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A Comparative Analysis of Literary Classics in *Penny Dreadful: Contemporary Adaptations of Frankenstein, The Picture of Dorian Gray and Dracula*

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ABSTRACT

Along centuries literature has been constantly adapted. Many works have been rewritten or re-interpreted depending on the innovations suffered by each period of time. A great number of visual reinventions of the classics started to emerge during the entire 20th century in cinema and television due to innovations in technology and the insertion of the TV into the everyday life of society. *Penny Dreadful* it is a 2014 show created by John Logan which adapts English horror classics such as *Frankenstein*, *The Picture of Dorian Gray* and *Dracula*. What is different about *Penny Dreadful* is the mixture of the classics' worlds into one big contemporary Gothic narrative located in the Victorian London. In this dissertation, a comparative analysis of the Gothic works and the corresponding adaptations in *Penny Dreadful* is accomplished.

Gothic novel, Penny Dreadful, Frankenstein, Dorian Gray, Dracula, Adaptation

Durante siglos las adaptaciones de obras literarias han sido constantes; muchas obras se han reescrito o reinterpretado dependiendo de las innovaciones de cada época. Un gran número de reinenciones de clásicos aparecieron en el cine y televisión debido a las innovaciones en la teconología y la inserción de la televisión en la sociedad. *Penny Dreadful* es una serie de 2014 creada por John Logan que adapta varias obras clásicas inglesas tales como *Frankenstein*, *El Retrato de Dorian Gray* o *Drácula*. Lo que diferencia a *Penny Dreadful* es la mezcla de los mundos de estos tres clásicos en una narrativa gótica contemporánea situada en la época Victoriana en Londres. En este trabajo, llevo a cabo un análisis comparativo de las novelas góticas y sus respectivas adaptaciones en *Penny Dreadful*.

Novela gótica, Penny Dreadful, Frankenstein, Dorian Gray, Drácula, Adaptación

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Introduction

Literature is known to be a very subjective field, reason why along history there have always been multiple reinterpretations or rewritings of certain works. Thanks to “the cinematic innovation of the 20th century” (Stevens, 26) started to appear on a large scale “endlessly versions of he Gothic classic novels” (Botting, 156). This last-year dissertation is related to these adaptations of three well-known works: *Frankenstein* by Mary Shelley, *The Picture of Dorian Gray* by Oscar Wilde and *Dracula* by Bram Stoker in the TV show of *Penny Dreadful*.

Reading was a leading activity in the Victorian Period even though it “provoked a good deal of anxiety” (Flint, 17). The 19th century England had different perspectives towards life as “urbanisation, industrialisation, revolution were the principal signs of change” (Botting, 23) that caused this sense of anxiety in the population. As a result, readers of the Victorian Era were fascinated by all that surrounded evil, darkness, monstrosity, mystery and the occult; features that are well comprised in the Gothic novel. This is so due to “Gothic produced emotional effects on its readers rather than developing a rational or properly cultivated response” (Botting, 4). Even if Gothic genre did not appear as such in the 19th century but before, “at the end of the nineteenth century familiar Gothic figures [...] re-emerged in new shapes, with a different intensity and anxious investment as objects of terror and horror” (Botting, 133). Gothic novels had its interest in plots that were connected with terror, supernatural and the reason of the human existence. The archetypical gothic characters are human: “scientists, fathers, husbands, madmen, criminals and the monstrous double” (Botting, 2) whether they are classified as heroes or villains. Gothic novel organizes its settings in new landscapes “whose action centres on urban, domestic, commercial and professional figures and locals.” (Botting, 6) All in all, the Gothic novel is made up by the fears of the population: terror comes into sight as something that lives within the human kind and not outside. Science was seen as a way of comprehending the uncertainty of life and it is used in literature in order to create an atmosphere of anxiety as it felt in the real 19th century in England.

Penny Dreadful, created by John Logan in 2014 is appreciated as a post-modern Gothic work because of its dark surroundings and obscure narratives. The creator stated in an interview that he was highly inspired by the English literary classics of the Gothic

genre. He decided to bring those characters to life making them live all together in 1891 in London and with the same big plot linking them either as heroes or villains. At the same time it is original and challenging as he had to rewrite “iconic characters in a new way” (Logan). He took all the great stories like *Frankenstein*, *The Picture of Dorian Gray* and *Dracula* and made of them a new story being faithful to their essence and characteristic features. He said that writers such as Mary Shelley, Bram Stoker or Oscar Wilde “were able to transmute the anxiety that Londoners felt about science and evolution into stories about mystery, suspense and anxiety” (Logan, 3:04 – 3:16) thus came the brilliant idea of “mixing and melting” (Logan, 3:23) the plots of these classics “into one sort of new narrative” (Logan, 3:25 – 3:27). This TV show is considered to very well play its part when it comes to transmit to the public the surroundings and settings of the Victorian Era as “*Penny Dreadful* riffs on Victorian science-fiction, occult, and horror stories.” (E.Larsen, 2016). As a result, *Penny Dreadful* is a story of mystery and suspense decorated with supernatural and gloomy environments having the leading role characters drawn from the English Gothic literature.

Keeping all the previous in mind, this dissertation focuses on the analysis of three classic English Gothic novels comparing them with their respective adaptations in the TV series *Penny Dreadful*. The purpose of this dissertation is to explain those differences as well as briefly expose the similarities of both the novel and the adaptation to the screen. My objective is to represent what it is taken directly from the book to the show as direct literary influence or, contrarily, what it is newly adapted for *Penny Dreadful* since it is interesting how literature grows and advances beyond its period to new and modern territories as TV could be.

To sum up, *Penny Dreadful* is the result of an exhaustive research of classic English literature and as such, it may be labelled as a new gothic story made up by an adaptation of other classic Gothic novels.

Frankenstein

Frankenstein by Mary Shelley has been adapted multiple times along very different periods and scenarios. The character of Victor Frankenstein (Harry Treadaway) and the Creature (Rory Kinnear) are the most adapted and are present uninterruptedly in the fictional plot of *Penny Dreadful*. In this first point is going to be explained and compared three main themes which appear in both Shelley's novel and Logan's show. Firstly, the background and the relation of some events between the two plots. Secondly; the original character of Victor Frankenstein; who is going to be analyzed from the point of view of his emotions and feelings throughout the story. Lastly, it is essential to carry out an analysis of the creature itself since it is a central piece in both stories from beginning to end.

2.1- Frankenstein's past, the adaptation of Elizabeth and the representation of the laboratory

The first adaptation to encounter is the place where the events occur. In Shelley's novel there are several places throughout Europe where Frankenstein travels or lives, being Switzerland and Germany the most common. On the contrary, in *Penny Dreadful* all the action takes place in London. The date is another crucial difference between the tales: "Frankenstein isn't a Victorian character; he's from the Regency period a full two decades prior to the Victorian era." (E. Larsen, 2016). This difference is important because of the historical, social and even philosophical changes between both times. For example; technology and science are present in this Victorian version of *Frankenstein*. How he would have evolved and changed living within a time with the appropriate innovations is where the important adaptation lies on. Speaking now of the background of the character of Frankenstein; there are also plenty of differences as well as similarities. Shelley's book starts telling the happy childhood of Frankenstein and the relation with his parents. Shelley marks three important events of Frankenstein's childhood: first, the importance of the studies on multiple sciences, especially anatomy, natural philosophy and chemistry. Second, the death of his mother to whom he was deeply connected was a cause to his interest with life and death. Apart from it, there is the third occurrence that also participates in developing the obsession: the vision of a rotting corpse as a child, which intensely caused an impression on him. There is a quote from Shelley's novel that shows this moment: "I saw how the fine form of man was

degraded and wasted; [...] I saw how the worm inherited the wonders of the eye and brain.” (Shelley, 53). All these previous points that Shelley marked out at the beginning of her novel appear somehow in *Penny Dreadful*. In the first episode of the series the very first meeting the viewer has with Frankenstein occurs while he is working as an anatomist. (1x01 18:30 – 18:50) In other words, the first impression Frankenstein gives is being surrounded by corpses, which is much accurate to the character. Moreover, he plays the part of the science and the seeking of knowledge of the Victorian Era; so it is perfect for the resolution of John Logan’s adaptation. There is a speech in which it is demonstrated this part Frankenstein plays in *Penny Dreadful*’s story whether it is about science or death:

“There is only one worthy goal for scientific exploration: piercing the tissue that separates life from death. Everything else [...] is insignificant. [...] The flicker that separates one from the other” (1x01 37:04 – 37:32)

It is in the third episode of the first season that most of Frankenstein’s past is told. Frankenstein as a kid is watching the rotting corpse of a dog which casually happened to have worms in the sockets of the eye (1x03 3:30 – 3:40); just as the previous quote where Shelley describes the same. In the next minutes it is shown how Frankenstein suffered due to his mother’s illness and death (1x03 5:00 – 6:00) and how, as a consequence, he was self-taught with the topics he wanted to learn about; as in the novel. (1x03 6:20 – 6:45) The fictional part and one of the big adaptations comes with the introduction of the character of Lily: she is a corpse Frankenstein resurrects for his creature (2x01 47:55 – 49:00) but Frankenstein tells her they are cousins. (2x01 13:10 – 13:48) In Shelley’s *Frankenstein*, he is in love with Elizabeth who was named cousin as well; and from beginning to end the relation between Frankenstein and Elizabeth evolves and matures ending in marriage. The literary connection about them is that of love; and similarly happens with the Victorian Frankenstein and Lily. At first; the love is shared and mutual between the two because Lily genuinely thinks she is human. However; when she discovers the truth of being a creation of Frankenstein, she turns evil and starts to abhor him as the essence of *Frankenstein* is that of the creature hating the creator. (2x08 42:55 – 43:51) Small details referencing Shelley’s work appear through the entire *Penny Dreadful* show such as two clear examples: one, the environment of Frankenstein’s laboratory and the experiment. The decoration in *Penny Dreadful* (1x01 33:00 – 34:30) is almost extracted untouched from the narrative of Shelley: “In a solitary chamber, or rather cell, at the top of the house, and separated

from all the apartments by a gallery and a staircase, I kept my workshop of filthy creation.” (Shelley, 55) The second example is the climate of the experiment. “*Penny Dreadful* pays homage to Frankenstein’s 20th century iconography [...] on the creation of both Caliban and Proteus [...] with electricity. But in the novel, Victor’s notation of electricity is a simple passing interest in lightning striking a tree.” (Crow, 2014). So, in Shelley’s novel thunder has its own importance as it is the cause of the resurrection of the creature whilst in *Penny Dreadful* it is a hindrance for Frankenstein. (1x01 46:00 – 49:00) Finally, as it happens with every adaptation, it is quite difficult and challenging to create something entirely new; however, *Penny Dreadful* achieves it taking the essence of Romantic Frankenstein of Shelley into the essence of the Victorian Era.

2.2- Psychological approach to the figure of Dr. Frankenstein

The second part of this point is linked to the character of Frankenstein; namely, with his emotions and actions. “Both men are scientists, and Treadaway’s character occasionally voices skeptical, if not atheist viewpoints. [...] whereas Shelley’s character is primarily interested in science.” (E. Larsen, 2016) Still, Shelley’s Frankenstein is very sensitive dealing with science and the emotions towards the experiment evolve negatively throughout the plot. Before the experiment he feels motivated and predisposed to work about and for his research:

“I had worked for nearly two years, for the sole purpose of infusing life into an inanimate body. For this, I had deprived myself of rest and health. I had desired it with an ardour that far exceeded moderation; but now that I have finished, the beauty of the dream vanished, and breathless horror and disgust filled my heart.” (Shelley, 58)

Just moments after the creature of Frankenstein comes to life, all he feels are negative emotions: regret, sadness, doubt, anxiety, agony, depression, fear and guilt:

“I was seized by remorse and the sense of guilt, which hurried me away to a hell of intense tortures, such as no language can describe. This state of mind preyed upon my health, which had perhaps never entirely recovered from the first shock it had sustained. I shunned the face of man; all sound of joy or complacency was torture to me; solitude was my only consolation – deep, dark, deathlike solitude.” (Shelley, 93)

Furthermore; these pessimistic emotions transform when Frankenstein starts to feel hate and anger thinking about the monster he had created: “Cursed be the day, abhorred evil, in which you first saw light! Cursed [...] be the hands that formed you! You have made

me wretched beyond expression.” (Shelley, 104) When speaking of Frankenstein from *Penny Dreadful*, emotions vary in multiple cases being totally new whilst others are properly adapted. It is first important to highlight one of the big differences between both Frankenstein: the literary classic only creates one monster while the adaptation ends up creating three monsters. Here is where the different emotions towards the creatures appear. At the end of the first episode it is shown the birth of a Frankenstein’s creature. His emotions towards this birth are diverse from those of the novel since Frankenstein feels joy when he sees his creature alive. He is shocked but so delighted that he even cries (1x01 51:20 – 51:25). It is unthinkable to imagine this situation in Shelley’s *Frankenstein*; however, in *Penny Dreadful* there is a reason why Frankenstein acts this way. This justification is simple and it is shown at the end of the second episode of the first season: Frankenstein had already created a first creature. In the third episode of the first season, it is revealed the other face of the birth of a Frankenstein’s creature. (1x03 8:05 – 10:00) In this case Frankenstein acts firstly shocked, then paralyzed and finally, terrified. These emotions are much related to the classic Shelley’s *Frankenstein*; even beyond Frankenstein suffers the same symptoms as the original: anxiety, fear, paranoia, sadness, anguish, solitude and guilt:

“Do you believe in fate? [...] I don't mean justice. I mean retribution. I mean facing the consequences of your actions that have produced catastrophe, a sin that is everlasting; one that you have made immortal.” (1x06 20:00 – 21:00)

All these emotions have their consequences on both characters: in Shelley’s, he has thoughts of suicide and rage. On the contrary, in *Penny Dreadful* appears a more developed and related response according to the end of the 19th century: Frankenstein gets addicted to drugs (1x07 31:00). There are more similitudes regarding Frankenstein’s behaviour towards the creature. Both of them abandoned the creature in the house at the moment of its birth which later on will affect to the creature when forming its personality. In Shelley’s novel it can be read:

“[...] I beheld the wretch – the miserable monster whom I had created. He held up the curtain of the bed; and his eyes, if eyes they may be called, were fixed on me. His jaws opened, and he muttered some inarticulate sounds, while a grin wrinkled his cheeks. [...] but I escaped, and rushed downstairs.” (Shelley, 59)

There are two crucial moments in *Penny Dreadful*. The first one in both stories is the chase of the creature of Frankenstein as a method to startle him and to hasten him to do

the companion task. In Shelley's world the creature follows Frankenstein towards all Europe whilst in *Penny Dreadful*; the monster becomes a phantasmagorical apparition that cannot be separated of Frankenstein, suddenly appearing in a window or an alley. (1x04 16:08 – 16:20) The second crucial moment between Frankenstein and the creature is the moment in which Frankenstein attempts to kill him. In Shelley's novel this is very important for the story since it is the last goal and purpose of living of Frankenstein. In *Penny Dreadful* again appears the adaptation to the Victorian Era showing Frankenstein aiming to the head of the creature with a modern gun (1x08 26:00 – 27:00). During the three seasons of *Penny Dreadful*, the spirit of Shelley's Frankenstein is present every time John Logan's Frankenstein appears on screen although "due to the practical necessities of television, Treadaway's Victor is far less remorseful about playing God after imbuing life to the dead" (Crow, 2014) but still, Victorian Frankenstein "captures the early euphoria that literary Victor recollects in the novel." (Crow, 2014)

2.3- The adaptation of the creature: birth, rejection and the seeking of a companion

There are three essential events surrounding the creature of Frankenstein that are crucial for the adaptation of *Penny Dreadful*: the birth, the rejection suffered by society and the request of a companion. In Shelley's novel, the creature's birth is traumatic and deeply marks its views towards life. The evolution Shelley's creature has is from good to evil. At first he wants to learn how to live and behave, he wants to be one among the crowd; however, he always receives rejection from humans:

"I was benevolent; my soul glowed with love and humanity; but am I not alone, miserably alone? You, my creator, abhor me; what hope can I gather from your fellow-creatures, who owe me nothing? They spurn and hate me." (Shelley, 103).

Not only he felt rejection but he caused chaos wherever he went:

"[...] but I had hardly placed my foot within the door before the children shrieked, and one of the woman fainted. The whole village was roused; some fled, some attacked me, until, grievously bruised by stones and many other kinds of missile weapons, I escaped to the open country" (Shelley, 108-109)

All of this is a response to the physical appearance he has:

"[...] But how was I terrified, when I viewed myself in a transparent pool! [...] when I became fully convinced that I was in reality the monster I am, I was filled with the bitterest sensations of despondence and mortification. Alas! I did

not yet entirely know the fatal effects of that miserable deformity.” (Shelley, 116)

There is a moment in the story in which the creature finds out a farm where a family lived. This event is essential for the creature since it is when it learns how to communicate, how to behave –always from the distance- and what kindness is. “How can I thank you, my best and only benefactor? From your lips have I heard the voice of kindness directed towards me; I shall be forever grateful [...]” (Shelley, 137). As response, the creature asks Frankenstein to create for him a female companion in order not to feel this rejection, solitude nor be neglected again:

“You must create a female for me, with whom I can live in the interchange of those sympathies necessary for my being. This you alone can do; and I demand it of you as a right which you must not refuse to concede.” (Shelley, 147)

On the other face of the creature, that of *Penny Dreadful*, his birth is equally traumatic:

“Hear how I bled. That it was a difficult birth there can be no doubt. I was born in sheer, terrified agony. But surely this was not the Protean man you'd envisioned. [...] This was abomination. [...] And so you fled. The first human action that I experienced was rejection. So do not wonder at my loathing of your species. I waited. But you did not return. [...] Was every new-born creature abandoned at the moment they were born? Was this what life was?” (1x03 8:00 – 9:20)

Along this speech it can be seen scenes of how painful, horrific and terrifying had to be the birth of the creature. In this part, the TV series plays a big role in the essence of the suffering Shelley wanted to transmit with words thanks to visual effects with blood and sounds such as screams or weeps. (1x03 9:00 – 9:15) Apart from the birth, they also have in common the rejection they felt by the hand of humans. However; it also appears on this matter the first difference among them: Kenney's creature is not as hated or rejected as Shelley's. As the background of the story is the Victorian Era; the kind souls that treat well the creature think of it to have been in an industrial or factory accident. (1x03 17:11 – 17:30) In any case, Kenney's creature is as well circled by rejection most of his existence; however, it also met kindness. (1x08 18:40 – 18: 50). The context in which this takes place is as well very similar to the situation of the cottagers of Shelley's creature. It is adapted the situation to the end of the 19th century: instead of living in the woods, the creature lives under a theatre. Another difference between both creatures is the behaviour and tone when addressing to Frankenstein. With the creature of *Penny Dreadful* happens exactly the opposite to Shelley's creature: he is since the

beginning evil and is full of hate and rage. However; at the end of the eighth episode, the creature attends to Frankenstein because he has not got anyone else. He achieves to soften Frankenstein's heart; something that does not happen in the classic novel. The creature says to Frankenstein:

“What dreams I had of my mate. Of another being, looking into these eyes, upon this face, and recoiling not. But how could that happen? For the monster is not in my face, but in my soul. I once thought that if I was like other men, I would be happy and loved. The malignance has grown, you see, from the outside in. And this shattered visage merely reflects the abomination that is my heart.” (1x08 26:10 – 27:15)

Finally, the request of a companion is much the same as in the classic novel. It occurs in the third episode:

“I do not seek your love, demon! I do not seek what is not there. [...] I seek a companion. [...] You will make me an immortal mate. A woman. Like myself, everlasting. This you shall do. Or I will strike down all those you love and render your brightest day... and your darkest night.” (1x03 30:28 – 31:55)

However; Treadaway's Frankenstein does something the classic did not do: accept to the creature request of creating a female companion for him. (1x03 30:10 – 32:00) Shelley's Frankenstein is incapable of forgiving the creature for the murders he had committed and as such he at the end rejects the creature's petition and does not conclude it. In any case, similarities are unquestionable in terms of plot and actions. All in all both creatures are very much alike; saying *Penny Dreadful* has done a reliable modern adaptation of the Shelley's creature.

To conclude; *Penny Dreadful* has done a faithful contemporary adaptation of Shelley's *Frankenstein*. For the most part, Victor Frankenstein's past coincide in both works playing emphasis on the irrefutable relation the doctor has with death. Besides, the show is focused beyond the primary character to also what surrounds him: science, dark and negative emotions, background such as his laboratory, some secondary characters such as Elizabeth transformed into Lily and of course, the existence of the creature and everything it experiences and suffers.

The Picture of Dorian Gray

The Picture of Dorian Gray by Oscar Wilde, even if written, is a very visual gothic fiction. “The novel [...] examined the relationship between art and reality, highlighting the uneasy interplay between ethics and aesthetics as well as the links between the artist, his or her subject and the resulting image on canvas.” (Buzwell) This second point will analyze and list the three major elements that are archetypical of the classic literary character of Dorian Gray (Reeve Carney) which are present in *Penny Dreadful*. Firstly; it is the beauty and the meaning of youth and life that surround Dorian Gray. Secondly; the morality of Dorian Gray; or in other words, the internal struggle of good and evil along immortality. The author of *Penny Dreadful* stated that the series’ “version of Dorian Gray is somehow different from Oscar Wilde’s. [...] What fascinated me about Dorian Gray is eternity. The essential sadness of a character who never die.” (Logan, 0:08 – 0:30) As a third point, the portrait itself is a key theme in the explanation of the character of Dorian Gray since it is what transforms him from being a fancy, naïve young man to be a cruel, bitter and evil creature.

3.1- The recognition of beauty in *Dorian Gray* and its depiction in *Penny Dreadful*

The first characteristic deals with the perception of beauty of material elements and abstract ideas that creates the sophisticated plot of *Dorian Gray*. “The Aesthetic Movement in *fin-de-siècle* England, as interpreted by Oscar Wilde, revolved around the ideal that the utility of one’s actions should be to create the maximal amount of beauty and pleasure in one’s life, and nothing more.” (Duggan). The realization of beauty is brought to the reader mainly through descriptions that represent this luxury in the Victorian society in England: “[...] as for the exquisite taste shown in the decoration of the table, with its subtle symphonic arrangements of exotic flowers, and embroidered cloths, and antique plate of gold and silver.” (Wilde, 149). In *Penny Dreadful* it is much easier to transmit this essence of luxury and elegance through the camera to the screen. In the fourth episode of the first season, from the minute 49:00 until the end of the episode it can be seen the representation of this luxury in all fields: how he is dressed, the room, the objects and even the knowledge he has on several topics. It can be observed how Dorian always appears on screen very delicately dressed and embroidered with jewelry. Linked to Wilde’s reception of beauty comes the concept of youth and

pleasure. Beauty and youth become an obsession for Dorian Gray and the society with whom he lives. At the beginning of the work, Dorian Gray is not a whole grown up man, he is still discovering life and as such, he is deeply influenced by everyone around him; especially by Lord Henry. Dorian Gray does not give importance to this matter at first; but it is after seeing the portrait that he starts to become obsessed with beauty and youth. For this issue; there is an important quote that summarizes this concept of Dorian Gray that started to expand through his mind:

“I shall grow old and horrible, and dreadful. But this picture will remain always young. It will never be older than this particular day of June... If it were only the other way! If it were I who was to be always young, and the picture that was to grow old! [...] I would give my soul for that!” (Wilde, 34)

Due to this desire he finally acquires what he is asking for: eternal youth. Although his soul is trapped rotting in the portrait. Carney’s Dorian Gray is a sophisticated and intellectual character who expresses this fascination and admiration of beauty and youth with symbolism and even some intellectual speeches. In the fourth episode of the first season Dorian gives a discourse on beauty, youth, life and death using nature as figure to create a metaphor; something that Wilde almost identically did in his work:

“I thought how tragic it would be if you were wasted. For there is such a little time that your youth will last [...] The common hill-flowers wither, but they blossom again. The laburnum will be as yellow next June as it is now. [...] But we never get back our youth.” (Wilde, 30-31)

On the contrary, in *Penny Dreadful*, Dorian is visiting a botanical garden where he is admiring the flowers and nature itself (1x04 8:00 – 13:00). He touches and smells the flowers sensitively; all related to the pleasure of the senses which is at the same time another symbolism of Dorian’s importance to the enjoyment of beauty. He says:

“It’s the adder beneath the rose, isn’t it? All of this. They can seem so enticing and luxurious, yet within, there’s a dark thing waiting. [...] Rothschild’s slipper. The rarest orchid on Earth, and thus the most expensive. [...] It can take up to fifteen years to bloom. All that time, perfecting itself. A lifetime for six perfect flowers.” (1x04 8:00 – 13:00)

In relation to the admiration of beauty in Wilde’s narrative comes the idea of Art. “[Oscar Wilde] explored the relation of art to influence in *The Picture of Dorian Gray*, as well as in his social and aesthetic theory.” (Gagnier, 27) In Wilde’s novel Art emerges in many shapes: paintings, music, scents, physical appearance, intellectualism or enjoyment of life and Dorian Gray is the personification of all those concepts. Dorian

Gray is known to have much knowledge on music and he is described to play the piano in more than one occasion. In the next quote can be observed the passion and pleasure Dorian has towards music:

“[...] ‘I like Wagner’s music better than anybody’s. It is so loud that one can talk the whole time without other people hearing what one says.’ [...] I never talk during music, at least, during good music. If one hears bad music, it is one’s duty to drown it in conversation’. (Wilde, 56)

In *Penny Dreadful* this representation of Dorian Gray and music is always present; he is not, however, playing piano in any scene or any other instrument. Instead; the adapted Dorian Gray is very fond of music as he collects music cylinders. (1x04 55:20 – 55:30) He represents music in the TV show by means of speeches, giving balls or the sound of classical pieces every time Dorian appears on scene. (2x08 31:00) In the fourth episode of the first season, Dorian Gray gives a speech on music; to represent again this vital essence of the character:

“Can Art be honest? [...] I think music can. Perhaps only music because it’s ephemeral. That’s the paradox. Music is phantasm, but it’s true. [...] I would ask if you know Wagner but you’d only pretend you don’t. [...] The waves are rolling in and out; you can hear that in the music, can’t you?” (1x04 54:00 – 56:00)

In Wilde’s narrative Dorian directly plays an instrument or rearranges balls and concerts; however, in *Penny Dreadful*, Dorian shows his high social status and his intellectual and material wealth by possessing cylinders of music and teaching about composers and operas. It is a clear difference between both characters but still, the important relation between Dorian and music Art is all the time existent. Also related to Art appears the obvious meaning of paintings. Paintings are the central piece of *The Picture of Dorian Gray* and this idea is mostly represented by the literary character of Basil Hallward. In *Penny Dreadful* this idea of portraits is adapted in a huge way. Dorian Gray is represented; apart from as an obsessed collector of portraits, as a lover of photography. In the Victorian Era in London started to appear the first erotic photographs (Sweet, 1:25 – 1:50) in history. Nonetheless, in *Penny Dreadful* Dorian Gray has a conversation with the protagonist, Vanessa Ives, where he declares that he loves more portraits than photographs saying that “a painting can capture eternity.” (1x06 15:36 – 15:50). Dorian Gray represents Art, Art represents beauty and beauty represents pleasures. Both Dorian Gray from Wilde’s text and *Penny Dreadful* are cultivated characters. Because of their immortality and the philosophy of enjoyment

they have on life; they are bearers of knowledge across different areas or times. As it has been already exposed; he is knowledgeable about botany, music, paintings, Victorian fashion and traditions and even decoration but also; of scents:

“And so he would now study perfumes, and the secrets of their manufacture, distilling heavily-scented oils, and burning odorous gums from the East. [...] and to estimate the several influences of sweet-smelling roots, and scented pollen-laden flowers, or aromatic balms, and of dark and fragrant woods, of spikenard that sickens, of hovenia that makes men mad, and of aloes that are said to be able to expel melancholy from the soul.” (Wilde, 154)

In *Penny Dreadful* there is a scene which is clearly influenced with this extract from Wilde's. Dorian is asked why he has so many perfumes and how he chooses to use one or another. He responds:

“Different aromas make you feel differently, don't they? Citrus and sandalwood produce one feeling. Musk and lavender another. Citron. Jasmine. Mint. Each produces a different sensation. A different you.” (1x04 49:20 – 49:50)

All in all, in Wilde's narrative the character of Dorian Gray is created beyond his elitist surroundings of music, balls, concerts, fashion, literature, jewelry or perfumes. Dorian Gray is mostly what his perception of life deals with; that is, beauty and the pleasure that connects with it. In Dorian Gray's adaptation from *Penny Dreadful* this importance of beauty is maintained as well as it is the exhibition of a rich and highbrow life.

3.2- The moral struggle of *Dorian Gray*, immortality and how it is altered in *Penny Dreadful*

“[...] Wilde saw that the “self” was not inevitably indubitable, rational and progressive, but was socially constructed.” (Gagnier, 20). Dorian Gray is an egocentric and narcissist character and it can be seen throughout the whole book of Wilde as well as in John Logan's adaptation. “Dorian's soul grows sick with indulging in the things it has ceased to forbid itself in a narrative which turns into a simple moral allegory about the evils of narcissism and the perils of aestheticism.” (Pykett, 207) At the same time, Dorian is a character very self-centered but it is so because society has moulded him. The book character Lord Henry influences Dorian's thoughts and perspectives since the beginning. Dorian starts being mouldable, controllable and easy to manipulate and Lord Henry “would seek to dominate him” (Wilde, 46). In the TV show, Dorian Gray is not dominated except for the character of Lily (Billie Piper), the female creation of Doctor Frankenstein. He ends up being subdued to her yearning to conquer humanity; but it is

not long after when Dorian will culminate with this submission and will loathe Lily. Moreover, Dorian is influenced in a way that he turns into an accomplice of a serial killer of men. In relation to this connection between Dorian Gray and society comes the morality and ethics towards the concepts of good and evil. According to the book, Dorian Gray sacrifices his soul for beauty and youth. Every time he sins, the portrait becomes older and uglier while he remains beautiful and young. With this notion of eternity Dorian Gray is capable of enjoying life to its limits so at first, he considers the sacrifice to be worth of his soul.

“There were sins whose fascination was more in the memory than in the doing of them; strange triumphs that gratified the pride more than the passions, and gave to the intellect a quickened sense of joy, greater than any joy they brought, or could ever bring, to the senses.” (Wilde, 187)

However; Wilde’s Dorian Gray starts to feel guilty and sad of what he has been part of, indirect or directly. He indirectly is an accomplice of two suicides: one of the girl he rejects, Sibyl Vane, and the other the suicide of Alan Campbell; a scientist that terminates, against his purpose, being accomplice of Dorian’s murder. This murder is the second accident that marks Dorian deeply: he kills Basil Hallward; the painter of the portrait. Then, the struggle between good and evil, sin and corruption is present in the thoughts of Dorian Gray constantly. On the other hand, in *Penny Dreadful* Dorian Gray seems to not have guilt at all of the sins he commits. He arranges orgies (1x04), he attends to illegal meetings such as animal fights (1x04), he uses alcohol (1x04), and he murders or is accomplice of murders. (2x08). Still, he until the season finale does not feel any kind of guilt or remorse. (3x09 16:00 – 17:00) At this point, the understanding of good and evil between both characters are not so alike. The Dorian Gray of *Penny Dreadful* looks like has lived more time than Wilde’s. He is bored of everything. He is tired of living life; he is the representation of eternity and as such he reflects feelings of boredom, anguish and sadness. There is nothing new for him to discover or to enjoy due to he, as personification of immortality, has already experienced everything that can be enjoyed. “There is this sadness in Dorian in realization that being a mortal is quite enjoyable but at this point he realized that the lustrous start to wear off a bit.” (Carney, 0:10 – 0:20). To sum up, Dorian Gray is mainly characterized by the constant internal fight between goodness and malice in an attempt to fit a harsh Victorian Era society. Dorian Gray has sinned and as consequence his soul has been corrupted. He has become

immortal and as such there is a constant atmosphere around him of sorrow towards solitude.

3.3- The adaptation of the portrait and its significance for the story

The last important remarkable aspect of Dorian Gray background is the obvious relation between him and the portrait.

“The consequence of Dorian’s insatiability, escalation of wants and formal equivalence of all desires is, of course, his portrait, where the shame of his consumption is permanently, absolutely, recorded. At this price, he is given beauty without limit, the scarcest commodity in a mortal world that is his sole source of valour to others, who commodify and consume him in turn.” (Gagnier, 23)

The portrait is the reason why the development of events occurs as they do. At first, Dorian loves his portrait and his curse.

“He grew more and more enamoured of his own beauty, more and more interested in the corruption of his own soul. He would examine with minute care, and sometimes with monstrous and terrible delight, [...] wondering sometimes which were the more horrible, the signs of sin or the signs of age.” (Wilde, 148)

He admires his youth and enjoys the never ending pleasures of life; however later on he will loathe his portrait and his beauty to the extent:

“Then he loathed his own beauty, [...] It was his beauty that had ruined him, his beauty and the youth that he had prayed for. [...] His beauty had been to him but a mask, his youth but a mockery.” (Wilde, 252)

In the adaptation of *Penny Dreadful* Dorian as well is marked by significant events. However, they differ a little of what it is described in Wilde’s novel. In *Penny Dreadful*, Dorian is not the cause of any suicide; however, he is participant of many murders whether he is the killer or not. There is a resemblance between both protagonists towards murder: they kill whoever is aware of the portrait. In Wilde’s *Dorian Gray* he kills Basil Hallward because he knows his secret and beyond; he is who painted the portrait so for Dorian’s eyes “all his failure had been due to that.” (Wilde, 252) On the other part, the adapted *Dorian Gray* also kills someone who discovers the portrait. (2x08 36:20 – 38:00) He does it with pleasure, even lying to the victim minutes before his death. John Logan’s *Dorian Gray* enjoys his curse and it is not until the season finale that he ends up looking at it with disgust. Another remarkable aspect of both portraits is

the description of it by Wilde and how this description has been brought to life in screen. One of Wilde's descriptions of the portrait is read as follows:

“One would have said that there was a touch of cruelty in the mouth. It was certainly strange. [...] The quivering, ardent sunlight showed him the lines of cruelty round the mouth as clearly as if he had been looking into a mirror after he had done some dreadful thing.” (Wilde, 105)

In *Penny Dreadful* they were forced to play with visual content. (2x08 38:10 – 38:35). To reach an end of this analysis and comparison between the portraits there are little similarities between both: first, both of them are hidden in order to express the anxiety Dorian Gray suffers if the portrait is discovered. Second, the room where they are hidden. In Wilde's work, the portrait is hidden in a room where his childhood is present constantly. In *Penny Dreadful* this symbolism of Dorian's ego is visually represented with mirrors. (1x04 3:20 – 3:40) Finally, the Gothic resolution of the stories is important. Wilde's Dorian finishes his life killing himself due to the curse, the corruption and the anger he feels while in *Penny Dreadful* Dorian Gray will continue living his secret as a loner. (3x09 16:00 – 17:00) Basically, the relation between Dorian Gray and the portrait is mainly negative. The portrait takes Dorian's years of age in exchange for his soul to corrupt it through sin.

All in all; Dorian Gray represents the struggle of a young boy who wants to fit into society being negatively influenced. The obsession with beauty, pleasures of life and immortality plays an important role for Dorian as they are the reason he terminates being an slave of his own portrait's corruption. Dorian Gray is all about a boasted life in which the only thing that matters is the enjoyment of pleasures even if that means to sacrifice his own soul. *Penny Dreadful* very well adapts all these features of Wilde's Dorian into the screen; mostly using visual effects for the materialistic setting. In extent, the representation of Dorian Gray is also captured through the script making the abstract philosophies, thoughts and reflections of life be essential characteristics for an adaptation of *The Picture of Dorian Gray*.

Dracula

Dracula has been reinterpreted and adapted multiple times since it first came out by the hand of Bram Stoker at the end of the 19th century. In *Penny Dreadful* the adaptation of this work is peculiar: it is the most important and central piece of the plot but at the same time it does not appear physically in the series until the third season as John Logan wanted to “bring elements of *Dracula* without dealing with Dracula himself” (Logan, 4:19 – 4:22). In this third part, the first point to analyze deals with the characters of both stories since some of them from Bram Stoker’s novel will appear in *Penny Dreadful*. Secondly, the atmosphere that Stoker creates is full of symbolism that is maintained in *Penny Dreadful* almost untouched. Third and last, the original literary work and its adaptation will be analyzed from the perspective of the sequence of events that happens along both stories.

4.1- The character of *Dracula*, the importance of *Vanessa Ives* and the vampire hunting party

The very first encounter the viewer has with *Penny Dreadful* is linked directly to vampires and when it comes to *Penny Dreadful* and the literary influences on which it relies on it is almost obvious to think of *Dracula*. This initial point will deal first, with the character of Dracula (Christian Camargo). Second, his focal victims Lucy Westenra and Mina Harker in Stoker’s novel and Vanessa Ives (Eva Green) and Mina Murray (Olivia Llewellyn) in *Penny Dreadful* and finally, the group of people who attempt to kill Dracula and save those who are infected by him, also seen from the perspective of the classic work and its contemporary remake. In most Victorian novels the “figure of monstrosity meant to repel rather than to evoke sympathy” (Brantlinger, 160) and with such purpose our antagonist created by Stoker fits since “Count Dracula is both an aristocratic gothic villain and an uncanny otherworldly demon” (Pykett, 208). In *Penny Dreadful* he is presented as “a fallen angel, the brother of Lucifer” (3x07 37:10 – 37:18) indirectly in the first season through his vampire subjects and directly in the third season when he comes out of his hiding place to manipulate and catch Vanessa face to face under the skin of Dr. Sweet, a made up personality. (3x02 53:05 – 53:15). In Bram Stoker’s novel, Dracula “is a liminal creature who crosses boundaries: between life and death; man and monster [...]” (Pykett, 208) where the first is achieved through eternal life and youth and the second is reached by being capable of transforming into night

creatures - the wolf or the bat- paleness and thirst for fresh blood. In consequence, Dracula is described as a “tall, thin man, with a beaky nose and black moustache and pointed beard [...] his face was [...] hard, cruel, and sensual, and his big white teeth that looked all the whiter because his lips were so red, were pointed like an animal’s.” (Stoker, 207). In *Penny Dreadful* these attributes are maintained being Dracula represented as a tall, thin man, with black beard and hair and extremely charming. (3x01 45:00) In addition; there are small hints on Dracula’s description in *Penny Dreadful* even before he appears on screen which are so alike to Stoker’s descriptions from the novel: “I look into his eyes and they are red with blood [...] His lips are red like blood [...] and his teeth are sharp like yours” (1x02 37:43 – 37:55) Either way, in *Penny Dreadful* the biggest adaptation of Stoker’s novel goes beyond Dracula individually to focus on the characters of Lucy Westenra, Mina Murray Harker and Vanessa Ives. This is an important aspect of the TV show since it is so twisted and reversed that it makes of it an original and smart reinterpretation of the literary work. Lucy Westenra is in *Penny Dreadful* Mina Murray whereas Stoker’s Mina Murray is in the series the fictional character of Vanessa Ives. Mina is the central piece of *Penny Dreadful* story as well as in its original version of Stoker although it is portrayed among very different perspectives. In Bram Stoker’s prose Mina is the strong and clever character who, as heroine, is the principal support and benefit for the hunting of Dracula as she “assembles the information [...] that allows [...] to know Dracula for what he is and overpower him.” (Armstrong, 119) Besides, Mina is as well persecuted and infected by Dracula although she finally attains to save herself whilst in *Penny Dreadful* Mina is the very first victim of Dracula who at the end cannot be saved and dies, as equally occurs with Lucy Westenra in Stoker’s novel. The reason why this tangled John Logan’s plot is this way is easy to find out: the introduction in the remake of the fictional character of Vanessa Ives, who is the representation of Stoker’s Mina Murray. Vanessa Ives is a strong woman who wants to confront Dracula in order to save her friend Mina. In contrast to Stoker’s Mina, Vanessa does join the action of the fight apart from participate by gathering useful information about the opponent. In Stoker’s work, Dracula does not chase any victim in particular; he infects Lucy due to opportunity meanwhile in *Penny Dreadful* Mina is infected with a purpose as Dracula: “[Mina] was meant to bring Vanessa to me”. (3x09 33:03 – 33:06) So; whereas Lucy is the key point for the consequences taking place in Stoker’s novel, Vanessa is the key point for the whole plot of *Penny Dreadful* and still; the literary connection to *Dracula*’s remake is

the relationship with Mina. Apart from Dracula and Mina being the primary characters; there are also other characters that are rewritten in *Penny Dreadful*: Van Helsing, Dr. Seward, Arthur Holmwood and Quincey Morris. They construct the party that hunts Dracula to kill him in memory of their friend Lucy. Similarly these characters are depicted mainly in *Penny Dreadful* as Malcolm Murray (Timothy Dalton), Dr. Frankenstein and Ethan Chandler (Josh Hartnett) respectively; although other characters will join them eventually in the hunting. In *Penny Dreadful* the leader of the party is Malcolm Murray, Mina's father, who is the one acknowledged with vital information on vampires and the person in charge of gathering all the member of the party together just as Van Helsing does in Stoker's writing: he is an old, experienced man who seeks to terminate Dracula's existence. Besides; Malcolm Murray is also the representation of Arthur Holmwood due to the close affection they had for the victim. Malcolm Murray is eager to save his daughter while Arthur Holmwood is eager to save his wife. Moreover; they both end up committing the same action: to kill the person they love because there is no salvation from the vampire illness. The character of Quincey Morris represents an American gunman who also has a bonding with the victim and attempts to save her from the vampires. The *Penny Dreadful* character of Ethan Chandler perfectly fits this description as he is an American gunman that attempts to save Mina and Vanessa. However; the reasons for saving both are different: for Mina he joined the party as a partial job whilst for Vanessa he joins voluntarily due to the personal relationship with her. The character of Dr. Seward in Stoker's work is the one that brings the scientific background to the supernatural events apart from being as well a friend of the victim. Similarly, in *Penny Dreadful* Dr. Frankenstein is the one dealing with the scientific perspectives. In addition; he, who is in part the representation of Van Helsing, brings into scene the proper character of Van Helsing in *Penny Dreadful* (1x04 13:52 – 13:52) appearing as an old and tired hematologist who gives some important facts on vampires and on the study of their blood. "This blood contains a unique property that prevents coagulation completely. [...] If one had to give a purpose to it, it would assist with hematophagy. The eating of blood." (1x04 14:45 – 15:05) Even if Van Helsing appears shortly in a couple of episodes of the first season, his adaptation is quite accurate. The physical description, the knowledge on the vampire theme and his relation to try to find a cure are present in *Penny Dreadful*. In the third season another character is introduced in the hunting party in relation to Stoker's Dr. Seward: a female Dr. Seward (Patti LuPone). She as well joins the hunting party to try to save Vanessa from becoming an

affiliate of Dracula; moreover, she is a therapist and is directly connected with mental health illnesses. Directly connected with Dr. Seward comes another adaptation from the novel in *Penny Dreadful: Mr. Renfield* (Samuel Barnett). In Stoker's novel Renfield is a psychotic lunatic patient who gives the point of view of the casual vampire that tries to survive. In *Penny Dreadful* this character of Renfield is rewritten as the secretary of Dr. Seward (3x01 31:30 – 31:40). Either way, he is infected by Dracula and throughout the third season his evolution from human to vampire (3x01 56:51 – 57:35) is very well depicted on the screen. At the end of the third season, Dr. Seward is aware of the illness of her secretary so she locked him up in a cell as a lunatic patient (3x08 40:00 – 40:25) which action, not by accident, is equivalent to the Stoker's vision. All in all it can be assured that one of the bases the remake *Penny Dreadful* has on *Dracula* is entrusted in the adaptation of their characters from paper onto screen.

4.2- Superstition, blood, wolves and mist as main symbolism

Symbolism in *Dracula* plays a vital role in the development of the tale. There are three main themes representing *Dracula* that are repeated in *Penny Dreadful*. The first one deals with the entire vampire world: the religious superstition that surrounds vampire myths and tales appear in both works. Also, the direct relation vampires always have with hell and demons or somehow the issues they have against God and everything religious. For example, crucifixes are seen as a defensive token against vampires:

“Van Helsing sprang forward and held between them this little golden crucifix. She recoiled from it, and, with a suddenly dissorted face, full of rage, dashed past him as if to enter the tomb.” (Stoker, 254)

Accordingly, in *Penny Dreadful* this religious superstition is strongly present. Vanessa Ives is a extremely religious character and this is represented with Biblical quotes as well as with religious decoration such as crucifixes or with the prayers often recited by her (3x09 41:41 – 42:25). Besides, the character of Ethan Chandler, who is a were-wolf apart from an American gunman is called “The Wolf of God” (3x09 4:50) and his quest is to protect Vanessa against the evil forces. The second key symbol is the physical and mental features vampires have being these related to fangs, paleness, blood, their lack of reflection in mirrors or their particular devotion for their Master. In Stoker's novel not only fangs are symbolic but also the bite they leave in the neck of the victims:

“Just over the external jugular vein there were two punctures, not large, but not wholesome looking. There was no sign of disease, but the edges were white and worn-looking.” (Stoker, 151)

In *Penny Dreadful* vampires do not contain themselves to only the neck but they devour the whole body of their victims. (3x03 44:45 – 45:05) Besides; Dracula is subtly shown to have fangs but it is the common vampire, the creature not alike to man, the one that has these fangs in order to emphasize the monstrosity. (1x08 42:28 – 42:30). Moreover; *Penny Dreadful* vampires show signs of evilness such as black eyes (1x08 44:20 – 44:30) or deformity so far from the human shape. (1x08 42:28 – 42:30). As *Dracula* is one of the masterpieces of vampire literature, blood is a must when it comes to symbolism:

“He was lying on his belly on the floor licking up, like a dog, the blood which had fallen from my wounded wrist. He was [...] simply repeating: ‘Blood is life! Blood is life!’” (Stoker, 171)

In extent; blood is not only their nourishment but also it is the mean by which the disease is transmitted. In *Penny Dreadful* vampires are also suffering of this yearning for blood. (3x02 52:30 – 52:35) Finally, the last present symbol is perhaps the most remarkable since it is found in Stoker’s novel: the relationship of Dracula with nature; namely, animals and the weather. He can command “all the meaner things: the rat, and the owl [...], the moth and the fox” (Stoker, 283) “he can transform himself to wolf” (Stoker, 286) or “he can be as a bat” (Stoker, 286). Besides; he can “direct the elements: the storm, the fog, the thunder” (Stoker, 283) or even “he can come in mist which he create” (Stoker, 286). In *Penny Dreadful* the symbolism related to animals comes out differently. Dracula does not transform himself into wolf or bat; instead, his relation to the night creatures comes in a contemporary way: he is a zoologist. (3x01 45:05 – 45:30). He represents the knowledge Dracula has on animals as a scientist that studies them. There are multiple scenes where Dracula demonstrate his comprehension of animals but he reveals a special interest in those that are dangerous, venomous or nocturnal. For example: scorpions (3x01 45:05 – 45:30), wolves and bats (3x06 37:15 – 37:35). He even states:

“This animal feeds off blood because it must. Because it has been afforded no other food source. Because if it does not, it will die. [...] I have come to love to all night creatures that surrounds us. They are so shunned... and alone.” (3x06 37:33 – 38:10)

However; there is a huge difference in the *Penny Dreadful* sight of the novel and that is; the resemblance and imagery Dracula has with wolves. In Stoker's narrative wolves are creatures of Dracula; he commands them and can even turn into of them. Contrarily; the major enemy Dracula has in *Penny Dreadful* is the wolf as the wolf represents God being even called "the Wolf God" (3x09 5:02 – 5:05) In relation to the weather in *Penny Dreadful* the mist represents the end of everything as it is what Dracula represents as well. After Vanessa has submitted to Dracula, the world starts to fade into darkness and as a consequence; London starts to fill up with mist. (3x09 27:45 – 27:51) These three main emblematic features symbolizes Dracula and vampires so much that are present in almost every adaptation and it could be no different with the contemporary show of *Penny Dreadful*.

4.3- Similar events: conversion and hunting of the vampire creature

The last point deals with the significant events that form the novel structure. Keeping the Stoker's work in mind and isolating *Dracula's* reference in *Penny Dreadful* there are two sequences of events that coincide: the vampire conversion of the victims and the hunting of Dracula. In Stoker's writing there are mainly two victims: Lucy Westenra and Mina Murray and similarly there are also two principal victims in *Penny Dreadful*: Mina Murray and Vanessa Ives. The illness of Lucy is the unleashing factor of the development of the story as it is the proof by which Dracula is discovered and located in London. Correspondingly in the show; the case of Stoker's Lucy is represented in the character of Mina Murray. Her conversion is as well the causing factor of *Penny Dreadful's* plot and it is what makes the story to run:

"She was working as a governess and became engaged to a Mr. Jonathan Harker. But then, she became embroiled with another man. But not entirely a man, something else altogether, perhaps one of many like him, we don't know. This creature influenced her behaviour and now she has become his slave, hovering between our world and his." (1x03 28:26 – 28:55)

Stoker describes Lucy's suffering and slowly conversion as:

"She was ghastly; chalkily pale, the red seemed to have gone even from her lips and gums; and the bones of her face stood out prominently; her breathing was painful to see or hear." (Stoker, 147)

Finally; Lucy dies and resurrects as a vampire: "She was bitten by a vampire when she was in a trance [...] in trance she died and in trance she is Un-Dead too." (Stoker, 241)

After this incident happens; Lucy must be killed again. Similarly; in *Penny Dreadful* the roots of the events are equivalent. Mina is bitten by Dracula and after suffering the conversion she is declared missing. When she is again found she is a vampire and just as Lucy she must be killed. (1x08 44:55 – 45:15) When it comes to the conversion of Mina Murray in Stoker's classic, she does not end as a vampire but instead; she is saved by means of exorcism after Dracula is killed. On the other hand, in *Penny Dreadful* Vanessa Ives is converted. Before this happens; she is aware that she is being chased by Dracula: "He wants to feed on my blood and make me his bride and he'll bring terror to everyone I love. [...] He is called Dracula." (3x06 35:40) Due to this, she is conscious of the destruction this curse would bring to the world so she asks Mr. Chandler to kill her:

"My battle must end. [...] You know you have a destiny. It's why we first met. It's why you're here now. You must help me defeat the forces of darkness and deny them their prize for all time. [...] Please, Ethan. Let it end." (3x09 39:50 – 40:32)

In the same way; in Stoker's work Mina also tells her companions; especially her husband Jonathan Harker, that in case she is not saved, she must be killed:

"You must promise me, one and all –even you, my beloved husband- that, should the time come, you will kill me. [...] When you shall be convinced that I am so changed that it is better that I die than I may live. When I am thus dead in the flesh, then you will, without a moment's delay, drive a stake through me and cut off my head; or do whatever else may be wanting to give me rest!" (Stoker, 393)

All in all; the parameters that are repeated between the original and the remake are obvious: a woman being bitten and infected by Dracula who ends up converting and being killed or saved. The second big event that marks Dracula's story is the consequence led by the conversion: the response of the closest group of people to the victims. This response leads to try to save the sick ones and when this fails, to revenge their death. This party in Stoker's tale is made up by Van Helsing, Dr. Seward, Mr. Morris, Arthur Holmwood –and later on Jonathan Harker and Mina Murray- who are represented in *Penny Dreadful* as Malcolm Murray, Dr. Frankenstein, Ethan Chandler and Vanessa Ives. The party created to battle Dracula however gathers together differently in both stories. In Stoker's novel, the figure that connects the party is Lucy: Dr. Seward, Mr. Morris and Arthur Holmwood propose marriage to her. At the same time; Dr. Seward brings to the party his old professor Van Helsing who consequently

invites Jonathan Harker and Mina to join as well. Contrarily in *Penny Dreadful* it is Malcolm Murray and Vanessa Ives in charge to gather the party together to find Mina. Ethan Chandler does not know of Mina's existence. Instead; he is employed by Malcolm Murray and Vanessa Ives as they need of someone with gun skills. (1x01 9:46 – 10:02). Likewise; Malcolm Murray employs Dr. Frankenstein as they are in need of a scientific point of view for examining the enemy's anatomy and to know useful information on how to end with it. (1x01 18:40 – 20:46) Finally, there is a difference between Stoker's novel and *Penny Dreadful*'s remake. To be precise, in Stoker's version the vampire hunting party is formed mainly by males when it comes to action whilst Mina is forced to be kept at home because she is "too precious [...] to have such a risk" (Stoker, 289). All in all, "the heroes of the tale achieve a form of masculinity capable of competing with the vampires as Mina transfers her duties of information gathering and assimilation over to them" (Armstrong, 120). In *Penny Dreadful*, Vanessa goes to the hunting and participates with equality being the principal motor of the party success. To sum up; the structure of this event coincide and it is as simple as to summarize in the fact that a man has lost a cherished relative by an evil creature and in an attempt to save her they ask for help to various friends. Even when failing the quest; this party will take revenge on the evil creature and will focus on killing it.

To conclude, Dracula is the classic adaptation *Penny Dreadful* is mostly based on. It is the focal point of everything that creates John Logan's story and even indirectly Dracula appears from the very first episode of the first season until season finale. Apart from Dracula, Mina Murray and the hunting party are vital for the adaptation to be faithful and accurate and *Penny Dreadful* builds a perfect script for them. Moreover; the essence of Dracula's symbolism through night animals and gloomy weather covers every corner of John Logan's adapted piece. Dracula is the moving motor of *Penny Dreadful* and it is thanked to Stoker and the magnificent Gothic novel he wrote about one of the most significant and symbolic vampire character of the terror literature of all times.

Conclusion

After analyzing and comparing the three Gothic classics and their relative adaptations in the TV show of *Penny Dreadful* it can be assured that the reinterpretations done by John Logan are literary faithful. Moreover; *Penny Dreadful* can be considered a Gothic work in itself but focusing on the screen and not on the page. The show takes *Frankenstein*, *The Picture of Dorian Gray* and *Dracula* circles and blends them into a contemporary Victorian world of its own.

For the version of *Frankenstein*, *Penny Dreadful* has transformed the Romantic views Mary Shelley portrayed in her novel and adapted them to a challenging Victorian atmosphere. They have achieved this not only with the character of Frankenstein himself and his management of the emotions but also in the creature, its physical appearance and its endeavours to fit in a society where the classic and original Shelley's creature has never been. Going beyond; the relation between Frankenstein and the creature are crucial for the plot of the show and gives a fresh and creative contemporary vision of the classic Gothic novel.

The contemporary adaptation of *The Picture of Dorian Gray* into the TV series *Penny Dreadful* is close to the classic written by Oscar Wilde in terms of essence and nature more than merely focusing on the structure and sequence of the events of the Gothic novel. This essence lies on the philosophical notions reckoning on beauty, youth, immortality, life and pleasure which are present in Oscar Wilde's novel as well as in *Penny Dreadful* through descriptions or visual images, speeches and intellectual conversations. Also, the nature in *Dorian Gray* is found in the struggle to fit in a boring society and in the moral internal fight between good and evil, corruption and youth, sin and pleasure. Thus, *Penny Dreadful* did an exhaustive comparison between both characters in such a way that this renewed *Dorian Gray* can be considered as a convenient contemporary adaptation of the literary classic.

Even if it is through the characters, the appearance of symbolism or the structure and sequence of events; the adaptation *Penny Dreadful* has made of the Gothic novel of Bram Stoker is remarkably accurate. It does not matter if it comes in the shadows commanding a vampire army and controlling Mina in the first season or if he appears himself to bring chaos to London in the third season: *Dracula* is the primary horror and terror ground in *Penny Dreadful's* plot. In extent; *Dracula* is somehow the creator of

Penny Dreadful and every development of incidents which occur in its three seasons are always related to Stoker's creation. Moreover; the reinvention of this memorable classic literary character is circular: Dracula is what brings *Penny Dreadful* to life and it is also what finishes it.

Having reached these conclusions, I can say for certain that John Logan's *Penny Dreadful* can be considered a brilliant contemporary adaptation of the Gothic classics of *Frankenstein*, *The Picture of Dorian Gray* and *Dracula*. This adaptation is impressive focusing on the classical aspects of these novels: Doctor Frankenstein and his creature, Dorian Gray and his portrait and the vampire Dracula and his victims. However; what makes *Penny Dreadful* unique and eye-catching is the invention on these three literary classics and how they are combined to create a completely new plot: what would have happened if Frankenstein worked to kill Dracula, if Dorian Gray fell in love with the female creature of Frankenstein or if Dracula and his army of vampires want to take over the Victorian London and everything it beholds. All in all; *Penny Dreadful* reinvents the adaptations of the classics into a TV show that comprises every feature of each Gothic novel tying them together into a different and innovative contemporary television narrative.

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