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## **THE PHILOSOPHY OF DANDYISM IN OSCAR WILDE'S FICTION**

At the end of the XIXth century, decadent trends began to appear in England. Characteristic for that time are aesthetic and naturalistic directions (symbolists, Pre-Raphaelites, aesthetes). The most popular direction in literature of that time becomes aestheticism, primarily thanks to the most famous representative of it – Oscar Wilde. He is one of the most controversial figures in the world literature and provokes constant interest in both his own work and his personal life. According to Alexander Grinstein, for this writer aestheticism became a rebellion against Victorian morality. The pose of the esthete had to be to oppose generally accepted tastes, conventions, and this is exactly what he expressed a kind of protest against the dominance of practicality and common sense: «This [«The Picture of Dorian Gray»] was Wilde's only novel and brought him considerable notoriety as the British public was incensed by the implied immorality in the work» [1, p. 126].

The main principles of aestheticism can be summarized as follows: beauty is above morality, art is above reality, pleasure is above all else. Aestheticism gave a new impetus to the flourishing of dandyism, which arose in England in XVIII – at the beginning of the XIX century as a reaction and a countermeasure of sorts to the growing role in the social and cultural life of the rich bourgeois: «The dandy, who despised the vulgarity and false morality of the newly emergent bourgeoisie, placed particular importance on

nonchalant appearance, refined language, banter and cynicism, which manifested the contradiction between spirit and material, aristocracy and vulgarity, art and nature» [2, p. 24].

The relevance of this work is determined by the consideration of aspects of the philosophy of dandyism in Oscar Wilde's writings and its development from Lord Goring (comedy «An Ideal Husband») to Dorian Gray and Lord Henry («The Picture of Dorian Gray»). This work is devoted to the analysis of the concept of life «philosophy of unreal» by O. Wilde on the examples of his dandy characters.

There are three main periods of development European dandyism. Initially, dandyism was considered a phenomenon of a fashionable society. Its first classic representative and prototype for all dandies of the 19th century was one George Bryan Brummell, a fop and a trendsetter of fashion and cultural preferences for the whole of Europe. Dandyism of the first period was implemented at the level of social practice, where the main attention was paid to the style of the costume, appearance and manners. The literary canon of dandyism began to take shape when a series of «fashionable novels» were published where the main characters were dandies. These the novels were perceived as textbooks of social manners and were a great success. Under the influence of translations of «fashionable novels» and general Anglomania, European dandyism began to develop in France. Its characteristic features are becoming intellectuality, modernism, rationality. The dandy develops traits of a bohemian artist and the model of gentlemanly behavior as a result becomes more democratic.

The third period of the development of dandyism is associated with the development of European decadence. At this time the literary canon of dandyism is continued by the novels «À rebours» by J.-K. Huysmans, «The Picture of Dorian Gray» by O. Wilde and «Zuleika Dobson» by M. Beerbom. In these novels, the dandy turns into a sophisticated aesthete who is characterized by its own ideology, rejection of the vulgar, his personality is carefully hidden behind a mask. Oscar Wilde portrays a dandy as a cultural-aristocratic individual who is opposed to society due to his aesthetic sophistication and exclusivity. Principles and ideas of the «philosophy of unreal» are set forth by the writer in his treatises, letters, essays, but they are most obvious in the images of his fictional dandy characters.

Dandies are present in almost every work of fiction by O. Wilde. The author empowers his characters with clear traits, highlighting one or another facet of dandyism, and this makes it possible to assess his attitude towards a certain character. In this sense, the play «An Ideal Husband» is particularly interesting. Philosopher, a close friend of the Chilterns, who hides behind the mask of a dandy – just like that Lord Goring appears before us. A spendthrift,

a slacker, a favorite of fate, who enjoys a luxurious life but hides behind a mask of salvation impenetrability: «I love talking about nothing... It is the only thing I know anything about» [3]. You can say about him that he is a perfect dandy from the tips fingers to the boutonniere: «Enter Lord Goring. Thirty-four, but always says he is younger. A well-bred, expressionless face. He is clever, but would not like to be thought so. A flawless dandy, he would be annoyed if he were considered romantic. He plays with life, and is on perfectly good terms with the world. He is fond of being misunderstood. It gives him a post of vantage» [3]. In the play, thanks to Lord Goring, his ingenuity and extraordinary intellect, complicated situations unravel. At the decisive moment he is «pulling himself together for a great effort, and showing the philosopher that underlies the dandy» [3]. But, if you look more closely, it seems that the author treats his hero with humour: «Enter Lord Gorin in evening dress with a buttonhole. He is wearing a silk hat and Inverness cape. White-gloved, he carries a Louis Seize cane. His are all the delicate fopperies of Fashion. One sees that he stands in immediate relation to modern life, makes it indeed, and so masters it. He is the first well-dressed philosopher in the history of thought» [3]. At first, we have a typical dandy, but the irony of the author's last phrase is bringing it all to naught.

The writer puts a number of his own aphorisms, with which he more than once shocked the society, in Lord Goring's mouth. That is why in the dialogue between the dandy and his butler, all Goring's answers sound like memorized aphorisms, parodies, and this feeling increases with each consecutive line: «Fashion is what one wears oneself», «Just as vulgarity is simply the conduct of other people», «And falsehoods the truths of other people», «The only possible society is oneself», and finally «To love oneself is the beginning of a lifelong romance» [3]. This «manifesto» of dandyism in front of the butler is delivered in the best traditions of author's self-irony. O. Wilde himself brings a number of his own ideas to the level of grotesque, but at the same time maintains a certain distance from his character. He, as a researcher, is experimenting with his pet dandy, testing him for strength and as an outside observer is eager to see whether Goring will be able to retain «high ground», like a real dandy should. And isn't it Lord Goring who gives an answer to his creator – what should you do when you and your friends are in a difficult situation? Maybe it's time to throw away the mask and become a true gentleman?

The theme of a dandy, but not a gentleman, is revealed in the novel «The Picture of Dorian Gray». This novel is certainly a brilliant example of a «fashionable novel» in which the main character is a dandy, a sophisticated trendsetter. The beauty of Dorian Gray, his fascination with exoticism, precious things, his desire to be surrounded with them and feel a great passion

for them – all this corresponded with the image of a dandy – a «golden boy»: «Yes, he was certainly wonderfully handsome, with his finely-curved scarlet lips, his frank blue eyes, his crisp gold hair. There was something in his face that made one trust him at once. All the candor of youth was there, as well as all youth's passionate purity. One felt that he had kept himself unspotted from the world» [5]. Developing the storyline for the novel, the author introduces another dandy character – an experienced cynic Lord Henry Wotton. The main characters of the novel, as the author described them in his letter to Ralph Payne, are: «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» [4, p. 116].

Dorian Gray is a perfect dandy: his appearance, behavior, clothes challenge society. Being under the influence of a «poisonous book» which was given to him by Lord Henry, Dorian develops a curiosity for life. The thirst for pleasure became the more acute the more diligently Dorian satisfied it. But having understood the point, quenching his curiosity, Dorian renounced them.

In the novel «The Picture of Dorian Gray» philosophical views of O. Wilde on dandyism, art and hedonism were laid out. Henry Wotton, who is a mold of tastes, manners and beliefs of O. Wilde himself, is a spiritual leader in the novel. Lord Henry belongs to critics-aesthetes, adepts of art. This sophisticated aesthete proclaims a manifesto of creative hedonism that glorifies joy from physical pleasure as the loftiest good and condition of happiness and becomes a new dandy for Wilde. Lord Henry embodies his philosophical ideas in Dorian Gray, thereby corrupting him. And under the influence of the «poisonous book» that he gives Gray, the protagonist begins to believe that «art is above life». The idea of acting with impunity absorbs him so much that he is even capable of a crime of killing Basil Hallward. His penchant for art and rejection of ordinary life and human feelings lead to cruelty, destruction of his soul.

In his writings Oscar Wilde was developing the philosophy of dandyism, he shows the evolution from the classic dandy in the persona of Lord Goring to the «ultimate dandy» in Dorian Gray. In his pursuit of pleasure, getting everything from life both possible and impossible, Dorian loses the most precious – his soul, his humanity. At the same time, we see Henry Wotton, who in his desire to experiment with human souls, becomes indifferent to their future fate. So, we now understand that the «philosophy of unreal» can possess a destructive force.

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**СЛИСАВЕТГРАДСЬКА МІСЬКА УПРАВА: КОНФЛІКТ  
МІСЬКОГО ХІМІКА К. БЕЛІНСЬКОГО З ФЕЛЬДШЕРОМ  
В. МАЄВСЬКИМ ЛІТОМ 1903 РОКУ**

Історія людства – це історія взаємовідносин між людьми, народами, націями, державами, цивілізаціями. Фізичне та психологічне здоров'я, віддача від роботи на більшість відсотків завжди залежала від взаєморозуміння, відносин, відношення між різними людьми в колективі, на робочому місці. Звичайно, не була винятком, і Єлисаветградська міська управа. Влітку 1903 року в ній розгорівся величезний конфлікт міського хіміка К. Белінського з фельдшером В. Маєвським, який було вирішено в суді.

У середовищі міських службовців на початку липня 1903 року мала місце одна надзвичайно погана подія, в якій можна було побачити прояв розбещеності вдач і відсутність належного керівництва з боку міської управи, яка зобов'язана була регулювати взаємини службовців. Найсумніше, що жертвою обурливої грубості став молодий чоловік з вищою освітою, який порівняно недавно вступив у сім'ю міських службовців. Жертва ця – міський хімік пан Белінський, який обійняв свою посаду у червні 1902 року невдовзі після закінчення ним московського університету. Вже після надрукування у «Міських