

Dissociative Identity Experiences -
DID studies in “The Strange Case of Dr.
Jekyll and Mr. Hyde” and “Frankenstein -
or The Modern Prometheus”

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“There is a famous remark of Oscar Wilde to the effect that, rather than life providing the originals which are presented in fiction, fiction provides the originals of whom people in life are copies.” (Hospers 1980: p. 9)

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1. Introduction

In this paper the author is going to focus on the constant and constantly imminent antagonism of traditional identity perceptions versus modern identity constructions. A recognized process of dislocation (“Entwurzelung”, Kraus 2000: p. 122) of identities usually is studied neither by psychological/psychiatric approaches nor by social discourses about standard behaviour. Still, these processes do have real consequences. The exclusion of people, who do not fulfil normatively located “normal” behavioural patterns, is an everyday life attraction. Psychological criteria find their equivalence in the construction of social normality. Hence the importance of the interaction between psychological discourse and the social implementation of that knowledge should not be underestimated. Identity is a fundamental and vital concept of the experience of man and a precarious enterprise as such. It is this delicacy of identity formation the author wants to focus on.

Personality is by standard perceived as undivided and self-contained, as coherent and consistent. The image of a complete and unified personality dominates the prevailing discourse about identity. However, current perceptions of life contrast with such an image. Modern time ailments of identity perceptions are most likely connected to the multitudes of challenges individual personality has to face. In a time when change and flexibility is said to be the main achievement of a person, identity is bound to suffer, since the coherent and consistent identity is not made to withstand that kind of pressure. People do have modern day patchwork-careers, -families, -lives, which are seen either as a challenge, reality or a (dis-)advantage of the present. The crucial point of these descriptions is that there seem to be no consistencies in life any more. How then can a consistent, non-changing, unified identity keep up with all those provocations? „Das Subjekt im Strudel unterschiedlichster Rollen, mit unterschiedlichen Zeitlogiken und ohne die Stütze (das Korsett? den Panzer?) gesellschaftlicher Kohärenzangebote, aber gleichwohl dem Zwang ausgesetzt sich kohärent zu erzählen: Das alles scheint heute überraschend vielen Menschen etwas zu sagen.“ (Kraus 2000: p. 65)

What is of interest in this paper is the modality of the term of identity and its translation into viable concepts. When and how is identity portrayed and most importantly what are the consequences of an „antiquated“ picture of identity. Societal expectations demand a unified identity to hold people accountable for their actions. The novels, which the author of this paper is consulting as examples, demonstrate this dogma very convincingly. The consequences triggered by individuals who disregard the claims of society are perfectly elaborated in both Stevenson's “The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde” and Shelley's “Frankenstein - or The Modern Prometheus”. Although the novels do have no direct reference to modern times at first sight, it is the universality of identity issues that can be exemplified formidably here.

In both novels the main characters achieve an alternative identity solution via creating an alter to reference social relations. The creators attempt to defy social regulations by creating an alter to enable autonomy via multiplicity. This dissociation from a certain basic expectation about the stable core identity is condemned by society and eventually by the creators themselves. The author will argue the case of social regulations and their impact on the individual. The main focus is to target the destructive forces of abstract and pressing societal assumptions about personality.

These assumptions include expectations about the capability of individuals to deal with social relations. If the individual is not able to adhere to these expectations, alternatives are sought for but rarely authorized by societal regulations. Although there are multiple identity possibilities to handle social affairs, only few of them are deemed acceptable. This restriction can bring about the destruction of single individuals, who are unable to comply to norms and standards and need their own way of expression. Alternative coping mechanisms - like multiple identity designs - for the challenges of life are deemed pathological or criminal, which on the one hand forecloses alternative solutions to identity problems for individuals and on the other hand enhances the pressure on individuals to comply to socially abstracted norms. A failure of compliance to social regulations can lead to the attempt to repress parts of the individual psyche and eventually to its dissociation.

The first exercise of this paper will then be to reveal how traditional psychological concepts of identity bring about mechanisms of exclusion by providing deviating behaviour with a pathological background. Hence, the paper includes an introduction into the psychological/psychiatric description of Dissociative Identity Disorder.

Consecutively and contrastingly, the author will show how deviating personalities can indeed be a viable solution to post-modern personal and social challenges. Still, which is very much the problem, such viable alternatives are bluntly rejected by society, which inevitably leads to the exclusion or even destruction of the person in question. Two of such cases will be argued along the classical novels of Stevenson's "Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde" and Shelley's "Frankenstein".

Since in "Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde" the interpretation of multiple identities is not contested, the author will merely take that novel as an exemplary study and carry out a more in-depth examination of "Frankenstein" instead.

Still, the author wants to caution the reader against misguided expectations. This paper is not so much a literary study than more of a case study in terms of psychological manifestations of Dissociative Identity Disorder. That does not imply the dismissal of the novel characters as such - literary figures, but rather their acceptance as a portrayal of human nature: "There is a famous remark of Oscar Wilde to the effect that, rather than life provid-

ing the originals which are presented in fiction, fiction provides the originals of whom people in life are copies.” (Hospers 1980: p. 9)

2. Identity and its Consequences - Dissociative Identity Disorder (DID)

Everybody experiences at least some dissociation: “Individuals differ in the extent to which they report dissociative experiences. While the majority of adults report only mild dissociative experiences such as 'highway hypnosis' (the experience of losing awareness during driving and then suddenly discovering some miles have been travelled without remembering that period), a minority of adults report more extreme dissociative experiences such as finding notes or letters that they themselves have recently written, but with no memory or awareness of having actually engaged in the writing.” (Frey 1998: p. 91)

The author of the paper is going to state the case of legitimate alternatives to bequeathed identity concepts. Multiplicity of identity is such an alternative – however it is rejected by society almost instantly exactly because of the interaction of psychological knowledge and social reaction. This rejection usually goes along with an almost primal fear of the strange or the unknown. That novels helped to make the unknown a little less so, show the responses triggered by the publishing of the first “real” multiple identity cases (the case study “Estelle” in France in 1840 and the case study “Sally Beauchamp” in England in 1906). As a result hundreds of letters were sent to the authors by people convinced they had identified the disorder in themselves. Obviously the feeling of being “multiple” was familiar to a lot of people at the end of the last century already.

How did it hence come that such a rigid perception of identity came to be the base line of society with all the apparent problems connected to it (apparent for example in the responses triggered by the publications mentioned above). In this paper the author is going to focus mainly on the psychological/psychiatric discourse about identity expectations and alternatives. In traditional psychology, identity is seen as the core structure of a human being, it is formed during childhood and adolescence, but from that point onwards is considered stable and consistent throughout adulthood. That conception continually produces social and according normative perceptions about personality. The assumption of the unchanging, stable core identity transforms identity into a function of traditions, roles and boundaries, since identity development ought to reinforce images of social adaptation. Transgression is only possible or allowed if it serves the purpose of unfolding or improving the self. Premise here is that the unity of the personality enables people to live their everyday lives by establishing a basis which confirms normality by consistency. If this consistency is threatened, so is the whole structure of society. Thus normality fulfils a socially

normative demand as institutionalized reality. Every differing or deviating behaviour has to be fought or contained to defend the unity and consistency of society. Fragmentation processes pose a threat to both society and the individual, mainly because they cannot be controlled that easily. Fragmented personalities elude the grasp of norms by a lack of accountability and hence stability.

In psychological/psychiatric discourses the person is subject to certain mechanisms of regulation and standardization. Deviating behaviour is either defined as criminal or pathological or both. Hence, to maintain a seemingly safe and unfragmented consistency the individual occasionally goes to a lot of trouble, although alternatives can be just as viable.

Still, in more recent research identity is rather seen as a project to be shaped during a lifetime. This encompasses the belief that identity formation can as such never be finished completely - every opportunity we take, every risk we encounter, every step along the way changes or enriches our self-perception even if only in the slightest manner each time. One example approach is called the „narrative self“. It addresses the issue of identity as a story that we „narrate“ ourselves, a story that is open to immediate changes or reformations, a story of our interpretation of life and the perception of ourselves and others.

However, even in an open-minded approach like this normative ideals prevail. The openness of the theory only encompasses identity alternatives that do not transgress social, moral or legal standards. Change, though accepted in certain terms, is not legitimate as long as the core expectations of human existence and interaction are met. This means that criminal and pathological behaviour is still excluded, however the definition of those are either open to other branches of science or to society itself.

This considered, the purpose of this paper is not to discuss the development of exclusion processes, but rather their consequences. Traditional and contemporary approaches respectively deny the individual individual solutions if they threaten the well-being of society. The characteristic of a threat, however, is open to interpretation via current social hegemonial interpretation patterns. Dissociative identity disorder is one of those threats. For example, judiciary systems are not construed to punish only one of possibly several minds, they are however construed to punish one body. What is at stake here, is the basic concept of accountability. The boundaries between mind and body are the obstacle. No matter what society we look at, social expectations are of some importance to keep any society functional. This requires a certain degree of knowledge and compliance about and with these expectations and behavioural rules by the individual.

The discrepancy lies in between socially idealized and normed demands to personality and varying coping strategies. The latter can be found in novels like “Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde” and “Frankenstein”. Their ability to deter is based in their appeal as horror stories.

The horror results not only from the atrociousness of the creatures themselves (Frankenstein's creature), but also by their conduct or complete disregard for others (Hyde). Still, the horror emanates from the splitting of one person into two - either by the administration of a drug or by the deliberate creation of an alter.

The author wants to delve into the topic of dissociative identity disorder as it is seen in modern psychological/psychiatric theories. The main focus on personality in medicinal approaches is the functionality of the same. So to speak, psychological diagnostics distinguish between functional and non-functional personalities. A non-functioning personality would then be an individual that is not capable of living his/her life autonomously and/or constitutes a threat to his/her surroundings.

How then is personality defined? In traditional psychological/psychiatric discourse it is usually perceived as (one) fully integrated and complex unity, which presents its own patterns of behaviour, memories and relations/-ships. The being and its actions are determined by those patterns. Consistency is hereby emphasized. Since personality is described via its lack of defects or dissociations, no objective personality standard can be produced. Still, the defects that negatively define personality are themselves no definite concepts.

The definition of Dissociative Identity Disorder (DID) for example is a very competed concept. The main characteristic is the existence of two or even more distinct identities or personality states, which are present in - and alternately take control of - an individual. Personality switches (shifts or switches) are most likely triggered by certain internal or external psychological stimuli or stressor and can happen very sudden (vgl. Eckhardt-Henn et al. 2004: p. 164): "Dissociative identity disorder (DID) involve sudden and temporary alteration in consciousness, identity, or behaviour." (McAllister 2000: p. 25). The alters themselves can take on very different forms in names, experienced age and gender, characteristics - even own historical (personal) records or handwriting. Usually there exists a 'host' or 'core' identity, which is the 'original' personality.

DID was called Multiple Personality Disorder until 1994, when the name was changed to reflect a better understanding of the condition - namely, that it is characterized by a fragmentation or splintering of identity rather than by a proliferation or growth of separate identities. It refers to the failure to integrate various aspects of identity, memory and consciousness into a single multidimensional self. Usually, a primary identity - the original 'personality' - carries the individual's given name and is passive, dependent, guilty and depressed. When in control, each personality state or alter may be experienced as if it has a distinct history, self-image and identity. The alters' characteristics - including name, reported age and gender, vocabulary, general knowledge and predominant mood - contrast with those of the primary identity. The various identities may deny knowledge of one another, be critical of one another or appear to be in open conflict. A person with the illness

can be consciously aware of one aspect of his or her personality or self while being totally unaware of or dissociated from other aspects of it – though this is not necessarily the case with all DID patients, memories can be shared, the existence of the alter can be accepted and even supported as the presence of a stronger alter. The onset of the illness is usually in childhood, although diagnosis in most cases is possible only in adulthood. The comorbidity (symptoms that accompany the illness) includes depressions, misuse of drugs, fears, (and most importantly for this paper) suicidal/self-destructive behaviour, mistrust of others, isolation/loneliness, deep insecurity and lack of a coherent sense of self, flashbacks, insomnia and emotional instability (McAllister 2000: p. 25f.). Each personality holds different memories and feelings and performs different (social) functions: “Dissociation ceases to be helpful when the person is unable to use other coping mechanisms to deal with stressful, intimate or dangerous situations.” (McAllister 2000: p. 26)

Mc Allister reports also on the cognitive mechanisms at hand in DID (McAllister 2000: p. 29). She suggests that patients with DID can be seen as an ecosystem of alters, who compete with each other for control. The alter that most successfully maintains an emotional balance is likely to be the best adapted. When the patient then moves to a different context, different cognitive schemata will be more adaptive and the alters will switch. So DID can indeed be seen as a mechanism of adaptation to different challenges or environments.

The primary treatment for DID is long-term psychotherapy with the goal of deconstructing the different personalities and uniting them into one. The cultural expectations of unity of personality become apparent in this approach – split personalities have to/can be reintegrated.

3. Dissociation in “Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde”

The multiplicity of this case appears to be obvious and usually is the standard interpretation. Dr. Jekyll sets loose on society a monster named Hyde by the deliberate self-administration of a drug he created. Still the author of this paper wants to shed quite a different light on the scenario.

The drug, though fundamental, just sets in motion a process that was inevitable from the very beginning. The use of a chemical substance – a self-developed drug to enable the transformation process – is important, not only since drug abuse is common in dissociative identity disorder. It points to the deliberate use of scientific means to create an alternate personality state or in the case of the novel an alternate personality. With Jekyll the drug helps bringing about a certain order to the fragmented and chaotic state of his mind – with a distinct separation of the characters. The aim is to enable both parts to thrive in their own possibilities, a separation sought for desperately by Jekyll. Still, the drug is not the rel-

evant part of the paper – since here not the signifier of a transformation is crucial, but its consequences.

Jekyll exhibits a distinct drive for dissociation and disintegration: “It was on the moral side, and in my own person, that I learned to recognize the thorough and primitive duality of man; I saw that, of the two natures that contended in the field of my consciousness, even if I could rightly be said to be either, it was only because I was radically both [...]” (Stevenson 1994: p. 70), “that [...] these polar twins should be continuously struggling. How, then were they dissociated?” (Stevenson 1994: p. 71). In the end two distinct personalities appear, different in character, propriety, even appearance: “My two natures had memory in common, but all other faculties were most unequally shared between them.” (Stevenson 1994: p. 79)

Dr. Jekyll, being somewhat uneasy with the rules and regulations of society, yearns for a dissociative momentum well before the actual discovery of the drug. The alteration to the Hyde persona, which is triggered by the use of the drug, has more the character of a self-fulfilling prophecy. From his very youth Jekyll is aware “that man is not truly one, but truly two.” (Stevenson 1994: p. 70). Still, the duplicity of man is only as far as Jekyll can guess, he himself assumes that others will venture further into the multiplicity of man (Stevenson 1994: p. 70).

However, the thesis of Jekyll having a dissociative experience is not contested as most of the available literature on the subject support the thesis in this case. The usual interpretation of the dissolution triggered by the deliberate self-administration of an unknown drug is not extensive enough. The author wants to focus on the inherent conflict of man and society within the rules the former creates and the latter enforces.

Identity is a very precarious project for every single person. Jekyll's personality and life reveal a conflictual nature as such. Dissociative personalities usually have an innate ability to dissociate easily, for instance because of repressed personality traits. Jekyll gives proof to that himself: “Hence it came about that I concealed my pleasures; and that when I reached years of reflection, and began to look round me and take stock of my progress and position in the world, I stood already committed to a profound duplicity of me.” (Stevenson 1994: p. 69) He realized very early in life that his personality and his aspirations were too far apart to be ever united, so he incorporated the ensuing duplicity into the very core of his being. Hyde becomes his alter precisely to commit all those atrocities against which Jekyll as honoured participant of society struggles. This enables Hyde to gain strength and intensity and to try and free himself of Jekyll in the only way possible to him – to dominate the body they both share, which in the end is the destruction of both of them.

On the one hand this duality can pass for a defence mechanism, on the other hand it

marks socially deviant behaviour, since he does not comply with the regulations of the society he lives in – a society that keeps the unity of the subject in high regard. The dissolution eventually becomes necessary, when Jekyll is no longer able to keep his urges in check. He seeks out primal pleasures and wants to rid himself completely of the enduring task of regarding others in their way of life, he feels a need to enjoy the “lower elements in my soul” (Stevenson 1994: p. 71).

The major instant for the aspired dissolution is his perception of the freedom it would afford him. The ties of socially constructed expectations and obligations are perceived as the core of his discontent. As Dr. Jekyll he has no option but to live up to all the characteristics of a respected life among his fellows: integrity, respectability, sincerity, education, behavioural codes, etc. But as Mr. Hyde he can evade those ties altogether: “a solution of the bonds of obligation, [...] an innocent freedom of the soul” (Stevenson 1994: p. 72) The very duplicity of Jekyll lies at the perception of him having no alternative. If social values would include acceptance of identity alternatives like a second persona, Jekyll might not have felt the urge to disguise himself as someone else at all.

Furthermore, patients with Dissociative Identity Disorder can feel relieved by the presence of a stronger alter, they might even welcome the freedom it affords them – a freedom of responsibility for their own actions. As is the case in "Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde" “each personality holds different memories and feelings and performs different functions” (McAllister 2000: p. 26). Jekyll needed Hyde in a more pragmatic sense. He designed Hyde specifically to enjoy and enact all the dreams and the freedom that Jekyll is denied. This strict separation of purpose is common to cases of DID, since alters can be created specifically for certain situations. If those situations occur, the alter best adapted takes over control. So DID can also be interpreted as a rather unusual means of social adjustment. As McAllister studied the phenomenon, she came to the conclusion that patients with DID display an ecosystem of alters, who compete with each other for control, just like Jekyll and Hyde do. The alter that is the best adapted to any situation will take control when it occurs, which was the very convenience Jekyll sought to defy social regulations in his own way (McAllister 2000: p. 27).

Although Stevenson can not have been fully aware of the implications for modern psychology in his novel, he presents an uncanny understanding of the inherent duality and contentiousness of man. The novel is known as the fictional account par excellence of so-called "split personality" or dissociative identity disorder. Even before Freud Stevenson realized that suppressed drives and pleasures may come back to haunt one, because man is principally guided by instincts. The two parts of the character are two very opposites, still both are integral to Jekyll. This antagonism literally rips him apart.

Jekyll's transformation can very well be seen as a deliberate “dissociation”, a neurotic

splitting of the psyche that threatened many Victorians and that results from an unresolved projection of a shadow of the unconscious elements of the personality (s.a. Jung, cited after Brennan 1997: 97). Stevenson seems in essence to be acknowledging the psyche's fundamental disharmony, composed as it is of conflicting impulses, affective states, and other elements. Unable to bear the pain of psychic conflict, his character Jekyll yearns for relieve: "I had learned to dwell with pleasure, as a beloved daydream, on the thought of the separation of these elements. If each, I told myself, could but be housed in separate identities, life would be relieved of all that was unbearable" (Stevenson 1994: p. 70).

As if to emphasize the dramatic completeness of the dissociation, Stevenson has Jekyll's transformation occur not only mentally, but physically as well. But the dissociative solution, designed for the sole purpose of creating an outlet for the deviant urges Jekyll experienced since the beginning of his memory, fails: "Hence, although I had now two characters as well as two appearances, one was wholly evil, and the other was still the old Henry Jekyll, that incongruous compound of whose reformation and improvement I had already learned to despair. The movement was thus wholly toward the worse" (Stevenson 1994: p. 74). Ultimately the dissociation occurs completely outside his control, which is an indication for the inherently personal rather than chemical component of the transformation.

The dissociation of "Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde" has distinct features. For example, both Jekyll and Hyde are aware of each other's presence, although Jekyll actually appreciates the mutual bond they share, whereas Hyde is very indifferent to his creator. The dissociation is facilitated by Jekyll's own isolation from society and friends – integrity in this case meant that Jekyll must never reveal his urges to anyone. This is a striking similarity to the novel of Frankenstein. Both isolate themselves from their families and friends, from their surroundings. This comes about either because of choice or by deeds. Both creators know about the atrociousness of their creatures and that their creations are not to be accepted by society. In both novels appearance alone forecloses the possibility of entering social relations for the creatures. Since the creatures can not walk freely among the people, so neither can their creators.

There are several social constructs at stake in the novel. The dissolution of identity threatens not only the individual, but society as a whole when the concept of accountability is no longer applicable. Who then is actually responsible for the actions of an alter of an individual? Jekyll rests in this apparent security of legal prosecution. However, it is only a make-believe security, since Jekyll in the end is held responsible – if not by legal institutions so by his own conscience. Still, Stevenson raises questions that baffle modern psychology as they did Stevenson.

There is a danger, however, in reading Stevenson's tale too literally. Whereas Jekyll con-

sciously set about his dissociative "remedy", in DID patients the process is usually unconscious, although the patients can often remember the alter. This inaccurate attribution of conscious intent to fundamentally unconscious processes has created severe difficulties in attempts both to treat and understand DID and allied conditions. Social narratives and expectations have been created that confuse the actual illness with its literary description to this day. Although numerous other novels have delved into the topic more intensely and tried to set the record about DID straight - like the book "The three faces of Eve" by Corbett Thigpen - the novel of Stevenson still proves to be the most influential. The phrase "Jekyll and Hyde" has entered psychological common parlance as a description of two utterly contrasting and contradictory sides of an individual's character.

The novel displays a number of critical and perhaps universal mental mechanisms at work in the development and maintenance of DID: the naturally fragmented and chaotic state of the mind, the yearning for unity and its equivalent in the social construction of the unity of personality, the wish to disavow responsibility and obligations, the delight taken in the gratification of those same forbidden impulses by an alter and the inevitable failure of dissociative attempts to dispel conflict (Garcia 1990: p. 165f.).

Through his fictional character, Stevenson seems in essence to be acknowledging the psyche's fundamental disharmony, composed as it is of conflicting impulses, affective states, and other elements, which harbour the potential for the coalescence into and splitting off of discrete personae (Garcia 1990: p. 165): "The drug had no discriminating action; it was neither diabolical nor divine; it shook but the doors of the prisonhouse of my disposition [...]" (Stevenson 1994: p. 74).

4. Dissociation in "Frankenstein"

The quote above describes in about the same way the condition of Frankenstein. He is a valued member of society himself, still he feels urged to create an artificial being so as to shake the doors of his personal prisonhouse of the ephemerality of humankind.

In Frankenstein the standard focus of interpretation rests on the creation of an external force, a being called into life by the use of science, an artificial life form. The author of this paper wants to shift the focus away from the actual artificial person to the embodiment of an alter of Dr. Frankenstein. The similarities to the creation of an alter in the novel "Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde" are striking. For instance, the creation of the life form by the use of science is equally highlighted. In the one novel the alter is brought about by the self-administration of a scientifically created drug, whereas in the other a concept of electricity is used to put to life a being external to the creator. Still, the concept of a drug is very much present in Frankenstein as well, when he asks Walton during one of their conversations,

whether he had “[...] drank also of the intoxicating draught?” (Shelley 1999: p. 23)

This enabling force – drug or lightning – is of little relevance, since not the signifier of the dissociation is important, but the dissociation itself. Whereas Jekyll rather metamorphoses into Hyde, Frankenstein seeks out the force of the elements to bring about a new state of experience, namely a new state of humanity. His main focus revolves around the obsessive idea to better mankind – to make man less prone to illness and defeat. Frankenstein developed an issue with the inadequacy and mortality of man, when he witnessed the death of his mother (Shelley 1999: p. 34 ff.). The death of the mother can be described as a social-betrayal issue according to Freyd et al. and since the diagnosis of DID includes some aspects about the origins of the illness, the author deems it important to emphasise the impact of this loss on the growth of the novel character. Freyd et al. theorized about the origins of DID and came up with two distinct features, one is the dimension of a distinct threat to the survival of the person (a fear-inducing stressor or life-threatening situation), the other is the social-betrayal dimension, which “relates to longer-term threats to necessary and dependent relationships.” (Frey et al. 1998: p. 92). When Frankenstein loses his mother, he realizes the fragility of life – every person he connects to and loves is prone to disease and bound to die some day. This realization triggers his intrinsic need to dissociate, to part from the desire to connect to people and the inherent risk of losing them, which is the onset of his isolation.

There is one knack in the interpretation of the creature as an alternate identity state within Frankenstein and that is its presence in society. However, this argument can be easily resolved. The only person – Robert Walton – ever to see Frankenstein and the creature as two different persons is the captain of the ship Frankenstein takes refuge on. A crucial factor for the argument of Frankenstein simply creating the manifestation of an alter instead of an artificial life form, is the credibility of Captain Walton. The same can be very much doubted, since Walton did not only suffer from a prolonged exposure to the forces of the northern regions (deprivation, cold, wind, etc.), but he is also just like Frankenstein, he exhibits self-centred and narcissistic characteristics, he neglects the well-being of his family and crew for his ambitions. In this way, Walton can be seen as just another reflection of Frankenstein. The moment their narrations intertwine, when Frankenstein corrects and alters Walton's notes of the story – “Frankenstein discovered that I made notes concerning his history; he asked to see them and then himself corrected and augmented them in many places [...]” (Shelley 1999: p. 160) – Walton fuses with Frankenstein. His self becomes a mere image of Frankenstein, and since the latter cannot be credited as objective, neither can Walton.

Walton exhibits most of the traits that lead to Frankenstein's destruction – an obsession with myth and the acquirement of Faustian knowledge (“Have you drank also of the intox-

icating draught?" (Shelley 1999: p. 23)), a deliberate isolation ("I have no friend" (Shelley 1999: p. 16)) and egocentrism. As a reflection Walton does not seem to have characteristics of his own: "Walton's 'self', if it emerges at all, is really dismembered and parcelled out in several aspects of composition." (Hogle 1995: p. 213) As a reflection still, his credibility is very much in question. But this credibility would be the weak thread on which the story of the creation as an external, artificial being dangles.

Another important aspect is marked by the residence of the creature and its subsequent education with the DeLacey family. This period coincides with Frankenstein's illness following the creation itself. Whether this period of time can pass as a mere dream of Frankenstein or whether he experiences it through the eyes of his alter, has to stay unaccounted for. What is for certain is that the creature made an entrance into society while its creator was impeded and absent and exited social relations when Frankenstein returned. This reciprocity pervades the whole novel.

So in the end Frankenstein is actually the only person to experience the creature and live to tell about it. For the lack of other survivors and the creature's absence from society during Frankenstein's presence (and the other way around), the creature can be described as an alternate identity state within the body of Frankenstein.

To achieve this kind of alteration without anyone noticing, isolation is crucial. Both the characters of the studied novels in this paper - Jekyll as well as Frankenstein - isolate themselves deliberately. Although they are respected members of society and are keeping to that status, they perceive themselves to be cut off - either by choice or by deeds. The same goes for their creations, which are by no means anywhere near being accepted and welcomed into society. So, as long as the creators are not accepted by society, neither are the creations, since the creatures are integral parts of their masters.

The characters detach themselves from society and the people around them, their self-sufficiency being the key, which provides them with the means for a nearly complete seclusion from others. Still, they are distinguished members of society, but find social values and ambience constraining and even alienating. Each fabricates a creature to be free of social constraints and live out the passions of the creators. This isolation is different for each though. Frankenstein is directly surrounded by and connected to his family and friends most of the time - he wills his isolation and cuts himself off of others emotionally. He refuses on the one hand to actively participate in their life and on the other hand he denies his familiars access to his own universe. "I shunned the face of man; all sound of joy or complacency was torture to me; solitude was my only consolation - deep, dark, deathlike solitude." (Shelley 1999: p. 70) He denies his familiars knowledge about his thoughts and actions the moment he neglects to tell them about his experiments and the subsequent creature. However, he exhibits paranoid tendencies when the sole purpose of

the isolation becomes the guise of protecting them from the creature. Frankenstein not only obsesses about his creation, but elevates himself to be the sole protector of humanity at the same time. This distorted reality perception brings about doom for his whole family in the end.

The achieved isolation and seclusion of his family offers Frankenstein the chance to obsess about the creation more and indulge in its existence, but offers him a certain freedom of being as well. Frankenstein exhibits narcissist characteristics in this way, not only is he obsessed with his self, but with his creation – which is another expression of himself – too. Kestner goes deeper into this subject in his article: “Victor Frankenstein's evident longing for another, despite his close friendship with Henry Clerval and his betrothal to Elizabeth, lead to the creation of a being who becomes the Inadequate Other which is in reality Victor himself.” (Kestner 1995: p. 69) This inadequacy (in the sense of mortality) is what Victor refuses to accept in himself and his fellows in the first place. Although Kestner argues the case along the lines of narcissistic delusion, his argument is just as viable for the paper, since “Sennett's analysis of the Narcissus myth illustrates that there is rarely one type of an individual involved in this pathology: in reality, there are two, one whose reaction evolves an hysterical 'demon', another whose symptoms induce a solipsistic, benumbed self-projection.” (Sennett quoted after Kestner 1995: p. 69) Narcissism, seen in this light, does presuppose a disintegrative trait in the individual.

Frankenstein lives up to both tendencies – disintegrative as well as narcissistic behavioural patterns. Therefore the author describes the condition of Frankenstein as a serious case of dissociative identity disorder with narcissist paranoid characteristics.

The theme of mirrors is directly related to the dissociation, the creation of an other. The Doppelgänger motif pinpoints the duality of man, the opposing forces in human nature. To create an alter is to reflect oneself directly and indulge in the mirrored self. “In the words of Coleridge, one of Mary Shelley's favourite writers, 'my nature requires another nature for its support, [and] reposes only in another from the indigence of its being'.” (Hogle 1995: p. 211) Frankenstein is obsessed with the creation of an alter – an image that reflects the grandeur Frankenstein sees in himself.

The Faustian motif in this novel is the acquirement of forbidden and supernatural knowledge – knowledge of the alchemists combined with Frankenstein's own morbid research – and the subsequent destruction of the proprietor. The inevitability of the process is horrifying. Still Frankenstein is much too much focused on his own self and its reflection to care for anything else. This obsession of his eventually leads to the destruction of both.

These narcissist characteristics are fuelled furthermore by a serious infatuation of aggrandisement, which symbolizes for Frankenstein “a technique for dealing with the extern-

al world - 'magic' - which appears to be a logical application of these grandiose premises." (Freud quoted after Kestner 1995: p. 74). His frustration with reality turns into a distorted perception of the same - everything becomes about him. However, this megalomania directs Frankenstein to create a supreme being to reflect his image - without surprise the creature turns out just as distorted as Frankenstein's perception. Still, "The self is constituted by the other just as the other points back to the self [...]" (Hogle 1995: p. 211). So the horrifying appearance and deeds of the seemingly supreme being are a reference to Frankenstein's defective perception of identity and reality.

The mirror motif itself is a famous artefact of gothic literature. An abundance of mirroring instances are supposed to illuminate the inherent duality and conflictuality of man and to heighten the sense of horror and dread. The mirroring, however, occurs in isolation, whether the isolation is spatial or personal is of little relevance. Frankenstein's isolation is personal and merely willed for - he is constantly surrounded by friends and family - except for the time of the creation and of the actual encounters with his creature, which is the time he is involved most with himself. However, he dismisses his family as a possible solution to his plight - as a more realistic reflection. Although Frankenstein's isolation is personal, spatial distance to his familiars is required to have the creature emerge. There are only rare cases of DID conveyed, where the alteration takes place publicly and for everyone to see. Consequentially, the change of personality states requires spatial distance and seclusion for Frankenstein as well.

Usually, isolation is not a sound coping strategy for human beings, since social relations help the individual to test its identity configuration in a kind of mirror situation - the individual presents itself and takes account of the reactions of family and friends. Either the current identity composition is accepted or has to be altered according to existing boundaries. Identity formations can vary only within a certain set of socially constructed rules and regulations. Neither Frankenstein nor Jekyll are able to adhere to those regulations, so their individual coping strategies deviate fundamentally from social expectations. This deviation is lastly not only visible in the appearance of the creations.

Still, the tragedy of the Frankenstein's creature is even more severe than Hyde's. Hyde was never meant to be part of society at all, his sole purpose was to defy society as it is. Frankenstein's creature on the other hand only responded to its obvious unsuitability within a social context - the defiance was not deliberate, but reactionary. This reaction still points back to Frankenstein - isolated from everyone around him - he merely observes the creature's deeds without intervening. The thought whether the destruction of Frankenstein's family is the sole purpose of the creature is pressing. Frankenstein's deliberate isolation finds its culmination in their annihilation by the creature, which is the ultimate construction of solitude brought about by his alter.

The obvious trait of Frankenstein is his inability to intervene. The description of the circumstances of his mother's death are the starting point of his inactivity, he distinguishes himself by complying to the will of others. Only when he realizes his possibility of refuge – creating the alter – all his life's energies are directed to achieving that goal. So much so that Frankenstein, after finishing his creation, becomes seriously ill – as if all life's powers were drained from him. Frankenstein rendered all his energy and will to his alter, which from now on is the single autonomous manifestation of Frankenstein. The latter turning from the creator to the observer – just as Jekyll did. Both creators could but watch the deeds of their creations, neither being able to intervene or remedy them. As for Jekyll, a feeling of relief about the appearance of a stronger alter applies to Frankenstein too.

Frankenstein's relation to social affairs is affected by the distorted perception of himself and the external world. A basic characteristic of DID is the failure to connect or adapt to social relations. The failure is compensated by the creation of an alter that is better suited for a distinct situation or in extreme cases for the more extensive handling of social relations. The core identity usually is either ill-equipped to deal with social bonds and boundaries (because of missing or misdirected education, which includes pampering a child as much as it does abusing it – pampering clearly having been part of Frankenstein's upbringing) or unable to comply to rules and regulations because of an inherent inadequacy (genetic defects, for instance).

The compensation mechanism can be triggered by both a life-threatening situation or tragic event. The distinction between the two can be blurred, as is the case in Frankenstein. The tragic loss of the mother is perceived as life-threatening to the young Frankenstein, who is not only used to sound family surroundings, but has come to take them for granted as well. As Freyd theorized, the dimension of social betrayal can lead to the seclusion and mistrust of the individual and later on to its disintegration. One can hence not overemphasize the arbitrariness of Frankenstein's isolation, since it is fundamental to understanding his need for the creation of a dependable alter (or mirror-image or Doppelgänger, if you will). Frankenstein's inability to act can be explained by the transfer of authority to the creature. Consequentially, Frankenstein is dependent on the course and decisions of his alter.

Frankenstein's and his creature's identification are based on reciprocity. Their need for each other is vital, which is common in dissociation disorders. The alter(s) and the core identity come to depend on each other on the one hand to affirm and reinforce the other within the individual and on the other hand to deal with the situations they are established for respectively. “This new dynamic [chase of Frankenstein after his monster, T.G.] also, however, reveals a mutual dependence. The Creature kills Frankenstein's family, not Victor himself: Frankenstein fails to destroy the Creature: and their deaths occur almost simultan-

eously, but not at each other's hands." (Jansson 1999: p. XIII) As a consequence this mutual dependency reaches its peak in the final chase at the north pole, the reciprocity plays out to be fatal: "The ensuing, confused pursuit binds the two together and tears them apart in a dialectic of desire ... Excluding all other relations, this polarisation of self and other is so absolute that it can only end in death." (Botting cited after Jansson 1999: p. XIII) It seems to be evident that the dissociation - no matter in what form - can be resolved only in destruction and has to be resolved as such since neither can live without the other. This points characteristically to the representation of psychological phenomena in social perception - only if the individual is cured the return into society and the well-being of the individual can be secured. The possibility of differing identity solutions as coping strategies is completely foreclosed. It seems that the condemnation of the creatures enhances their fascination for their creators - a paradigm that formidably depicts the disillusionment of both Frankenstein and Jekyll with their respective societies.

Another interesting aspect - though admittedly of only little relevance in reference to the subject of the paper - is the concept of beauty or rather the complete lack of such. The creatures are both described as appalling, as not to be laid eyes on easily, as evil not from the very core of their being, but from the very essence of their appearance. Mr. Hyde is hideous, though no witness can actually describe the details of his hideousness. Frankenstein's monster on the other hand has by far surpassed the possibility of description, not even his creator is able to overcome his feelings of repulsion. Social acceptance is in both novels very much connected to a certain concept of beauty - and as in so many novels before there is significant doubt as to whether an ugly person can contain a beautiful soul. In the case of Mr. Hyde this possibility seemingly can be neglected, since the whole purpose of the character is to live out Jekyll's socially deviant urges, however Frankenstein's creation started out squarely as an innocent being and turned into the monster exactly because of the immediate repulsion and rejection by society.

This is a new aspect indeed. The chronological order is of some importance here as well. Mr. Hyde was created to disavow social standards and expectations and he never once strove to adhere to them, so Jekyll's disillusionment with these social characteristics came before the creation, which he openly admits to. However in Frankenstein's case it is the other way round. Frankenstein might have created his creature for reasons apart from scientific inquisitiveness, but the experiment backfired badly on the experimenter only because of the hideousness of the creature. Interestingly, the creature then turns to the only plausible alternative - from being good to the bone to being evil from the core. It seems that this turn only fulfilled what was already promised by the appearance of the creature.

Nonetheless, this aspect is not entirely valueless for the paper. If the social expectations concerning looks are that rigid already, what is to be expected by social standards con-

cerning alternate coping strategies for life and personal urges? Unfortunately the purpose of the paper permits pursuing the aspect of beauty more intensely.

Still, the impact of an unexpected or even horrifying appearance on the destiny of the characters is astonishing. In the case of Frankenstein's creature a development and life within society is rendered impossible just because of his looks. One starts to wonder - with a family of such great beauty as the family of Frankenstein is described, how exactly does Frankenstein figure to create a monster of atrocious traits and huge proportions if not to rebel distinctly against the social values communicated via his upbringing and surroundings. The aspect of rebellion is certainly crucial for the understanding of the role the alters play for Frankenstein and Jekyll as well.

Frankenstein's rebellion against those social values is derived from the uncertainty with the same of the author Mary Shelley: "To our late 20th Century sensibilities we may not approve of these behaviors [Mary Wollstonecraft's "relationship with an American and subsequent birth of an illegitimate daughter, her suicide attempts, and the fact that she was already pregnant with Mary when William Godwin married her"] but we certainly don't consider then shocking or extraordinary. The above mentioned events, however, occurred in the late 1700's and were not morally acceptable, were abhorrent to the conventions of society, and were certainly not to be discussed or published in a memoir. William Godwin's publication of this memoir, more than any other event, created an air of societal stigma around Mary Shelley almost from the moment of her birth." (Woodbridge 2001) Shelley herself was born as a distinguished child into society - distinguished insofar as she was closely observed and commented upon, and this only because her mother lead a rather unconventional life. This insecurity about how to deal with social values accordingly is written into her character Frankenstein.

5. Conclusion

Both creators attempt to defy social regulations by creating an alter to enable autonomy via multiplicity. The eventual doom of these alternative identity formations because of missing acceptance is at the core of this paper. The author argued the case of social regulations and their impact on the individual. The main focus was to target the destructive force of abstract and pressing societal assumptions about personality.

Social regulations regarding identity are strict and rigid. A stable core identity is expected to enable the individual to deal with social relations. Those relations have to be sought in the external world - meaning other people, family, friends as reference for the viability of personality. However, if that mechanism fails, no other options are available, since alternative coping strategies are either criminalized or deemed pathological or both. The

pressure to sustain an “intact” identity is immense – this pressure alone could tempt an overextended individuality to disintegrate. New facets of personality could – on the other hand – convey differing constellations of the self, which includes emotions and behavioural patterns as well.

The inherent ambiguity of human thought is conflictual as such, the consequence is the imperative ability of the self to either repress conflicting ideas or adapt to them, to excel as an individual. Of course, tumult and conflicts are predictably a basic part of human nature, however possibilities of dealing with them are limited. A liberation of the regulation patterns of identity could imply manifold strategies to deal with life – dissociation as a point of origin for creativity, ideas and survival techniques. The fragmented and disrupted personality demonstrates a likely counterpart to equally fragmented and pluralized modes of modern reality. „It is not acceptable [...] that academic psychology contents itself with pathologising the saturated and many times fragmented self, just because it occasionally causes the person to be unable to make decisions and act.“ (Straub 2005: 335)

The normative standard of personality is described by the lack of deviation. In traditional psychological approaches no distinct definition of personality is available or personality is defined via exclusion – identity is rather described by absent characteristics, like the lack of dissociation or defects. The concept of deviation, however, depends heavily on prevailing ideas about pathology. What used to be identified rather as a personal quirk in former times, might be treated pharmaceutical nowadays (the best example here might be the “new” discovery and treatment of children supposedly suffering from Attention-Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD)). A good indication of the variability of pathological descriptions in reference to ADHD is the following quote: „Boys will be boys – that's why we've got them popping pills.“ (Rees 1999: A15). There simply is no such thing as an objective personality state.

So objectifying and standardizing personality seems to be besides the point, still the assumption of a stable, personal unity is the core acquiescence of society and the reason for despair for both Jekyll and Frankenstein. Objective normality comes to be the guardian of social order. Through the constant reiteration of normative constructions, likewise normative collective and individual dispositions are presumed. Discourses about anomalies are manifested by restrictions, exclusions (prison or mental home) and the subjection of the individual to society (s.a. Bublitz 1999: p. 11). All these mechanisms supposedly safeguard society from deviating, threatening or criminal elements. However, society is composed of individuals, discord and change are intrinsic traits: „Das heißt: Die Konstitution der Norm über das Abweichende gefährdet die Norm und damit die gesellschaftliche Ordnung immer schon im Konstitutionsprozess von Gesellschaft selbst. Gesellschaftliche Ordnung, im Kern diskursiv über den Dualismus von Abweichung und Norm hergestellt, ist daher immer

schon brüchig.“ (Bublitz 1999: p. 13) Hence, social values have to be reinforced via normative specifications of identity. To concert and eventually preclude all possibly deviating tendencies is to strip them of their disturbing potential.

However, those identity norms run the risk of assuming a loop normativity, which implies that the norms are justified only within their own range and end in a tautology. The moment the origins of a concept are lost or no longer questioned, the concept takes on an in-artificial or natural pretence, hence losing its capability of change. Exactly those abstracted norms achieve hegemonial potency in an unlimited area of use. Interpretations according to these abstracted norms entail manifold consequences, for example rigid and not to be questioned principles about identity formations. This causality enables not only exclusion processes in between individuals, but within single individuals as well. This caused both Frankenstein and Dr. Jekyll to despair of their creations at first sight. Alternative identity strategies will be denounced socially and individually as well. Possible coping mechanisms for the challenges of life are deemed pathological or criminal, which on the one hand forecloses alternative solutions to identity problems for individuals and on the other hand enhances the pressure on individuals to comply to socially abstracted norms no matter what. Kraus describes this formidably: “post-modern society and/as psychosis” (Kraus 2000: p. 150, translation T.G.). Identity metamorphoses from an expression of personality to a defence mechanism, always on the lookout for socially authorized alternatives to cope with one's own life. Consequentially, the only other option would be to fail social standards and become suspicious.

The return of excluded individuals is only possible the moment they conform anew to those normative normality standards, which in the case of DID is usually achieved via pharmaceutical treatment. However, with a change of standards, with more tolerance concerning individual identity strategies, individuals could not only question abstracted norms that have entered a loop normativity, but experience completely new ways of understanding and living identity as well. The revolution of identity perceptions might just be possible via anarchical conceptions of self, which can offer credibility and acceptance to multiple designs of identity.

6. Literature

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