

THE PEOPLE'S DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF ALGERIA  
MINISTRY OF HIGHER EDUCATION AND SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH  
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**A Machereyan Reading of R. L Stevenson's *Strange  
Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde. 1886***

**A Dissertation Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for a  
Master Degree in English Literature and Civilization**

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**09/09/2021**

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**Academic Year: 2020/2021**

## **Dedications**

We would like to dedicate this humble work to our precious supportive families.

To the memory of our beloved departed ones.

## **Acknowledgements**

First, we would like to express our extreme gratitude to our dear supervisor Ms. Abida Benkhodja, thank you for being patient with us, for your insightful guidance and directions, your helpful comments and notes, and for your warm words and encouragement.

We would also like to thank Ms. Wissam Baouz for her instructions in organizing our work.

Last, but not least, we would like to express our earnest gratefulness to the members of the jury who accepted to read and evaluate our work.

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## **Abstract**

The current paper follows an in-depth reading of Robert Louis Stevenson's novella, *The Strange Case of DR.Jekyll and Mr. Hyde* under the lens of Macherey's post-Marxist reading strategy of the 'said' and the 'unsaid' to reveal its absences. It goes further on explaining the impact of the Victorian society's mentality and ideology on the production of literary works. This work also investigates the creation of Victorian Gothicism, and displays all of its elements that the author implied directly or indirectly in the novella. Overall, this research paper thoroughly analyses Louis Stevenson's novella utilizing the Machereyan method of reading the absences of a text to enlighten its mystery, and have a deeper understanding of the message that Louis Stevenson wants to communicate through his writing.

**Key Words:** Pierre Macherey, Silence, Victorian Gothicism, Victorian morality.

## **GENERAL INTRODUCTION**

The following research deals with silence in the text of Robert Louis Stevenson's *The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde* (1886) and attempts to reveal the unspoken.

Published in 1886, *The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde* was what made Robert Louis Stevenson among the infamous writers of the Victorian era. It is a classic of English literature that foreshadows the different doubts, anxieties, and the challenges that haunted the changing Victorian society. Most importantly, the novella tackles the themes of darkness and supernatural storytelling using a very mysterious style of narration. The story of the novella depicts the duality of human beings and their identities that splits into multiple personas; constantly switching up between their perfectly molded public figures and their dark ones, which of course are full of many evil and nasty urges.

Classified as a gothic horror fiction, the novella follows the Gothic movement that dominated the Victorian period, specifically its literature. The movement's focus in literature is primarily death and terror; praising irrationality and passion over rationality and reason. In other words, it is a dark romanticism that neglects many aspects of reasoning by embracing fictional elements and avoiding logical and scientific explanations. In Gothicism, the style of writing always carries dark and mysterious tones both literally and symbolically. Essentially, in the structure of gothic novels, authors tend to show little glimpses of their point of view, which totally makes it up to the readers to form their own perspective through linking all the gathered information and eventually draw conclusions themselves.

Furthermore, the gothic elements of *The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde* are represented in the theme of human duality through the plot of the novella, which basically revolves around the transformation of the protagonist Dr. Jekyll into his evil self Mr. Hyde



that was portrayed in a very gloomy way.

The text is a narrative about how scientific manipulations could create so much complicity, which of course results in inappropriate outcomes leading human beings into great guilt that sooner or later brings them to their end. Henry Jekyll, the is a well respected doctor and an intelligent scientist who gets into the dark side of science attempting to bring out his evil ‘second’ persona, thus transforming himself into Mr. Hyde ; his evil alter ego. At first, Dr. Jekyll thought he could be in control of his alter ego but surprisingly, he lost power against Mr. Hyde, which later on took over him and leads them both to their death.

The proposed method of reading the silences of a text comes from the post Marxist book, *A Theory of Literary Production* written by the prominent French philosopher Pierre Macherey. The book offers new strategies of going beyond the physical text by exploring its silence. It also challenges the basic assumptions of what previous scholars and people think of literature and the text itself. For instance, Macherey questions the idea of a text as being an organic whole or a text containing all of its meaning within the body itself.

## **Review of Literature**

Dating back to over a century, *The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde* has been the main subject of uncountable studies and was approached through diverse theories and concepts, which provides us a wide range of information and points of view on this specific work of literature. However, Macherey’s *A Theory of Literary Production* is a little underestimated and, only a few have used his theory in their works.

Laura Luque I Brugué in her article entitled “Mentally Unconscious: The Scientific Method in The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde and its Moral Constraints” focused on the link between science and religion, and superstition in the novella(2014). She

concluded that Dr. Jekyll struggles to balance his faith and his thriving need to complete his experiment. Which in the end; makes him completely give up on religion, to end up with a gothic superstitious creature: Hyde that makes him mentally unconscious.

Sami Schalk studied Stevenson's novella in his article entitled, "What Makes Mr. Hyde So Scary?: Disability as a Result of Evil and Cause of Fear", under the lens of critical disability studies (2008). He tried to explain why the characters of the story and the readers are frightened of Mr. Hyde. Schalk sees that although Hyde committed two crimes in the story, it is hard to believe that he is the complete representation of evil because there is no physical description that confirms that he is disabled. He also suggests that this fear is due to the incapacity to differentiate between "mind" and "body" which makes people judge others from their appearances before knowing their true intentions. Therefore, both readers and characters from the novella fear from Mr. Hyde for his distorted looking and misjudge him of evil only by his appearance. Sami Schalk concludes that Hyde looks frightening because he is a free unable to be controlled evil and disabled creature.

In his article, "Some Things Must Be Left Unsaid!"—On How Macherey Is Dialogically Engaged with Post-Marxism" (2018), Billy Bin Feng Huang explains the ideological relation between Macherey and post-Marxism in building his said and unsaid reading strategy. He emphasized on clarifying things about ideology, such as the origin of the word, its meaning for some theorists, and how its significance changed throughout time from the Marxist perspective to the post-Marxist point of view. His findings are that ideology born in a specific historical reality that influences the writing of the literary work; this creates what Macherey calls the absence of the narrative rupture.

## **Significance of the Study**

The story of this gothic novella is fictional; in fact, it is difficult to link the events to reality. It is important to mention that the author wisely used this literary text to mainly criticize the Victorian society and push readers to acknowledge the many similarities between his fictional work and reality, through mirroring the Victorian era's problems, struggles, and their over-judgmental society they used to have at that period utilizing an irrational story. Accordingly, it is fair to say that the existence of a certain absence and silence within the text is highly debatable, considering that even though the body of the text does not directly criticize nor talk about the many Victorian taboos, it is implicitly depicted within the unspoken part of the text. As such, no research has been devoted to investigating the unspoken in the text. Therefore, conducting a study about silence within *The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde* will shed light on the novella's true meaning.

## **Thesis Statement**

This paper explores the invisible within the chosen text, revealing what is beyond the spoken. Furthermore, the Victorian period is to be explored, representing the changing aspects of its society as well as their over-obsession with values, and strict rules that completely controlled people's lives at that time. The paper will study *The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde* under the light of Pierre Macherey's method of Reading the Silences of a text.

## **Aim of the study**

This research attempts to draw attention to the silence within Robert Louis Stevenson's novella *The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde*. Thus our study aims to showcase Victorian society's rule in shaping works of fiction in the eighteenth century.

## **Methods and Materials**

For the fulfillment of this research, Robert Louis Stevenson, *The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde* is used as a primary resource to reveal what the author really wanted to say within its unwritten body. Indeed, we have chosen to apply the Machereyan method of reading the silences of a text to a novella produced during the late eighteenth century by Robert Louis Stevenson. This time period in England was marked by ultimate ideological change and social stratification and will serve as an adequate basis to our research for exploring Macherey's concepts of absence and silence. It is, in our opinion, the analytical study of this specific work of fiction that will enlighten new perceptions into how society indulged in shaping the late eighteenth century's fictional literature.

## **Structure of the Research Paper**

The paper is divided into two chapters. The first chapter is designed to further enlighten the readers about the Victorian era in general. It provides an overview of this era's cultural and historical background, its negative aspects, and its strict morality. This chapter sheds the light on the Machereyan method of reading the silences of a text. The second chapter provides a brief biography of the author Robert Louis Stevenson. First, introduces Gothic literature, and presents the gothic elements in *The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde*. This chapter sheds light on the usage of Gothic literature during the Victorian era and how silence helps to reflect their social problems and criticize their society. Moreover, it serves as a theoretical background for the research work that explores the unspoken in *The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde*.

## **CHAPTER ONE**

### **Introducing the Victorian Era and the Machereyan Reading Strategy**

## **Introduction**

In the present chapter a general historical background of the Victorian era, the negative side of this era as well as morality that has marked it, are explained. This chapter also sheds light on Macherey's method of reading silence within literary productions. It also provides a brief biography of Pierre Macherey and how his work challenges the usual critical reading of a text. Silence is defined according to Pierre Macherey. Lastly, we will provide an introduction to how we can connect this concept to our study of Robert Louis Stevenson's novella *The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde*.

## **1 The Victorian Era, Cultural and Historical Background**

Dominated by the reign of Queen Victoria from 1837 to 1901, Britain witnessed an age of change and prosperity. This rapid change which was the result of the Industrial Revolution marked a major turning point in England's history; putting it in a state of political stability and high economic growth. This is largely what made it the most important global maritime power; due to the expansion of its overseas colonies.

### **1.1 The Industrial Revolution**

The Industrial Revolution was one of the most important reasons that helped England rise above the turbulent period of the Georgian era. Following the latter, the Victorian era was characterized by the huge evolution of science and the many technological innovations. By the mid eighteenth century, Britain was the world's leading commercial nation and industrial power with its trade development and its growing business; producing much of the world's as it has changed almost all of their life aspects and shifted their way of living

from a rural traditional life to a modern and urban one. Moreover, the invention of steam engines and electrification increased the production of factories and created new means of transportation such as trains and steamships that granted not only in transporting goods and people, but also in keeping control over a larger swath of territory. Communication became much easier and efficient with the invention of telegraph that allowed people to communicate easily and rapidly across the globe in a mere second. This device was of a great value for trade and coordinating military.

## **1.2 Politics**

Politics also indulged greatly in the reform of Britain. The Victorian era was conservative and remained heavily aristocratic with a very stable and wealthy government. Seemingly, the formal political system was a constitutional monarchy reigned by Queen Victoria who was considered as a figurehead for the nation, however, in practice it was controlled by aristocratic men. Thus, the British government consisted of a monarch and a Parliament of two houses; House of Commons and House of Lords. During this period, remarkable laws passed to tremendously help improve the quality of the Victorian people's lives, specifically the middle class individuals who consisted of land owners, factories owners, and business men. In 1832, the government passed the first Reform Bill, also known as the Great Reform Act. This law expanded representation of newly large cities to be represented in parliament to eventually have more seats and influence there. The bill also expanded voting rights for men as it allowed voting for small land owners, tenant farmers and householders who paid a yearly rental of 10£ or more. Additionally, an act to amend the law relating to Trades Unions was created. The British Parliament legalized Trades Unions under the recommendation of a royal commission in 1867 which stated that both employers

and employees could profit from the establishment of the organizations. After officially being legalized in 1871, the Trade Union Act improved the socio-economic conditions for working men in factories. It is also important to mention other events that drastically marked the Victorian era which are the abolition of slavery, the expansion of franchise, and the reform of Corn Laws, which lowered the prices of wheat in Britain.

### **1.3 Religion**

Britain was Christian dominated by the Anglican Churches of England, Wales and Ireland as the state churches in which the Monarch was the nominal head. People attended the Church every Sunday, sometimes twice a day and were very pious and religious. The government in the 1840s decided to invest into the production of Church building in the new industrial cities, and by 1851, they managed to build and restore over 2400 Churches.

Towards the mid-Victorian period, some people started contradicting the Anglican Church on the way they should worship and pray; this led to the appearance of Non-Anglican Christians such as Protestants, Methodists, Baptists, and Quakers who each built their own Churches based on their religious beliefs. In addition to the Bible being the ultimate source and guide to moral life and the origin of human beings, the Late-Victorian era's scientific research progress and evolution brought up science as another lens to understanding the meta-physical aspects of life. This created a faith crisis that eventually led people to doubt what is said in the Bible. Furthermore, the rise of philosophical beliefs and scientific theories such as Charles Darwin's *The Origin of Species* in 1859 where he claimed that human beings' ancestors were apes. This created a massive number of people who started getting confused and questioning and reconsidering biblical miracles, the existence of God, and human's nature and origin.



## **2 The Negative Aspects of the Victorian Era**

Although England was the richest country in the world during this Era, wealth and pleasure stood in stark contrast with severe poverty and inhumanity. In other words, England's wealth did not belong to all people; meaning that only a minority which consisted of the royal family, the nobles, and the bourgeois benefited of the fortunes that industrialization brought. This unequal distribution of wealth resulted in creating more social classes and poverty in the Victorian society.

As noted above, one of the greatest aspects that really characterized injustices in the Victorian period is the huge gap and contrast between the rich and the poor. Largely organized hierarchically by class, the Victorian society lived in a system full of social unrest and inequality. This age of contradiction was an organized chaos between the privileged and the poor because considering all the goods and wealth England had at that time, nobody would assume that so much cruelty and poverty existed within the lower class of the Victorian society. In support of this argument, the Former Prime Minister of The United Kingdom Benjamin Disraeli wrote his novel *Sybil* in 1845; in which he labels the class structure in the Victorian society by the term "The Two Nations", implying that England was a bitterly divided nation between the rich and poor. The term perfectly described the inequality which was so crucial to the extent that two individuals from two different social classes in the Victorian society did not seem to be living in the same country. Habits, morals, thoughts were all completely different in higher class households. Arguably, it is known that there always has been a difference between classes in certain things like food, clothes, and

houses ;as a matter of fact this difference is what creates the structuralism or what it is also known as class structure.

## **2.1 Factories and the Working Class**

During this era, endless numbers of factories were built and so to make them function a massive working force was required, which made poor people of the countryside leave their farms and fields to seek jobs in these new factories hoping to find a better life in the big cities. Arriving to their destinations, the farmers' great expectations faded away as they found themselves in bad living conditions than in the countryside; at least back there, they had a shelter to sleep in at night. Some of them found jobs in factories, but others could not and they were obliged to seek for work elsewhere.

These people were called unskilled workers because they mastered no craft; they formed a new social class named the lower class. They suffered the most from poverty, and had almost no place to live in. Lower class families were obliged to work no matter what age or gender they were in order for them to get food and pay rent. These families lived in community houses and dirty slums, they often shared public toilets; these places they lived in were easily contaminated by diseases and deadly illnesses due to the absence of hygiene standards. The unskilled workers had the toughest jobs ever that required an excessive physical strength; they worked nonstop for approximately 12 hours a day or more as miners, street sweepers, or as servants.

## **2.2 Women in the Victorian Era**

Victorian women, however, were treated as objects and had no voice or authority no matter what social class they belonged to. Although England at that time was reigned by a female, girls were taught to be polite and were obliged to act in specific ways and stick to

certain etiquette when talking, eating, and walking until they get married to take care of the house, please their husbands and raise their children.

Moreover, the lack of money in poor households has made a considerable number of lower class women obliged to work outside to help feeding their families just like men did. They worked in factories or in domestic service for rich household and they also sold snacks they prepared themselves in the streets and helped in finishing garment and shoes for factories in addition to the unpaid work they did at home. Women were more required in workplaces than men because owners paid them less since women's wages were thought of as secondary earnings and less important than men's wages even though they were crucial to the family's survival.

Gradually, women started to take action to get better salaries. The first one was in 1888 when one of the two women delegates at the Women's Trade Union named Clementina Black, proposed the first ever Trade Union Congress equal pay resolution. This was based more on the working conditions and circumstances rather than being paid equally as men. In July of the same year, a famous strike led by women workers at Bryant and May match factory. Twenty women left work and went to protest because the factory owners fired three employees for speaking to a social reformer about their unbearable working conditions consisting of long working hours, poor pay. These women faced the factory owners' intimidations and took their campaign to Parliament, and after three weeks of strike finally the factory met all their demands. The workers thus, created the Union of Women Match Workers.

### **2.3 Child Labor**

It is worth mentioning that lower class children suffered a lot from this poverty, as their parents could not afford enough money to survive, many children were forced to work

at a very young age. Children worked for very long hours, and their jobs were as tough as adults' jobs. They were given tough tasks especially in the places that adults could not reach because of their big bodies. They worked then in factories and upper class households as chimneysweepers or in mines; they also transported coal and helped in clothing and hat making factories. They were so cheap workers and were paid very little compared to all the hard work they did.

Children had no working assurance, they often got hurt from falling repeatedly in chimneys and got out of it full of bruises and covered in soot and dust. This made the majority of children suffer from asthma and many other skin diseases. In addition to that, the dirty places they lived in, the unavailable sanitary standards in their working environment, and the lack of clean water made children so easy to be contaminated by deadly diseases such as cholera and tuberculoses. Illnesses excessively increased children mortality in the Victorian age and only a few of them survived these terrible illnesses.

Poor children were dispossessed of their most basic rights. In fact, they had no right to play and enjoy their childhood as rich children did. They did not have the right to wear clean clothes or new shoes. Only few of those children had access to education; the little things they were taught in Sunday Churches because their parents could not offer to pay the high fees of schooling. By the end of the Victorian era, the government made school accessible for all children of the age of five to thirteen and made some reinstruction regarding child labor.

England had lived one of the most prosperous periods during the Victorian age economically and politically speaking, yet the Industrial revolution had the worst of side effects that made poor people become even poorer and caused the death of numerous people

due to the pollution it brought to the country.

### **3 Victorian Morality**

Social classes in the Victorian society did not only differentiate in material things; they also were highly different in many other matters such as morals, manners, feelings, and even their way of thinking. In higher classes where families did not have to worry about financial matters, people within this rich circle were most likely to care about trivial things such as fashion, gossip or love affairs; letting their whole sense of life revolve around being rich and getting what they want in life. It was an issue of a huge insignificance that these rich people put themselves into, not only this, but this insignificance has eventually brought up so many appalling matters that indeed marked the Victorian society as a whole.

At a time where England was infamous for its insignificant draining expectations of piety and manners, morality was generally what characterized the high middle class and the privileged of the Victorian society. These higher classes alarmingly imposed a precise moral code and a very strict social pattern on themselves in order to fit within a certain image which they considered to be the perfect ideal to follow. To begin with, some major ideas were widespread throughout all the privileged, and were ultimately made into general social rules which people had to strictly obey. Furthermore, men at that time were highly held to a certain standard of social behavior. In fact, besides their social rank, men were judged based on their behaviors as well as being called out for their smallest mistakes or any act that contradicts the society's norms. Additionally, the rise of the idea of respectable high class men has definitely set newer guidelines for people to stick with. The term or the title of "Respectable" in which Victorian men were eagerly trying to have was mainly owned by superficial acts that of course suited the social rules. Thus, for a man to be called a

respectable gentleman he had to talk, behave, dress and even eat in a certain way.

Although the majority of the behaviours that characterized the respectable men were quite noble and constructive as men had to be good father figures and provided for their families, have a moral duty, work hard to produce wealth, do charity work to help poor people, as well as being respectable and kind towards their surroundings. Men felt like society was in a way controlling them and not properly letting them experience life to the fullest. Therefore, men were only seeking to be called respectable and be seen as perfect individuals with high values and great manners just to satisfy their societal environment. In fact, all that respectability was a matter of appearance because most of those men were not close to being respectable; most of them had prostitutes and a lot of love affairs outside their marriage, and nearly all of them treated the lower class with so much arrogance and neglect.

Despite the fact that high middle class and privileged women were not specifically suffering financially nor were they obliged to work as their parents or spouses were already rich, they surprisingly were not so different from lower class ones. Similarly, these women were also highly persecuted by society as they were considered to be the weaker sex; the more sensitive and emotional individuals who were in need of a man to properly process a legal existence. For them being proper ladies and maintain a dignified life for a future marriage was their main goal. Thus, girls in the Victorian age were for the most part raised to be wives, meaning that they were not given the opportunity to sufficiently pursue their educational path, neither were they given the freedom of having eligible careers. Once married, a woman was deemed as the angle of the house, as she had to be respectable and submissive towards her husband, looking after her children and take care of her family.

Besides that, unlike men who primarily had a more public role in which they

needed to accomplish by following the social pattern outside the house to appear as respectable gentlemen, women's role was more likely private and inside her marital home, and sure enough, because of the Victorian family being extremely patriarchal and putting the power of leadership in the hands of the husband, women were awfully oppressed and treated as their husbands' property.

## **4 The Machereyan Reading Strategy**

### **4.1 Pierre Macherey's Biography**

Born on February 17<sup>th</sup>, 1938, in Belfort France, Pierre Macherey is a prominent French philosopher and one of the most famous deconstructionists and Marxist literary theorists. Macherey studied philosophy at the École Normale Supérieure from 1958 to 1963 and was a former student of Louis Pierre Althusser and his collaborator on his book *Reading Capital*, which was an intellectually influential book. Macherey's deconstructive way of thinking made him a major exponent in the development of Post-Marxism and post-structuralism in France, as well as it challenged many of the literary critics and the whole theories of literary readings. Ultimately, his most popular work on literary criticism and literary theory; *A Theory of Literary Production* which was originally published in French in 1966 is marked as an influential volume in the world of critical theory and has also set new interesting qualities in the process of critical literary readings.

### **4.2 An Introduction to the Machereyan Theory of Literary Production**

In his book *A Theory of Literary Production* that was published in 1966, Macherey challenges the basic assumptions of what previous scholars and people think of literature

and the text itself. For instance, Macherey strongly disagrees with the idea of a text being an organic whole or a text containing all of its meaning within the body of the text itself.

Macherey in this book develops a new concept of reading literary texts which is called “the silence of a text”; also known as the unsaid, the unspoken or the invisible. Macherey specifically explains his whole theory of how an author is certainly leaving a lot of things unsaid and unspoken, and that in order to fully understand a text one should read between the lines. Furthermore, Macherey believes that what is not written in a text is equally important as to what is written and that the unsaid and the whole silence within the body of a literary text, is what makes that text exist at the first place. Therefore, Macherey claims that it is the unsaid that gives the text its importance, and that it additionally is through this unsaid that the text becomes significantly relevant.

As Macherey points out, reading the silences of a text and trying to see what lays beyond the written body of a text, one could assume that he is reading within a text what a text does not say. In the light of this argument, Macherey brings up the concept of the “unsaid” which is really one of the most important highlight in his whole theoretical reading of a text. He precisely states that “The speech of the book comes from a certain silence, a matter which it endows with form, a ground on which it traces a figure. Thus, the book is not self-sufficient; it is necessarily accompanied by a certain absence, without which it would not exist. A knowledge of the book must include a consideration of this absence.” (95) In here, Macherey initiated in the reformulation of the basic critical reading of a text which has been known for since ages, that is, understanding the text by just reading its written content and analyzing its language. In other words, Macherey asserts his disagreement with the idea of taking the text itself as arrived, for him the unsaid is, in fact, the silence that shapes the speech of the text, and that the body of the text is not enough to completely understand its aim and its true meaning. Therefore, the text having a certain



absence and genuinely lacking many unsaid things, which the author did not include in the written form of his text, is eventually what makes the text really exist. Moreover, Macherey emphasizes the importance of seeking the unsaid or the silence of a text in literary reading, because it simply is the key element that makes reading more accurate as it goes deeply into it by trying to discover what is beyond the language and the written context of a text.

Furthermore, Pierre Macherey was sure enough highly influenced by his former professor Louis Pierre Althusser; a Marxist author and philosopher who presents the concept of ideology, which is, importantly a very interesting concept that puts into consideration the ideological representations that authors use in their writings. According to Althusser and certainly to a Marxist thought, ideology has no history and it is rather achieved through class structure and the struggle between the ruling classes and the lower exploited classes. Consequently, the clash between social classes, especially the mechanism of the ruling class in a society is what creates ideology.

According to Macherey, stating the relation between ideology and the ruling class is what makes the understanding of any piece of literary work much easier because it is absolutely impossible to separate ideology from the living mechanism of a ruling class in a certain society. Thus, Macherey uses the concept of ideology as a key element to better read a text and to deeply understand its development. He asserts that this relationship between ideology and the ruling class is actually what controls the context of a text and it is what limits the author's used language in the production of his literary work. Therefore, Pierre wants us to acknowledge the fact that this limitation that crucially exists in the process of producing a text restricts what can be said, hence it is how the unsaid and the silence is essentially present in a text. It is important to know that Macherey's emphasis on the production of literary works allows revealing the mechanism of the ruling ideology, and

hence reading the silence of a text will help in exposing the truth and not what ideology provides in a literary production.

Pierre Macherey's theories all come from a Post-Marxist point of view, as he is after all a post-Structuralist critic. For this reason, it is evident that the silence which Macherey illuminates in his book has a post-Marxist emphasis that reveals the sexual, racial, ethnic divisions and social structures of modern western society. The silence of a text refers to the conditions in which a literary production was created in as having a primary significance. This is meant to help us in figuring out that the actual content of a literary work that the author provides in his work is in fact limited to the ruling ideology since it shapes the ingredients, from which all literary productions such as language, literary themes, plots and character development. That is to say, authors are largely restricted to the rules their government and their society had set; thus, indicating how textual silence exists. Here Macherey challenges previous critics to shift their critical gaze and make literary criticism a concept that must be re-evaluated to include a consideration of elements in literature where the ruling ideology reveals elements of silence in a literary text.

Consequently, Macherey believes that it is critical to see the importance of the unsaid within a text because it is actually, what the text is about. In this regard, he states:

Yet the unspoken has many other resources: it assigns speech to its exact position, designating its domain. By speech, silence becomes the centre and principle of expression, its vanishing point. Speech eventually has nothing more to tell us: we investigate the silence, for it is the silence that is doing the speaking. Silence reveals speech--unless it is speech that reveals the silence. (96).

on the basis of this quoted passage, Macherey believes that looking for the unsaid in a text

is crucially necessary to truly understand a literary work. He furthers this point by indicating that “it is the silence that is doing the speaking” (96); in other words, Macherey sees that what the author did not say is in fact saying a lot about what that author is not saying in his text.

We have chosen to apply the method of silence to a novella produced during the late eighteenth century by Robert Louis Stevenson mainly because this time period in England was marked by ultimate ideological change and social stratification and will serve as an adequate basis to our research for exploring Macherey’s method of absence and silence. In our opinion, the analytical study of this specific work of fiction will enlighten new perceptions on how society indulged in shaping the late eighteenth century’s fictional literature.

## **Conclusion**

This chapter has presented a general historical background of the Victorian era. Besides, it has uncovered the Victorian era’s negative and dark side. It has discussed the matter of strict morality within Victorian society. Moreover, this chapter has introduced a brief biography of Pierre Macherey as well as his method of reading the silence and the unspoken in literary productions. It additionally explained this method in depth in order to inform the reader about the silence within a text.



## **CHAPTER TWO**

### **Examining the Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde**

## Introduction

In the previous chapter, we have introduced the different characteristics of the Victorian era. We have identified the contrast between the negative and the positive sides that have marked its society, thus revealing how people from the lower class have suffered and were totally neglected throughout that time, contrary to the higher and the middle classes, who tremendously lived a very different life where financial issues never crossed their way thanks to the wealth that the industrial revolution has brought to them. We have also addressed the matter of morality and the strict societal rules that excessively dominated the Victorian society, which eventually resulted in their obsessive caring about self-image and appearances. Moreover, we have presented Macherey's method of reading the silence of a text. We have noted the importance of the absent elements in a literary production and how this absence is just as crucial as the physically written text. We have also highlighted Macherey's influence by the concept of ideology which was introduced by his former professor Louis Pierre Althusser. Therefore, a big portion of Pierre Macherey's reading strategy relies on the theory of the ruling ideology, which relates each literature to the society it was created in.

In this chapter, we provide a brief biography of the author Robert Louis Stevenson. Then we will introduce Gothic literature, followed by the gothic elements in *The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde*. This part also sheds light on the usage of Gothic literature during the Victorian era, and how silence helps to reflect their social problems and criticize their society. This second chapter eventually explores the unspoken in *The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde*.

Drawing on Pierre Macherey's method of reading the silences of literary texts, we will display what was left unsaid in the novella.

## 1 Robert Louis Stevenson's Biography

Robert Louis Stevenson is considered as one of the pillars of the nineteenth century British literature. He is a Scottish novelist, essayist, poet and travel writer. Louis Stevenson was born in Edinburg, Scotland, on November 13, 1850, to Thomas and Margaret Stevenson. His parents took good care of him as he was their unique child, but he soon became a youth sick being contaminated by an aggravated respiratory illness that pursued him all his life.

Stevenson did well at school and succeeded to enroll at Edinburg University at the age of 17 to study lighthouse engineering which was his family profession. Soon later, this field failed appealing him; the reason why he decided to let down his parents' dream of him being an engineer and study law instead. However, after graduating, Stevenson gave up on working as a lawyer and he decided to be a full-time writer.

As for his beliefs, Stevenson has totally rejected his parents' religion, beliefs and standards. He preferred leading a bohemian life with an unconventional approach of life that is not based on any of what the majority believed in. the Victorian society's norms and ethics were unpleasant to Stevenson he denounced them offensively and ranted foremost about the bourgeois hypocrisy.(Britannica)

In his early twenties, his health condition got worse because of his bronchial trouble he was sent to France to find a cure. Ever since his recovery, he became a man of adventure who likes discovering new places in the world and he never put down roots for long in any single location. In fact, his global wanderings affected his writings in as he started using travels and voyages as frameworks for his works as in *Treasure Island* and *kidnapped*.

In 1876, on one of his trips to France, he met Fanny Osbourne who was a 36 years old American woman living apart from her husband and had two children. He fell badly in love with her but he courted her secretly for two years without telling his parents probably because she was approximately one decade older than he was.(Biography.com)

Stevenson's first work to be published was in 1878, entitled *An Island Voyage*. In the same year, Osbourne went back to California to finalize her divorce and Louis Stevenson followed her, he had indeed wrote about that experience in one of his works *The Amateur Emigrant* published in 1879. They thus officially married each other in California and then traveled to England again along with Fanny's children.

Although Stevenson's health condition went from bad to worse soon after he got married in the early 1880's; and he started dwelling again from a place to another hoping to cure his illness, this never stopped him from writing. It is proclaimed that this period was the one in which he gave all his best and wrote prolifically over the next decade. With the publication of *Treasure Island* in 1883, Louis Stevenson savored for the first time the real taste of success. Stevenson eventually kept publishing works constantly such as *The Body Snatcher* (1884), and *Dynamiter* (1885). But it was the publication of *The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde* (1886) that he ensured his fame as a writer as it sold 40.000 copies in only six month, and by the late 1880's Stevenson had became one of the leading lights of English literature.

Despite his overgrowing fame, Louis Stevenson led a troubled life since he was diagnosed with tuberculoses in his later days that made him travel often to find the suitable and fitting climate for his disease. Stevenson was advised by his doctor to move to a warmer climate for his heath, he hence settled in Samoa for four years and died out of a sudden in December of 1894; unexpectedly, the reason was not the long-feared tuberculoses but from



cerebral hemorrhage (Britannica)

## 2 An introduction to Gothic Literature

The rise of Gothic literature started in the late 18<sup>th</sup> century, with the publication of the first English Gothic novel, *The Castle of Otranto*, written by Horace Walpole. However, the horror novel did not truly gain success and popularity until the Victorian era, which occupied most of the nineteenth-century (Stephanie F. Craig). The popularity of this genre made other authors during the Romantic Movement instantly imitate it. Writers strongly believed that reason is not the most relevant trait of the human being and that the world cannot always be justified by reason. With the Romantic writers centering their faith on both imagination and nature, they have seemed to have found the perfect genre of fiction. On the other hand, readers fell in love with this genre's suspense, the mysterious supernatural themes, and the medieval touch made it a captivating center of interest for many people. Novels like *Frankenstein*, *Dracula*, *The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde*, *Jane Eyre*, and *The Picture of Dorian Gray* succeeded in gaining the public's appreciation.

Eventually, the Gothic novel became a massively popular genre in Great Britain. Gothic literature's sudden popularity in Britain was not created only by the fiction writers and readers and their sudden shift of interest. Arguably, it was also due to the many social factors that plagued the changing Victorian society (Stephanie F. Craig). In a time when people were being silenced by strict rules and a crucially controlling government, Gothic literature was considered as an escaping mechanism that helped writers in using their imagination to create gloomy stories that wittingly criticized their society. Essentially, what differentiates gothic fiction from other works of fiction is the dark elements, mainly because the themes that this specific genre uses are horror, mystery, and gloom; in addition, this

genre incorporates elements that are beyond science and do not function according to the rules of the real world. The presence of supernatural creatures such as monsters, ghosts, vampires, goblins, and many other non-humans is commonly essential in gothic fiction; it is also the main element that makes the plot have frightening dark energy.

## **2.1 Gothic Elements in *Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde***

As noted in the previous section, Gothic novels use dark and mysterious elements of romance and horror. In *The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde*, the story questions the limit of what it is to be human and what extent of evil humans can reach when their inhibitions are moved. The novella's story is a narrative about the complicities of science and the duplicity of human nature. Dr. Jekyll, the protagonist, is a well respected and an intelligent scientist who happens to find a chemical mix that liberates his evil self. Robert Louis Stevenson combined many gothic elements to extenuate the heavy sense of mystery and darkness to fit the story's plot.

### **2.1.1 Mystery**

The element of mystery is mainly achieved through the existence of powerful secrets, such as Mr. Hyde's hidden connection to Dr. Jekyll. Furthermore, Utterson's inability to describe the appearance of Hyde primarily because of Hyde covering his face, but also because of Stevenson not giving any details of what Jekyll's transformation into Hyde resembles. This specific point adds to the readers a sense of suspicion and mystery about the event itself. It is not until chapter 9 that Lanyon explains how he first saw the transformation of Hyde to Jekyll. It is also important to mention that the first ever appearance of Mr. Hyde was utterly full of mystery suspense. In Chapter 1, Mr. Enfield told Mr. Utterson about the odd story where he witnessed a man trampling over a little girl's

body and leaving her on the ground screaming.

All at once, I saw two figures: one a little man who was stumping along eastward at a good walk, and the other a girl of maybe eight or ten who was running as hard as she was able down a cross street. Well, sir, the two ran into one another naturally enough at the corner; and then came the horrible part of the thing; for the man trampled calmly over the child's body and left her screaming on the ground. It sounds nothing to hear, but it was hellish to see. It wasn't like a man; it was like some damned Juggernaut. I gave a few halloa, took to my heels, collared my gentleman, and brought him back to where there was already quite a group about the screaming child. He was perfectly cool and made no resistance, but gave me one look, so ugly that it brought out the sweat on me like running. (9)

Mr. Enfield's description of the event was rather shallow and confusing because he himself didn't process what really happened; nor did he understand what caused that strange looking man to act in that awful way. Having said that, it is notable that Stevenson used this style of narration to create a sense of a dark mystery to make the readers wonder about Mr. Hyde's scary identity, which then makes the whole plot of the story suspenseful and a lot more exciting to read.

### **2.1.2 Murder**

This element is achieved in (chapter 4) when the maidservant witnessed the crime scene where Hyde violently knocks off an old man to the floor after they were seemingly having a conversation when Hyde suddenly snaps and gets furious. He then starts to vigorously stamp his victim's body under his foot until he audibly crushed his bones. The gravity of this terrifying incident places emphasis on the darkness and the Gothicism in the novella. The incident also adds to the horror part of the story as it helps the readers have a

sense of thrill that haunts them through their reading.

### **2.1.3 Setting**

In Gothic literature, the setting is an essential element that not only sets the atmosphere of the story, but also tells about the character's state of mind and feelings. Similarly, Stevenson used this element to the advantage of describing Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde and how their characters function in society. First, Jekyll is a well-mannered ordinary man who lives in a fancy luxurious home that has an open fire in the front hall. This detail reveals that Dr. Jekyll is a man that ought to be from the upper-class portion of society whom is a very warm and welcoming human being. His fancy house shows how he prioritizes the way he's portrayed in public. His fascination for luxurious things explains his confidence in showing off his wealth and his expensive taste (MS Davidson). Second, Stevenson combined Jekyll's fancy taste in Hyde's messy lodging, where he described it as luxurious yet so chaotic. "Mr. Hyde had only used a couple rooms; but these were furnished with luxury and good taste" (42). At this moment, however, the rooms bore every mark of having been recently and hurriedly ransacked; clothes lay about the floor, with their pockets inside out; lock fast drawers stood open; and on hearth there lay a pile of gray ashes, as though many papers had been burned" (42).

The author associates some of Jekyll's good values and qualities with Hyde, yet he adds a chaotic touch to the details for his character. An example of that is when he described Hyde's room as recently and hurriedly ransacked. He uses aggressive, impulsive, and even violent language choices. Moreover, the conflict between the adjectives used to describe the furniture accentuates the sense that the owner is a contradictory bizarre person. Stevenson intended to combine the two contrasting descriptions luxurious vs. ransacked to hint that Jekyll and Hyde are the same person, thus, creating a sense of suspense and

curiosity for readers to make them question Hyde's character.

Another important detail to note about the Gothic setting in *The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde* is the way London was described in chapter 4:

It was by this time about nine in the morning, and the first fog of the season. A great chocolate-coloured pall lowered over heaven, but the wind was continually charging and routing these embattled vapours; so that as the cab crawled from street to street, Mr. Utterson beheld a marvelous number of degrees and hues of twilight; for here it would be dark like the back-end of evening; and there would be a glow of a rich, lurid brown, like the light of some strange conflagration; and here, for a moment, the fog would be quite broken up, and a haggard shaft of daylight would glance in between the swirling wreaths. (39)

In this paragraph, the fog is present to give a haunting atmosphere to London and indicates that something bad is about to happen; therefore, it symbolizes the gloominess and darkness that marked England in the late eighteenth century. The fog presumably came from a river's waters, which eventually got mixed in with soot and smoke of different buildings and factories that were of crucial importance in the Industrial Revolution. Thus, so many coal fires were burning till that fog rose and was incredibly thick and hard to see through. This particular detail is very atmospheric and ominous and takes the novella into the horror of Gothicism.

#### **2.1.4 The Existence of the Supernatural**

The supernatural element is present in the transformation of Dr. Jekyll to Mr. Hyde. With the help of science, Jekyll released his evil self into the world to liberate himself from

social pressure. In the novella, Mr. Hyde is often described as hardly human and troglodytic who lacks control over his actions. Although this description is barely enough to assume or confirm that Mr. Hyde is indeed a supernatural creature in the first chapters of the novella, the reader in the last chapters ultimately meets with proofs and explanations for this man's strange physique and wicked evil acts. In Chapter 9, the penultimate event of the novella happens, and it is in this chapter that Jekyll and Hyde are exposed to be the same person. Lanyon explains how he first saw the transformation that magically turned Hyde into Jekyll and thus confirmed the supernatural assumptions about the true identity of Mr. Hyde.

He put the glass to his lips and drank at one gulp. A cry followed; he reeled, staggered, clutched at the table and held on, staring with injected eyes, gasping with open mouth; and as I looked there came, I thought, a change—he seemed to swell—his face became suddenly black and the features seemed to melt and alter—and the next moment, I had sprung to my feet and leaped back against the wall, my arms raised to shield me from that prodigy, my mind submerged in terror (104)

As noted above, this paragraph from chapter 9 explains the whole story behind Jekyll and Hyde's connection. It also gives a vivid and suspiciously scientific description that is haunting and terrifying because the symptoms that got eventually revealed are neither natural nor normal.

The power of this novella is across the entire Gothic elements Stevenson chose to combine. And it's terrifyingly mesmerizing that on the one hand, no matter how the questionable events of the story seem unbelievable, all the Gothic elements, on the other hand, suspended that disbelief to bring the readers into considering the evil dark side of humanity.

### 3 The Usage of Gothic Literature in the Victorian Era

Stevenson's choice of making this novella a Gothic fiction serves as proof that the content indeed represents ideology. Hence, the existence of this ideology within the text implies that silence is present as well. The Gothic genre allows the writer to get creative with scary demonstrations and makes him able to give terrifying descriptions from a perspective that puts the readers in a state of complete disbelief as well as separating them from reality. This separation helps the readers to feel confident and comfortable with reading this type of terrifying stories. Therefore, it seemingly helps in making fear and horror appear aesthetic and more pleasant to examine. Moreover, the popularity of Gothic fiction in late eighteenth century Victorian England, which was known for its strict societal rules, allows the readers to consider the protagonist's choice in creating an evil double that lives out his fantasies. Yet, using this genre restricts the author from offering a genuine, realistic view about the seriousness of the social pressures and rigid class structures the Victorian society went through. Additionally, the popularity of gothic fiction hints at the existence of the ruling ideology in literary texts. Nonetheless, in *The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde*, the gothic usage of the language also enables us to consider the content of this novella from the perspective of Macherey, reading the silence and absence within the text and not just examining its ruling ideology.

Although writers in the Victorian era used gothic fiction to address the uneasiness of their lifestyle and the gravity of their social problems, it is worth mentioning that they were not entirely allowed to talk about taboos or criticize their government. This restriction made these authors carefully choose their themes yet smartly figure out ways to indirectly write about the Victorian taboos and judge their society as a whole. Most importantly, they made sure that all their literary productions delivered a proper message to the public

without them feeling judged, but rather making them feel conscious and mentally awake towards all forms of oppression and social injustices.

Therefore, this restriction proves that the usage of the gothic genre is not only relevant for the aesthetic aspect of the literary production and that the excess of all kinds of over-frightening descriptions serves as a device that indicates what the literary production left unsaid and did not represent. All the horror, panic, terror, and fear used in gothic fiction is the only mode that draws nearer to describing the anxieties and apprehensions that plagued the changing Victorian society. The silence within the text then becomes evident to show the lack of freedom in expressing the struggles of the ruling ideology in literary productions. Here then, thematic signs of silence such as mental disorders, double standards, lack of femininity and the dilemma of Victorians under Social pressures are trickily placed inside the gothic language, thus accentuating the ruling ideological representation.

#### **4 Silence in *The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde***

##### **4.1 Multiple Personality Disorder (Dualism) and Depression in the Novella**

The first sign of silence we will address in this gothic novella is the mental disorders in the Victorian era. Dualism and Depression are some of the main themes that Stevenson has dealt with in his novella. *Originally*, Sigmund Freud introduced psychoanalysis after *The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde* got released to the public. Therefore, it is fair to say that the fact that the author was not aware of the psychology of the mind makes the subject even more considerable. In other words, his weak knowledge about mental diseases is what makes the themes of dualism and depression even credible. He, for instance, pictured what people in Victorian society were going through and how these people have dealt with all kinds of different social pressures and how exactly their attitude towards these



pressures was. The author then accidentally makes his way into one of the most common twisted psychological diseases in history.

Duality was depicted in the battle between humanity and the unnatural forces of evil, the protagonist shows the deep struggles that encounter the life of an eighteenth-century regular human being. Henry Jekyll lived around the 1860s, where society rules were strict, and class conduct was rigid. Ultimately, Dr. Henry Jekyll feels that he has some dark desires that needed to be satisfied. However, he also knows that he cannot make that happen, because he is a respectable man with a decent position in society. Therefore, he does so by liberating his second evil self, Mr. Hyde. Hyde in the novella represents the alter ego of the human being but with a sick, dark, and mentally disturbing form. Stevenson brings psychological diseases like multiple personality disorder into the light using very frightening descriptions to eventually represent insanity in Victorian society.

Furthermore, depression is an absence that is represented through the character of Jekyll. Stevenson represents some very gloomy and depressing images that prove that Henry Jekyll was indeed suffering from severe depression and anxiety. Primarily, we learn that Jekyll decides to seek an escape from life, using his evil double because he wasn't satisfied with his own life. Jekyll says: "And indeed the worst of my faults was a certain impatient gaiety of disposition, such as has made the happiness of many, but such as I found it hard to reconcile with my imperious desire to carry my head high, and wear a more than commonly grave countenance before the public" (106). This passage shows that in reality, Jekyll did not find happiness in suppressing his desires and act like a respectable man of society. He thinks that he isn't feeling the joy that every other individual in society feels in being an honest gentleman who can restrict his wicked desires in life. Moreover, we learn that Jekyll confessed that he was indeed unhappy when he said: "Here then, as I lay down

the pen and proceed to seal up my confession, I bring the life of that unhappy Henry Jekyll to an end” (141). Here then, we notice how depressed Jekyll was in his life and how none of his friends knew about it. Thus, silence here becomes too obvious because even Jekyll himself was secretive and silenced about his depression, keeping all his anxieties to himself until reaching the point of despair and committing suicide. This detail delivers a powerful sign of silence in the novella, proving that people in the Victorian period had suffered from depression in silence since there was not any awareness or knowledge concerning this issue at that time.

## **4.2 Double Standards**

The presence of dualism in Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde also symbolizes another essential aspect that has marked Victorian society during that era. Many people of all social classes led a double-faced life behind the curtains. In other words, because of the strict societal rules and morals, Victorians often felt pressured in their daily lives. Even the very notable and respectable men in society portrayed themselves as some perfect gentlemen with dignity and pride. But on the other hidden side, they were indulged in very shameful and scandalous affairs like cheating in their marriage, having homosexual relations, getting involved in political and social crimes, and many other wicked acts. Stevenson puts the character Jekyll as a living proof that even wealthy and respectable men can be evil people.

Moreover, in the first chapter; in Utterson and Enfield’s walk through a quiet street in a busy quarter London. “Even on Sunday, when it veiled its more florid charms and lay comparatively empty of passage, the street shone out in contrast to its dingy neighbourhood, like a fire in a forest; and with its freshly painted shutters, well-polished brasses, and general cleanliness and gaiety of note, instantly caught and pleased the eye of the passenger” (7). However, it is also mentioned that at the end of the street stands a “certain sinister”

looking building (7). In this description, Stevenson shows that there are two completely different sides in one same street. One side which is the very clean and respectable street represents the respectable middle class gentlemen and another side in which the sinister building at the end of the street is located; represents the dark side of London and its crimes. (GraduateWay)

Generally speaking, Stevenson represents the anxieties and the social dilemmas within Victorian people. However, his depiction of the double standards seems extreme and over- done, but once we read and analyze Jekyll as a figure of Gothic personality, we, therefore, can understand the excess and see how simply talking about this issue; would only make it seem trivial. Hence not being able to express this very matter to its full potential and not fully describe the struggles of the ruling ideology. Because, in the author's eyes, the issue of double standards is not considered a serious concern of the Victorian people but rather a creative fun way to escape their lives at that time. Therefore, he uses a supernatural scary and ugly creature to represent all the people who lead other lives apart from their own.

### **4.3 The Shallow Presence of Female Characters**

While reading *The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde*, even a casual reader can notice that the author built the novella on an all-male backdrop storyline that lacks main female characters. Due to this absence of attention given to women in the book, people had accused Louis Stevenson of being a sexist.

Although women are present in the text, they only make an appearance a few times in the whole novella. Stevenson has made no close relation between them and the male characters. Moreover, their personalities lack depth, and their identities are missing; we do

not even know their names as they have a very passive and weak role. The author gave these characters so little interest what made their presence seem so hollow and unnecessary to the extent that one may think that taking them out of the text would bring no change to the plot.

These female characters are both present and absent at the same time. Notably, Macherey describes that as; “The unacknowledged co-existence of the invisible and the hidden: the visible is merely the hidden in a different guise” (96). That is to say, that these characters are barely present. Macherey assumes that silence lies in the elements that have not received sufficient attention in the text; thus, we should investigate why they are used in this way and find the unspoken side of the text which is the case with women in this literary work. Macherey states, “It is not enough to let him speak, for his speech is hollow and cannot be complete on its own level”(93) From this, we understand that another side of the speech exists, a hidden one that needs to be explored and revealed to get the real meaning of the written text.

The first female character in the novella is a little girl that came out of nowhere running and screaming, and then ran onto Hyde in the corner of a street and ending up trampled under his feet. This scene is full of mystery and has many absent and unclear facts, such as why the girl was running and screaming.

Another important female character in the novella is the maid that witnessed Carew’s death. She appears to be a romantic woman in the way she was sitting under the beautiful moonlight, feeling so emotional till she shed tears while remembering how beautiful was the moon that night. Her testimonial on the murder was pretty unusual which, makes her personality seems out of context.

Additionally, in the scene that introduced Hyde’s housekeeper, Stevenson described her as an ugly woman that looked like a hypocrite but still has a very polite and respectful

attitude (Stevenson 41). What is noticeable in all these scenes is that the females, contrary to the males in the text, have no names and are not physically described and their presence in the text holds no significance. To understand this half presence and half absence of female characters in the novella using the Machereyan concepts of the spoken and the unspoken, we must remember that Macherey mentions a social ideology that conducts the writer to put barriers and limits to express his thoughts freely. And this is one of the reasons for having an incomplete work of literature where the reader needs to go further beyond words to get the complete message that the writer truly wants to communicate through his piece of writing. In this case, we should take into consideration that this text is a late Victorian novella. Critics claim that the neglect of female characters in *Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde* reflects how Victorian society treated women. However, Pierre Macherey has built his reading strategy on a post-Marxist perspective that rejects any sexual, racial, class, or ethnic division of modern western society. The neglect of female characters in *Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde* works as a mirror of the sufferance of Victorian women being puppets in men's hands. It is also convenient to be explained as mimicking the role of Queen Victoria for only being a passive and voiceless character in the monarchy and to remind of how she gave no voice or supported the feminist movements that rose with the industrial revolution in Europe during the late Victorian era.

#### **4.4 The Dilemma of the Victorians under Social Pressures**

Another issue that is implicitly tackled through some of the characters in *The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde* is the Victorians being prisoners of rigid social codes imposed by society. The first character of the tale that seems struggling under Victorian social pressure is Mr. Utterson, a respectable lawyer with a good reputation who has good manners in social gatherings. The way he cares about his friends and tries his best to stay

loyal to them makes him appear as the ideal and best representation of middle-class men. On the other side of his personality, the author writes, “He was austere with himself; drunk gin when he was alone, to mortify a taste for vintages; and though he enjoyed theatre, had not crossed the doors of ones for twenty years” (1). this description means that Utterson restrains himself from his pleasures and desires to please the public and preserve his image in society and, that far from his successful social life, he was secretly alcoholic in his private life.

Dr. Jekyll also represents people’s suffering from society’s rigid laws. He was a man of high status and a respectable figure of the upper social class of Victorian England, which made him care more about satisfying his surroundings rather than living for himself. Jekyll was too afraid of talking about his wrong deeds, mainly his sin of making an evil self.

Keeping this secret made him an even more anxious and depressed and eventually died in the most unpleasant ways.

Not only did these social pressures enslave people of high societal status, but they also strictly summoned low-class Victorians to respond to these social demands. We see this in the housekeeper at Hyde’s lodgings; Stevenson described her saying, “She had an evil face, smoothed by hypocrisy; but her manners were excellent” (41). Here again, we see that this woman hides her true self from other people to look amiable for them. Here again, we see that this woman hides her true self from other people to look amiable for them; this shows that even low-class Victorians are summoned to stick to these harsh social demands in order for them to get accepted in society. This passage can also mean that Victorians cared a lot about beauty and appearance and merely judged others based on their looks. Here then, the author wants to draw attention to view this particular detail as a product of a ruling ideology, therefore pointing out another sign of silence in the text.

## Conclusion

This chapter has investigated Gothicism in *The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde* and reveals the unspoken within the text. Primarily, we have introduced a brief biography of the author Robert Louis Stevenson. We then have presented Gothic literature and identified the Gothic elements found in the novella. Furthermore, we have shed light on the usage of Gothic literature during the Victorian era in mirroring their social problems and anxieties. In this chapter, we explored and unveiled the signs of silence in *The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde* under the light of Pierre Macherey's method of reading silences of literary texts. Reading this novella using the Machereyan strategy helped capturing the unsaid of the text and the thematic signs of silence that consist of mental disorders, double standards, lack of femininity and the dilemma of Victorians under Social pressures. These signs of silence served in revealing England's situation during the Victorian era and the many issues people of that period had suffered from.

## **GENERAL CONCLUSION**



The present research has looked into the Machereyan concept of silence or the unspoken within the text. It has examined one of Robert Louis Stevenson's most popular texts, *The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde*. Our study has claimed that silence in this novella is largely indirectly linked to Victorian society.

The first chapter entitled "Introducing the Victorian Era and the Machereyan Strategy" has provided a general overview into the Victorian era. It has introduced its historical background, drawn attention to its negative dark side and shed light upon the matter of the strict Victorian morality. This chapter has also introduced the method on which our research paper is based. It has provided a brief biography of Pierre Macherey as well and introduced his reading strategy. It has shown that in every text, there is an unspoken part that eventually makes up the silence of the text. Moreover it has looked deeper through Macherey's method and his intriguing concept that challenges the claims of previous scholars and critics to start reading what is beyond the literary product, and dig deeper into the ruling ideology surrounding the text.

The second chapter titled "Examining *The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde*" has provided a brief biography of the author Robert Louis Stevenson and has given a general introduction into Gothic literature. Furthermore, this chapter has explored Gothic elements in *The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde*, such as mystery, murder, setting, and the existence of the supernatural. Accordingly, this section has investigated the excess of the usage of gothic language in eighteenth century literary works as it has determined that the Victorian authors' choice of gothic fiction and its excess of the frightening descriptions is crucially important in not only creating the sense of horror and suspense, but in also accentuating the unrevealed ideological representations. In other words, this chapter revealed that within the gothic language there lay signs of silence.

Our research has called attention to the question of what exactly the author Robert Louis Stevenson wanted to say in his most infamous gothic novella, *The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde*. Primarily, the silence within the text is to be found within the ruling ideological representations which the author implicitly and indirectly includes in his literary work. Pierre Macherey in his method of reading the silence within a text assumes that in order to understand what the text is really about and what the author is indirectly implying in his literary work, one should go beyond the written form of the text and try to read between the lines, to then eventually be able to reveal the implanted ideological representation within the author's writing. Significantly, Stevenson in his novella explored the evil side of the human being using terrifyingly dark and gloomy imagery to show the duplicity of life. Yet, in trying to seek the silence within this novella, we notice that the author managed to implicitly indulge other subjects that seemingly were objects of the ruling ideology. These were the anxieties and apprehensions that plagued that changing Victorian society in the eighteenth century.

Our findings indicate the silence in *The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde* is imposed within Stevenson's usage of the Gothic language. Furthermore, the thematic figurations within this novella allowed us to see the contrast between the struggles against the ruling ideology and the laws governing the latter, to later divulge the thematic sings of silence such as mental illness, double standards, depression, lack of femininity, and the dilemma of Victorians under social pressures that are awkwardly placed inside the gothic language of the novella, hence making the silence that lays within it appear and reveal what Robert Louis Stevenson wanted to inform his readers.

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## Résumé

Ce travail de recherche représente une lecture approfondie du roman de Robert Louis Stevenson intitulé *The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde*, sous le prisme de la stratégie de lecture postmarxiste de Pierre Macherey du "dit" et du "non-dit" pour révéler les absences de cette nouvelle. D'avantage, il explique l'impact de la mentalité et l'influence de l'idéologie de la société victorienne sur la production d'œuvres littéraires. Ce travail enquête également sur la création du gothique victorien et démontre tous les éléments que l'auteur a employé d'une manière implicite ou explicite dans son roman et que signifie chaque élément. En outre, il analyse en profondeur le roman de Robert Louis Stevenson en adoptant la méthode de lecture qui consiste à lire les absences d'un texte littéraire introduite par le philosophe Pierre Macherey afin de dévoiler ses mystères et atteindre une compréhension plus détaillée du message que Louis Stevenson souhaite communiquer aux lecteurs à travers son ouvrage.