

ABSTRACT

The bachelor thesis *Émile Zola and Honoré de Balzac: The (Im)perfection of artwork* is an analytical comparison of the content of these two works, where the authors of these pieces are the main representatives among the French novel writers in the 19th century. The main portion of this thesis contains a comparison of *The Unknown Masterpiece* (*Le Chef-d'oeuvre inconnu*, 1837) from Balzac and *The Masterpiece* (*L'Oeuvre*, 1886) from Zola. The beginning of this thesis looks at several events in the lives of the authors, which inspired the creation of the two works that are being compared. The following chapter analyzes the keypoints in the short story from Balzac. This section looks predominantly at the character of the painter, the process of his work, as well as the art theories that are contained in the text. The very same format is used for the analysis of *The Masterpiece* by Zola. After that, a comparison of the analyzed parts follows, and the conclusion pinpoints the different approach that both writers took to the same topic.