wilde could not escape from this because he broke the law several times. In the meantime, he continued with writing and worked very well under the pressure from the outside world,

finishing for example the play *An Ideal Husband* or brought up *A Florentine Tragedy* in this productive period. Apart from these plays he also wrote what is probably his best play *The Importance of Being Earnest* in 1895. In this work he described the concept of double life in the form of “Bunburying,” as the main characters Algernon and Jack came up with fictitious names for themselves in order to escape their responsibilities whenever they need to. (Ellmann 551–554)

3.7. The Case of Oscar Wilde

Before the case there were several incidents happening for about two years, that led to the case, which need to be explained. These incidents arose because of the relationship between Douglas and Wilde, which Douglas’s father, John Sholto Douglas, ninth Marquess of Queensberry, found out.

The first time that Queensberry met Douglas and Wilde was by accident in Café Royal in September 1892. They even had lunch together and nothing seemed to go wrong. However, Queensberry found out the truth about their so-called friendship a few days later and he wrote to both of them advising to stop their contact. He was worried that the public had already noticed it. Nevertheless, Douglas responded very badly to his father and stood against him, which made Queensberry even angrier. There was a long-time exchange of letters between them. Queensberry was ready to save his son from sodomy at all costs, even Douglas did not want to participate in it. He was disappointed that his own blood is making such criminal acts, but he blamed Wilde mostly for it. Moreover, he was sending Wilde threatening letters and he was ready to have him shot. (Mckenna 384–387)

After Wilde's absence from London, there were several letters from Queensberry waiting for him, of course full of threats but Wilde decided not to pay attention to them, hoping that the whole situation will calm down after some time. However, that did not happen, and Queensberry came to Wilde's house in June of 1893. They discussed Wilde's relationship with Douglas, and again Queensberry was threatening to shoot him. Wilde even asked if he is accusing him and Douglas of sodomy, which Queensberry liked to hear from Wilde's mouth, and he twisted the whole situation later, putting it as Wilde was posing as a sodomite. Moreover, Wilde did not like how Queensberry talked about him and his wife in his letters to Douglas. After the unexpected visit, Wilde found out that Queensberry is collecting more evidence about his relationship with Douglas, from the Savoy hotel for example. (Mckenna 389–391)

With Douglas's support, Wilde was about to sue Queensberry for criminal libel because of the disturbing things he wrote in that letter for his son. Nevertheless, Wilde thought that a solicitor letter with a warning will be enough. Moreover, he asked Queensberry for an apology for writing such words, but he strongly refused. Instead, he was ready to oppose Douglas and Wilde publicly and was trying to find them. Nevertheless, they went away to Algiers and spent the summer of 1894 there, hoping that Queensberry will stop while they were away, but they underestimated him. (Mckenna 392–395) In the meantime, Queensberry started to go through some of his son's letters, mainly the Hyacinth letter that ended up in his hands in 1894. It was not a direct means for accusing Wilde of sodomy, but it was definitely a good starting point. (Ellmann 592)

Queensberry was planning to make a scandal. He wanted to call Wilde a sodomite publicly and found a perfect opportunity. When Wilde came back from Algiers in October, he planned an opening of his play *The Importance of Being Earnest*. It took place in St James's Theatre on Valentine's Day in 1895. Queensberry wanted to make a demonstration there, but Wilde found it out and with the police around the theatre Queensberry was not allowed to go inside. So, he waited outside and then attacked Wilde by throwing vegetables at him. Unfortunately, this incident was not counted as evidence later in court. (Mckenna 454–455)

Later, Wilde received a note from Queensberry in the club Albemarle on 28th of February 1895. Actually, it was written few days earlier, but Queensberry could not find him. In this short note he accused Wilde of being a sodomite, while misspelling the word sodomite as "sodomite." (Mckenna 459) Wilde decided to sue him for that criminal libel. So, soon after Wilde received the insult, on 2nd of March, two detectives came to arrest Queensberry. (Mckenna 466) He had to prove that what he wrote in the note was true by finding some concrete evidence of Wilde's sexual acts and then the libel would not be valid. (Mckenna 470) He was strongly motivated to prove his point and make sure that Douglas will not meet the same destiny as his other son, who died in a homosexual scandal. Queensberry, accompanied with Charles Russel, his new solicitor, and private detectives continued to work on the case. These private detectives were trying to find some external evidence against Wilde. One woman prostitute gave them the address of 13 Little College Street, where they found what they were looking for. They discovered a box of names of boys connected to Wilde, who were probably too afraid of standing against him by themselves. Wilde could do nothing but to withdraw; he was taken to Marlborough Street police station in the middle of March. (Ellmann 591, 595–598)

Desperate, Wilde met with Frank Harris, one of his friends, to consult about the case. Harris warned Wilde that it will go bad for him, mostly because no jury would judge a father protecting his son. He advised Wilde to drop the case, take his wife and children and go to Paris, but Wilde wanted to stand up for his writings, *The Picture of Dorian Gray*, and the letters. Additionally, while Harris was urging Wilde to drop the case, Douglas was encouraging him to continue with it. However, at the end of March, Queensberry accused Wilde of soliciting about twelve young boys, most of whom were involved in sodomy. (Ellmann 599–601)

3.7.1. **The Trials**

The first trial began on 3rd of April 1895. Viewing some of Wilde's poetry and especially the novel *The Picture of Dorian Gray*, Edward Henry Carson, Queensberry's chosen barrister leading the court case and also Wilde's classmate from Trinity College, marked Dorian a pervert, but Wilde had strongly defended his works and always found a suitable argument. In this field Carson could not win or force Wilde to confess to anything, it was a loose end for him. That is why he decided to move to the more serious part of the accusation connected with the young boys, where Wilde denied the charges of sodomy. However, Carson was well prepared and invited the boys, Wood, Allen and Clibborn, who were ready to testify against Wilde, which brought a considerable seriousness to the accusation. (Ellmann 602–603, 607–609)

After this accusation, other friends tried to persuade Wilde to finally leave the country, because he was going to be arrested soon. Nevertheless, his stubbornness and pride kept him in London. He did not want to be on the run, so he accepted his awaiting destiny. While being arrested, he asked for a bail even though he did not have the money. However, he remembered that Douglas promised him that his family will help him financially, but in the end they did not. This scandal of course could not be prevented

from going public, so it resulted in removing Wilde's name from the theatre plays or cancelling the performance. (Ellmann 617–619)

In the second trial, the evidence found in the Savoy Hotel was discussed. Witnesses of the Savoy Hotel testified that they had seen some young boys with Wilde. The housekeeper even talked about the fecal stains on the bedsheets, which brought new evidence to the case. Douglas was hardly mentioned, even though he spent similar time at Savoy as Wilde, but both his father and Wilde wanted to keep his name out of the case. On the contrary, Sir Edward Clarke, representing Wilde in the trials, questioned the evidence found in the hotel – suggesting that the stains could be caused by diarrhoea. So, they could not really prove any illegal acts by Wilde, but if someone could clearly deny it, most likely Douglas, it would be of course even better. Clarke even doubted the previous testimonies of the young boys, because their stories could have been just made up. (Ellmann 622–628)

The trial brought an unexpected twist. It was found out that the Parker brothers were apparently paid some amount of money since the beginning of Wilde's case. So, they were marked as unreliable witnesses of the blackmailers. At this time also Wilde's friends, such as Edward Shelley and Sir Frank Lockwood, tried to persuade the judge with their testimonies. After that, Mr Justice Wills, the judge, presented the summing-up, agreeing that the fecal stains could be of a different origin, but as it was just a speculation it could not be taken as supporting evidence. Nevertheless, there were still the Wilde's inappropriate letters to Douglas and the testimonies of the young boys. The speeches of Shelley and Lockwood were found doubtful and these two were marked as Wilde's accomplices. On 25th of May the judge reached the verdict commenting that this was the most dreadful case of his life and because of the evidence he found Wilde guilty and sentenced him for two years of imprisonment accompanied by hard labour. Wilde

could not say or do anything after he heard the news. There was a pain and despair in his face, he was absolutely devastated. (Ellmann 628–636, 642–644)

3.7.2. The Effect of the Trials

The trials of course effected Wilde's life, because there was a lot going on. At first Wilde was quite confident when he was defending his works. That was what he was presenting to the public all the time, so it was easier for him to talk about. (Ellmann 697–608) Even his remarkable speech in the first trial about what does "Love that dare not to speak its name" mean, left the whole court speechless. (Ellmann 626) However, after the accusation of sodomy, he became more vulnerable, mainly because they were exposing the actions of the secret life he was trying to hide. (Ellmann 612)

When Queensberry called Wilde a sodomite publicly, society also started to look at him differently. Wilde as a writer, a famous figure, had to definitely felt the pressure from the outside. Moreover, the public opinion was supported by the press that was destroying his reputation piece by piece. The fact that sodomy was positioned directly under murder at that time did not help him either in the public eye. Later, this situation made it difficult to get the bail he hoped for. Further, he was receiving some letters from Queensberry during the court case. All of these aspects influenced him psychologically. There was a lot to bear and even though his friends tried to help him as much they can, as with financial support for example, there were things they could not solve, where they could not help him.

Through the process of the case Wilde could have escaped abroad but he did not, as mentioned above. From that we can see that he could not leave and start somewhere else without Douglas and if so, he was trying to think of a way they can live together there. He knew that leaving the country would probably save him, but on the other hand he could not imagine his life without Douglas, even though his friends had been trying to separate them for years. Here his two lives can be seen as “fighting with each other” about which one is going to take over.

In between the trials he stayed with his brother Willie, which was very difficult as they did not speak with each other for about a year. Many friends, such as Robert Sherard or Frank Harris, were again urging him to leave the country but on the other hand Willie and Lady Wilde thought that he should face the trial. It had to be very hard for Wilde to decide how to react, because he was in the middle of it all and these two sides were trying to influence him. Lady Wilde even told him: “If you stay, even if you go to prison, you will always be my son. It will make no difference to my affection. But if you go, I will never speak to you again.” (Ellmann 632) The whole process of the court case was hard for Wilde and with the pressure from his family and friends it became even harder. Dual opinions on what he should do did not help his dual self with the decision he had to make. He knew, that if he would leave, his family will turn their backs on him, and he will lose Douglas forever but going to prison was not beneficial either. He was desperate and at this time not even physically well. Moreover, living with his brother was not very easy for him, so he stayed with his friends Ernest and Ada Leveson. They tried to influence him of course, but Wilde had already decided. He still cared about his public image, so going to prison was a better option for him. His love for Douglas was his only hope in order to survive in prison. (Ellman 631–637)

3.8. Life in Prison

During his imprisonment Wilde's health has weakened, he has suffered from insomnia and depression. He was trying to read because he did not want to lose his mind in prison, even though the allowed literature was very limited. With the writing it was similar, he was allowed to write but only letters. Instead, they allowed him some visitors, for example Ross, Sherard or Otho, the brother of Constance. With Otho, Wilde discussed the possibility of divorce, but he himself did not intend to part from his wife or children, and Constance dropped the divorce application after reconsideration. However, Constance had visited Wilde in person only once on 19th of February 1896 to inform him about his mother's death. Together they talked about their children and discussed the future. (Ellmann 648–663)

In summer of 1896, Wilde's health got worse. He was having problems with diarrhoea and suicidal thoughts. That is why his friends asked for the alleviation of his sentence, but due to Colonel Isaacson, the warden of the Reading prison, it did not happen. He did not like Wilde in general because he was not following the prison rules properly, talking with other prisoners for example. Actually, Wilde was often punished by him. Isaacson saw no reason for the alleviation of the sentence, because according to the prison doctor Wilde was in a good state of health. Nevertheless, in July Colonel Isaacson was transferred to another prison and Major J. O. Nelson took his place. Under his leadership Wilde could easily read and write more than just letters but had to stay in prison. (Ellmann 675–677, 688–692)

Once, when Wilde was writing to Douglas, he came up with the idea to add some autobiographical passages at the end of the letter. He was writing that letter from January to March of 1897 and came up with the title "In Carcere et Vinculis" but in the end it was named by Robert Ross *De Profundis*. Ross was not only a close friend of Wilde, but also

a reader and critic of his texts. However, Douglas misunderstood Wilde's intentions in *De Profundis* and did not want anything to do with it, so Ross kept that letter. Douglas's behaviour was again hurting Wilde even in prison. Actually, the letter was meant to restore their relationship, but first Wilde wanted to remind Douglas of how he had hurt him several times before, in order to have the past solved before their possible reunion. (Ellmann 693–698) While writing *De Profundis* Wilde was able to express all his feelings of pain and injustice. He admitted his true love for Douglas and his attraction to men. (Mckenna 571–572).

3.9. Release & Last years of life

After his release on 20th May of 1897, Wilde was still in prison in his mind, and it was hard for him to adapt to the “normal life.” He settled down in a hotel room in Dieppe, a town in France. Sometimes he thought about Constance and his children. In his letters he begged her for a meeting, and she agreed to it mainly because of the boys. In the meantime, when Wilde tried to make it up to his family, Douglas contacted him. He sent letters to Wilde, he was begging and persuading him that they can finally live together, but Wilde did not want to deal with him at first. However, at the end he forgave him, because the feelings were stronger than his will, although for others Douglas was still seen as a main reason of his downfall. (Ellmann 716–719, 725–726, 739–740)

At that time, his two lives were somehow fighting inside of him. On one hand he was thinking about his wife and children, but on the other hand he could not stop thinking about the relationship he had with Douglas. It was impossible to lead both of them anymore since each side was waiting to be selected. So, sooner or later he had to choose one of his lives.

Despite the fact that Wilde was looking forward to the meeting with Constance and the boys, he could not stay away from Douglas, even if it meant to be safer. Wilde and Douglas could not live without each other, and no one could stop their reunion, not even Constance. So, they finally met in Rouen in 1897 and later lived together in Posilippo, a small village near Naples. (Mckenna 593, 596) Meanwhile the contact with Constance ended, because Wilde preferred Douglas to her and his children. However, as expected, the relationship between Wilde and Douglas did not work out, so after three months they decided to split up. At the beginning of February 1898 Wilde returned to Paris and focused on writing. (Ellmann 746–748, 753–755)

Soon, his life was shaken with two deaths of loved ones. First, of his wife Constance in April 1889, for whom he was grieving, but on the other hand felt hope that his old life was finally ending. Approximately one year later he lost his brother Willie and even his own health weakened in 1899. He was having red stains on his body. It was not syphilis, but it probably had some syphilitic origin. (Ellmann 764, 768, 780) In November he got worse, so he asked Ross to make sure that *De Profundis* will be published one day. At the end of November Wilde had trouble breathing and could not speak. He died on 30th November 1900 at the age of forty-six and was buried on 3rd December. His relationship with Douglas ended as his life, but it is still expressed in *De Profundis*, which Ross published in 1905. (Ellmann 783–787)

4. Double in The Picture of Dorian Gray

In this part of the bachelor thesis the purpose is to present the novel *The Picture of Dorian Gray* and the double found in this work. I would like to open the chapter with a biographical parallel to Wilde's life and then provide a short introduction of the book and mention its various forms. The main part will consist of two major topics: first the characteristics of the three main figures, Basil Hallward, Lord Henry Wotton and Dorian Gray, and their dualities. The second part focuses on the origin of Dorian's corruption, which comes from the influence of Lord Kelso. In this connection the possible parallel between Lord Kelso and Basil Hallward is presented.

4.1. A Parallel to Wilde's life

There are several similarities between Wilde's life and the novel *The Picture of Dorian Gray*. One of the main inspirations for creating the figure of Dorian was John Gray. He was one of the Wilde's young lovers at the time Wilde was writing the novel in 1889. The similarities can be judge from the surname "Gray" already, and also from the fact that John looked as young and beautiful as Dorian. So, Wilde could reflect on their relationship through this work of literature. (Mckenna 176–178) Further, the figure of Lord Henry Wotton reflects Oscar Wilde himself. He was at the same age of 35 and looked similar to Lord Henry when he met John Gray. Also, the fact that Lord Henry does not mind that he is a married man, is identical to Wilde's relationship with Douglas. (Mckenna 180) The relatedness of the characters to Wilde was even supported by Wilde himself as he once said: "Basil Hallward is what I think I am: Lord Henry what the world thinks me: Dorian what I would like to be – in other ages, perhaps." (Ellmann 438)

This quote refers to how Wilde relates to the characters in the book. The distinction between Basil Hallward and Lord Henry Wotton shows what kind of person Wilde believed he was which opposed to the different view of society. The world around thought of him as Lord Henry mostly because of how he presented himself in public. However, he personally related more to the character of Basil. He identified with the secret desires of Basil and questioned his sexuality. Further, Wilde mentioned Dorian as someone who he wanted to be, which can support the fact that he was interested in young handsome boys and was probably jealous of their beauty similar to how Lord Henry is jealous of Dorian.

4.2. The Picture of Dorian Gray

The publication of the work *The Picture of Dorian Gray* brought a lot of difficulties – because of the contained homoerotic motives and the topic of duality. However, before it was published as a novel in 1891, its sections were placed in Lippincott's Monthly Magazine in 1890. (Ellmann 431) Placing the sections of the work into the magazine brought attention of the society, which Wilde wanted. Nevertheless, this attention was not always a positive one. (Ellmann 439) Moreover, there were charges against Wilde because of the immoral aspects of the novel, which were later used in the trial. Also, the similarities related to Wilde's life, his closet full of dark secrets, were questioned. (Sedgwick 165) However, as a work of literature, a piece of art, it was in a way defensible, but that does not change the fact, that it was actually dangerous to publish. (Ellmann 441)

This novel opens the taboo of sexuality and its struggles. It shows an experience of different forms of sexuality, as we can see in Wilde's life too. The love between Dorian and Sybil Vane is probably inspired by the relationship of Wilde and Constance. After the unsuccessful love affair Dorian starts to doubt his sexuality, similar to Wilde in his

marriage. Dorian cannot face it, so Lord Henry Wotton shows him the book *A Rebours* by Joris Karl Huysmans, which influenced him in finding his true sexuality. Reading this book has an effect on Dorian and it plays an important role in his future development. (Mckenna 189) The interest in relationships between men is described through the celebration of sex rather than love in this novel. There is an emphasis on the body rather than on the soul, which supports the division of those components and creates two independent parts instead of one, a double. (Mckenna 184)

One of the interesting characteristics of the novel is the different view on morality of Henry and Basil. These two are seen as contrasting figures at first, when we judge their view on morality, but they both want the same thing – Dorian’s loyalty. Lord Henry is not a fan of the moral rules and their control over people’s lives, thinking that it takes all the pleasure from one’s life. Furthermore, he believes in sins without consequences whereas Basil has a different approach and says that “Sin is a thing that writes itself across a man’s face” (Wilde 152, see also Liebman 298, 303–304)

Another interesting aspect is the choice of the name “Dorian,” which could be picked up randomly, but this name is supposed to have some connection to an introduction of the homosexual tendencies in Greece. As we know Wilde was very familiar with ancient Greece, so it would be a very unlikely coincidence if he did not know about it. Historically, Dorians are believed to be one of the developers of homosexuality in Greece. The Dorians formed one of the groups of several Greek communities, which were divided into regions – in this case “Dorian region.” However, homosexual practices were legal only in some of the regions, in Crete or Sparta for example. (Dover 185, 194) At the time when Wilde lived, the only possible interpretation of an intimate relationship between men was Greek pederasty (from Greek “paiderastia”). (Mckenna 184) Pederasty described a sexual relationship between an older man and a

teenage boy. This act originated in Crete and was presented concretely by Minos, the Cretan king. (Dover 186)

4.2.1. **Different Versions**

Before moving to the duality, it is important to mention, that more versions of this literary work exist. First, the differences between the publications in the Lippincott's Monthly Magazine from 1890 and the novel version one year later. There were no crucial changes made in the main topic of the work, but more information was provided in the novel version – about the characters – for example chapters about Dorian's background or more attention was paid to the character of Sibyl Vane and her family. The story is more complex with the added chapters. The information about Dorian's background creates better understanding of who he really is, a what kind of influence he had experienced leading to the double life. However, this distinction between the sections of the magazine and the novel and their differences will not be discussed in this thesis which focuses on the complete novel. There are rather differences between the original novel version, the uncensored one, and the one that had to be revised.

The original version of the novel is much darker and immoral. What Basil felt towards Dorian was the most inappropriate for the Victorian society. So, Wilde had to make some changes before he could publish the work, mostly in how he presented the figure of Basil. He needed to revise the relationship between Basil and Dorian to seem more as a friendship, but still a lot of material was not replaced. However, the admiration of Dorian's beauty, supported by the existence of the portrait, can be interpreted as the admiration of art, which lowers the suspicion concerning Basil's secret feelings.

4.3. Duality of the Main Characters and Their Characteristics

4.3.1. Basil Hallward

Basil Hallward, a painter, is one of the three main figures in the novel. He is the creator of Dorian's picture, which plays an important role in the story. Thanks to the meeting with Dorian, Basil actually finds secret desires he did not feel before. "Suddenly I found myself face to face with the young man whose personality had so strangely stirred me. We were quite close, almost touching. Our eyes met again" (Wilde 7).

As a painter, he paints a portrait of Dorian and is fascinated by his beauty. This fascination becomes an obsession, which is not just an attraction on friendly basis, but is interpreted more as a sexual one. His homosexual desires create the need for duality as he tries to hide them from others. Like every person in love, Basil idealizes Dorian and thinks of him as the best connection of body and soul. When he talks about him with Lord Henry, he says: "The harmony of soul and body – how much that is! We in our madness have separated the two, and have invented a realism that is vulgar, an identity that is void. ...You remember that landscape of mine...while I was painting it, Dorian Gray sat beside me. Some subtle influence passed from him to me, and for the first time in my life I saw in the plain woodland the wonder I had always looked for, and always missed. ...He is a suggestion as I have said, of a new manner. I find him in the curves of certain lines, in the loveliness and subtleties of certain colours. That is all." (Wilde 10–11) Dorian gives Basil a new perspective on art and inspires him. Therefore, Basil is able to express his true feelings while painting the portrait. That is why the portrait is so intimate for him, and why he does not want to show it in the exhibition. "Every portrait that is painted with feeling is a portrait of the artist, not of the sitter. The sitter is merely the accident, the occasion. It is not he who is revealed by the painter; it is rather the painter who, on the coloured canvas, reveals himself. The reason I will not exhibit this

picture is that I am afraid that I have shown in it the secret of my own soul.” (Wilde 5)

Basil is afraid that someone can find out his secret by observing the portrait, which can be dangerous for him as this kind of attraction was not allowed in Victorian society. His life can be seen as a typical dual life of a gay man during the Victorian period.

After some time, Basil wants to see the portrait he gave to Dorian, but Dorian is not interested in showing him the painting. Instead, he asks Basil for the reason why he did not want to exhibit the portrait and that is when Basil confesses his feelings. “I worshipped you I grew jealous of everyone to whom you spoke. I wanted to have you all to myself. I was only happy when I was with you. When you were away from me you were still present in my art. ...Of course, I never let you know anything about this. It would have been impossible. ...I had seen perfection face to face, and that the world had become wonderful to my eyes. ...Weeks and weeks went on and I grew more and more absorbed in you.” (Wilde 116). Dorian understands what Basil is implying but he advises to remain his friend. “But you Basil mustn’t talk about worship. It is foolish. You and I are friends Basil, and we must always remain so.” (Wilde 118) After the visit Dorian thinks about what happened and about what Basil told him, and his friend’s behaviour starts suddenly make sense to Dorian. “Poor Basil! ...How strange it was that, instead of having been forced to reveal his own secret, he had succeeded, almost by chance, in wresting a secret from his friend! The painter’s absurd fits of jealousy, his wild devotion, his extravagant panegyrics, his curious reticences – he understood them all now, and he felt sorry. There seem to him to be something tragic in a friendship so coloured by romance.” (Wilde 119)

4.3.2. **Lord Henry Wotton**

Lord Henry Wotton is a very influential figure, and he plays an important role in the novel. He can influence almost everyone, which is why Basil does not want him to meet Dorian, because he is going to spoil him. The notion that Basil knows almost for certain that Lord Henry can lead Dorian down the wrong path demonstrates the influence of Lord Henry almost from the beginning of the story. His philosophy of life and mostly his way of having pleasure in life can leave an extraordinary impression on a person. Lord Henry is a great speaker gifted with a specific wit. Moreover, he is a perfect observer of other people and based on his observations he chooses friends wisely. His selection of friends is very strategic, and it depends mainly on what Lord Henry will benefit through the particular friendship. He chooses his “friends for their good looks” and his “enemies for their good intellects” (Wilde 8). That means that he is interested in the friendship with Dorian mainly because he is good looking.

Lord Henry keeps up a public image as an English gentleman and a good husband. On the other hand, he is not a supporter of marriage at all, and says that he is only married to fulfil the expectations of the society. He often criticizes marriage and his wife Victoria Wotton among his friends, but that is his cynic posing, his invented image shown to the public. Victoria Wotton knows her husband’s tendencies, so she is aware of Henry’s manipulation of others and Dorian is no exception. Due to his manipulative skills Lord Henry is seen as “Mephistopheles” by Walker, as a kind of tempting devil (98). Lord Henry can easily persuade people and influence them. He is able to talk about everything, but that does not mean that he is actively doing it, as for example when he talks about improper behaviour. That is where the conflict arises, because what he thinks or what he talks about is so much different from his real actions. He thinks about the immoral behaviour and tries to “live” it through others, in this case through Dorian. He

intentionally transforms Dorian's thoughts. "Lord Henry thinks of his influence over Dorian as an art, but he also describes it as a scientific experiment" (Raitt 169). He thinks of the influence as an art because he admires Dorian as "a piece of art." The reason is that Dorian is exceptionally beautiful, which is also supported by the existence of the portrait. On the other hand, Lord Henry's influence can be described more as a scientific experiment. The principle is similar to when a scientist observes his subject and waits for the result. Similarly, Dorian is being observed by Lord Henry, and he waits for Dorian's reaction to his influence.

Lord Henry's duality is seen through the way he presents himself in the society – the posing, his opinions on marriage and other topics. However, the presented image is just a part of his life, his double life, that he allows other people to see. He creates this image in order to fit in the society and has dual opinions, which help to form his duality. On one side we can see this married gentleman, but deep down he is a different man full of immoral desires. This provides another double characteristic, which can be seen in the relationship with Dorian. Lord Henry admires Dorian's beauty and youth, putting it as art of course in order not to raise any suspicion, but deep down he wants more than just a friendly companionship. He is physically attracted to Dorian and would like to spend time with him alone so he can create a close relationship with him. Lord Henry even tries to impress Dorian with his specific wit and influence him with his philosophy of life. Actually, he is the one who gives Dorian the book *A Rebours* so Dorian can question his sexuality as he himself did. Moreover, Lord Henry claims that after reading it he discovered his true sexuality. As we know he is a married man, but that does not mean that he cannot question his sexuality or have secret homoerotic desires. The interest in Dorian and his beauty could be therefore interpreted as of homosexual origin.

4.3.3. **Dorian Gray**

Dorian Gray, the main character of the story, is a beautiful young man that fascinates others with his beauty. However, he is easily influenced by other people and that is why he is manipulated by Lord Henry Wotton, whom he meets at Basil's studio. Lord Henry plays an important role in Dorian's development. He shows Dorian that he is very beautiful and how he should value his beauty, presenting that beauty and youth are the only things that matter in life. Thanks to that Dorian starts to see himself differently and is obsessed with his young image, which he wishes to keep forever. The portrait he received from Basil supports his new obsession. After his expressed desire to stay forever young and beautiful like he is captured in the picture, his body or face do not age. Moreover, Dorian's appearance does not change according to his sins, but the portrait does, and it starts to reveal his corrupt soul piece by piece. His body and soul are separated and do not depend on each other. Dorian leads a double life.

The presentation of the divided self in the case of Dorian is captured through the fight between the body and the soul, which was already portrayed in ancient times. (Glick 138) Also, the philosopher and a literary theorist György Lukács focused on the problematic of the divided self. Lukács was an important figure, who extended the Marxist critique with several of his theories, such as the theory of reification, which deals with different social relations. Further, he discussed the crisis of culture and did not support its decline. (Breines 482–484) Focusing on the body and soul Lukács explains their split as a “doubling of personality, which in bourgeois consciousness assumes a rigidly twofold form. Dorian, as we shall see, is the victim of such a rigidly twofold and therefore unmanageable dialectic” (Lukács 165–166). Therefore, the portrait of Dorian is often interpreted as a “mirror” emphasizing the idea of doubling, which makes it easier to imagine the concept of double life. (Glick 140) As Dorian, similar to Faustus, makes

a wish to stay young forever, his face is covered in a mask that he shows to the world around him. This public face is free from his sins, but that does not apply to the portrait as mentioned above. (Walker 97–98) Apart from this the existence of Dorian’s duality is supported by Lord Henry when he reacts to Basil in the following quote: “You really must not say things like that before Dorian, Harry. Before which Dorian? The one who is pouring out tea for us or the one in the picture? Before either.” (Wilde 29) This supports the existence of “two Dorians” almost since the beginning. However, that does not mean that Lord Henry understands the action of the portrait, only that the living person and work of art constitute a doubling.

Soon Dorian falls in love with an actress called Sibyl Vane and is so in love that he even gets engaged to her. Lord Henry is not very pleased about it, because he is worried that he will lose power over Dorian. That is why Lord Henry makes Dorian think that he fell in love with Sibyl’s acting, with the character she played, and not directly with Sibyl. Dorian is fully convinced of it, when he, together with Lord Henry and Basil, witnesses the horrible performance of Sibyl. That is when he starts to be disgusted with her and therefore, he ends the relationship after the show. So, Lord Henry gets what he wanted in the end. This provides a contrast with Basil. Like Lord Henry he does not support Dorian’s engagement for his personal reasons. However, in the end he is able to get over it and he wants the best for Dorian’s happiness because he still loves him. This shows a big difference between Lord Henry and Basil, meaning that Basil can accept something even if it does not seem beneficial for him, whereas Lord Henry is not able to do that.

The character of Sibyl Vane is often discussed in terms of double life. Although she does not belong among the main characters, it is important to pay some attention to her, because as the main characters of the novel, Sibyl also leads a double life. In her case the double is more obvious than the others I would say, because she is an actress by profession. As an actress she has to pretend to be someone else, so she lives the lives of characters she plays. That is why Dorian fell in love with her acting or one of the characters she lives through and probably not with her true self. After the public finds out about Sibyl's suicide the day after the performance, Dorian blames himself for her death because he was very cruel to her. He realizes his involvement and knows he is responsible for what happened. Nevertheless, he is manipulated by Lord Henry, who twists his mind, and after that he does not feel any guilt. Shortly after the incident the portrait of Dorian changes for the first time. Since then, it changes every time Dorian sins.

After some time, rumours about Dorian's evil life start to spread but because his appearance was charming, people could not believe it and Dorian was still respected in society. Actually, his appearance helped him through his life many times. However, Basil was concerned about him because of the rumours, and he paid him a visit. It was impossible for Basil to believe that Dorian, the pure beautiful creation, could ever sin. Dorian's appearance was so compelling that it kept Basil and others from the truth, it gave them impressions that were not true at all, but more importantly it did not even make them think about the possibility that it could all be just a lie. As Basil cared about Dorian he wanted to know if the rumours were true or not and wanted to see his soul. So, Dorian decided to share the secret of his double life, his secret soul locked in a room, with Basil. It was a relief for him, the fact that he could finally show someone what has been haunting him all the time. The separation of the good and evil was revealed. After Dorian showed

the portrait to Basil. “There was the madness of pride in every word he uttered. He stamped his foot upon the ground in his boyish insolent manner. He felt a terrible joy at the thought that someone else was to share his secret, and that the man who had painted the portrait that was the origin of all his shame was to be burdened for the rest of his life with the hideous memory of what he had done.” (Wilde 156)

Basil could not believe what he just saw and thought that the portrait was not the one he painted at first, but then he recognised his canvas. “An exclamation of horror broke from the painter’s lips as he saw in the dim light the hideous face on the canvas grinning at him” (Wilde 159). After the portrait was revealed, Dorian told Basil what the portrait caused him: “One day you introduced me to a friend of yours, who explained to me the wonder of youth, and you finished a portrait of me that revealed to me the wonder of beauty. In a mad moment, that, even now, I don’t know whether I regret or not, I made a wish, perhaps you would call it a prayer...” “You told me you had destroyed it” I was wrong. It has destroyed me.” (Wilde 160) They were arguing and Dorian blamed Basil for the portrait, that he was the one who started all this and with a sudden hatred inside of him he stabbed Basil to death.

Soon, his sins started to haunt him, and his double corrupt soul wanted to take over. At that time Dorian spent more time in the opium den. The opium dens and the possible drug addiction are not just randomly inserted into the story, but the addiction is a camouflage for the homoerotic desires similar to in the work *Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde*. Both works start with some tension between men but in the end turns towards users. Being an addict or a homosexual were similar problematic issues during the nineteenth century. (Sedgwick 172)

Further, it is important to say that having a drug habit is connected with the need to escape reality. In the case of Dorian, it could originate from the stress of the double life, which was not easy for him to lead. So, an addiction could help him to actually bear it. Also, killing a human being leaves an impact on a person I suppose. That is why the death of Basil could have been the pressure point for Dorian's addiction, which is supported by the fact that Dorian started to visit the opium dens after he killed Basil. In the opium dens he could forget what he did or did not need to be paranoid that someone will find out the truth about Basil's disappearance. However, the drug addiction does not only mean to escape the reality for a while, but it is often connected with a self-destruction. An addict feels no hope for a better future and is trapped in his current situation, which leads to self-destruction, as it does by Dorian.

Soon Dorian's double parts were fighting each other. He was desperate and could not confess to anyone, because no one would believe his crimes, not even to Lord Henry. He could not live like this any longer, because the sins intensified and with every new sin his double life was harder to manage. He hated the portrait that reminded him of his actions and so he decided to destroy it and stabbed it. Nevertheless, by destroying the painting Dorian stabbed himself in the heart and died. That was the moment when his separated soul found the way back to the body and became one entity. That is why his appearance changed into the one found in the portrait and the painting took the original look captured by Basil Hallward. Dorian's double existence ended like he wanted, but unfortunately also his life.

These are the last lines of the novel: "When they entered, they found hanging upon the wall a splendid portrait of their master as they had last seen him, in all the wonder of his exquisite youth and beauty. Lying on the floor was a dead man, in evening

dress, with knife in his heart. He was withered, wrinkled, and loathsome of visage. It was not till they had examined the rings that they recognized who it was.” (Wilde 231)

This quote supports the notion that Dorian’s double life was covered by a fake mask because other people found it hard to identify him when his real face was finally revealed. They identified Dorian only thanks to his rings. The revelation of Dorian’s double life is supported by the visual expression in the novel. So, people can see how Dorian looked like and they are able to actually notice the double. Otherwise, when someone leads a double life, it is hard to see who the person really is.

4.3.4. **Conclusion**

All the selected figures from the novel *The Picture of Dorian Gray* lead a double life - each of them a bit differently than the other. Basil Hallward’s double personality is shown through the homoerotic desires, which he discovers thanks to Dorian. His struggles are seen as typical for a homosexual during the Victorian period. In the case of Lord Henry Wotton, we are able to see more his public image, the developed self, which he manages quite well and keeps a good name in the society. At the same time, he does not forget to show his personal interest in immorality and his secret desires. Dorian’s doubling is visually expressed by the portrait and therefore can be the easiest to imagine. In this section I also covered a different type of double in the case of the actress Sybil Vane. One would probably not even think about it, but actors can lead a dual or multiple lives through the characters they are playing.

By providing an insight into the Victorian society through this book, we can see that leading a double life was quite usual. The Victorian era is known for its rules and emphasis on morality. However, the dictated norms did not enable people to truly be themselves. That is why people often created another identity to actually survive all those restrictions. The double life was supported by fear, because obviously it did not follow the norms, so people tried to keep it a secret. The novel shares some concrete examples of people leading a double life. Wilde presents more the negative side of the double existence and that is the self-destruction to which the double often leads because it is hard to manage both lives at once. Wilde's inspiration for creating this novel was the situation of the society he lived in and even more his own experience, as he was leading a double life himself.

4.4. The Development and Demoralization of Dorian

In this section the development and demoralization of Dorian is discussed. It focusses on the origin of Dorian's corrupt soul and his crucial sins. Further, it mentions Lord Henry's influence and its effects on Dorian. Lastly, parallel between Basil Hallward and Lord Kelso is provided.

Where you come from influences who you become. This saying or idea is used universally across the world. I am not addressing the importance of the place that can influence you at this point, though the region also plays a role in the development, but I mean the family background. Growing up in a specific background, surrounded by concrete people, influences our everyday development from an early age and Dorian was no exception. Moreover, unexpected events like some crucial changes or a sudden loss have an effect on a child.

From what Lord Henry finds out about Dorian's childhood is that he went through a lot of traumatic events, which of course influenced his later development. Dorian's beautiful mother Margaret Devereux, from whom Dorian got his beauty, died when he was very young. Also, he lost his father, so he had to stay with his grandfather Lord Kelso, who was very cruel to him. (Rashkin 70) Living and growing up by Lord Kelso effected Dorian. Even though he lives alone for five years at the time he meets Basil and Lord Henry this experience from his childhood is still part of his soul, a part of who he has become. That is why Dorian starts to show his corrupt soul under Lord Henry's influence and his corruption escalates.

It all starts with the portrait, as the does story itself, which is the presentation of Dorian's soul and each time he sins the portrait changes, as mentioned before. At the beginning Dorian does not show any signs of corruption or cruelty, but after Lord Henry changes his view on beauty and later on love towards Sibyl Vane, he shows his real side. When he talks with Sibyl after her performance, he is very cruel to her, which is later expressed visually on the portrait. Since then, Dorian engages in immoral behaviour and soon several rumours are spread in the society. However, after Sibyl's suicide he feels responsible at first, but then after Lord Henry's conviction he strongly oppose his participation in that matter. This shows that at that time he is not fully corrupt, but the death of Sibyl is just a starting point.

During the story the sins of Dorian escalate in murder of a human being, moreover of one of his closest friends. "...He did not even glance at the murdered man. He felt that the secret of the whole thing was not to realize the situation. The friend who had painted the fatal portrait to which all his misery had been due, had gone out of his life. That was enough." (Wilde 163) This quote provides Dorian's feelings right after he killed Basil and it indicates that he did not really care about the death of his friend but

more about the fact that the author of the portrait is gone for good. The body of Basil shows another evidence of Dorian's corrupt soul and of course the portrait reminds him of this horrifying act he committed. In order to get rid of the corpse, Dorian needed to persuade his friend from earlier years, the chemist Allen Campbell, to help him. Actually, Dorian manipulated and blackmailed Campbell until he got what he wanted, which again shows his appalling behaviour. After killing Basil, it goes all the way down with Dorian. He spends his time in opium dens, where he tries to escape from the reality and the fear that someone will find out that he killed Basil.

Nevertheless, not even in the opium den Dorian could escape his past when a woman refers to him as "Prince Charming" the way Sibyl used to call him and where James Vane, Sibyl's brother, seeks for revenge. James wanted to kill him, but thanks to his young appearance Dorian persuaded him, that he is not the man he is looking for. At this point, Dorian was very good at convincing people and influencing them like Lord Henry did with him. However, the threat of death made him think about his sins and actions and he was worried about his life. This problem was solved few days later when James was accidentally killed in a hunting event, while spying on the group of hunters, including Dorian, in the bush. Again, Dorian was saved, this time not because of his beauty but by a coincidence. After that, the disappearance of Basil reached public awareness. Lord Henry discussed the possibility that Basil was murdered with Dorian, but he did not raise any suspicion that Dorian was the one behind it all. He simply did not think that Dorian was capable of a crime like that. He expected only the good from this handsome young man and was tricked by his appearance like other people and even said to Dorian: "People like you...don't commit crimes." (Wilde 51) So, even before Lord Henry the cruelty of Dorian remained hidden. Nevertheless, that does not mean that Lord Henry did not notice how Dorian was changing. Actually, it was his purpose. He

wanted to influence Dorian and see what will happen, but he did not probably expect it to escalate in something like this. He did not think that Dorian is capable of killing someone.

Lord Henry Wotton plays an important role in Dorian's development. He is able to influence Dorian's opinions and behaviour. As he becomes closer to Dorian his influence even intensifies. On the other hand, the influence of Lord Kelso, Dorian's grandfather, can sometimes be hard to find because he does not directly appear in the story and does not fully participate in what is going on. Lord Henry's influence is therefore more obvious to the reader. Nevertheless, that does not mean that Lord Kelso is not important. His presence in Dorian's past is very crucial and thanks to that we can address the origin of Dorian's appalling behaviour.

One of the suppositions that Dorian was badly treated by his grandfather is indicated when Dorian hides the portrait in the room built by Lord Kelso, where he was kept as a child. Moreover, he covers the portrait with a satin piece of material, which belonged to his grandfather. "His eye fell on a large purple satin coverlet heavily embroidered with gold, ...that his grandfather has found in a convent near Bologna. Yes, that would serve to wrap the dreadful thing in. It had perhaps served often as a pall for the dead. Now it was to hide something that had a corruption of its own, worse than the corruption of the death itself – something that would breed honours and yet would never die." (Wilde 121)

4.4.1. **Basil as the possible representative of Lord Kelso**

A possible representation of Lord Kelso is through the depiction of Basil Hallward. Basil, the one who painted the portrait of Dorian, presents the grandfather of Dorian – as a person who actually created the picture. The probability of this conjecture can be noticed at the beginning of the story, where Basil talks about the nature of

distinction between the artist and the portrayed person. This is also the reason why Basil does not want to show the picture in an exhibition because it is too personal for him. In this way he creates a parallel between him and Lord Kelso, who also put too much of himself into Dorian. (Rashkin 76) This means that Lord Kelso projected himself into Dorian as he took care of him. It is generally known that children are often copies of their parents as they learn from them, and Lord Kelso became a surrogate parent to Dorian. Moreover, parents can regulate children's behaviour because they have a certain power over them. Lord Kelso had similar power over Dorian until he died. Also, Basil wants to have some power in Dorian's life. After he finishes the portrait, he feels connected to Dorian and he wants to participate in his life. Therefore, the love of Basil towards Dorian can be seen as partially paternal as he cares about Dorian and "as a parent" he is worried about him when he hears the rumours. Further, the paternal love is supported by the parallel to Lord Kelso. Similar to Kelso, Basil has a nuanced view on living, which differs from Dorian's ideals, but he tries to still participate in Dorian's life.

Furthermore, this parallel is supported by the fact that Basil wants to have control over Dorian, when he wants him to stop behaving in that adopted way and regain his goodness. He accuses him of doing cruel things, of meeting with the inappropriate society and criticizes his corruption. In this sense Basil resembles Lord Kelso's manners. As Dorian shows him the changed hideous picture, he calls Dorian a devil. At that time Basil makes a remark on his childhood. "This is what you have done with your life, why, you must be worse even than those who talk against you fancy to be! ...Pray Dorian, Pray. What is it that one was taught to say in one's boyhood? Lead us not into temptation." (Wilde 160–161) Dorian is full of hate and assaults Basil with a knife. In that moment he is not stabbing Basil to death, as seen in the story but it has a representative meaning of fighting with Lord Kelso. The man who Dorian murders is the man that in fact painted

the picture of him. It is his grandfather, who made him suffer. Basil's murder can be therefore understood as Dorian's reaction to his abused childhood and the final revolt against his grandfather. (Rashkin 76–78) “Dorian Gray glanced at the picture, and suddenly an uncontrollable feeling of hatred for Basil Hallward came over him...The mad passions of a hunted animal stirred within him, and he loathed the man who was seated at the table, more than in his whole life he had ever loathed anything.” (Wilde 161) This representation of Basil Hallward as Lord Kelso can be also seen as another example of the double. The qualities of Lord Kelso or imaginatively Lord Kelso himself is somehow inside of Basil who tries to have control over Dorian.

4.4.2. **Conclusion**

To conclude, the origin of Dorian's corrupt soul comes from Lord Kelso, but its further development occurs later in his life. Even though Dorian lives alone for about five years after the death of his grandfather a person with similar abilities of manipulation enters his life and that is Lord Henry Wotton. At this time the relationship is better, because Lord Henry values Dorian and is not cruel to him at all. However, Lord Henry influences him and then Dorian starts to reveal his true self, which escalates as seen in the story. Two of the radical changes comes after Sibyl's suicide and of course after Dorian kills his friend Basil. Over time Dorian masters his manipulative skills, which he uses later for manipulating Campbell in order to help him to get rid of the body. This is already absurd in itself but moreover Dorian does not feel bad about it, which makes it even more absurd. However, in the end Dorian realizes what he had done, but at the same time he blames the portrait as the origin of all his sins. As we know from the story it does not end well for Dorian and his corrupt soul leads him to self-destruction.

5. Conclusion

Through the examination of Wilde's life, we can see his developmental stages and what influenced him and his literary output. The aim was to provide the biographical facts related to the double and to present how Wilde led a double life. His duality can be noticed mostly through the homoerotic desires and the secret sexual practices he experienced. The time when his duality intensified was when he met Alfred Douglas and their lifelong love affair started. He was still married to Constance but on the other hand it was hard for him to play a husband and a dad. However, he tried to manage it all, which worked for a while as mentioned earlier, but as the relationship with Douglas intensified then his double life was harder to hide. Later, after leaving prison, it was no longer possible to lead a dual life and so Wilde had to choose between his family and Douglas. The examination of Wilde's life shows us the reality of leading a double life and its possible ending, which differs from that of Dorian.

By learning about Wilde's biography, we can more easily understand the double elements, and find some similarities in his works. I am not implying that every book comes from the life experiences of a writer, but it is definitely a crucial influence and inspiration. Wilde's duality certainly influenced some of his works, such as the novel discussed in this thesis *The Picture of Dorian Gray* or *The Importance of Being Earnest*. The chapter about the selected novel characterized the three main figures, Basil Hallward, Lord Henry Wotton, and Dorian Gray, and their duality. It discusses the homosexuality of Basil as a type of duality, in addition to the Lord Henry's double found in the division between his public image and secret desires, and lastly the duality of Dorian, the fight of the body and soul, which is supported by the existence of the portrait.

Further, it focused more on Dorian's development and how he was easily influenced by other people including his grandfather Lord Kelso. From the second part of the bachelor thesis, we can learn that appearance is not everything and it can be quite tricky. Unfortunately, it is not possible to see one's soul in real life as we have the privilege in *The Picture of Dorian Gray* where the portrait helps us to visually imagine Dorian's soul. Otherwise, we would be easily tricked like Lord Henry Wotton was. In general, a nice appearance creates some kind of illusion that the person is automatically nice inside. Moreover, good looking people arouse more sympathy, and we feel more comfortable around them. Nevertheless, that does not apply to the soul, which can be hideous like Dorian's was. So, it is not very advantageous to rely only on the person's appearance.

The thesis introduced the chosen topic in detail, the duality in both Wilde's life and by the characters of the novel. Further research related to the topic can be done by introducing other literary works with the aspect of duality by Wilde or other authors, for example the previously mentioned novella *Strange Case of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde*. Another possibility how to extend this thesis is to deal with the Victorian period. The characterization of the era can provide a better understanding of that time and also bring a more detailed information about the situation of the double.

Lastly, I would like to present a phenomenon called the "Dorian Gray Syndrome" which is related to the topic and shows the relevance of the novel today. The name refers to the main protagonist of the novel and it is an existing psychological phenomenon. Dorian Gray Syndrome refers to two possible interpretations. First it refers to the obsession of staying young forever as Dorian wanted in the novel. However, the second interpretation is more likely, which is that this syndrome refers to people leading a double life. It focuses on the double arising from the expectations of the society that oppose to

one's expectations and dreams. Moreover, the desire to remain young can be connected to this interpretation as a way of expressing duality. (Harth 46) So, even though the double life is often connected with the Victorian period and its emphasis on morality, that does not mean that this lifestyle cannot be found today. Actually, many people live in duality, because there are still rules to follow and expectations of the society, as the choice of a partner for example. So, even nowadays people mask their real selves in order to fit in.

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