

Háskóli Íslands

Hugvísindasvið

Enska

“Disorderly Order”

The Grotesque and the Gothic as Forms of Caledonian Antiszygy in James Hogg's

***The Private Memoirs and Confessions of a Justified Sinner* and Robert Louis**

Stevenson's *The Strange Case of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde*.

Ritgerð til MA-prófs í Ensku

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Abstract

This thesis is a study of Scotland's two iconic novels, *The Private Memoirs and Confessions of a Justified Sinner* by James Hogg and *The Strange Case of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde* by Robert Louis Stevenson, and how both authors develop the use of Gothic and grotesque literary tropes as a result of the so-called Caledonian antiszygy in an attempt to encapsulate and rationalize the fragmented sense of identity associated with Scottish writers.

By examining the historical roots of the authors' Scottish identity, as well as viewing the more modern approaches to Scottish writing as post-colonial, or subaltern works, I argue that the Treaty of the Union, as well as Britain's attempts to quell any further Jacobite uprisings through gentrification and the Clearances, resulted in the Scottish writer becoming at war with himself. With this history in mind I also look at how the concept of the Other and dual personalities have helped shape the discourse of these novels.

I will furthermore examine the meaning of the word grotesque, starting with its near-mythical origins in Nero's Domus Aurea and tracing the concept's history to the Gothic, where the two artistic traditions meet and blend.

I will then study the two works of James Hogg and Robert Louis Stevenson referred to above and argue that their use of the grotesque and the Gothic in their presentations of the Other are not simply artistic or stylistic choices but naturally inherent forms of narrative for the Scottish writers bedevilled by the Caledonian antiszygy.

“Disorderly Order”

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Introduction

Scottish writers over the centuries have expressed themselves through grotesque, Gothic and fantastic imagery and subject matter in which their characters' struggles come from within, or are manifested outwardly as warring selves. As Alan Bissett tells us in his introduction to *Damaged Land: New Scottish Gothic Fiction*: "The Scottish psyche has been formed from being cast as underdog in the dialectic of power, from our being subsumed both in our own culture and in that of a stronger nation's. There is a place there where the two halves do not meet. Damage. A hairline crack, and what rough beasts emerge" (Bissett 1).

Novels by James Hogg and Robert Louis Stevenson are recognized works of dualism and/or the grotesque, and in this essay I will argue that the growing trend towards the Gothic and grotesque in Scottish literature stems from the Scottish writer's need to try and rationalize and encompass his/her inner turmoil, or at least to give it shape and an outlet.

I have chosen these authors, James Hogg and Robert Louis Stevenson, because they have in common an understanding that any man is not just one facet or image that others may see. Both authors attempt to rationalize their inner turmoil in the creation of a double, an Other, that allows the reader a chance to view a "self-mythologizing [...] powerful and alternate nation in the collective imagination" (Bissett 1).

Furthermore, by looking at Scotland's history, the origins of the term grotesque, and the thematic idea of dualism, I aim to explore how the grotesque, the Gothic and the Other have influenced Hogg and Stevenson, and propose that, rather than using them as deliberate stylistic choices, they were compelled to do so in order to examine their own and Scotland's

situation. As Alan Bissett tells us: “When myth becomes channelled through the splintered prism of the present [...] what emerges can only be something distorted and halfway monstrous” (Bissett 6).

Chapter 1

Hogg's and Stevenson's Two Novels

The Private Memoirs and Confessions of a Justified Sinner was written in 1823 by James Hogg and serves as the predecessor of a Scottish identity seen through grotesque imagery. The novel's plot is, like *Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde*, framed by a report from an apparently neutral or impartial narrator. In the case of Hogg's novel, it is the Editor's narrative. The Editor tells the reader the basic structure of the story, leading to and following on from the confession of Robert Wringhim, the novel's protagonist. The Editor begins, factually, by telling the reader of Robert's parentage. He was born the second son of Rabina Orde, a zealous Calvinist woman, who married George Colwan the laird of Dalcastle. The Editor makes it a point to differentiate between the two brothers by their personality: George, the older brother, is told to have been much like his father, an easy-going and an amicable person. Robert, however, is early on said to have shown no traits of his father. Indeed, the Editor implies that Robert was not the son of George Colwan but rather of Reverend Wringhim, Rabina's priest.

From there the Editor charts Robert's mistrust of anything related to his father, and makes it clear that the most likely cause of this was the undue influence of the strictly Calvinist minister, Reverend Wringhim. Just before turning to Robert's own words, his confession, the Editor takes a witness account into the narrative in order to build the scene for Robert's eventual confession.

Robert's brother, we are told, was stabbed in the back during a scuffle, or a duel, the matter is never fully settled, and the blame is put on Robert, who is commonly identified as Wringhim, the Reverend's surname, and not his father's. Furthermore, the only witness to

the murder, a prostitute, tells us that it was not Robert who committed the murder, but his double, a shadowy figure.

Robert Wringhim's personal confession then takes over from the Editor's narrative. Here we learn that under the Reverend's influence he accepted the Calvinist doctrine and declared himself one of the Elect. Furthermore, a shadowy double appears to him by the name of Gil-Martin after Robert is declared a member of the Elect and begins to seduce him into using the doctrine of predestination for evil ends. The confession serves to illustrate to the reader Robert's descent into madness and Gil-Martin's increasing influence over him.

The novel ends with the Editor again picking up the narrative, and writing about the confessions, which had by then been found. Hogg himself also appears in the novel, lending further credence to the tale, and directing the Editor to Robert's supposed grave.

The Strange Case of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde, written much later, in 1886, carries a similar structure but tonally feels less like something that had credibility and more like a fantasy using the structure of an expert's opinion as a vehicle for the narration. In *Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde*, the expert is John Utterson, a lawyer and Henry Jekyll's friend. Through conversations with various people, he tells the reader of his encounters with a man called Edward Hyde. Utterson's narrative is meant to reinforce the validity of the narrative, as well as make the later fantastical turns of events more plausible. The narrative in this way parallels Hogg's use of the Editor's narrative in *Confessions of a Justified Sinner*. We also see glimpses of the grotesque when Edward Hyde is mentioned. The first time Utterson encounters Hyde is on a walk through the streets of the city (it is never expressly mentioned which city, though, and an argument can be made for either London or Edinburgh) and sees

Hyde trample over a young girl and then flee the scene in a rage. The second time is through a conversation with the police, who suspect Hyde of murdering one of Utterson's clients.

In both cases, Utterson contacts Henry Jekyll in order to investigate further and look up his friend. The reader learns through Utterson, therefore, that Hyde is connected to Jekyll. Jekyll, for some mysterious reason, has given Hyde everything in his will. The story then starts to take shape as an investigation into the motive behind Jekyll's will, and his connection to the demonstrably monstrous Hyde.

The mystery increases after Dr. Lanyon, a mutual friend of both Utterson and Jekyll, dies after giving Utterson a letter. The letter sheds more light on the case and seems to connect Jekyll and Hyde more intimately. It is only after Jekyll is suddenly found dead, that the grotesque finally reveals itself in the dual personality of Henry Jekyll and Edward Hyde. Jekyll's confession, left near his body, tells the story of a man desperate to escape his surroundings and who therefore uses scientific means to transform himself. The result of that transformation is Edward Hyde. Jekyll tells Utterson that at first he was elated at being able to escape his surroundings, his constraints, but soon found that Hyde was much more than just a vehicle for his hedonistic escape. And as that realization grew he also found that he was losing control of Hyde and his transformations. In the end he tried to end his life in order to prevent Hyde from being unleashed on the world. The last line of the novel is taken from the last line of Jekyll's suicide letter, and reads: "I lay down the pen and proceed to seal up my confession, I bring the life of that unhappy Henry Jekyll to an end" (Stevenson 106).

The parallels between the two novels are striking, from the way they are narrated,

their use of grotesque imagery to represent duality and to the way that both protagonists wind up in desperate plights and die mysteriously with only a confession left behind. In that sense both novels defy attempts at a conclusive narrative definition, leaving the reader with an odd sense of mystery.

Chapter 2

The Caledonian Antisyzygy

It is perhaps an overstatement to say that the literature of Scotland is overly concerned with dualistic thinking or that the Scottish national identity is rooted in a deeply dualistic tradition. Yet those ideas are very much evident in the works of Hogg and Stevenson. What is more, each author approaches and works with the subject in a slightly different way, challenging the reader to view dualism in a different light each time.

What is important, then, is to define and view the subtleties of Scottish dualism and dualistic criticism before venturing into the halls of Scottish grotesque literature.

George Gregory Smith writes in *Scottish Literature: Character and Influence* that “It is never easy to describe national idiosyncrasy” (Smith 1). He refers to the attempt to understand the North from a Southern perspective and vice versa and is not too far off the mark. One great “national idiosyncrasy” that Scotland possesses is the split attitude that manifests itself in Scottish literature. Smith continues to say that “in formal expression and in choice of material [...] the [Scottish] literature is remarkably varied, and that it becomes under stress of foreign influence and native division and reaction, almost a zigzag of contradiction” (Smith 4).

Smith points out that it is only under foreign stress that “division and reaction” appears, although he is almost unwilling to press the point that Scotland’s national idiosyncrasy is the division, and the reaction therefore resulting from that division, between Scotland’s national character, its statehood and identity, and Britain’s involvement in Scotland’s governance and culture. Largely though, the division, reaction and contradiction stem from the Scot himself, as we can see with Smith’s coined description of Scottish

identity as: “Caledonian antisyzygy” (Smith 4). This description is extremely important to any discussion on Scottish dualism, the grotesque, and national identity as it informs the classical view of the Scottish dualistic literary tradition. So, briefly, it is:

[...] a reflection of the contrasts which the Scot shows at every turn, in his political and ecclesiastical history, in his polemical restlessness, in his adaptability, which is another way of saying that he has made allowance for new conditions, in his practical judgement, which is the admission that two sides of the matter have been considered. If therefore Scottish history and life are, as an old northern writer said of something else, “varied with a clean contrair spirit,” we need not be surprised to find that in his literature the Scot presents two aspects which appear contradictory. Oxymoron was ever the bravest figure, and we must not forget that disorderly order is order after all. (Smith 4–5)

If there was ever a defining description of the Scottish literary character, especially in the novels discussed in this essay, it is this passage above. A telling signal in that quote is Smith’s use of “disorderly order”, a manifestation of unrest which in and of itself is a common occurrence in Gothic and grotesque literature.

Treaty of the Union

Caledonian antisyzygy, then, serves as the mirror in which we can view the Scottish spirit, which Smith defines as “contrair”. The reflection is based partly on Scottish history and its relationship with Britain, which David Ross reminds us, in *Scotland: History of a Nation*, is

not an insignificant one. He writes that after the 1706 Treaty of Union, “the minds of all the thinking people had been thoroughly stirred up” (Ross 221), especially as Scotland was on the cusp of major industrial and commercial growth. At the same time, however, the deal signified the major cultural shift in Scottish history with James Ogilvy, the last Chancellor of Scotland and Earl of Seafield, having remarked that the treaty was: “ane end of ane auld sang” (Ross 220). What is remarkable here is that the Earl’s lament is solely based on the implied cultural loss that he perceives Scotland to suffer from. Indeed David Ross quotes Robert Burns’ poem from 1791: “We’re bought and sold for English Gold; Such a parcel of rogues in a nation” (Burns 57), and remarks that “English gold played a significant part, but even without the carrots, it is likely that the Union would have been approved” (Ross 220).

The Treaty of the Union signifies the beginning of the Scottish contrair spirit. With the treaty, Scotland enjoyed domestic, economic growth, with luxury items such as coffee, tea and tobacco being made more available, though at expensive rates. Furthermore, “[o]ld standards of household life were being rejected by people who wanted windows with glass in them, curtains, carpets, teacups and more furniture. [...] now there was a wider market to operate in” (Ross 221). The old way of life was fast becoming obsolete, replaced with imported goods and standards. A startling example of this were the “planned communities of stone houses built along a main street or grouped around a market square” in clear contrast to the older “ferm touns of cottars and labourers, nor the clachans of Highland peasants”, as well as paved roads and an increase in harbours to safeguard shipping traffic (Ross 230).

The result is a country swiftly pulled from its old roots and planted somewhere else. The change was from the top down, meaning that the common man had little or nothing to

say about the change, and aside from a few expensive material possessions and infrastructure there was little that benefited those below the upper class. Yet even within the relative upper class structure in Scotland at the time there was unrest. As early as 1715 the Earl of Mar, John Erskine, led an uprising against the Union with the hopes of restoring James VII to the throne (Ross 225-226). Later, in 1745, a larger uprising, this time led by Prince Charles Edward, James VII's son, culminated in the Battle of Culloden in 1746 (Ross 232-233). As Ross remarks:

The aftermath of Culloden was very different from the relatively mild consequences of the 1715 rising. A large and victorious government army was in the heart of the Highlands and determined to make its presence felt. Those like Duncan Forbes of Culloden, who argued for clemency and restraint in the treatment of the defeated Highlanders, were given short shrift by the Duke of Cumberland and his advisers. The ferocity of the pursuit frightened some chiefs like Glengarry, into blaming their clansmen; others, like Grant, handed their men over to the dragoons. (Ross 235-326)

The important emphasis here is that the Jacobite uprising, the Scottish element rebelling against outside rule, failed, and eventually in some cases turned in on itself. Highland clan chiefs turned on each other and on their men, effectively neutering their remaining strength, even in defeat. Furthermore, London seemed determined to never let another uprising happen again. Ross continues and writes:

London had been given a bad fright and had had enough of Jacobitism. To have the Highlands as a large redoubt of the people with a separate language and culture was tiresome enough but for them to be a continuing military threat was intolerable. Cumberland's policy was analogous to that carried out in earlier centuries by English kings who saw the whole of Scotland in the same way that he viewed Gaeldom. But now many in the South of Scotland also saw with his eyes. Disarming the Highlands was only part of the intention. Clanship was to be stamped out. Visible evidence in the costume of the people was forbidden. The Gaelic language was now outlawed. The people harried, bullied and victimised. The government took the opportunity to bring not only the Highland chiefs but also the lowland lairds into the eighteenth century by passing the Act for Abolishing Heritable Jurisdictions. By this, the long-established Scottish institutions of the baron court and hereditary sheriffdom were stripped of their legal function and authority. What power a chief retained was determined purely by his own personal qualities, the inertia of tradition and, by no means least, the rights and status of a land-owner. (Ross 236)

Aside from the general tone of Ross' passage, which contains a certain tone of abject horror at the loss of Scotland's culture, there are a few key items of importance. The first being the ban on tartan colours and outfits, or as Ross puts it, the "costume of the people". The clan costume was the symbol of each particular clan, a unifying marker that bound clansmen together. By banning the clan costume the English weakened the cultural unifying symbol of the resisting Scotsman. This was further impacted with the abolition of

the chief's legal power. Even though tradition and hereditary influence still remained, the clans' visible power in Scotland was left in tatters. This not only impacted Scottish culture in the general sense but also divided the country even further. Ross mentions that Cumberland's policy had gained favour with some of the southern Scotsmen living in the Lowlands and this could only have increased the split in Scottish culture.

Worse, though, was the absolute ban of the Gaelic language. By leaving the Scotsman no recourse in public communication other than English, the State effectively bullied Gaelic speaking Scotsmen into accepting, at least partly, a modicum of English identity that came with speaking English. With the loss at Culloden and with the institutionalized reforms that followed, Scotland had been split into two contradicting cultural states:

The encouraged trend was assimilation, to English speech, English practices and English ideas. Prejudices and attitudes formed in England over many centuries had not gone away in 1707, and for many years Scots arriving in London found that they were regarded as members of a rough and even semi-barbaric community, something the alarm and the fright generated in 1745 did nothing to dispel. The reaction of the Scots was to seek conformity. (Ross 245)

Gaelic Poetry and Scottish Writers

However, a curious movement returned late in the 1700's. With the rise of education in Scotland, that in and of itself an English influence, literature and creative writing began to gradually return (Ross 249). Ross tells us that in the years between 1760 and 1763 a book

of poems was published causing a great stir in literary circles. The book, *Fragments of Ancient Poetry Collected in the Highlands*, was said to be poetry from Gaelic translated into English, with the original composition said to be done by Ossian, a legendary hero (Ross 250). In effect, though, the work was most likely written by James Macpherson, rather than merely being translated by him. What is important, however, is that the poems were popular because, as Ross tells us, they “were to some extent based on Gaelic ballads, with considerable additions of what the eighteenth-century mind felt to be authentic Celtic sentiments and character” (Ross 250).

Amidst the tumultuous changes that were happening in Scottish society, including the setting of English standards throughout, there rose a noticeably Celtic, or Gaelic-centred cultural movement, and while James Macpherson’s Ossian tales were certainly at the forefront, other writers emerged from within that early movement, Robert Burns, of course, being the prime example.

It is here, arguably, that the Caledonian antisyzygy described by George Gregory Smith comes into clear focus. Not only did Robert Burns’ work extend from patriotic fervour to biting satire (Ross 251), but it also showed how subversive Scottish literature could, and can, be. Later, writers such as Sir Walter Scott, and of course James Hogg and Robert Louis Stevenson, would add to that subversive, dualistic cultural landscape.

However, the Scottish tradition in dualism is not wholly centred on polemical writing and/or concerned with the split between pro-Union and anti-Union, even if it informs much of the restlessness and contradictions found in Scottish writing. George Gregory Smith tells us that:

The Scottish Muse has, however another mood. Though she has loved reality, sometimes to maudlin affection for the commonplace, she has loved no less the airier pleasure to be found in the confusion of the sense, in the fun of things thrown topsyturvy [sic], in the horns of elfland and the voices of the mountains. It is a strange union of the opposites [...] derived from the very exuberance of the poet's realism by an inevitable reaction, or were a defect of its quality, or a sort of saturnalian indulgence of the slaves of observation. (Smith 19)

Two things stand out in Smith's quote, namely his use of "inevitable reaction" and "saturnalian indulgence of the slaves of observation". When Smith says that the Scottish Muse's other mood can be attributed to an "inevitable reaction," he refers to the self-reflective quality in Scottish writing and "a direct protest against the prose of experience" (Smith 19). Here Smith is likely referring to the measures employed by the government after the Treaty of the Union, and the quelling of the Jacobite uprising. Interestingly, the Scottish Muse's other mood is also in reaction to the Scottish Enlightenment, where reason and logic were valued highly.

Smith's second point is also interesting, if only for his choice of words. By evoking Saturnalia where all things are thrown "topsyturvy", he subtly lets the reader know where the Scottish writer is coming from. This other mood therefore, divorced from "reality" and the emerging Enlightenment experience, is an indulgence meant for the "slaves of observation". In other words, those stuck within a world where logic and reason ruled.

This places the Scottish writer, according to both Smith and the historical perspective, in a dualistic role where aspects of the Enlightenment and the "topsyturvy",

oppose each other in warring states. This, too, harkens back to the English/Scottish divide, and the deep-set feelings (positive and negative) which fuel it. If the Scottish Enlightenment was made possible through English influence after the Union, then the saturnalian Scot is a product of, and a reaction to, the sense of cultural loss that followed the Union, and its many repercussions. Gerard Carruthers and Christopher Whyte mention in *Scottish Literature In English and Scots*:

In literature, the feeling of having “sold out” to southern powers provoked a kind of sentimental Jacobitism. There was a desire in Scotland to look back to the vanquished Stuart cause. And from Allan Ramsay to Robert Burns, popular vernacular Scottish poetry, charged with a feeling of nostalgic longing, served to fuel the sense of cheated national identity. [...] Yet while popular national feeling supported Jacobitism and the integrity of Scottish identity, the work of the Scottish *literati*, the educated upper and middle classes of Scotland, tended in the opposite direction; towards “self improvement” in the anglicized language and literature. By the middle of the eighteenth century, Edinburgh in particular was leading a Scottish Enlightenment which seemed to have its primary values located in a “North British” sensibility. Polite society tried hard to divest itself of Scotticisms and vulgar native expression, at times seeming to out-English the English in attempts to show that it was no mere northern country cousin. (Carruthers and Whyte 105-106)

Scottish writers are, therefore, tied on the one hand between the older, folkloristic aspect of Scottish culture, such as the Ballad culture, and on the other hand the

Union-driven mindset of logic and reason. Both *Confessions of a Justified Sinner* and *Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde* use this rift as a serious thematic substance, expressing that substance through the literal duality of their protagonists. And though both novels deal with this thematic duality, only *Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde* does it with an overt mindset, meaning that the thematic shift seen in *Confessions of a Justified Sinner* is both more subtle and directed more towards other aspects of the Scottish duality than Robert Louis Stevenson's work.

National Identity

In general what is referred to here is James Hogg's use of religious fanaticism in *Confessions of a Justified Sinner* as a vehicle to explore Scottish duality. Carruthers and Whyte write that: "Eighteenth-century Scotland is characterised by polarisation and division. In religion the insurmountable theological divisions of the moderate and extreme parties culminated in the Disruption of the Church of Scotland in 1843" (Carruthers and Whyte 106). In this sense, Robert Wringhim's crisis mirrors that of Scotland's religious disruption.

In both cases, Robert Wringhim's and Dr Jekyll's identity crises mirror, or represent, Scotland's own national identity crisis. Carruthers and Whyte write that:

National identity, expressed in cultural terms, was a complex issue in eighteenth-century Scotland. Some modern critics argue that the period is characterised by cultural anxiety which led many Scottish writers hastily and artificially to mimic the dominant forms of English and French neo-classical culture. Many of the Enlightenment writers strove to rid their written work of

“Scotticisms”, scots words and language forms. The paradox is that while the Scottish drive to be British is thought to have been stimulated by the European Enlightenment programme to promote progress and civilisation, such a programme ironically included a fashionable emphasis on primitivism. [...] It is these conflicting aspirations of British civility and Scottish integrity which compounded the Scottish “crisis of identity” in the eighteenth century. (Carruthers and Whyte 114)

Such thinking bears with it the faint trace of colonial thinking, with elements of meaningful disdain for a previous and older culture as well as the “noble savage”, specifically Carruthers' and Whyte's use of a “fashionable elements of primitivism”. However such criticism is hard to sustain. As Bill Ashcroft, Gareth Griffiths and Helen Tiffin argue in *The Empire Writes Back: Theory and Practice in Post-Colonial Literatures*:

[...] while it is possible to argue that [Ireland, Scotland and Wales] were the first victims of English expansion, their subsequent complicity in the British Imperial enterprise makes it difficult for colonized people outside Britain to accept their identity as post-colonial. (Ashcroft, Griffiths, and Tiffin 31-32)

While Scotland's place in post-colonial theory might stand on a weak base, it is nonetheless true that Scotland bears the hallmarks of a colonized nation, as do Ireland and Wales, especially bearing in mind Cairns Craig's assertion in *Out of History: Narrative Paradigms in Scottish and British Culture*. Craig argues that the: “History of Scotland,

Ireland, and Wales remains a series of accidents, a series of incidents held together by no fundamental necessity [...] England has a history; Ireland [and Scotland] will only acquire history once [they come] into the orderly and progressive world that is imposed on [them] by England” (Craig 101).

Yet Craig’s statement overlooks the simple fact that while England tried to impose its history on Scotland, through trying to ban the Scottish cultural heritage, they were ultimately unsuccessful in the sense that Scottish culture adapted, changed and retained, in part, its heritage. Not only in the sense that during the Enlightenment it was Scotland, and Scottish thinking, that was in the forefront of Enlightenment thinking, however influenced by the British it might have been, as Carruthers and Whyte mention:

[...] the tendencies of Enlightenment Scotland towards British *mores* in the eighteenth century may be read more positively, as part of a new and genuine cosmopolitanism in Scottish culture. The intellectual ferment of eighteenth-century Scotland (“a hot-bed of genius” as Smollett memorably described Edinburgh at the height of the Enlightenment) contributed many works of history, philosophy, economics, sociology, and science which were seminal in the European debates at the time, and which mark the beginnings of western modernity. (Carruthers and Whyte 114-115)

The post-colonial stamp, or lack thereof, contributes then as a somewhat false flag when it comes to interpreting Scottish literature, especially Scottish literature in the eighteenth century. While it is certainly true that the drive towards British sensibilities, and

the attempt to banish Scottish cultural elements from Scotland itself, are ethically on thin ice, it cannot be forgotten that in the absence of this part of Scottish culture a new element must invariably take its place. This creates in the Scottish writer the “Caledonian Antisyzygy” or “disorderly order”, the manifestation of the two warring aspects, British/Scottish and reason/faith, or belief.

Furthermore, Kurt Wittig, writing in *The Scottish Tradition in Literature* tells us that:

Several recurrent traits of the Scottish tradition may perhaps have gone to produce this phenomenon. One is the intense preoccupation with character, with which is linked a relentless curiosity, an insatiable desire to enter into other people’s minds. The Scot usually is not satisfied with outward appearances; he worries what may be behind the surface. Then there is the subjective impressionism so characteristic of Scots and Gaelic poetry [...] from which arises a tendency to create one’s own subjective vision of reality. The same thing can be seen from different angles, as a whole series of variations on a single theme. From the beginning, Scots poetry showed a combination of two or more seemingly irreconcilable qualities: of high pathos and everyday realms, of stark tragedy and grim humour, of high seriousness and grotesquerie, of tenderness and sarcasm. [...] This emotional and intellectual dualism - the “Caledonian Antisyzygy,” as Gregory Smith called it - may possibly have been reinforced by the schizophrenic tendencies of a nation which came to use one language to express thought, another to express feeling. It may also have been hardened by the stern intellectual discipline of Calvinism; and, as the impact of the

Reformation gradually wore off, people may have become increasingly conscious of the latent emotional and moral dualism implicit in the overt contradiction between the Scottish Sabbath and the Scottish Saturday (or Friday) night. [...] the problem of a strangely subjective vision of reality is dominant in much of modern Scottish literature. (Wittig 249-250)

Wittig's quote is necessarily dependent on the historical perspective. And while it catalogued the Scottish writer's foibles accurately, the full impact of Wittig's statement is not made clear until you apply the historical perspective. In this sense, the Scottish writer is so influenced by the cultural impact of the Treaty of the Union, and its subsequent events, that he cannot help but try and reconcile the disparity between the English and Scottish cultures. At the heart of the matter is Wittig's statement that the Scot uses two languages, one for thought and another for feeling.

Certainly that is at least partially true, as can be seen by Robert Burns' use of Scots in his poetry, for as David Ross reminds us: "Burns also contributed to the tradition of David Herd by not only gathering but recasting traditional songs" (Ross 251). Meaning that the Scots language survived in the traditions, songs and other cultural heritages not directly connected with British sensibilities. Here we can also see another split in the Scottish cultural mind, and one that perhaps is more telling than the split between Scots/British sensibilities: namely that of the two languages in Scotland prior to the Act of the Union: Lowland Scots and Highland Gaelic, only one of these has seen more widespread use: Lowland Scots, with studies showing that Scots speakers in the United Kingdom total around one point five million speakers ("Scots"), while Highland Gaelic only numbers

around fifty-eight thousand speakers in 2011 (“ScottishGovernment - News - A’ Fàs Le Gàidhlig”). And while statistics have little bearing on the actual reasons for this split, it gives us a glimpse of the eventual argument, that Lowland Scots may have survived partly because of the proximity to British sensibilities, and therefore benefited greatly from the eventual economic impact and “British *mores* [...] as part of a new and genuine cosmopolitanism in Scottish culture” (Carruthers and Whyte 114). It must not be forgotten, however, that the Clearances in the Highlands also contributed greatly to the decline of the Scottish Gaelic culture, heritage and language.

As Wittig continues in his quote: “It [Caledonian antiszygy] may also have been hardened by the stern intellectual discipline of Calvinism” (Wittig 250), which we can see in *Confessions of a Justified Sinner*, where the rigor of Calvinist doctrine is juxtaposed with the more folksy, common and faerie- or supernatural-like approach of Gil-Martin’s seduction of Robert Wringhim.

Just as importantly, we see the same pattern emerge in *Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde*, where instead of “the stern intellectual discipline of Calvinist doctrine” we are treated with a protagonist, Dr Jekyll, who mirrors Wittig’s statement that: “The Scot usually is not satisfied with outward appearances; he worries what may be behind the surface” (Wittig 249-250). This is chiefly reflected in the chapter “Henry Jekyll’s Full Statement of the Case” (Stevenson 83), wherein Dr Jekyll explicitly states:

“I stood already committed to a profound duplicity of life. [...] such irregularities as I was guilty of; but from the high views that I had set before me, I regarded and hid them with an almost morbid sense of shame. It was thus rather the exacting nature

of my aspirations than any particular degradation in my faults, that made me what I was and, with even a deeper trench than in the majority of men, severed in me those provinces of good and ill which divide and compound man's dual nature. In this case I was driven to reflect deeply and inveterately on that hard law of life, which lies at the root of religion and is one of the most plentiful springs of life."

(Stevenson 83-84)

Though Jekyll's statement is not particularly concerned with the minds of others, except in the case of him projecting the correct outward appearance, he is more concerned with his own mind and the split that occurs there when forced to reconcile his base desires with the proper appearance that he must present to the world. As the novel progresses, the reader also learns that Jekyll's concern lies also with the growing menace within himself.

Wittig's quote about Calvinism, therefore, seems to accurately describe Smith's "Caledonian antisyzygy" and further expand on the concept of the Scottish duality: "by the schizophrenic tendencies of a nation which came to use one language to express thought, another to express feeling" (Wittig 250).

This duality certainly holds a powerful grip on the Scottish psyche, arguably to the point where the classical example of dualism in Western literature lies with Robert Louis Stevenson's *The Strange Case of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde*. A major part of this stems from the divide after the Treaty of the Union. The divide between those that could prosper (merchants and upper-class people) and those that would struggle to do so, grew wider and deeper, not only because "the country grew wealthier than it ever had [...] the nobility and the country gentry became firmly Unionist in their sympathies, and [...] exercised not

merely influence but a degree of power [and] their attitudes were widely imitated” (Ross 245), but also because English influence suppressed Scottish cultural tendencies. Not only was it fashionable to act, sound and look English it was also frowned upon to be in any way associated with Scottish elements or culture. Ross reminds us that:

Prejudices and attitudes formed in England over many centuries had not gone away in 1707, and for many years Scots arriving in London found that they were regarded as members of a rough and even semi-barbaric community. [...] The reaction of the Scottish was to seek conformity (Ross 245).

And as representative of the Scottish attitude as this is we must not forget Robert Burns as being representative of the other side of the coin, especially bearing in mind his poems “Holy Willie’s Prayer” and “Address to a Haggis”. Indeed, the representation of Scottish culture as Scottish, and not English, can be clearly seen in the last stanza of “Address to a Haggis”:

Ye Pow’rs, wha mak mankind your care,
And dish them out their bill o’ fare,
Auld Scotland wants nae skinking ware
That jaups in luggies;
But, if ye wish her gratefu’ prayer
Gie her a haggis! (“BBC - Robert Burns - Address to a Haggis”)

Chapter 3

Subaltern Dualism

Scottish dualism, however, has changed over the years, going from the cultural influence of the Union and into a slightly narrower definition of post-colonial literary criticism.

Broadly defined, dualism in literary criticism refers to dualism of the mind, a metaphysical, philosophical, idea which supposes that the mind and the body are separate, though connected. The philosophy emphasizes a “radical difference between mind and matter” (“Dualism and Mind | Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy”). Proponents of this philosophy argue that there is a distinct difference between mind and matter and that that difference can be proven by arguing that: “two things are identical if, and only if, they simultaneously share the same qualities” (“Dualism and Mind”).

What this means is that, strictly speaking, a work cannot be considered dualistic unless it meets these criteria. Gil-Martin, the shadow double of Robert Wringhim, in *The Private Memoirs and Confessions of a Justified Sinner* does not necessarily share Robert Wringhim’s qualities simultaneously with Robert. Indeed, the only novel that reflect this view a hundred percent is Robert Louis Stevenson’s *The Strange Case of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde*.

Dualism therefore as a divided self is hard to pin down, but at the core it remains a question of the Other: a dark unknown which manifests in certain grotesque ways. Masao Miyoshi writes in *The Divided Self* that:

Distinctions among the several themes of self-duplication and self-division arise

from the source of the second self or partial self. In the case of duplication, the second self or double appears, as it were, from outside the first self; whereas in the case of division, as in the Jekyll-Hyde personality, it splits off from within. For our practical purposes here this difference is of only minor importance next to what is essential to both, the disintegration of the person. Common, too, to both duplication and division are the conflicting and often simultaneous impulses of the victim - the craving for and the fear of the encounter with the second self - each of which has its archetype in a traditional version of the double: the Platonic, or epipsychean, longing for unification of the severed halves of man, and the folkloristic fear of the double as an omen for death. (Miyoshi xii)

Miyoshi's point is interesting if slightly off the mark. Certainly Hogg and Stevenson fit into the category of Miyoshi's definitions, with their characters' longing for and fearing the escape which the Other provides. But Miyoshi's point bears several points of note.

As it relates to self-division and self-duplication the distinction is minuscule, for as Miyoshi rightly points out, what matters is not *how* the person is divided, but rather that the person is *being* divided. It is the psychological strain and the effects of that which provide the thematic material for the stories.

Walter Scott, even, thought long and hard about dualism, that one could be two. He writes in his journal, in January 1826 that:

People say that the whole human frame in all its parts and divisions is gradually in the act of decaying and renewing. What a curious timepiece it would be that could

indicate to us the moment this gradual and insensible change had some completely taken place, that no atom was left of the original person who had existed at a certain time period, but there existed in his stead another person having the same limbs, thews, and sinews, the same face and lineaments, the same consciousness - a new ship built on an old plank - [...] Singular - to be at once another and the same.

(Scott 74)

Scott wrote that just two years after James Hogg's *The Private Memoirs and Confessions of a Justified Sinner* and it helps contextualize the fascination at the time for what or who a man is. Or, as the Scottish author James Robertson said in an ASLS conference lecture:

Scott's views on this, on history, were formed by a mixture of his childhood exposure to oral history and storytelling in the Borders, and his education in Edinburgh in the latter part of what we now call the Scottish Enlightenment. He was a child of that age which prioritized the science of man, the study of humans and human society which sought to explore the mysteries of who we are rather than speculate on the insoluble mystery of God. (Robertson, Youtube: 4:40-5:28)

While Robertson seems to edge closer to explaining Scott's, and by extension Hogg's, Stevenson's and others' fascination with the double as a pure by-product of the Enlightenment, a study of the human and the science of man, it also seems to imply a strong argument that the study of humans must not just be scientific and quantifiable, but

also means an examination of what it actually *means to be* human.

This is also seen in Scott's use of the word "atom" in his musing on the dual aspect of man. It shows us that there is a scientific background there, or at least a scientific curiosity. The quote also shows us that science is not the main thrust of Scott's thoughts, but a more metaphysical idea, which is not quite grounded or solid.

Robertson then also provides an explanation when he mentions both the Border tradition and the Scottish Enlightenment. In point of fact, it is these two elements working together that form the basis for the dualistic thinking in the works covered. The Border tradition, with its folk tales and superstitions, is in conflict with the rational and scientific thinking of the Enlightenment.

Furthermore, dualism is closely joined with the Gothic tradition (Anderson and Gifford 409), especially after the Romantic period, reflected, as Anderson and Gifford mention: "Later in the nineteenth century, Taine presented the concept of 'two moral personalities in the same individual' in *On Intelligence* (1870)" (Anderson and Gifford 409). However, the nuances of what the term can mean has important implications, not only on the examination of the Hogg's and Stevenson's works as inherently dualistic but also for the grotesque and Gothic elements these works present as well. The Other represents not only the split from the character's Self, but also an alienation from the setting or the cultural mood at the time of writing. James Hogg and Robert Louis Stevenson therefore each show the Other as a separation from their characters.

Subaltern Other

The Other can also be connected with subaltern theory, showing the difference between the

Empire and the colonized as a displacement similar to the displacement from Self to Other. This becomes relevant as a signifier of Scotland's national identity and its relationship with Great Britain.

This dividing line can be seen as part of subaltern studies, the more acceptable term for post-colonial studies. Subaltern studies refers originally to the writings of Ranjit Guha and as explained by Douglas A. Mack is a:

[...] distinction between what he [Guha] called the "elite" and what he called the "subaltern classes". Writing about Indian society in the days of British Imperial rule, Guha suggested that a dominant elite then operated in tune with the interests of the British Raj, and contained "foreign as well as indigenous groups". The foreign elements included British officials, industrialists, merchants, financiers, planters, landlords, and missionaries, while the indigenous elements (at an all-India level) included "the biggest feudal magnates, the most important representatives of the industrial and mercantile bourgeoisie and native recruits to the uppermost levels of the bureaucracy." At a more local level, the indigenous portion of the dominant elite could also include people belonging to "hierarchically inferior" social strata, who nevertheless acted in the interest of the elite "and not in conformity to interests corresponding truly to their own social being". Guha stresses that the "subaltern classes", on the other hand, consisted of the "people", the dominant mass of the population in town and country. [I] will argue that, in Scotland as in India, the "elite" and the "subaltern classes" had significantly different experiences of the impact of the British Imperial project. (Mack 1)

The subaltern classes are the Other while the “elite” is associated with the Self. Metaphorically speaking this means that the Scottish writer is displaced at a cultural level, torn between Imperial English and the subaltern Scottish identities.

Crucially, this is dualism as explored in Scottish fiction in the forms of Scottish statelessness being seen as an identity. Gill Plain, in her essay “Concepts of Corruption: Crime Fiction and the Scottish State”, argues that crime fiction represents a suitable way to project Scottish statelessness, and disenfranchisement. She writes: “Through fiction, the inarticulate resentments of a stateless nation find form and expression, and this symbiotic relationship between text and context is equally manifest in crime fiction.” (Plain 133) Her point is convincing, and a strong argument could be made that what represents dualism in the works of Hogg and Stevenson is crime. A more natural theory would hold that these dualistic tendencies in Scottish fiction are represented not only in crime, a manifestation of a struggle, but also by the tone of the work, that the work lends itself to dualism through the need to seek an identity.

What this means is that these novels not only show us a glimpse of the Scottish character, but also reveal that there is a hidden depth to the clash between the Other and the Self. This dualism emerges through the shadows of the grotesque and the Gothic.

Chapter 4

Grotesque and Gothic: the Two-Headed Scottish Monster

Origins, and the Palace of Nero

To start with we need to look at what constitutes grotesque art. It is easy to picture an individualized grotesque form. It is simply an alienation of traditional forms, whatever those forms happen to be. To one person it might be a natural reserve, deformed and industrialized. To another it might be some dark recess in the human mind; fetishes after all are often subjected to their grotesque stamp and pushed to the fringes. It is the distorted image of normality pushed to a shocking degree and often manifested as a reaction to imposed limits. In other words, it is the Other.

Arthur Clayborough writes in *The Grotesque in English Literature* that the term itself, “grotesque”, is said to originate as a descriptive term for murals “in which human and animal motifs were combined with foliage and floral decoration, found in the chambers of (“grotte”) Roman buildings excavated about 1500” (Clayborough 1).

Certainly this description does not do justice to the word’s later semantic development, one which Geoffrey Galt Harpham describes, in *On the Grotesque*, as: “irreducible queerness” (Harpham 3). Rather it began, as Randall Cotgrave, an English lexicographer described, in *A Dictionaire of the French and English Tongues*, as “pictures wherein (as it please the Painter) all kinds of odde things are represented without aine peculiar sence, or meaning, but only to feed the eye” (Cotgrave 507). The leap from “only to feed the eye” to “irreducible queerness” is one that is worth looking into, especially as it informs, by its very “odd” leaps and bounds from architectural styles to literature, its very definition.

These grottoes, which the word grotesque is derived from, contained painted both walls and murals, as Clayborough informs us above, yet the history behind those murals does as much to inform us of their “queerness” as the eventual leap from architecture to literature. Clayborough tells us that the murals, or frescoes, were found in the excavation of the Domus Aurea of Nero, which is to say Emperor Nero’s palace in Rome (Clayborough 2). Harpham tells us that:

In these ruins, scholars and artists beheld the ancient past suddenly revealed in the form of an awesome enigma. A vast labyrinth of passageways, rooms, and supporting pillars to structures that no longer existed [...] The site inspired the imagination as it resisted comprehension [...] although it was known that the Baths of Titus has been erected in that area, popular tradition had placed the Domus Aurea at the Lateran, the Quirinal, or the current site of the Vatican. (Harpham 27)

The origin of the grotesque starts in an area that “resisted comprehension” as Harpham puts it. Furthermore we learn that the site also contained Nero’s palace, as Clayborough mentioned. Harpham gives us more and tells us that “this unique building, so grandiose in its conception and so important in its decay, was described at the time of its construction by Pliny [and] Tacitus” (Harpham 27-28). Already the stories of Nero’s palace infuse the word’s narrative with some sense of “oddness” or even shrouds of myth. After all, Nero was the emperor accused of playing his fiddle as Rome burned, or as Harpham recounts:

Historical movements great and small pivot on this monstrosity [the palace]. After the great fire of 64 A.D. had devastated most of Rome, a popular rumour spread that Nero had ordered the conflagration so that he could found a new city named after himself; moreover, that while the blaze consumed Rome, Nero had appeared at the window, performing a recitation of the fall of Troy. To distract people and redirect their suspicion from himself, Nero began the persecution of the Christians, ostensibly as punishment for arson. Despite this entertaining spectacle, doubts persisted, based now on Nero's reconstruction of the city. With the land cleared and old Rome extinct, Nero began to fancy himself a Sun-God, sweeping his hair forward and up to resemble a wreath of flames; and he built an imperial villa so enormous that Tacitus was moved to remark that the whole of Rome had been reduced to one house. (Harpham 28)

What is remarkable about this account is how utterly absurd it seems, yet it feeds into the narrative of the grotesque. The veracity of Nero's actions is not necessarily needed as the popular perception of Nero supports this view. It also shrouds the building, and by extension the grotto-esque frescoes which begat the name grotesque, in a particularly odd sense of mystery, making it hard to pinpoint what is and is not, especially standing on the other side of history with only stories and myths as references.

In this sense the grotesque starts to represent an intangible feeling, something barely felt, or if felt, not understood. It goes back to what Randall Cotgrave writes that the word itself is "represented without aine peculiar sence, or meaning, but only feed the eye" (Cotgrave 507). Accentuating this point is the fact that these frescoes, or murals, were

unoriginal during Nero's time. Indeed Harpham reminds us that the frescoes were of a much earlier design and use: "ways of thinking much older than Rome" (Harpham 27). The implication here is that the fresco style itself is grotesque and had survived for much longer than anticipated, yet that is not the case. Harpham's quote only goes as far as to tell us that, by implication, the frescoes were outdated, and/or unoriginal. Indeed he goes on to say that "Nor were they [frescoes] immediately recognized as 'grotesque'. This recognition has to wait until the Golden Palace had been buried underground for nearly a millennium and a half" (Harpham 27).

Critically, it is the recognition that holds weight here, and not strictly the time spent buried underground. The perception of time, as well as the perception of the structure itself (labyrinthine and colossal) creates an unnatural sense of foreboding, a certain oddness or weirdness. Paradoxically, and indeed therefore grotesquely, the word itself stems from an architectural subject which was outdated and unoriginal as well as "the work of an austere nonentity providentially named Fabullus" (Harpham 29). Harpham is here referring to the painter himself, whom Nero charged with painting the Domus Aurea. Fabullus, we learn, was pedestrian in his work and failed to grasp Nero's new forms, grandiose and sweeping as they were (Harpham 29). Instead we are left with:

The finest example [...] of a style that had appeared in Rome about 100 B.C. This style consisted of graceful fantasies, symmetrical anatomical impossibilities, small beasts, human heads, and delicate, indeterminate vegetables, all presented as ornament with a faintly mythological character imparted by representations of fauns, nymphs, satyrs, and centaurs. (Harpham 29)

Hidden Crypts and Leering Gargoyles

The mention of mythological characters is interesting as it suggests that the grotesque holds a deeper impact on art and literature than merely as murals, frescoes and weird stories. And indeed one can see traces of that impact in Hogg's and Stevenson's works where both protagonists, Robert Wringhim and Dr Jekyll, are faced with a deep and alien interaction with their doubles. This idea of the grotesque therefore being out of reach, and odd or partially, if not completely incomprehensible, can also be found in the semantic roots of the word itself. Harpham tells us that:

More because of the setting than because of any qualities inherent in the design themselves, a consensus soon emerged according to which the designs were called *grottesche* - of or pertaining to underground caves. [...] this naming is a mistake pregnant with truth, for although the designs were never intended to be underground, nor Nero's palace a grotto, the word is perfect. The Latin form of *grotta* is probably *crupta* (cf. "Crypt"), which in turn derives from the Greek κρύπτη, a vault; one of the cognates is κρυπτός, to hide. *Grotesque* then, gathers into itself suggestions of the underground, of burial, and of secrecy. (Harpham 32)

Remarkably then, the meaning of the word is more implied by its history rather than strictly by the actual derivative object the word was used to describe. In this sense the word evolves from being strictly a descriptive term for the particular frescoes found at Domus Aurea and begins to take on meaning surrounding the mythological aspects around the

palace's history as well as the etymological history and meaning of the word. This influence is so pervasive that the description of the original frescoes is only relevant in that they seem, through the filter of history, to mean wholly unnatural, whereas the original artistic meaning behind them was innocuous and pedestrian. Furthermore, Arthur Clayborough writes that this new style of frescoes, with the imparted new meaning: "is characterized by its rejection of the "natural conditions of organization" and the combining of heterogeneous forms. Natural physical wholes are disintegrated and the parts fantastically redistributed to suit the taste of the artist" (Clayborough 3).

It is the disintegration that is especially interesting in this context, implying a deconstruction of the classical or arguably even older style, that Fabullus used, suited for a different purpose and imparting a subjective meaning unique to the artist. And to an extent that is true, the grotesque is paradoxically resistant to an objective definition. Clayborough remarks that "The grotesque design stands condemned as a perversion of truth" (Clayborough 6), which seems influenced from the word's history and etymological meaning. The grotesque is only considered "grotesque" in definition because of the imparted meaning given by circumstance and structured meaning. This gives weight to the subjective interpretation where the word, and the concept of the grotesque is fluid and subject to change according to the artistic manifestation.

One such manifestation is the bridge between the architectural concepts of the word, as seen in the Domus Aurea, and the eventual literary manifestations of the concept. In her essay on "Victorian Poetry", in the *Encyclopedia of Literature and Criticism*, Isobel Armstrong argues that the grotesque as a literary category emerged from Gothic art, and specifically defined by John Ruskin in his third volume of *Stones of Venice*. Armstrong

states:

Ruskin did not believe that art was typical or universal but that it expressed different historical moments. Grotesque art, he said, manifested itself in a number of historical periods, but it took different forms according to the culture to which it belonged. One form of it appears in the art of the Gothic cathedral, where the workman gave expression to resistance against the social order by carving sculpture embodying the will to freedom. Some nineteenth-century discussion of Gothic art associated it with integrated, organized society, but Ruskin did not. All forms of grotesque art are related to play, and play is directly related to the forms of work a society evolves and to its social hierarchy. (Armstrong 285)

Ruskin's argument here is interesting as it plays upon the notion that grotesque art (and later arguably, literature) is inherently tied to the times in which it is viewed, rather than the times in which it was created. This is not a Barthesian attack on the artist, the author, and Ruskin is not talking about the insignificance of the creator. Rather, as Armstrong suggests, Ruskin is making a case for the fluidity of the grotesque as a concept. It defies our attempts to categorize it effectively and does not allow for a definitive interpretation. Just looking at the earliest forms of the grotesque one can see that it was originally wholly unoriginal flora and fauna frescoes, not connected in any way to what could arguably be made as the modern interpretation of the grotesque, the horrid and the unnatural. Those filters are brought in later, in part through the mythology of the Domus Aurea and the etymological roots of the word grotesque, but also through interpretation and

re-interpretation of the word as a word, and the word as a concept.

Writing in *The Stones of Venice* Ruskin tells us, concerning the gargoyles sitting on cathedrals, that:

It seems to me that the grotesque is, in almost all cases composed of two elements, one ludicrous and the other fearful; that, as one or the other of these elements prevails, the grotesque falls into two branches, sportive grotesque, and terrible grotesque; but that we cannot legitimately consider under these two aspects, because there are hardly any examples which do not in some degree combine both elements; there are few grotesques so utterly playful as to be overcast with no shade of fearfulness, and few so fearful as absolutely to exclude all jest. (Ruskin, cited in Harpham 43)

Interestingly, what we see here is a movement from the absolute earlier forms of the grotesque, which also contain elements of jest and terror in their human/animal hybrids and mythical interpretations, and into something else, and something more akin to horror, the Gothic and most importantly, duality. Ruskin's quote indicates that the grotesque invariably always contains a measure of the two: jest and terror. It is exactly in this way that the grotesque works, by combining the two into something odd and fearful, but enticing. This could be said to be the seduction of power in Robert Wringhim's struggle with his demonic counterpart as well as Dr Jekyll's struggle against Mr Hyde. It also skirts the subject of duality in grotesque forms. Harpham notes that "the doubleness of the gargoyles puts us in mind of the doubleness of the cathedral, which, although it honors God, was built by

mortals” (Harpham 43).

The gargoyle actually provides the perfect example of the grotesque as envisioned by Ruskin. Writing in *The Stones of Venice*, Ruskin not only attempted to set forth a critical examination of the Venetian architecture, but also to write about cultural history. So while most of his discussions on the grotesque revolves around the actual architecture in Venice, we can also glean some insight into his approach to the subject by his comments on cultural history and religion. He writes in his criticism of Giovanni da Udine, a painter and student of Raphael, that:

The care, skill and science, applied to the distribution of the leaves, and the drawing of the figures, are intense, admirable, and accurate; therefore, they ought to have produced a grand and serious work, not a tissue of nonsense. If we can draw the human head perfectly, and are masters of its expression and its beauty, we have no business to cut it off, and hang it up by the hair at the end of a garland. If we can draw the human body in the perfection of its grace and movement, we have no business to take away its limbs, and terminate it with a bunch of leaves. (Ruskin 143-144)

Ruskin’s criticism of Giovanni’s style, which is based on what he had seen in the grottoes, but enlarged and displayed more prominently (Harpham 34), is that the style, the work itself, is wasteful, and later he speaks of Raphael’s style as “an unnatural and monstrous abortion” (Ruskin 144). Interestingly this criticism only seems to embolden the artistic merit of the grotesque, as seen in Raphael’s and Giovanni’s frescoes in Rome.

Harpham goes on to say that:

[...] the artists of the Renaissance did not see it this way [...] Giovanni's work is scarcely meant to be contemplated at all, but merely observed. It is pointless to try to extract any lessons from the *grotesche*, or even describe it, for its formal arrangement of elements repels translation into syntax, much less paragraphs. Here on the borders, it was assumed is a place for the eye alone, where it can wander at will, luxuriating in the delights of unencumbered design. (Harpham 36)

The grotesque here stands as a mere observable arrangement not intended for intellectual consumption. It is unobtrusive and on the margin, yet somehow gains prominence as an arresting feature, a halting experience. Curiously it is Ruskin that brings the debate back around. Again commenting on Ruskin's dialogue in *The Stones of Venice* Isobel Armstrong writes that:

In connecting play with forms of work and the social structure Ruskin is implicitly escaping from the idea of pure aesthetic play which had been developed in Schiller's influential *Letters on the Aesthetic Education of Man* (1795). He details many forms of play, but some societies have a structure of work so intransigent that its members cannot play at all. The nineteenth century has developed such a society through the organisation of industrial labour, and whether they participated in oppressed labour or not, all classes will produce the art which is formed by it. Mechanics and artisans express these distortions of the grotesque only in jibes, jests,

facial expressions and caricature. For other classes the sense of distortion will be expressed through an art which he sees as a distorted form of the sublime.

(Armstrong 285-286)

The relevant point here is Armstrong's use of the word "distorted". It carries some weight in her writing, meaning a distortion in our perception of ourselves, like Robert Wringhim and Dr Henry Jekyll view themselves. It is the definition of their broken or split selves. At the same time, though, "distortion" may also refer to a rebellion against conformity. Gil-Martin as the Devil (and he does not specifically need to be real or not) urges Robert Wringhim to rebel against accepted laws and customs. He magnifies and distorts Robert's perception of predestination so that Robert accepts that he is celestially immune to reprobation for his actions. Dr Jekyll meanwhile manifests his distortion physically as, literally, another side of himself to escape Victorian sensibilities. This rebellion against conformity is also seen, however vaguely, in Ruskin's dialogue of Raphaelite art in Rome. He criticizes the artists themselves for not having "produced a grand and serious work" (Ruskin 144), but instead wasting their talent on frivolities. These frivolities, then, are the inherent rebellion against conformity, for if conforming to artistic standards of human perfection (as Ruskin notes) means representing the human form in religious detail in all its glory, then the rebellion against that is the distortion of the human form, an amalgamation and subjugation of the form with and into other forms, natural or otherwise.

The Sublime and Distortion

Distortion also provides us with the link from artistic endeavours in architecture to literature. David Punter, writing in *The Literature of Terror: A History of Gothic Fictions from 1765 to the Present Day*, tells us the origins of Gothic literature is usually accredited to novels written between the 1760's and 1820's, when there is an "emphasis on portraying the terrifying, a common insistence on archaic settings, a prominent use of the supernatural" (Punter 1) and "Gothic was the archaic, the pagan, that which was prior to, or was opposed to, or resisted the establishment of civilized values and a well-regulated society" (Punter 5). This definition of the Gothic, a theme steeped in the macabre, queerness and unease. Horace Walpole wrote in a letter to Mme du Deffand that he wrote *The Castle of Otranto* "in spite of rules, critics, and philosophers [...] Which wants only cold reason" (Walpole 260). That is to say for Walpole the Gothic tradition was against much of the intellectual rise in the Renaissance, preferring to trust in intuition and emotion instead of logic and reason.

Here we can see a thematic link between the grotesque architecture of Domus Aurea and the Gothic literature of Walpole, Ann Radcliffe and eventually James Hogg and Robert Louis Stevenson. Both deal with the resistance of the expected, what can be called logic or reason, but also tradition. And both concepts argue against the expected with what is weird, odd, or even just a little out of the ordinary. To echo Isobel Armstrong, what they seek is the distortion of the expected.

This distortion then provides us with a new form, a new integration of a rebellion against conformity, whether that be through religious doctrine or rigid morals and gender roles. The Gothic form therefore, itself a movement or rebellion against logic and reason,

can be viewed through this distortion as something else entirely, though viewed through the same prism of the grotesque. Harpham writes that “The word [grotesque] designates a condition of being just out of focus, just beyond the reach of language” (Harpham 3), meaning that grotesque as a concept breaks our attempts at understanding, or creating something new and unexpected. With it, we get the weird feeling that the reader cannot be sure whether, for example, Robert Wringhim and Gil-Martin are the same person or not, or that Dr Jekyll’s transformation might actually be an escape from himself, however monstrous that might seem.

This feeling of unease comes not solely because of the Gothic influence, which is strong in the grotesque form, but also from a break from that understanding. As Isobel Armstrong continues:

The rupture of understanding, the epistemological break created through the sublime moment, is a distortion which, in the case of the grotesque, gives rise to a sense of limit, of a painfully narrowed perspective, of non-transcendence. The movement of Burke’s sublime was a movement from the experience of dissolution and terror in the infinite to a new integration, where the sense of breakdown of perception and relationship was surmounted in a new synthesis. The grotesque stays with the sense of a gap in the experience, of incomplete synthesis and restriction, and consequently the art of the grotesque is an art of infinitely self-generated desire, an economy of perpetually expended feeling. The sense of limit finds its expression in a preoccupation with death, the ultimate limit of all experience, and with violence, the site of frustration. Above all the gap opened up by the withholding of

meaning results in a fascination with the inadequacy of the sign, with the mystified symbol and with misprisioned representation, where the very correctives to distortion lead to further progressively distorted representations and misprision, the flawed mirror of perception. (Armstrong 285-286)

However, to understand how grotesque is a result of the “flawed mirror of perception”, we need to understand what kind of perception Armstrong is talking about when referring to “Burke’s sublime” as “a movement from the experience of dissolution and terror in the infinite to a new integration, where the sense of breakdown of perception and relationship was surmounted in a new synthesis” (Armstrong 285).

Armstrong is referring to, of course, the experience of the sublime as defined by Edmund Burke in his treatise on aesthetics, called *A Philosophical Enquiry into the origin of Our Ideas of the Sublime and Beautiful*, which he published in 1757. Burke’s proposal was that the Sublime is the strongest emotion we are capable of feeling, stronger than pure happiness and pain. He said:

[...] whatever is in any sort terrible, or is conversant about terrible objects, or operates in a manner analogous to terror, is a source of the *sublime*; that is, it is productive of the strongest emotion which the mind is capable of feeling. (Burke 33)

The first definition of the sublime is that of pure pain or terror. In a way that definition of sublime is closer to what H.P. Lovecraft called “the oldest and strongest

emotion of mankind” (Lovecraft), namely fear. Yet neither that definition, nor Burke’s, is adequate to explain the inherently dualistic aspect of the grotesque. That is to say, if we take Armstrong’s definition of the grotesque, namely that it is a break from the sublime, a radical one at that, which further evolves into a “self generated desire [...] expanded feeling” (Armstrong 286), then we have to reconcile the fact that the reason for that break, the fuel which drives the “expanded feeling”, is inherent in the very term. That is to say, what drives the grotesque desire, or the desire to manifest as grotesque, is buried deep within the sublime. It is neither a true break from the sublime, otherwise the manifold form of the grotesque would not include pain and terror as a true representation, nor is it a natural, charted evolution from the sublime. It lies somewhere in between. It is at the same time part of the void, which is generated with such a pure and strong emotion that the sublime evokes, and is divorced from it.

A little further on in Burke's *Enquiry* he writes:

The passion caused by the great and sublime in nature, when those causes operate most powerfully, is Astonishment; and astonishment is that state of the soul, in which all its motions are suspended, with some degree of horror. In this case the mind is so entirely filled with its object, that it cannot entertain any other, nor by consequence reason on that object which employs it. Hence arises the great power of the sublime, that far from being produced by them, it anticipates our reasonings, and hurries us on by an irresistible force. (Burke 47)

Burke argues that the reason the Sublime is such a force is that it bypasses reason

and logic, anticipates what reason and logic will say or do, and circumvents it. When discussing “Terror” Burke adds: “No passion so effectually robs the mind of all its powers of acting and reasoning as fear” (Burke 47). The Sublime therefore arguably works as a prism in which to see the distortions, rebellious thoughts and views, and the terror that follows. Either form, or concept cannot work without the other as they support each other in order to produce that strongest emotion.

To put it another way, they are two sides of the same coin. Victor Hugo, in his Preface to *Cromwell* wrote what makes an excellent case for this dualistic aspect of the sublime and the grotesque:

[...] everything in creation is not humanly *beautiful*, that the ugly exists beside the beautiful, the unshapely beside the graceful, the grotesque on the reverse of the sublime, evil with good, darkness with light. It will ask itself if the narrow and relative sense of the artist should prevail over the infinite, absolute sense of the Creator; if it is for man to correct God; if a mutilated nature will be the more beautiful for the mutilation; if art has the right to duplicate, so to speak, man, life, creation; if things will progress better when their muscles and their vigour have been taken from them; if, in short, to be incomplete is the best way to be harmonious. [...] All things are connected. (Hugo 31)

All things are connected indeed. With this information we can safely say that the sublime, as the true form of the ultimate feeling - most of the time in the form of pain and terror, is the fuel for the grotesque. Without this ardent feeling there would not be any need

for a mutilation of that feeling. That is to say, if the sublime is the highest of emotions, then there is no other way to travel but down and away from it when the time eventually comes to deviate. The resulting expression therefore is grotesque, a distorted/mutilated feature of our strongest emotion: fear, terror and pain.

It is in this distortion, or mutilation, that we get the epistemological split that is manifested in the protagonists of *The Private Memoirs and Confessions of a Justified Sinner* and *The Strange Case of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde*.

Chapter 5

New Grotesque

Geoffrey Galt Harpham writes in *On the Grotesque* that:

When we use the word “grotesque” we record, among other things, the sense that though our attention has been arrested, our understanding is unsatisfied.

Grotesqueries both require and defeat definition: they are neither so regular and rhythmical that they settle easily into our categories, nor so unprecedented that we do not recognize them at all. They stand at the margin of our consciousness between the known and the unknown, the perceived and the unperceived. (Harpham 3)

This echoes the sentiment felt in the examples of dualism. There is an unquiet that is centred on the grotesque, something which the reader registers easily but cannot identify without difficulty.

Consider therefore Robert Wringhim and his double, Gil-Martin. The connection between them is easy to see, which Hogg uses to confuse the reader’s perception of who is who: is Robert Gil-Martin, or are they separate beings? The same can be said of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde.

Indeed Harpham continues and says:

Fittingly, the word itself betrays an irreducible queerness. As an adjective it has no descriptive value; its sole function is to represent a condition of overcrowding or contradiction in the place where the modifier should be. [...] The grotesque is

concept without form: the word nearly always modifies such indeterminate nouns as monster, object or thing. [...] The word designates a condition of being just out of focus, just beyond the reach of language. It accommodates the things left over when the categories of language are exhausted; it is a defense against silence when other words have failed. In any age - this one, for example - its widespread use indicated that significant portions of experience are eluding satisfactory verbal formulation. (Harpham 3)

What is this if not a fitting description of Scottish statelessness and dual identities? That these authors express themselves in a manner that evokes this weird feeling, and that this feeling is strongly associated with the Scottish identity speaks volumes.

This is also echoed in the definition of the Gothic, a theme steeped in the macabre, queerness and unease. Recall Walpole's comments of the limitations of cold reason and as Peter K. Garrett writes in *Gothic Reflections: Narrative Force in Nineteenth-Century Fiction*: "Much of the appeal of Gothic and its many offshoots from Walpole's time to our own has come from such resistance, from its promise of release from the limitations of cold reason and the commonplace" (Garrett 1).

The grotesque denies reasonable classification and definition and seems antithetical to logic. For if logic or reason could identify the grotesque, or the Gothic, then those traditions would lose some of their power. If you shed light on the darkness you will find there is nothing to be afraid of.

But does this line of reasoning prohibit the study of those artistic forms? Is the deconstruction of the Gothic and the grotesque a way of disassembling the proper pieces

and putting them together as a jigsaw puzzle?

Not entirely. Examining Gothic and grotesque art enables us to view the world around us, the normal world, through a different prism and to understand it better. Peter K. Garrett writes that:

It is only because of our coarse sensibilities, our moral stupidity, that we require the strong stimulation of the exceptional or sensational to be moved. The more discerning, sensitive perception of ordinary human life that realism offers discloses a deeper and more inclusive truth, and yet its disclosure becomes in its own way as extreme and threatening as the darkest Gothic vision. [...] Gothic is the preferred nineteenth-century mode for dramatizing solitary subjectivity under stress, and here too the dynamics of narrative open up alternative perspectives on the relationship between an isolated consciousness and the social group. (Garrett 220)

Garrett's vision of the Gothic plays upon the deep psychological underpinnings of what moved the late eighteenth century authors, Walpole and Anne Radcliffe, to describe how the experience, and the sense of what it meant to be oneself, or, what oneself actually was, played a key role. Looking at Hogg and Stevenson, for example, there is a definite attempt at trying to pin down who or what Robert Wringhim and/or Dr Jekyll are, if they are what they seem to be, if they are their darker selves, or if they are both. Part of that sensibility is realizing the limitations of the Gothic and the transformation of it into something else, the grotesque. Or as James Robertson reminds us when he says: "our simultaneous engagement with and alienation from progress" (Robertson, Youtube: 9:33).

Robertson's use of progress here reflects an understanding, more than any meaningful interpretation of progress as advance.

This feeling of unease comes not solely because of the Gothic influence, which is strong in the grotesque form, but also from a break from that understanding. As Isobel Armstrong has showed when she talks about “[t]he rupture of understanding, the epistemological break created through the sublime moment [...] the flawed mirror of perception” (Armstrong 285-286). And where the grotesque and the Gothic excel is playing with the reader’s (and author’s) perception, challenging us with unnatural and eventually terrible images and themes, of things familiar if not only for the weird feeling you get when viewing them. Garrett mentions that:

[...] we can link those imagined worlds metaphorically with our own, as when we consider the dungeons, crypts, and secret passageways of Gothic settings as figures for the unconscious. These are familiar and useful strategies of reading, but we should recognize that all of them, including the honorific conflation with psychoanalysis, are means of mastering disturbance. (Garrett 53)

This means that the grotesque and the Gothic, by their very element of distortion and disturbance, challenge us to master them while at the same time reminding us that such means of mastery only serve to make us aware of the “frames we impose and the partiality of the versions we construct” (Garrett 53). Indeed, Robert Bloch, a horror writer, who is most famous for his work on H.P. Lovecraft’s Chthonic mythos, writes in his introduction to *The Best of H.P. Lovecraft: Bloodcurdling Tales of Horror and the Macabre* that:

Most writers choose to work within the horror genre do so to exorcise their own fears by exposing and expressing them to an audience. In childhood such writers are usually gifted - or cursed - with a hyperactive imagination. As adults they translate early dread of pain, death, and the unknown into fictional form, what frightened them, they reason, will also frighten their readers. Drawing upon a cultural heritage of myth, legend and fairy tales, they employ a technique of conveying their vision in terms of convincing reality. (Bloch xx)

Bloch's statement assumes that all writers of horror, and for the purpose of this essay (as I hope I have established) the sublime and grotesque, do so to cast out their own fears onto the reader. The notion is slightly nonsensical, though not totally without merit. Horror writers are not immune to fears, and in some cases they do actually try and manifest their fears onto the page in order to free themselves of their horror. Stephen King mentions in *The Dance Macabre* that trying to deal with terror and horror is practically impossible without some autobiography (King 85). It seems like both Bloch and King are in agreement here. Writers of horror and terror need to implicate themselves, at least a little, in their text in order to project this horror successfully onto the page. But further on in King's essay, which is rather cleverly titled "An Annoying Autobiographical Pause", he changes tack. He mentions that "[readers] seem rarely to feel the same desire to psychoanalyze their favorite writer's interest (and their own) as do the readers of horror fiction" (King 85).

This point ties in neatly with Lovecraft's point that writers "of totally opposite leaning [...] try their hands at it in isolated tales, as if to discharge from their minds certain

phantasmal shapes which would otherwise haunt them” (Lovecraft). The general consensus seems to be that horror writers must write out their demons in order to pacify or exorcise them. But King is not quite done, and he has a very different take on why horror writers do write what they do.

He begins by asking why people have such an interest in what interests him. His answer, at least a preliminary one, is:

I believe that, more than anything else, it’s because we all have a postulate buried deep in our minds: that an interest in horror is unhealthy and aberrant. [...] So when people say, “Why do you write that stuff?” they are really inviting me to lie down on the couch and explain about the time I was locked in the cellar for three weeks, or my toilet training, or possibly some abnormal sibling rivalry. (King 85-86)

King’s point is that writers write because they are paid to do so (King 86) amongst other reasons, and that writing to make a living is such a bizarre way of making a living that people don’t really buy it (King 86). People need an underlying, psychological reason why writers make up such terror, and actually, why readers, in turn, read these tales of terror.

I think that both views share a similar intent, namely that of wanting to, but perhaps not really daring to, look too long at the sublime and grotesque which fuels the “grist for the writer’s mill” (King 87). As Robert Bloch and H.P. Lovecraft make clear, the reason they write, and why they think the majority of other writers write, is to expel their demons.

Chapter 6

Robert Wringhim and his Devil-Self

In James Hogg's *The Private Memoirs and Confessions of a Justified Killer* we get our first true view of the Scottish grotesque and how it relates to horror and the sublime. The plot offers a pretty conclusive narrative attack on Calvinism. It is not just that Gil-Martin, who appears to be the Devil, seduces Robert Wringhim, the novel's protagonist, into killing his brother and purifying the world for the Elect, but also that it offers a more demure way to express the novel's unfolding horror.

There is a definite sense of possession in *Confessions of a Justified Sinner*. Hogg never explicitly states that Gil-Martin is real. Of course Robert Wringhim certainly thinks so, but as we will see further on, no one actually sees the two of them together. If Gil-Martin is real then he certainly took care to hide himself away from prying eyes. So there remains a lingering question as to whether Robert is possessed, seduced or simply crazy. Then there is the obvious attack on Predestination and antinomian laws. But the real question is not whether Robert was actually possessed, seduced or crazy, and nor is the novel solely an attack on antinomianism and Calvinism. Of course there are elements of all these things in the novel, all which add up to one whole: grotesque horror. The actions of Robert and his association with Gil-Martin definitely constitute the grotesque. His murder of George, his brother, is clearly meant to evoke the terror of fratricide. Killing one's own blood is nothing short of biblical terror. After all, it is one of the horrifying stories in the Bible, Cain's murder of Abel. With this element clearly out in the open we can take a closer look at the text and see where the line is between the horror (sublime emotion) of fratricide and the grotesque dualism that resides within it.

An Age of Personality

Karl Miller mentions in his introduction to the Penguin Classics edition of *The Private Memoirs and Confessions of a Justified Sinner* that: “His [Hogg’s] was an age of personality, of mimicry, and of physiognomy” (Miller xxii), meaning that the microcosm that James Hogg lived in, the world of literature in the early nineteenth century, was a world of personality, mimicry and physiognomy. What Miller is referring to is Hogg’s relationship with other literary figures of the time: William Blackwood, who founded and published Blackwood’s Magazine, and John Gibson Lockhart, a writer who wrote *Memoirs of the Life of Sir Walter Scott* and, John Wilson, a fellow Blackwood writer. Miller reminds us that Hogg belonged to the fraternity of writers who made up the Blackwood Magazine where “tricks, mysteries, attributions, denials, joint authorship, anonymity and pseudonymity became, for a while, habitual” (Miller xi).

The reason for this stems from a well-worn argument that Hogg did not write *Confessions*, but rather his fellow Blackwood writer, John Gibson Lockhart, did. That has now been proven false, Hogg did indeed write the novel, but nonetheless it is a curious point and one well suited to reflect some of the dual aspects of the novel.

Hogg's is an unusual case of a writer who did not learn to read or write until late adolescence. In John Herdman’s book, *The Double in Nineteenth-Century Fiction*, we learn that Hogg was a country boy, a shepherd, who taught himself to read and write using the Bible, that he aspired to poetry and, more importantly, “found himself ambiguously accepted or tolerated in Enlightenment Edinburgh” (Herdman 70). This leads us exactly to the reason why critics were uncertain of *The Confessions*’ authorship. No one could

actually believe that a shepherd, albeit one with a certain talent for parody, could be the author of such an exceptionally well-written book. J.B. Pick also notes the following points about Hogg:

Born in 1770, in Ettrick Forest, he had little formal education, and had to teach himself to read efficiently at the age of fifteen. From the time he was eight until his mid-thirties he worked as a herd-boy and shepherd, and even when he began publishing regularly, Hogg never did more than scrape a living, and was not taken seriously by critics and fellow-writers. He was a shrewd, well-tempered, garrulous man with a rift in his personality through which poured an occasional stream of wild and dark extravagance. (Pick 17)

Indeed, the chapter heading from which this quote is taken is “Common Sense and the Diabolical Sublime”. What this gives us, then, is an image of a man who did not belong with the literary elite. Or at least that was the perception he was made to endure. Herdman reminds us that Hogg “had an *alter ego* foisted on him in the form of ‘The Shepherd’, John Wilson’s depiction of him in the ‘Noctes Ambrosianae’ in *Blackwood’s Magazine*, which he rightly regarded as a distorted and offensive parody” (Herdman 70). Distorted is a good adjective to describe Hogg’s fellow Blackwood writers’ perception of him. By all accounts Hogg was a common sense man but that does not mean that he was “a simple soul from the country who has had the nerve to write a book. ‘*Him* write a book? I kent his faither.’ Scotland’s proverbial mockery of an ancient prejudice” (Miller xiii). We also have to remember what Miller tells us about Hogg’s time with the Blackwood writers, that:

Such was the intimacy and ambivalence of their relationship, of the *Blackwood's* collective, in which they copied one another, rewrote each other's stuff, impersonated each other, in a welter of false names, parody, imposture, sport. [...] Hogg became a personality, both in the Borders and at *Blackwood's*, where the word 'personality' became a pun. It could mean both an *ad hominem* insult and an individual human being, whether one person or two, *homo simplex* or *homo duplex*. And it was on its way to meaning, as in his case a celebrity or star. The romantic reaction which had come about in this quarter of Edinburgh swore by personality and its uncertainties, and by error, and by nation and imagination, the nation being both Scotland and Britain, together with their empire, on which, as Wilson had been thought to have been the first to say, the sun never set. (Miller xvi-xvii)

We must bear in mind that Hogg's "personality" at this time was not wholly his own. He was "The Shepherd", a country boy from Etrick. At least that is the persona that was made for him, one he could not readily escape from. This is where Miller's point, "*homo simplex* or *homo duplex*" becomes clearer. Or as Dr. Henry Jekyll so eloquently puts it, in *The Strange Case of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde*: "man is not truly one, but truly two" (Stevenson 84). We might be tempted, like Dr Jekyll, to further try and divide the multiple facets of each person's character (Stevenson 84), but for this argument two will suffice.

The Good Nature of a Common Man

Hogg indeed lived a life of two, magnified by his association with Lockhart and the rest of

the writers from Blackwood's magazine. It is no small wonder that this spilled over into his fiction. It provided the grist for his mill (King 87), especially so when we consider J.B. Pick's point that Hogg was a common sense man, and that Hogg claimed to believe in both devils and fairies, "thus mixing the pagan world with that of reward-and-punishment" (Pick 18). This is important because of the way Hogg mixes Calvinist theology and every-day moral behaviour with the supernatural. Gil-Martin, Robert Wringhim's double, is cast in a decidedly ambiguous light. Though I am inclined to say that Gil-Martin is indeed the Devil, and I will explain that better further on, there is a case to be made for Wringhim's mental state, that Gil-Martin does not exist at all but is a projection of a mental illness that Wringhim suffers from, that he is in fact schizophrenic. This is an interesting argument, but one that fails to tick all the boxes, as it were. If Gil-Martin is indeed Wringhim's schizoid self then the supernatural already present in the story does not work. There would be no resonance between the Calvinist world which Hogg is clearly attacking and what J.B. Pick calls "the Diabolical Sublime" (Pick 18).

Pick's argument is very convincing. He tells us that Hogg, in addition to attacking Calvinism, also wanted to:

[...] attack rationalistic assumptions, too, and once he allowed the legend of the Devil stalking the world to burst through, it took over the tale. The account has a frightening authenticity, and achieves a force and loftiness which I can only call "attainment of the diabolical sublime". The heavenly sublime does not get a look in. It may be the characteristic of the Ballad culture that Hogg's neighbours found it easier to believe in the Devil than in God. Is this because of a secret suspicion that

the Devil might prove their only ally, however dangerous, against a tyrant?

Hogg's counterweight to the diabolical sublime is what I can best describe as the good nature and good sense of the common man. The overweening intellectual arrogance of Robert Wringhim, the "justified sinner", and his minister father, is opposed not by the arguments of university philosophers or divines, but by the robust downrightness of farmers and servants.

Hogg is keenly interested in the psychological subtleties which the Devil employs to get his way, but even while the Shadow is winning all the arguments, you never feel the author himself to be threatened by them, nor that the Shadow has more power than human beings will allow him. Hogg conveys the emotional intensity of his fictional narrator and the appalling nature of his predicament while keeping his own ironic distance. (Pick 18)

What is remarkable about Pick's analysis is not that it disputes or suppresses Hogg's autobiographical notes in *Confessions*. The elements are there of course, but they are not the important element. What is more important here is Pick's point that Robert Wringhim's ordeal is real, at least as far as the narrator is concerned. There is a very definite sense, when reading Pick's thoughts on Hogg, that the story is a fancy, a parody of the Calvinist way of life. That Hogg, seeing the horror and delusion of the Calvinist doctrine, could not help but make fun of it. On the matter of the Calvinist doctrine, Hogg reached the sublime, meaning that in order to write, or express himself on the subject, he needed to distort it and allow the reader to view it through a grotesque prism.

The Editor's Narrative

How Hogg does this is through the Editorial narrative framework, framing the story as a believable tale by slipping Robert's actual confession in between the sections "The Editor's Narrative". Garrett writes that:

Confessions of a Justified Sinner allows us to sense more acutely how different versions entail subject positions through the troubling relation between its doubled narratives. As they tell the "same" story twice, their perspectives seem to be at first complementary and eventually incommensurable, yet their distinctness is also compromised at moments such as those where the Editor seems compelled to adopt preternatural terms or where Robert cannot account for the evidence of his double existence, as if a version of events that neither can accommodate is imposing itself and disrupting their self-possession. This blurring of boundaries to the subversion of identity by doubling, then splitting or a self or the encounter with another who is also oneself. (Garrett 67-68)

One of the points Garrett makes here is that by splitting the narration into two parts, Hogg amplifies the atmosphere of the story by allowing the reader both the external and, crucially, internal viewpoints. The reader is treated to the Editor's narration as well as Bell Calvert's, who witnesses Robert's murder of his brother, George. She sees two strangers pass beneath her window, one in black and one in tartan (Hogg 62). Interestingly, it is Robert Wringhim who wears black and, presumably, Gil-Martin, then, who wears the tartan. However, a little less than a page after the Editor, and the reader, is told that two men

passed after George Colwan, Bell Calvert says:

When I peeped over again, the two men were disputing in a whisper, the one of them in a violent agitation and terror, and the other upbraiding him, and urging him on to some desperate act. [...] I thought all this while I was closely concealed from them and wondered not a little when he in tartans gave me a sly nod as much to say, “What do you think of this?” or, “Take note of what you see,” or something to that effect, from which I perceived, that whatever he was about, he did not wish it to be kept a secret. For all that, I was impressed with a terror and anxiety that I could not overcome. (Hogg 61)

Calvert's account is interesting for a couple of reasons. Firstly it reveals that of the two men Robert Wringhim is the one in “violent agitation and terror”. Hogg reveals this later in the novel during the “Confessions of a Sinner” part, the part that Robert Wringhim wrote. There are several instances of Gil-Martin, Robert’s mysterious friend, berating and accosting Robert after Robert meets his brother, George, and attacks him, unsuccessfully. Robert’s description of the event is both miserable and telling in connection with Calvert’s account later when Robert actually kills George: “My friend met me again on the hill, and derided me, in a haughty and stern manner, for my imbecility and want of decision” (Hogg 131).

This shows that Gil-Martin has some power over Robert, not just a power of suggestion, being able to influence and accelerate a hate already burning, but also in acceptance of authority. Robert even says, after Gil-Martin berates and instructs him, that

he “promised compliance” (Hogg 131). Gil-Martin, therefore, has some tremendous power over Robert and we see that again in Bell Calvert’s version of the murder in the “Editor’s Narrative”.

The other important point in Calvert’s account is her own reaction to Gil-Martin’s presence. Gil-Martin notices Bell Calvert looking at them and first asks her what she thinks of the whole thing and then tells her “take note of what you see” (Hogg 61). Notably, Bell Calvert does not react the way we see Robert react. Her recollection is not impressive as she tells the Editor that Gil-Martin said “something to that effect” (Hogg 61), meaning she either was not under his spell the same way that Robert was or she was simply too frightened to remember clearly.

But this raises an interesting question of power and who wields it against whom. Throughout the novel it is made repeatedly clear that Robert believes he has power over other individuals because he is one of the Elect. Indeed, he tells himself, after he unsuccessfully attacks his brother and gives false testimony before a judge, that he was in the right because: “Had I not been sensible that a justified person could do nothing wrong, I should not have been at my ease concerning the statement I had been induced to give at the occasion” (Hogg 132). Robert believes with certain, false logic that the Elect can do no wrong and can therefore do anything without impunity. There is power inherent in that belief, even if that power proves false, as we see when Robert murders George and the pressure of Gil-Martin’s power over him intensifies.

The Grotesque Devil

It is there where the grotesque element emerges, though not quite in focus. Gil-Martin is

perhaps the best personification of the grotesque in the novel. It stems both from the various descriptions given to him, either a shadow, a man in tartan, or, perhaps best, when he melds the two, appearing besides Robert and then disappearing at the exact time Robert needs him (Hogg 74-75). And while Gil-Martin is most often seen as a companion to Robert and therefore perhaps easily overlooked, it is in Robert's own perception that the real grotesque begins to emerge, as when Robert tells the reader:

I generally conceived myself to be two people. When I lay in bed, I deemed there were two of us in it; when I sat up I always beheld another person, and always in the same position from the place I sat or stood, which was about three paces off me towards my left side. (Hogg 127)

The passage turns the novel "topsy-turvy" making it odd, or weird. As odd as it is, that Robert suddenly makes a new friend in the beginning of the novel, who directs him and helps him along a path that ultimately ends in his brother's murder, it still remains a possible, or perhaps rather probable, outcome or explanation that Gil-Martin is separate and independent from Robert, and that he actively helps him. But when Robert voices his concern that he is not sure if Gil-Martin is separate from him, then, suddenly, there is an atmosphere of doubt. If Gil-Martin is part of Robert, how is he part of him? Does Robert imagine Gil-Martin as part of some delusion, or does he spring forth from his body as separate to him as anyone else?

The eventual answer matters less than the effect the question has. Gil-Martin is at once Robert's companion, shadow, demon and inner strength. And indeed it is the power

Gil-Martin provides and proves to have over Robert that amplifies the effects of that question. If Gil-Martin is responsible for nudging Robert along toward the murder of George Colwan, and helping with the deed, and if Gil-Martin is Robert, or at least a part of him, then that calls into question: who is the real killer? This is even more horrifying for Robert, because he has to ask himself who he is. David Punter, writing in *The Literature of Terror: Volume One, The Gothic Tradition* writes that:

The book is the story of dual persecution; in the first narrative the persecution of George by Wringhim, in the second Wringhim's persecution by Gil-Martin. George is bewildered by Wringhim's ability - which he owes, of course, to Gil-Martin - to pursue him with supernatural accuracy [...] and Wringhim comes to seem the a demon to George in much the same way as Wringhim himself becomes demon-haunted. (Punter 133)

Punter points out that just as Robert comes to torment George, so does Gil-Martin in the end torment Robert. Robert goes from being the persecutor to being persecuted. He becomes alienated and isolated. In effect he becomes the Other. In the uneasy situation where Robert is not sure of what he is, the reader sees how the weird and unnatural situation devolves into the grotesque.

As Robert himself says late in his confession: "Either I had a second self, who transacted business in my likeness, or else my body was at times possessed by a spirit which it had no control, and of whose actions my own soul was wholly unconscious" (Hogg 150).

It is also here that the story maintains a strong Gothic element. A little after Robert's doubts about his own self he writes:

I looked back on my by-past life with pain, as one looks back on a perilous journey, in which he has attained his end without gaining any advantage either to himself or others; and I looked forward, as on a darksome waste, full of repulsive and terrific shapes, pitfalls, and precipices, to which there was no definite bourn, and form which I turned with disgust [...] My principal feeling, about this time, was an insatiable longing for something that I cannot describe or denominate properly, unless I say it was utter oblivion that I longed. (Hogg 152)

The Gothic element here can be felt through the word choice "darksome waste" and the idea that Robert seems to be searching for, longing for, an escape that he knows is not coming. Robert, at this point in the story, knows that Gil-Martin's influence is too strong for any escape except death. In a way much as Robert's split journey resembles that of a schizoid patient it also starts to resemble that of a chronically depressed person as well. His situation, his life, has gotten to such a dire point that he finds no alternative to it other than oblivion. Indeed, Gil-Martin himself informs him that:

Sooner shall you make the mother abandon the child of her bosom; nay, sooner cause the shadow to relinquish the substance, than separate me from your side. Our beings are amalgamated, as it were, and consociated in one, and never shall I depart from this country until I can carry you in triumph with me. (Hogg 157)

For Robert there is literally no escaping Gil-Martin. They are and are not the same in a way that invites unease and queerness. Some writers have put this down to purely psychological effects. David Punter writes in *The Literature of Terror* that this very unease about Gil-Martin's existence "raises the central ambivalence of the *Confessions*, and as to the objective existence of Gil-Martin" (Punter 134). This however is missing the point, bearing in mind J.B. Pick's argument for Hogg's worldview:

[Hogg's] dislike of a mechanistic and rationalistic interpretations of the universe is so strong that he was willing to take any stick to beat them [...] he did not accept that any single mind or any single system of thought can encompass all the complexities of life. (Pick 18)

Punter does concede, however, that the question of Gil-Martin's objective existence is not really a question Hogg answers and that "equally, Wringhim is clearly progressively subject to a religious mania with close affinities to recognizable forms of schizophrenia" (Punter 134). And while Punter's reading of the text has some real merits, R.D. Laing, a psychiatrist at the Department of Psychological Medicine at the University of Glasgow, wrote in *The Divided Self* that:

It is well known that temporary states of dissociation of the self from the body occur in normal people [...] a response that appears to be available to most people who find themselves enclosed within a threatening experience from which there is no

physical escape. (Laing 78)

The applicability of this reading soon falls apart, however, as Robert, for the longest part in the novel, does not feel threatened. There are hints of jealousy or scorn passed down to him from the Reverend Wringhim and Robert's mother Rabina, but all in all there is little evidence to support that Robert is threatened either by his older brother George or anyone else. Robert's belief that he is one of the Elect is also further textual evidence that there is little he should fear. However, what does resonate, and is likely the reason for the schizoid reading, is the result, or behaviour of a schizoid person. Laing also writes that:

The self may at the same time long more than anything for participation in the world. Thus, its greatest longing is felt as its greatest weakness and giving in to this weakness is its greatest dread, since in participation the individual fears that his vacuum will be obliterated, that he will be engulfed or otherwise lose his identity, which has come to be equated with the maintenance of the transcendence of the self even though this is a transcendence in a void. (Laing 80)

This is precisely the reaction we see from Robert near the end of the novel, but it is not in and of itself, a reading or a diagnosis of Robert's state, mental or otherwise.

This particular reading fails to register that Gil-Martin's "objective existence" is hardly the point or the main thrust of the novel. The plot itself, for instance, would hardly change if Gil-Martin remained in Robert Wringhim's head or if he is merely some stranger that happened upon Robert and managed to exert some influence over him.

However, Victor Sage writes in *Horror Fiction in the Protestant Tradition* that what Laing is doing is not examining clinical cases, but “charting features of what he [Laing] calls the 'schizoid position', the mental disposition which may become psychotic, but which exists as a possibility in our daily behaviour” (Sage 88). A little later Sage continues: “Hogg, however, performs the richest of satires on the whole tradition, again tilting into psychopathology the rhetoric of extreme Protestantism” (Sage 98).

Sage’s point is relevant because it breaks down the idea that what matters is *how* Robert and Gil-Martin relate. Essentially, it does not matter what Gil-Martin is, as long as he serves his narrative purpose, which is, amongst other things, to satirize Calvinist beliefs. Interestingly this reading also keeps the focus on the impact Gil-Martin, whatever he is, has on Robert. This comes back to the narrative framing of the book which itself further emphasizes the horror of the Other as Garrett points out:

This blurring of boundaries [...] the splitting of a self or the encounter with another who is also oneself [...] The power manifests itself here as narrative disposition, the counterpart and opposing force to the writer’s attempt to control meaning and secure a narrative’s grasp on its reader. [...] The divided self appears here not as the splitting of a primal unity but as an apprehension of the other that already inhabits us. (Garrett 68)

Thus the novel does not so much revel in the horror of a body split, or a consciousness split, but rather of that dark half of us that we know deep down already exists: “In Hogg’s story, as in many stories of the double, someone goes mad because he is possessed by the Devil,

because the Devil is in him; and the Devil is able to be in him because he has been granted admittance” (Herdman 87). Robert's predicament therefore is only the result of him granting Gil-Martin admittance to him, and his life.

Chapter 7

The Grimmet Duty

Alan Bold writing in Chapman with the title *Scotland: A Predicament for the Scottish Writer* says that:

The Scot - the typical Scot, the average Scottish writer - is marvellous at making all about him miserable. That is one of his grimmest duties, one taken very seriously indeed [...] Suspicious of everything they become failures but even these failures have flashes of the sensitive soul trying to get out. (Bold 4)

Yet Hogg's work does not appear as a miserable work, though of course Robert himself becomes miserable toward the end of the book, and of course his ultimate end is not a happy one. Specifically, if we accept that Gil-Martin is the Devil then is he the source of Robert's misery? The playful, satirical tone of the novel does not lend itself well to that reading even though Gil-Martin appears to be the agent of Robert's misery and downfall. In the chapter on James Hogg in *Scottish Literature*, Douglas Gifford and Gordon Gibson mention that a good approach to Hogg's *Confessions of a Justified Sinner* is through Robert Burns' poem "Holy Willie" (Gifford and Gibson 293):

O Thou that in the heavens does dwell!
Wha, as it pleases best thysel
Sends ane to heaven and ten to hell,
A' fo thy glory!

And no for ony gude or ill

They've done afore thee. ("Holy Willie's Prayer by Robert Burns")

Read this way the Devil, Gil-Martin, is only a guise for glory-seeking Calvinists. That is to say, Gil-Martin is not there to tempt Robert away from ethical considerations but to reinforce the Calvinist dogma that the Elect are immune from ethical considerations. They can do as they please because they are the Elect. This is seen in Burns' poem, in which Willie presumes that it is only for the glory of God that one goes to heaven and not because of morals or accepted Christian doctrine. Indeed Gifford and Gibson mention that: "Willie also boasts, implicitly, that he is perfect, gifted, and full of grace - and Hogg will show that grace is a term distorted by extreme Calvinism" (Gifford and Gibson 293).

Therefore Gil-Martin, though functionally the Devil, if only because he seems to fulfil the same role as the Devil himself traditionally occupies, that of tempting man into sin, is only there to reinforce the lunacy of Calvinist dogma. Hogg uses the preconception of the Devil to subvert the supposed moral high ground of Calvinist doctrine. Furthermore, Gifford and Gibson write that Hogg was impressed by Burns' "conveyance of these religious values [...] Burns' frequent habit of pretending to occupy the position of those he most scorned probably gave impetus to Hogg's methodology" (Gifford and Gibson 293).

Hogg Makes an Appearance

It is here we see the mark of the Ettrick Hogg, the shepherd who "found himself ambiguously accepted or tolerated in Enlightenment Edinburgh" (Herdman 70). For all the fame he got he was always still just a country man. At the end of the novel, in the second

“Editor’s Narrative” Hogg himself shows up as himself, a shepherd in Ettrick Forest with a broad Scots accent. When the Editor, surely the reader’s stand-in, asks Hogg if he could spare more men to help raise the mummified corpse of Robert Wringhim, Hogg replies:

“Od bless ye, lad! I hae ither matters to mind. I hae a’ thae paulies to sell, an’ a’ yon Highland stotts down the green every ane; an’ then I hae ten scores o’ yows to buy after, an’ if I canna first sell my ain stock, I canna buy nae ither body’s. I hae mair ado than I can manage the day, forey ganging to houk up hunder-year-auld banes.”
(Hogg 204)

The tone is very light and in sharp contrast to the preceding “Confession of a Sinner” not five pages previous. Additionally, it is a chance to see the real Hogg, or at least the version of himself that he preferred to show on the written page: the Border man and precisely not the Edinburgh Blackwood man. It is a sharp curtailing of the reader’s expectations, yanking them out of the gloom of Robert Wringhim’s grotesque Scottish tale. We need only to remember what Smith wrote about the Scots writer: “If therefore Scottish history and life are, as an old northern writer said of something else, ‘varied with a clean contrair spirit,’ we need not be surprised to find that in his literature the Scot presents two aspects which appear contradictory” (Smith 4-5).

Hogg’s attempt to contrast Border spirit with Edinburgh city life results in a remarkably Gothic story of subversion where the Devil himself seems to work for God and with the Elect.

Robert Louis Stevenson, James Hogg’s spiritual successor, however does not tread

the same tracks though his themes are similar. In the next section we will see how the Scottish grotesque evolved to show a new kind of twin monster.

Chapter 8

The New Science of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde

While James Hogg might have been a more cheerful and down to earth person, and perhaps not in line with Alan Bold's representation of the Scottish writer as "making all about him miserable," Robert Louis Stevenson is. In a letter to J.M. Barrie, Stevenson writes: "It is a singular thing that I should live here in the South Seas under conditions so new and striking, and yet my imagination so continually inhabit that cold old huddle of grey hills from which we come" (Harman 434-435). Stevenson, an often sickly child by all accounts (Anderson and Gifford 402), rebelled against much of what was thrown at him in life. He was born:

[...] a child of post-Enlightenment Edinburgh, and very much one of middle-class respectability, a situation which led to his constant questioning in his fiction of bourgeois values - and probably never coming to a conclusion. [...] His father was also a devout believer and church elder, which Stevenson was not. From being a much-loved sickly child he became a Bohemian student who rebelled against what he felt was the suffocating atmosphere of concern and disapproval at home - and to the deep unhappiness of both parents and son, against his father's religious beliefs. (Anderson and Gifford 402)

Much of Stevenson's life seems to have been about escape, or chafing at the bonds imposed on him, whether they be his health, his family, or the bourgeois society around him. He was, much as Hogg, rebelling against restrictions set against them: Hogg as the

Ettrick shepherd/Blackwood writer and Stevenson's middle-class upbringing and his emotional and imaginative world as a writer. In these roles both writers managed to distort the surroundings they rebelled against into something more and into something a little less defined, something odd and horrifying.

Cold Respectability

Stevenson's distortion however was a little more obvious than Hogg's. Anderson and Gifford write that Stevenson's "diametrically opposed presentations [...] reflect his inability to decide whether he accepted solid middle-class respectability, or whether he rejected it as sanctimonious hypocrisy" (Anderson and Gifford 403). We see this in the very first page of *The Strange Case of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde* with the description of Mr Utterson the lawyer:

Mr Utterson the lawyer was a man of rugged countenance, that was never lighted by a smile; cold, scanty and embarrassed in discourse; backward in sentiment; lean, long, dusty, dreary and yet somehow loveable. At friendly meetings, and when the wine was to his taste, something eminently human beaconed from his eye; something indeed which never found its way into his talk, but which spoke not only in these silent symbols [...] He was austere with himself; drank gin when he was alone, to mortify a taste for vintages; and though he enjoyed the theatre he had not crossed the doors of one for twenty years. (Stevenson 1)

This first introduction to the novel serves two purposes: first, as Stevenson's

narrative framing device, it is similar to that of Hogg's: he needs a respectable and reliable narrator for the reader, someone who is either easy to identify with or has no discernible faults. In Utterson's case it is the former and as such it shows us the second purpose: Stevenson's "inability to decide whether he accepted solid middle-class respectability" (Anderson and Gifford 403). Indeed, that Utterson enjoys the theatre but had not been in one for twenty years speaks volumes about the sort of person Stevenson is portraying, in sharp contrast to Stevenson's own bohemian lifestyle. As a cold introduction, Mr Utterson is painted in a dreary light, which serves to make the actual case of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde that much more vibrant, strange and grotesque.

Also, similarly to Hogg's *Confessions of a Justified Sinner*, Stevenson frames the book by having Utterson present the story of Dr Jekyll to the reader much as the unnamed Editor frames and presents Robert Wringhim's "Confession of a Sinner" to Hogg's readers. Peter K. Garrett writes that "the preternatural always produces disturbance, not just in the characters or readers who thrill with terror but to the cultural norms of a world that has relegated belief in such prodigies to a surmounted past. Seeking to regain control, we may try to construct alternative accounts" (Garrett 53). These accounts amount to the narrative framing both Hogg and Stevenson both employ by placing a figure of authority, an editor and a lawyer, as the reader's guide and introduction to the world their story takes place. This narrative awareness, Garrett argues, is made by "questioning narrative authority by indicating multiple reading positions. [...] nearly all of them embody the question of authority in the uncertain reliability of one or more first person narrators" (Garrett 53-54).

Thus by introducing Mr Utterson as a lawyer, a person of authority, and a drab and grey one at that, who cannot allow himself to enjoy the theatre, the telling of stories,

Stevenson is framing his story in order to give the reader more colour and more excitement when the actual monstrous story of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde comes to light.

Hogg's Successor

It is these two characters that form the basis of Stevenson's novel, especially Dr Jekyll's increasing desperation as he feels Mr Hyde emerge more and more forcefully into the grotesque. Yet these two elements do not show any concrete Scottish elements. The book itself can be seen as the spiritual successor to *The Private Memoirs and Confessions of a Justified Sinner*, and in many ways the book is precisely that, but for all the wrong reasons. They both contain serious elements of Gothic and grotesque imagery, and they use doubles and dualism effectively. But as David Punter points out in his chapter "Scottish Gothic" in *The Cambridge Companion to Scottish Literature*:

In what sense might we consider *Jekyll and Hyde* to be "Scottish Gothic"? Stevenson, it is true, was Scottish; but *Jekyll and Hyde* has most usually been contextualized within a range of *fin-de-siecle* British fictions [...] Furthermore, it is set in London and has apparently, little contextual bearing on Scotland. Finally, it has most normally been interpreted in terms of the double, and while, as we have seen with the *Confessions of a Justified Sinner*, the double is an all too present figuration in Scottish fiction, it is in no sense unique thereto. (Punter, "Scottish Gothic" 142)

Punter's point is that there is little to absolutely define *Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde* as a

Scottish novel except for the connection to *Confessions of a Justified Sinner*, and as he points out that connection is so prevalent in Scottish fiction to hardly register as unique or defining. Except that it is the connection to *Confessions of a Justified Sinner* that makes *Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde* a truly Scottish novel.

A part of that is of course the duality: Robert Wringhim and Gil-Martin corresponding to Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde. Both protagonists share a private Devil, an Other. Also as Gifford and Anderson note, there are other parallels between the two novels: the maid witnesses Hyde murder the old man, which directly echoes Calvert's witnessing the murder of George Colwan, likewise Jekyll and Robert Wringhim both share a moment of self-doubt when Jekyll professes to be the chief of sinners and sufferers, which echoes Robert's confession that Gil-Martin's presence is starting to wear thin on him. Furthermore:

Jekyll thinks a "vainglorious" thought is when he is again overwhelmed by Hyde, just as Robert Wringhim's key moment of spiritual pride coincides with his meeting Gil-Martin [...] The echoes of Hogg are telling, for just as *The Justified Sinner* undermines any single or fixed notion of truth, so too does Stevenson's novella, which, foreshadowing post-modern fiction, is hauntingly "indeterminate."

(Anderson and Gifford 418 – 419)

So the narrative likeness is there which in and of itself draws elements of the Scottish qualities Hogg injects into *Confessions of a Sinner* into Stevenson's *Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde*. Both novels even end with the main character in a fable-like circumstance, having some revelation which both authors leave up to the reader to decipher: "The reader

is left to make up his or her own mind [...] no clear moral is drawn” (Anderson and Gifford 419).

Autobiographical Matters

It is easy to say that both Robert and Dr Jekyll have moral epiphanies, that reveal their behaviour during both stories is reprehensible, and traditionally the reader would want a lesson-learned moment. Yet neither confession reveals a definitive lesson learned. Dr Jekyll in his last moments writes:

God knows; I am careless; this is my true hour of death, and what is to follow concerns another than myself. Here then, as I lay down the pen and proceed to seal up my confession, I bring the life of that unhappy Henry Jekyll to an end.

(Stevenson 107)

As has been mentioned, Stevenson was a sickly child and a sick man, who required bed rests and often trips to the South Seas to ease his laboured breath. As Vladimir Nabokov, has commented “*Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde* was written in bed, at Bournemouth on the English Channel, in 1885 in between haemorrhages from the lungs” (Nabokov 1).

The autobiographical detail here matters, as it clearly fed into the creation of the novel, for Stevenson was bedridden when he wrote it. Nabokov’s detail that he wrote the book while bleeding from his lungs notwithstanding, Stevenson also wrote the book in between bouts of nightmares. Indeed, some autobiographical details seem to suggest that the story was originally conceived from a dream, as Harman notes, citing Fanny Stevenson

in a letter to Stevenson's biographer, Graham Balfour:

Louis wrote *Jekyll and Hyde* with great rapidity on the lines of his dream. In the small hours of one morning I was wakened by cries of horror from him. I, thinking he had a nightmare, waked him. He said, angrily, "Why did you wake me? I was dreaming a fine bogey tale." I had waked him at the first transformation scene. He had in his mind an idea of a double life story, but it was not the same as the dream. [...] The powder - which I thought might be changed - he couldn't eliminate because he saw it so plainly in the dream. In the original story he had Jekyll bad all through, and working for the Hyde change only for a disguise. [...] [I] proposed that Hyde should run over the child showing that he was an evil force without humanity. (Fanny Stevenson, cited in Harman 295-296)

Clearly, then, the story originated in a dream, which speaks volumes to the Gothic elements inherent in the book. The scene itself which Harman describes, as Stevenson wakes with cries of horror, could have come from any other Gothic or grotesque story of that time.

Even more telling is a note in Claire Harman's biography in which she tells us that the dream that inspired Stevenson's story was not exactly the first of its kind. Stevenson dreamt sequential dreams wherein: "The dreamer [...] began to dream in sequence, and thus begin to live a double life - one of day, one of the night - one that had every reason to believe was the true one, another that he had no means of proving false" (Harman 60-61). A little later Harman continues: "In his dream life, he passed a long day in the surgical

theatre, his heart in his mouth, his teeth on edge, seeing monstrous malformations and the abhorred dexterity of surgeons” (Harman 61).

There is a lot to process in those two quotes and their relevance is important, especially in the light of Robert Bloch’s statement that:

Most writers choose to work within the horror genre do so to exorcise their own fears by exposing and expressing them to an audience. In childhood such writers are usually gifted - or cursed - with a hyperactive imagination. As adults they translate early dread of pain, death, and the unknown into fictional form, what frightened them, they reason, will also frighten their readers. Drawing upon a cultural heritage of myth, legend and fairy tales, they employ a technique of conveying their vision in terms of convincing reality. (Bloch xx)

Stevenson’s statement that he was dreaming a “fine bogey tale” after his nightmare obviously carries with it an element of exorcism, especially so when considering how autobiographical his dreams turned out to be. Then there is the echo of Hogg to be considered again. Both authors seem to have drawn from their own lives specifically and morphed and distorted those elements to fashion a grotesque tale.

Stevenson, especially, almost exactly transferred his dream-scape, itself a very Gothic action, onto the page. The dream wherein he sees the first transformation would then become the first scene in Jekyll’s confession where he describes the effects of the transformation: “The most racking pangs succeeded: a grinding in the bones, deadly nausea, and a horror of the spirit that cannot be exceeded by the hour of birth or death”

(Stevenson 87). Stevenson very cleverly uses both a very specific descriptive language, “grinding bones” and “deadly nausea”, coupled with the ambiguous language of the grotesque, “horror of the spirit,” which transcends all other feelings and “cannot be exceeded by the hour of birth or death”.

Not only does Stevenson evoke the Sublime in this passage, creating a distortion of the spirit, or mind, so profound and strong that it passes above terror into something else, the grotesque, but he also keeps the language purposefully vague and unsettling.

Furthermore, additional biographical matters seem to have influenced the creation of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde. In Harman's biography we learn that Stevenson's relationship with his father, Thomas, was: “never anything other than intense, complex and troubling” and that “Thomas Stevenson had on the one hand unusual sympathy with the child, colluding instantly with his attempts to avoid school, while at the same time being in thrall to the strictest ideas of what it was to be a responsible parent” (Harman 33-34). Thomas, it seems, was a mercurial parent, able to relate and sympathise with Stevenson well, but then at the same time adhere to the *strictest* responsibilities. The result was that Stevenson “was on the whole frightened of being accountable to him” (Harman 34). Freedom from responsibility and fear of accountability became as Harman puts it “[Stevenson's] favourite persona [...] free from responsibility and respectability” (Harman 40).

Edward Hyde, the Monster

The end result, of course is, Edward Hyde, the monster to the more civilized Dr Jekyll. Here the similarity to Robert Wringhim and Gil-Martin fades slightly as Gil-Martin is purposefully made ambiguous in *Confessions of a Justified Sinner* while Edward Hyde is

very clearly a violent expression of Dr Jekyll's repressed desires. Jekyll tells the reader that:

I stood already committed to a profound duplicity of life. Many a man would have even blazoned such irregularities as I was guilty of; but from the high views that I had set before me, I regarded them and hid them with an almost morbid sense of shame. It was thus rather the exacting nature of my aspirations than any particular degradation in my faults, that made me what I was and, with even a deeper trench than in the majority of men, severed in me those provinces of good and ill which divide and compound man's dual nature. (Stevenson 83-84)

Dr Jekyll is filled with desires, and in attempting to indulge them, he irresponsibly experiments with drugs, in the form of the elixir, which transforms him into Edward Hyde. The reader then has to ask, is Dr Jekyll good? Nabokov provides an answer that both manages to satisfy and yet still leave a few questions open. He writes that, of course, like any other person, Dr Jekyll is "a composite being" (Nabokov 10), both good and evil and capable of both. He goes on to say that when Jekyll takes the potion he: "is not really transformed into Hyde but projects a concentrate of pure evil that becomes Hyde, who is smaller than Jekyll, a big man, to indicate the larger amount of good that Jekyll possesses" (Nabokov 10).

Nabokov, though, does not try to quantify what, who, or how Jekyll and Hyde interact. Like with Robert Wringhim and Gil-Martin, the relationship itself between the two is paramount, not the overt specifics of how the actual relationship came to be. In Stevenson's case it is enough to know that it is the potion that brings about the

transformation. Both as a use of (then) modern medicine and chemistry, which to the average contemporary reader must have read as something weird and uneasy, as a tool for horror, in this case (in)voluntary body transformation. This is also a ticking time-bomb, for the reader knows that there is a finite supply of the potion and if it runs out then Jekyll or Hyde will have trouble transforming back.

Nabokov does, however, get it right when he talks about the metaphysical cause behind the entire plot:

Stevenson gives us the specific lifelike description of events by humdrum London gentlemen, but contrasting with this are the unspecified, vague, but ominous allusions to pleasure and dreadful vices somewhere behind the scenes. On the one side there is “reality”; on the other, “a nightmare world.” [...] The question that must be asked of the work is whether Utterson and the fog and the cabs and the pale butler are more “real” than the weird experiments and the unmentionable adventures of Jekyll and Hyde. (Nabokov 22-23)

This nightmare world not only applies to the reader, it also applies to the characters themselves. Or rather, to Jekyll. Utterson and the other “humdrum gentlemen” only serve the narration by virtue of being the reader’s vehicle into the story, and very like the unnamed Editor in *Confessions of a Justified Sinner*, they also frame the story for the reader so that Jekyll’s eventual confession, like that of Robert, becomes more horrific and more vivid.

The Scottishness of Stevenson’s writing, though thin on the surface, reveals itself to

stem from the same wellspring as Hogg's: the desire to tell a tale that distorts and subverts both the traditional and given expectations.

Edinburgh, the Shadow City

Even though Stevenson's novel is set in a nameless city, the assumption, given the underlying theme of repression and Victorian morals, is that it is set in London. Indeed, both Punter and Nabokov mention that the novel is set in London. Punter tells us that the novel "is set in London and has apparently, little contextual bearing on Scotland" (Punter, "Scottish Gothic" 142), while Nabokov tells us that Stevenson gives us humdrum London (Nabokov 22). Yet no discernible features mark the novel's setting as bearing hallmarks of London scenery. In fact, there is no mention of any scenery except for Dr Jekyll's house. G. K. Chesterton makes a convincing case in his book *Robert Louis Stevenson* that the novel is actually set in Edinburgh. He writes that:

[...] it seems to me that the story of Jekyll and Hyde, which is presumably presented as happening in London, is all the time very unmistakably happening in Edinburgh
[...] Mr. Hyde indeed possesses the cosmopolitan charm that unites all nations; but there is something decidedly Caledonian about Dr. Jekyll; and especially something that calls up the quality in Edinburgh that led an unkind observer (probably from Glasgow) to describe it as "an easy-windy, west-endy place. (Chesterton 68-70)

Chesterton is undoubtedly referring to several qualities of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde, which mark them as being from Edinburgh. The first is surely the connection to Deacon

Brodie, a “real-life Deacon of the Wrights who in the 1780's had carried on the notorious double life: respectable alderman by day, thief by night” (Harman 33). Indeed, Stevenson owned furniture made by Brodie, which Harman notes was “a tangible reminder of the criminal's duality” (Harman 33). Chesterton might also be referring to Edinburgh's own dualism. In *Louis: A Life of Robert Louis Stevenson*, by Philip Callow, we learn that Edinburgh was:

[...] a city split down the middle. Slums about the houses of the rich to this day.

Louis knew very well that the respectable citizens slipped over from New Town to the brothels of the Old, just as he knew how Calvinism preached of the world divided between the chosen and the damned. (Callow 203)

Edinburgh, then, is more appropriate thematically. Not only does it reinforce the novel's duality through its history, Deacon Brodie's double life, but also because of how it was physically split. We can also see this through Stevenson's relationship with the city, as Alan Bold, writing in *Modern Scottish Literature*, tells us: “In Edinburgh he [Stevenson] lived two lives; in his father's house he subscribed, reluctantly to the Victorian notion of filial duty; in the streets of Edinburgh he cultivated the company of prostitutes and relished the bohemian life” (Bold, *Modern Scottish Literature* 103).

Not only is Edinburgh thematically appropriate as the setting for *Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde* but it is also autobiographically appropriate. Stevenson lived and breathed Edinburgh's double life. He grew up, and lived, in the gentrified, and arguably English-influenced Edinburgh but rebelled and sought out the Old Town, where the

bohemian lifestyle and its associated vices were on offer. This is not lost on Bold, as he continues: “What is so Scottish about the novel is the familiarity with hypocrisy, the pretence that there is no moral middle ground but a world populated by men who are either absolutely good or absolutely evil” (Bold, *Modern Scottish Literature* 103).

This pretence makes Dr Jekyll's last statement especially damning as it forces the reader to understand Jekyll's motivation for creating Hyde. Jekyll's “concealed pleasures,” that he hid “with a morbid sense of shame” (Stevenson 83), but which afforded him only misery in the end. Jekyll's transformation in the end, however, is not somehow a punishment for his vices. It represents Jekyll's inability to balance or control his impulses, his vices. As Monica Germanà writes: “The double personifies a translated self, a traumatic sense of fracture and dislocation. It embodies the notion of being other than oneself: whilst interrogating the self/other dichotomy, duality forces the self's confrontation with the other” (Germanà 99).

Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde then, reinforces its Scottish identity, by showing the reader Jekyll's failed attempts to escape his way of life. His transformation into Edward Hyde is, as Germanà argues, a forceful attempt to confront the self with the Other, meaning that Jekyll is forced to confront his vices. In the end he fails, as he tells the reader before he concludes his full statement of the case: “this is my true hour of death, and what is to follow concerns another than myself. Here then, as I lay down the pen and proceed to seal up my confession, I bring that unhappy Henry Jekyll to an end” (Stevenson 107).

The autobiographical suggestion is prominent here. Jekyll's confrontation with Hyde is Stevenson's expression of the Caledonian antiszygy, and as Smith reminds us: “a direct protest against the prose of experience” (Smith 19).

Conclusion

What is it, then, that makes Hogg and Stevenson Scottish, Gothic and grotesque writers? It is not, as Peter K. Garrett said the doubling of personalities or characters as that is too pervasive in Gothic fiction to be exclusively Scottish, though there is undeniably an air of dualism in Hogg's and Stevenson's writing. Nor are there direct similarities in plot or narrative framing, though they also certainly have a bearing. Or is it that I am asking the wrong question? Should the question rather be: why are the novels, *Confessions of a Justified Sinner* and *The Strange Case of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde*, Scottish novels?

The Caledonian antiszygy is the form in which we see the grotesque, the Gothic and dualism manifest. We see that in the way that both Hogg and Stevenson use the "reliable narrator" as a Gothic archetype, and as a way to magnify the grotesque as we, the readers, learn of Robert Wringhim's and Dr Jekyll's true fates. The grotesque also underlines the Scottish writer's preoccupation with outward appearances and concern for what lies behind the surface (Wittig 249-250). That, also, emerges as grotesque when we see that the etymology of the word "grotesque" comes from something hidden or buried. The Scottish writer's preoccupation shares a thematic link with the grotesque as something not seen. Finally, the grotesque also distorts. Once we read both Robert Wringhim's and Dr Jekyll's confessions, we allow for the fact that what the narrators, and the reader, experience, is distortion. It is precisely because the Caledonian antiszygy manifests itself in the grotesque, or the Gothic, or in dualism, that we experience this distortion.

The Private Memoirs and Confessions of a Justified Sinner and *The Strange Case of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde* are Scottish novels because both Hogg and Stevenson employ the Gothic, grotesque and dualistic tropes, and these are inherent, natural forms Scottish

narrative as a result of the Caledonian antisyzygy. These novels are truly Scottish because “we must not forget that disorderly order is order after all” (Smith 4-5).

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