

Abstract

This essay examines the theme of duality in Robert Louis Stevenson's *Strange Case of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde* and *The Master of Ballantrae*. After a short introduction of Stevenson's life, the essay explains the meaning of duality and how it is depicted in these two works.

Dualism appears in many forms in these two stories as Stevenson describes the characters and their surroundings in opposite ways, either good or bad. Firstly, an analysis is made on the main character in *Strange Case of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde*, Dr Jekyll. Jekyll is constricted by Victorian society, which causes him to split into the two selves of Jekyll (good) and Hyde (bad). Additionally, the society forces Jekyll to suppress his secretive behaviour that will eventually go out of control. This compels him to live a double life and causes the destruction of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde. Secondly, the essay analyses the two brothers in *The Master of Ballantrae*, Henry and James Durie. The brothers are capable of doing good and bad deeds, which connects them and ultimately destroys them. The narrator of the story, Mackellar, describes the brothers as in constant battle with one another and takes the side of the younger brother, Henry. Furthermore, the older brother, James, embraces his darker self while Henry is forced to repress his desires. Towards the end of the story, the roles of the brothers are switched as Henry begins to show his bad self. In fact, neither of them backs down in destroying one another, until they are both dead. Finally, the essay concludes with a comparison of these two works of Stevenson as they both share the theme of duality. In *Jekyll and Hyde* we have the split between the two sides of the same individual, while in *Ballantrae* this is shown as a split between the two brothers. In addition, there is a contrast to be found in how the theme of good is depicted in the two stories as well as in the narrators' way of revealing the aspects of good and evil.

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I. Introduction

In his novella *Strange Case of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde* and his novel *The Master of Ballantrae*, Robert Louis Stevenson writes about the split between good and bad, which can divide and unite man's nature. Longman, Green and Co. first published *Strange Case of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde* in January 1886, while *The Master of Ballantrae* appeared serially in *The Scribner's Magazine* from November 1888 to October 1889 and was published later as a fully revised volume.

Strange Case of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde revolves around the mystery of Jekyll and Hyde and how they are connected to one another. The story is told from the point of view of Mr Utterson, a lawyer and a friend of Dr Jekyll, who investigates this strange case. As the investigation goes on it is revealed that Jekyll and Hyde are the same individual. In fact Jekyll has created Hyde with an experimental potion in order to do evil in another man's disguise. This causes a problem for Jekyll as the two halves are constantly battling for predomination, which leads to the death of both.

The Master of Ballantrae is about the two brothers James and Henry Durie and their battle over the ancient family estate of Durrissdeer. Mackellar, the steward of the family, narrates the story, but his main sympathies lie with Henry Durie. James Durie, or the Master of Ballantrae, the older of the two brothers, goes to take part in the Jacobite rebellion of 1745 after making a life-changing decision by tossing a coin. On the other hand, Henry Durie remains at home to support the Hanoverian crown. As the story goes on the two brothers are in constant battle with one another, which ultimately results in their own demise.

In *Strange Case of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde*, the divided self of Dr Jekyll is the main aspect that needs to be examined in terms of differences and qualities in his double character. Furthermore, in *The Master of Ballantrae*, an even closer analysis needs to be performed on the divided self of the brothers. According to Mackellar, the narrator of the story, Henry Durie

is the force of good while James Durie is the force of evil. However, the circumstances are not as simple as this since the brothers share the same qualities and therefore cannot be split into two separate entities of good and evil (Simon 129).

This essay focuses on how Stevenson addresses the topic of duality in his works *Strange Case of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde* and *The Master of Ballantrae*, and how the battle between good and evil can play a big part in a person's life. Dr Jekyll's fate and that of the brothers in *The Master of Ballantrae* shows us that good and evil co-exist and any attempt to separate those two forces leads to a person's physical destruction.

II. Background

i. About Robert Louis Stevenson

Robert Louis Stevenson was born on the 13th of November 1850 in Edinburgh, Scotland. Like his father, Thomas Stevenson, he was destined to become a lighthouse designer. However, this did not appeal to Stevenson and he began studying law. He graduated from law school in 1875 but never practised it because of his longing to write. In 1876 he met his future wife, Fanny Vandergrift Osbourne, an American lady with two children who would later divorce her husband to be with Stevenson. In the 1880s Stevenson's health began to decline. He suffered from tuberculosis and spent much of his time in bed. In this state he wrote some of his famous stories like *Treasure Island* (1883), *Kidnapped* (1886) and *Strange Case of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde* (1886). In 1889 Stevenson and his family moved to the Samoan islands, which would influence some of his later works. Robert Louis Stevenson died of stroke on 3rd of December 1894 at his home in Vailima, Samoa.

In fact it was not until after Stevenson's death that his works became critically praised and in the late 20th century critics fully accepted him as an important writer. He began his career as an essayist in the late 1870s, writing for various journals at that time. Stevenson was connected to well-respected literary officials in London, such as Virginia Woolf's father, the editor Leslie Stephen. The critic Andrew Lang who helped such writers as Rudyard Kipling to rise to their fame said that Stevenson "possessed, more than any man I ever met, the power of making other men fall in love with him" (Lockhurst viii). These men encouraged Stevenson to write a literary masterpiece that would get him on the literary map. Stevenson then went into an experimental phase and played with many forms of writing, from travel narratives to ghost stories.

In 1883 his first successful novel *Treasure Island* was published, but it was initially written as a family adventure for his stepson. In 1886 *Strange Case of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde* came out, just missing the Christmas market. Early reviews were not sure how to react to this new work of Stevenson's, calling it a "shilling shocker" (Lockhurst ix). However, this came to be Stevenson's masterpiece, "a commercial success, selling 40,000 copies in England in six months, and innumerable tens of thousands of pirated copies in America, where the book was a popular sensation" (Lockhurst ix). Moreover, Stevenson had an even greater impact on the field of literature than this popularity shows. With his *Jekyll and Hyde*, genres such as science fiction and the psychological horror story were taken more seriously. He saved children's poetry from Victorian morals as he dared to write about children's feelings that were considered taboo, such as fear and exclusion. He brought realism to the English short story like in his work *New Arabian Nights* (1882) and he was a skilful travel writer and an essayist. For a man suffering from tuberculosis and bedridden most of the time this can be called a great achievement ("Robert Louis Stevenson"; Lockhurst viii-x; Stevenson and Robinson 14).

ii. Dualism

Mankind has always been in constant search for the meaning of life. There are many stories of how we first came into being along with various religions that we can pursue to help us find answers to our existence. Human nature is tangled with the dualism between good and evil, which has undoubtedly raised questions for some people. On a daily basis we do not always agree whether one thing is good and the other bad. Duality is something we have created within our minds and it restricts us from seeing a world where this division does not exist, or in other words a world of perfection.

Duality used as a literary device was not uncommon in the literature of Romantic dualism. It was an important tool for writers to investigate many subjects such as repression and morality that were disapproved topics in Victorian England. As Roderick Watson argues:

It is a structural convention which seeks to deal with the fluidity and the multiple complexity of our inner lives by setting up a more formal system, indeed a binary system, of doubles, doppelgangers, or psychological counterparts. (10)

One of the most memorable stories using this device is Stevenson's *Strange Case of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde*. Stevenson had dreamed of writing a story about dualism but he only needed the right idea to make it a reality. He says in his "A Chapter on Dreams" that he "had long been trying to write a story on this subject, to find a body, a vehicle, for that strong sense of man's double being which must at times come in upon and overwhelm the mind of every thinking creature" (Block 445-446). These preoccupations of Stevenson led him to write the famous story *Strange Case of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde*. Everyone must have seen or heard of Dr Jekyll and his evil self, Mr Hyde. The basic image is that of Dr Jekyll drinking his vile potion and the hideous transformation scene that follows has him change into the diabolical creature of Mr Hyde. The idea of the double-sided character was not unprecedented during Victorian times as other stories had been published before *Jekyll and Hyde*, like for instance Dostoyevsky's short novel, *The Double* (1846), along with *Crime and Punishment* (1866), but clearly Stevenson's story is the most memorable one (Watson 10).

Furthermore, Stevenson's inspiration and fascination with duality came from mourning his dear friend, the engineer Fleeming Jenkin. Jenkin's death was such a blow to Stevenson that he began writing a biography of his friend but suddenly stopped to write *Jekyll and Hyde*. Stevenson and Jenkin shared common interests in drama and poetry but not in engineering. Stevenson said that Jenkin's "taste for machinery was one that I could never share with him, and he had a certain bitter pity for my weakness" (Hammack 32). Stevenson saw Jenkin as a double-sided character, one part interested in engineering and the other in poetry. This had him speculate how two contradictory things could live within the same individual, which helped him to create *Jekyll and Hyde* (Hammack 31-32).

III. *Jekyll and Hyde*

In the last chapter of *Strange Case of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde*, Henry Jekyll gives his statement of the case. Jekyll is a well-respected member of society and has everything that a man could wish for. However, he lives a double life, as he is tired of hiding his indecent side. In his search for a cure for his double self he discovers, “a man is not truly one, but truly two” (Stevenson 52). Jekyll conducts an experiment on himself that has him create Mr Hyde. At first he feels horrible but soon after he is filled with energy:

I came to myself as if out of a great sickness. There was something strange in my sensations, something indescribably new and, from its very novelty, incredibly sweet. I felt younger, lighter, happier in body. (Stevenson 54)

In the narrative Mr Hyde’s hideous appearance causes devastation. He is described as being “ape-like”, “troglodytic” and “hardly human” (Stevenson 20, 16). Here “Hyde is referred to as an animal or some primitive form” (Block 456). Furthermore, it is also mentioned that he has a decadent speech and Jekyll’s manservant Poole hears him “cry out like a rat” (Stevenson 38). In Dr Lanyon’s narrative, Lanyon describes the transformation scene:

He put the glass to his lips and drank at one gulp. A cry followed; he reeled, staggered, clutched at the table and held on, staring with injected eyes, gasping with open mouth; and as I looked there came, I thought, a change—he seemed to swell—his face became suddenly black and the features seemed to melt and alter—and the next moment, I had sprung to my feet and leaped back against the wall, my arm raised to shield me from that prodigy, my mind submerged in terror. “O God!” I screamed, and “O God!” again and again; for there before my eyes—pale and shaken, and half-fainting, and groping before him with his hands, like a man restored from death—there stood Henry Jekyll! (Stevenson 50)

This comes as a great shock for Lanyon as he had previously doubted Jekyll's experiments. Furthermore, Lanyon dies shortly after the incident, having written his narrative of the event. The transformation scene is vital in the story because here the veil is lifted off Jekyll's secrets and we find out that Jekyll and Hyde are one and the same man. In other words, the real message of this passage is not to emphasize the difference between Jekyll and Hyde but that they are in a constant battle with each other over predominance. Actually, at this point Jekyll is getting weaker as Hyde is beginning to take over.

Jekyll and Hyde differ in personality as they differ in appearance. In fact the novella has been criticized in the field of psychoanalysis (Lockhurst xvi). In the late 19th century various experiments were made on people with separate personalities and in 1890, "double-consciousness had become standard psychological terminology" (Lockhurst xviii). This is important because "Jekyll and Hyde became shorthand for multiple personality" (Lockhurst xix). Stevenson splits the consciousness of Dr Jekyll into two separate entities: the decent one, Jekyll, who plays by the rules of society, and the indecent one, Hyde, who has animalistic urges. Dr Jekyll takes note of this in his own narrative and says: "I saw that, 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 53). In these lines he discusses the duality of man, who can behave in a good or bad way. The main purpose of Jekyll's experiment is to split the good side from the bad. However, this goes wrong as he only draws out his darker self, Mr Hyde. Eventually this darker self begins to take over and Jekyll faces the risk of being no more. In his disguise as Mr Hyde, Jekyll manages to escape from a society that he finds constrictive. However, in the end Jekyll begins to realize that he has to choose between being Dr Jekyll or Mr Hyde, as he states: "Between these two, I now felt I had to choose" (Stevenson 59). This is a dilemma for Jekyll as he is beginning to enjoy being Mr Hyde. If he chooses to become Jekyll he will have to give up this trait. On the other hand,

to become Hyde “was to die to a thousand interests and aspirations, and to become, at a blow and forever, despised and friendless” (Stevenson 59).

In the story Stevenson describes certain places in London as dark and unpleasing, and compares them with the posh sections of the city. Victorians would have liked to see these places hidden from view; however, these two sides of the city are nonetheless a reality, therefore the bad cannot be fully concealed. As most unsocial behaviour, like crime, is hidden from the everyday life of London to give it a better image. Because the Victorians tried so hard to hide every unsocial behaviour and dark places the concept of bad is allowed to endure; the only reason for this is that all the effort is put into the concealment of such things rather than addressing these problems and trying to find solutions. Furthermore, Stevenson links Victorian London with the darkness that surrounds Hyde. He gives us frightful imagery that finds its way into Utterson’s nightmares to give us an eerie feeling befitting the dark deeds performed in the city:

He would be aware of the great field of lamps of a nocturnal city [...] The figure [...] haunted the lawyer all night; and if at any time he dozed over, it was but to see it glide more stealthily through sleeping houses, or move the more swiftly [...] through wider labyrinths of lamp-lighted city, and at every street corner crush a child and leave her screaming. (Stevenson 13)

This is a description that shows us Hyde committing his crimes under the cover of night. This has its advantages as the darkness keeps everybody blind to these nocturnal activities or crimes that the Victorians do not want to witness and choose to ignore them instead.

Furthermore, one can see the duality of good and evil in the setting of Dr Jekyll’s house and laboratory. These two buildings are adjoined but not easily recognized as being

connected since they face two different streets and could, therefore, be considered two distinct places; just like the two sides of Jekyll. In the text, one can find contrary descriptions of these two places to clarify this even further. The laboratory is described as “sinister” and a place of “negligence” (Stevenson 6), whereas the house is described as a “comfortable hall [...] warmed [...] by a bright, open fire, and furnished with costly cabinets of oak” (Stevenson 16). This structure of two distinct places can be compared to two different personas. The house is the embodiment of Jekyll while on the other hand the lab is the embodiment of Hyde. Jekyll and his lovely home show great warmth whereas Hyde and the laboratory are repulsive to others. These two opposite places allow both sides of Jekyll their space for freedom, but this space will eventually cause Jekyll to lose control over his situation. It is because Jekyll distances himself from Hyde that he begins to lose control over the latter. Here Stevenson criticizes Victorian society for only accepting the so-called respectable qualities of some people while non-respectable people or members of the lower class feel the urge to suppress their desires; this causes people to develop within themselves two different personalities.

Jekyll creates Hyde in order to escape the restrictions of Victorian society, as he feels obligated to repress his desires. Jekyll shares these urges with Dorian Gray in Oscar Wilde's *The Picture of Dorian Gray* (1890). Both of them have a sense of inner torment; their attempt to live the dream life of keeping up appearances in ordinary life while secretly living up to their deepest desires is what lies heavily on the hearts of Henry Jekyll and Dorian Gray. Jekyll represses his true desires in order to fit into society:

Hence it came about that I considered my pleasures; and that when I reached years of reflection, and began to look around me and take stock of my progress and position in the world, I stood already committed to a profound duplicity of life. (Stevenson 52)

This shows that Jekyll has great difficulties in coming to terms with his own duality of nature. As a result of this Jekyll degenerates and becomes Mr Hyde. For him there is no line between good and bad. Because of this he tries to hold back his true desires, which he considers evil, and that frustrates Jekyll. Consequently, Jekyll creates Hyde in order to lead a secret life where he can live up to his forbidden urges. This however does not solve his problem as it merely helps his dual nature to manifest even further. Many readers in Victorian times might have been able to relate to Jekyll's case and in a way this might have helped Stevenson's story to seem more real. Irvine Saposnik verifies this and states that:

Victorian man was haunted constantly by an inescapable sense of division. As rational and sensual being, as public and private man, as civilized and bestial creature, he found himself necessarily an actor, playing only that part of himself suitable to the occasion. As both variables grew more predictable, his role became more stylized and what was initially an occasional practise became a way of life. By 1866 the English could already be described as "Masquearaders". (Saposnik 716)

For Victorian readers, Stevenson's story could be read as a cautionary tale of not repressing one's true self for the sake of society.

The Victorian era was famous for its rigid morals and social customs. The capital and the largest city of England, London, was considered a place of prosperity where people followed the highest moral standards. To be a member of Victorian society might have seemed glorious to foreigners or an experience one could only dream of. However, this perfect Victorian life was a pretence and "failed to take account of the realities of human nature" (Altick 177). The etiquette of Victorian England avoided people who expressed behaviour that did not follow their social code, even if they did not cause harm in any way. Therefore, the reaction that people got for this unwanted behaviour helped to suppress them

and was the key factor that made them eventually become discreditable members of the society they lived in.

During Victorian times, it was desirable to be deemed respectable by the people one associated with. To be respectable “included sobriety, thrift, cleanliness of person and tidiness of home, good manners, respect for the law, honesty in business affairs, and, it need hardly be added, chastity” (Altick 175). This applied to the character of a person as well as to their status in society. These ideas restricted people from living up to their desires because they were not allowed any recreational activities. The term “social morality” is also connected to this idea as “the essence of that morality is summed up in the single word ‘respectability’” (Altick 174). In fact it was not enough that one’s social class thought highly of you, but also it had to be certain that you were a good and moral person. It was all dependent on one’s reputation at this time and it was important to maintain one’s respectability.

A person having both good and bad qualities was ill regarded in Victorian England. It was expected that people followed the standards of Victorian society in order to maintain social integrity, and because of this many people had to hide any unwanted behaviour and personal urges until they had suppressed their natural human behaviour. Though Victorian people may have seemed perfect they were certainly not so, since it is a part of human nature to have within yourself both positive and negative aspects. This concern for maintaining one’s reputation led people to deception and to conceal their negative aspects from others. Dr Jekyll has trouble in revealing his hidden desires and so tries to conceal them until he expresses them through Hyde:

This familiar that I called out of my own soul, and sent forth alone to do his good pleasure, was a being inherently malign and villainous; his every act and thought

centered on self; drinking pleasure with bestial avidity from any degree of torture to another; relentless like a man of stone. (Stevenson 57)

Jekyll conceals his “pleasures” with a “morbid sense of shame” as he knows that society would not agree with them (Stevenson 52). Jekyll is not a bad individual as he was only been forced to repress some aspects of himself until he has a “dramatic transformation typical of the morally insane” (Rosner 6). In fact, “middle-class morality strikes us as being bleak, austere, perversely self-denying at the same time it was self-satisfying” (Altick 177). In general, people could go up the social ladder and gain success while on the other hand they were not allowed to express their true feelings in order to maintain their higher social class. For Jekyll to become a doctor or to maintain his high position in life, he has to deny his true feelings.

Jekyll feels trapped in his own body and this feeling compels him to search for a way to separate his two selves. This has him experimenting scientifically to find a possible way to fragment his two selves from each other and Hyde becomes a reality. Thus, the “ever present but submerged” other half of Henry Jekyll that has been in hiding for some time comes to real life (Sapoznik 717). For Jekyll to be split into two halves leaves him only half a man and that leads to his destruction, because Jekyll and Hyde are connected to each other. One half cannot survive without the other, as they are both part of the same physical manifestation, which is Jekyll. In fact Jekyll is proved wrong when he thinks that he can remove Hyde away from himself, because Jekyll cannot exist without Hyde. This explains why Victorians are afraid of Hyde or rather what he represents; Hyde, the dark side, is a part of every person, and this is what the Victorians so desperately try to hide from others; thus the name Hyde gains another meaning of one’s hidden self.

IV. *The Master of Ballantrae*

The Master of Ballantrae is set at the time of the Jacobite uprising in 1745, when Bonnie Prince Charlie fought against the Hanoverians for the British crown. At the beginning of the novel, Mackellar, the narrator of the story, compares James, the Master of Ballantrae, to his brother Henry. Mackellar describes the two brothers as two different persons, each with their qualities and flaws. Mackellar takes the side of Henry and describes James as the enemy of the household. About James he says:

The Master of Ballantrae, James in baptism, took from his father the love of serious reading; some of his tact, perhaps, as well, but that which was only policy in the father became black dissimulation in the son. The face of his behaviour was merely popular and wild: he sat late at wine, later at the cards; had the name in the country of “an unco man for the lasses”; and was ever in the front of broils. (Stevenson 10)

On the other hand, Henry is described as “neither very bad nor yet very able, but an honest, solid sort of lad, like many of his neighbours” (Stevenson 11). Here Henry is described as the lesser character as he has not the same talents as his brother James; additionally he is considered inferior by the people around him, for instance by his father and his wife Alison, who was formerly James’s fiancée.

On the surface, the two brothers can be seen as good (Henry) and evil (James), but in reality things are more complicated. Simon argues that Mackellar sets up the story “as a tale of good versus evil, but [it] is in actuality a tale about good and evil; for though these two qualities are opposites, they both exist in the brothers and in Mackellar himself” (130). As the story begins the Durie brothers are debating which of them should take part in the Jacobite Rebellion and which of them should stay at home, siding with the Hanoverians, to safeguard the family’s

interests regardless of the outcome. James is intrigued by the rebellion because of his love of danger, but Henry wants to fight with the rebels also. Thus, the brothers both show that they want to live dangerously when the opportunity comes to fight with Bonnie Prince Charlie against the Hanoverian crown. Henry believes that he should go, since he is the younger of the two and says: "I am the cadet, and I should go" (Stevenson 12). He also states that James is the older brother and the heir to Durrissdeer estate and should therefore stay behind. They settle their argument by flipping a coin and James wins the right to go. Henry understands that if he is pushed into the role of the Master he will earn a spot that does not befit him as the younger brother, even though James gives his promise of forfeiting his title to Henry, he knows that he will not do this, since James is the rightful heir. As James has his way the brothers are pushed into roles that are opposite to their "natural positions" (Simon 132). Thus, by chance each brother takes on the role that the other one desires and while doing so the two brothers will become accustomed to their positions and learn to adapt to them as best they can. Additionally, each brother shows that he carries within himself another persona with darker motives. This darker persona is something that James embraces wholeheartedly while Henry suppresses it.

Furthermore, the two brothers can be compared in how Mackellar describes them as spectral figures. Firstly, he describes James thus:

This outer sensibility and inner toughness set me against him; it seemed of a piece with that impudent grossness which I knew to underlie the veneer of his fine manners; and sometimes my gorge rose against him as though from something partly spectral. I had moments when I thought of him as of a man of pasteboard – as though, if one should strike smartly through the buckram of his countenance, there would be found a

mere vacuity within. This horror (not merely fanciful, I think) vastly increased my detestation of his neighbourhood. (Stevenson 156)

Secondly, a later description of Henry by Mackellar links the younger brother to the older:

My lord, I should say, had listened to Mountain's narrative, regarding him throughout with a painful intensity of gaze; and, since the tale concluded, had sat as in a dream. There was something very daunting in his look; something to my eyes not rightly human; the face, lean, and dark, and aged, the mouth painful, the teeth disclosed in a perpetual rictus; the eyeball swimming clear of the lids upon a field of blood-shot white. (Stevenson 208)

This also means that Henry is not as dull or one-dimensional as he might appear. In fact, as Simon argues, "the spiritual deformity that Mackellar perceives in the Master is linked with Henry and undermines his perception of Henry as all-good, for it implies that there is darkness within Henry too" (133). Henry begins to take on his darker self when James returns home after being away for years. The brothers have an argument and decide to settle the matter with a duel. They fight each other until James lies badly hurt on the ground, believed to be dead. According to Douglas Gifford, guilt poisons Henry when he thinks he has killed his own brother in a duel and this sets him on a path of darkness (77).

Accordingly, each brother takes on aspects of the other. Edwin Eigner notices a shift in Henry's nature and believes that "his hatred for James continues, but paradoxically he begins to resemble his brother" (185). The same goes for the Master for he begins to resemble Henry as if their roles are being exchanged. "This further expresses the doppelganger essence of the brothers' relationship, their unity and integration, in spite of their insistence on their fundamental difference and their mutual hatred" argues Simon (135). James is not so different

from his brother since he has the same moral complexities and this is shown when Mackellar gets charmed by the Master: “I do not think you could be so bad a man [...] if you had not all the machinery to be a good one” (Stevenson 154). Furthermore, the Master’s death scene in the end is a shock for Henry in a way that his face begins to share the same “icy countenance” as that of James in the grave; thus he follows his brother into death: “I have heard of from others that he visibly strove to speak, that his teeth showed in his beard, and that his brow was contorted as with agony of pain and effort” (Stevenson 218). This duality can be looked further into in the Master’s appearance. Even though Mackellar has made it clear that he does not favour James he describes how, after Henry strikes James during the duel, he “sprang to his feet like one transfigured; I had never seen the man so beautiful” (Stevenson 94). The difference between the two brothers is that James knows his own duality and says: “I was not always as I am today” (Stevenson 165), “I was born for a good tyrant!” (Stevenson 167). Thus the master confesses his dual nature because it also establishes the split in roles that each brother takes on in the beginning. The role of the bad character that James takes on leaves him helpless to the people around him. Therefore, James decides to harness his evil side to its fullest as his intention is not to be good.

The brothers use the good and evil natures that they have in order to destroy one another. This becomes their main goal in life even though they cannot live without each other at the same time: “For, as doubles, they each fulfil the desires of the other: Henry unconsciously reveals the darkness that James embodies, and James covets Henry’s position as husband to his one-time betrothed and lord of the estates he forfeited” (Simon 135-136). After the duel, Henry has a hard time being around James and takes his family to America to be free of him. When James discovers where they have gone to, he follows them. This agonises Henry as he states: “nothing can kill that man. He is not mortal. He is bound upon

my back to all eternity – to all God’s eternity!” (Stevenson 118), and “Wherever I am, there will he be” (Stevenson 119). James reacts to this situation in another way:

This battle is now committed, the hour of reflection quite past, the hour for mercy not yet come. It began between us when we span a coin in the hall of Durrisdeer, now twenty years ago; we have had our ups and downs, but never either of us dreamed of giving in; and as for me, when my glove is cast, life and honour go with it. (Stevenson 166)

Here James’s words show him as more pro-active person, whereas Henry is like a haunted man according to his words above. James, on the other hand, is committed to haunting Henry and gaining some kind of resolution through conflict. In fact, neither of the two brothers backs down until both of them are no longer part of this world. When James dies in the wilderness Henry follows him in death when he sees his dead brother and “at the first disclosure of the dead man’s eyes, my lord Durrisdeer fell to the ground, and when I raised him up, he was a corpse” (Stevenson 218). This obsession of the brothers links them even closer together as this confirms that the brothers cannot live without one another and are ready to go so far in killing each other that they eventually destroy themselves.

V. Comparison of *Jekyll and Hyde* and *The Master of Ballantrae*

The Master of Ballantrae and *Jekyll and Hyde* are two works where Stevenson presents his important theme of psychic duality. These works can be compared because of the similarities that they share in this aspect. As Simon claims, *Jekyll and Hyde* is the most famous one out of “doubling” novels, but *The Master of Ballantrae* is also important in its exploration of duality. In *Jekyll and Hyde* we have the split between the two sides of the same individual, while in *Ballantrae* the duality is shown as a split between the two brothers. Furthermore, in *Jekyll and Hyde*, we have a clear division of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde as the two represent the good and the bad. On the other hand, there is no clear division between the brothers in *Ballantrae*, or, in other words, “one a Jekyll, the other Hyde,” as they are morally complex and neither of them can be categorised as pure good or evil. Yet this dual relationship between the brothers is very much in the spirit of *Jekyll and Hyde*, which concludes in their mutual destruction (Simon 129). Stevenson shows here that the brothers are not only opposed to each other, but fail to recognise the ambiguity of good and evil within themselves, just like Dr Jekyll does, which leads to their downfall.

In addition, the brothers resemble Dr Jekyll’s alter ego, Hyde, who is the manifestation “of his own dark desires” (Simon 132). As stated before in this essay, Jekyll claims: “I learned to recognise the thorough and primitive duality of man; I saw that, 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 53). The brothers have this trait in common with Jekyll, as James harnesses his evil side while Henry has to play a part that he does not like and therefore needs to hold back his darker self. The dark side that the brothers share is aligned with Hyde and “all that is dark and twisted in the human soul; for Hyde is somehow physically deformed and is, undoubtedly, repulsive to others” (Simon 133). The

descriptions of the Durie brothers as spectral figures, quoted above in *The Master of Ballantrae* section, resemble very much how Stevenson describes Hyde:

He is not easy to describe. There is something wrong with his appearance; something displeasing, something downright detestable. I never saw a man I so disliked, and yet I scarce know why. He must be deformed somewhere; he gives a strong feeling of deformity, although I couldn't specify the point. (Stevenson 9)

This shows how both James and Henry are aligned with Hyde's monstrous figure.

Furthermore, this also demonstrates how the two brothers attempt to fragment the dark aspects of their souls from their minds, but that is a hard task as the dark aspects are already buried deep within their nature.

The concept of good is present both in *Jekyll and Hyde* and *The Master of Ballantrae*. In *Jekyll and Hyde*, Dr Jekyll comes from a good family, as well as being a man with good prospects and education. He lives in Victorian society where Victorian morals are at their highest. Despite being bound by the restrictions of society he enjoys the company of good friends. The society at this time was structured on class, but that does not have any effect on Jekyll as he fits in naturally with his good position as a doctor. His closest friends are Dr Lanyon and Mr Utterson. They share each other's lives, as there is a great mutual respect between them. Even when Jekyll begins to act strange they never lose their friendship. Furthermore, the fact that Jekyll is a highly educated man makes him enthusiastic about becoming well known as a scientist. He has a dream of separating the good aspect of one's character from the bad, which he eventually does with devastating effects. This is his attempt to contribute to the society that he lives in and gain more recognition as a scientist.

There is also good to be found in the world of *The Master of Ballantrae*. The story revolves around sibling rivalry as the two brothers are in constant battle over who is the better one. When the brothers face trouble they try to deal with it in the best way that they can. For example, James is quite good at escaping when the occasion calls for it, for instance when having been struck down by Henry and believed to be dead, but unexpectedly under cover of night he escapes, though badly wounded. Further, when Henry takes down his brother he shows deep regret and sorrow when he believes he has killed his own brother. Good aspects of the two brothers can be found in the story, mostly through descriptions that Mackellar provides. The Master, known for his bad deeds, manages to show throughout the story that he is “an elegant and charismatic individual,” so appealing that even Mackellar falls for his charm (Simon 137). Then we have Henry, the responsible brother who “took a chief hand, almost from a boy, in the management of the estates” (Stevenson 11).

The narrators of the two stories reveal the aspects of good and evil in different ways. In *Jekyll and Hyde*, the story is told from the point of view of Mr Utterson, a friend of Dr Jekyll. Stevenson describes him as a rather rugged character as his face “never lighted by a smile” (Stevenson 5). Despite this rugged countenance he shows willingness to be friends with Jekyll even when he starts to behave in a strange manner. Because of this friendship he means to fathom the mystery that surrounds Jekyll. In fact, Mr Utterson plays a part in the theme of good and evil when he attempts to protect his friend’s reputation by investigating the strange case of Mr Hyde. He even goes against the police by hiding evidence from them in order to conceal the truth about Jekyll. For example, when Utterson discovers that Jekyll has forged Hyde’s writing in order to shelter him and says: “‘Henry Jekyll forge for a murderer!’ And his blood ran cold in his veins” (Stevenson 27). This shows us that Utterson sides with Jekyll, as he does not know at this time that Hyde is the same person as Jekyll, and only wants to protect his friend Jekyll.

In *The Master of Ballantrae*, the steward Mackellar narrates the story. Mackellar refuses to recognise the good and evil nature within himself. Instead, because of his loyalty to Henry, he labels James as the evil one. However, this remains a hard task for Mackellar as he begins to like James when he is left alone with the Master and his servant, Secundra Dass, in the Durrisdeer house (Stevenson 150). Furthermore, Mackellar shows his double-sidedness when he offers James money to help him during his stay in New York (Stevenson 180). Through Mackellar's narration one begins to feel sorry for James; however his pity does not make James's character improve as he still keeps to his goal of destroying his brother. Mackellar's shift in sympathies is not shown clearly until he is confronted with his own moral complexities. Gifford states, "in the closing sequences we see Mackellar condemning the fratricidal plans of Henry, but destroying his own moral validity by refusing to separate himself from Henry's cause" (82). Mackellar therefore continues to take Henry's side, even though Henry has shown that he is capable of darker deeds. Despite all of this Mackellar shows a tendency towards evil when he wishes the Master dead (Stevenson 157). In this way, Mackellar is only thinking of protecting his friend and master Henry. In the end Mackellar admits to his moral complexities, as he feels more sympathetic towards James whom he labelled evil from the beginning. Thus, the Master draws out Mackellar's inner darkness and exposes the good and evil aspects of his character.

VI. Conclusion

In conclusion, Robert Louis Stevenson's *Strange Case of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde* and *The Master of Ballantrae* are stories where the theme of duality between good and evil plays a fundamental role. As has been stated in this essay, the main characters in these stories demonstrate that there is not a clear line between the two sides of good and evil in a person.

It has been discussed that the main character in *Strange Case of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde*, Dr Jekyll, is restricted by Victorian morals that compel him to create Mr Hyde in order to live up to his deeper and darker urges. Furthermore, this double life that Jekyll is forced to take on goes eventually out of control and leads to his destruction. In *The Master of Ballantrae*, the main characters, James and Henry Durie, are two brothers who are both morally complex. In fact the brothers are described by the narrator, Mackellar, as two opposites but are connected, for they are not so different from one another. However, this connection that they share is the reason why they seek to destroy one another, which results in their own demise.

In these works Stevenson has shown that inside every individual there exists both good and evil. These two forces co-exist in everlasting equilibrium and to disturb this can lead to one's destruction. In fact, duality is not a battle between good and evil, but rather it works like a syndrome that enables us to make mistakes that we can hopefully learn from.

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