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Why They Kill:

Criminal Etiologies in Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein*, R.L. Stevenson's *Strange Case of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde*, and Oscar Wilde's *The Picture of Dorian Gray*

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Résumé

Ce mémoire réunit trois classiques de la littérature britannique du XIX^{e} siècle (*Frankenstein* de Mary Shelley, *Strange Case of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde* de Robert Louis Stevenson et *The Picture of Dorian Gray* d'Oscar Wilde) pour rendre compte de la façon dont les personnages s'expliquent le comportement des meurtriers. La comparaison entre une analyse textuelle de leur opinion et du discours social contemporain clarifie l'argumentation des personnages et met en évidence comment l'oeuvre s'inscrit dans les débats de l'époque sur l'altérité du criminel et la laideur comme marqueur du mal. *Frankenstein* met en scène deux discours concurrents en matière de criminalité: les préjugés physiognomoniques et la révolte succédant à l'ostracisme. Dans *Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde*, les spéculations physiognomoniques d'Utterson situent Hyde à la frontière de l'humanité alors que Jekyll parvient à la même conclusion après s'être d'abord identifié à son alter ego. *Dorian Gray*, la quintessence de la physiognomonie, déploie une panoplie diversifiée de discours: une analyse de classes, une opposition entre influence et nature intrinsèque ainsi que le déterminisme comme source de déresponsabilisation. L'examen de multiples versions des oeuvres (ébauches, manuscrits et différentes éditions) rappelle continuellement la fluidité et la richesse du texte.

Mots-clés : XIX^{e} siècle, littérature britannique, criminels, *Frankenstein*, *Strange Case of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde*, *The Picture of Dorian Gray*, physiognomonie, criminologie, psychologie

Abstract

This thesis brings together three classics of British nineteenth-century literature – Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein*, Robert Louis Stevenson's *Strange Case of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde*, and Oscar Wilde's *The Picture of Dorian Gray* – to assess how fictional characters make sense of murderers. Close reading of their positions compared to contemporary social discourse clarifies the characters' arguments and examines how the work engaged with concomitant debates about the criminal as Other and the ugly as evil. *Frankenstein* showcases two competing discourses on criminality: physiognomic prejudice and revolt from social exclusion. In *Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde*, Utterson's physiognomic speculations classify Hyde as barely human while Jekyll comes to a similar conclusion after having first identified with his alter ego. *Dorian Gray*, the epitome of physiognomy, displays a variety of discourses: a class-based analysis, an opposition between influence and true nature, and determinism leading to unaccountability. Examination of multiple versions of the works – drafts, manuscripts, and different published editions – constantly remind of the text's instability and richness.

Keywords : 19th century, British literature, Criminals, *Frankenstein*, *Strange Case of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde*, *The Picture of Dorian Gray*, Physiognomy, Criminology, Psychology

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Abbreviations

I	Wilde, Oscar. *Volume 1: Poems and Poems in Prose*. Ed. Bobby Fong & Karl E. Beckson. Oxford: Oxford UP, 2000.
II	Wilde, Oscar. *Volume 2: De Profundis; 'Epistola: In Carcere Et Vinculis'*. Ed. Ian Small. Oxford: Oxford UP, 2005.
III	Wilde, Oscar. *Volume 3: The Picture of Dorian Gray: The 1890 and 1891 Texts*. Ed. Joseph Bristow. Oxford: Oxford UP, 2005.
IV	Wilde, Oscar. *Volume 4: Criticism: Historical Criticism, Intentions, The Soul of Man*. Ed. Josephine M. Guy. Oxford: Oxford UP, 2007.
CL	*The Complete Letters of Oscar Wilde*. 1st ed. Ed. Merlin Holland & Rupert Hart-Davis. New York: Henry Holt, 2000.
EUP	Stevenson, Robert Louis. *Strange Case of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde*. Centenary ed. Ed. Richard Dury. Edinburgh: Edinburgh UP, 2004.
LMRC	*Lives of the Most Remarkable Criminals.* London: Reeves and Turner, 1873.
Letters	*The Letters of Robert Louis Stevenson*. Ed. Bradford Allen Booth & Ernest Mehew. New Haven: Yale UP, 1994.
Norton ed.	Wilde, Oscar. *The Picture of Dorian Gray: Authoritative Texts, Backgrounds, Reviews and Reactions, Criticism*. 2nd ed. Ed. Michael Patrick Gillespie. New York: W. W. Norton & Co, 2007.
ON	*Oscar Wilde's Oxford Notebooks: A Portrait of Mind in the Making*. Ed. Philip E Smith & Michael S Helfand. New York: Oxford UP, 1989.
Oxford ed.	Wilde, Oscar. *The Picture of Dorian Gray*. Ed. Isobel Murray. London: Oxford UP, 1998.
Sh. Fiction	*The Complete Shorter Fiction of Oscar Wilde*. Ed. Isobel Murray. Oxford: Oxford UP, 1979.
Vail. ed.	*The Works of Robert Louis Stevenson: Vailima Edition*. London: William Heinemann, Chatto & Windus, Cassell and Longmans, Green, 1922.

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Introduction

"A morbid fascination with crime seems to number among the basic human traits, and writers through the centuries have never been slow to gratify this taste in appropriate literary forms."
Theodore Ziolkowski, "A Portrait of the Artist as Criminal"

Criminality, at all ages, though to varying degrees, creates anxiety in society. Any phenomenon to which no cause can be ascribed breeds worry. Disquiet cannot be endured: an explanation must be provided. Rationality identifies causal relations to make sense of the world's apparent and distressful chaos. Once pinpointed, society can hopefully manage collectively to bridle the circumstances from which the phenomenon emanates. In the nineteenth century, Western societies' ability to explain the physical world seemed quite satisfactory and encouraging. However, confidence waned as social relations and the metaphysics of the mind failed to yield effective laws to positivism's enquiries.

Criminal ætiologies – from the Greek *αἰτία*, "cause, reason" – participate in the soothing search for meaning (OED). Today, we are acquainted with representations of the criminal as Other – the poor, the uneducated, the immigrant – a very comforting view for those who escape stigmatization: they need not fear to turn one day into a threatening criminal. Nevertheless, creating Others as scapegoats does not dispel anxiety, but simply shifts it to a wariness of those targeted. The current eagerness to underscore the criminal's Otherness contrasts sharply with the prevalent view in seventeenth- and eighteenth-century England, according to which universal human depravity caused crime. It comes as quite a surprise to twenty-first century readers, habitually presented with criminals fairly different from them, to be warned against human depravity, which slumbers in each and everyone. Yet convicts displayed on the gallows as examples were understood to be but this invisible yet omnipresent danger's unfortunate victims. Three hundred years ago, social discourse held human nature – in all its fallibility, not its anomalies – responsible for criminality.

The Genevese philosopher Jean-Jacques Rousseau's (1712-1778) challenge to the prevailing pessimism regarding human nature retains the universal criterion: all human beings are born good, society corrupts them. A number of Romantics have adopted and expressed his perspective, from the German Friedrich Schiller (1759-1805) in *Der Verbrecher aus verlorner Ehre* (1786) to the Frenchman Victor Hugo (1802-1885) in *Les Misérables* (1862). They address deviance from a socio-psychological point of view, dissecting the criminal mind, a paramount example of which is *Crime and Punishment* (1866) by the Russian Fyodor Dostoyevsky's (1821-1881) . These examples of humanized criminals run counter to nineteenth-century social discourse, set upon circumscribing first the criminal classes, and eventually the criminal man. As alterity displaces universal humanity, fearing the Other replaces brooding anxieties about becoming a criminal.

***

In *Surveiller et punir : la naissance des prisons*, Michel Foucault theorizes that at the turn of the nineteenth century, the advent of a disciplinary society transferred punishment's hitch point from the body to the soul and that of judgement from the crime to the criminal's soul. Into this "âme," he fits "des passions, des instincts, des anomalies, des infirmités, des inadaptations, des effets de milieu ou d'hérédité" (23). A confusing terminological choice, hence, but his analysis of criminal justice transposing its scope from an act to a being can be compelling: "on punit des agressions, mais à travers elles des agressivités; des viols, mais en même temps des perversions; des meurtres qui sont aussi des pulsions et des désirs" (23). Foucault aims to explain the widespread introduction of detention as punishment between the eighteenth and nineteenth century – and the fact that it was maintained despite unremitting criticism. His argument revolves around the emergence of discipline as "un type de pouvoir, une modalité de l'exercer" (217). He identifies three punitive technologies: corporal punishment under monarchy, 'humanized' punishment – seeking the most effective representation to impress the social body – in projected penal code reforms, and the prison system in their perverted application. He reads criminology, and any form of knowledge, as a part of a vast controlling apparatus.

Theories of criminal behaviour also reveal assumptions regarding human nature. The Classical school of penology, spear-headed by the Italian Cesare Beccaria (1738-1794) and the Englishman Jeremy Bentham (1748-1832) conceived crime as a rational act, like all human actions. The consequent remedy was thought to be the systematic enforcement of a punishment slightly superior to the gain found in infringing upon the law. Penal code reforms took into account this principle, with only meagre results. Rationality as a common human denominator was perhaps a flawed assumption: universality was thence breached, allowing for the criminal to become an Other. Under the pretext of explaining his or her act, normative concepts started circulating between legal and medical discourse and entered the courtroom, supposed to simply assign responsibility, to judge mental constitutions. According to Foucault, sentences now offer "une appréciation de normalité," normalizing being the disciplinary power regime's "art de punir" (25, 185). Yet, by studying criminal deviations from the norm, the burgeoning science of criminology was inevitably (re)defining human nature.

The concept of "human nature" draws a border between human and inhuman conduct, a fine line which fluctuates from one culture to another. In Western societies, this normative construct excluded until recently homosexuality from natural desires and practices, and still rejects paedophilia, necrophilia, bestiality, etc. A normal human being would not be driven by such impulses, would not commit such acts. Another example: social discourse currently tends to normalize mental illnesses. Nevertheless, while depression has become an unfortunate yet almost natural stage in life, heavier conditions such as schizophrenia and psychopathic personalities remain stigmatized as abnormal, as unnatural human conditions. Unfortunately, the constructed nature of a concept can too easily be employed to negate the reality it aims to describe.

Many social and literary critics allow precedence to concepts' construction over their content. Consequently, their relation to power seems to be the only *raison d'être* for so-called 'social constructs' such as human nature, poverty, criminality, and insanity. Hence, Foucault describes the advent of criminology as enabling the double-headed hydra of power and knowledge to grasp, to construct a "prise justifiable" on the criminal (24).

This "assujettissement" turned humans into an "objet de savoir pour un discours à statut " scientifique "," bodies into a "force utile" (28, 29, 30). His interpretation, with its myopic focus on power struggles, is just as reductive as one that would exclude the concept's socio-historical context.

Science's existence within social discourse does not disqualify its reference to an underlying reality. Discourse analyst Marie-Christine Leps reads Doctor Henry Jekyll's discovery "that man is not truly one, but truly two," in Robert Louis Stevenson's classic novella, as a manifestation that "human nature as a monolithic entity" is a "product of social conventions" rather than the "adequate expression of a preexistent reality" (*EUP* 59; Leps 207). Her opposition is oversimplified. Indeed, agreement between the "expression of a preexistent reality" and "social conventions" does not encourage scientists to call into question the former. However, Jekyll's revelation can serve to perfect the "expression," the model, rather than to dismiss it as a mere "product." Indeed, how are we to research and discuss the underlying reality – to make sense of it – if not through constructs? Old-fashioned, I maintain that science produces models that best represent a phenomenon given the available knowledge and the ideological constraints. Changes in the latter and the collection of new data which the model cannot explain will respectively provoke its ethical revaluation and its epistemological collapse.

***

Beyond, or rather before the allegories, there is a first level to a text, rich in historical information. Literary studies, when analysing past works set in a time contemporary to their writing, can inform social history and assist in assessing the range of possible thoughts available to individuals on various political, economic, religious, and social issues in a given culture. Social discourse – the sum of linguistic utterances, written and oral, pictorial representations, and moving images circulated in mass communication – yields the most pragmatic approximation of the limits of the thinkable. The adjective 'social' does not mean that 'society' produces the discourse, transcendentally inserting meaning into the social body. Only individuals can produce meaning: they make sense of

what they observe in their physical existence through idiosyncratic theories influenced by what they read and hear – texts which are products of other individuals, not of society. Discourse, whether argumentative or artistic (if such distinctions are necessary), flows between producers and receivers which respectively encode and decode meaning, with the possible transmutations the process entails.

In the nineteenth century, social discourse can be divided into three subcategories: general public discourse – recorded in newspapers, periodicals, political speeches, and publicity; specialized discourses – found in legal, medical, scientific, etc. articles and treatises; and artistic products – including literary works, theatre performances, paintings, and sculptures.[1] The actual encoding and decoding, which communication studies examine empirically, are very hard to access with past discourses: all that is left is the text. They can nonetheless be inferred by seeking intertextual comparisons within contemporary social discourse.

In his introduction to an article on Oscar Wilde's *The Picture of Dorian Gray*, Joseph Carroll claims that literature has always offered "subjectively evocative depictions of human nature," though the 1970s poststructuralist revolution has suppressed the concept and lead literary critics "to speak of authors, characters, settings, and plots not as individuals situated in a natural world but as discursive formations constituted by the circulation of linguistic, cultural, and ideological energies" (286). I opt for a return to the former: reading characters' speech and thoughts as expressions of an individuality constrained by the frames of thought contemporary to both the work's setting and writing – keeping in mind that they may be hypocritical or unreliably reported by the narrator. One must nevertheless remember that, just as no author can avoid anachronism at some point when representing personal thoughts and social interactions of centuries past, no reader, including the literary scholar, can ever totally escape his or her own context.

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1 These divisions come across, coincidentally, as generalizations of the three sections in Leps's *Apprehending the Criminal*: "Criminology," "The Press," and "Literature." I chanced upon her extraordinarily interesting study while researching my doctoral project last summer. I consequently realized that she had already written my dissertation and that I needed to find a new project.

The pervasive sexually-oriented interpretation of the Gothic genre is such an example. Hollywood and psychoanalysis have anachronistically imposed sexual readings of the Gothic, but refuse to acknowledge evil as its underlying basis. Though it can manifest itself through deviant sexuality, the ultimate threat of the Gothic is the existence of uncontrollable evil, invading the world supernaturally from without – an allegory of immigration? – or, even more dreadful, stemming from within human beings. Furthermore, the essence of Gothic is the inexplicable. Hence, as Donald Lawler states in the conclusion of his article on Stevenson's *Strange Case of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde*, "to organize, complete, or resolve the narrative is, æsthetically, to escape the nightmare of the gothic world" ("Reframing Jekyll and Hyde" 251). Hollywood, at least during its classical period, endlessly delivered neatly unravelled mysteries. Literary criticism should serve to remind of a text's open-endedness, rather than seeking psychoanalytical resolutions which triumph over and dismiss mystical and transcendental fictional realities.

Within this set of presuppositions (there is a reality beneath discourse, meaning is produced by individual subjectivities, Gothic literature stages uncontrollable and inexplicable evil) and personal preferences (reading the text literally, understanding readings contemporary to the text), this thesis aims to identify the conflicting views on criminality set forth within a text and analyse the narrative resolution of this battle of subjectivities. Characters voice certain positions (liable to evolve in the course of the narrative) likely to be found elsewhere in social discourse: close reading will reveal correspondences. These may shed light on elements that the author and the contemporary audience might have taken for granted, clarifying the character's argument. More importantly, they indicate how the work engages with contemporary debates, embedding it bidirectionally in social discourse. To dispel a certain text fetishization which intense close reading is likely to conjure, I compare multiple versions of the works: different published editions, but also drafts and manuscripts. The critic – and its scholarly readers – are thus reminded of the text's instability and richness.

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Foucault presents a short and segmented literary history of criminal narratives scattered in different sections of his *Surveiller et punir.* He first describes how nineteenth-century literature's "monstruosité des forts et des puissants" replaced the subversive "gloire du malfaiteur rustique," found in seventeenth- and eighteenth-century criminal biographies, turning crime into a "privilège exclusif" for those "qui sont réellement grands" (72). The philosopher rightly analyzes criminal biographies as both moralizing (in their propagandizing exemplary quality) and subversive (in their glorification of popular resistance): the hero carries, "sous la morale apparente de l'exemple à ne pas suivre, toute une mémoire de luttes et d'affrontements" (70). However, in Foucault's discussion of gallows speeches, he considers only, or so it seems, condemned highwaymen.

Certain criminal biographies introduce causality while others focus on the criminal's adventurous life. In his sociopoetical analysis of British criminal biographies, Lincoln B. Faller identifies two distinct narrative formulas: the first attempts to make sense of familial murder by invoking a spiritual ætiology and the other, originating from the picaresque tradition, recounts the life of highwaymen in a disparate tale devoid of any attempt to rationalize their behaviour (3-5, 194-195). The former category might not have existed in France, which would explain Foucault's oversight, but it was certainly present in the German States since similar gallows speeches inspired Schiller's poem "Die Kindsmörderin" (1782). The first-person narration, a young mother's last words before being executed for having killed her own bastard child, recalls the tropes of familial murder criminal biographies with its insistence on weakness and human fallibility. Biographers exposed criminal ætiologies as early as 300 years ago.

Foucault associates biography as a technique to psychological causality as a discourse. He constructs the "appareil pénitentiaire" as displaying an interest in the "délinquant"'s life whereas pre-disciplinary "justice pénale" concentrated strictly on the illegal act committed (258). Foucault correlates the establishment of a "réseau de causalité" and the "introduction du « biographique »" at the end of the eighteenth century (256, 255). Seventeenth- and eighteenth-century criminal biographies disrupt his neat reciprocal

relationship. On the one hand, highwaymen's life tales, though biographical, did not define any causality. On the other hand, the existence of criminal biographies promoting an ætiology (based on human depravity) well before Foucault situates the rise of the disciplinary society fatally undermines his argument on a European scale (again, they may not have existed in France). All in all, the philosopher reports that criminal biographies glorified lower-class criminals under the monarchy and claims later, in blatant contradiction, that the newly-introduced biographical writing to which criminals were subjected enabled the post-penal reform disciplinary society to circumscribe the "délinquant" beyond the "infracteur."

Chronological contradictions abound in Foucault's attempt to wring from nineteenth-century fiction a move into upper-class criminality. Again, a later segment introduces contradictions. Indeed, declaring that criminal novels stressed the "étrangeté" of crime (as opposed to the "fait divers" which underscored its proximity), he suggests that mid-century serials such as Eugène Sue's *Les Mystères de Paris* (1842-1843) and Pierre Ponson du Terrail's *Rocambole* (1859-1884) depicted the lowest-class slums ("bas-fonds") as a site of strangeness (292). Thence, the powerful and privileged men did not entirely rob the people of its "ancien orgueil de ses crimes" (72). Lower-class criminals are still represented in nineteenth-century popular literature across Europe.

His portrait of higher-class criminals representations – works presenting murder as a fine art succeeded by detective novels – is equally sketchy. For the first category, he gives only two examples, a "roman noir à Quincey" (either his short-story *The Avenger* [1838] or his essay *Murder Considered as one of the Fine Arts* [1827]) and the "*Château d'Otrante* de Baudelaire" (72). Disturbingly, Charles Baudelaire (1821-1867) wrote no piece entitled "*Château d'Otrante*": the philosopher must be referring to Horace Walpole's gothic novel *The Castle of Otranto* (1764). His short discussion of the "réécriture esthétique du crime" therefore loses all credibility and should be disregarded given its distressful incoherence: not only is the example ascribed to the wrong author, but it stems from the wrong century,

disrupting his literary history narrative.[2] He then turns to detective novels, which "la lutte entre deux purs esprits – celui de meurtrier, celui de détective" characterizes, first under Émile Gaboriau's (1832-1873) pen from which was born detective Lecocq (72). The emphasis shifts from the crime to the investigation, a transposition the comparatist Theodore Ziolkowski has also described.

Ziolkowski, in a chapter entitled "A Portrait of the Artist as a Criminal," elaborates a history of criminal narratives in which three concurring representations of the criminal emerge one after the other (chronologically) to then coexist in twentieth-century literature. He argues that the criminal can operate 1) as a titanic object whose mind is studied, 2) as a specific metaphor for the artist's immorality, and 3) as a general symbol for the entire society's guilt. These figures however only play out "on a literary level" (295). Before introducing this typology, Ziolkowski briefly presents the path criminal narratives followed within popular culture. He describes how British criminal biographies and their descendants, the Newgate novels, presented the titanic criminal hero and his deeds favourably. Sympathy then shifted from the criminal to the detective around 1830, as authors gradually displaced the Titan-like character from one to the other.

Some fictional criminals still retained a titanic quality afterwards. To explain why, Ziolkowski inserts this tentative assertion:

> It is perhaps not going too far to suggest that the titanism of evil, continued in the *Volksbücher*, the shilling pamphlets, and the penny dreadfuls of the nineteenth century, was deflected into the genre of horror fiction, which manifested itself on a literary level in *Frankenstein*, *Dracula*, or *Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde*. (294)

This sentence prompts three remarks. First, Foucault's account of a class displacement in criminal fiction – which I have demonstrated to be quite flawed with his own French examples – is additionally incorrect when applied to British and German literature. The philosopher cites Jonathan Wild (1683-1725), Jack Sheppard (1702-1724), and Claude

2 His description of the "découverte de la beauté et de la grandeur du crime" brings to mind Æstheticism and Decadence, which emerged after the detective novel (72).

Duval or Du Vall (1643-1670)[3] as criminals famous in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries for their biographies and fictionalizations, like France's Cartouche (1693-1721), Louis Mandrin (1725-1755), and Philippe Guilleri (?-1608). However, Victorian penny dreadfuls, akin in form to Sue and Ponson du Terrail's *romans-feuilletons*, revived highwaymen like Dick Turpin (1705-1739) and introduced Sweeney Todd, the demon barber of Fleet Street, keeping alive both titanic and popular criminals' celebration.

Second remark, Ziolkowski's three samples of "literary [...] horror" all hail from Great Britain. They contrast with nineteenth-century continental Europe Romantic narratives of criminality. To return to previously cited works, Hugo and Dostoyevsky narrate Jean Valjean and Raskolnikoff's psychological evolution, linking their infractions to social injustice. These authors vividly represent criminals, even murderers, as human. During the same century, both before and after, British writers have offered Gothic renderings of criminality, situating it outside or on the borderland of humanity.

Last remark, Ziolkowski ousts without any solid justification the three British classics from his criminal narratives literary history to coop them up in "the genre of horror fiction." Granted, the last two do not fit his typology: Stevenson and Stoker's works showcase no criminal born good but corrupted by society, perhaps because in both novels the evil character is not given a narrative voice. However, I would like to challenge his classification and rescue Mary Shelley's creation from the limited categorization of horror fiction by offering a broader study of the unnamed demon. The scientist may engender a being he firmly believes to be evil at the core, but it argues it is led to crime because society rejects it on physiognomic grounds for its inhuman nature. Three editions of *Frankenstein* were published during her lifetime. The first appeared anonymously in 1818. The second, signed, was released in 1823 to benefit from the success of Richard Brinsley Peake's stage adaption, *Presumption; or The Fate of Frankenstein*, which opened the same year. Shelley revised the novel for a third publication in 1831. Her rewritings intensify criminological implications.

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3 Duval was certainly not as notorious as the preceding two, but his French origin might explain why Foucault chose to include him as an example.

Physiognomy and the criminal as Other also shape Stevenson's novella. In addition, a few contemporary reviews, such as those in *The Dial*, the *Overland Monthly*, and *Harper's Magazine*, mention that it is reminiscent of *Frankenstein* (Payne 301; "Recent fiction" 323; "Editor's Study" 972). A single edition was published in 1886. Two fragmentary preparatory drafts on loose notebook sheets and an also fragmentary final manuscript still exist, but yield no criminologically-interesting revisions. In this Victorian text, the maker and his criminal creation share the same body, complicating the delicate operation of allocating responsibility. However, in his autobiographical narrative, Dr. Jekyll will, gradually, discursively convert Mr. Hyde into an inhuman Other. Upon first seeing him, the lawyer Gabriel Utterson, driven by a physiognomic interest in reading his face, similarly classifies the criminal.

Other-ing and physiognomy are also prominent themes in Oscar Wilde's "The Picture of Dorian Gray." Many contemporary reviews compared it – favourably (*The Christian Leader*, *Light*), unfavourably (*The Christian World*, *The Speaker*) or both ("A Revulsion from Realism" in *Lippincott's Monthly Magazine*) – to *Strange Case* (Mason 138; 145, 156; 140; 142; 166). Furthermore, Julian Hawthorne, in "The Romance of the Impossible," also published in *Lippincott's*, situates Wilde's work within a genealogy including both *Frankenstein* and *Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde*, along with Honoré de Balzac's *Peau de chagrin* (Mason 176-178). "The Picture of Dorian Gray" was first published in *Lippincott's* on June 20, 1890. The author revised and augmented the text for a book publication: the 1891 single-volume edition numbers 20 chapters, seven more than in the periodical. Wilde has made interesting additions for a criminological reading. An analysis of Wilde's Gothic piece in conjunction with Shelley and Stevenson's novels should enrich criminal narrative literary history.

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According to Ziolkowski's typology of criminal narratives, the second class of criminal representations to appear in Europe move away from an objectifying gaze and treat the criminal as a metaphor for the artist. The following analogy between crime and art

could fit *Dorian Gray* into this category: "Crime belongs exclusively to the lower orders. [...] I should fancy that crime was to them what art is to us, simply a method of procuring extraordinary sensations" (*III* 214). However, the critic concentrates on three early twentieth-century novelists: André Gide (1869-1951), Thomas Mann (1875-1955), and Hermann Hesse (1877-1962). These "immoralists" employed the criminal as a metaphor for the artist's guilt, marginal position, and attitude opposed to society.

Ziolkowski contends that Goethe, Dostoevsky, and Nietzsche inspired all three. The critic does specify that his list is not exhaustive (Ziolkowski 317). Could Wilde be an additional influence? He knew André Gide personally, even met with him daily for almost a month in Paris in 1891, and – Lord Henry-like – taught him that "nothing is good in moderation" (Fryer 32; Ellmann 253). There were no such encounters with Hesse and Mann: though Wilde was competent in German, he was undeniably more of a francophile (Ellmann 26). Mann sacrilegiously compares Nietzsche – a "Heiliger des Immoralismus" – to Wilde – a "Dandy" – in a 1948 essay: "als Revoltierende, und zwar im Namen der Schönheit Revoltierende gehören sie zusammen" (*Nietzsches Philosophie Im Lichte Unserer Erfahrung* 46).[4] Hesse seems to have taken no notice of Wilde. The latter has nevertheless influenced Gide strongly and Mann tangentially.

Although he fits in the lineage, Wilde is not a precursor, like Goethe, Dostoevsky, and Nietzsche: he is rather the first of these immoralists. However, to correctly insert Wilde into Ziolkowski's typology, I would have needed to analyse Gide, Hesse, and Mann's novels, which were written after the Irishman's death. I am personally more interested in assessing how a literary work responds to its predecessors as well as to contemporary theories circulated in social discourse. Furthermore, I deal with the criminal's objective status and subjective justifications, not with his metaphorical qualities. Hence, though I do believe a very good case could be made for Wilde's introduction into Ziolkowski's immoralist grouping, I have refrained from making such a demonstration since it is quite beside my main argument.

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4 The English translation reads "saint of immoralism," "dandy," and "they belong together as rebels, rebels in the name of beauty" ("Nietzsche's Philosophy in the Light of Recent History" 158, 172).

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This thesis brings together three classics of British nineteenth-century literature – Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein*, Robert Louis Stevenson's *Strange Case of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde*, and Oscar Wilde's *The Picture of Dorian Gray* – to offer a new reading of the criminal elements at the heart of each text. My objective is to identify the conception of criminality the different characters' voice. Narrative structure must then be interrogated to determine which is preponderant. Attention shall be directed to two specific credences: the criminal as Other, known in penology and criminology as the notion of *homo criminalis*, and the ugly as evil, pseudo-scientifically studied as physiognomy. The following questions shall guide my analysis: (1) how does physiognomy intervene in the understanding of the criminal? (2) how is the criminal Other than human? (3) why does this character kill? Possible origins for each ætiology shall be retraced in earlier texts.

Chapter 1, entitled 'A Portrait of the Monster as Criminal, or the Criminal as Outcast: Opposing Ætiologies of Crime in Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein*,' discusses the opposition between Dr. Victor Frankenstein's physiognomic prejudice and his creature's discourse designating social exclusion as the cause of its mischief. Frankenstein's accusations rely mostly on its creation's appearance, borrowing from Johann Kaspar Lavater's (1741-1801) principles. The monstrous creature counter-balances its maker's presumptions by interpreting its own criminal behaviour similarly to Christian Wolf's self-analysis in Schiller's short story "Der Verbrecher aus Verlorene Ehre." The novel additionally borrows from criminal biography tropes.

Chapter 2, entitled 'Too Close and Cruel for Comfort: From "This, too, was myself" to "another than myself" in R. L. Stevenson's *Strange Case of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde*,' offers an in-depth analysis of Jekyll's evolving understanding of Edward Hyde's nature. It also addresses Utterson's physiognomic speculations and their scientific and theological roots. References to the biological concept of atavism and the psychopathological categories of moral insanity and dual personality disclose interactions with contemporary

social discourse. Stevenson questions human nature by illustrating the tragic consequences of pruning the soul's natural duality.

Finally, Chapter 3, entitled '"Poisonous influences" and "the real Dorian Gray": Criminal Responsibility in Oscar Wilde's *The Picture of Dorian* Gray,' revisits the epitome of physiognomy and the desperate need to construct the criminal as Other than one's self. Wilde gives a supernatural indicator of evil in the form of his protagonist's portrait, literally depicting immorality, and its criminal corollaries, as decrepitude. This last chapter, the longest, is organized in two parts: Lord Henry Wotton's general discourse on criminality, linked to that of Wilde in his criticism, and all three main characters' rationalizations of Dorian Gray's sinful and criminal lifestyle.

Wilde's prose is filled with self-plagiarism. His longer critical essays, published between 1889 and 1891, are at times rewritings of his 1880s journalistic reviews; Lord Henry's aphorisms turn up in the 1890s plays; and the unfortunate author's prison writing, commonly known as *De Profundis*, reshuffles many themes dealt with in his earlier prose. Hence, Wilde's criticism clarifies Lord Henry's similar class-based two-fold criminological stance: poverty causes crime, which, like art for the higher classes, improves individualism in the lower classes. Furthermore, references to contemporary thinkers' texts – most notably those of sociologist Herbert Spencer (1820-1903) and anarchist Prince Pyotr Kropotkin (1842-1921) – complete the analysis when Wilde's position remains unclear. Chapter 3 will then briefly recapitulate Basil Hallward and Lord Henry's opposing theories on Dorian: does he act under Lord Henry's influence or has the latter revealed the younger man's true self? The criminal's scapegoatism will thence be explored in detail. Influence – ideological, genetic, even astrological – serves as an escape from responsibility.

Chapter 1. A Portrait of the Monster as Criminal, or the Criminal as Outcast: Opposing Ætiologies of Crime in Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein*

"All men had offended me, for all were better and happier than me. [...] much was promised to my hunger for revenge."
Friedrich Schiller, *The Criminal from Lost Honour*

The epigraph presents the vengeful sentiments ostracism brewed in Christian Wolf in words very similar to those Mary Shelley's monster utters: the creature interprets its own behaviour, identifying causes that counter-balance its maker's presumptions. Indeed, *Frankenstein* showcases two competing discourses on criminality, foreshadowing the nature vs. nurture debate that still endures today. Both perspectives adapt tropes that can be found in criminal biographies, though offering a different take on the relationship between human nature and criminality. Influence from Johann Kaspar Lavater on the one hand and from Friedrich Schiller on the other shapes these ætiologies.

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Murder, in the Frankenstein family's opinion, is not a deed everyone is capable of committing. This consideration arises with Justine Moritz's accusation. Ernest, when welcoming home his elder brother Victor and announcing the unfortunate news, exclaims his surprise and dismay at discovering that she had "suddenly become capable of so frightful, so appalling a crime" (206).[5] If the young man considers the girl as a *person* incapable of such a rash killing, other comments extend this inability to all human beings.

Justine herself pushes criminal capability outside of human reach and into the realm of the supernatural. In what might however simply be a figure of speech, she expresses her

5 Quotes from *Frankenstein* are taken from the 1831 edition. In this case, the 1818 and 1823 editions read "all at once become so extremely wicked?" a wording less designed for a criminological interpretation.

relief at learning that Elizabeth does not believe her "a creature capable of a crime which none but the devil himself could have perpetrated" (62). The discourse of human incapability to commit crime is also present in Victor's stance. He holds that "Justine, and indeed every human being, was guiltless of this murder," a conviction indeed brought on by his detection of another suspect (57). Nevertheless, neither confession nor irrefutable evidence enables him to incriminate the creature. Therefore, a strong belief in the incapacity of any human being to kill such a sweet child tints, and strengthens, his assurance. Capability is at the heart of the Frankenstein house's discourse on murder. Furthermore, Victor firmly considers criminality, or at least homicide, to emerge from a state of inhumanity, to be the prerogative of beings other than human.

This contrasts sharply with the prevalent view in seventeenth- and eighteenth-century England, according to which universal human depravity caused crime. Criminal biographies, for instance, emphasized common traits between murderers and the rest of the population. Pamphleteers reminded readers of their human condition – shared with criminals – which rendered each and every one capable of the worst atrocities (Faller 54). For instance, Gilbert Burnet records in his *Last Confession, Prayers, and Meditations of Lieutenant John Stern*, that the murderer, condemned in 1682, had previously "thought himself as little capable of committing such a crime, which should bring him to such an end, as any man was" (10). Furthermore, sampling early seventeenth-century personal memorabilia, Cynthia B. Herrup points out that "[n]one of the conventional assurances of social status, family harmony or good fortune did more than temporarily assuage anxiety about human frailty and vulnerability to temptation" (109). Indeed, compilations such as *Lives Of The Most Remarkable Criminals*, published in 1735, attested even gentlemen could succumb to vice and become pirates or murderers (*LMRC I* 184, 202). No one was safe, for depravity lay in the core of every human being.

Nevertheless, some individuals did break the law and others did not. What could explain this discrepancy? The contemporary ætiology of crime revolved around criminals' greater indulgence in the universal "propensity to sin" (Faller 61). In the eighteenth century, the population understood that this leniency had, in time, "hardened them emotionally and

morally" (61). By starting with seemingly insignificant sins such as breaking Sabbath, people would embark upon a deviant *train de vie* that hardened their hearts, eventually weakening their will, and in the end compromising their mind or judgement (99):

> in the present Age, the Depravity of Men's Morals being greater than ever, they addict themselves so entirely to their Lust and sensual Pleasures, that having no Relish left for more innocent Entertainments, they think no Price too great to purchase those lewd Enjoyments, to which, by a continued Series of such Actions, they have habituated themselves beyond their own Power to retire (*LMRC II* 245-246)

A much quoted passage from Ben Jonson's *Eastward Ho* (1605) humorously illustrates this "'domino theory' of human character": "Of sloth cometh pleasure, of pleasure cometh riot, of riot comes whoring, of whoring comes spending, of spending comes want, of want comes theft, of theft comes hanging" (Herrup 109; IV, 2). Criminal biographies did not seek to expose such logically causal chain reactions, content with identifying in a murderer's past tell-tale si(g)ns. Ultimately, criminals were neither more nor less depraved than any other individual, but by giving way to sin, they opened their hearts, wills, and minds to illegal mischief.

The assumption at the heart of this ætiology – universal human depravity – did not rule all minds. Philosophers of the Enlightenment, most notably Jean-Jacques Rousseau, challenged such a pessimistic view of humanity in the eighteenth century. By refusing to blame any human for William's murder, Victor Frankenstein participates in this renewed optimism. Nevertheless, stating that humans are born good-natured does not resolve the interrogation about criminality. How do thinkers make sense of criminality in this new configuration? Explanations in which the elite could find comfort arise with the search for *homo criminalis*, a delimited group of individuals who indulge in crime and, in more radical theories, must be eradicated.[6] The "criminal class" theory as well as criminological

6 Michel Foucault states that, with the penal Code reforms of the end of the eighteenth century, the criminal became "un « monstre »," "« hors nature »" rather than "« hors-la-loi»" as under the Ancien Régime, but does not support his claim with evidence (92, 94). He only explains that the right to punish lay no longer in the sovereign' vengeance against his personal enemy, but in the defence of society, turning the criminal into a common enemy, a traitor to the entire community. The subsequent quantum leap to a "monstre

anthropology flourish during the nineteenth century. John Jacob Tobias traces the former concept's appearance back to the end of the 1810s (52). The assumption delineates a proper "*caste*" operating along the lines of its own "peculiar slang, mode of thinking, habits, and arts of living" (Wade 159). Cesare Lombroso best embodies the latter Italian school. He wrote a treatise, *L'Uomo delinquente* (1876), recording precise characteristics regarding the criminal's physical appearance. Hence, after *Frankenstein*'s first publication, scientific ætiologies emerged to explain criminality within the new optimistic paradigm of human nature.

I suggest that Mary Shelley's novel also opposes universal human depravity, not in scientific terms, but in a format arguably rooted in criminal biographies. She introduces a murderer treated as distinctly different from human beings, which is why I chose to treat it as neutral, though the text considers it masculine. Nevertheless, *Frankenstein* contains no single rationalization, contrarily to developing criminological theories. The fictional work provides not one but two discrete ætiologies to replace the religious-laden attempt at explaining crime in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Indeed, two characters voice their own views on criminality: the creature and Frankenstein, the criminal and its creator.

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As the notion that his creation would be William's murderer strikes Victor, he convinces himself of his intuition's truthfulness by asserting that no human being could have committed such a horrible deed. The thought flashes across his mind with the certainty of a revelation:

> Could he be (I shuddered at the conception) the murderer of my brother? No sooner did that idea cross my imagination, than I became convinced of its truth; [...] Nothing in human shape could have destroyed the fair child. *He* was the murderer! I could not doubt it. The mere presence of the idea was an irresistible proof of the fact. (54-55)

This passage, commented on by different critics we shall discuss, offers a crucial key to uncover the thought process that led Frankenstein to identify the creature as the criminal.

« vomi » par la nature" requires justification (93).

In Victor's mind, certainty is equated with truth. Jules Law explains that such an illumination is a Romantic trope. William Blake, in "Proverbs of Hell" (1790-1793), describes it succinctly: "Every thing possible to be believ'd is an image of truth" (l. 38). Ideas move directly from the realm of thought to that of reality in the Romantic conception of creative imagination (Law 980). The process is nonetheless strengthened by an important bias. Commenting on the same passage, Scott J. Juengel clarifies:

> "On the one hand, Frankenstein projects wickedness onto the creature based on his disfigured 'shape' and deformed 'aspect,' a verdict that has 'an irresistible proof of the fact,' despite Frankenstein's limited knowledge of his creature's history and temperament; on the other hand, Frankenstein's intuitions prove prescient when the creature later confesses to the crime." (362)

What was first only imagined is eventually verified and proves to be true. I agree with these statements, but believe more is at work then creative imagination alone. I would argue that it is prejudice's support that allows the initial suspicion to leap into reality.

Preconceptions regarding appearances play an undeniable role in the perception of criminals. The Oxford English Dictionary traces the term's etymology to *pre-* "before" and *iudicium* "judgement, sentence," hence to judge beforehand, before having confronted the facts and the accused. A very explicit example can be found in Robert Boreman's 1655 account of his first encounter with a fratricide: "I expected to see the head of a Monster, (a Beare or a Tigre) set upon the shoulders of a man" (qtd. in Faller 97).[7] The mind mostly constructs prejudice around exterior manifestations since they impress it first and enable it to produce a quick, and often arbitrary, judgement.

Be Frankenstein's truth-laden belief provoked or simply encouraged by prejudice, a close reading reveals that the creature's form – instead of its essence for example – shapes, or confirms at the least, Victor's first apprehensions.[8] To describe whom – or that which –

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7 See Robert Boreman, *A Mirrour of Mercy and Iudgement, or an exact and true Narrative of the Life and Death of Freeman Sonds*. London: Thomas Dring, 1655. 7.

8 It is unclear if the statement "Nothing in human shape could have destroyed the fair child" comes as an afterthought or the rationale of a previous thought. The question lies in the concordance of chronological

could not "have destroyed the fair child," the tortured brother does not choose the words 'no human being' but rather "[n]othing in human shape." The creature's hideousness, as Other than a "human shape," precipitates its creator's prejudgement and accusation. What he deems a "deformity of its aspect more hideous than belongs to humanity" undoubtedly casts the creature for the part of murderer (54). Building on the believed truthfulness of its guilt, Victor even finds a motive to support his accusation: its "delight" must lie "in carnage and misery" (55). This reasoning will be subject to comparison with the accused's alleged motivation, and might thence be rejected. One of Victor's subsequent assumptions is clearly unfounded, for none can credit the creature with "rash ignorance" (206).[9] Imagination does not create a transcendental reality; it forges one's own along the lines of one's prejudices.

Though a crucial moment, this encounter is not the first instance of prejudice the maker contrives against his creation. Frankenstein presupposes meanings for his creation's actions from the very beginning of its existence. When the exhausted scientist awakens from his blissful nap after the fatal galvanism, the creature is hovering over him, "one hand was stretched out, seemingly to detain [him]" (40). Victor interprets the gesture violently, though nothing points to that particular reading, apart from his own prejudice concerning what he repeatedly identifies as a "monster." In its creator's eyes, this appellation sums up both the creature's exterior and interior qualities.

Presenting "unearthly ugliness" as a stigma of a devilishly evil nature consists in an extreme form of physiognomic argument (73). In a chapter entitled "Von der Harmonie der moralischen und körperlichen Schönheit" of the first volume of his *Physiognomische Fragmente zur Beförderung der Menschenkenntnis und Menschenliebe* (1775),[10] Lavater sets out to prove the existence of a consonance between moral and physical attributes using

and narrative sequence. If Frankenstein's narration adequately renders his thought process, the sentence can be read as the emergence, within the scientist's consciousness, of the unconscious reason for which he accused his creation. Otherwise, if this explanation occurred before its inevitable conclusion, the narrator chose to delay its presentation to keep up the pace and render fully the deadly revelation's instantaneousness.

9 This passage has been added in the third edition.

a *reductio ad absurdum* based on divine principles. God, Who is perfect, would not allow discrepancy between moral and corporeal beauty. This perspective is epitomized, both conceptually and linguistically, in Frankenstein's warning to Walton: "His soul is as hellish as his form" (159). Physiognomy thus forges Victor's prejudice.

Mary Shelley must have been acquainted with Lavater's theories since her mother, Mary Wollstonecraft (1759-1797), "made an abridgment of Lavater's *Physiognomy*" and mentioned him in her *Letters written during a short residence in Sweden, Norway and Denmark* (Godwin 65; Wollstonecraft 228). It might also be noted that Thomas Holcroft (1745-1809), her father's closest friend, translated the *Essays on Physiognomy.* Shelley was even subject, as a child, to a "precautionary 'reading,'" as Juengel terms it, though her father did not give total credence to the pseudo-science (355n). It can thus be reasonably assumed that she knew the Lavatarian principles.

Physiognomy in *Frankenstein* becomes central as it dissolves the criminal's defence. The vision of a "filthy mass" which rekindles both "horror and hatred" constantly stiffens Frankenstein's compassionate feelings (110). On each encounter, Frankenstein reads wickedness in its "countenance": before hearing its autobiography on Montanvert, he speaks of its "bitter anguish, combined with disdain and malignity" while as they meet in Scotland he remarks upon its "utmost extent of malice and treachery" (73, 129). Physiognomic principles no longer simply serve as a basis for prejudice, but Victor naturalizes them into an ideology on which he grounds his ruling. Indeed, the unproven assumptions endure, though contradicted by the Other's discourse once the dominant party allows for it to express itself. The scientist even questions his creation's own subjectivity by claiming he has "endued [it] with the mockery of a soul still more monstrous" than its "monstrous Image" (221).[11] Physiognomy dismisses all the criminal's possibilities of asserting himself.

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10 "On the Harmony Between Moral and Corporeal Beauty" in *Essays on Physiognomy*, translated by Thomas Holcroft.

11 This passage has been added in the third edition.

Another element distinguishes Victor's treatment of criminality from his creation's discourse: he focuses on the criminal acts. The first time he confronts the creature, he accuses it of multiple murders (74). Yet, he is disposed to hear its story, out of curiosity blended with compassion, hoping to learn whether his suspicions were founded or not. Once the creature has reached the conclusion of its tale, his maker concentrates again on the last events recounted, most notably William's assassination and the framing of Justine as the culprit. The audience in the Genovese courtroom echoes the constant concern with the act rather than the accused as Victor perceives it is fixed upon "the imagination of the enormity she [Justine] was supposed to have committed," suggesting the trait is shared by the entire society (58). Michel Foucault considers the judgement of the criminal's person rather than his or her act – especially criminology's consequent construction of a "connaissance « positive » des délinquants et de leurs espèces" – to be one of the multiple dangerous drifts of the disciplinary society, which replaces the "infracteur" by the "délinquant" (258). Indeed, with Foucault, "savoir" is relentlessly suspicious, for it undeniably rhymes with "pouvoir" (27). I argue psychological readings of criminality can just as well redistribute blame onto the entire social body as they can essentialize. Ultimately, Frankenstein forges his interpretation of the criminal in relation to its actions and appearance, a rather simplistic approach denying it any psychological development and, consequently, his own responsibility concerning its evil turn.

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The creature also retraces the cause of its rejection to its appearance. As it tells its maker: "I had sagacity enough to discover that the unnatural hideousness of my person was the chief object of horror with those who had formerly beheld me," for "a fatal prejudice clouds their eyes" (99, 100). It thus forms the plan to enter society through "the good-will and mediation" of two beings it believes will not demonstrate the same prejudice: a blind man and a child (99). The creature reasons that its physical aspect will be kept hidden from the former's conscience, countering all possible influence, while the later would not have yet integrated, due to his young age, the cultural physiognomic prejudice.

On the earliest occasion, the idea proves successful, since old De Lacey is willing to help what he understands to be "a human creature" (100). Still more generously, he promises not to reject him "even if [he] were really criminal; for that can only drive [him] to desperation, and not instigate [him] to virtue" (100-101). Unfortunately, the three younger cottagers return, interrupt the conversation, and drive the visitor away. Yet, the plan seemed promising enough for the creature to eventually return to the cottage, hoping, with more time, to effectively win the father's heart. Disappointed by Felix's desire to flee, it however burns the house down, committing its first crime. Its initial attempt to enter society by approaching an unprejudiced individual failed due to the intervention of one that was prejudiced.

Afterwards, the creature conceives of a new arrangement upon seeing a child wandering in the woods. It expects that "this little creature [is] unprejudiced, and [has] lived too short a time to have imbibed a horror of deformity," and thus purports to "educate him as [its] companion and friend" (106). Solitude would then be a long past nightmare, and the creature could conceivably aspire to integrate society through its pupil's mediation. Regrettably, its calculations were inexact, for fairy tales inculcate the "horror of deformity" at a very early age, as demonstrates William's belief that he is confronted with "an ogre" (106). When the youngster invokes his father's name, the abandoned creation's resentment against its maker explodes into its second crime and first murder. Retrospectively, its two experiments to incorporate human society end in a frustration causing criminal acts.

The creature's quest to ease its pain and loneliness continues, though it no longer expects to join in the human fellowship. It therefore turns to its creator, asking, as did Adam in *Paradise Lost*, to make another like itself but from the other sex (8.379-411). The unfortunate being claims it should then be content and leave the sight of human eyes forever. When the scientist destroys the creature's half-finished hopes of happiness, it responds once more in a burst of rage, culminating with Henry Clerval's murder, for which Victor himself is framed.

After this incident, the creature is "heart-broken and overcome" (168). Its feelings of revenge have died out, leaving only pity regarding Victor and abhorrence towards itself. Learning that "he, the author at once of [its] existence and of its unspeakable torments," is planning his wedding nevertheless rekindles the creature's thirst for reprisal (168). The injustice is too poignant: "he sought his own enjoyment," explains the indignant being, "in feelings and passions from the indulgence of which I was for ever barred" (168). Elizabeth's death in its hands evens the injury of seeing one's mate being destroyed.

The circumstances of each of these four crimes demonstrate how deeply the creature's criminality is interlocked with social rejection caused by its own external deformity. It feels the victim of extreme injustice – "Shall each man [...] find a wife for his bosom, and each beast have his mate, and I be alone?" – which it hopes to atone by securing the mediation of a human companion. But all its efforts prove useless (130). Striving to prove itself worthy of living in a community even becomes counterproductive when it saves the drowning young girl and is thanked by being shot. Injured both physically and emotionally by society, the desperate being engages in a vendetta against its maker, responsible, initially, of having brought it into an inhospitable world, but chiefly, of having abandoned it. In its closing confession, it asks Walton: "Am I to be thought the only criminal, when all human kind sinned against me?" (169). Frankenstein's focus lied on physical appearances and mischievous deeds, and he imagined the assassin to relish "in carnage and misery" (55). By bringing attention to the workings of its own criminal mind, the creature suggests a representation akin to the first type introduced by Ziolkowski: the criminal as Titan.

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Ziolkowski identifies a number of characteristics gradually appearing in literary texts, each offering a more precise image of the criminal. In the first sample work, *Le Neveu de Rameau* (1762), Denis Diderot depicts the criminal, a titanic figure, with an objective detachment focused on his mind. In the second, *Der Verbrecher aus verlorner*

Ehre (1786), Schiller has added two crucial characteristics to the titanic criminal's representation: 1) born good as all human beings, society corrupts him, yet 2) once driven to crime, he wilfully chooses his evil doings. These characteristics form the basis of a literary manifestation of the criminal that will culminate with Jean Genet in the mid-twentieth century.

Though subsequent works will follow in Schiller's footsteps, his conception of criminality will not stand altogether unchallenged. The first of two novelties he incorporated will undergo a transformation in the 1810s with Romantics such as Clemens Brentano (1778-1842) and E.T.A. Hoffmann (1776-1822). Under the influence of Jean-Jacques Rousseau and the *Sturm und Drang*, Schiller had placed responsibility for criminality on society, but Romantic *Naturphilosophie* shifts it to nature, giving the criminal representation a psychoanalytical twist *avant la lettre*.[12] *Frankenstein*, however, does not seem to follow this path; the creature's claim that ostracism is responsible for its criminal career stands much closer to *Der Verbrecher*. It thus seems safe to assume ancestry must be looked for in Schiller's novella and not in Brentano's or Hoffmann's works, though temporally closer.

Interestingly, that precise story has been examined as a possible literary source for Mary Shelley's novel. In an article published in 1915, Geoffrey Buyers called attention to similarities between the creature and Christian Wolf, Schiller's *Verbrecher*. His proof however lacked a determining element: how could Mary Shelley have been acquainted with the German story, if she could not read it in the original language? Syndy McMillen Conger dusts off the hypothesis in 1980 and further supports the argument by indicating three translations, since then uncovered, that were available in England before the penning down of *Frankenstein*. Indeed, Schiller's tale is embedded in Peter Teuthold's *The Necromancer* (1794), for the most part a translation of Karl Friedrich Kahlert's *Der Geisterbanner* (1792). It was also published on its own in two periodicals: as "The Criminal" in *The German Museum* (1800) and as "The Criminal from Lost Honour" in

12 Ziolkowski concludes his discussion of the criminal as Titan by incorporating Dostoevsky, Nietzsche, and Jean Genet.

Universal Magazine (1809-1810). Mary Shelley could thus have had access to Schiller's short story in English and used it as an inspiration for the treatment of criminality in her work.

Conger posits three potential mediations through which the writer could have heard of the story: by Matthew Lewis (1775-1818), author of *The Monk*; by Percy Bysshe Shelley (1793-1822), her soon-to-become husband; and by William Godwin (1756-1836), her father. The former visited the Shelleys at Lake Leman in 1816 and told many tales, one of which Mary transcribed in her journal. *Der Verbrecher aus verlorner Ehre* might have been one of the others. Additionally, P.B. Shelley owned a copy of *The Necromancer* which she could have read. Finally, the latter consulted Teuthold's book in 1795, and could have been interested in periodicals such as *The German Museum* and *Universal Magazine*, rendering Schiller's story available for his daughter during her childhood. These are all plausible hypotheses concerning Mary Shelley's acquaintance with the German tale.

To sustain his argument, Geoffrey Buyers dwells on semiotic similarities. Conger successfully demonstrates their frailty. She rather draws attention to three situational resemblances and to correspondence in both form and general thematic. Though the former are mildly convincing,[13] the latter are much more promising. They shall be addressed in the course of the last two sections of this chapter along with the creature's will to crime. This last element is the remaining piece of evidence required to incorporate *Frankenstein* in Ziolkowski's theorization of the criminal as Titan. The previous section has amply demonstrated that within its discourse, the creature presents itself as a good soul condemned to rejection – thus corrupted – by both its 'father' and humanity in its entirety.

13 The first concerns both criminals' ugliness. Indeed, Schiller's character was disfigured by a horse kick in his youth. However, Christian's deformity is not as central as the creature's physiognomy, because it is referred to only in the beginning of the story. The second draws a comparison between each criminal's encounter with a child. Conger is right to assert that the two instances are "pivotal episodes," though wrong, in *Frankenstein*, in affirming it "precipitates the causal chain of crimes" (226). Indeed, as it has been described previously, the creature's first crime is pyromania called upon by the cottagers' desertion. The connection between Christian's appeal to commute a death sentence into a life in the military and the creature's request for a mate is simply too far fetched (McMillen Conger 228).

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Pointing out a formal similarity, Conger remarks on the fact that both Schiller's and Shelley's stories encompass "criminal autobiographies" presented as "speeches aimed at attaining forgiveness" (225). This form draws its origins from seventeenth- and eighteenth-century English criminal biographies, collected in *The Newgate Calendar: The Malefactors' Bloody Register* starting in the mid-eighteenth century. Adaptation of criminal biography tropes in *Frankenstein* episodes can be more convincingly argued than resemblances with Schiller's short story. I shall examine three such similarities.

Justine's accusation includes two frequent scenes leading to condemnation in criminal biographies. First comes a convenient discovery of evidence, such as finding in the young girl's pocket the picture William was wearing on the night of his death. In criminal biographies, such "admirable discoveries" (qtd. in Faller 74)[14] would be accounted for as divine interventions. Nevertheless, Faller points out that, gradually, as the population moved away from superstition, His workings seemed less miraculous, more invisible (75). Hence, God's absence in the *Frankenstein* episode does not contradict the possibility of it adapting a frequent criminal biography trope.

The second such instance can be found in the state of confusion Justine enters immediately after being presented with the evidence: "On being charged with the fact, the poor girl confirmed the suspicion in a great measure by her extreme confusion of manner" (57). In criminal biographies, this was also understood as a direct implication of the accused's guilt, but specifically sent down from Heaven. Faller puts it nicely: "God had no need to point a supernatural finger [...] at most murderers, so easily could He indict them by disordering their minds, spreading them over with confusion and fear" (76). Again, the possible connection is not diminished by the lack of divine reference in *Frankenstein*. Faller speculates further on the possible cultural programming to which this belief could lead. Indeed, it might have increased the murderer's nervousness at being betrayed by that very nervousness (78). Justine indeed understands her confusion worked against her case

14 See William Lupton. *A Discourse Of Murther, Preach'd In The Chapel At Lincoln's-Inn*. 1725. 17.

and strives during her trial to seem calmer (58). Though significant, the two resemblances – in the evidence's discovery and the accused's state of confusion – might gesture toward a common social discourse disseminating the belief that culprits are doomed to be caught.

The most telling element adapted from criminal biographies is the final repentance the creature displays in its confession. Robert Walton dismisses it as "superfluous" once the dirty deeds are done (167). His opinion is quite contrary to the one expressed in criminal biographies, for which redemption through public confession was a crucial means of reintegrating the criminal in society – albeit before ejecting him or her for eternity (Faller 93). Foucault alternatively reads these public confessions as a confirmation of the trial and the condemnation's worth: "La justice avait besoin que sa victime authentifie en quelque sorte le supplice qu'elle subissait" (69). Unsettlingly, chaplains were charged with wringing out confessions by invoking eternal damnation (Faller 88). Justine, for instance, is "besieged" by her confessor who "threatened excommunication and hell fire" (62). Public confession could thus be a very dubious proof of the condemned's culpability and of justice's righteousness.

The creature's confession, unlike Justine's, is freely offered during its encounter with Walton. Bowed over its maker's remains, it "utter[s] wild and incoherent self-reproaches," unreservedly admitting "That is also my victim!" and asking him to be pardoned (167). Its repentance is manifest and unrestrained, as confessors preferred. For instance, Burnet was satisfied by one of Lieutenant John Stern's accomplices' attitude: he "was free and ingenuous in his confession and expressed great sorrow for what he had done" (9). By demonstrating that murderers could be redeemed, criminal biographies argued that "conscience was active, at least potentially, in all men" (Faller 89). It is also active in *Frankenstein*'s criminal, continuously tortured by remorse. Its confession mirrors the exemplary behaviour sought in criminal biographies as well as their figures of speech. Indeed, the unfortunate being states that "crime[15] has degraded [it] beneath the meanest animal" (227, 169). The use of this frequent bestial metaphor can be compared with John

15 The 1818 and 1823 editions read "vice."

Stern's alleged reflection on "what a beast he had been" (10). Though different than Justine's, the creature's confession also seems to stem from criminal biographies.

Returning to Ziolkowski, the creature's final confession demonstrates the second element identified in Schiller's tale, namely, the will to crime. Though its "heart was fashioned to be susceptible of love and sympathy," it had to adapt to "an element which [it] had *willingly* chosen" (167, 168, emphasis added). Consequently to Elizabeth's death, "[e]vil thenceforth became [its] good" (168). Responsibility thus does not uniquely lie on society's side, but also on the individual. Free will is asserted in both Schiller's and Shelley's tales.

Conger perceives that "[e]ach tale dramatizes a monstrous metamorphosis: creatures with the potential for nobility are transformed by fellow humans into fiends" (228). In *Frankenstein*, however, this outlook is limited to the creature's discourse. Hence, Conger's statement takes for granted that the creature's perspective ultimately comes across the entire narrative, bypassing Victor's. This premise has yet to be demonstrated. Even after the creature's last words – its only speech free of its maker's commentary – both Walton and the reader are left wondering whether it was telling the truth.

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By framing Frankenstein's story in an epistolary novel, the narrative structure allows for the reader to evaluate on a personal basis each of the two 'criminological' theories' credibility. Indeed, the presence of Robert Walton as a mediator opens up a space to better assess the Swiss doctor's subjectivity and to take a critical stance regarding his autobiography. The creature's eloquence induces suspicion in both men, but the same could be applied to Victor's own persuasiveness.

Frankenstein's creature is highly eloquent, but its horrific physique leads his creator to believe it deceitful by exhibiting a Satan-like rhetorical capacity. Both Victor and Robert acknowledge the creature's eloquence. Indeed, though the former warned the latter that his creation was both "eloquent and persuasive, and once [its] words had even power over [his]

heart," the amateur geographer admits he "was at first touched by the expressions of [its] misery" (159, 168). Unfortunately, the being's elegant speech is in direct conflict with its physiognomy, thus its words are worthless when directed to one who can look upon him.

As the novel draws to a close, the explorer's comments on his new found friend's eloquence offer an interesting parallel with the exact quality he warns the creature will exalt. "He spoke this with a voice so modulated to the different feelings expressed in his speech," writes Walton, "with an eye so full of lofty design and heroism, that can you wonder that these men were moved" (164). Is this ability to convey emotion to one's audience not as dangerous as the hideous being's "powers of eloquence and persuasion" (168)? I believe the Englishman suggests, involuntarily, the same caution should be applied with regard to Frankenstein's discourse.

Ultimately, *Frankenstein* criticism is always bound to address the question of creation, so central that it is referred to in the subtitle: *The modern Prometheus*.[16] In the battle of subjectivities, the fact that Victor created the alleged monster actually tips the balance toward the latter's criminological views. Indeed, the scientist defends physiognomic considerations while the creature argues that same prejudice induced its solitude – which in turn gave rise to a criminal rage and despair. In truth, the scientist did create a hideous being. Hence, if Victor Frankenstein symbolizes the ideas for which he stands, the criminal was created by physiognomic prejudice, which summarizes the creature's own conception. Hence, though both positions are credible, the storyline seems to support the creature's view that the criminal might be a monster, but created by those it vengefully hurts.

To conclude, I would like to expand upon another of Conger's statements. She argues that "[l]ike Schiller's tale, Mary Shelley's novel aims to create a revolution in attitudes, to encourage compassion and humility: compassion for our less fortunate fellows and humility concerning our own rather overrated superiority to them" (228). One may

16 In Greek mythology. Prometheus is credited with the creation of humankind from clay.

replace "less fortunate fellows" by 'criminals.' Indeed, provided one accepts the creature's version, the criminal is stripped of any congenital inferiority and acts as any human being would have. This is not unlike criminal biographies.

Chapter 2. Too Close and Cruel for Comfort: From "This, too, was myself" to "another than myself" in R. L. Stevenson's *Strange Case of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde*

> *"That every murderer is presumably a madman is a comfortable doctrine which men are naturally much inclined to accept. To admit that a horrible crime has been deliberately committed by a human being, is indirectly to reflect on ourselves, especially if the criminal, as a refined and educated person, represents human nature at its best. [...] we are easily persuaded to believe in the existence of insanity, which, by disallowing to the criminal the possession of a nature such as ours, relieves us from an inference unflattering to ourselves."*
> "Criminal Irresponsibility of the Insane," *Law Magazine and Review*, 1 April 1872

The epigraph epitomizes the nineteenth-century (and onward) need to wring human nature of its criminal potential by classifying the criminal as different and abnormal in any and every possible way. In Robert Louis Stevenson's classic double's tale *Strange Case of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde*, the scientist regards his alter ego as "natural and human" until he commits a motiveless murder, after which he becomes a being in which "nothing human" exists (*EUP* 61, 70). Between these two extremes, in a rare moment during which he implies that he, rather than some Other, is the culprit, the doctor diagnoses himself with moral insanity, a psycho-medical category of mental illness. Two further conditions on humanity's frontier come into play when the lawyer Gabriel Utterson, a friend of his unaware that Hyde and he are the same person, suggests biological atavism and demonic intervention to account for the deformity which all note upon meeting the villain. He is appalled by the mysterious ties which bind to him the respectable Henry Jekyll. The latter's horror, and rhetoric dissociation, grows as he witnesses the extent of "pure evil"'s depravation (*EUP* 62). After embracing his natural duality, Jekyll is forced to recognize that

a constitutive and natural pole – evil in his case – reveals itself unfathomably extreme when separated from its antagonist.

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Edward Hyde's physical appearance is thought to supply fundamental clues about his nature. The Victorian age kept well alive physiognomic beliefs with manuals popularizing the reading of these pseudo-scientific links between facial traits and psychological characteristics (e.g. Nelson Sizer's 1891 *Heads and Faces, and How to Study Them*). Unfortunately, upon first speaking of Hyde to Utterson, who nevertheless knows him from Jekyll's will, Richard Enfield is unable to translate his mental image into words: he can only describe the feeling of disgust which reviled him. The indescribableness of Hyde's face and body impedes its legibility. The search to describe and make sense of their deformity drives Stevenson's narrative, with each encounter either leading to new speculations or dismissing a hypothesis.

The lack of representation fuels Utterson's near-obsessive desire to set eyes on the dreadful being. Indeed, in free indirect speech, the narrator conveys the lawyer's frustrated conclusion as he reflects upon Enfield's strange "Story of the Door": "If he [Utterson] could but once set eyes on him [Hyde], he thought the mystery would lighten and perhaps roll altogether away [...] He might *see* a reason" (*EUP* 16, emphasis added). According to the gentleman, reasons are not constructed, they are positivistically *seen*. He further embeds his representation in rationality by recasting his cousin's description of a "not human-damned Juggernaut" running over a little girl into a "human Juggernaut," as Marie-Christine Leps perceptively remarks (211; *EUP* 15). While only a visceral subjective impression struck Enfield, Utterson hopes the sight of the dreaded face will yield to his positivist gaze an objective solution to the puzzle.

While the objective answer remains evasive, the subjective response is uncannily universal. The desire for physical description and the generated "spirit of enduring hatred" combine and react in Utterson's mind to produce "a face worth seeing" (*EUP* 16). The repulsion it initiates is strong enough to affect the "unimpressionable Enfield" and grows

increasingly intriguing as multiple other characters confirm its universality (*EUP* 16). Indeed, as he narrates the youngster's nocturnal trampling, Utterson's cousin recounts his surprise at witnessing a doctor brought to the scene "turn sick and white with the desire to kill" Hyde (*EUP* 9). Relying on a stereotype related to his profession, Enfield deems him "as emotional as a bagpipe" (*EUP* 9). Thence, a weak and impressionable nature cannot justify this "usual cut and dry apothecary"'s reaction, as Victorians would easily explain and dismiss lower-class and female responses (*EUP* 9). In fact, the "odd subjective disturbance caused by [Hyde's] neighbourhood" must be physiological since it affects all alike (*EUP* 54). Furthermore, the sensation is translated into all levels of speech, from Poole's familiar "you felt it in your marrow kind of cold and thin" to Lanyon's medico-technical terminology: a "resemblance to incipient rigor[17]" and "a marked sinking of the pulse" (*EUP* 45, 54). A (negative) subjective impression universally characterizes Hyde though he evades objective description.

This reaction, both deeply-rooted and epidermic, is by no means isolated in Stevenson's literature and in social discourse. It characterizes demonic encounters in "Thrawn Janet," a short-story written in Lallans, the Scottish Lowlands' dialect, and published in October 1881 in the *Cornhill Magazine*. Reverend Murdoch Soulis is twice taken by "a kind o' cauld grue in the marrow o' his banes"[18]: first when an unknown visitor arrives to see his sinister housekeeper, and then when he sees her new "fearsome face" (*Vail. ed. XI* 164, 165). Like the aforementioned Satanic figures, criminals also stir uncanny subjective responses. As Zebulon R. Brockway, superintendent of the Elmira Reformatory in New York, explains at the 1890 International Penitentiary Congress, mental habits impress themselves upon the body and provoke the onlooker: "le tissu corporel se transforme en un type criminel jusqu'à ce que, même sans quelque laideur physique, la présence du criminel communique une impression de répulsion ou de danger" (*Actes* 564). The instinctual physiological aversion thus would serve as a warning against both immoral

17 The fragmentary final manuscript added "or what is called goose-flesh," a definition which was not part of the preceding notebook draft (*EUP* 197).

18 "a kind of cold shiver in the marrow of his bones."

influence ("impression de répulsion") and genuine threat (impression "de danger"). The expert's account converges with a fantastic literary trope.

Despite difficulties, Enfield attempts to satisfy Utterson's physiognomic curiosity. At first, he bends his efforts towards delineating Hyde's appearance by tracing it back to the impression with which he was left, tentatively asserting: "He must be deformed somewhere [...], although I couldn't specify the point" (*EUP* 12). Then, declaring "I can see him this moment," he scrutinizes the mental image his memory conjured, hopelessly grappling for isolated objective elements to share with Utterson (*EUP* 12). His efforts remain vain: he cannot pinpoint what is "wrong with his appearance" (*EUP* 12).[19] Hyde remains evasively whole; his traits, subjective.

The (un)representation of Hyde's physical demise within the novella spawned debates amongst critics. While Gordon Hirsch describes the "reluctance to emphasize [Hyde's] physical appearance," Virginia Wright Wexman explicitly sets herself in opposition, stating that "Stevenson has gone out of his way to punctuate the narrative with sustained descriptions of his characters' physical characteristics" (283; 225). In view of these opposite perspectives, the question must be plainly asked: can the reader access or not the demonized protagonist's visual aspect?

Eluding a straightforward positive or negative response, Bordat operates a most promising and accurate synthesis. He identifies both "quelques indications très générales (qui évoquent le caractère « simiesque » ou « troglodytique » du personnage), ou au contraire très particulières (qui focalisent sur un détail du corps [...])" (119). These visual cues function cinematographically, which explains why they captured film scholar Wright Wexman's attention. The analysis compellingly clarifies Hyde's representation: between the zooming out of broad analogies and the zooming into particular physical details, facial traits are left out of focus. Stevenson writes in "A Note on Realism," which was first

19 Indescribability is a common trope in *fin-de-siècle* Gothic. Compare with Arthur Machen's *The Great God Pan*: "Every one who saw her at the police court said she was at once the most beautiful woman and the most repulsive they had ever set eyes on. I have spoken to a man who saw her, and I assure you he positively shuddered as he tried to describe the woman, but he couldn't tell why" (67).

published in the *Magazine of Art* in 1883, that "any fact that is registered [...] is at once an ornament in its place, and a pillar in the main design" (*Vail. ed. IV* 420). Details matter, though they are made to appear trivial. Naugrette describes Stevenson's technique as "[n]i flou impressionniste, ni exactitude photographique," but rather catered towards "la recherche d'une impression à produire et créée dans la clarté des lignes" (16) Paradoxically, the sum of neatly defined characteristics delineating Hyde's hand and body conveys but a vague impression of his face, the main site of psychological legibility according to physiognomy.

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Since Enfield failed to translate the dreaded face into words, Utterson is left wishing he could himself lay eyes on it. As Leps perceptively remarks, "[h]is grasp of available information," which includes his cousin's story, but also Lanyon's account of his scientific dispute with Jekyll, "is always partial and his search for Hyde consists of a reinterpretation of already interpreted events rather than objective accumulation of facts" (210). Similarly, the reader is unable to construct his or her own conjecture on Hyde's deformity for lack of physical representation. Therefore, he or she must rely on other characters' surmises. Given that an omniscient narrator follows Utterson's point of view until the two closing chapters uncover the truth, the reader is bound to the stern man's projections until Lanyon and Jekyll's narratives lift the veil from the mystery. Immediately after his first encounter with Hyde, the lawyer formulates three hypotheses regarding the origin of his effect on the beholder: atavism, pure and irrational distaste, and Satanism.

With the discovery of evolution comes the fear of degeneration, an ambiguous term variably designating "disintegration of the highest levels of nervous organization, [...] arrested development, [and] atavistic reversion" (Reid 56). Utterson wonders if "[s]omething troglodytic" deforms Hyde's physique, bringing out caveman-like features (*EUP* 18).[20] Stephen Arata and Donald Lawler have studied *Dr Jekyll and*

20 In a political parody on Ireland by *Punch*, this hypothesis is turned into "Something like *Frankenstein*'s Monster, shall we say, only intimately, inseparably related to its creator by a sort of clinging identity in dread duality?" ("Dr. McJekyll and Mr. O'Hyde" 81).

Mr Hyde in conjunction with Cesare Lombroso's atavistic born-criminal, exposed in *L'uomo delinquente* (1876). However, Stiles dismisses the potential source, quoting Arata himself: "Lombroso's work first reached a wide audience in England thanks to Havelock Ellis's *The Criminal* (1891)," which Stevenson's piece predates (34). The objection stands on solid ground: I found no reference to the Italian criminal anthropologist in Stevenson's writing, whether fictional, non-fictional, or autobiographical. Nevertheless, atavism was a well-known hereditary law before Lombroso argued it applied to the criminal man.

Evolutionary theory transformed atavism. Antoine Nicolas Duchesne (1747-1827) coined the scientific term, from the Latin *atavus*, 'ancestor,' in reference to the tendency for plant varieties to revert to the type, also known in English as "*Reversion*, or *Throwing back*," "*Pas-en-arrière*" in French, and "*Rück-schlag* (sic), or *Rück-schritt* (sic)" in German (Darwin 28). The concept was familiar: "Every one is aware that it is nothing unusual for a child to resemble its grandfather or grandmother or some ancestor still farther back, more than it does either its own father or mother," states the 1861 manual *The Principles of Breeding* (Goodale 61). With the advent of Darwin's evolutionary theory, atavism came not only to designate the reemergence of recessive genes after having skipped generations (the resemblance between grand-parent and grand-child to which Goodale refers), but also the appearance in an individual of traits from a more primitive stage within the species.

The nineteenth-century progressive mindset specifically recoded anterior traits as inferior. Some anthropologists thus attempted the reverse: explaining inferior conditions, idiocy for instance, as a return to an earlier evolutionary stage. In his 1867 monograph *Mémoire sur les microcéphales ou hommes-singes*, Carl Vogt suggested "microcephaly to be a case of atavism, the appearance of a type of brain inherited from some very remote ancestral ape," a view which William Wotherspoon Ireland calls into question in his own *On Idiocy and Imbecility* (1877), stressing their "human character" (Ireland 83, 87).[21] A

21 Ireland refuses to equate lesser development of an individual with a step back in evolution: "In the microcephalic brain we still see the human type with its folds and convolutions stopped in their growth,

head circumference notably smaller than average characterizes this cephalic disorder. The debate on "teratological conditions" continued well into the 1880s, e.g. with discussions on polydactyly – the presence of supernumerary fingers or toes ("Scientific Serials" 615).[22] Were they "simple monstrosities" or should they be considered as "a reappearance of a more primitive organisation, or a reversion (Rückschlag) to a primary state, – in a word, an atavism"? (Gegenbaur 615).[23] Atavism equates abnormal conditions with degeneracy, itself understood as an evolutionary throwback.

Thence, the contemporary audience could read – and has read – Hyde, and Utterson's suggestion of a troglodytic being, in reference to pre-Lombrosian atavism. John Addington Symonds (1840-1893), poet and literary critic, writes in a letter to Stevenson, which Arata quotes in a footnote, that he has discussed his work "in wh (sic) atavism is played with" with "the great biologist" Sir Thomas Lauder Brunton (Maixner 211; qtd in 192n5). The author can also be said to have had atavism in mind when shaping his villain. Nearly two years after *Jekyll and Hyde* (and still three years before Ellis's publication), Stevenson speaks of a character born of "a hideous trick of atavism" in "A Chapter on Dreams" (*Vail. ed. XII* 249). The article first appeared in *Scribner's* in January 1888 before being reprinted in *Across the Plains* in 1892. Though the famous novella's genesis forms the piece's main object, the quotation refers to the terrifying mother in the short story "Olalla" (1885). Hence Utterson's first hypothesis is most likely rooted in atavism.

A reference to Tom Brown's quatrain on Dr. Fell illustrates the second hypothesis, mere dislike. Itself a playful translation of a latin epigram by Martial – "*Non amo te, Sabidi, nec possum dicere quare; / Hoc tantum possum dicere, non amo te*" – the English satirist's rhyme runs as follows:

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now here and now there struck by an arrest of development which we cannot clearly explain, but which is not a copy of the brain of any monkey that ever existed or indeed could have existed" (89).

22 The review summarizes a French article, *L'atavisme chez l'homme*, by Raphaël Blanchard, published in 1885 in *Revue d'anthropologie.*

23 The article is an abridged translation of *Kritische Bemerkungen über Polydactylie als Atavismus*, published in 1880 in *Morphologisches Jahrbuch.*

I do not love thee, Dr Fell,
The reason why I cannot tell;
But this I know, and know full well,
I do not love thee, Dr Fell (Lejeune 26).

Leps tentatively asserts that "the reader is left to assume that the story fell into discredit, or at least into silence, as it is never mentioned again" (213). No additional reference to Dr. Fell may be made, yet Lanyon at first formulates the same "idiosyncratic, personal distaste" explanation based on the "principle of hatred" (*EUP* 54). He nevertheless abandons this causality for one lying "much deeper in the nature of man" (*EUP* 54). Both Utterson and Lanyon's reactions are too strong for them to admit a trifling personal enmity should move them to such depths.

The third hypothesis is theological in substance and pervades all of Enfield and Utterson's discussions of Hyde. The former had explicitly referred to the latter as inhuman and demonic in his description of the violent attack upon the child: "It wasn't like a man; it was like some damned Juggernaut" (*EUP* 9). The scene was "hellish" and the culprit managed to maintain a "black sneering coolness" which is "really like Satan" (*EUP* 9, 10). Utterson, who had recast Enfield's "Juggernaut" as "human" in his dream, also binds the religious and the inhuman, as Leps remarks, once he himself has seen the man (212). The narrator conveys his confused effort to make sense of Hyde's appearance in direct speech: "God bless me, the man seems hardly human!" (*EUP* 18; 212). Perhaps the first clause is simply a formulaic interjection. However, Utterson may also be implying that he shall need God's blessing if he is faced with a being Other than human. As Katherine Bailey Linehan remarks, "the language of deviltry" both gentlemen employ may be simply "figurative," yet they still draw from "imagery of Satan and damnation in their attempts to account for the mystifyingly powerful sense of evil the stranger conveys" (93). In the end, religious vocabulary seems best suited to speak of Hyde.

Utterson's final hypothesis suggests that Hyde could be "the mere radiance of a foul soul that thus transpires through, and transfigures, its clay continent" (*EUP* 18). The abnormal mark would signal, again, an inner defect, yet spiritual rather than genetic.

Settling his mind on this last explanation, the lawyer rhetorically apostrophizes his friend: "O my poor old Harry Jekyll, if ever I read Satan's signature upon a face, it is on that of your new friend" (*EUP* 18). Utterson has been "read[ing]" Hyde's "face," as a physiognomist, as he had longed to ever since Enfield mentioned the name of Jekyll's sole heir. His analysis uncovers "Satan's signature": has Hyde entered a Faustian pact with the devil? Lineham very perceptively remarks that Utterson refers to "poor *old Harry* Jekyll," "Old Harry" designating the devil, as confirms John Stephen Farmer and William Ernest Henley's[24] dictionary of slang (94; 97). Utterson's chosen interpretation clearly involves the archfiend. All in all, the lawyer raises doubts about Hyde's humanity in two out of three hypotheses, including his preferred explanation.

Reading clues is key to any detective story,[25] yet misreadings turn Stevenson's tale into what Arata calls "an uncannily self-conscious exploration of the relation between professional interpretation and the construction of criminal deviance" (33). Sexuality is distinctly absent, both explicitly and implicitly, from Utterson's three attempts at explaining Hyde's deformity and its effect. Nonetheless, readers may always create meaning while reading between the lines. Gerard Manley Hopkins, an English poet converted to Roman Catholicism, suggests in a letter to a friend in defence of Stevenson's work: "the trampling scene is perhaps a convention: he was thinking of something unsuitable for fiction" (243). Victorians are thus fully conscious of the author's self-censorship and let their own imagination fill in the blanks.

Some of Stevenson's contemporaries, thus also from the pre-Freudian era, have interpreted lust as causing Hyde's violence. Frederick W. H. Myers' letters to Stevenson offer a most thorough account of such a reading. Deeply moved by *Strange Case of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde*, the poet, essayist, and self-taught psychological researcher wished "that it may take a place in our literature as permanent as 'Robinson Crusoe'" and

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24 Henley co-authored with Stevenson *Deacon Brodie*, to be discussed in the next section.

25 For a reading of *Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde* as a detective story, see Hirsch, Gordon. "*Frankenstein*, Detective Fiction, and *Jekyll and Hyde*." *Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde After One Hundred Years*. Ed. Gordon Hirsch and William Veeder. Chicago: U of Chicago P, 1988. 223-46.

consequently suggested numerous revisions to polish both story and style (Maixner 213). Myers protested against Stevenson's "too vagu[e]" notion of "incarnate *evil*": "Hyde is really not a generalized but a specialized fiend" (Maixner 215, emphasis original). The author acknowledges this objection as "just" in his written response (*Letters V* 216). However, he remains silent on the specialization his admirer proposes.

Myers assumes that Hyde's "cruelty developed from *lust*" and consequently that he should "have simply brushed the baronet [Sir Danvers Carew] aside with a curse, and run on to some long-planned crime" (Maixner 214, emphasis original). However, he checks himself in a later comment: "I don't understand the phrase 'kept awake by ambition.' I thought the stimulus was a different one" (Maixner 217). In the passage to which he refers, Jekyll explains Hyde could have "come forth an angel instead of a fiend," but his "evil, kept awake by ambition, was alert and swift to seize the occasion" (*EUP* 62). Myers believes lust fuelled evil, whereas Jekyll's stimulus is bent towards proving sceptical colleagues wrong, a concern quite remote from "generous or pious aspirations" (*EUP* 62). Hence, the eager reader has himself identified a flaw within his sexually-oriented reading, but fails to resolve the apparent contradiction.

Contrastingly, sexual connotations can be easily read into Utterson's guesswork pertaining to the nature of the ties binding Jekyll and Hyde. Indeed, their intimacy seems quite disturbing to the lawyer. After having finally set eyes on Hyde and debated on his essence, he is left speculating on his relationship to the dignified Jekyll. The narrator refrains from quoting Utterson's thoughts on this second mystery. Left in the dark, the reader may freely interpret the lawyer's laconic assumptions with sexual depravity on his or her mind. Devising the relationship between two Victorian men is indeed a fruitful terrain for sexual innuendoes. Utterson discovers the men's particular bond first in the "strange clauses of [Jekyll's] will" (*EUP* 20). He learns from Enfield that Hyde has drawn a check from doctor's account. The cousins both suspect blackmail. Who would attempt such a manoeuvre?

Utterson's first intuition casts Hyde as a "ghost of some old sin, the cancer of some concealed disgrace" (*EUP* 19). According to Arata, the lawyer "suspects that Hyde is the doctor's illegitimate offspring" (40). He indeed speaks of him as Jekyll's "protégé," but also, more ambiguously, as his "favourite" (*EUP* 15, 26). The latter supposes some form of choice, with which biological filiation has little to do (OED). Further indication of Utterson's thoughts is given as Hyde's letter to Jekyll after the Carew murder relieves him of certain suspicions: "it put a better colour on the intimacy than he had looked for; and he blamed himself for some of his past suspicions" (*EUP* 30). Homosexuality is a form of intimacy Utterson would most likely have felt ashamed of supposing on Jekyll's part. Hence, Hyde can easily be interpreted as his benefactor's illegitimate child or lover. Stevenson's work is pregnant with certain sexual innuendos, though it refrains from definitely casting Hyde as the unfortunate and dreadful offspring of Jekyll's repressed sexual frustration.

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All encounters assert Hyde's abnormality, but the criminal as Other trope takes up a new and fascinating dimension with Jekyll's perspective. Utterson's detective work comes to an end with two closing statements, which Stiles links to "the concrete data placed toward the end of the traditional nineteenth-century case study" (889). In the first, Lanyon reveals that Jekyll and Hyde are the exact same person, dissolving the sexual ties that could bind them. The second retells the entire narrative from Jekyll's perspective, starting in typical Victorian fashion with the moment of his birth. His dual personality problematizes the identity of the criminal.

Psychoanalytical critics focus their readings on the Freudian triptych structure of the psyche – the id, the ego, and the superego, – overlooking the duality of mind theme, a "late nineteenth century fascination," subject to both scientific debates and fictional representations (Harrington 106). Stevenson shared the obsession: the double lives of "esteemed citizen[s]" troubled him deeply, and he returned "again and again" to the Deacon Brodie when discussing the topic (Simpson 115). Even his autobiographical self is divided

into opposite natures, enigmatically signing letters "Yours – (I think) Hyde – (I wish) Jekyll" to his mother and "Robert Louis Stevenson et Triple-Brute" to the sculptor Auguste Rodin (*Letters V* 247, 334). Both the well-regarded public man hiding an evil nocturnal alter ego and scientific advances in understanding the double brain infuse his *Strange Case*.

Carpenter – cabinetmaker to be more precise – by trade, William Brodie (1741-1788) had been elected deacon[26] of the Wrights (Gibson 14). His day-time respectability was but a sham, for he performed night-time burglaries, breaking into households he had diligently studied while working at their service. He acquired legendary status in Edinburgh after he was hung. Cummie, short for Alison Cunningham, probably impressed the tale on young Stevenson's mind while nursing him; in his children's bedroom stood a bookcase and a chest of drawers wrought by the infamous hands (*Vail. ed. VII* 338). A precocious artist, Robert Lewis attempted twice during his teenage years to pen down a play on the haunting subject. The later manuscript found its way into the hands of his friend W. E. Henley, who insisted upon reworking the draft (Borowitz 417). The final product, *Deacon Brodie, or, The Double Life*, was staged with meagre success from 1880 to 1884 successively in Glasgow, on tour in the States, and in London (Gibson 134). The drama's existential reflections set the scene for *Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde*. Brodie's soliloquy stands witness to the ever unresolved problematic of identifying the true self: "If we were as good as we seem, what would the world be? The city has its vizard on, and we – at night we are our naked selves" (*Vail. ed. VI* 26).[27] Persons leading double lives serve as a constant reminder that appearances are misguiding and duplicity, a human attribute.

Fanny Osbourne Stevenson wrote in a preface to her husband's work that Deacon Brodie's story was coupled with impressions left by "a paper he read in a French scientific

26 'Deacon' in Scotland designates "the president of an incorporated 'craft' or trade" (OED).

27 A theatre critic reviewing an American staging of the play in 1887 remarks: "There is a touch of weakness and vacillation about him [Deacon Brodie] which is not in harmony with the hardihood of habitual criminality. Compunctions of conscience are unknown to the professional outlaw, and when the deacon becomes sentimental he is unnatural and therefore uninteresting" ("Stevenson's "Deacon Brodie"" 244). Contemporaries thus sometimes read fiction against scientific discourse.

journal on sub-consciousness" to form "the germ of the idea" of dual personality which infiltrates his play, a short-story entitled *Markheim* (1885) – in which a murderer claims to be torn by evil and good "haling [him] both ways" – and his celebrated shilling shocker (*Vail. ed. VII* 338; *Vail. ed. XI* 152). Though Stevenson refused in an interview to link it with actual cases of double-personality, Richard Dury traces the French paper to Eugène Azam's Félida X case study (247-248). The weekly *Revue scientifique* published a series of five articles on that particular case and "double conscience" in general from 1876 to 1879: the three first were printed front-page (Dury 243-245; Azam lv-lvi).[28] Azam's first narrative was "skilfully condensed by Mr. H. J. Slack, in the pages of a quarterly journal of science," explains English journalist and astronomer Richard Proctor (89).[29] He draws from this summary in an article entitled "Dual Consciousness" published in the *Cornhill Magazine* in 1877 and later collected in *Hereditary Traits and Other Essays* (1882) and *Rough Ways Made Smooth: A Series of Familar Essays on Scientific Subjects* (1888). Stiles suggests this publication as a more available source since Stevenson also contributed to the magazine at the time (880). Scientific accounts from French specialized publications, popularized and/or translated, may have merged with childhood memories to produce the *Strange Case*.

In the following decade, scientific discussions on dual personality continued. During the 1880s, scientists such as G. Stanley Hall and E. M. Hartwell posited, like Jekyll, that "so far as the brain represents it, the soul must be double" in the philosophical quarterly *Mind* (102). Hence, duality is not a sign of insanity, but a 'normal' feature pertaining to healthy humans. 'Abnormality' is rather rooted in the imbalance between the left – rational – and right – emotional – hemispheres, which is thought to cause anything from multiple personality disorders to criminality (Stiles 886). Furthermore, Jekyll's contention that "others will outstrip" his dual-nature hypothesis was well-founded (*EUP* 59). Six months before *Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde* was published, in July 1885, in France, Dr. Hippolyte Bourru revealed that his patient Louis Vivet had eight distinct

28 Three of these were republications abridging longer papers which appeared in a specialized medical journal (*Annales médico-psychologiques*) or in colloquium proceedings.

29 I have not managed to retrace this article.

personalities (Hacking 172). Myers, who had suggested in writing alterations to the novella, wrote an article on the subject, "Multiplex Personality," published in 1886, shortly after *Jekyll and Hyde* came out in January, in which he also discusses Azam's famous patient Félida X. Additional testimony to the circulation of specialized theories within general social discourse: Myers's article first appeared in *Proceedings of the Society for Psychical Research* before being reprinted in the November issue of *Nineteenth Century*, a monthly review which also published some of Oscar Wilde's critical essays. Stevenson's shilling shocker, whether consciously or not, is perfectly in touch with contemporary scientific discoveries.

French professor of English literature Jean-Pierre Naugrette bridges the gap between critics concentrating on nineteenth-century psychiatry and those using psychoanalysis. He situates *Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde* at the nexus of psychology's development: "aboutissement de toute une série d'histoires de cas, il [le conte de Stevenson] préfigure aussi les découvertes du fondateur de la psychanalyse" (32). Emerging from and pushing the boundaries of late-nineteenth-century case studies, the text exemplifies "de manière presque prophétique" the latter's theories on the id, the ego, and the superego, though couched in evolutionary terms: Darwin, in pervading all analyses, is the Victorian Freud (32, 35). Hence, according to psychoanalytical critics, Stevenson transcends *fin-de-siècle* Britain to appear as a precursor of Freud.[30]

Adaptations have followed the trend, from theatre to film and even graphic novel. Dropping the title's first words – "*Strange Case of*" – they removed the epitextual reference to case studies.[31] Interestingly, contemporary reviewers of the *Saturday Review*, *Athenæum*, and *The Times* emphasized the "strange case" through intertextuality: "It is certainly a very strange case," for example (Maixner 200, 202, 206). The widespread truncated title originates from Thomas Russell Sullivan's first dramatization, which opened in 1887 in

30 Julia Reid rejects both the diffusion and the foreshadowing models of the relation between literature and science because they maintain them in separate spheres (6).

31 None of the 36 entries of Richard Dury and Francis Bordat's filmography, which spans from 1908 to 1996 and is appended to Naugrette's *Dr. Jekyll & Mr. Hyde*, wears Stevenson's full title. In addition, Lorenzo Mattotti and Jerry Kramsky's 2002 graphic novel is entitled *Docteur Jekyll & Mister Hyde*.

Boston. Stevenson complains of Hyde's stage representation as a "mere voluptuary" in a letter discussed at length further in this chapter (*Letters VI* 56). Just as adaptations have reinterpreted Stevenson's novella, Stiles contends that it adapts the case study genre, functioning as a Gothic parody and "lay[ing] bare the limitations of scientific prose" in its claim to objectivity (Stiles 881).[32] Her demonstration, sadly, remains vague. Nonetheless, she has succeeded in framing *Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde*'s indebtedness both in form and in content not only to science in the guise of (bio)chemistry, but also in that of psychology and psychiatry. Scientific talk on the double brain complemented Stevenson's long-standing interest in double lives.

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The physical separation of Jekyll's dual personality into two distinct embodiments facilitates his distancing from Hyde. Yet, at first, the former expresses no desire to mark the latter down as different. Indeed, his perception of Hyde's nature evolves throughout his "Full Statement of the Case": he is, at first, human and part of Jekyll. Indeed, the doctor eagerly greets his alter ego's "form and countenance," though hideous, for they are "none the less natural," expressing elements of his own soul usually coupled with more virtuous components (*EUP* 60). His position is explicit in what Leps terms his "leap of welcome": "This, too, was myself" (207; *EUP* 61). Though Hyde be "pure evil," he is no less "natural and human" and consequently belongs to "the ranks of mankind" (*EUP* 62, 61, 62). When he first 'meets' Hyde, Jekyll greets the evil constituent of his nature with serenity rather than shame or repulsion.

Jekyll discovers the extant of Hyde's malice through 'perusal.' While he only wished to indulge in the same "undignified" pleasures which he always sought, his nefarious 'twin' sets them on a "monstrous" trail: "This familiar that I called out of my own soul, and sent forth alone to do his good pleasure, was a being inherently malign and villainous" (*EUP* 63). A "familiar" can be both "an intimate friend or associate" and "a

32 According to Foucault, the "examen disciplinaire" "fait de chaque individu un «cas»," thence both a "objet pour une connaissance" and a "prise pour un pouvoir" (193).

demon or evil spirit supposed to attend at a call" (OED). In "A Chapter on Dreams," Stevenson uses "Familiar" in its second meaning, as a synonym for "Brownie," a "benevolent spirit or goblin," supposed in Scotland "to perform useful household work while the family were asleep" (*Vail. ed. XII* 246; OED). Stevenson's Brownies supply him in his dreams with creative fabric in which he needs only to weave a moral before tailoring it into a written narrative.[33] Jekyll has left his "familiar" "alone" and cannot interfere with "his good pleasure," *son bon plaisir*, both the legal expression (Jekyll is not only a physician, but also a lawyer) and, more obviously, any form of sensual gratification (*EUP* 106n63, 13). While Hyde enjoyed deviant delicacies, the respectable though compound self "did not even exist," he contends, affording him total security from suspicion (*EUP* 63). The plan would have been perfect had it not been for the foil's exceeding deviance.

In his quest for pleasure, Hyde is not only selfish but, a more worrisome trait, he is also sadistic. According to the mostly upright self, "his every act and thought centred on self; drinking pleasure with bestial avidity from any degree of torture to another" (*EUP* 63). To soothe his conscience and secure himself from remorse, Jekyll rejects responsibility for his alter ego's acts, which he strictly "connived," rather than "committed," if we follow his own terminology (*EUP* 64). Nevertheless, though Hyde gradually reveals himself to be worse than expected, he remains a "second self," a "part of [Jekyll]" (*EUP* 65). The latter's unease with regards to his "familiar" emerges as his vices seem to outstrip those of the compound self.

Jekyll diagnoses himself with moral insanity after the murder of Sir Danvers Carew: "no man morally sane could have been guilty of that crime upon so pitiful a provocation" (*EUP* 67). The phrase is uttered as an excuse, requesting apologetically not to be held accountable, as if he were "a sick child" who had broken "a plaything" (*EUP* 67). Moral insanity refers to a condition in which a person loses his or her sense of morality while his or her intellect still functions normally. James Cowler Prichard introduced the

33 Arata remarks that "like the Brownies, [Hyde] is so easily identified with the raging energies of the id" (48).

pathopsychological category in the 1830s, and it remained well alive half a century after.[34] In a series of "Lectures on the Medical Jurisprudence of Insanity" published in the *London Medical Gazette* in 1850, Dr. Robert Jamieson, of King's College, Aberdeen, differentiates intellectual and moral insanity. The former concerns a "diseased perception" which produces "delusion" as a symptom while in the latter, disorder is found in "emotion," which leads to "loss of control over actions" (179). The distinction between "intellectual" and "moral" aspects of the mind recalls Jekyll's two "sides of [his] intelligence," both of which participated in his scientific endeavour (*EUP* 59). The doctor's description of psychological structures is in key with contemporary specialized discourse, making his denial at being a "man morally sane" a very probable moral insanity diagnosis.

Jekyll does not deny that he was the one who "struck" (*EUP* 67). Hence, the "man" who is not "morally sane" can be no other than himself. He is thus both practitioner and patient, "hopelessly confus[ing] the boundaries between objective observation and subjective experience" (Stiles 891). Medical discourse objected to collapsing these roles:

> the psychiatrist was not supposed to recognize the 'diseased' aspects of the patient in himself. A psychiatric diagnosis was in the nineteenth century something that a doctor gave to the patient as an 'other.' Not until the advent of psychoanalysis would subjectivity be valorized as an appropriate instrument of medical-scientific investigation (Goldstein 138)

Hence, Jekyll would be, not surprisingly given his unorthodox views on medicine, going *à contre-courant*, first identifying with his animalistic aspects and finally rejecting them as totally Other, diagnosing himself as morally insane in the process.

After Sir Danvers Carew's murder, Jekyll revokes Hyde's claim to humanity. The latter is neither an atavism nor one who has entered a Faustian pact with the devil: he is himself a "child of Hell" and consequently "nothing human" inhabits within him, only "fear and hatred" (*EUP* 70). The doctor does not simply cast him off as inhuman, but also as Other: "He, I say – I cannot say, I" (*EUP* 70). As he closes his "Statement," Jekyll clearly

34 Witness the impressive list of over thirty references in English, German, Italian, and French given in a footnote in the French translation of Cesare Lombroso's seminal treatise (542-543).

rejects Hyde as part of his identity and refers to him as "another than myself" whose destiny he no longer shares (*EUP* 73). The protagonist's stance evolved from one extreme – self-same and human – to its total opposite – inhuman Other – with the mounting of the evil self's violence.

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Even before the experiment, Jekyll perceived his self as dual rather than unitary. According to Leps, he thus "shares the hegemonic view of human nature as an entity which can be divided into fixed realities" (208). Indeed, the doctor traces the origin of his downfall to a basic opposition within his character between "a certain impatient gaiety of disposition" and an "imperious desire to carry [his] head high" (*EUP* 58). Hence, though the former "has made the happiness of many," reconciliation with the latter was arduous, for it commanded "a more than commonly grave countenance before the public" (*EUP* 58). Therefore, he clearly states that, on its own, the "impatient gaiety of disposition" was not problematic, and others endowed with the same quality were happily rewarded. The problem stems from its conflict with his "imperious desire" to present himself before his peers in a radically different posture, the "more than commonly grave countenance." Consequently, striving to satisfy "the exacting nature of [his] aspirations," he felt more sharply than other human beings the divide between "those provinces of good and ill" (*EUP* 58). Jekyll places fault not on evil impulses, but on his own intolerance to any deviation.

The well-respected doctor wishes his virtuous self and his more decadent counterpart would each be free to lead an existence in accord with their own inclinations. Thereon, he seeks to dissociate his conscience from the "undignified" pleasures in which he indulges, a scientific endeavour "socialement et moralement injustifiable," reminds Bordat (*EUP* 62-63; 121). Moreover, the doctor admits that had he "approached [his] discovery in a more noble spirit," Hyde might have been "an angel instead of a fiend" (*EUP* 62). Leps underscores how Jekyll's research orientation and motivation differentiate themselves from that of positivist scientism: it is "transcendental" – like

Frankenstein's[35] – rather than materialist and its selfish goal is far from criminal anthropology's aim to "understand 'criminal man' and discover means to eradicate his presence from society" (*EUP* 56; 207). Jekyll wants to secure his own impunity while committing crimes: Hyde offers such protection.

Stevenson accuses his character of hypocrisy in a letter to the American journalist John Paul Bocock (1856-1903) written in November 1887: "The harm was in Jekyll, because he was a hypocrite – not because he was fond of women" (*Letters VI* 56). The Scottish writer is reacting to his work's first adaptation, Sullivan's play. In contrast with the author's perspective, the fictional scientist dispels accusations of hypocrisy by legitimizing both good and evil in his autobiographical account. Each moral side functions differently, but both "were in dead earnest" (*EUP* 58). Pained by the "trench" in "the agonised[36] womb of [his] consciousness," Jekyll aims to house them in "separate identities" (*EUP* 58, 59). Each element should be satisfied, freed from its "polar twi[n]," for each finds pleasure in opposite acts (*EUP* 59). Indeed, Jekyll opposes them as simply "just" and "unjust" (*EUP* 59). Should each follow its separate course, the former would no longer be "exposed to disgrace and penitence," and inversely the latter would be "delivered from the aspirations and remorse of his more upright[37] twin" (*EUP* 59). Nevertheless, Jekyll cannot leave his opposing personalities on a par and is forced to pass judgement. He admits that evil is "the lethal side of man" given its decaying imprint upon the body (*EUP* 61). Who holds highest authority in assessing a character's sincerity? The character itself, the author, or the reader?

Whether Jekyll be a hypocrite or not, the character, the author, and this reader agree that Hyde is simply evil. Stevenson objects ferociously to interpreting him as "a mere voluptuary" (*Letters VI* 56). His malice is worse than mere sexual deviance. The Scotsman swears heavily that "[t]here is no harm in a voluptuary" nor "in what prurient fools call 'immorality'" (*Letters VI* 56). He blames the reductive understanding on "people [being] so

35 The connection would have escaped me had it not been for Richard Dury's editorial notes in the Centenary Edition (EUP).

36 Stevenson replaced "sensitive" by "agonised" on the second notebook draft (*EUP* 142).

37 The second notebook draft reads "perfect" (*EUP* 142).

filled full of folly and inverted lust, that they can think of nothing but sexuality" (*Letters VI* 56). Stephen Heath, author of the seminal essay "Psychopathia sexualis: Stevenson's *Strange Case*," is unsurprisingly unconvinced: "if people *are* so filled full of folly and inverted lust, this must be central for what Hyde represents, all those 'lower elements'" (94, emphasis original; quoting *EUP* 60). Yet, to the novelist, the "beast Hyde" remains "no more sensual than another" (*Letters VI* 56). Sexual-oriented readings of his villain infuriated the Scotsman.

Stevenson makes clear in the final portion of his answer, which Heath leaves out of his own essay, that sexually-driven interpretations function as diversions. Indeed, the most dangerous "lower elements" still hold sway while moral lessons revolve around sexuality. Stevenson incisively dismisses these as irrelevant: "bad and good [...] has no more connection with what is called dissipation than it has with flying kites" (*Letters VI* 56-57). What he deems central is rather "the essence of cruelty and malice, and selfishness and cowardice" (*Letters VI* 56). He stresses that "these are the diabolic in man – not this poor wish to have a woman, that they make such a cry about" (*Letters VI* 56). Hyde is evil, which pushes him towards sexual deviance, not the reverse.

The imbroglio lies in misconstruing a consequence for a cause. Stevenson explains indeed that "the sexual field and the business field are perhaps the two best fitted for the display of cruelty and cowardice and selfishness," hence the confusion (*Letters VI* 57). In the end, Hyde is "a soul boiling with *causeless* hatreds," driven by "complete moral insensibility and insensate readiness to evil" (*EUP* 72, emphasis added; 67). There is no other *Ur*-cause: pure evil is at the root of all of Hyde's actions, at least according to Jekyll's understanding. It can obviously be argued that Jekyll does not fully comprehend the situation. Leps concludes that since Jekyll is "unprepared for Hyde's development," his "dispersion of a complex process" into "clear-cut, fixed entities" must be proven to be "ineffective, harmful, and untrue" (214). She contends that humans are "an incongruous amalgamation of possibilities" and cannot be separated into "good and evil" (214). I fail to see how the narrative disproves the assumption. I read Jekyll's miscalculations through the

lenses of a single neglect: he has overlooked the fact that his evil nature, free from his good nature's remorse, can only be more extreme.

Stevenson's epigraph supports a reading of Hyde's excessive violence as the result of pure evil released from its tempering combination with equally pure good. The warning is explicit: "It's ill to loose the bands that God decreed to bind" (*EUP* 4). The author inscribed moral judgement within a line taken from a poem written in a letter to his cousin Katherine De Mattos. Indeed, the original verse read: "We cannae[38] break the bonds that God decreed to bind" (*EUP* 79). Through his diagnosis of moral insanity, Jekyll does admit to having broken "bonds." The "polar twins" are "bound together" in the original self, but the potion severs the links: "I had voluntarily stripped myself of all those balancing instincts by which even the worst of us continues to walk with some degree of steadiness among temptations" (*EUP* 59, 67). The result is unrestricted evil: "to be tempted, however slightly, was to fall" (*EUP* 67). Linehan remarks that "[t]he imagery of the story consistently highlights the danger of Jekyll's betrayal of the ties that bind body to soul, self to society, and family member to family member" (97).[39] The doctor thought he could simply release his merely "unjust" self from the shackles of conscience, but failed to anticipate that thus unbound, evil could only grow worse.

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38 "cannot."

39 She mentions, in additions to the passages that I have quoted, the "bond of common interest" Jekyll broke with Lanyon over their scientific disagreement, when "Mr. Hyde broke out of all bounds," resulting in Sir Danvers Carew's murder, the "house of voluntary bondage" in which Utterson believes he has immured himself, and Jekyll's own words: "the doom and burthen of our life is bound for ever on man's shoulders" as well as the phrase "a solution of the bonds of obligation," twice repeated (*EUP* 14, 25, 37, 60, 69; qtd in 97-98).

Chapter 3. "Poisonous influences" and "the real Dorian Gray": Criminal Responsibility in Oscar Wilde's *The Picture of Dorian Gray*

"Il était préparé, par tout ce que l'hérédité et l'éducation avaient déposé et développé en lui, uniquement à jouir de la vie. Il n'avait appris à lutter contre les autres, ni contre lui-même."
Léon Lemonnier, *La vie d'Oscar Wilde*

The epigraph refers to Oscar Wilde. This very arguable statement originates from a 1931 narrative which reads more like a nineteenth-century novel than a biography given its precise descriptions of local settings and constant attention to morality. The quotation might nevertheless be easily, and more fruitfully, applied to his creation Dorian Gray. Lord Henry, Basil Hallward, and himself bring up notions of heredity, intellectual development, influence, and race for novel sensations to account for his deviant lifestyle which culminates in crime.

Like Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein*, Wilde's *The Picture of Dorian Gray* opposes nature and nurture. However, nurture must in this case be understood as intellectual development rather than social environment (implied in the monster's defence, which lays blame on ostracism). Nature is posited against influence – æsthetic, psychological, genetic – which may shape, or more gloomily, determine the criminal's actions. Each character defends a different perspective within the debate. Basil Hallward claims that Lord Henry's influence corrupted Dorian, the second maintains that he has but revealed his *protégé*'s true nature, and finally, the *principal intéressé* is bent upon rejecting responsibility, a feat he manages by blaming a variety of other often deterministic influences, including his own nature. The aristocrat also discusses criminality somewhat independently from his friend's situation. His class-based æsthetic and political discourse on the subject recalls the author's own, as expounded in his non-fiction writing.

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In early 1890, Wilde defines and refines his philosophy of life in three pieces of writing: a review, an essay, and a novel. Earning his living as a journalist, he set upon the task to "fashio[n] himself a role as a critic" after the well-established Matthew Arnold (1822-1888) died (*IV* xxxiii). He thus started, alongside his more profitable occupation, working on longer essays to be published in serious monthlies. In his review of *Appreciations* (1889) – a collection of critical essays by Walter Pater (1839-1894), an Oxford professor and celebrated critic whom Wilde deeply admired[40] – he requires that, if one be called "modern," there is "no mood with which one cannot sympathize, no dead mode of life that one cannot make alive," that "no form of thought is alien, no emotional impulse obscure" to one ("Mr. Pater's Appreciations" 189). The preceding review was published in the *Speaker* on March 22, 1890, while he was also writing a dialogue, "The True Function and Value of Criticism," which appeared in two instalments (July and September) in *Nineteenth Century.* This long essay is better known as "The Critic as Artist," title under which Wilde included a revised version in his own critical collection *Intentions* (1891). It entrusts to the critic, using the exact same phrases, the task of experimenting until he or she has synthesized human history (*IV* 176-177, 178). In "Dorian Gray," which was published the same month as "The True Function"'s first part – though it was perhaps written before both the essay and the review (see *IV* xliv), – the plea for similar experimentation issues from Lord Henry Wotton, advocate of a new hedonism.[41]

40 Léon Thoorens compares him to the "maître néfaste du *Disciple*, de Paul Bourget," also a possible inspiration for Lord Henry (Thoorens 292).

41 During this period, Zhuangzi's (4th c. BC) writings also influenced Wilde. In a review published in the *Speaker* on February 8, he speaks of "the ideal of self-culture and self-development, which is the aim of his scheme of life, and the basis of his scheme of philosophy" ("A Chinese Sage" 186). This notion is distinct from that of experimentation, but will be discussed in reference to individualism and "The Soul of Man Under Socialism."

The cynical aristocrat suggests new hedonism as a remedy to past "self-torture and self-denial" (*III* 108, 278).[42] To him, sensorial and æsthetic experiences, an integral part of enhancing consciousness through the spiritualization of the senses, include "a chance tone of colour," "a particular perfume," "a line from a forgotten poem," and "a cadence from a piece of music" (*III* 158, 351). Dorian, for his part, will study and collect perfumes, jewels, and clerical vestments, following closely upon Duc Jean Floressas Des Esseintes's experimentation in the Frenchman J.-K. Huysmans's novel *À rebours* (1884). In 1890, Wilde was deeply invested in the influential works of Huysmans and Pater, particularly the latter's "Conclusion" to his *Studies in the History of the Renaissance* (1873), to define what becomes new hedonism in "Dorian Gray."

On both sides of the Channel, the Decadent artistic movement, of which Pre-Raphaelite Æstheticism was a precursor, is sufficiently well-known to attract attacks. In the collected version of "The Decay of Lying" found in *Intentions*, Wilde mentions Paul Bourget's *Le Disciple* (1889), in the preface of which the author warns French youth against the "stuggle-for-lifer (sic)" and the dilettante, two dangerous influences (*IV* 80; xviii, xx). The first, a "positiviste brutal qui abuse du monde sensuel," bent upon monetary success, is less of a threat than the second, who desires to try all things moral and immoral for experience's sake (xx). The latter's description fits perfectly Dorian's implementation of new hedonism:

> Le bien et le mal, la beauté et la laideur, les vices et les vertus lui paraissent des objets de simple curiosité. L'âme humaine tout entière est, pour lui, un mécanisme savant et dont le démontage l'intéresse comme un objet d'expérience. Pour lui, rien n'est vrai, rien n'est faux, rien n'est moral, rien n'est immoral. [...] C'est un égoïste subtil et raffiné dont toute l'ambition [...] consiste à « adorer son moi, » à le parer de sensations nouvelles. La vie religieuse de l'humanité ne lui est qu'un prétexte à ces sensations-là, comme la vie intellectuelle, comme la vie sentimentale. (xix-xx)

42 The parenthetical references include page numbers for both the 1890 and 1891 editions when the quotation is identical. References to the manuscript and the typescript can be found in the bottom portion of the first edition.

Bourget even mentions the charm of paradoxes wrought by the dilettante's "maitres (sic) trop éloquents," a surprisingly accurate designation of Lord Henry's discourse. If these correspondences do not confirm *Le Disciple* as a source, they do demonstrate that Dorian and his master were not uncommon types in *fin-de-siècle* Western Europe.

The quest for ever-new experiences knows no boundaries, be they set by law or by morals, and is thus likely to lead the hedonist upon a criminal path. Jonathan Fryer describes *Dorian Gray* as "combining a sophisticated expression of the author's æsthetic concerns with a blatant disregard for society's values and a taste for criminality" (19). (I would argue that Wilde's "æsthetic concerns," exposed at length in *Intentions*, rely precisely on a "disregard for society's values.") Indeed, Lord Henry frequently advocates in favour of sin. It is key to self-development, which implies a rejection of social norms in order to fulfil one's own distinct individual personality. Contrastingly, in a 1891 addition, the cynical aristocrat rejects crime on the basis that it is "vulgar" and cannot be mentioned after dinner (*III* 349). Hence, he does not believe "the real Dorian" to be criminally-oriented: "People like you – the wilful sunbeams of life – don't commit crimes" (*III* 30, 190; 42, 214). Moreover, Lord Henry reasserts and clarifies his position in the previous 1891 addition, when his ever young and beautiful friend suggests himself as Basil's murderer: "Crime belongs exclusively to the lower orders. [...] I should fancy that crime was to them what art is to us, simply a method of procuring extraordinary sensations" (*III* 214). Transgression, at the heart of sin and crime, also supplies the foundation of Wilde's æsthetics.

Wilde's criticism exposes an analysis of art, criminality, individuality, and government which intersects with Lord Henry's. Examining it in detail helps to understand Lord Henry's refusal to recognize Dorian as criminal. In "The Critic as Artist," art's immorality lies in its *avant-gardiste* attitude, defying contemporary conventions and guiding humanity towards its betterment, as do sin and crime:

> What is termed Sin is an essential element of progress. [...] By its curiosity Sin increases the experience of the race. Through its intensified assertion of

> individualism, it saves us from monotony of type. In its rejection of the current notions about morality, it is one with the higher ethics. (*IV* 148)

(Herbert Spencer's concept of race experience shall be explored later in relation to heredity.) Individualism, in Wilde's writings, designates the full development of one's individuality by self-affirmation against authority. Art and crime are both "mode[s] of Individualism," according to "The Soul of Man Under Socialism," though the latter is "the most intense" because it need not "take cognisance of other people and interfere with them" (*IV* 248). The critical piece first appeared in the *Fortnightly Review* in February 1891 and was revised and reprinted in 1895 in a stand-alone volume entitled *The Soul of Man*. In Wilde's writing, the sinner, like the artist, seeks to free himself or herself from contemporary constraints, in consequence of what the entire "race" can progress.

In her "(Con)Textual History" of the aforementioned essay, Josephine Guy explains that Individualism was a short-lived political current in England, opposed to any form of government, which gained much exposure by the end of the 1880s. Wilde's definition is nevertheless so idiosyncratic that to refer to this movement in trying to understand his argument is almost counterproductive. In fact, he uses the term "individualism" in his notebooks before it was applied to the political current (*ON* 121). In "The Soul of Man," he actually subverts the Individualist discourse in advocating for the abolition of private property: "it may be asked how Individualism, which is now more or less dependent on the existence of private property for its development, will benefit by [its] abolition" (*IV* 237). Guy acknowledges the reversal, which she takes to be "provocative but not profound" (79).[43] In fact, she narrowly defines Wilde's stance as a combination of "Individualist anti-statism with a Socialist critique of private property," conveniently allowing for a filiative link to Grant Allen's "Individualism and Socialism," published two years earlier in the *Contemporary Review* (78). With such a restrictive synthesis, Guy occludes the notion of self-development. I argue, with Nils Clausson, that in "The Soul of Man," "Wilde explores the political conditions of self-development" (Clausson 345). Given

43 Wilde also takes up the Individualists' attacks on philanthropy, but couches them in terms diametrically opposed to their "survival of the fittest" plea, an additional subversion which Guy does not point out (74).

its consistency with the views expounded in "The Critic as Artist," I believe it is central to his idiosyncratic use of Individualism. To achieve this state of exalted individuality, Lord Henry believes Dorian should be using art rather than crime, given the former's superiority.

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Wilde's *oeuvre* relates crime and art in additional ways, not to mention the writer's own 'criminal' life as a homosexual. *Lord Savile's Crime*, his first criminal narrative, was serialized in May 1887 in the *Court and Society Review* and collected in 1891 with three other stories. In this short and humorous tale on predestination, dynamiter Herr Winckelkopf presents crime *as* art. Indeed, he refuses to be paid for sending a defective bomb-clock to the protagonist's uncle, claiming: "I do not work for money; I live entirely for my art" (*Sh. Fiction* 44). Less anecdotally, Lord Henry's class-based analysis first appeared in "Pen, Pencil and Poison" and was subsequently expounded in "The Soul of Man." The former, Wilde's second criminal narrative, concerns Thomas Griffiths Wainewright and was published in the January 1889 *Fortnightly Review* before being reprinted in *Intentions*. Wainewright was a Romantic artist and poisoner, friend to Charles Lamb. His existence embodies the close ties between crime and art.

The description of his "Life" as art, with particular attention set on decoration – gems, carpets, rare books, engravings, – reminds one of Huysmans' Des Esseintes and prefigures Dorian (*IV* 108-109). Waineright first "sought to find expression" through painting, and much later "by pen or poison," Wilde tells his readers casually (*IV* 106). His crimes were widely known for, as Wilde mentions in his closing remarks, Edward Bulwer-Lytton and Charles Dickens both fictionalized him, respectively in *Lucretia*, published in 1846, and *Hunted Down*, which first appeared in 1859 (*IV* 122). Nevertheless, the idea that one should *express* one's self through poisoning remains uncanny, though totally consistent with the "modes of Individualism" expounded afterwards in "The Soul of Man." Wilde takes Waineright's crimes to have improved his art, endowing his "style" with a "personality" which it previously "lacked" (*IV* 120). There is no need to choose between the two means of self-development: they may be combined.

As previously announced, the flamboyant Irishman also introduces a class-based analysis of criminality in "Pen, Pencil, and Poison." Waineright found deportation, to which he was sentenced for forgery, to be a "distasteful" experience given the cultural divide separating the poet-poisoner from his fellow inmates: "Crime in England is rarely the result of sin. It is nearly always the result of starvation," explains the narrator (*IV* 119). The critic further elaborates upon a quasi identical statement in "The Soul of Man," in which the geographical specificity is turned into a historical one: "Starvation, and not sin, is the parent of modern crime" (*IV* 245). Thence, for better or worse, local and contemporary crime is not a freely-chosen emancipatory act, nor a sin pushed to the next level.

True criminals, from imperial Rome and the Italian Renaissance for instance, stand out in history as appealing and intriguing characters (*IV* 121). In contrast, he claims that Wainewright's company during deportation lacked men of "psychologically interesting nature" (*IV* 120). Shedding light upon this cryptic claim, the author contends in "The Soul of Man" that "our criminals are, as a class, so absolutely uninteresting from any psychological point of view" when contrasted with literature's "marvellous Macbeths and terrible Vautrins," being nothing more than "ordinary, respectable, commonplace people" that have "not got enough to eat" (*IV* 245). One may thus assume that hungry persons simply act predictably and rationally, theft being more useful than dying lawfully. In contrast, no predictable force, such as reason, guides truly evil criminals, who thus offer interesting psychological studies. Hence, Wilde wrote in a letter to the editor of the *St James's Gazette* in defence of "Dorian Gray": "Bad people are, from the point of view of art, fascinating studies. They represent colour, variety and strangeness" (*CL* 430). To be the object of a Wildean novel, Dorian must be, like Wainewright, a sinner rather than a pauper.

Wilde's social analysis of criminality stretches beyond economic issues of poverty into politico-legal discussions of penology. Indeed, he speaks of punishment as another parent to crime, apart from sin and starvation, succinctly summing up their relation as "[t]he less punishment, the less crime" (*IV* 245). He took the idea down in his *Commonplace Book* from Spencer's *The Study of Sociology*, in which the synthetic

philosopher refers to Sir Samuel Romilly's turn-of-the-nineteenth-century "great amelioration" of the criminal law and its role in decreasing crime rates (*ON* 177; *The Study of Sociology* 12).[44] However, Spencer further explains that crime's cause lies in "an inferior mode of life," itself a consequence of an "original inferiority of nature" (*The Study of Sociology* 330). Wilde's assessment of criminality, which underscores superior Individualism, does not sit well with a discourse of congenital inferiority. It nevertheless gains in clarity when informed by a similar but more elaborate argument. Another source than Spencer must be sought to better make sense of Wilde's belief in a proportional relation between crime and punishment.

Severe and brutal punishment's repeal was quite consensual ever since the Classical school of criminology, pioneered by penologists Cesare Beccaria and Jeremy Bentham, reformed penal policy across Europe at the end of the Enlightenment. Hence, Wilde's source may issue from all categories of the political spectrum. Guy reads his rejection of "Authoritarian" socialism, and all forms of authority, in relation to British Individualism (Wilde, *IV* 233). However, in his case, it is much more consistent with an anarchist stance. Indeed, Wilde later came to view anarchism in continuum with socialism, confiding in a 1894 interview that he thought of himself as "more than a Socialist," i.e. "something of an Anarchist" (Almy 232). As David Goodway points out, anarchists have recognized "The Soul of Man" as an important text from the onset (63). For instance, Peter Kropotkin, whom Wilde described in *De Profundis* as leading one "of the most perfect lives [he had] come across in [his] own experience," referred to "The Soul of Man Under Socialism" as "that article that O. Wilde wrote on Anarchism – in which there are sentences worth being engraved, like verses from the Koran are engraved in Moslem lands" (*II* 124, 184; Ross 113). Interestingly, Goodway reveals that "the principle political and economic debt" in the text Kropotkin regards as almost sacred is to the Russian himself, both

44 Guy scolds Smith and Helfand for having occluded the political aspects of Wilde's engagement with Herbert Spencer by concentrating simply on questions of biology (84n37). She contends that "the Individualists' appropriation of Spencer explicitly politicized his work," yet this process came a few years after Wilde had filled his notebooks (74).

anarchist and non-anarchist commentators have found (74). Guy does list Kropotkin's name first in her enumeration of potential sources but, in a footnote, she dismisses the anarchist interpretation as simply "fashionable" in the mid-twentieth century (66, 83n25). Close reading rather proves that Wilde's criminological position may likely owe much to Kropotkin's argument.

In 1886, Prince Pyotr Alexeyevich Kropotkin, newly established in Britain, published a revolutionary pamphlet entitled *Law and Authority: An Anarchist Essay.* In its fourth and final chapter, he refutes the need for three types of law he identifies: those on property, those on government, and those on "penalties and misdemeanours" (23). Kropotkin supports Spencer and Wilde's argument – regarding severe punishment's inefficacy in preventing crime – with a more thorough explanation than theirs.

Kropotkin and Spencer are nonetheless opposed on other criminological debates.[45] Hence, whereas Spencer states that a "criminal aggressor would not commit a crime if he were quite certain to be caught and punished," Kropotkin, in a similarly unsupported statement, claims the opposite: "it is also a well-known fact that the fear of punishment has never stopped a single murderer. He who kills his neighbour from revenge or misery does not reason much about consequence" (*The Study of Sociology* 385; 21). Is the criminal a rational being, as the Classical school posited and Spencer agreed, or are its psychological motives more complex than utilitarian philosophers affirm?

Wilde does not address the issue of reason, but agrees with Kropotkin in his *Commonplace Book*, comparing the "incapacity of severe criminal legislation to produce higher morality or even order" with the inefficiency of the fear of Hell religion attempts to inspire, demonstrating human nature's "showy indifference to any system of rewards and

45 In *Modern Science and Anarchism*, first published in Russian in 1901 and translated in English in 1903, Kropotkin takes issue with Spencer's inconsistent methodology in his attempt to construct a synthetic philosophy (giving up "his rigorously scientific method" for the "the method of analogies" in the study of societies) as well as with his understanding of "the struggle for existence" as centred strictly around competition (40-42). In his major essay *Mutual Aid* (1902), he suggests cooperation as an alternative survival, and thus evolutional, mechanism.

punishments either heavenly or terrestrial" (*ON* 115). It thus appears safe to assume that, if anything, Wilde follows Kropotkin rather than Spencer.

Both Wilde and Kropotkin understand private property and ensuing inequalities to be the ultimate cause of nearly all crimes. The Irish writer states that, when private property is abolished, criminality "will cease to exist" because it shall become unnecessary (*IV* 245). A reference to jealousy as both "an extraordinary source of crime in modern life" and "an emotion closely bound up with our conceptions of property" supplements the simplistic and hasty conclusion (*IV* 245, 246). Kropotkin is slightly more explicit, stating (without supporting evidence) that two thirds to three quarters of assaults are the result of crimes against property rather than directly against persons (21). Like Wilde, he links violent crime to feelings beyond hunger. Indeed, he claims, again without any reference, that general unhappiness is statistically proven to be a factor: "when the harvest is good and provisions are at an obtainable price, and when the sun shines, men, lighter hearted and less miserable than usual, do not give way to gloomy passions, do not from trivial motives, plunge a knife into the bosom of a fellow creature" (21). Yet private property's abolition does not suffice: punishment must also be repealed.

"The Soul of Man"'s argument in favour of revoking punishment becomes clearer when read in light of Kropotkin's rejection of law as a whole. Wilde and Kropotkin do not simply portray punishment as ineffective, but also as a direct cause of crime. Wilde opens his discussion on penology with a vague statement: "a community is infinitely more brutalised by the habitual employment of punishment than it is by the occasional occurrence of crime" (*IV* 245). The words "brutalised" and "habitual" echo Kropotkin's: he contends that punishment's disappearance will diminish the number of murders by putting a stop to the production of "habitual criminals, who have been brutalised in prison" (22). Indeed, they are "deprived of freedom and shut up with other depraved beings, steeped in the vice and corruption which oozes from the very walls of our existing prisons" (23). This stance recalls the position Friedrich Schiller defends in "Der Verbrecher aus verlorene Ehre" (see Chapter 1), and eerily anticipates closing verses in Wilde's *Reading Gaol*:

The vilest deeds like poison weeds
  Bloom well in prison-air:
It is only what is good in Man
  That wastes and withers there:

[...]

And some grow made, and all grow bad (*I* 559-562, 569)

In a 1894 interview, he had spoken of the "perfect fiasco" which the Victorian penal administration had become: "'It is a sign of a noble nature to refuse to be broken by force.' 'Never attempt to reform a man,' he said; 'men never repent'" (Almy 232, 233). Prison corrupts more than it reforms.[46]

According to both men, the redress against criminality is the abolition of private property and punishment. Crime would disappear, or subsist "as a very distressing form of dementia, to be cured by care and kindness" under the guidance of physicians, writes Wilde (*IV* 245). Kropotkin's "remedy" is nearly identical for he deems the criminal to be "simply unfortunate": he prescribes "the most brotherly care" and a "treatment based on equality" (23). Only criminogenic mental disease would be left: crime arising from necessity and sin would disappear with poverty and morals in Wilde's political utopia, shared with Lord Henry: a non-authoritarian society that enables individuals to grow to their fullest potential. Nevertheless, hunger, jealousy, economic difficulties, imprisonment, or bad weather can hardly account for Lord Savile's, Wainewright's, and Dorian's crimes.

Perhaps they do not enter this understanding of real-life criminality because they are literary figures. During his first trial, Wilde insisted that fiction and life function differently. His fictional criminals perhaps operate according to Gide's "immoralité supérieure": the origin of both their crimes and art – painting and writing in Wainewright's case and Life in Gray's ("to him Life was the first, the greatest, of the arts") – is a certain "attitude of mind"

46 Foucault underscores that this critique, one of five, has been repeatedly formulated since the prison system has been implemented.

which offends society (Gide 184; Wilde, *IV* 107, 278; Ziolkowski 311). Gide assumes that wisdom relegates laws and moral sense to a temporary role as "éducatrices" (183). Wilde expresses an analogous idea in relation to conscience in "The Critic as Artist." He deems its "mere existence" to be "a sign of our imperfect development," for it should rather be instinctual (*IV* 148). In order to ignore exterior authorities, humans must develop their own individual authority.

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Now for the main text: *The Picture of Dorian Gray.* Basil and Lord Henry play out the nature versus nurture debate in their disagreement about Dorian's transformation from innocent philanthropist to callous cynic. The former sets his friend apart from other men for his "fine" nature which renders him incapable of "bring[ing] misery upon any one" (*III* 54, 234). The admirer treats Dorian's "indifference" regarding his fiancée Sibyl Vane's suicide as "merely a mood," unrepresentative of his unalterable nature, itself too full of goodness and nobility (*III* 87, 261). More generally, he blames on Lord Henry's "influence," taken to have corrupted Dorian, the discrepancies between his behaviour and his pure heart (*III* 85, 260). The painter confronts his Oxford friend immediately when he notices, upon completing his masterpiece, that his model's mood has altered. He is suddenly and surprisingly lamenting the eventual waning of his beautiful youth and curses the portrait and its maker for offering an everlasting measure of his bodily corruption. Lord Henry dismisses the 'bad influence' accusation with the claim that this novel attitude reflects "the real Dorian Gray" (*III* 30, 190). Hence, Basil and Lord Henry disagree on their friend's true nature.

Basil blames Dorian's loss of innocence on Lord Henry's nurturing. The reproach piques the hedonist because he regards any form of influence as "immoral" (*III* 20, 183). In the manuscript, Wilde first wrote:

> "[...] to influence a person is to give him one's own soul. He does not think his *own* thoughts, or burn with his *own* passions. His virtues are not *natural* to him. His sins, if there are such things as sins, are borrowed. He becomes

> an echo of some one else's music, an actor of a part that has not been written for him." (*III* 20, emphasis added)

While revising his manuscript, Wilde crossed out the two italicized "own"'s to replace them with "natural."[47] The modification problematizes the property of the "borrowed" "thoughts" and "passions": though they be not "natural," do they become one's "own" once one has been influenced? Or does the revision invalidate the concept of private property altogether in metaphysics?

The immorality of influence lies in the usurpation of another person's personality, complete with its "thoughts," "passions," "virtues," and "sins." Such an invasion runs counter to Wilde's notion of individualism detailed in "The Soul of Man": "All imitation in morals and in life is wrong. [...] There is no one type for man. There are as many perfections as there are imperfect men" (*IV* 243). The unwelcome influence in this case erupts from governmental laws and social customs, which impede their subjects' personal growth by restricting the realm of possible actions and thoughts. According to Lord Henry, the "aim of life" is precisely "[t]o realize *oneself* perfectly" through "self-development," a wording Wilde changed to "one's nature" while revising the manuscript (*III* 20, emphasis added). Twice did the author turn notions of property and identity into references to nature. It may be assumed that one's character traits and behaviours are "natural" as long as they are consistent with one's "nature," which one must develop, aiming to realize it perfectly.

The various uses of "deep" and "shallow" imply a distinction between two types of natures.[48] Indeed, it seems as though a deep nature allows one to cumulate a multitude of experiences as natural, whereas a shallow nature is restricted to a certain defined type. It thus follows that influence, according to the hedonist, designates the – immoral – imposition of one's character upon another person endowed with a shallow nature. Reflecting on his own ascendancy over Dorian, Lord Henry contends that "[h]e had made

47 Perhaps not to repeat the same adjective a third time, Wilde changed the italicized "natural" in the quote to "real."

48 Consider the use of both words on pages 39 and 212, and that of "shallow" on pages 85 and 259 as well as on 121 and 288.

him," speaking of him as his "creation" and avoiding the term 'influence' (*III* 47, 218). One gifted with a deep nature cannot be influenced, for all poses are natural to him or her.

Considering others' demands interferes with self-development. Lord Henry explains in a lengthy addition to the 1891 edition that "Individualism" involves being "in harmony with one's self," whereas morality forces one "to be in harmony with others" (*III* 235). Wilde, like his character, rejects any concession to external demands. Hence, in "The Soul of Man", he deems "immoral" (a term which recalls Lord Henry's condemnation of influence), "ridiculous," "corrupting," and "contemptible" the authority which the public attempts to assert upon the artist (*IV* 248). Development must come from within – though Lord Henry implies it may be *suggested* from without, as he does with Dorian.

Minds, just like living organisms, must be free from external constraints in order to evolve, for complexity arises internally, or so Wilde believes. Though Charles Darwin made it clear that natural selection only describes the evolution of beings other than human, a variety of philosophers applied his evolutionary theory to races, culture, and even ideas: "The idea of evolution as a movement from simplicity to complexity pervaded all areas of scientific thought in the nineteenth century" (Haley 221).[49] For instance, by drawing a four-point analogy between society and organisms, Herbert Spencer manages to universalize natural selection to a wide array of phenomena ("The Social Organism" 395-396).[50] In his *Commonplace Book*, Wilde noted: "Progress in thought is the assertion of individualism against authority, and progress in matter is differentiation and specialisation of function: those organisms which are entirely subject to external influences do not progress any more than a mind entirely subject to authority" (*ON* 121). Analogies between biology and psychology are quite common throughout his Oxford notebooks; nineteenth-century

49 See Wilde's entry in his *Commonplace Book* entitled "Survival of Fittest in thought" and further remarks: "Hegelian dialectic is the natural selection produced by a struggle for existence in world of thought" (*ON* 121, 149).

50 Wilde draws from Spenser's *The Study of Sociology* to make similar points in his *Commonplace Book* (*ON* 109-110, see notes on 175-176).

thought had a *penchant* for synthesis.[51] Biology and history are also paralleled in the *Commonplace Book* as "the passage from cantonal individuality to national unity" is equated with "the evolution of multicellular organisms from unicellular" (*ON* 117). In sum, biology, psychology, and history all follow the same universal laws.

Wilde's "Historical Criticism"[52] essay, submitted to the Chancellor's English Essay prize in 1879, exemplifies external influence's detrimental impact with a short case study of the decline of Greek historical criticism after Thucydides (5th century BC), author of the *History of the Peloponnesian War*, and before Polybius (2nd century BC), father to the notion of political balance in the government. He names two perverse trends external to the Greek spirit in historical criticism: the rhetorician Isocrates (mid-5th century to mid-4th century BC) – responsible for the appreciation of contemporary historians according to "the goodness of the Greek they write" rather than "their power of estimating evidence" – and the founding of Alexandria (332 BC) by Alexander the Great – which "diverted the critical tendencies of the Greek spirit into questions of grammar, philology and the like" (*IV* 42). The opposition between Polybius's birthplace – "the serene and pure air of the clear uplands of Arkadeia" which are "the very heart of Greece" – and "the sophists of Athens" or "the hot sands of Egypt" underscores the latter's external – or at least peripheral – situation with regards to the true Greek spirit (*IV* 42). In conclusion, external influences impede progress in all spheres, according to Lord Henry and to Wilde's early writing.

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In contrast, Dorian welcomes influence as an excuse to deflect responsibility, almost casting the Other as sinner rather than himself. From the moment Dorian notices the change on his portrait and becomes conscious that he has acted reproachfully when heartlessly

51 Wilde writes in his *Notebook Kept at Oxford*: "the force of analogy[,] the desire to bring all one[']s thoughts into harmony, and mutual correspondance (sic), have led men to infer that the reign of Law which is the first message of physical science, is also to be extended to those phenomena which seem the most remote from Law" (*ON* 172).

52 The essay is best known by the title "The Rise of Historical Criticism," assigned to the first of the text's three parts when privately printed by Sherwood Press in 1905 (*IV* xxiv).

breaking off his engagement with Sibyl, he consistently places the blame for his "cruelty" outside of himself (*III* 67, 246). He successively blames Sibyl for disappointing him ("It was the girl's fault, not his"), his Maker for endowing him with "such a soul," and Sibyl once more for making him suffer "æon upon æon of torture[53]" (*III* 67, 246). Such ramblings and mental detours are consistent with his usual thought process when distressed. Furthermore, with no self-assertion, Dorian seems totally devoid of internal "will or intention" – concepts which Lord Henry incidentally rejects[54] – and dependant upon exterior forces to develop in any capacity (*III* 158, 351). For instance, only a "higher *influence*" could ennoble his "unreal and selfish love" for Sibyl (*III* 72, 250, emphasis added). Dorian projects all ultimate causes outside of himself, incidentally displacing the blame onto an Other.

Dorian henceforth refuses any form of responsibility, particularly in decision-making. He will not own up to his choices, presenting them as not even his own: "He felt that the time had really come for making his choice. Or had his choice already been made? Yes, life had decided that for him,—life, and his own infinite curiosity about life" (*III* 82, 257).[55] He first blamed the choice of living a life of "infinite passion, pleasures subtle and secret, wild joys and wilder sins" ascribed to his "infinite curiosity about life" upon Sibyl's death in childish accusations. He claimed that she had acted in a "selfish" manner by killing herself because until then she counterpoised Lord Henry's "wrong, fascinating, poisonous, delightful theories" and could have thus kept Dorian "straight" (*III* 76, 253; 55, 235).

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53 The manuscript reads "suffering."

54 Lord Henry's materialist stance concords with Wilde's notes on Edward Burnett Tylor's *Primitive Culture* (1871). Indeed, he put down in his *Notebook Kept at Oxford*: "in the study of man we must put aside any ideas of extra-natural interference and causeless spontaneity," of which an example is a "motiveless will" (*ON* 154, partly quoting Tylor 3).

55 I disagree with Sheldon W. Liebman, who fails to acknowledge that Dorian is refusing responsibility. He rather contends that "Dorian *realizes* that he has already made the choice to follow Henry rather than Basil" (308, emphasis added). If Dorian has himself "made the choice," why would he then state that "life had decided that for him"?

Dorian will under no circumstance allow to be held accountable for his lifestyle, attitude, and their consequences, but does acknowledge they are problematic.

Interestingly, the young man's reliance on Sibyl to resist hedonist temptation demonstrates that she rapidly displaced Basil's "idealism" as a challenger to the hegemony of Lord Henry's "scientific materialism" (Seagroatt 743). The painter's "compliments,"[56] according to the narrator's earlier report of Dorian's own understanding, "had not influenced his nature" the way Lord Henry's "strange panegyric on youth" and "terrible warning of its brevity"[57] impressed and affected him (*III* 28, 189).[58] Addressing his new-found mentor, the young man contends that he would not have discovered Sibyl without him. Indeed, he traces his "passion for sensations" to the men's first meeting: "You filled me with a wild desire to know everything about life" (*III* 38, 211). Hence, all blame ultimately reverts to the aristocrat and his theories.

The bond of disciple to master resists total dissolution. As Dorian reflects on the possibility of self-reform, successive authorial rewritings subtly confirm a reading according to which he is too fond of Lord Henry to refrain from seeing him. Indeed, the manuscript reads: "He would not see Lord Henry any more, or listen to that subtle poisonous voice that in Basil Hallward's garden had first stirred within him the passion for impossible things" (*III* 68). The "or" seems to convey the meaning of a "nor," but Wilde added "at any rate" immediately after on the manuscript, making the disjunction's negation sound more like the negation of only the second element (*III* 68). In the published versions, "—would not" replaces the aforementioned coordinating conjunction (*III* 68, 246). The em

56 The manuscript reads "panegyrics."

57 The manuscript reads "terrible account of the horrors of old age."

58 Though Dorian is very attached to Lord Henry, his affection is contained within the boundaries of friendship (whereas Basil is in love with the former). Indeed, in a sentence Wilde deleted in the typescript, the young man reports that "[h]e felt no romance for him" (*III* 91). The passage was most likely removed for its direct homosexual implications rather than an incorrect rendition of Dorian's feelings. The subsequent explanation according to which Lord Henry is "too clever and too cynical to be really fond of" is maintained through all versions (*III* 91).

dash along with the verb's repetition give the impression that Dorian has retracted from his first thought (not to "see Lord Henry any more") and reformulated it in more viable terms: to continue on seeing him, yet without listening to his "voice," which Wilde changed to "views" on the manuscript and to "theories" on the typescript (*III* 68). Dorian knows both that he is subjected to Lord Henry's influence and that it is nefarious to him, yet he cannot resist, confirming his malleability.

Nevertheless, Dorian does not simply replicate Lord Henry's theories, does not imitate him beyond his "speech mannerisms," as Lawler puts it (*An Inquiry* 126). He rather enacts what his mentor has told him, bringing "a zeal for direct action" to his theories and aiming for "a life of performance not speculation" (*An Inquiry* 124, 126). Contemplation or being "merely the spectator of life" is indeed the renunciation of which Lord Henry is found guilty in Wilde's moral: "He finds that those who reject the battle are more deeply wounded than those who take part in it" (*CL* 430). The narrative unfolding further demonstrates that Dorian's relationship to Lord Henry is conflictual. First set upon following his counsels, the younger man ends up changing his mind, as though he were struggling to either assert his individuality or to comply to his own conscience. Speaking of his delightful Sibyl, the young man earnestly repeats his lessons to his master: "I don't think I am likely to marry, Harry. I am too much in love. That is one of your aphorisms" (*III* 37, 210). Wilde emphasized that Dorian brings praxis to Lord Henry's theories by adding in the typescript: "I am putting it into practice, as I do everything you say" (*III* 37). Nonetheless, on the very same evening, Lord Henry receives a telegram announcing Dorian and Sibyl's engagement (*III* 49, 220). Hence, Dorian does not always follow blindly Lord Henry's teachings.

The mentor's direct influence wanes after Sibyl's death but extends indirectly with his gift, the yellow book. The French novel is a *cadeau empoisonné*.[59] Dorian is said to have been "poisoned by a book," an analogy with the Renaissance's "strange manners of

59 Jacques Derrida discusses the ambiguity of gifts in his commentary of Plato's *Phedra*, "La pharmacie de Platon."

poisoning": "by a helmet and a lighted torch, by an embroidered glove and a jewelled fan, by a gilded pomander and by an amber chain" (*III* 125, 290). Louis Courtadon, in a 1912 article, raises doubts on such poisoning methods' existence. Indeed, he relegates to the realm of legend perfume poisonings such as Jeanne d'Albret's death to perfumed gloves, pope Clement VII's to a poisonous torch's fumes, and the Cardinal of Lorraine's to the deadly fumes of gold coins wrought especially for him (191). The same Italian perfumer who is believed to have presented Jeanne d'Albret with the poisonous gloves is also accused of giving a similarly deadly pomander to Louis de Bourbon, Prince de Condi (Lucas 166). Hence, in a number of cases, poison is believed to have been delivered through gifts, an interesting parallel with the yellow book.

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Dorian seems to agree with Basil that nurture is at least partly to blame, yet he does not dissociate himself from Lord Henry's heritage, only from the implication that he was a simple puppet. In answer to the painter's request for "the Dorian Gray [he] used to paint,"[60] the young man signals his autonomy and explains that he has changed: "I have developed. I was a school-boy when you knew me. I am a man now. I have new passions, new thoughts, new ideas" (*III* 260; 87, 261). Furthermore, nature does enter into Dorian's rationale concerning his behaviour. He claims he must resist more than Lord Henry and his toxic gift's influence: "the still more poisonous influences that came from his own temperament" hold sway over him (*III* 96, 269). Hence, he does not find his nature blameless.

Nineteenth-century scientific discourse frequently traced one's actions to one's constitution, undermining free will. For instance, in accord with his materialist ideology rejecting "will or intention," Lord Henry locates the seat of "thought" and "passion," which govern life, in "nerves, and fibres, and slowly built-up cells" (*III* 158, 351). In a Darwinist phase during his philosophical and spiritual experimentation, Dorian took "a curious pleasure in tracing the thoughts and passions of men to some pearly cell in the brain, or

60 The 1890 version reads "the Dorian Gray I used to know" (*III* 85).

some white[61] nerve in the body" (*III* 111, 280). "Thought" and "passion" connect to the body, and can thus be inherited, have deduced Victorian thinkers. According to Gilbert in "The Critic as Artist," heredity not only determines eye and hair colour, but passes down "subjective" gifts: "strange temperaments and subtle susceptibilities," "wild ardours and chill moods of indifference," "complex multiform gifts of thoughts that are at variance with each other, and passions that war against themselves" (*IV* 177). While visiting his family's portrait-gallery, Dorian similarly muses on the possibility that his character might have been passed down from his ancestors (*III* 121-122, 188-189). With Wilde, experiences influence the race beyond the individual through the inheritance of acquired characteristics. Incidentally, his fictional character blames ancestry and its impact on his "temperament" to endlessly evade accountability.

Philip E. Smith II and Michael S. Helfand, who have edited Wilde's Oxford notebooks, contend that he integrated Hegelian idealism and positivist evolution, following mathematician and philosopher William Kingdon Clifford's *Lectures and Essays* (1879), yet added the notion of evolution towards greater perfection throughout history (*ON* viii, 29-32). Smith concisely summarizes their view: "Wilde's æsthetic and critical theory envisioned the progressive and self-conscious development of human culture through evolutionary mechanisms recognized as valid by Victorian scientists" (30). Indeed, races improve by inheriting acquired characteristics according to Wilde.

Wilde discusses the inheritance of acquired traits mechanics in his *Commonplace Book*. He wrote in the very last note: "certain material changes exterior to our organism are always accompanied by certain other material changes inside our organism" (*ON* 152). Again, once transformations are inscribed within one's body, it may be supposed that they can be passed onto one's descendants. Acquired characteristics in one generation become innate in the next. In a note on "English Thought from Bacon," Wilde narrates in dialectic terms – and celebrates – the return of "Innate Ideas (sic)" in philosophy: on

61 J. M. Stoddart, an American managing editor at Lippincott, changed "ivory" to "pearly" and "scarlet" to "white" on the typescript.

"transcendental" grounds with Immanuel Kant and his "forms or categories of thought" and on "Biological Grounds (sic)"[62] with Spencer and the "hereditary transmission of concepts" (*ON* 120).[63] All humans are thus born with a store of knowledge which depends upon their race: "the experience of the race having been substituted for the experience of the individual, necessary truths are admitted to be a-priori to the individual, though a-posteriori to the race" (*ON* 133-134).[64] Wilde refers to this notion of race-experience in his apology of Sin in "The Soul of Man" quoted previously. The individual sinner's personal growth enriches his or her race's experience, provided that he or she does have children. Otherwise, his or her acquired development cannot be passed on biologically.

Hence, Dorian's understanding of the human psyche combines inheritance with multiplicity, recalling Lord Henry's notion of "deep" nature. Pathologies and acquired psychological traits are passed on to form "a being with myriad lives and myriad sensations, a complex multiform creature that bore within itself strange legacies of thought and passion[65], and whose very flesh was tainted with the monstrous maladies of the dead" (*III* 121, 288).[66] The "myriad lives" recall Gilbert's claim in "The Critic as Artist" that the presence of our ancestors' experiences within our soul "enables us to live [their] countless lives" (*IV* 178). A baby is thence far from a blank slate: it has the potential to develop into all its ancestors. Human beings are thus both physiologically and

62 Capitalization (and punctuation) are quite random in the notebooks.

63 Spencer presents his "general doctrine" as a "reconciliation between the experience-hypothesis [Locke] as commonly interpreted, and the hypothesis which the transcendentalists oppose to it" and refers specifically to Kant's "forms of thought" in his text (*The Principles of Psychology* 465, 466).

64 Wilde is likely following Clifford's presentation of Spencer's ideas in *Lectures and Essays*: "The perceptions, not only of former generations of men, but of those lower organisms from which they were originally derived, beginning even with the first molecule that was complex enough to preserve records of its own changes; all these have been built into the organism, have determined its character, and have been handed down to us by hereditary descent" (278-279).

65 The typescript read "*creature* with myriad lives and myriad *passions*, a complex multiform *being* that bore within itself strange legacies of thought" before Wilde revised it (emphasis added).

66 The wording echoes that of the passage in "The Critic as Artist" previously referred to, with the use of "complex multiform" and "maladies" (*IV* 177).

psychologically the products and sum of their ancestry's experiences. The richer the stock, the further he or she can push back the boundaries of human experience.

Evolution increases the availability, for an individual, of thoughts and passions through the accretion of past experiences, both through genetic and imaginary genealogy. Indeed, Dorian does not restrict the concept to biological lineage: "one had ancestors in literature, as well as in one's own race, nearer perhaps in type and temperament, many of them, and certainly with an influence of which one was more absolutely conscious" (*III* 122, 289). He repeatedly imagines himself as reliving literary and historical characters' lives, be they his "prefiguring type" – his French novel's Parisian hero, – Roman emperors, or Italian Renaissance despots (*III* 105, 276; 122-125, 289-290). In his criticism, Wilde also details an unorthodox conception of heredity. The coupling of biological and literary genealogy echoes "Historical Criticism": "[t]he principle of heredity can be exemplified in literature as well as in organic life: Aristotle, Plato and Polybius are the lineal ancestors of Fichte and Hegel, of Vico and Cousin, of Montesquieu and De Tocqueville" (*IV* 41). Literature must not be understood in relation to æsthetics, to beauty, but rather to experience and to imagination, which, according to Gilbert in "The Critic as Artist," is "concentrated race-experience" resulting from heredity (*IV* 178). Nevertheless, while heredity affords imagination ever growing latitude by preceding personal experimentation with a stock of accumulated experiences, it constrains action.

During the 19th century, positivism repeatedly challenged free will. The loss may only be temporary:

> There are moments, psychologists tell us, when the passion for sin, or for what the world calls sin, so dominates a nature that every fibre of the body, as every cell of the brain, seems to be instinct with fearful impulses. Men and women at such moments lose the freedom of their will. They move to their terrible end as automatons move (*III* 330).

This passage of a chapter added to the 1891 edition circumscribes within time the disintegration of one's control over one's body. In *Primitive Culture*, Tylor presents

biological determinism as an empirically and universally observed perpetual phenomenon: "None will deny that, as each man knows by the evidence of his own consciousness, definite and natural cause does, to a great extent, determine human action" (3). The fictional Gilbert in "The Critic as Artist" pushes the argument further and contends that "the scientific principle of Heredity" has freed humanity from the "burden of moral responsibility" by robbing "activity of its choice" (*IV* 177). According to Wilde, heredity has a deterministic influence on action.

Determinism not only annihilates accountability, but also renders the future inescapable. The narrator speaks ominously of Dorian's future: "There were passions in him that *would* find their terrible outlet, dreams that *would* make the shadow of their evil real" (*III* 96, 270, emphasis added). The extent of Dr. Sixte's fatalism in *Le Disciple* is quite extraordinary, which illustrates how far determinism could be pushed in the *fin de siècle*:

> « Si nous connaissions vraiment la position relative de tous les phénomènes qui constituent l'univers actuel, – nous pourrions, dès à présent, calculer avec une certitude égale à celle des astronomes le jour, l'heure, la minute où l'Angleterre par exemple, évacuera les Indes, où l'Europe aura brûlé son dernier morceau de houille, où tel criminel, encore à naître, assassinera son père, où tel poème, encore à concevoir, sera composé. L'avenir tient dans le présent comme toutes les propriétés du triangle tiennent dans sa définition... » (Bourget 21-22)

The future's inevitability serves as premise for Wilde's first take on the causes of crime: his short story *Lord Savile's Crime*. In its second publication, the subtitle was changed from "A Study of Cheiromancy (sic)" to "A Study of Duty" (*Sh. Fiction* 6). This ironic subtitle refers to Lord Savile's self-imposed duty to, before he marries, realize the inevitable yet dreadful act written upon his hand. In his introduction to *Primitive Culture*, Tylor mentions disdainfully "the list of dissertations on supernatural intervention and natural causation, on liberty, predestination, and accountability" (3). The topic which forms the substance of the short story's plot was thus already popular by the 1870s.

In this first take on crime, Wilde treats murder lightly, offering it as the object of a self-fulfilling prophecy and a dreadful reversal of fate for the chiromancer. Lord Savile attempts to kill two relatives but fails miserably. He nevertheless manages to fulfil his destiny by pushing the psalmist into the Thames in a lonely nighttime encounter. Belief in a metaphysical determinism is thus shown to be the cause of a crime without which it would never even have been imagined (see especially *Sh. Fiction* 27). Yet this curiously does not evacuate duty. Predestination may serve the plot's comic reversal, yet the protagonist's attitude offers a striking contrast with Dorian's. Indeed, Lord Savile feels the responsibility to measure up to his predetermined destiny without cowering away while Dorian uses determinism to deny accountability.

In other cases, the horrific actions which result from fatalist theories prompt a re-evalution. In *Le Disciple*, remorse overcomes Dr. Sixte, formerly a "négateur de toute liberté," when he realizes that in the end his doctrines of moral relativity and absolute determinism have corrupted a "caractère [...] dangereux par nature" (321). The young disciple Robert Greslou's psychological experimentation in the seduction of a young lady ends with her suicide.[67] As Ruth Harris aptly describes, "the abstract appreciation of mental operations" lead him "to excuse his own immoral acts as the result of ineluctable necessity" (316). All in all, theoretical principles justifying (non-)responsibility are but a *façade*: personal ethics control the bottom-line.

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67 Scholars depicting Lord Henry as conducting a scientific experiment through Dorian have surprisingly overlooked *Le Disciple*, which offers an example of such a plot (Clausson 252-253; Seagroatt 742-743). French critics have pointed out promising analogies. Catherine Lingua suggests a comparison between Lord Henry and Dr. Sixte on the basis that they both excel "dans l'étude et le maniement d'une âme vivante" and that Wilde might have read *Le Disciple* while preparing *Dorian Gray* (118). In addition, Gérard Peylet draws a parallel between Greslou and Lord Henry's "démon de l'analyse" (128). Furthermore, the writers befriended in the 1880s (Sherard 242; Mansuy 280n73, 382). Finally, Bourget shared on May 12, 1895 in the *Figaro* reflections Wilde's trial inspired him (Carassus 266).

First laid out by Lord Henry and subsequently brought to life through the influence of the protagonist of a French book, depraved ancestors scrutinized in portraits, and decadent historical figures witnessed through literature, new hedonism only accounts for Dorian's sinful life, not his murderous crime. Such experimentation can however turn killing into nothing more than a new sin to be tested. Accordingly, *The Daily Chronicle* reviewer notes that Dorian's "sudden impulse [...] to murder the painter" can be "artistically defended" as "a fresh development of his scheme for realising every phase of life-experience" (Beckson 73). In contrast with speculations on the causes of Dorian's sins, to which all three main characters contributed, the reader must rely on the narrator's report of the killer's stream of consciousness alone to explain both the murder and the self-destructive finale. Indeed, Basil cannot comment on the motives of his own unforeseen assassination and Lord Henry refuses any implication that his former *protégé* should be a criminal.

Upon close reading, the narrator's account of the painter's end from the murderer's perspective seems to rule out a simple hedonistic experiment. Though he feels "strangely calm" once the deed is done, more than a "sudden impulse," as *The Daily Chronicle* reviewer puts it, dominates him beforehand (*III* 137, 300). An "uncontrollable feeling of hatred" towards his long-time friend and the "mad passions of a hunted animal" seize him (*III* 137, 300). These violent emotions certainly do not sit well with Basil's valuation of good-natured Dorian, but they are equally remote from his new hedonist pose, which Lord Henry understands to be his true nature. In his constant quest for novel "sensations" to quench his "intellectual curiosity," Dorian would voluntarily let "modes of thought [...] really alien to his nature" influence him until he felt he had "caught their color" (*III* 110, 280). These include Roman Catholicism, mysticism, and studies in biological determinism. His nature does not dictate his thoughts: his curiosity for life leads him to seek other, "alien" frameworks. He also diligently studies his reaction to different stimuli, seeking for instance to "elaborate a real psychology of perfumes" (*III* 112, 281). Dorian seems to have total command over this meticulous exploration of both thought and the senses' effects,

which Seagroatt compares to a scientific endeavour (744, 748). How then could it degenerate into bloodshed?

This sense of mastery over one's thinking process – the "cool, calculating, conscienceless character, evolved logically enough by Mr Wilde's 'New Hedonism'" that the reviewer evokes – runs contrary to the narrator's statement, at the beginning of the long descriptive chapter on new hedonism, that he has "almost entirely lost control" over his "nature" and its "changing fancies" (Beckson 73; *III* 105, 276). Wilde corrects the reviewer in a written reply published by the *Daily Chronicle*: Dorian, on the contrary, is "extremely impulsive" (*CL* 436). Furthermore, while the reviewer reads the young man as "conscienceless," Wilde discredits the interpretation and claims that Dorian is "haunted" by "an exaggerated sense of conscience which mars his pleasures for him" (*CL* 436). Different passages within the text support both the author's and his critic's positions. Dorian thus seems to have at least two personalities – one raging underneath the cold and calculating dominant one – an unsurprising fact given the ultimate imperative of new hedonism discussed in the beginning of the chapter: to know of all the past's experiences.

Conscience from time to time erupts and disturbs the cool, calculated experimentation of new sensations. Once one acknowledges Dorian's dual personality, his plea to Basil – "Each of us has Heaven and Hell in him" – shines in a different light (*III* 135, 299). He replies to the awe-struck painter who has just come to the realization that the object of his past adoration's soul has "the face of a satyr" and "the eyes of a devil" (*III* 135, 299). Editors of *The Picture of Dorian Gray* Joseph Bristow and Michael Patrick Gillespie read the passage as an echo of *Paradise Lost*: "The mind is its own place, and in itself | Can make a Heaven of Hell, a Hell of Heaven" (I.254-255, qtd in *III* 420n135.26; *Norton ed.* 131n3).[68] However, John Milton's Satan is referring to the possibility of *creating* Heaven and Hell within one's mind, not to their proper *existence* within one's being. Dorian insists that he is neither simply the idealized figure to which his friend clung nor the hellish being he just discovered. The two nouns were only capitalized on the

68 Isobel Murray includes no editorial note on the passage in the Oxford edition.

typescript, which gives less weight to an argument based on formal resemblance. The distinction between the verbs "to have" and "to make" bring Dorian's theory much closer to that of Stevenson's Jekyll (see Chapter 2) than to that of Milton's Satan, one in which competing characters cohabit within the mind. Such an interiorized battle can command a "wild gesture of despair," whereas on the contrary Satan's proposition offers hope (*III* 135, 299). Because of the supernatural curse, the portrait bears alone the weight of Dorian's inner Hell while his inner Heaven glows on his face.

There is no compound avatar in *Dorian Gray*, comparable to Dr Jekyll, who retains both parts of his nature while Mr Hyde is pure evil. Nevertheless, the portrait functions similarly to the evil alter ego: it is "an iconographical establishment of difference, illustrating self as other," as Rosemary Jackson very aptly describes (45). The difference is underscored physiognomically. Indeed, the natural "signs of age" but also the physiognomic "signs of sin," which should both mar Dorian's constitution, stain the portrait instead while the character retains his early adulthood freshness (*III* 106, 277). The displacement of the legible heralds of evil from the face to the portrait misleads many who took "that wonderful youth that seemed never to leave him" as a token of moral conduct (*III* 120, 287). As Brigit M. Marshall remarks in the introduction to her article on physiognomy and phrenology in *Dorian Gray* and *Dracula* (1897), evil is perhaps most frightening "in real-life" because it not detectable visually, as it is in Gothic novels (161). Dorian alone witnesses the hideousness of his soul, from which he can easily dissociate himself and mark as Other.

Dorian chooses to materialize his conscience within the portrait in a rare moment of self-determination. He expressly pledges upon noticing the initial transformation that it shall be to him "the visible emblem of conscience" (*III* 68, 246). In this capacity, it has had a decisive influence over all his criminal actions and not only the final blow.[69] Whereas *The*

69 The manuscript expressed a tidy symmetry: "Dorian Gray had been poisoned by a book *and by a picture. Lord Henry had given him the one, and Basil Hallward had painted the other*" (*III* 125, emphasis added). Wilde struck out the second sentence directly on the manuscript and the remainder of the italicized text on the typescript.

Daily Chronicle reviewer finds narrative justification in Basil's murder, he (or less likely she) argues that the portrait's destruction, prompted "merely" by its apparent 'insensibility' to Dorian's alleged good deed, is "inconsistent" with his "cool" and "calculating" pursuit of new hedonism (Beckson 73). Such a motivation is indeed unconvincing, but Wilde in his reply explains the act's deeper roots: "It is finally to get rid of the conscience that had dogged his steps from year to year that he destroys the picture" (*CL* 436). Wilde reaffirms this interpretation five years later during his first trial against the Marquess of Queensberry, father to his lover Lord Arthur Douglas (Holland 63). Dorian sought to do away with the terrible burden of conscience by destroying its "visible emblem."

Given the motive behind Dorian's second violent attack, Basil's murder could be reinterpreted as a first attempt to kill conscience. The appalled painter's last words are indeed moralizing: "You have done enough evil in your life. My God! don't you see that accursed[70] thing leering at us?" (*III* 136, 299). Basil directs the sinner's attention to the representation of his soul. On every encounter, he reminded his sitter, perhaps painfully, of his long lost innocence by clinging to an idealized moment of Dorian's existence, thought to be immortalized on canvas. The artist acts as conscience's disapproving voice – as the portrait provides its reproachful gaze – and must be removed in order for Dorian to enjoy his lifestyle with less remorse. The voice may be gone, but the gaze remains and must be destroyed as well.

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The text, especially its 1891 additions, offers an additional, more eerie, explanation to both slaughters: insanity. In the thoughts running through Dorian's mind before he destroys the picture, and consequently himself, he as always lays the blame on others. He holds Basil and Alan Campbell – the unlucky scientist who commits suicide after having been recruited to cover up the murderous deed – responsible for their own fate. Additional blame falls upon the painter for having produced his dreaded work of art: "It was the

70 The typescript reads "damned."

portrait that had done everything" (*III* 161, 355). The 20-chapter version offers more details on that which the portrait has "done." Indeed, it expressly becomes the instigator of Basil's murder: "Dorian Gray glanced at the picture, and suddenly an uncontrollable feeling of hatred for Basil Hallward came over him, *as though it had been suggested to him by the image on the canvas, whispered into his ear by those grinning lips*" (*III* 299, emphasis added). The added passage (in italics) turns suggestion into hallucination. In a strange reversal, the "visible emblem of conscience" inspires crime. This decisive part of Dorian's excuse in murdering Basil has gone widely unnoticed within the academic community.[71]

Dorian twice discharges himself of criminal responsibility by specifically invoking madness. Before killing himself, he blames his friend's murder on "the madness of a moment" to which he had given an astrological origin immediately after the deed: "There had been a madness of murder in the air. Some red star had come too close to the earth" (*III* 161, 355; 139, 301). Isobel Murray, in her editorial notes, directs the reader to Pater's "Denys L'Auxerrois": "The planet Mars drew nearer to the earth than usual, hanging in the low sky like a fiery red lamp" (62; qtd. in *Oxford ed.* 193). Mars is known to be the red planet, which does give the reference a certain relevance, but the context links the astronomical phenomenon to climate change and perhaps, though not expressly, to social upheaval: it bears no connection with murder. Ptolemy's *Tetrabiblos* nevertheless links Mars to violence in multiple forms (183). This Ancient astrological treatise was twice translated into English during the first quarter of the nineteenth-century (Holden 203). It remained a reference well into the twentieth-century: William Butler Yeats (1865-1939) recommends it in a letter, asserting it is the source of all modern astrology (Saddlemyer 63). Furthermore, the *Tetrabiblos* also states that comets, which can be assimilated to stars moving in the sky, "naturally produce the effects peculiar to Mars and to Mercury – wars, hot weather, disturbed conditions, and the accompaniments of these" (193). The "red star,"

71 Only two scholars have discussed the passage, with contradictory interpretations of agency. To Stephen Kern, it is "the painting itself" that acts and "miraculously urges him [Dorian] to commit murder" (317). In contrast, Guy Willoughby contends that the dreadful deed is born of the protagonist's own reading: "Dorian is unable to review the awful messages of his portrait [and] finds, rather, his own distorted meanings in the picture which shames and horrifies Basil" (73).

according to astrological lore, could thus have caused the "madness of murder" which Dorian invokes to shy away from criminal responsibility in Basil's death.

The aforementioned passage is the only reference to astrological influence. However, punctual references to madness are recurrent. For instance, in his love-letter to the already dead Sibyl, Dorian "accus[es] himself of madness" (*III* 73, 250). Folly first enters his thoughts when he notices the change in the portrait and attempts to address the puzzling problem rationally. He is quite convinced that "[i]t was not a mere fancy of his own," yet a trace of doubt remains (*III* 66, 245). He briefly fathoms that "that tiny scarlet speck that makes men mad" had "fallen upon his brain" due to "horrible night" he had spent (*III* 68, 246). A speck is a "small spot of a different colour or substance to that of the material or surface upon which it appears" also "indicative of a defective, diseased, or faulty condition" (OED). Esther Rashkin very perceptively links this mark to an obsolete figurative use of 'worm,' often termed 'wild worm': "A whim or 'maggot' in the brain; a perverse fancy or desire; a streak of madness or insanity" (OED, qtd in 174). Sadly, she does not share her research process and surprisingly makes no reference to the preceding meaning in the *Oxford English Dictionary*, which is still in use and also of interest to *Dorian Gray*: "A grief or passion that preys stealthily on a man's heart or torments his conscience (like a worm in a dead body or a maggot in food); esp[ecially] the gnawing pain of remorse" (OED). Dorian's hypothesis regarding the "speck" is thus that a strange mixture of remorse and madness initiated the illusion of the portrait's transformation. Nonetheless, he rapidly reverts to his earlier position, recognizing the change's concreteness. Madness is nonetheless tightly connected to the portrait.

Dorian's self-justification for moving the portrait evolves and bears witness to a growing paranoia. The apparition of the "touch of cruelty in the mouth" triggers its locking up (*III* 66, 245). As he initially notices the change, even before he feels threatened by his friends' eyes, he wonders if it will "become a monstrous[72] and loathsome thing, to be hidden away in a locked room, to be shut out from the sunlight" (*III* 257). Ugliness would

72 The 1890 version reads "hideous" (*III* 82).

make the painting unfit for public display within the marvellously decorated library, with its "cream-coloured silk blinds," its "blue-dragon bowl [...] filled with sulphur-yellow roses," and its "luxuriously-cushioned couch" (*III* 66, 245; 71, 248; 72, 249). However, after he learns of Sibyl's suicide, Dorian starts to fear discovery rather than mere hideousness.

When he fully understands the "horrible change" he noticed, Dorian grows distrustful, fearing his intimacy will be breached (*III* 72, 249). Scared someone will spy on his validation of the transformation, he locks the doors. The next day, Basil comes to visit and incidentally asks to see the portrait he has himself painted. As the artist gestures to remove the screen and Dorian stops him with a "cry of terror": he is "trembling all over" (*III* 88, 262). He then resolves to remove his secret from all eyes except his own: "The portrait must be hidden away at all costs. [...] It had been *mad* of him to have allowed the thing to remain,[73] even for an hour, in a room to which any of his friends had access" (*III* 267, emphasis added). Had it really been mad, or is he becoming mad? Dorian indeed begins to display paranoid tendencies. The savage impulse to protect his secret reappears against Mr. Hubbard, the helpful frame-maker: "He felt ready to leap upon him and fling him to the ground if he dared to lift the gorgeous hanging that concealed the secret of his life" (*III* 100, 272). The safety Dorian's unalterable appearance affords him by evading physiognomic suspicion depends upon the portrait's eternal removal from the public eye.

The prime suspect for a potential discovery is a background figure too close for comfort: Victor, the faithful butler. The young master is clearly unstable when he begins distrusting him: "When his servant entered, he looked at him steadfastly, and wondered if he had thought of peering behind the screen. The man was quite impassive, and waited for his orders. [...] There was nothing to be afraid of, there. Yet he thought it best to be on his guard" (*III* 94, 268). Wilde adds on the typescript, after Dorian has given his orders: "It

73 The manuscript reads "to let it remain;" the typescript, "to have let the thing remain;" and the 1890 version, "to have the thing remain" (*III* 93).

seemed to him that as the man left the room he peered[74] in the direction of the screen. Or was that only his[75] fancy?" (*III* 94) Dorian is aware of his fear's potential excessiveness, as he suggests his "fancy" could be playing tricks on him. The paranoia nevertheless persists as he feels, once Victor has re-entered, that he "must be got rid of at once" because of a certain slyness and of his "thoughtful, treacherous eyes" (*III* 97, 270). The slippage from "thoughtful" to "treacherous" is noteworthy: Dorian's portrait – the visible decrepitude of his own soul – so preoccupies him that he cannot conceive that his entourage is not equally obsessed.

There is no relief for the paranoid mind. Only once the moving men are downstairs, the door locked and the key in his pocket will Dorian believe he can feel safe: "No eye but his would ever see his shame" (*III* 100, 273). Nevertheless, as he returns downstairs, he starts wondering whether Victor had "wormed out" of the men the reason for which they had been called, for he would assuredly, believes the unstable master, notice the painting's absence: "Perhaps some night he might find him creeping upstairs and trying to force the door of the room. It was a horrible thing to have a spy in one's house" (*III* 101, 273). The delusion is particularly pervasive concerning Victor since the menace comes from within, and thus seems even more threatening. The fear of getting caught also participates in Dorian's resolution to destroy the picture. Indeed, he surmises that it is the only "bit of evidence" left to prove his guilt in relation to Basil's murder (*III* 162, 356). Though no hallucination drives the young man to self-destruction, madness still participates in the homicide in the form of paranoia.

74 The 1891 version reads "his eyes wandered" (*III* 268).

75 The 1891 version reads "merely his own" (*III* 268).

Conclusion

Close reading and literary genealogy enable an interpretation of Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein* as a criminal narrative. It relies on two competing ætiologies of crime. The first draws on Johann Kaspar Lavater's physiognomic principles. The second constructs a psychosocial argument in the line of Friedrich Schiller's *Der Verbrecher aus Verlorene Ehre*, which earns it a place, in my opinion, in the criminal as Titan corpus of Theodore Ziolkowski's typology. Additional connections with the criminal narrative can be traced by referring to an ancestor within popular culture: seventeenth- and eighteenth-century criminal biographies. Further inquiry into differences between *Frankenstein*'s first and third editions, guided by Shelley's journals and letters, might determine to what extent the criminal angle was intentional.

Robert Louis Stevenson's *Strange Case of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde* functions as a detective story in which explanations regarding Edward Hyde's nature, behaviour, and relation to Jekyll supersede each other as the narrative unfolds additional clues. The main investigator, Gabriel Utterson, formulates three successive hypotheses involving biological atavism, idiosyncratic dislike, and Satanism. In the final chapter, Dr. Henry Jekyll's autobiographical perspective on Hyde moves from identification – he forms part of his human self – to rejection – he constitutes an inhuman Other. In the process, he pronounces himself morally insane. The entire tale bears witness to Stevenson's fascination with double lives, an effervescent topic in psychopathological research at the time. Further comparison with the Scotsman's other devil stories might give more depth to the overarching theological descriptions of the evil self.

Close reading and comparative analysis with social discourse uncovers multiple and varied understandings and explanations of criminality in *The Picture of Dorian Gray.* On a meta-narrative level, Lord Henry Wotton contrastingly describes crime as a lower-class means to liberate one's self from social constraints – as is art to the higher classes, – but

also as a necessity in the face of poverty and a result of punishment. He refuses to take the blame Basil Hallward lays on him for Dorian's corruption, claiming he has but exposed the young man's true self. The latter also refuses accountability, invoking deterministic influences emanating from his character and his ancestry, both biological and philosophical, as well as madness. Analysis of the James Vane subplot added to the 1891 edition might reconcile Lord Henry's class-based discourse on criminality with the narrative.

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All three novels question physiognomic legibility. Indeed, the creature offers its own discourse to counter Frankenstein's reading (and narrative structure favours its view); Utterson's three hypotheses fail to unravel the basic mystery – that Hyde and Jekyll are the same person; and the fantastic transposition unto the portrait of the bodily markings of Dorian's age and sins renders his physiognomy misleading. Notwithstanding its shortcomings, the pseudo-science concretely affects the narratives, through negative prejudice – drowning Frankenstein's sympathy for his creature and excluding it from society; through physiological reactions – making Hyde's onlookers' blood run cold; and through positive prejudice – immunizing Dorian against scandal and enabling him to maintain his deviant life.

The criminals' alterity grows more subjective from one work to the next. No character doubts that Frankenstein's creature is inhuman: even itself does not vindicate inclusion into humankind as a species. It is completely Other. A deformity all observe marks Hyde as objectively abnormal. However, only Utterson and Jekyll state expressly – not only metaphorically – that he could be inhuman. The alter egos share their memory and handwriting, but exist in distinct embodiments. Self and Other cohabit and commingle until the original compound person gradually repudiates its evil personality. In *Dorian Gray*, there is only one body: the Other is a pictorial representation. Nonetheless, the criminal protagonist strives to reject responsibility, ultimately blaming his portrait and its maker. In sum, the criminal gets closer and closer to one's self.

Why do they kill? If the monster is to be trusted, because its maker abandoned it in an inhospitable world in which, despite repeated efforts, it could not belong, the frustration inciting it to revolt. If this discourse is but Satan-like rhetoric, it slaughters simply because of its demonic nature. Hyde murders because Jekyll released him from conscience's grip. Similarly, Dorian assassinates Basil and destroys his portrait, unintentionally committing suicide, because in his madness he wanted to kill conscience. While Shelley offers a counter-narrative to her leading character's assumptions that the criminal is pure evil, the two *fin-de-siècle* Gothic novels reaffirm the powerfully frightening and appalling correspondence.

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