

Review

The Divergent Path Within and Without: A Psychoanalytic, Neo-Marxist Study of Jekyll and Hyde

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Robert Louis Stevenson's highly acknowledged novel has been analyzed more often than not as a binary dichotomy of good and evil pointing toward condemnation of Hyde as the inferior double to be cast aside one way or another. To the contrary, herein, Hyde is granted more attention as the repressed voice of the self which is curbed either by internalization of the restrictive forces or by direct and more conscious exterior forces of the law. To this end, the present paper deals with the cause of this duality characteristic of Dr. Jekyll as a serious trauma which arises mainly out of paucity of balance and harmony between the fighting poles involved, and by adopting the theories of Sigmund Freud, Jacques Lacan and Louis Althusser, based on psychological and ideological circumstances, argues that Hyde is evidently the revolution of the self against the Other.

Keywords: Hyde, Repressed Voice, Freud, Lacan, Althusser, Revolution, Self, Other.

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INTRODUCTION

Thus far, a great number of critiques have been written on *Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde*, most of which referring to the binary juxtaposition of moral/immoral or good/evil in the person of Jekyll and Hyde, based on Darwin's degeneration theory (Mighall, 25) and the pathological psychoanalysis grounded in the psychoanalytic theories of Sigmund Freud (Mighall, 154). A great many of such studies refer to the drawback of Jekyll to the troglodytic and ontogenetic stage (Arata, 187), while many other refer to pathological cases of sexual perversion, whether homosexual (Mighall, 20) or masturbatory (Mighall, 155), common in the Victorian period drawing on Freud's theories through a negative lens directed to the assassination of Hyde. However, a

few number of studies have been conducted whose focal point have not been the abnormality, barbarism and immorality of the character of Hyde, instead, their concern have been for Hyde as the repressed voice of his own self and age.

In harmony with the latter studies, an eclectic study of this novella would be taken up so as to cover the internal and external factors involved in Jekyll and Hyde's disastrous effort for liberty. Inclusively, the purpose of the present study is to analyze the concept of the divided self, primary issues, defense mechanisms and life instinct versus death instinct drawing from Freudian psychoanalysis in relation to the inner trauma of the protagonist of this novella; to apply the triple structures of

the psyche of Lacan's model of the self, and death theory on Jekyll and Hyde and finally to relate the trauma of the self to the internalization of what is imposed on Dr. Jekyll from without through the ideological perspectives of Althusser.

Having lived a life of self denial and extreme self-control, Henry Jekyll encounters the fact that his supposedly unitary self is divided into two contradictory and opposing parts. Born into a great fortune and prosperous life as an educated man his life is constantly overshadowed by the society principle due to the excessive introjections of such a principal; that is according to Freud the internalization of authority in the psyche which causes it to be divided between the demands of society and those of one's own which turns into a self-policing superego within the psyche once the authority ceases to make its demands (online Felluga). Therefore, the above-mentioned internalization of the "ego-ideal" forming the superego is to be later associated with conscience and (sense of guilt) (online Felluga); accordingly, Jekyll's conformity to his repressive superego imposes a sense of humiliation on him which stems from the secret gratification of his natural instincts.

Such a biting abjection according to Jekyll makes his situation more vulnerable in that in his words, "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 and hid them with an almost morbid sense of shame" (Stevenson 56). "Freud argues in *Civilization and Its Discontents* that all of civilized society is a substitute-formation, of sorts, for our atavistic instincts and drives" (online Felluga). However, no matter how much progress man makes in technology, education and lifestyle, he is likely to fall into "'moral insanity' which is not related to any code of ethics but to the 'behavioral' anomalies considered pathological in the modern industrialized society (Mighall 147). According to Freud, 'the sexual impulse [is] so powerful that it continually [threatens] to 'return' and thus disrupts our conscious functioning (hence the now-famous term, 'the return of the repressed')" (online Felluga). Thus, for one thing not only the reappearance of the repressed instinctual demands to the consciousness, but also the failure of Jekyll's ego in mediating between the contradictory parts occasions an irresolvable psychological conflict.

Of special note is the fact that before his transformation to Hyde, Henry Jekyll's pivotal defense mechanisms were denial (believing that the problem doesn't exist...) and avoidance (staying away from people or situations that are liable to make us anxious by stirring up some unconscious—i.e., repressed—experience or emotion) (Tyson 15). All the time he tries to substitute his better self for his other side corresponding to his libidinal energies and up to the end he would not accept Hyde as another part of him, for it is impure and impulsive. His avoidance can be related to his fear of intimacy as he has

gotten no romantic female partner and while sociable in character of Jekyll, he is surrounded with professional unmarried friends all of whom seem to be practicing asceticism.

In Miyoshi's terms "the important men of the book, then, are all unmarried, barren of ideas, emotionally stifled, [and] joyless" (472). As a matter of fact, the men for the most part have replaced their anima with animus; that is biologically speaking, their left hemisphere which associates with the rational, masculine, and educated, is activated while on the other hand, their right hemisphere, linking to the passive, feminine, and sensual instincts, is paralyzed whose true epitome is Jekyll and Hyde, respectively (qtd. in Stiles 882). After all, both mechanisms are more in line with the social demands of the super-ego than the private demands of the id.

Through transformation to Hyde, despite the delusion that his new part in another body can release the manipulative pressures of the rational side, Jekyll is merely able to shift the already-mentioned mechanisms, namely denial and avoidance, to projection. In consequence, he projects what his super-ego considered humiliating onto people over there so that the other would be punished (online Felluga). Certainly, by distancing himself, he is provided with a safety outlet to release his long-captivated libidinal energies; albeit, he overlooks that Hyde is only a part of this double conflict. This is to say, notwithstanding the fact that he houses the two sides into different bodies, they are never separable from one another and what makes them look physically distinct is nothing other than an overpowering of energies in each case. In Jekyll's words "The drug had no discriminating action; it was neither diabolical nor divine; it but shook the doors of the prison house of my disposition; and like the captives of Philippi, that which stood within ran forth. At that time my virtue slumbered; my evil, kept awake by ambition..." (59). In another instance he depicts Hyde as pure evil but this is not the case, since Hyde is incorporated in Jekyll and belongs to his ego, however less developed, seeking to balance a lopsided self wherein repression has been embedded quite a while.

Despite Jekyll's conviction that his situation was far from the laws and he had a relaxed conscience, by saying that only Hyde was responsible for the guilt (60), we come to the understanding that Jekyll is just trying to rationalize what he himself has chosen to develop as an inseparable part of himself. Therefore as it is evident, his shift between Jekyll and Hyde just compounds his former situation and leaves him desperate and despondent despite his initial momentary happiness and youthful feelings. His experiment proves to be a mere fiasco, in that he can and would never be able to divide his disparate sides. In some cases, Jekyll yearns and pities Hyde; while in other cases, Hyde writes letters and goes to Lanyon's since Jekyll wants him to do so.

Once Jekyll comes to this unconscious recognition and

resolution that what he has done was no separating action, rather a transient outlet which would never categorically unfetter him, he turns to his former melancholia in which case his over-active and over-abusive super-ego maltreats him to the point of severe humiliation and nemesis (online Felluga). As a result, he has to make a choice, and find an alternative through which he can restore his quietude and equilibrium of a chaotic conflict. So far he has been making half-victorious efforts to cure himself as a doctor by an earthly remedy in the service of his eros; the life and sexual instinct whose function is the preservation of self (online Felluga); however, from the point of discovery he resorts to thanatos which is the drive that for Freud was related to the resettlement of the previous tranquil order of things uninterrupted by the appearance of life and can cause one's destructive actions including suicide (online Felluga).

Jekyll's destructive actions whether to the society or ultimately toward himself is a cycle which starts from his melancholy and self-denial and marks the end of his conflict in the same melancholic condition. His eventual resort and suicidal action as well as his destructive behavior in society were all but disobeying both the internal and the external ego-ideal. By so doing, he gets what he had been pursuing his whole life-- peace and equilibrium. Dying as Hyde does undo the life of the subservient Jekyll whose life was nine-tenth a life of virtue. How paradoxical that even in the time of his suicide Jekyll and Hyde cannot be separated from one another; hence Jekyll wants Hyde to find enough courage not to die on the scaffold but to do so at least for once by his own freedom of choice. So, as Saposnik claims "The final suicide is thus fittingly a dual effort: though the hand that administers the poison is Edward Hyde's, it is Henry Jekyll who forces the action" and "Never before have they been so much one as when Hyde insures the realization of Jekyll's death-wish" (724). Eventually, the inseparable double had to cooperate with each other to go overboard the society principle— be it in life or more effectively in death.

Observed through the Lacanian three-fold structure of the human psyche, Jekyll is entangled in the symbolic order wherein his mind and communications are concurrently controlled by the "name of the father" (online Felluga); identified with the figure of authority. At the instance of realizing his fragmented nature impossible to reconcile with the real order whose presence cast a life-long eternal shade over the symbolic order of his psyche, Jekyll resorts to the illusory stage of the imaginary world of his early childhood, unknowingly. In Lacan's wording, the real order is the sense of wholeness which a newborn child experiences at that stage of her birth when he did not feel the necessity of differentiating twixt himself and his mother/world; being at one with the other; the relationship is based on the need and satisfaction of such

a need (online Felluga).

Next is the mirror stage where the child, whose relationship to the other shifts to that of demand, sees the afterglow of his image which equals to an illusion of fullness formed unconsciously to make up for the sense of loss whose roots go back to the imaginary register. Interestingly though, the pursuit of such an illusion ensures the continuation of the desire in the symbolic order (online Felluga). Therefore Jekyll's longing for such an early order of his psyche is manifested in the texture of his new self as he states:

There was something strange in my sensations, something indescribably new and, from its very novelty, incredibly sweet. I felt younger, lighter, happier in body; within I was conscious of a heady recklessness, a current of disordered sensual images running like a mill race in my fancy, a solution of the bonds of obligation, an unknown but not an innocent freedom of the soul. (57)

The so-called disordered sensual images are merely a product of fanciful perception of Jekyll as they recall the preverbal images of the imaginary order of his psyche. This dreamlike register is depicted by Massey not as the displacement of good by evil but to the contrary, as the good itself while it is left with no safe alternatives (58). That is to say, literally, Hyde is indeed a part of Jekyll; hence Jekyll determines the being of it unquestionably. What is more, when he looks at himself in the mirror he welcomes himself, however ugly, and sees his image as more single and whole than that of his imperfect former self. This is exactly reversion to a childlike way of looking at the self so as to flee the never-fading loss of separation. It is not surprising that, he calls Jekyll as pure evil *prima facie* while unaware of his fantastic illusion of a unitary self.

He tries to resort to another order of his psyche just as in dream to speak his own language rather than the language of the others (Massey 60). This is why Hyde is unable to communicate and while he is imposed to enter into the world of language, he reacts as "a sick child [who] [breaks] a plaything" (64). As a consequence, since people have no understanding for Hyde's world, they disrupt his speechless world forcing him to protect his preverbal existence by his destructive actions such as murdering of Carew whereby he seeks to free himself of the public demands (61). Adding to his formerly demolishing actions, "destroying the portrait of [his] father" is at the apex of his destructive efforts (69); correspondent to the shattering of "Name-of-the-Father" (online Felluga), and rejection of the always-already influence of Jekyll's person and acquiescence to the "big Other" (online Felluga).

By far, Jekyll has been concerned not so much about

the union of the binary duality of his nature as about the splitting of them. However, in the course of his illusory dual existence, it strikes him that Jekyll and Hyde can never be separated; hence the “trauma of the real” (Tyson 32). Such a trauma thereof, refers to the realization of the fact that it exists behind the curtain of the symbolic order; far-fetched and unachievable by language, however ever-present (Tyson 32). As a result, what so far could be taken as the hell of two in one, turns into the hell of one comprised of two. Thus, Jekyll’s description of Hyde’s situation in which “His terror of the gallows drove him continually to commit temporary suicide, and return to his subordinate station of a part instead of a person...” sheds light on his realization of the initial misrecognition of himself as a whole, unique person to the point that he no more wants to be two than one.

Unfortunately, with a trace of bitterness, Jekyll, in his face-to-face contact with the material reality, comes to recognize that not only he is multifaceted, but also the housing of his opposing sides into two parts and seeing either as one; hence the breakage, has been nothing but an illusion of the fullness he has been pursuing ever since and can only be established by the reconciliation of the divergent orders. Put another way, “Hell is the loss of duality, not the victory of evil over good” (Massey 59). Once again he becomes aware of his lack, this time; however, his illusion is shattered by what the symbolic world of his being, Jekyll, reminds him in his encounter with the reality of the world outside. Eventually, he moves from “the jouissance” (online Felluga) of the real as an illusion of a momentary union and oneness to the trauma of the real being reminded of his materiality.

As Lacan says all desire is the desire for death, beyond ego and language, which constitutes incomprehensible ecstasy only to be caught momentarily in language (Demir 8). Because the very entrance into the symbolic register makes one go through the filter of language and learn the rules by subordinating one’s will to that of the authorities, the only way out of such enslavement is death (Demir 8); the acceptance of which is putting the always-present castration anxiety to an end provided that the law is disobeyed. Therefore, death is synonymous with castration and a definite seclusion of the self from the Other. Similarly, in this case with the backward movement from the desire of the big Other through the demand of the imaginary order to the need of the real one, the sole way of fulfilling one’s ever-paining and never-gaining disguised needs is to end where one has started; either by natural death or in this traumatic case by self-destruction.

Till now, a psychological analysis of the novella have been carried out in accordance to the inner world of the individual, besides, a neo-Marxist explication of the protagonist’s situation will be undertaken with regard to the material and historical setting, in which the Victorian society is responsible for how Jekyll finally ends up,

based on the Althusser’s perspectives on ideology and his classification of “ISAs”; “Ideological State Apparatuses” and “SAs”; “State Apparatuses” (online Felluga).

Born as an affluent man educated within the bourgeois ideological system, Jekyll is socially programmed both before and after his birth. As Althusser mentions, we are all “always-already subjects” born into a specific “familial ideology” to which we identify and conform (online Felluga). Accordingly, Jekyll’s ideology is formed by others as he is born “to a large fortune, endowed besides with excellent parts, inclined by nature to industry, fond of the respect of the wise and good among [his] fellow-men, and thus, as might have been supposed, with every guarantee of an honourable and distinguished future”(56). Thus his already-shaped ideology supposedly gives him a higher sense of self, totally welcome by others and their capitalistic criterion for the establishment of a joyful, comfortable life.

As Althusser holds, ideology has a “material existence”; hence the subject’s performance of it (online Felluga). Jekyll’s life has been nine-tenth a life of virtue signifying what creates his definition of self identity in proportion to the practice of the bourgeois ideology of morality and wealth. Such a practice makes him self-conscious and sensitive in formation of his sense of self and conditions his misconception of the other voice within him as he overlooks that “ideology never says, ‘I am ideological’” (online Felluga). Moreover, this unconscious conformity fashions his life and his bourgeois coterie, all of whom ‘successful middle-aged professional men’ (qtd in. Arata 185). No wonder, he decides “to carry [his] head high, and wear a more than commonly grave countenance before the public.”(56), insofar as his long-lasting practice of social demands are concerned.

In addition, he similarly goes through “interpellation” as a process in which one turns into an ever ideological subject which is the result of a latent give and take interaction between the ISA or SA agents of the society and its subjects (online Felluga). Of particular note is that, in the process of being interpellated, his professional and submissive class identity is shaped by two ISA agents; doctor Lanyon and lawyer Utterson. What distinguishes the ISAs from the SAs is that while the former is “ideological” including religion, educational system etc., the latter represents the “repressive” forces such as government, police and so forth (online Felluga). Lanyon as the ISA agent of pedantic education has been in full control over Jekyll till he cuts off their relation. This ISA is the “number-one” “bourgeois” institute for controlling and repressing the ideology of the so-called subjects of the society (online Felluga). However, such an influence together with that of Utterson has been supposedly significant till Jekyll’s scientific experiments shifted his target and consequently diminished their repressive function.

Of the two ISA agents, the lawyer who has undertaken the legal case through which Hyde would become the heir to Jekyll's properties, pursues Hyde to the end; as he says, "If he be Mr Hyde...I shall be Mr Seek" (14). He is a man of rigid and repressive demeanor described as follows: "He was austere with himself; drank gin when he was alone, to mortify a taste for vintages; and though he enjoyed the theatre, had not crossed the doors of one for twenty years" (5). He is more than any other character concerned with Jekyll and what would become of his property in the hands of Hyde. To put it differently, he is the voice of hegemony, which is the dominant ideology and whenever Jekyll is described as healthy and sociable they are on friendly terms.

Through his metamorphosis to Hyde, Jekyll turns to the counter-hegemonic or anti-ideological voice of his society. As Mighall puts it, "Observed by others, Jekyll, who comes from an identical background, also becomes 'careless of the society he fell into' and appears to be 'suspicious of his friends', refusing to trust Utterson with his secret and locking himself away" (148). Consequently, he recognizes the other inside him obviously by stepping aside from the ISA representatives of his society. As Mighall declares, the reorientation of Hyde's social class as a commoner suggests him as another part existing within Jekyll (159). So Jekyll who has been so far hailed as "Henry Jekyll, M.D., D.C.L., LL.D., ER.S., etc." (Arata 185) would be hailed as Hyde.

The counter-hegemonic nature of Jekyll makes him weird and this eerie quality is manifested in his physical deformity. As Mighall points out, what makes Hyde's compulsion pathological is his divergence from his former communicative and sociable nature which has been built upon his social identity till his transformation (149). In comparison to the hegemonic voice he is regarded as the other and this so-called other may refer to more than many repressed voices, two of which would be discussed here. The first other in Arata's opinion is Hyde's atavistic shape and deformity as a product of the bourgeois class ideologies and is representative of the lower-classes (186). Nevertheless, the victims of this backward atavism are "the rich educated people", whose knowledge and opulence does not save them from falling into this path (qtd in. Arata 187). The second is the feminine other while the boundaries of masculinity and femininity with the appearing weakness of the latter is comingled (Doane and Hodges 63-67).

Whether the other is a lower-class or the feminine other, he enacts what has been dictated to him by hegemony via repressive actions. In this case, therefore, Jekyll takes a counter-hegemonic action by projecting the repression from the self onto society while similar to the oppressive function of ideology he begins to repress the other by violence just as repressive SAs do once the ISAs face obstruction. This shift from the self to society makes Hyde counter-hegemonic; however, his rebellion

against the society is the hegemonic voice of Jekyll whose ideology is that of the repression of the other. After all, "Jekyll and Hyde is a compelling expression of middle-class anger directed at various forms of the Other, say that Hyde acts out the aggressive fantasies of repressed Victorian men, another altogether to say that he comes eventually to embody the very repressions Jekyll struggles to throw off" (Arata, 191).

Therefore, the harm in Jekyll is that of the Victoria's England which rejected Hyde as its inseparable part; conversely, Hyde's hostility for Jekyll is nothing but the repudiation of what the bourgeois ideology exercised over him to make a scapegoat out of him (Saposnik 730). As far as Hyde is Jekyll he represents hegemony; on the other hand, as far as Jekyll is Hyde his voice becomes counter-hegemonic. These voices are in a sort of way so much intermingled that obfuscate one's understanding of the whole character, merely through the use of boundaries. Such a confusion is highlighted in Jekyll's uncertainty as he declares, "He, I say – I cannot say, I. That child of Hell had nothing human; nothing lived in him but fear and hatred" (67). His fear is the fear of loss; loss of what he has gained including money and high reputation at the expense of his other self who is hateful of being constantly sacrificed; hateful of being repressed.

The conflict of Jekyll and Hyde continues to the bitter end. While Jekyll created an opportunity of afterlife for himself in his other, who is Hyde (Mighall 149), and pitied him at heart by means of whom he tries to get rid of social burdens of self-censorship so as to reach liberty (Arata 193), Hyde "exercises self-control" and feels strangely comfortable in the bourgeois surroundings which he repudiates" (Arata 193-194). However, the conflict at the root of their being complicates their situation with the result that Jekyll as an always-already subject rejecting his other, begins to suppress Hyde just as he had been doing before. Therefore, Hyde's voice is pushed to the background as Arata puts it, "Stevenson...shows how such figures [like Hyde] are not so much 'recognized' as created by middleclass discourse. He does this by foregrounding the interpretive acts through which his characters situate and define Hyde (188).

That Hyde's final violent act takes place with the cane of Utterson, is the archetype of the decisive role of him as an ISA agent. It is not merely because the repressive murder is done by his cane, but because the cane is again put within his possession in the scene of the murder, signifying "the aggressions of a timid bourgeois gentleman" (Arata 191). Also, Jekyll's final decision to put the money in the hands of Utterson by substituting his name in the will for Hyde's, shows that he was brave as far as "the situation was apart from ordinary laws" (60). In a similar vein, later in the face of the ISA agent who, "[representing] that legality which identifies social behavior as established law, unwritten but binding..."

(Saposnik 719), wants to intrude his room “if not by fair means, then by foul – if not of [his] consent, then by brute force!”(44); Jekyll asks for “mercy” (44). All in all, he gives up all he has gained in life in the hope of a moment of liberation for his suppressed other, paradoxically pitying him and rejecting him at once as part of his humanity, till his death as Hyde rather than Jekyll brings this class struggle to cessation in the end.

CONCLUSION

To put it succinctly, whether this case is analyzed through the lens of psychoanalysis or neo-Marxism, it should be noted that two perspectives are at play. The first belongs to the psychology and hegemony of the subjects of the ruling class; while the latter belongs to psychological-cum-ideological dynamics of Henry Jekyll. Psychologically speaking, the first group regards Hyde as the epitome of id or the imaginary order who shatters the symbolic order, system and law. They look at him as a criminal whose crime signifies the fragility of the law and attacks their identity and sense of distinct self. On the contrary, in his self-assessment Jekyll never refers to himself as a criminal. Refusing to take responsibility for trampling a little girl, slapping a woman, and murdering a man, he seems to be enacting what ISA agents have done to him formerly by repressing his childhood, killing his anima and symbolically his animus as an act of liberation or revenge on the society as a whole.

Ideologically speaking, the outer world deems Hyde as a vulgar sinner and a dangerous non-conformist who must be disciplined, if not by the ISAs through consent, then by the SAs and ISAs' secondary policy which is that of coercion rather than consent. On the opposite, given his inner situation and imposed ideological condition, Henry is the counter-hegemonic voice of his time whose only fault is a struggle for a moment of liberation from both the introjected excessive super-ego and the dominant ideology which has programmed him since his birth. Consequently, his death has double significance where he dies as Hyde rather than Jekyll, his fall can be taken as the defeat of his ideology by that of his age; however on the other hand, since he does so out of his own choice when there was no Jekyll to provide an outlet for his momentary freedom and safety, his suicide is to be viewed as another counter ideological act by which he not only pursues liberation, but also manages to undo Jekyll's former life and credit by acceptance of castration. To put it specifically, by suicide he sets a rigid border twixt self and other; subject and object, and finally individual and society.

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