O’ZBEKISTON RESPUBLIKASI OLIY VA O’RTA MAXSUS TA’LIM VAZIRLIGI

NAMANGAN DAVLAT UNIVERSITETI

FILOLOGIYA FAKULTETI

INGLIZ TILI VA LEKSIKA-STILISTIKA KAFEDRASI

ISOQOVA BASIDAXON MAXAMMADJON QIZINING

«STYLISTIC PECULIARITIES OF R. L. STEVENSON’S INDIVIDUAL STYLE»

MAVZUSIDAGI

BITIRUV MALAKAVIY ISHI

Namangan – 2014

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“DAK ga tavsiya etaman”
Filologiya fakulteti dekani
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“___”_____2014 yil

«STYLISTIC PECULIARITIES OF R. L. STEVENSON’S INDIVIDUAL STYLE» MAVZUIDAGI

BITIRUV MALAKAVIY ISH

Bajardi: «Ingliz tili» ta’lim yo’nalishi bitiruvchi
4-kurs talabasi Isoqova B.M.

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Rahbar: katta o’qituvch Dadaboyev O

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Bitiruv malakaviy ishi kafedradan dastlabki himoyadan o’tdi. Kafedraning__ sonli bayonnomasi. «____» _____2014 yil.

Namangan – 2014

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Bitiruv malakaviy ishga yuqoridagi qismlardan tashqari, ilmiy rahbar xulosasi, ichki va tashqi taqrizlar hamda dastlabki himoya bayonnomasi ayni shu tartibda qo’yiladi. Yuqoridagi qismlardan so’ng malakaviy ish mundarija, kirish, asosiy qism, xulosa, foydalanilgan adabiyotlar ro’yhatlari va ilovalardan tashkil topadi.

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BMI ning kirish qismi quyidagi punktlardan iborat bo’lishi lozim.

Tadqiqot mavzusining dolzarbligi;
Tadqiqotning masad va vazifalari;
Ishning o’rganilish darajasining qiyosiy tahlili;
Tadqiqotning ilmiy yangiligi;
Tadqiqot ob’ekti va predmeti;
Tadqiqotning ilmiy ahamiyati.
Ishning strukturasi

Stylistic peculiarities of R. L. Stevenson's individual style

Contents

Introduction

The creative activity and personality of Robert Luis Stivenson (1850-1894) one of most famous English writers of the XIX century always caused the intent interest of the readers and literary critics. His works are bright and varied: he was broadly known as a novelist, short story writer, literary critic, less as playwright and poet.

In spite of the fact that some of his poems are included into the multiple English anthologies creative activity of Stivenson was not deeply learned and was not a subject of the special inheritance.

The aim of this work is to highlight the role of R. L. Stevenson's creation in the world literature and the peculiarities of his individual style. It consists of two chapters.

The work can be considered as innovative because it presents a concept in Western culture; the inner conflict of human's sense of good and evil. It is the guide to the Victorian era because of its piercing description of the fundament dichotomy of the 19th century outward respectability and inward lust as it had a tendency for social hypocrisy.

Scientifically-practical value of the work is concluded in that that presented in her material can be used in courses on histories of the foreign literature of the XIX and XX centuries, in the courses on histories of English.

In order to specify the main ideas in the author's creation we have worked out the novels "The Master of Ballantrae", "Kidnapped" and "The strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde". Especially, in "The strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde" we tried to research which stylistic devices used Stevenson to develop a plot, to describe heroes of the novel, to distinguish between Jekyll and Hyde, good and evil. We tried to specify how author produces some new and effective permutation in the relation

between romance and irony or manages to combine horror and suspense with moral diagnosis. His heroes contaminated by the author's spirit of romanticism stepped beyond the page. Who is Dr.Jekyll? The history knew a lot of half – mad scientists ready to sanscrifice themselves for the word truth. Mr. Hyde implements all human vices but is not he the portrait of our dark side hid deep inside?

The first chapter outlines stylistic peculiarities of R. L. Stevenson's individual style. The approach in this chapter has been to focus on the stylistic peculiarities of his novels.

The second chapter of qualification work examines the theme of morality in Robert Louis Stevenson's The Master of Ballantrae and Kidnapped, focusing mainly on the former novel. After a brief discussion of Stevenson's historical interests and of the sources gathered by him for the writing of his Scottish novels, I proceed to an investigation of the main narrator of The Master of Ballantrae, the unreliable Mackellar. I argue that Mackellar can be regarded as a dogmatic moralist whose ethical standards are first questioned, and then subverted by the character of James Durie. Subsequently, I analyze the main narrator of Kidnapped, the seventeen-year-old David Balfour, and I claim that similarly to Mackellar, David also holds strict moral standards that gradually dissolve after he experiences significant historical and social events that contribute to his individual growth. I then conclude the work by evidencing Stevenson's preoccupation with moral issues, which transpires both from his letters and prose, and by claiming that he disregarded a decontextualized morality based on prejudices and religious dogmatism.

The Conclusion summaries the results provide the main issues of this work.

Chapter I. Representation of Victorian era reality in Stevenson's work.

1.1. Robert Luis Stevenson – a representative writer of a Victorian age

Victoria became queen of Great Britain in 1837. Her reign, the longest in English history, lasted until 1901. This period is called Victorian Age.

The Victorian Age was characterized by sharp contradictions. In many ways it was an age of progress. The Victorian era marks the climax of England's rise to economic and military supremacy. Nineteenth-century England became the first modern, industrialized nation. It ruled the most widespread empire in world history, embracing all of Canada, Australia, New Zealand, India, Pakistan, and many smaller countries in Asia, and the Caribbean. But internally England was not stable. There was too much poverty, too much injustice and fierce exploitation of man by man.

The workers fought for their rights. Their political demands were expressed in the People's Charter in 1833. The Chartist movement was a revolutionary movement of the English workers, which lasted till 1848. The Chartists introduced their own literature. The Chartist writers tried their hand at different genres. They wrote articles, short stories, songs, epigrams, poems. Chartists (for example Ernest Jones "The Song of the Lower Classes"; Thomas Hood "The Song of the Shirt") described the struggle of the workers for their rights, they showed the ruthless exploitation and the miserable fate of the poor.

The ideas of Chartism attracted the attention of many progressive-minded people of the time. Many prominent writers became aware of the social injustice around them and tried to picture them in their works. The greatest novelists of the age were Charles Dickens, William Makepeace Thackeray, Charlotte Bronte, Elizabeth Gaskell, George Eliot. These writers used the novel as a tool to protest against the evils in contemporary social and economic life and to picture the world in a realistic way. They expressed deep sympathy for the working people; described the unbearable conditions of their life and work. Criticism in their works was very strong, so some scholars called them Critical Realists, and the trend to which they

belonged - Critical Realism. “Hard Times” by Charles Dickens and “Mary Barton” by Elizabeth Gaskell are the bright examples of that literature, in which the Chartist movement is described. The contribution of the writers belonging to the trend of realism in world literature is enormous. They created a broad picture of social life, exposed and attacked the vices of the contemporary society, sided with the common people in their passionate protest against unbearable exploitation, and expressed their hopes for a better future. As for the poetry of that time, English and American critics consider Alfred Tennyson, and Robert Browning to be the two great pillars on which Victorian poetry rested. Unlike the poetry of the Romantic Age, their poetry demonstrated the conservatism, optimism, and self-assurance that marked the poetry of the Victorian age.

R.L.Stevenson was a Scottish novelist, essayist, and poet who became one of the world’s most popular writers. He was born on November 13, 1850, in Edinburgh, Scotland. He was a sickly boy who suffered from a lung disease that later developed into tuberculosis. Young Stevenson loved the open air, the sea, adventure, and, especially, reading. He was a man of a strong will. He fought illness constantly and wrote many of his books in a sickbed. He traveled widely for his health and to learn about people.

Stevenson’s father was a Scottish engineer, and the boy was expected to follow in his father’s footsteps, but he preferred literature and history. When he was 17, Stevenson entered Edinburgh University to study engineering, his father’s profession. But this profession was not appealing for him and as a compromise he agreed to study law. He graduated from the University in 1875, but he did not enjoy law and never practiced it. His real love was writing. By the time of his graduation from the University he had already begun writing for magazines. He began publishing short stories and essays in the mid-1870s.

The writer’s first book “An Inland Voyage” appeared in 1878. This work relates his experiences during a canoeing trip through France and Belgium. In his next book “Travels with a Donkey in the Cevennes”, written in 1879, Stevenson describes a walking tour through France.

In 1879 he followed Mrs. Fanny Osbourne, an American whom he later married, to the American continent. In America his health began to

fail and made him a tubercular invalid for the rest of his life. He spent his last nine years on the Pacific island of Samoa.

Stevenson's first and most famous novel "Treasure Island" was published in 1883. The characters of the book, the boy hero Jim Hawkins, the two villains Long John Silver and blind Pew, and their search for the buried treasure have become familiar to millions of readers.

The publication of Stevenson's second major novel "The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr.Hyde" in 1886 assured his reputation. The story tells of a doctor who takes a drug that changes him into a new person, physically ugly and spiritually evil. The novel is one of the most fascinating horror stories ever written.

The same year Stevenson also published his long novel "Kidnapped". The work is based on historical research and weaves an exciting fictional story around an actual Scottish murder committed in 1745. Because of its length, Stevenson ended "Kidnapped" before the plot was completed. He finally finished the story in 1893 in "Catriona". Besides these he had written many other novels, short stories, essays and travel books.

Some of Stevenson's short stories were collected into "New Arabian Nights" (1882) and "More New Arabian Nights" (1885). His short stories are rich in imagination and fantasy.

Stevenson's last years were clouded by tragedy . At that time his wife suffered a nervous breakdown. This misfortune struck him deeply and affected his ability to complete his last books. Stevenson's life began to brighten when his wife recovered partially, but he died suddenly of a stroke on December 3, 1894. Local chiefs buried him on top of Mount Vaea in Samoa.

Stevenson in all that he wrote, in his essays, his letters, and his novels, remained an artist. He was in style self-conscious, exacting from himself perfection. Stevenson leads the novel back towards story-telling and to the romance. Stevenson is so consistent an artist that it is difficult at first to realize the phenomenon that had produced his success.

1.2. The history of writing of Stevenson's novel "The Strange Case of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde".

Robert Louis Stevenson was the man who "seemed to pick the right word up on the point of his pen, like a men playing spillikins", as G.K.Chesterton put it. He is often described as a writer of originality and power, whose essays at their best are cogent and perceptive renderings of aspects of the human conditions. His novels are either brilliant adventure stories with subtle moral overtones or original and impressive presentations of human action in terms of history and topography as well as psychology. His short stories produce some new and effective permutations in the relations between romance and irony or manage to combine horror and suspense with moral diagnosis. His heroes contaminated by the author's spirit of romanticism stepped beyond the page. Stevenson's mystery is akin to that of the childhood.

Stevenson had long been interested in the idea of the duality of human nature and how to incorporate the interplay of good and evil into a story. One night in late September or early October of 1885, possibly while he was still revising "Markheim", Stevenson had a dream, and on wakening had the intuition for two or three scenes that would appear in the story. "In the small hours of one morning," says Mrs Stevenson, "I was awakened by cries of horror from Louis. Thinking he had a nightmare, I woke him. He said angrily: "Why did you wake me? I was dreaming a fine bogey tale." She had awakened him at the first transformation scene …

As was the custom, Mrs Stevenson would read the draft and offer her criticisms in the margins. Louis was confined to bed at the time from a hemorrhage, and she left her comments with the manuscript and Louis in the bedroom. She said in effect the story was really an allegory, but Louis was writing it just as a story.[1] After a while Louis called her back into the bedroom and pointed to a pile of ashes: he had burnt the manuscript in fear

[1] Masson R. O., The life of R. L'stevenson, Edinburgh, 1923.

that he would try to salvage it, and in the process forcing himself to start over from scratch writing an allegorical story as she had suggested. Scholars debate if he really burnt his manuscript or not. Other scholars suggest her criticism was not about allegory, but about inappropriate sexual content. Whatever the case, there is no direct factual evidence for the burning of the manuscript, but it remains an integral part of the history of the novella.

Stevenson re-wrote the story again in three days. According to Osbourne, "The mere physical feat was tremendous; and instead of harming him, it roused and cheered him inexpressibly." He refined and continued to work on it for 4 to 6 weeks afterward.

Strange Case of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde was initially sold as a paperback for one shilling in the UK and one dollar in the US's. Initially stores would not stock it until a review appeared in The Times, on 25 January 1886, giving it a favourable reception. Within the next six months close to forty thousand copies were sold. By 1901 it was estimated to have sold over 250,000 copies. Its success was probably due more to the "moral instincts of the public" than perception of its artistic merits, being widely read by those who never otherwise read fiction, quoted in pulpit sermons and in religious papers.

This novel represents a concept in Western culture, that of the inner conflict of humanity's sense of good and evil . It has also been noted as "one of the best guidebooks of the Victorian era because of its piercing description of the fundamental dichotomy of the 19th century outward respectability and inward lust as it had a tendency for social hypocrisy.

Literary genres which critics have applied as a framework for interpreting the novel include religious allegory, fable, detective story, sensation fiction, science fiction, Scottish devil tales and gothic novel.

Stevenson never says exactly what Hyde takes pleasure in on his nightly forays, saying generally that it is something of an evil and lustful nature;

thus it is in the context of the times, abhorrent to Victorian religious morality. However scientists in the closing decades of the 19th century, within a post-Darwinian perspective, were also beginning to examine various biological influences on human morality, including drug and alcohol addiction, homosexuality, multiple personality disorder, and regressive animality.

Jekyll's inner division has been viewed by some critics as analogous to schisms existing in British society. Divisions include the social divisions of class, the internal divisions within the Scottish identity, the political divisions between Ireland and England, and the divisions between religious and secular forces.

The novel can be seen as an expression of the dualist tendency in Scottish culture, a forerunner to what G. Gregory Smith[2] [12] termed the "Caledonian Antisyzygy"(the combination of opposites) which influenced the 20th Scottish cultural renaissance led by Hugh MacDiarmid. The London depicted in the novel resembles more closely the Old Town of Edinburgh which Stevenson frequented in his youth, itself a doppelganger to the city's respectable, classically ordered New Town. Scottish critics have also read it as a metaphor of the opposing forces of Scottish Presbyterianism and Scotland's atheistic Enlightenment.

Critical appreciation of Stevenson's status as an influential Gothic writer has largely focused on his novella The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde. The work itself was immensely popular with contemporary readers, although early critics' reactions varied widely. Almost all acknowledged Stevenson's skill as a writer of suspense, though many questioned the work's moral intent. Some viewed the story as a moral allegory on the nature of evil, while other commentators found Stevenson's own remarks illuminating, particularly his statement that the transformation of Jekyll into Hyde was meant to show that desires, when ignored, become

[2] http://www.erudit.org/revue/ravon/2007/v/n47/016704ar.html

perverted. Since the middle of the twentieth century, critics have continued to forward moral, thematic, and psychological interpretations of Stevenson's novella.  The novel can be interpreted in terms of the identification of Victorian society with the story, the psychological thematics of the split (opposition) personality, the "evil" aspect of the human being, the Darwinian conception of the animal or beastly "original man", the Freudian dynamics of the ego/id/super ego.

1.3. The main problems elucidated in the novel “The Strange Case of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde”.

There are many themes in The Strange Case of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde. It is a parable about the deeper levels of human nature. The central theme revolves around the dual nature of man. Dr. Jekyll apparently lives the moral life and has a mask that people want to show to others, and Mr Hyde lives out a side of ourselves we like to deny and don't want others to see. The novel places much emphasis on the use of a drug and perhaps alcohol. It's not clear what Dr Jekyll's sins are and Mr Hyde may act very badly because he becomes drunk. Dr Jekyll concocts a drug that transforms him into Mr Hyde. The drug causes him to look and to act completely differently from the way the world supposes he is capable of. Jekyll starts off slowly with this drug, but gradually he loses control of it or himself. He becomes addicted to being Hyde, and the addiction is so strong that a transformation to Hyde begins to take pace even without his using the drug.

There is also a strong emphasis on cruelty in the novel. Mary Reilly is much more realistic, psychological and sociological in its approach to the same story we find in Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde. Stevenson presents his story almost mythically and morally and philosophically; in Stevenson's brief tale, the fantasy element dominates more and is not explained away at all (though we could believe Jekyll made it all up). At the end of Mary Reilly, there is an explicit attempt at an explanation for what happened, and throughout the story we are asked to understand things in a realistic, psychological, and social way. Martin's atmosphere is much more prosaic; we are in the world of a later 19th century servant girl.

The central themes of Mary Reilly actually deal with gender: Martin shows how the class structure of society controls people, especially women. She also brings the female element into play. There are literally no women in Stevenson's tale. In Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde women are only ambiguously referred to. Valerie retells the story from a woman's point of

view: Mary, the servant who describes her close intimacy with Jekyll and Hyde as the servant of both in Jekyll's house. The novel shows how women sometimes find themselves in positions where it is to their advantage to be submissive. Her novel paints a picture of the rigid social hierarchies in existence throughout the nineteenth century. There was a hierarchy of rich and poor, but there were also many sub hierarchies within hierarchies. We see a struggle for power among the servants as they fit into a prescribed pecking order. Poole, the Butler, is an important character in Mary Reilly (so too in the film adaptation of the book); in Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde, Poole appears only in one significant scene.

The summary of the story: The Strange Case of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde is a novel about a scientist who literally makes himself into two selves. Mr Hyde is to carry out his amoral desires. We follow the tragedies that ensue. Mary Reilly is a suspenseful novel centering in the young housemaid who lives in the household of Dr Jekyll and becomes involved with both of the doctor's "identities"; she eventually learns the dark secret that the two men are one. It has a subplot about how she was abused as a child by her father whose themes mirror the main plot taken from Stevenson's book.

The structure of the story introduces some main characters that evolve around the double character of Dr Jekyll/Mr Hyde. The narrator is Utterson. He appears as a serious and clever man and the story is seen through his point of view. "Mr. Utterson, the lawyer was a man of rugged countenance, that was never lighted by smile; cold, scanty and embarrassed in discourse; backward in sentiment; lean, long, dusty, dreary, and yet somehow loveable. He had an approved tolerance for others and in any extremity inclined to help rather than to reprove."[3] He is automatically presented as the perfect person, ready to be confronted with Jekyll's problems. The author uses a narrator to explain the mystery of the metamorphosis and to show how various people react when confronted

[3] Karl Miller, 'The Modern Double', in Linehan ed., Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde, pp.124-125.

with such a case. This fact also proves the ambiguity of the character Jekyll/Hyde and the hesitation on which rests the fantastical effect. The reader's questions are asked by Utterson and he embodies the courage, the curiosity, the reader would like to have. Utterson is the narrator but he is not an omniscient narrator: he reacts exactly as the reader would react. Utterson represents the perfect Victorian gentleman.

The main character is the double Dr Jekyll/Mr Hyde. Can we say he is one or two characters? He is the character but also the subject of the story. In the first part he is the subject of investigation: the reader is not aware of what truly happens, he only has Uttersons' point of view. After chapter eight, when Utterson comes into Jekyll's house, the reader discovers more and more about what happened in Jekyll's intimacy. At the end, the letter-confession of Jekyll makes the reader understand the whole story through the eyes of Jekyll. This story is very interesting because of the two points of view: evil is shown through the eyes of sane people and through the eyes of perverted people.

The description of Mr Hyde is the perfect antagonism of Dr Jekyll: "he is not easy to describe. There is something wrong with his appearance; something displeasing, something downright detestable. I never saw a man so disliked and yet I scare know why. He gives a strong feeling of deformity. He's an extraordinary looking man. Hyde is described as a monster, a creature or an insane and abnormal human.

One sentence is very important in order to understand the relationship between Utterson and Hyde. "O my poor old Harry Jekyll, if ever I read Satan's signature upon a face, it is on that of your new friend". It proves that Stevenson chooses to give to Utterson the capacity to have an intuition at the first sight and thus to provoke the events. If Utterson did not act, the story would not have existed in the same manner.

Hyde appears as a punishment towards Jekyll, a condemnation, a burden[4] "the ghost of some old sin, the cancer of some concealed disgrace; punishment coming, pede claudo, years after memory has forgotten and self-love condoned the fault". In fact, Hyde was created through the regrets of Jekyll because of his being enable to accomplish rather bad things and to be dizzy.

As in the majority of Gothic texts, the creation takes parts of the bad side. Automatically it is identified as a monster. Hyde is morally and symbolically the bad and his body reveal this. The description by Utterson shows that Hyde inspires repulsion and fear. He is almost disgusting.

The reader can easily see the monster in Hyde when Utterson tells the story in the beginning: Hyde is like a beast, he is insane, mad. He embodies the bad side of human nature.

One question: are Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde in fact a single character? Until the end of the novel, the two persons seem nothing alike—the well-liked, respectable doctor and the hideous, depraved Hyde are almost opposite in their personalities. Stevenson uses this marked contrast to make his point: every human being contains opposite forces within him or her, an alter ego that hides behind one's polite facade. Correspondingly, to understand fully the significance of either Jekyll or Hyde, we must ultimately consider the two as constituting one single character. Indeed, taken alone, neither is a very interesting personality; it is the nature of their interrelationship that gives the novel its power.

Despite the seeming diametric opposition between Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde, their relationship in fact involves a complicated dynamic. While it is true that Jekyll largely appears as moral and decent, engaging in charity work and enjoying a reputation as a courteous and genial man, he in fact never fully embodies virtue in the way that Hyde embodies evil. Although Jekyll undertakes his experiments with the intent of purifying his good side

[4] Karl Miller, 'The Modern Double', in Linehan ed., Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde, pp.124-125.

from his bad and vice versa, he ends up separating the bad alone, while leaving his former self, his Jekyll-self, as mixed as before. Jekyll succeeds in liberating his darker side, freeing it from the bonds of conscience, yet as Jekyll never liberates himself from this darkness. Jekyll and Hyde are called "polar twins". That expresses the ambiguity of the relationships between the two aspects of the main characters.

The "sense of man's double being" as Stevenson described it is also in Deacon Brodie, a play written eight years previously in collaboration with W.E Henley. The play tells the tale of a councillor who leads a double life. He is a respectable and well renowned citizen of Edinburgh during the day, but by night he dresses in suitable costume and becomes a cunning and reckless burglar. In the play, the protagonist merely dresses differently and takes on a second personality. Stevenson takes this theme of changing identity a step further in The Strange Case of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde. The main character Dr Jekyll invents and then takes a drug which causes him to transform both mentally and physically into another person.

After consuming the drug, Jekyll becomes the character Mr Hyde, and this alter ego is an embodiment of the grotesque in many senses of the word. The transformation of one person into another is no doubt an extraordinary occurrence, but it is not portrayed in a fantastically un-realistic manner. The story is set in an ordinary city setting, not unlike our own world which makes the central event seem more bizarre.

The idea of a person's duality is also I believe a grotesque element. The drug separates all that is bad in Jekyll's personality and this becomes personified in Edward Hyde. Hyde therefore consists of nothing else but the evil in Jekyll's nature.

1.4. The use of stylistic devices in Stevenson's novels.

Robert Louis Stevenson's 1886 novel The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde, a novel which has been seen as participating discursively in nineteenth-century theories of evolution and degeneration but which has also been the focus (or object) of certain psychoanalytic analyses in spite of the novel's resistance to psychoanalytic appropriation.

In more recent history, psychoanalytic critics have read Stevenson's novel as a struggle between the id and the super ego, as being connected to Freud's theories of the "ego as facade" and as a precursor to both Freud's theories on the structural model of personality and repression and to the genre of the "case" study itself, and in this way they have provided insight into various pathologies—including the psychology of addiction, multiple personality disorder and borderline personality disorders. Contemporary readers claim that the novel can be understood as an effort in Victorian society "to define deviance and normality" or that it can be seen as an "explicit evocation of the discourses regarding moral insanity" in nineteenth-century psychology. Others have focused on the Jekyll-Hyde dyad claiming, for example, that Edward Hyde is "the representation of a more primitive or rudimentary aspect of the human psyche"[5] and that Henry Jekyll—who is "inveterately narcissistic"— becomes "monstrous" and "sadistic" when he loses contact with his "moral sense by splitting off into Hyde".

These remarks show that it would be difficult, if not impossible, to approach Stevenson's novel without invoking the performative discourses of either psychoanalysis or forensic psychiatry, even inadvertently, since the interpretive domain of modern literary theory shares the space with psychoanalysis. However, I want to suggest that since many of these

[5] William Veeder, 'Children of the Night: Stevenson and Patriarchy', in Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde after One Hundred Years, ed. William Veeder and Gordon Hirsch (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1988), pp.107-160

readings are diagnostic in nature and seem determined to establish the psychopathology of the Jekyll-Hyde dyad, they appear resistant to a certain engagement with a text that allegorizes what is at stake in reading a novel psychoanalytically, one that resists psychoanalytic appropriation and yet paradoxically draws the reader into an uncanny scene of transference and mutual resistance.

If we recall Felman's claim that the scandal is not simply in the text, that it resides in our relation to the text, in the text's effect on us, its readers, then the proper name of Edward Hyde is synonymous not only with "that of which the text is speaking, but also with that which makes it speak to us". This speaking "to us" takes the form of an address and, brings its subject into being. In Stevenson's text, avoiding interpellation is almost impossible. That this interpellation is discursive and concerned with reading and writing can be heard in Lanyon's narrative when, face-to-face with Hyde, Lanyon tells him to "Compose yourself". It is through such "composition" that we come to recognize that in addressing us, the text compels us to participate in the novel's quasi-epistolary dynamics.

In other words, to countersign this text is to be the subject of an uncanny dialectical interpellation the likes of which are alluded to by Jekyll—who, in his final letter to Utterson remarks, as I mentioned earlier, that he is "radically both" Jekyll and Hyde and "truly two"—and by Utterson, who pairs himself with Mr. Hyde when, driven to catch a glimpse of Hyde after dreaming of a shadowy figure who "had no face," the lawyer turns his stakeout into a game, saying that "'If he be Mr. Hyde, ... I shall be Mr. Seek". Although Utterson's play on "hide-and-seek" draws attention to the fact that the lawyer's desire to solve the mystery of the elusive Mr. Hyde takes the form of a child's game, the strangely paired proper names of Hyde and Seek also give us insight into the fort-da game Stevenson's text plays with the reader by inviting her to enter the uncanny epistème of a narrative which, through the figure of Utterson, promises to solve a

"mystery" that the text presents in the guise of Hyde which serves, paradoxically, to produce the figure of concealment. In this regard the narrator's description of Utterson at nightfall could just as easily be about the reader drawn into the dream-logic of Stevenson's text by the grip of the same "inordinate curiosity" which compels Utterson: "Hitherto, the mystery had touched him on the intellectual side alone; but now his imagination also was engaged, or rather enslaved". The narrator's revision with respect to Utterson's imagination is telling because it also suggests that readers of Stevenson's novel might find themselves "enslaved", like Utterson, being subject to the mystery rather than being in the position to solve it. The reader, like the lawyer, finds herself in "the neatness of transference, in which the analyst finds herself caught up in and reenacting the drama [she] thought [she] was analyzing from the outside". In this case, to reenact the drama of Stevenson's text is to find oneself, like Utterson, being, "implicated in the game, ... being caught in the game, ... being as it were at stake in the game from the outset".[6]

This uncanny realization is what Utterson tries to avoid; which is one reason why, after dreaming all night long of an evil "figure that had no face", he awakens with "a singularly strong, almost an inordinate, curiosity to behold the features of the real Mr. Hyde". The fact that Utterson's curiosity is "almost ... inordinate" suggests the force of his desire to catch a glimpse of Hyde, yet the fact that he now desires "to behold the features of the real Mr. Hyde" also suggests that Utterson, by seeking empirical evidence of evil in an other, attempts to establish a hard division between dreams and reality, between fact and fiction, thereby disavowing knowledge of his participation in the drama. In other words, to catch a glimpse of the "real" Hyde means that Utterson can remember to forget to remember the dark figure of his dreams. This play of forgetting works much in the way that a certain critical analysis seeks, as Gallop suggests, to

[6] http://www.erudit.org/revue/ravon/2007/v/n47/016704ar.html

forget that "interpretation is … the medium through which ... transference is manifested". In this regard, forgetting is also a form of denial that, according to Gallop, works to avoid the terror of a certain recognition: "the critic escapes that terror by importing psychoanalytic "wisdom" into the reading dialectic so as to protect herself from what psychoanalysis is really about, the unconscious, as well as from what literature is really about, the letter".[7]

What is at stake in reading The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde is less about describing the unconscious than it is with engaging with " that which reads." In Stevenson's novel, letters, proper names, handwriting, forgery, correspondence, readers, and signatures are all metonyms for "what was reading—in what was being read."

The novel is concerned with what was reading in what was being read becomes profoundly apparent at the end of Stevenson's text in the form of a narrative written by Jekyll that purports to be a "full statement of the case".[8] What is uncanny about this narrative is how, in the drama of letters, both the reader and Utterson are simultaneously reading Jekyll's narrative. Recall that at the end of the novel—which is an end and not an end—the reader is Utterson, who, the narrator tells us, has "trudged back to his office to read the two narratives in which the mystery was to be explained". Yet, this is the last we hear of either the narrator or the lawyer who, we presume, is engaged in opening the "considerable package sealed in several places" and reading the letters or "narratives" of Hastie Lanyon, who narrates the horror of discovery regarding the transformation of Hyde to Jekyll—or of Jekyll, who writes that in laying down the pen and sealing up his confession, "I bring the life of that unhappy Henry Jekyll to an end". It is curious, firstly, that the writer who has laid down the pen and sealed the letter considers the matter—or the case— closed. Note that although the

[7] http://www.erudit.org/revue/ravon/2007/v/n47/016704ar.html
[8] Pater, Walter. "Style." Appreciations [1889]. London: Macmillan, 1911.169 p.

last word of the narrative is the word “end,” Jekyll has also written that “what is to follow concerns another than myself”. It becomes even more curious when we realize that “what is to follow” is a profoundly uncanny moment in that we realize that Utterson and the reader are simultaneously reading Jekyll’s narrative: each holds that text in his or her hands, each reads the word “end” and each considers “what is to follow.” If what is to follow concerns another, who is it? Utterson? The reader? Both? At the same time? It is as if the has reader had passed through the cheval-glass of Stevenson’s text, this passage leading her—leading me—as Jekyll says, “to reflect more seriously than ever before on the issues and possibilities of my double existence”.

With respect to Stevenson’s novel, the notion that such boundaries are under erasure, gives us the sense that the relationship between a reader and a text is uncannily similar to that between a dreamer and a dream, since dreams tell us about displacement and desire.

In this novel Stevenson used such specific styles of sound instrumenting as:

Alliteration (lean, long; dusty, dreary);

Assonance;

To emphasize the sentence author used such graphical means:

capitalization (DEAR UTTERSON, PRIVATE, ALONE);

hyphenation (by – the – by, Tut – tut!);

italics (to be destroyed unread);

These graphical means – all aimed at revealing and emphasizing the author’s view point.

In particular, Stevenson used archaic (apothecary, burthen) and literary words. These words contribute to the novel the tone of solemnity, sophistication, seriousness.

Many of stylistic devices are presented in the novel :

Metaphor (heavy heart, black secret, sade of change a. o.);

Personification (Sinister block of buildings thrust forward its gable out of the street. Mr Enfield's tale went by before his mind… Time ran on…your tale has gone home);

Antonomasia ("If he'll be Mr Hyde", he had thought, "I shall be Mr Seek".);

Epithets (embarrassed in discourse man, …there is something wrong with his appearance; something displeasing, something downright detestable…He was small, and very plenty dressed…);

Idioms (he is in deep waters, a storm of blows u. o.)

Conclusion

The purpose of course paper was a research of stylistic peculiarities of R. L. Stevenson's individual style.

Having investigated Stevenson's literary works and his biography I came to conclusion:

This novel represents a concept in Western culture, that of the inner conflict of humanity's sense of good and evil. It has also been noted as "one of the best guidebooks of the Victorian era because of its piercing description of the fundamental dichotomy of the 19th century outward respectability and inward lust" as it had a tendency for social hypocrisy;

There are many themes in The Strange Case of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde. It is a parable about the deeper levels of human nature. The central theme revolves around the dual nature of man. Dr. Jekyll apparently lives the moral life and has a mask that people want to show to others, and Mr Hyde lives out a side of ourselves we like to deny and don't want others to see. The novel places much emphasis on the use of a drug and perhaps alcohol.

There is also a strong emphasis on cruelty in the novel;

Chapter II. Stevenson's Background for Writing The Master of Ballantrae

2.1. Stevenson's Background for Writing The Master of Ballantrae

The events narrated in The Master of Ballantrae are historically contextualized. Mackellar's narration starts in the year 1745, when the Jacobite Young Pretender, Bonnie Prince Charlie, lands on British soil in order to lead an army composed mostly of Scottish Jacobites with the aim to re-establish the Stewart's dynasty on the throne of the United Kingdom.

Several critics evidence the importance of The Master of Ballantrae as a historical novel with its social and political implications. For example, Joseph J. Egan demonstrates how the rivalry which opposes Henry Durie to his older brother James might be interpreted as a metaphor of the duality between the Jacobite and Whig forces which divided the Scotland of the eighteenth century.

Other critics, such as Harold Orel, argue that even though the story of the Durrisdeer family is narrated within a historical frame, Stevenson did not provide the reader with any specific details concerning the sociological and political situation of 18th century Scotland, especially for what relates to the Scottish Highlanders: "Even in the „beginning., however, Stevenson had betrayed little interest in sketching a community. The Scots who lived near the Durrisdeer estate were sketched lightly. […] Nor did Stevenson consider the issues that had led to the Rising, or the issues that precipitated the fatal split within the family". According to this view, Stevenson cannot be compared to the classic historical novelists who painstakingly analyzed primary sources in order to produce a novel whose historicity relied on "the claims of realistic fiction". Therefore, the Scottish author launched a new trend in the tradition of historical fiction, contributing, as Orel claims, to

the formation of "The New Historical Novel"[9]. This new literary form might be defined as a subgenre of the classic historical novel, with the fundamental difference that even though its authors committed themselves to serious historical research, they still allowed themselves some imaginative liberties in framing their stories within a historical context. Stevenson, who figures among these authors, dismissed the pretentions of realist fiction to reflect reality as truthfully as possible by listing innumerable historical facts, which means that according to his view, "it was far better to invent, to exploit an imaginative vision, than to record what might be seen before him in the real world".[10]

However, in contrast to the argument which considers Stevenson as a writer who is not seriously concerned with the importance of the historical detail and the reliability of his sources for the composition of his Scottish novels (which also include The Master of Ballantrae), it is important to point out how the Scottish author was a great connoisseur of the culture and social organization of the Scottish Highlanders and Scottish history in general. His fervent interest in the geography and history of the Scottish Highlands vastly influenced his literary production, and The Master of Ballantrae might be regarded as one of the fruits of this interest. Louis Stott is one of the critics that argue that Stevenson's direct experience of the landscape of the Scottish Highlands provided him with useful material for the genesis of The Master of Ballantrae. It is known, for instance, that Stevenson loved spending his holidays in the Highlands of Scotland and his stay at an inn in Blair Atholl in 1880, was clearly a stimulating experience, since he composed a poem called Athole Brose, which he later defined as one of the sources of inspiration for some of his most popular Scottish works. As Stott points out: "Elsewhere he refers to the Athole papers which

[9] Orel, Harold. The Historical Novel from Scott to Sabatini: Changing Attitudes toward a Literary Genre, 1814-1920. London: Macmillan, 1995. p.43.

[10] Orel, Harold. The Historical Novel from Scott to Sabatini: Changing Attitudes toward a Literary Genre, 1814-1920. London: Macmillan, 1995. p.41.

provided him with background material for Kidnapped and The Master of Ballantrae".[11] What is more, one year later, Stevenson rented a cottage known as Kinnaird Cottage in the district of Pitlochry, where he wrote some of his masterpieces and conceived of the idea for The Master of Ballantare: "While he was at the cottage, Stevenson wrote two of his most highly regarded short stories, Thrawn Janet, his first Scottish story, and The Merry Men, as well as other less successful pieces. He also relates that the genesis of The Master of Ballantrae can be attributed to this district".[12] In relation to this, in examining Thrawn Janet, Fred B. Warner points out that it was "[…] the first story in which Stevenson used the Scottish dialect, and he was apprehensive that because of this no publisher would take it".[13] Thus Stevenson employed the Scottish dialect for one of his works during a period which saw him seriously involved in an investigation of all cultural and social aspects of Scotland, language included. Moreover, Menikoff shows that in the fall of 1880, Stevenson wrote a letter to his father telling him of his project of writing a Scottish history from 1715 to the end of the 18th century which would also include an exhaustive examination of the situation of the Scottish Highlands. For this purpose, Stevenson also attempted to teach himself Scottish Gaelic. Furthermore, Stevenson's knowledge of Scottish history and culture also extended to the social organization of the Scottish Highlanders. David B. Morris claims that the writer was particularly attracted to the history behind the Highland clan of the Macgregors which played such an important role in the Jacobite rising of 1715.[14]

Barry Menikoff argues that in retrieving historical sources for the writing of his Scottish novels, in particular Kidnapped, Stevenson analyzed and selected the gathered material with a "scholarly eye", since: He was

[11] Stott, Louis. Robert Louis Stevenson and the Highlands and Islands of Scotland. Stirling: Darach Publications, 1992. p.85.
[12] Stott, Louis. Robert Louis Stevenson and the Highlands and Islands of Scotland. Stirling: Darach Publications, 1992. p.91.
[13] Warner, Fred B. Jr. "Stevenson's first Scottish Story." Nineteenth-Century Fiction 24.3 (1969): 335-344.
[14] Menikoff, Barry. Narrating Scotland: The Imagination of Robert Louis Stevenson. Columbia: UP of South Carolina, 2005.

critical, even skeptical, and did not take what he read on faith. Just where, or how, he developed this habit is not easy to say. It may have been a vestige of the Scottish philosophical tradition that alternately emphasized the limits of our knowledge (David Hume) and the necessity of our knowing (Thomas Reid, Dugald Stewart) […].Menikoff also points out that when Stevenson lived in the United States during the 1880's, "…he wrote to Charles Scribner, his American publisher, from Saranac Lake in upstate New York, asking Scribner to send him books for his work-in-progress, The Master of Ballantrae". In fact, Menikoff reports an extract from a letter by Stevenson to Scribner which dates 15 December 1887, where the writer asks his publisher to send him books about the American colonial life in 1760 and The Memoirs of the Chevalier Johnstone, a Jacobite army officer, who after the battle of Culloden, escaped to France where he enrolled in the French troops for the conquest of Canada. In retrieving this material, Stevenson proved to be a meticulous writer, confirming Menikoff's interpretation that he had a "scholar's attitude toward history", since all the material congenial to the genealogy of the Master of Ballantrae that was collected by him had to be historically reliable and accurate: "for Stevenson, originals are key to his project. If the novel is historical, then every detail of its representation must be accurate. Therefore he requires first-person accounts by the people who were there".[15]

From this evidence, it emerges that contrary to a summary analysis of Stevenson's Scottish novels, the writer relied on a solid historical preparation and knowledge of Scottish history for the writing of The Master of Ballantrae. Stevenson's background might have shaped his portrayal of the Durie brothers, which according to Egan's interpretation mentioned above, might reflect the political divisions of Scotland during and after the Jacobite rising of 1745. However, Egan also claims that despite the differences which distinguish one brother from the other, both

[15] Menikoff, Barry. Narrating Scotland: The Imagination of Robert Louis Stevenson. Columbia: UP of South Carolina, 2005.

of them share the same evil and good characteristics in the same way as 18th century Scotland's political forces were dependent on one another: The interdependence of the brothers of Durrisdeer suggests the idea that the Whig and the Jacobite required each other's best qualities to enable the finest things in Scottish life to survive. […] and Stevenson dramatizes this basic ambivalence in Scots history by making it all but impossible to separate good from evil in the strange relationship of the Duries.

Given this, it is important to closely examine the moral problematic of the novel, which is summarized by Mackellar's attempts to re-conduct the brothers. psychology and behavior to a fixed Presbyterian dichotomy between good and evil. For an interpretation of The Master of Ballantrae and its moral implications, it is fundamental to ask why and how Mackellar's attempts miserably failed.

2.1. The Moral Problematic in The Master of Ballantrae

If Stevenson had adopted the narrative technique of the third person narrator for The Master of Ballantrae, the novel would probably have been less effective in demonstrating the fragility of any dogmatic and pre-conceived moral structure. This is because, throughout the book, the reader experiences Mackellar's development as a narrator. From an ultra prejudicial and partisan teller, to a disillusioned narrator, Mackellar faces numerous moral uncertainties that undermine his dogmatic views. Those critics that claim that Robert Louis Stevenson is one of the precursors of the literary genres that characterized nineteenth and twentieth century literature, such as Modernism and Postmodernism, base their argument on solid evidence which can be mostly drawn from The Master of Ballantrae. For instance, Sandison claims that the majority of Stevenson's works are characterized by a hybridity of forms which aims at subverting any moral, social and aesthetic certainty, in a way which can be defined as Modern. In The Master of Ballantrae, this hybridity of forms is represented by Burke's narrative interpolations, which contradict Mackellar's account, and by the Master's words to the steward which drastically challenge the latter's moral standards. In this way, even though Stevenson's explicit authorial voice is absent in the novel, his position concerning morality can still be grasped. For an examination of Mackellar's unreliability, it is crucial to start by analyzing the way he delineates the moral dichotomy which contrasts Henry to James.

First of all, from the outset of the novel, Mackellar opposes the Master of Ballantrae to his brother Henry by drafting a short description of their qualities and flaws: The Master of Ballantrae, James in baptism, took from his father the love of serious reading; some of his tact, perhaps, as well, but that which was only policy in the father became black

dissimulation in the son. The face of his behavior was merely popular and wild: he sat late at wine, later at the cards; had the name in the country of an „unco man for lasses.; and was ever in front of broils.

From these lines it is evident that the steward does not hesitate in expressing a judgment on James. On the other hand, Henry is initially depicted as "an honest, solid sort of lad, like many of his neighbours". As Simon argues, Mackellar initially sets the story "as a tale of good versus evil".[16] It seems that from the beginning, Mackellar's preoccupation is to distinguish the enemy of the household and to demonstrate how Henry had to endure his brother's persecutions.

This can clearly be seen in those chapters of the book where Mackellar repeatedly stresses the Master's evil nature by recurring to Christian symbolism and allusions that reinforce his Presbyterian moral opposites. For instance, after the Master returns to the estate in order to obtain the inheritance of the Durrisdeer household and title, the steward describes him as a "diabolical contrivance: so perfidious, so simple, so impossible to combat" and as an "insidious devil". Mackellar continues to associate the Master to a demonic figure even later on in the story, where James is compared to the biblical serpent which tries to approach and contaminate Mr. Henry's son Alexander. On the other hand, Henry is depicted as the victim of James. abuses in a way that his persecution is comparable to a martyr's endurances. It is therefore obvious that Mackellar takes Henry's side in a rivalry which is mostly interpreted by him in Christian terms. As Sandison claims, not only does Mackellar, as he readily admits, quickly become a partisan in the conflicts which are destroying the House of Durrisdeer, but his very perception must be suspect since, as a deeply committed Presbyterian, his particular theology will present him with a dualistic universe where salvation will depend upon his recognizing

[16] Simon, Marilyn. "Doubled Brothers, Divided Self: Duality and Destruction in The Master of Ballantrae." Journal of Stevenson Studies 4 (2007): 129-149.

the speciousness of surface appearances and penetrating to the truly significant moral substance that lies beneath.[17]

Mackellar's continuous referring to Christian imagery and elements as parameters of judgment is also confirmed by his reading of the Bible during the sea voyage to the province of New York. He affirms that the Bible constitutes his entire library, thus showing the limitedness of his critical thought.

What is more, when Mr. Henry starts assuming some of the traits that characterize his brother's personality, Mackellar is ready to reproach him because of his un-Christian attitudes, reminding his master that forgiveness is one of the most important Christian virtues (123).

Mackellar's unreliability is not only summarized by his dogmatic Christian categorization of Henry and James; it also emerges from his account of the duel between the two brothers, where the steward, in contrast to his usual self-confidence as a narrator, is unable to narrate the event in a clear and objective way. His description of the fight mostly consists of "a series of isotopic references to visual limitation („to see clearly., „it seems., „I cannot say I followed it., „my untrained eye., „it appears.)" (Tomaiuolo 95), which prove that the steward is not sure of the dynamics of the duel. His uncertainty cannot be regarded as a proof of his objectivity, since there is a relevant exception to the series of visual limitations that characterize Mackellar's account. This exception is constituted by the use of the adverb "certainly" in his description of the action that caused the Master's death: "Certainly Mr. Henry only saved himself by leaping on one side; as certainly the Master, lungeing in the air, stumbled on his knee, and before he could move, the sword was through his body" (96). Here, in contrast to the vagueness of the previous lines, Mackellar abruptly introduces an adverb which denotes his absolute certainty in reporting James. death. Obviously, a careful reader might

[17] Sandison, Alan. Robert Louis Stevenson and the Appearance of Modernism: A Future Feeling. London: Macmillan, 1986.

notice this contrast and question the steward's objectivity. Once again, it is plain how he takes Mr. Henry's side in an attempt to justify his murder of James. Mackellar's description of the Master's death implies that it was inevitable and accidental at the same time, since while Henry was trying to save his life, James stumbled on his knee and was fortuitously penetrated by his brother's sword. As Douglas Gifford argues, Mackellar's account of the duel is both unreliable and prejudicial to James: "Would not any defence lawyer for James demolish the credibility of this account in very little time, on the basis that it argued first for essential limitations of subjectivity, and then proceeded to assert the validity of these subjective (and prejudiced) impressions?" (80).

Another concrete piece of evidence which proves Mackellar's prejudices and unreliability is represented by the steward's dismissal of the Chevalier Burke's account of the Master's wanderings. As mentioned above, Burke's telling represents the first narrative interpolation of The Master of Ballantrae that seriously challenges Mackellar's moral duality. From Burke's perspective, it emerges that the Master is a character with exceptional charisma and abilities: "This was the Master of Ballantrae, my Lord Durrisdeer's son, a young nobleman of the rarest gallantry and parts, and equally designed by nature to adorn a Court and to reap laurels in the field". Moreover, James is also endowed with the moral qualities of moderation and temperance as is demonstrated by his lack of involvement in the collective rape which took place on the ship on which Burke and James were, whereas, according to Mackellar, the Master has a sexual weakness for women. In addition, the Master is also capable of expressing affection, as he confesses to Burke. It is not surprising then that Mackellar interrupts Burke's narration because, according to his words, "The simplicity of Mr. Burke's character leads him at this point to praise the Master exceedingly; to an eye more wordly-wise, it would seem it was the Chevalier alone that was to be commended". In reality, Burke's narration

gives a multifaceted portrayal of the Master which, contrary to Mackellar's unilateralism, also evidences James. qualities. As Saverio Tomaiuolo argues: "For instance, as far as Chevalier Burke's memoirs are concerned […], Mackellar interrupts his „adventurous. narration--in which James figures as a hero-- to point to its textual incongruities […]". Burke's interpolation can thus be regarded as one of Stevenson's literary devices employed in order to create instability to the narrative course of the events.

However, even though the Chevalier's interpolation contradicts Mackellar's moral binaries, it does not represent the only challenge to the steward's dogmatic views. Mackellar's moral universe is first shaken by Henry's change after the duel, and then subverted by the steward's direct confrontation with James. Both challenges need to be carefully examined.

Douglas Gifford argues that after the duel between the two brothers, Henry, who was previously portrayed as morally superior to James, falls into degeneration, while James rises in worth, therefore eliciting the reader's sympathies. Gifford's claim can be partially verified by noticing the changes in attitude and behavior which characterize Henry after the fight with the Master. The younger brother comes to embrace some of James' psychological features. Henry begins building up a grudge towards the Master of Ballantrae and laments the fact that the latter survived the fight; it seems that from now on, sincere hatred towards the other brother is a feeling that does not only distinguish James personality, but also affects Henry's character. Nonetheless, Henry's regret at not having killed his brother might also be interpreted as grief at not having suppressed that part of his psyche that links him to James. For instance, immediately after the duel, Henry is remorseful for James. presumed death and asks his father to forgive him, since he affirms that despite their differences, he always loved his brother. Edwin M. Eigner argues that the killing of James represents even more than the murder of a brother. Henry is trying to eliminate his interior critic as well as the critic's physical manifestation. […] Such a

rejection of self is as bound to fail in The Master of Ballantrae as it did in the Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and M. Hyde. […] His hatred for James continues, but paradoxically he begins now to resemble his brother. (184-185) Moreover, Henry also displays some behavioral instabilities (exceeding cheerfulness and excitement) that lead Mackellar to question the stability of his reason. Henry's first signs of irrationality might be compared to James. scorn of reason in the few situations in which the Master tosses a coin to decide his actions. Rationality is not anymore a distinctive feature that separates the honest Henry from the wild James. This can also be evinced by the former's unjustified mistreatment of his servants, and subsequently, by his unexpected outburst of rage towards James-"I wish he was in hell!"- in a conversation with the lawyer of the family, Mr. Carlyle.

What is more, the complex issue of rationality is closely linked to a linguistic dichotomy which opposes the use of English to the use of Scots. According to this interpretation, the former linguistic code designates rationality and stiffness, while the latter is very close to irrationality and a melancholy nostalgia. For instance, the first time James returns to the estate, Mackellar informs the reader that he spoke with an English accent, thus denoting formality and "a quick, alert, black look, as of one who was a fighter, and accustomed to command". Later on, while having dinner with the rest of the family, the Master sets aside "his cutting English accent, and spoke with the kindly Scots tongue, that set a value on affectionate words". The use of Scots is thus associated with James. emotional side. Similarly, Henry switches from English to Scots while desperately lamenting the death of his brother after the duel: "I loved him in the beginning; I could have died for him; […] And we used to be bairns together!". In addition, he also employs it to remember the happy days, when he was "a lad" and enjoyed fishing in the surroundings of Eagels. In both circumstances, the use of Scots is associated with a romantic and probably better past, and

both in James and Henry with their emotional and irrational side. As Simon points out, Stevenson employed the Scottish tongue in other of his works (e.g. Thrawn Janet), for exactly the same purpose. Henry's manifestation of his irrationality through the use of Scots reaches its peak when, having received the news of the Master's definite death, he refuses to believe James is dead, hence exhibiting total senselessness. The use of Scots is definitely another of the elements shared by both brothers.

Although Mackellar is perfectly aware of Henry's changes after the duel and his similarities with James, he persists in being loyal to his master. He explicitly labels James as the enemy of the Durrisdeer estate during his second stay, thereby showing determination not to give up his rigid moral duality. However, during the journey with James, Mackellar cannot avoid a direct confrontation with him which will definitely undermine his dogmatic views. In fact, it is reasonable to argue that the last three chapters of the book represent the ultimate turning point of the story, where the reader might start to feel a sincere sympathy for James, even though the Master still aims at the destruction of his younger brother[18] (Eigner 187). The reason is that James shows an outstanding ability in demonstrating how human nature is morally ambiguous and impossible to reduce to absolute categories that distinguish what is exactly good from what is exactly evil. Stevenson further "complicates" the moral problematic of the story, and it is significant that the reader's empathetic feeling towards James is elicited through Mackellar's narration, the steward who considered him as the immoral brother. For these reasons, it is important to consider the ultimate subversive challenge to Mackellar's moral universe.

To begin with, James first questions the steward's Christian morality by pointing out the incongruities that an individual who holds strict moral standards might encounter: " „Ah! Mackellar., said he, „not every man is so great a coward as he thinks he is--nor yet so good a Christian. Faced with

[18] Eigner, Edwin M. Robert Louis Stevenson and Romantic Tradition. Princeton: UP of Princeton, 1966

these words, Mackellar admits the truthfulness of the Master's statement (159), and subsequently pays attention to the story he tells him about the Count and the Baron, which is a clear moral allegory on the concepts of revenge and sin. James questions the definition of murder and inquires if the baron's death can be regarded as an assassination. The story also shows the Master's deep understanding of human nature; the tale implies that if a man desires to cause his enemies. destruction he must be able to exploit their "vanity and egotism".[19] Maybe James. remark to Mackellar while narrating it, "you know enough of human nature, my excellent Mackellar" (162), might be interpreted as an ironic provocation to the steward's blindness or forced ignorance of the complexity of human spirit. This provocation doubtless awakens the steward's repressed darkest side. As Simon argues, the story connects Mackellar to "his own dark pit", since it is basically a narration concerning death and revenge and "like the baron, Mackellar begins to see that his encounter with death provides a solution for how to kill his enemy". The steward fantasizes about the death of the Master of Ballantrae, first by hoping for the ship to sink, and then by directly attempting to murder him, thus rejecting his Christian morality which professes forgiveness and also demonstrating how, as with the brothers, his psyche is characterized by both good and evil features. The Master's challenge has been effective in the sense that it demonstrates both the complexity of morality and the steward's fragility; his moral dichotomy can be applied neither to the brothers nor to Mackellar himself.

Obviously, Mackellar fails to murder James and he is struck by shame and regret. However, he cannot ignore his moral internal inconsistency that gave him the concrete evidence that he is also capable of committing sin. Furthermore, it is curious how in this phase of the narration, Mackellar seems to embrace Mr. Henry's sentiments for James. At the beginning of the chapter, Mackellar tells the Master: " „I do not

[19] Sandison, Alan. Robert Louis Stevenson and the Appearance of Modernism: A Future Feeling. London: Macmillan, 1986. p.296.

think you could be so bad a man., said I, „if you had not all the machinery to be a good one.“ hence recognizing his positive features; later on, he tries to kill James, and after his failure, he promises the Master not to harm him anymore. From this, it seems that like Henry, Mackellar also nourishes a love-hate feeling for James; he would like to suppress him, but at the same time cannot avoid being attracted to him.

In the earlier stage of the narration, the steward noticed the Master's physically attractive features. His splendor reminded him of Milton's Satan in Paradise Lost. In addition, now he also begins to sense a deeper attraction to James. personality. The steward reports that during the last tract of the trip, James looks after him while he is sick, and that he accepts his "remedies with security". Mackellar and James conclude their journey with perfect serenity, despite the former's fear and abhorrence of the Master at the beginning of it. In a short time, Mackellar rapidly passes from scorn of James to loyalty to him. His unstable emotions regarding the Master are another manifestation of the steward's emerging divided self. It is conceivable that once faced with the complexity of the Master's nature, both Mackellar and Henry find it difficult to categorize it according to absolutist views of good and evil, with the result that their feelings for James express a mixed combination of admiration, love and hatred. In this respect, it is suggestive how James remarks to Mackellar that he might have lived a thousand years and never understood his nature.

Furthermore, several critics have also interpreted the steward's confrontation with the Master as a second duel, where swords are metaphorically replaced with words. This confrontation might be termed as a "literary duel". Above it was evidenced how Mackellar sees the Bible not simply as a theological text, but as a moral guide that pervades every aspect of his life. On the Nonesush ship, James peruses Richardson's Clarissa and reads some of its passages aloud; Mackellar replies by reciting some passages of the Bible. The whole confrontation implies that contrary to the

steward, James does not reduce his morality to the following of a series of maxims expounded in a holy book. The Master considers the Bible as a literary work like Clarissa. No book can pretend to attend the function of being an absolute moral guide. As Mackellar observes, James takes the Bible from his hands, and begins flipping through it, but it was singular how little he applied his reading to himself; it passed high above his head like summer thunder; Lovelace and Clarissa, the tales of David's generosity, the psalms of his penitence, the solemn questions of the Book of Job, the touching poetry of Isaiah-- they were to him a source of entertainment only, like the scraping of a fiddle in a change-house.

Nonetheless, the Master does not despise the Bible, since Mackellar reports that "he tasted the merits of the work like the connoisseur he was". James has simply a sharper critical eye than the steward, and maybe the fact that contrary to the latter, his whole library is not composed of a single volume, might justify his variegated views about morality.

The literary duel between the Master and Mackellar also implies more subtle connotations like the contrast between the written and the oral word and the implications of this. According to this interpretation, the early chapters of the book can be seen as a report by a meticulous narrator who pretends to be totally objective. It is as if Mackellar has elevated himself to the status of a historian whose written text cannot be questioned. He believes that the reader of the novel will peruse his narration as a historical document.[20] The written word, summarized by the steward's account, is therefore contrasted to the unreliability and looseness of the spoken word. This is because the textual idiom lacks a direct audience and it is less context-bound than the spoken word which can be subverted at any moment during a communicational interchange. Hence, Mackellar avoids any immediate critics by expressing his views through the use of the

[20] Fielding, Penny. Writing and Orality: Nationality, Culture, and Nineteenth-Century Scottish Fiction. Oxford: UP of Oxford, 1996.

written word. This immunity from any different perspective cannot be guaranteed by the spoken word. This is doubtless an advantage the steward avails of in order to preserve his moral views from any dissent voices. On the other hand, the Master is a great performer[21] He recites poetry, his eloquence enables him to cleverly discharge himself from the accusations of being a spy and he also shows a particular elegance and charm in singing a ballad. James plays with words, he disrupts their traditional codified meaning and sees human language in general as deceiving. As Adrian Poole observes, the master's abilities as a performer intrigue Mackellar to the point that the steward's contradictory feelings to James are further intensified: "and it is the art and grace of his presence that Mackellar so envies, readily hates, reluctantly admires and perhaps secretly loves".[22]

Moreover, always on the Nonesuch, James further undermines Mackellar's exceeding trust in codified words, also exemplified by his dogmatic reading of the Bible, by exclaiming " „O! there are double words for everything: the word that swells, the word that belittles; you cannot fight me with a word! […] It is your pretention to be un home de parole; „tis mine not to accept defeat. Call it vanity, call it virtue, call it greatness of soul-- what signifies the expression? But recognize in each of us a common strain: that we both live for an idea. This means that morality like language is relative, and cannot be interpreted in an absolutist and unilateral way. Even the written word can be subverted, as the text of the Bible in itself does not guarantee a unanimous morality, but is subject to different readings. That is maybe what James wants to demonstrate when he puts it on the same level as an ordinary literary work.

From now on, it will be evident how Mackellar starts dismissing not only the spoken word, but also the written one. In the chapters that follow, his account will cease to pretend to grasp the ultimate truth of the events, and this is due to a plurality of views and general disorientation that

[21] Poole, Adrian. Introduction. The Master of Ballantrae. By Robert Louis Stevenson. London: Penguin, 1996
[22] Poole, Adrian. Introduction. The Master of Ballantrae. By Robert Louis Stevenson. London: Penguin, 1996. vii-xxvi.

characterize his journey into the wilderness. As Fielding observes: In the wilderness, all the characters are edgy and suspicious of each other. The proliferation of both oral and written accounts accelerates as the travelers find it increasingly difficult to make sense of their experiences. Any communication, oral or written, is either frustrated or ambiguous, and distinctions between speech and writing are subsumed in the general breakdown of language itself. James loses his powers of speech and Mackellar loses his faith in writing. It is curious then, that in the last two chapters of the book any dogmatic views about morality gradually dissolve, to the same extent as any epistemological certainties that language was supposed to provide seem to vanish. The high sense of suspiciousness of which Fielding writes about characterizes Mackellar and Henry's journey with Sir William Johnson, who is interestingly a historical figure; according to the steward's words: "We proceeded by day and encamped by night in the military style; sentinels were set and changed; everyman had his named duty; and Sir William was the spring of all". This feeling of precariousness, of imminent danger, is further intensified by Henry's anxiety of receiving news from his brother. All these elements color the whole situation with a surrealist tint, since there is a lack of reliability and trustworthiness that undermine the truthfulness of any point of view, Mackellar's included.

Importantly, Mackellar incorporates in his narration three different sources constituted by John Mountain's account, two conversations with the Master's follower Secundra Dass and several conversations with Mountain himself, all of them "not very consistent in all points". This plurality of views architected by Stevenson for the ending of the novel, reinforces the relativity of language in guaranteeing a fixed sense of morality or truth. By including additional sources to his narration, Mackellar embraces a relativist view of language bound by context and interpretation.

Before concluding a discussion about the moral problematic in the Master of Ballantrae, it would be better to briefly summarize in a few points how James finally disrupts Mackellar's dogmatic moral duality. First of all, he shows him to be a profound connoisseur of human nature through the telling of a tale, which proves to be an interesting parable on the concepts of sin and revenge. Second, he elicits in Mackellar an ambiguous feeling of admiration mixed with hatred, directed towards James himself, and comparable to Henry's contradictory feelings; this reveals the divided self of the steward, manifesting the impossibility of applying any absolutist conception of morality to human behavior and attitudes. Third, James inflicts the definite blow to Mackellar's dogmatism by demonstrating that morality, like language, can be relative and subjected to several circumstances. These are all factors that doubtless contribute to the elevation of James Durie.

Paradoxically, the Master of Ballantrae turns out to be the hero of the novel. Whether James Durie is an edifying example or not is irrelevant; what really matters is that Stevenson was able to examine so successfully the complex nature of morality through one of the most subversive characters in the history of Scottish literature. In a letter written in Saranac Lake on the 24th of December 1887, and addressed to Sidney Colvin, Stevenson expounds his work in progress, The Master of Ballantrae, a tale on "human tragedy".[23] What it is interesting to single out from the letter, is the author's considerations regarding the main characters of the story: "Clementina [subsequently Miss Alison], Henry and Mackellar […] are really very fine fellows; the Master is all I know of the devil; I have known hints of him, in the world, but always cowards; he is as bold as a lion, but with the same deadly, causeless duplicity I have watched with so much surprise in my two cowards". There is no doubt that Mackellar, Henry and

[23] Stevenson, Robert Louis. The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde and Other Tales. Oxford: UP of Oxford, 2008.

Miss Alison are intended as good fellows; as is claimed above, the only problem with Mr. Henry is that his evil side takes over his entire self. Mackellar is a prejudicial narrator, but harmless despite his ludicrous attempt to murder James. What is relevant here, however, is Stevenson's recognition of both the devilry and boldness of James Durie which implies that he is not the classical shallow villain to be found in a fairy tale. Even if Stevenson's character is interpreted as a negative figure, a careful critical examination of his personality is needed in order to analyze his "causeless duplicity", which consists of the Master's ability to reinvent himself according to the situation and to express either his positive or evil emotions. By stressing his devilish persona, Stevenson also wants to point out that a critique of James. evil side can be extended to an examination of evil in general, and to the issue why evil can be attractive and charming in those circumstances in which it is intermingled with malice and cunning.

The last chapter of the novel, titled "The Journey into the Wilderness", represents the resolution of the story in which Mackellar witnesses the ultimate moral and physical degeneration of his master and plainly admits that he "melted" towards his presumed enemy. In addition, Stevenson, through Mackellar's pen, creates an analogy between Henry's definite moral decay and the description of the wild landscape in which the events of the last chapter take place; the reader comes to know that "the weather was extremely harsh, the days were in the beginning open, but the nights frosty from the first. A painful keen wind blew most of the time. […] And a dreadful solitude surrounded our steps". Beside this, the steward also observes how Henry abandoned himself to a pathological behavior, so suspicious and paranoid, almost schizophrenic. The depiction of the wilderness further dramatizes the situation, so that Mackellar confesses that "I could never depict the blackness of my soul upon this journey". In relation to the portrayal of the wilderness, Simon argues that it might be

interpreted as “a descent into the unconscious, and, for Henry in particular, as an immersion into his
heart of darkness”. According to Brian Gibson, who remarks Henry’s transformation in the wilderness as “eerily inhuman”, the description of the landscape in The Master of Ballantrae also expresses the moral ambiguity which the novel transmits.

Furthermore, Henry also tries to emulate his brother by singing the old Scottish ballad Twa Corbies, but as Mackellar observes, James has always had a finer voice than his brother, and has always enjoyed “all the graces of the family”, once more recognizing James. abilities and confirming the interpretation that sees him as a great performer. Henry’s singing is the melodramatic expression of his desperation: “His tears continued to flow, and the man to sit there, three parts naked, in the cold air of the chamber”. It is significant that while witnessing Henry’s anguish, Mackellar recalls the times when his master was a balanced, wise and patient fellow: “and calling to remembrance his old wisdom, constancy, and patience, I was overborne with a pity almost approaching the passionate, not for my master alone, but for the sons of man”. These lines best summarize Stevenson’s position on the moral problematic. Never, throughout the whole novel, has the “silent” authorial voice been as strong as in these few words. Mackellar feels pity for the sons of man because he realizes that human nature is ambiguous, and that any dogmatic categorization is inapplicable to the human kind. Maybe his pity is justifiable because he would like to single out of the mass those men endowed with only a good nature, and to oppose them to those who personify evil. This is what he attempted to do with Henry, but faced with reality, he recognizes that even the man who appears to be the most honest and righteous conceals a darker side that cannot always be repressed. Stevenson accomplishes the purpose of demonstrating the duality of the human psyche; he creates a narrator who reaches his full development at

the end of the novel, since he proves to be as ambiguous as the Durie brothers, and by feeling pity for the sons of man accepts his own failure as a dogmatic moralist.

2.3. The Moral Problematic as a Recurring Theme in Stevenson's Literary Production: Kidnapped

The Master of Ballantrae is not the only novel by Stevenson where the moral problematic represents one of the most important themes. Morality is a significant issue to be found also in other works by the Scottish author, such as Kidnapped. This novel was published in 1886 after Stevenson committed himself to an intense research on the culture and society of the Scottish Highlanders: "Kidnapped and David Balfour are two parts of an epic novel, impelled by a studied reading of the past and an inventive manipulation of narrative art"[24].

Kidnapped and The Master of Ballantrae are not only the product of a serious historical research, but they can also be compared because of particular themes that recur in both novels. As Sandison evidences, in both works one brother antagonizes the other for the love of a woman and for an inheritance; therefore, it seems that the theme of brotherly rivalry was introduced in Kidnapped as "a practice piece for Stevenson's major completed romance, The Master of Ballantrae". Besides a divided household, politics occupy another central place in both novels. In Kidnapped, the two main characters differ from one another because of their political ideas. David Balfour, the narrator of the story, is a Whig loyal to the Hanoverian crown, while Alan Stewart is a staunch Jacobite who boasts of his king's name.

[24] Menikoff, Barry. Narrating Scotland: The Imagination of Robert Louis Stevenson. Columbia: UP of South Carolina, 2005

The similarities and differences between the two works do not only concern their historical and social background, but they also involve the moral problematic. In Kidnapped, the narrator of the story, the seventeen-year-old boy David Balfour, experiences a life adventure throughout the Scottish Highlands that contributes to his individual growth. In this sense, the novel can also be considered as a Bildungsroman. David's moral standards can be compared, to an extent, to Mackellar's rigid dualism, with the relevant exception that contrary to the steward, David is young and inexperienced. At the beginning of the narration, David is proud of his Whig sympathies and holds moral standards that might be defined as purely Christian. This can be seen when he regrets having killed two men on Capitan Hoseason's ship, as the mere thought of the killing haunts his mind as the most dreadful of nightmares. This proves that, according to David's morality, murder is wrong a priori without any justification, even when it is committed to save one's life. In addition, David also reproaches his friend Alan because of his un-Christian attitudes towards the Red Fox, hence resembling Mackellar in reprimanding Mr. Henry.

In the first phase of the novel, David tends to see things as either black or white[25]. His prejudiced morality is at the root of several misunderstandings with Alan. For instance, David defines revenge as contrary to Christian moral beliefs, while Alan replies that it can be justified in some circumstances, especially when a population has been subjected to the harsh abuses of a tyrannical government. David labels his friend's behavior as childish, because he is still unable to put himself in Alan's shoes; he finds it difficult to accept moral standards that differ from his own.

W. W. Robson, after claiming that Kidnapped is one of those novels where the moral problematic occupies an essential role, summarizes it as a

[25] Robson, W. W. "On Kidnapped." Stevenson and Victorian Scotland. Ed. Jenni Calder. Edinburgh:UP of Edinburgh, 1981. 88-106

contrast between two different moralities: A Calvinist one according to which "man's life here is either a life of Sin or it is a life of self-extrication from Sin", and an Aristotelian one made of a spectrum of different degrees, where ethical absolutisms are discarded. Robson argues that the killing of the Red Fox corresponds to a crucial turning point of the narration in which David suddenly finds himself transplanted into a world where morality cannot be reduced to a dichotomy between black and white: "We pass from the timeless world of folktale, with its appropriate black-and-white morality, to a historical world, with a problematic, relative, regionally and culturally conditioned morality. Aristotle presides, not Calvin". For instance, after the Appin Murder, David engages in a harsh debate with Alan on the concept of justice. Alan's "tribal morality"[26] is anchored to an idea of justice which does not trust codified law and tribunals; the killing of the Red Fox is one of the consequences of the continuous strife between the Jacobite Highlanders and the Hanoverian forces. This means that justice is not equally applied to the Scottish Jacobites; whether the murderer of the Red Fox will be caught or not, the suspected murderer will be tried and convicted by a jury entirely composed of Campbells. More than once, David manifests his doubts about continuing his journey with Alan: If he is found in Alan's company, he will surely be arrested and convicted. In accordance to Robson's interpretation, this phase of the narration symbolizes a rite de passage which involves the narrator of the story, because David's Calvinist morality is questioned by Alan in relation to concrete human affairs. In the debate between the two companions, Alan regards Justice not as an abstract idea governed by strict ethic criteria, but as an assemblage of laws and conventions that are shaped according to the mainstream ideology that dominates society. At this stage of history, the clan justice of the Scottish Jacobites is opposed to the formal Hanoverian

[26] Robson, W. W. "On Kidnapped." Stevenson and Victorian Scotland. Ed. Jenni Calder. Edinburgh: UP of Edinburgh, 1981. 88-106

justice which is apparently equal, but in reality relies on numerous prejudices against the Highlanders. Due to his lack of experience and his dogmatic Christian upbringing, David lives in a idealistic world made of ideas and ethic maxims detached from the historical complexity and moral dilemmas of 18th century Britain. The killing of the Red Fox suddenly opens the door to the adult world to him.

The boy is uncertain whether it is a good idea to continue to follow Alan until the quarrel that results from the stay at Cluny's cage, where his friend irresponsibly loses David's money at cards. Here David abandons his dogmatic morality, because he finally recognizes that Alan is neither good nor bad in a Calvinist sense[27] ; this can be evinced when, at the end of the argument, Alan asks David to be forgiven, and the latter replies: " „Oh. man, let's say no more about it!. […] We.re neither one of us to mend the other-- that's the truth! We must just bear and forbear, man Alan! […]". It is clear then that, as Robson claims, David ends up finding a compromise with his friend. He admits that it would be impossible to impose his moral standards upon Alan, since both of them must accept the other for the way he is and base their friendship on mutual tolerance and forbearance. David's acceptance of his friend's views proves his emergent awareness of the intricacy of the adult world.

Like in The Master of Ballantrae, a morality governed by a rigid dualism is initially embraced by the narrator of the story in Kidnapped, but then, like Mackellar, David undertakes a process of development thanks to which his moral standards are seriously revised. It is plain therefore that the theme of moral ambiguity obsessed Stevenson throughout his literary production; what the author seems to transmit to the reader is a warning against too facile a moral appraisal of human behavior and attitudes that, according to dogmatic religious standards, ignores the complexity of

[27] Robson, W. W. "On Kidnapped." Stevenson and Victorian Scotland. Ed. Jenni Calder. Edinburgh: UP of Edinburgh, 1981. 88-106

human psychology. Some critics regarded Stevenson's works as the reflection of a Presbyterian philosophy which does not pretend to be didactical: "Again a literature which becomes too sociological creates types rather than character, and to do this would be to run counter to the Presbyterian sense of the importance of the individual"[28] (Dalglish 163). It is true that Stevenson is anchored to Protestant cultural values that permeated his personal life and somehow also influenced his prose. As Jenni Calder points out, "Stevenson was the son of the first established generation of the professional middle class" (4), which means that he inherited those Protestant middle-class values that stress the importance of hard work and self-accomplishment. On the other hand, it is also important to remark that Stevenson partially embraced those values, since he refused the strict set of moral Calvinist standards that characterized the behavior of the emergent middle classes of 19th century Scotland: "He was acutely aware of what could happen when moral structures collapsed, he wrote about this often, but it made quite clear that the individual had to work out his own code of behavior, his own morality"[29].

In connection to this, it is interesting to analyze two letters by Stevenson, one of them written on the 16th of December1880, probably the golden decade of his life, since in those years he produced some of his greatest masterpieces, and the other composed in 1891, just three years before his death. In the first epistle, sent to his mother from Davos, Stevenson briefly discusses the moral problematic in relation to the Christian imperatives summarized by the ten commandments and reinforced by parsons. sermons. According to Stevenson: Parsons speak so much in long-drawn, theological similitudes, and won.t say out what they mean about life, and man, and God, in fair and square human language. I wonder if you or my father ever thought of the obscurities that lie upon

[28] Dalglish, Doris N. Presbyterian Pirate: A Portrait of Stevenson. Oxford: UP of Oxford, 1937.
[29] Calder, Jenni, ed. Stevenson and Victorian Scotland. Edinburgh: UP of Edinburgh, 1981

human duty from the negative form in which the ten commandments are stated; or of how Christ was so continually substituting affirmatives.

Here Stevenson argues in favor of a religion that does not impose on man moral maxims in the form of negative imperatives and binding conditionals through using an abstruse theological language ("don't do this: if you do this, then the consequence will be that…" and so on). On the contrary, the necessity of reaffirming affirmatives would probably relieve man from the burden of a dogmatic morality and help him develop his critical thinking related to ethical issues. The call for a religious message expressed by a "square human language", can also be seen as a call for a morality that is contextually related to concrete human affairs. Stevenson additionally claims that "faith is not to believe the Bible, but to believe in God; if you believe in God (or, for it's the same thing, have that assurance you speak about) where is there any more room for terror? In this passage, it is curious how the writer resembles his character, James Durie, in discarding a dogmatism based on an "uncritical" interpretation of the Bible. In fact, Stevenson goes on by asserting that "the whole necessary morality is kindness; and it should spring, of itself, from the one fundamental doctrine, faith". Kindness is first of all based on individual faith in accordance to Christian values, but faith should not become synonymous with dogmatism and intolerance.

The second letter, written in Oceania, was addressed to Adelaide Boodle, one of Stevenson's family friends. Boodle was a convinced Christian, and in the letter Stevenson briefly discusses the role of the Church, in particular the Anglican Church, as a moral guide. His positions are comparable to the ones quoted above, since he reintroduces the same issues: Who are those whom we respect, who do a fair day's work in life, and keep their blood pure by exercise? The most that I have known do not sit in your friend's church; many of the best Christians sit in none. Christ himself and the twelve apostles seem to me (chetif) to have gone through

this rough world without the support of the Anglican communion. […] God is not churchman, my dear lady; and no clergyman. The world is great and rough; he is nearest to the right divinity who can accept that greatness and that roughness.

The conclusion that should be drawn from these two letters is that Stevenson's idea of morality does not, as it might erroneously appear, consist of a relativism which culminates in a moral nihilism, where any values or standards are denied. On the contrary, Stevenson reaffirms the significance of Christian values by evidencing that their basic message stresses the importance of generosity and kindness. Stevenson's stance is that morality is not fixed, but subject to change according to society and, most importantly, is related to the concreteness of life. In examining moral issues, the Scottish author articulates his thesis with the insight of a philosopher or cultural anthropologist committed to the study of the moral problematic. Stevenson questions the validity of any holistic theological moral system that pretends to pervade all aspects of individual life, and his preoccupation with ethic issues is doubtless reflected in his wonderful prose.

Conclusion

To sum up, Robert Louis Stevenson's The Master of Ballantrae and Kidnapped are novels where the moral problematic occupies a fundamental role. The concept of moral dualism interested Stevenson throughout his literary career and recurs in other works by him, such as The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde. Stevenson masterfully analyzes the ethical ambiguities that characterize his most successful characters and demonstrates how moral judgments based on religious dogmatism are inapplicable to men.

General conclusion

Various direct influences have been suggested for Stevenson's interest in the mental condition that separates the sinful from moral self. Among them are the Biblical text of Romans (7:20 "Now if I do that I would not, it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelled in me."); the split life in the 1780s of Edinburgh city councilor Deacon William Brodie, master craftsman by day, burglar by night; and James Hogg's novel The Private Memoirs and Confessions of a Justified Sinner(1824), in which a young man falls under the spell of the devil.

Literary genres which critics have applied as a framework for interpreting the novel include religious allegory, fable, detective story, sensation fiction, science fiction, doppelganger literature, Scottish devil tales and gothic novel.

Stevenson never says exactly what Hyde takes pleasure in on his nightly forays, saying generally that it is something of an evil and lustful nature; thus it is in the context of the times, abhorrent to Victorian religious morality. However scientists in the closing decades of the 19th century, within a post-Darwinian perspective, were also beginning to examine various biological influences on human morality, including drug and alcohol addiction, homosexuality, multiple personality disorder, and regressive animality.

Jekyll's inner division has been viewed by some critics as analogous to schisms existing in British society. Divisions include the social divisions of class, the internal divisions within the Scottish identity, the political divisions between Ireland and England, and the divisions between religious and secular forces.

The novel can be seen as an expression of the dualist tendency in Scottish culture, a forerunner to what G. Gregory Smith termed the “Caledonian Antisyzygy” (the combination of opposites) which influenced the 20th Scottish cultural renaissance led by Hugh MacDiarmid. depicted in

the novel resembles more closely the Old Town of Edinburgh which Stevenson frequented in his youth, itself a doppelganger to the city's respectable, classically ordered New Town. Scottish critics have also read it as a metaphor of the opposing forces of Scottish Presbyterianism and Scotland's atheistic Enlightenment.

As it has been argued in this work, several parallelisms concerning the moral problematic recur between the Master of Ballantrae and Kidnapped. It has been demonstrated, for example, how Stevenson introduces the two main characters and narrators of the novels as rigid moralists that greatly develop throughout the story until reversing their original views. These common elements are the evidence of Stevenson's constant preoccupation with moral issues that is also reflected in his letters to his closest relatives and friends. In his prose, Stevenson does not pretend to teach anything to the reader. On the contrary, his aim is to warn the reader to distrust any religious moral dogmatism which obstructs critical thinking. In the case of the Master of Ballantrae, Mackellar's initial dogmatism and close-mindeness are questioned and subverted by James Durie's cunning and critical thought.

Similarly, in Kidnapped, David's immaturity and lack of mundane experience shape his early rigid moral ideas, but the encounter with Alan and the witnessing of important historical events and different social realities, contribute to his individual growth and to the forging of more complex ethical views.

Even though Stevenson's major works cannot be considered as purely didactical, they doubtless portray the complexities of human psyche and behavior in an exemplary manner.

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