Supervisor’s Report:
Petra Burianová, “Polarities in the Works of Oscar Wilde” BA thesis

Choice of Topic:
The selected topic is clear, has scholarly potential and is critically inflected.

Thesis statement / aims and objectives:
The purpose of the thesis is cogently outlined. The work pursues an analytic agenda as opposed to presenting and defending a claim. That said, a particular strength here is way Ms Burianová maps the reception of Wilde’s work and impressions of his life to produce a lucid overview of her subject. Her approach demonstrates a capacity for some original thinking that acknowledges and synthesizes existing critical assertions about Wilde as a very public literary figure and writer. At the defence, if time permits, it would be useful to hear more on how Ms Burianová arrived at her key term – the question persists as to whether polarity is the optimal critical term to deploy here. Why not use binary or dialectic? Theoretically the thesis might have profited from a turn towards deconstruction and a consideration of the ways binary oppositions might dismantle/sustain each other.

Structure and development:
Overall the structure and development of this work are quite logical. Ms Burianová analyzes the issue with a clear sense of scope and is successful in identifying the influence of historical and cultural context. Mainly, the thesis unfolds as an overview of critical attitudes rather than close reading of specific texts. The approach is engaging although discussion of primary texts is less extensive than the introductory chapter suggests. Rather too much credence is given to Wilde’s self-scripted fate, in particular in chapter three. The result is that discussion occasionally pools at a rather jaunty journalistic level preventing a trickle down to the substrata of debates about Wilde. While development of the thesis is good, a couple of critical comments are necessary: the section on Hegel is far too underdeveloped given the weightiness of the philosophical reference; the conclusion stampedes to an abrupt finish that does not do justice to the competent scholarly work that precedes it.

Research:
Research shows a very pleasing sense of initiative and sustained effort at BA level. There is good evidence of search, selection, and source evaluation skills; notable identification of uniquely salient resources.

Use of sources:
There are no major formal or stylistic issues concerning the use of sources. Materials have been carefully and effectively cited throughout. Well done.

Stylistics and language:
Language clearly and effectively communicates ideas and is at times nuanced and eloquent.
Ms Burianová’s writing style is fluent and consistent. Excellent command of written English.

**Format:**
Consistent use of appropriate format. A great deal of care has been taken with format of the project.

I recommend the thesis for defence and propose to grade the work VERY GOOD/2 depending on the result of the defence.

12.8.2013

Doc. Clare Wallace, PhD