

**THE INDIVIDUAL AND SOCIAL BODY IN
THE PICTURE OF DORIAN GRAY BY OSCAR WILDE AND
THE BODY BY HANIF KUREISHI**

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Batı Dilleri ve Edebiyatları Anabilim Dalı, İngiliz Dili ve Edebiyatı Bilim Dalı öğrencisi Ayşe EKİCİ tarafından Yrd. Doç Dr. Mehmet Ali ÇELİKEL yönetiminde hazırlanan “**Individual and Social Body in The Picture of Dorian Gray by Oscar Wilde and The Body by Hanif Kureishi**” (Oscar Wilde’ ın *Dorian Gray’in Portresi* ve Hanif Kureishi’nin *Beden* eserlerinde Bireysel ve Sosyal Anlamda Beden) başlıklı tez aşağıdaki jüri üyeleri tarafından 07.07.2010 tarihinde yapılan tez savunma sınavında başarılı bulunmuş ve Yüksek Lisans Tezi olarak kabul edilmiştir.

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To My Son

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ABSTRACT

INDIVIDUAL AND SOCIAL BODY IN THE PICTURE OF DORIAN GRAY BY OSCAR WILDE AND THE BODY BY HANIF KUREISHI

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This study is an analysis of the body and self relation in The Picture of Dorian Gray by Oscar Wilde and The Body by Hanif Kureishi. The main focus of the study is upon the division between body and self in terms of individual and social identities. Whether the body is a separate entity or there is a relation between body and self is studied in detail. Dorian Gray, whose portrait serves as his real identity and Adam, who experiences the transplantation of his brain into a new body, are the characters whose body and identity relations are analyzed in this study.

The method used in this study is Cultural Studies. Cultural studies is a method which consists of many disciplines providing different approaches to the body as an agent of giving meaning.

Chapter one presents background information about Cultural Studies and various approaches to the concept of body. In chapter two, the theoretical information is applied to Wilde's novel. Chapter three is also devoted to the body and self relation analysis of Kureishi's novella. Chapter four discusses the common points in both works together with the intertextual allusions to other literary works.

The aim of this study is to explore the division between body and the self, the concept of personal and social identity, and the extent to which these are rooted in the physical being. Although the body is commonly accepted as the representation of personality, in this study it is claimed that there is a strong division between the protagonists' self and body.

Key Words: Cultural Studies, Body, Self, Individual and Social Identity.

ÖZET

OSCAR WILDE'İN DORIAN GRAY' İN PORTRESİ VE HANIF KUREISHI'NİN BEDEN ESERLERİNDE BİREYSEL VE SOSYAL ANLAMDA BEDEN

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Bu çalışma Oscar Wilde' ın Dorian Gray' in Portresi ve Hanif Kureishi'nin Beden eserlerinde beden ve öz arasındaki ilişkiyi analiz etmektedir. Bu çalışmanın odak noktasını bireysel ve sosyal kimlik açısından beden ve öz arasındaki ayrım oluşturmaktadır. Bu çalışmada beden tek başına bir varlık olup olmadığı sorgulanmış ve beden ile öz arasındaki ilişki ayrıntılı bir şekilde çalışılmıştır. Portresi gerçek kişiliğini gösteren Dorian Gray ve beynini yeni bir bedene aktarma deneyimini yaşayan Adam, bu çalışmada beden ve kimlik ilişkileri incelenen karakterlerdir.

Bu çalışmada kullanılan yöntem Kültür Araştırmalarıdır. Kültür Araştırmaları bir anlam çıkarımı açısından bedene farklı yaklaşımlar sağlayan pek çok disiplini içeren bir metottur.

Birinci bölüm Kültür Araştırmaları ile ilgili gerekli temel bilgileri ve beden kavramına farklı yaklaşımları sunmaktadır. İkinci bölümde, teorik bilgiler Wilde'ın romanına uyarlanmıştır. Üçüncü bölüm de Kureishi'nin romanını beden ve öz ilişkisi açısından analizine ayrılmıştır. Dördüncü bölüm diğer edebiyat çalışmalarıyla da bağlantılı olarak her iki çalışmadaki ortak noktaları tartışmaktadır.

Bu çalışmanın amacı beden ve öz arasındaki ilişkiyi, kişisel ve sosyal kimlik kavramını ve bunların ne ölçüde fiziksel varlıkla bağlantılı olduğunu araştırmaktır. Bedenin yaygın olarak kişiliği temsil ettiği kabul edilse de, bu çalışmada beden ve öz arasında kuvvetli bir ayrım olduğu öne sürülmektedir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Kültür Araştırmaları, Beden, Öz, Bireysel ve Sosyal Kimlik

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INTRODUCTION

Over the centuries, the body image has always fallen under close attention. Although the point of view has definitely changed in time, there has always been focus on body. The body has either been needed as the physical power to survive or, as Featherstone suggests, “become taken as the expression of self” (1991: 189). Throughout ages, in the fields of literature, medicine, sociology and psychology body has stood as an issue of concern for theorists and academicians. Many attempts have been made in these branches to find the ways to protect the body from illnesses and to increase bodily endurance and to look into the role of body for psychology and human relations. Many philosophers have questioned the relationship between one’s body and personality; there has also been much discussion on body’s place for a person’s role in a society. Especially in the post modern age of decentered meanings and changing values, the body has turned out to be something that stands for a person’s life style, character and personality. The body is perceived as such an important determinant that, the clothes people wear, the style of speaking, gestures, hair, skin colour and the other bodily features are all regarded as the means of representing the self. People are widely judged with their jobs, education, personality and gender through their bodies. The common idea about the body is that; all the implications of age, race, sexuality, gender and class can be inferred through looking at one’s physical features. As Hassard and Ruth points out:

“Black bodies are associated with rampant, uncontrolled sexuality, women’s bodies are linked either to physical weakness, inappropriately masculine traits or obesity and seen as leaky, uncontained, ever-changing and thus out of control. Mad bodies move and twitch, manifesting psychological disorders..., working men’s bodies are imbued with excessive masculinity and bestial aggression- all of these bodies have come to represent identities.” (2001: 9)

As the body has been regarded as an important part of a person’s life for the individuation process and social existence, the bodily requirements have certainly gained importance in time; the cosmetic products, accessories, clothes and equipments for body health and appearance are of much interest for people of modern age than ever. In the past, people struggled to gain control over nature, machines, and even other people. However, together with the technological

developments and the awareness of human knowledge and power, there has appeared a global interest on the body control. While merely the wealthy people used to access the body caring facilities in the past, nowadays anybody has the opportunity to get a diversity of such services. People either undergo plastic surgeries, go on diets, or use various technological gadgets in order to keep their physical health. Therefore, the technological improvements of present age seem to show the amount of importance given to the body and the body related issues.

In addition to the body caring messages, which people are exposed to in a number of ways during their lives, what is imposed upon people all over the world is that no matter what you have to do, you should look young and attractive. Unlike the times in which old people are respected and valued due to their experience and knowledge, in the modern age in order to be an individual among the other people and find acceptance, people consciously or unconsciously try to adjust themselves and their bodies to the strives of being young and beautiful. Andrew Blaikie summarises this shift in the conception of old age:

“Popular perceptions of ageing have shifted from the dark days when the ‘aged people’ sat in motionless rows in the workhouse, to a paternalistic pause when ‘the elderly’ were expected to wear the retirement uniform, to modern times, when older citizens are encouraged not just to dress ‘young’ and look youthful, but to exercise, have sex, diet, take holidays, and socialise in ways indistinguishable from those of their children’s generation.” (1999: 73-4)

While the old age has also not been welcomed during the industrialization of many societies, due to the need for young people and the productive workforce; in the late twentieth century, people are heavily under the pressure of catching up with the trend of looking young. As Simone de Beauvoir writes in The Coming of Age, in modern thought, old age is and has been considered “a kind of shameful secret that is unseemly to mention” (1996: 1). The more one grows old, the more uncomfortable they feel with their bodies. On the other hand, those aged people who look young and healthy are more highly praised than the aged who do not look young. Thus, most people look for the ways to hide the indications of their biological age. As Mike Featherstone and Mike Hepworth point out “a new breed of body maintenance” (1991: 374) captures people from all ages; experts prescribe

health foods, vitamins, dieting, fitness techniques and other regimens to control biological age.

Having had such an importance in people's life, it seems impossible to see the reflections of the body image in literature. The body has been used as a literary motif for the works of literature and the meaning of body has changed in accordance with the values of the age the literary works are written. To illustrate from the present concerned novels of this thesis, in the nineteenth century what made a person acceptable or reliable were the physical beauty and wealth. Dorian Gray, a prototypical upper class man of his age, guaranteed his place in the society thanks to his extraordinary beautiful body and money. Moreover, as a man of the modern age, Adam's old appearance did not attract anyone's attention. Being young has been depicted as such a significant issue for a person's life that, Adam gives up everything in order to be young for a short period of time. In short, as will be discussed in detail in the following parts of this thesis, the body has been an influential agency for people of all times, and it will gain even more importance as time passes.

This thesis aims at analysing the individual and social body in two literary works written in different periods of time: Oscar Wilde's The Picture of Dorian Gray and Hanif Kureishi's The Body. Although there are numerous methods to handle the concept of body from different perspectives, Cultural Studies provides the grand theories like Structuralism, Post-structuralism and Psychoanalytic Criticism to look into the body, language, generating meaning and constructing individual and social identity. Thus, the most appropriate method to analyze the body is the Cultural Studies. The present study analyzes the bodies of the two protagonists and the relation of their bodies with their personalities, the lives they lead, their inner lives and their souls.

The present study is composed of two parts: the theoretical and the analytical parts. In the theoretical part the background information and the main points about the method which is applied to the analytical part are presented. In the analytical part, the two novels are analyzed according to the mentioned method. The study consists of four chapters. Chapter I is dedicated to the theoretical knowledge about

Cultural Studies: the notions of culture, meaning, identity and body are discussed in detail by references to the important figures concerned with these issues. Chapter II focuses on the first novel to be analyzed through the aforementioned theoretical information. Dorian Gray's portrait and the relationship between his body and soul are discussed with quotations from the novel. In Chapter III, Adam's old and new bodies are analyzed with the same method. Finally, Chapter IV is concerned with the common points which are introduced in the two previous chapters. The similar parts of the protagonists' lives due to the body-soul division they experience are discussed in this part.

CHAPTER I

CULTURAL STUDIES AND BODY

The purpose of this thesis is to analyze the place of the body for the construction of one's individual and social identity. As Beverley Skeggs writes "bodies" are the physical sites where the relations of class, gender, race, sexuality and age come together and are embodied and practiced (qtd in Barker, 2001: 3). The sign of identity is the body, and it is at the same time the representation of self. Just like there are different ways of representing one's self, there are also different types of bodies; black bodies, gendered bodies, women's bodies, obese bodies, mad bodies "docile bodies" as Foucault calls it (1990:102), grotesque bodies, butch bodies and a lot more.

The body is an increasingly significant concept over recent years, because it bears a peculiarly intimate relation to life (Miles, 1999: 24). At once, an organ system or flesh, the creation of God, cultural construction, one part of a two sided coin, and whether as a temple or a prison for the soul, it is not surprising that the body has fallen under the attention of historians of art, gender, thought, medicine, theatre and costume, and of literary scholars, archaeologists and historical sociologists and philosophers. In fact, body has a very long history and a great importance for many fields: as Margaret Miles writes; from early philosophers like Plotinus, who addressed the question of the relation of body and soul in a cultural world (23), to the Christian focus on bodies with the ascetic movement (19), to the importance of bodies in the colosseum games of Roman leisure (84), to the innovations based on knowledge-body-mind relation in Enlightenment period in eighteenth century, to the present day post-modern age, in which there is the most fundamental attempt to gain mastery over one's own body, it is an indispensable subject to be inquired.

The body is both "that through which we experience the world immediately and that by which we are experienced (initially) in the world by others; the body is the 'vehicle of being in the world'" (Hussey, 1986: 3). Either individual or social, many things can be implied through looking at the bodies. The choice of clothes, the style of hair, and the size of body are all the ways that reveal one's personality. In

addition to the individual classifications, bodies are the parts that are seen by others, so they also help to determine the place one has in a society. In other words, bodies are also social representations that present one's sexuality, ethnicity, gender and class. For example, an aristocrat white woman's body can be differentiated in many ways from that of the lower class black men's, or working bodies are often idealized as rational and mechanical entities in an organization.

There are several theories and methods to analyze the body. Since the concept of "body", as will be discussed in detail below, has many cultural connotations as well as its aesthetic and representational implications, cultural studies offer appropriate methods and theories to analyze and interpret the use of "body" in literary texts. Either fictional or realistic, literary works are placed within a discourse, and individual and social identities of the characters are strongly affected by their bodies. Then, there appear some questions: how do the writers describe their characters, whether or not the writer draws his character as seen in the mirror, does he show the events lived through the physical existence of the characters as they are, and how important is body for literary works? Depending on the context, writers use bodies of characters as a means of defining their identities. For example, if the writer deals with the matter of racism in his work, he can put a black character into a white majority or vice versa, or if the subject matter is about gender, female and male characters are arranged in contrasting ways. If the body is represented as young and inexperienced, the innocence or cultural deterioration can be used as the theme of the literary work. The examples can be multiplied, and they will be discussed in detail in the application part of this thesis, but before taking body as the starting point, it is necessary to talk about its cultural aspects.

"Culture" is a capacious term, and various definitions of culture have been done by many people throughout the ages. Since it can be handled with a number of points, it becomes more difficult to define culture. Omar Khayyam Moore is one of those who studied the difficulty of defining the concept of culture in his book. The following definitions of culture were taken as samples from his study. For example, M. J. Herskovits suggests that one clear definition of culture is "the learned portion of human behavior" (251). Margaret Mead has defined culture as follows: "Culture means human culture, the complex whole of traditional behavior which has been

developed by the human race and is successively learned by each generation” (252). E. B. Tylor’s famous definition of culture is “that complex whole which includes knowledge, belief, art, morals, law, custom, and any other capabilities and habits acquired by man as a member of society” (255). Lastly, in Keywords: A Vocabulary of Culture and Society, Williams defines culture as “not only a body of intellectual and imaginative work; it is also and essentially a whole way of life” (1983:311).

Culture is defined in a variety of ways, however, “the definition usually includes some notions of shared values, beliefs, expectations, customs, jargon, and rituals” (Lazear, 1999: 96). Thus, what is certain about culture is that it has a number of shared meanings and a social formation.

“To say that two people belong to the same culture is to say that they interpret the world in roughly the same ways and can express themselves, their thoughts and feelings about the world, in ways which will be understood by each other. Thus culture depends on its participants interpreting meaningfully what is happening around them, and ‘making sense’ of the world, in broadly similar ways.” (Hall, 1997: 2)

This social formation is a unity that is made up of differences; namely different social positions and social roles, different economic structures, policies, values and perceptions. Since people, as living beings, live inevitably in a society, in addition to one’s own identity, there must be a collective entity that is shared by members of that culture. Thus, culture can be described as how we make sense of the world we live in as a human being, and how we live among others.

Culture refers to the things that are shared by people, and these shared meanings can either be global, popular or local. In other words, culture has different types; namely, the universal culture, the folk culture and the popular culture. While we are all part of a global society, it is certain that there are some values that are peculiar to some people living in the same place, sharing the same physical and historical features. The customs and traditions are among the best examples of this type that is named folk culture. Folk culture is the product of a stable, traditional social order in which social differences are not conflictual, and that is characterized by social consensus. The values in this culture are passed through many generations, but they do not change or they are exposed to little change during this transmission

between the generations, since folk culture operates outside the established institutions like education system, church or media. The folk culture does not change in time but it is geographically limited to some boundaries. “In general, folk materials exhibit major variation over space and minor variation through time” (Glassie, 1969: 33). The reason for this is that the determinant of folk culture is spatial not temporal. Folk culture is bounded but can be combined with other types of cultures. It can be referred as a “relatively simple culture type which is rapidly modified out of existence by increasing contact with modern industrial civilization” (Foster, 1953: 159).

Although it seems improbable that there are some values shared by people all around the world, there are many evidences to prove the contrary. The development of new forms of communication and information allow many things to be “conducted across time and space” (Barker, 2000: 168). The electronic media give each of us “access to a world well beyond our local community” (Storey, 2003:153). That is why it is not surprising that in the context of the accelerated globalization of late modernity, globalization pervades the local traditions and values. Globalization “can be experienced by simply walking down your ‘local’ high street, where local goods and services are displayed alongside global goods and services” (Storey, 2003: 152). In many shopping malls, franchised restaurants, music shops and clothes stores serve people the products that are available in all parts of the world. Also the technological developments of transportation let people achieve the available universal resources. “The increased speed and range of travel together with the fact that more people travel, makes the world seem smaller” (Storey, 2003: 153). However, globalization is not just an economic and technological matter but is concerned with issues of cultural meaning. While the values and meanings attached to place remains significant, we are increasingly involved in networks which extend far beyond our immediate physical locations (Barker, 2000: 169). According to Robertson, the globalization “refers both to the compression of the world and the intensification of the consciousness of the world as a whole” (1992: 8). Through this processes of universal culture, we have begun to talk about hybrid cultural identities rather than a homogenous national or ethnic cultural identity (Barker, 2000: 41).

The last type of culture is the popular culture, an idea that emerged in the late eighteenth century. The “popular” is not a stable term that is used for a specific thing at a certain time. Thus, the field of popular culture does not have distinct borders since the content of popular culture is in constant process. There is a permanent variation for the popular culture products. The popular culture “exhibits minor variation over space and major variation through time” (Glassie, 1969: 33). In order to understand the popularity that transcends the physical borders, the jeans may be the best example. The widespread usage of jeans cannot be limited to a certain place; people of all ages in many parts of the world prefer jeans. Although they are accepted as functional, comfortable, cheap garments, the popularity of jeans cannot be explained just with these features, they “transect almost every social category we can think of: we cannot define a jeans bearer by any of the major social category systems- gender, class, race, age, nation, religion, education” (Fiske, 1989: 2). Whatever local meanings they bear, the jeans are the products of popular culture, and they exceed the limits of place. At the same time, the materials of popular culture are temporal, and they change in time periods. The movies, TV programs, novels, musical products and all the other things that people deal with cannot be expected to be always the same. As time passes, and life conditions, consciousnesses, values and pleasures of people change, together with the cultural changes, “the popular” also changes. The concepts of beauty, form, quality may be relative in different periods of time; but, those in the eighteenth century cannot be the same as those in the seventeenth century.

Popular culture is “the arena of struggle and negotiation between the interests of the dominant groups and the interests of the subordinate groups” (Storey, 2003: 4). The societies and accordingly, the cultures are the wholes that are made up of differences. Thus, unsurprisingly, there are major and minor, dominant and subordinate groups in a society and there are different sets of meanings between these groups. The differences can clearly be observed with the classifications of culture they share. Though popular and the folk “do bear some similarities” (Fiske, 1989: 168), and both are, in their different social contexts, the culture of the people, the two must not be mistaken with one another. While the folk culture bears the national, unified and homogenous values of a society, the popular culture has some contradictory points that do not correspond with the whole culture. The popular

“must offer complex and contradictory meanings about class, gender, and family; to name only a few” (Fiske, 1989: 162). Popular culture is made up of cultural resources that are not produced by the social formation that uses them. As has been defined in cultural studies, the concept of popular breaks with the model of culture as a unified, expressive totality organically linked to social groups. Popular culture is “the culture of the subordinated and disempowered and thus always bears within the signs of power relations, traces of the forces of domination and subordination” (Fiske, 1989: 4).

The idea of culture “embraces a range of topics, processes, differences and even paradoxes” (Jenks, 1993:12). Since it is not a fixed entity and cannot easily be limited, in order to analyze culture, a lot of theories have been offered by many theorists throughout the ages. Either sociologically, or politically, or economically, culture can be handled in a number of ways. In this thesis, the concept of culture and its relation to body and identity construction will be analyzed through the theories of Cultural Studies, in relation with Structuralism, Post-structuralism, Psychoanalytic criticism and partly Feminism; because these disciplines are closely related with body, language, meaning, identity, social relations and one’s place in a society.

As mentioned, cultural studies is concerned with each layer of culture, and there are numerous disciplines in cultural studies to examine these different interests. This means that cultural studies functions by borrowing freely from many disciplines. It appropriates theories and methodologies from almost any method from textual analysis, to ethnography, psychoanalysis and deconstruction. That is why it is difficult to pin down the boundaries of cultural studies (Barker, 2000: 5). Cultural studies, as Hall defines, is:

“a discursive formation, that is; ‘a cluster of ideas, images and practices, which provides ways of talking about, forms of knowledge and conduct associated with, a particular topic, social activity or institutional site in society’.” (1997: 6)

Cultural studies does not have a clearly defined subject area, but its starting point is a very broad and “all-inclusive notion of culture” (Sardar, 2005: 6). The concept of culture is central to cultural studies because culture is a common way of life, and cultural studies is concerned with; how meanings are generated in this

social formation, what affects the change of meanings, what roles gender, language, ethnicity, economy, and biological bodies of individuals have for the construction of one's identity, and so on. Cultural studies seeks to examine its subject matter in terms of cultural practices. Since individual beings inevitably live in a society, in order to achieve the knowledge of them, the culture and the society they live in must be studied in detail. In other words, culture can only be understood through the theories of cultural studies.

Just like culture is central to cultural studies, the concept of meaning is core to the explanation of culture. Culture is said to “work like a language” (Barker, 2001:11), and to investigate culture is to explore how meaning is produced in a language. Language is the tool that connects people to one another and creates meaning. The meaning is produced symbolically in language as a “signifying system” (Barker, 2000: 7). This has been the domain of structuralism and semiotics, as the study of signs. Saussure, one of the pioneers of structuralism, explains meaning by reference to a system of relations in language. The basic unit of a language is the “sign”, and the components of a sign are called ‘concept’ and ‘sound image’ – or, to use the terms which Saussure’s work has made famous – signified (*signifié*) and signifier (*signifiant*) (Hawkes, 1997: 26). A signifier is the form or medium of signs, for example a sound, an image, and the marks that form a word on the page. The signified is understood in terms of concepts and meanings. According to Saussure, “meaning is produced through the selection and combination of signs” (Barker, 2000:90). He suggests that there is an arbitrary relationship between signifier and signified. In other words, it requires the active presence of the interpretant to make the signifying connection (Hawkes, 1997: 129); it is culturally and historically specific. The meaning cannot be fixed in time and space, as Foucault explains:

“If meaning is not something fixed and guaranteed in nature, but it is the result of particular ways of representing nature in culture, then the meaning of something can never be fixed, final or true; its meaning will only ever be contextual, contingent .” (qtd. in Storey, 2003: 6)

The same words or signs may have different connotations in different places and times. Since there is an arbitrary relation among the words, differences among signs

that give them meaning “is placed on the oppositions and reversals of the signs themselves” (Mukerji, 1986: 60).

Language produces meaning by “a system of relationships, by producing a network of similarities and differences” (Sardar, 2005:11). The signs gain their meanings through their binary oppositions. Black/white, on/off, male/female, sacred/profane, up/down, in/out, pure/impure... only have meaning in relation to its opposite. Thus, meaning is generated through difference, in relation of one signifier to another, rather than by reference to fixed entities in an independent object world.

Through the study of signs, Saussure attempts to explain the way they work in social life. In order to explain the relationship between the signifier/signified, and the role of participant and cultural connotations, he gives a bunch of roses as an example:

“It can be used to signify passion. When it does so, the bunch of roses is the signifier, the passion the signified. The relation between the two (the ‘associative total’) produces the third term, the bunch of roses as a sign.... As a signifier, the bunch of roses is empty, as a sign it is full. What has filled it (with signification) is a combination of my intent and the nature of society’s conventional modes and channels which offer me a range of vehicles for the purpose. The range is extensive, but conventionalized and so finite, and it offers a complex system of ways of signifying.” (Hawkes, 1997: 132)

As can be inferred from Saussure’s example, one signifier may have a number of signified. What determines the meaning is mainly the interpretant and the spatial, historical and cultural factors. The bunch of roses, depending on the context, might be used to signify passion, sorrow, friendship, apology, love and a lot more signified.

A structuralist understanding of culture is concerned with the “systems of relations” of an underlying structure (Barker, 2000:15). Human relations, material objects and images are all analyzed through the structures of signs. Consequently, structuralist analysis treats meaning as fundamentally social and cultural in the sense that language is social and the base of culture.

Louis Althusser, another structuralist, tries to explain the concept of culture and meaning through “ideology”, a term borrowed from Marxism. Marx argues that the dominant ideas in any society are the ideas of the ruling class. He suggests that “what we perceive to be the true character of social relations within capitalism are in actuality the mystifications of the market” (Barker, 200: 77). This means that people are manipulated to believe that they are free to sell their labor, and that they get a fair price for it. Althusser uses the word “interpellation” for a similar Marxist idea: the way the individual is encouraged to see her or himself as an entity free and independent of social forces (Barry, 1995:165). Althusser thinks that ideology hails or interpellates concrete individuals as concrete subjects. He argues that people are made to feel that they choose when, in reality, they have no choices at all. For Althusser, “dominant ideology turns what is in fact political, partial and open to change into something seemingly ‘natural’, universal and eternal.” (During, 1999: 5) What differentiates Althusser from the Marxists is that he avoids the view that the economic base is the essence of society. He suggests that “the main ideological instruments of society - law, religion, education, family - are just as important as economic conditions” (Sardar, 2005: 46). Culture is neither totally dependent on nor totally independent of economic conditions and relationships.

For Althusser, individuals can be sucked into ideology so easily because it helps them make sense of the world, to enter the “symbolic order” (During, 1999: 5). The cultural construction of identities occurs through the same procedure they do in familial relations. According to Althusser, individuals see themselves mirrored in dominant ideology and identify with it as a way of taking the father’s place. For the famous psychoanalyst Lacan, “the self is something we acquire over time through entry into the symbolic order of language and culture” (Barker, 2000: 107). Lacan suggests that a person’s identity is constructed only when s/he has entered the symbolic order, the time when father is introduced into his/her life. In classical psychoanalytic thought, prior to the Oedipal moment, the infant forms a kind of identification, an attachment, “a blissful fusion” (Booker, 1996: 35) to the mother. Before the sense of self emerges, the young child exists in a realm which Lacan calls the Imaginary, “in which the child, believing itself part of its mother, acknowledges no difference between itself and the rest of the world” (Montserrat, 1997: 75). The infant’s relation to his mother goes on throughout this pre-linguistic stage, because

the baby physically depends on his mother's breast to be alive; all his needs are provided by the mother without the necessity of verbal deeds. When the child comes:

“between six months and eighteen months, the infant enters into the mirror stage, when the child sees its own reflection in the mirror he begins to conceive of itself as a unified being, separate from the rest of the world.” (Barry, 1995: 114)

He gains the sense of his own existence as a separate entity and becomes aware of his own limitations. Then, the infant's unity with the mother is spoiled “as the infant grows older; he gradually comes to realize that the mother is already... attached to the father.” (Booker, 1996: 27) There appears the Oedipus complex in which the infant experiences both a fear of castration by the father and a desire to replace his authority. According to Montserrat:

“The Imaginary ends with the ‘Oedipal crisis’, when the father breaks this unity, becomes a third term and so introduces the idea of difference to the child, who thus enters the ‘Symbolic Order’, essentially the world as culturally constituted. The father also, by the ‘Law of the Father’ which Lacan represents by the phallus, forbids the child continued access to the mother's body, and thus imposes a sense of loss on the child through its desire for the lost body of its mother which must be suppressed.” (1997: 75)

Thus, after the realization of father's existence, the child loses the unity he has constructed with his mother, and as he has entered into the Symbolic order, in other words, acknowledged the Law of Father and acquired the linguistic skills, he forms a separate self.

The image of father has paramount importance for the child's construction of identity, because “it is the Phallus that serves to break up the mother-child dyad and stands for the entry into the symbolic order” (Barker, 2000: 109). Indeed, the child enters the sphere of language when he has met the Phallus, as ‘transcendental signifier’, from which difference is generated. Language is the manifestation of the lack the child bears. For Lacan, meaning and identity are generated along this system of differences; the child becomes an individual when he realizes that he can be neither a mother nor a father.

Both Saussure and Lacan's views on language and identity depend on the relational feature of signs. As Terry Eagleton explains, "'cat' is what it is because it is not 'cad' or 'mat', and 'mat' is what it is because it is not 'map' or 'hat'" (1996:121). The idea here is that, the signs have stable meanings and what is important is "the difference." This idea which is implied by binary pairs and denotation was undermined in the work of Derrida and post-structuralist thought (Barker, 2000: 94). Structuralism divided the sign from the referent with:

"Saussure, who shows that meaning in language, is a matter of contrasts between words and words, not between words and things. Meaning, that is to say is a network of differences. There is a perpetual barrier between signifier (the word) and the signified (the referent)." (Barry, 1995: 1119)

Post-structuralism goes a step further and it divides the signifier from the signified. Jacques Derrida accepts Saussure's argument that meaning is generated by relations of difference between signifiers rather than by reference to an independent object world. Derrida argues that "meaning slides down a chain of signifiers abolishing a stable signified" (Barker, 2000:17). Thus, there is a constant play of signifiers. One signifier is only meaningful with the other; so meaning can never be fixed:

"Meaning is not immediately present in a sign. Since the meaning of a sign is a matter of what the sign is not, its meaning is always in some sense absent from it too. Meaning, if you like, is scattered or dispersed along the whole chain of signifiers: it cannot be easily nailed down, it is never fully present in any one sign alone, but is rather a kind of constant flickering of presence and absence together." (Eagleton, 1996: 110)

Post-structuralist theory draws attention to the things which we normally do not notice, not just the things on the page, but the underlying things beneath the surface. Derrida uses the term "deconstruction" to reveal the hidden meanings. Deconstruction reveals the tension between what something; a text, a film, a story or a piece of writing, means to say and what it is constrained to mean. To deconstruct is to take apart, to undo in order to seek out and display the assumptions. Deconstruction seeks "to expose the blind-spots, these are the unacknowledged assumptions" (Barker, 2000: 99). Through his ideas and dissatisfaction with the old and trusted maps of meaning, Derrida leads people to new ways of thinking, to search the untold parts of everything, in short, to deconstruct.

Unlike the structuralist view, which attempts to find underlying larger structures, makes generalizations and trusts in the stable meanings; with post-structuralism, we enter a universe of uncertainty. According to post-structuralists, we live in a ‘decentered’ universe. To quote Peter Barry, “in the twentieth century, the centers were destroyed or eroded (...), in the resulting universe there are no absolutes or fixed points, so that the universe we live in is ‘decentered’ or inherently relativistic” (1995:66). The classical notions of meaning, reality, knowledge, truth must be doubted from now on. Everything that has once been reliable, established, and fixed, was shattered in the post- modern conditions of this age.

As a consequence of the ‘decentered’ nature of the universe, there appear many problems. The common problems, which can be attributed to the post-modern age and accordingly the people in this age, can mainly be defined as fragmentation, alienation, anguish-dread, anxiety and absurdity. First of all, the causes of these problems mainly stem from the great social changes caused by industrialism. Man, living in an industrial city in which all religious and spiritual assumptions were gradually uprooted, becomes stranger to his fellows. He is unable to understand the others as a result of the limited communication among people. With the rise of the machinery, a new type of man has come into being: the helpless individual who is deprived of his natural environment and of his own natural ties has been pushed into an artificial community. Despite living among people in a society, he feels lonely.

In the modern world, many factors can be counted to lead one to feel lonely, alienated, and meaningless. Among these forces are the technical developments, the lack of communication among people, the difficult life conditions, the loss of faith in the established institutions such as government and religion, decadence in moral values and the oppression of society on the individual. These result in the individuals’ disintegration and many disorders:

“...an extra ordinary variety of psycho-social disorders, including loss of self, anxiety states, anomie, despair, depersonalization, rootlessness, apathy, social disorganization, loneliness, atomization, powerlessness, meaninglessness, isolation, pessimism, and the loss of beliefs or values.” (Josephson, 1963: 13)

Postmodern culture is said to be marked by a sense of “the fragmentary, ambiguous and uncertain quality of the world” (Barker, 2000:20). Therefore, the main themes of the modern world have been the fear of loneliness, discontinuity of social relations, anxiety, psycho-social disorders, alienation in its various forms, inner conflicts of individuals in a mass society, and loss of identity. In accordance with these themes, post structuralism argues that subjectivity is an effect of language or discourse. Michael Foucault, in History of Sexuality, explains that “the identities are the products of culture, history and discourse” (1990: 139). People are born into a world that-pre-exists themselves. They learn to use a language that was in use before they arrived. They live their lives in the context of social relationships with others. In short, they are constituted as individuals in social process using socially shared materials. Each person passes through a process of socialization and individualization. The systematic ideas, opinions, concepts, ways of thinking and behaving which are formed within a particular context are the implications of discursive structure that exists in a society. To illustrate, we can assume that there is a set of discourses of femininity and masculinity, because women and men behave within a certain range of parameters when defining themselves as gendered subjects:

“It is these discourses which heterosexual, lesbian, gay, bisexual and transsexual/transvestite subjects engage with when coming to understand themselves as sexed: when a lesbian takes up a ‘femme’ position, it is her perception of the discourse of heterosexual femininity that she is actively modifying and reworking and ultimately destabilizing (Bell, et al., 1994). This discursive framework of femininity may determine the types of clothes she chooses to wear, the types of bodily stance she adopts and ways of thinking about herself and others in relation to power.” (Mills, 1997: 18)

Thus, the individuals are the social constructs and cannot exist outside of cultural representations. They mostly construct their identities in these pre-existing rules, standards and discursive formations. Unlike the belief that power is restricting and repressive, Foucault suggests that power cannot only be referred as “a repressive agent”; it also produces some behaviors as well. It was discourse about sex which actually produced sexuality. Foucault states:

“What the discourse of sexuality was initially applied to wasn’t sex but the body, the sexual organs, pleasures, kinship relations, interpersonal relations, and so forth.” Since we have marginalized sex and sexual practices, and made it a “sin,” we have

turned it into a problem and a burden. So, it was the developing religious discourse about sex which marginalized, excluded, and defined our notions of sex, and in so doing, it produced the abstraction of “sexuality.” (Michener, 2007: 103)

While Foucault claims that the identity is “permanently inscribed by power relations and discourse and totally imprinted by history” (Grosz, 1994: 146), Judith Butler suggests that identity and “gender intersects with racial, class, ethnic, sexual and regional modalities of discursively constituted identities” (1990:3). It becomes impossible to separate gender from the political, cultural intersections in which it is invariably produced and maintained. The identity formation is based on a range of different aspects. Therefore, there appears an ongoing discussion about what the determinant of identity is, whether the biological nature or culture makes one’s sex, and whether sex and gender are different things. To insert what Simon During suggests about Butler, she has a diverse point of view about the variety of forces:

“She is Foucauldian in arguing that the social and legal regulations which seem to limit freedom actually provide the conditions for the identities in which freedom becomes meaningful and desirable. She is Freudian in that, for her, desires, drives, and identities are not simply social constructions. They belong to the body which is not quite the creature of ideological or familial structures... She is deconstructionist most of all in that she does not organize her thoughts in binary oppositions; the notion that people have necessarily one of two gender.” (During, 1999: 341)

Butler differentiates sex and gender. The distinction between sex and gender serves the argument that “whatever biological intractability sex appears to have, gender is culturally constructed: hence gender is neither the casual result of sex nor as seemingly fixed as sex” (Butler, 1990: 6). The body of a person is humanized when his/her sex is determined, and this occurs just at the moment “when the question ‘is it a boy or a girl?’ is answered” (Ibid: 8). That is why, the biological sex is accepted as given at birth and it is compulsorily one of the two sexes; however gender is something acquired, and it can vary. As During quotes, Butler adopts Beauvoir’s idea that “one is not born a woman, but rather becomes one” (1999: 8). She suggests that the category of gender is a variable cultural accomplishment, a set of meanings that are taken up within a cultural field, and that no one is born with a gender - it is always acquired. Nothing guarantees that the one who is born a woman necessarily requires a female identity. Giddens describes identity as “a project” (qtd. in Barker, 2000: 221). By this, he means that identity is our creation. It is something

always in process, a moving towards rather than an arrival, as Butler explains: “it is not a fixed entity but an emotionally charged discursive description of us that is subject to change (1993:67).

Identity can be handled in a number of ways as Butler suggests in her works on gender: “It is an essence that can be signified through signs of taste, beliefs, attitudes and lifestyles” (1993: 65). what is certain is that, it is deemed to be both personal and social. The social side, namely, the culture has already been explained in detail; from now on the focus will be on the personal side of identity, namely; the body.

Body has always been an intriguing and controversial subject. Since it is an issue that attracts great attention, throughout the ages, scholars, philosophers and theorists have discussed and studied body. Among them, there are Ancient Greek philosophers like Plato, who is one of the leading figures that draw the distinction between body and mind; Plotinus, who emphasizes the double dimension of existence; namely body and soul; and Descartes, who pays attention to the relation of body and self with his saying “I think, therefore; I am,”. Taking body as the starting point, some basic questions come to mind: What makes body so important? Is it really at the core of one’s life and existence? What is the relation of the body with self, soul/mind and identity? Why are there so many different approaches to the body? The only answer to these entire questions is that we exist in this world through the physical existence of our body. It is the tool that lets us present ourselves to the others, it is the thing that bears all the burden of personality, it is the medium on which cultural meanings are inscribed, and it is the instrument through which we acquire identity. Body has a lot more than it bears in the definitions cited here. Therefore, it seems impossible to attempt to produce one grand ‘theory of the body’, one all-encompassing reading and writing of the body.

Depending on different points of views, various perceptions of body have emerged throughout the ages. To illustrate, Marxists consider body as the potential unit of production, the psychoanalysts analyze it as an object that must be evaluated in terms of sexual desires and basic instincts, and feminism is centrally concerned with body in terms of “sex as an organizing principle of social life that is thoroughly

saturated with power relations subordinating women to men” (During, 2000: 227). Post- structuralists are interested in the body and self relation that involve the subject in shifting, fragmented and multiple identities - they think that people are composed not of one but of several, sometimes contradictory identities.

Just like there are different ways of looking at the body, it has been used for many purposes since the beginning of history. Hussey’s quotation, “the body is that through which we experience the world immediately and that by which we are experienced (initially) in the world by others; it is the ‘vehicle of being in the world’” (1986: 3), emphasizes the importance of the body as a social instrument. For example, in early Roman periods it was the tool for the entertainment. Either royal or public, people used to go and watch the gladiators fighting in the colosseums. In the amphitheatres of ancient Greece, the players performed for whether entertainment or education. In the stadiums every kind of sports has been watched by people throughout the ages. There have always been fashion shows to exhibit the clothes. Similar but not the same, the public baths are one of the most important places where nothing but just the bodies matter:

“Baths were public places with free admission in which the class distinctions were blurred, contested and temporarily reconfigured. When dress with its clear markings of social status was discarded, status became difficult to detect except by “body, voice, conduct, and attitude.” Social status was reassigned according to physical status; visible beauty replaced visible wealth.” (Miles, 1999: 88)

All these places show that body is a way of being in the world, either by clothes, or style of hair, or body shape, people give the message that they exist in this world. The examples can be multiplied but, the thing is that, body is a way of being among people; we communicate with our bodies through facial expression, gestures, dress and stance (During, 2000: 131). In addition to the social dimension, body is basically treated as the complementary of the soul/mind. As Plotinus explains, the person is seen as “the composite of soul and body” (Miles, 1999: 35). In other words, both body and soul contribute to the construction of one’s identity. Without soul/mind, body would have no life; similarly, without body soul could find no way of existing in the world. While there are different ideas about the importance or the priority of them, the only thing that cannot be denied is that, body and soul/mind are necessarily together.

Contrary to the above mentioned assumption, body and mind are, at the same time, separate forms. Descartes' proposal is that: "the mind, by which I am what I am, is entirely distinct from the body' so that 'even if the body were to cease, it [the mind] would not cease to be all that it is" (Hassard, 2001: 4). Heavily influenced by Descartes, in western tradition, body is regarded as ambiguous, the starting point or first step, and lowest in value. It is the mind, not the body which is at the center. As Plotinus suggests, "the whole human composite is not immortal" (qtd. in Miles, 1999: 58); body is in a state of evident and perpetual change, growing and diminishing, dissolving, and wasting away; however, the soul is suggested as the immortal side, it is the real source of body's life and action. While body is apt to wear out, die and cease to exist, the soul is believed to migrate through bodies.

It can easily be noticed that, in Plotinus and Descartes' view, soul is accepted as prior to and more important than the body. There are even types of bodies; namely, 'docile' and 'grotesque' bodies, which are evaluated as high or low in terms of its relation to the mind:

"The Foucauldian disciplined, regulated and regimented docile body is accorded high status within Western culture, whilst the Bakhtinian grotesque body, associated with loss of control, is reviled and denigrated. Of course, the disciplined body is a body connected intimately with the mind; it is the mind that overcomes the body's potential excesses, and strong minds are represented through disciplined bodies. The grotesque body on the other hand, is associated with the weak mind, with those inferior status." (qtd. in Miles, 1999: 9)

In monotheistic religions, there is a common idea that the origin and source of a living being is, with its different names God, Creator, Divine Being or the One. The living "must be in relation with or have a likeness of it, "as light is of the sun" (Miles, 1999: 74). The only way of being close to the One is the soul; since it is soul that gives life to the body and "the power to give life is 'more honorable' than the thing enlivened" (Ibid:73), soul is much more important than the body. By the way, the body is seen as just an instrument, a trap for the soul.

The reason why body is defined as a handicap for the soul is that, body does not have a stable nature. From the moment one is born to the time he dies, the body

changes. Due to the temporality of body, it is accepted as inferior to the soul, and as Miles explains: “anyone who has suffered injury, disease, or old age, knows that bodies do not provide trustworthy identities” (1999:126). Bodies are vulnerable to change, growth, diminishment, and ultimately corruption in death. Contrary to the common idea that beauty and youth are among the features of one’s body, in reality, these are the things that transcend the body, and belong to the soul. Thus, Plotinus’s claims for the lineage and capacities of soul reveal his confidence that “soul is the ‘real self,’ the center of human personhood” (qtd. in Miles, 1999: 57). In the light of the foregoing things mentioned, Plotinus gives the answer to the following question:

“Who are we really? A human being, he says, is a soul with a kind of particular kind of rational forming principles that is *disposed to* a body of a particular kind. We are double; we are simultaneously, a soul using a body and a distinguishable person that “belongs to a soul already more divine which has a better man and clearer senses.” (qtd. in Miles, 1999: 107)

To conclude, the identity is a concept that consists of many dimensions. There are many factors that contribute to one’s social and individual identity: among these factors mentioned in this theoretical part of the thesis, there are the culture and cultural factors, the language that is used, the historical, ideological, political and economical status and livings, the experiences, scientific and technological developments and together with the other people, one’s self; the biological and psychological nature of a person. Every one of these factors has more or less a role for the construction of one’s identity. The following chapters will be an application of the presented theoretical knowledge to the two important literary works: The Picture of Dorian Gray by Oscar Wilde and The Body by Hanif Kureishi.

CHAPTER II

THE INDIVIDUAL AND SOCIAL BODY IN THE PICTURE OF DORIAN GRAY

From the moment individuals are born, they find the ways to live in the world. They either imitate, or learn how to be a person on their own. While parents or peers are the role models for some people during the individuation process, some people set up their identity through the things they live. No matter which steps they pass through, people gain their identities over time. Everyone has a unique identity; however, since human beings live inevitably with the others, two kinds of identities come up; one is the individual identity that usually demonstrates the real part of one's self, and the other is the public identity that is mostly used to live among the other people. The aim of this chapter is to discuss the body and self relationship in its relation to the construction of social and individual identity in The Picture of Dorian Gray by Oscar Wilde. After a short introductory part about the Victorian era and literature, a brief summary of the novel will be presented below. In the following parts, the argument will be studied in detail with quotations from the novel.

Covering the whole of the 19th century, Victorian literature is the body of writing produced during the reign of Queen Victoria. The Victorian era, named after Queen Victoria, begins with her accession to the throne in 1837 and ends with her demise in 1901 (Tucker, 1999: 10). Marked by the Industrial Revolution, there were profound economic and social changes by the beginning of the Victorian period. During that time, an economy based on manual labour was replaced by one dominated by industry and the manufacture of machinery. Especially the use of railways and steam made everything faster and enabled the works that require power to be managed much more easily. The result was a mass migration of workers to industrial towns to find jobs.

As a result of the change in the living and working conditions of the lower class or rural people, there appeared the term, "middle class", which described those people below the aristocracy but above the workers. Before the Industrial Revolution, the economy was dominated by agriculture and "it was horsepower,

daylight or the seasons that ruled the countryside” (Gunn, 2000: 53). The world was restricted to the village or town people used to live in - where the families had probably lived for generations, and not surprisingly, the fastest thing on earth was a galloping horse for those people whose horizons were limited only to their hometowns and led an accordingly slow life. In a short period of time, the dynamism of the economy shifted firmly from agriculture to industry and trade. Some regions rapidly industrialised and with the opening of new factories and industrial improvements; gone were the days when work was dictated by natural forces: “steam engines were servant to neither season nor sunshine” (Gunn, 2000: 54). In contrast, foremen, who checked the workers and their performance, were employed in the factories and life became correspondingly more regimented. After these drastic changes took place gradually, rural people migrated to big cities or at least to nearest towns where they could find better jobs. To sum up, while those who were lucky and who could achieve an opportunity owned small enterprises, the others had to work as managers, clerks etc. for the aristocrats or land owners with reasonable wages. However, no matter how difficult the working conditions were, or how long they worked, the people were satisfied with the mere opportunity to work and feed their families.

After the Industrial Revolution, as well as the businessmen, aristocrats and the rich ones, the workers, farmers and the other members of the middle class shared the prosperity of the time. Almost every one benefited from the increasing incomes and economic developments. When the economic troubles of the preceding age vanished, the social stability was achieved. Thanks to these positive developments in economy, there appeared a sense of national security and trust in institutions. The society made up:

“a common moral code based on duty and self-restraint... Institutions like the school, the voluntary organization, the trade-union and, above all the family emphasized the maintenance of those values which held the society together. ” (Briggs, 1955: 3)

In other words, the Victorian society managed to build a society which is not only economically but also socially powerful. Challenging the established privilege and aristocratic corruption, the industrial and urban middle-classes were striving to

establish a society based on moral values, and they wanted to regularize their life around working and self-responsibility within the framework of ethics.

Although Victorian period was characterized by optimism, beneath the surface, it was also the century of paradoxes and uncertainties. Together with all the changes, everything was certainly not perfect during this period. In order to provide the stability of the nation and economy, there appeared certain ambiguities, troubles and fragments. The great rise of the population of the cities created restless individuals who had to make a new start leaving behind their own environments. There appeared new in-between city dwellers that could not leave their rural roots and could not catch up with city life. The exceeding pace of life and changes caused people to feel anxious and isolated. The autonomy of the machines declined the importance of manual works. As Mathew Arnold states, “machinery had added to national wealth, but it was continuing to produce ‘a multitude of miserable, sunken, ignorant human beings’” (qtd. in Briggs, 1955: 5). Especially, on the point of moral values and religious beliefs, the urban people were not guided by the abstract values, as the money was the only thing that they yearned for.

While there were so many changes in the culture, it would be impossible not to see the reflections of these changes in literature. The writers of the period paid attention to the problems in the stable national profile and particularly tried to reflect the problems and contradictions of the century. They became the spokesperson of the society, and as a result, the topics and themes of the novels were usually taken from the real and ordinary lives of middle class people. The main themes were the class distinction, social problems and deep structures of the world. In addition, they included the multiplicity of styles, characters and plots.

Many writers wrote novels, “in which the basic structure of society was discussed in terms of bitter satire” (Tucker, 1999: 18). They attacked the urban degradation. They pointed out the misfortunes of poor families, and how the poor were the victims of factory system for which they left their root. The thousands of women were driven out of their homes in order to work as dressmakers, milliners and screw-makers, but they were low-paid. In addition, they were abused sexually, and either women or men, most of the middle class people were forced to forget

their identity in the middle of industrial areas. Such problems also led the writers to write novels that explored the problems of middle and working class.

The novelists of the Victorian period accepted and presented the newly emerged middle class values, and they also paid great attention to the problems of that class. They were “urged to describe the realities of the everyday world and describe the contents of human nature, which includes the battle of good and bad” (Randle, 1981: 32). The literature of the age was also expected to have an educational purpose. The literary works had to be particularly suitable for people to read and infer messages. On the other hand, there was certainly a hero/heroine as a victim under the hegemony of the values of the age and the disastrous ends of those who do not care about these strict values were depicted in the literary works.

Oscar Wilde (1854 - 1900), just like the protagonist of his famous novel The Picture of Dorian Gray, is among the victims of the strict values of his age. As much as for his genius, he is also known for the details of his private life. Wilde was married to Constance Lloyd, and they had two sons. However, rather than his marriage, he gained a reputation for his relation with a man named Lord Alfred Douglas, the son of Marquis of Queensberry. This relation was accepted as illegal and immoral according to the Victorian values. The reason of this notorious name he gained was that, having a homosexual affair was a serious criminal offense in Victorian society. Victorians did not want anything extreme, unclear or unacceptable for the perfectionist image of society they drew. Laying down the strict rules and moral restrictions, the people of this time period were not ready to confront or tolerate homosexuality; such kinds of relations were against law and social values of the time. Hence, Wilde’s lover’s father, the Marquis of Queensberry, discovered this illegal affair and sued against Wilde. Losing the case, he was sentenced to two years hard labour. However, prison was harmful to Wilde’s health, and it was the beginning of a dramatic downfall for him and he died in 1900.

Under the pressure of the conservative Victorian era, Wilde had to construct two identities; on one hand, he had to obey the rules the society put forward, but on the other hand, he was trying desperately to suppress his homosexual tendencies. His only resource to channel this was through his literary works in which he

implicitly reflected his homosexual lifestyle. The book that gave him an opportunity and his fame was The Picture of Dorian Gray which was written in 1891 during the hard times Wilde lived. This book well reflects Wilde's talent and rich ideas together with the homosexual undertones of its plot. Though the book can be interpreted in several different ways, it seems certain that Wilde himself projected onto his characters mostly the theme of duality, or a double life, as he himself was living. Thus, many parallels, which will be discussed in the following parts, can be drawn between Wilde's own life and Dorian Gray.

The subjects of beauty and morality were prevailing in Victorian art, and Oscar Wilde, with his ideas on art and aesthetics, was an important figure in the realm of art in Victorian literature. Wilde's idea of art was a bit different; in his preface to the novel he explains:

“The nineteenth century dislike of Realism is the rage of Caliban seeing his own face in a glass, the nineteenth century dislike of Romanticism is the rage of Caliban not seeing his own face in a glass.” (5)

Wilde intended to say that the established classic idea that art is the imitation of life, and the dominant romantic idea during the preceding age that art is the reality of the world, had nothing to do with his idea of art. He suggested that “art is disengaged from actual life... by its creation of beauty; art reproaches the world, calling attention to the world's faults” (Elleman, 1982: xxvii). As a proof to his theory of art, he pictures Dorian as a lovely young man who never ages or changes contrary to the natural laws and the real life. As Larson states, “Wilde plays with assumptions about the relation of art and life” (2001: 105) in his novel.

Based mainly on the portrait of a young man in his twenties, the novel depicts Dorian as exceptionally good-looking, and whoever sees him is charmed by his extra ordinary beauty. In the opening scene of the novel, he is introduced to the reader as modelling for Basil Hallward, a shy, dull and conservative painter, who adores Dorian's beauty. Basil's trance-like painting is interrupted by Lord Henry Wotton's arrival - an idle aristocrat, who is characterized by his flamboyant personality and outrageous wit. Unwillingly, Basil introduces Dorian to Lord Henry, and from that moment on, Dorian leads a very different life. Lord Henry makes a

great influence with his extra ordinary ideas on Dorian. The unaware young boy at the beginning of the novel is startled by Lord Henry's philosophy, and he cannot save himself being exposed to Lord Henry's manipulations all through his life. Just like a poison spreads through the cells, corrupted by Lord Henry's ideas, Dorian lives a life which, day by day becomes wicked than ever. He turns out to be a selfish, cruel pleasure seeker who cares about nobody, but himself. Since Lord Henry is a high-brow aristocrat, Dorian was also introduced to the very influential and rich people in his town. These people of high status, which are harshly criticized throughout the novel, has a very different life from those of middle class people. These people are depicted as holding parties, joining luxurious gatherings, and exploring insincere, hypocritical behaviours throughout the novel. They judge people much upon their appearance and status, wealth is "a certain element of security" (164) in the novel. If a person is both rich and fascinating, nobody believes to the detriment of that person, and this is what the main theme of the novel is based on: how much a person's appearance, or stating it in a different way; a person's body represents the real self of a person. Taking Dorian's unchanged body that challenged the years as the starting point, the rest of this chapter aims at discussing the relationship between his body and soul; the relationship between the portrait of Dorian Gray and the real Dorian Gray who exists in the real world.

The novel is based on the concept of beauty, and it questions to what extent the physical beauty presents the goodness of the soul. At the beginning of the novel, Dorian is depicted as such a beautiful young man that anyone who saw him admires his beauty:

"He was certainly wonderfully handsome, with his finely curved scarlet lips, his frank blue eyes, his crisp gold hair. There was something in his face that made one trust him at once. All the candour of youth was there, as well as all youth's passionate purity. One felt that he had kept himself unspotted from the world." (23)

Having seen such an extraordinary beauty, people think that Dorian's beauty is the guarantee of his good personality. In other words, nobody expects him to do bad things. While the criteria of people of his time were mainly based upon appearance, the young innocent boy is unaware of both his own beauty and how significant the physical appearance for the role he has in the society. Until he meets Lord Henry

Wotton, the visible beauty of Dorian is of little importance for him. As Lord Henry also asserts after they spend some time together, “Dorian, you will always be fond of me. I represent to you all the sins you have never had the courage to commit” (95). Lord Henry’s words about the realities of life are striking for Dorian. In a very short period of time, he remains heavily under the influence of this Hedonist upper class man; as he himself tells Lord Henry: “you have a curious influence over me” (59). His philosophy turns out to be the leading force that determines Dorian’s every deed in his life. According to Lord Henry, the aim of life is to take pleasure as much as one can. Among these pleasures, the beauty is at the first rank:

“To me, beauty is the wonder of wonders. It is only shallow people who do not judge by appearances. The true mystery of the world is the visible, not the invisible....” (30)

His Hedonist approach to life is something Dorian has never thought of. That is why they have a great impact on his view of life. Dorian admiringly defines Lord Henry as a person who “spends his days in saying what is incredible and his evenings in doing what is improbable. Just the sort of life I would like to lead” (135). Basil Hallward is aware of Dorian’s innocent nature and warns Lord Henry that “he has a simple and a beautiful nature. ... Don’t spoil him. Don’t try to influence him. Your influence would be bad” (21). As Foucault claims, the identity is “permanently inscribed by power relations and discourse” (qtd. in Grosz, 1994: 146). What the people living in a society believe, more or less, affects the other members of the same society. In this context Lord Henry is the one who has the same influence of a society on a person for Dorian Gray. Lord Henry is a typical upper class man whose ideas have been “poisonous” (91) as Dorian refers him later on. He is depicted as a vain, egoistic man who leads his life as a pleasure seeker. As the spokesperson of his society, he is the one who makes Dorian aware of his beauty, youth and the temporality of them:

“You have the most marvellous YOUTH, and youth is the one thing worth having... you don’t feel it now. Some day, when you are old and wrinkled and ugly, when thought has seared your forehead with its lines, and passion branded your lips with its hideous fires, you will feel it, you will feel it terribly.... Yes, Mr. Gray, the gods have been good to you. But what the gods give they quickly take away. You have only a few years in which to live really, perfectly, and fully. When your youth goes, your beauty will go with it, and then you will suddenly discover that there are no

triumphs left for you, or have to content yourself with those mean triumphs that the memory of your past will make more bitter than defeats. Every month as it wanes brings you nearer to something dreadful. Time is jealous of you, and wars against your lilies and your roses. You will become sallow, and hollow-cheeked, and dull-eyed. You will suffer horribly.... Ah! Realize your youth while you have it. Don't squander the gold of your days....Live! Live the wonderful life that is in you!" (29)

Among the philosophers who dealt with body-mind problem, Descartes was perhaps the first to suggest that the physical existing body and the spirit are the two different realms. He proposed that these concepts should be treated in a different way; he answers our basic question on "the nature and relation of mind and body using the basic assumption that minds and bodies are irreducibly different in nature" (Wilkinson, 2000: 12). Plotinus revised his idea and claimed that although "the person is a composite of soul and body" (Miles, 1999: 35), the soul is not necessarily reflected on body. According to him, soul is "the real being... prior to bodies and stronger than they are" (Miles, 1999: 58). Although everyone agrees that each individual has a body and soul, their relation has been a controversial issue throughout ages.

In Victorian age, it was widely believed that you could see a man's character on his face. In other words, people used to believe that both the beauty and ugliness of one's soul were reflected on his/her physical appearance. As Lord Henry puts forward in the novel: "if a wretched man has a vice, it shows itself in the lines of his mouth, the droop of his eyelids, the moulding of his hands" (172). The Victorian people thought that there was a harmonious relation between body and soul. However, as mentioned before, Oscar Wilde was not the man of his time and contrary to this belief, he draws the character of Dorian as leading a life of duplicity; there is Dorian's physical beauty that represents the body, and there is the portrait of Dorian that represents his soul.

The moment when Dorian experiences the division of soul and body occurs at the beginning of the novel, when Dorian sees the portrait, he laments that it will be he, who will get older, not the portrait, and he exclaims that if he can have eternal beauty like the portrait, he will give his very soul. As a result of his wish, Dorian's body and soul are split up:

“How sad it is! 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! For that--for that--I would give everything! Yes, there is nothing in the whole world I would not give! I would give my soul for that!” (34)

At that very moment, although Dorian is unaware of this fact, the picture has been transformed into Dorian’s conscience. There have not been any observable changes on the portrait yet, but the changes can obviously be seen on Dorian’s personality; he grasps Lord Henry’s ideas on beauty and youth quickly, and utters “youth is the only thing worth having. This picture has taught me that” (34). Later on, the innocent, naïve Dorian starts to feel deeply the regret of losing his beauty:

“I am jealous of the portrait you have painted of me. Why should it keep what I must lose? Every moment that passes takes something from me and gives something to it. Oh, if it were only the other way! If the picture could change, and I could be always what I am now! Why did you paint it? It will mock me some day--mock me horribly!” (35)

Dorian asserts that the portrait will mock him one day, as if he feels the upcoming events. Such drastic changes would take place on the young, innocent boy’s personality that he would lead a wicked life; a life that would turn him to an evil. At the same time, the portrait would be like a conscience for him. As he states in his final hours:

“Once it had given him pleasure to watch it changing and growing old. Of late he had felt no such pleasure. It had kept him awake at night. When he had been away, he had been filled with terror lest other eyes should look upon it. It had brought melancholy across his passions. Its mere memory had marred many moments of joy. It had been like conscience to him. Yes, it had been conscience.” (255)

Day after day, Dorian notices that his wish to remain young and the portrait’s deformation instead of him chases him like a nightmare. When he sees the first physical changes on the portrait, after the death of Sibyl Vane, the girl who committed suicide after she was scorned by Dorian, he is startled:

“In the dim arrested light that struggled through the cream-coloured silk blinds, the face appeared 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 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.” (105)

He realizes that after that time, there will be a Dorian who is seen by the others and the other Dorian who has to be kept away from people. The physical affects of sin will be manifested onto the portrait instead of Dorian’s very own life. In other words, it will be the public, physical Dorian that actually commits the immoral acts, and it will be the private and the soul of Dorian that is corrupted. Therefore, in addition to the double life Dorian lives in himself, namely; living in the real world Dorian and the portrait of Dorian, the dual selves of Dorian also start to show themselves in the forms of public and private Dorian. As Hussey states body is something both “that through which we experience the world immediately and that by which we are experienced (initially) in the world by others” (1986: 3). Similarly, it is Dorian’s beauty that wears the mask of goodness in public, but the portrait is the one that bears the burden of his sins: “for every sin that he committed, a stain would fleck and wreck its fairness...” (107), “what the worm was to the corpse, his sins would be to the painted image on the canvas” (138).

In fact, before Dorian learns the reality about the portrait, Basil who also foresees Lord Henry’s bad influence on him again notices the division of Dorian’s self. When Dorian and Lord Henry asks him to go out with them he refuses: “‘I shall stay with the *real* Dorian,’ he says, sadly” (38), referring to the painting rather than the flesh-and-blood Dorian who stands before him. Thus, Wilde’s aim of emphasizing the duplicity Dorian experiences has clearly been mentioned by one of the characters in the novel.

After the day Dorian Gray met Lord Henry, his personality is exposed to drastic changes. Basil Hallward attempts desperately to keep Dorian away from Lord Henry, “he felt that Dorian Gray would never again be to him all that he had been in the past. Life had come between them....” (95). In fact, rather than life itself, it is Lord Henry and his ideas about life that spoil Dorian and his relation to Basil. Lord Henry is aware of the changes he has caused on Dorian’s personality, and he wants even more to dominate his soul:

“How different he was now from the shy frightened boy he had met in Basil Hallward’s studio! His nature had developed like a flower, had borne blossoms of scarlet flame. Out of its secret hiding-place had crept his soul, and desire had come to meet it on the way... He would try to be to Dorian Gray what, without knowing it, the lad was to the painter who had fashioned the wonderful portrait. He would seek to dominate him--had already, indeed, half done so. He would make that wonderful spirit his own.” (66)

Lord Henry’s desire to dominate Dorian’s soul can implicitly be associated with homosexuality. Dorian Gray’s character and also the dual object of his portrait also illustrate this division between the queer and the straight aspects of his identity. This division or the double life is led by many homosexuals. As Butler states, “since the production of nature operates in accord with the dictates of compulsory heterosexuality, the emergence of homosexual desire transcends the categories of sex (1990: 26). In accordance with this idea, since many societies do not welcome their relations, in order to find a place in their societies, the homosexuals have to construct two selves; one is private, and the other is public. As Foucault suggests, “the category of sex and of identity generally are the effect and instrument of a regulatory sexual regime” (1990: 101). Similarly, being aware of the fact that the Victorian society scorns homosexuality, Wilde does not report that Basil and Lord Henry have sexual feelings for Dorian, but he uses a language which shows deep, romantic intimacy to describe their devotion for Dorian. In other words, although it is not clearly stated that they have homosexual tendencies for Dorian, Basil and Henry’s language is full of such connotations. For instance, what Basil says about him when speaking of the moment he saw Dorian for the first time is the reminiscent of one’s feelings upon love at first sight:

“I turned...and saw Dorian Gray for the first time. When our eyes met, I felt that I was growing pale...A curious sensation...came over me. I knew that I had come face to face with some one whose mere personality was so fascinating that, if I allowed it to do so, it would absorb my whole nature, my whole soul, my very art itself... To have in it all the passion of the romantic spirit, all the perfection of the spirit...The harmony of soul and body-- how much that is!” (13)

In Basil’s terms, the soul can be accepted as a reference to Basil himself, and the body part belongs to Dorian. The most evident thing about Dorian is the unspoiled beauty of his body, and the thing that reveals the true nature of one’s self seems to be Basil; the part that functions like a “conscience” (255) as Dorian also admits. While Lord Henry takes the role of tempter who constantly tries to lead Dorian

astray, Basil tries to tame the unusual and extreme desires of Dorian. Just like the picture he painted, he is also the conscience, the one who tries to make the bitter realities clearer for Dorian. This idea is also proved by Oscar Wilde himself; at the end of the novel, Dorian both kills Basil and tries to destroy the painting in order to get rid of the only two things that remind him of the evil life he leads.

Basil's work of art is created as a result of his adoration for Dorian. His desire to protect him from Lord Henry and all the other people show to what extent he is fond of Dorian. His final confession of his true feelings for him is also unmistakably homoerotic:

“Dorian, from the moment I met you, your personality had the most extraordinary influence over me. I was dominated, soul, brain, and power, by you. You became to me the visible incarnation of that unseen ideal whose memory haunts us artists like an exquisite dream. I worshipped you. I grew jealous of every one to whom you spoke. I wanted to have you all to myself. I was only happy when I was with you. When you were away from me, you were still present in my art....It is quite true that I have worshipped you with far more romance of feeling than a man usually gives to a friend. Somehow, I had never loved a woman. . . . Well, from the moment I met you, your personality had the most extraordinary influence over me. I quite admit that I adored you madly, extravagantly, absurdly. I was jealous of every one to whom you spoke. I wanted to have you all to myself. I was only happy when I was with you. When I was away from you, you were still present in my art. It was all wrong and foolish. It is all wrong and foolish still. Of course I never let you know anything about this. It would have been impossible. You would not have understood it; I did not understand it myself.” (232-33)

Another homoerotic implication can be alluded to Basil's accusation of Dorian for having lived a wicked life. Basil questions Dorian in a manner that suggests that Dorian's relationships with other men may also be homoerotic. He asks “Why is your friendship so fatal to young men?” (172). Furthermore, Basil proceeds to talk about the men whose lives have been ruined after having relation with Dorian. Some have lost their lives; some have had reputations devastated after their friendship with Dorian Gray. It may be questioned here what Dorian might have done to sully the reputations of so many men if it were not homosexual in nature and why he is so notorious for corrupting every one with whom he becomes intimate. The answers to these questions seem to be the homosexual relations of the characters. In accordance with the accusations Basil makes for Dorian, Wilde was also seen as dangerous. After he published his novel, *The Daily Chronicle* of 30 June 1890 suggested that Wilde's novel contained “one element...which will taint

every young mind that comes in contact with it.” This element certainly is the homosexual tendencies of the writer of the novel together with his characters.

The Picture of Dorian Gray is also considered by many to be an autobiography of Oscar Wilde. The novel can be accepted as acting as a window to allow the reader into Wilde’s life, and to be able to discover the hidden homosexuality and tragedy of his life. Wilde explained in his Preface to the book that “Basil Hallward is what I think I am: Lord Henry what the world thinks of me: Dorian what I would like to be- in other ages perhaps” (Intro: 10). Many parallels can be drawn from the novel with Wilde’s real life. As soon as the reader opens the book, he/she is struck by the intense love that Basil feels for Dorian. Similarly, in one of the letters Wilde wrote to Lord Alfred Douglas he said, “I can’t live without you”, and “you are the atmosphere of beauty through which I see life. You are the incarnation of all lovely things” (Holland, 2000: 358-363). Thus, Basil’s love is the same feeling that Wilde felt for Douglas, his forbidden lover. It can be clearly inferred that he imagined himself as Basil, because he thought himself as having a good personality and a moral side like Basil; however, he was absorbed by Douglas just as Basil cannot resist his feelings for Dorian. This man had the same hold on Wilde that Dorian has on Basil. Dorian ends up destroying Basil’s talent of art in the same way that Douglas ruined Wilde’s talent of writing. After Dorian discarded Basil, Basil can no longer paint masterpieces. Similarly, as soon as Wilde went to jail and left Douglas, his writing suffered greatly. Wilde also wished to be like Dorian, because, apart from the tragedy Dorian goes through at the end of the novel, Dorian leads the life Wilde wanted to lead. His wealth and beauty has been the keys for the unconditioned independence he has. Under the pressure of Victorian age, Wilde had to suppress his feelings. The phrase “in other ages perhaps” is a bitter satire for the conditions of Victorian society he lived in. In fact he wanted to take the pleasure of everything:

“... I wanted to eat the fruit of all the trees in the garden of the world, and that I was going out into the world with that passion in my soul. ... My only mistake was that I confined myself so exclusively to the trees of what seemed to me the sun gilt side of the garden, and shunned the other side for its shadow and its gloom. ” (Wilde, 1905: 3)

Oscar Wilde's desire "to eat the fruit of all the trees" and his reference to the world as a garden, can be alluded to the famous image of "Garden of Eden". In this well-known myth, Adam and Eve are thrown out of the Garden of Eden by God after they have eaten the forbidden apple. Although they are warned about it, they cannot resist their curiosity and eat the apple from the tree accepted as *the tree of knowledge*. Throughout ages, this theme has been used in many literary works. It is believed that the fall of Adam and Eve is the beginning of people's thirst for knowledge and experience. Wilde also utters a similar wish, and he also desires a forbidden thing. However, in this quotation our main focus is on his demand about his own life. Wilde, as mentioned before, had homosexual tendencies which are not welcomed in the society he lived in. Besides, he was aware of the hypocrisy, immodesty, and welfare of the rich people around him, but at the same time the people of his time were strictly bound to the moral values. Thus, he felt a strong pressure on himself and his life. What he wanted was to enjoy all the facilities of life presented to him. Regardless of all the restrictions, he had the passion of experiencing everything. In the novel, Lord Henry is the one who presents his desires.

Wilde explained that the society thought of him as Lord Henry because, as it was already stated, Victorian people frowned at the extremes, and Wilde was thought as dangerous for the young, innocent people who would read the book just because of the influence it might have on the other people. Just like Dorian's innocence is corrupted by Lord Henry's evil influence, he was believed to corrupt the reader with the book. In addition to the society's ideas, in Wilde's own life, Lord Henry can also be seen as Douglas and Dorian as Wilde himself; Wilde was relatively innocent before being introduced to the corruptive seduction of Douglas' nature. After the two met, Wilde's life and conscience were utterly destroyed by Douglas in the same way that Lord Henry has destroyed Dorian's life. Douglas seduced Wilde into a crazy style of living in the same way as Lord Henry's influence on Dorian to abandon all moral consideration. By the end of the novel, despite all the disasters Dorian encounters, Lord Henry remains unchanged. He feels no regret for having corrupted the purity that once existed in Dorian, and for having destroyed his life. In Wilde's own life, Douglas also remained unchanged. Dorian

dies as a bitter man, and this was perhaps the same way Wilde felt at the end of his lifetime.

Throughout the novel, Lord Henry tries to affect and seduce Dorian through his endless and shocking epigrams and manipulates him to follow a path only to fulfill his pleasure:

“Be always searching for new sensations. Be afraid of nothing.... A new hedonism--that is what our century wants. You might be its visible symbol. With your personality there is nothing you could not do. The world belongs to you for a season.... For there is such a little time that your youth will last--such a little time... We never get back our youth. The pulse of joy that beats in us at twenty becomes sluggish. Our limbs fail, our senses rot. We degenerate into hideous puppets, haunted by the memory of the passions of which we were too much afraid, and the exquisite temptations that we had not the courage to yield to. Youth! Youth! There is absolutely nothing in the world but youth!” (31)

He constantly tells Dorian that people should not be afraid of their own desires and impulses. He is both the spokesperson of his time and a rebellious figure that encourages Dorian to take pleasure from life no matter what the price is. He says that it is better to experience everything the world offers than to spend time worrying about ethics or morals since his beauty and youth will not belong to him forever. His main point is that Dorian should live a life regardless of all the social, moral and legal laws and do whatever he wants for his self fulfillment.

On his attempts to dominate Dorian Gray, Lord Henry has also ideas on the relationship between body and soul. Despite his unusual ideas, he is aware of the fact that a person's soul and body feed each other:

“Soul and body, body and soul--how mysterious they were! There was animalism in the soul, and the body had its moments of spirituality. The senses could refine, and the intellect could degrade. Who could say where the fleshly impulse ceased, or the psychical impulse began? How shallow were the arbitrary definitions of ordinary psychologists! And yet how difficult to decide between the claims of the various schools! Was the soul a shadow seated in the house of sin? Or was the body really in the soul...? The separation of spirit from matter was a mystery, and the union of spirit with matter was a mystery also.” (70)

Lord Henry's ideas suggest that although the relationship between body and soul is mysterious, it is clear that they are integrated in each other. Parallel with this idea, Plotinus argues that "the person is a composite of soul and body" (qtd in Miles, 1999: 35), and neither body nor soul can exist without one another; the soul needs body to be in this world and soul is the drive that gives life to body. As Lord Henry states in one of his epigrams about this relation, "nothing can cure the soul but the senses, just as nothing can cure the senses but the soul.... that is one of the great secrets of life" (28). In other words, the body is "soul's instrument or tool" (Miles, 1999: 58), and soul is the real part that bears one's personality. The thing that differentiates the two is that body is widely accepted as biologically degradable, it is "in a state of evident and perpetual change, growing and diminishing, 'dissolving' and 'wasting away'" (Ibid: 68). However, the soul is believed to migrate through bodies: "many religions include the doctrine that it can and do live on, in some way, after the death of the body, and for that to be true minds have to be very unlike bodies" (Wilkinson, 2000: 12). It is assumed that although bodies stop their function after death, souls go on living in the world after they quit the bodies. In some societies this idea goes even one step further, and some preparations are made for the dead people: they build special places and find ways like mummifying to protect the dead bodies in order to prevent them from decaying. While the body and soul are bound to each other in the physical world, they are believed to be separated in the afterlife, and these preparations are aimed as a way to keep the body and soul together. In the novel, this idea is reversed by the fact that Dorian's body and soul are separated in the physical world unlike the other human beings. After he stabs the portrait, in other words, stabs his own soul, his soul and body are reunited.

Although it seems anachronistic, the poststructuralist idea of signifier-signified relationship should be mentioned in order to clarify the relationship between body and soul. If we take into consideration the above mentioned body and soul relationship and apply it to the modern world: "a signifier is the form or medium of signs, for example a sound, an image, and the marks that form a word on the page. The signified is understood in terms of concepts and meanings" (Hawkes, 1997: 26). In this context, body is the signifier, the medium through which meaning is transferred to the other people, and signified is the soul, the agent that gives meaning. Contrary to the suggested signifier-signified and body-soul relationship,

just like poststructuralist thinkers, Wilde sets Dorian's body and soul; namely, the portrait and the flesh-blood Dorian in a different way. The signifier does not have the fixed, standard relation with the signified in his novel. In other words, it is the portrait of Dorian that "grows old, and the face on the canvas bears the burden of his passions and his sins; that the painted image might be seared with the lines of suffering and thought" (106). However, Dorian's real body "remains young..., his beauty might be "untarnished..., keep all the delicate bloom and loveliness of his then just conscious boyhood" (106). Contrary to the laws of nature, Dorian has the eternal beauty and youth just like the infinite souls, but the portrait grows old and is deformed just like the degradable biological body.

Upon seeing the portrait Dorian Gray points at the portrait, Basil Hallward painted of him, and says that it will be a guide to him through life: "here was a visible symbol of the degradation of sin. Here was an ever-present sign of the ruin men brought upon their souls" (112). Asserting the idea that soul is affected by everything the physical body does, Dorian depicts the portrait as the representation of a person's self:

"He would be able to follow his mind into its secret places. This portrait would be to him the most magical of mirrors. As it had revealed to him his own body, so it would reveal to him his own soul." (124)

Had he led a good life, his soul would not suffer; or as it can be seen in the novel, the portrait would not have "the hideous lines that seared the wrinkling forehead or crawled around the heavy sensual mouth..., the signs of sin or the signs of age" (148), or it would not be so ugly.

Dorian Gray, knowing that the passage of time can do nothing to his beauty, wants to enjoy this gift and tries his hand on many things; he attempts to taste all the varieties of life and finds a number of interests:

He studied perfumes (153), . . . devoted himself entirely to music (153), . . . took up the study of the jewels (156), . . . turned his attention to embroideries (158), . . . and sought to accumulate the most exquisite specimens (160) . . . All these things "were to be to him means of forgetfulness, modes by which he could escape, for a season,

from the fear that seemed to him at times to be almost too great to be borne. The portrait showed him the real degradation of his life. (161)

After a long period led by endless pleasures, Dorian starts to feel a kind of regret. As it has been in Basil's accusation to Lord Henry: "if one lives merely for one's self, Harry, one pays a terrible price for doing so" (92). Basil's words remind the reader of the well-known narcissus myth; a mythical character whose soul is tempted by beauty, it is "so captivated by the charms of corporeal beauty that it neglects its own beauty, and forgetting itself, runs after the beauty of the body, which is a mere shadow of its own beauty" (Bruhm, 2000: 37). This pursuit gives way to his tragic fate. Narcissus sees his reflection on water and admires his extraordinary beauty to such an extent that he falls into the pond while looking at his own reflection and dies. Likewise, all the things, which once had the greatest importance for Dorian, makes up the tragic end of his life. He pays the price of his endless desires and pleasures. Unlike the future he dreamt of, the youth and beauty he longed for destroys his life:

"It was his beauty that had ruined him, his beauty and the youth that he had prayed for. But for those two things, his life might have been free from stain. His beauty had been to him but a mask, his youth but a mockery. What was youth at best? A green, an unripe time, a time of shallow moods, and sickly thoughts. Why had he worn its livery? Youth had spoiled him." (252)

Once the only reality was his beauty; under the influence of Lord Henry's ideas, he has adapted himself to the superficial values of the upper class people around him. While the portrait of Dorian, the private part of him, remains in a locked room and deteriorated; the public Dorian, who guarantees his place in the society with his beauty, enjoys his life:

"Not one blossom of his loveliness would ever fade. Not one pulse of his life would ever weaken. Like the gods of the Greeks, he would be strong, and fleet, and joyous. What did it matter what happened to the coloured image on the canvas? He would be safe. That was everything." (124)

The only things that make Dorian busy have been the parties, joining luxurious gatherings, and spending time with the insincere, hypocritical people of upper class. He is so absorbed by this style of living and so pleased to use the facilities his

beauty presents him that, he completely forgets or wants to forget that the real life is not in fact ordered, full of beauty, luxurious, and pleasant as he thinks:

“Ugliness that had once been hateful to him because it made things real, became dear to him now for that very reason. Ugliness was the one reality. The coarse brawl, the loathsome den, the crude violence of disordered life, the very vileness of thief and outcast, were more vivid, in their intense actuality of impression, than all the gracious shapes of art, the dreamy shadows of song. They were what he needed for forgetfulness.” (214)

Contrary to Dorian’s excessive interest in his bodily features, Plotinus suggests that the real beauty is beyond the physical existence. He argues that “the identification with soul is the most effective and trustworthy way to see the startling beauty of bodies and of the natural and social worlds” (qtd. in Miles, 1999: 25). According to Plotinus, “beauties of body are as nothing to the beauties of the soul” (Ibid: 37). He perceives the soul as higher in rank than the body and suggests that people should go on to the beauties beyond seen by the eye of the mind rather than the bodily eye:

“Bodily beauties come to us; they ‘sally forth.’ But we must, with considerable effort, ‘go on up’ to the invisible beauties. The more beautiful one’s own soul is, the more readily it relates to the beauty in sensible objects.” (Ibid: 40)

In the light of the foregoing ideas of Plotinus, it seems impossible for Dorian to achieve the form of beauty Plotinus offers. Since he only perceives the physical beauty, he cannot see the real beauty beneath the surface; in other words, since Dorian is so busy with his body, it is impossible for him to discover the real side of his soul. When he realized the truth at the end of the novel, it is too late for him. Despite some of his philanthropic attempts, there appears no change on the canvas. While talking to Basil he even confesses, “no one is more ready than I am to acknowledge that it is better to be good than to be ugly” (228).

During the time of terror and regret as a result of so many wicked things he has committed, he questions his life, as a kind of his life’s summary, he wonders:

“Was it really true that one could never change? He felt a wild longing for the unstained purity of his boyhood--his rose-white boyhood, as Lord Henry had once called it. He knew that he had tarnished himself, filled his mind with corruption and given horror to his fancy; that he had been an evil influence to others, and had

experienced a terrible joy in being so; and that of the lives that had crossed his own, it had been the fairest and the most full of promise that he had brought to shame. But was it all irretrievable? Was there no hope for him?" (251)

Dorian has such a strong faith in his beauty that he has never thought that one day he might regret for everything. The people around him treat him as a symbol of goodness, and everybody tells him that he is "made to be good" (206). He joins a party just after he murdered Basil. However:

"no one looking at Dorian Gray that night could have believed that he had passed through a tragedy as horrible as any tragedy of our age. Those finely shaped fingers could never have clutched a knife for sin." (201)

Through the end of the novel Dorian is haunted by these lines from Hamlet: "Like the painting of a sorrow, / A face without a heart" (215). These are Claudius's words to Laertes, designed to spur him to revenge by charging him with insincere and inadequate grief for his father, and they are of course ironic since Claudius himself is capable of only the show of sorrow. Like Claudius, Dorian is in a lie, a kind of simulation; he wears a mask, his real flesh and blood face hides the true face he already has. "Unlike a natural face, Dorian's face was inexpressive of the pain he felt, and he was therefore emotionally isolated from others" (Larson, 2001: 111). The portrait, meanwhile, lives and vividly goes on registering his heartlessness. Dorian's life becomes a painting, and though he formulates a second wish - to be good - he can never achieve this aspiration.

In addition to the duplicity of Claudius, another literary figure which Dorian has frequently been associated is the famous character of Christopher Marlowe, Dr. Faustus and his tragedy. Wilde himself admitted that he constructed his novel on the notion of a "young man selling his soul in exchange for eternal youth", and it was an "idea that is old in the history of literature, but to which I have given a new form" (Holland, 2000: 435). The two protagonists, Dorian and Faustus, have similar personalities in that both are naïve at the beginning and end up their lives as evil characters who lost their souls. Faustus sells his soul to the devil in exchange for knowledge and power; likewise, Dorian pays for the eternal beauty he wished with his soul.

What is similar about the two characters is that they both construct two identities. The identity of Faustus as a sophisticated but ordinary man, who is greedy of knowledge, is the public version of his divided self; however, using the magical powers he hides his real identity from the others. Owing to the pact he signed with the devil, Faustus, in private, has the potential to have everything he wanted. Dorian also experiences the same division of public and private self, and for him, the thing that helps him to cover his real self is his beauty. Thanks to their special gifts, they both can lead a double life. However, in their lives, despite the extraordinary features they both have, they turn out to be mediocre or even evil characters in search for even more than they gained.

While the Faustus legend raises the question of eternal damnation, it is the theme Wilde uses to prove that Dorian's beauty is in fact a kind of punishment that destroys all his life. The two characters have gifts that others admire, yet they are both dissatisfied with the way they conduct their lives. In their quests for happiness, they both become vulnerable and open to the influence of others. The hedonist, Lord Henry is very influential on Dorian; he says, "The only way to get rid of a temptation is to yield to it" (18). Similar to him, Mephistopheles shows Faustus the hidden secrets of life and leads him astray. Faustus gains everything he wants through magic, and beauty is the thing that enables Dorian to lead the life he longed for. Although both characters live the moments of regret, they cannot save themselves, and repent. They both have disastrous ends: Faustus spends his last hours in deep penitence, but could do nothing to save himself, and Dorian, trying to get rid of the portrait, kills himself.

After he killed Basil, the painter of "the dreadful thing" (138) - as Dorian himself describes the portrait; trying to get rid of the only witness of his real life, he unconsciously kills himself. There stands only one bit of evidence left against him; "the picture itself--that was evidence, he would destroy it!" (255). He believes that if he destroys the painting, all the things will be over:

"As he had killed the painter, so he would kill the painter's work, and all that that meant. It would kill the past, and when that was dead, he would be free. It would kill this monstrous soul-life, and without its hideous warnings, he would be at peace." (255)

After he stabs the portrait with the same knife he murdered its painter, Dorian's body and soul have become one, and everything has changed the way it has to be. When the servants enter the secret room in the attic, there stands:

“hanging upon the wall a splendid portrait of Dorian as they had last seen him, in all the wonder of his exquisite youth and beauty. Lying on the floor was a dead man, in evening dress, with a knife in his heart. He was withered, wrinkled, and loathsome of visage.” (256)

Dorian, unaware of the fact that the portrait functions as his real self, attempts to put an end to the uneasiness he has been living for a long time. His aim was to get rid of his conscience, but he cannot estimate that since the soul is the living force of human beings, if a person's soul leaves his/her body, he/she cannot keep on being alive. Consequently, when destroying the portrait, bearing all the burden of his life, Dorian in fact destroys his real self. At the end of the novel, the beauty of the young man has been replaced by the old, ugly figure in the portrait. During his life time, what Dorian fears most is to be ugly; whereas, when he died he has the most awesome appearance ever.

What determined Dorian's place in the society is the beauty of his body. John Hassard and Ruth Holliday have a similar story of a very beautiful woman, who faces the same situation with Dorian; the beauty of her skin also precedes her real self. Although quite ordinary in other respects, “the surface of her body had a luster like polished stone, a color as deep as still water, a texture of satin silk. This one feature was so beautiful that people re-named her the ‘skin –woman’ in honor of this attribute” (2001: 40). The society, as it was for the Victorian people values her with her skin. “Even if you are more than a skin, surely your skin is your most important part. That is how you are known” (Ibid: 41) people tell her. Sometimes people even ask, “Isn't it hard to have all your worldly achievements sucked up by your skin?” (2001: 41). She always gives the same answer, ‘my life is full and useful, despite my skin’ (Ibid: 41). However, what differentiates the skin-woman from Dorian is that while she struggles against the prejudices of her society and tries to have a useful, good life; Dorian's character is dissolved within his society. Despite all the endeavors of skin-woman, the reactions have been the same, unchanged; “however hard you work, whatever else you do, your name is in your

covering, not your actions” (2001: 41). While the others live in the world as social beings, the two protagonists are just reduced to one dimension; no more than a picture. Again, while the other people take their names from what they do, Dorian and skin-woman are no more than what others see. When she dies at the end of the story, and loses her wondrous skin and the beauty, which is the main determinant of her name and her place in other people’s eyes, the reader is left with the question to what extent the personality of skin woman might be seen through the physical appearance of her body.

This chapter focuses on the relationship between soul and body, and this relation has been discussed through the character of Dorian Gray. The argument of the chapter is based on the beauty of Dorian’s body and what the real determinant of one’s self is. Contrary to the common idea that the physical appearance is the demonstration of soul, through the extraordinary nature of the portrait, it can be concluded from the things Dorian has experienced in the novel that; the body cannot be a thing in itself and subsume its owner and the real characteristic of him. What makes a person a whole is the composite of soul and body. As can clearly be seen in the novel, if the harmony of soul and body is spoiled, it results in two different identities in the forms of individual and public. This part of the thesis has aimed at studying this relationship through Oscar Wilde’s famous novel The Picture of Dorian Gray, and the following part will focus on Hanif Kureishi’s novella The Body so as to look into the subject in detail and reach more precise answers.

CHAPTER III
THE INDIVIDIAL AND SOCIAL BODY IN THE BODY

“After a bit you realize there’s only one invaluable commodity. Not gold or love, but time. Who hasn’t asked: why can’t I be someone else? Who really wouldn’t want to live again, given the chance?”

(Hanif Kureishi, 2003: 13)

Whoever these questions in the above quotation are asked, the answer is clear. In the present day society, which is mainly based on technology, the longevity and quality of human beings’ lives have reached a turning point of finding ways to remain young forever. Since the governing principle of modern societies and one’s relationship with the others especially depend upon the concepts of beauty, youth and desire; the usual clichés that depict the elderly as wise and respected people are apt to be replaced by the young, beautiful, energetic ones. The main reason behind this idea is that the old people are accepted as weary and often unhealthy, so they cannot be expected to be active agents in a society, and are therefore cast aside. However, the young people have the necessary health, energy and potential for the future. The experiences of old people of course cannot be left out. Therefore, in order to reach an ideal, the two must be combined; a young body with an experienced mind. Hanif Kureishi, in his short novella, The Body, sets up this ideal and tells the story of an aging writer and playwright who is offered the chance to inhabit a new, healthy, young body. Adam, the protagonist of the novel, will be able to do all the things that young people enjoy doing but with the benefit of all the knowledge and experience he has stored up during the years. Kureishi’s novel evokes the present subject of this thesis; dualism between flesh and spirit, body and mind. This chapter aims at exploring these dualities together with their effects on the individual and social self. Following an introductory part that will focus on the concepts of beauty and youth, and the importance of these terms in modern people’s lives, a brief summary of the novel will be made. This chapter will deal with the above mentioned dualities in detail with quotations from the novel.

Throughout ages, youth and beauty have always been desired by all human beings. However, it was the Ancient Greeks that gave probably the greatest importance to these concepts. From architecture to sport, from daily life to social

values and many other fields, beauty was very influential for Ancient Greeks. They either held beauty contests, or presented the various beauties as altars to their gods. The goddess of beauty, Aphrodite, belongs to Greek Mythology. The Greeks were the ones who even had the greatest wars in history for the sake of a beautiful woman. The idea of beauty was so prevailing in Ancient Greece that old age was perceived as a punishment or a fate like disease or poverty. The old and ugly people were drawn as wicked or dangerous characters. That is why the beauty and youth meant more than physical appearance; they also connoted innocence, morality and goodness. “Youth, represented by a youthful body, is good; old age, represented by the aging body, is bad” as suggested by Kathleen Woodward (1991: 7), was a common idea for most of the people at the time. The same idea was strengthened by the development of a strong religious conscience in the middle ages: “old age represented the body and sinfulness and youth represented the soul and salvation” (Troyansky, 1992: 41). Although the ageing body has never been a source of pride, it was during and after the Industrial Revolution that old age was regarded with the most negative sides. The accelerated technology and development, which became the ground figure of the industrial and capitalist societies, lead the people to see the old ones as a source of problem; because these people not only needed special care but they were also unable to be part of the productive working. Since the main criteria were the practicality and productiveness, “the worker was idealized as a rational, mechanical element in an organizational machine” (Hassard, 2001: 117). However, the old people could neither catch up with the pace of life, nor be integrated into the harsh conditions and long working hours. As one of the characters from the novel states, nobody “wants a lot of Oldbodies hanging about the world? They’re ugly and expensive to maintain. Soon they’ll be irrelevant” (103). In modern civilization, in addition to the technological developments, under the effect of media while the discontent of old age increased, being young and beautiful reached its peak. Peter Laslett listed a number of fears felt by the aged and, mainly, by those who “have begun to recognise for the first time how much of their life still to come will be spent as an older person” (1991: 14). Among those fears, there is not only the fear of death, of life-threatening diseases, but also the fear of loss of “beauty, attractiveness, fertility, potency” (1991: 14).

In order to get rid of the disadvantages of old age and its reflections on people's bodies, a newly emerged term "body maintenance" (Featherstone: 1991: 82), which means keeping the body fit, has become the motto of modern life. Either for aesthetical or practical purposes, body has been placed at the centre of attention. The concept of body maintenance, which is mostly determined by an economic system increasingly has focused on consumerism, has become almost compulsory within the ideology imposed by marketing. The consumer culture has turned the precious youth to its own benefit by trying to convince people that the negative effects of old body can be prevented by applying a number of techniques and products. As Mike Featherstone suggested, it appeared as "an indicator of the popularity of the machine metaphor for the body, so that, like cars and other consumer goods, bodies require servicing, regular care and attention to preserve maximum efficiency" (1991: 182). Thanks to the technological developments that have exceeded the limits of human imagination, just like the mechanical devices, people's bodies can be fashioned in many ways. In addition to the treatment of illnesses, people can modify their bodies as they wish. There are numerous gadgets and cures that are used for body alteration. Cosmetic surgery allows people to change some of their physical features, both on their faces and bodies; there also have been studies about creating clones and choosing the right genes for one's children. Moreover, the developing technologies in plastic surgery now even enable those born into "the wrong sex" (Hassard, 2001: 15) to change their sexes. Also the organs of one's body can be easily transplanted to another person without difficulty. Hanif Kureishi, by taking a surgical operation that will transplant the protagonist's brain into a young man's body as the starting point of his novel, pays attention to the individual and social problems and difficulties of the old people in modern times and being aware of the facilities that are presented to human beings by technology; he constructs his novel in this frame.

The novel starts with the discontented remarks of a well-known London author and screenwriter, Adam. He is introduced to the reader as a successful, sophisticated but unhappy man in his mid-60s. He longs for the youth while watching the young people enjoying themselves. He meets a young man who claims that he knows and loves Adam's earliest writings. However, that is impossible because he has the appearance of a young boy. Besides, this young man was most

probably a child when the play was put on stage. Thus, Adam gets startled with the reality when this man, named Ralph, tells him that he is in fact older than Adam, but that his brain has been transplanted into a young and healthy body. Showing the attractive sides of this operation, he asks Adam to do the same. Adam is captured with curiosity by this extraordinary offer. Since he has been thinking upon his old age and the disadvantages of it for some time, he decides to experience this adventure. He tells his wife that he needs a holiday for a short period of time. Agreeing upon half a year for the experiment, he goes to the secret hospital where *new bodies*, which died at a young age, are hired or sold for brain transplantation. He chooses one of the bodies that are exhibited just like the clothes on a row.

After the operation, he finds a new name for his new body, and he sets off a hedonistic trail across Europe, including Paris, Rome, Vienna and Switzerland, where he falls in with a group of young film-makers, discovers ecstasy and rediscovers sex. Then, on a Greek island he finds an odd job at a spiritual centre. It is here that the tension between who Adam is and who he appears to be becomes more apparent. He inevitably constructs two identities; the private self of old writer and the public appearance of the new young hedonist man. Adam soon finds out himself regretting and confused with these two identities. He longs for what he left behind and feels guilt over the responsibilities he has ignored. Through the end of the novel, Adam is introduced to a rich, yacht-owning playboy named Matte at a party. He learns that including Matte and him, there are also many new bodies around them. Adam gets into trouble with this man because Matte wants Adam's new body for some reason and tracks him down until he catches him. When Adam could flee from Matte and his men successfully, he realizes that he has nowhere to go; neither the body he wears belongs to him, nor the life he lives is his own. As he himself asserts at the end of the novel, he becomes a stranger to everything: he "was a stranger on the earth, a nobody with nothing, belonging nowhere, a body alone, condemned to begin again, in the nightmare of eternal life" (126).

The main focus of Kureishi's novella is on one of the most common problems modern people experience; the fragmented self, and the disconnected relation between one's body and mind. Through Adam's feelings and ideas, Kureishi shows that anybody might feel themselves alienated from the world they

are born into, the society they live in, their families, their jobs, and even their bodies. Kureishi draws the character of Adam as having a successful life, a lovely wife and two children in order to emphasize that if a person's body and his soul are not in harmony with each other, he cannot be happy no matter how appropriate the other things are. For Adam's situation the first and perhaps the foremost problem is his aging body. At the beginning of the novel, Adam complains about the pains of his old body:

“My knees and back give me a lot of pain. I have haemorrhoids, an ulcer and cataracts. When I eat, it's not unusual for me to spit out bits of tooth as I go. My ears seem to lose focus as the day goes on and people have to yell into me. I don't go to parties because I don't like to stand up.” (3)

As can be inferred, he is not happy with his bodily functions. When he observes his body in the mirror, what he sees is an old man “with [...] rotund stomach, veiny, spindly legs and left-leaning posture” (17). He notices that he approaches to the last phase of his life; he “was beginning to resemble his father just before his death” (17). Moreover, in addition to the physical deficiencies and the disturbance his old body caused, what disturbs Adam more is the fact that his ageing body is increasingly unable to arouse desirability and likeableness. He thinks that, “the older and sicker you get, the less your body is a fashion item, the less people want to touch you. You will have to pay. Masseurs and prostitutes will caress you, if you give them money” (34). He laments that these are the attributes which seem to be restricted to the young. He thinks that “to participate in the world with curiosity and pleasure, to see the point of what is going on, you have to be young and uninformed” (5). His physical age also affects his social life. As Mike Hepworth and Mike Featherstone explain, in present-day modern societies “the process of growing old is complicated by the fact that there are really two kinds of ageing: biological and social” (1982: 3). In other words, the person passes through two different stages of aging. While Adam heavily feels the biological one, he is not ready for being cast away socially. He struggles to be able to keep up to date with the recent events. He feels that, at his age, “education and experience seem to be of no advantage” (5). He also asserts that he is “no longer familiar with the pop stars, actors or serials on TV”, but he is eager to participate in the things going around him; he never stops “being interested in others, or in culture and politics - in the general traffic of mankind” (4).

It is clear that Adam does not want to accept the reality that his body is not young any longer. While coming to the party which the story begins with, Adam walks for about forty-five minutes. When he arrives, he is “breathless and feeble” (6). As he walks, he thinks about this issue:

“The elderly seem to have been swept from the streets; the young appear to have wires coming out of their heads, supplying either music, voices on the phone or the electricity which makes them move.” (7)

In the party, Adam finds the opportunity to observe the young people. When he arrives at the party, his mind has already been busy enough with the idea of being young. At the party, the glamour and fashion of young people fascinates him. He:

“couldn’t help noticing how well groomed everyone seemed, particularly the pierced, tattooed young men, as decorated as a jeweller’s window with their hair dyed in contrasting colours. Apart from the gym, these boys must have kept fit twisting and untwisting numerous jars, tubs and bottles. They dressed to show off their bodies rather than their clothes.” (9)

What attracts Adam’s attention is especially the young bodies in the party. With a feeling of envy, he is filled with the idea that the young bodies surpass the selves of young people; their real personalities are hidden under their fit and energetic bodies. On the other hand, Adam has the thing that these young people, who show off their bodies generously, do not; he is an experienced and sophisticated man, despite all the troubles he experiences due to his aging body. He has many successful works which has attracted many people’s attention and appreciation over the years.

At the party, he is introduced to a man who praises one of his works with enthusiasm and “with extensive knowledge, even of its obscurer aspects” (9). This man, named Ralph, claims that he saw the films whose scripts Adam wrote and he even mentions an actor from 1970s. What is strange about him is that, looking at his physical appearance, it seems impossible for him to know these things, because he has the appearance of a man just in his early twenties. After a short conversation, Ralph reveals that in fact he is older than Adam, but he has had an operation. He explains that some rich people are “having their living brains removed and transplanted into bodies of the young dead” (12). Adam does not have difficulty in

believing this, because he is aware that the technology exceeds the limits of human imagination in present-day living conditions. Ralph explains that:

“These people might not exactly live for ever, but they would become young again. They could be twenty year-olds if they wanted. They could live the lives they believed they’d missed out on. They could do what everybody dreams of, have a second chance.” (12)

Ralph’s proposal seems really attractive, because as Ralph explains, the years pass by so abruptly that one cannot understand how valuable it is. People constantly put off the things since they are busy with temporal desires; while some try to earn money, some are captured by the ambition to be successful, etc. As Adam explains “Perhaps I’d been over-constrained by my ambition. Hadn’t my needs been too narrow, too concentrated?” (43). When they think that they attained all they wished, they notice that little time is left for the things they really wanted. This adventure extends Adam’s longing for “a new world” (16), and after a short evaluation of his life, he concludes that:

“the end of my life was approaching, too; there was a lot I was already unable to do, soon there would be more. I’d been alive a long time but my life, like most lives, seemed to have happened too quickly, when I was not ready.” (17)

Since the passage of time is not something that can be prevented, people search at least ways of decreasing its effects. Adam experiences these effects heavily, and he is “aware of [his] deterioration, having had it pointed out by a disappointed lover” (29), he attempts to dye his hair and even sign up for sessions at a gym. These are all the reminiscent of his anxiety for the remaining time he has and his fear of coming to an end. Living in the present-day society, in which youth, beauty and fitness are the basic criteria to social integration, increases such feelings and also leads the individuals to struggle to keep fit and remain young. While the aged people, who look young and healthy, are highly praised, those ones, whose bodies show signs of ageing, are seen as miserable and unattractive. As Foucault suggests, “it is in the nature of the power- particularly the kind of power that operates in our society- to be repressive... the intensity of pleasures, and irregular modes of behavior” (1990: 9). In the society Adam lives in, the body maintenance is really important; from his

wife to the most beautiful actress, everybody seems to be hooked on taking extra care of their external appearance:

“It was rare for my wife and her friends not to talk about botox and detox, about food and their body shape, size and relative fitness, and the sort of exercise they were or were not taking. I knew women, and not only actresses, who had squads of personal trainers, dieticians, nutritionists, yoga teachers, masseurs and beauticians labouring over their bodies daily, as if the mind’s longing and anxiety could be cured via the body.” (29)

Adam concludes that “the game was up when [he] had to wear the reading glasses in order to see the magazine [he] was masturbating over” (29). As a proof to Adam’s fear of death and the passage of time he strongly feels, he questions how many nights he will live with his wife together. The operation Ralph offered is a unique opportunity for him. After he heard about this chance, Adam, who has already been living the pressure of the society, feels even more willing to be young, desired, and energetic. What encourages Adam more than anything is that he does not want to be old and invisible just like the others; because in addition to his aging body, his literary productivity also declines; he thinks that his latest play is considered ‘old-fashioned’” (30) by the other people. He also adds that his life isn’t “scandalous enough [...], of much interest” (Ibid) for the other people, even for a biographer. In order to reverse this situation, after the operation he hopes to spend at least six months just contrary to his previous life. He wants to change not only his self representation but his life style and his place in the society as well. He believes that when he changes his body his perception of the world will accordingly change. Thus, he becomes “so excited about this possible adventure” (18). Eventually, he makes up his mind to take pleasure from whatever he missed; he gathers in himself the necessary determination to take most of the opportunities in this world within a young body. However, unlike many others, who have this operation and do not want to return to their bodies, Adam wants a temporal experience, because he is not “particularly unhappy” (21) with his life; what he wanted was to “be cured of [...] indifference, slight depression or weariness” (30), and what he looked for was a time off from the troubles of his old age. Therefore, he asks his wife for a “six-month sabbatical” (19), a “body holiday” (99). Adam is not like those who constantly complain about everything in his life; he thinks that a person’s body is the demonstration that makes a person a real living being: “it’s the failures, the

hopeless digressions, the mistakes, the waste, which add up to a lived life” (97). When he learns the fact about Ralph, he cannot feel sure that what he saw is the real part of him; he wonders what his real self is like: “if the body is a picture of the mind, his body was like a map of a place that didn’t exist. What I wanted was to see his original face, before he was reborn” (19).

Adam uses the word “reborn”, for the extraordinary experience; the one Ralph has lived and the same thing he is about to attempt. Adam’s name and the idea of being reborn can be alluded to myth of creation in which Adam is the man humankind is believed to originate from. Adam is the first man inhabiting in Paradise, and he is characterised by his innocence and virtuousness before his fall from Eden. This fall is accepted as the original sin: the beginning of the malice of humankind. It can naturally be assumed that Kureishi chose Adam’s name on purpose, because Adam, our protagonist, also has a moderate life without any disgraceful event or any immodest behaviour before the operation. Just like Adam’s fall is the beginning of his sinful deeds, the experiment is the turning point in Adam’s life; he turns out to be a hedonist, he does everything which his new body allows him to experience, he follows a life of pleasure in all its forms. He surrenders himself “to physical pleasure, the ecstasy of the body, [...], of movement, and of accelerated, spontaneous affection for others” (58).

Adam wishes to have a body rental instead of body sale, and he wants to reside in his new body for six months. The number six is also something that reminds the myth of creation, because it is commonly believed that God created the universe in six days. As Patricia A. Williams explains:

“... on the third day God gathered waters into one place, separated them from dry land, and created vegetation; on the fifth day made fish and birds; on the sixth, created animals, including human beings.” (2001: 67)

Since Adam is the man human beings are believed to originate from, it can be inferred that the sixth day is the creation of Adam. The protagonist of Kureishi’s work also wants a six month body rental, because together with the new body he wishes to live a second life. The operation, which enables him the six month lasting renewal, is the beginning of a new life for him. Adam also uses the word

“sabbatical” (19) when he tells his wife that he needs some time for himself. As it is quoted in William’s work:

“In the Bible the Sabbath is the day of rest reserved for God, a day calling human beings to unreserved rest, recalling humans to what is, and is to be, their first love, their being bound up with, bound by, God. The day also recalls human beings to the first commandment, which tells us that God is God, God alone is God, and nothing but God is God. The Sabbath is the day when we are to be most free of idols, that is to say, counterfeit doubles of God.” (William, 2005: 312)

Sabbath is the religious term that is accepted as the seventh day. This is the resting day, because it is believed that God created the universe in six days and rested the seventh day. Adam’s word *sabbatical* implies the time he wants to take off from his old body. He wishes to get rid of the exhaustion of his long life in that six months.

Adam begins his quest in a hospital, a “run-down ware house on a bleak wind-blown industrial estate outside London” (20). The doctor, in his mid-thirties, meets Adam and Ralph and, after a short introductory conversation, he asks Adam if “it is a short term body rental” (21) he wants. It is worth saying that the doctor’s behaviour to Adam’s body and the other bodies that wait for exchange is, as if they are only substances. Just like an object or a cloth, Adam’s body is referred to as the thing he is “wearing” (26). Adam also asserts later on, his body “become[s] just an object to be worked on” (27). Adam is confused, too, about the forthcoming consequences of this operation. He wonders “how will we know who is new and who is old?” (22). Adam’s worries on how to distinguish the real bodies from new bodies reminds the reader of the poststructuralist idea about the relation between signifier and signified. In the poststructuralist thinking, the signifier is divided from the signified. Derrida argues that “meaning slides down a chain of signifiers abolishing a stable signified” (qtd. in Barker, 2000: 17). This means that there is a constant play of signifiers. In this context, with the surgical operation, it seems that there appears a chain of changing bodies. A person might go through many different bodies, and if it is assumed that the transplantations go on for a long time, contrary to the classical idea, the identity or body cannot be accepted as a fixed entity; rather as it is for the signifiers, the endless transference among the bodies replaces the common notion of the united self in a stable body.

The doctor's approach is too rigid not only for the operation but also for Adam's worries. He says, "just as there has been argument over abortion, genetic engineering, cloning and organ plants, or any other medical advances, so will be over this" (22). Although the doctor tries to trivialize the operation and its consequences, in fact it can be regarded as a revolution for human beings; Ralph explains that there are only three or four doctors in the world today who can do this operation, and "they're like the men who made the atomic bomb – hated, admired and feared; having changed the nature of human life" (99).

As if he is shopping in a store, Adam has to decide in which body he wants to spend his next six months. Among many choices, it appears to be a difficult decision for him, because he has to pick up the appearance he will be seen by the others:

"Suspended in harnesses, there were rows and rows of bodies: the pale, the dark and in-between; the mottled, the clear –skinned, the hairy and hairless, the bearded and the large-breasted; the tall, the broad and the squat." (24)

This is a great confusion for Adam. He will live in another body, but the question is to what extent this body will belong to Adam. As he also points out after the operation that he "was suspended between bodies: out of [his] and not yet properly in another" (31). It is equally surprising for the reader who is startled by the chance Adam is given to choose his new body and decide on his new appearance.

Although everybody accepts that body and mind both constitute a person's self, this mind and body problem has always been and is still being discussed by many philosophers. Kureishi makes the situation get even more complicated by separating these two components. While people even cannot agree upon what determines one's personality, to what extent the body and mind are influential, Kureishi takes the argument to a further step by putting the protagonist's brain into a different body. Each person lives the division of body and mind; however, for Adam's situation its effects are more noteworthy, because he has to conduct his life within another body. The reason why Adam dares such an incredible operation is that he believes that the key to personal identity resides in the physical body. He thinks that the chance to live within a younger body will also cure his soul. He

believes that the depressive mood he has been living recently is the result of deficiencies in his old body. However, when he realises that the reality is contrary to his thought, he has difficulty in residing in his new body and his self division becomes unbearable. Thus, the two kinds of selves everybody constructs in order to live among others have more drastic consequences for Adam; his identity is fragmented. Since he cannot make a compromise between his soul and his new body, he is under the pressure of a strong feeling of being in between.

When he sees the bodies that are exhibited before him, he cannot help thinking about its weirdness. While ordinary people's bodies are biologically pre-determined in a natural way, Adam is given the chance to choose which sex he wants to have, what color his skin will be, the weight and height of his body and many physical features like that. A number of various choices are ready, just waiting for Adam; as Ralph suggests: "you might, for a change, want to come back as young woman... Some men want to give birth. Or they want to have sex as a woman... Or you could choose a black body" (24). No matter what Adam chooses, Ralph wants to remind him that there are "options" (25). Startled with this opportunity, Adam has difficulty in understanding how simple it seems:

"All the bodies, as far as I could see, were relatively young; some of them looked less like young adults than older children. The oldest were in their early forties. I was reminded of the rows of suits in the tailors I'd visit as a boy with my father. Except these were not cloth coverings but human bodies, born alive from between a woman's legs." (24)

For the same scene Adam also uses the phrase "shopping for bodies" (24) in order to emphasize the position which bodies are reduced to. As he observes the bodies, Adam thinks that together with this operation "a society in which everyone would be the same age" (37) will be waiting the next generation. This experiment, which seems ordinary for both Ralph and the doctors, is something traumatic for Adam and the other patients who will undergo the similar operation like him. However, as he finds out later, it is not everyone who has access to such operations, but only those who are powerful and have money, those who have made a name for themselves just as he has done.

The bodies, which are reduced to be objects to be worked on, pass through the same process in which “old car chassis are substituted for new ones when their owners consider it necessary” as it is stated by Mike Featherstone (1991: 182). Adam deeply feels that he needs such an alteration. He even tries to dissociate himself from his body “as if it were an embarrassing friend [he] no longer wanted to know” (29). If the external appearance is an informant to the self, it is clear that Adam’s self does not correspond with his old body. His dissatisfaction with his body is reflected on his thoughts; he admits that “a quarter of [him] was alive; it was that part which wanted a pure, unadulterated ‘shot’ of life” (30). When he heard about the operation, Adam believed that this operation will be a fresh start, a kind of renovation for his life. However, the forthcoming events will not be as pure as he expected.

Before the impure and hedonistic quest Adam starts, it is worth giving the details of his new body. The most outstanding thing about the new body Adam chose is definitely its youth. When Adam saw his new young body, he was so absorbed by the physical features that he cannot help feeling a kind of intimation for this body:

“At last I stopped. I had seen ‘my guy’... Stocky and as classically handsome as any sculpture in the British Museum, he was neither white nor dark but lightly toasted, with a fine, thick penis and heavy balls. I would, at last, have the body of an Italian footballer: an aggressive, attacking midfielder, say. My face resembled that of the young Alain Delon with, naturally, my own brain leading this combination out to play for six months.” (25)

It is important to note that this new body reminds Adam of “any sculpture”; the things that do not have a life but accepted as only having aesthetic values. Just like a statue or sculpture, the bodies that are exhibited in that place have just the physical beauty. What these rows of bodies lack is the essence that gives life and beauty to the living beings.

In On the Sublime, Longinus suggests that without the artist’s elaboration, all the best examples of statues are nothing but just stones. He argues that all “the glowing perfections of the finest statues, their grandeur, their beauty, their mellowness, their dignity, their energy, their power, and all their other graces” (qtd.

in Russell, 1964: 35) are given by the artist's sublime soul. The thing that gives beauty to the raw forms of stones in nature is the souls that are transferred by the artists. What Plotinus offers about the beauty of the physical objects also clarifies Adam's reference to the bodies as sculpture:

“The things we see, hear, or otherwise perceive as beautiful are “images and shadows” We must not linger with them, but go on to the “beauties beyond,” seen by the eye of the mind rather than the bodily eye. Bodily beauties come to us; they “sally forth.” But we must, with considerable effort, ‘go on up’ to the invisible beauties.” (qtd. in Miles, 1999: 40)

The invisible beauties in Plotinus's terms can be perceived as souls. Without the souls these bodies are of no value just like the stones that only have artistic or visible beauty. After Adam undergoes the operation, together with the transplantation of his brain, he keeps on living in a new body. Consequently, his soul, his self and identity, as he also states in the novel, can be assumed to “emigrate” (30) to his new body in order to give life to that handsome sculpture like figure.

Just after the operation, he is captured by the facilities his new body presents. He enjoys all the physical convenience of his new body. From that moment on, he regards himself as “a body which wanted things” (32). He attempts to do all the activities that require flexible or young muscles, the things that were unimaginable for his previous body:

“I sat lay down, jumped up and down, touched myself, wiggled my fingers and toes, shook my arms and legs and, finally, placed my head carefully on the floor before kicking myself up and standing on it – something I hadn't done for twenty- five years. There was a lot to take in.” (28)

After the operation all the weary thoughts, which made his mind busy are not with him. He does not have to think about the pains his old body used to cause, he does not need to worry about the approaching end of his life; he “had more important things to do, like standing on [his] head” (31).

When he first saw his new body in the mirror, he realizes that the operation is not a daydream and in order to believe its reality he touches every part of his body. Although he has all his past with him, there is no trace from his former appearance:

“I continued to examine myself in the mirror, stepping forwards and backwards, examining my hairy arms and legs, turning my head here and there opening and closing my mouth, looking at my good teeth and wide, clean tongue, smiling and frowning, trying different expressions. I wasn’t just handsome, with my features in felicitous proportion.” (35)

As he observes himself on the mirror, he states that “everywhere I turned there were more me’s, many, many more new me’s, until I felt dizzy” (28). Having seen his new physical being reflected on the glass, he remembers one of his friend’s words about mirrors:

“A theory-loving friend of mine has an idea that the notion of the self, of the separate, self-conscious individual, and of an autobiography which that self might tell or write, developed around the same time as the invention of the mirror.... According to my friend, if a creature can’t see himself, he can’t mature. He can’t see where he ends and others begin.” (28)

The idea of mirror, that also forms the basis of Jacques Lacan’s ideas on identity construction, may be regarded as a quintessence for Adam’s two different identities. The new Adam, as he is seen on the mirror, is just like a mask that is worn in public. Everybody judges him by his appearance and similarly the place he has in the society is based on his illusionary looks. The old Adam, whose personality is hidden under the cover of his young body, is the second but real identity he has. Until he sees his new body, in other words, the appearance he will be seen by the others, he cannot distinguish this divided self he has. His awareness is just like a baby’s first recognition of his/her self and the others. Lacan claims that when an infant comes into the world, s/he conceives that s/he is united with mother. He calls it the Imaginary stage, “in which the child, believing itself part of its mother, acknowledges no difference between itself and the rest of the world” (Montserrat, 1997: 75). In addition to a baby’s physical attachment to his/her mother, there is a strong emotional bond that leads the baby to see the mother as an identical part of him/her. However, this situation changes when:

“between six months and eighteen months, the infant enters into the mirror stage. When the child sees its own reflection in the mirror he begins to conceive of itself as a unified being, separate from the rest of the world.” (Lacan, 1977: 4)

As is also stated in the expression of Adam’s friend, the mirror stage is a turning point for the infant to see that s/he is an individual; not a part of mother. In other words, this experience is the beginning of the individuation process that each individual passes through. It is the time when the baby sees his/her reflection on the mirror which lets him/her understand that there is a physical existence that only belongs to him/her. From that moment on, s/he gains the sense of his own existence as a separate entity and becomes aware of his own limitations. At the same time, he notices that there are also other people around. Consequently, Adam’s first sight on the mirror is the first step of his adjustment to his new body. Although it seems difficult he tries to customize with his new body “Each time [he] saw [him]self in the changing- room mirror [he] thought a stranger was standing” (40). Just like the maturation process of infants, Adam experiences the same procedure with his new body in his new life. The division a baby lives in the mirror stage reveals itself in the form of the separation of Adam’s soul from his former body and its progression to a new, young one.

Lacan also claims that before the mirror stage, infants are in “the pre-linguistic stage” (qtd. in Montserrat, 1997: 75), in which the body is the only tool that enables them to express themselves. The only focus is on their bodily gestures, they either cry or smile to show how they feel or make the others around them to understand their needs. Adam also points out this idea suggested by Lacan:

“A body is the child’s first playground and his first experiences are sensual. It doesn’t take long for children to learn that you can get things from other bodies: milk, kisses, bottles, caresses, slaps. People’s hands are useful for this, as they are for exploring the numerous holes bodies have out of which leaks different stuff, whether you like it or not: sweat, shit, semen, pus, breath, blood, saliva, words.” (32)

In addition to the Lacanian mirror stage mentioned above, there are also some stages which were mainly defined by another psychoanalyst, Sigmund Freud; “oral stage, anal stage and the phallic stage” (qtd. in Jacobs, 2003: 50), are the three main stages

which each individual is believed to pass through. Lacan's mirror stage reminds us of these stages naturally; however, Kureishi's emphasis is on Adam's encounter with his new body and it is mainly related with Lacan's mirror stage.

After the mirror stage, having learned the separate individuality the baby has and acknowledged the parts of his/her body, s/he both utters some words to show their reaction and starts to be in an interaction with others. They exhibit various responses to other people's existence. While they do not care the people they are familiar with, they do not like the strangers. Likewise, Adam's awareness of the other bodies around him obviously appears as a phobia or discomfort in his dream. Just after the operation when he falls a sleep, he dreams that he were in a train in which there were many:

“inhabited bodies move around one another. Yet I have become slightly phobic about others' bodies. I don't like them too close to me; I can't touch strangers, friends or even myself... This semi-sleep continued.” (31)

Under the effect of the mental confusion Adam has, he forms a kind of fear for the other bodies. Although he cannot be sure that it was a dream or a real experience, Adam does not want to see anybody; he wants to be alone. This situation is apt to change soon, and Adam conducts the remaining part of his life in his new body as much close as possible to the other bodies. The other people form a great part in his following months; either for sexual pleasure or spending time enjoyably he participates among the crowd of people. He becomes aware of “the possibility of having real sex with others” (33). He remembers the fact that in his old body, “it had been a long time” (18) since he did not have a sexual discourse as he wished. Thus, the first negative impression he had about the other people's bodies is reversed and Adam launches for the city because he concludes that: “in the countryside, there are fewer bodies and more distance between them. I came to the city because the bodies are closer; there is heat and magnetism. The bodies jostle” (33). What he wants is to make the most of the opportunities that are presented by the city life. His expectations and desires are completely changed after the operation:

“As a young man, I wanted to get inside bodies, not just with a portion of my frame, but to burrow inside them, to live in there. If this seems impractical, you can at least

get acquainted with a body by sleeping next to it. Then you can put bits of your body into the holes in other bodies.” (34)

The main goal of Adam’s new life in his young body seems to be like doing everything he can without any limitation. When he is offered to make love by a woman for some money in turn, he says “my deal with myself was not to turn down such offers” (55). When he undergoes the operation, he promises himself about not to miss any chance that is laid before him, and it is clear how decisive he behaves for the purpose he determined. Equipped with his new body, Adam undergoes experiences he has never had for lack of time or opportunity during the years he was working hard to maintain his family. The experience and knowledge acquired during his sixty-five years of life together with a young and attractive body offer him a wide range of possibilities:

“I was delighted with the compliments about my manner and appearance, loved being told I was handsome, beautiful, good-looking. I could see what Ralph meant by a new start with old equipment. I had intelligence, money, some maturity and physical energy. Wasn’t this human perfection? Why hadn’t anyone thought of putting them together before?” (56)

What gives meaning to Adam’s present life is his “old mind in a new body” (36). It is also suggested by Poststructuralists by the idea of “meaning through binary pairs” (During, 1999:17); it is the idea which suggests that white is only meaningful with its binary pair, black. Adam’s new body also gains meaning with his previous experiences. Within this dichotomy, his old age is combined with a young body and makes up Adam’s self through this binary opposition. What Adam notices about his second life is that “it was an unpleasant loneliness [he] had condemned [him]self to” (42). He cannot feel any belonging, he neither can feel the youth he yearned for, nor disclose his real old age and experiences to the people around him; his life turns out to be something in between. He complains about his present situation:

“I tried to speak in young tones, as if I knew only a little; and I tried not to be pompous, as I must have been in my old body. It was quite an effort. I was used to people listening or even writing down what I said.” (74)

After the operation Adam is told that, “a new life has been made” (36) for him. However, when this new life full of pleasures loses its charm, Adam’s anxieties about “not only of death, but of what might come out of it – a new life” (27) are replaced by how he will feel when he gets his old body back. The owner of the luxurious yacht, Matte disturbs Adam’s ideas on his old body. According to Matte, the old bodies have no value after a person experiences the life in a new body; he says “old body sack is about as valuable as a used condom” (98). Although Adam eagerly participates in this adventure, as he says he is not “particularly unhappy” (21) with his life, when he decides it is time to go back, Adam is worried:

“whether, when I returned to my old body, my values would be different. I had been certain that I wanted to go back, but it was a question that wouldn’t leave me alone now. There were decent arguments on both sides. What would have been worse?” (69)

Since Adam has had the chance to live the life he has missed once, it seems certain that nothing would be the same when he returns to his own body and his own life. Having spent sometime among the other young people with his point of view he brought from his previous life, Adam notices many new things he did not before. For instance, when he is in an exclusive party held at night, worried about the other young people with him, he “couldn’t help wondering what their parents would have thought” (59). He even “composed a lengthy mail apologizing for omissions years ago, but didn’t send it... [he] saw that most of [his] kids’ childhood was a blank” (60). Disguised in his new body, when he spends sometime with his wife, he confirms that he is right to have worries about his life when he turns back from his body holiday. He can clearly see everything he neglected about his life, his wife and his children:

“Her story made more sense to me now, or I was able to let more of it in. We drank tea and wine. She was stimulated by my interest, and amazed by how much there was to tell. She wanted to speak; I wanted to listen.... I wanted to offer her all that I’d neglected to give in the past few years. How withdrawn and insulated I’d been! It would be different when I returned as myself.” (117)

In his second life in a new body, Adam can ascertain that he is paying “the emotional price of a double life” (60). Although his new body enables him to be young; he feels he is a stranger in his new body and new life. He is now much more

aware “how much of one’s self one locked away”, in other words, how little one can reveal the things in himself. Although Adam knows that his body does not show who he really is, all the people around him take his body as the criteria for his personality. When Adam is fed up with this misconception, he was “confronted with the losses involved in gaining prolonged youth” (45). According to Adam a new life in a new body is not as simple as Ralph and Matte thinks. Matte sees this process as a trivial detail: “you get to bodies and the person you become in them. As with jeans, new bodies are better the more they’re worn in” (96). Similar to the doctor’s approach to Adam’s and the other people’s bodies, Matte also takes bodies as objects; resembling them to *jeans*.

While Adam enjoys all the facilities of his new body, he is captured by them in an extreme way, and he overemphasizes the devotion he felt for youth and beauty. He confesses that he “was falling in love with [him]self” (35). The exaggerated passion and desire he felt for his new body can be a reminiscent of the myth of Narcissus. According to this well-known myth, if a person is concerned with himself too much and centers on the features of his body extremely, the real part of that person- his self- is taken apart. Instead of the real beauty that lies in the soul of that person, the physical beauty overtakes his personality. In the myth, Narcissus’s obsessive care for his body ends up with his tragic end. In the novel, Adam yields himself to his impulses and thinks that the young body he gained is the only and absolute key for his happiness. Although Adam survives unlike Narcissus, he experiences that tragedy in his inner world. Referring to Adam’s young and attractive body, it is clearly stated by one of the characters in the novel; Patricia, that all the troubles he lives stem from his beauty. She notes that “it is the price the beautiful have to pay” (107). Moreover, when Adam discovers that the body, which he sets up his life on, is not a heaven, but it is in fact a burden, he cannot compromise with his soul any longer, and he regrets more than ever for the things he left behind. Despite all the physical attractiveness he desired once, he cannot stand living in that body. He deeply feels the alienation, estrangement and isolation; he becomes “a stranger on the earth, a nobody with nothing, belonging nowhere, a body alone, condemned to begin again, in the nightmare of eternal life” (126).

After all the troubles Adam has lived because of his new body, he wants to take his old body back. He realizes towards the end of the novella that the second chance he yearned for has not ended up as he wished. All he wanted was to enjoy everything he missed for a certain period of time; however, when he saw that this new body became the source of many problems, pointing at his body he says “all I want is to get rid of this, to get out of this meat” (122). When he first saw the body in the hospital he defines it as a sculpture and this time he refers to it as a *meat*. This can be interpreted that at the beginning, the body seemed something beautiful although it had no sense of soul in it; however, at the end of the novel the body loses all the importance and value it once had for Adam, even the physical beauty, youth and attractiveness of the body do not have any charm for Adam. It becomes a worthless meat that must be dispensed with as soon as possible. In addition to all these abovementioned reasons, the main reason that lies at the root of Adam’s irreversible decision to leave his new body is that, he “missed [his] old body” (108), and he “wasn’t ready to give up [his] mind or [his] body” (106). When he meets his wife and goes to the house he used to live with his old body, his disappointment with the new body rises to its highest point; all the furniture, his pictures, his books, the study he spends most of his time studying and even his wife and son are strangers for him now. In fact, while everything is the same, it is Adam who appears as the stranger in a familiar environment. Filled with missing, anxiety and regret, Adam defines his present situation in the body he is wearing at that moment as “waiting in a limbo, a waiting room in which there was no reality but plenty of anxiety” (108)

When he returns to the hospital where he thinks his old body is kept, he is startled with a great feeling of wonder and disappointment. “There were no bodies around, neither new nor old” (124). The place he was taken by Ralph is “encircled by barbed wire; grass was poking up through the concrete” (123). Adam’s description of the hospital shows that it has not been used for a long time. All the doctors, equipment and bodies were gone. This is the time Adam refers to as “condemned to eternal life” (126). Since he cannot find his real body, he is bound to live a life that will never belong to him; he might live in either his present body or in another one, however; Adam will never be able to turn to his own body, the real self that is constituted by Adam’s former old body and his tired soul. This is the

beginning of an endless struggle that awaits him for the rest of his life. “The idea of death itself is dying” (97) summarizes Adam’s thoughts on new bodies. He describes the ones who let their brains transplanted into another body as “mutants, freaks, human unhumans” (102), “moving statues” (89), and the real people who owns their own bodies and whose bodies get old as it has to be as “those with death in them” (97). Adam clearly states that what he has experienced is in fact the image of eternal damnation. When he compares himself with one of the characters, who is unaware of Adam’s secret he concludes that “her body and soul were one; she was ‘real’” (103).

In conclusion, in The Body, Kureishi invites the reader to contemplate over Adam’s life and the things he lived in his old and new body. Exhibiting the individual and social contradictions existing between an elderly body and a youthful and active self, Kureishi wants the reader to figure out the place of body in a person’s life. Since Adam feels this contradiction both within himself and in his society, he decides to undergo a most unusual transplantation, with the result that he is not only deprived of his external appearance but also of his inner and social self. As Featherstone argues, nowadays, “[a]pppearance, gesture and bodily demeanour become taken as expressions of self” (1991: 189). When Adam learns that he cannot go back to his former body, he is aware that he has actually lost his true value as an individual within a social group, because although his external appearance as a young man does not reveal his real self, he needs his old body as an indicator that he is in fact the successful, old writer in his sixties.

CHAPTER IV

REPRESENTATION OF BODY IN THE TWO NOVELS

The previous two chapters have been devoted to the analysis of the two novels; The Picture of Dorian Gray by Oscar Wilde and The Body by Hanif Kureishi in terms of the role of body for individual and social identity construction. In these novels, the divided selves of the two protagonists, Dorian and Adam, have been studied in detail with examples from the novels. The relation between these characters' body and soul, the roles of their physical appearance as the determinant of their place in the society, and the extraordinary events the two characters experience owing to their bodies have been discussed. The present chapter aims to focus on the common points that have been introduced in the previous chapters.

Although the two novels were written in two different periods of time, Kureishi and Wilde both apply the same theme of divided self in their novels. Both Dorian's portrait and Adam's new body are the main indicators of the division they experience. All the events are centred on Dorian and Adam's almost obsessive care for their bodies. Dorian, informed and manipulated by Lord Henry about the importance of being young and beautiful, utters the following words after he sees the portrait; "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!" (34). The idea of being young and beautiful appears as such a significant issue for Dorian that he even feels envy for a portrait; he laments that it will be he who will get old while the portrait will remain just the same as it is on the day it was drawn. Plotinus had a similar anxiety when he is asked to have his portrait painted. He objects to this idea, wondering:

"Why really, is it not enough to have to carry the image in which the nature has encased us, without your requesting me to agree to leave behind me *a longer-lasting* image of the image, as if it was something genuinely worth looking at." (qtd. in Miles, 1999: 91, *my emphasis*)

A similar sense to Dorian's feelings lies under Plotinus's refusal to let his portrait painted. What differentiates their ideas is, in addition to his anxiety about leaving "a longer-lasting" portrait, Plotinus also focuses on the gap between nature and art. He argues that while there is the beauty, which is bestowed upon us by nature, it is no

use drawing an image that does not have the same beauty. However, Dorian has nothing to do with the artistic value of the portrait; what he just yearns for is the youth he is apt to lose naturally. On Adam's part, the same desire to be young and the excitement to have a second chance leads him to attempt an extraordinary surgical operation. For this unusual adventure, Adam dares to take the risk of losing his almost steady life, he estranges himself from the environment he is accustomed to, even from his wife and children; he eventually feels the estrangement in its highest level from the body he chose to live in. In other words, Adam's dream of being young for six months period turns out to be a nightmare, or a curse that will chase him all his life.

The two novels are mainly based on the characters' intense desire to be young. While Dorian's priority is the eternal beauty which is bestowed to him through the replacement of his soul with the portrait in a striking way; in The Body, youth and knowledge have been conjoined in Adam's brain transplantation. However, as with the protagonists of the literary works of the past, the myth of eternal beauty and youth fails to work for these two characters. As mentioned in Chapter II, the events Marlowe's Dr. Faustus and Oscar Wilde's Dorian Gray have lived are almost identical; while one of them uses his body as a disguise in order to hide his soul and keep the eternal youth, the other sacrifices his soul and twenty four year's service for the sake of absolute knowledge. Moreover, both characters are not only deprived of their souls but they also end up their lives in a tragic way. In The Body, Adam neither trades with the devil nor is exposed to a supernatural case, but thanks to the overdeveloped technology, he lets his brain transplanted into another young body. In other words, he succumbs to consumer culture's messages of eternal youth and beauty. Although Adam manages to survive physically, unlike Faustus and Dorian, the remaining part of his life is condemned to a similar damnation just like the two protagonists lived.

While all these three characters once had ordinary lives, they all undergo a similar degradation towards the end of their lives. On one side, Faustus gives himself to trivial details like amusing himself with inferior tricks and turns out to be a mediocre magician; on the other side, Adam and Dorian's lives appear as the quintessence of a hedonist or pleasure seeker philosophy. Without any limitation

and having no wonder about the results of their deeds, Adam and Dorian do not miss any opportunity to fulfil their sensual needs. As Adam concludes after the operation, what he needs is to make the most of the pleasure that young age presents to him; “for the first time in years, my body felt sensual and full of intense yearning... [Y]outh itself, [...] was a pleasure that overtook and choked me” (48).

The beginning of their quest for endless pleasures is also similar; the tempter image, which has always been one of the most common motifs in literary works to make the hero lead astray is also used in both Wilde and Kureishi's works. While Lord Henry is the one who tries to manipulate Dorian's life with his puzzling aphorisms, Ralph appears to be the tempter who encourages Adam to dare such an extra ordinary operation. Another similarity, which Kureishi uses in his novella through Ralph's desire to be an actor, is that at the end of Adam's adventure, he visits Ralph just as he is going to perform Dorian Gray's role on stage (Kureishi, 120). Since Dorian Gray has turned out to be the symbol of divided personality for ages, Ralph, as also a new body, plays Dorian's part in order to lay stress on his double identity. Kureishi perhaps implicitly gives the message that together with the brain transplantation operations, each new body will be a Dorian Gray; in other words, due to the double identity they are apt to bear, the real sides of people will not be able to be seen by anyone. As Lacan, who opposed to the idea that “there is a whole self” (Grosz, 1990: 27), suggests the human beings consist of two different components; one is the physical appearance which can publicly be seen by anyone, the other is the soul that remains in privacy. Just like Dorian Gray's mask of beauty, those with new bodies will be concealed under their new bodies. Therefore, in addition to their tragic ends and the two men who pervert their desires, it is certain that the division Adam and Dorian have experienced between their souls and bodies is also the same.

The soul and body as the separate entities have been overemphasized in both Wilde and Kureishi's works. Both novels show and specify that the two parts of a person, namely soul and body, fall apart from each other; in order to emphasize this division, the two writers apply the motif of reflection into their stories. To illustrate, when Dorian first notices the changes on the portrait, he watches them carefully as if he looks at somebody whom he wants to know better. As he realizes very soon, the

portrait he looks at, is the reflection of his soul; in other words, the real part of him is evidently reflected on the portrait. In an ironical way, Oscar Wilde sets the portrait as the indicator of Dorian's soul; "an ever-present sign of the ruin men brought upon their souls" (Wilde, 1994: 112). The more Dorian spoils his "simple and beautiful nature" (Ibid: 21), the more his portrait is deformed. Thus, it is clear that the portrait takes the role of Dorian's soul. Also, Adam's first reaction to his new body when he looks at the mirror is similar to that of Dorian's. After the operation, Adam, just like Dorian, examines his new body as if he were a baby who has first seen his reflection on the mirror. Since Adam's brain has just been taken to another body, he has an unfamiliar appearance which covers his real self. As mentioned in Chapter III., Lacan suggests that each infant realizes the fact that s/he has a different self from the others when s/he sees herself/himself in the mirror (Lacan, 1977: 4). This is the way a person recognizes his/her as a separate person. However, this image is partly reversed in the two novels and rather than distinguishing themselves from the other people, both Adam and Dorian discern their body and soul from one another. They make up a second identity in the society. Adam pretends to be a person he is not; as if he were in a play, he performs a different role. Similarly, as Wilde claims, Dorian's "beauty had been to him a mask" (252). In other words, both Dorian and Adam's selves are hidden under a mask; namely, their bodies.

The two novels seem to depict the characters' bodies as surpassing their soul, in other words, the physical features are denoted as more influential factors than the characters' self identity to determine their identities. However, both writers negate this idea through the events the characters live due to their intense care for their body and the way they conduct and end up their lives. In the previous two chapters both Adam and Dorian's resemblance to the myth of Narcissus has already been mentioned. What is in common between narcissus myth and the characters' lives is that they have to pay the price of their captivation by the corporeal beauties and youth of their bodies. They are all concerned with their bodies to such an extent that they forget about the needs of their souls. Narcissus dies while looking at his own reflection; he is so absorbed by his beauty that nothing else matters for him. When Adam's weary body cannot catch up with his desires, and the fear to die is combined with the possibility to be young again, Adam dares an incredible operation. Since

his new body reminds him of the things he forgot to do long ago, Adam's enthusiasm and curiosity about his new body turns out to be an obsession with it. Dorian has all the blessings of young age, and he takes the advantage of his unspoiled beauty and young body. When his sensual desires capture his life and appear so fatal that he can even murder somebody, Dorian notices the fact that he ignored his soul, a fact Lord Henry tried to explain once. Lord Henry thinks that:

“The aim of life is self-development. To realize one's nature perfectly--that is what each of us is here for. People are afraid of themselves, nowadays. They have forgotten the highest of all duties, the duty that one owes to one's self. Of course, they are charitable. They feed the hungry and clothe the beggar. But *their own souls starve*, and are naked.” (25, *my emphasis*)

The extreme interest on body is the main reason that leads to the destruction of all these three characters' lives. Since they fail to realize the needs of their souls, their lives end up with disaster: Dorian and Narcissus's death and Adam's imprisonment in a foreigner's body.

Adam and Dorian's late repentance and their tragic end is another point they have in common. Having committed so many wicked things, Dorian wants to purify his soul and attempts to do some philanthropic deeds. When he looked at the portrait and saw no change:

“A cry of pain and indignation broke from him. He could see no change, save that in the eyes there was a look of cunning and in the mouth the curved wrinkle of the hypocrite. The thing was still loathsome--more loathsome, if possible, than before--and the scarlet dew that spotted the hand seemed brighter, and more like blood newly spilled. ... why was the red stain larger than it had been? It seemed to have crept like a horrible disease over the wrinkled fingers. There was blood on the painted feet, as though the thing had dripped--blood even on the hand that had not held the knife.” (254)

Dorian realizes that it is too late to reverse his situation. He cannot bear the grief of what he has done with his life, and in order to get rid of the unbearable conscience the portrait reminds him, he stabs the knife into the portrait's heart. Similarly, although Adam seems so eager and passionate to take the advantage of his new body at the beginning, when his new body starts to give him more trouble than delight; he is fed up with his “body holiday” (99), and his pleasure bound life. He feels a kind of resentment and wants to take everything he left behind back; even the

deficiencies of his old body: “I’d had two and a half months of ease and pleasure, and I wanted to prepare for my return- for illness and death” (Kureishi, 62). However, Adam not only cannot turn back to his old body, but he also jeopardizes his life in his new body. Disappointed with the situation he is in, he says: “This wasn’t the death I wanted” (Kureishi, 119). As it has also been stated in the previous chapter, although Adam can save his life, “there was nowhere [he] could go now; not back to [his] wife, to [his] hotel, or to stay with friends” (126). He turns out to be a dead man alive in the world.

In conclusion, no matter what the names of characters in the above mentioned literary works are, no matter what they live and where they live, the consequence that awaits each individual who cannot compromise the unity between his soul and body is similar. If there is a great gap between one’s real self and his public identity, the result is an indispensable division between soul and body. Since people exist in this world through their bodies and they are seen by the other people with their physical existence, every one has to make up a public identity. However, as is also exemplified by all the characters from different writers, the public identity is not the thing that reveals one’s real personality. In order to live among the other people the real selves are disguised. This does not mean that all people are hypocritical or insincere. Whereas the more one’s real self is repressed or hidden from the others, the more his exhibited self loses its credibility. Thus, although they can give some clues, bodies are not the things that can reveal one’s personality, what makes a person is not exhibited publicly but preserved in private.

CONCLUSION

This study has attempted to analyze the role of body in the construction of individual and social identity. Taking the body as the starting point, the relation between body and soul, how the body, as an agent of living in the world, affects a person's private and social life have been discussed. The previous chapters have focused on the common assumption that the body is the reflection of a person's real identity. However, contrary to this common idea, the argument of this thesis is that the body is not and cannot be the only determinant of one's self. It can be asserted that what makes a person composite is the unification of body and self. Therefore, what gives meaning to the body is the soul, while the soul exists through the body. This mutually influential relationship has been explained in detail through the examples from the works of Wilde and Kureishi as well as their intertextual allusions to other literary and mythical contexts.

Adam as an old man, who cannot find the harmony between his soul and body, has undergone a surgical operation. Before the operation he dissociates himself from his body because he cannot feel his old age in his soul and cannot compromise with the fact that people of his age are retired, and mostly taken apart from the rest of the society due to their biological ages. In other words, Adam's two types of aging, as in Featherstone's terms (1982: 3), does not occur at the same time; while his *biological age* is old, he does not feel that he is in the same level as his *social age*. Thus, with the aid of a man named Ralph, Adam has his brain transplanted to another body, which is young and good looking, in order to have a second chance, to be desired and live the things he could not. Ironically, Adam has the chance to conduct his life in a body he has chosen for some time. As can be concluded from this unusual operation, Adam's body does not give the true information about his self. Although he is an old man, his appearance shows him as a man in his twenties. The trouble of the divided self, which everyone more or less lives, has drastic consequences for Adam. While he finds a place among other people with his newly gained physical appearance, since his former self is not revealed through his body Adam is torn between the things his new body offers and the experiences of his former self.

Just like Adam, in addition to the division in his self, Dorian also sets up two different identities. The flesh and blood Dorian and the portrait of Dorian function as the two selves he has in private; moreover, he has a social identity - his beauty and youth enable him to be a person in public. As a result of the wish he has uttered after seeing the portrait painted by an artist, Dorian takes the advantage of eternal youth and beauty in order to lead the life he wishes. Adam takes the pleasure of anything he can; he leads a hedonist life for many years. However, despite the passing years, Dorian remains young contrary to the laws of nature; his body does not bear any kinds of aging and villainy. On the other hand, the portrait, which is hidden from the eyes of other people, turns out to be the one which gets old. Therefore, it can clearly be stated that the physical body Dorian is seen by others is not the real Dorian; it is just like a cover which hides Dorian's real personality. As Dawson Terence states, "Dorian Gray's picture . . . propels the whole train of events leading to the disclosure of his true self" (2004: 117).

Another duality the characters experience is based on their gender choices. While Dorian feels a kind of intimacy for the same sex, the old Adam chooses a young, male body. Adam's new unlimited lifestyle includes all the bodily pleasures. As he states in the novel he finds himself looking at young women and even young men (48). The homosexual relationships in The Picture of Dorian Gray are not clearly expressed; however, the language used for the feelings of characters has such connotations that it can clearly be inferred. The reason why Wilde cannot talk about these tendencies directly is that the Victorian society, which he lived in, had strict rules about such extremes. Since homosexuality is scorned by the society both legally and morally, Wilde can neither write nor reveal his preferences about his gender. Therefore, Wilde, as the writer of the novel, and the characters in his novel have to hide their real feelings. Since homosexuals are not valued and accepted by the other people of the time, it seems necessary for both Wilde and his characters to repress their feelings and construct a second identity. The society frowns at them due to their choices; so if they want to take a place in the society, they have to wear a mask among other people. This disguise they wear also helps the argument of this thesis; thus it can be asserted that since these characters have male appearances, it is impossible to infer their feminine sides through their bodies.

Consequently, in addition to the individual and social dimensions of these characters, they also live a double life in their own selves. In the novels, Dorian and Adam are drawn as the characters whose bodies do not reflect their real personalities. In conclusion; although there is more than a century between the publications of Wilde and Kureishi's novels, they both apply the same theme of duality. The protagonists of the works are the characters who lead two dimensional lives. In addition to the division they experience in their own selves, they also set up a public identity; they pretend to be people they actually are not. While Dorian's beauty surpasses his vice deeds, Adam hides his real self through a young body which does not belong to him. Thus, Dorian's portrait, and Adam's new body can be referred to as both the symbols of the division they live in their selves and they are the things that indicate their ways of masking their true selves, and functioning as disguises for their public identities.

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