Exploring the Meaning of Duality in R. L. Stevenson's Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde

Hadžiselimović, Lara

UNIVERSITY OF RIJEKA

FACULTY OF HUMANITIES AND SOCIAL SCIENCES

Department of English Language and Literature

Lara Hadžiselimović

EXPLORING THE MEANING OF DUALITY IN R. L. STEVENSON'S *STRANGE CASE OF DR. JEKYLL AND MR. HYDE*

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Supervisor: Dr Antonija Primorac, Associate Professor

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Abstract

This thesis will provide an analysis of the different meanings and interpretations of duality in Robert Louis Stevenson's novella *Strange Case of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde (1886).* In order to achieve this, it will primarily concentrate on Henry Jekyll and his transformed self, Edward Hyde, as representative of Victorian duality. Firstly, the thesis will consider the socio-historical context of the Victorian times, with an emphasis on the concept of the private and public self, as well as the results of, then prevailing, societal restrictions and norms. It will then continue to analyse the two characters, Jekyll and Hyde, by exploring the ways in which their duality can be read as a reflection of both the conflicting desires and gender identity.

Keywords: Robert Louis Stevenson, duality, Jekyll and Hyde, Victorian society, social norms, double life, public and private sphere

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1. Introduction

Strange Case of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde is a novella written by the Scottish novelist Robert Louis Stevenson, published in 1886. The novella is centred around the notion of duality in human nature, specifically, the idea that humans are complex beings composed of both good and evil, morality and immorality. This theme of duality, which is central to Stevenson's novella, is portrayed through the opposition of good and evil in the characters of Dr Henry Jekyll, a well-respected scientist, and Mr Edward Hyde, his devilish counterpart. The 'better' Dr Jekyll, led by his ambition to separate his 'worse' side, conducts a transformative experiment leading to the creation of Mr Hyde. At the outset, the experiment seems successful, and Mr Hyde is free to engage in activities that are both appalling and illegal, while Dr Jekyll remains respectable and faces no consequences. Eventually, Dr Jekyll loses control of both Mr Hyde and the transformations, as the two become progressively more entwined.

The Jekyll and Hyde narrative lends itself particularly well to different readings and interpretations which may possibly have contributed to its many adaptations. The reason for these readings can be found in the novella's ambiguity. For instance, the vagueness of the scientific explanations of the transformative potion, use of vague concepts such as good and evil, or moral, amoral, and immoral, inviting the readers to fill in the blanks as they deem appropriate. Claire Harman in her biography of Robert L. Stevenson even goes as far as to say there is "little motivation to read the book" given that "the story is now so embedded in popular culture that it hardly exists as a work of literature" (Harman 243). Owing to the multitude of adaptations, the phrase 'Jekyll and Hyde' has become synonymous with a number of concepts in popular culture. For example, in movie, or other adaptations, we encounter the tropes of the evil twin, the

doppelganger, the alter-ego, the double, and so on. In everyday discourse, the phrase 'Jekyll and Hyde' is usually used to describe an individual with a two-sided personality, changing from the good and pleasant side to the evil and malicious one without warning, much like Jekyll's transformation into Hyde. More often than not, people are aware of the phrase's meaning without ever having read the novella it originated from.

This thesis will focus on the notion of duality and the way it was portrayed in the novella itself, looking at its place within the broader Victorian social context. The concept of social class has always been an important aspect of English society, particularly in the nineteenth century, where it influenced quite a few aspects of one's life. This influence ranged from the way people dressed, held themselves, communicated, the opinions and beliefs they held, where and whom they associated with, and so forth. Those with a similar family background, education, and wealth, that is to say, those who belonged to the same social class, were part of similar social circles. Social class can be defined as "one's position in the economic hierarchy in society that arises from a combination of annual income, educational attainment, and occupation prestige" (Kraus et al. 423), or in simpler terms, "a group of people within society who have the same economic and social position" (Cambridge Dictionary). It could be said that, in order to meet the rigorous standards of the Victorian society, people felt the need to restrain and repress parts of themselves considered unacceptable. The idea that humans are creatures of duality was extremely problematic because the very standards of the time implied that immorality was not allowed to exist in any shape or form, and duality in human nature presupposes an inherent good and evil side. However, with double standards came a double life. This pertained especially to individuals who were successful and respected and thus held a prominent position in society. An example of this could be found in Stevenson's character of Dr Jekyll, seeing as his desire to purge his immorality, and overcome his

dual nature, was born of those same dual standards, that same dual society. The influence of social standards is evident in the fact that Dr Jekyll, who was considered a respectable well-mannered doctor, was continuously reminded of the existence of 'his devil', the worse side of him that should not see the light of day, that is, if he were to keep his position.

This thesis will thus discuss the notion of duality in Robert L. Stevenson's *Strange Case of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde* in terms of the theme of duality of the self, while taking into consideration the duality of the Victorian society, the concept of the unitary self and gender identity. This duality of the Victorian society will be analysed with reference to the standards of the time which were not only hypocritical and allowed men to lead double lives but also appeared to promote such a lifestyle. Furthermore, it will argue that middle-class Victorians, such as Jekyll, could not but separate their public and private selves to satisfy their conflicting desires, in order to both be a respectable public persona living in compliance with Victorian societal norms, and use their private persona to satisfy their deviant desires. Additionally, gender identity will be observed by means of two notions, namely, the normative and transgressive gender identity associated with different embodiments of English masculinity.

2. Duality and the Victorian society

If one were to say anything about the notion of duality in Victorian society, one must first consider the socio-historical context of nineteenth century England. In order to do so, this section will put the emphasis on the notion of hypocrisy of the Victorian society, while also mentioning the notions of morality and social control. Houghton defines Victorian hypocrisy in a threefold manner, and according to him, "conformity, moral pretension and evasion – […] [were] the hallmarks of Victorian hypocrisy." (Houghton 395). Before focusing on the three characteristics of hypocrisy, it should be noted that if we are to hold the Victorians accountable for being hypocritical, then "the term must not carry its usual connotations of guilt" and should, instead be used "as a synonym for insincerity." (Houghton 395). Additionally, not all hypocritical people are behaving in a hypocritical manner in order to gain something out of it, and thus not all hypocrisy is conscious and calculated. Some Victorians, argues Houghton, are "conforming to the conventions out of sheer habit, or an understandable piece of self-deception." (Houghton 395). Moreover, even when one is behaving hypocritically and doing so consciously, they may as well be doing so for no reason in particular. Some may believe that "candour would do more harm than good", or as a form of "pardonable self-protection" (Houghton 395), or protection of one's family.

2.1 Conformity

The first hallmark of Victorian hypocrisy is conformity, which refers to the concealment and suppression of one's true beliefs and principles, as well as one's innate tastes. Consequently, the Victorians' actions and words reflected their support of conformity, and thus saying and doing the 'right' thing was always high on their list of priorities. (Houghton 395). What caused the conformity to root itself in Victorian society was the fear of standing out. Individuality was bound

to distinguish one from the rest of the class, making them “look like an outsider or an upstart” (Houghton 395). For someone trying to avoid being singled out, it was that much easier to “avoid any ideas and behaviour which by distinguishing him from his class” (Houghton 395) and blend in with the majority. According to Houghton, “the proper thing to do is not only what the individual wants to do in order to belong to good society, or what he does do out of ingrained habit; it is also what he must do if he is to avoid social stigma.” (Houghton 397). In a way, conformity could be considered a necessity for survival in society of the time. Public opinion played an important role in the perception of an individual, as well as their status in society. Houghton quotes Bagehot to further paint the picture of public opinion as “a permeating influence, and (which) exacts obedience to itself; it requires us to think other men's thoughts, to speak other men's words, to follow other men's habits.” (Bagehot 4-5 quoted in Houghton 397). In order to conform, a person had to renounce their individuality, and by doing so, they were never truly themselves.

In connection to the idea of renouncing one’s individuality, it might be useful to mention the notion of social control. While discussing the notion of social control in Victorian society, Francis Thompson states that there is nothing “particularly new in observing that those who have power, authority, and influence seek to use these to protect and preserve the state of things which gives them power, and to maintain the peaceful, and preferably contented, subordination of those less comfortable than themselves.” (Thompson 189). Bearing this in mind, it could be argued that, to some extent, the goal of social control was achieving conformity. Furthermore, by conforming, one renounced their individuality for acceptance. Regarding social control, socialisation can be described as “the process whereby people learn the rules and practices of their group, and (where) the expected and accepted forms of behaving are transmitted.” (190). It was generally believed that those under no parental, social or other control were to grow up to be dangerous. For example,

Thompson states that, the children who attended the Spitalfields school for the poor, “bereft of the influence of working parents”, were “suspected of being vicious little heathens, lying, stealing, and being sexually precocious as well as dirty, and only too likely to grow up into dangerous characters.” (Thompson 192). Here Thompson essentially identifies some characteristics considered undesirable in the Victorian society, such as lying, stealing, sexual precocity, and dirtiness.

The reformers believed that people, “who in the absence of proper guidance and training” (Thompson 192) were disposed towards becoming dangerous, and as such, could bring about the downfall of the current social order. As that social order was beneficial to the reformers, a mere possibility of rebellion was a sign to that something needed to be done. Therefore, it “was obvious that the situation called for urgent action to eradicate anti-social tendencies and breed respect for law and order, other people, and other people’s property.” (Thompson 192). Their solution was to socialise the people and teach them to conform to societal conventions, rules, and morals, and thus become respected members of society. The methods used are those of social control in which people would be taught “in the principles of piety and virtue; in the necessity of honesty, veracity, and sobriety; and of having them at the same time inured to habits of subordination, industry, and cleanliness” (McCann 2 quoted in Thompson, 192). In Thompson's words, the intention was to “produce children, and thus adults, who would make well-behaved members of the community; good behaviour meant that they should be properly equipped in morals, manners, and thoughts for a submissive, obedient, and inferior role in society, conditioned not to challenge or disturb the position and authority of their superiors.” (Thompson 192). In his article, Thompson notes that those who attended public day schools, such as Spitalfields, accepted those parts of education they deemed necessary and useful, while rejecting the moral and controlling aspects such education

offered. Even though the reformers set out to provide guidance and training to individuals who possessed characteristics to become, what the Victorians deemed, 'dangerous characters', the result was not one they expected as they only facilitated the spread of literacy amongst the people. Social control, as described by Thompson in his article, is surveyed by looking at the ideology the middle class implemented on the working class and the poor. The implication here is that the middle class, both lower middle class and upper middle class, had to abide by those same standards to keep the social order intact. Needless to say, this included Dr Jekyll who was considered a member of the upper middle class, along with Lanyon, another doctor, „colleague and old school companion" (Stevenson 48), and Mr Utterson, a lawyer and one of Jekyll's only friends. Jekyll and his colleagues were the ones who, unquestionably, benefited from their social standing. From their perspective, no change was necessary since they were not the ones getting the short end of the stick. Furthermore, this is proven by Jekyll adding Hyde to his will in case "anything befell (him) in the person of Doctor Jekyll" (Stevenson 59). Even if Jekyll were to take the fall, he would „profit by the strange immunities of (his) position" (Stevenson 60), and continue to exist as Hyde.

Stevenson elaborates on the notion that a person cannot achieve true happiness if they renounce their individuality for the sake of a society that has conditioned its people to live under conformity. In the eyes of society, Jekyll was a respectable, law-abiding citizen who conformed to societal rules. However, in reality, he merely sacrificed his individuality in favour of societal acceptance. In his article about the anatomy of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde, Irving Saposnik claims that "mere disguise is never sufficient for his ambition and his failure goes beyond hypocrisy, a violation of social honesty, until it touches upon moral transgression, a violation of the physical and metaphysical foundations of human existence." (Saposnik 721). Upon realising his duality, Jekyll "attempts to isolate his two selves into individual beings and allow each to go his separate

way." (Saposnik 721). Jekyll had been renouncing his individuality up to the moment when he realised he could have both, his individuality in the form of devious behaviour, and societal acceptance as a bourgeois Briton. "The tension between splitting and joining reappears here as the basis of Jekyll's scientific project, his sense of the continuous struggle between his 'two natures' as a curse" (Garrett 192) lead to his daydreaming "on the thought of the separation of these elements." (Stevenson 56). In his daydreams he speculated whether each of his natures "could but be housed in separate identities", which, he claimed would relieve his life „of all that was unbearable." (Stevenson 56). If his daydream were to become reality, "the unjust (part of him) might go his way, delivered from the aspirations and remorse of his more upright twin; and the just could walk steadfastly and securely on his upward path, doing the good things in which he found his pleasure, and no longer exposed to disgrace and penitence by the hands of this extraneous evil." (Stevenson 56). By separating his 'good' and 'evil' self, Jekyll could finally strike the balance between appearing proper in the eyes of society on one side and satisfying his innermost desires on the other. Additionally, Saposnik maintains that even though we might believe that the separation of Jekyll's dual persona has proven successful, in reality, it was nothing but a failed experiment. The purpose of the experiment, notes Saposnik, was for Jekyll to "free himself from the burden of duality" (Saposnik 715). However, the fact that he even considered conducting the experiment to begin with, goes to show that he remains "a victim of society's standards even while he would be free of them." (Saposnik 715).

2.2 Moral Pretension

Moral pretension, as the second hallmark of hypocrisy, refers to the Victorians' belief that they were superior to everybody else, as well as their tendency to make a pretence of being more

religious and moral than they actually were. Houghton states that although the Victorians "talked noble sentiments", in reality, they lived "quite opposite" (Houghton 395). The Victorian period was a "period of much higher standards of conduct – too high for human nature." (Houghton 404-405). Some requirements were "to support Christianity by church attendance and active charity, to accept the moral ideals of earnestness, enthusiasm and sexual purity…" (Houghton 147), the most detestable amongst them being "the unctuous mouthing of pious sentiments and a sanctimonious prudery." (Houghton 408). On the other hand, certain critics, like Himmelfarb, believed that the virtues that were at the core of the Victorian morality were those considered mundane or even lowly. These virtues included hard work, sobriety, frugality, foresight, and they were attainable by everyone regardless of breeding, or status, or talent, or valour, or grace or money. (Himmelfarb 231). By focusing on ordinary virtues and ordinary people, the "Victorian ethos located responsibility and authority within each individual." (Himmelfarb 231), ultimately resulting in a shift of responsibility, moral and other, to the individual. In both cases, moral pretension seems to presuppose at least some level of insincerity and self-deception considering most did not abide by the moral codes they were, supposedly, advocating for.

As a Victorian man, Jekyll was "haunted constantly by an inescapable sense of division." (Saposnik 716). He was always both a "rational and sensual being", a "public and private man," a "civilised and bestial creature". (Saposnik 716). Authors like Vladimir Nabokov describe Jekyll's morality as neither good nor bad. Nabokov claims that, as most human beings, Jekyll is "a composite being, a mixture of good and bad, a preparation consisting of a ninety-nine percent solution of Jekyllite and one percent of Hyde" (Nabokov 185); Hyde is both fused with him, and within him. Therefore, he too, was a victim of moral pretension, a mere "actor, playing only that part of himself suitable to the occasion." (Saposnik 716). In an attempt to justify himself and his

moral standards, Jekyll explains how “at that time (his) virtue slumbered” and his “evil, kept awake by ambition, was alert and swift to seize the occasion”, and in turn “the thing that was projected was Edward Hyde.” (Stevenson 59). The ‘evil’ in him awoke at moments after he lowered his guard down, leading to a decline in his morals and, consequently, appearance of Hyde. As time went by, Jekyll’s transformations became more frequent, and he grew more comfortable and more efficient in playing the role that befit a given situation. An aspect relevant to Jekyll’s moral pretence is his moral rigidity, evident in the inability to cope with “the necessary containment of his dual being” (Saposnik 721). His experiment, conducted under the guise of science, is in reality, rooted in his selfishness and moral cowardice.

In relation to the standards of Victorian society, Jekyll’s morals are doubtful at the very least. He is described by Nabokov as being “a hypocritical creature carefully concealing his little sins.” (Nabokov 185), as well as being vindictive, never forgiving, and foolhardy. Even before the appearance of Hyde, Jekyll’s morality must have been sufficiently permissive for him to even consider the division of the self in the first place. This is noticeable as Jekyll observes his new form and bears no particular emotions towards it at first. The mood is that of an “unqualified identification” (Garrett 189), followed up by acceptance. Eventually, though, his emotional stance shifts again as it “moves toward equally unqualified denial and dissociation” (Garrett 189) in regard to his other self. As revealed by Jekyll in the full statement of the case, he claimed to have “thrived upon duplicity and his reputation has been maintained largely upon his successful ability to deceive.” (Saposnik 721). Nevertheless, “though so profound a double dealer”, he does not ascribe himself the title of hypocrite. Rather, he claims “both sides of me were in dead earnest; I was no more myself when I laid aside restraint and plunged in shame, than when I laboured, in the eye of day, at the furtherance of knowledge or the relief of sorrow and suffering.” (Stevenson 55).

In order to protect the pretence of morality and keep a clear conscience, in the full statement of the case, he maintains the self-delusion of Jekyll being separate from Hyde. In his words, what happens after the conviction "concerns another than (himself)" (Stevenson 70). Because of Hyde's failure of recognising reality causes him to never be "able to see beyond his initial deception" and "remains convinced that the incompatible parts of his being can be separated" (Saposnik 724). For example, in the note he left for his lawyer and friend, Gabriel Utterson, Henry Jekyll dismisses the charges and refuses to take responsibility for the murder of Sir Danvers Carew, saying he was in a "fit of… delirium, struck through the heart by a cold thrill of terror" (Stevenson 64) during the confrontation. Jekyll claims he was not in control of his actions, the reason for that being that his "second and worse (self)" (Stevenson 62), that is Edward Hyde, had been in control at that time. This too, supports the implication that Jekyll, at that point, thought of Hyde as a separate being, one he had no control of and for whose actions he was, thus, not responsible. (Herdman 136). The tragic outcome is, as Herdman put it, that "Hyde alone is guilty, while Jekyll's conscience is relaxed and slumbers." (Herdman 136). In Gilbert Chesterton's words, what we have to be mindful of is that:

> the real stab of the story is not in the discovery that the one man is two men; but in the discovery that the two men are one man. After all the diverse wandering and warring of those two incompatible beings, there was still one man born and only one man buried. (…) The point of the story is not that a man can cut himself off from his conscience, but that he cannot. (Chesterton 183-184).

At first, Jekyll believes he has successfully turned his dream into reality, saying he "had now two characters as well as two appearances" where "one was wholly evil, and the other was still (…) that incongruous compound" (Stevenson 59) we recognise as Henry Jekyll. Garrett acknowledges

Jekyll is aware of this "asymmetrical relation" of his characters, saying that "his later account of their attitudes toward each other elaborates this pattern." (Garrett 192). Proof of this asymmetrical relation is found at the point Jekyll realises his two selves are merging. As Jekyll was slowly losing control over the form of his body, it was becoming more apparent that, albeit unconsciously, he was becoming merged with his "second and worse" (Stevenson 63). Jekyll found himself in a predicament where he felt he had to choose one or the other. The asymmetrical relation between the two arises because, while Hyde did not enjoy any advantages or disadvantages because of Jekyll, Jekyll now, having experienced the advantages of living as Hyde, has no desire to revert to being the ordinary doctor, Jekyll. At some level there is, and always will be "a part of himself that wants to be Hyde, (while) there is nothing in Hyde that wants to be Jekyll, no inducement sufficient to encourage him to undergo the reverse transformation." (Herdman 136).

2.3 Evasion

The aspect of evasion could be seen in the Victorians' refusal to view life truthfully and realistically. Houghton defines evasion as "a process of deliberately ignoring whatever was unpleasant, and pretending it did not exist, which led in turn to the further insincerity of pretending that the happy view of things was the whole truth." (Houghton 413). Instead of acknowledging a problem, most Victorians opted for shutting their eyes "to whatever was ugly or unpleasant and pretended it did not exist." (Houghton 395). For the Victorians, it was easier to live an undisturbed life, thus creating an illusory truth that had little to do with objective reality. In all probability, living a life with such a skewed perception of reality was going to lead to more problems than evasion set out to avoid.

Furthermore, critics such as Houghton believe that what made "clear-eyed self-examination rare and difficult" was the people's "intense desire to cling to Christianity (…), with the correlative fears of finding doubt in the mind or evil in the heart, and the general pressure to adopt good attitudes" (Houghton 413). Moreover, in the case of Jekyll, who was introspective to some extent, he could still be charged with some degree of evasion. From the titles alone, it is evident Dr Jekyll is a man well educated, in both fields of medicine and law. The titles Dr Jekyll held were many; He was a Doctor of Medicine (M.D.) and Doctor of Civil Law (D.C.L), Doctor of Laws (LL.D.), and even a Fellow of the Royal Society (F.R.S). Besides his education, Jekyll's social standing allowed him to understand society's inner workings better than most. Even Jekyll himself made his predispositions clear saying he "was born in the year 18 — to a large fortune, endowed besides with excellent parts, inclined by nature to industry, fond of the respect of the wise and good among my fellow-men, and thus, as might have been supposed, with every guarantee of an honourable and distinguished future." (Stevenson 55). Aware of his circumstances and the hypocrisy of Victorian society, Jekyll could have easily navigated the public sphere to his benefit, to achieve an 'honourable future'. That being said, while he was aware of the society's evasive tendencies, he did not want to decide between his just and unjust self. This, we could say, is the root of Henry Jekyll's evasion. He still wanted to enjoy both sides of life and lived under pretence of his Jekyll persona being the whole truth, while keeping his more despicable self, hidden. In relation to Thompson's statement that "those who have power, authority, and influence seek to use these to protect and preserve the state of things which gives them power" (Thompson 189), one could say Jekyll's decision to lead a double life is justified in case his aim was to preserve the current state of things, ultimately preserving his honourable future as Jekyll, and satisfying his

animal-like desires as Hyde. Additionally, this would also enable Jekyll to keep his current position in society, and the pretence of his morality, unharmed.

Conformity deemed it necessary that people follow rigorous rules and behave in accordance with socially accepted principles, thus sacrificing their individuality. However, in reality, people in either supressed their deepest desires or acted upon them by creating another persona, one that was able to exist out of the public eye. Moral pretension builds on the concept of conformity in such a way that again, there is a persona that is portrayed in public as highly moral, and therefore better than others, while reality paints a different picture. Lastly, evasion is centred around the idea that everything unpleasant could be discarded, or simply put away where nobody could witness it. It further advanced the illusion of a double reality, one that is real and unpleasant, and one that was not. When brought together, we can see that it was precisely these three concepts that served to demonstrate that the way Victorian society was organised is what, ultimately, enabled hypocrisy that occurs in humans to flourish, and in turn, contributed to the development of a double life that is exemplified in the characters of Henry Jekyll i.e. Edward Hyde.

3. Duality of the Unitary Self

3.1 Attempts at a scientific reading

The discussion on Victorian duality can be continued from a scientific point of view, where the concept of the double brain was put forward as one of the most infamous reasons for such an argument at the time. Anne Stiles, for example, claims the novella parodies the form of the case study. Especially relevant are the case studies of the brain as a double organ, such as cases of Félida X. and Sergeant F., who both represented, what late-Victorian physiologists called, a dual personality, "a disorder often explained (…) in terms of bilateral hemisphere imbalance." (Stiles 891). Most theories about the double brain advanced during the nineteenth century suggested the possibility that both of the brain's hemispheres could function independently, without the interference of the other. Another relevant theory was that put forward by psychologist Alfred Myers and advocated by his brother, Frederic Myers. According to them the multiple personality disorder also relies on the activity of the brain's hemispheres, that is, their inhibition. In his article on the multiplex personality, Frederic Myers argues on topic the "mutable character of that which we know as the Personality of man." (Myers 496-497 quoted in Linehan 134). He does so by presenting examples of the extent "to which the dissociation of memories, faculties, sensibilities may be carried without resulting in mere insane chaos, mere demented oblivion" (Myers 496-497 quoted in Linehan 134) by means of the inhibition of the brain's hemispheres. The idea is if one were to inhibit a person's left brain, and respectively the right side of the body, that person's actions would be overridden by the right brain and "he becomes, as one may say, not only left-handed but sinister; he manifests himself through nervous arrangements which have reached a lower degree of evolution". (Myers 499-500 quoted in Linehan 134). On the other hand, if one

were to inhibit a person's right side of brain, and the left side of their body, the "higher qualities of character (…) like the power of speech" (Myers 499-500 quoted in Linehan 134) would remain intact.

3.2 A Frankfurtian account of desires

However, both theories were disregarded in favour of other theories that postulated a unitary consciousness, as opposed to a multiplicity of one. One recent theory was proposed by Jessica Cook in her article on the unitary self, where she explicitly argues against Myers's claim of Jekyll and Hyde being exemplar of the multiple personality disorder. Myers was confident that Stevenson's novella represented this theory, so much so that he even provided "detailed suggestions on how to better align Jekyll and Hyde with recent discoveries about multiple personality disorder" (Cook 93), making sure the novella did not involve any inconsistencies. However, even after exchanging several letters with Myers, Stevenson dismissed his pleas and chose not to revise the story. Cook believes that the 'inconsistencies' in Jekyll and Hyde, the semi-permeable boundary between their identities, viewed from the scientific perspective of the multiple personality disorder, were not accidental. Additionally, if the inconsistencies were meant to be included, discussing the narrative of Jekyll and Hyde as a model for the multiple personality disorder would be in vain.

Instead, Cook suggests that Jekyll and Hyde is about "desiring while desiring not to" (Cook 94), or rather, about second-order desires. Jekyll's most overwhelming desires, ones that define his persona, are in conflict. He both desires to remain respectable and deviant, or rather, desires to be deviant while desiring not to. In other words, although Jekyll knew what was right and expected of him, he felt like he could not live under such a pretence and needed to find an outlet. This outlet

was realised through another persona, Hyde, who represented the part he wanted to keep hidden from the public eye. Moreover, the concept of second-order desires and second-order volitions which Cook references in her article stems from philosophical debates on the freedom of the will and the self.

In his article *'Freedom of the Will and the Concept of a Person'*, Harry Frankfurt introduces the concept of first and second-order desires. He argues that even though there are certain aspects humans share with other species, such as desires as motives, there are a number of qualities only human beings possess. One of these qualities, according to Frankfurt, is the ability to form second-order desires and second-order volitions. As Frankfurt observes, "besides wanting and choosing and being moved to do this or that, men may also want to have (or not to have) certain desires and motives. They are capable of wanting to be different, in their preferences and purposes, from what they are." (Frankfurt 7). Our desires have a hierarchical structure. First-order desires include objects or states of affairs, and they are usually not given much consideration or thought. Simply stated, they are "desires to do or not to do one thing or another" (Frankfurt 7). In contrast, second-order desires are completely different because they require psychological complexity to assess the consequences of one's actions and how they may have an impact on the future. Second-order desires are preferences we have towards our first-order desires, and they can be in favour of or against them. Additionally, second-order volitions are what Frankfurt believes is essential when it comes to debating whether a being is also a person. Having second-order volitions means to want "a certain desire to be (their) will" (Frankfurt 10). It is important to note that second-order desires differ from second-order volitions. In brief, a second-order desire is a desire to have a certain desire, whereas a second-order volition is a desire that a certain desire be one's will.

In the context of Jekyll and Hyde, for instance, one could say that Jekyll does not want to be free of his deviant urges as he still recognises them as a part of himself. Freeing himself of such desires would definitely make it easier for him to live out his life as a respectable Victorian gentleman, but he neither wants to, nor has the means to do that. If he were to be free of his devious desires, he would not be truly himself. Although conflicting, his desires seem equally important to him, so he chooses to take the easier way out. He chooses not to give up either and therefore becomes both the gentleman and criminal. Furthermore, Myers would not accept that there could be shared psychological aspects between Jekyll and Hyde, as he believes them to be completely separate. However, the self, as Cook observes, remains unitary "in the face of such conflicting desires" (Cook 94). These conflicting desires could be seen as a result of society where one could not truly come into being one's true self, except by hiding undesirable parts of themselves. In a society where much was prohibited and there was a pressure to keep up appearances, one's devious desires seemed even more devious in comparison. As Wilde notes, society enforces normative behaviour by coercing people to make a choice "between living one's own life, fully, entirely, completely – or dragging out some false, shallow, degrading existence that the world in its hypocrisy demands" (Wilde act 2, lines 287–90 quoted in Cook 109). In other words, "Jekyll's early impulse to hide his deviant desire because it threatens his ability to conform to bourgeois society's expectations eventually germinates into his creation of Hyde" (Cook 102).

Additionally, one of the most obvious signs that Jekyll and Hyde has nothing to do with the multiple personality disorder, but rather represents a conflict withing the unitary self, is their shared consciousness. However, the self being unitary does not mean it is homogenous. As Jekyll himself observes, "of the two natures that contended in the field of my consciousness, even if I could rightly be said to be either, it was only because I was radically both" (Stevenson 56). With

the assistance of a transformative potion which allows him to "engage in perverse behaviour without feeling shame" (Cook 101) and "safeguard him from the sudden emergence of painful memories" (Cook 102), Jekyll is able to shift the blame to Hyde. Additionally, by evading responsibility, he can act as if the deviant desires are not his, but Hyde's, although he experiences pleasure from them, nonetheless. At first glance it seems that Jekyll does not want to be violent or murder people, Hyde does. Immediately after the first consummation of the transformative potion, Jekyll felt relieved that he could achieve his desires through Hyde and bear none of the repercussions or shame. After the agonising transformation, Jekyll observes he "came to (himself) as if out of a great sickness" and immediately "felt younger, lighter, happier in body" (Stevenson 57). Additionally, following the transformation, Jekyll recounts:

> (…) within I was conscious of a heady recklessness, a current of disordered sensual images running like a mill race in my fancy, a solution of the bonds of obligation, an unknown but not an innocent freedom of the soul. I knew myself, at the first breath of this new life, to be more wicked, tenfold more wicked, sold a slave to my original evil; and the thought, in that moment, braced and delighted me like wine. (Stevenson 57)

Cook notes that, at times, "in sober moments of reflection, Jekyll becomes increasingly distressed by his recollections of licentious acts and disgusted by continued uncontrollable urges" (Cook 101). In the full statement of the case, Jekyll admits to having an "imperious desire to carry (his) head high and wear a more than commonly grave countenance before the public." (Stevenson 55). The "high views that (he) had set before (himself)" were incompatible with his desire for deviance, so the only thing he could do was to conceal his pleasures. As time went by, and Jekyll reflected on his deeds and misdeeds, he realised he "stood already committed to a profound duplicity of life" (Stevenson 55). This could be seen as a form of escapism that allows Jekyll to

continue his everyday life as a distinguished doctor and remain in the same social circle as his colleague Dr Lanyon, and Mr Utterson. For instance, when Jekyll found himself sitting on a bench at Regent's Park reminiscing over the murder of Sir Carew, "the animal within (him) licking the chops of memory; the spiritual side a little drowsed" (Stevenson 66), he was still "comparing (himself) with other men, comparing (his) active goodwill with the lazy cruelty of their neglect." (Stevenson 66). At that moment, Jekyll is involuntarily transformed into Hyde. The reason for this, argues Cook, is his attempt to articulate incompatible desires: "his sadistic desire to replay memories of Sir Carew's murder and his hypocritical impulse to judge his peers—at the same time" (Cook 104).

In the case of Jekyll and Hyde, Jekyll must "either resolve deep psychological inconsistencies or manage the consequences of living with a divided mind" (Cook 94). Although he tried, Jekyll could not accomplish either. As previously mentioned, he was always aware of the conflict in his psychology, but this was never an either-or situation to him. At times, Jekyll tried reasoning with himself saying "It was Hyde, after all, and Hyde alone, that was guilty" (Stevenson 60), which was immediately followed by stating that "Jekyll was no worse; he woke again to his good qualities seemingly unimpaired; he would even make haste, where it was possible, to undo the evil done by Hyde. And thus his conscience slumbered." (Stevenson 60). Jekyll's conscience was clean, although the evil done by Hyde could not be undone by any means. Through the character of Jekyll, Stevenson acknowledges one could not exist with such an inner conflict without resolving it in some manner. Although dividing one's consciousness was the only way for Jekyll to exist and keep his position in society, it was extremely difficult, if not impossible, to divide one's consciousness, which ultimately leads to Jekyll's suicide.

While there were various theories which considered the concept of Jekyll and Hyde's duality, those who leaned towards a more scientific explanation were quick to be overlooked. Those in favour of such theories argued that the source of Jekyll's duality was a multiplicity of personas in a singular body, or, as they claimed, a singular brain. However, such theories required changes to be made to the novella in order to remain credible, which defies the purpose of interpretation. On the contrary, Cook's theory is far more believable, and the novella itself supports it. Thus, her theory on the unitary self is one that is here advocated. She makes a case for a theory of the unitary self which postulated that Jekyll's duality arose from a multiplicity of conflicting desires surfacing in one brain, that is, one person. This proves that duality developed and became part of everyday life, as a consequence of repressed deviant desires, the inability of self-expression, and the Victorian way of life in general. The limitations to the expression of one's self can also be traced back to the Victorian gender norms, especially the notion of masculinity.

4. Duality and Victorian Masculinity

In this section, the duality of the personas presented by Jekyll and Hyde will be examined in terms of a conflict between the different embodiments of English masculinity in nineteenth-century England, as well as the "malleability of fictional identity", in order to illustrate "the superficial nature of social standing". (O'Dell 509). Cohen claimed these conflicted embodiments of masculinity to be normative and transgressive.

4.1 Normative and Transgressive identity

The term normative describes anything that either relates to, or determines, norms or standards, or conforms to, or is based on norms (Merriam-Webster), whereas transgressive is used to define anything "involving a violation of moral or social boundaries." (Oxford Dictionaries). In short, while normative embodiments imply conformity to societal standards, transgressive embodiments violate them. According to Ed Cohen, the conflict between those dual embodiments of masculinity is what makes it easier to understand the "contradictions that permeate these opposing configurations of male gender identity" (Cohen 182).

Additionally, there is an unspoken opposition in the assumption about the male character, asserting that the male character is supposed to embody the attributes of "a (male) person and a gender ideology that qualifies masculinity as "proper" male character." (Cohen 182). By drawing a distinction between Jekyll and Hyde, Stevenson presents a striking contrast so as to reveal the absurdity that is Victorian masculinity and male gender identity. The duo also serves to show how "fictional depictions of English masculinity often narrativise the difficulties of male embodiment as a splitting within the male subject precisely in order to assert new modes of self-representation"

(Cohen 183). In order for Jekyll to be himself, he needed to embody both the normative and transgressive aspects of his masculinity. In this manner, Jekyll would remain a part of the public sphere, and Hyde would revel in the private sphere which would allow Jekyll the self-fulfilment he so desperately desires. These aspects of his masculinity were represented by the split psychology, and the conflicting desires they signified, in which Jekyll would be regarded as the normative, and Hyde the transgressive self. Both were needed for Jekyll to be able to remain true to himself in society of that day.

The result of this opposition is a dilemma surrounding the male identity crisis which states that "while all men 'naturally' and consistently ought to be men by virtue of possessing male bodies, only some men are 'real' (a.k.a. bourgeois English) men, insofar as they embody the appropriate class-defined, nationally inflected gender attributes" (Cohen 182). As long as one embodied properties of real Englishmen, they would assume a position of power in society. In this manner, Jekyll's perceived social identity, which is normative, allows him to assume a favourable position in society, that of a doctor and a bourgeois Englishman. Accordingly, Hyde represents the opposite, the transgressive identity which is devious and does not merit a prominent position in society. Similarly, if one were to lose those properties, the opposite would follow. The relationship between the English middle-class men and what Cohen calls his 'others', paired with a conflict-ridden social and political context, uncovered "latent instabilities in masculine property and propriety that had remained obscured when unchallenged" (Cohen 183). Having wanted to preserve their privileged position, they aimed to get to the root of these instabilities. The way they intended to achieve this is by forming a new conception of superiority that worked in their favour.

Because of this, in fiction, English masculinity was prevalently represented through narratives of "the difficulties of male embodiment as a splitting within the male subject (…) in order to assert new modes of self-representation." (Cohen 183). Moreover, these fictional depictions made possible other imaginings of middle-class masculinity. The instabilities of Jekyll's masculinity derived from, as mentioned previously, the instabilities in his desires. Furthermore, in the novella, Jekyll's identity as a 'real' man is only superficial. Jekyll is aware he would not be able to keep up appearances if Hyde were to be revealed as a part of him. Owing to Jekyll and Hyde's shared consciousness, memory, handwriting style, and even aesthetic tastes (Cook 93), Jekyll's selfhood can be considered unitary, as previously established. Therefore, Jekyll could not simply dispose of Hyde if he wanted to, and it seems that even if given the opportunity, he would not do it. In describing Hyde, Jekyll notes that Hyde too, was himself, and upon seeing him in the mirror he was "conscious of no repugnance, rather of a leap of welcome. (…) It seemed natural and human" (Stevenson 58).

Therefore, Cohen suggests that *Strange Case of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde* was an early indication of the male modernist novel, which was written at the culmination of developments in narration that played a role in the establishment of "contemporary forms of male embodiment and/as self-representation. (Cohen 183). As an exemplar of 'a contemporary form of male embodiment', the novella begins by revealing Jekyll to be endowed with characteristics one might find in a true English middle-class man. Specifically, it introduces Jekyll with "properties of class and gender" (Cohen 191) that were supposed to guarantee his life as middle-class gentleman. However, it is not long until Stevenson abandons the idea of Jekyll being representative of a "class-determined, masculine ideal" (Cohen 191). Jekyll is therefore made to claim the following:

> And indeed the worst of my faults was a certain impatient gaiety of disposition, such as has made the happiness of many, but such as I found it hard to reconcile with my imperious desire to carry my head high and wear a more than commonly grave countenance before the public. Hence it came about that I concealed my pleasures; and that when I reached years of reflection, and began to look round me and take stock of my progress and position in the world, I stood already committed to a profound duplicity of life. (Stevenson 55).

Were it not for that duplicity of life, particularly his devious desires, Jekyll would have been an ideal example of middle-class values, and accordingly, a true English middle-class man. Instead, we are presented with a "retrospective reflection on the trajectory which led to his partial discovery" and "foregrounds the multiple determinants that must be made to cohere in order to reproduce that fictionally unitary being, the male subject." (Cohen 192).

In his discussion of Jekyll's character crisis, Benjamin O'Dell locates the characters in the public sphere of a city that pivots around Jekyll's social acceptance and rejection, where the 'exclusionary identities' must stand their ground. By doing so, Stevenson gave rise to "a transparent figure that could demystify the concentration of power in a tenuous and uncertain age", which O'Dell believes to be "a characterisation that reflects the unique social position of male privilege in the 1880s and 90s." (O'Dell 512). O'Dell argues that a public sphere, such as London, would be difficult for the Victorian men to dominate. This argument could be pushed a step further by saying that the public sphere would not only be difficult to dominate but also exist in. One would have to embody the characteristics of an archetypal Victorian man in order to efficiently traverse "contemporary landscape without falling victim to the threat of gross improprieties" (O'Dell 513). A proper Victorian gentleman was someone who was religious, righteous, modest, outspoken, maintained a respectable reputation, all the while having no undesirable characteristics.

People like that were few and far between, if not non-existent. So, it seems that leading a double life in some shape or form was necessary in a society with such rigorous rules. Without having someone like Hyde to take the blame and responsibility, it would not be difficult for one's status in society to decline, and possibly as a result of an unfortunate accident. Rather than trying and failing, some Victorian men turned to seclusion for the same reason they desired to dominate the public sphere, power, and recognition. Even in the case they try, and fail, they "turn inward to the isolation of secret societies and fraternal organisations, of private studies and their homes, the mask of the Victorian gentleman threatens to become the mask of shame." (O'Dell 512).

Duality of gender identity can be observed by considering different embodiments of gender and which of the duo, Jekyll or Hyde, they were associated with. The normative gender identity was the one that had an important role in Victorian society, the one that belonged in the public sphere, and was usually embodied by the conventional Victorian gentleman. This normative identity is connected to Jekyll, and the proof of that can be found in Jekyll himself, that is, his social standing, profession, choice of acquaintances, and housing. On the contrary, the transgressive identity was the complete opposite, and it represented all that the Victorians wanted to keep hidden, or at the very least, keep private. That included the deviant desires and behaviour and noncompliance with already ingrained principles and customs. Therefore, it comes as no surprise that Hyde represents this rebellious side of the masculine identity. Once again, Hyde's entire identity serves as proof of his noncompliance. He is a deviant criminal who, without Jekyll, would be left with no prospects. Looking at Jekyll and Hyde in comparison to the Victorian society as a whole, it seems that by encouraging the embodiment of the normative identity and oppressing the embodiment of the transgressive one, existence of duality was further endorsed.

5. Conclusion

The main goal of this thesis was to offer a reading of Robert L. Stevenson's Gothic novella *Strange Case of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde* in the light of theories that analyse the notion of duality, particularly focusing on how the duality of the Victorian society is reflected in the character of Henry Jekyll and his counterpart Edward Hyde. Moreover, it discussed how and to what degree this duality of society entailed duality in other aspects of life, namely, the development of a private and public persona, each of which follows different rules and standards. Additionally, in the characters of Jekyll and Hyde, duality is manifested not only in the double life they lead but also in other aspects, that is, their conflicting desires and different embodiments of the masculine gender encompassed in a unitary self.

Right from the beginning of the novella, Henry Jekyll is portrayed as a respected Victorian gentleman, but a closer inspection of his character reveals that he has been fascinated by things immoral and corrupt ever since his youth. His fascination with the immoral was at first hidden, as he plays the part of Jekyll and conforms to society's expectations. All the while, Jekyll was aware of both his private conflict and public expectations. Jekyll, when considered as a representative of an average gentleman of the period, could not exist in a society that demanding. As we have observed, his solution was to divide his desire to keep his established position in society and his desire for deviant behaviour. The idea was that each could be realised through Jekyll and Hyde, respectively. For all who have heard of Jekyll, he remains unchanged, a seemingly moral, prominent member of society, while Hyde serves as a means of expression of his deplorable desires. Jekyll was the one who belonged in society, and Hyde was not. Knowing that, for Jekyll,

the point of the transformation was to get all the advantages that his social standing suggested, with none of the disadvantages.

Maintaining the facade of the proper charitable gentlemen would, to Jekyll as a representative of the Victorian upper-middle-class, mean the downfall of his true identity, which was not as pure as one might have been led to believe. Ultimately, it is evident that the same society that led to his private conflict also partially influenced his decision regarding the transformation. Nevertheless, the novella shows that it was a transformation made willingly, since a life of pretence would be meaningless, and one he would surely regret. Therefore, Jekyll as a representative of the Victorian society could be said to illustrate the determination of some of its members to cross unimaginable boundaries in order to preserve their position in society while fulfilling their deviant desires by keeping those same desires hidden, and accordingly, the novella paints a dark picture of the Victorian society at large.

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