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**COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF WILDE'S PICTURE
OF DORIAN GRAY IN BOOK AND IN FILM**

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Prohlašuji, že jsem práci zpracoval(a) samostatně a použil(a) jen uvedených pramenů a literatury.

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1 INTRODUCTION

The Bachelor's thesis is aimed at Oscar Wilde's *The Picture of Dorian Gray*, especially at the comparison with its film adaptations. The main objective of the thesis is to compare the book with its three selected film adaptations, find similarities as well as differences. However, we can assume that the differences will prevail. Oscar Wilde is a writer of Irish descent, who became famous because of his specific style of writing and trials that were brought against him for homosexuality. This theme often appears in his works and *The Picture of Dorian Gray* is not an exception to this rule. He is considered to be a representative of Aestheticism and Decadence.

The thesis consists of several chapters and subchapters. Firstly, as a representation of the theoretical background, we will discuss Wilde's life, both private and professional. His childhood, university life, publishing career, his most favourite works and influences, which had an impact on his life and works, will be described here as well. Then, the novel under question will be analysed and the most important elements of the story, setting and characters will be presented. Specific features of particular characters will be demonstrated on chosen abstracts from the novel.

Last but not least, the three selected films – *The Picture of Dorian Gray* (1945), *The Picture of Dorian Gray* (2005) and *Dorian Gray* (2009), will be shortly described, paying attention to the details that may differ in particular cases. The 1945 film is black-and-white and represents a movie made by older method. The second analysed film is from 2004 and it takes place in the second half of the 20th century in Bulgaria. The last film of 2009 is the latest film adaptation based on the novel. The final part of the thesis represents the practical part, when the book and film adaptations will be subjects of a detailed comparison.

To accomplish the objective of the thesis, it is necessary to read books about Wilde's life, carefully scan the novel under question, watch

the chosen film adaptations and analyse them critically. The books and films are used as primary sources for the thesis. Also, to be able to analyse the era appropriately, the knowledge of Victorian era and the 19th century is applied. To give the reader more accurate idea about the discussed topic, the thesis will be accompanied by several illustrative appendices.

2 OSCAR WILDE'S LIFE

Family

Oscar Wilde, full name Oscar Fingal O'Flahertie Wills Wilde, is one of the most famous Irish writers of the 19th century. He was born in Dublin on 16 October 1854 to the family of a doctor and a writer. [1] His father, William Robert Wills Wilde (1815-1876), was an eye doctor and a freelance writer. He founded St. Mark's Ophthalmic Hospital at his own cost in 1884. Wilde's mother, Jane Francesca Elgee (1821-1896), best known by the pseudonym "Speranza" [2], was a poet, associated with the Young Irelander Rebellion of 1848¹ and a linguist. Wilde was influenced by this environment in his later years of writing career. He had five siblings - Henry Wilson, born in 1838; Emily, born in 1847; and Mary, born in 1849, who were from father's side before the marriage with Jane and other two from the marriage with Jane – William Robert Kingsbury Wills, born in 1852, and Isola Francesca Emily, born in 1857. [3]

From the age of thirteen, Oscar Wilde showed his talent and sense for dramatic presentation. Starting from this young age, his tastes in clothing were of a dandy's². His mother used to speak about him as about an unordinary person. He had not musical talent like his brother Willie. However, he was very talented and had a special gift of fast reading. Thanks to his mother, he spoke French fluently and was efficient in German. He really deified his sister Emily. After her death caused by fever in February 1867, when she was only nine, Wilde wrote a poem about her called *Requiescat*. [4]

On May 29, 1884, at St. James Church, [5] Wilde married Constance Llyod. They had two sons – Cyril (born in 1885) and Vyvyan (born in 1886). The trial, in 1895, and its results also influenced Wilde's family life. Before his release from prison, Wilde and Constance divorced.

¹ A failed nationalist insurrection led by the Young Ireland movement.

² For further information on Dandy, continue on page 9.

Constance and their two sons moved to Switzerland and changed their name to Holland. [6] Wilde never met his sons again.

Studies

His classmate, Edward Sullivan, said about Wilde that he had romantic imagination. He attended the Portora Royal School at Enniskillen, where he started to be interested in Greek and Roman studies. During the last two years of his studies, he won the top prize for classics and second price in drawing in his final year. He graduated in 1871 and was awarded the Royal School Scholarship to attend the Trinity College in Dublin. At Trinity College, he studied with John Pentland Mahaffy, whose *Social Life in Greece from Homer to Menander* (1874) took a surprisingly liberal view on homosexuality in ancient Greece. He received the Berkeley Gold Medal for Greek in 1874 and was awarded a Demyship scholarship to Magdalen College in Oxford. He had excellent results also at Oxford and in 1878, he won the Newdigate Prize for the best English verse composition by an Oxford undergraduate for his poem *Ravenna*. [7]

Apart from studies, he also got familiar with the homosexual subcultures of Oxford and London. Wilde travelled with Mahaffy to Greece and Italy in 1877, where they visited Pope Pius IX at Vatican. At Oxford, he made several important friends and contacts with writers and famous people, for example with John Ruskin³, who was his Slade Professor of Art at the university. At university, Wilde was oriented towards Roman Catholicism and later he converted to it. [8]

Career

Immediately after graduation from Oxford, he moved to London with his friend, Frank Miles. When living there, his first collection titled *Poems*

³ An English poet, writer and art critic (1819-1900).

was published in 1881. The public started to be more interested in him and his pieces of writing. In 1882, Wilde travelled from London to New York City to embark on an American lecture tour, delivering about 140 lectures in just nine months. One year after the marriage, Wilde was employed to direct an English magazine about fashion, *Lady's World*. Three years later, he published a collection of children stories, *The Happy prince and Other Tales* (1888). He was often compared with Hans Christian Andersen thanks to this collection. From the late 1880s to middle 1890s, he was enjoying his greatest literary success. [9]

During that period, he wrote a novel which was a great success – and which made him well-known even among today's readers - *The Picture of Dorian Gray* (1890). It was followed by a critical protest, especially because of the homoerotic content. After his great success with his first play, *Lady Windermere's Fan*, in 1892, in London, Wilde decided to enter the public's consciousness as a writer of theatre plays. His other famous plays were *The Importance of Being Earnest* (1895) as well as *Woman of No Importance* (1893) and *An Ideal Husband* (1895). [10]

Relationships with men

The period of great literary success was also the period marked by his affaire. In June 1891, Wilde met Lord Alfred Douglas, a young aristocrat. [11] Wilde started to be interested in him and Douglas became his new lover. During his life, Wilde experimented with two forms of sexuality, love of women and of men. Douglas was not the only one who had a relationship with Wilde. His other famous lover was John Gray. [12] Wilde discussed this theme in almost all his works. Most notorious example is the story of Dorian Gray, for example. Moreover, Wilde dedicated most of his works to his lovers, for example collection *Poems* was dedicated to his Oxford lover or *The Picture of Dorian Gray* to Douglas. [13]

Trials, prison and the end of his life

However, such behaviour was not tolerated in the Victorian England. On February 18, 1895, Wilde received a card from Douglas's father with words "To Oscar Wilde, posing Sodomite". [14] He was accused of homosexuality and summoned to court. The trial began on 26 April 1895. They used homoerotic passages from his literary works against Wilde, such as those from *The Picture of Dorian Gray*⁴, as well as letters which he wrote to Douglas. The prosecution had evidence that Wilde was involved with more than twelve young men. On 25 May 1895, Wilde was found guilty and sentenced for two years in reclusion with hard labour. [15]

During the imprisonment, Wilde was transferred to more than one prison; he did the most of the sentence in Reading Gaol outside of London. He wrote essays, poems and letters, which were responses to Douglas, called *De Profundis*. In 1899, he finished his work called *The Ballad of Reading Gaol*, a poem of his experience of suffering in prison, about the injustice of the death penalty and the hanging of Charles Thomas Wooldridge⁵, published under the name C.₃.₃.⁶. [16] [17]

He travelled around Europe for the rest of his life, especially to Paris, with friends and stayed in hotels. On 30 November 1900, Wilde died of a secondary infection through meningitis in a hotel room in Paris with presence of his friends. He was buried at Père Lachaise Cemetery in Paris. [18]

⁴ For example, Hallward's reaction to the news about Gray's engagement (*The Picture of Dorian Gray*, p. 86).

⁵ A man who was executed in Reading Goal for his wife's murder.

⁶ The name of his cell block.

2.1 Wilde's inspiration and motivation

The very first Wilde's inspiration was his mother, who influenced him in languages and his style of writing. When she had translated Wilhelm Meinhold's gothic horror novel *Sidonia the Sorceress*, Wilde read it with enthusiasm and drew on it for the darker elements of his own work. [19] Wilde got a great amount of inspiration from his family. Mysteries around birth, orphans, and abandoned infants were derived from his experience of his father's family. For example, in *The Picture of Dorian Gray*, Dorian Gray started to be interested in a young woman of illegitimate birth, Jack Worthing's birth in *The Importance of Being Earnest* or unmarried Arbuthnot's mother in *A Woman of No importance*. The names of his characters were carefully chosen as the names in Wilde's family. For example, Lord Henry Wotton in *Dorian Gray* said that names are everything. [20] For that reason, Dorian's surname should be delivered from Wilde's nickname "Grey Crow". [21] He used his experiences with his cousin when he grounded geography and history into the character of Cecily in *The Importance of Being Earnest*. [22]

Also, his opinions appeared in the works, for instance Wilde said Miles that he would never speak to him again as long as he lived and the same sentence was used by Dorian Gray to threaten Basil Hallward (*The Picture of Dorian Gray*). [23] His life attitudes were also showed in his works, whether it was homosexuality and free life or the love of his family. Wilde also parodied his quality (*The Importance of Being Earnest* – tendency to look for contradictions).

Not only family, but friends, people who Wilde met and their varied works inspired him, too. During his life, he got to know many famous writers. The dark side, mystery, horror environment, gloomy ambience – he should draw these elements from the works of Edgar Allan Poe, Charles Baudelaire, Bram Stoker, Lord Ronald Gower or Shakespeare. He found inspiration in the behaviour of his friends, such as his friend Henry S. Bunbury from Trinity College, who gave his name to Algernon in

The Importance of Being Earnest. [24] When he wrote *The Picture of Dorian Gray*, he was inspired by many sources, for instance Stevenson's *Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde*, Goethe's *Faust*, Balzac's *La Peau de chagrin* or Meinhold's *Sidonia* and Shakespeare's *The Tempest*. [25]

One of the most important influences and inspiration is also the era, when Wilde lived. Victorian era is characterized by rapid change and developments in nearly every sphere - from advances in medical, cultural, scientific and technological knowledge to changes in population growth and location. This was period of novels, theatre plays, poems and critical writing in literature. Wilde was impacted by Decadence, Aesthetic movement, Symbolism and dandyism (dandy).

Firstly, Decadence represents a movement which was inspired by gothic novel, aesthetic movement and symbolism. It leads off Romanticism. In literature, decadent attitude reflected pessimistic moods, feelings of worthlessness, downfall, morbidity, mysticism, erotic glut, narcissism and taboos, too. The decadent life is often connected with bohemianism, not binding sex and alcohol. Decadence emphasised the peculiarity of art ("art for art's sake"). [26] Wilde is considered as one of the main writers of this movement. One of the most famous examples of Wilde's literary output is *The Picture of Dorian Gray* - including the effort to view and live life as if it was art.

Secondly, Aestheticism is a movement which looks for beauty. Aestheticism puts more emphasis on creating art and often relies on complex forms of poetry that are at a high technical level (the French verse forms), such as rhyme and repetition. The poems always express a thought. It deals with beauty, with the perception of beauty and art. The main ideas of Aestheticism are "escape, fantasy, detachment, passivity, reverie, and harmony". [27] Morality is not taken into account. For instance, this movement is expressed in *Salome* (1891). [27]

Thirdly, Symbolism appears predominantly in myth and fairy tales. Symbols should be expressed indirectly (by means of metaphors, similes,

allegory) and should allow the reader to guess the secret hidden inside the thing. Symbol is an object, colour or something that represents some idea. For example, In *The Picture of Dorian Gray* Wilde used these symbols: *The Opium Den* represents Dorian's dirty mind, *the yellow book* represents injurious influence how art should affect an individual. [28]

And finally, Dandy is the person who takes care of his physical appearance, speaks using cultivate language, puts emphasis on leisure hobbies and aims to imitate an aristocratic lifestyle and acclaims himself with nonchalance. Dandyism is close to spirituality and cultivating idea of beauty, about thinking, feelings and passions. Dandy attracts audience and it should be in a negative way, such as scandals and gossips. Dandyism is often perceived as a political protest against the society. Wilde was dandy and he often attributed it to the characters in his works, for instance Dorian Gray, Lord Henry Wotton (*The Picture of Dorian Gray*), Lord Goring (*An Ideal Husband*) and Algernon (*The Importance of being Earnest*). [29]

2.2 Wilde's Works

Oscar Wilde is an author of various literary genres: essays, poems, fiction, short stories, novel and the last but not least, plays. [30]

Fiction

- Novel:

The Picture of Dorian Gray (1890)

- Stories:

The Canterville Ghost (1887),

The Happy Prince and Other Tales (1888, fairy tales),

The Portrait of Mr. W. H. (1889)

A House of Pomegranates (1891, fairy tales)

Lord Arthur Savile's Crime (1891)

Intentions (essays, 1891)

Complete Short Fiction (published in 2003)

Essays

The Decay of Lying (1889)

The Soul of man under Socialism (1891)

Inventions (1891) which include *The Critic as artist*, *The Decay of Lying*, *Pen, Pencil and Poisson*, *The Truth of Masks*

De Profundis (1905) (written 1895-97)

Poems

Ravenna (1878)

Poems (1881)

The Sphinx (1894)

Poems in Prose (1894)

The Ballad of Reading Gaol (1898)

Plays

Vera, or the Nihilists (1880)

The Duchess of Padua (1883)

Lady Windermere's Fan (1892)

A Florentine Tragedy (*La Sainte Courtisane* 1893)

A Woman of No Importance (1893)

Salomé (1894)

An Ideal Husband (1895)

The Importance of Being Earnest (1895)

3 THE PICTURE OF DORIAN GRAY

The Picture of Dorian Gray is one of Wilde's most famous books. It was firstly published as a short story in *Lippincott's Monthly Magazine*⁷ in July, 1890. [31] The work was criticised for homoerotic passages. Wilde recast the book, extended chapters from 13 to 20; added the preface and then he republished it one year later.

3.1 Plot

The story begins when Lord Henry Wotton visits his friend and artist Basil Hallward, who paints the picture of a young man and at the same time his muse, Dorian Gray. Lord Wotton admires this painting, becomes interested in this man and hears the story about Hallward's first meeting with Gray. Wotton remembers that he has heard this name before from the tale of his aunt, Lady Agatha. Later on, Wotton meets Gray even despite Hallward fears of Wotton's cynicism and sentiments and his effects on Gray. Wotton and Gray speak together during the finishing of Gray's portrait. In the middle of finalisation of the painting, Gray and Wotton go into garden, where Wotton admires Gray's beauty and youth and tells him his attitude about life.

Gray is not satisfied with the completed portrait because he recalled Wotton's words about beauty and age. It will remain young even if he grows older and his face will change. He curses his fate and promises his soul. Hallward is not satisfied with the painting and tries to destroy it, but Gray stops him and then, they agree on giving the painting to Gray as a gift. [32]

After meeting with Dorian Gray, Henry Wotton asks his uncle, Lord Fermor, about Gray's past. After hearing his uncle out, Wotton finds Gray's past very interesting and becomes more fascinated with him. Shortly after, Wotton and Gray meet in Lady Agatha's dinner, organized for London's elite. Gray is captivated by Wotton's sympathising with

⁷ A literary magazine which was published in Philadelphia from 1868 to 1915.

everything and selfishness and leaves dinner with Wotton without realising his plan to visit Hallward.

Several months later, Gray starts to be interested in Sibyl Vane, an actress who plays Shakespeare's heroines in repertoire of a cheap London theatre. She calls Gray "Prince Charming". After Gray's narration about Sibyl Vane, Henry Wotton decides to see her playing in *Romeo and Juliet*⁸. A few days earlier, Hallward sent his portrait to Gray. The same night Gray gets engaged to Sibyl Vane. Sibyl's family, her brother James and mother, are not enthusiastic and doubt about the relationship with Gray. James even promises to kill Gray if he aggrieves Sibyl. Hallward expresses his misgivings about their marriage, too.

However, Sibyl plays the Shakespearean heroine Rosalind (in *As You Like It*⁹) and she performs it badly. Dorian finds out that his relationship is not strong, he is heartbroken and realises that he did not start to be interested in her owing to her personality, but instead because of her beauty and acting. He spurns her in a cruel way and tells her that he wishes to never see her again. His portrait starts to change its appearance the same night; he remembers his desires that the painting would bear his mark of age and life instead of himself. The face in the portrait has become crueller. Lord Wotton says Gray that Sibyl committed suicide by poison. Gray is benumbed and after Wotton's speech, he decides to live life full of passion, wild joy and sins. [33]

Next day, Hallward comes to express his commiseration to Gray, but he uses sentences and opinions very similar to Wotton's one. Hallward discovers Gray's portrait and is frightened. Afterwards, Gray decides to hide the picture in the schoolroom so that nobody else finds it again.

Gray gets under influence of a yellow book, French novel, which was a gift from Wotton. He changes his attitudes and behaviour. Years

⁸ Shakespeare's play which premiered in 1595.

⁹ A comedy written in 1599 by Shakespeare.

pass and Gray is still so young and beautiful as he was at the time he got the painting. He pursues beautiful things like perfumes or music. Under the dissipated life, his portrait deteriorates, such as the horror of it goes. During the years, he has many relationships, for example with Gladys, the Duchess of Monmouth and the sister of Geoffrey Clouston. [34]

In the evening of Gray's thirty-eight birthday (the ninth of November), Gray meets Hallward before his six-month trip to Paris. Hallward fears of Gray's bad influence on his relationships, which ended catastrophically, some of young boys he knew committed suicide. Hallward wants to see Gray's soul and he agrees with it. He shows Hallward the forbidden portrait. Hallward, horrified, begs him to atone. Gray says that it is too late to atone and kills Hallward with a knife in a convulsion of rage. The next morning, Gray sends for his lover, Alan Campbell, and tells him about the murder he committed. Under the threat of divulgence of their relationship, Gray blackmails Campbell to get rid of the body with chemicals. After Gray's long persuasion, he finally agrees. Then, when Gray comes into the room where the body should be, it is not there and there is the smell of acid in the room. [35]

At the night of the murder, Gray goes to an opium house due to his bad conscience and he meets there a brother of Sibyl Vane, who attempts to avenge his sister. Gray escapes to the countryside, when Sibyl's brother is shot during hunting and Gray takes a moment to feel safe now. He decides to change his life, but he cannot confess his sins. He believes that his good intentions are reflected in his portrait, but nothing better happens, except the eyes and wrinkles around the mouth. Gray gets angry and he tries to destroy the image with the same knife he killed Hallward with.

The servants who hear the sound go into a room and there they find an old man's body on the ground, with a very disfigured face, with a knife stuck in the heart and untouched picture of a young and beautiful

Gray. The old man is eventually recognised by the ring on his hand as Dorian Gray. [36]

3.2 Main characters

3.2.1 Dorian Gray

In the beginning of the novel, Gray personifies pure beauty and youth, which is something wonderful and extraordinary. His curly gold hair, blue eyes and red lips ravish people around him. He is elegantly dressed every time. After meeting Henry Wotton, Gray doubts about his beauty and youth and he starts to change under his influence - takes over his sentiments about life and society. The same influence Wotton has on him, Gray has on his vicinity. However, he is afraid of the ephemerality of loveliness and youthfulness. He curses his fate and pledges his soul in order to be able to live without bearing the physical burdens of aging and sinning. All of it is possible to see in the following abstracts:

“Yes, he was certainly wonderfully handsome, with his finely curved scarlet lips, his frank blue eyes, his crisp gold hair.”

“The scarlet would pass away from his lips and the gold steal from his hair.” ...

“Dorian Gray lifted his golden head from the pillow.” ...

“Suddenly she caught a glimpse of golden hair and laughing lips, and in an open carriage with two ladies Dorian Gray drove past.” ...

“Was it to become a monstrous and loathsome thing, to be hidden away in a locked room, to be shut out from the sunlight that had so often touched to brighter gold the waving wonder of its hair?” ...

“Gold hair, blue eyes, and rose-red lips — they all were there.” [37]

“He had changed, too-was strangely melancholy at times, appeared almost to dislike hearing music, and would never himself play, giving as his excuse, when he was called upon, that he was so absorbed in science ...” [38]

Gray considers the moment of the first change of the portrait as the first major crisis. His precipitous demise starts after thinking about Sibyl's death as about an artistic deed more than tragedy which he caused. During the years, it seems he has lack of conscience and committing sins leaves indelible blemishes on his soul (the picture). The turning point is the murder of his friend Hallward, by which he realises his guilty. At the end, he does not bear the oppression of his soul and decides to deal with it once and for all.

“Dorian Gray smiled. There was a curl of contempt in his lips. ‘Come upstairs, Basil,’ he said, quietly. ‘I keep a diary of my life from day to day, and it never leaves the room in which it is written. I shall show it to you if you come with me.’ [...] ‘That shall be given to you upstairs. I could not give it here. You will not have to read long.’ ” [39]

“When he closed his eyes, he saw again the sailor's face peering through the mist-strained glass, and horror seemed once more to lay its hand upon his heart.” [40]

“What sort of life would his be, if day and night, shadows of his crime were to peer at him from silent corners, to mock him from secret places, to whisper in his ear as the feast, to wake him [...] in wild of madness he had killed his friend [...] terrible and swathed in scarlet, rose the image of his sin. When Lord Henry came in at six o'clock, he found him crying as one whose heart will break.” [41]

3.2.2 Basil Hallward

He is a very talented painter, open minded, without corrupted soul. He is an eternal idealist, who believes in the goodness of mankind. He believes in Gray, in his goodness and he is also more than his very good friend. After painting Gray's portrait, he fears that he gave too much of himself into the portrait as it is described in the following abstract:

“The painter considered for few moments. ‘He likes me,’ he answered, after a pause, ‘I know he likes me. Of course I flatter him dreadfully. I find a strange pleasure in saying things to him that I know I shall be sorry for having said. As a rule, he is charming to me, and we sit in the studio and talk of a thousand things. Now and then, however, he is horribly thoughtless and seems to take a real delight in giving me pain. Then I feel, Harry, that I have given away to put in his coat, a bit of decoration to charm his vanity, an ornament for summer’s day.’” [42]

He tries to protect Gray, voicing his objection to Lord Wotton’s harmful influence over Gray and defending Gray even after their relationship has clearly dissolved.

“Don’t try to influence him. Your influence would be bad. The world is wide, and has many marvellous people in it. Don’t take away from me the one person who gives to my art whatever charm it possesses, my life as an artist depends on him. Mind, Harry, I trust you.” [43]

Before his trip to Paris, he tries to save Gray’s soul because he still believes that he does not have only beauty but he is truthful and loving.

“You must give me some answer, some answers to these horrible charges that are made against you. If you tell me that they are absolutely untrue from beginning to end, I shall believe you. [...] My God! Don’t tell me that you are bad, and corrupt, and shameful.” [44]

“It is never too late, Dorian. Let us kneel down and try if we cannot remember a prayer. Isn’t there a verse somewhere, ‘Thought our sins be as scarlet, yet I will make them as snow?’” [45]

3.2.3 Lord Henry Wotton

In comparison to Basil Hallward, Lord Henry, called Harry, is a selfish aristocrat, pleasure-seeker and very good speaker with original attraction. But he is a well-read man, intelligent, with brilliant wit and rhetorical skill [46], and he lives a staid life. Thus, it is not a surprise that

Gray falls under his influence. His philosophy is radical, too much shocking for society. Though he is married to Lady Victoria (his marriage eventually ends with divorce); he spends so much time with Gray and Hallward in theatres, soirées, clubs and operas. Until the end, he does not realise what effect he has on people, he himself fails to realise the implications of most of the things he says.

“ ‘There is no such thing as a good influence, Mr. Gray. All influence is immoral-immoral from the scientific point of view.’

‘Why?’

‘Because to influence a person is to give him one’s own soul. He 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.’” [47]

He presents ideas about moral and immoral things; he alleges that there is not such a thing as immoral or moral, only people make things as that. He still believes that if people look like haven, they should be good with no corrupted soul. He does not believe Gray could be a killer because his face is still so young. [48] Wotton’s character is constant during the whole story, though Hallward’s and Gray’s characters are changing, so it seems that Wotton is absolutely right at the beginning of the novel and not at the end, where it is so difficult to accept what Wotton says; his philosophy seems to be shallow.

3.2.4 Sibyl Vane

She is a young, beautiful and innocent actress, who comes from a poor family, from London’s slums. Gray starts to be interested in her when he sees her in play; he claims she is the best actress he has ever seen. Sibyl’s interest in Gray is reflected in her acting because she is aware of the falseness of emotions on the stage. However, after her fiasco, Gray falls out with her and she commits suicide by poison under the oppression of dissolution.

3.2.5 James Vane

James Vane is Sibyl's brother, a sailor, who promises to kill Gray in case of his sister be harmed by Gray. After his overseas service in Australia, he tries to find Gray and fulfil his vow. He finds him eventually, even though he knows Gray only as Prince Charming. He wants to shoot him but James is shot first by accident.

3.2.6 Other characters

Alan Campbell is one of Gray's intimate friends. He helps him eliminate Hallward's body. He severs relation with him because of Gray's sullied repute. After helping Gray with Hallward's body, he commits suicide.

Lady Victoria Wotton is Henry's wife, who appears in novel when Gray is waiting for Hallward. She often goes to church and she is romantic. In the end Henry divorces her.

3.3 Setting

The novel takes place in the second half of the 19th century in London. The era is called Victorian era. The author never mentioned the exact date, but Gray reads a decadent yellow book, which is a version of Huysmans's *À rebours*¹⁰, which was published in 1884 [49], it means that Dorian must be living some time after 1884. Dorian moves between two parts of London, representing two sides of him. In the first part of the novel, it is West End, which represents him as a gallant, fashionable and cultured aristocrat. There is the higher society when he attends theatres, operas, and clubs. In the second part of the novel, it is East End, which represents Dorian as a man with spoiled soul, trying to forget about his criminal life. On the contrary, this is a place with slums, opium houses, near the dock. Thus, there is obvious double face and decadent view of society.

¹⁰ A decadent novel by French writer Joris-Karl Huysmans which deals with principal character, who despises a high society in the 19th society, and Symbolism.

Every era is also characterised by the style of clothing. The Victorian fashion had various trends. In the 1870s, in lady's fashion, uncorseted dresses were set up for informal entertaining. Ladies wore slimmer dresses without hoop skirts. The dresses had corseted torso and the crinoline was substituted by bustle. They were complemented by small hat. In the 1880s, riding habits and hunting costumes with ankle skirt were popular. In casuals, long jacket and skirt could not miss. The 1890s were characterised by collar stays, bodices and very slim waist. Evening dresses were more luxurious.

The men's fashion had specific coat for various avocations. Blazer was introduced from 1890s. The casuals were stricter. They wore frock coat, waistcoat or vest, light trousers during the daytime and dark coat and trouser with cravats or neck ties, later bow in the evening. In the 1870s, sack and frock coats became shorter. Formal evening dress consisted of dark suit, white shirt and bow tie, or jacket or tuxedo during 1880s. Men shoes were with higher heels and a thin toe. On a head, they wore top hats or working class had bowler hats. Most men had short hair and a bearded face until the end of 1880s. [50]

4 FILMS

As mentioned before, there have been several movie adaptations of Wilde's book *The Picture of Dorian Gray*. The following subchapters will be dedicated to the analysis and comparison of three chosen movie versions of the legendary story. Films, compared to books, interpret a view mostly in one way. Books give readers more freedom in terms of imagination. On the contrary, films use other methods how to capture the audience. For example, music often illustrates the story without any further explanation or there is the movie camera movement, which gives us some feelings as well. It is true also about the following movies.

4.1 The Picture of Dorian Gray (1945)

Firstly, we should discuss the oldest version of *The Picture of Dorian Gray*. It is directed and written by Albert Lewin. It is black-and-white film with a few scenes made in colour to represent the symbolic meaning of evil. The film won the Academy Award for the Best Black-and-White Cinematography, the Golden Globe for the Best Supporting Actress (Angela Lansbury who played Sibyl Vane) and Hugo Awards (the Best Black-and-White Dramatic Presentation) in 1946. It also received two more Oscar nominations (Best Art Direction-Interior Decoration and Best Actress in a Supporting Role). It is 110 minute long and it premiered on 1st March 1945 in New York City. The film is categorised as drama, fantasy and horror. Dorian Gray is played by Hurt Hatfield, Henry Wotton by George Sanders and Basil Hallward by Lowell Gilmore. [51]

4.1.1 Plot

The story begins in London in 1886. Henry Wotton who reads *Fleurs du mal*¹¹ during the journey goes to visit his friend, Basil Hallward - a very gifted painter. Hallward does not want to be disturbed because he is waiting for his new muse for finishing the painting. However, Henry

¹¹ French poetry written by Charles Baudelaire.

Wotton goes inside and then, he sees the portrait of a very handsome man. His name is Dorian Gray. Wotton starts to be interested in Gray. Hallward is afraid that Wotton's influence will have damaging consequences, especially his cynicism. Hallward talks to Wotton about Gray and Henry Wotton remembers him from the narration of his aunt Agatha. Gray comes to Hallward earlier and meets up with Wotton.

While Hallward finishes portrait, Gray listens to Wotton's ideas. Wotton realises that Gray's youth is fugacious and Gray starts to fear. When the portrait is finished, a young girl comes into the drawing room. This is Gladys, Hallward's niece who is very interested in Gray. Gray steals her heart and she wishes Gray does not change until she grows up. Gladys helps Hallward with his signature on the painting. She writes letter *g* on it. For the first time, when Gray looks at his portrait he wishes the portrait ages instead of him, his face will be still young, so he gives his soul to evil. Since there is the statue of Egyptian cat, Wotton says that it is very probable it comes true.

Under the Wotton's influence, Gray starts to be courageous and discovers new places. In the poorest part of London, he comes to the small cheap vaudeville called *The Two Turtles* in which he finds a beautiful singer Sibyl Vane who enchants him. She sings a song *The Little Yellow Bird*. Gray walks there every day, he wants Sibyl to sing only for him and he buys her a small yellow bird. Sibyl's brother, James Vane called Jim, is not enthusiastic about their relationship and expresses his fear. Before his journey to Australia as a sailor, he promises to kill Gray if he hurts his sister.

Gray gets engaged to Sibyl and then, he tells the news to Wotton in the evening in Lady Agatha's house. Wotton and Basil decide to see Sibyl personally. Henry Wotton expresses the suspicion of Sibyl and induces Gray to test the honour of Sibyl. Gray invites Sibyl to his house, he reads the poem written by Oscar Wilde and unfortunately, she fails the test. Gray writes letter to Sibyl that he never wants to see her again and

as compensation, he sends her a sum of money. After writing the letter, he goes to see his portrait and it has the touch of cruelty. He recalls his words and hides the portrait. Then, he realises he wants to marry Sibyl and writes another letter to her. However, Henry Wotton comes to say Gray that Sibyl was found dead, lying on the floor in the cabaret. Wotton asks Gray without any marks of sadness if he wants to go to opera. Even though Gray blames himself for Sibyl's death, he goes to opera with Wotton. The same evening Hallward visits Gray to condole him but he is with Henry. [52]

In the morning, Hallward comes again and he hears answers and deep influence of Henry in Gray's speech. Gray mentions a yellow decadent book which he got from Wotton. Hallward gives him the book about Buddha and wants Dorian to read it. Before Hallward leaves, he wants to see his portrait, which he is going to exhibit. Gray, full of fear and voices, desires not to show the picture and Hallward respects his wish. Gray hides the portrait in the old schoolroom and locks it.

As years pass, the terrible rumours circulate about Gray. Gray is seen mainly in the East End and poorer parts of London. He enjoys the company of women as well as men and he has a few intimate relationships. Most people he met had ruined lives and many of them ended tragically. From time to time, he worried that someone saw his portrait. He often visits drug houses. One of the relationships he has is with Gladys, who started to be interested in him as a child but she has a boyfriend, David Stone, now.

In the eve of Dorian's 38th birthday, Basil Hallward comes to visit Gray before his half-year trip to Paris. He is waiting for him two hours since Dorian comes. Basil talks about him, he still does not believe that these rumours are true, he is afraid of his unspotted soul. Before he leaves, he would like to see his portrait again. At first, Gray is sheepish and full of evil fear but he shows it to him. Basil does not believe it and

tries to save Gray's soul. However, Dorian affirms that it is too late and kills him by knife. The picture changes again. [53]

Being afraid that he will be suspicious, he slips away from the house and makes it so that someone sees him coming. He knows he has to get rid of the body, and thus, he invites his former friend Allen Campbell to dispose Basil's body. Campbell does not want to do it at first, but after threats that Dorian reveals his relationship with him and his sexual orientation, Campbell agrees. Later, Gray makes a proposal to Gladys and hears that Allen Campbell shot himself.

James Vane is still looking for Dorian Gray for years however he does not know his face or real name, only his nickname Sibyl gave him - *Sir Tristan*. One day, he hears this name in a drug house and he starts to chase him. He chases him right to countryside to Selby¹², where James is accidentally shot during the hunting.

After the accident, Gray realises how many sins he has done and decides to go back to London alone. He sends a letter to Gladys in which he explains that he must go. Meanwhile, David Stone confides his fears about Gray and tells his company what he saw in the room where Gray has a hidden image, after he had procured the key of the room. According to a special signature of Basil (letter *g* which Gladys wrote), they begin to realise what had happened and set off for Gray to London.

Meanwhile, Gray is locked in a room with a picture and under the weight of his conscience and the sins which he cannot bear for more; he stabs the knife that he killed Basil with at the painting. But soon the portrait starts to change to its original appearance and Gray falls to the ground. The knife remains in the painting. On the floor, there is old and disfigured Gray. Wotton, Gladys, David and servants rush into the room and see Gray's disfigured dead body. [54]

¹² A town and civil parish in North Yorkshire, England.

4.1.2 Main characters

4.1.2.1 Dorian Gray

Beautiful, young and innocent man with unspoiled soul, dark short hair and blue eyes – this is Dorian Gray in the beginning of the film. He can play the piano. When he is innocent and unspoiled, there is played a song *The Little Yellow Bird* in a musical background. After he is spoiled by Henry's ideas, he changes and gets under his spell completely. He thinks that when someone loses his beauty, he loses everything. [55] Henry's thoughts are visible when Basil is asking him about the evening when he was in opera instead of being at home and should grieve about Sibyl. [56]

He is without emotions and does not realise his deeds until Sibyl's death and the change of portrait. He starts to be afraid that someone will see his changing. And this feeling is stronger after killing Basil, he has doubt about finding his body, not about the fact that he killed someone. [57] However, Basil's, Allen's and James's death are his last deeds. At the end, he does not bear the oppression of his soul and decides to deal with it once and for all. He writes a letter to Sibyl and he is not able to live with himself. [58] In the old school room, there are children's cubes with letters which symbolise the initials of Gray's victims, people who had tragic life owing to Gray and of course Gray himself. [59]

At first, when Gray sees his portrait and expresses his desire and every time when the picture is changed, the evil and the sins are demonstrated by a different colour. The picture is coloured under the oppression of the wrong acts which he did. [60]

4.1.2.2 Basil Hallward

Basil Hallward is a very talented painter with light curly short hair and dark eyes, who finds Gray and he paints his portrait under the spell of his beauty. He gives everything to his portrait and a part of himself, as well. Basil believes in love, truth and unspoiled souls. He is interested in

secrets. He believes that someone who is so beautiful must be also merciful and has goodness in the heart. And this is the reason why Basil believes in Gray till the end. He tries to save his soul till his own death. [61]

He thinks that Wotton's ideas are only a pose, his version of cynicism. His influence on Gray is greatly deep and Basil tries to save Gray and everyone from evil and decadent ideas. [62]

4.1.2.3 Lord Henry Wotton

Lord Henry Wotton is a very elegant, blue-eyed, dark-haired man with moustache and goatee. His ideas are very strong and decadent, full of cynicism. He is fascinated by Gray's beauty and youth. He has got very strong opinion about marriage and women. He advocates the notion that women are there for the veneration and botheration of men. [63]

He is a very intelligent and educated person. He believes that someone pure and young as Gray cannot commit crimes. He does not change a lot during the story. Till the end, he does not believe Gray could do such terrible things.

4.1.2.4 Sibyl Vane

Sibyl Vane is a young, pretty singer in the cabaret *The Two Turtles*, who starts to be interested in Gray when he watches her performance every day. She is enchanted by him. [64] She agrees to marry Gray, however she did not pass Gray's test and after reading his letter, she committed suicide by poisoning herself. She has long blonde-dyed hair, brown eyes and painted face.

4.1.2.5 James Vane

James Vane is Sibyl's brother with dark hair and tattooed body; a sailor who travels to Australia and before it, he promises to kill Gray if something happens to Sibyl. He tries to find Gray and he pursues him all the way to countryside where he is shot dead by accident.

4.1.2.6 Other characters

David Stone is a man who is in relationship with Gladys and he tries to stop her from a wedding with Gray. It is obvious that he has deep feelings for her. He reveals Gray's secret about locked room with the portrait to Henry Wotton and Gladys.

Gladys Hallward is Basil's very pretty young niece with brown hair and blue eyes, who started to be interested in Dorian Gray when she was a young girl. She is so fascinated by him and she is ready to marry him in spite of the fact that he had a relationship with David Stone before it.

Allen Campbell is one of the men who are in relationship with Gray and after threatening of revealing their relationship, he agrees to get rid of Basil's body. He has got light hair and wears moustache. He shoots himself.

4.1.3 Setting

The main part of the story is set in London. The story begins in 1886. West End, the place of higher social class, is presented as the place of Gray's unspoiled soul and angel face. In this part of London, there are beautiful houses with large rooms and servants, theatres and the clubs for aristocrats. Gray's corrupted soul is represented by East End, the poorest part of London. The working class and the poorest inhabitants live there. Slums and houses with drugs and near docks are places which Gray visits frequently when his sins start to poison his soul.

The clothes used in the movie were typical for this era too - the suits for men or more social tuxedo with a white shirt and a narrow tie. The coat was completed by a top hat and men from lower social class wore only hat and simple suits. Women wore longer dresses without deep neckline, with a slim waist. Some of them wore padding in the hind part. The lower classes had less graced dresses.

4.2 The Picture of Dorian Gray (2005)

The newer movie adaptation of *The Picture of Dorian Gray* is written and directed by David Rosembaum. It is 90-minute long and it premiered on 1st December 1991 in the USA and in June, 2005, it had a premiere in Hungary. The informal title for this film is *Portrait of Evil*. It was made in Sofia, Bulgaria. The film is classified as horror and drama. Dorian Gray is played by John Dushamel, Harry Wotton by Branden Waugh and Basil Ward by Rainer Judd. The film is divided into five parts: Influence, Romance, Sin, Revenge and Redemption. [65]

4.2.1 Plot

The film begins when Gray's grandfather Kelso shoots Gray's mother and himself in the derangement of mind. Gray's father died after a nuclear explosion.

Ten years later (Chapter I, Influence), Harry Wotton comes to Basil Ward who is painting a new portrait of a young man. Wotton starts to question Ward about Gray, but she does not want to tell him about Gray. After Wotton's urge, Ward tells Wotton about her first meeting with Gray. She came across Gray when she attended Loberg's soiree six months ago. She was fascinated by his beauty. She is afraid that she gives too much of herself into his picture. Wotton and Basil walk in the garden and Ward begs Wotton not to spoil him by his ideas of life. They come back to Ward's house and there is Dorian Gray. Wotton is fascinated by him in the same way as Ward.

They go to the beach to finish the portrait. Gray lies on the rock, wearing the swimming suit. Ward does the last changes to the portrait; Wotton enchants Gray with his cynicism and the ideas about beauty as the form of genius. Then, Ward finishes the picture but Gray is not so sure if he wants the picture because it will remain the same even if he grows older and older. He curses his youth and then, he sells his soul to

the devil - his portrait will age instead of him. Few minutes later, everybody swims in the sea.

After 6 months (Chapter II, Romance); Gray goes to the theatre to see beautiful Sibyl Vane in opera. He is interested in her very much. Sibyl Vane is enchanted by him, too. She says her brother James about a beautiful man who is her "Prince Charming". James does not like him and promises her that he kills Gray if he hurts her. James is a soldier and goes to the new world. Because of his sister, he wants to stay, but he leaves eventually.

Gray is waiting for Wotton in his house. Wotton's wife, Laura, tries to seduce Gray. When Wotton comes, it is evident that their marriage was not well-chosen. Gray tells Wotton about his relationship with Sibyl Vane, but Wotton gives him a lecture about marriage instead of understanding. Gray regrets he told him about Sibyl.

Few days later, Ward and Wotton go by car to theatre where Sibyl plays. Wotton says Gray is engaged to Sibyl. Ward does not believe it, she would like to have Gray only for herself. Wotton is not convinced by their marriage, too. In the evening, they are sitting in the theatre. They watch Sibyl, but her acting is not as excellent as Gray presented. People go away from the theatre. She plays like a puppet.

After the performance (Chapter III, Sin), Gray goes to the dressing room. He realises he is not interested in her anymore. He has a quarrel with her about their relationship. He realises he likes only her acting and the beauty in the performance. He regrets he had something with her and he never wants to see her again. Sibyl Vane commits suicide by hanging on the stage.

Gray goes home; he does not know what Sibyl did. He finds some changes on the picture and starts to be afraid about his beauty; he tries to fix his relationship with her, he writes excusatory letter to her. In the morning, Wotton comes to say him the news about Sibyl, about his divorce and gives him another book. Out of fear that someone will see his

portrait, he hides it in the children's room. Gray does not believe that it is true; he blames himself for her death. Wotton gives him advice to forget about Sibyl and if he wants he can organise a lawn party. Gray agrees and one week later, he organises a small lawn party.

Basil Ward comes to condole to Gray; however, he does not mourn Sibyl's death. Ward tries to save his soul and has a word with Gray. However, Gray is spoiled too much with Wotton's ideas. Ward wants to see her picture, she decides to exhibit it. Gray assures Ward she will never see his portrait, but Ward still believes that he will see it one day.

A few days later, at the meeting with Ward and Wotton, Gray learns that Wotton and Ward will get married and that they want him to be a witness. On the wedding day, Gray and Ward have an involvement in the Orthodox Church. However, Gray tells it to Wotton during the ceremony and the wedding is cancelled. The picture changes again.

A few months later (Chapter IV, Revenge), Ward would like to talk with Gray about his discredited reputation before her departure to Paris. She does not think that the rumours are true. Gray could not be such a monster with the beauty in his face. She fears she does not know him as she thought.

Gray goes to the drug house, which is full of prostitutes and drug pushers. In the same place, there is James Vane, brother of Sibyl, who is still searching for Gray. As soon as Vane heard that someone called Gray, "Prince Charming", in the drug house, he runs behind him and he tries to shoot him. They fight together and then, Vane runs away because he thinks that someone so young could not be about forty years old. Gray picks up the gun and runs away, too. Gray goes to the Wotton's soirée. Then, he drives the car home and crashes twice into Vane's car, which pursues him. Vane is killed by this accident.

Gray has nightmares every night under the oppression of his sins. Ward comes to him; she would like to speak to him as the last attempt of his salvation before her leaving. Gray is surprised; he does not want to

talk about himself, he gets angry when she asks him to see her portrait. Gray shows it to her and few moments later, Ward collapses crying on the ground, she tries to save his soul that is already spoiled. He rejects everything he did and shoots her with the gun which he purloined from James Vane.

Gray sends for Wotton to help him with the Ward's body. Wotton does not believe him that he committed the crime. Gray menaces him with a threatening letter. They throw Ward's body, wrapped in the cloth and encumbered by books, which Gray received from Wotton, from the yacht into the sea.

Wotton is desolated (Chapter V, Redemption); he does not think that Gray could be so heartless and ruthless. Gray goes up the stairs. There are his sins in his mind, the pictures of crimes which he committed. He enters the room with his picture and shoots himself by the gun he killed Ward with. On the floor, there is a dead body with the bullet in his hearth. The picture changes into the original appearance for the last time.

4.2.2 Main characters

4.2.2.1 Dorian Gray

Dorian Gray is a blonde-haired, blue-eyed, young man with the dreams and ideals of beautiful and unspoiled world. However, only until the day he meets Wotton. At the beginning, he is very naive. He believes everything Wotton says. He has a panic-stricken fear of the loss of beauty, which is more important for him than his conscience. [66] He has a comradely relationship with Ward and Wotton. Gradually, he changes his nature and adopts the habits and thoughts from Wotton, his books he gave him, his narrative and the bohemian life style that he leads, even though he is married from the beginning of the story. [67]

In the last years of Gray's life, he visits the dark places with drugs and prostitutes. His mind becomes perverted as his crimes. He becomes

even more helpless when he looks at the changing picture. At the end, he cannot bear the burden of sins and ends his life.

4.2.2.2 Basil Ward

Basil Ward is a blue-eyed, blonde-haired, talented painter who starts to be interested in Gray. She is fascinated by him. She is caring and tries to save him. She has an emotional attachment to him that cannot be overcome and she has a compulsive need to protect him. She even blames herself for Gray's behaviour. [68]

At the beginning, she is interested in Wotton and he knows it. Wotton spends his free time more with Ward than with his own wife. Her nature is calm, selfless, wishing, good-hearted and she does not think only of herself. [69]

4.2.2.3 Harry Wotton

Harry Wotton is a cynical, brown-haired, blue-eyed freethinker. His deep influence affects Gray and he supports him. He is married with Laura but their marriage is free, they do not spend so much time together and they divorce eventually. His heart belongs to Ward and Gray as a friend.

He has a very strong opinion about the marriage that it is not real, it is only because of women's curiosity and men's tiredness. [70] When he goes to say Gray about Sibyl's death, instead of feeling for him, he exhorts him to forget about it and go on. He cannot imagine the feelings which Gray has. [71]

4.2.2.4 Sibyl Vane

Sibyl Vane is a singer in opera. She has got blue eyes and long ginger hair. She starts to be interested in Gray and then, loses the ability of acting because she is not able to express feelings. She means it with Gray very seriously and after his unbalance; she committed suicide by hanging herself in the theatre. She called Gray "Prince Charming".

4.2.2.5 James Vane

James Vane is Sibyl's brother and soldier who tries to find out where Gray is after his sister death. He has got short dark hair and he is not so well dressed. He is obsessed with Gray; he pursues him until his death.

4.2.2.6 Laura Wotton

Laura Wotton is Harry's wife who divorces him. She is independent and long-dark-haired; she provokes Harry and does not have the scruple to seduce Gray.

4.2.3 Setting

The film is set in the second half of the 20th century in Bulgaria near a sea, which is proved by the symbols of peace on the walls near the drug houses, which are typical for the hippie movement that arose in the 1960s in the USA. Clothes are modern and not so strict like in the 19th century. Women wore deeper neckline. The types of cars used in the movie, the car makes as Mercedes and Peugeot, were made in the second half of the 20th century.

4.3 Dorian Gray (2009)

The latest adaptation of Wilde's novel is called *Dorian Gray* and is directed by Oliver Parker and written by Toby Finlay. It is 112 minutes long and it premiered on 9th September 2009 in the UK. It is classified as drama, thriller and fantasy. It was nominated as Best Film in Catalonian International Film Festival in 2009. It was mainly filmed in London. Dorian Gray is played by Ben Barnes, Henry Wotton by Colin Firth and Basil Hallward by Ben Chaplin. [72]

4.3.1 Plot

The story begins with murder of Hallward and after it; Gray throws the travelling chest with death Hallward's body into the river. Then, the

narrator brings the watcher at the very beginning, one year before the murder.

Dorian Gray returns to London to the house of his dead grandfather Kelso. He meets Basil Hallward who decides to paint his portrait. They go together to the soiree which is organised by Henry Wotton. They become friends and Wotton is present when Basil finishes the portrait. Wotton exhorts Hallward to finish portrait quickly and then they can go to the club. In the club, Gray starts to be interested in Sibyl Vane, a young beautiful actress. Gray acquaints himself with Wotton's cynicism and the opinions about life and beauty.

During the last session of finishing of the portrait, Wotton admires Gray's beauty and after Wotton's speaking, Gray promises his soul on the devil's altar in exchange for eternal youth. Everyone looks up to Gray's beauty. Gray walks in the poorest part of London and looks for the young girl who charms him. He finds her in a small royal theatre where she plays in Hamlet. Since then, they spend a lot of time together; Gray goes to see her performances, pays compliments to her, until she succumbs to him.

Even if he is interested in her, he spends his free time in clubs with men and women with the support of Henry. However, Sibyl does not tolerate it and they argue so much that Gray leaves without emotions. Sibyl is desolated and commits suicide - she drowns herself in the river. The day after, Gray learns about Sibyl from her brother James Vane who tries to strangle Gray. He promises he will kill Gray because he caused Sibyl's death. Gray is in depression and does not believe that it is true. Wotton urges Gray to forget about it. The picture changes for the first time with the touch of cruelty. In the fear of discovering of his changing picture, he hides it in a loft. [73]

Basil Hallward comes to his house for making a condolence; he thinks that Gray will mourn Sibyl's death but he is not. He speaks like Wotton and Hallward does not believe what he hears and sees. Gray

answers without emotions. Gray still visits clubs and enjoys his life with prostitutes; he does not have moral barriers. In the middle of the soiree with prostitutes in Gray's house, Hallward comes to see his portrait because he would like to exhibit it in Paris. They spend the night together instead of his first plan.

After some time, Hallward comes again; he does not believe the lies which are spread in the society. But Gray does not want to talk about himself and he blames him for everything what change him, for every sin he committed. Gray shows him the picture and Hallward does not think that it can be truth. He prays for Gray. But Gray stabs the knife into Hallward's neck with word that he is a God. He stabs him again and again. Then, the picture changes and becomes full of worms and moulds. Gray cuts Hallward's body, compacts it into a chest and throws it into the river and puts the stones in to the chest and throws it into the river, too.

After the crime, Gray behaves as usual. He uses drugs, goes to clubs, alternates women and men and his life starts to pursue him. After discovering Hallward's deformed body, he makes a speech in his burial. Gray decides to travel around the world and presses Wotton to come with him, but Wotton refuses because his wife Victoria is pregnant. Gray writes letters to Wotton from his travelling in which he accuses him of everything he committed. [74]

Gray returns to London few years later and meets Wotton and his family in his house. He gets to know Wotton's daughter who is a young lady now. Even after the years, Wotton is still the same cynic and is glad to see old friend who is still so young. Gray starts to be interested in Wotton's daughter, but Wotton is not enthusiastic about it. From the time of Sibyl's death, Jim Vane chases Gray. They meet face to face in one drug house, but Vane does not recognise him because of his youth.

Gray is pursued by the voices of his sins so much that he decides to say everything to Wotton's daughter, however every time he tries to speak about it with her, she does not want to know it. He is desperate and

goes to confess his sins to the priest. Gray is still chased by Jim, they fight together in the underground and Jim is run over by the underground. Gray visits Miss Wotton and wants to start with a clean slate.

They live together, however Henry Wotton is still searching for Gray's youth. He recalls Gray's promise, which he did a few years ago and tries to move to show his portrait. In the soiree, Gray and Miss Wotton announce that they will move to New York, Henry Wotton uses the time and runs in to the loft where Gray's portrait is stored. Gray stops him and they dispute, Henry finds Hallward's scarf with blood in the box and everything is now clear to him. Gray blames him again of doing a monster of him. They fight together and Wotton sets the picture on fire and locks Gray in the loft. Gray pierces the heart in the picture by a sabre. The portrait changes into his first beautiful appearance. Gray is an awful creature now. Henry Wotton was burnt in the face. He saved the portrait in his house. Only the frame was burned but paintwork stayed without the marks of fire. [75]

4.3.2 Main characters

4.3.2.1 Dorian Gray

Dorian Gray is a brown-haired and dark-eyed man who returns in London to his natal home. In the beginning, he is very naive, innocent and full of desire. His eyes look on the world like the ones of a child. [76] He yields to Wotton influence; he takes over his ideas and a view on life. [77] He behaves in a cruel way and his look in the eyes changes instead of his permanent youth and beauty. [78]

In the end of his life, his sins come to him in the form of retrospection. He changes himself but in the deep, there is a voice that says he is not responsible for everything what he did. He decides in the right way eventually and ends his life. [79]

4.3.2.2 Basil Hallward

Basil Hallward is a painter with dark hair and brown eyes who is enchanted by Gray in a piano concert. He is his muse and he is afraid about him. He believes in goodness, love, God, truth and Gray. He spends a night with him and his emotions are real. He tries to save Gray all the time. He is a counterpoise of Wotton's influence, full of goodness. [80]

Till the end, he does not believe that Gray should be able to commit a crime nor has the soul which is extensive awful as his portrait. [81] For that, he is still so much interested in him.

4.3.2.3 Lord Henry Wotton

Henry Wotton is a man with very strict ideas full of cynicism. He admires beauty and youth but he alleges that it is volatile. He thinks about marriage as about illusion, and the love and life is a change. The person wants to be contented and the society wants the person who is courteous but a polite person is not contented. [82]

He is brown-haired and eyed with beards; his relationship with Gray is very close. Except Gray and Hallward, he does not change so much. His humour, opinions and behaviour are the same all time.

4.3.2.4 Sibyl Vane

Sibyl Vane is a blue-eyed, ginger-haired actress in a small theatre. She plays in Hamlet. She gives everything to Gray and when she finds out that Gray does not do the same for her, she commits suicide.

4.3.2.5 James Vane

James Vane, called Jim, is Sibyl's brother who revenges the death of his sister. He has got brown eyes and dark hair. After the long he chases Gray, he goes mad.

4.3.2.6 Other characters

Lady Victoria Wotton is Henry's wife who loses every ideal related to marriage. After years, she divorces him. She has brown eyes and ginger hair. She represents Wotton's view of marriage in practise.

Miss Wotton is the last Gray's muse and the daughter of Henry and Victoria. She fights for women's right to vote. She is pretty with dark hair and eyes. She is very interested in Gray, he is her muse.

4.3.3 Setting

The story is set in the second half of the 19th century in London. We can say from the fact that there appears underground that was firstly opened in 1863. Then, there were built new stations of the tube. Also, the women right to vote was initiated in 1918 in the United Kingdom, so the film takes place before that. There are seen two faces of London – the poor one with slums and prostitutes (East End) and the rich place with houses full of dinner parties (West End).

The era is also represented by the style of clothing which people wore. Men wore suits with sting tie. For the evening soiree, they wore shorter dinner jacket. The coat was completed by a top hat and men from lower social class wore only hat and simple suits. Women wore richly combed hair; dresses were made of precious cloths and some ladies wore padding in the posterior. Women, from lower classes, wore plain dresses from casual materials.

5 DISCREPANCIES BETWEEN BOOK AND ITS FILM ADAPTATIONS

The aim of this chapter is to briefly summarise the changes in film adaptations in comparison to the book. Firstly, it is necessary to focus on the issue of depiction of the relationships among the main characters of the book. Wilde's story is often discussed in connection to homoerotic images and obscenity. Therefore, when comparing the adaptations of the book, we should focus on this topic as well. The film adaptation of *The Picture of Dorian Gray* tries to preserve the relationship triangle among Dorian Gray, Henry Wotton and Basil Hallward. However, in the 2005 adaptation (see chapter 4.2.1) the theme of homoerotic relationship among them and Gray's other relationships are omitted and replaced by heterosexual relationships.

Further, the important part of the analysis is also the plot of the novel. Directors often deliberately change the storyline to fit their own imagination. The 1945 film adaptation (see chapter 4.1.1) is the most accurate reproduction with an exception of some slight changes related to Gladys Hallward and her family relation. The scene when a servant finds Gray's body was changed, too. There were added some new characters, for example David Stone. The screenwriters of the 2009 film modified some of the main events of the book. As was described in more detail in the chapter 4.3.1, the film differs from the book in the following points: Gray's first meeting with Henry Wotton and Basil Hallward, Gray's first meeting with Sibyl Vane, reasons for her suicide, James Vane's and Sibyl's death, the way in which Gray got rid of Hallward's body, the fact that his body was discovered and last but not least, the way how Gray died. The screenwriters also added one more character, Wotton's daughter, who represented the way in which Gray could save his soul.

Further, the 2005 film adaptation is changed in the most parts of the plot (see chapter 4.2.1). Authors omitted the storyline regarding

homoerotic relationships and the film takes place in the second half of the 20th century in Bulgaria. Also, Ward finished Gray's portrait on the beach and Gray is in swimming suit. The situation related to Sibyl Vane's death, Gray's death, the way how he got rid of Basil's body, James Vane's death were modified, too, and the scene about Wotton's and Ward's wedding and their relationship were completely invented for the film story.

Paying attention to the particular characters, we are also able to find several discrepancies. In every movie adaptation, there is visible Henry Wotton's influence on Gray's behaviour. Dorian Gray in the 1945 adaptation (see chapter 4.1.2.1) is very similar to his depiction in the book. Still, his appearance and his face expression stay the same for all moments in the film. He seems as if his face was completely emotionless, even at times when the rest of his body and eyes expressed some emotion. On the other hand, Dorian Gray in 2005 film adaptation (see chapter 4.2.2.1) is more emotionally accessible. His visage is the same as in the book, but he looks more stressed and nervous; he lacks elegance and respectable behaviour. Dorian Gray from 2009 adaptation (see chapter 4.3.2.1) is elegant and behaves as a real gentleman. His two different faces are obvious in the film and he hides emotions as well. His appearance is different, but it does not spoil viewer's notion of the character at all.

The other main character of the story, Basil Hallward, is most similar to his book character in the 1945 film adaptation (see chapter 4.1.2.2) and the one from 2009 (see chapter 4.3.2.2.). Both are men and painters and sacrifice themselves for Gray's life; both believe in truth, love and Gray. Both are angels of Gray's life. In the second case, there is explicitly said that Hallward spends the night with Gray. This aspect is similar to the 2005 adaptation (see chapter 4.2.2.2), but in this case, Basil Ward is a woman who desires to spend her time with Gray. She admires love, truth and Gray, too, even though in a different way. She is not

elegant and lacks cultural scope of knowledge as in the book and the other two adaptations.

In the book, the next main character, Henry Wotton, is an intelligent, well-educated, distinguished man with desire and fascination for Gray and he is depicted in the same way in 1945 adaptation (see chapter 4.1.2.3) and 2009 (see chapter 4.3.2.3). However, in the 2009 adaptation, his character does not follow the book original. He is part of Gray's sacrifice and because of his daughter, he starts to mistrust Gray. Harry Wotton from 2005 adaptation (see chapter 4.2.2.3) is less educated and less intelligent than in the book. His influence and behaviour, which is not well gentled, are of comradely level.

One of Gray's loves represented by Sibyl Vane is depicted in the same way in every film adaptation. The minor modifications are made in case of her appearance. In 1945 adaptation (see chapter 4.1.2.4) she is blonde and a singer not actress and in the two newer versions she is ginger. Further, the way in which she ends her life is also different in 2005 adaptation (see chapter 4.2.2.4), where she commits suicide by hanging, and in 2009 adaptation, she drowns herself (see chapter 4.3.2.4).

James Vane's character and behaviour are the same as in the book. However, in the 2005 film adaptation, he is presented as soldier (see chapter 4.2.2.5) and in the 2009 adaptation (see chapter 4.2.3.5), his occupation is not specified. His death is also presented in different ways from the book (see chapter 3.2.5). In the older version, he dies in the same way as in the book, however in the 2005 film, he is killed by Gray in the car and in the third film; he is run over by subway.

As for the other characters, the film-makers have given more space to Wotton's wife Victoria, who has rather symbolic importance in the book. In the 1945 film, she appears in the same way as in the book. In the 2005 film, she is portrayed more as a woman who hates her husband and seduces everyone around and is renamed to Laura. In the latest film, she symbolises Wotton's idea of marriage.

In the book, there is very important character of Alan Campbell, who represents the homoerotic theme. In the 1945 film, he is the same as in the book (see chapter 4.1.2.6). However, in the 2005 film he is omitted and in the adaptation of 2009, he appears only twice as Gray's acquaintance.

And finally, we can also pay attention to the setting. The place and era is identical with the book in most cases. However, the 2005 film takes place in Bulgaria in the second half of the 20th century (see chapter 4.2.3). The other two film adaptations copy the book original, the older one (1945) is more precise regarding the cultural studies. This is the reason why 1945 and 2009 films have the same dramatic and horror atmosphere as the book. The 19th century was very specific in this respect.

In conclusion, it is obvious that the directors and screenwriters of the 1945, 2005 and 2009 film adaptations of Wilde's *The Picture of Dorian Gray* made several minor as well as major changes in comparison to the original story; some of them more than the others. However, when watching the three chosen film adaptations, the viewers are able to learn the basic facts about the story. Still, the viewers with the previous knowledge of the book seem to be in advantage because they are able to spot the differences and may find them either relevant or irrelevant.

6 CONCLUSION

The aim of the thesis was to analyse and compare the novel *The Picture of Dorian Gray* and its film adaptations in order to find possible differences and similarities.

The thesis was divided into two parts: theoretical and practical. In the theoretical part, there was described the life of Oscar Wilde and themes, which appeared in his novel. It also dealt with the detailed analysis of the novel *The Picture of Dorian Gray*. The findings of the theoretical part were further applied in the practical part, where the analysis of the novel was used to compare it with its film versions.

In the practical part, the analysis of the three chosen film adaptations dealt only with the facts and main characters that seemed to be crucial for the story. Initially, every film adaptation was analysed in the terms of the main events of the plot, which had some impact on the whole story. Secondly, main characters of the movie adaptations were introduced. The last part of the analysis dealt with the era in which the story took place. The analysis was based on the cultural references, which appeared in the film, for example the appearance of subway in London (see chapter 4.3.3). The last chapter sums up the main differences and similarities from the original novel.

As was mentioned earlier in chapter 5, the oldest film adaptation from 1945 is the best film one from the three selected films. The plot was not very different from the original and kept the main commonality of the story. Also, the main characters behaved in the same way. However, some differences in their appearances were spotted. The film has same setting and gave true picture of London in the 19th century. Some new characters, such as David Stone, were added to the story. Further, some characters were changed and were given more space – for example Sibyl Vane.

The 2009 film also took place in the second half of the 19th century in London. In this case, there were made bigger changes in the plot, for example James Vane's death or the death of Dorian Gray. Film-makers gave more space to Wotton's wife and added Wotton's daughter, who added another point of view to the story. However, the main characters were interpreted with precision, especially Henry Wotton and Dorian Gray.

Both mentioned film adaptations preserved the theme of homosexuality, which was forbidden in the 19th century. This theme was omitted in the 2005 film, which together with the fact that the film was set in the 20th century in Bulgaria made it the most different adaptation of the novel. Further, the omitted cultural references are also important for the horror atmosphere of the story, therefore changing the character of it completely.

The 2005 film adaptation is the one modified most at all levels. Concerning the plot, the marriage of Ward and Wotton was added and Gray's and Vane's death were changed, for example. The main difference is the change of in Ward's gender; depicted as a woman in the movie and as a man in the original book. This alteration was done because of the omission of the homoerotic theme. The authors preserved the appearance of Dorian Gray, however, it was the least successful adaptation on the whole.

As fundamental sources for the thesis were used all mentioned films and original version of *The Picture of Dorian Gray* written in 1891. There are also appendices attached to the thesis. They contain pictures of Oscar Wilde, film posters and main characters of the films. The thesis could be further used as a basis for further analysis of other film adaptations of *The Picture of Dorian Gray* since there are 17 more.

7 ENDNOTES

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3. *Ibid.*, p.3 -16.
4. *Ibid.*, p. 16 – 27.
5. *Ibid.*, p. 249.
6. *Ibid.*, p. 486.
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8. *Ibid.*, p. 53 – 94.
9. *Ibid.*, p. 112 – 278, 294 – 304.
10. Oscar Wilde. *The Biography.com website* [online].
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14. *Ibid.*, p. 438.
15. *Ibid.*, p. 438 – 477.
16. *Ibid.*, p. 486.
17. *Ibid.*, p. 477 – 504, 532 – 533.
18. *Ibid.*, p. 584, 588.
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20. *Ibid.*, p. 16.
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23. *Ibid.*, p. 148.
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27. *Ibid.*
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33. *Ibid.*, p. 40 – 124.
34. *Ibid.*, p. 125 – 168.
35. *Ibid.*, p. 169 – 211.
36. *Ibid.*, p. 212 – 256.
37. Seb, P. *Noise to signal: The Hair of Dorian Gray* [online].
38. Wilde, O. *The Picture of Dorian Gray*, p. 190-191.
39. *Ibid.*, p. 176 – 177.
40. *Ibid.*, p. 229.
41. *Ibid.*, p. 230.
42. *Ibid.*, p. 19.

43. Ibid., p. 21.
44. Ibid., p. 176.
45. Ibid., p. 181.
46. Ibid., p. 40-54.
47. Ibid., p. 22-23.
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58. Ibid., 1:32:02 – 1:32:30, 1:39:35 – 1:40:06.
59. Ibid., 1:41:49.
60. Ibid., 0:11:17, 0:12:40, 1:07:20, 1:11:21.
61. Ibid., 1:02:53 – 1:09:42.
62. Ibid., 0:04:35, 0:06:01 – 0:06:06.
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8.4 Sources of Appendices

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Picture 1

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Picture 2

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Picture 5

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Picture 6

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Sources of pictures in Appendix II**Picture 1**

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Picture 5

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Picture 1

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Momentum Pictures (2009, August 7). *Dorian Gray* [Poster]. Retrieved

April 12, 2014, from: <http://ia.media->

[imdb.com/images/M/MV5BMTc1NzlwNDQ4MI5BMI5BanBnXkFtZTcwMTEzMzY3Mg@@._V1__SX1303_SY542_.jpg](http://ia.media-imdb.com/images/M/MV5BMTc1NzlwNDQ4MI5BMI5BanBnXkFtZTcwMTEzMzY3Mg@@._V1__SX1303_SY542_.jpg)

[cwMTEzMzY3Mg@@._V1__SX1303_SY542_.jpg](http://ia.media-imdb.com/images/M/MV5BMTc1NzlwNDQ4MI5BMI5BanBnXkFtZTcwMTEzMzY3Mg@@._V1__SX1303_SY542_.jpg)

Picture 2

Momentum Pictures (2009, August 18). *Dorian Gray* [Poster]. Retrieved

April 12, 2014, from: <http://ia.media->

[imdb.com/images/M/MV5BMTY5ODc1NjU5N15BMI5BanBnXkFtZTcwMTUyNDg3Mg@@._V1__SX1303_SY542_.jpg](http://ia.media-imdb.com/images/M/MV5BMTY5ODc1NjU5N15BMI5BanBnXkFtZTcwMTUyNDg3Mg@@._V1__SX1303_SY542_.jpg)

[cwMTUyNDg3Mg@@._V1__SX1303_SY542_.jpg](http://ia.media-imdb.com/images/M/MV5BMTY5ODc1NjU5N15BMI5BanBnXkFtZTcwMTUyNDg3Mg@@._V1__SX1303_SY542_.jpg)

Picture 3

Momentum Pictures (2009, August 7). *Dorian Gray* [Photograph].

Retrieved April 12, 2014, from: <http://ia.media->

[imdb.com/images/M/MV5BMTc1OTM0MDkwM15BMI5BanBnXkFtZTcwNTEzMzY3Mg@@._V1._CR138,7,238,335__SX1303_SY542_.jpg](http://ia.media-imdb.com/images/M/MV5BMTc1OTM0MDkwM15BMI5BanBnXkFtZTcwNTEzMzY3Mg@@._V1._CR138,7,238,335__SX1303_SY542_.jpg)

[TcwNTEzMzY3Mg@@._V1._CR138,7,238,335__SX1303_SY542_](http://ia.media-imdb.com/images/M/MV5BMTc1OTM0MDkwM15BMI5BanBnXkFtZTcwNTEzMzY3Mg@@._V1._CR138,7,238,335__SX1303_SY542_.jpg)

[.jpg](http://ia.media-imdb.com/images/M/MV5BMTc1OTM0MDkwM15BMI5BanBnXkFtZTcwNTEzMzY3Mg@@._V1._CR138,7,238,335__SX1303_SY542_.jpg)

Picture 4

Momentum Pictures (2010, June 15). *Dorian Gray1* [Photograph].

Retrieved April 12, 2014, from:

<http://kalafudra.files.wordpress.com/2010/06/dorian-gray1.jpg>

Picture 5

Momentum Pictures (2011, April 16). *dg13* [Photograph]. Retrieved April

12, 2014, from:

<http://dardenitaaa.files.wordpress.com/2011/04/dg13.jpg>

Picture 6

Momentum Pictures (2011, January 1). *Picture of Dorian Gray* [Photograph]. Retrieved April 12, 2014, from: <http://iv1.lisimg.com/image/1617079/600full-dorian-gray-screenshot.jpg>

Picture 7

Momentum Pictures (2013, October). *Dorian Gray (2009)* [Photograph]. Retrieved April 12, 2014, from: <https://s-media-cache-ec0.pinimg.com/originals/90/3b/8c/903b8cdef9dbf6ed2f7ab8fdb3c43e3f.jpg>

Picture 8

Momentum Pictures (2009, October). *dorian gray 5* [Photograph]. Retrieved April 12, 2014, from: <http://www.trendnista.com/wp-content/uploads/2009/10/dorian-gray-5.jpg>

9 ABSTRACT

The aim of the Bachelor's thesis is to analyse Wilde's *The Picture of Dorian Gray* and compare it with its three film adaptations - of 1945 (*The Picture of Dorian Gray*), 2005 (*The Picture of Dorian Gray*) and 2009 (*Dorian Gray*), and point out the main differences and similarities between the original book and the chosen adaptations.

The thesis is divided into several parts. The first two parts contain the theoretical background. The first part concerns the author Oscar Wilde; his vocational and personal life as well as influence on his works are presented here, too. The second part deals with a complete analysis of the book in terms of plot, the analysis of the main characters and setting. The practical part is devoted to an analysis of three selected films and their subsequent comparison with the book. The pictures of the main characters of particular films, film posters and the pictures of Oscar Wilde are included in appendices.

10 RESUMÉ

Cílem této bakalářské práce je provést komparativní analýzu Wildova díla *Obraz Dorian Graye* s jeho třemi filmovými zpracováními z roku 1945 (*Obraz Dorian Graye*), 2005 (*Obraz Dorian Graye*) a 2009 (*Dorian Gray*) a poukázat na hlavní rozdíly a podobnosti mezi knižní předlohou a filmovými adaptacemi.

Práce je členěna do několika částí. První dvě části tvoří teoretický přehled, kde je nejprve představena postava samotného autora, Oscara Wilda, jeho profesní i osobní život, a vliv na jeho díla. Druhá část práce se zabývá kompletní analýzou knihy z hlediska děje, hlavních postav a období. Praktické části práce jsou věnované analýze třech vybraných filmových adaptací a jejich následným srovnáním s knižní předlohou. V příloze je možné najít obrázky hlavních představitelů z filmů, filmové plakáty a fotografie Oscara Wilda.

11 APPENDICES

List of appendices

- Appendix I: Pictures of Oscar Wilde
- Appendix II: *The Picture of Dorian Gray* (1945)
- Appendix III: *The Picture of Dorian Gray* (2005)
- Appendix IV: *Dorian Gray* (2009)

Appendix I: Pictures of Oscar Wilde



Picture 1. *Oscar Wilde in 1876*



Picture 2. *Oscar Wilde in 1882*



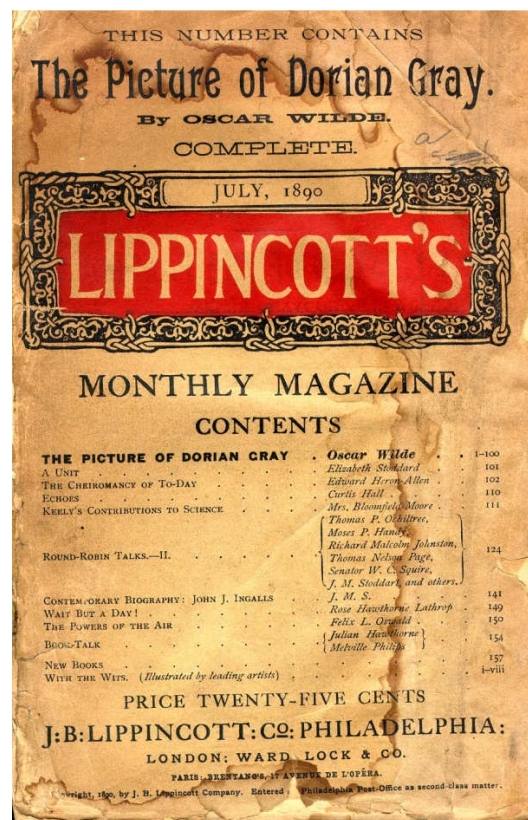
Picture 3. *Oscar Wilde in 1882*



Picture 4. *Oscar Wilde in 1889*



Picture 5. The tomb of Oscar Wilde in Père Lachaise Cemetery



Picture 6. The issue of Lippincott's magazine with The Picture of Dorian Gray

Appendix II: *The Picture of Dorian Gray* (1945)



Picture 1. The film poster



Picture 2. The film poster



Picture 3. *The Picture of Dorian Gray* at the beginning



Picture 4. *The Picture at the end*



Picture 5. *Dorian Gray and Sibyl Vane*

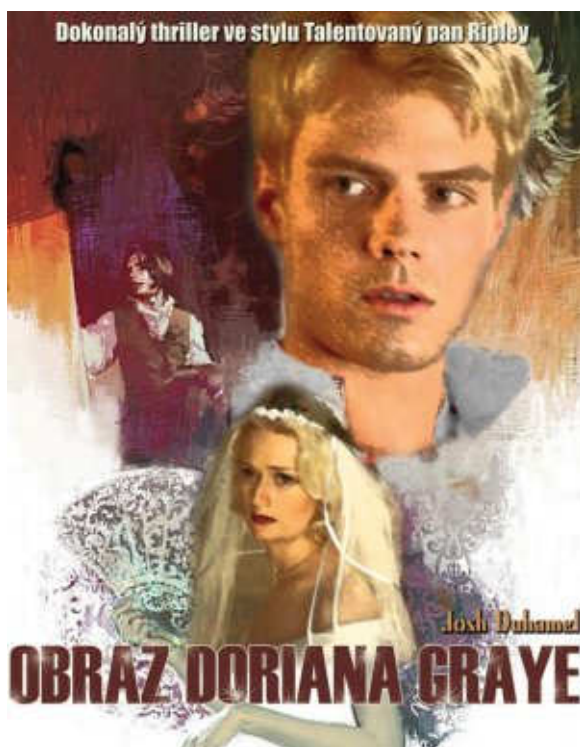


Picture 6. *Henry Wotton, Dorian Gray and Basil Hallward*

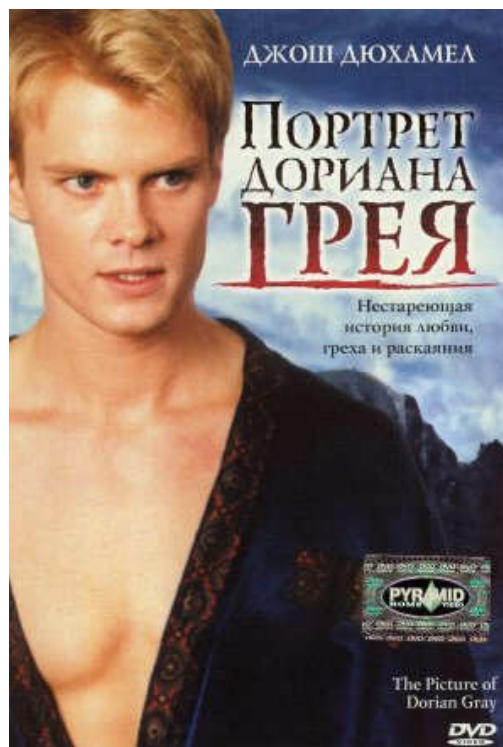


Picture 7. *David Stone, Henry Wotton and Gladys Hallward*

Appendix III: *The Picture of Dorian Gray* (2005)



Picture 1. *The film poster*



Picture 2. *The cover of DVD*



Picture 3. *The Picture of Dorian Gray and Dorian Gray*



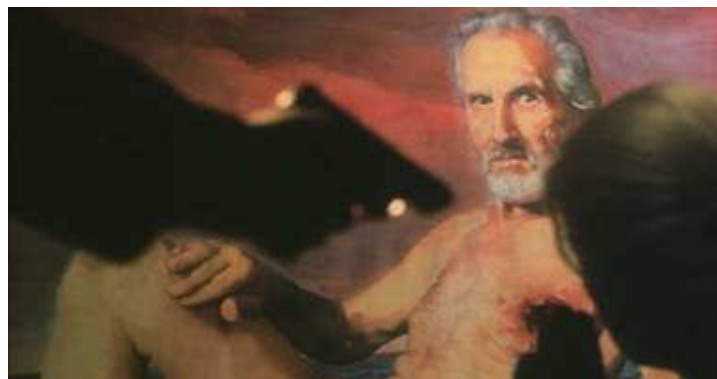
Picture 4. *Harry Wotton, Dorian Gray and Basil Ward at the wedding*



Picture 5. *Sibyl Vane*



Picture 6. *Dorian Gray*



Picture 7. *The Picture of Dorian Gray before Basil's death*

Appendix IV: *Dorian Gray* (2009)



Picture 1. *The film poster*



Picture 2. *The film poster*



Picture 3. *Sibyl Vane*



Picture 4. *Dorian gray and his portrait*



Picture 5. *Dorian Gray and Wotton's daughter*



Picture 6. *The picture before Gray's death*



Picture 7. *Henry Wotton, Basil Hallward and Dorian Gray*



Picture 8. *Henry Wotton and Dorian Gray*