Hacettepe University Graduate School of Social Sciences
Department of English Language and Literature
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THE PICTURE IN DORIAN GRAY: OBJECT AGENCY AND OSCAR WILDE'S DECADENT IDEAS IN *THE PICTURE OF DORIAN GRAY* AND ITS SCREEN ADAPTATIONS

Emine AKKÜLAH DOĞAN

Master's Thesis

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KABUL VE ONAY

Emine Akkülah Doğan tarafından hazırlanan "The Picture in Dorian Gray: Object Agency and Oscar Wilde's Decadent Ideas in *The Picture of Dorian Gray* and its Screen Adaptations" başlıklı bu çalışma, 12 Haziran 2018 tarihinde yapılan savunma sınavı sonucunda başarılı bulunarak jürimiz tarafından Yüksek Lisans Tezi olarak kabul edilmiştir.

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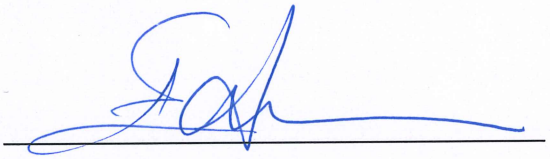

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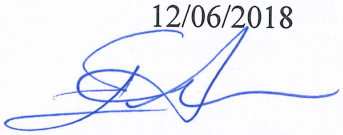

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ETİK BEYAN

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ABSTRACT

AKKÜLAH DOĞAN, Emine. *The Picture in Dorian Gray: Object Agency and Oscar Wilde's Decadent Ideas in* The Picture of Dorian Gray *and its Screen Adaptations*, Master's Thesis. Ankara, 2018.

Oscar Wilde's only novel, *The Picture of Dorian Gray* has been studied with reference to the themes of morality, homosexuality, art and aesthetics since the day it was published in *Lippincott's Monthly Magazine* in 1890. Considered as a manifesto of Wilde's ideas in relation to the Decadent movement and aestheticism, critical attention on the novel has been mostly engaged in showing how the hypocritical values of the age are countered through the implicit approval and justification of the 'sinful' actions of the main character, Dorian Gray. Nevertheless, one striking aspect of the novel as the reflection of Wilde's ideas on art and aesthetics is that it is full of references and descriptions of objects of art. Among these objects, ostensibly, the Picture of Dorian is the most powerful one and it has the most definitive effect on the narrative. Even though the title of the novel attributes ontological priority to the Picture rather than to the human Dorian, such prioritisation of the Picture has been reduced in the existing analyses of this novel. It can be observed that Wilde ascribes power and autonomy to the Picture of Dorian by creating it not as a mere portrait but as a criminal partner for the human character. Therefore, the aim of this study is to highlight the "embodiment" between the Picture and the human character by focusing on how it is reflected not just in the novel but also in the screen adaptations of the novel. Accordingly, in the introduction chapter, mainstream comments on the novel, Wilde's unique personality, the development of object-oriented ontologies, Bill Brown's thing theory and finally the recent findings in neuroaesthetics along with Vittorio Gallese's "embodied simulation" theory are given. In Chapter I, how an embodiment of the Picture and Dorian is created by the author is explained with specific examples from the novel within the framework of thing theory and "embodied simulation" theory. In Chapter II, different modes of reflections of this embodiment to the screen, namely literal mode (*The Picture of Dorian Gray* 1945), traditional mode (*Dorian Gray* 2009) and radical mode (*Penny Dreadful* 2014-16), are highlighted with a clear emphasis on both Brown's and Gallese's theories and the emergent views in adaptation studies. Additionally, as a contribution to these emergent views in adaptation studies, it is argued in this chapter that Dorian and the Picture are adaptations which continuously simulate

each other in the narrative of the novel. In the conclusion part, it is asserted that emergent critical approaches to the objects of art such as Brown's thing theory and recent findings in neuroaesthetics pave the way for a new possible perspective to analyse the objects of art in literary texts. The things which are empowered by thing theory go beyond their symbolic meanings and the representational codes by forming "embodied simulations" with humans. Hence, within the critical venue provided by these two approaches, it can be observed that the Picture and the human in Wilde's novel come together to create a new protagonist for the novel who is neither human nor nonhuman. It will be argued in this thesis that the protagonist of this novel is not just the human or just the Picture but the embodiment they create together. Because of their "embodied simulation" the Picture and the human Dorian constitute what is famously called "Dorian Gray."

Keywords

Oscar Wilde, *The Picture of Dorian Gray* (1891), *The Picture of Dorian Gray* (1945), *Dorian Gray* (2009), *Penny Dreadful* (2014-16), object-oriented ontology, thing theory, object agency, neuroaesthetics

ÖZET

AKKÜLAH DOĞAN, Emine. *Dorian Gray'deki Portre*: Dorian Gray'in Portresi *ve Ekran Uyarlamalarında Nesne Eyleyiciliği ve Oscar Wilde'in Dekadanlık Fikirleri*, Yüksek Lisans Tezi. Ankara, 2018.

Oscar Wilde'in tek romanı olan *Dorian Gray'in Portresi*, 1890 yılında *Lippincott's Monthly Magazine*'nde yayımlandığından beri ahlâk, homoseksüellik, sanat ve estetik temaları çerçevesinde çalışılmıştır. Romanın, Wilde'in Dekadanlık hareketi ve estetizm fikirlerinin bir manifestosu olduğu düşünüldüğünden, üzerindeki eleştirel bakış çoğunlukla ana karakter olan Dorian Gray'in 'günahkâr' davranışlarının yazar tarafından üstü kapalı bir biçimde onaylanması ve meşrulaştırılmasıyla, dönemin riyakâr değerlerine nasıl karşı konulduğu fikrine yoğunlaşmıştır. Ancak, yazarın sanat ve estetik fikirlerinin bir yansıması olan romanın çarpıcı bir yönü sanatsal nesnelere atıflar ve onların tasvirleriyle dolu olmasıdır. Öyle görünüyor ki, bu nesneler arasında en güçlü olan Dorian'ın Portresidir ve anlatımda en açık etkiye sahiptir. Romanın başlığı ontolojik üstünlüğü Dorian'dan çok Portre'ye atfetmiş olmasına rağmen, Portre'nin bu üstünlüğü romanın mevcut analizlerinde aza indirgenmiştir. Onu önemsiz bir nesne olarak değil de insan karakterinin suç ortağı olarak yaratarak Wilde'ın Dorian'ın Portresine bir güç ve özerklik yüklediği görülmektedir. Bu nedenle, bu çalışmanın amacı Portre ve Dorian arasındaki bütünlüğün hem romanda hem de ekran uyarlamalarında nasıl yansıtıldığını ele almaktır. Bu doğrultuda, Giriş bölümünde, roman hakkındaki ana görüş, Wilde'in eşsiz karakteri, nesne yönelimli ontolojilerin gelişimi, Bill Brown'ın şey teorisi ve son olarak Vittorio Gallese'in "bedenselleşmiş simülasyon" teorisi anlatılmaktadır. Birinci bölümde, Portre ve Dorian arasındaki "bedenselleşmenin" yazar tarafından nasıl yaratıldığı romandan spesifik örneklerle, şey teorisi ve "bedenselleşmiş simülasyon" teorisi çerçevesinde açıklanmaktadır. İkinci bölümde ise, bu yansımanın farklı yöntemlerle ve üç farklı ekran uyarlamasında aslına uygun uyarlama (*Dorian Gray'in Portresi* 1945), geleneksel uyarlama (*Dorian Gray* 2009) ve radikal uyarlama (*Penny Dreadful* 2014-16) olmak üzere nasıl ekrana aktarıldığı Brown'un ve Gallese'in kuramları ile uyarlama çalışmaları alanında yeni ortaya çıkmakta olan görüşler bağlamında tartışılmaktadır. Uyarlama çalışmalarında ortaya çıkmakta olan görüşlere bir katkı olarak, bu tezde Dorian ve Portre'nin romanın akışında sürekli olarak birbirlerine benzemeye çalışan uyarlamalar oldukları iddia edilmektedir. Sonuç bölümünde sanatsal

nesnelere karşı ortaya çıkan bu yaklaşımların klasik edebi metinlerdeki nesneleri analiz etmede yeni bir perspektifi ortaya koyduğu ileri sürülmüştür. Şey teorisi ile güçlenen "şeyler" insanlarla bir "bedenselleşme" oluşturarak sembolik anlamlarının ve temsili kodlarının ötesine geçerler. Bu iki yaklaşım tarafından sağlanan eleştirel alanın sınırları içerisinde, Wilde'ın romanındaki Portre ve Dorian'ın romanda ne insan ne de insan dışı bir ana karakter yaratmak için bir araya geldiği gözlemlenir. Sonuç olarak, bu tezde romanın ana karakterinin ne sadece insan ne de sadece Portre olduğu, ana karakterin bu iki unsurun oluşturduğu "bedenselleşme" olduğu iddia edilir. Bu "bedenselleşme" sayesinde, Portre ve insan Dorian herkesçe bilinen "Dorian Gray" karakterinin birer parçası olurlar.

Anahtar Sözcükler

Oscar Wilde, *Dorian Gray'in Portresi* (1891), *Dorian Gray'in Portresi* (1945), *Dorian Gray* (2009), *Penny Dreadful* (2014-16), nesne yönelimli ontoloji, şey teorisi, nesne eyleyiciliği, nöroestetik

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INTRODUCTION

Oscar Wilde's *The Picture of Dorian Gray* has been interpreted in a number of ways since it was published in *Lippincott's Monthly Magazine* in 1890. These include Wilde's so-called attack on the Victorian values, his implied homosexuality and also the manifestation of his Aestheticism shaped around his Decadent ideas. This wide range of readings shows that the novel can be read from different perspectives. Robert Mighall states that "[q]uestions of the role of art and its relation to morality, and to the author's life dominated debate about *The Picture of Dorian Gray* at the time of publication" (x). Even though the mainstream comments on the novel are mostly focused on the writer's immorality, the novel "has been seen as everything from an attack on Late-Victorian hypocrisy to a story of the domination of an older man by a beautiful youth" (Baker 350). On the other hand, according to an anonymous contemporary review in *Punch* which, Wilde believed, was written by Francis Cowley Burnand, the novel was "Oscar Wilde's Wildest and Oscarest work" (qtd. in Beckson, *the Critical Heritage* 90). To put it differently, the novel was the combination of Wilde's ideas on art, aesthetics and morality which were considered "wild," "immoral" and "inappropriate" in the Victorian period. Wilde's courageous attempt to present those ideas paves the way for a number of morality-based criticisms for the novel.

In addition to becoming notorious as an implication of Wilde's homosexuality, the novel has also been interpreted as a work in which Wilde expresses his understanding of aesthetics and art. Accordingly, objects of art hold a significant place in the narrative. Yet, they are mostly ignored by the centrality of Dorian's story. Among these objects, the Picture[1] of Dorian has the most definitive effect on the plot. Even though the title of the novel attributes ontological priority to the Picture rather than to the human Dorian himself, such prioritisation of the Picture has been reduced in the existing analyses of this novel. However, the Picture as an object has an undeniable existence throughout the narrative, which makes it, rather than the human character, the protagonist of the novel. It is clear that even today Wilde's "Wildest" work continues to be received in terms of its immorality and its references to homosexuality. The reflections of this reception can be seen in the recent screen adaptations both of the novel and the biopics that are the film

productions based on Wilde's biographies. In other words, existing scholarship on the novel has typically been preoccupied with the human characters and their human values. However, this study aims to offer a different analysis of the novel and its modern screen adaptations by decentring the human elements and prioritising the roles of objects. As such, the theoretical approaches adopted in this study will be based primarily on thing theory introduced by Bill Brown and embodied simulation theory by Vittorio Gallese. Additionally, object-oriented ontology with reference to the works of Graham Harman, Timothy Morton and Jane Bennett will be the theoretical frame of reference while commenting on the agency of the Picture in the narrative. It will be argued that even though it has been ignored in the critical literature on the novel and in the compositions of the screen adaptations and its ontology is appreciated only for the human character, the Picture has an immense "narrative agency" (Iovino and Oppermann 86) in the life of Dorian as the embodiment of "cultivated corruption" (Mighall xiii). As Mighall asserts, "high life and low life are often conflated in Dorian Gray" (xii), which means cultivation and corruption are not presented as two distinct spheres but as an incarnation of mind and body in the relation between Dorian and his Picture. That is to suggest that the traditional understandings of cultivation as the works of the mind and the corruption as the works of the body are shattered in this novel. Instead, the mind of Dorian is the symbol of corruption while his body and physical beauty claim a form of cultivated art. Similarly, while the Picture is an object of cultivated art in the beginning, the manifestation of a sinful life on the canvas makes it a symbol for corruption. Therefore, the duality between cultivation and corruption seems to disappear in the novel in addition to the vanishing duality between the human character and the Picture. That is why the aim of this study is not to favour either the human character or the object. Instead, it is to say that the human and the Picture come together to form a material ontology which includes both cultivation and corruption.

The attacks and criticisms on *The Picture of Dorian Gray* mostly dwell on the implications and endorsement of immoral values and attitudes. For instance, in 1890, *Scots Observer* wrote that "Mr. Oscar Wilde has again been writing stuff that were better unwritten" (qtd. in Beckson, *the Critical Heritage* 88). Debora Hill suggests that the reason for such an attack from the media was because *The Picture of Dorian Gray* "was a damning account of the hypocrisy of Victorian England," which means Wilde

deconstructed the established moral values of the society and shows the nineteenth-century people their true face (389). Wilde's novel is also different from the popular novels of the time, which makes it incomprehensible to readers and critics of his time (Hill 389). It can be understood from what Hill claims that Wilde actually presented a moral story to the Victorian audience, yet his moral aspects were different from what Victorians expected from the popular fiction of his time. Similar to Hill's comment, Wilde himself also believed that his novel had a moral side which was "all excess, as well as renunciation, brings its punishment," as he wrote to the editor of the *St. James's Gazette* (*The Letters* 259). Wilde continued his letter by explaining the morals of the story: Basil, as the artist who admires physical beauty so much, was murdered by the monster behind the beauty. Dorian who cared about his pleasures and desires killed himself while trying to kill his conscience. And finally, Lord Henry "finds that those who reject the battle are more deeply wounded than those who take part in it" (259). Therefore, despite all those criticisms about immorality, it can be suggested that Wilde's novel is, in fact, rich in moral lessons for those who can find them.

Wilde's homosexual identity and the implications of homosexuality in the novel are possible reasons for such criticisms in terms of the moral values of the time. According to Karl Beckson, the first reactions to the novel when it was published "indicated that many reviewers had grasped its homosexual subject" ("Oscar Wilde: Overview" 406). For example, the *Daily Chronicle* stated for the first version that it was "a tale spawned from the leprous literature of the French *Decadents*--a poisonous book […] [of] effeminate frivolity […] [and] unbridled indulgence in every form of secret and unspeakable vice" (qtd. in Beckson 407). Similar to this, a reviewer of the second edition from the *Athenaeum* called it "unmanly, sickening, vicious" (qtd. in Beckson 407). Besides these critical reactions which suggested that *The Picture of Dorian Gray* was against the moral values of the Victorians, what Wilde had to experience in a few years following the publication of the novel shows that his homosexual identity was also against the political situation of the time. The homosexual subtext of the novel was used against Wilde in his trials in which he was accused of being a sodomite by Marquess of Queensberry who was the father of Wilde's romantic affair, Alfred Douglas. Wilde and Alfred Douglas were seeing each other against the warnings of Douglas's father, Marquees of Queensberry. Upon realising that his warnings were ignored, Marquees

blamed Wilde for "posing as a somdomite *(sic)*" and after a few trials, Wilde was sentenced to two years of hard labour by English law (Ellmann 412). However, Wilde was more than just a homosexual in the Victorian society. Even though Wilde's most known characteristic is his being a homosexual, Mark Ravenhill claims that "Oscar's work is too varied and too contradictory for him to be read as [only] a gay or a queer author" (3). He even argues that the error in the phrase by Marquess of Queensberry was not a real error and he knew what he intended to say, that was "Wilde was too slippery to pose even as a regular 'sodomite' but was a completely unique, perverse creature, the 'somdomite'. Perhaps" (3). This personality of Wilde shows that confining him into the category of queer authors and reading him only from this perspective is unfair. Because Wilde presented himself more than as a queer author not just to the Victorian London but to the world.

Although the general comments mainly dwell on the homosexual subtext, Wilde's novel also gets critical attention in terms of its views on art and aesthetics. Wilde's views on the subject which were mostly influenced by the French Decadent movement will be explained in detail later in this chapter. Nonetheless, it is important to highlight here that most of the reviewers, in its time, did not evaluate the novel as an artistic work due to the immoral sub context it conveys. As Wilde repeatedly states in his letters to the reviewers, what he believes is that "[t]he sphere of art and the sphere of ethics are absolutely distinct and separate" (qtd. in Beckson, *the Critical Heritage* 67). Wilde presents this separation in his novel by creating a character who is the embodiment of "cultivated corruption" (Mighall xiii). Through Dorian Gray, Wilde questions in the novel whether culture and corruption can exist at the same and through Lord Henry, he replies: "Civilization is not by any means an easy thing to attain to. There are only two ways by which man can reach it. One is by being cultured, the other by being corrupt" (*PDG* 200). The first reviewers, however, only focused on culture and ignored the fact that corruption can be a way to reach civilization. Wilde proposes the Picture which is both an artistic work and a corrupted soul. It can be argued that the early reviewers of the novel who focused on the destruction of ethical values in the story could not see the most central object of artistic production, the Picture, which can be considered as the basis of Dorian's alternative life. Julian Hawthorne was probably one of the few early reviewers who praised the novel and Wilde's ability of artistic writing in *The Picture of Dorian Gray*. He asserts in a review

in *Lippincott's* in 1890 that "Mr. Wilde's writing has what is called 'colour,' […] and it appears in the sensuous descriptions of nature and of the decorations and environments of the artistic life" (qtd. in Beckson 79). It is clear, as Hawthorne also states, that Wilde's aim was not to destroy Victorian morality but to show that an artistic product does not have to be moral by presenting Dorian Gray as an artistic production that has no morals in the context of Victorian values. On the other hand, he even begged the reviewers after a sequence of letters to "leave [his] book to the immorality that it deserves" (qtd. in Beckson 68). For he believed that through the combination of immorality and aesthetic cultivation, the novel could reach what he aimed at, which was a free sphere for art. However, the fact that literary critics could not separate the sphere of art from the sphere of morals caused this novel to be seen as an immoral one.

Considering Wilde as "a criminal aesthete," Simon Joyce reads the novel as an aesthetic crime that Dorian commits "freely between aesthetic pursuits (like the study of perfumes, music, jewels, and embroidery) and criminal ones, beginning in the opium dens of the East End docklands and climaxing in murder" (505). According to Joyce, there is a difference between high-class crime and the low, which is reflected in the novel through Dorian's murder of Basil and James Vane's attempts to kill Dorian. James's, who is Sibyl's brother, attempts to end Dorian's life are concluded by his own accidental death while Dorian's crimes from the beginning to the end are successful and represented as aesthetically beautiful. For instance, Sibyl Vane is an actress from one of the theatres in the East End of London. Dorian falls in love with her at the beginning of the novel after watching one of her performances, which is a role from one of Shakespeare's plays. However, Dorian loses his interest in the girl in the progression of the novel, which leads Sibyl to commit suicide. No matter how indirectly Dorian gets involved in the suicide of Sibyl, it is suggested by the author that he is the main reason or the criminal of her death. Their romantic relationship contributes to the discussion on art and aesthetics of the novel. Lerzan Gültekin comments that "Dorian's love affair with the actress Sibyl Vane is one of the conflicts between art and life" (52). Since Dorian sees her theatrical performance at first, he imagines Sibyl like a character from Shakespeare's plays. She is an artistic production in a play, in an imaginary world which is different from the one Dorian belongs to. One day she becomes Juliet and another she becomes Imogen, yet she is never herself (*PDG* 79-80). Thus, Dorian falls in love with her performances and her theatrical

identity rather than Sibyl herself because she has no identity beyond her performances, which makes her an artistic object in the eyes of Dorian. When Sibyl does not separate art from the real life in one of her performances in which she is tested by Lord Henry and Basil Hallward, she loses her ability to act and disappoints Dorian who, according to Richard Ellmann, is the opposite of Sibyl in separating art from life (298). Upon hearing of her suicide, Dorian interprets Sibyl's death, under the influence of Lord Henry, as a performance from a tragedy in which he is the playwright. This act leads Dorian to become a "criminal aesthete" and also paves the way for his second murder. Since Basil discovers the secret to Dorian's youth and beauty, he has to die, as well. The instinct to kill Basil is proposed to Dorian by the Picture: "Dorian Gray glanced at the picture, and suddenly an uncontrollable feeling of hatred for Basil Hallward came over him, as though it had been suggested to him by the image on the canvas, whispered into his ear by those grinning lips" (*PDG* 191-2). The death of Basil is in the hands of his own creation, an artistic work. Dorian kills the painter and gets help from a friend, Alan Campbell, to dispose of the body. Even though Dorian is not the one who uses chemistry while disposing of the dead body, the idea comes to his mind, which shows his cultivated mind even in the act of murder. Presenting Dorian using chemistry in his murder, Wilde illustrates that he is not a mere murderer but an artist who merges murder with science. This is also proved when Dorian continues to live his life by meticulously picking his rings the morning after. Finally, in his last crime which is a suicide, Dorian acts like a painter since his stabbing of the Picture renews the horrible creature in the canvas and transforms it into a young and beautiful boy. All of these murders are executed as different genres of art such as tragedy, chemistry and painting. These examples suggest that there exist both a criminal and an aesthete in Wilde's novel and both of these are enmeshed in 'Dorian Gray.'

Before interpreting his works, one should know the flamboyant personality of Wilde along with the life he experienced as an outcast in Victorian London. Even though he was mostly known for his queer sexual identity, this was just one of the reasons why he was marginalised by the society. Norbert Kohl explains the different dimensions of his marginalisation by stating that

> [h]e was ostracized and forced into exile by the guardians of tradition, cast by the liberals in the role of the martyred artist, victimized by puritan prides and Pharisees, dismissed by literary historians as a brilliant epigon caught between the Victorian Age and modern times, and smugly classified by the critics as a first-class representative of the second division. (1)

Wilde, as can be seen, was different from the Victorians in regard to both his ideas on morals, freedom and his physical look as a dandy. All of these differences, together with his homosexuality, caused him to be put on trial and sent to prison with hard labour when Marquees of Queensberry accused him of getting involved in sodomy. "Even in prison," claims Ellmann, "his personality was overwhelming" (474). As written by Ellmann, Wilde was exposed to severe conditions in prison and got crueller punishments for "small offenses, such as not sweeping his cell quite clean, or uttering a word or two to another prisoner" (474). These conditions and discriminations, however, could not change his positive personality and could not prevent him to call prison one of the turning points of his life (qtd. in Smith 28-9). He imagined a world "free from social intolerance, or the oppression of conventional thought and behavior" (Gagnier "Wilde and the Victorians" 28) and he suffered and died while trying to achieve it.

As one of the most famous aesthetes of the Victorian age, Wilde's ornamented look and the poses he gave attracted the attention of the public and the media. Leon Litvack writes on the unique style of Wilde that "he caused a sensation whenever he appeared in public" (40). He was described in *The New York Times* after his visit to America on 2 January 1882 as follows:

> His long bushy hair crowded in front of his ears […] but it was brushed well off his forehead. He wore a low-necked shirt with a turned-down collar and a large white necktie, a black claw-hammer coat and white vest, knee-breeches, long black stockings, and low shoes with bows. A heavy gold seal hung to a watch-guard from a fob-pocket. (qtd. in Litvack 40)

As a Victorian dandy, Wilde presented himself with an exaggerated and flamboyant look not only to the London audience but also to his American followers. James Eli Adams, on the other hand, puts forward that his self-fashioning was like a performance since, for Wilde, manliness was basically a "theatrical being, whose 'nature' is emphatically a pose" (*Dandies and Desert Saints* 55). Considering one of his striking ideas that is "life imitates

art far more than art imitates life" ("The Decay of Lying" 230), it is not surprising for Wilde to live his life as a theatrical performance. However, his posing as a dandy was considered as an unspeakable vice by the Marquees and caused his tragic end in prison because in addition to a "different" masculine identity, Wilde also proposed a different dandy figure to the Victorians as Adams states:

> Wilde rejuvenated the stance of the dandy, which had long vexed the middle-class imagination as an emblem of idle, unproductive existence, and thus of effeminacy. But Wilde's dandyism also elicited a more unsettling prospect: that masculine identity might not be a stable ground for secure moral judgement, but instead might be a mode of performance, a set of social scripts to be perpetually enacted and revised. ("Dandyism" 220)

Even though Wilde presented a new form of dandyism by his self-expression, which did not favour the idleness, unproductiveness and effeminacy, it was again not accepted by the society. The reason for that, according to Adams, was his variable nature. According to Wildean dandyism, one can perform his masculine identity in regard to his own rules, which scares the middle-class people who seek for a static ground for their values. Peter Raby comments on this generation of *fin-de-siècle* dandies to which Wilde belonged, as well. He attributed this period of dandies a new quality different from the past generations, which was their experiments on the senses. Raby calls this "Dandyism of the senses," which redefined art and life as distinct spheres (34). Similar to the fictional character of Wilde, Dorian Gray, Wildean dandies followed the unique desires of life which are likely to be considered as immoral. Raby's definition of them goes as follows: "[T]hey made the perfection of the pose of exquisiteness their greatest aim and they directed all their languid energies towards nurturing a cult of aesthetic response that begins beyond ordinary notions of taste," all of which are against the established values of the age and different from the dandyism of fashion (34). Wilde transformed Dandyism from a mere fashionable look to a sphere that saw life as an artistic work that can be written day by day as an exquisite experience. That is why Wilde's expression of himself and the effects it created worldwide have been subjects of speculation as much as his works. If his life is a literary genre, a tragedy maybe, his self-fashioning, then, must be his tragic fault.

Besides, Wilde's self-fashioning and self-admiring become the starting point for most of the drawings and cartoons about him. These drawings show how Wilde was understood and represented by the people of his age. The most famous of them is the representation of Wilde pictured as Narcissus as he gazes at his reflection on water (see Figure 1). This cartoon was pictured by the American painter James Edward Kelly (1855–1933) and presumably referred to six prose poems by Wilde published in *The Fortnightly Review* in 1894. One of them, "The Disciple," is told from the perspective of the water upon the surface of which the image of Narcissus is reflected.

Figure 1. James Edward Kelly. *Caricature of Oscar Wilde as Narcissus*. British Library, London.

"The Disciple" is a short poem which tells a dialogue between the pool and the Oreads after Narcissus's death. It begins with the following line: "When Narcissus died the pool of his pleasure changed from a cup of sweet tears into a cup of salt tears" ("The Disciple" 612). The transformation of the pool from "sweet waters" to "salt tears" implies there may be a mourning for Narcissus. However, while Oreads are weeping for Narcissus, the pool is mourning for itself because in the eyes of Narcissus it was able to see its own beauty. Wilde interprets Narcissus myth in such a way that even the mirror of Narcissus appreciates its own beauty. Wilde, then, writes a more narcissist story than the original myth. It can be suggested that Wilde's image as "the heartless beauty" as in the original myth is reflected by Kelly in a cartoon in a satiric way. Kelly charges Wilde with being a

fake Narcissus by highlighting his personality as an "aesthetic sham." By making a comparison between the original myth on the right side and the adaptation on the left, Kelly explicitly refers to "The Disciple" and makes a clear judgement at the bottom of the cartoon: "Mr. O' Wilde, you are not the first one that has grasped at a shadow," which contributes to the ongoing discussions about Wilde's controversial originality. No matter the extent to which Wilde was original, he was a prominent and a flamboyant figure not only in his time but also in modern times. He still continues to shatter the boundaries with his works and probably the most famous of them is *The Picture of Dorian Gray* in which the myth of Narcissus is revisited.

Ostensibly referred to in his works, Wilde had a great knowledge of classical Greek language, culture, mythology, and literature. It is argued by Patrick Sammon that his interest in Classics and the Classical language was very much affected by his parents' interests (124). First of all, Lady and Sir Wilde believed that Irish and Greeks shared the same origin (Ross 15). That is why, Wilde, as an Irish, valued his Celt origin "through which he could claim kinship with both the French and the ancient Greeks, whose literatures formed the poles of his imagination" (Ross 2). It can be asserted that, as an Irish child, Wilde saw the classics as a place of imagination where he could play with the texts, and later a place of imagination where he could base his aesthetic notion. He described his encountering with Greek life as follows: "I was nearly sixteen when the wonder and the beauty of the old Greek life began to dawn upon me. […] I began to read Greek eagerly for the love of it all, and the more I read the more I was enthralled" (qtd. in Ross 19). Even though he considered reading classics as a play at the beginning, his interest took him to Trinity College, Dublin and later to Magdalen College, Oxford where he transformed his knowledge on ancient Greece into something that would later be called the "[l]ove that dare not speak its name" (qtd. in Ross 161). In 1871, he started Trinity College where he became a pupil of John Pentland Mahaffy, a famous Irish classist, for three years. Though he later quit Trinity College and was accepted to Magdalen College in 1874, Wilde and Mahaffy visited Greece together in 1877. Linda Dowling asserts that "Wilde's Catholic friends became convinced he was changed by this experience [trip], 'become Hellenized, somewhat Paganized,' as one of them, David Hunter-Blair, would later say" (Dowling 121). On the other hand, Philip E. Smith and Michael S. Helfand, while commenting on Wilde's *Oxford Notebooks*, point out that his "visit to

archaeological sites in Greece" gave him "a more concrete and detailed knowledge of Greek art and sculpture" (27). To sum up, Wilde had been raised in an environment that was nourished with the knowledge of Greek culture since his early childhood. His early school years helped him to develop himself in the Classical language and works, which led him to draw his future in this area in his college years. However, it would not be wrong to claim that it was not until he visited Greece that he became aware of his affinity with the Classical Ages.

It is most likely that one of the reasons for Wilde to feel a sense of belonging to the Classical times is the experience he went through because of his homosexual identity. Emphasising on Greek roots of homosexual love in Victorian age, Nikolai Endres argues that "Wilde creates a mood that is homoerotic and will not limit itself to the Victorian conventions of heterosexual marriage" (305). Also, Regenia Gagnier comments on the character name Dorian and suggests that "polemicists for the amendment of homosexual laws designated their noble ancestors in ancient Greece'" (*Idylls of the Marketplace* 61). These comments show that Wilde believed that the love he felt for the male beauty was the continuation of the Greek love for male beauty in a modern age as he explained in his defence. Clearly, he tried to explain this love in his novel but failed. This love that Wilde defended was revisited in his only novel both in the relationship between Dorian and Basil and also in Dorian's educational relationship with Lord Henry. Later, he attempted to tell it to the people of his age in his trial, which failed, as well. Wilde's defence of the "[l]ove that dare not speak its name" goes as follows:

> The 'Love that dare not speak its name' in this century is such a great affection of an elder for a younger man as there was between David and Jonathan, such as Plato made the very basis of his philosophy, and such as you find in the sonnets of Michaelangelo and Shakespeare […] It is intellectual, and it repeatedly exists between an elder and a younger man. (qtd. in Hyde 236)

Wilde defined this "love" with references to the Bible, ancient Greece and also Renaissance texts from Italy and England. By doing that, Wilde tries to attract the attention of the audience to the fact that admiration of male aesthetic beauty required philosophy, intellectuality and purity. Besides, Wilde also underlined the fact that it was as affectionate as the relationship between a master and a disciple. When the male relationships in the novel are analysed in the light of this justification, it can be seen that

Dorian's friendships represent two different aspects of the 'so-called' homosexual love. In the opening scene, Basil explains his feelings for the young beloved as seen in the following: "Unconsciously he defines for me the lines of a fresh school, a school that is to have in it all the passion of the romantic spirit, all the perfection of the spirit that is Greek. The harmony of soul and body – how much that is!" (*PDG* 32-3). Basil's feelings for Dorian are the reflection of 'pure' and 'perfect' Greek admiration for male body as described by Wilde in his trial speech. Just as he does not want to share the human Dorian with anybody else, he would like to keep the Picture away from public eye. As an artist who meticulously analyses the face of his model while painting the Picture, Basil admires the naive and beautiful face he sees in Dorian so much that he even could not believe what he hears about the unspeakable vices of the young lad since he believes that even a simple sin can leave its trace on the face. On the other hand, Iain Ross indicates that "Dorian's relationship with Henry is a decadent re-enactment of Alkibiades' *(sic)* with Sokrates *(sic)*" (168). Ross draws the attention to the educational aims of Greek love rather than the physical. He argues that people in ancient Greece considered love between two males in regard to the educational purposes in which the beloved (mostly the younger) learned from the lover who was the experienced one (or older) (Ross 168). In this context, the relationship between Lord Henry and Dorian can be considered the "re-enactment" of Alcibiades's relationship with Socrates (Ross 168). Dorian, from the beginning to the end, is constantly learning from Lord Henry about the meaning of youth and beauty. Their relationship also can be called 'intellectual,' though not 'pure' and 'perfect' according to Wilde's trial speech.

The name Wilde chose for the protagonist of the novel also refers to the Greek admiration for male beauty. Ross explains the importance of the coded name that "[t]he Dorians [are] one of the major ethnic, or more properly cultural and linguistic, divisions of the ancient Greece" and they became a code word for Greek love of male body in the Victorian London (170). Similarly, Barbara Belford argues that "it is generally thought that Greek homosexuality originated in the military of the Dorian states (the 'Sacred Band' of Thebes was composed only of pairs of homosexual lovers) and spread through Dorian influence" (171). It is also significant to note that "Dorian had never been a Christian name until it appeared in Wilde's novel" as stated by Paul Cartledge (qtd. in Ross 170). Cartledge also claims, on the famous quote by Wilde which says: "Dorian what I would like to be — in

other ages, perhaps" (*The Letters* 352), that this should not be read as the character, Dorian Gray, but the Dorians in ancient Greece among whom Wilde would like to live (qtd. in Ross 170). Because only then the people would appreciate his love for the male beauty. All of these claims and comments on the name show that, rather than just a mere character in the novel, Dorian is an idea that symbolises the beauty of male body and the exquisite aesthetic notion.

Additionally, Wilde's years in Oxford, which he called "the most flower-like time in his life" (qtd. in Ellmann 36) gave him the opportunity to meet Walter Pater, John Ruskin and Matthew Arnold. These critics helped Wilde develop his own ideas on art and aesthetics and position himself among the famous aesthetes of the time who were Pater, Ruskin and Arnold. However, Wendell V. Harris claims that Wilde took a step further by questioning the relationship between the work of art and the individual vision in order to set a certain ground for criticism which was considered as a mere imitation (733). Harris also adds that "his broadest statement of his theory of criticism, as a point of departure for their own quite different major aesthetic doctrines as set forth in *The Renaissance* and 'The Critic as Artist,' Pater and Wilde offer the reader neatly-packaged statements of their divergences" (734). Wilde separated art and criticism and refused the place ascribed to the literary criticism. Criticism, for Wilde, was no longer an imitation but something new and challenging as an artwork as he stated in "The Critic as Artist": "Criticism is no more to be judged by any low standard of imitation or resemblance that is the work of a poet or sculptor" (81). Wilde offered a new ground for criticism, which elevated the position of it from a low standard of imitation to an original work of art. He believed that art and criticism should be evaluated in a different sphere of life and with reference to its own criteria. In this new sphere for the criticism as a work of art, the artists should be free from all of the social conventions and values, which also frees the art from the limited interpretations these conventions and values created. That is why art, as defined by Wilde, does not have to be moral. Art, in other words, should be for the sake of art, not for the sake of values. On the other hand, he said in the Preface of *The Picture of Dorian Gray*, that "all art is quite useless" because it does not have to be useful or beautiful. It seems that Wilde considered art not as something that people drew benefits and utility from. Art is not a lesson as much as it is not a guidebook. Art is there just to look at and praise the beauty in its own criteria. As claimed by Moira M. Di Mauro-Jackson, a realistic art

should portray "not just the most beautiful, but also the most sinister facets of humanity because only this dark journey will allow modern man to peek at the future through his past" (190-1). Ostensibly, Wilde's notion of art dwells on this idea by portraying a dual life in *The Picture of Dorian Gray*. Through the beautiful face of humanity, represented in Dorian, Wilde ironically implies the masks all people have to wear to be accepted in public. Besides, through the ugliness and degradation in the face of a work of art, he portrays "the most sinister" face of humanity that should be hidden. However, Wilde's aim is not to despise the immorality of the Picture but to point out that it is the "plain realism" that mankind has to have. Wilde's nakedness in terms of art and aesthetics shows that his ideas on art were shaped around his relation to Decadent movement.

Apart from his knowledge of ancient Greece, Wilde was also influenced by the French Decadent movement in the process of writing this novel. "Decadence" as a term is explained in *New Princeton Encyclopaedia for Poetry and Poetics* as "a falling away from previously recognized conditions or standards of excellence" ("Decadence"). According to this definition, the term can be explained as the rejection of the moral values of the end of the nineteenth century and it highlights the personal thoughts and experiences in spite of the general rules of the society. It also refers to the falling apart of the moral values in a metaphorical sense and breaking the ties with the society and its rules individually. So, the Decadent person decides his or her own rules and values and does that according to his or her individual experiences. S/he has an undeniable desire to experience new things with the use of senses because the use of senses points out the divergence from the traditional moral values which favoured spiritually over the materiality (Ryals 88). Since it refuses the generally accepted values of the society, a Decadent writing does not aim to educate or give moral lessons but to surprise with unspeakable activities. That is why it is also associated with the "art for art's sake" principle and originates from Aestheticism in terms of the appreciation of beauty and aesthetics over morals. Arthur Symons specifies the qualities of Decadence as "an intense self-consciousness, a restless curiosity in research, an over-subtilizing refinement upon refinement, a spiritual and moral perversity," which causes it to be labelled as "a new and beautiful and interesting disease" (Symons 858-9). Decadents, in addition to being diverged from conventional values, cut their ties with the conventional style of the literature of the century. They have the desire to try what is undone in terms of literature,

as well: “[T]hey have found out a way of noting the fine shades; they have broken the outline of the conventional novel in chapters, with its continuous story, in order to indicate-sometimes in a chapter of half a page –this and that revealing moment, this or that significant attitude or accident or sensation” (Symons 860). Symons adds that even though they are far away from the ideals of the time, Decadent texts show that “there is ‘some strangeness in the proportion’ of every beauty” (866). Similarly, it can be confirmed that rejecting the conventional style both in morals and in writing, Decadents display the hidden beauty that exists in every “strangeness.” Clyde de L. Ryals, on the other hand, describes Decadence as a “complete disintegration” where the unlikely elements are mixed in unlikely proportions, which causes the Decadent work to lose all “sense of proportion” (86). Comparing the time of Decadence with Romanticism, Ryals comments that Decadent work of art lacks “an equilibrium between the natural and the grotesque” and it favours the grotesque over the natural (87). The search for the ideal in Romanticism is compensated for with the search for the self and being aware of the individual’s capabilities and the desires it requires. Thus, the Decadent hero shatters the definition of the hero in the romantic sense and as Ryals suggests “decadent art so often appears as a parody of romantic art” (90). Rather than being the ideal hero that one would like to reach, the Decadent hero puts forward what is inside an ordinary human being with all the degeneration and decadence. In other words, the Decadent hero is the real and unmasked living being.

Even though the Decadent writing can be considered as an evolved form of Romanticism, the elements of Romantic literature such as sublime and gothic can be found in Decadent literature, as well. Victoria Nelson declares gothic as “wildly popular black-sheep older sibling of English Romanticism” and she notes that “the two literary movements/ sensibilities, once severely separated by critics, actually made up a single continuum that initially shared the same literate middle-class readership” (4). Gothic elements contribute to the darker nature of Decadence with aesthetic pleasure and a pain-evoking horror effect created by the experiences of the main character, which leads to the sublime. Edmund Burke defines the sublime as “the strongest emotion which the mind is capable of feeling” (59). According to Burke, the pain caused by the sublime is more powerful than the pleasure of beauty because its effects on the body and mind are stronger (59). Sublime, then, can be defined as the great feeling and excellence felt from a sensual experience.

While sublime is a reaction to the beauty of nature in Romanticism, in decadent writing it evolves into the appreciation of aesthetic beauty. However, this kind of beauty is different from the traditional sense which was mostly attributed to aesthetic and small objects. Instead of that, the sublime in decadent literature is nourished with Gothic which is vast, grotesque, dark and terrifying. With the influence of Gothic, the sublime questions the thin line between pain and pleasure. The role of the senses in the perception of the sublime also makes it a significant element of decadent literature in which the individual experience of the senses is the main aim. As one of the important examples of decadent literature, the elements of Gothic in Wilde's novel contribute to sublime. The Picture in the novel is the embodiment of aesthetic beauty and the sublime. It is an aesthetically beautiful object which is dark, grotesque and overwhelming. The Picture captures and paralyses the observer by causing the sublime. Dorian experiences this kind of sublime moments when he looks at the Picture by feeling pain and pleasure at the same time. The Picture, then, as a gothic material in the novel reveals the emotions of the beholder as the sublime reveals terror and darkness. In accordance with this, David Morris asserts that "terror [in the Gothic literature] was a liberating- hence dangerous- force" (306). The terror coming from the Picture liberates Dorian in such a way that he feels free to commit sins and even murder. The Picture is Dorian's response to the accepted norms of Victorian society in regard to moral values and his homosexual identity.

Another example of such a combination of Gothic and Decadence can be found in Joris-Karl Huysmans's *À Rebours* (1884). In French fiction, Huysmans's most notorious work, *À Rebours* is considered as the "Decadent manifesto" (Forlini 1). Brian Stableford describes this novel as "a kind of handbook of Decadent taste, Decadent doctrine, and Decadent understanding, as well as an archetype of Decadent artwork" (41). Symons also pinpoints Huysmans's place in the movement and states that his novel "is largely determined by the *maladie fin de siècle*-the diseased nerves that, in his case, have given a curious personal quality of pessimism to his outlook on the world, his view of life" (865). Translated as *Against Nature* or *Against the Grain*, Huysmans's novel is centred around its main character, Jean Des Esseintes, and his inner life full of new desires. Des Esseintes tastes a new experience every day and tries to create an imaginary world for himself outside of the nineteenth-century bourgeoisie life. He collects art objects and drawings and makes his isolated home an aesthetic and intellectual place in which he can

conduct his artistic, but unnatural, experiments. Though the novel shocked many critics as a scandalous work, it attracted the attention of the young aesthetes of the age, one of them being Oscar Wilde. The effect of the book on Wilde is described by Ellmann in his biography of the author:

> Whistler rushed to congratulate Huysmans the next day on his 'marvellous' book. Bourget, at that time a close friend of Huysmans as of Wilde, admired it greatly; Paul Valéry called it his 'Bible and his bedside book' and this is what it became for Wilde. He said to the *Morning News*: 'This last book of Huysmans is one of the best I have ever seen'. It was being reviewed everywhere as the guidebook of decadence. At the very moment that Wilde was falling in with social patterns, he was confronted with a book which even in its title defied them. (237-8)

In other words, it would not be wrong to say that Wilde found his own conflict with the society and the common knowledge of the age in Huysmans's novel. Des Esseintes showed Wilde the way to deal with the problems of himself caused by his divergence from the nineteenth-century values. It is widely believed that Dorian Gray is poisoned by the actions of Des Esseintes even though Wilde did not name the book that deeply affected his main character until he was forced to admit in court that it was Huysmans's novel (Tanitch 371). It is also considered that the hedonistic and immoral life of Huysmans's main character dominates the sinful life of Dorian Gray. Ellmann also writes: "Wilde does not name the book but at his trial he conceded that it was, or almost, Huysmans's *À rebours*. […] To a correspondent he wrote that he had played a 'fantastic variation' upon *À rebours,* and some day must write it down. The references in *Dorian Gray* to specific chapters are deliberately inaccurate" (298). It is extensively accepted by the critics that *The Picture of Dorian Gray* is a "fantastic variation" (Ellmann 298) of *À Rebours*, yet there are also controversial issues about their similarities and differences in literary reviews. While Michael Shea considers the influence of the "key initiator of the 'decadent' movement" as ambivalent in Wilde's work (1), Graham Hough evaluates Wilde's novel as unsuccessful at imitating Huysmans's novel (198). In spite of the parallels in the decay and corruption of both characters, Hough claims "Wilde misses the point [where] the incident in Huysmans is a violent protest against bourgeois society [while] Wilde's is a commonplace mid-Victorian seduction story, given a 'decadent' twist only at the end" (198). As opposed to the common belief, Richard Aldington claims *The Picture of Dorian Gray* is a contrast to Huysmans book in regard to their plots and

dialogues since "*À Rebours* is all sulky monologue and self-pity, where *Dorian Gray*, for all its affected 'sins' and tragical ending, is full of enjoyment of life and sunny talk" (27). Additionally, accusing the ones who believed that *The Picture of Dorian Gray* and *Against Nature* have so much in common of not reading Huysmans's book, Aldington asserts that their common characteristics do not go beyond the fact that both of the heroes are aesthetes "who delight in the perverse and artificial" (26). Rather than *The Picture of Dorian Gray*, Aldington also believes *Salomé* owes much more to Huysmans (27).

In addition to the common belief, that Wilde's novel is mostly the reflection of Huysmans's, there are several novels that are suggested to affect *The Picture of Dorian Gray*: Benjamin Disraeli's *Vivian Grey* (1826), Balzac's *La Peau de Chagrin* (1831) and R. L. Stevenson's *The Strange Case of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde* (1886) (Aldington 26-8). Balzac's *La Peau de Chagrin* (The Magic Skin) which is a criticism of the extreme material consumption of the high society in the nineteenth-century Paris has a considerable similarity to *The Picture of Dorian Gray*. Similar to Wilde's novel, Balzac's novel also has a supernatural motif which is a skin written in Arabic. This skin has this magical power of giving one whatever he wants in return for his youth. So, every time the wish comes true, the skin of Raphael de Valentin, the protagonist, shrinks (Jaffe 10-3). In this respect, the skin has similar characteristics to those of the Picture of Dorian Gray. Both the skin and the Picture have a power over the main characters, which leads them to panic, lose the control of their lives and finally commit suicide at the end. Additionally, Hough and Raby point out the influence of Gautier on Wilde. Raby suggests that "[t]he story of *Mademoiselle de Maupin* offers analogies to Dorian's obsessive love for Sibyl Vane in her Shakespearean roles," which leads him to claim that Wilde was affected by Gautier's interpretation of art and the relationship between art and life in *Mademoiselle de Maupin* (Raby 163). Different from the general comments on the novel, it can be argued that Wilde's novel owes a good deal to Benjamin Disraeli's first novel, *Vivian Grey*. In addition to his character who he named Gray, Wilde christened his second son Vivian, which led Aldington to suppose that Wilde read Disraeli's novel in his mother's library and was affected by the character he created (28). One of the common characteristics of these two novels is their style of characterisation. Being read as a political satire, *Vivian Grey* is a story of becoming a dandy over the years and Vivian's efforts to enter the high sphere of society, which is similar to the story of Dorian Gray. In

both characters, the process of transformation from a naive young boy to the sophisticated and cunning man can be observed. It can also be suggested that both Vivian and Dorian have dangerous ambitions that cause their falls. While Disraeli's main hero tries to become an influential politician, Wilde's protagonist would like to be an aesthete who never gets old. Both of them, however, cannot achieve their ambitions, which leads to the conclusion that both Disraeli and Wilde present a criticism of the society both in political and in the social sphere.

To put it in a more specific line, among the numerous possibilities on the genesis of the lively Picture, Charles C. Nickerson adds one more by commenting on the similarities between *The Picture of Dorian Gray* and *Vivian Grey*. Nickerson lists the principal sources for the idea of aging Picture in *The Picture of Dorian Gray* and those are Balzac's *La Peau de Chagrin* (1831), Poe's "William Wilson" (1839) and "The Oval Portrait" (1842), Maturin's *Melmoth the Wanderer* (1820), Stevenson's *Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde* (1886) – and even an article on "The Philosophy of Yourself" (1864) by George Augustus Sala (n.p.). It is significant to note that one possibility behind the origin of the novel is the dialogue between Wilde and the painter Basil Ward who Wilde visited frequently (Nickerson n.p.). It was later learned in a preface Basil Ward wrote to a later edition that the "true genesis" for the idea of Dorian Gray was revealed in a studio in front of a picture when Wilde said: "What a pity that such a glorious creature should ever grow old!" And the painter agreed and said, "How delightful it would be if he could remain exactly as he is, while the portrait aged and withered in his stead!" (qtd. in Brasol 197). Nickerson personally believes that even though the idea of such a novel came to Wilde several times, "only it was in *Vivian Grey* that he struck it first, at an impressionable age" (n.p.).

As can be seen, there are many works that have been suggested to have influenced Wilde and the writing of *The Picture of Dorian Gray*, which leads some critics to accuse Wilde of plagiarism. Depending on the idea the at "[a]bsolute originality in art is a delusion," Aldington disagrees with this claim (29). He underlines that taking pieces from other materials and bringing them together with a new perspective was Wilde's unique style and Wilde with "his unique personality[,] transform[ed] them into something fresh and attractive" (30). Following Aldington's claim, one can evaluate Wilde's work as adapted

versions of the source texts. In other words, Wilde's works are the adaptations of the above-given source texts. As opposed to the common view which supports that adaptations are the bad copies of the original, Wilde proves that adaptations, similar to criticisms, suggest a new way of thinking, a new perspective to the source text, which makes them original. Even though the discussions continue on the issue, recent developments in Humanities and adaptation studies lead this study to see beyond these questions. The question now should not be whether Wilde stole ideas from earlier works or not, rather the focus must be on the undeniable neglect of the material existence of the Picture in the critical analysis of both the novel and the screen adaptations. If there is anything stolen in this work of art, it is undeniable that it is the stolen presence of the Picture, which deserves a deep analysis.

In addition to all these novels and writers, including Huysmans, Disraeli and Balzac, Decadence movement also saw a periodical that has been a vital signifier of the movement. It is known as *The Yellow Book* and was probably the most 'decadent' thing of the time in terms of its content which degraded the moral and social norms. *The Yellow Book*, which ran from 1894 to 1897, included essays, poems, fiction and illustrations (Burdett n.p.) and was dominated by yellow and green colours. Carolyn Burdett comments on the significance of yellow and green colours and asserts that they were "associated with bruising and decay […] [and] with decadent style" (n.p.). Similarly, Stanley Weintraub highlights that the colour of *The Yellow Book* was an appropriate representation for the "Yellow Nineties": "[A] decade in which Victorianism was giving way among the fashionable to Regency attitudes and French influences; For the yellow was not only the décor of the notorious and dandified pre-Victorian Regency, but also of the allegedly wicked and decadent French novel" (viii). In other words, the creators of the periodical, Aubrey Beardsley and Henry Harland, attempted to create a periodical which featured works representing the transition period from the end of the Victorian period to the modern times. On the other hand, "the allegedly wicked and decadent French novel" in Weintraub's description refers to the above-mentioned novel of Huysmans which was believed to be the origin of *The Picture of Dorian Gray* and also the book that poisoned Dorian Gray. Wilde portrays Huysmans's novel in *The Picture of Dorian Gray* as a book in yellow binding, which makes it known as "The Yellow Book" for a time. Additionally, Wilde was fallaciously reported as carrying *The Yellow Book* magazine

upon his arrest in 1895 by some newspapers, yet some argue that it was just a yellow binding book (Weintraub xvii).

Notwithstanding the enigma of *The Yellow Book*, Wilde's aesthetics and the concept of art as expressed in *The Picture of Dorian Gray*, "the prototype of English Decadent literature" (Di Mauro-Jackson 43), were highly affected by French Decadent movement and the prominent figures that shaped the Decadent literature. Wilde's aestheticism, from the beginnings of his career, questions "the boundaries between art and life; form and content; the coterie and the mass; beauty and virtue" (Livesey 261), which is the critical content of the Aesthetic movement. Ruth Livesey also underlines Wilde's aesthetic taste in decorative arts as an undergraduate at Oxford. Reading the novel with reference to this fact, it can be suggested that Wilde seemingly represented his taste in *The Picture of Dorian Gray* and this was transposed to the screen adaptations. Considered as "the first French novel to be written in the English language" by Arthur Ransome (213), Wilde believed his only novel was "an essay on decorative art" as he wrote in a letter to the editor of the *Daily Chronicle* (*The Letters* 264). In other words, Wilde cut the ties between art and life and argued that art must be evaluated according to its own sphere rather than the boundaries created by the moral values of the age. In this regard, Wilde's understanding of art rejects the ethic responsibility and he finishes the Preface of *The Picture of Dorian Gray* by stating that "[a]ll art is quite useless" (*PDG* 22). Ellmann points out on the issue of ethical responsibility that Wilde "allowed for 'a higher ethics' in which artistic freedom and full expression of personality were possible, along with a curious brand of individualistic sympathy or narcissistic socialism" (288). This kind of freedom leads the artist to create beautiful things rather than serving educational purposes. It is also argued that art was an alternative world for Wilde and in that world, beauty and art were the only things that mattered. He did not believe that art imitated life, but as he stated in "The Decay of Lying," art hides the ugliness of the real world through showing the perfection only "like a veil, rather than a mirror" (228).

It can be stated that *The Picture of Dorian Gray* is the representation of all of Wilde's ideas on art and aesthetics. As he asserted in the Preface, "no artist desires to prove anything" (*PDG* 21) through his art, therefore no artist intends to put anything from himself to his work. However, Basil admits that he puts too much of himself in Dorian's

Picture, which leads him to decide not to present the Picture publicly. Yet the aim here is not to discuss Basil as a good artist or not, but to discuss his work functioning as "a veil" in Dorian's life. Since it is hard to pinpoint which one is the real Dorian or the work of art, it can be said that both the Picture and the human character reverse their roles as the representation of real life and the object of art. Even though at the beginning of the novel, the human is the real and the Picture is the imaginary side, as the story progresses, the Picture shows all the ugliness of the human character with reference to the "plain realism" (*The Letters* 264) of life. At that moment, the human character becomes the aesthetic representation of beauty. As Wilde highlighted, both representatives of beauty in the novel function as "a veil" which hides the immoral and unconventional desires and also sins of Dorian. Being ostensibly an aesthete of his time, Dorian's aesthetic desires are disrupted by the moral claims of the society, which requires him to live an alternative life behind the mask provided by the lively Picture. The art and life of Dorian exist on two different levels within their own criteria rather than the moral codes that confine them behind the same borders. In other words, the human Dorian and the Picture Dorian work together in this story to create a Decadent aesthete and to be saved from the confinements of the time. Without the Picture that gives him the possibility of alternative worlds, Dorian would not have the courage to commit all those sins including the murder. It can be stated that their embodiment into one single entity proves that the Picture has an accountable agency and power as a material thing in the novel, which has been neglected so far.

The recent "material turn" in the Humanities has introduced substantial, critical and theoretical tools and frames of reference which allow for the study of literary texts with a focus on the nonhuman entities. These theoretical tools change the understanding of nonhuman entities' ontological features both in fictional narratives and also non-fiction. Rachel Tillman considers these theories as "more dynamic theories of materiality" (30). She notes that these changes prepare "the stage for a revolution in how we conceive of the place of human beings, as creatures of embodied life, in nature and in material world" (30). This introduces a new way for the concept of embodiment between humans and nonhumans, especially objects in the course of this study. The embodiment of humans and objects provides objects with an agency and power which have been ignored for a long time in critical appreciations. The conventional understanding in the nature of objects which is mostly evaluated as 'passive' leaves its place for a more "dynamic," as

Tillman suggests, and 'agentic' nature for them. They have been granted an ability to cause some kind of change in the lives of human beings. All of these features, recently attributed to the existence of objects, remind humans of their presence and their ontological basis. Hence, the rise in the understanding of objects paves the way for an abundance of object-oriented writings. Almost all of these object-oriented studies are informed by Bill Brown's thing theory in which he discusses the "thingness" of the objects and argues that "[t]he subject arises from the object" (qtd. in Brown 1). One of the significant contributions of Brown to the theory is his drawing a line between objects and things. According to him, every material entity can be an object, but not every one of them can be a thing. Things separate themselves from the world of objects by claiming their power and changing their functionality in the life of the human beings. Thus, things are the objects which save themselves from the boundaries and refuse to be passive objects or to be symbols in the lives of humans. In this regard, things also refuse the functions which are attributed to them by the human owners and they assign new functions for themselves. In Brown's words, "[w]e begin to confront the thingness of objects when they stop working for us" (4). This statement does not mean that things do not work and have a function anymore, but it means that they stop working 'for humans' and decide their functionality themselves. These features, which separate them from objects, assign them an agency, an autonomy and an identity different from the codes the humans give them.

Following up Brown's distinction of objects and things, objects which have an ontological priority, an autonomy and an agency will be referred as things in this study. In this regard, while the original Picture which is painted by Basil is an object, the transformed version of it turns into a thing which claims an ontological presence over the human character. The Picture of Dorian Gray is not a mere object when the transformation begins but a material thing that has a power on the human character. It becomes the material combination of Dorian's pleasures, desires and the unspeakable vices by not only changing but also rotting inside and outside. In addition to the manifestation of Dorian's sins on it, the Picture tempts the human character to commit those sins and even to commit murder. The degradation of the Picture provides Dorian with a clear sight of his soul which is also rotten. Observing this corruption, Dorian becomes aware of what he is, which causes him to act according to his desires rather than the set social values. Dorian

knows that the results of these sins do not show themselves on his face but on the face of the Picture. In other words, while the sins are committed by the body of the human, they manifest themselves on the body of the Picture. This relationship between the human and the Picture clearly implies an inseparable embodiment, a combined identity in the novel. Ostensibly, the human is not the only protagonist of the story, but his embodiment with the Picture, the dualistic character they created together is. That is why this study changes the focus of Wilde's novel from the human to the thing, the Picture and its relation to the human character. While changing the focus of Wilde's novel, the aim of this study is to also change the perception of literary criticisms from the humans to the things which claim their presence and ontological equality to humans since the eighteenth century (Blackwell 10).

Things have been the primary characters in literature since the eighteenth century; however, they were mostly ignored and left behind the human characters. That is to suggest that agency of things has a long history that needs to be analysed. The above-given frames of reference make possible the study of the "it-narratives" emerging in the eighteenth-century as defined by Mark Blackwell as "an odd sub-genre of the novel, a type of prose fiction in which inanimate objects […] or animals […] serve as the central characters," which was variously called "it-narratives," "novels of circulation," "object tales," and "spy novels" (10). Blackwell discusses "the mute resistance of matter to subjective manipulation" on the grounds of Brown's thing theory and he offers that "even the eighteenth century had a thing about things" (9). These it-narratives of the eighteenth century revolve around the adventures of an object or an animal, namely, a guinea, a rupee or a lapdog. Most of the works under the genre of it-narratives with speaking objects "similarly align authorship, market value, and national acculturation" (Flint 162). According to Aileen Douglas, *Chrysal: Or the Adventures of a Guinea* (1760) by Charles Johnstone initiated the tradition and in two years the novel reached its third edition (147). Douglas argues that one explanation for the excitement and fear towards the notion of the objects having adventures is because it is "a novel way of thinking" (150). The fear, Douglas continues, "is that people have become enthralled to things and that objects, therefore, can explain society as it really is; the excitement comes from the unfamiliarity and novelty of the society the objects reveal" (150-1). On the other hand, while tracing back the roots of the inanimate storytellers to Pythagoras, Christopher Flint points out

that one of the reasons for the popularity of these narratives in this century is that "they reproduced transformations in the marketing of printed literature" (171). It is considered that circulation of goods contributes to the gradual development of Britain as a country through distribution canals such as "national postal system, extensive highways and canals, provincial printing houses, circulating libraries, coffee-houses, charitable societies, a national bank, and modern international systems of credit and stocks (Flint 171). In spite of the visible position of these narratives in the eighteenth century and their growing popularity in the nineteenth, these works could not get the critical attention they deserve until recently.

This century also witnessed some regulations on the treatment of slaves and on animal rights. The category of nonhuman is not limited to objects. Slaves and animals had also been considered belonging to this classification and they were treated accordingly as 'the other.' Besides, the use of the personal pronoun "it" for slaves, animals and objects clearly explains the same condition they were in. Making a comparison on the neglect of slaves, animals and things, Markman Ellis states that "slaves like animals, were degraded to the status of things, considered as property, and as such, not human – or at least, not human in the same way as the master" (95). And this status among the things allowed animals and slaves to be treated cruelly according to Jeremy Bentham (qtd. in Ellis 96). It should be highlighted in this account that some narrators of the genre were not inanimate objects. Animal adventures were also a part of it-narratives such as Francis Coventry's *History of Pompey the Little or the Life and Adventures of a Lap-Dog* (1751). The visible but also limitless nature of the objects in the texts is interpreted as flexibility and Douglas states that "[s]uch narratives did not respect the boundaries and limits which organized eighteenth-century society" (148). Thus, the lap-dogs or coins were mobile among the classes and they easily moved downward and upward. In other words, they broke the boundaries between social classes in eighteenth-century England like no human could. Such a mobility, for Douglas, "blurred the distinction between private and public; and, given that the personal information purveyed was sometimes entirely fictional, it separated the historical individual from the commercial use of his or her name and actions" (149). One of the defining features of the object characters, Liz Bellamy argues, is that they have the ability to cross the borders of the social classes different from the human characters, which proves the fact these concepts like class or gender belong to the

human world of constructions (122). In this respect, the authors of these narratives who were mostly attributed to the inferior class (qtd. in Bellamy 117) could experience class mobility from the eyes of a rupee or a guinea.

On the other hand, it can be asserted that even though these narratives are occupied with the objects that tell their own stories, most of the time, their stories are developed by their interaction with the human owners. Lynn Festa states that "the narrators are deeply preoccupied with humans: their desires, their needs, their aspirations, their flaws (311). This statement suggests that similar to the people who cannot be separated from their things, things also do not want to be separated from their humans. In this ongoing relationship, both humans and things need to be enmeshed in this embodiment. Both of them forget their own specific characteristics and their being because of disappearing boundaries. They together create an ontological integrity in which neither human nor the thing matters. Instead, their ontologies are accumulated and shaped due to the embodiment produced equally between the thing and the human. In that regard, the thing narrators present a world in which the identities of things are shaped by their relations with their owners, which shows the interdependence between the things and humans and blurs the boundaries that separate them. The autonomy of the human owner is challenged by the authorship of the thing that tells its own story and pictures the owners with their desires and flaws. Similarly, the authority of the thing is provided by its relation and interaction with the human. The twenty-first-century critics realise that this ontological embodiment between things and humans has stayed in the shadow for a long time and it should be dwelled on clearly. Things should be freed from the symbolic meanings of the past and regarded as equal to humans by focusing on their integrity.

When object narratives first emerge, they are considered as satirical allegories for adults. They serve a critical purpose by presenting a moral code to the humans who are about to lose the traditional moral values in the effect of the changing social conditions of the age. Leah Price defines it-narratives as "a stick with which to beat the Victorians" (108). Thus, object tales are to criticise the people in a satirical way from the perspective of the objects they own and also show them that they may end up in the same situation as the object characters in the tales. These narratives help humans identify themselves with the things and see that "humans, like things, are subject to material erosion and death" (Festa 313).

Even though the novels of the genre share common characteristics in terms of the themes, the way they are dealing with human nature varies in some of them. Douglas asserts that there is one more aim of it-narratives in the eighteenth-century, which is the representation of national economic growth and the rehabilitation of trade (159). One of the themes of the it-narratives is the deterioration of the human nature because of the damage trade causes. Douglas, however, suggests that this damage, as proposed by the objects, "can be repaired once commerce is understood in terms of empire" (159). This aim of the tales proves that growing trade and the abundance of material goods in the era lead to a consumer revolution and humans' alienation by their possessions. To put it differently, among a variety of objects, humans lose their interest in unique objects and stop regarding them as precious. The only thing that matters for human beings becomes the price and the function of the object, which eliminates object desire, soul and will.

Though the objects continue telling their stories with humans, the target reader change from adults to children in the late eighteenth and the nineteenth centuries. Bellamy explains this transformation as follows: "For much of the eighteenth century, up until around 1780, the circulation format was largely used in satirical works addressed to an adult audience. In the last twenty years of the eighteenth century, a number of works were produced that adapted the circulation structure to produce moral and didactic stories for children" (131). The tales of the genre are transformed from the satirical allegories for adults to the didactic stories for children. According to Festa, this transition may be because of the romantic period and the appreciation of the naivety of children. Yet, Festa again concludes that the boys and girls of the object tales are different from the Wordsworthian boy of the Romantics (315). The components of the genre change with the target, as well. Festa evaluates the relationship between objects tales and children in a sentimental way in which the objects become the teachers for the children and rather than criticising them they teach them how to become good masters. Whereas the eighteenth-century objects want the humans to identify themselves with the objects and make a satirical critique, the children's tales aim to educate the little boys and girls and to remind them of "their obligations to the objects and animals" (Festa 314). Thus, these tales refuse to mock their masters and it can be suggested that they accept human authority over the material. Objects of children's tales draw the line between the human masters and the things that can be possessed. The autonomy of the objects over the human

characters is started to be used in order to teach children that objects also have feelings and they may be hurt in case of a bad treatment. On the other hand, these children's tales are not interested in the object's fiscal value but just focus on the didactic relations between the humans and their things, which lead the children to love their possessions for their own sake.

Additionally, the nineteenth-century it-narratives begin to take a religious perspective with the novels that tell the stories of a circulating bible, prayer book or a hymn book and this leads books to be seen as the narrator object (Price 109). The object as the narrator is replaced by the book that tells its own travel. Albeit, Christina Lupton and Price argue that nineteenth century is not the beginning of the book telling its story as the agent. As Lupton states, the original it-narratives are "in the first place, the life story of a pile of paper, and only in the second, the story of the objects represented there" (412). Price also pinpoints that in the classical it-narratives "the book-object is mentioned around the edges: in prefaces, introductions, and other paratexts" (110). Thus, by the 1800s, the forgotten agency of the book is renewed with the religious narratives. Yet, this innovation does not stop the scientific side of the it-narratives.

Considering the place that it-narratives hold among the recent material turn in the Humanities, it can be argued that it-narratives of the eighteenth century introduce a novel way of thinking in that age by subverting the authority of human characters and replacing them by objects that tell their own stories. Their analysis as the allegorical tools for the critique of humans, now, is replaced by the interpretation of objects as things by focusing on the very existence of them as the potential authority that narrates a story. By the nineteenth century, however, their symbolic meanings are enriched with the children's tales and they serve as the didactic stories. Yet, no matter how much attention given to the objects in that age and regardless of their symbolic meanings, what matters is that their very presence affects and shapes the lives of humans.

Apart from the object tales that are transformed from the century before, Victorian era has also "a thing about things" (Blackwell 9). It would not be wrong to say that one of the reasons for this variety of things is probably the technological achievements. The abundance of things in Victorian Britain is caused by the mass market productions similar

to the stories of eighteenth century it-narratives in which objects stand in the centre of the novel with their exchange value. This period sees the inventions of many small objects which put themselves in the centre of people's lives such as pins, needles and matches. Victorians love their things and their homes are filled with objects which are either decorations or collections. On the other hand, Victorian period has also witnessed Aesthetic movement which influences the Victorian people for their home decorations. Different from the objects in the object tales, however, Victorian things stand for themselves in the novels. Even though they do not talk and give moral lessons most of the time, they claim their presence in many other ways by affecting the narrative and also the life of the protagonist. Additionally, John Plotz points out that Victorian age is the period of things that are loved by their owners because of their sentimental values. Victorians are famous for "the accumulation and harmonious arrangement of possessions; [in other words] home decoration" (Plotz 1). It is not surprising that this abundance of things attracts the attention of some critics under the influence of new materialisms. Recently, some writers have been engaged in writing on the abundance of Victorian things and their relationship with the owners. The being of the things in narratives starts to be seen apart from the symbolic meanings ascribed to them. In other words, they are seen as what they are rather than what they symbolise. In addition to the fictional narratives that give a voice to things, some critics write non-fiction to show that things assert their presence in people's lives. For example, Asa Briggs's *Victorian Things*, Elaine Freedgood's *The Ideas in Things*, Leah Price's *How to do Things with Books in Victorian Britain* and John Plotz's *Portable Property* are some of them. Briggs attempts to include the nineteenth-century things in terms of how they are used in their own time rather than their surviving qualities to the upcoming centuries (14). In the light of this aim, Briggs creates what he calls the "intelligible universe" (41) of Victorians in which the great variety of objects are analysed in terms of their economic, political and social effects. His "intelligible universe" consists of cameras, photographs, hats, caps, bonnets, locks, coal, iron, paper, furniture, needles, pins, matches, stamps and postcards. Different from Briggs, Freedgood examines how the Victorian objects are described in their "fugitive" meanings rather than their apparent symbolic meanings (4). She argues that objects of Victorian fiction acquire their meanings beyond fetishism as described by Marx and the financial value and this is what she calls Victorian "thing culture" (7-8). Analysing four Victorian novels from this perspective, Freedgood concludes that the

meaning of things has been given enough attention so far, that is why, it is time for understanding the meaninglessness of them and for saving them from the meaning trap (150). Price discusses the books as objects printed in the Victorian period and their relations with the human owners. She explains that her book "excavate[s] the often contentious relation among three operations: reading (doing something with the words), handling (doing something with the object), and circulating (doing something to, or with, other persons by means of the book)" (5). Price's Victorian books are the constituents of people's relationship with other people (260). Nonetheless, they fail to be mere material entities because they cannot be free from social and political meaning. Plotz, however, discusses this abundance of things from a different point of view. He asserts that rather than being "static deadweights," Victorian things serve as "moving messenger" (1). In other words, he argues that these things gain their autonomous identity as "the Victorian object" by circulation in the prominent Victorian novels. By doing that, he also attracts the attention on "the novel's own status as an exemplary portable property" (1). To put it differently, Plotz assigns a cultural meaning to the books of William Shakespeare, Charles Dickens, Jane Austen and George Eliot and claims that these novels are circulating properties that carry English culture around the world. Plotz's main reference is to the circulating "cultural property" over the colonial lands of the Empire. He explains "cultural portability" of a property as follows: "The crucial assumption of any account of cultural portability is that moving objects can serve as a constitutive basis for a shared (but potentially bounded) community, so that Shakespeare's works bound in green cloth can have a trade value and a resonant national identity at once" (173). The books of these English writers, for him, can be defined as "travelling-Englishness" since they take English culture to India and Africa and they have a national identity (170). Through colonial politics, objects renew their positions in the novels when it comes to the nineteenth century because the word "portable" acquires new meanings (Plotz 3). These new meanings, however, are problematic from the perspective of the materiality of the object because 'portability' as a trait became to be ascribed not just material objects but also the metaphorical meanings of objects:

> [F]or example, Gurney's phrase 'portable evidence of Christianity,' which comes to refer both to the physical Bible and its spiritual message. Like novels themselves, such 'properties' are half-material, half-abstraction; that is, they are understood

> partially as pieces of physical property, and partially as weightless bearers of the message that they contain. (Plotz 175)

Thus, this new kind of "portability" shatters the distinction between the physical and metaphorical, which Plotz prefers to call "quasi-materiality" (175). This new position problematically defines the objects in the novels with both their economic, cultural and sentimental value. However, a material object should be defined in terms of its physical materiality before the meanings attributed to it. Objects, at first, should be analysed in terms of their objectness, but nothing else. With the critical turn towards the material and its fugitive meaning rather than the allegorical, the Victorian century social life and the fictions that show this life in a realistic manner begin to be "looked at" in detail. That is why anyone who studies a given Victorian novel cannot ignore the centrality of the things that the lives of the characters are shaped around. Beside Oscar Wilde, other Victorian novelists include objects in their works and deal with the undeniable "objectness" of these objects beyond their allegorical status, as well. Freedgood argues that "[t]he mid-Victorian novel is a particularly rich site for tracing the fugitive meanings of apparently nonsymbolic objects" (4). The objects in the Victorian fiction are portrayed in detail, which extends their visibility and their reality behind the allegorical symbols. Yet, there is a very thin line between seeing things as allegories and "seeing them as they are." By referring to the difference between an allegorist and a collector as defined by Walter Benjamin, Freedgood points out that "to see the object as it is" can be accomplished by "avoid[ing] the temptations of allegory and follow instead the protocols of collector" (2-3). Thus, a reader of Victorian novels should think as a collector who sees the materiality of them and brings them together because of "their affinities and their succession in time" (qtd. in Freedgood 2-3). Keeping this in mind, Jane Austen, Charles Dickens and George Eliot are the three Victorian authors who are mostly discussed in the critical books and associated with things in their novels. The things in their works are mostly affected by gothic tradition, industrialism and the dichotomy created between the financial value and sentimental value. Thus, because of the agency of this materiality in the Victorian age, the boundaries between the organic human and the nonhuman blur and the material things become what they are. None of these critical works, however, reads Oscar Wilde's novel from the perspective of the material objects, probably because he is considered as a playwright more than a novelist. Yet, his relation to the Aesthetic movement and his appreciation of art ostensibly prove his keen interest in things, which deserves a deep

analysis. Wilde, in his only novel, portrays a Picture whose symbolic meanings are destroyed. The Picture acquires a new position not only as a "portable property" but also as a humanized, bodily thing.

In addition to the industrial development that creates a relationship between the owner and the owned, Aestheticism and Decadent movement of the century are two other reasons that led things to be represented in detailed in the novels of the nineteenth century. The appreciation given to the aesthetic material beauty together with the Decadents rejection of spirituality lead writers to look at the objects and also humans in order to see their material beauty. Forlini argues that "Decadent obsessions with the material object is not only- or even primarily- the result of an emerging consumer culture. It is a function of the emergence of a new technological object and the development of a number of specimen-oriented sciences [...] that attempt to 'see the objects as in itself it really is'" (2). According to Forlini, the thing in Victorian fiction is the result of the scientific materialism of the century, which leads decadent writers, who strictly refuse the spiritual "goodness" of the human beings, to see the human as a material being. So, the decadent writers see the connection between the materiality of the object and the materiality of the human body (Forlini 6) like Wilde did in *The Picture of Dorian Gray*. Similar to Dorian Gray who is under the effect of the things around him like the yellow book and his Picture, Huysmans's protagonist, Des Esseintes is also very much affected by the things of art around him. It is important to note that these functions of the things are not their utility as goods, rather the function of a thing is the effect on the human subject by its presence.

Eighteenth-century it-narratives and the material abundance in the nineteenth century give rise to critical discussions on the material existence of the objects in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries with the developing object-oriented ontologies which are new schools of thought. Object-oriented ontology (OOO, in short) refuses the superiority of human existence and conscious over the nonhuman entities. It is a critique of anthropocentrism, a view that undermines objects and their agency by carrying human beings at the centre of the world. OOO, as opposed to anthropocentrism, is dedicated to searching for the 'secret lives' of nonhuman objects. It emerges as opposed to the twentieth-century dominant philosophies which claim that objects become real when they are perceived by the humans. OOO suggests that objects are ontological beings that need

to be saved from human perception. This means that the objects are given the ontological priority and the freedom to exist independently from human owners. The concept first appeared with Graham Harman in 1999 as object-oriented philosophies. In one of his articles, he discusses the rejections of literary texts as individual things independent of human consciousness. He argues "[i]nstead of dissolving a text upward into its readings or downward into its cultural elements, we should focus specifically on how it resists such dissolution" ("The Well-Wrought Broken Hammer" 200). In other words, he offers to look for things as what they are rather than what they symbolise. In the very core of Harman's argument lies "non-relationality," which means that OOO suggests a "deeply *non-relational* conception of the reality of things" (187). Here, Harman refers to the individuality of the objects and their ontology which is independent of the human subject. Similar to Harman, Timothy Morton focuses on a different kind of relationship between the object and its parts. He stresses out that objects cannot be reduced to their relationships with humans and he adds "[w]e are too accustomed, argues OOO, to seeing things as patterns and not as objects" (219). Later in 2009, Levi Bryant gave the concept its current name as object-oriented ontology. According to him, OOO is the turn from the subject to the substance (270-1). To put it this way, OOO rejects the privileged condition of humans as subjects and portrays the "hidden life" of things. To sum up, the aim of OOO is not to follow the subject/object dualism but to follow an ecological perspective of ontology that does not believe in the superiority of human beings. Yet, it should be asked whether this situation leads OOO critics to believe the superiority of objects or not.

Different from what Harman and Morton put forward, the new materialist critic Jane Bennett stresses out that Harman and Morton create a boundary between the objects and humans by focusing on the objects and completely ignoring the humans. Claiming that "there is no need to choose between objects and their relations," Bennett gives the advice to look at the objects and their relations together as a "unit" ("Systems and Things" 227). She argues that this theoretical project of approaching objects "would be to make both objects and relations the periodic focus of theoretical attention, even if it is impossible to articulate fully the 'vague' or 'vagabond' essence of any system or any things, and even if it is impossible to give equal attention to both at once" (227). Although it seems impossible to give equal attention to both things and their relation to humans, it may be possible to not favour one over the other. By placing the objects at the very centre of their

study, Harman and Morton fall into the same trap as the anthropocentric studies do. Bennett, on the other hand, attempts to move the focus to the integrity, embodiment or "assemblage" which are shaped by the ontological togetherness of both things and humans. With reference to the critical positions expressed by Harman, Morton and Bennett, it can be asserted that while Harman and Morton are dealing with objects, Bennett's focus is more on the side of things. Because while objects can exist alone and as independent from their relations, things cannot. Things have to encounter with humans and show "a glimpse" (Brown 4) from their being to humans in order to live together. Even though, in his relatively new book, Harman accepts that their ideas on object ontology evolve into what Bennett proposes on the object relations (*Object Oriented Ontology* 241-2), he defends that "objects – whether real, fictional, natural, artificial, human or non-human – are mutually autonomous and enter into relation only in special cases that need to be explained rather than assumed" (*Object Oriented Ontology* 12), which means that objects should not be reduced to their relationality with other objects including humans. Although this study is rooted in the discussions of Harman and Morton on OOO, at the very heart of the study Bennett's idea will be the starting point which supports the existential "unit" of the human subject, Dorian, and the material object, the Picture, together.

The first chapter of this study discusses the "thingness" of the Picture in the novel with reference to Brown's thing theory, which has been ignored in critical analyses so far. The Picture has an undeniable material existence over the narrative and it gives Dorian the chance to alternate between his two worlds. It functions as an imaginary world for Dorian in which he can hide the effects of his sins and desires. The word "function," however, is used here not to refer to the working of the Picture as a portrait but as the thing that lives like a secret other. Rather than just the individuality of the Picture, the ongoing relationship between the subject and the object will also be highlighted in this chapter. As explained by Bennett, apart from the individual identity of the Picture, what creates the horrible look is actually his relationship with the human subject. Both subject and the object are affected continuously in this process by this relationship. Thus, through the end of the story, it is hard to pinpoint which one is the dreadful creature and which one is the beautiful Picture. The subject and the object change places and become the other. On the other hand, in addition to thing theory, the neuroscientist Vittorio Gallese's theory of

"embodied-simulation" and intersubjectivity will be the main frame of reference in the first chapter. Gallese proves his theory by referring to the findings of the mirror neuron system which suggest that the same neurons are activated while performing an action and also watching the same action performed ("Embodied Simulation Theory" 197). Due to the mirror neurons, argues Gallese, "the feeling of physical involvement in a piece of painting, sculpture, or architecture, not only provoked a sense of imitating the motion or action seen or implied in the work, but also enhanced our emotional responses to such a work" ("Mirror Neurons and Art" 446-7). This intra-action between the observer and the painting constitutes the "embodied simulation" which can be interpreted as the one single body, an intersubjective position, shaped by the equal involvement of both parties. That is why focusing on either of them and ignoring the other would be a wrong approach in regard to the basic principles that this thesis is based upon. Thus, in this chapter, the "thingness" of the Picture will be discussed first and later the "embodied self" created by the Picture and Dorian will be analysed in the light of neuroscientific developments as interpreted in the context of literary and art criticism.

In the second chapter, three screen adaptations of the novel will be analysed with reference to thing theory and neuroscience. These three adaptations are chosen from three different time periods and they belong to three different classifications of adaptation modes; namely, literal, traditional and radical (Cahir 200). The modern screen adaptations of the novel are clearly influenced by the existing critical comments. They also build a story revolving around Dorian even though some of the directors, whether consciously or unconsciously, create an aesthetic character generating from the Picture. Pramod Nayar puts forward in that context that "textual criticism is an instance of adaptation because the critical texts are produced from and about literary texts" (n.p.). Similarly, adaptations are textual criticisms, as well (Nayar n.p.). For example, Anouska Kersten comments on the differences between the novel which has been read in the context of Victorian morality and the 2009 adaptation which subverts the gender roles along with moral values. She argues that upon the pornification of media, "[t]his ability and acceptance of sexuality has been exploited in *Dorian Gray* and has led to an interpretation of Dorian's sins. Through the positioning of certain scenes against a sexual background, Dorian's sins immediately get a sexual charge" (27-8). It cannot be denied that Wilde's homosexuality is among the most widely known facts about his life and his identity as a literary figure. However, the

point the screen adaptations of the novel miss is that the degeneracy of Dorian's life is abetted by the freedom, immortality and powers of regeneration that the Picture provides Dorian with. It is obvious that the absence of the ontological agency of the thing in the critical appreciations of the novel is replicated in the constitution of the screen adaptations of the novel. Johannes Weber argues, for 1945 and 2009 adaptations, that the continuous career of the novel and its adaptations "can be found in [its] eponymous hero" (11) who is Dorian Gray. Weber asserts that Dorian's monstrosity and "almost exclusively visually perceived deviant corporeality is at the centre of both the texts and the filmings" (11). However, it is the Picture that gradually becomes monstrous while Dorian keeps his beauty for ages.

As can be observed, the inevitable centrality of the Picture in *The Picture of Dorian Gray* has again been overlooked as the novel is transposed to the screen. Nonetheless, some cinematographic tools over the production of the Picture make it possible for the Picture to claim its presence in all three screen adaptations. As an example, Albert Lewin's technicolour in 1945 gives the Picture the monstrosity it deserves with the colours. Accordingly, the 2009 adaptation attributes a presence to the Picture by placing the camera into exactly where the Picture is even though it omits the role of the Picture even in the title. On the other hand, *Penny Dreadful* (2014-16) is another example in which the Picture of Dorian is never seen until the second season although there are numerous objects of arts, especially portraits, referring to the obsession of the human character. Even though the walls of his living room are full of portraits which can be considered as objects, his other half, which is a thing, is never showed publicly. Rather than the Picture, the scenes with Dorian and in his home are full of objects which creates an aesthetic criminal. However, the duality created throughout the show also refers to the dual identity of Dorian Gray. This dual identity will be analysed in the second chapter in the light of a new term, "confluence"[2] which is coined by Sinan Akıllı and Seda Öz. It will be argued that Dorian's "confluence" is in some ways different from other characters and this is provided with his embodiment with the Picture.

In the light of the theoretical and methodological information that has been provided above, this thesis aims to make a contribution to the literary criticisms on Victorian novels and their screen adaptations by analysing Wilde's *The Picture of Dorian Gray* along with

its screen adaptations. It can be claimed that no text has one dimension, rather, all of them can be read from many different perspectives and interpreted with the help of new emerging studies. That is why this thesis opens up a new road for studying Victorian novels. While doing that, emergent studies both in Humanities and neuroaesthetics will be embraced as the starting points in order to move the focus from human characters to nonhuman ones. As a contribution to the current literary analysis of the novel and its screen adaptations, this study argues that the agency and effect that the novel ascribes to the Picture as an object have so far been absent from the critical reception of Wilde's only novel, an absence that has also been carried over to screen adaptations. As such, the Picture as a thing in *The Picture of Dorian Gray* and in the screen adaptations of the novel deserves separate critical attention and commentary with appropriate conceptual and theoretical tools. This study aims to give the Picture of Dorian Gray the necessary attention it seeks as the part of the main character, Dorian. After the analyses of selected texts, it will be concluded that, as the components of the "cultivated corruption" (Mighall xiii), the Picture and Dorian cannot be reduced to their own selves. Without the Picture, the Dorian figure would not be possible. Besides, without its relation to the human character, the Picture would function as a mere portrait in the world of objects.

CHAPTER I

"EMBODIED SELF" AND INTERSUBJECTIVITY IN *THE PICTURE OF DORIAN GRAY*

"Like the painting of a sorrow,
A face without a heart."
(*Hamlet* 4.7.106-7)

This chapter argues that the human Dorian and the Picture are actually the components of the same ontology which cannot be separated from one another. Different from a critical approach that is embedded in the conventionally-established dualism between the mind and the body, it is argued here that within this corporeal existence produced by the interdependence between the human Dorian and the Picture, they constitute the recently-proposed idea termed as *bodymind* or *mindbody* by Wendy Wheeler (18). That is to suggest that, similar to the embodiment between the body and the mind as a whole, the human and the Picture cannot be considered as separate entities but the components of the same matter. This relationship between a human character and his Picture will be discussed in detail with reference to Brown's thing theory and Gallese's theory of "embodied simulation" in which he highlights the intra-action of a human being with "others." Even though the word "others," in Gallese's understanding, refers to all of the subaltern groups in the world history including animals and things, this study aims to focus on things as othered entities and their relations with the human. The rationale for this is that, as Gallese suggests, "one can relate to another human being similarly to when one relates to inanimate objects" ("Bodily Selves" 5). The incarnation of Dorian and the thing in *The Picture of Dorian Gray* will be analysed along two strands of discussion: Firstly, the co-evolution of Dorian and the Picture towards a state of "cultivated corruption" (Mighall xiii) will be shown; and the second strand of discussion will be involved with the disappearance of the boundary between the human and the thing, which brings to the mind the question of which one the real Dorian is. In order to understand the ontological embodiment of a human character and his Picture in the light of neuroscience and neuroaesthetics, Gallese's theory of "mirror neurons system" (MNS) and "embodied simulation" (ES) will be explained and the undeniable relationship between art and

science will be highlighted in this chapter. Before doing that, the agency of the things with reference to Brown's theory will be given in order to draw attention to the similarities between art and science.

From the eighteenth century onward, things have leading roles in the narratives, which "dramatizes the struggle between humans having power over things, and things having power over humans" (Benedict 20). Barbara Benedict suggests that, from Medieval times until the eighteenth century, the significance and control of the religious things over humans had taken considerable critical attention. Thus, Benedict argues that things were the site of struggle between religious and secular meanings. Within this struggle of meanings, things were considered as soulless bodies, which "come to embody the ambiguity of the material and the uncertainty of significance in a world of lost meanings" (Benedict 20-1). The lost meaning and the ambiguity attributed to the material caused things to be considered as the "other" and made them invisible. Towards the eighteenth century, however; "attention was shifting from Christian symbolism to the things themselves, objects isolated from action or narrative, insolent in their insignificance" and the reason for this transition is attributed to the rapid development of scientific research (Lamb 43-4). The accurate representation of species, due to scientific realism, also leads to "a growing concentration on the surface of the thing and the surface of the work, as if nothing of any importance lay behind it" according to Jonathan Lamb (43-4). The attention on the human or the symbolic representation of things in human life change direction to the very materiality of the things, including their matter and form. Thus, what Lamb proposes in his work is to see beneath the surface. What is beneath the surface, however; is not the symbolism created since the Medieval times. Both Lamb and Benedict encourage humans to see the souls, desires, feelings and will that things have. Lamb saves objects from the boundaries of the symbolism and representational codes of the age in which they are trapped and helps them to become things that matter by arguing that "a thing neither represents nor symbolizes a deity, yet generates a glamour beyond the ordinary, as if what had been made or painted had a life of its own" (46). He also adds that "desymbolized or fetishized still life could acquire a power distinct from the artist's" by giving examples from Johannes Torrentius, a still-life artist, and Marinus van Reymerswael, a painter (46). The paintings, then, can exist independent of the artist and the model. On the other hand, the colours that form the painting are produced from

organic matter, which makes the painting organic, as well. When touched on the surface, one can feel the moves of the brush and the remnants of it, a characteristic which differentiates portraits from other things. A painting, for Lamb, could gain power, life, and soul because of the painter. Basing the argument on this suggestion, this study will offer a Picture that acquires a life and a soul from the beholder. Looking at the paintings from Lamb's point of view, all of the symbolic meanings that have been attributed to the Picture of Dorian Gray since the time it was painted should leave their place for an understanding of the Picture that explains what is beneath the surface. What is beneath the surface, then, is a horrible and degraded soul which goes uglier and uglier every day. It has a corrupted life and the face of a monster that no one can endure to look at. Even though Dorian sees "the fair young face that laughed back at him from the polished glass" (159), he also realises that "[t]he surface seemed to be quite undisturbed, and as he had left it. It was from within, apparently, that the foulness and horror had come. Through some strange quickening of inner life the leprosies of sin were slowly eating the thing away. The rotting of a corpse in a watery grave was not so fearful" (191). Later, Dorian will notice that the thing is rotting inside and also outside. What lies beneath the surface will reveal itself on the surface, as well. The process of "rotting" in the excerpt also implies the organic nature of the painting. From the traditional understanding of the objects, they do not decay since decaying is a feature attributed to the organic matter and it happens due to the actions of bacteria. The Picture gets wormy and rotten similar to a dead body or a plant. On the other hand, even though the human Dorian seems like an art object, a perfect example of a still life explained by Lamb, his soul is also decaying. Since it is not certain which one the real Dorian is, one can consider that the human is the image, the beautiful painting that never gets old and ugly. While Dorian presents himself as a young and beautiful lad, his soul is rotting, his sins are eating him away and the horror is coming from his heart. Besides, the state of the rottenness of the Picture is not used metaphorically here. The process of putrefaction should not be considered as a symbol anymore, but a literal decay with worms, rats and maggots. What matters, in this novel, is not what the decaying Picture symbolises but what effects it can wake up when one reads or touches it on the surface. Thus, both the Picture and the human as material things prove their existence by revealing their bodies not as symbols or signs but as real-life forms. They are just the different sides of the same coin.

Most of the critical works that look at thing power in the contemporary age make use of Brown's thing theory in which he discusses the agency and nature of things and their relations to humans. First of all, Brown separates things from objects. By calling them objects, he suggests, we reduce things to a lower position (3). In other words, making them objects put things in a hierarchical relationship with the subject. However, things wander around, not independent of their relations, but without marking a higher position in the life of the subject. Things would like to regain visibility from their relations to subjects or other things while objects try to become one with their functionality. Even though these words are used interchangeably, Brown draws a line between them. It would be wrong to call this line a strict one because it seems that things mobilise between these two statuses and they become things "when they stop working for us" (Brown 4). The word "object" refers to a more definite and general category while "thing" refers to an ambiguous, mysterious and unreliable kind, which may come from their unexpected and abrupt encounter with people. Brown emphasises the "suddenness with which things seem to assert their presence and power: you cut your finger on a sheet of paper, you trip over some toy, you get bopped on the head by a falling nut" (3-4); or when you get bopped on the head by a falling apple and discover the force of gravity. Claiming their presence with sudden attacks, things have agentic powers to make people look and see the world around. As Brown suggests,

> [a]s they circulate through our lives, we look through objects (to see what they disclose about history, society, nature, or culture-above all, what they disclose about us), but we only catch a glimpse of things. We look through objects because there are codes by which our interpretive attention makes them meaningful, because there is a discourse of objectivity that allows us to use them as facts. A thing, in contrast, can hardly function as a window. (4)

The object, according to Brown, is similar to a window which enables people to look and see. Its material presence cannot be recognised and appreciated until it stops working and becomes a thing. Things, however, are different and they face with people. The very moment when you "catch a glimpse" of the thing, the one time it stares back at you, as different from the time when it is "used," is the exact point where the object begins to be a thing. At this moment when human beings realise that they are surrounded by each and every one of those things, they also, as material bodies, try to prove their presence to be visible among them.

Albeit, it is not easy to define things and put them into categories. Tillman comments on the nature of the material as "undetermined." She goes on to say that "[t]he actual nature of any phenomenon being studied becomes determinate only within a particular context of engagement" (32). Brown, on the other hand, suggests, about the place of the things, that "things is a word that tends, especially at its most banal, to index a certain limit or liminality, to hover over the threshold between the nameable and unnameable, the figurable and unfigurable, the identifiable and unidentifiable" (4-5). The ambiguous physical forms of the things enable them to replace the moral with material values. In other words, things become substitutes for the relationships and values among humans. Thus, Benedict states that things turn humans into things in their relationship by claiming that "[t]hings' seductive fungibility is contagious" (26-8). Similar to Dorian's relationship with his changing Picture, while the thing becomes the lively character of the story who commits crimes, the human character turns into a thing in terms of his physicality and due to the control the Picture exerts over him. This does not mean to say that things do not have meaning beyond their relationship and interaction with a human. Yet, it is to say that matter and mind should be considered as inseparable parts of a whole. In their relationship, the Picture functions as the "undetermined" antagonist. This situation reflects the in-between nature or the liminality of the Picture. It is in the "grey" area, which also refers to Dorian's family name. The uncanny and unknown Picture is the origin of the so-called main character, which is tragic and blurry. While the human is the Dorian, the Picture is the Gray. This obscure nature of the matter makes this study a challenge because it is hard to define and describe both the Picture and Dorian. But then again, as Lord Henry claims, "[t]o define is to limit" (233). Dorian and the Picture resemble each other so much that it is impossible to explain their relationship separately.

From the perspective of neuroscience, Gallese and his colleagues discovered that in the brain of macaque monkeys, a group of neurons take action not only when the monkeys execute a motor act, but also when observing other monkeys doing the similar acts[3] ("Mirror Neurons and Art" 442). Gallese suggests that "their visual properties— the stimuli that excite them when observed— 'mirror' their motor properties—the motor acts that excite the neurons when actively performed by the monkey" (442). These are called "mirror neurons" and later, it is proved that humans have the same kind of neurons that 'mimic' the action which is observed. According to these discoveries in neuroscience, the

neurons which are activated when an individual executes a motor act are also the ones which are energised when the individual watches this action in a film or reads it in a book. In other words, the same feelings and emotions are active when a motor act is observed in others or when one does it himself or herself. Gallese exemplifies the situation and summarises the ongoing research in this field as follows:

> witnessing someone else expressing a given emotion (e.g., disgust, pain) or undergoing a given sensation (e.g., touch) recruits some of the visceromotor (e.g., anterior insula) and sensorimotor (e.g., second somatosensory area, SII; ventral premotor cortex) brain areas activated when one experiences the same emotion […] or sensation […], respectively. ("Embodied Simulation Theory" 197)

These studies shatter the highly accepted view in cognitive science "that action, perception, and cognition are to be seen as separate domains. The discovery of the MNS [mirror neuron system] challenges this view as it shows that such domains are intimately intertwined" (Gallese, "Mirror Neurons and Art" 443). Thus, MNS provides a system whose components are so enmeshed within each other that they compose an "embodied simulation."

Apart from perceiving action, a further discovery shows that "when we read or listen to narratives we literally embody them by activating a substantial part of our sensorimotor system" ("Embodied Simulation Theory" 198). Thus, it is not just visually observing; reading, listening and even imagining can trigger the mirror neurons and cause "embodied simulation" as argued by Gallese ("Embodied Simulation Theory" 198). Reading the experience of pain and suffering in a narrative activates the mirror neurons and leads one to feel the same pain, maybe in a different intensity, but still with the same neurons even though it is clear that it is a fictitious narrative. While, in literature, this situation is explained with "suspension of disbelief," Gallese proposes that this kind of experience of reading is more than a suspension of disbelief, but a sort of "liberated embodied simulation" ("Embodied Simulation Theory" 199). Although the readers or the audience know that the narrative is based on imagination, the mirror neurons are activated for them to feel the same with the protagonists. By feeling the same situation- pain, suffering or touch-, the reader liberates the hidden embodiment between the self and the protagonist or the observer feels a connection between the self and the artwork in the case of the present analysis of Wilde's novel. That is to say that, according to Gallese and embodied

simulation, the boundaries between the real life and the literary works start to disappear. On the other hand, Gallese accepts that this theory is based on hypotheses and it still needs to be developed: "Although the discovery seemed to fit in this research context, one should keep in mind that we did not look for mirror neurons. In other words, the discovery was not guided by a preconceived thesis about social cognition" ("Mirror Neurons and Art" 442). Albeit, existing evidence based on the above-mentioned discoveries seems to support such a reading and "indicates that embodied mechanisms involving the activation of the sensory–motor system, of which the MNS is part, do play a major role in social cognition, language included" (447) in his own words.

Gallese explains embodied simulation (ES) theory with intersubjectivity in which the components of the self, mind and body or the self and the other, are interlocked. "Embodied simulation" occurs between the self and the other when the self perceives the action of the other. A kind of bond is produced between these two that creates an embodiment, which even proves that the self and the other are connected physically rather than metaphorically. In his study where he discusses the relationship between the bodily self and intersubjectivity, Gallese offers that "[t]o solve the problem of what it means to be a human subject, a self-reflective self, we should not consider the brain in isolation, but focus on its tight interrelated connections with the body" ("Bodily Selves" 2). In this account, Gallese proposes that mindreading should be understood as a way of understanding others but not in a meta-representational way. Instead, mindreading is "basically sharing a common crucial feature: the mapping of the other onto the self, reciprocated by the mapping of the self on the other" (7). Intersubjectivity, thus, can be seen as the embodiment of the self and the other or "identity and alterity" in his words (7). In this relation, then, both of the components lose their own subjectivity and individuality and start to serve as intersubjective bodies.

All of these studies in the field of cognitive science lead to the emergence of a new discipline from within cognitive neuroscience; one that which explores the relationship between biology and aesthetic experience. This emerging field is called neuroaesthetics and proposed to "emerge from the interaction between sensory-motor, emotion–valuation, and meaning–knowledge neural systems" (Chatterjee and Vartanian 370). According to neuroaesthetics, aesthetic pleasure arises from the embodiment or

intersubjectivity with the object of art and with the help of the mirror neuron system. On the other hand, David Freedberg and Gallese challenge the mainstream view suggesting that cognition is the primary cause of responses to art (197). Rather, aesthetic pleasure should occur when the embodied systems such as "the simulation of actions, emotions and corporeal sensations" are activated together (197). They also state that "the same neuron not only codes the execution of motor acts but also responds to the visual features that trigger them, even in the absence of overt movement" (200). This statement shows that not just moving images, such as films or the images received during witnessing the performed action, but also static images like a work of art can stimulate mirror neurons. Besides, Anjan Chatterjee and Oshin Vartanian point out "the ability of art to communicate subtle emotions that are difficult to convey with words" (371). According to them, objects lead to aesthetic pleasures (372), although they do not speak the human language, through the mental connections between the observer and the observed, in other words, through the physical involvement of both parties. Both of these studies highlight the significant role played by the static and still objects in the process of creating a self and also taking aesthetic pleasure. Hence, Freedberg and Gallese further argue that "even a still-life can be 'animated' by the embodied simulation it evokes in the observer's brain" (201). These recent contributions to cognitive science and neuroaesthetics open up a new critical venue for the analysis of Wilde's novel. More specifically, it can be claimed that Dorian has many "embodied simulations" with the objects around him, which makes him recognise his own self. His Picture, however, holds the leading role in the process of creating "a self" because it acts as an artistic guiding force in Dorian's life. Focusing on this new critical venue which interprets the relationship between a human and a material thing as an intersubjective embodiment, material things in Wilde's novel including the Picture can be analysed in terms of their roles as intersubjective bodies in the creation of the embodiment 'Dorian Gray.'

Beside the Picture that has a leading role in the story, the book which Lord Henry gives Dorian is described as having a tremendous effect and agency in the evolution of Dorian. Even though there is not enough evidence, it is believed that this book is Huysmans's *Against Nature*, which Wilde expressed his admiration for (Ellmann 237-8). The adventures of Des Esseintes open the eyes of Dorian Gray to the reality of desires and

pleasures that he has never heard of. His first encounter with Des Esseintes is portrayed as follows:

> After a few minutes he became absorbed. It was the strangest book that he had ever read. It seemed to him that in exquisite raiment, and to the delicate sound of flutes, the sins of the world were passing in dumb show before him. Things that he had dimly dreamed of were suddenly made real to him. Things of which he had never dreamed were gradually revealed. (155)

While Dorian is being absorbed by the life of Huysmans's main character, he also finds himself and his hidden desires behind the lines of the story. The influence of the book continues for years for Dorian. In this time, he reads it several times and every time discovers a different pleasure according to his changing moods. In the framework of what Gallese and others propose, while reading Huysmans's book, Dorian's mirror neurons are activated and Des Esseintes and Dorian become one, the embodied self. Witnessing Des Esseintes life full of pleasures and feelings as if he is doing the same actions, Dorian is filled with an irresistible desire, a temptation to live the same life as portrayed by Wilde: "The hero, the wonderful young Parisian, in whom the romantic and the scientific temperaments were so strangely blended, became to him a kind of prefiguring type of himself. And, indeed, the whole book seemed to him to contain the story of his own life, written before he had lived it" (158). The lives of two protagonists are so blended and enmeshed into each other that Dorian believes it is the life story of his own life. There occurs a physical connection that bonds their brains with a single line that is 'pleasure.' From that time on, every pleasure Des Esseintes feels may be said to be also experienced by Dorian with the help of his mirror neurons. The things "that he had dimly dreamed of" (155) become Dorian's own experiences as he observes Des Esseintes performing them. Finally, when Des Esseintes is poisoned by his sins, Dorian is "poisoned by a book" (179). The pleasure Dorian feels while reading the artistic work leads him to feel the empathy with the main character. In turn, reading Wilde's novel most probably created the same reaction for the readers in the nineteenth century. This explains the negative critical attention Wilde and the novel got at the time of publication. The readers who realised the secret desires of their lives in *The Picture of Dorian Gray* found themselves in an enmeshed nature with Dorian Gray and the thing, which revealed to the readers their own hidden nature. Wilde commented on the poisonous nature of some books in his novel as well through Lord Henry: "As for being poisoned by a book, there is no such thing as

that. Art has no influence upon action. It annihilates the desire to act. It is superbly sterile. The books that the world calls immoral are books that show the world its own shame" (257). So, in a way, the reaction to Wilde's novel was actually the Victorians who reacted to the hidden sins and desires of their own. As Wilde asserted in a letter he wrote to the editor of *Scots Observer*, "[e]ach man sees his own sin in Dorian Gray. What Dorian Gray's sins are no one knows. He who finds them has brought them" (*The Letters* 266). In Gallese's words, "the bodily affective self is at the roots of the narrative self" ("Embodied Simulation Theory" 196). The neuroscientific studies blur the boundaries between the fictional and the real. Even though Victorians were fully aware that Wilde's novel was a fictional work, their reactions proved the opposite. This novel not only reminded them of their own feelings and desires but also liberated their "embodied simulation," activated their mirror neurons and reached their senses similar to Des Esseintes reaching Dorian's.

The senses which are the primary evidence of being alive and of materiality are used in the novel but not to reflect a moral or spiritual side of the character. Rather it is to focus on the physicality of Dorian as the body, together with the materiality of the Picture. While Dorian is experiencing new sensations, in every one of them, he is reminded that his body is there materially and it is connected to the Picture which is the materialisation of his soul. Every sensation that goes into his mind activates Dorian's body and the soul at the same time. Especially, smelling is the strongest sense in the story so that every corner of London has its unique smell either good or bad. At the beginning of the story, the inexperienced Dorian tries to cure his soul which is tired of standing still for Basil's masterpiece by smelling the flowers in the garden. Even though in that stage, the naive Dorian is not aware of how to use his senses to reach perfection, he later learns from Lord Henry that "[n]othing can cure the soul but the senses" (44). Making this aphorism his main motto, after his encounter with the visual effect of his sins, Dorian spends his life in order to cure his soul by means of his senses. However, he realises that

> the true nature of the senses had never been understood, and that they had remained savage and animal merely because the world had sought to starve them into submission or to kill them by pain, instead of aiming at making them elements of a new spirituality, of which a fine instinct for beauty was to be the dominant characteristic. (161)

This new spirituality to which Dorian would like to belong is based on the physical, bodily or animal sensations which are trapped by the world. That is why, Dorian experiences the world of the perfumes, music, and jewels and in each world, he meets something materially exquisite that help him to create his "bodily self." Inclining to the material doctrines of the "*Darwinismus* movement in Germany" (*PDG* 164), Dorian realises the physical connection between body and soul as he finds "a curious pleasure in tracing the thoughts and passions of men to some pearly cell in the brain, or some white nerve in the body, delighting in the conception of the absolute dependence of the spirit on certain physical conditions, morbid or healthy, normal or diseased" (164). Even though Dorian becomes aware of the embodiment between his soul and his body, his new experiences with his senses cannot cure his soul, but cure and renew his physical beauty while his soul goes bestial. The embodiment of body and soul is reflected in Dorian's relationship with his Picture. Focusing on the inseparability of them, the narrator of the story highlights that "[h]e hated to be separated from the picture that was such a part of his life" (172). Even though he is far away from England, through their physical bond, all of Dorian's experiences show themselves on the canvas. It can be claimed that Dorian's experiments with his senses and reflections of them on the Picture remind him that he is a material being, no different from his Picture on the canvas, which exemplifies the recent contributions in cognitive science and supports the intertwining of perception, recognition and emotion in a physical level. It is clear that all other materials in the novel, including the book and the body of the human, contribute to the physical connection between the human and the Picture which is the most definitive agent in the novel.

Among the objects in the novel, the Picture of Dorian has the most definitive effect on the plot. Even though the title of the novel attributes ontological priority to the Picture rather than to Dorian himself, such priority of the Picture has been reduced in existing analyses of this novel. The Picture of Dorian Gray as the thing that drives the narrative progression has an agency throughout the novel. That is why, the novel is the story of the Picture as the thing, not Dorian's. Yet, it is mostly ignored by the centrality of Dorian. Moreover, as Blackwell comments on the changing characteristics of the people through their relationships with the things they own (10-11), Dorian's personality changes with the Picture during the moments of bodily pleasure and the Picture shows that both physically and emotionally it also takes pleasure from Dorian's actions by giving him the

possibility of committing these sins. By reflecting the effects of the sins and the desires on its body, the Picture gives Dorian the chance to commit those sins without taking the burden of them. Therefore, Dorian's and the Picture's identities are accumulated together throughout the narrative. If Dorian is the protagonist of this story, it is no doubt that his ontological priority as a human being is supported by this Picture which is no longer a passive portrait but a living part of his identity.

Although their understanding of things could not go beyond seeing them as the representations and symbols, the common idea among art critics is the fact that pictures are living objects. They frequently refer to the thoughts, desires, feelings and consciousness of the paintings as objects that are alive. For example, Michael Fried explains the magical existence pictures have in the age of Diderot: "[A] painting, it was claimed, had first to attract *(attirer, appeller)* and then to arrest (*arreter)* and finally to enthrall (*attacher)* the beholder, that is, a painting had to call to someone, bring him to a halt in front of itself, and hold him there as if spellbound and unable to move" (92). Drawing the attention to what Brown asserts on the "suddenness" of things and on how humans "catch a glimpse of things" (3-4), a painting makes use of the sudden look coming from the observer in order to "attract" the attention of the observer towards its presence. These are the characteristics of an agentic power that the pictures have, which refers to the authority and control of the thing over the human. Fried's explanation challenges the static nature of paintings by attributing them an agential control in the world of humans. The observer can be absorbed into a picture even if the picture presents a static, still-life. It can be said that a painting wants to prove its liveliness by poisoning and taking the beholder's place, turning the beholder into a thing. Fried's portraits, however, have these powers because of the social and political context of the age or the artist, not due to their physical existence. Siri Hustvedt also writes on the liveliness of a painting and the intersubjectivity between a painting and the observer:

> It is the silent encounter between the viewer, 'I,' and the object, 'it.' That 'it,' however, is the material trace of another human consciousness. […] The painting carries within it the residue of an 'I' or a 'you.' In art, the meeting between viewer and thing implies intersubjectivity. Despite the fact that I would run in terror if a painting actually talked to me, I am alert to the human presence that is part of the object. Common parlance makes it clear that most people feel this about art. 'That really spoke to me' has become a gallery cliché. (xix)

Hustvedt's interpretation is much more similar to what neuroscientists suggest as the "embodied simulation" between the thing and the beholder. The thing is the embodiment of both 'it' and 'I' as the beholder, which can be called intersubjectivity. However, she thinks that the thing is the material sign of another human being, which can be the artist, the model or the viewer, and this totally rejects the agency of the thing and gives it to another human. The traces of an individual can be seen on the surface of the canvas but this does not eliminate the role and the being of the portrait. Her ideas on that "art is personal" imply the subjectivity and anthropocentric side of art, which dwells on the interpretations of human beings. On the contrary, this study claims that objects of art must exist independently from all interpretations and symbols. That 'it' is the very being of the Picture and the aesthetic process occurs between 'I' and 'it' by refusing the effect of the artist. After creating the work of art, the artist casts it aside so that the thing exists independently, free from the social and political spheres in which the artist belongs to. Additionally, the model is not present as a model after the painting is done and he or she becomes an inherent part of the painting. Finally, the viewer is the only one that can communicate with the portrait and he or she does that with the help of the mirror neurons, that is, by forging a bond with the thing. Moreover, in *What Do Pictures Want*, W. J. T. Mitchell describes the characteristics of pictures as follows:

> Pictures are things that have been marked with all the stigmata of personhood and animation: they exhibit both physical and virtual bodies; they speak to us, sometimes literally, sometimes figuratively; or they look back at us silently across a 'gulf unbridged by language.' They present not just a surface but a *face* that faces the beholder. (30)

In opposition to the mainstream view which believes the portraits are static and dead, Mitchell presents an accountable nature for them. Pictures are the visual desires showing the secret pleasures and they tell these secrets without using words. These desires are understood by the observer through the connection created between 'I' and the 'thing' during the moments of aesthetic pleasure. Mitchell, then, finds an answer for the question he asks: "What do pictures want?" and his answer is: It "is not to be interpreted, decoded, worshipped, smashed, exposed, or demystified by their beholders, or to enthral their beholders" (48). The pictures want to be themselves, free from all the meanings and contexts. They just want to exist materially as things, not humans. So, attributing them human qualities and characteristics is also to undermine their own nature. That is why

they do not speak the human language and the criteria of being human do not fit the nature of pictures. In the framework of these views on the nature of the pictures, this study suggests an awareness about the existence and power of the Picture in Dorian Gray.

On the aim of Wilde to use a magical portrait in his novel, Diana E. Bellonby suggests that Wilde used the Picture as an example of a tradition called the magic-portrait story which was popular before and also in his period by claiming that *The Picture of Dorian Gray* "synthesizes the plots of popular magic-portrait stories published before it" (200-1). Similarly, Deborah Maria Manion argues that "Wilde's narrative as a Picture represents a controlling ekphrasis that achieves the blending of visual (spatial) and narrative (temporal) arts in proto-cinematic fashion" in the Victorian period when the portraits gain autonomous and subversive features (176). Both Bellonby and Manion analyse Wilde's Picture in its own Victorian popular context. Even though Manion is successful in realising the subversive and powerful role of the Picture in Wilde's novel, she fails to recognise that the magic the Picture has comes from the materiality of it and its embodiment with the human. From a different perspective, according to Mighall, "[t]he portrait of Dorian may be the vehicle for a fantastic plot device, the repository for ancestral memory, a metaphor or mask for erotic desire, or the alibi for a life of secret vices; but it is also a work of art, and therefore occupies an important place in Wilde's text and œuvre" (xxiii). Mighall interprets the Picture as an object which gains symbolic meanings throughout the novel. Additionally, he misinterprets the transformation of the Picture by stressing out that "the reflection here [on the Picture] is more 'moral' than physical; it serves as a moral 'ledger'" (xxiv). Ostensibly, Mighall realises that the Picture is not a mere object since he also emphasises its material ontology as a work of art by claiming that the Picture is "the eponymous character" rather than the human subject (xxiii). Albeit, his comments on the Picture could not go beyond the mainstream analyses that confine the Picture in the world of objects.

On the other hand, in terms of the place of the Picture in the narrative and its relation to the human, Michal Peled Ginsburg approaches specifically to the Picture of Dorian Gray in her book in which she tells different *Portrait Stories*. According to her, "[w]ith the accomplishment of the wish, the Picture's relation to Dorian is no longer that of representation," but an influence (98). Because she suggests that a thing represents

something absent or dead. However, "in Wilde's story both man and portrait are present (though one is visible and the other is hidden). But though both man and portrait are present, neither one is identical to himself or itself: the man is (also) a portrait— has the portrait's attributes— while the portrait is (also) a man— has man's attributes" (Ginsburg 98). In other words, after Dorian's wish, the Picture stops working as a portrait for Dorian; it becomes something else. Ginsburg, in this quotation, portrays the complex and ambiguous ontology of the portraits in general. This explanation proves that portraits do not have certain features and limited bodies, which blurs the distinctions with the humans. This point will be clarified later in this chapter; however, it is important to highlight here that the Picture in Dorian Gray, as suggested by Ginsburg, is not a representation but an influence which is transposed to the canvas. In that regard, Ginsburg alleges that, in some way or another, all three men (Dorian, Basil and Lord Henry) get involved in the painting process of the Picture by commenting on Wilde's own assertion in the Preface: "It is the spectator, and not life, that art really mirrors" (22). Looking at the situation from the perspective of neuroscience, Freedberg and Gallese propose that "[t]he marks on the painting or sculpture are the visible traces of goal-directed movements; hence, they are capable of activating the relevant motor areas in the observer's brain" (202). According to them, even the traces in the painting implied by the gestures of the artist activate the mirror neurons in the observer's brain and lead him or her to simulate the same motor action. Under the influence of Lord Henry's poisonous words on beauty and youth, Dorian stands perfectly still with a wonderful look from Basil's perspective and he transfers this beauty to the canvas in a way which makes him realise that he has "put too much of [himself] into it" (24). Even though the Picture includes the three of them in the beginning, later it is recognised that it is just Dorian who the Picture really mirrors, since he is the only spectator. Thus, it can be suggested that art historians discuss the same issue as the neuroscientists, which is the agency of objects of art, from different aspects. These studies lead this thesis to argue that Dorian and his Picture constitute an embodiment in which they share an equal partnership in what is called "cultivated corruption" (Mighall xiii).

Mighall's term "cultivated corruption" is used in this study in order to refer to the embeddedness of two different entities. These two entities, namely the Picture and the human, come together in order to evolve into one single entity which includes the features

of both. In other words, the Picture and the human form a heterogeneous embodiment which is defined both as human and as the Picture. This embodiment is neither alive nor dead, neither human nor nonhuman and finally neither cultivated nor corrupted. All of these dualities contribute the Picture and the human to create the protagonist of the novel who is Dorian Gray. So, the affinity between the human and the Picture expresses itself on the canvas by simulating the actions of the human. Therefore, this expression creates "cultivated corruption" which stressing out the conflation/negotiation between art and criminality on the embodiment of the human and the thing. Creating his characters, both the human Dorian and the Picture, on the idea of "cultivated corruption," Wilde not only questions the moral side of art but also discusses the nature of human beings as the incarnation of good and evil. According to the critical strand this thesis dwells on, it can be stated that Wilde's novel is the journey of an evolution process from ignorance/inexperience of young Dorian to become fully aware of who he is and also to become one with the Picture. Thus, "cultivated corruption" can be interpreted as a form of co-evolution of the Picture and the human.

This character created by Dorian and the Picture seems to feature two characteristics in his body, which forms the embodiment of "cultivated corruption" (Mighall xiii). The fact that Wilde lived an illegal life in a 'respectable' society is interpreted as a "double-life" by Mighall and he states that this is transferred to *The Picture of Dorian Gray* by Wilde (xi). The Picture presents Dorian a mask that can hide his, in Mighall's words, "shady activities" in opium dens (xii). On the other hand, Dorian's subsequent trips, first among the high-class ladies and gentlemen of London and later in opium dens, "effectively conveys his divided existence" (xii). Mighall uses "divided existence" to highlight the different lifestyles between the human character and the Picture, but what he means to say is not a 'divided' but an 'embodied' existence between the human and the thing. Thus, Mighall's comments on the novel and the Picture provide a reliable source for a reading from the perspectives of neuroscience and thing theory. Unaware of the agency of the Picture as a material thing, Mighall proposes that as a criminal and an aesthete, Dorian is a combined figure of "cultivation" and "corruption" (xiii). It is important to remember that Dorian transforms into a criminal in the hands of the Portrait and due to the power provided by the thing. So, in the combination of cultivation and corruption, the Picture contributes to the corruption Dorian experiences with his senses by playing the aesthetic

criminal. The beauty and youth that the human Dorian pollutes by his "shady activities" are gained back by the pleasure taken by observing the Picture and recognising the difference:

> The very sharpness of the contrast used to quicken his sense of pleasure. He grew more and more enamoured of his own beauty, more and more interested in the corruption of his own soul. He would examine with minute care, and sometimes with a monstrous and terrible delight, the hideous lines that seared the wrinkling forehead or crawled around the heavy sensual mouth, wondering sometimes which were the more horrible, the signs of sin or the signs of age. He would place his white hands beside the coarse bloated hands of the picture, and smile. He mocked the misshapen body and the failing limbs. (159)

The way that Dorian views the misshapen body and the failing limps in an aesthetic delight leads him to continue his actions. To put it differently, by taking pleasure from the wrinkling and monstrous face, Dorian mirrors the effects of these sinful activities. Looking at the Picture after every sin, Dorian realises how pleasurable and desirable his life is, which reveals his corrupted side. On the other hand, Dorian's watching the horrid face in delight and finding beauty in it imply Wilde's words on the Preface: "Those who find ugly meanings in beautiful things are corrupt without being charming. This is a fault. Those who find beautiful meanings in beautiful things are the cultivated. For these there is hope" (21). Although Wilde said nothing on those who find beautiful meanings in ugly things, they are the people who are corrupted in a cultivated way and Dorian, as the embodiment of the human and the thing, is one of them. This duplicity of character, then, does not show multiple identities but refers to the embodiment of self with its own nature. Functioning as a "visible emblem of conscience" (*PDG* 121), the Picture, as the thing, is very essence of Dorian's personality as well as his origin. Their relationship does not have two features but one that holds cultivation and corruption in order to show that it is possible through their co-evolution towards an embodiment.

One of the evidences proving that the Picture of Dorian is actually a lively character and a partner for Dorian is the evolution in the Picture and the co-evolution of the thing and the human together. Dorian thinks that there must be some kind of connection between the colours on the canvas and himself. As Forlini argues, "human beings and their objects come to be related intimately, even positing the means through which they mutually constitute each other over time" (177). That is to say that the lives of the subject and the

thing which they start as separate entities, are combined in a moment and they become inseparable. The master/servant dynamics, in Forlini's words, in the traditional understanding of the interaction between the subject and the object change. From that moment on, neither the human has human characteristics nor the Picture has the functionality of an object. Their deep embodiment refuses their nature as separate entities and defines them as the components of a whole. In this togetherness, neither of them has priority to the other and, in this life that they live together, they learn and experience the process of evolution together. As Basil also questions after this change by claiming that "I want the Dorian Gray I used to paint" (138), the human Dorian loses his naive and pure nature even though his body does not bear the traces of this shift. Likewise, while the human changes spiritually, the Picture changes physically emphasising its material existence. However, this does not mean to say that the human Dorian lacks a material body. On the contrary, the human Dorian has a bodily existence that keeps his youth and beauty. His materiality does not show any traces of shift but it exists. Their creation/evolution start at the same moment when Lord Henry is paralysing the human Dorian and Basil Hallward is painting the Picture. Dorian is so influenced by what Lord Henry is telling him that he has "the most wonderful expression" (43). He is "perfectly still. And I [Basil] have caught the effect I wanted – the half-parted lips, and the bright look in the eyes" (43). So, the effects of Lord Henry's words are easily transformed into the Picture by the painter through the model. In other words, while Basil is painting the canvas, Lord Henry is painting the human in order to lead them to compose a corruption which is embraced by the cultivation. Even though there occurs an embodiment between the human and his thing, in this situation, Basil serves as a tool to pass this intra-action between the two. He observes the human Dorian as a work of art created by Lord Henry and mimics it on the canvas. Thus, the first moment of intersubjectivity is actually constituted by the model, the artist and the thing. From that moment on, the tied neurons of the human and the thing are activated at the same time creating an "embodied self" in the actions, pleasures and sins. That is why when Dorian treats Sibyl cruelly for the first time, the Picture presents him the change in his nature with "a touch of cruelty in the mouth" (*PDG* 119). The Picture becomes an artwork that observes the actions of Dorian and is painted by the sins day by day. When Sibyl is dead, the Picture gains a life together with the human character who feels like he is born again in the influence of Lord Henry's persuasive words, who interprets the situation as a beautiful tragedy. When he realises

that the Picture has a life of its own, Dorian expresses the evolution in the Picture as follows:

> Now it was to hide something that had a corruption of its own, worse than the corruption of death itself – something that would breed horrors and yet would never die. What the worm to the corpse, his sins would be to the painted image on the canvas. They would mar its beauty, and eat away its grace. They would defile it, and make it shameful. And yet the thing would still live on. It would be always alive. (149)

The Picture has a fatalistic characteristic. Yet, it would never let Dorian grow old and sick. Instead, the thing regenerates the human continuously in this process. The traces of his sins will never leave mark on the beautiful face of the human. While the human's face is renewed, the face of the thing gets wormy and rotting. Even though Mighall attributes this transformation in the Picture to Dorian who "constitutes an extreme combination of cultivation and corruption" (xiii), it can be observed that it is not just Dorian but the embodiment he produces with the thing can be called "cultivated corruption." Additionally, emphasising the literal meanings of the words, this is not only a combination but an incarnation in which both the human and the Picture not only come together but also are embedded into each other.

In this incarnation and intersubjectivity of the human and the artistic thing like in this novel, it would be wrong to suggest that the activation of mirror neurons works in a single direction. Rather, it is clear that both Dorian and the Picture affect and are affected by one another. For example, taking aesthetic pleasure from a work of art, Dorian also simulates the corruption suggested to him by the evil creature on the canvas. This is also an important element of his response to an aesthetic creation, as argued by Gallese: "[T]hese mechanisms are universal" ("Mirror Neurons and Art" 445). Even though the Picture is static and involves no action, Gallese points out that "even the observation of static images of actions leads to action simulation in the brain of the observer, through the activation of the same brain regions normally activated by execution of the observed actions" (445). Thus, the degraded image of himself on the Picture triggers Dorian to become more evil and corrupted since he is sure now that the Picture carries the burden of his sins. On the other hand, observing the actions of Dorian, the Picture simulates the corruption it sees in Dorian and presents it in an aesthetic way. In other words, the

pleasures that the Picture mimics are how "cultivated corruption" can be created on a canvas. The death of Sibyl Vane and Dorian's response under the influence of Lord Henry is transposed to the canvas viler than before:

> It seemed to him that it was unchanged; and yet his loathing of it was intensified. Gold hair, blue eyes, and rose-red lips – they all were there. It was simply the expression that had altered. That was horrible in its cruelty. Compared to what he saw in it of censure or rebuke, how shallow Basil's reproaches about Sibyl Vane had been! – how shallow, and of what little account! His own soul was looking out at him from the canvas and calling him to judgment. A look of pain came across him, and he flung the rich pall over the picture. (150)

The Picture loses its function for the model day by day and "the face painted on the canvas could grow bestial, sodden, and unclean" (152). It is still an artistic and aesthetic creation, however; rather than the pure and naive soul under the beautiful face, now it shows the hidden desires and corrupted soul of the owner. Similar to Brown's explanation on the difference between objects and things, the Picture of Dorian becomes a thing "when it stops working" as a portrait (Brown 4). It is a thing that gives Dorian a chance to alternate between his two worlds, also a chance to hide who he really is beneath the beautiful face. The Picture is the thing that makes Dorian a charming and dangerous gentleman of his age. The embodiment of the human character and the Picture as the thing creates this story and without the Picture, Dorian Gray would not be possible. Thus, it is neither the human nor the thing that drives the narrative progress, but their embodiment into single self and becoming one. On the other hand, one aspect of this intersubjectivity can be observed between the thing and the space-time relationality. To give an example, the characteristics of the Picture change when it is moved to the attic by Dorian. While the Picture stands in the living room, it is still an object of display in spite of small physical changes. However, when it is sure that no one can see it in the attic, the Picture feels free to liberate its embodiment by reflecting all material transformation on the canvas. Gallese interprets this kind of relationality between the thing and the space as "*we-centric* space" ("Mirror Neurons and Art" 442). He suggests that "this shared manifold space can be characterized at the functional level as embodied simulation, a basic functional mechanism by means of which our brain/body system models its interactions with the world" (442). What Gallese claims here a unity between the thing and the place it stands. However, his theory seems to have not explored the notion of time and space in detail, yet. Because of the lack about this notion in the current studies in the field, this study will not elaborate on the

issue even though the example above shows that there is an embodiment between the Picture and the space it occupies.

In addition to the process of evolution which can be observed both in the human and the Picture, there are also sudden moments in the novel proving that Dorian and the Picture share the same body. The death of Basil Hallward, for instance, is reflected on the canvas through the workings of mirror neurons. First of all, the feeling of hatred that results in the killing of Basil comes to Dorian from the vicious looking face on the painting and Dorian holds the knife and stabs Basil. While Dorian is murdering the painter, who Dorian thinks is the cause of everything he experiences, the connectedness between the brains of the human and the thing is activated and the observed action is mirrored by the Picture. That is why the hands of the painted Dorian are stained with blood although the human one commits the murder: "What was that loathsome red dew that gleamed, wet and glistening, on one of the hands, as though the canvas had sweated blood?" (208). Finally, in the last scene of the novel, when Dorian stabs the Picture in the heart, he actually stabs himself and with a cry of pain falls on the ground:

> 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 a 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. (264)

Because of the physical connection between the human and the thing, both of them are affected by this suicidal action. The human character loses its immortality and immortal beauty while the Picture gains back beauty and youth. They exchange their roles as the lively character and the Picture like they have done in the beginning. Since they create an entity which gains life and soul from their embodiment, when they fall apart as the thing and the human, this embodiment falls apart, as well. From that moment on, the human becomes the human who is doomed, wrecked and dead and the Picture turns into an object again and functions as a portrait as in the beginning. As argued by Gallese, "experience of our body as our own mainly relies on multisensory integration, which, however, is conditioned by the possibility—or not—to perform actions with a given body part. Sense of agency refers to the sense of being the one who generates the action" ("Bodily Selves" 4). The incorporeal body they make up together, according to Gallese, consists of two

bodies which are the bodily self and the second self and they are tied up with their mirror neurons systems, which enables one to 'mime' the action observed. Even though it is questionable which one of them murders Basil and which one of them commits suicide, it is clear that the other one mirrors the observed action and shows the traces of it on its body. Thus, no matter who generates the action, their agency comes from the intersubjectivity that considers them as the components of one whole entity. Even though it seems they are physically apart, they are actually physically connected through the produced intersubjective body.

The intersubjectivity between the human and the thing, on the other hand; does not favour one over the other. In order to produce intersubjective bodies, there is no hierarchy of their status as also pointed out by Bennett as a response to Harman and Morton. Bennett claims that Harman and Morton favour things over the relations they have with the subjects and they attempt to free the matter from the entanglements it belongs to. According to Bennett, however; there is no need to separate things from their relations and the aim should be "to make both objects and relations the periodic focus of theoretical attention, even if it is impossible to articulate fully the 'vague' or 'vagabond' essence of any system or any things, and even if it is impossible to give equal attention to both at once" ("Systems and Things" 227). What she means is that there could be moments when things are given the priority or moments when the humans get the full attention. Yet, it is important to remember that things and humans acquire power from their relationships. Moreover, in *Vibrant Matter*, Bennett focuses on the vitality of things, which she defines as "the capacity of things […] not only to impede or block the will and designs of humans but also to act as quasi agents or forces with trajectories, properties, or tendencies of their own" (viii). While emphasising that humans are also thing, Bennett first dwells on thing-power and how objects "exceed their status as objects and […] manifest traces of independence or aliveness" (xvi). Differentiating things from objects, she seems to accept Brown's object/thing division. As a contribution to this division, Bennett analyses things in their "assemblages" in which they appear with human partners. She states that "[i]n this assemblage, objects appeared as things, that is, as vivid entities not entirely reducible to the contexts in which (human) subjects set them, never entirely exhausted by their semiotics" (5). Therefore, thing-power, as defined by Bennett, is not only things' ability to act but also to affect the human partner in their "assemblage." Borrowing Bruno

Latour's term, Bennett claims she defines things as "actants" rather than objects (10) by referring to their effectiveness and functionality in their relationships with humans. However, she also points out that "the case for matter as active needs also to readjust the status of human actants: not by denying humanity's awesome, awful powers, but by presenting these powers as evidence of our own constitution as vital materiality. In other words, human power is itself a kind of thing-power" (10). That is to suggest that humans, as things, work together with other things in their "assemblages" in order to affect and be affected by each other. Hence, while focusing on thing-power, Bennett does not differentiate humans from things but consider them both as "actants" (13).

Reading Bennett's views in the light of neuroscientific findings leads this study to discuss the relationality between the Picture and the human as an embodied actant which creates a narrative progression. For example, the Picture acts as a guiding force, as a teacher in the life of Dorian. Dorian himself expresses this several times while he tells how much he learns from the thing itself. He says to Basil that "your picture has taught me that" when one loses its beauty, one loses everything (50). The picture "held the secret of his life, and told his story. It had taught him to love his own beauty. Would it teach him to loathe his own soul?" (120). The Picture teaches him the "wonder of beauty" (190). These examples show that the Picture has an undeniable role in shaping the identity of Dorian Gray. It tries to manipulate the thoughts and actions of the human character. The Picture is a vital part of his life since, without it, Dorian does not have a role model to follow. It can be suggested that the Picture is the brain of this embodiment while the human is the body. However, this is not to support the separation of mind and body but just the opposite. It is to argue that the embodiment between Dorian and the Picture coincides with the embodiment between mind and body termed as *bodymind* or *mindbody* (Wheeler 18). So, as the components of a lively entity, the Picture and Dorian live together, sin together, suffer and take pleasure together, as well. When they become one, they constitute the most famous Dandy of the age who causes people run away when he enters a room. Besides, the first time when Dorian sees the Picture coincides actually with his realising his own self under the influence of Lord Henry (*PDG* 48-9). In other words, Dorian recognises his own nature and eternal nature of the Picture at the same time. When their fate is tied with a wish Dorian utters, the Picture becomes Dorian and Dorian becomes the Picture. The Picture influences Dorian in every thought and action while

taking his soul away. Lord Henry explains this strong influence as an adaptation or simulation. For him, the person who is influenced "does not think his natural thoughts, or burn with his natural passions. His virtues are not real to him. His sins, if there are such things as sins, are borrowed. He becomes an echo of someone else's music, an actor of a part that has not been written for him" (40-1). This person, then, becomes an adaptation of the source. The sins of Dorian Gray are borrowed or inspired by the cruel face in the Picture. Discovering that the Picture has been altering gradually, Dorian finds out that the Picture is telling his life-story to the world even though it does not utter any words, but "silently addresses the mind of Dorian" (Sanna 34). He is influenced by every tiny change in the Picture and seems like a puppet for the thing. He accepts the orders coming from the thing unconditionally. It is not after he thinks logically that he realises how evil he has been. Dorian is either poisoned or mesmerised by the agency of the thing. For instance, the thought of murdering Basil is proposed by the Picture to Dorian without words:

> Dorian Gray glanced at the picture, and suddenly an uncontrollable feeling of hatred for Basil Hallward came over him, as though it had been suggested to him by the image on the canvas, whispered into his ear by those grinning lips. 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. (191-2)

Affected by the language spoken by the Picture, Dorian accepts what his brain wants him to do. The time when the Picture stops being a portrait and becomes a murderer is the moment when it turns into a thing. Considering the separation between the objects and things Brown claims, the Picture in Dorian Gray asserts its existence over the human. The Picture is the source text which is adapted by a human being who does not want to lose his youth and beauty. Dorian would like to be the artistic Picture. The Picture; however, mirrors him the ugliness of his soul. It makes Dorian realise "how unjust, how cruel, he had been to Sibyl Vane" (124). Dorian approaches the change in the Picture as a guide through life which shows him the horrible acts and cruelties he commits to others. Thus, by seeing the degradation in his soul, he expects to cure himself: "There were opiates for remorse, drugs that could lull the moral sense to sleep. But here was a visible symbol of the degradation of sin. Here was an ever-present sign of the ruin men brought upon their souls" (125). This sign is the material existence of his Picture. It, however, is not a symbol in the traditional sense. It is a symbol of a material presence, as a thing that his own soul

and life, a thing that makes its own decisions and influences the observer. It "would be to him the visible emblem of conscience" (*PDG* 121) since the mesmerised Dorian does not have one.

On the other hand, the intersubjectivity between the human and the thing requires equal roles in order to include them in an embodied relationship. In order to have the equality in their relationship, the human and the thing challenge the boundaries which limit their forging a bond with the other. When the boundaries are removed, the human becomes the thing while the thing becomes the human. Gradually in the novel, the Picture takes all of Dorian's vital and earthly characteristics and becomes the human while Dorian turns into a thing who never gets old. That is to say that the conventional boundaries that are used to separate the human and the thing start to disappear, which also makes them closer to one another. Dorian's 'humanness' is obscure and questionable since he is also a constructed thing like his Picture. The 'image' of young and beautiful Dorian is created day by day by himself due to the effects of his actions. Julian Hawthorne claims in his review of the novel that "Dorian never quite solidifies. In fact, his portrait rather the more real thing of the two" (qtd. in Beckson, "Oscar Wilde: Overview" 80). While Dorian keeps his youth and beauty like a marble statue, the hands of the Picture are stained with blood and the touch of cruelty comes upon its look. The boundaries between the human and the thing start to disappear and that is why it is difficult to decide and label them as the human and the thing. This situation is also discussed in the second chapter of the novel between Basil and Lord Henry and they try to decide which one the real Dorian is. Ginsburg comments on the question as follows: "The portrait thus raises question of who is the 'real' Dorian, not as a question of the relation between the real and its representation but as a question that cuts across, and undoes, the separation of and opposition between the real and its representation" (101). Even though it is not clear which one is the real and which one is its representation, it is sure that the real and its representation do not have distinctions. In Wilde's novel then, the question should not be who the real Dorian is or which one comes first because as Ginsburg explained "they are coextensive while each one also divides the other, and is divided by the other, from within" (103). They share the same material body and the same ontology. No matter how changed the beauty on the canvas due to the degraded actions, it is still Dorian Gray's himself until the last moment and Basil recognises that in horror and pain when they meet (189). It is the Dorian Gray

Basil used to paint with the "plain realism" of his soul. While the Picture is the human, the human is the Picture.

Although no answer is given in the novel for who the real Dorian is, it is clear that the human Dorian is objectified as the aesthetic production for both Basil and Lord Henry. Similar to the treatment to the things in narratives, it can be argued that the artist's model has been treated as an art object. Forlini claims that "[t]he artist's model occupies a very peculiar place in the nineteenth century" (180). The stillness of the object is attributed to the live models and even, in nineteenth-century France, as Marie Lathers puts forward, "the model's body was in a sense a nature morte (still life), a morbid object to be rendered living by the artist" (45). Moreover, Frances Borzello also suggests that the human models are likely to be treated as "the life-size jointed dolls that substitute when live models are not available" (qtd. in Forlini 180). Even though these studies mostly focus on the objectification of female models, this can also be applied to models in general without the gender boundary. It is clear that the models are objects for the artists who would like them to stand still. In other words, art refuses the boundaries between the human subject and object. The boundary between the human protagonist, Dorian, and the thing, the Picture, is destroyed in the novel, not just through science but also aesthetic. Both of these areas consider the human as the material thing and also highlight the enmeshed body the human and the thing create together. For instance, Basil thinks about Dorian as "all my art to me now" (32) and sees him no more "than a green bronze figure" (50). "The merely visible presence of this lad" is what taught Basil a new way of art and a new school of thought (32). While the Picture is humanised by living a life full of desires and sins, Dorian is thingified by keeping his beauty and youth. Dorian is an object of art and has to be concealed for Basil, which leads him to keep Dorian away from Lord Henry and to keep the Picture away from the public eye in the first place. The name Dorian is used for the Picture several times as Basil does: "as soon as you are dry, you shall be varnished, and framed, and sent home" (51). On the other hand, according to Lord Henry, Dorian is a pure clay that needs to be formed in the hands of someone experienced. He diligently works on Dorian and tries to influence him with words, which he succeeds in.

To conclude, this chapter argues that the Picture in Dorian Gray is one of the protagonists in the novel together with the human character. This novel shows how much in life people

are governed by their things and how much their identity is accumulated with the things they own. Even though the Picture has not been the focus of the critical attention so far, it has an immense agency and power throughout the narrative. The aim of this study, however, is not to attribute the human nature and knowledge to a material being. It is to show that the matter exists materially and physically but not just metaphorically. The aim here is to create an awareness about seeing the thing as itself, and beyond the symbolic and representational meanings. The Picture in Wilde's novel functions as a thing that helps to create Dorian Gray figure. Both Dorian and the Picture acquire meanings in this corporeal relationship. The recent neuroscientific research enables an analysis in which Dorian and the Picture come to embody an entity, an enmeshed personality. In the light of the existing neuroscientific research on the mirror neuron system, the agency of the Picture as a thing and the embodiment between the Picture and Dorian prove that Dorian and the Picture are tied to each other with their mirror neurons. Because of the activities of this system, they mirror actions and feelings, which leads them to gain a 'self.' Besides, the studies on objects of art also focus on the liveliness of the portraits. Especially recent contributions on the area, such as Mitchell's and Ginsburg's, point out that Pictures should be treated as physical bodies and what they want is actually to be asked for what they want (Mitchell 48). It can be suggested that people and things are no different and there is no hierarchy between these two. Until the recent material turn in the Humanities, *The Picture of Dorian Gray* has been studied under the influence of mainstream topics such as gender, morality and art. Albeit, it is observed that Wilde's novel has a different perspective, which has been neglected for a long time. In the light of these emergent conceptual tools, it can be seen that this novel is actually a ground for understanding the embodiment between things and humans. People are defined by their embodiment with the things they own. Likewise, objects become things in their relationships with humans. That is why there is no use to separate them instead of perceiving them as the parts of the whole.

CHAPTER II

"EMBODIED SELF" ON SCREEN: DIFFERENT REPRESENTATIONS OF INTERSUBJECTIVE SELVES IN THE 'MOVING PICTURES' OF DORIAN GRAY

"No more let Life divide what Death can join together."
(Shelly "Adonais" 477)

The physical embodiment between the human Dorian and the Picture that has been argued for in the previous chapter is also successfully transposed to the screen adaptations of the novel. However, similar to the criticisms of the novel, the critical attention for the screen adaptations of the novel has been limited with mostly repetitive comments on immorality and homosexuality. Besides, as instances of literary criticisms, as proposed by Nayar (n.p.), it can be said that the screen adaptations studied in this thesis are influenced by such repetitive comments and they also focus on the human character by ignoring his embodiment with the Picture. They tend to disregard the presence and power of the Picture as a material thing and combine the life of the author with the life of the protagonist. To put it simply, the character of Dorian Gray is presented in the screen adaptations as an example of Wilde's flamboyant and aesthetic personality with a clear reference to his homosexual identity. It would not be wrong to evaluate Dorian Gray as a reflection of Wilde since he admits that "Dorian what [he] would like to be — in other ages, perhaps" (*The Letters* 352). Albeit, this approach causes scholars and film producers to ignore the agency of the most effective thing in Dorian Gray's character, which is not the author himself, and blindly focus on only the human character. It is stated several times in this study that the most effective thing that shapes Dorian Gray's identity and constitutes the material body of the entity called 'Dorian Gray' is the Picture. Thus, it is their "embodied simulation" (Gallese, "Embodied Simulation Theory" 197) and the intersubjective relationality between them that create this single entity. Whether consciously or unconsciously, the producers of these adaptations present a character that is constituted by the integrity of the human and the thing by the use of cinematographic techniques such as technicolour and the camera gaze. The construction of this character

also owes to the use of Gothic doubling as a narrative element, an aspect of the genre which can be also understood with reference to a newly introduced term, "confluence" as a gothic narrative element (Akıllı and Öz 16). Even though the agency of the Picture as a material entity lacks in the critical attention, the screen adaptations are successful in giving it the role it deserves as an undeniable part of the human character. Thus, different from the existing studies, this chapter aims to show how this "embodied-self" (Gallese, "Embodied Simulation Theory" 197) between the human Dorian and the Picture is transposed to the screen adaptations and what cinematographic tools are used to highlight this embodiment. On the other hand, in addition to discussing adaptation theory and having the concerns of emergent studies in the field, this chapter aims to go beyond the current approaches in adaptation studies by taking into consideration that the Picture and the human complete and define each other in this process. It can be stated that they continuously and reciprocally affect each other in the narrative of the adaptations. By taking a step further, it will be argued in this chapter that the Picture and the human are the adaptations of one another. This attempt will draw from the recent findings in neuroaesthetics, which is a relatively new field studying the relationship between art reception and activities in the brain. Additionally, Brown's thing theory, and some emergent critical tools from the field of the adaptation studies will be analysed in order to better understand the techniques used in these adaptations. With reference to these critical tools, the first part of this chapter will give the necessary explanations and discussions on adaptation studies by attributing a source-adaptation relationship to the human and the thing. The second part, on the other hand, discusses how the intersubjective relationship between the human and the thing are transposed to the selected screen adaptations, namely *The Picture of Dorian Gray* (1945) by Albert Lewin, *Dorian Gray* (2009) by Oliver Parker and *Penny Dreadful* (2014-16) by John Logan.

Recent discussions in adaptation studies, which go beyond fidelity, discuss the association between different modes of narrative, namely the book and the film, and ascribe a dialogic and dynamic relationship between the source and the adapted text. Claiming that one-way influence between the source and the adaptation is impossible, Jørgen Bruhn argues that "[a]ny rewriting or adaptation of a text is always influencing the original work and even the most 'loyal' or repetitive adaptation imaginable is bound to be unsuccessful in terms of copying the original" (70). In that case, while an adaptation

acquires differences from the source text, it also changes the source text by, for instance, defining sometimes a new cover for the book or changing the reader's reception (Bruhn 72-3). This new power attributed to the adaptation paves the way for the adaptation to be considered equal to the source text and gives it a voice, an agentic power in the process of adaptation. Additionally, Regina Schober interprets adaptation as "connection" (89) by arguing that there exists "an inherent relationship between two medial expressions" (89). In the process of adaptation, then, there occurs a connection between these two medial expressions. Similar to what Bruhn points out, Schober also attributes an ontological embodiment to the source and the adaptation. Through their dialogic and dynamic relationship, the source and the adaptation create an "embodied-self" (Gallese, "Embodied Simulation Theory" 197), a connection in which both parties are treated equally. In this regard, Schober offers a new alternative for transmediality since the traditional understanding of transmediality separates the two media and draws a clear-cut border between them. However, her argument evaluates adaptations in their own "intertextual embeddedness" (92) similar to what Gallese proposes with "embodied simulation" ("Embodied Simulation Theory" 197).

Even though Gallese uses "embodied-self" in a different context, his arguments are similar to what Schober points out by "connection." The embodiment between the human and the thing, or the observer and the observed, is similar to the connection between the source and the adaptation in a way that in both relations, one side, namely the human or the source, is always the main focus while the othered party, thing or the adaptation, is always ignored. In the light of these background information, it can be suggested that Gallese, Bruhn and Schober want to attract the attention on the same issue but in different fields. In the context of this study in which the developments of both neuroscience and adaptation theory are merged, the focus will be on the connections between the source and the adaptation and also between the human and the Picture. In the light of these emergent developments, this chapter attempts to renew the position of the adaptations as well as the things in these adaptations. The aim is to destroy the hierarchical relationship between the source and the adaptation together with the one that is believed to exist between the human and the nonhuman. It is also to show that through their embodiment and intersubjectivity, these actors survive in their environment as they make each other complete. As Kamilla Elliott reminds, it is time to "adapt" adaptation studies into a more

interdisciplinary field, into the embodiment of things with humans and things with things (148). Therefore, this chapter provides insight from a variety of disciplines and accordingly developed arguments in order to discuss the embodiment of humans and things.

A relatively new idea on adaptations proposes that adaptation studies should be an interdisciplinary field or, to put it with Elliott's words, this field needs to "evolve" into something which embraces ideas from other disciplines in order to "adapt" itself to the developing ideas on Humanities (148). This kind of thinking on adaptation theory is first put forward by Gary R. Bortolotti and Linda Hutcheon in an article discussing the origins of adaptation in a biological context. By offering a biological context, they aim to move adaptation theory "beyond the theoretical impasse in narrative adaptation studies representing by the continuing dominance of what is usually referred to as 'fidelity discourse'" (Bortolotti and Hutcheon 444). In this regard, they propose "a homology- not an analogy, not a metaphoric association- but a homology between biological and cultural adaptation" in order to evaluate an adaptation in terms of its success (444). Following the appreciation of biological diversity in nature, Elliott takes the idea from where Bortolotti and Hutcheon stand and avers an adaptation of the adaptation theory but in a biological way and in the same line with Darwinian evolution. In this regard, rather than the loyal parts of an adaptation, the differences it creates become more important for a text in order to survive in the form of an adaptation:

> [C]hanges to the source text hold more scholarly value than fidelity because they convey more information about adapting contexts and processes of adaptation. […] Just as biological evolution depends not only on genes being passed on but also on genes not being passed to produce the variation essential to survival, so too, for stories to thrive and survive, they have to differ from as well as resemble the stories they adapt. Absolute fidelity runs counter to survival. (Elliott 149)

Elliott's argument paves the way for a material understanding of adaptations because all organic phenomena, to elaborate on the biological analogy she employs, are material in the first place. Her ideas evaluate both source texts and adaptations as material bodies that need to be adapted in order to survive in their constantly changing environment. This approach renders adaptations into a more complex nature by saving them from the metaphorical and representative meanings and by attributing them a life that is of their

own, together with an agency over the source text. By noting its differences from the source text, an adaptation claims its own body, independence and existence. Kyle Meikle, on the other hand, gives a good secondary literature review for a way to "rematerialize adaptation theory." He adds that "rethinking adaptation in terms of raw materiality would allow for nonhuman actors to take their rightful place alongside the adaptation industry's more literal and literary agents" (174). To give an example of these nonhuman actors, Meikle emphasises celluloid. He defines his understanding of celluloid as follows: "Celluloid is a compound, a plastic, 'real,' 'nonhuman' and 'objective.' But celluloid is also a means through which 'society projects its cinema'; as the current crisis of faith in film studies affirms, film is also 'social,' 'fabricated,' and 'collective.' Celluloid is a contentious 'coproducer' on and of film" (177). The process of film-making changes the notion of celluloid from a simple and dead raw material to a thing, in Brown's aspect, that has agency and power as the "coproducer" (Meikle 177) of the film. The film, then, is created by the embodiment of both human and the nonhuman producers. Yet, it is clear that the agency of the nonhuman film producers has been ignored until recently similar to the other things that attempt to create a place for themselves in the narrative of the films. Apart from celluloid, Meikle draws attention to the objects which become "things" in the process of creating a narrative in the story (176-7). So, in the process of film-making, these 'dead' objects that are used by the human characters come alive and assert their agency as the characters in the story. This approach to objects brings them on the screen as the cast, just like their human counterparts and turns them into "things." By focusing on the agency of these things in the screen adaptations, this chapter will follow a different line in "rematerializing adaptation studies," which Meikle's single attempt does not seem to have achieved yet, and will introduce a new perspective for studying the screen adaptations by regarding them as sites of "embodied simulations" between two matters, namely the thing and the human, in the context of neuroscientific developments.

As clarified in the first chapter, recent findings in cognitive theory challenge the traditional understanding of perceiving visual arts. To remember briefly, one of these challenges is Gallese's study of the mirror neurons and their activation while witnessing an action, an emotion or a static visual art. Gallese discusses how mirror neurons are activated and how they create what he calls "embodied simulation" ("Embodied Simulation Theory" 197). Gallese builds upon his discussion on the study of mirror

neurons, which proves that these neurons are activated in both while doing an action and also witnessing the same action performed by others ("Mirror Neurons and Art" 441). These mirror neurons simulate the witnessing action and send signals to the brain as if the action is done by the observer. For instance, in their article in which they analyse "embodied simulation" in the context of film studies, Gallese and Michele Guerra point out that the sight of an object sends signals to the mind about the function of this object (185). They give the example of a key and assert that when you see a key, the notion of opening comes to your mind immediately (185). This is not to consider the key as a symbol for opening, but this is the effect that a key leaves on the mind of a human being. Gallese, then, proposes an intersubjective relationality between the observer and the observed and calls this relationship "embodied simulation" ("Embodied Simulation Theory" 197-8). These recent developments in neuroscience can be employed in understanding the subjects of adaptation studies, as screen productions are artistic works that depend primarily on visual representation. Besides, these developments pave the way for a new interdisciplinary field to emerge which is called "neuroaesthetics" that aims to explore "the biological bases of aesthetic experiences" according to a definition by Chatterjee and Vartanian (370). They assert that the interactions between the brain systems produce aesthetic experience, which shows that appreciation of art is actually a biological process rather than a mere semiotic or cultural experience of individual taste (370-1). In this biological process, mirror neuron mechanism of the observer forms an embodiment with the observed aesthetic work and they respond to the experience together. For example, Chatterjee and Vartanian claim that different from other painters' works, looking at Van Gogh's 'moving' paintings triggers "a subjective sense of movement and activates visual motion areas" because Van Gogh's paintings are dynamic (370).[4] In other words, aesthetic appreciation is not a one-way experience. Rather than that, "[t]he final artistic output emerges from coordination of different components organized in a flexible ensemble across the brain" (Chatterjee and Vartanian 373). Yet, even though they are two separate things at the beginning of their relationship, during the aesthetic experience, they are combined into one single life-form through the connection between their mirror neurons.

These recent developments in neuroscience and their contributions to adaptation studies mostly dwell on the effect created by this connection on the observer rather than the

relationship between the source and the adaptation. However, his theory of "embodied simulation" (ES) challenges the understanding that perception is a one-way route. Rather than that, ES reminds that the meaning is created through the dialogic relationship between the observed action or emotion, no matter if it is a painting or a film or a real-life situation, and the observer's brain cells which are called mirror neurons. Gallese's theory clearly explains the intersubjective relation between an observed action/emotion and the observer and how the observer simulates them. He proposes that watching an action or emotion is enough to simulate it and to activate mirror neurons. In this regard, ES theory is very applicable to the studies of screen adaptations in a way that adaptations are also simulations of what is read in the novel. Besides, the embodiment between the observer and the observed can also be ascribed to the relationship between the source text and the adaptation. Similar to the relationship between the source and the adaptation, ES theory suggests a dialogic and reciprocal relationship between the observer and the artwork. In the production of an adaptation, the action and the emotion in the novel are transferred to a different medium. In other words, what is observed or read in the novel is simulated in the adaptation and while doing that, there occurs a connection between these two media. The meaning created in the adaptation cannot be considered separately from the source. Thus, it is produced by the intersubjective relation between the source and the adaptation or the observer and the observed.

Focusing on the intersubjective relation between the observer and the observed, Gallese and Guerra discuss how films are experienced through the interconnectedness between the brain and the body as well as the connection between two different entities namely the observer and the observed. In this regard, they emphasise that

> the MM [mirror mechanism] also applies to emotions and sensations. Witnessing someone else expressing a given emotion like disgust or pain, or undergoing a given sensation like touch activates some of the viscero-motor (e.g., anterior insula) and sensory-motor (e.g., SII, ventral premotor cortex) brain areas activated when one experiences the same emotion or sensation, respectively. Such shared activations ground an apparently external stimulus (someone else's emotion or sensation) in our personal experiential acquaintance with the same emotion or sensation. (184-5)

These "shared activations" explained by Gallese and Guerra prove the interconnected relations both humans with humans and also humans with things. In addition to giving a reaction to a person feeling pain, according to Gallese and Guerra, mirror neurons also

give reactions to the visual representation of pleasure and pain. Besides, this visual representation does not have to be a moving image such as a film. The visuality of a painful emotion on a canvas can trigger the mirror mechanism and cause the same pain to be felt by the observer, as well. These studies in neuroscience give the visual adaptation an agentic power over the observer. The observer is absorbed by what s/he sees. On the other hand, feeling the same emotion, observer and the observed constitute an "embodied-self." They become the same entity who experiences the same things such as the human Dorian observes every tiny change in his Picture and becomes one with it.

If these studies both from the field of adaptation studies and neuroaesthetics are taken into consideration, it is argued that the relationship between the human Dorian and the Picture resembles the dialogic and dynamic relationship between the adaptation and the source text. In the first chapter, it has already being argued that the embodiment of the human and the thing creates the character "Dorian Gray." In the narrative progression through their connected mirror neurons, while the Picture simulates the actions of the human character on the canvas, the human Dorian also 'adapts' the actions and emotions proposed to him by the very existence of this material entity on the canvas. If their relationship is interpreted within the framework of what Bruhn, Schober and Gallese point out, it can be evidently asserted that the human and the Picture function as the adaptations of one another, albeit, it is difficult to draw certain borders between them and decide which one is the adaptation and which one is the source. The dynamics of their relationship do not work in the one-way direction, rather, the Picture and the human continuously 'adapt' the source and evolve into something very likely to survive in the middle-class society to which they belong. Thus, the discussion in this chapter is basically engaged in the question of which one is the source text and which one is the adaptation. Nonetheless, it should be noted that while defining the source text and the adaptation, the aim is not to favour one over the other or evaluate them according to their 'success.' As Linda Hutcheon states, adaptations are to be evaluated in terms of the change and resistance to change rather than their fidelity to the original source (xxvi). She regards adaptation as a biological process in which adaptation is defined "in terms of successful replication and change" (xxvi). That is why this study considers both the human Dorian and the Picture as successful adaptations as much as they prove how much they change and cause surprise in the audience/observer.

In the most general sense, the Picture is a visual adaptation of the human source and there are many reasons why the Picture is considered as such. First of all, it can be argued that the Picture is painted while looking at the model, the human Dorian, which means it is the Picture 'of Dorian Gray.' The sense of ownership is clearly ascribed to the human character while the Picture is treated as an 'object' that can be owned by a human being. However, it should not be forgotten that the day when Dorian utters these words, Dorian is born again as a different human being: "If it were only the other way! If it were I who was to be always young, and the picture that was to grow old! For that – for that – I would give everything! Yes, there is nothing in the whole world I would not give! I would give my soul for that!" (*PDG* 49). Dorian gives up his soul in that day and is reborn as a soulless and heartless body, a body that evolves into just bone and flesh. Focusing on this fact, it is asserted that the Picture and Dorian are born on the same day together, like twins who feel every emotion of each other in their integrated bodies. Their lives in this embodiment are the only factors that help them to form "cultivated corruption," which coincides with the name Dorian Gray. Without their power together, the power of a thing and human, the character Dorian Gray would not be possible. On the other hand, the lower status of the Picture as a thing is similar to the lower and degraded status of an adaptation. Things are also considered degraded just like "an adaptation is likely to be greeted as minor and subsidiary and certainly never as good as the 'original' (Hutcheon xiv). Even if they are interpreted or evaluated, their meanings cannot go beyond the symbols and they are always under the shadow of the human values. In this way, the status and perception of things and adaptations are actually very similar, which probably leads one to propose that the Picture is the adaptation while the human is the source text. However, the thing and the human progressively change roles in the narrative and blur the strict boundaries that are drawn between adaptations and sources just as they shatter the understanding of a thing and a human.

Due to their dialogic and dynamic relationship, the Picture and the human change roles while the story is approaching the end. At the very beginning of the story, it seems that the Picture is "some foul parody" (*PDG* 189) of the human Dorian, which sounds like a conventional comment on the film adaptation of a canonical novel. It mimics every action, emotion and sin that the human experiences and does that in a satirical way as if it mocks the beauty and youth of the human Dorian:

> Hour by hour, and week by week, the thing upon the canvas was growing old. It might escape the hideousness of sin, but the hideousness of age was in store for it. The cheeks would become hollow or flaccid. Yellow crow's-feet would creep round the fading eyes and make them horrible. The hair would lose its brightness, the mouth would gape or droop, would be foolish or gross, as the mouths of old men are. There would be the wrinkled throat, the cold, blue-veined hands, the twisted body, that he remembered in the grandfather who had been so stern to him in his boyhood. The picture had to be concealed. (*PDG* 153)

In spite of all these changes on the canvas, it is still Dorian Gray but in a different style or in a different medium. The Picture, then, is the visual adaptation of the sinful life of the human character. Since his visuality as a human is not enough to represent all of those sins, the Picture takes the stage and interprets his life in such a different way. In other words, the Picture looks at the story of Dorian from a different perspective and tells the story of what is beneath the surface.

On the other hand, there are moments when the Picture plays the role of the source text while Dorian is the adapted one. After the unspeakable vices begin to be written on the canvas, Dorian feels a kind of impulse coming from the Picture to commit a sin. Denying the role attributed to him as a human being, the human Dorian behaves as an adaptation of the source-Picture in this relationship. In his physical appearance, the human takes youth and beauty from the Picture on the day they are born. The Picture becomes a source (text), a guidebook or "a conscience" (*PDG* 124) for him through his life. The first example of the Picture becoming a source for the human is its narration of how he is so cruel to Sibyl Vane when he rejects her:

> One thing, however, he felt that it had done for him. It had made him conscious how unjust, how cruel, he had been to Sibyl Vane. It was not too late to make reparation for that. […] [T]he portrait that Basil Hallward had painted of him would be a guide to him through life, would be to him what holiness is to some, and conscience to others, and the fear of God to us all. There were opiates for remorse, drugs that could lull the moral sense to sleep. But here was a visible symbol of the degradation of sin. Here was an ever-present sign of the ruin men brought upon their souls. (*PDG* 124-5)

Upon what the Picture implies with a cruel change on the face, Dorian realises that his actions hurt Sibyl's feelings. He decides to change the situation by writing a letter to Sibyl and asking her to be his wife again. In other words, Dorian modifies his thoughts and behaviours according to what the source text proposes to him. The reason why he uses

the Picture as a guidebook is very basic and simple, indeed, and it is for his own survival in this new society he tries to get in. Benefitting from the changes in the Picture, Dorian would like to direct his life to a more acceptable way in the Victorian society. Even though his first attempt to adapt himself according to the changes in the Picture fails because of Sibyl's suicide, it can be further argued that the Picture continues to be a source for future sins of Dorian. The physical transformation of the Picture gives him an inevitable pleasure and causes him to watch and analyse them diligently. He takes pleasure from watching the Picture because the results of these sins are not reflected on his face but on the face of the Picture. Another specific example showing that the human adapts his actions according to what is proposed by the Picture is Dorian's murder of Basil: "Dorian Gray glanced at the picture, and suddenly an uncontrollable feeling of hatred for Basil Hallward came over him, as though it had been suggested to him by the image on the canvas, whispered into his ear by those grinning lips" (*PDG* 191-2). The hatred for Basil comes from the hateful Picture to Dorian and when Dorian looks at his Picture, his mirror neurons warn him that something must be done and the sight of the knife activates the simulation of murder in his mind: "Something glimmered on the top of the painted chest that faced him. His eye fell on it. He knew what it was. It was a knife that he had brought up, some days before, to cut a piece of cord, and had forgotten to take away with him" (*PDG* 192). Just like the example of a key in Gallese and Guerra's article, this knife evokes or moves Dorian to do something. This is the dialogic and dynamic relationship or the embeddedness between a thing and a human being. Ostensibly, the knife, together with the Picture as well, triggers the human Dorian and secretly tells him what must be done without using words. The hatred and thirst for blood in the source text are adopted and also adapted by the human character in a visual way. This adaptation-source relationship between Dorian and the Picture comes from the intersubjectivity they create, which puts them in a situation that both of them cannot escape. Their integrity is so tense that omitting one of them will end the story just as at the end when Dorian stabs the Picture. While trying to erase the Picture out of his life, Dorian actually kills this embodiment, which means he kills himself because they are together to become Dorian Gray. This perspective on the Picture and the human de-hierarchizes their relationship and gives equal importance to both. The degradation of the adaptation and the focus on the source leave its place to a more dialogic situation. This embodiment between the source and the adaptation is also reflected in the screen adaptations of the novel. The rest

of this chapter will be engaged with how this embodiment is carried over to the screen through analysing the three most-known screen adaptations of Wilde's novel. These adaptations will be interpreted chronologically in terms of the agency of the embodiment of the thing and the human.

Norbert Kohl states that "Wilde's first and only full-length prose narrative is not only widely read but is also one of those rather rare literary works that have inspired artists from other spheres" (139). These other spheres that are highlighted by Kohl are the adaptations of Wilde's novel into stage and screen. Robert Tanitch makes a list of sixty-five adaptations of *The Picture of Dorian Gray* from 1913 to 1999 including theatres, ballets, operas and musicals (370-406). According to Internet Movie Database (*IMDB*), there are twenty-nine screen adaptations of Wilde's novel since 1913. However, the earlier ones which are in the form of silent films are either lost or destroyed and they only exist with their names and cast information (Meissinger 37). Other than that, neither the adaptations nor any information about them can be found either in print or online sources. That is why this thesis takes the 1945 adaptation by Albert Lewin as the starting point by also referring to the transition from silent films to films with sound. Additionally, since 1945, many screen adaptations of the novel have been produced in different countries. John Sloan explains the possible reasons for this interest in Wilde in the film industry as follows:

> Fascination with Wilde and the 1890s always had its forbidden side. *The Picture of Dorian Gray*, Wilde's most famous story, epitomized for generations of readers and cinema audiences the atmosphere of evil and decadence, and sin. Given its participation in acts of looking and mirroring, the story understandably attracted the early film industry. (171)

Wilde's story appeals anyone in any age whatever the circumstances are because it is the presentation of a simple human nature which every person has inside, which is what Sloan would like to point out. Another reason may be, as Oliver S. Buckton argues, the scandalous life of the author which is also reflected in the adaptations of his works: "The scandal surrounding Wilde's life has permeated many aspects of the cinematic adaptation of his works, though not always obvious ways" (347). The most obvious of these ways is the foregrounding of homosexual subtexts in these cinematic adaptations, yet; they have been subject to heavy censorship until recently. Even though there are many discussions

on the issue, the aim of this thesis is not to discuss the homosexual desire either in Wilde's work or in its screen adaptations. Rather, it is to discuss the visual and material reflections of this subject on the Picture.

In accordance with the aim of this thesis, three screen adaptations of the novel which are *The Picture of Dorian Gray* (1945) by Albert Lewin, *Dorian Gray* (2009) by Oliver Parker and *Penny Dreadful* (2014-16) by John Logan will be analysed in this chapter. Each of these adaptations belongs to a different time period and uses a different cinematographic technique or a narrative element to present the visual and material reflections of the relationship between the Picture and the human Dorian. Additionally, these adaptations belong to three different group of adaptations, namely and in order; literal, traditional and radical (Cahir 200). Considering translation as a mode of adaptation in her chapter in which she discusses "The Nature of Film Translation," Linda Costanzo Cahir defines these three groups as follows:

1. literal translation: which reproduces the plot and all its attending details as closely as possible to the letter of the book;
2. traditional translation: which maintains the overall traits of the book (its plot, settings, and stylistic conventions) but revamps particular details in ways that the filmmakers see as necessary and fitting;
3. radical translation: which reshapes the book in extreme and revolutionary ways, both as a means of interpreting the literature and of making the film a more fully independent work. (200)

Accordingly, Tanja Meissinger classifies the adaptations of Wilde's novel according to the above-given three groups and she analyses Lewin's production as a literal (43) and Parker's adaptation as a traditional adaptation (80). This study contributes to the content of these classifications by adding what may be categorised as a radical adaptation, namely, *Penny Dreadful*. Different from the other two adaptations, *Penny Dreadful* is a collage/TV Series which is constituted by not only the story of Dorian Gray but also of other fictional characters from the Victorian period. Even though Logan's Dorian Gray is similar to Wilde's in terms of his lifestyle and his relationship with the Picture, the story of the character and his encounter with other fictional characters in the show is quite different and radical considering the source text. Most importantly, Dorian Gray is not the only protagonist in *Penny Dreadful*, but one among the many Victorian fictional characters including Dr Frankenstein, Dracula, and Mina Murray. In this regard,

Benjamin Poore asserts that "[t]he series is neither an adaptation of *The Picture of Dorian Gray*, nor of *Dracula*, nor of *Frankenstein*. As such, the publicity and John Logan's discussions of the series are refreshingly free of claims to have realised 'the spirit of the text' or the author's real, unstated intentions" (70). That is to suggest that Logan subverts Wilde's novel in "revolutionary ways" (Cahir 200) and produce a text which has notable changes. Hence, *Penny Dreadful* can be easily put into the category of radical adaptations. In the light of these details, the aim of this chapter is to analyse all three screen adaptations, in chronological order, focusing on the agency of the Picture and its embeddedness with the human character. Different cinematographic techniques and "confluence" (Akıllı and Öz 16) that support the agency of the Picture will also be pointed out in order to better understand the ontological relationship between the human Dorian and his Picture.

As a transition from silent film adaptations of the novel to talkie adaptations (adaptations with sound), 1945 version of *The Picture of Dorian Gray* was directed by Albert Lewin and had the same title. Before analysing the film, it would be necessary to point out the resemblance of the nature of the director to that of Wilde along with the conditions in which the film was shot. In her thesis in which she analyses six of Lewin's films, Susan Felleman makes a comparison between Lewin and Wilde and she deduces that Wilde and Lewin shared a "critical posture" as well as a relatively critical reaction for the morals of their works (50). It is apparent that Lewin was also influenced by the Victorian *fin-de-siècle* period and reflected this in three of his six directional films (Felleman 20). More importantly, Lewin's themes revolve around Aestheticism, Decadence and art, which leads him to use an abundance of objects in his films (Felleman 21). Both the danger of Decadent art which questions human nature, morality and pleasures and also the danger of the prototype novel he picked caused Lewin to have some censorship problems with the production of the adaptation. For example, "Joseph I. Breen, in charge of the Hays office, recommended a number of script changes in order that 'there will be no possibility of any inference of sex perversion, anywhere in this story'" (qtd. in Felleman 58). Nonetheless, the beauty of the male character along with his artistic and aesthetic nature by Hurd Hatfield, who plays Dorian, attracts the attention of the audience, which is also similar in other screen adaptations. The beauty of Dorian is the focus of not just female characters who are Sibyl and Gladys, but also Basil Hallward and Lord Henry. According

to Felleman, despite all rejections and censorship by "Hollywood's largest, most conservative studio" (51) to adapt a novel written by a notorious aesthete of his period and also received negative critical attention at the time of publication:

> [T]he danger of the commonplace was successfully avoided in Lewin's second directorial project, *The Picture of Dorian Gray* (released 1945), a film often criticized at the time and since for either its literary pretensions, its Hollywood compromises, or both. It is, nonetheless, arguably Lewin's best film, and certainly his most critically acclaimed. (Felleman 51)

While avoiding the dangers of its time, Lewin's film is still loyal to the nature of the author, Oscar Wilde, and his aesthetic and decadent notion of art by employing a number of art objects and giving them undeniable roles. Lewin's use of objects in *The Picture of Dorian Gray* has a wide range of cultural backgrounds, as well, including a bronze copy of Verrocchio's David, a copy of Donatello's David, a book illustrated by Aubrey Beardsley, an Egyptian cat figure, letter blocks along with many portraits, statues and decorative objects. In this regard, Lewin's production of *The Picture of Dorian Gray* can be discussed with clear reference to these objects and the embodiment each of them contributes in their own context. By giving vital roles to these objects, Lewin produces not only an aesthetic style but also refers to the inseparable nature of the human and the thing.

In the light of the above-given account of Lewin's aesthetic alignment with Wilde, his use of objects actually gives these objects an agentic power throughout the film and renders them into things. These things claim their presence in most of the scenes by proving a kind of "embodied-self" in their intersubjective constitution with the human character. Thus, as opposed to mainstream film readings which attribute a symbolic meaning to objects, this study aims to give ontological priority to the things and their intersubjective relationship with the humans as reflected in these adaptations of Wilde's novel. Felleman argues that it is Lewin's tradition to use powerful objects in his films (21-4) and, ostensibly, in *The Picture of Dorian Gray* (1945), there are many other things that assert their agency throughout the story together with the Picture. Therefore, in the film, the main character is the combination of many different things, not just the Picture. The most notable and visible ones among Lewin's things are two bronze figures of David, one is by Verrocchio and the other is by Donatello, an Egyptian cat figure and a number

of toy blocks of letters. It can be asserted that all of these things help the Picture to claim their embodiment with the human Dorian in different settings of the film. For example, Verrocchio's David is placed in Dorian's drawing room while Donatello's David is featured in the club scene. In addition to showing the aesthetic taste of both the producer and the main character, these statues are on the screen to help Dorian Gray enact what is called "cultivated corruption." The relationship created between Dorian and his Picture is reformed in this adaptation by Lewin between the human and the statues. Even though Lewin was unaware of the "embodied-self" between the human and the artwork in his own time, it has been recently proved that the appreciation of art in Dorian's story is actually the negotiation of the human to the things. Felleman interprets the meanings of the statues in the following:

> [The David statues] are meaningful for their general iconographic references to youth, and for their specific representation of sexually ambiguous, narcissistically erotic, adolescent youth, and their meanings literally 'reflect' the representation of Dorian himself, who, as portrayed by Hurd Hatfield, negotiates his every move, gesture and expression with considered and self-conscious circumscription. (62)

Felleman's argument suggests that the human character and his personality are "mirrored" (63) in these statues. There is one more thing to add to Felleman's argument and that is the human who also mirrors or mimics what he sees in these things. To put it differently, both the human Dorian and the David statues mirror each other and they "simulate," to refer to Gallese's theory here again, what is observed. What is meant here is not "representation" but an "embodiment" in which both sides have equally significant roles. These statues are no longer mere objects of art but they function as characters who have vital roles in the story. Their existence as material entities gives them an ontological incarnation with the beauty they observe through the bronze eyes and that is the beauty of the human Dorian.

Plate 1: Dorian and Basil in sight of Verrochio's David in Dorian's home (*PDG* 48:15). The coldness of the statue is reflected on Dorian while the statue and Dorian are standing in the same horizontal line.

The static and cold nature of the 'dead' statues also reflects itself on the human character. The stillness of the Hurd Hatfield, even when he thinks he is responsible for Sibyl's suicide and when he murders Basil, contributes to this argument, as well. He seems heartless and cold as much as a bronze statue in most of the scenes. According to Tanitch, Hatfield's performance is also cold with his "pallid, doleful, smooth, youthful, chiselled good looks [which] were so glacially cold, so immobile, [that] he might have been made of marble" (378). While in the beginning, there are moments when he shows a little emotion, gradually, he turns into a statue himself with his soulless and heartless but beautiful and exquisite body. It seems like he has been moulded with clay to become a human but the creator forgets to give him a soul and a heart. By placing these statues together with Hatfield in most of the scenes, one can argue that Lewin destroys the line between Dorian and the Davids. What matters is not the sinful life of the human but how objects and humans turn into things and how they come together in this intersubjective environment.

Another object that becomes a thing in the film is the statue of an Egyptian cat figure which can be considered to have magical powers, as well. This figure is first seen by the audience in Basil's studio where he paints the Picture while Dorian and Lord Henry are

having a chat. After Dorian sees his Picture and prays to become forever young and beautiful while his Picture loses its beauty and youth, the camera gaze instantly moves to this cat foreshadowing a supernatural event that may come true in the future by the help of the cat figure. At that moment, when the audience is invited to "catch a glimpse" of the cat (Brown 3-4), it stops being a simple object and turns into a thing that has a power over the human characters. The implied power of the statue is supported by the focus of the camera when the audience sees just the cat on the screen while the voices of the three men, namely Dorian, Henry and Basil are heard in the background. The scene tells that the cat listens to what they talk about and is ready to accept prays, which is also pointed out by Lord Henry saying: "You ought not to express such a wish in the presence of that cat Dorian. It is one of the seventy-three great gods of Egypt and it's quite capable of granting your wish" (*PDG* 11:49-11:57). The presence of the cat and its capabilities save it from the 'static' situation and define the statue as a powerful god. Even though it still cannot move materially, its agency and existence are felt both by the characters in the film and also by the audience.

There is one more scene in the film in which the cat figure is attributed a magical power. Sibyl claims in the dim light in Dorian's house that the eyes of the cat move (*PDG* 32:46). By granting magical and, in fact, metaphysical powers to an object, thereby making it a thing, Lewin's work gives the sense that the characters are secretly watched by the presence of a thing. This approach would give the thing a life and soul of its own and also change the understanding of things in films, which goes beyond the interpretation of horror element in Gothic cinema. In addition to horror, there are also comments that argue this kind of approach for an Egyptian god aims to add an orientalist perspective in the film. Felleman asserts that

> Lewin's predilection for Oriental (Egyptian, Near- and Far-Eastern) works of art reflects a significant embellishment, or alteration, of Wilde's story. While Wilde's Dorian is a connoisseur and collector of mainly Western cultural oddities (i.e. religions, music, gems and textiles), Lewin's Dorian involves himself with Eastern art and literature, as well (as does the character of Basil). (72)

Felleman is right, however; reading the film again with the critical tools suggested by recent developments in neuroaesthetics and thing theory goes beyond an orientalist interpretation. Lewin's objects become important characters in the story and they drive

the narrative progression. This cat statue functions not just an imaginary element but as a material being which is there to accept Dorian's wish and claim its existence apart from the human characters. When the cat god accepts Dorian's wish, it can be claimed that the cat statue and Dorian constitute an inseparable relationship. By giving him what he wants, the cat becomes a partner who knows Dorian's unspeakable secret. Later, the statue is moved to Dorian's house together with the Picture (see Plate 2).

Plate 2: The Egyptian cat statue in Dorian's home at the end of the film is shown as if it is responsible for the tragedy of Dorian Gray (*PDG* 01:44:43).

As one of the things in the film, the cat statue is more visible than the Picture which is claimed as the most powerful among things. It observes every visitor of Dorian and also listens to them carefully. It can be pointed out that if Dorian and the cat becomes such an inseparable couple similar to the relationship between the human and the Picture, the cat operates as the other half of the Picture. When the Picture is not around, the cat controls the situation and drives Dorian into his most sinful desires. As the god who grants the wish, the cat has the control of the entity that is the embodiment of the human and the thing. It is a driving and connecting force that paves the way for the relationship between Dorian and his Picture. In that scene when Sibyl realises that the cat's eyes move, Dorian reads some parts from Wilde's poem "The Sphinx" which is addressed to a cat/Sphinx:

[…]

Dawn follows Dawn and Nights grow old and
all the while this curious cat
Lies couching on the Chinese mat with eyes of
satin rimmed with gold.

[…]

Get hence, you loathsome mystery! Hideous
animal, get hence!
You wake in me each bestial sense, you make me
what I would not be.

You make my creed a barren sham, you wake
foul dreams of sensual life,

[…] (32:53-33:36)

These lines from Wilde's poem foreshadow the degradation upon Dorian and his cruelty to Sibyl under the influence of the cat. Because the cat, as Wilde claimed, wakes the secret desires of Dorian and "each bestial sense." Even though this effect of the cat is ascribed to its oriental and exotic origins, it should also be highlighted that this material ontology is not only a statue for Dorian but a partner which knows influences and even controls the feelings of humans around. In other words, observing the cat activates Dorian towards simulating the cruelty he sees in the thing. With its agentic power, this cat statue triggers a series of cruel acts in Dorian's life and also triggers the corruption in the Picture.

Lewin's Picture, similar to other things in the film, plays its role not just as a mere object but as an agentic power over the human character. Besides, Lewin supported the role of the Picture by colouring its scenes different from the rest of the film which are all black-and-white. The film includes three scenes in technicolour and all of them are the scenes of the Picture. This aspect of Lewin's film marks it as a transition from black-and-white films to technicolour versions of Dorian Gray adaptations, as well (Meissinger 44). It is claimed by Judith Mayne that

> [n]ot only is the portrait shown in Lewin's film, but its appearance introduces a striking opposition between black-and-white and color, for the display of the portrait at three crucial moments in the film occasions the use of technicolor. The use of

> color gives the painting(s) a certain autonomy, and also makes the difference between the early and late versions of the painting all the more striking. (122)

Clearly, Lewin wanted to surprise the audience and increase the effect of the Picture in the audience by using colours. On the other hand, his technique attributes the Picture "a certain autonomy" (Mayne 122), which is both over the human Dorian and also over the observer/audience. While doing that, according to Mayne, Lewin moves the focus of the film from the human to the Picture (123) as the "embodied-other" of the human Dorian. As it is claimed in the first chapter, the Picture and the human Dorian creates an embodiment, an intersubjective and interdependent relationship in order to develop an "embodied-self" in this process. Similarly, this integrity is transposed to the screen adaptations. The reason for an attempt to use technicolour is to highlight, along with its autonomy, the rotten and wormy degeneration in the canvas with different colours and, ostensibly, it helps. Among these three scenes in technicolour, the first one coincides with Dorian's first look at his Picture while it is still young and beautiful. The second one is after Dorian tests Sibyl's virtue by asking her to spend the night in his house as suggested by Lord Henry. When Sibyl accepts his offer, Dorian loses his interest on her and asks her not to see each other again, which is reflected in the Picture as narrated by the voice as "a touch of cruelty in the mouth" (39:19). After this small change, the Picture cannot be seen for a long time until it has been totally transformed into the grotesque image. For the third time, the Picture is revealed to Basil together with the audience. Mayne defines the transformation in the Picture as follows: "The style of the painting has also changed. It is now in an expressionist mode, with excessive strokes, bold colors, and a myriad of indistinguishable objects within the frame" (125). Different from the change after Sibyl's death, which is resulted as only a "cruel look about the mouth," after Dorian murders Basil, the hands of the Picture Dorian get bloody and the colour red is added reflecting the blood in the murderer's hands. The Picture shows the audience that black and white are not the only colours. However, it also implies that experiencing these colours may have a price to pay. Even though these colours are the different and exquisite pleasures of the world, they cause degeneration, degradation and rottenness. Additionally, Lewin expresses his feelings for the production process of the Picture in the following:

> I got involved with making the picture exquisite. I really went to town on every set-up. When you have two thousand set-ups in a picture, it can take rather long. I was even careful about the table linen and the cutlery and whatever was on the wall. All

> the upholstery was built for me. I decided that everything was going to be black and white because of the good and evil symbolism. (qtd. in Felleman 72)

This explanation justifies the use of technicolour in the Picture. It is clear that Lewin cannot decide which colour the Picture should be because it is neither totally black, to symbolise "evil," nor totally white, that is, "good." Rather than that, the Picture is the negotiation between good and evil. It is the embodiment of cultivation and corruption, in other words, "cultivated corruption" (Mighall xiii). Lewin's aim echoes, in this context, Lord Henry's words: "Sin is the only real colour-element left in modern life" (*PDG* 53). Both Wilde and Lewin evaluate sin as the true colour of life. However, taking Wilde's claim a step further, Lewin did actually put colour in the life of Dorian Gray. Even though it is not the aim of this study to discuss the ethics of Wilde's novel, it is important to realise that the degradation in the Picture is an aesthetic simulation of what it sees in the life of the human character and colours help Lewin to create such an aesthetic simulation, which is lacked visually in the novel. The Picture, then, is the materialization of both the aesthetic aim and also the "cultivated corruption" which defines what Dorian Gray is with the literal meanings of the words as shown in Plate 3:

Plate 3: The transformed version of Dorian's Picture is revealed in technicolour (*PDG* 01:07:33). More tense and vivid colours are reflected on the canvas referring to the colours of life as suggested by Lord Henry.

The degraded painting above belongs to Ivan Albright which is on display at the Art Institute of Chicago. It should be stated that together with the character in the Picture the background is also changed, except for the cat figure. While in the first version of the Picture, in which the handsome Dorian is on display, the background is all green and no other object or colour is added; Albright's version is full of different colour combinations which are grotesque and also carnivalized. The spiritual change in the human character reflects itself not just on the character on the canvas, but also in the atmosphere of the canvas as a whole. This is to suggest that Dorian's incarnation is not only with the thing in the Picture but also with the Picture as the material entity. That is why, affecting the whole Picture, the degeneration in the human is transposed to the canvas completely. In other words, the Picture, not as the portrait of the human, but as the material partner of the human, observes the object of art, the beautiful Dorian and mirrors all pleasures in an aesthetic way through colours.

Another technique of Lewin to point out the partnership between the human and the Picture is to employ other objects. While the David statues and the Egyptian cat figure contribute to this aim of Lewin in some way, Lewin prefers relatively invisible things, such as the letters blocks in Dorian's childhood room (see Plate 4), to show the audience that the human and the Picture are actually the different forms of the same matter.

Plate 4: The Letter blocks after Basil's death (*PDG* 01:10:42). Lewin preferred to tell the story with the situation of letter blocks. After every dreadful act of the protagonist, these blocks are resituated referring to the relationships between humans and things.

The camera focuses on these blocks clearly after a dreadful act of Dorian and the change on the state of them must be an attempt to refer to the partnership of the human and the thing in every act they perform. In the last scene when Dorian stabs the Picture and also himself, the blocks are organised to show the audience this partnership: A "D" block is placed upon an "8" block and the "8" is placed a triangle of letters including "L," "H," and "W" which are the initials of Lord Henry Wotton. Besides, on the floor, there are several blocks typed J-S-V, A-C, B-H and S-T, which are the initials of Dorian's victims, James-Sibyl Vane, Alan Campbell, Basil Hallward and Sir Tristan, Dorian's alter ego (Felleman 76). On the other hand, James Bueselink asserts for "8" block that it represents "the portrait" because the word consists of eight letters in it (qtd. in Felleman 76). This argument is a questionable one because one may ask why, then, Lewin did not place block "7," which is the number of letters in "Picture" instead of "8." This would be more appropriate since the title of the novel and also the film is *The Picture of Dorian Gray*, not the portrait. Instead of that, it can be claimed that rather than the number, "8" block is actually there to show the everlasting beauty and youth of Dorian Gray. Even when the human dies lying dreadfully on the floor after stabbing the Picture, the Picture turns back into its original nature with all its beauty. If the aim of this study is to argue that the human Dorian and the Picture are actually one entity sharing different bodies, then, it would not

be wrong also to claim that Dorian Gray never actually dies but only changes his/its body. Hence, even though Felleman considers the relationship between the human and the Picture as a symbolic one (76), she highlights that "the concept of such a phenomenon necessarily takes precedence over its function as a visual sign" (87). Both in Wilde's novel and Lewin's film, the Picture is no longer a portrait in the traditional sense. Even though Wilde meant to write a symbolic novel through this relationship, Lewin saved the Picture from symbolism and the conventional uniforms around it by the use of technicolour and other assistant objects. The effects that these techniques create are so visible that even the absence of the Picture until the second half of the film cannot be realised.

In 2009, Oliver Parker adapted Wilde's novel with minor changes in the story. This was not the first experience for Parker in adapting a work from Wilde. He also adapted *An Ideal Husband* in 1999 and *The Importance of Being Earnest* in 2002 to cinema. Putting aside what Lewin proposed by his techniques on the agency of the Picture, the recent adaptations of the novel reduce the visibility of the Picture both in the screen and also in the title such as the 2009 adaptation by Parker. His production omits the existence of the Picture from the title, which becomes *Dorian Gray* only. However, claiming the ontological integrity of the human and the Picture, this study tends to read this ignorance from a different aspect. It can be asserted that this title refers to the embodiment of the human and the Picture and it implies that their coming together constitutes what is famously called 'Dorian Gray.' If the human character is the Dorian of this story with its youth, beauty and the homosexual tendency suggesting the Greek love for male beauty, then, the Picture is the Gray one referring to its uncanny, liminal, undefinable and most importantly grey nature. On the other hand, Parker's use of the camera gaze in some scenes attributes an agency to the Picture. For example, by placing the camera on the Picture, Parker makes the audience see the scene through the eyes of the Picture. As well as giving the Picture a presence throughout the film, these scenes with the Picture suggest that this is not a mere presence but a presence of an agent that affects the characters along with the narrative progress.

Different from Albert Lewin's production, Parker's film does not have a visible, voiceover narrator of the story. Rather than that, Parker prefers to use a more silent

narrator, which does not speak the human language, for the progress of events. The destruction and the grotesque imagery on the canvas say more than a human narrator and they also give the Picture a visibility, an ability and also a power to affect. Kristen Marie Fish makes a striking claim on the agency and the power of the Picture as a narrative voice in Parker's film:

> Parker answers the narrator's anonymity by twisting the narrative point-of-view through the portrait the novel itself centers around. In particular, the portrait is the omniscient narrator who watches, judges, and executes consequences upon the main structural dynamic between the eternally youthful Dorian Gray, the artist Basil Hallward, and the ever-cynical Lord Henry Wotton. (5)

She supports this argument with Parker's use of "lighting, camera placement, and set design to manipulate one's understanding of the narrative point-of-view" (20). These technical details attribute an identity to the Picture that observes the acts of the human character and mimics him through the degradation created on the canvas. The grotesque Dorian in the canvas grows dreadful and bestial gradually proving the moral lack of the human character. Even though the Picture is physically absent in most of the scenes, the corporeal entity of the thing and the human, in other words, their embodiment into one single entity points out that the Picture is with or within the human in every pleasure and sin he experiences without knowing being watched in the beginning. The physical absence of the Picture does not have a logical ground in the context of this study because it is already pointed out that the thing and the human were born at the same time and the same place. That moment when the human Dorian makes his wish in order to be young and beautiful forever, a new Dorian Gray is born, one who is different from both the former human and the Picture. Later in the film, this new Dorian realises that his exquisite experiences are observed and imitated by the Picture. However, instead of stopping him, this corporeality supported by the material existence of the Picture gives Dorian a power that transforms him into a thing in their embodiment with the Picture which is also transformed into a thing from an object according to the definitions of Brown regarding the object/thing separation (4). While diminishing the visibility of the Picture, Parker increases the focus on its relationship with the human, which is an obsessive one as Meissinger claims:

> While the Dorians in previous adaptations often did not even dare to look at their 'mirror' and 'other self', Oliver Parker's Dorian seems to be drawn towards it. With pleasure he is seen sitting in front of his picture taking drugs, as if he tried to observe the immediate changes in his portrait. Besides, he is haunted by the fear that someone might find out about the picture and destroy it. However, despite Dorian realizing the horrible truth of his rotten soul towards the end of the film, he cannot let go of his painting. (84)

Meissenger's interpretation highlights the inseparable nature of the human and his Picture. Even when Dorian is away for a long time, travelling around the world to taste new experiences, he is always with the Picture which is watching him and mirroring the same action. After he is back from his travelling, his first visit is to the Picture again in order to 'observe' the changes on the canvas. Thus, this part of the study will analyse the "embodied-self" of Dorian Gray with the help of Fish's argument and place the focus on camera positioning.

In addition to narrating the story from the Picture's point-of-view throughout the film, Parker adds some specific scenes that make the audience believe that the Picture is alive and is watching the events around it. Before that, at the beginning of the film, Parker's use of camera lens puts the audience in the place of the main character, Dorian, which leads the audience to experience and observe what is around from the eyes of Dorian. Since the Picture is absent in these scenes physically but actually exists in the human body, the human Dorian leads the audience on his journey from naivety to corruption in its most fatal sense. This kind of camera use allows the audience experience and observe the inner desires of the character together with his thoughts and deeds. In other words, Parker attributes a power and ability to the camera for travelling to the heart and the mind of the character in order to "weave the narrative" (Fish 7). In addition to ascribing a narrative power to the camera, Parker also elevates the position of the Picture as a thing in the film by placing the camera exactly where the Picture stands, which makes the Picture "seemingly omniscient, morally aware narrator" (Fish 12). Even though the Picture is morally aware of what the human experiences, it simulates the acts of the human on the canvas, which is not a moral judgement as opposed to what Fish claims. Instead of judging the human, the Picture shows that it is also actually taking pleasure from the hidden desires of their embodiment. That is why it could be asserted that the Picture observes the human Dorian's daily life and makes itself a life out of what it sees from the

human. Parker explicitly employs some important scenes to show the audience that the human is watched by the thing throughout the film.

Different from the novel and also from Lewin's version, Parker lets the characters display the Picture publicly. It is hung on a wall at the centre of Dorian's living room, a place where it could observe the environment clearly. While Buckton reads this display as a "sexual openness" (354) on the side of male characters of the film, according to the critical position this thesis takes, this placement and public display of the Picture give it the ability to watch its human partner and also the whole society coming to see the Picture. As they are commenting on how lively and original it is, the Picture starts watching the whole society from above and waits for Dorian to take up the brush from Basil Hallward, metaphorically. At the end of the scene, while Dorian, Lord Henry and Basil are photographed in front of the Picture, the Picture is also one of the characters in the photograph as the embodied other of the human Dorian, almost a visual echo of the man situated on the same vertical line in perspective (see Plate 5).

Plate 5: The photograph with the Picture (*DG* 20:19). The Picture watches everything from above and also stands as a visual echo of the human in the same vertical line with him.

This scene suggests an inseparable relationship between the human and the Picture. This relationship, however, is different from the one between a human and his object. In their relationship, as can be seen in Parker's adaptation, both the human and the Picture reciprocally affect and are affected by the presence of each other. Besides, in the film, there is no hierarchy in this embodiment. Rather than that, while the human Dorian is the

one who presents a show to the audience with his deeds, the Picture narrates their story from its perspective. The place of the canvas, in this context, is very suitable for a narrator to watch and tells the story due to the corruption, degradation and degeneration. The first example of Parker's attempt to create a lively Picture is the time when Dorian realises for the first time that he is under the focus of some evil eyes, those of the Picture's. After the death of Sibyl and when the human is under the influence of Lord Henry's degenerated ideas, the camera gaze swiftly changes from the human and the thing in the same scene to just the human Dorian who is watched by the Picture. The lens of the camera blurs and a horror sound is added to the background (see Plate 6).

Plate 6: The Picture is watching the human Dorian (*DG* 43:28). The camera is positioned where the Picture stands, which makes the Picture the narrator of the story.

The look of the Picture is so tense that finally, the human realises the eyes upon himself and immediately turns his face to where the Picture stands. In this scene again, Dorian sees the cruel change in the face and also the scar in the hands of the Picture. The scar in the human Dorian is simulated by the Picture while the hand of the human is healed. The Picture's ability to gaze around the room and also at the human gives it an identity different from the original portrait which is a 'dead' object. When the mirror neurons of the Picture are activated to observe and simulate, it turns into a thing which is an agent in the story of Dorian Gray, in other words, it is Dorian Gray. Even though Gallese's argument puts the human in the place of the observer and the art in the observed, in their

intersubjective and dynamic relationship, the human and the Picture constantly observe and simulate each other. Thus, the "embodied simulation" which is made by the human and the Picture is explicitly reflected on the canvas. The degenerated soul of Dorian which is trapped in the canvas is embodied with the Picture and creates an "embodied-self." After realising his incarnation with the Picture, Dorian moves it to his old schoolroom in the attic. This displacement, nonetheless, does not reduce the power and agency of the Picture as the narrator of the film because it is embodied in the human body in every sin they commit. Even though the material presence of the Picture is absent until the second part of the film, partial changes can be observed by the audience, which tells the audience that the Picture is corrupted and rotten nature of the human Dorian, however, not symbolically. The Picture goes beyond its symbolic meanings with its materiality and agency. By doing that, it not only reduces the difference between a human and a thing but also embodies the human into an ontological incarnation.

When Basil sees the Picture for the first time after the corruption, the camera gaze is again from the Picture's point-of-view. The Picture and the human together look at surprised Basil standing against the creator of their embodiment (see Plate 7).

Plate 7: The human and the Picture are looking at Basil (*DG* 57:32). This scene suggests a unity of gaze between the human and the thing. They watch the world together from the same perspective.

While the Picture, in this scene, narrates the past in corruption, the human asks the question "Don't you recognise me?" (57:38). Later the human stands next to the painter to examine the Picture. He asserts that "[t]ogether we created something beautiful"

(57:53). It is not clear, here, whether Dorian refers to Basil or, most implicitly, the Picture with himself. It can be suggested that the human Dorian refers to the intersubjective togetherness between him and the Picture as the creators of this original work. Although Basil is the one who paints the young and beautiful Picture in the beginning, the embodiment of "cultivated corruption" (Mighall xiii) at the end of the film is the production of an intersubjective relationship between the human and the thing. On the other hand, while Basil and Dorian are discussing, the Picture still observes and makes the audience watch the scene from its perspective. As stated in the novel, the hatred and murder of Basil come from the Picture to the human Dorian. Similar to this, in Parker's version, his looking at the Picture as his other self and his desire to imitate the artwork lead Dorian to murder the painter. Besides, as a dynamic adaptation of the human, while witnessing the murder, the Picture transfers it into the canvas with "a cruelty in the mouth." Finally, the Picture point-of-view is presented with a scene with Lord Henry while he surprisingly examines the corrupted Picture as well as he is examined by the Picture. In this last scene, Dorian and the Picture kill each other and terminate this embodiment with a knife at the heart.

In addition to the narrative perspective that attributes a life and agency to the Picture, Parker adds, as explained below, some other elements in order to prove the organic nature of the Picture (see Plate 8, 9 and 10).

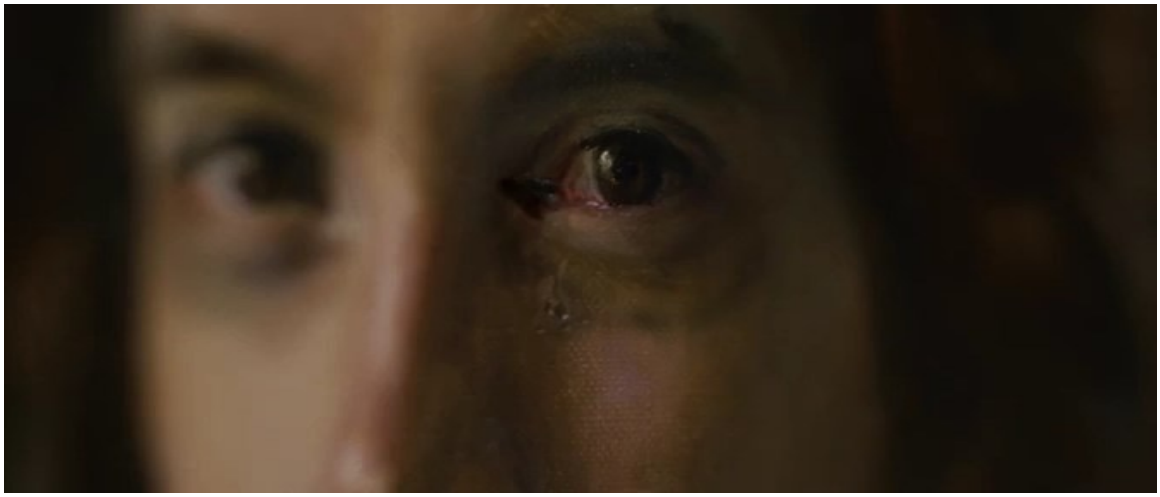

Plate 8: A fly stands on the eyes of the Picture as if it visits a rotten matter (*DG* 36:40).

Plate 9: A worm comes out of the Picture's eye, which means that the Picture starts to decay (*DG* 44:36).

Plate 10: The back of the canvas with the maggots shows that the Picture is rotting both inside and outside (*DG* 01:25:32).

Dorian realises the first changes on the Picture because of a fly which flies around him first and then goes to the face of the Picture as if visiting a rotten matter. In the second encounter, Dorian sees a worm coming out of the Picture. Finally, toward the end of the film, he sees rats around the Picture and all over the room, which implies that there may be something 'dead,' 'rotten' and 'wormy' in that room. Meissinger comments on these scenes as follows:

> In the course of the film the portrait seems to develop a life of its own and at times it appears almost as if Dorian's other self tries to escape the boundaries of the frame. While in former versions the painting only changed on a surface level, in this adaptation it serves to visualise the decay of Dorian's soul. The portrait is actually rotting, and maggots feeding on the canvas. (84)

Thus, it can be concluded at this point that the Picture of Dorian, which is used by Parker in his film, is decaying from inside, not just on the surface. Besides, its decaying is not used metaphorically to refer to the decaying soul of Dorian. Instead, this is a literal decay implying the degradation and degeneration in the Picture. Similarly, the reflections of carnivalization in the Picture is also used for literal meanings, which is to suggest that the Picture shows the animalistic and bestial nature of itself through carnivalizing the actions of the human. While the soul of Dorian is becoming corrupt and going down gradually, the material Picture is decaying, thereby claiming the material and biological nature of itself, which means that the Picture has a carnal body of its own.

Different from Lewin's and Parker's productions, John Logan attempts to create a different kind of adaptation not only of *The Picture of Dorian Gray* but also of all other Late-Victorian fictional characters and their stories. His creation, *Penny Dreadful* is a collage bringing together Dorian Gray, Dr Frankenstein, Dracula, and Mina Murray. Additionally, the show is nourished with the elements of Gothic horror stories from the nineteenth century including vampires, werewolves, magical creatures and objects, in other words, penny dreadfuls. Therefore, it would be wrong to consider it as a loyal adaptation of the novel and also there is no such demand on the side of the producer. Logan asserts in an interview that "[their] version of Dorian is somewhat different from Oscar Wilde's" and he thinks it is unnecessary to take anything from the novel to the role (*Penny Dreadful Comic-Con 2014* 20:34). On the other hand, he also admits that when he sees Reeve Carney who plays Dorian in the show, he believes he is the real Dorian with all his silver jewellery and rings, which clearly refers to Dorian as the aesthetic Dandy (*Penny Dreadful Comic-Con 2014* 21:21). Besides, Logan's version of Dorian Gray and his embodiment with the Picture is no different from what the novel proposes in 1891. The point is that even though *Penny Dreadful* is a different story with different characters, ideas behind the show is almost the same as the novel, yet in a more carnivalized and grotesque way. On what this show is all about, Logan claims that it is about "the monsters in all of us. The thing we must embrace, the thing that frightens us,

the thing that makes finally who we are" (*Penny Dreadful Comic-Con 2014* 5:47). It can be said that this show is about humans as "human-animals" who try to fight with what is inside just like in Wilde's novel. As already stated, Dorian Gray is the representation of all humanity with a little difference. He does not hide his feelings and desires. Both Wilde's and Logan's aims are to underline that those animal desires that humans try to escape are actually who they are. Focusing on these similar ideas behind the novel and the show, it could be suggested that Logan's Dorian is an evolved version or an adaptation of Wilde's Dorian Gray. Additionally, Logan creates an embodied character around Dorian Gray and the Picture with the implication of duality, or Gothic doubling, in the show.

Putting all of these arguments aside, one of the big challenges in the adaptations of Wilde's novel is the production of the paintings in Dorian's townhouse. The walls of the house are filled with 164 paintings (Gosling 114). Sharon Gosling asserts on these paintings that "[t]he essence of *Penny Dreadful* is verisimilitude: each painting had to look and feel as if it were the real thing. For example, an actual painting has a texture, as opposed to the flat nature of a standard digital print" (114-5). This organic nature of paintings is also stated by Dorian in the show: "I prefer paintings. Photographs are so ironically impermanent. They capture one moment in time to perfection. A painting can capture eternity" ("What Death Can Join Together"). Both Gosling's comment and Dorian's words imply the liveliness of paintings which is discussed in the first chapter. While capturing one moment can give photographs perfection, the perfection of the Picture is the eternity that estranges it from being a perfect object as if it were the human. Like a human being, the Picture of Dorian has the burden of an ever-lasting life which is filled with sins and desires.

Producing the Picture, emphasising its everlasting pleasures but also pains, is also difficult for Logan and his team. Unlike other adaptations, in *Penny Dreadful*, the Picture has already started to transform itself when the show begins, which means the audience never has the chance to see the unchanged Picture. On the other hand, the corrupted Picture is also never seen until the second season. One of the reasons for that is the continuous discussions over the look of the Picture among the creator and the team designing the Picture. Logan claims that

> Of all the many challenges of *Penny Dreadful*, one of the most profound was trying to figure out what the hell that picture looks like. […] With *The Picture of Dorian Gray*, I was sort of haunted by the Ivan Albright painting that was in the [1945] MGM movie […] So I was sort of flummoxed by that because I think it so perfectly, and in such a beautifully artistic way, created what Oscar Wilde was talking about. So I said, 'Well, we can't do that, so we have to do something else.' […] He [Dorian]'s eternal, and he will live forever, and the loneliness inherent in that I find very moving. So what I wanted was an incredibly sad image, a very lonely, haunting image, because the true pain of Dorian Gray, it seemed to me, had to do with loneliness. (qtd. in Connolly n.p.)

As well as the degradation, Logan's focus on the Picture is on the loneliness and sadness of the literary character. This focus leads him to create a Picture which is chained. Ostensibly, Logan created a Picture which is different in some aspects from both Lewin's and Parker's. Firstly, Logan's creature is not standing but sitting in chains as if someone is torturing it, giving it eternal pain while it is begging for mercy. Secondly, it is all naked revealing the grotesque and tormented body (see Plate 11).

Plate 11: The revealing of Dorian Gray's Picture in chains suggests that the Picture has a bestial nature that has to be controlled ("Memento Mori").

Thirdly, while Lewin's and Parker's Picture look cruel, Logan chooses to fill the eyes of the creature with sadness and loneliness. Cruelty is not the first impression that one can feel while looking at this Picture for the first time. Instead, it seems that the pain of eternity consumes the Picture physically while the human's bloody wounds are healed.

Even though the Picture is revealed to the audience in the second season of the show, Logan admits that he is sorry for doing that "because I think the spur of the imagination is so powerful, and mystery is important" (Connolly n.p.). It is obvious that Logan lets the audience imagine what may be the most grotesque and degraded but also beautiful creature. Nevertheless, the Picture is absent in the scenes physically but it is well-known that the secret of Dorian's ever-lasting beauty is his Picture. Thus, the Picture is with the human in all of his scenes claiming its presence and autonomy. The audience who already knows the story of Dorian and his Picture can feel the absence-presence agency of the Picture all over Dorian's life and deeds. Additionally, even though the Picture is off-scene, there are some scenes in which Dorian goes in front of the canvas in order to heal his wounds. These moments are kinds of opium sessions for the human character that he observes and absorbs the degradation in the Picture while at the same time the Picture absorbs the sinful acts coming from the human character. It can be concluded that the human Dorian is eluded all of his humanistic features in those scenes and becomes one with his Picture. This embodiment of the human and his thing produces a healing power for the human.

No matter to what extent Logan's attempt is successful as an adaptation, ostensibly, *Penny Dreadful* has reached a wide range of audiences across the world so far. It has been continuously taking critical attention in the academic area, especially in adaptation studies and Victorian studies. The show has been studied in terms of gender, gothic, adaptation, repetition, identity and duality. For example, Lauren Rocha emphasises "the failed restoration of the gender order" (30) in *Penny Dreadful*. Claiming that the male characters of the show are unable to save the females, namely Mina and Vanessa, Rocha points out that this kind of state to which females belong "illustrates Victorian cultural anxieties regarding women's selfhood and identities in relation to societal stability" (31). Dragoş Manea analyses *Penny Dreadful* in terms of "a twin logic of repetition and convergence" (41). While doing that, Manea focuses on Ethan character and considers him as a production of Anglo-American cultural memory (44-5). That is to suggest that Logan's show should not be regarded as a mere adaptation and appropriation but "as remediations of the various intertexts used in the construction of their characters" (48). Poore, on the other hand, considers *Penny Dreadful* "as a reflection […] [and] an appropriation – of contemporary media fandom" by commenting on the homosexual appropriation in the

show (62). Poore asserts that

> while a 'trumping adaptation' interpretation of the sex scenes in *Penny Dreadful* might see them as liberating these Victorian characters from their perceived repression, a fan fiction interpretation might argue that there is nothing distinctive about the Victorians here: that fan fiction, generally, is interested in sex, bodies, and carnality, and that *Penny Dreadful* is simply putting those fan fictions derived encounters on screen. (76)

Poore's interpretation on the show, then, regards *Penny Dreadful* as the visual twenty-first-century reflection of penny dreadfuls of the nineteenth century. However, none of these studies gives the focus it deserves to either Dorian or the Picture. Even the studies that discuss the duality of the identity of the characters ignore the duality of Dorian Gray provided by his Picture. In their study where they coined and proposed a new term, "confluence," as a conceptual tool for the study of adaptations, Sinan Akıllı and Seda Öz examine the dualities in the show in three levels. They argue that

> [t]rue to the Gothic's 'essentially betwixt-and-between nature', *Penny Dreadful* creates what we would like to call a 'confluent' and urban diegetic world which is characterized by the merging of dualities. In the most general sense, it is possible to observe three layers or orders of confluence in *Penny Dreadful*: first, the confluence of London/Demimonde; second, the confluence of the double (and sometimes multiple) selves of the characters; and third, the confluence of Romantic poetry and nineteenth-century Gothic fiction. (16)

The term "confluence" is used by the authors in order to refer to the merger of and the dynamic relationship between two entities that are not totally separate but also not exactly the same, in other words, the relationship between an adaptation and a source text. They explain the metaphor of "confluence" as follows: "the flowing together of two streams of water as a single but heterogeneous body – [the term] is used primarily to refer to various dualities accommodated in a single entity such as a city, a character etc" (25). Using the term, they also highlight the merging nature of the characters to their other selves. However, as stated by the authors, this is not to draw boundaries between the character and the other self or split them into halves but "'a more complex fragmentation of the subject' in the context of late-Victorian Gothic writing" (20). Akıllı and Öz suggest that "[i]n *Penny Dreadful*, John Logan creates a 'confluent' and urban diegetic world which is characterized by the merging of dualities" (16). As they already assert, the characters in the show are in a kind of liminal space in which their identities are split into two

different but not separate entities. It may be considered that there are two roles for each character and they commute or oscillate between these roles throughout the show. In their conversation with Ethan Chandler, Dorian makes a reference to the dualities and the roles each of them has to play:

> Dorian: I suppose we all play parts.
> Ethan: What's yours?
> Dorian: Human. ("Demimonde")

This dialogue not only specifies Dorian's role as the human in the human-nonhuman intersubjectivity that defines his self, but also refers to the Picture as the nonhuman, as a Picture, as a thing. However, Dorian already knows that there exists no line between him and the Picture. He is aware that he becomes the Picture while the Picture becomes the human with its sins, desires and pleasures. Dorian reveals this to the audience in his speech to Lily while explaining the wicked secret of immortality. He claims that one day she will lose her passion and becomes like those paintings in Dorian's home: "Beautiful and dead. […] You will become a perfect, unchanging portrait of yourself" ("Perpetual Night"). Even though Lily does not know what Dorian means, the audience who already knows his relationship with the Picture understands that Dorian's reference is to his embodiment with it. Playing two different roles as the human and the thing does not make them separate since they are embedded in one entity. The point that must be highlighted is that both of the roles are played by the same, single character, or to put it differently, by the same material being. This is to highlight that even though this show is all about dualities, the constituents of these dualities are merged heterogeneously by losing their original selves and create new embodied selves that are intersubjective. Nonetheless, while discussing the dual personalities of the characters, Akıllı and Öz analyse Vanessa Ives, Ethan Chandler and Dr Frankenstein, yet seem to be remiss for not elaborating on the presence of Dorian Gray and the embodied self he creates with the thing. Notwithstanding the fact that their work is not an attempt to explore the implications of the intersubjective dualities in the show, they also add as an endnote at the end of their article that an example of confluence in Dorian Gray may be the confluence of the author and the character (26). Similarly, Carlie M. Copal examines the divided-self in monstrosity, yet with no reference to Dorian Gray (3-4). Copal claims that these dual

identities of Victorian fictional characters illustrate the transformation from the social pressure and their "self-denial" into the ones who get accepted in the society (3-4). So, the monstrous duality of each character is created by the "potentially uncontrollable consequences" (Copal 42), which produces an internal conflict between the self and the monstrous identity. However, just like the other authors who do not dwell on Dorian Gray from this perspective, Copal also ignores the negotiation and embodiment between Dorian and his portrait. He is one of the proper examples of dual nature and monstrosity in *Penny Dreadful*. So much so that it is Dorian who triggers the evil in Vanessa and pushes her back to Demimonde. On the other hand, considering of all the characters who deal with their other self, Dorian is the most successful in the show. Both Ethan and Vanessa are not happy with their evil sides while Dr Frankenstein is also having the burden of both of his creations. However, all of Dorian's burdens and sins are gathered in the Picture while he himself remains always young and beautiful. There may be scenes that suggest the unhappiness of Dorian with his eternality as Logan also asserts in an interview in *Entertainment Weekly* (Connolly n.p.), but this does not prevent Dorian to consume all exquisite things in the world. Actually, it can be proposed that Dorian's unhappiness stems from his consumption of all sins. When he finds a new one, such as when he finds Vanessa, he becomes energised again with the help and negotiation provided by his Picture. Therefore, as a contribution to all of these studies which dwell on "confluence" and duality in the show, this study aims to fill the gap by providing necessary discussion on the human Dorian and the Picture in order to increase the visibility of their embodiment.

Focusing on Akıllı and Öz's idea of "confluence" on the dual nature of characters, this study argues that Dorian is different from the other characters in the show in terms of the confluence he creates with his other self. This difference can be understood on two levels: First, unlike the others, Dorian and the Picture do not share the same body and secondly Dorian is happy about his evil side as long as he finds a new experience. On the first level, Logan, as in other characters of the show such as Vanessa or Ethan, pictures Dorian Gray as the combination of good and evil. However, different from Vanessa and Ethan, Dorian's other self is located in a separate body or matter. This condition of Dorian and the Picture does not imply that they are separate entities but proves their embodiment through their neurons into the single self that manifests beauty on the human and sins on

the canvas. Through "embodied simulation," the sins committed by Dorian are manifested on the canvas, which makes it difficult to decide which one is evil and which one is good. That is to say, the borders between good and evil are not clear in Dorian Gray while one can easily decide it for Vanessa or Ethan. In other words, this situation between Dorian and the Picture suggests that they cannot be separated as good or evil and that Dorian Gray is the combination of these two. This is the unique instance of "confluence" presented by Dorian Gray in the show. Dorian exemplifies this combination in the show with reference to a special kind of orchid called "Rothschild's Sleeper" ("Demimonde"). The rhizomatic relationship between the orchid and the wasp, first pointed out by Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari (10), is interpreted with the term "confluence" by Akıllı and Öz referring to the dual identity of the character along with the source and the adaptation. To put it differently, the orchid metaphor in the show refers to the rhizomatic relationship between the human and his portrait and their unique embodiment. Similar to the wasp and the orchid in Deleuze and Guattari's example, the human and the Picture come together to "form a rhizome" (10). Therefore, to read this relationship with Deleuze and Guattari's words, Dorian and the Picture "imitate" each other by "reproducing" what they see while looking at each other's faces. This duplicity is what makes the orchid beautiful and aesthetic similar to the portrait that makes Dorian beautiful and young. According to Dorian, "it is poisonous like all beautiful things" ("Demimonde"), which is very similar to his embodiment with the Picture. Their embodiment is also poisonous, yet at the same time, this poisonous and evil side provides the human Dorian with immortality, beauty, and the courage to experience one exquisite thing every day.

On the other hand, while Vanessa and Ethan try to save themselves from the evil nature of their other selves, Dorian seems to embrace what is gifted to him. It is sure that, as Logan claims, Dorian feels a kind of loneliness and boredom from time to time (Connolly n.p.). This, however, only lasts until a new experience comes his way. Throughout the three seasons that the show is aired, Dorian is seen trying numerous exquisite pleasures including a sexual intercourse with Brona Croft, a whore suffering from consumption, Ethan who is a werewolf, Vanessa who is possessed by Evil, Angelique who is a transwoman and at last, a bloody sex with Lily who is in fact Brona who brought back to life by Frankenstein and Justine, an adolescent girl. That is why, no matter what Logan thinks of Dorian Gray, this study argues that Dorian is happy with his embodiment with

the Picture and with the combination of good and evil in their embodiment. Otherwise, Dorian would never go to see his Picture after each sin and watch the absorption of his sins from the Picture. It is clear that observing his sins in the Picture does not hurt Dorian but gives him a different kind of pleasure that he shares with the Picture. On the other hand, unlike the novel and two other adaptations by Lewin and Parker, Dorian never attempts to get rid of the Picture. Instead, he attempts to convince the other characters who try to terminate their individual evil natures. While Vanessa, Ethan and the other characters are fighting against the evil both in themselves and also outside, Dorian fights neither with them to save Mina nor against the evil inside him. This may be the reason why Logan would like to keep Dorian out of this band consisting of Vanessa, Ethan, Dr Frankenstein, Sir Malcolm, and Sembene. During the show, Dorian continuously takes every chance to convince Vanessa, Ethan and Lily to embrace the evil inside them. First of all, in the Botanical Garden scene, Dorian tells Vanessa that "[w]hat I find so fascinating about flowers is their duplicity. […] Their hidden depths, at any rate" ("Demimonde"). Then Dorian would like Vanessa to interpret what is beneath the soft smell of a "Deadly Nightshade," which is of course lethal. Then their dialogue goes as follows:

> Vanessa: It is the adder beneath the rose, isn't it?
>
> Dorian: All of this. They can seem so enticing and luxurious, yet within, there's a dark thing waiting.
>
> Vanessa: Things are so rarely what they seem.
>
> Dorian: Which of us does not have our secrets, Miss Ives? ("Demimonde")

Dorian shows Vanessa how exquisite and unique the dark side can be if only one knows how to use it effectively like Dorian does. Sensing the dark nature of Vanessa, Dorian would like to save it from the trap in Vanessa's body. He would like Vanessa to be herself by embracing her evil nature and tries to convince her for a new experience with himself. Finally, the evil of Vanessa is released by Dorian during a sexual relationship. However, Dorian could not convince Vanessa for the second time who is very much afraid to witness her dark side and when he learns this, he gives up Vanessa to look for new experiences with Ethan, Angelique, and Lily. Later till the end of the show, Dorian tries to convince Lily to understand and learn to live like this with the immorality and the evil it brings:

> Do you not yet comprehend the wicked secret of the immortal? All age and die, save you. All rot and fall to dust, save you. Any child you bear becomes a crone and perishes before your eyes. Any lover withers and shrinks into incontinence and bent, toothless senility. While you, only you, never age, never tire, never fade, alone. But after a time, you'll lose the desire for passion entirely for connection with anyone. Like a muscle that atrophies from lack of use. And one day, you'll realize you've become like them. Beautiful and dead. You have become a perfect, unchanging portrait of yourself. ("Perpetual Night")

Even though he seems sorry, it is clear that Dorian knows how to live with his evil side, his embodiment with the Picture. He learns how to use the ephemeral things for his own good and how to take pleasure from them. As explained by Akıllı and Öz, "confluence," which refers to two streams flowing in the same direction, refers here to Dorian and his embodiment with the Picture and their "unified whole even though they are seemingly different entities" (Akıllı and Öz 25). Dorian believes that no matter what the price is, his beauty is the result of his sins manifesting in the Picture. His beauty is the result of his devilish pact with the Picture and it is worth it. It is the evil inside that makes one beautiful and young forever. Therefore, Logan, employing confluent identities as duality in the show, would like to stress out that humanity is consisting of confluences of good and evil, cultivation and corruption. All dualities must be embraced to be human. Different from Lewin and Parker, Logan puts the emphasis on neither the human nor the Picture, but on the confluence, the duality that they create together. That is why the Picture is absent for a whole season because what matters is not the physical existence of the canvas but the embodiment of it with the human and the reflections of this relationship in the imagination of the audience.

In conclusion, this chapter engaged the screen adaptations of *The Picture of Dorian Gray* in order to argue that even though the Picture is physically absent in most scenes of those adaptations, the challenges the producers faced with while creating the Picture and the specific cinematographic and also narrative techniques they used in order to create the effect of a grotesque entity prove that the Picture exists in every scene with its very materiality. Most importantly, this chapter underlined the co-occurrence of the Picture and the human and the visual reflections of this co-occurrence in screen adaptations. What is emphasised in this chapter is that the identity of the Picture and its togetherness with the human partner in screen adaptations have been neglected so far. After analysing the screen adaptations in the light of the critical tools provided by adaptation studies and

neuroaesthetics, it is observed that the embodiment between the Picture and the human is transposed to the screen. With specific examples from the films of Lewin and Parker and Logan's show, it is concluded that whether consciously or unconsciously the producers of these screen adaptations created an agential power on the Picture and presented a powerful embodiment between it and the human character. Lewin used technicolour, Parker used camera gaze and finally, Logan used confluent doubling to attribute the Picture an autonomy and merge it with the human. With each of these techniques, the thing and the human constituted Dorian Gray, in other words, "cultivated corruption" (Mighall xiii). Additionally, taking a step further from the recent discussions on adaptation studies, this chapter contributes to the field by claiming an adaptation-source text relationship between the human Dorian and the Picture. Although it is difficult to draw certain borders between them, it can be surely stated that Dorian and his Picture become the adaptations of each other by simulating each other's actions continuously in their story. This embodiment between Dorian and the Picture proves that the adaptation and the source text are the different parts of the same matter. They nourish and are nourished by each other in this ever-lasting journey. That is to say that as long as the source lives, so lives the adaptation and vice versa.

CONCLUSION

It can be observed that the mainstream critical comments on Oscar Wilde's *The Picture of Dorian Gray* mostly dwell on the moral values of its period, homosexuality, art and aesthetics. The novel is read as an attack to Victorian values and as an implication to Wilde's secret homosexuality. On the other hand, considered as a manifestation of the author's Decadent ideas, it is studied in regard to art and aesthetics with references to Decadent movement. However; one striking aspect of the novel is that it is full of references to and descriptions of objects of art and this aspect of the novel is misinterpreted in existing studies within the framework of representational codes of the period. If the novel is read by deploying the critical tools provided by object-oriented ontology (OOO) and thing theory developed by Brown, it is seen that the human subject and the so-called subtext of Wilde's novel are given too much attention while the Picture, which has also been a vital element to drive the narrative forward, is neglected or misinterpreted under the influence of representational codes. Even though the Picture has an undeniable presence and power with its materiality, they are generally ignored in the critical analyses of the novel, which causes the Picture's being considered as a mere portrait or a symbol. The critical tools which this thesis is based upon, on the other hand, attribute material agency, autonomy and identity to the Picture by shattering the 'higher' position of the human character, Dorian. Breaking away from the traditional understanding of the material as a passive and dead object and following the object/thing division of Brown, this study regards the Picture of Dorian as a thing and gives it a life and a soul of its own. Accordingly, different from the mainstream analyses, this study suggests that the Picture has been a central character in the novel together with the human character, Dorian. That is to argue that the protagonist of Wilde's novel is neither the human nor the thing but the material entity they create together.

Dwelling on the neglect of the appreciation of the Picture, thing theory is used for a different reading of Wilde's novel in the first chapter. Differentiating the Picture as a thing from the object portraits, it is clearly underlined that the Picture of Dorian has an identity and an autonomy which help it capture the observer human. In addition to giving the Picture the role it deserves as a material thing in the story, the ontological embeddedness of the Picture and the human Dorian is highlighted by focusing on the

recent developments in neuroscience. These scientific developments cause a new field, which is called neuroaesthetics, to emerge. This new field paves the way for a further reading of things and their relationship with the human owners. Gallese's theory on the physical connection between things and humans underlines the possibility of a new perspective to understand what he calls an "embodied simulation" ("Mirror Neurons and Art" 443). The employment of "embodied simulation," in this study, challenges the 'inferior' position of things and the ignorance of them by assigning a partnership or an interaction to them along with the human character. Thus, it is suggested in this chapter that the narrative development of this novel is the result of the interaction and the embodiment created between the Picture and Dorian. It is claimed that while the human is one of those Greek Dorians, the Picture is the Gray which coincides with its undefined, liminal and uncanny nature. Hence, it is concluded that the Picture not only drives the narrative as one of the protagonists of the novel, but also drives the other protagonist who is the human Dorian. The power of the Picture throughout the novel gives it an ontological priority over the human Dorian. However, the Picture does not claim an independence from the human but proves how much it and the human are dependent to each other. This priority changes the function of the Picture from being a mere portrait to being a conscience and a guiding force for Dorian. Therefore, the relation between Dorian and the Picture is such an embodiment, an incarnation or "an assemblage," in Bennett's words ("Systems and Things" 227), in which both of them forget what they are and become one single entity. This embodiment is discussed with references to the novel in the first chapter. The transformation on the canvas after every deed of the human proves that the human and the Picture constitute what is called 'Dorian Gray.' It is concluded in this chapter that the human and the Picture are not two separate entities but an embodiment of matters with an immense agency in the novel. This chapter also provides an example of the possible new ways of reading novels in the light of emergent trans- and-multidisciplinary theoretical approaches and critical methods.

The same theories and methods are used to analyse three screen adaptations of the novel in the second chapter, namely *The Picture of Dorian Gray* (1945) by Albert Lewin, *Dorian Gray* (2009) by Oliver Parker and *Penny Dreadful* (2014-16) by John Logan. It is observed that the agency and the identity of the Picture are ignored in these adaptations, as well. However; the heterogeneous composition of the human and the Picture is

transposed to the adaptations by the use of some cinematographic techniques which are technicolour and camera gaze. Additionally, Logan uses the Gothic dualism as a narrative element in *Penny Dreadful* to present, what Akıllı and Öz suggest, a "confluence" between the Picture and Dorian. This is to claim that, whether consciously or unconsciously, the producers of these adaptations are successful in giving the Picture the role it deserves. Therefore, it is argued in this chapter that the embodiment between the human and the Picture is transposed to the screen adaptations of the novel by the use of technicolour by Lewin, the camera gaze by Parker and finally Gothic doubling in Logan's adaptations. In addition to a variety of objects which have significant roles in the film, Lewin gives considerable attention to the Picture by colouring it in a black-and-white film. While doing that, Lewin presents a corrupted image in cultivation, which questions the separation between black and white or good and evil. To put it differently, Lewin's Picture is neither black nor white but a combination of more vivid and intense colours. Parker's adaptation, on the other hand, attributes an agency to the Picture by placing the camera exactly where the Picture stands in order to catch the effect of the agentic Picture in the novel's progression. It is asserted that the Picture in *Dorian Gray* watches/observes every scene carefully in order to simulate the actions of the human. Finally, focusing on the dualities exist in every human being, Logan creates the characters of *Penny Dreadful* in a "confluence" in which they produce an embodiment with their other selves. In this world of ongoing "confluence," Dorian and his Picture constitute an embodiment different from the other characters of the show who would like to break free their embodied others. Dorian, on the other hand, supports to become one and to learn how to live with the Picture or the evil side. In this regard, Dorian is not in a fight with his other half but he seems to embrace his embodied other different from other characters in the show.

Furthermore, this study claims that the Picture and Dorian are the adaptations of each other who continuously mimic the actions observed in the embodied other. The incarnation and the interactions between them challenge the place of the source text and the adaptation in the conventional sense. This argument moves the ongoing discussions on fidelity and the quality of the adaptation to a new venue in which it is impossible to draw boundaries between the source text and the adaptation. Capitalising on this fact, it is argued that Dorian and the Picture present a dialogic interaction, which does not favour

one over the other. Their embodied nature in their intersubjectivity means that, similar to the dialogic relationship between the source text and the adaptation, they have to exist together. In addition to supporting the dialogic interactions between the source texts and the adaptations just like the Picture and the human Dorian, this study analyses the visual adaptations of 'Dorian Gray' as sites in which the human-nonhuman embodiments are created. In the light of these references from the visual adaptations of 'Dorian Gray,' this chapter brings a new aspect to adaptation studies by merging it with neuroaesthetics.

As a final conclusion, this study contributes to the emergent ways of reading literary texts in the light of critical tools provided by thing theory and neuroaesthetics. It is argued in this thesis that even though the Picture is physically absent in the critical analyses of the novel and the screen adaptations, it has an undeniable presence and agency which it obtains through its embodied ontology with Dorian Gray. After the analyses of the novel and three screen adaptations, it is concluded that the Picture not only claims its agency but also gives this agency a considerable role in the narrative together with the embodiment in 'Dorian Gray.' Hence, it could be suggested that these above-explained critical tools pave the way for a variety of new perspectives for the interpretation of literary texts other than the given Victorian novel and its screen adaptations. This study is an attempt to show that humans are not the only characters in novels. In the light of this fact, there are numerous examples waiting for literature scholars to give attention to the things and save them from the symbolic meanings in which they are trapped.

NOTES

[1] Throughout this study, the word Picture will be used with capitalised initial in order to refer to its agentic nature and autonomous identity.

[2] "Confluence" is used by Akıllı and Öz as a metaphor in their study in which they discuss the merging of two different but not separate entities. They explain the term as in the following quotation: "[T]he flowing together of two streams of water as a single but heterogeneous body - [the term] is used primarily to refer to various dualities accommodated in a single entity such as a city, a character etc" (25).

[3] Gallese explains the details of the experiment and the workings of the motor systems in another article titled "Embodied Simulation Theory: Imagination and Narrative":

> The mirror mechanism maps the sensory description of others' actions, emotions, and sensations onto the perceiver's own motor, visceromotor, and somatosensory representations of those actions, emotions, and sensations. […] It has been proposed that such mapping enables one to perceive others' actions, emotions, and sensations as if performing those same actions or experiencing those same emotions and sensations. Embodied simulation (ES) theory is an attempt to provide a coherent theoretical framework to these neuroscientific findings. (197)

[4] Chatterjee and Vartanian explain the workings of the sensory-motor systems as follows:

> The visual brain segregates visual elements such as luminance, color, and motion, as well as higher-order objects such as faces, bodies, and landscapes. Aesthetic encounters engage these sensory systems. […] Portraits activate the face area in the fusiform gyrus (FFA) and landscape paintings activate the place area in the parahippocampal gyrus (PPA). Surprisingly, beyond classifying visual elements, these sensory areas may also be involved in evaluating them. Beautiful faces activate the fusiform face and adjacent areas. As with faces, some studies show that neural activity in visual areas increases with the beauty of art images. The issue of how much and what kind of valuation occurs in sensory cortices is an area of active inquiry. Biederman and colleagues observed that cortical μ-opioid receptor density is greatest in parts of the ventral visual pathway that process 'stimuli that contain a great deal of interpretable information.' Thus, the experience of aesthetic pleasure might arise from the interplay between brain structures that underlie perceptions of specific stimuli (e.g., PPA for scenes) and the distribution of relevant neurotransmitters in the cortex. (370)

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APPENDIX 1: ORIGINALITY REPORTS

HACETTEPE UNIVERSITY
GRADUATE SCHOOL OF SOCIAL SCIENCES
MASTER'S THESIS ORIGINALITY REPORT

HACETTEPE UNIVERSITY
GRADUATE SCHOOL OF SOCIAL SCIENCES
ENGLISH LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE DEPARTMENT

Date: 04/07/2018

Thesis Title: **The Picture in Dorian Gray: Object Agency and Oscar Wilde's Decadent Ideas in *The Picture of Dorian Gray* and its Screen Adaptations**

According to the originality report obtained by my thesis advisor by using the Turnitin plagiarism detection software and by applying the filtering options checked below on 04/07/2018 for the total of 117 pages including the a) Title Page, b) Introduction, c) Main Chapters, and d) Conclusion sections of my thesis entitled as above, the similarity index of my thesis is 3%.

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I declare that I have carefully read Hacettepe University Graduate School of Social Sciences Guidelines for Obtaining and Using Thesis Originality Reports; that according to the maximum similarity index values specified in the Guidelines, my thesis does not include any form of plagiarism; that in any future detection of possible infringement of the regulations I accept all legal responsibility; and that all the information I have provided is correct to the best of my knowledge.

I respectfully submit this for approval.

Date and Signature
04.07.18

Name Surname: EMİNE AKKÜLAH DOĞAN
Student No: N14228523
Department: ENGLISH LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE
Program: BRITISH CULTURAL STUDIES

ADVISOR APPROVAL

APPROVED.

ASST. PROF. DR. SİNAN AKILLI

HACETTEPE ÜNİVERSİTESİ
SOSYAL BİLİMLER ENSTİTÜSÜ
YÜKSEK LİSANS TEZ ÇALIŞMASI ORİJİNALLİK RAPORU

HACETTEPE ÜNİVERSİTESİ
SOSYAL BİLİMLER ENSTİTÜSÜ
İNGİLİZ DİLİ VE EDEBİYATI ANABİLİM DALI BAŞKANLIĞI'NA

Tarih: 04/07/2018

Tez Başlığı: **Dorian Gray'deki Portre: *Dorian Gray'in Portresi* ve Ekran Uyarlamalarında Nesne Eyleyiciliği ve Oscar Wilde'in Dekadanlık Fikirleri**

Yukarıda başlığı gösterilen tez çalışmamın a) Kapak sayfası, b) Giriş, c) Ana bölümler ve d) Sonuç kısımlarından oluşan toplam 117 sayfalık kısmına ilişkin, 04/07/2018 tarihinde tez danışmanım tarafından Turnitin adlı intihal tespit programından aşağıda işaretlenmiş filtrelemeler uygulanarak alınmış olan orijinallik raporuna göre, tezimin benzerlik oranı %3'tür.

Uygulanan filtrelemeler:
1- ☒ Kabul/Onay ve Bildirim sayfaları hariç
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3- ☒ Alıntılar hariç
4- ☐ Alıntılar dâhil
5- ☐ 5 kelimeden daha az örtüşme içeren metin kısımları hariç

Hacettepe Üniversitesi Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü Tez Çalışması Orijinallik Raporu Alınması ve Kullanılması Uygulama Esasları'nı inceledim ve bu Uygulama Esasları'nda belirtilen azami benzerlik oranlarına göre tez çalışmamın herhangi bir intihal içermediğini; aksinin tespit edileceği muhtemel durumda doğabilecek her türlü hukuki sorumluluğu kabul ettiğimi ve yukarıda vermiş olduğum bilgilerin doğru olduğunu beyan ederim.

Gereğini saygılarımla arz ederim.

Tarih ve İmza
04.07.18

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DANIŞMAN ONAYI

UYGUNDUR.

DR. ÖĞR. ÜYESİ SİNAN AKILLI

APPENDIX 2: ETHICS BOARD WAIVER FORMS

HACETTEPE UNIVERSITY
GRADUATE SCHOOL OF SOCIAL SCIENCES
ETHICS COMMISSION FORM FOR THESIS

HACETTEPE UNIVERSITY
GRADUATE SCHOOL OF SOCIAL SCIENCES
ENGLISH LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE DEPARTMENT

Date: 04/07/2018

Thesis Title: THE PICTURE IN DORIAN GRAY: OBJECT AGENCY AND OSCAR WILDE'S DECADENT IDEAS IN *THE PICTURE OF DORIAN GRAY* AND ITS SCREEN ADAPTATIONS

My thesis work related to the title above:

1. Does not perform experimentation on animals or people.
2. Does not necessitate the use of biological material (blood, urine, biological fluids and samples, etc.).
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I declare, I have carefully read Hacettepe University's Ethics Regulations and the Commission's Guidelines, and in order to proceed with my thesis according to these regulations I do not have to get permission from the Ethics Board/Commission for anything; in any infringement of the regulations I accept all legal responsibility and I declare that all the information I have provided is true.

I respectfully submit this for approval.

Date and Signature
04.07.18

Name Surname:	Emine AKKÜLAH DOĞAN
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Program:	BRITISH CULTURAL STUDIES
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ADVISER COMMENTS AND APPROVAL

APPROVED.

(ASST. PROF. DR. SİNAN AKILLI)

HACETTEPE ÜNİVERSİTESİ
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İNGİLİZ DİLİ VE EDEBİYATI ANABİLİM DALI BAŞKANLIĞI'NA

Tarih: 04/07/2018

Tez Başlığı: THE PICTURE IN DORIAN GRAY: OBJECT AGENCY AND OSCAR WILDE'S DECADENT IDEAS IN *THE PICTURE OF DORIAN GRAY* AND ITS SCREEN ADAPTATIONS

Yukarıda başlığı gösterilen tez çalışmam:

1. İnsan ve hayvan üzerinde deney niteliği taşımamaktadır,
2. Biyolojik materyal (kan, idrar vb. biyolojik sıvılar ve numuneler) kullanılmasını gerektirmemektedir.
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Hacettepe Üniversitesi Etik Kurullar ve Komisyonlarının Yönergelerini inceledim ve bunlara göre tez çalışmamın yürütülebilmesi için herhangi bir Etik Kurul/Komisyon'dan izin alınmasına gerek olmadığını; aksi durumda doğabilecek her türlü hukuki sorumluluğu kabul ettiğimi ve yukarıda vermiş olduğum bilgilerin doğru olduğunu beyan ederim.

Gereğini saygılarımla arz ederim.

Tarih ve İmza
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Programı: İNGİLİZ KÜLTÜR ARAŞTIRMALARI
Statüsü: ☒ Yüksek Lisans ☐ Doktora ☐ Bütünleşik Doktora

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