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**TRABAJO FIN DE GRADO**

*Bachelor Thesis*

**DEHUMANIZED SONS AT THE *FIN-DU-GLOBE*: THE  
“PICTURES” OF *DORIAN GRAY* IN THE CONTEXT OF GOTHIC  
LITERATURE**

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## INTRODUCCIÓN

El análisis de *The Picture of Dorian Gray* y el intento de determinar su pertenencia al género gótico, precisaría de un estudio más profundo que el que los límites aquí impuestos permiten; sin embargo, sí se puede llevar a cabo una aproximación al tema. Teniendo esto en cuenta, los objetivos fundamentales de este Trabajo Fin de Grado son los que siguen:

-Situación *The Picture of Dorian Gray* en el lugar apropiado que ésta ocupa entre el conjunto de obras góticas producidas desde el nacimiento del género en 1764.

-Examinar la evolución sufrida por la novela a medida que las distintas versiones iban siendo compuestas.

-Analizar los elementos góticos que aparecen en la novela y el modo en que estos contribuyen a hacer de *The Picture* una obra maestra del género.

Para alcanzar estos objetivos, nos basamos tanto en una serie de recursos primarios como secundarios. Entre los primeros, destacan la reciente edición de Nicholas Frankel (2011) y la editada por Michael Patrick Gillespie para Norton (2006). En cuanto a los segundos, se utilizan diferentes estudios teóricos sobre Oscar Wilde y su producción (biografías, crítica literaria, etc.). La edición de Frankel, resulta también imprescindible a la hora de comprender las concepciones intelectuales de Oscar Wilde. Además de las distintas versiones de *The Picture*, se hace referencia a otras obras wildeanas, especialmente sus piezas teatrales. Wilde fue, sobre todo, un gran dramaturgo (aunque su producción incluya narrativa breve, poemas o ensayos) y sus dramas muestran algunos aspectos que también aparecen en la novela estudiada; la comparación de estas obras teatrales con *The Picture* permite establecer una serie de leitmotifs comunes a ambos géneros.

El análisis de la evolución de las diferentes versiones de la novela y de sus elementos góticos se desarrolla a lo largo de seis capítulos, desglosados del siguiente modo:

- El primer capítulo comienza con una explicación histórica del término “gótico” y sus implicaciones. También se diserta sobre cómo el género derivado de este término ha sido recibido y entendido en los diferentes países en los que se ha

cultivado, poniendo especial énfasis en Gran Bretaña y Estados Unidos. Asimismo, se analizan una serie de términos que nos ayudan comprender mejor la literatura gótica en su contexto (por ejemplo, sublime).

- El segundo capítulo versa sobre la evolución del género desde su nacimiento en 1764 hasta 1818, (fecha de su “supuesta muerte”). Las obras producidas en esta época se clasifican como “Gótico de primera generación”, para distinguirlo de aquél producido en décadas posteriores. En el período mencionado, la novela gótica sufrió una primera división en dos perfiles distintos: uno más “clásico” y otro más “duro o violento”. Las brujas y los vampiros, entre otros seres, como figuras características del gótico, también tiene cabida en esta sección.
- El siglo XIX fue la era de la novela en Europa; Norteamérica, por su parte, asistía a la gran eclosión de su literatura nacional. El tercer capítulo de este estudio versa sobre este período, los diferentes géneros y subgéneros literarios nacidos en el mismo (Realismo, novela policiaca, novela histórica, etc.) y sus relaciones con la novela gótica. Varios autores góticos decimonónicos fueron seguidores de estos movimientos, insertando sus obras en alguno o en varios de ellos.
- El capítulo cuarto se centra en *The Picture of Dorian Gray* en sí, en la explicación de sus características generales desde el punto de vista técnico y de la Crítica (tono, estilo, argumento, personajes...). Así, se provee al lector de un estudio técnico necesario para entender esta obra de arte.
- La novela sufrió sustanciales cambios desde que fue compuesta por primera vez hasta que fue publicada. El objetivo de la quinta parte de este TFG es el estudio de estos cambios y de cómo la historia narrada en la novela se fue volviendo más y más complicada para encajar en los cánones de la literatura victoriana.
- Por último, en el sexto capítulo se analizan, con profundidad, los elementos góticos presentes en la novela. Este estudio analítico constituye la esencia de estas páginas, pues permite ubicar *The Picture* en el palmarés de la literatura gótica.

Todo lo anteriormente expuesto, demostrará la complejidad de esta novela y del contexto en el que surgió y dará nuestra de cómo se produjo la reescritura de elementos propios del género gótico durante su primera y sucesivas gestaciones.

## INTRODUCTION

*The Picture of Dorian Gray* and its inclusion within the field of Gothic Literature deserve deeper and further research; nevertheless, the limits and purposes of this study allow us to make a modest approach to the complexity of the topic. Bearing in mind these limitations, the objectives of this “small thesis” are the following:

-To set *The Picture of Dorian Gray* in its place among the whole amount of Gothic “Literatures” produced since the genre was born.

-To examine the evolutions the novel suffered while its different versions were being written.

-To analyze the gothic elements which appear in the novel, and how they help in order to set Wilde’s masterpiece into the Gothic genre.

In order to achieve these objectives this research will be based on primary and secondary sources. Regarding the first, the newest scholarly publication of the *The Picture*, edited by the Wildean expert Nicholas Frankel (2011) or the classical edition made by Norton, and edited in 2006 by Michael Patrick Gillespie, will be analyzed. About the latter, publications on the figure of Oscar Wilde and his works (biographies, critical studies, etc.), will be examined. The introductory study provided by Frankel is also very valuable to comprehend the world and mind of Oscar Wilde. Apart from the different versions of *The Picture*, other works by Wilde, especially his plays, will be taken into account. Wilde was mostly a playwright (even if he also produced poems, essays or short fiction pieces) and his theatre works show trends and features also present in *Dorian Gray*. Indeed, the comparison of the novel with some aspects appearing in his plays will permit to contrast how similar leitmotifs operate in each literary genre.

The analysis of the novel’s evolution and the study of the different gothic elements which appear in the plot are examined along six chapters, as explained below:

- The first chapter starts with the explanation of the term “gothic” and its implications along the history. In this chapter, the different reception the genre had in the different cultures and countries which compose the “western canon” is

also explained; with a special focus in the Anglo-Saxon countries, especially Britain and United States.

- In the second chapter, the evolution the genre suffered since its birth in 1764 is explained; how it went on and on during the remaining years of the eighteenth century, until 1818, is also examined. The gothic works produced during this stage are introduced as “first-generation Gothic”, in order to distinguish them from the ones written from that date on. Over this period, the genre already underwent some changes and evolutions which contributed to the birth of two trends followed by the authors of the time: a “classical one” and a “more strong line”. Witches and vampires, types conforming of the Gothic, appear in this section as well.
- Nineteenth century was the era of the novel in Europe, and American literature underwent a great development in this epoch, too. Chapter three is devoted to these facts. The different genres (or sub-genres) born in the *siècle* (Realism, historical novel, detective fiction, etc.) had their share within the Gothic; some of its characteristics were, therefore, interweaved with the new arguments composed by writers who created some of the highest examples of World Literature.
- Chapter four centers on *The Picture of Dorian Gray* itself, showing and explaining some of the characteristics of the novel from the point of view of Literary Criticism. This provides a technical study necessary when approaching a literary work of Art; in consequence, tone, style, characters or plot, amongst other features, are analyzed.
- As before stated, the novel suffered several changes since it was first conceived until the definite version was published in 1891. The goal of the fifth part of this study aims towards the examination of these changes and how they were getting more and more complicated (affected) in order to shape the novel according to the new Victorian aesthetic canon.
- Finally, but not least, the sixth chapter provides an overview of the gothic elements which appear in the novel. To examine these sources is maybe the

main purpose of this study, and through it, it is possible to locate *The Picture of Dorian Gray* in the context of Gothic Literature plus the Victorian Age.

To conclude, all before stated aims to show the complexity of the novel and of the context in which it was created, focusing on the fact that it belongs to the Gothic trend (although written more than a century later than the awakening of the genre), and on how the gothic elements were rewritten along the evolution of the novel.

## 1. DEFINITION AND IMPLICATIONS OF THE TERM “GOTHIC”

The word “gothic” has, in general, been used in reference to everything opposed to order or to the classical canon. The term derives from the Goths: barbarians who, in the fifth century, entered the Roman Empire and ended up by destroying it. These barbarians were the reverse to what Rome represented (order, civilization, style, etc.).<sup>1</sup> *The Shorter Oxford English Dictionary on Historical Principles* defines ‘gothic’, in its fourth entry, as belonging to or (supposedly) characteristic of the Middle Ages; medieval, romantic, originally and frequently derogatory, redolent of the Dark Ages, portentously gloomy or horrifying.<sup>2</sup> The term “gothic” is also associated to what is alien to the classical canon. If a gothic building is contemplated, it is found to be—in comparison to a classical one— “ugly”, untidy, unreasonable, out of everything connected to reason; and it is considered closer to chaos than to any kind of order. In consequence, if the term is studied in correlation to literature, works belonging to a “gothic style” have necessarily to be unreasonable, and feelings must be more important than ideas. Gothic pieces of literature include, therefore, supernatural elements: ghosts, dark forests, abandoned abbeys, evil characters, etc. However, Gothic literature was not born in the Middle Ages or in an obscure period of History, but during the eighteenth century, as a reaction against the Enlightenment.<sup>3</sup> Enlightenment exalted reason, which was present in every aspect of life; this was not only meant to be so for politics, economy, state organization or arts, but also for matters such as family organization, religion, and culture which only concerned daily life.<sup>4</sup> In the second half of the century, the early examples of Gothic literature appeared, starting with *The Castle of Otranto* by

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<sup>1</sup> An interesting and traumatic example was, during this period, the case of language: while Latin was, together with Greek, the perfect language, completely organized, the languages spoken by these “barbarians from the North” sounded like chaos to Roman ears.

<sup>2</sup> *The Shorter Oxford English Dictionary on Historical Principles*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2007: 1137.

<sup>3</sup> See, for instance, BOTTING, F.: “The Enlightenment, which produced the maxims and models of modern culture, also invented the Gothic”, *Gothic Darkly: Heterotopia, History, Culture*, in PUNTER, D. (Ed.). *A companion to the Gothic*. Oxford: Blackwell, 2000: 3.

<sup>4</sup> The philosophical works of Rousseau, Voltaire or Montesquieu in France, which settled the bases of the modern democracy, or the works of Kant in Germany or Hume in England should be born in mind here.

Horace Walpole (1764), said to be the first novel in which supernatural elements were included.<sup>5</sup>

During the eighteenth century, European society was overwhelmed by reason; as a result, some cultivated people began to write “gothic” pieces of literature. Most of these writers belonged to a high social class (Walpole himself was counselor to the king of England). They created a new canon of aesthetics in which reason, morality, beauty and customs were eliminated.<sup>6</sup> At the end of the century, the medieval past of European countries was recovered by these people. This meant a recovery of legends (specially the terrifying ones), myths, dark and scaring places (monasteries, castles, cathedrals, caves, forests, etc.), which contributed to create a new universe full of supernatural elements: ghosts, demons, spirits, etc. Some of these authors tried to live according to the style of the period: they erected houses following gothic rules; Walpole, for example, had a house built in Strawberry Hill, more similar to a medieval castle than to a British country house of the eighteenth century.

Related to gothic is also the term “sublime”, which can be defined as “a feeling whose origin can be located in the contemplation of “something” that produces terror, being darkness one of the main characteristics that Burke pointed to achieve this goal.<sup>7</sup> In accordance to this, David Morris notes that ‘the gothic sublimity, with all its implications of terror, becomes a liberating force because it is the runaway response to the repressed desires and the oppressor rules of tradition’.<sup>8</sup> Hugh Blair, also discoursing about this locution of sublime, asserts that it produces a sort of internal elevation and expansion of the mind above its ordinary state; and fills it with a degree of wonder and astonishment, which it cannot well be expressed.<sup>9</sup>

During the nineteenth and the twentieth centuries, the term “gothic” suffered an evolution which brought it to be used in reference, first, to literary works and,

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<sup>5</sup> This novel has also been considered as one of the inspirations for surrealist writers because the author states that the story was based in a dream he actually had.

<sup>6</sup> BOTTING, F.: 2000, 3.

<sup>7</sup> See GONZÁLEZ MORENO, B.: *Lo sublime, lo gótico, y lo romántico: la experiencia estética en el romanticismo inglés*. Cuenca: Ediciones de la Universidad de Castilla-La Mancha, 2007: 117 (I translate from the original).

<sup>8</sup> MORRIS, D.: “Gothic Sublimity”, in *New Literary History* (Winter 1985) through GONZÁLEZ MORENO, B.: *Lo sublime, lo gótico, y lo romántico: la experiencia estética en el romanticismo inglés*. Cuenca: Ediciones de la Universidad de Castilla-La Mancha, 2007: 117.

<sup>9</sup> BLAIR, H.: *Lectures on Rhetoric and Belles Letters*. London: Strachan and Cadell, 1796, I: 53.

afterwards, also to cinematographic ones. These included supernatural elements (or other means) to produce fear and/or to wake up the feelings of horror readers and/or spectators carry inside them. An example of this can be found within the genre called psychological fear. Since it was born in England, the first country where gothic aesthetic principles were adopted was Britain itself, followed by France and Germany; however, during the nineteenth century gothic works were written in other countries, as Neil Cornwell notices.<sup>10</sup> Despite this, the “gothic” remained mostly in English-spoken countries, and at the same time as these works were developed in Europe, a new generation of American authors started to compose their works following this new style. Among these authors were Charles Brockden Brown, Edgar Allan Poe and Nathaniel Hawthorne, who had a great importance in the development of the literature of their nation.

With the arrival of the twentieth century, as above mentioned, the Gothic genre was not wiped out, but it had to be adapted to the new times, and also to the new literary techniques and models that were born with the century. Among these new demonstrations of style, one of the most newfangled was the Gothic cinema, taking profit of the technology developed by the Lumière brothers at the end of the nineteenth century. In the sphere of literature, it is worthy to highlight authors who created a gothic atmosphere by mixing actual historical facts with supernatural elements as it was done from the nineteen-fifties or by some Latin American writers who belonged to the Magical Realism trend.<sup>11</sup> Other interesting contributions to the genre were achieved by including elements such as psychological fear (i.e. Stephen King).<sup>12</sup>

The way women were dealt with is another important element, worthy to be discussed: before the birth of gothic literature –and right after it, especially during the nineteenth century– women were presented by authors as angels (as the angels of the

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<sup>10</sup> See CORNWELL, N.: “European Gothic”, in PUNTER, D. (ed.): *A Companion to the Gothic*. Oxford: Blackwell, 2000: 33-36.

<sup>11</sup> One of the most famous novels of this type came through the hand of the Colombian world-reckoned author Gabriel García Márquez: *One Hundred Years of Solitude* [*Cien años de soledad*], which was first published in 1967.

<sup>12</sup> Stephen King (Portland, Maine, 1947), American author well known for his novels of terror. His first novel was *Carrie*, first published in 1974. Some of his most reckoned works are *The Shining* (1977), *It* (1986), *The Green Mile* (1996) or the screenplay for the film *Storm of the century* (1999). By now Stephen King has published thirty-nine novels, plus seven more signed with the pseudonym Richard Bachman, ten collections of short stories, the saga *The Dark Tower* and four non-fiction works. He has also been awarded with many American and international prizes.

house). This was changed by Gothic, which explored the other side of women, presenting them as demons (i.e. *Carmilla*),<sup>13</sup> young and beauty demons who used every aspect of their characterization to seduce male characters, heading them even to death, as it can be appreciated in many Romantic poems, especially from Great Britain (i.e. *La Belle Dame sans Merci*).<sup>14</sup>

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<sup>13</sup> *Carmilla*, Joseph Sheridan Le Fanu, novel published in 1872 in the magazine *The Dark Blue*.

<sup>14</sup> *La Belle Dame sans Merci*, ballad written by John Keats in 1819.

## 2. EVOLUTION OF THE GENRE

Limits of Gothic are still not totally clear. It is conventionally accepted that the Gothic genre was born in 1764 with *The Castle of Otranto*.<sup>15</sup> However, it is much more difficult to establish the end of the genre.<sup>16</sup> Following the theory pointed by Juan Bravo Castillo, “with *Melmoth the Wanderer*,<sup>17</sup> published in 1820, the Gothic novel, already languishing, shone for the last time”;<sup>18</sup> however, Marcel Schneider explains that, even if this novel can be considered the last Gothic example, an author rarely reached such a high point of satanic greatness as Maturin did in *Melmoth*; and he achieved it by introducing horror in relation to sacred themes.<sup>19</sup> If Melmoth is the last Gothic character, the genre was given an excellent farewell, since this character is –without any doubt— the outstanding leader of the novel, being all the other characters subordinated to him. He is both, tempter and object of temptation. Another novel said to be the last supreme Gothic example is *Frankenstein or The Modern Prometheus*, different from all of its kind.<sup>20</sup> For the first time, horror didn’t come from any supernatural element: it is a man, with his intelligence and the control of science, the one who creates the “monster”. This new being will be the origin of dread all through the novel, even though this creature is not bad in essence. Here, fear is only present in humans’ souls; it is fear to everything which is different. The creature only starts to act like a bad “person” (reaching even to crime) out of revenge, a behavior which was taught to him by humans. It is this difference in the provenance of horror what feeds the discussion about if *Frankenstein* can be included into the Gothic trend or if it is something different.

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<sup>15</sup> *The Castle of Otranto*, Horace Walpole’s novel, published in 1764 in London. This novel is considered as the one which marks the birth of the Gothic as a major literary genre; nevertheless, along the whole history of literature (which is also the history of Humanity), it is easy to find gothic elements in many popular literary productions, such as local legends, fairy tales, transmitted orally from generation to generation and only put down into words with the arrival of Romanticism.

<sup>16</sup> Here, the term “end” refers to the end and of the Gothic genre, considering it in its narrowest sense because the elements introduced by this genre are still being used in present days.

<sup>17</sup> *Melmoth the Wanderer*, novel written by the Irish author Charles Robert Maturin and first published in 1820 in Edinburgh.

<sup>18</sup> BRAVO CASTILO, J.: *Grandes hitos de la historia de la novela euroamericana. Vol. 1 Desde sus inicios hasta el Romanticismo*. Madrid: Cátedra, 2003: 611. [I translate from the original].

<sup>19</sup> Melmoth makes a pact with the Devil (as it is shown in Goethe’s –contemporary to Maturin- Faust). In the novel the author tries to make the Protestant Church look extremely better than the Catholic (it must be born in mind that Maturin was a Church of Ireland pastor since 1803).

<sup>20</sup> *Frankenstein or The Modern Prometheus*, Mary Shelley’s novel first published in 1818 in London by Lackington, Hughes, Mavor and Jones, and initially attributed to her husband, Percy Shelley.

The first novel to be discussed here will be *The Castle of Otranto*; a plausible explanation of why the term Gothic (in relation to a novel) was first used after its publication might be that the complete title was *The Castle of Otranto. A Gothic Story*. After the appearance of this novel, all the literary works which saw the light following this new aesthetic trend were named Gothic. Influenced by the immense success of this long narrative, many authors started to copy and rethink the elements here present and used them in their own productions. Walpole introduces some of the characteristics of the novel (and of the genre) in the prologue he wrote for the first edition. In this prologue it is stated that the novel is not an original production but the translation and of a manuscript that was found by the author in the North of England and which belonged to a Catholic family.<sup>21</sup> This manuscript was written in Italian and his task consisted only in editing (and translating) it.<sup>22</sup> Walpole also points that the action of the novel took place after 1442 because some of the names used are Spanish ones and in this year king Alfonso V of Aragon conquered the kingdom of Naples, where Otranto was located. This shows that the author draws upon some elements like returning to the Middle Ages to create his novel, resource that was used by many authors from the Gothic and Romantic periods. The supernatural power or impulse that moves the huge helmet to kill Conrad – the teenager son of Manfred, prince of Otranto, whose family usurped the throne by poisoning the legitimate lord of Otranto— can be given as an example of a gothic component. The action takes place mostly at night, what helps to emphasize terrible the atmosphere for the events that will follow. The character of Friar Jerome – with his ambiguous behavior in relation to Manfred’s divorce— adds another disturbing ingredient.<sup>23</sup> The imprisonment of Theodore and his encounters with Matilda (Manfred’s daughter) make the reader and the characters descend to darkness, from

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<sup>21</sup> Here it is easy to appreciate the introduction of the Catholic element, which will be one of the most frequently used by some authors (Protestant ones) in order to create the appropriate atmosphere but also to show the supposed atrocities made by the Catholic Church in countries such as Spain, France or Italy. This feeling had been fed by facts such as the St. Bartholomew’s Day massacre in France in 1572 or the institution of the Inquisition in Spain established in 1478 and definitively abolished in 1834. This element is magnificently shown in works such as, for instance, Matthew Gregory Lewis’ *The Monk*, the mentioned *Melmoth the Wanderer* or Edgar Allan Poe’s “The Pit and the Pendulum”, among others.

<sup>22</sup> This is another very recurring element, especially of epistolary novels and even used by Miguel de Cervantes in his novel *The Ingenious Gentleman Don Quixote of La Mancha* (*El ingenioso hidalgo don Quijote de la Mancha*).

<sup>23</sup> Adding in this way Walpole the element of, on one hand and first, incest, and on the other hand an later, rape (even if it is only an intention here). This element had been already explored, for example, by Samuel Richardson in his novel *Clarissa, or, the History of a Young Lady*, first published in 1748 in London.

where, surprisingly, the light of solution comes.<sup>24</sup> At the end of the novel, Theodore (heir of Otranto) marries Isabella and then, the legitimate family recovers the property. The solution of the story comes after Theodore, Isabella and the other characters undergo many adventures proper of a Byzantine novel. Solution which is also reached through the Aristotelian anagnorisis (ἀναγνώρισις) of Theodore when he is recognized as the new legitimate lord of Otranto.<sup>25</sup> Nevertheless, the confession of Manfred is presented like an element of redemption, something that will not appear in later gothic pieces.<sup>26</sup> It can also be said that this novel starts the surreal tide in literature, as it was (according to Walpole's words) the product of a nightmare the author had had and, following it, the novel was written in a row.

After *The Castle of Otranto*, the Gothic genre split into two different trends. The first one could be called "classical" because it follows the lines started by Walpole; its maximum exponent would be *The Mysteries of Udolpho*, by Ann Radcliffe.<sup>27</sup> Some other authors, i.e. Clara Reeve,<sup>28</sup> followed the same tendency. The second trend is less classical but more popular and it contains a substantially higher level of horror. This is incarnated by William Beckford's *Vathek*<sup>29</sup> or the above mentioned novels *The Monk* and *Melmoth the Wanderer*.

Ann Radcliffe (1764-1823) was a calm typical English woman from the middle class whose life had nothing similar to the stories she wrote.<sup>30</sup> According to what Walter Scott said about her, she was the first poetess of the gothic novel.<sup>31</sup> She published some mediocre novels before becoming popular in 1794 with *The Mysteries of Udolpho*, such

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<sup>24</sup> It must be born in mind that these encounters happened inside a crypt, the crypt of Alfonso (the legitimate lord of Otranto). These meetings were the cause of Matilda's death when she is confused by her father with Isabella (Conrad's fiancée who Manfred wanted to marry).

<sup>25</sup> Term used by Aristotle in his *Poetics* in reference to the recognition of a person or a situation that had been veiled until then but present in all the play (Aristotle designed it for drama). In this case Theodore is a character appearing from the beginning of the novel.

<sup>26</sup> This novel is also said to have started the surreal tide in literature, as it was (according to Walpole's words) the product of a nightmare the author had had; after this nightmare, the novel was written in a row.

<sup>27</sup> *The Mysteries of Udolpho*, novel written by Ann Radcliffe, and first published in 1794 in London by G.G. and J. Robinson.

<sup>28</sup> Clara Reeve (1729-1807), English novelist who contributed to the Gothic with her novel *The Old English Baron*, first published in 1777 anonymously and signed by the author one year later. In the preface, Reeve declares her novel an offspring of *The Castle of Otranto*.

<sup>29</sup> *Vathek*, novel written by William Beckford, and first published in French in 1782 (in 1786, in English).

<sup>30</sup> An important aspect of Radcliffe's production is that her, even being a woman living in a time when the letters were forbidden for women, stood holding the first position in English literature sales and popularity for years.

<sup>31</sup> BRAVO CASTILLO, J.: 2003, 602 (I translate from the original).

as *The Castles of Athlin and Dunbayne* (1789), *A Sicilian Romance* (1790) and *The Romance of the Forest* (1791). After *The Mysteries of Udolpho*, she published another powerful gothic novel entitled *The Italian or The Confessional of the Black Penitent* (1797). Her last novel, *Gaston de Blondville*, was published posthumously. Ann Radcliffe achieved to recreate horror in her novels by using the feelings of the characters much better than Walpole did. She also used elements (like the pursued maiden) already explored by other authors. In an essay (also published posthumously) she described the difference between terror and horror. According to her terror “expands the soul and awakens the faculties to a high degree of life”, and horror “contracts, freezes, and nearly annihilates them”.<sup>32</sup> The “character” of the specter (real or not) is introduced in a novel for the first time in *The Mysteries of Udolpho* (a real specter). Three years later she was to use a non-real specter in *The Italian*. Since then the specter has become one of the most popular and “classical” figures in gothic literature through centuries, appearing in many different places, situations and contexts.

The first example of the second trend (the popular one) is William Beckford’s *Vathek*. In this novel, the author uses the technique of a manuscript found and translated by the author, too.<sup>33</sup> He does so probably in order to avoid responsibilities. The novel was given two alternative titles with which the story was magnificently introduced. These titles are *Vathek, an Arabian tale* (in allusion to the supposed manuscript found and translated by the author) and *The History of The Caliph Vathek* (referring to the main character). The novel tells the story of Vathek, a tyrannical caliph who is given to all kinds of perversions and who is only a literary reflection of Beckford, who put into practice all the perversions Vathek practices or even more; perversions that cost Beckford the exile and almost the execution. This is a good example of how some literary works are better examples of the life of their authors than autobiographies.<sup>34</sup> With the publication of William Beckford’s *Vathek* we assist to the birth of an aura of doom, related to literary works.<sup>35</sup> Since then many writers were known as *poète*

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<sup>32</sup> BRAVO CASTILLO: 2003, 604 (I translate from the original).

<sup>33</sup> In this case a manuscript written in Arabic.

<sup>34</sup> This could easily be seen in the novels of the French author Stendhal (*The Red and the Black* [*Le Rouge et le Noir*, 1830] and *The Charterhouse of Parma* [*La Chartreuse de Parma*, 1839]).

<sup>35</sup> A term used in reference to many authors because of the wicked nature of their works and which consists in the recreation of catastrophic atmosphere.

*maudit*.<sup>36</sup> Some of these writers made honor to this appellative, as William Beckford did, but many others have been accused and accursed without any reason (i.e. Matthew Gregory Lewis with his novel *The Monk*).<sup>37</sup>

As soon as the Gothic novel was developed and became popular, some parodies were written in order to show the supposed sensationalism of these works and to produce the opposite effect: humor from fear and horror. Probably the best known of these parodies is Jane Austen's *Northanger Abbey*.<sup>38</sup> Among other previous novels, *The Mysteries of Udolpho* and *The Italian* are mentioned here. In this novel the Gothic genre is parodied by an author whose novels can be considered everything but not Gothic. The same year Jane Austen published *Northanger Abbey*, and it also appeared *Nightmare Abbey* by Thomas Love Peacock, another example of Gothic parody.<sup>39</sup> During the Victorian fin de siècle another parody which deserves to be taken into account, George du Maurier's *Trilby*, saw the light.<sup>40</sup> In the twentieth century some other parodies to the Gothic genre have also been published, such as Muriel Spark's *The Ballad of Peckam Rye* (1960), Fay Weldon's *The Life and Love of a She-Devil* (1983) or John Updike's *The Witches of Eastwick* (1984).<sup>41</sup>

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<sup>36</sup> A *poète maudit* is a poet living a life outside or against society. Abuse of drugs and alcohol, insanity, crime, violence, and in general any societal transgression, often resulting in an early death are typical elements of the biography of a *poète maudit*.

<sup>37</sup> Matthew Gregory Lewis (1775-1818), English writer mostly known for his novel *The Monk*, written and first published in 1796, considered one of the best examples of Gothic novels.

<sup>38</sup> Jane Austen (1775-1817), English writer whose novels are characterized for the exceptional modeling of female characters and which can be included as belonging to the Sentimental trend. She wrote six novels (*Pride and Prejudice*, *Emma*, *Sense and Sensibility*, *Persuasion*, *Mansfield Park* and *Northanger Abbey*), short fiction, some non-finished works and more than 3000 letters. *Northanger Abbey* was first published posthumously in December 1817 in London.

<sup>39</sup> Thomas Love Peacock (1785-1866), English writer whose novels have a satirical component, with characters who criticize the philosophical ideas that had been developed at that moment in Britain. His production is conformed by novels, poems, plays essays and some unfinished pieces (novels and tales). His novel *Nightmare Abbey* was first published in 1818.

<sup>40</sup> George du Maurier (1834-1896), English cartoonist and author who was born in Paris. His production was mostly developed as cartoonist, being his narrative production reduced to three novels. *Trilby* was first published in 1894 and it inspired Gaston Leroux's *Phantom of the Opera* (*Le Fantôme de l'Opéra*, 1910).

<sup>41</sup> Muriel Spark (1918-2006), Fay Weldon (born 22 September 1931) and John Updike (1932-2009) are three contemporary British (the first two) and American (the last one) authors.

### 3. THE GOTHIC IN THE 19TH CENTURY: THE ANGLOXASON CONTEXT

The “gothic genre” did not pass away after the publication of *Frankenstein*, but it did suffer a change. The aesthetic canon was no longer the same and the models chosen by authors in order to create their works were different. Frankenstein was interpreted as a rupture with what had been being the development of Gothic until that moment. It included the element of science as another component of the gothic atmosphere and as another tool to produce fear and horror. This new element was again used during the nineteenth century.

As said, new models were being used by authors, but also new references to make up their stories. It could be said that the “classic” authors of the genre (Walpole, Radcliffe, Reeve, Lewis, Beckford...) had become references insufficient to express the new realities. Only the element of the specter was recurrently being reused, helping it to develop into one of the most popular within the genre.<sup>42</sup> For the first time, works were settled in the same period in which they were written and characters were also taken from reality.<sup>43</sup> The appearance of new ways of communication and information also influenced the development of the genre in this century. One of the most important was the newspaper.<sup>44</sup> Authors took reports from newspapers as the basis of their works. They were actual events used and reformulated to build gothic stories. In the British context, for instance, the *Newgate Calendar*, constituted a very interesting case. This publication appeared in 1773 as a bulletin of the executions that were going to take place in the jail of Newgate, in London; afterwards, it started to offer information about real crimes and criminals.<sup>45</sup> The fact of having available information about actual crimes was very useful when authors wanted to write gothic stories, because it could be used as an inspiration in order to recreate the description of murderers, executions, etc.

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<sup>42</sup> This element was introduced by Ann Radcliffe in two of her novels: *The Mysteries of Udolpho* (1794) and *The Italian* (1797) as we pointed in the chapter above.

<sup>43</sup> There were some exceptions that will be exposed when the analysis of the works, being this especially notable in the novels of Walter Scott. What it is meant with this assertion about the characters is that they were plausible ones, not real persons.

<sup>44</sup> Although newspapers appeared in the previous centuries, being the first one the *Relation aller Fürnemmen und gedenckwürdigen Historien*, published by Johan Carolus in Strasbourg since 1605.

<sup>45</sup> See RIGAL ARAGÓN, M.: “La narración policíaca: el nacimiento de un género”, in BRAVO CASTILLO, J.: *Grandes hitos de la historia de la novela euroamericana. Vol. 2 El siglo XIX: los grandes maestros*. Madrid: Cátedra, 2010: 963-1007.

At the beginning of the century there were some authors who introduced gothic elements on their works but who were not gothic authors. These authors can perfectly be included within a category known as “sentimental” novelists. This is, for example, the case of Jane Austen and the Brontë sisters (Charlotte, Emily and Anne).<sup>46</sup> In the novels of these authors the Gothic elements are not the predominant ones, but it does appear in different aspects of the story and of the setting. Some of these stories take place in great manors (*Wuthering Heights*, *Jane Eyre*, *Pride and Prejudice*, etc.) set in the middle of the countryside, with descriptions which are proper of the Gothic. These manors play a fundamental role in the building of the gothic atmosphere, being the center of horror with their long corridors, dark rooms, decadent appearances, etc. The inclusion of Jane Austen within this group of writers is due to some of the plots she develops for her novels (not due to the stories she created). Jane Austen was also (as it was pointed in the chapter above) the starter of a new subgenre, known as Gothic parody with her novel *Northanger Abbey*.<sup>47</sup> On the other hand, the Brontës (especially Charlotte and Emily) provide a much clearer instance. In Charlotte’s *Jane Eyre* it is easy to appreciate some gothic elements used by the author to set the argument.<sup>48</sup> Also all through the story, some other gothic components are found, such as the laments of Grace Pool, the character of Bertha Mason and the story of the unfortunate marriage of Mr. Rochester, which is worthy to be considered among the greatest gothic examples. Emily, too, wrote a novel which can be included within the “Gothic”: *Wuthering Heights*.<sup>49</sup> Here the horror comes from inside the main character (Heathcliff) who, being and adopted son, becomes the owner and most powerful person in *Wuthering Heights* – the domain where the action takes places.

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<sup>46</sup> In regards to Jane Austen, see note 38.

Charlotte Brontë (1816-1855), English novelist and poet. She was the eldest of the three sisters. Her most known work is *Jane Eyre*, published under the pen name of Curren Bell in 1847. Emily Brontë (1818-1848), English novelist and poet mostly known for her novel *Wuthering Heights*, published in 1847 under the pen name of Ellis Bell. Anne Brontë (1820-1849), English novelist and poet mostly known due to her novel *Agnes Grey*, published in 1847 and based in her own experience as governess.

<sup>47</sup> See note 38.

<sup>48</sup> *Jane Eyre*, novel published in 1847 by Charlotte Brontë under the pen name of Curren Bell with the title of *Jane Eyre: An Autobiography*. It tells the story of Jane Eyre, who is the narrator and her time as governess employed by Edward Rochester, whom finally falls in love with.

<sup>49</sup> *Wuthering Heights*, novel written by Emily Brontë and published in 1847 under the pen name of Ellis Bell. In this case, the story is told by several narrators and composed by an external witness (Mr. Lockwood).

Some years before the Brontës and Jane Austen started publishing, another author was producing his works in Britain: Walter Scott.<sup>50</sup> Scott is a good case of the recovery of the past and the use of it to produce works following the new literary rules and the new aesthetical canons which were being developed; being this one of the main characteristics of both Gothic and Romanticism, which will lead to the “modern historical novel”.<sup>51</sup> None of Walter Scott’s works can be considered properly Gothic, but some elements typical of the genre are present throughout the novels and poems he wrote.<sup>52</sup>

Realism in literature also appeared during the nineteenth century. Some of the most recognized authors of this subgenre are: Gustave Flaubert (1821-1880), Honoré de Balzac (1799-1850), Stendhal (1783-1842) in France; Leo Tolstoy (1828-1910), Fiodor Dostoievski (1821-1881) in Russia; Benito Pérez Galdós (1843-1920), Leopoldo Alas (1852-1901) in Spain... In England this genre had an excellent representative: Charles John Huffman Dickens, who is now considered the second greatest writer in English language after William Shakespeare.<sup>53</sup> This realistic author retakes the element of the specter and uses it, for example, in *A Christmas Carol*, one of his very well known stories.<sup>54</sup> The purpose of this *novella* was social criticism, but to do it, Dickens built a story with a ghost and with Gothic elements;<sup>55</sup> for instance: Scrooge’s vision, Scrooge himself, or the death of a child (Tiny Tim) as a punishment. Dickens was not a gothic author, but some of the settings of his novels have a gothic atmosphere; some examples of this are to be found in *Hard Times* and *Great Expectations*, where, even although

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<sup>50</sup> Walter Scott, (1771-1832), Scottish playwright, novelist and poet. He is mostly known due to his historical novels and poems, like for instance *Ivanhoe*, *Rob Roy*... He also wrote some essays about History (*The Border Antiquities of England and Scotland*...).

<sup>51</sup> This is in quotes because is hard to define what can be considered as modern historical novel or historical novel when all novels are historical documents from their own time, expressing the aesthetic society followed, which is a representation of their way of thinking.

<sup>52</sup> In this case (in opposition with the previous authors –Brontës and Jane Austen–) the setting is outside, so the horror comes from the exterior, from the nature.

<sup>53</sup> Charles Dickens (1812-1870), English novelist and social critic. His novels are considered among the best ever written and the characters composed by him are very well known worldwide. Some of his best known works are *The Pickwick Papers*, *David Copperfield*, *The Adventures of Oliver Twist*, *A Tale of Two Cities*, *Our mutual friend*...

<sup>54</sup> *A Christmas Carol*, novella written by Charles Dickens and first published in 1843.

<sup>55</sup> Even if here the horror is not presented.

social criticism is the main purpose, some gothic winks are introduced (settings, actions, characters..., but everything in a very soft way).<sup>56</sup>

During the nineteenth century, another important subgenre was born. It is Crime Fiction, first developed by the American author Edgar Allan Poe and brought to fame by Sir Arthur Conan Doyle and his immortal character Sherlock Holmes.<sup>57</sup> Crime fiction authors, besides writing about crimes (as it was “their duty”), or while doing it, also created gothic stories or introduced gothic elements to make up crime stories. This subgenre had a big acceptance by the general public in Britain, and it was cultivated by many writers. One of these was William Wilkie Collins.<sup>58</sup> He was a follower of Charles Dickens, as it can be appreciated in *The Woman in White*.<sup>59</sup> The fact itself of writing about crimes can be considered as a gothic characteristic; even more, these authors in general, and Wilkie Collins in particular, used to set their crime stories in gothic environments. Crime fiction writers also introduced the character of the detective, who, although being inspired by real figures, sometimes seems to be a supernatural character due to his/her shrewdness. The other genius of Crime fiction in Britain was the already mentioned Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, creator of Sherlock Holmes, who has been one of the most known and beloved characters in the history of literature.<sup>60</sup> The Gothic in Doyle’s works can be especially found in his novel *The Hound of the Baskervilles*.<sup>61</sup> In this novel, the gothic elements are not only present in the countryside setting or in the description of the manor which appears;<sup>62</sup> it is also appreciated in the inclusion of a “supernatural” component, which even gives the name to the novel: the hound. Later on, it is ascertained that the supposed supernatural element is just a trick and the truth is

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<sup>56</sup> *Hard Times*, novel written by Charles Dickens and first published in 1854 with the title *Hard Times-For These Times*.

*Great Expectation*, *idem*, first published between 1860 and 1861 in the “All the Year Round”.

<sup>57</sup> There are, however, theories about Poe not being the first author to cultivate this subgenre. See, for instance RIGAL ARAGÓN, M.: 2010.

<sup>58</sup> William Wilkie Collins (1824-1889), English novelist and playwright of the Victorian era, mostly known due to his crime fiction stories.

<sup>59</sup> *The Woman in White*, epistolary novel written by Wilkie Collins and first published in 1860, following Dickens’ *A Tale of Two Cities*.

<sup>60</sup> Sir Arthur Ignatius Conan Doyle (1859-1930), British author best known for his detectives’ stories. His character of Sherlock Holmes appeared for the first time in 1887 in the novel titled *A Study in Scarlet*.

<sup>61</sup> *The Hound of the Baskervilles*, novel written by Sir Arthur Conan Doyle and first published serialized between 1901 and 1902. Here, the character of Sherlock Holmes appears again.

<sup>62</sup> As already mentioned in regards to the Brontës and Jane Austen’s novels.

discovered by Holmes and his loyal helper Dr. Watson.<sup>63</sup> Another gothic element is the inclusion of what it could be called the ghosts of the past, as it is seen sometimes in reference to Holmes. At the end of his life, Conan Doyle was also involved in some cases of Spiritualism and other practices in relation with the supernatural world, which can be considered as close to the Gothic.<sup>64</sup>

In the neighbour isle of Ireland, Gothic was developed, too. (The conditions were similar to the ones which will be explained later on in relation to the Scottish case.) In the middle of the century, the works of Joseph Sheridan Le Fanu are within the best examples of gothic literature.<sup>65</sup> His most famous work was the novella called *Carmilla*, where the character of Carmilla is introduced, which has become one of the referents in horror literature, vampire stories and nightmare settings.<sup>66</sup> This novella is a gothic story which sometimes is included within the Gothic of the “first generation”<sup>67</sup> and which can also be included within the gothic works proper of the nineteenth century. Nevertheless, *Carmilla* is a prototypical character of the Gothic; being, maybe, the best example of the arrival of the “new woman” and a milestone in the development of vampire literature.<sup>68</sup>

Scotland is a dark, shadowy and foggy land, very appropriate to harbour ghost stories, based maybe just in the legends the Tradition had created. Scotland gave Robert Louis Balfour Stevenson to the history of literature.<sup>69</sup> The Gothic in the production of this author is mainly present in one of his most famous novels: *The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde*.<sup>70</sup> This novel deals with the topic of the double and the splitting of the personality.<sup>71</sup> This novel brought the horror to the streets of London in the Victorian era, when everything seemed to be calm and ruled. Mr. Hyde burst into Victorian

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<sup>63</sup> A similar plot is presented in the French film *Brotherhood of the Wolf (Le pact des loups)*, directed by Christophe Gans in 2001.

<sup>64</sup> Being very famous the pictures of fairies, he and other followers of this trend, supposedly took.

<sup>65</sup> Joseph Thomas Sheridan Le Fanu (1814-1873), Irish writer, mostly known by his gothic tales and his mystery novels.

<sup>66</sup> See note 13.

<sup>67</sup> Authors and works treated in the chapter above.

<sup>68</sup> Subgenre born in the eighteenth century, being one of the first works the short German poem *The Vampire (Der Vampir)*, written in 1748 by Heinrich August Ossenfelder.

<sup>69</sup> Robert Louis Stevenson (1850-1894), British author born in Edinburgh, mostly known for his adventures novels and tales.

<sup>70</sup> *The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde*, novel written by the Scottish author Robert Louis Stevenson and first published in 1886.

<sup>71</sup> A scientist is again the subject of horror, following the trend started by *Frankenstein*.

society was similar to an earthquake, making all the pillars it was sustained on tremble. *Dr. Jekyll* has been interpreted as a criticism of the strict English society in the last quarter of the century. Two years after the publication of the novel, London was shaken by the case of Jack the Ripper.<sup>72</sup>

At the end of the century, in the period known as *fin de siècle*, more gothic works were produced, being the most famous Bram Stoker's *Dracula* and Henry James' *The Turn of the Screw*.<sup>73</sup> The first example is extremely well known and it has become the most famous vampire story ever written. It has also become a model in cinema, fashion and cultural trends since it was published.<sup>74</sup> Stoker had already published other horror stories; for instance, a tale entitled "The Crystal Cup", first put into print in 1872. To create *Dracula*, Bram Stoker was influenced by his professor, the Hungarian Arminius Vámbéry (Ármin or Hermann Banbenberg) who told him about legends from East Europe and about Vlad the Impaler, prince of Wallachia, who was the historical character used as model for the building of the character of Dracula. Here, Stoker retakes the resource of the epistolary novel in order to compose the story. This story (as *The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde*) has been interpreted as a criticism of Victorian society. However, in this case the criticism was focused on the fear felt in relation to the unknown, represented here as fear to East Europe and its culture.

Henry James's novels retake the trend already shown in Realism, but reformulating it as psychological realism by including the interior world of the characters (especially women) with the development of the plot and using techniques that will lead literature to stream of consciousness.<sup>75</sup> Most of James's production can be included within this group, but his short novel *The Turn of the Screw* is also a Gothic story, full of gothic elements in order to produce terror and horror.<sup>76</sup> The horror shown here is an antecedent of the psychological fear developed by Stephen King in the

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<sup>72</sup> Jack the Ripper was an unidentified murderer famous for the killing of, at least, five prostitutes in the district of Whitechapel, in London in 1888. This name was given by himself in a letter he sent to the police.

<sup>73</sup> Bram Stoker (1847-1912), Irish author mostly known for his novel *Dracula*, first published in 1897. Henry James (1843-1916), American author nationalized British in 1915. His novels start the trend known as psychological realism in literature.

<sup>74</sup> However, when it saw the light of day it was unsuccessful and its author died poor.

<sup>75</sup> Stream of consciousness, narrative technique developed by James Joyce in *Ulysses* (1922), but already heralded by some other authors during the nineteenth century. It is about writing what a character is thinking in a concrete scene of the novel, showing what is running into his/her/its mind and putting it down into words as it is thought, without any punctuation mark.

<sup>76</sup> *The Turn of the Screw*, horror novella written by Henry James and first published in 1898.

twentieth century.<sup>77</sup> In this story the subjects of horror are kids, what makes the story even more horror-striking.<sup>78</sup>

Gothic was not only a European domain, it was also developed in the United States of America and there were some authors who cultivated it, besides the already mentioned Henry James.<sup>79</sup> American Gothic is partly based in Puritans' sermons, which were usually about Hell, Devil, punishments given to sinners, and other darks themes.<sup>80</sup> As Allan Lloyd-Smith points out two of the sermons which had a higher influence in American Gothic were "The Day of Doom" (1662), by Michael Wigglesworth and "Sinners in the Hands of an Angry God" (1741), by Jonathan Edwards.<sup>81</sup> The history itself of this young nation provided authors with arguments from where to spawn their stories. A very well-known example is the Salem witch trials.<sup>82</sup> The first American Gothic was based in this, with the shaping of the country and stories of the first settlers.

These [...] factors shaped the American imagination towards Manichean formulations of good and evil and, as Richard Chase says, focus it on alienation and disorder or, as Leslie Fiedler more extravagantly puts it, led American fiction to become "bewilderingly and embarrassingly, a gothic fiction, non-realistic and negative, sadist and melodramatic –a literature of darkness and the grotesque in the land of light and affirmation".<sup>83</sup>

But, for many years, American authors followed the tendencies that were being developed in Europe, especially in Britain. However, as the nineteenth century approached, the first generations of genuine American writers were born, some of them cultivators of the Gothic. The first American author who can be considered a

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<sup>77</sup> See note 12.

<sup>78</sup> A resource which will be used by many authors in the twentieth century, being one of the most famous *The Shining*, a horror novel written by Stephen King and first published in 1977. It based the famous film directed by Stanley Kubrick in 1980 with the same title.

<sup>79</sup> An author who is included both, in the American and Gothic Canons.

<sup>80</sup> As the reader may know, the American literature was started by the chronicles of the explorers which sent to explore the unknown coasts of the new continent (Spanish, French, Dutch, Swedish, English, etc.). Finally the British took the control of this land and the Puritans were the first settlers who started to produce a kind of literature which can be considered as "American".

<sup>81</sup> LLOYD-SMITH, A.: "Nineteenth-Century American Gothic", in PUNTER, D. (Ed.): *A Companion to the Gothic*. Oxford: Blackwell, 2000.

<sup>82</sup> The Salem witch trials were a serie of hearings and prosecutions of some people accused of witchcraft between 1692 and 1693. These processes were parallel to other which were taking places in Europe at the same period: Zurragamurdi, Spain (1609), Salzburg, Austria (1675-1690), Spa, Belgium (1616), Fulda and Würzburg, Germany (1603-1629), Northamptonshire, England (1612), Jesenice, Bohemia (1678-1696), Køge Huskors, Denmark (1608-1615), Kirkjuból, Iceland (1656), Roermond, the Netherlands (1613), Vardø, Norway (1662-1663), Torsåker, Sweden (1675), etc...

<sup>83</sup> See note 82. CHASE: 1957, 11; FIEDLER: 1966, 29.

gothic one is Isaac Mitchell.<sup>84</sup> From the pen of this author came one of the first examples of American Gothic, a novel first published in installments as *Alonzo and Melissa*, and later (in one volume format), as *The Asylum*. This novel became famous for having been pirated in 1811 by the editor Daniel Jackson.

Almost at the same time, the works of Charles Brockden Brown were being published.<sup>85</sup> This author had been influenced by the German poems which came from Europe at the end of the eighteenth century and at the beginning of the nineteenth.<sup>86</sup> The best example of Brockden Brown's Gothic is his novel *Wieland*.<sup>87</sup> This novel deals with the arrival of a family to America in order to become missionaries, when they fail, they established themselves in a property next to a river, and there, the father builds a temple. When the father dies,<sup>88</sup> his children, Clara and Theodore continue with the property and start building a utopia of a summer-house where free discussions and readings with their friends were usually held. Finally, Theodore gets married, but one day he kills his family and his sister Clara (supposedly following the will of God, given to him by some voices he hears in his head). The importance of Brockden Brown's Gothic is that he retakes the trend started by Ann Radcliffe and by the authors treated in the chapter above. In *Wieland*, the resource of the inclusion of supernatural elements is also retaken; resource which was not as common in nineteenth-century Gothic as it was in the previous century. *Wieland's* utopia has also been interpreted as an image of the history of the United States, because it is based on the same principles as the nation was.

Maybe the best examples of American Gothic during the nineteenth century came by the hand of Edgar Allan Poe.<sup>89</sup> Not all his production can be included within the Gothic, but a wide part of it. The Gothic in Poe is mostly seen in his short stories, especially in some of them. Very well-known examples of this are "Ligeia" (1838),

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<sup>84</sup> Isaac Mitchell (1759-1812), American author who is mostly known for his novel *Alonzo and Melissa* (1802), published later as a part of a major work with the title of *The Asylum: or Alonzo and Melissa* (1811). There is not much data about this writer, and his life is still in the shade.

<sup>85</sup> Charles Brockden Brown (1771-1810), American novelist, historian and editor who has been considered one of the most remarkable American writers before James Fenimore Cooper.

<sup>86</sup> Some of these were Schiller's *The Ghost-Seer* (*Der Geisterseher-Aus den Papieren der Markgräfin von O\*\**, 1789), Kahlert's *The Necromancer*, 1794 or Tschink's *The Victim of Magical Delusion* (1795).

<sup>87</sup> *Wieland: or, The Transformation: An American Tale*, gothic novel written by Charles Brockden Brown and first published in 1798.

<sup>88</sup> The father dies in very strange circumstances; following a kind of ritual in which he is burns some leaves in the temple he, himself, had built.

<sup>89</sup> Edgar Allan Poe (1809-1849), American writer who produced poetry, tales, novels, drama and essays following different trends and who is considered now as one of the most representative American authors.

“The Fall of the House of Usher” (1839), “The Oval Portrait” (1842), “The Tell-Tale Heart” (1843), “The Black Cat” (1843), “The Pit and the Pendulum” (1843), “The Oblong Box (1844)”, “Hop-Frog (1849)”, among others. One of the main characteristics of Poe’s Gothic is the linking of natural and supernatural elements, connecting in this way the two principal trends that Gothic was going to develop until the arrival of the twentieth century. In many of his tales, he also sets the actions in castles or in cities with a glorious medieval past (i.e. Toledo), following both Gothic and Romantic movements. In his tales, some veiled examples of later gothic literature can also be appreciated, being the teeth of “Berenice” (1835) a clear example of what could be called vampirism. The case of “William Wilson” (1839) deserves to be treated on its own because it is a different example in Poe’s Gothic. This tale deals with the topic of the double, but a “double” which is reflected upon a mirror which shows its own image. The horror comes, in this case, from the character itself without any other transformation.<sup>90</sup>

During the same period, there was another American author whose production can partly be included in the gothic trend: Nathaniel Hawthorne.<sup>91</sup> Most of Hawthorne’s gothic production can be found in a collection known as *Twice-Told Tales*.<sup>92</sup> Some of these tales follow the American gothic trend of using the puritan inheritance of the country to build the plots (i.e. “The Minister’s Black Veil”).<sup>93</sup> Hawthorne is a master at transforming religion into a horror element. But this is not the only trend followed by Hawthorne because he also exploited the scientific one. Together with Nathaniel Hawthorne Herman Melville must be mentioned.<sup>94</sup> Melville’s Gothic is more difficult to be traced than that of the rest of the authors already analysed, because it is shown in a more veiled way. The main characteristic in his Gothic is the inclusion of nature. But this nature is not at all similar to the nature shown by other writers. Here, nature is shown in its most extremely wild manner and it is used to build the gothic atmosphere. Sometimes, the deep argument of the stories is also a gothic element by itself because

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<sup>90</sup> As, for instance, in Stevenson’s *The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde*.

<sup>91</sup> Nathaniel Hawthorne (1804-1864), American novelist and short story writer.

<sup>92</sup> *Twice-Told Tales*, collection of tales published by Nathaniel Hawthorne in 1837. These tales had already been published in magazines and annuals, and that is why they were given this title by Hawthorne himself.

<sup>93</sup> It should be noticed that this trend is also used in Hawthorne’s most famous novel, *The Scarlet Letter* (1850).

<sup>94</sup> Herman Melville (1819-1891), American novelist, poet, essayist, etc., mostly known due to his novel *Moby Dick* (1851).

they are presented as epic actions of man against nature, a fight that cannot be solved within the real world.

In spite of the fact that this study is concerned with narrative, it should be mentioned that Gothic also had some influence in poetry. At the beginning of the nineteenth century, poetry was the major source of expression of some romantic authors such as Lord Byron (1788-1824), Percy Bysshe Shelley (1792-1822), John Keats (1795-1821), etc. These poets included some of the elements of the Gothic in their works. An example of this is “La Belle Dame sans Merci”, by John Keats.<sup>95</sup> It is found here, for the first time, a woman shrouded by shadows and mystery, a woman who will be discovered as lethal.<sup>96</sup> It is this woman the one who takes the control, leading the knight, and heading him even to death. Another interesting example is “Christabel”, by Samuel Taylor Coleridge.<sup>97</sup> In this poem, the woman has been transformed into a “monster” who, nevertheless, keeps some feminine elements, as the breasts, for instance. This “monster” is a men-eater and she/it is quite similar to the creatures represented during the Middle Ages, being in this way a perfect forerunner of the vampires that will appear later in the Gothic.

The goal of this chapter was to show how the Gothic, since it was not dead with the arrival of the nineteenth century, it was quite changed by authors who developed their works at the time, with the inclusion of new elements, the new use of old modes, or the creation of new trends. At the *fin de siècle* these new models were totally developed and ready to welcome the new century which will mean the definitive development and the split of the genre.

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<sup>95</sup> See note 14.

<sup>96</sup> It can be interpreted as a premonition of Carmilla.

<sup>97</sup> Samuel Taylor Coleridge (1772-1834), English poet, critic and philosopher who started the movement of the Lake Poets, with William Wordsworth (1770-1850). “Christabel” is a poem written by Samuel Taylor Coleridge in two parts. The first one appeared in 1797 and the second one in 1800.

#### 4. STUDY OF *THE PICTURE OF DORIAN GRAY*: GENERAL CHARACTERISTICS

Everything above stated leads us to the main subject of this study: Oscar Wilde's *The Picture of Dorian Gray*. As well known, Oscar Wilde (1854-1900) was a British author born in Dublin who revolved the English literary overview, especially in reference to drama, with plays such as *The Importance of Being Earnest* or *An Ideal Husband*.<sup>98</sup> From his pen, poems (*The Ballad of the Reading Gaol* or *Ravenna*) tales ("The Happy Prince" or "The Selfish Giant"), and a really interesting collection of essays about Aesthetics and Criticism are kept; these can be considered as a milestone in the development of modern Criticism. *The Picture of Dorian Gray* is apparently the only long novel written by him.<sup>99</sup>

*The Picture of Dorian Gray* was composed during the year 1890, and that same year it was given to the printing. However, the first version written by Wilde was not published then, because it had to be reformed and adapted in order to avoid problems with the strict social rules ongoing during those years. After Wilde himself had censored the novel, it was submitted to the *Lippincott's Monthly Magazine*,<sup>100</sup> whose editor was also responsible for the censorship of the work; he erased or changed about 500 words, with the knowledge of the author. It finally appeared in June 1890. Even after this process, the novel was fiercely criticized by some of Oscar Wilde's detractors. Anyway, it became an enormous success and from then on, it has been one of the most famous (also controversial) pieces of English literature, being the subject of myriads of studies of all kind, from Philosophy to Aesthetics and from its demonic plot to the treatment of women and sexual connotations.

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<sup>98</sup> For more detailed information, check the Chronology.

<sup>99</sup> Even if some critics, as Maurice Girodias (Olympia Press, 1958) also count *Teleny, or the Reverse of the Medal* as one of Wilde's work. This novel has raised a huge controversial among the Wildean experts. For instance, Zdeněk Beran, from the Charles University of Prague, asserts that this work was not written by Wilde at all. In the same article, it is also explained by Beran that the furthest relation of Wilde with Teleny could have been a task as proofreader. (BERAN, Zdeněk. "http://www.phil.muni.cz". Teleny and the *fin-de-siècle* sexuality.

http://www.phil.muni.cz/plonedata/wkaa/Offprints%20THEPES%204/TPES%204%20(027-033)%20Beran.pdf. (12/17/12).

<sup>100</sup> *The Lippincott's Monthly Magazine* was a 19th century literary publication settled in Philadelphia (US), which run from 1868 to 1915, when it merged with *Scribner's Magazine*. Many important authors published their works on its pages, as for instance Sir Arthur Conan Doyle (*The Sign of Four*) or Rudyard Kipling (*The Light that Failed*).

The following year, the novel was published again. This second version included several important changes: seven more chapters had been added, together with an aphoristic Preface, in which Wilde writes about the labor of the artist. This preface had been included in response to the critics the novel had received, for, among some other appellatives, it had been qualified as immoral. As already stated, the very first version was not published at Wilde's age. Actually, it was hidden during a long lapse of time until it was rediscovered, edited and published by the Virginian Wildean expert Nicholas Frankel in 2011.

#### 4.1. Brief Description of the Novel

As it is well-known, *The Picture of Dorian Gray* is the story of a man and his portrait. This man (Dorian), after having seen the portrait, is induced by another character (Lord Henry) to realize that he will grow old and the painting will remain as it was finished. Then, a kind of demonic arrangement to make the painting grow old instead of him is made. From this point on, Dorian, under the influence of Lord Henry Wotton, goes down and down into perversion, destroying everything which is pure and good around him, but he, himself, is destroyed at the same time because of the malediction. Finally, at the end of the novel, he has to die in order to break it and to get free.

The story is written from a third person point of view. The narrator is unknown and omniscient; he knows everything happening to every character, for example: the narrator shows readers views of the future, predicting what is going to happen next. This happens, on one hand, by exposing situations and, on the other hand, by using a character through whom the thoughts of another character are shown, for instance: "They got up and put on their coats, sipping their coffee standing. Hallward was silent and preoccupied. There was a gloom over him. He could not bear this marriage, and yet it seemed to him to be better than many other things that might have happened".<sup>101</sup> With this information the reader learns how Basil Hallward sees the future, or better, a future in which a marriage seems to be the only solution for Dorian's soul. Basil seems to know what is going to happen if Dorian Gray's marriage does not go on. The reader doesn't know this yet; it will be displayed afterwards. Through these examples and

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<sup>101</sup> WILDE, Oscar: *The Picture of Dorian Gray* [An Annotated, Uncensored Edition by Nicholas Frankel]. Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 2011: 136.

others, found all though the novel, it can be deduced that the point of view, as the narrator, is a third person one.

The characters in this novel can be classified in two main groups: actors and sufferers. Those who move the engine of the novel and who propitiate its evolution belong to the first group. These characters also are the most relevant figures in the novel: Dorian Gray himself, Lord Henry Wotton, Basil Hallward and the portrait.<sup>102</sup> They, with their actions, behavior, or even with their own thoughts, carry the reader along the story and lead the other characters to play the game they have decided should be played. To the second group (the “sufferers”), the secondary characters belong. Their lives are orchestrated by the other group. Some of these characters, however, are more important than others; for instance, Sybil Vane has in her hands the chance of changing the story, the unnamed girl Dorian meets in the country makes him to wish to become a better person, etc. What this group of persons has in common is that they “suffer” somehow the consequences of the behavior of the other group. Basil Hallward could be included in both groups: he is an actor but he is a sufferer, too. He is an actor because he is the author of the portrait –which is going to be the main point of terror and horror in the novel, and also the starter of Dorian’s trip into darkness,<sup>103</sup> but he is also a sufferer, for, eventually, he dies as a consequence of Dorian’s corruption.

Most of these characters are flat. The ideas and the behavior they exhibit at the beginning of the novel are what are unchanged through it. The exception is Dorian Gray, who goes lurching from demon to angel and vice-versa. At the beginning of the novel, he is a formal, cult and decent English rich man but he gets more and more corrupted as events develop. Sometimes, this corruption comes from the teachings of Lord Henry, but, at some point of the story, Dorian beats his master. Dorian tries sometimes to change, to become again a decent man, but he falls into temptation again and again, and his corruption goes on. When, at the end of the novel, he decides to change, he has to pay with his life. The other character who shows some traces of being a round one is Lord Henry. In addition, Henry’s change is operated by Dorian’s own corruption. When Lord Henry sees what his pupil has been converted into, which

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<sup>102</sup> Afterwards it will be explained a little bit more about some of these characters and peculiar characteristics they own, as for instance Basil Hallward.

<sup>103</sup> This can be interpreted as a use of the leitmotiv of the Descent to Hell, very common in Western literature, used from Homer on.

monster he has created, he regrets and he starts to understand that a revolutionary change is needed, that the ideals which had moved his life and Dorian's cannot lead them (nor anyone) to a satisfactory *finale*.<sup>104</sup>

The plot evolves almost exclusively in London. Some scenes are transferred to the countryside around the City, but these scenes have a minor importance in comparison to the ones developed inside the city. For instance, in the first version and in the 1890 one, the affair of Dorian and the country girl takes place in the country. Both scenes have some importance since they change Dorian's attitude: the first one seems to bring him again to the civilized world, and the second makes him realize how far his corruption has gone. The other coordinate worthy to take into account is time. The story is set in the Victorian Age. The action seems to start at the same time the novel is published, and it lasts several years.<sup>105</sup> The atmosphere seems not to change during those years, what actually did not happen. The readers see the world through Dorian's eyes and, as he, himself, cannot change, the world doesn't change, either.

#### 4.2. Tone and Style

Oscar Wilde is characterized for being an author with a very depurated style and who always searches perfection in his works. *The Picture of Dorian Gray* is not an exception to this rule, especially as long as it is regarded as a Stylistic Masterpiece. The style is very cultivated, following the trend already used by the author in some of his previous works, but, at the same time, it is not extremely difficult. Wilde wanted his novel to be understood by the highest amount of people as possible. This can easily be appreciated by observing the tone of the novel, in which the life of Victorian society is shown, but not only the actual life but their desires and hidden passions. Dorian Gray is a representation of what every Victorian man would like to be like, as Lord Henry points:

“I wish I could change places with you, Dorian. The world has cried out against us both, but it has always worshipped you. It always will worship you. You are the type of what the age is searching for, and what it is afraid it has found. I am so glad that you have never done

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<sup>104</sup> To learn more about the characters, check GARCÍA TIERRASECA, M<sup>a</sup> Dolores: *Otras lecturas de “El retrato de Dorian Gray”*. [Trabajo Fin de Grado defendido en julio de 2012]. Albacete, Facultad de Humanidades, Universidad de Castilla-La Mancha, 2012.

<sup>105</sup> These years grow from the first version to the definitive one.

anything, never carved a statue, or painted a picture, or produced anything outside of yourself!  
Life has been your art. You have set yourself to music. Your days have been your sonnets.”<sup>106</sup>

Wilde tries to show the hypocrisy of Victorian society. They are interested in figures like Dorian, but, at the same time, they are scared of them. The social rules which were on course over that time were a clamp for people, because it was clear to them that they were the jet set of the world and stopped their expectations, heading them to practice secret vices and to have dark desires which were condemned when they were found on their mates.

*The Picture of Dorian Gray* is plenty of symbols. Some of them come from the characters themselves, and some from situations, actions, etc., which are present in the novel. One of the first symbolic figures is Lord Henry Wotton. He is introduced to the reader at the very beginning of the novel, with Basil Hallward (also a very symbolic character). Lord Henry can be the representation of the Devil. He is the temptation which leads Dorian, the naïve creature, to a world of corruption; Lord Henry is who teaches Dorian how to be a “demon”; but Wotton is not only a tempter because he also falls into the temptations he preaches. At the end of the novel, as it has already been mentioned, Harry notices what he has done, how much pain he has created but, even then, he doesn’t regret, he doesn’t change. On the opposite side, Basil Hallward, the painter is the personification of everything which is good. Basil tries, several times, to take Dorian away from Lord Henry’s influence, because he knows how Harry is and in what Dorian can be transformed. Finally, Evil beats Goodness, the Evil triumphs.<sup>107</sup> Many religious symbols are also present; for example: redemption and perdition because of a woman. Perdition comes, in all forms, from Sybil Vane.<sup>108</sup> When the actress kills herself, Dorian, after some regret, starts his way to hell, this being the beginning of his demonization. The intention of marrying her is his last good action until a lot of time later. His redemption (or the intention if achieving it) also comes from a woman. It is better appreciated in the first version (published and non-published) than in the 1891 one. This woman is the anonymous country girl Dorian meets in one of his

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<sup>106</sup> WILDE: 2011, 247.

<sup>107</sup> Many of the ideas Lord Henry teaches to Dorian are exposed by Oscar Wilde not only in *The Picture*, but also in some of his Aesthetics’ essays.

<sup>108</sup> Even if she is presented as his salvation, and Basil also sees it, thinking that is the only chance Dorian has not to become a demon.

excursions.<sup>109</sup> The affair he has with her makes him rethink about his life and about what he is doing. In consequence, perdition comes from a woman, as it occurred with Eve, and redemption also comes from another one, in as it happened with Mary (also in the *Bible*).<sup>110</sup>

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<sup>109</sup> Here, Wilde also presents the literary topic started with the *Epic of Gilgamesh*, in which the city is presented as holder of all the vices and bad actions human beings can commit, and countryside as a naïve place, where virtues are everywhere and in everybody.

<sup>110</sup> The novel shows many more religious symbols, but its analysis would exceed the limits and purpose of this study.

## 5. THE CHANGES WITHIN THE “PICTURES”

The objective of this chapter is to analyze the different changes suffered by *The Picture of Dorian Gray* within the three versions under analysis. As stated above, the first of these versions is the original novel written by Wilde in 1890 and which was never published due to the fact that the author himself wanted to censure some of its parts, especially those ones which had a clear (more or less) homosexual connotation.<sup>111</sup> Afterwards, this version was censored by the editor of the work, under the approval of Oscar Wilde. As a result of this censorship process, the first version eventually published in 1890 in *Lippincott's Monthly Magazine*, publication which provoked an enormous wave of critics. One year later another version appeared; Wilde's purpose was to quiet these critics. To achieve this, modifications were introduced and an explanatory preface added.<sup>112</sup> The main change was the addition of seven chapters.<sup>113</sup> And even though there were alterations, the plot itself did not undergo very remarkable ones.

### 5.1. From the First to the Second Version

From the first unpublished version to the first published one there are much more veiled variations than in the second “wave” of modifications. The main changes are found in some of the details of the plot of the story. As stated, Wilde and his editor censored sentences and expressions of the first “Picture”. This was done in order to try to avoid problems (even if this was not possible) with the puritan Victorian public and with the Justice System, and they affected specially to parts of the work which could confuse the reader about the intentions or the ideology of the author. Many sentences which could be interpreted in the light of homosexual relations were eliminated or modified. But not only the plot was changed; an evolution in some of the characters can also be appreciated.<sup>114</sup> The most remarkable variation affects the main character, the

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<sup>111</sup> For instance, Wilde deleted the lines “Of course sometimes it is only for a few minutes. But a few minutes with somebody one worships mean a great deal”, together with Lord Henry's following question, “But you don't really worship him?” and Basil Hallward's reply, “I do”. He replaced these lines of the dialogue with the less-revealing sentence “He is absolutely necessary to me”. WILDE: 2011, p. 83.

<sup>112</sup> This preface was written in order to indicate the reader that this novel should be interpreted and understood only as a work of art.

<sup>113</sup> Most of the chapters added in the last version of the novel are new. On the other hand, the last two (the ones with which the novel was finished) were built as a result of the spreading of the last chapter of the previous edition, with some additions and changes as well.

<sup>114</sup> See note 105.

young protagonist Dorian Gray, who becomes less and less diabolic from one version to another. In the first version, both Dorian Gray and Lord Henry Wotton are terrible characters. Dorian Gray goes down and down into perversion,<sup>115</sup> and Lord Henry is an unfeeling character, a person who does not care about anything. Even if he continues mostly acting like this in the two later versions, it is possible to see that, in the second one, his conscience rises, and it is bigger in the last one.

## 5.2. From the Second Version to the Third

As said before, the most characteristic changes took place from the second to the last version of the novel. Here, the story is enlarged and the plot becomes more complex by adding some new details and storylines.<sup>116</sup> By reading the last version, it is possible to understand what happens to the characters during some gaps of the plot present in the previous versions, such as the conversation of Sybil Vane with her mother and her brother. The inclusion of James Vane is also an important element for the development of the story. He appears only three occasions in the novel, but these are key moments:

Chapter	Circumstances
<b>Chapter V</b>	Sybil tells her mother and her brother about Dorian and the relationship they have. Later, Sybil and James go for a walk to Hyde Park. They cross over with Dorian's carriage but James does not manage to see him.
<b>Chapter XVI</b>	By chance and many years later, James meets Dorian in an opium den. He almost kills him but, when Dorian makes him reflect on the age of the man who had driven his sister to suicide, he forgives his life. Minutes later, a prostitute tells him that Dorian's appearance had not changed in 18 years.

<sup>115</sup> See chapter above.

<sup>116</sup> These storylines are not totally new, but their inclusion within this version contributes to complete the story or to make it more complicated.

### Chapters XVII-XVIII

Later on, and while in a visit to his country house, Dorian sees, through a window, James passing by; Dorian thinks of James as a phantom who comes to remind him of his past sins and becomes ill. The following day, during a shoot, James becomes killed by accident.

This is maybe the most important new element included in the novel, but it is not the only one which contributes to make the story different. For example, we know that the marriage of Lord Henry is a masquerade, but in the last version he goes through a divorce which is spread all over London. We are also informed of the vicious behavior Dorian Gray follows since the suicide of Sybil, but now we know one of his vices, the consumption of opium: “The hideous hunger for opium began to gnaw at him.”<sup>117</sup> In the first two versions, Dorian and Lord Henry are the only cynical characters; in the third one, there are also shown some others, as Lady Narborough or the Duchess, this one even loving Dorian for being as he is. These new female characters are useful to close the quartet composed by them plus Dorian and Lord Henry, almost as “couples’ dinner”.<sup>118</sup>

Another unforgettable evening is the one Mr. Gray spends talking with Harry almost at the end of the novel. As it was stated above, during this conversation it can be seen how Lord Henry’s conscience has achieved levels that would have been impossible to infer only by the reading the first version. Here he is told about the affair Dorian has had in the country.<sup>119</sup> During this *soirée*, Lord Henry also reflects on his own life and what he has done with it. Dorian’s conscience is more capable in the last version, too:

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<sup>117</sup> WILDE, Oscar: *The Picture of Dorian Gray* [A Norton Critical Edition. Edited by Michael Patrick Gillespie]. London: Norton, 2006: 154.

<sup>118</sup> Lady Narborough and the Duchess could have been introduced, on purpose, by Wilde as “partners” of Dorian and Harry in order to avoid critics due to the supposed homosexual meaning of the work, whose highest representative is Basil Hallward, who is killed.

<sup>119</sup> See chapter above.

he almost confesses Basil's murder to Lord Henry, but he does not believe him, following the conversation they had had some chapters before:<sup>120</sup>

“Yes, Harry, I believe that is true. I cannot help telling you things. You have a curious influence over me. If I ever did a crime, I would come and confess it to you.<sup>121</sup> You would understand me”.

“People like you –the willful sunbeams of life- don't commit crimes, Dorian”.<sup>122</sup>

Another good example is a part of the conversation maintained at Lady Narborough's, in which Dorian seems to regret his past life and the actions which had fulfilled it, showing the *mal du siècle* present in the whole work:

“Fin de siècle,” murmured Lord Henry.

“Fin du globe,” answered his hostess.

“I wish it were fin du globe,” said Dorian, with a sigh. “Life is a great disappointment.”<sup>123</sup>

Among the new chapters included in the book version, there can be found some signs of something horrific being announced. These chapters were mostly written (except chapters V and XVI) as a critic to the British society of the time. They are conceived by Wilde in a way similar to his plays: dinners, meetings, conversations between aristocrats, etc., are shown, but not real conflicts. They are like an affectation of the plot of the novel. The two clearest examples are the dinner at Lady Narborough's (chapter XV) and the hunt organized by Dorian at his country house (chapter XVII). During these two meetings both conversations take place. The first one is a conversation in which all the guests at Lady Narborough's participate; the main part, however, is performed by herself, Dorian and Lord Henry. This chat is about everything and nothing, it is only a meaningless discussion compiled as a work of Aesthetics. The second one is a talk between Lord Henry and the Duchess,<sup>124</sup> and it is about the *fin-de-siècle* and the passions of the Aristocracy. These two conversations have also the characteristic of having been composed in parallel: after each of them, James Vane appears in a violent context.

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<sup>120</sup> Or maybe Lord Henry believes what Dorian is telling him. Here, Oscar Wilde is able to build a great meaning ambiguity.

<sup>121</sup> But it is later seen that he does not confess his crime until the last version, and even in this occasion, almost as a joke.

<sup>122</sup> WILDE: 2006, 47.

<sup>123</sup> WILDE: 2006, 149.

<sup>124</sup> Although Dorian also plays a small part in it.

Changes and the new parts were introduced by Oscar Wilde as the novel was going through successive editions, but there were also some other parts which did not suffer modifications and which are important for the development of the plot. Here, only three of them will be dealt with. The first one takes place in a chapter in which some years pass by. In this chapter, the narrator also describes very profusely the possessions and exotic belongings (some of them with a magical meaning) Dorian had been collecting during those years. This is the ninth chapter in the two first versions and it becomes the eleventh in the last one. It was conceived as an aesthetic and decorative essay; it is useful and interesting, too, to understand how the mind of Dorian Gray is not excessively far away from Wilde's own.<sup>125</sup> The other two chapters which are going to be analyzed have to be interpreted as parallel elements important to understand the structure of the work as a whole. These are the two afternoons/evenings after Dorian's crime and after the murder underwent under his influence. (These crimes are the suicide of Sybil Vane and the murder of Basil Hallward.) As known, after the first death, Dorian is in his house and Lord Henry arrives in order to inform him of the pitiful happening. Harry tells Dorian all the details of the event and he convinces him of not confessing his relationship with the dead actress. The following afternoon, Dorian takes control of the situation and calls a friend and doctor, Allan Campbell; he makes the corpse disappear forced by Dorian's blackmailing.<sup>126</sup> While the doctor is performing his experiment in the room where the portrait is hidden, Dorian is waiting chilling out in the living room. During these two parallel scenes, the descriptions provided by Oscar Wilde are quite similar, especially in terms of light and in relation to Dorian's thoughts. Both scene are two pillars for the inner structure of the plot; they endow with moments of calm and reflection after the scenes of, on one hand, the rupture of Dorian with Sybil, and, on the other hand, the murder of Basil Hallward; providing, thus, the counterpoint to the breathtaking action the reader has undergone just a few pages before.

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<sup>125</sup> The symbolism of some of the objects described in this chapter will be analyzed within the next chapter.

<sup>126</sup> Even if at the end the regret is much bigger and Allan finally kills himself.

## 6. OVERVIEW OF *DORIAN GRAY'S* GOTHIC ELEMENTS

The aim of this chapter is to analyze how the gothic elements have evolved within the different versions of *The Picture of Dorian Gray*. Gothic elements appear in Dorian Gray's life even before he is born, in the figure of his grandfather and his mother. In the third chapter of the 1891 version, the reader obtains, for the first time, news about Dorian's family, and it is through a conversation between Lord Henry and his uncle. During this chat there are two moments that should be taken into account: the first one is the description of Dorian's mother's imprisonment by her own father, Lord Kelso. "He brought his daughter back with him, I was told, and she never spoke to him again. Oh, yes; it was a bad business. The girl died too, died within a year."<sup>127</sup> What it is said in these sentences is how Lord Kelso destroyed the soul of his daughter, driving her unto death; only to think of the poisoning she had to suffer every day during that year constitutes a first-rate gothic element.<sup>128</sup> Two pages below, we have a description of Dorian's mother which bring to mind to the reader the female characters in the poems of the Romantics, a good example of the new woman "created" with the gothic genre:<sup>129</sup>

A beautiful woman risking everything for a mad passion. A few wild weeks of happiness cut short by a hideous, treacherous crime. Months of voiceless agony, and then a child born in pain. The mother snatched away by death, the boy left to solitude and the tyranny of an old loveless man.<sup>130</sup>

This fragment can be considered as the background of little Dorian, who will, with difficulty, get free of its influence and of the power that his grandfather, "an old loveless man", had been performing on him.

Everything starts with a conversation: the painter tries to explain to Lord Henry how he felt when he first met Dorian. It was not a warm feeling, as their late relationship would suggest. It is described as if Basil had seen a phantom: "A curious instinct of terror came over me."<sup>131</sup> With this sentence the reader can start to imagine what is going to happen even before the real story of Dorian Gray and his portrait begins; but that is not the only which begins at this point. As stated above, Basil

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<sup>127</sup> WILDE: 2006, 32.

<sup>128</sup> This situation is reformulated, many years later, by the Spanish writer Carlos Ruiz Zafón's in his novel *The Shadow of the Wind* [*La sombra del viento*, 2001], in the character of Penélope Aldaya.

<sup>129</sup> See Chapter I.

<sup>130</sup> WILDE: 2006, 34.

<sup>131</sup> WILDE: 2011, 78.

Hallward is going to develop a function as a visionary and almost as a prophet.<sup>132</sup> Basil is the main “prophet” in the novel, but he is not the only one; or, to be more correct, at some points of the story, some other characters take the role he had been playing as visionary.<sup>133</sup> The next table shows the parts of the plot where the prophetic facet of the painter, and of the other characters, appears:<sup>134</sup>

<b>Chapter</b>	<b>Sequence</b>
<b>Chapter I</b>	The first meeting of Dorian and Basil is described.
<b>Chapter I</b>	A conversation between Basil and Lord Henry, where the painter shows his fear of Dorian being corrupted if he meets Harry.
<b>Chapter II</b>	Basil realizes that the negative influence of Lord Henry has started and tries, for the first time, to take Dorian back to the “good way of life”.
<b>Chapter III</b>	At the end of this chapter, Harry prognosticates how the <i>affaire</i> of Dorian with Sybil is going to evolve: “...and wondered how it was all going to end”. <sup>135</sup>
<b>Chapter IV</b>	Basil, after knowing of the engagement of Dorian and Sybil, suspects the tragic end of the story, with the difference that he still has a bit of hope.
<b>Chapter X</b>	Some years later, Dorian meets Basil by chance in the middle of the street at night. As soon as he sees the painter, he knows how the meeting is going to end. Dorian tries to avoid Basil inside his house, maybe

<sup>132</sup> Continuing with the religious meaning of the novel pointed in the chapter above.

<sup>133</sup> These characters are Lord Henry and Dorian, and they only act like this at very specific moments of the narration, once each one.

<sup>134</sup> The reference is taken from the edition by Nicholas Frankel.

<sup>135</sup> WILDE: 2011, 130.

	as a last try of doing a good action.
<b>Chapter XI</b>	Basil Hallward finally confronts the portrait he painted years ago. For the last time, he makes an effort to take Dorian away from his sinner life.
<b>Chapter XI</b>	Basil is killed by Dorian, as a typical prophet, assassinated by that who he tried to save.

As a prophet, Basil blames himself for having painted the portrait when he is talking with Dorian about a hypothetical exhibition of the masterpiece and Dorian denies the painter to contemplate his work: “Well, I am punished for that, Dorian, -or shall be some day”,<sup>136</sup> prognosticating his own ending.

After the murder of Basil, Dorian tries to defuse the fact by thinking that his was only one more of the myriad of crimes usually performed in London,<sup>137</sup> but he also shows his horror to be discovered. Finally, he states that society is mad and he is only a product of his madness: “He sat down, and began to think. Every year –every month, almost- men were strangled in England what he had done. There had been a madness of murder in the air. Some red star had come too close to the earth”.<sup>138</sup>

The whole plot is built in relation to some gothic elements that are used to articulate the novel and which contribute to produce, in the end, a gothic novel if it is considered all together. The leitmotiv underneath the story is the “sale of the soul” Dorian performances when he sees the portrait for the first time. In this moment, the painting seems to possess the model, although the last one only offers a tiny resistance before surrendering definitively: “I would give everything! Yes: there is nothing in the whole world I would not give”.<sup>139</sup> As it is easily seen, Dorian takes his picture as a son, for whom he would do everything. It seems Dorian takes the responsibility of feeding the portrait... and the only food it would take is sin and corruption.

<sup>136</sup> WILDE: 2006, 246.

<sup>137</sup> It must be born in mind that Jack the Ripper had been acting only two years before the novel was first published.

<sup>138</sup> WILDE: 2011, 226.

<sup>139</sup> WILDE: 2011, 102.

Until the *soirée* when the portrait is finished, Dorian had not known the terror. Now, as he faces corruption and sin, he is also able to know the sensation of horror.<sup>140</sup> From that evening on, Dorian will go down and down into a gothic world that, even if it had always been around him, was never perceived by his senses, due to the fact that his senses were slept and now have been awakened by the strength of Lord Henry. Some pages ahead, during his first conversation alone with Lord Henry, Dorian confesses that he had felt fear while exploring London to satisfy his curiosity: “Some of them [the lives of some Londoners] fascinated me. Others filled me with terror”.<sup>141</sup>

The description of the theatre where he saw Sybil acting participates of the gothic trend, too: decadent buildings as symbol of a decadent society.<sup>142</sup> The building and the characters inhabiting it produce a feeling of anguish. But the climax of this descriptive paragraph becomes with the introduction of the Jew, Sybil’s master.<sup>143</sup> He is presented as a supernatural creature: “He was such a monster”.<sup>144</sup> With this sentence Wilde recovers the entire gothic trend whose leading role had been performed by “monsters” and whose maximum example is Mary Shelley’s *Frankenstein*, even if in this case, the Jew would be a corrupted example of Frankenstein’s creature.

Dorian Gray is a character who is ready to give everything he has or everything he is. We have already seen how he gave it (or, at least, promised that to the portrait). In “Chapter V” it can be seen again how he gives everything to another beautiful thing: Sybil Vane “...to whom I have given everything that is good in me”.<sup>145</sup> The fact that he only promises to give what is good can be understood in two ways: on one hand that he still hopes to maintain something good inside himself and, on the other hand, that he does not really want to give everything to Sybil, because this “everything” already belongs to the portrait.<sup>146</sup> Anyway, everything good remaining in Dorian is now Sybil’s. Related to this it is the episode of the death of Sybil. It is shown, within the first version of the novel, in “Chapter VI”, when Lord Henry arrives in Dorian’s house to inform him

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<sup>140</sup> Adam and Eve only knew the shame after having sinned.

<sup>141</sup> WILDE: 2011, 115.

<sup>142</sup> This can also be appreciated in Edgar Allan Poe’s “The Fall of the House of Usher”.

<sup>143</sup> Whose description reminds the reader of the creature appearing in Gustav Meyrink’s *The Golem* [*Der Golem*, 1914].

<sup>144</sup> WILDE: 2011, 115.

<sup>145</sup> WILDE: 2011, 139.

<sup>146</sup> Here, the painting can be considered as owner of its own conscience and will, the same as the ring created by J. R. R. Tolkien.

of the sad news. When Harry pronounces the sentence "...my letter –don't be frightened- was to tell you that Sybil Vane is dead",<sup>147</sup> it has to be understood that, with her death, she has taken everything good remaining in Dorian. From this scene on, it is when the degradation of Dorian's soul takes place. But, there have been two previous moments when Dorian had the chance of becoming a demon: the first one is when he sees the portrait for the first time; and the second one is after Sybil's horrid performance, when she and Dorian meet. Dorian literally mutters "You have killed my love".<sup>148</sup> However, some pages later it is possible to appreciate a tiny trace of regret in Dorian's attitude, with his reflection about cruelty. In the next moment, he is planning to go to see her in order to apologize and to accomplish his promise of marriage. His "good side" will be never shown away.

Once Sybil has killed Dorian's love he goes back to his house. In his way home, the description offered by Wilde is that of a decadent image of the city, showing the vices of people, caricaturizing human beings, transforming details into gothic elements. During this journey, there is a feature which deserves to be taken into account. It is known that Dorian changes have not any effect in his external aspect, but hereby a background character is presented as he maybe knew something about Dorian's hideous new life: the cherries seller. "A white-smocked carter offered him some cherries. He thanked him, wondered why he refused to accept any money for them, and began to eat them listlessly".<sup>149</sup> The reason of this refusal can be due to some scaring sign Dorian has now in his face as Cain after having killed Abel: "So the LORD put a mark on Cain to warn anyone who met him not to kill him".<sup>150</sup> The mark is there to show the crime and to avoid any revenge. The sinner has to suffer and to penance.

But Sybil's death is not a gothic death only for Dorian, but also for her. Her death is not a random one. She commits suicide. It has to be remembered that the night the relation became broken, she had been playing Juliet, and in the same way as Juliet is

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<sup>147</sup> WILDE: 2011, 156.

<sup>148</sup> WILDE: 2011, 144.

Love is the last hope of men. In the Faustian myth love [*Liebe*] is the only thing able to save doctor's soul.

<sup>149</sup> WILDE: 2011, 146.

<sup>150</sup> Gen. 4, 15. *Good News Bible*. New York: American Bible Society, 1976.

put into tomb as she [Sybil] dies:<sup>151</sup> “She had swallowed something by mistake, some dreadful thing they use at theatres”.<sup>152</sup> In Shakespeare’s play it is shown how her family set Juliet’s corpse in a crypt, what constitutes an element very much liked and used by gothic authors (i.e. Matthew Gregory Lewis’s *The Monk*). On the other hand, as she kills herself by her own hand, she cannot be saved. Her soul will be brought into hell, closing the romantic aura of the romance and its end. Dorian adds one more romantic detail to the whole: “Strange, that my first passionate love-letter should have been addressed to a dead girl”,<sup>153</sup> making use of the taste expressed by writers during the Romantic period. An argument of why Sybil did what she did is given. According to Dorian “she acted badly because she had known the reality of love. When she discovered its unreality, she died, as Juliet might have died”,<sup>154</sup> showing that love, a feeling which is supposed to be good and to produce good effects and to bring happiness to people, is guilty of a murder. Wilde is presenting something good beneath the mask of something evil. The inner meaning of everything is what really makes it, not only its pretty face.<sup>155</sup> Later on, a new similar situation is exposed: the moment when Dorian covers the portrait with a piece of cloth which is described as a luxury piece of manufacture:<sup>156</sup>

His eye fell on a large purple satin coverlid heavily embroidered with gold, a splendid piece of late seventeenth-century Venetian work that his uncle had found in a convent near Bologna. Yes, that would serve to wrap the dreadful thing in. It had perhaps served often as a pall for the dead. Now it was to hide 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 of 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.<sup>157</sup>

The most terrible thing ever created is going to be hidden by one of the most beautiful pieces of art able to be described. Again, the idea of the evil hidden under a patina of attractiveness appears here.

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<sup>151</sup> Both Juliet and Sybil are driven into tomb due a substance they drink, being Sybil dead, unlike Shakespeare’s character.

<sup>152</sup> WILDE: 2011, 157.

<sup>153</sup> WILDE: 2006, 239.

<sup>154</sup> WILDE: 2011, 168.

<sup>155</sup> This also happens with Dorian himself.

<sup>156</sup> Note that the painting is hidden in the study-room where Dorian used to be mistreated by his grandfather.

<sup>157</sup> WILDE: 2011, 177-178.

The changes produced in the portrait are, maybe, the most significant gothic element present in the novel: they show Dorian's sins and corruption. The first change takes place after Dorian leaves Sybil, perhaps as a sign pointing to the fact that the painting already knows the actress's fate and the role Dorian has played on it:<sup>158</sup>

As he was passing through the library towards the door of his bedroom, his eye fell upon the portrait Basil Hallward had painted of him. He started back on surprise, and then went over to it and examined it. In the dim arrested light that struggled through the cream-coloured silk blinds, the face seemed to him to be a little changed. The expression looked different. One would have said that there was a touch of cruelty in the mouth. It was certainly curious.<sup>159</sup>

Later Dorian doubts if he has really seen what he thought to have seen:

Was it all true? Had the portrait really changed? Or had it been simply his own imagination that had made him see a look of evil where there had been a look of joy? Surely a painted canvas could not alter? The thing was absurd. It would serve as a tale to tell Basil some day. It would make him smile.<sup>160</sup>

But the truth is that the painting changes and its modifications are so accurate that they are adequate to each crime Dorian commits. For instance, when he breaks up with Sybil only an evil expression appears, but when Basil is killed a red strip, symbol of blood, comes to accompany the image; and when Dorian tries his first "good action" after a life of perversity (the seduction of Hetty) a new expression is added: hypocrisy. Dorian wants to convince himself and the picture (his soul) of the goodness of his act: "It was an unjust mirror, this mirror of his soul that he was looking at. Vanity? Curiosity? Hypocrisy? Had there been nothing more in his renunciation than that? There had been something else. At least he thought so. But who could tell?"<sup>161</sup> Some chapters before, Wilde had already compared it with a mirror, "the most magical of mirrors".<sup>162</sup>

Another element taken from gothic tradition is the opposition between spaces: the terror appears when the character is alone and, specially, when he or she is in a particular place. In Dorian's case, this place is his own house,<sup>163</sup> and it goes on and on as the action is being transferred to the room where the painting is. This use of the

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<sup>158</sup> Placing the sinner and the sin in opposite positions.

<sup>159</sup> WILDE: 2011, 148.

<sup>160</sup> WILDE: 2011, 153.

<sup>161</sup> WILDE: 2011, 250.

<sup>162</sup> WILDE: 2011, 165.

This comparison affords the painting a magical character and puts it in relation with some other literary works, as for example Edgar Allan Poe's "William Wilson".

<sup>163</sup> "When he stepped out in the grass, he drew a deep breath. The fresh morning air seemed to drive away all his passions", WILDE: 2011, 151.

spaces as the element which constructs the terrific atmosphere has been used since the first gothic works, preferring dark and narrow places in order to be able to maintain the tension up. A good and similar example can be found in the tale of Guy de Maupassant “The Horla” [“Le Horla”].<sup>164</sup> The house is the scenario where the terror is developed, and the character would only feel safe outside, but there is a higher fear than this one: the horror of the painting to be discovered. Dorian knows that, if the work of art is seen by anyone, his life would be ruined, and this keeps him inside the house, taking care of the portrait, which becomes his energy and his slaver.<sup>165</sup> The look of the picture as a judge can be related to many popular legends and fairy tales in which something supernatural appears in order to show the witnesses their dreadful actions, with the particularity of the proximity of death.<sup>166</sup>

In the novel, everything changes in a specific point: when Dorian is gifted with a book by Lord Henry. This book is entitled *Le Secret de Raoul, par Catulle Sarrazin* and the description of its plot allows it to be easily associated with a prototypical gothic novel, where the main character explores all the vices which take place over the world, and across the ages. Rivers of ink have been written about this fictional book, and it will maybe never be known which one exactly is.<sup>167</sup> Two candidates to achieve this position could be William Beckford’s *Vathek* or Rachilde’s *Monsieur Venus*.<sup>168</sup> Dorian is overwhelmed by the poisonous effect of this book: “For years, Dorian Gray could not free himself from the memory of the book”,<sup>169</sup> and, during his last conversation with Harry, it would be said that the book has been like a poison for the young man: “Yet you poisoned me with a book once. I should not forgive that. Harry, promise me that you will never lend that book to any one. It does harm”.<sup>170</sup> The book tells the story of a dreadful life that, at the end, becomes Dorian’s owns.

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<sup>164</sup> Guy de Maupassant (1850-1893), French author who is well known for his horror and erotic tales with the background of the rural Normandy and the Franco-Prussian War. His tale “The Horla” was first published in 1886.

<sup>165</sup> For instance, Dorian sells his house in Algeria.

<sup>166</sup> One of these legends could be “the shadow”, very popular and well-known in places such as the South of Spain, where it is acknowledged as “*enlutado*” [in mourning] due to the external appearance it uses to take.

<sup>167</sup> It will never probably be discovered if Wilde had in mind a particular book or if it was just a creation of his imagination for his novel.

<sup>168</sup> Rachilde (1860-1953) was the pen-name of Marguerite Vallette-Eymery, French author who was related with the decadents’ group. Her novel *Monsieur Venus* was first published in 1884 in Brussels.

<sup>169</sup> WILDE: 2011, 187.

<sup>170</sup> WILDE: 2006, 299.

In Chapter IX (XI within the definitive version) a vast description of the objects Dorian has been collecting for years is provided. This, besides being a work of aesthetics, also offers some gothic details which contribute to build the atmosphere. For instance, the collection of Catholic embroideries and ornaments he gathered was chosen due to the meaning they had in relation to the daily sacrifice in Mass, “more awful than all the sacrifices of the antique world”.<sup>171</sup> Dorian is not convinced of the religious principles underlying within the Roman ritual, he is only interested in the notion of sacrifice (the representation of a terrible murder) performed every day. It is also said that he collected some weapons and strange musical instruments, brought from the most distant areas of the world, from very different cultures, and with a dreadful past: “and flutes of human bones such as Alfonso de Ovalle heard in Chili”.<sup>172</sup>

Dorian had not only been cursed when the painting was finished and he pronounced that already famous words of submission. London is neither blind nor deaf to his life and people start rumoring. In meetings, some gentlemen leave when he arrives. Some ladies are taken away from social life (as Lord Henry’s sister). It is also well known which the end of those close to Dorian will be. One of them is Alan Campbell (whose past is also questioned), but another example is found in Adrian Singleton (1891 version), now an opium addict with no hope neither future. It would be considered as normal if all those would have cursed Dorian, but the hatred for him goes further: “It was said that even sinful creatures who prowl the streets at night had cursed him as he passed by, seeing in him a corruption greater than their own, and knowing but too well the horror of his real life.”<sup>173</sup>

The experiment performed by Alan Campbell can be interpreted as a sample of the new sciences which were being developed at the late XIX century.<sup>174</sup> These evolved disciplines contributed too to create new gothic trends, by introducing new elements which can provoke horror. Alan’s experiment can also be seen as a homage Oscar Wilde was paying to Dr. Frankenstein. Both were doctors dealing with dead bodies:

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<sup>171</sup> WILDE: 2011, 194.

<sup>172</sup> WILDE: 2011, 196.

<sup>173</sup> WILDE: 2011, 203.

<sup>174</sup> Those interested in this topic should see GRAY, Frances: *York Notes Advanced. The Picture of Dorian Gray*. London: Longman, 2009.

Victor with the purpose of creating life and Mr. Campbell in order to preserve his own (task in which he fails, as it is known) and to allow Dorian's continue.

The last gothic element appearing in the novel is the destruction of the portrait and the "death" of Dorian. It is with the same knife Basil's life was taken with which the painting is destroyed. Finally the actual guilt is getting its reward, finally Dorian is being a victim of the justice he had anticipated. The word "death" has been written within inverted commas because there is doubt about the end: is the real Dorian who lies dead next to the picture with a knife in his heart? Or, is it only an image of his soul, now clean and pure again, as it can be observed on the canvas? Because, at the beginning of the first published version, Lord Henry describes Dorian as unfolded: "Before which Dorian? The one who is pouring the tea for us, or the one in the picture?"<sup>175</sup> The last scene in the novel shows Dorian's servants recognizing the corpse by examining the rings he is wearing, maybe a last wink to the aesthetic established by Wilde.

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<sup>175</sup> WILDE: 2006, 207.

## 7. CONCLUSIONS

This dissertation is based on various issues which could, at first sight, be considered as very different, but which lead the reader to the general overview presented as the main goal of this “little thesis”. First of all, it has been verified that *The Picture of Dorian Gray*, even having been written many years after the end of the awakening of the Gothic genre, still includes elements and characteristics proper of this type of works. Oscar Wilde used those elements in order to create the atmosphere surrounding characters and plot, taking them directly from the gothic tradition or reformulating them. Gothic followed many different trends after the “great split” it suffered as the nineteenth century advanced. During this period, “the age of the novel” (as usually called), Gothic did not disappear, but gothic authors were hangers-on of the different literary movements which were being developed during those years in the different European countries and in the United States. It was then that writers and works which were initially included within some other styles (i.e. Realism) presented fragments or elements proper of the Gothic. This is how and why, at the fin-de-siècle, Oscar Wilde wrote this stunning novel with so many gothic implications, even if the horror was not the main purpose of this work of Art.

The analysis of Frankel’s 2011 edition (which was, paradoxically, the first one written by Wilde), together with that of the two previous, allows the establishment of a comparison between the three versions devised by the author of *The Importance of Being Earnest*. The changes the novel suffered and how the plot and characters evolve can be appreciated on the basis of this comparison; thanks to this procedure, the reader can also learn and appreciate the different structural adjustments within the story and detect the variations between the “three plots”. Finally, and taking all this into account, it has been possible to attain how Wilde’s own mind changed during the process of writing of *The Picture*. The evolution of the use of the gothic elements since the first version to the definite one has also been contrasted; evolution which can mostly be understood with the enlargement of the plot: within the new chapters, new gothic elements appear as, for instance, the description of the opium dens at London East areas, or the new storyline in which James Vane has the leading role.

Many details about Wilde's life and production, which were relatively unknown, have been disclosed; they have proven very useful for the development of this dissertation, for the understanding of this novel, and of Wilde's production in general. For instance, to properly comprehend this piece of Art, the education in oral culture of young Oscar has to be born in mind; or his aesthetical ideas to figure out why he produced this novel (and also his plays) the way he did. As shown in the novel, Wilde was a master of Aesthetics and a dandy. The main characters (Dorian and Lord Henry) assume features of the dandyism; besides, the society they live in was the one where this "movement" was being developed. Throughout the novel the reader can see aesthetic details (Chapter IX –later XI-), or appreciate how the conversations between the different characters are based in some of Wilde's ideas about life, society, and the world in general. Finally, the affairs of his personal life have also been taken into account in order to grasp the treatment he gave to his characters or to society in general.

In brief, *The Picture of Dorian Gray* is a Gothic novel. However, it must be specified that, due to the historical characteristics of the period in which the work was composed, gothic elements are shown in a much more subtle way than at the beginning of the century. It also has to be born in mind the personality of the author (Oscar Fingal O'Flahertie Wills Wilde) who was one of the most controversial characters of Victorian Age. Due to his formation on Aesthetics and to his brilliant mind, Wilde was able to create this novel, which gathers not only the Gothic, but also the social criticism, the psychological analysis, or the aesthetical essay. Many years had gone by since Horace Walpole wrote a short book inspired in a dream he had; the imprint left by the passing of time and the tortuous paths of life itself, with its inherent complications, appear in "our portrait". Late Victorian urban high social class was not like that of the medieval lords of castles or the eighteenth century country nobles: their lives did hide darker secrets and their souls were carrying the burden of more terrible sins. Dorian Gray, Lord Henry, and company could solve the problems they created by the divine intercession of fate or by a complicated development of occurrences, but only by vicious actions.

The limits and the purpose of this little thesis have only allowed space to deal with some small strokes of the brush of *Dorian Gray*. For this reason, this is –by no means— a closed study, but an approximation to future analysis of the multiple particulars which can be dealt with; for instance, the Biblical and religious symbols

which populate the novel deserve further scrutiny. Another very interesting line of research could be to contrast the gothic elements present in *Dorian Gray* with those of some other works produced during the same period, for example, *The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde* or *The Turn of the Screw*. The door is, therefore, open to further and deeper research.

## 8. CONCLUSIONES

En este estudio se han explorado una serie de aspectos que, en un principio pueden ser considerados dispares, pero que presentados en conjunto coadyuvan al general entendimiento de la totalidad. Para comenzar, y a pesar de que *The Picture of Dorian Gray*, fue escrita muchos años después del nacimiento de la novela gótica, la novela incluye una serie de características y elementos propios de este género. Tras el pormenorizado análisis aquí efectuado, se ha comprobado que Oscar Wilde hizo uso de las particularidades del género para crear una atmósfera envolvente en torno a los personajes y al argumento. Algunos de ellos fueron tomados directamente de la tradición gótica y otros fueron reformulados específicamente para la composición de la obra. Para ello, en el capítulo III se ha puesto de relieve que la gótica no dejó de cultivarse durante “edad de la novela” (siglo XIX), sino que sus autores se entremezclaron con los grandes movimientos literarios surgidos en esos años en Europa y en Norteamérica. Debido a la “difuminación” del género, muchas de las obras góticas decimonónicas se incluyen en los cánones de otros estilos, presentando, sin embargo, fragmentos o características meramente góticas. Así es como se entiende que Oscar Wilde, en los años finales del siglo, escribiese esta magnífica obra que muestra amplias características góticas, aunque el terror no se erigiese como tema principal de la novela.

El empleo de la versión editada por Nicholas Frankel en 2011 (que paradójicamente fue la primera escrita por Wilde) es una novedad en los estudios “wildeanos”. Tal y como se ha puesto de relieve a lo largo del capítulo V, su análisis, conjuntamente con el de las dos versiones conocidas de la novela, ha sido primordial para establecer una comparación entre las tres versiones de *The Picture*, pues dar cuenta de los cambios sufridos en la novela, así como la evolución del argumento y los personajes ha sido una de las bases que fundamentan este estudio. Gracias a este procedimiento, el lector puede conocer los ajustes estructurales que se fueron produciendo en la novela a medida que las diferentes versiones iban siendo compuestas. Para terminar, el mencionado estudio comparativo nos permite ver el modo en que la mente del propio autor cambiaba junto con su obra. No sólo el argumento y los personajes de la novela sufren transformaciones, sino también los elementos góticos presentes en la misma. En su última versión, la novela sufrió un alargamiento de siete capítulos, en los cuales, como es lógico, se han podido hallar nuevos y más elaborados

elementos góticos, como la descripción de los fumadores de opio del *East End*, o la nueva trama argumental que supone la inclusión de James Vane.

Este trabajo también se ha adentrado en aspectos de la vida de Oscar Wilde que eran relativamente desconocidos. Estos detalles han sido muy útiles para la mejor comprensión de la pieza objeto de estudio, así como de la producción de Wilde en general. Por ejemplo, para entender esta obra de arte, hemos tenido en mente la educación que el propio Oscar tuvo en la cultura oral irlandesa; o sus teorías sobre Estética, que nos son expuestas a lo largo de toda su producción (ensayos, obras de teatros, etc.). Las ideas estéticas de Wilde se pueden apreciar en las descripciones presentes en la obra (por ejemplo, en el capítulo IX –XI en la versión definitiva-) o en las conversaciones sostenidas por algunos de los personajes en distintas partes del argumento. El dandismo es otro concepto que se ha tenido en cuenta, pues los personajes principales de *The Picture* (Dorian y Lord Henry) presentan rasgos característicos de este tipo londinense de la época victoriana.

Para resumir, *The Picture of Dorian Gray* es una novela gótica; sin embargo, se debe especificar que, debido a las características históricas del período en que la obra fue compuesta, los elementos góticos se presentan de un modo mucho más sutil de lo que se hacía a principios de siglo. Además, la personalidad y genialidad del autor —uno de los personajes más controvertidos y polémicos de su época) — su formación estética o su mente brillante, le permitieron crear esta inolvidable novela, repleta también de crítica social y análisis psicológico. Habían pasado muchos años desde que Horace Walpole escribiese una novela corta inspirándose en un sueño, y la impronta dejada por el paso del tiempo y los tortuosos caminos de la vida se reflejan en nuestro *Portrait*. La alta sociedad del período victoriano no era como los señores medievales, ni como los aristócratas rurales del siglo XVIII: sus vidas y obras escondían secretos mucho más oscuros y sus almas cargaban con pecados mucho más terribles. Para Dorian Gray, Lord Henry y el resto del elenco de personajes que aparecen en la novela resultaría imposible resolver los problemas que ellos mismos habían creado por divina intercesión o con un complicado desarrollo de acontecimientos. Para ellos sólo es posible resolver sus problemas mediante acciones aún más terribles, tejiendo así una oscura madeja que sólo la muerte puede desentrañar.

Debido a los límites y los objetivos de un Trabajo Fin de Grado, éste breve acercamiento a *Dorian Gray* deja al lector y, sobre todo, al “investigador”, sumido en el deseo de saber más, de descubrir más. Por ello, éste no es un trabajo cerrado, sino una aproximación para futuros trabajos. Por ejemplo, el análisis de elementos bíblicos que aparecen en la obra, o el contraste de los elementos góticos de esta novela con otros presentes en obras escritas durante este mismo período, como *The Strange Case of Dr. Jeckyll and Mr. Hyde* o *The Turn of the Screw*, podrían constituir investigaciones de gran interés. La puerta queda, así, abierta.

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## CHRONOLOGY

- 1854: Oscar Fingal O’Flahertie Wilde (he added Wills in the 1870s) was born on 16 October at 21 Westland Row, Dublin. He was the second son of Dr. (later Sir) William Wilde and Jane Francesca Elgee. His father was a leading oculist and ear-surgeon and his mother was a poet and translator, who took part of the nationalist movement Young Ireland, witting under the pen name of Speranza.
- 1855: His family moves to 1 Merrion Square in Dublin.
- 1857: Birth of Isola Wilde, Oscar’s sister, on April 2.
- 1858: Birth of Constance Mary Lloyd, Wilde’s future wife.
- 1863: Wilde’s father is knighted following his appointment as Queen Victoria’s “Surgeon Oculist”.
- 1864: Oscar starts his studies at Portora Royal School, in Enniskillen, Northern Ireland. William Wilde is given his knighthood.
- 1867: Death of Oscar’s young sister, Isola, at the age of eight. This event left an indelible mark in the author. Wilde writes the poem “Requiescat” to commemorate her passing away.
- 1871: Oscar finishes school in Enniskillen (upon leaving he is awarded the Portora Gold Medal as the best classical scholar) and he starts his studies at Trinity College, in Dublin, following the courses of Ancient History and Classics.
- 1873: Publication of Walter Pater’s *Studies in The History of The Renaissance*. Pater was one of Oscar’s professors at Trinity College; this work had a huge influence in the aesthetic ideas of the author.
- 1874: Wilde wins the Berkeley Gold Medal for Greek at Trinity College and matriculates, with a scholarship, at Magdalen College, in the prestigious University of Oxford, where he will follow the courses of Classics and Ancient History (“Greats”).

- 1875: In summer Oscar visits Italy for the first time, being accompanied by his tutor from Dublin J. P. Mahaffy.
- 1876: Death of Sir William Wilde on April 19. His mother moves to England. Oscar stands out in Oxford due to his brilliant grades in Classics. His first poems are published in *Dublin University Magazine* and he takes a First Class in Classical Moderation.
- 1877: Oscar visits Greece with Mahaffy and he travels again to Italy, visiting Ravenna and Rome.
- 1878: Oscar wins the Newdigate Prize for Poetry in Oxford with his poem “Ravenna”, which is published by Thomas Shrimpton & Son, Oxford. He takes his BA degree, and a First Class in Litterae Humaniores. Finally, Wilde moves to London and starts to establish himself as a popularizer of Aestheticism.
- 1879: Oscar’s flirtation with an academic career ends when his essay “The Rise of Historical Criticism” fails to win the Chancellor’s Prize, which was not awarded that year, and he is not elected a fellow of the college. Wilde then settles as an Aesthetics teacher, being constantly an object of interest (and sometimes of derision) in Victorian England. Wilde meets Constance Lloyd.
- 1880: Wilde privately publishes his first play, *Vera, or the Nihilists*.
- 1881: The first edition of his volume *Poems* is published privately. It is not well received by the critics. Wilde also becomes the subject of a series of cartoons in *Punch* satirizing the “art for art’s sake” movement”. The well-known Victorian playwrights Gilbert and Sullivan publish their opera *Patience*, where the aesthetes are satirized, Wilde amongst them (in the character of Bunthorne).
- 1882: Spending of a year lecturing in United States and Canada, speaking on arts, aesthetics and decoration, dealing with topics such as “The English Renaissance of Art” and “The House Beautiful”. A revised edition of his *Poems* is published.

- 1883: Oscar spends three months in Paris and, afterwards, he acts again as a lecturer, this time in Britain. His early play, *Vera; or, The Nihilists* is performed in New York unsuccessfully. Wilde writes *The Duchess of Padua*.
- 1884: After several years of young love with –among others- Florence Balcombe (future wife of Bram Stoker, *Dracula*'s author), Oscar finally marries Constance Lloyd (following their six month engagement) on May 29. The couple spends the honeymoon in Paris and Dieppe and, after that, they settle in Chelsea. Oscar starts working as a critic and regular book reviewer until 1890.
- 1885: Birth (on June 5) of Cyril Wilde, first son of the new marriage. They move into 16 Tite Street, Chelsea, an artistic section of London, on January 1. Oscar writes reviews for the *Pall Mall Gazette*. “The Criminal Law Amendment Act” is approved, which condemned homosexual relations for the first time. Due to this law, Oscar will later spend two years in prison.
- 1886: Birth of Vyvyan Wilde, second son of the Wilde marriage, on November 3. Oscar meets Robert Ross, who will be his lifelong friend and his literary executor in 1897. Ross was maybe the first male lover of Oscar.
- 1887: Oscar becomes the editor of *Lady's World: A Magazine of Fashion and Society*. He changed its name to *Woman's World*. His tales “The Canterville Ghost”, “Lord Arthur Savile's Crime”, “The Sphinx Without a Secret” and “The Model Millionaire” are published.
- 1888: *The Happy Prince and Other Tales* (a fairy tales collection originally composed for his sons) is published, and it is well received.
- 1889: Oscar finishes editing *Woman's World*. He publishes “Pen, Pencil and Poison” (on the forger and poisoner Thomas Griffiths Wainewright), “The Decay of Lying” (a dialogue in praise of artifice over nature and art over morality), “The Portrait of Mr. W. H.” (on the supposed identity of the dedicatee of Shakespeare's sonnets) and “The Birthday of the Infanta”.
- 1890: The first version of *The Picture of Dorian Gray* is published in the July number of *Lippincott's Monthly Magazine*. There is a fierce debate between

Wilde and hostile critic ensues. “The True Function and Value of Criticism” (later revised and included in the volume *Intentions* as “The Critic as an Artist”) is also published.

- 1891: Oscar meets Lord Alfred Douglas (“Bosie”) for the first time, who, later, will become his lover. Wilde’s play *The Duchess of Padua* performed in New York as Guido Ferranti. He also publishes the revised version of *The Picture of Dorian Gray* in April, where seven more chapters are added (published by Ward, Lock and Company). This year it appears, too, “The Soul of Man Under Socialism” (Wilde’s most interesting utopian work) and “Preface to *Dorian Gray*”; these works are published in the February and March numbers of the *Forthnightly Review*. *Intentions*, *Lord Arthur Savile’s Crime and Other Stories* and *A House of Pomegranates* (fairy-tales) are also published. The writing of *Salome* is started in Paris. The Irish leader Parnell is involved in some dark issues about a divorce and his career gets ruined.
- 1892: Performance of *Lady Windermere’s Fan* in St. James’s Theatre, London (February to July) to great popular acclaim. Wilde writes (in French) *Salome*, whose license to be performed (it was going to be performed by Sarah Bernhardt) is refused due to moral issues (English law forbade theatrical depiction of biblical characters). Wilde writes *A Woman of No Importance*.
- 1893: The French original version of *Salome* is published in Paris. Meanwhile, *Lady Windermere’s Fan* is published in London, and *A Woman of No Importance* is performed at Haymarket Theatre. Oscar writes *An Ideal Husband*.
- 1894: Publication of the English translation of *Salome*, illustrated by Audrey Beardsley, dedicated to Alfred Douglas. Wilde also publishes “The Sphinx”, illustrated by Charles Ricketts, *A Woman of No Importance* and *Poems in Prose*. Oscar writes *The Importance of Being Earnest*.
- 1895: *An Ideal Husband* is performed at Haymarket Theatre from January on. From February on, this is followed by the hugely successful *The Importance of Being Earnest* at St. James’s Theatre. On 28 February Wilde returns to his club, the Albermale, to find a card from Douglas’s father, the Marquess of

Queensberry, accusing him of “posing as a sodomite” (sodomite). Wilde quickly takes out an action accusing Queensberry of criminal libel. In April, Queensberry appears at the Old Bailey and is acquitted, following a successful plea of justification on the basis that Wilde was guilty of homosexual behaviour. Wilde is immediately arrested, after ignoring his friends’ advice to flee the country. In May he is tried twice at the Old Bailey. The first trial jury fails to agree a verdict; at the second trial Wilde is found guilty and, on 25 May, given the maximum sentence of two years’ imprisonment with hard labour in Pentonville for “acts of gross indecency with another male person”. In July he is transferred to Wandsworth Prison and, in November, he is declared bankrupt, and shortly afterwards transferred again, this time to Reading Gaol.

- 1896: Death of Oscar’s mother, Lady Jane Francesca Wilde (“Speranza”). Constance Wilde travels from Genoa to Reading Gaol to break the news. *Salome* is produced in Paris.
- 1897: Wilde writes, in prison, a long letter to Alfred Douglas that would be later entitled “De Profundis”. In May, he is released from prison, and sails for Dieppe by the night ferry. He would never return to Britain. On his release, Wilde writes to the *Daily Chronicle* about the treatment of children in gaol. Once in France, he establishes in Berneval, near Dieppe and he adopts the name of Sebastian Melmoth. Later, Oscar joins Alfred in Naples, breaking the promised made to his wife causing a new rift and a virtual rupture with her.
- 1898: Wilde publishes, pseudonymously (as C.3.3, his cell-number in Reading Gaol), *The Ballad of the Reading Gaol* based on his experiences there. In February Oscar moves to Paris. During this year, another long letter about prison conditions to the *Daily Chronicle* is written. Constance Wilde (who had by now changed her name to Holland) dies in Genoa on April 7.
- 1899: *The Importance of Being Earnest* and *An Ideal Husband* are published. Oscar, having already some health problems, does some travels in Europe. Finally he moves into the Hotel d’Alsace, in Paris. His elder brother, William (born in 1852), dies.

- 1900: In January Queensberry dies. Oscar visits Rome for the last time. He is very ill with a blood infection and undergoes an ear operation in his hotel room. On 29 November he is received into the Roman Catholic Church by being baptized and dies the following day of cerebral meningitis in the Hotel d'Alsace, in Paris. Oscar Fingal O'Flahertie Wills Wilde is buried in Bagneux Cemetery, in Paris.
- 1905: An abridged version of "De Profundis" is edited and published by Robert Ross.
- 1906: Wilde's state is discharged from bankrupt.
- 1908: *The Collected Works*, edited by Robert Ross, are published.
- 1909: Wilde's remains are moved from Bagneux Cemetery to Pere Lachaise Cemetery, also in Paris, and, in 1912, a monument is erected over them by Jacob Epstein.