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The manifold operations of the gothic double

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The Manifold Operations of the Gothic Double

By

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Thesis

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ABSTRACT

The gothic novel's emergence as a dominant genre in the 19th century is illustrative of a shift in popular ideology taking place in Western Europe during this period. Competing viewpoints, particularly between opposing classes, directly reflect the uncertainties, anxieties, and aspirations of a continent undergoing a significant transition. Because the gothic draws upon the tension between contending attitudes—spiritualism and secularism, realism and romanticism, nationalism and imperialism, and aristocratic and bourgeois—it exposes how ideology embedded in these concepts either adds to or detracts from the greater good of the community.

The technique of *doubling* is utilized to locate divergent ideologies and to demonstrate the complexity of reconciling them. The preferential treatment of middle-class values in the gothic helped shift mainstream conceptions of morality. In combination with contemporary critical theory, through the treatment of doubles, this thesis aims to address how the gothic influenced shifts in social and cultural trends.

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INTRODUCTION

The appearance of doubling in the gothic genre is a phenomenon that creates uneasiness, anxiousness, and discordance when observed in the narrative. Something about the double doesn't *feel* right to us, and we notice it fashions an environment wrought with tension, turbulence, and trepidation. And rightly so: the double is a symbolic textual construction designed to evoke an uncomfortable reaction through the simultaneous deployment of mystical or supernatural subject matter that is fashioned to appear coincidental and/or plausible. Whenever two separate entities, whether characters, locations, or even objects, share unlikely or exaggerated commonalities with one another, they should be viewed as sets of doubles. The simultaneity of the magical with the plausible creates an illusory moment within a text where the reader's skepticism of the impossibility of a paranormal moment is disarmed, as he or she encounters the double with an entwined sense of curiosity and aversion.

The 19th-century gothic is saturated with incidences of doubling, and the examination of the tendencies inherent in the double provide profound insight into the lives, times, and culture of the individuals who wrote, produced, and consumed the literature of the age. The occurrence of doubling, or the overstated similarity between two characters or objects that *should* appear unlike, primarily occurs when some facet of social order is not working properly; it thus signifies a breakdown of cultural structures.

The tension surrounding sets of doubles is the locus of conflict within the gothic and is a primary mechanism through which the genre critiques culture, society, and ideology at work in the world. Identifying instances of doubling and correctly reading the tension between them is the key to revealing veiled criticisms of contemporary institutions. The reading of the subtext in sets of doppelgangers is vital to a comprehensive understanding of the Gothic because the employment of this technique allows for a subversive and allegorical critique of institutions and structures that would have been taboo or unpopular to attack overtly.

In *Power in the Darkness*, Fred Botting discusses how the unfamiliar settings found in the Gothic are typified as mazes, or *labyrinths*, and function as doubles for spaces that contemporary readers would have found morally, familiarly, and culturally desirable. The *labyrinth* setting is typically evidenced in old cathedrals, castles, or other remote spaces and displays the defunctness of the preexisting values associated with and represented by these liminal spaces:

The desire for authority orients and drives the doubled strategy of Gothic narratives. In relation to the negativization of the labyrinth, though the divisions seem unbridgeable, the doubled strategy of identification and differentiation produces a condensation, a solidification of associations that are antithetical to idealized social space. The labyrinth becomes a

net in which to catch all forms of alterity and the site on which authority exercises and affirms its position. (262)

In creating an environment where the traditions and values of the other are derogated below those of the familiar, the gothic is able to reaffirm that the bourgeois ideology it represents is, in fact, morally and culturally superior to all other models of culture.

The Gothic double is a revolutionary construction that comes into being during an intensely unstable historical moment, when commonly held notions and class-based consciousness were being uprooted and redefined. The emergence of an educated middle class created a new audience for the arts and literature, and the Gothic is a prime example of this trend. The tastes, values, and concerns of these newly empowered people are evidenced in the narratives and themes of the 19th-century Gothic novel. In *Nostalgia for the Present*, Fredrick Jameson argues that the tension between classes is the central thematic conflict that extends through the gothic genre. Social inequality becomes the catalyst for narrative tension. Competition between the middle class and aristocracy to establish their values as the dominant ideology is the source of gothic anxiety and creates a relationship where each is distrustful of the other:

Gothics are indeed ultimately a class fantasy (or nightmare) in which the dialectic of privilege and shelter is exercised: your privileges seal you off from other people, but by the same token they constitute a protective wall through which you cannot see,

and behind which therefore all kinds of envious forces may be imagined in the process of assembling, plotting, and preparing to give assault. (235)

The age is characterized by an uncertainty about where Western Europe was headed, how it was changing, and what these changes would hold for the future. Europe in the 19th century was a continent in the midst of a remarkable metamorphosis—it watched the rise of the middle-class to cultural and economic prominence; it saw the unstoppable momentum of the industrial revolution shifting into gear; it made rapid scientific breakthroughs and advancements one after another; it clung to the crumbling ruins of an unjust and decaying system of colonial exploitation abroad and class exploitation at home; and it witnessed the violence of its people in full fury during the French Revolution—and the anxiety, doubt, and cynicism of this dynamic world is accessible at the rawest and most uncensored level through the gothic.

This thesis will focus on the way that the double functions within the context of the 19th century Gothic novel to unveil the occurrences of, and causes for, hidden ideological practices during the Victorian period. The first chapter focuses upon how doubling enlightens our understanding of the appearance of ghosts and monsters in narrative, and the way that these creatures signify psychological, emotional, and ideological dysfunction in society. The second chapter will focus upon how doubling reveals inconsistencies in the way that history is recorded and remembered over

time and the way that the dominant cultures are able to silence fringe or periphery accounts of events. The last chapter will investigate how doubling extends beyond the interpersonal and can be applied to inanimate objects and places, particularly with regard to the doubling of environment, structures, and artifacts that appear in the narrative.

Chapter I: The Grotesque and Phantom Double

Un-happy man! Do you share my madness? Have you drank
also of the intoxicating draught? Hear me—let me reveal my
tale, and you will dash the cup from your lips!

—Mary Shelly, *Frankenstein*.

Gothic novels utilize the motif of the double in a myriad of ways to expose structures and practices that facilitate the repression and concealment of ideological tenets wherever and whenever they exist. This chapter focuses upon how the trope of doubling, when coupled with aspects of the grotesque, phantasmal, and/or monstrous, unmasks concealed elements of character, particularly veiled social practices and the subconscious psychological workings of the mind. Two famous gothic novels that deploy the phantom or monstrous double are Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein* (1818) and Bram Stoker's *Dracula* (1897). In each, the occurrence of textual doubling illuminates the motives for, and consequences of, popular social and cultural conventions of the age. One signature marker of the gothic double is the incorporation of metaphysical or supernatural content within the narrative. Fantastic or mystical instances of doubling typically function hyperbolically to exaggerate the relationships between the people, objects, and ideologies. Protracted hyperbolic doubling often begets a space within the narrative where

individuals share acute emotional and psychological proximity to one another, often to the point of inhabiting one combined consciousness. Even when psychological adjacency is less severe than to allow for a complete consummation of consciousness, i.e. a doppelganger, the delineation of aberrant or sublime doubling allows for each to access the interiority of the other.

The late 18th century brought about dramatic advancements in scientific and psychological investigation. Scholars in this era acquired a more intensive and comprehensive understanding of the operations of the human mind and subconscious thought, and so too did the population's curiosity and fascination grow as well. The evolution of the double into an analogue of interiority is symptomatic of the historical context that created it. The gothic novel afforded writers the perfect environment to test out the far-reaching implications, effects, and possible consequences of the nascent scientific and psychoanalytic theories of the age; the genre also functioned as a public forum where the general populace could engage in a dialogue with new and revolutionary ideas. Both *Dracula* and *Frankenstein* integrate concepts from modern science and psychology into the narrative, and the proper or improper application of science plays a critical role in either alleviating or intensifying social or cultural consternation. Victor Frankenstein's cultivation of scientific knowledge to create an artificial life in *Frankenstein* and Dr. Van Helsing's administration of advanced medical techniques (hypnosis and blood transfusion) to treat the injured as well as

combat the archaic evil of the count in *Dracula*, are central moments of both texts where the fate of the community rests on an individual's decision to either use or misuse his mastery of science.

The publication of *Frankenstein* in 1818 and *Dracula* in 1897, respectively, falls during the post-Enlightenment period but predates psychoanalysis incipient in the late 19th century. The historical moment encapsulated by the 19th-century gothic shares the same temporal moment as the advent of modern psychology, in particular the discoveries and writings of Sigmund Freud, which foreground the inner workings of the mind and subconscious impulses never before considered. Ezra Pound writes in *The ABC of Reading* that "Art is the antennae of the human race," and the pre-Freudian gothic is an excellent demonstration of this observation at work. 19th-century novelists displayed a tremendous capacity for representing the psychology of characters, despite the fact that scientists had not yet developed the theory or vocabulary to describe the complexities of human interiority accurately. Gothic literature dealt with psychological subject matter before the science of psychology was established, reaffirming Pound's claim that the ideas which move culture forward are first evidenced in art and confirmed later by science.

One of the primary ways that character psychology is displayed during this period is through the utility of doubling, which places two objects into tension with one another. The tension arises because although the two objects share innumerable similarities with one another, a

distinction frequently arises that causes them to be oppositional. A double can also be formed inversely, when two objects that one would expect to differ are consistently bound by at least one strong similarity. The psychological tension surrounding the immediacy of doubles exposes the source of nested subconscious and social anxieties to be made visible. In *Psychoanalysis and the Gothic*, Michelle M. Masse discusses the correlation between psychoanalytic theory and the gothic and how the examination of one within the context of the other broadens our understanding of both genres. Psychoanalysis and the gothic share a similar aim in detecting and explaining how hidden, subconscious, or veiled motives drive human behavior and social constructions:

The gothic is such a genre, one that is important to psychoanalytic critical inquiry not solely for its ongoing popularity and easily recognizable motifs, but for the affinities between its central concerns and those of psychoanalysis. Psychoanalysis examines how and why our most strongly held beliefs and perceptions are sometimes at odds with empirical evidence. (230)

The psychoanalytic investigation of gothic novels is advantageous because the narratives include a plethora of instances where veiled ideology or desire leads to the breakdown of proper social interactions.

In "*The 'Uncanny,'*" Freud discusses how doubling creates uneasiness for the reader. The experience of the uncanny, according to Freud, can

occur in several ways, particularly when something familiar is de-familiarized and becomes simultaneously recognizable and foreign: “It may be true that the uncanny [*unheimlich*] is something which is secretly familiar [*heimisch*], which has undergone repression and then returned from it, and that everything that is uncanny fulfills this condition” (528). The condition of doubling (magical, mystical, or seemingly coincidental) creates an uncanny effect because it destabilizes narrative by allowing an individual’s interior psychological workings to be directly accessed by outside parties. Freud asserts that the public disclosure of private information through a metaphysical intermediary is a distressing circumstance, especially when psychological interiority is shared by multiple individuals:

It is marked [doubling] by the fact that the subject identifies himself with someone else, so that he is in doubt as to which his self is, or substitutes the extraneous self for his own. In other words, there is doubling, dividing and interchanging of the self. And finally there is the constant recurrence of the same thing—the repetition of the same features or character-traits or vicissitudes, of the same crimes, or even the same names through several consecutive generations. (522)

The invocation of uncanny doubling signifies that the character or situation has gone awry somehow, or that a familiar psychological or social convention is no longer functioning properly, because a set of doubles are

able to simultaneously cohabit a space that should only accommodate one individual.

The phantoms of both novels, Count Dracula and Frankenstein's Monster, are both grotesque and supernatural doubles of the human protagonists. Both antagonists, the vampire and the monster, possess frightening physical qualities and deformities that only tenuously differentiate them from other humans, this coupling of the familiar and frightening makes them overtly uncanny. Freud asserts that the theme of the undead or the animation of inanimate objects is the height of uncanny imagery, for it presents a familiar object in an unfamiliar way: "Apparent death and re-animation of the dead have been represented as the most uncanny themes" (528). The reanimation of a corpse is uncanny because it presents a familiar object, in this case the human body, in an unfamiliar and satiric manner. The presentation of a dead body as a lively agent is unexpected, and such a character will always appear unfamiliar and therefore monstrous. *Dracula* and *Frankenstein* 'double-up' on uncanny representations because not only is the narrative destabilized by doubling, but in addition the objects doubled are undead.

One of the foremost ways that doubling occurs in the gothic is through the linkage of two people who are unlike on the surface, but still united by some internal element. The most contradictory distinction is that between human and monster, which accounts for why monsters are such popular and effective doubles in literature. *Frankenstein* and *Dracula* each

draw attention to the failed distinctions between humans and the uncannily human, or monstrous. By doubling human characters with monsters, the author asks the reader to consider the question “what is *human*?” and “what is *monstrous*?” The interplay of these categories either confirms or complicates this binary.

Sets and subsets of binary qualities cause textual and structural tension in gothic novels. When binaries appear, one is culturally prized over the other and their value is given in relation to the other. In *The Raw and the Cooked* (1964), the anthropologist Claude Levi-Strauss argues that the investigation and conscientious interpretation of signs inherent to sets of binaries allows individuals the opportunity to understand meanings that might otherwise go overlooked: “The function of signs is, precisely, to express one by means of the other. Even when very restricted in number, they lend themselves to rigorously organized combinations which can translate even the finer shades of the whole range of sense experience” (14). Essentially, Levi-Strauss claims that the manner in which signs are coupled together reveals unique, culturally charged information about the societies in which the binaries are constructed. For instance, by means of the binary of *raw* and *cooked*, Levi-Strauss determines that the sign of the *cooked* is culturally prized over the *raw*, since cooked foods require more preparation and/or technology. The additional socialization, technique, and modus operandi necessary for a culture to cook its food, as opposed to eat it raw, is favored within European culture and thus fashions a tendency to favor the

sign of the *cooked* and denigrate the sign of the *raw*. Western culture recognizes its own elaborate procedures for cooking food as a superior methodology for consuming victuals, and distinguishes different forms of consumption as foreign and lesser.

In the essay *The Nature of the Linguistic Sign*, Ferdinand de Saussure explains that a sign is the fusion of an idea, concept, or object with a word/sound:

The linguistic sign unites, not a thing and a name, but a concept and a sound-image. The latter is not the material sound, a purely physical thing, but the psychological imprint of the sound, the impression that it makes on our senses. The sound image is sensory, and if I happen to call it “material,” it is only in that sense, and by way of opposing it to the other term of the association, the concept which is generally more abstract.

(27)

The sign is, for Saussure, the completion of a circuit within the individual where upon hearing a sound the listener connects the sound to a memory or concept which is charged with personal and cultural psychological meaning. The sign system is important when encountering binaries and doubles in the gothic novel, as the meaning thus becomes twofold because each sign in the binary carries culturally loaded meaning on its own, but also becomes pervaded with additional meaning when it becomes part of a binary. When two signs are placed into a binary relationship, certain

aspects of a sign become emphasized over others. For instance, the connotations of the sign of the *cooked* are drastically different if one changes the binary from *raw* to *frozen*. The subtext of *cooked* transforms when its binary partner changes; in this case, coupling *cooked* and *frozen* highlights aspects of the difference in temperature between hot and cold, and also whether a food product is to be immediately consumed or preserved for another occasion.

In *Frankenstein* and *Dracula* perhaps the most compelling binary created as a result of character doubling is that of the *human* and the *monster*. Using the model of *raw* and *cooked* as a guideline for interpreting the signs of *human* and *monster*, it is obvious that humanity would be prized over monstrosity. When these two signs are paired together, *human* would signify reason, goodness, and beauty, whereas *monster* would signify violence, savagery, and ugliness. Although the same binary drives both novels, the way in which the binary is performed does not necessarily lead to the same conclusion in both texts. Whereas *Dracula* upholds culturally charged stigma attached to the monstrous double, *Frankenstein* is apt to challenge and critique the ideology attached to the sign.

In *Dracula*, the privileging of *humanity* over *monstrosity* is consistently upheld throughout the narrative. The primary reason Count Dracula's grotesque monstrosity remains intact and unchallenged is that he shows no interest in integrating into society, but rather exists in violent and parasitic relation to other humans. In *Gothic Reflections: Narrative Force in*

Nineteenth-Century Fiction, Peter Garrett distinguishes Dracula from other popular gothic phantasms because he remains beyond the scope of legitimate society. Count Dracula exists outside of the protagonist's culture and infiltrates the domestic space from abroad, while conversely, Frankenstein's Monster is a product of the human protagonist's ingenuity gone awry and is unleashed upon society:

In this last and most popular of the great nineteenth-century monster stories there appears to be no mystery about the source of disturbance or any doubt about the critical role of the narrative in containing it. Here the threat is emphatically external; the monster is not created by or from the protagonist but comes as an alien invader from a distant time and place.

(122)

The assertion that the monster impedes the world of humans from someplace distinctly beyond the reach and control of civilized society emphasizes the conspicuousness of the signs of *monster* and *human*. Dracula operates in opposition to the customs, traditions, and practices of the civilized human world into which he refuses to integrate and makes his very presence in urban London inappropriate. Not only is Dracula distinctly *not* one of "us," but he antagonizes our human society by imposing his foreign otherness upon local bourgeois ideology; this blatant opposition to familiarity confirms and upholds the expected sign of Dracula as a monstrous doppelganger.

In Jonathan Harker's first journal entry, he describes the Count's homeland of Transylvania as wild and uncultivated. The account marks Dracula as an outsider and cultural alien. In addition, Harker clearly relegates Dracula's foreign culture, practices, and technology as less sophisticated and therefore beneath his own native traditions:

I find that the district he named is in the extreme east of the country, just on the borders of three states, Transylvania, Moldavia, and Bukovina, in the midst of the Carpathian mountains; one of the wildest and least known portions of Europe. I was not able to light on any map or maps of this country as yet to compare with our own Ordnance Survey maps.

(6)

Transylvania, Dracula's homeland and place of dwelling, is portrayed as unrefined wilderness and consistent with how one would expect the *human / monster* binary to play out. Dracula's country, which in contrast to the domestic urban sphere of London, is set far off in Eastern Europe and is wild, savage, and dangerous. Harker's comment on the poor mapmaking skills of eastern Europeans establishes and reinforces a hierarchical binary where Western is prized over the more rustic Eastern European culture.

The elevation of one over the other creates a link between the East and non-native cultural practice, geography and tradition and the sign of the *monster*. The distinction between cultivated and alien spaces in *Dracula* is so striking that it has become part of the Western cultural consciousness.

The primary knowledge the average Westerner is likely to possess about Transylvania is that it was the homeland of the fictional character of the Count from *Dracula*, and it has subsequently become the setting for many scary tales and horror films. In *Orientalism*, Edward Said conceptualizes how the Occident constructs and propagates a biased representation of the Orient. The West's perception of the other is rooted in its partiality toward the familiar and condescension of the unknown. Said argues that the West systematically derogates Eastern culture while elevating its own traditions through a complex and largely invisible process:

It is (Orientalism) an elaboration not only of a basic geographical distinction (the world is made up of two unequal halves, Orient and Occident) but also of a whole series of "interests" which, by such means as scholarly discovery, philological reconstruction, psychological analysis, landscape and sociological description, it not only creates but also maintains; it is, rather than expresses, a certain will or intention to understand, in some cases control, manipulate, even to incorporate, what is a manifestly different (or alterative) and novel world. (1086)

Said's claim that Western culture creates the Orient illustrates how Western representations of the East are always infused with perceptual prejudices. The Occident's predisposition toward interpreting the customs of the Orient reprehensively is tainted by its attachment to its own familiar values and standards. Western culture encounters the Orient primarily through

second-hand sources such as the media, literature, and art, and thus the episteme of the other reinvents Eastern culture according to the imagination of the West. The manner in which the Occident describes the Orient to its own members becomes the version of the other that Westerners take as authentic, in spite of the fact that it is wrought with ethnocentric bias. The biased version of the East perpetuated by the Western media and consumed by Western culture ultimately becomes the dominant understanding of Oriental culture that is both created and believed by the Occident: “It is Europe that articulates the Orient; this articulation is the prerogative, not of a puppet master, but of a genuine creator, whose life-giving power represents, animates, and constitutes the otherwise silent and dangerous space beyond familiar boundaries” (57). Although Said specifically addresses how the Occident performs the construction of Asiatic culture, the basic principles still hold true when the reader applies them to the British characters’ pejorative attitudes in *Dracula* toward Eastern European culture.

Said’s *Orientalism* complicates Levi-Strauss’ binary of the *raw* and *cooked* when applied to the gothic novel. In *Dracula*, Western (specifically English) culture and learning is elevated over all things Eastern European. Eastern and Western culture form a binary where the ideas and customs of the West are prized and those of the East are derogated. The casting of Eastern culture as wild, dangerous and uncivilized in *Dracula*, a Western

fiction, reinforces the Western stereotype about the other's culture as both inferior and dangerous.

The privileging of Western culture subtends the doubling in Stoker's *Dracula*. If the reader considers the binary of *human* and *monster* and applies it to Mina and Dracula, the elevated sign of *human* is clearly attributed to Mina, whereas the inferior sign of *monster* is unmistakably ascribed to the Count. Dracula's personification of monstrosity hinges on the fact that he is not only overtly uncanny but also adept in using English people as his functionaries. The impetus to infiltrate and colonize western culture by inculcating virtuous individuals into fellow vampires provides Dracula with the power to threaten the very fabric of Occidental culture. Dracula's ritualistic recruitment of individuals into the cult of vampirism is latent with overtones that suggest an antagonistic relationship to the West and a desire to refashion it in accordance with his own customs. The rhetoric and gestures Dracula performs as he contaminates Mina with Vampirism are perversions of sacred Christian rituals meant to openly mock Western authority.

When Dracula forces Mina to share the vampiristic bond with him by drinking her blood, the description of the event is in explicitly sexual terms that resemble a rape. Contemporary readers would have recognized the sexual innuendo of the vampire's bite, and the fact that it pairs sexual with religious imagery would have made this textual moment uncanny and uneasy:

With his left hand he held both of Mrs. Harker's hands, keeping them away with her arms at full tension; his right hand gripped her by the back of the neck, forcing her face down on his bosom. Her white nightdress was smeared with blood, and a thin stream trickled down the man's bare breast which was shown by his torn-open dress. The attitude of the two had a terrible resemblance to a child forcing a kitten's nose into a saucer of milk to compel it to drink. (300)

The description, "a child forcing a kitten to drink from a saucer," not only suggests Dracula's complete dominance over his female victim, but also insinuates oral sex, an act that Victorian England would have viewed as taboo. The exchange of bodily fluids implicit in the vampire's conversion ritual aims to destabilize two icons of Western morality: the sanctity of sexual congress within the institution of marriage and the Eucharistic ritual, with which Christians consume consecrated bread and wine emblematic of the flesh and blood of Christ. As Dracula forces Mina to consume his blood, he proclaims, "And you, their best beloved one, are now to me, flesh of my flesh; blood of my blood; kin of my kin" (306) which is an adaptation of Adam's speech from Genesis. In the biblical passage, Adam first addresses his wife, Eve, after God creates her from his rib and denotes the sanctimonious bond between a husband and wife within the ritual of marriage. However, Dracula obscures the biblical narrative when he forcibly *takes* another man's wife as his own property and by doing so

mocks the traditions and covenants of Western culture by inducting Mina against her will. The vampire's sacrament removes her from human community in the biblical sense, and instead places her through what Van Helsing later describes as "the vampire's baptism of blood" (342) into the cult of the vampire.

Dracula targets virtuous women of high social standing (first Lucy, then later Mina) for vampiristic conscription. During the 19th century, women were portrayed as decidedly moral and righteous individuals, and Dracula's victimization and conversion of the symbol of western virtue, its women, is a conscious display of his power over the Western culture. Additionally, by displaying the magnitude of his power through the systematic enslavement of western women, Dracula (associated with the wildness and mysticism of the East) is able not only to disrupt the integrity of Western convention, but also to pollute and colonize it at the same time. The ability of Dracula's competing doctrine to disturb the conventions of Western culture points to the vulnerability and instability of ideology and tradition. Dracula converts chaste Western European women to vampirism by unveiling their culturally constructed masque of unblemished chastity and actively sexualizing them. If the vampire, the foreign invader, can seduce and lift the veil of chaste maternity from the edifice of Occidental womanhood, he can collapse the entire hierarchy that holds the West above all other Oriental culture; the act points out that culturally defined truisms (such as the virtue and morality of English women) are not natural facts but

manufactured ideologies. The men, particularly Harker, express great anxiety when seeing their women in the arms of the vampire because it undermines not only female virtue, but also their own power and virility.

The Count's sexualizing of western women is interesting when one considers that Western Europeans have traditionally eroticized the women of the cultures they colonize. In *The Colonial Harem*, Malek Alloula discusses how erotic photographs of Muslim women in traditional garments, as well as a preoccupation with the harem setting, were a particularly effective way for the colonial Western powers to create and maintain a sense of control and superiority over people and cultures that they didn't fully understand: "[The photographer] will unveil the veiled and give figural representation to the forbidden. This is the summary of his own program or, rather, his symbolic revenge upon a society that continues to deny him any access and questions the legitimacy of his desire" (14). Alloula's book foregrounds the postcards taken at the turn of the 20th century as a continuation of a Western tradition that sought to eroticize the East via print, painting, and literature to master cultures it saw as frightening and mysterious. Colonizers employed the tactic of the eroticization of colonized peoples to advance their own ideology and to see their own customs and traditions as superior to those of the other. In *Dracula* the Count utilizes an Occidental practice, the sexualizing of the women of another culture, and turns it back upon itself by forcing English women to become his subordinates. This moment reveals the folly of the ideological belief that the

superior virtue of English women entitles English men a claim to power over other cultures, and it demonstrates how power and perspective have the capability not only to distort reality, but also, as Said suggests, to imagine and create it.

Dracula's disruption of the symbolic power structures of English culture backfires when Mina Harker uses her intellect and newly acquired vampiric abilities to help her associates track down and destroy him. Lucy, who is also victimized by the Count, fails to realize her novel abilities after being bitten and instead relies on male companions for protection and alleviation, a decision that ultimately causes her to succumb to vampirism. Lucy's reliance on male protectors is in keeping with expectation for a woman of her background and period; however, it is impossible for even the strongest and best educated of Lucy's male guardians to protect her from the threat of the supernatural and mysterious Dracula, largely because they do not have ample understanding, perspective, or the know-how about how to fight against the tactics, techniques, and abilities of the foreign invader, the vampire. Dracula's enlistment of women into his control is not only a form of colonization, but also a subversion of the Western way of life; he endeavors to extend his influence over the British by undermining their ideology and transplanting his own customs in place of the local traditions he dissolves. In targeting women as his victims for conversion, the Count buys into the hegemonic construction that Western women function solely as symbols of virtue and are weak and incapable of defending themselves;

particularly, he underestimates women's ingenuity to use the psychic enhancements afforded to them via vampiric adaptation against him. Mina Harker resists Dracula's invasion of her mind, body, and soul by calling upon her own intellect and cunning (unlike Lucy who relies solely upon men to remedy her) and, with the help of her male companions, to break the vampire's curse. Van Helsing testifies that Mina's intellect and ability to *think* like a man is a tremendous asset in the group's effort to destroy Dracula:

She knows it not; and it would overwhelm her and make despair just when we want all her hope, all her courage; when most we want all her great brain which is trained like man's brain, but is of sweet woman and have a special power which the Count give her, and which he may not take away altogether—though he think not so. (360)

The professor's description of Mina as possessing a *man's brain* discloses that he believes she is capable of utilizing creative problem-solving to generate a plan to best the vampire. As a scientist, Van Helsing's insistence that Mina's usefulness arises from the fact that she, a woman, has a brain similar to a man's validates scientific differentiation between the brains and abilities of men and women. It also insinuates even well-learned Western men during this period would have believed that, biologically speaking, a woman's brain was suited for docility and obedience (like the ill-fated Lucy), while a man's brain was naturally adapted toward reason, intellect, and

effective action. Mina's assertive attitude and willingness to fight back against her attacker works against the common belief of the time and shows an example of femininity both capable and willing to act—in fact, it is ultimately Mina's idea to use hypnosis to track the vampire. The two female characters bitten by the vampire represent two competing models of femininity, that of the passive woman (Lucy) and that of the assertive woman (Mina); yet of the two, only the woman who actively attempts, through logic and reasoning, to save herself survives. Lucy and Mina operate as doubles and their converse methods of coping with being bitten problematizes the way traditionally submissive feminine obedience is constructed and enforced. In providing an alternate model of femininity where the woman defends herself, the novel is able to critique preexistent Occidental ideology.

In *Dracula*, science and psychology are displayed positively, as the sign of *humanity* not *monstrosity*. The vampire hunters, particularly Van Helsing and Dr. Seward, make the most of their education in modern science, psychology, and medicine to fight against the Count, who relies upon magic and the supernatural for the power to terrorize the English. The practices of modern medicine play a positive role in the narrative, as is evidenced by Lucy's life being prolonged through blood transfusions and the use of hypnosis to track and spy on Dracula: "I want you to hypnotize me!" she said. "Do it before the dawn, for I feel then I can speak, and speak freely. Be quick, for the time is short!" Without a word he motioned for me

to sit on the bed” (330). Mina’s epiphany that hypnosis will allow her to infiltrate the Count’s subconscious displays modern science in a positive light, and the fostering of this concept yields fruitful results for the group. In spite of the fact that male characters, Van Helsing and Dr. Seward, are both practicing physicians, the use of hypnosis to gain access to the Count’s mind only arises from the intellect of the female double. In “*Being There: Gothic Violence and Virtuality in Frankenstein, Dracula and Strange Days,*” Jules Law asserts that Mina’s desire to complete a psychic circuit between herself and Dracula exposes the vampire’s underestimation of female resourcefulness and cunning:

When Mina wakes up in the middle of the night and hits upon the strategy of turning Dracula’s telepathic powers against him, the various editorial projects and transcribing technologies are superceded by the fantasy of full-body, real-time meditation. The catch, of course, is that the hypnotic state sought by Mina negates even as it fulfills the experience of immanence. Rendered passive, prone, and unconscious, Mina consequently misses her own moment of virtuality: when she awakes from her trance she is ‘eager to know what she had told,’ and is bound over once again to retrospection. (403)

Law points out that Mina tends to encounter and realize the events of the narrative through retrospection and writing in her journal rather than internalizing the significance of interactions at the moment they occur.

Many of the principle events that happen to Mina are only known to her after the fact, either by being told about them by the others or by reading about them in journal entries. The information that Mina uncovers while hypnotized is no exception to this rule; while she is the source of the information divulged from the hypnosis, she does not recall what she has seen while she was put under and must be told belatedly. In addition to hypnosis and blood transfusion, modern scientific advancement makes an appearance through the use of criminal profiling to predict Dracula's future actions: "The Count is a criminal and of criminal type. Nordau and Lombroso would classify him, and *qua* criminal he is imperfectly formed mind. Thus, in a difficulty he has to seek resource in habit" (362). Professor Van Helsing employs modern psychology in order to classify the Count's mind, allowing him to predict Dracula's actions and behavior. Dracula's mind is also compared to that of an undeveloped and selfish child, incapable of compassion and inclined to selfishness and cruelty. Science is shown to be on the side of the *human* binary, as the protagonists successfully utilize it to vanquish the mystical and monstrous invader.

Science and technology have the opposite effect in Shelly's *Frankenstein* as they have in *Dracula*. Whereas the cultivation of scientific techniques and practices, both medical and psychological, are clearly a great boon to humans in *Dracula*, it takes on a sinister role in *Frankenstein*, where instead of rescuing humanity from a monstrous invader, science unleashes the monster upon civilization. In "*Frankenstein's Fallen Angel*,"

Joyce Carol Oates argues that Victor Frankenstein's preoccupation with knowing hidden and arcane knowledge casts him as a Faustian figure:

The search of medieval alchemists for the legendary philosophers' stone (the talismanic process by which base metals might be transformed into gold or, in psychological terms, the means by which the individual might realize his destiny), Faust's reckless defiance of human limitations and his willingness to barter his soul for knowledge, the fatal search of such tragic figures as Oedipus and Hamlet for answers to mysteries of their lives—these are the archetypal dramas to which Frankenstein bears an obvious kinship. (545)

Similarly to Faust, Victor craves knowledge for his own purposes, yet he has no interest in using that knowledge for the benefit of the community.

Victor's craving to ascertain the secrets of nature echoes throughout the novel, and while there is nothing particularly monstrous about the progression of humanity through science, it is clear from the scientist's behavior that the primary motivation for his research is a desire to know, to create, and to secure himself a legacy among the great scientists of Western culture; at the beginning of the novel, Victor remarks "The world was to me a secret which I desired to divine" (27). The statement "desired to divine" reveals that Frankenstein sees himself and his work so beyond the limits of humanity that he approaches godlike status. Victor's self-proclaimed departure from his community is problematic because it suggests he is not

concerned with how the culmination of his progress will affect his fellow people and is possessed by his ambition to acquire knowledge, skill, and status beyond the reach of his contemporaries. As a student and scientist, Frankenstein's fundamental aim is to achieve more in his field than those who came before, and to know secrets about the universe that nobody else had yet been able to uncover: "So much has been done, exclaimed the soul of Frankenstein—more, far more, will I achieve: treading in the steps already marked, I will pioneer a new way, explore unknown powers, and unfold to the world the deepest mysteries of creation" (40). The motivations for the acquisition and application of scientific knowledge by the protagonists in *Frankenstein* and *Dracula* are utterly opposite with regard to whom the information is ultimately meant to serve. Whereas Dr. Seward and Van Helsing use their wisdom to help fellow humans in peril and to protect their community from outside corruption and invasion, Victor Frankenstein thinks only of using his newfound learning for personal gain; he never considers how his experimentation will affect the people around him.

The preference for solidarity over community makes Victor a poor candidate to represent the sign of *human* and thus complicates the *human / monster* dichotomy. Unlike a traditional rendering of this binary, where humanity prizes its accomplishments in terms of the collective community, *Frankenstein* presents a protagonist who continually neglects his responsibility toward his fellow humans. At critical points in the novel, and in moments of tragic misfortune in particular, Victor shirks his

responsibility to his friends and family by opting for isolation over kinship. When Victor discovers his brother has been murdered, instead of immediately returning home to be with his family, he makes a slow pace so he can spend more time alone: “My journey was very melancholy. At first I wished to hurry on, for I longed to console and sympathise with my loved and sorrowing friends; but when I drew near my native town, I slackened my progress” (71). Consciously, Victor asserts his desire to be with his family during the time of hardship; however, his actions do not reflect any such concern to serve the community. The disunion between how Frankenstein says he wants to behave and how he *does* behave is like night and day, for although Victor knows how an empathetic person should behave in such a situation, something defective in his disposition causes him to act against his instinct. A transformation in Frankenstein’s temperament (in which he sees himself as a social outsider) stems from his years spent in a reclusive, Faustian pursuit of the secrets of nature. The severity of this dysfunction is made evident when even after his friends and family are killed, Frankenstein is still unable to re-assimilate into the community, instead opting for the more comfortable state of solidarity.

Victor’s *in-humanity* is also apparent in his interactions with the monster, especially in his failure to take responsibility for creating the creature. Immediately after Victor sees the fruits of his diabolical labor and is satisfied by the animation of the monster, he flees from the scene in horror and fails to inform anyone of the atrocity he has introduced into the

world. By not telling the authorities of the monster's existence, Victor compromises the entire community, then threatened by an unknown and all the more dangerous force. When the monster takes vengeance against humanity by murdering Victor's brother and framing Justine for the crime, Frankenstein still refuses to divulge his secret, though it could potentially exonerate her from unwarranted guilt. Victor alleges he does not inform the public of the monster's existence during Justine's trial because the community will not believe his story and that revealing the tale will cause him to be labeled a madman:

I was firmly convinced in my own mind that Justine, and indeed every human being, was guiltless of this murder. I had no fear, therefore, that any circumstantial evidence could be brought forward strong enough to convict her. My tale was not one to announce publicly; its astounding horror would be looked upon as madness by the vulgar. Did anyone indeed exist, except I, the creator, who would believe, unless his senses convinced him, in the existence of the living monument of presumption and rash ignorance which I had let loose upon the world? (78)

Once again, Victor sees himself as separate from the community, not as a component of it. The pretext that his story will not be believed and is therefore inadmissible allows Frankenstein to maintain his illusion that he is a good member of the community, in spite of the fact that his desire for personal transcendence has caused him to become an outsider and a

liability to the safety of the group. Victor attempts to circumvent his transgressions via proper social behavior and cues to maintain his reputation, despite the fact that he is concealing behavior that is beyond the bounds of acceptable social practice. The assumption that no one will believe him accentuates the fact that Victor places his faculties of comprehension beyond that of the other community members, a symptom of the God complex that leads him to create the monster in the first place. The undisclosed story is essential to the well-being of the community, as it is literally a matter of life and death to many people. By denying the community critical information, Victor affords the individuals at risk of being targeted by the monster's violence little or no chance for survival. Victor suppresses the real narrative as a result of his reluctance to relinquish social standing, and in spite of his becoming an operative outside of the spectrum of mainstream society, the markers of social status and personal image still carry enough weight to dictate his actions.

In *Civilization and its Discontents*, Freud explains how guilt serves as the attempted but ineffectual suppression of feelings, intentions, or deeds that lead to the loss of love by one's social superiors. Guilt arises when the id, i.e. ambivalent, yearns to do something society and superego will reject:

This state of mind is called a 'bad conscience'; but actually it does not deserve this name, for at this stage the sense of guilt is clearly only a fear of loss of love, "social" anxiety. In small children it can never be anything else, but in many adults, too,

it has only changed to the extent that the place of the father or the two parents is taken by larger human community.

Consequently, such people habitually allow themselves to do any bad thing which promises them enjoyment, so long as they are sure that the authority will not know anything about it or cannot blame them for it; they are afraid only of being found out. (86)

The superego restrains the craving to perpetrate a socially unacceptable action only by remembering that being caught in the act will result in the loss of status, respect, and, ultimately, love from one's community (not to mention possible punishment). Guilt is a symptom of the superego's realization that the cravings of the id are indeed inappropriate or self-destructive; the recognition that such urges are in conflict with the established social order, and therefore against the individual's sense of security, supersedes the fulfillment of improper action. Freud's conception of repression pertains to Victor's compulsion to conceal his misdeeds from the community. Guilt is also a function of why Victor spends an excessive amount of time in solitude both before and after he creates the monster.

The quest to animate life and unravel nature's secrets is conducted away from the gaze of society because Victor knows that should he be discovered, he will be punished for acting against the moral codes of proper social and scientific conduct. Victor, thus, typifies those who outwardly appear to police their own thoughts via the super-ego, but internally

indulges his non-normative desires. This opposition further distances and alienates Victor from the people around him, as it broadens the gap between his internal identity and the projected external performance of selfhood that he must display in public.

In contrast to Victor's self-imposed exile, the monster initially seeks out union with the human community. One wouldn't traditionally expect that the figure representative of the sign of *monster* would desire affectionate and harmonious union with men and women, an impulse that complicates the reading of the monster as monstrous in the narrative. The monster's earliest living memories (at De Lacey's hovel) are of longing for companionship with the humans whom he watches from afar. The monster is so attuned to the suffering and hardship of these people that he (without their knowing) helps them with their daily chores in hopes of relieving some of their burdens. The monster's first impetus is toward obtaining harmony with other living beings in the natural world through acts of kindness and compassion; conversely, the monster's immediate reaction toward the malicious treatment of one individual by another is of revulsion and disgust: "To be a great and virtuous man appeared the highest honour that can befall a sensitive human being; to be base and vicious, as many on record have been, appeared the lowest degradation, a condition more abject than that of the blind mole or harmless worm" (124). The monster's instantaneous recognition of interpersonal relationships as valuable directly inverts Victor's preference of solitude over community. It is ironic that

Victor, a man who has unlimited ability to commune with others, neglects and strays from them, whereas the monster, who has never known or experienced community, constitutes it as the most desirable and amicable of pursuits. Victor and his creation are fascinating doubles with regard to the binary of *human* and *monster* because their natural tendencies reverse what one would traditionally expect. The individual who exhibits all of the outwardly grotesque traits of a monster is ultimately the one who is willing to sacrifice everything in order to become part of a human community, while Victor, who is a human by birth, acts without regard for that community's wellbeing, refuses to take responsibility for his actions, and neglects to inform his friends and family of the threat that his creation poses to the them.

Victor also fails to display the human trait of compassion or responsibility when he animates a dead body and brings it to life. The irresponsible scientist realizes the consequences of creating life once he has completed his odious task and sees the grotesqueness of the being to which he has given life:

I had desired it with an ardor that far exceeded moderation; but now that I had finished, the beauty of the dream vanished, and breathless horror and disgust filled my heart. Unable to endure the aspect of the being I had created I rushed out of the room, and continued a long time traversing my bedchamber, unable to compose my mind to sleep. (51)

The moment Frankenstein sees the conclusion of his labors realized, he no longer yearns to do the impossible and realizes that in completing his task, has done something terrible and immoral. In the wake of this realization, rather than destroy the monster or confess his crime to the authorities, Victor exacerbates the problem by fleeing from the scene and leaving the situation unresolved. Not only does Victor fail to display a sense of moral accountability to the community for the monster's acts when left to its own devices, but he also feels no sense of obligation towards the creature that he creates. He chooses to abandon the monster and resolves to never speak of it again, in hope that the situation would resolve itself and that no harm would come from the monster's undisclosed presence in the community.

Frankenstein's immediate revulsion to the sight of the monster is similar to the concept of abjection discussed by Julia Kristeva. In *Powers of Horror: An Essay on Abjection*, Kristeva explains that abjection occurs when an individual simultaneously associates and dissociates himself with something horrific:

It is thus not lack of cleanliness or health that causes abjection but what disturbs identity, system, order. What does not respect borders, positions, rules. The in-between, the ambiguous, the composite. The traitor, the liar, the criminal with good conscience, the shameless rapist, the killer who claims he is a savior Any crime, because it draws attention to the fragility of the law, is abject, put remediated crime,

cunning murder, hypocritical revenge are even more so because they heighten the display of such fragility. [. . .] Abjection, on the other hand, is immoral, sinister, scheming, and shady: a terror that disassembles, a hatred that smiles, a passion that uses the body for barter instead of inflaming it, a debtor who sells you up, a friend who stabs you. (4)

The abject disturbs the fabric of socially and psychologically constructed order. Kristeva argues that crime, for instance, is abject because it exposes how laws are not steadfast, but rather capable of being circumvented and disrupted at the whim of individual desire. Society crafts laws to protect the well-being of citizens, but when crime takes place, it shows how the laws only work when they are obeyed and that abiding to the rules is ultimately a personal choice that can be disregarded. Victor's face-to-face encounter with the monster is also an encounter with abjection, and his aversion to the sight of his creation brings his own ethical misconduct into focus for him. The monster is a symbol of Victor's social and moral delinquency, so his instinctual reaction to witnessing the abject is repulsion, which accounts for his flight from the scene and from himself.

Victor and the monster, creator and creation, are inextricably linked as doubles, yet this relationship complicates the way the *human/monster* binary works. The binary plays out opposite from how one would expect it to; in the narrative humanity is shown to behave monstrously, while the monster is depicted as acting humanely. The monster's initial tendency is

to commune with humanity and to act in a socially and morally responsible manner. Unfortunately, the monster faces one grave problem—his appearance is grotesque and deformed, and the exterior difference between the monster and other creatures excludes him from participating in the same social circles. The contradiction between the monster's internal sense of self and his exterior physique is absolute, as his preliminary tendencies are pure and decent, but his person is ghoulish and frightening. The dichotomy between the monster's interiority and exteriority is most overtly displayed when he attempts to communicate with De Lacey. The blind man, unable to see the grotesqueness of the monster's outward appearance, cannot distinguish the person he is talking to as anything but a good-natured human being: "I am blind, and cannot judge your countenance, but there is something in your words which persuades me that you are sincere. I am poor, and an exile; but it will afford me true pleasure to be in any way serviceable to a human creature" (141). The monster's speech and sentiments are consistent with values and mannerisms that one would associate with proper humanity, and because De Lacey is blind and cannot observe the monster's external flaws, he cannot distinguish between the monster and a human. It is only once De Lacey's son, Felix, returns and reacts with horror to the creature's physical deformity that the conversation is abruptly ended, and the possibility of friendship between the man and the monster is severed forever.

After the encounter at the De Lacey's homestead, the monster has another negative confrontation with humanity and realizes that he will never be able to establish a union between humanity and himself. While the monster is wandering in solitude, he encounters a drowning child and acts compassionately by rescuing it from certain death. The child's guardian arrives on the scene shortly after the child has been saved and is frightened by the monster's hideous appearance; despite just having saved the man's son, the monster is shot and badly wounded by the terrified man. The monster reacts to the injury with both anger and exasperation, as he comes to terms with the fact that humans will never accept or tolerate him because of his grotesque physique:

'This was the reward of my benevolence! I had saved a human being from destruction, and, as a recompense, I now writhed under the miserable pain of a wound, which shattered the flesh and bone. The feelings of kindness and gentleness which I had entertained but a few moments before gave way to hellish rage and gnashing teeth. Inflamed by pain, I vowed eternal hatred and vengeance to all mankind.' (149)

Although possessing a grotesque exterior, the monster's initial disposition is toward compassion and community with humans; the monster is only driven to act *monstrously* after repeatedly being made the victim of humanity's intolerance and cruelty. The actions of humans are directly responsible for shaping the internal and external monstrosity of the

creature. The constant rejection, cruelty, and violence of humans towards the monster shape his violent designs for retribution. After being repeatedly shunned by humans, the monster succumbs to vindictiveness, an emotion that he learns from humanity, and opts to take revenge against his creator: Victor Frankenstein. In a conversation with Victor, the monster professes: "I am malicious because I am miserable" (153). The distinction that the monster is inclined toward benevolent behavior but learns monstrous behavior from humans confirms that the characteristics innate in the sign of *monster* are qualities initially evidenced in humans.

The doubling of Victor and the monster draws upon the binary of creator / creation to demonstrate how one's choices and actions impact the lives of others. The monster's unhappy status as outcast is a direct consequence of his master's irresponsible and neglectful behavior, and because Victor's actions are the cause of the monster's miserable state of being, the monster seeks out Victor for help. The solution the monster proposes is that Victor should build him a female counterpart, so that he will have somebody with whom to socialize: "You must create a female for me, with whom I can live in the interchange of those sympathies necessary for my being: "This you alone can do; and I demand it of you as a right which you must not refuse or concede" (78). The monster argues that Victor is his creator and therefore obligated to provide him with the basic necessities required for happiness. A companion, the monster argues, is the bare minimum that an intelligent being requires to live a worthwhile

existence, and because the monster's appearance makes it impossible for him to have human companionship, it is therefore Victor's duty as creator to provide the monster with a female. For a moment the monster's plea resonates with Victor and he contemplates his sense of duty, compassion, and responsibility to provide for his creation: "did I not as his maker owe him all the portion of happiness that it was in my power to bestow?" (78). Victor's newfound sense of responsibility is quickly forgotten when he relives the experience of abjection while building the monster's female companion. The creation of the second monster causes Victor to again confront the shame and guilt that has led to his severance from communal life, all of which is ultimately too traumatic for him to bear. Instead of keeping his promise to the monster, Victor, consumed by his passions, instead destroys the monster's female companion. In response to Victor's breaking his vow and murdering his companion, the monster guarantees that he will have revenge upon Victor on his wedding night, a threat that Frankenstein completely misunderstands.

The monster's revenge is directed against Victor's friends and family, and is an attempt to teach him how it feels to be alienated and utterly alone in the world. Victor interprets the monster's haunting threat, "*I will be with you on your wedding-night,*" (78) as a direct threat against his own life; never does he consider that the monster is planning to take his wife away from him—an act of retribution against a creator who deprived his creation of a female companion. Victor's thoughts on his wedding night, a night spent in

solitude apart from his new wife Elizabeth, reveal that he hadn't considered the monster might attack his wife. "Yet when I thought of my beloved Elizabeth,—of her tears and endless sorrow, when she should find her lover so barbarously snatched from her,—tears, the first I had shed for many months, streamed from my eyes, and I resolved not to fall before my enemy without a bitter struggle" (158). The fact that Victor never considers his wife as the target of the monster's violence—especially given the monster's prior actions of murdering his creator's brother and framing his cousin for the crime—exposes how shockingly self-centered Victor's disposition is. Victor believes that marrying will lead to his own death, a tragedy that will cause sadness for his newly widowed wife and remaining family members; but he still refuses to ask the community for protection from the monster for fear of tarnishing his reputation. By agreeing to marry, when he knows the event will culminate in his murder, Victor's death wish provides him an escape from taking responsibility for his actions without the guilt of suicide.

Victor's behavior is *monstrous* because the only responsibility he consistently honors is to himself and the preservation of his reputation. Unlike *Dracula*, where the *human/monster* binary plays out according to our expectation, in *Frankenstein* the opposite is true. Victor is a popular, respected, and lovable young man with an extensive network of friends and family; however, his activities are driven by irresponsible compulsions that lead to tragic consequences for the community. Contrary to Victor's negligent and disengaged attitude toward society, the monster spawned

from his careless behavior seeks kinship with mankind, and is only subsequently taught its violent and malicious cues by humans, a construction that suggests monstrosity isn't an external force lurking outside of civilization waiting to pounce, but rather, that monstrosity, and particularly cruelty and prejudice, are qualities inherent to humans that have disastrous consequences when left unchecked.

Chapter II: Haunted By Histories And Memories

My life formerly was all anticipation,—now it is all retrospection.

The life of the happy is all hopes,—that of the unfortunate all memory.

—Charles Maturin, *Melmoth the Wanderer*.

Chapter I looked at how doubling exposes hidden interiority in the gothic; this chapter covers the ways doubling unsettles coherent notions of history and memory. Two texts, William Godwin's *Caleb Williams* (1794) and Charles Maturin's *Melmoth the Wanderer* (1820), contain incidents where the predominant narrative undermines an alternative reminiscence of the same episode. The intercession of the double's antagonistic version of events destabilizes the perception of history as a unified account of the past and reveals dominant cultural memory to be untrustworthy. A stilted record of events arises because of the predilection for canonizing perspectives that perpetuate ideology useful to the dominant cultural voice while systematically suppressing alternate or minority viewpoints. The double's bifurcation of historical narrative challenges the inaccuracies of the prevailing account and affords displaced or ulterior narratives a space to be recorded. The doubling of popularized memory with alternative accounts draws attention to how history is constructed surreptitiously and reified by the affluent to foster public support of social, economic, and/or political

structures that sustain inequality. This selective historical memory causes inequality to appear natural and acceptable, though it is potentially against the interest of the majority. The gothic exposes the fallacy of equating history with truth; histories are manufactured and written with the intent to persuade one to view the past one way instead of another.

Western Europe during the mid-18th century was a time and place of importance with regard to how individuals understood their personal relationship to the traditions of the past. The emergence of the merchant class brought on by private entrepreneurship provided people not of noble birth access to wealth, power, and influence previously reserved exclusively for the aristocracy. The redistribution of wealth and restructuring of the socio-economic makeup of Western Europe during the 19th century created tension between these two competing castes. The aristocratic class's claim to dominance had for centuries been entrenched in the feudalistic practice of primogeniture, namely passing down one's wealth, title, and land intact from one male heir to the next and the use of hereditary birthright to restrict power to individuals of aristocratic birth. The onset of colonialism in Europe provided access to new lands, resources, and advantages to other individuals, giving them in turn the means to acquire further wealth, affluence, and capital. The potential for profit abroad allowed the merchant class to accumulate tremendous holdings of wealth that in many cases exceeded that of local nobility and began to upset the traditional power structure that had bound European society together for hundreds of years.

The gothic novel was an art-form largely authored by, written for, and marketed to the new European middle class, and the genre as a whole reflects the ideas, cultural practices, and concerns of this same group. The conflict between the old traditions of the aristocracy and the new ideas governing the growth of the merchant class becomes the central fixture of gothic texts and mirrors these individuals' struggle to situate themselves within the established traditions of the past. The competition between these classes explicitly structures the interactions between pairs of doubles within these texts. Mikhail Bakhtin's *Discourse in the Novel* shows how language usage reveals underlying information about what is being said, particularly with regard to a speaker's class, education, and environment. Bakhtin asserts that the connection between written language and meaning extends beyond the text itself, words are subject to interpretation and have differing context dependent connotations: "Form and content in discourse are one, once we understand that verbal discourse is a social phenomenon—social throughout its entire range and in each and every of its factors, from the sound image to the furthest reaches of abstract meaning" (1190). Bakhtin's conception of *heteroglossia* (the infinite connections between textual language and the free-floating cultural symbols in the natural world) is useful for un-packing instances of narrative disagreement surrounding doubles and examining how this variance is related to class and ideology. Heteroglossia suggests that the bond between textual *form* and *content* is inseparable, as the former informs the later and vice versa—the novel

functions as a linguistic piece of art where it is just as important to evaluate not only what is being said and done, but also how the events and discourses transpire with regard to the language being used. The investigation and application of how heteroglossia lends itself to a deeper understanding of narrative and ultimately allows for a complex reading of the veiled conflict within the work with regard to instances of ideological, political, or social strife taking place beneath the surface. The manner and context in which language is used greatly influences how it will be interpreted and what meaning it will convey to the person receiving it:

But the centripetal forces of the life of language, embodied in a “unitary language,” operate in the midst of heteroglossia. At any given moment of its evolution, language is stratified not only into linguistic dialects in the strict sense of the word (according to formal linguistic markers, especially phonetic), but also—and for us this is the essential point—into languages that are socio-ideological: languages of social groups. (1199)

The language at play between sets of doppelgangers is stamped with ideological markers that inform the narrative. The interplay between doubles is a function of form not only in the direct sense that it moves the narrative forward and contributes to aspects of plot, but also in that dialogism relies on the reader’s ability to make connections between the written word and the conventions of the natural world that exist outside of the text.

In *Caleb Williams* the coupling of form and content reveals the tension between two doubles, Caleb and Falkland, to be rooted in their socio-economic inequality. In “Interpersonal Violence: The Penetrating Gaze and the Field of Narration in *Caleb Williams*,” John Bender describes a major literary innovation Godwin utilizes that affords his narrative the ability to draw upon the reader’s sympathy in order to launch a tremendously effective critique of class inequality. Godwin’s use of the *free-indirect discourse* narrative style, which hides the typical framework that marks a novel as fiction, allows the narrator to masquerade as a genuine first-hand participant in the events of the novel:

It is the characteristic mechanism for securing the illusion of transparency that distinguishes the realist novel from the later eighteenth century onward. Transparency is the convention that both author and beholder are absent from representation, the objects which are rendered as if their eternals were entirely perceptible in a unified field of vision and their internality fully accessible. (114)

This transparency stages the illusion that Caleb is a real person, and the text of the novel *his* words, rather than the construction of an absentee authorial mastermind. This stylistic deception evokes a stronger emotional response from the reader as he or she imagines that the descriptions of first-hand suffering and oppression are actually being inflicted upon a fellow human being. The reader’s sympathetic response toward the Caleb also

functions inversely as aversion to the misuse of aristocratic power; the use of free indirect discourse to produce an emotional response allows the unseen author to mount an effective critique of economic injustice.

The tension surrounding oppositional class-based ideologies is the central thematic conflict in *Caleb Williams*. Caleb, the middle-class protagonist, aspires to assimilate what he perceives as supposedly moral superiority of his aristocratic master Lord Falkland. The compulsion to become more like Falkland motivates Caleb to learn as much as possible about his master; this curiosity leads to the sharing of interiority that results in doubling. Initially Caleb's attitude toward Falkland takes an inquisitive form, as he engages his master in philosophical conversation in order to commandeer the intellectual adroitness he wishes to possess. One such conversation between the two on the subject of Alexander the Great and his accomplishments reveals Falkland's outlook on history to be unconcerned with the plight and goings-on of non-aristocratic people. Falkland's admiration of Alexander's xenophobia and colonization abroad demonstrates that his position as aristocrat has made him callous and pejorative towards individuals who do not share his status:

Alexander, my boy, has been much misunderstood. Mankind have revenged themselves upon him by misrepresentation, for having so far eclipsed the rest of his species. It was necessary to realizing his project, that he should pass for a god. It was the only way by which he could get a firm hold upon the

...veneration of the stupid and bigoted Persians. It was this, and not a mad vanity, that was the source of his proceeding. And how much had he to struggle within this respect, in the unapprehending obstinacy of some of his Macedonians? (116)

The dialogue between Caleb and Falkland functions on two levels: on the surface, it is a philosophical conversation about a historical figure, but on the allegorical level it is also a cryptic discussion in which Falkland justifies his own ethical shortcomings. The class difference between these individuals—Falkland is of noble birth and Caleb is his subordinate of working-class origin—means that Falkland has access to resources and privilege beyond that available to Caleb. Falkland's status influences his sensitivity to the world around him and colors the way he constructs his conception of proper social interactions between people. The key to Falkland's defense of the atrocities and genocidal actions committed by Alexander is that all of those events were done in the name of bringing aristocratic European values abroad, an argument that relies upon his complete faith in his milieu's ideological system. Falkland has grown up immersed in what he considers the best education, experience, and privilege that Western European culture has to offer.

The defense of Alexander's imperialist endeavor displays Falkland's own racist attitude towards non-Europeans, as he indifferently refers to the colonized as "bigoted" and "stupid" Persians. Falkland's conception of the world is grounded in a particular understanding and construction of

European history that justifies his own claim to power and position. The aristocratic system, and the belief in the sanctity of noble birthright, allows Falkland to endorse immoral actions as long as they are meant to protect the political and socio-economic system to which he belongs. By this logic, the most important factor for determining one's entitlement to justice becomes affiliation with the dominant culture, and that hierarchy becomes an adequate defense for brutalization. Supporters of imperialist aggression, such as Falkland, legitimize the violence and bloodshed inherent in the system by portraying non-native peoples as, at worst, villains and, at best, ignorant savages.

In *The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte*, Karl Marx argues that the events and actions of the present are heavily influenced by the histories that precede them and that individuals model their ideas and traditions on models from the past. Contemporary law-makers and thinkers always look to the past for guidance and seek to recreate and improve upon the models that have already existed, and therefore the traditions and customs of the past are unavoidable because they influence everything thereafter:

Men make their own history, but they do not make it just as they please; they do not make the circumstances chosen by themselves, but under the circumstances directly found, given and transmitted from the past. The tradition of all the dead generations weighs like a nightmare on the brain of the living.

(595)

The impetus to revitalize the social constructions of the past arises from the aspiration to move one's own culture into proximity of the values of a preexisting historical moment in order to legitimize its own cultural supremacy. By basing one's culture directly upon another historical model, the copy culture establishes itself as the heir to the original. Marx's idea that cultures are replications of the past creates a model of doubling where the present becomes a simulacrum of the past.

The conduit for drastic social reform is the animation of institutions and slogans that have significant symbolic importance in the public memory. The motivation for the sweeping overthrow of social order is the unified movement back toward the strategically idealized recollection of the glory days of the past, which are largely mythologized versions of history that serve a specific political or social agenda. Marx uses the French Revolution as an example of a moment that carefully reconstructed itself in the image of an authoritative past model to enact major social and national change. The French Revolution arises to justify their claim to power by constructing itself as a double of the great republics of antiquity; the subsequent 19th century revolution in France drew upon the original French Revolution as the basis of its authority. The later revolution is therefore a copy of a copy, and two layers of doubling are present in this history. The French Revolution sought to tear down the remnants of the previous social order and replace them with bourgeois ideology. Marx argues that the revolutionary movement was able to effectively transplant its new ideologies

as dominant culture by equating the symbols of the preexisting aristocracy with the perversion of justice that the revolution and the models it saw itself as the legitimate heir to:

They had given out the watchwords of the old society, "*Property, family, religion, order,*" to their army as passwords and had proclaimed to the counter-revolutionary crusaders: "In this sign you will conquer!" From that moment, as soon as one of the numerous parties which had gathered under this sign against the June insurgents seeks to hold the revolutionary battlefield in its own class interests it goes down before the cry: "Property, family, religion, order." (603)

The doubling of past and present is also represented by literature, through metaphorical and symbolic motifs used in the narrative. The overarching themes of the gothic borrow from the tradition that came before, and the symbols and stories of the past are the foundations upon which the genre was built. The innovation of the 18th century is to place these traditional narratives into a novel, context allowing them to appear modern and speak to the problems of the age. In "Myth and the Gothic Dream: C. R. Maturin's *Melmoth the Wanderer*," Veronica Kennedy identifies numerous strands of literary allusion within Maturin's novel and examines how historical literary borrowings link past and present within the gothic. Kennedy asserts that Melmoth is an archetypal outcast character fashioned in the tradition of preexisting biblical exiles:

Melmoth is like Cain and the Wandering Jew, branded with God's seal, invulnerable, but causing universal abhorrence. He bears the mark of God's anger but has the invulnerability that was one of the temptations offered by Mephistopheles to Faust, and that has been the constant dream of those who sought to control supernatural and elemental forces by magic art. (44)

Melmoth is seduced into becoming an abomination by his desire to know and possess power beyond ordinary mortals, and through his misuse of the mystical, he is exiled from union with the community. The analogous trajectory of Melmoth with other significant literary characters (for instance Melmoth and Faust are both ruined by obsessive pursuits of unnatural knowledge and power), allows the novel to connect contemporary concerns to those of antiquity and makes modern concerns appear universally essential.

The immortal, accursed Melmoth functions as a counter example to the conception of the past as golden age; he is a relic from an earlier era lingering in contemporary Europe trying to pawn off his curse to somebody else so he can finally expire. Melmoth's role in the narratives is active and his presence influences the way events unfold, which directly impacts the lives of other characters. Alonzo's torment by the Spanish Inquisition and Father Olavida's untimely death are both tragic events that transpire according to Melmoth's design. These instances indicate that Melmoth, a ghost from the past, is an acting agent capable of influencing contemporary

and future events. Melmoth symbolizes how the residual traces of past ideology and tradition inform the present and how these remnants have the real power to impact and influence the present.

Despite the tremendous physical and mental pressure Melmoth exercises on those shouldering his burden, every person to whom he appeals ultimately rejects his proposal. The rejection demonstrates that although figures from the past have tremendous authority when they recur throughout history, these objects do not have the power to dominate the contemporary imagination uncontested; rather, there is the possibility for individuals to decode antiquated symbols on a case-by-case basis and thoughtfully discern how these symbols are constructed, what they signify, and to what end implementing them will affect modern reality.

Reading the gothic double in a historical context allows points of contestation in 18th century to become clear, especially the class conflict between the aristocracy and the middle class. In *Caleb Williams*, Lord Falkland's support and glorification of Alexander the Great entrenches his own claim to aristocratic power. Caleb, a character representative of the middle-class, does not share Falkland's ardor for imperialistic violence. Unlike Falkland, who views Alexander's conquest as a triumph of European culture over the other, Caleb criticizes the violence and cruelty of the tactics against common people during the campaign:

But shall I forget what a vast expense was bestowed upon
erecting the monument of his fame? Was not he the common

disturber of mankind? Did not he over-run nations that would never have heard of him but for his devastations? How many hundred thousands of lives did he sacrifice in his career? What must I think of his cruelties; a whole tribe massacred for a crime committed by their ancestors one hundred and fifty years before; fifty thousand sold into slavery; two thousand crucified for their gallant defense of their country. (116)

Caleb lacks the privilege of a noble title and is able to see a less distorted vision of how Alexander the Great imposes the European way of life on the orient. Caleb and Falkland are doubles whose conceptions of morality differ because of their unequal societal positions. Falkland's argument that colonial violence is a moral practice reveals him to be distrustful of the working and middle classes. For Falkland, Alexander's suppression of the East symbolizes the strength of the system that upholds his aristocratic claim to power. Conversely, Caleb's sympathy for individuals brutalized in the name of European colonial expansion evidences his working-class critique of the aristocracy's abuse of its power. Although characters' positions are opposite each other, the cause of the difference is the symmetrical distrust that each class has of the other. John Bender argues that both characters' obsessive, classist suspicion of the other is equally destructive, but the masque of transparency afforded to Caleb via indirect discourse downplays his role in causing the conflict. Caleb's compulsive spying and the pleasure that he experiences at the thought of catching an

authority figure in a scandal is a symptom that class paranoia is equally emblematic of the bourgeois as the aristocracy:

Godwin obviously attacks the aristocratic code of honor, which always has been understood as his chief target. But the novel also works to indict the newer orthodoxy of sympathy. Caleb's transparent subjectivity makes plain that the sympathetic equation, no less than Falkland's *amour propre*, holds up an opaque masque appearance that Rousseau condemns as merely artificial form. But Caleb's sympathy is no neutral or innocent alternative: it is an irrational and exploitive byproduct of political power, experienced as a real psychological state, though itself produced in masquerade. (121)

Bender distinguishes that Caleb's role in incurring Falkland's wrath is active and not passive, as the servant delights in his inappropriate suspicion and investigation. The deployment of free indirect discourse downplays Caleb's antagonism toward Falkland by emphasizing the injustices and suffering the master retaliates upon his servant. The gothic emphasizes the perceived intrinsic goodness of middle-class values and elevates them over all other ways of thinking. Caleb and Falkland's distrust of each other is symmetrical; Caleb's irrational and obsessive invasion of Falkland's privacy that leads to the escalation of violence and hostility between the two proves that both classes had misgivings about the other. The veiling of Caleb's active role in escalating the drama by indirect

narrative discourse demonstrates the impunity the gothic affords middle-class ideology to critique the other.

The double also functions as a key tool for discerning exactly how history is recorded and remembered during this period. In *Imagined Communities*, Benedict Anderson asserts that the relationship between history and community is a function of the construction of “nationalism” within groups that are bound by a mutual investment in ideological beliefs. In an “imagined community” there is an unspoken and unconscious belief among all members that regardless of class or social position, everybody belongs equally. However, Anderson also points out that the enthusiastic nationalism brought about in “imagined communities” can persist despite social inequality:

It is imagined as a *community*, because, regardless of the actual inequality, and exploitation that may prevail in each, the nation is always conceived as a deep, horizontal comradeship.

Ultimately it is this fraternity that makes it possible, over the past two centuries, for so many millions of people, not so much to kill, as willingly to die for such limited imaginings. (7)

Anderson provides an explanation for why members of the working class would allow social inequality to exist; the reason is that, although their labor and liberties are exploited for the gain of those with power, the imagined bond is so powerful that revolt seems unfathomable and unwarranted.

The phenomenon of “imagined community” is ubiquitous and reinforced through everyday activity, especially between individuals and the media. Individuals have limited interaction with others whom they imagine as part of their community, so it is through the act of reading that individuals are reassured that there are other people working in the world to the same end as they are:

The newspaper reader, observing exact replicas of his own paper being consumed by his subway, barbershop, or residential neighbors, is continually reassured that the imagined world is visibly rooted in everyday life. As with *Noli Me Tangere*, fiction seeps quietly and continuously into reality, creating that remarkable confidence of community in anonymity which is the hallmark of modern nations. (16)

The double uncovers attitudes and practices that enable and perpetuate inequality because it showcases the divergent attitudes between individuals with differing social and economic status. In *Caleb Williams*, the character who works against the paradigm of the imagined community and seeks restitution for injustices brought upon him by an aristocrat is brutally punished for disturbing the established social order.

History is constructed to influence compliance from citizens, starting at the top of the social order and moving down to the lowest rungs of society. In Maturin’s *Melmoth the Wanderer*, the construction of histories and the manner in which histories influence an individual’s actions is a

central theme. In “The Tale of the Spaniard,” one of novel’s nested storylines, the reader is shown how the refinement of historical narrative by an authoritative body (in this case the Catholic Church) validates suppression of individuals who challenge powerful organizations. Alonzo is forced into a monastic life by the Church and his aristocratic parents under the guise that his compliance will serve the whole community:

This prostration, so unexpected, so revolting, and so like the monastic habit of artificial humiliation, completely annihilated the effect of his language. I retreated from his arms, which were extended toward me. ‘My father, I *cannot*,—I will never become a monk.’ ‘Wretch! And you refuse, then, to listen to the call of your conscience, the adjuration of your parents and the voice of God?’ (83)

Alonzo’s hesitance to obey the Catholic Church’s demands is met with immediate aggression and coercion under pain of torture to comply. The forced recruitment of Alonzo into monastic life is the result of a deal struck between the Church and his parents whereby the firstborn son has to be given to the monastery in return for penance for the sin of premarital sex which culminated in a child. However, the true nature of this history is only revealed to Alonzo at a much later time, after he was forced to take the monastic vows against his own wishes. In this instance, it is clear that the suppression of history actively hinders the life and dreams of Alonzo, the person from whom the truth is made invisible, and serves the agenda of the

Church. Monastic life is not a desirable option to Alonzo, yet he submits because his social milieu convinces him that his compliance will ultimately benefit himself, his community, and the state.

The interaction between gothic doubles, by providing two contradictory recollections of the same event, destabilizes the notion that a reliable version of history can exist. By drawing attention to instances of dissent about how an event transpired and the mediation of this historical uncertainty, the gothic is able to critique the manner in which dominant histories are preserved over time. Nowhere is the idea of competing histories more apparent than in Godwin's *Caleb Williams*, where two completely alternate versions of reality arduously vie within multiple forums (public opinion, newspapers, gossip, written publications, and the court of law) for believability as the *real* version of events. The conflict between the doubles arises because Caleb suspects Falkland has used his status and reputation to perpetuate a version of events that is false, and by digging up the truth, he unknowingly disrupts the entire social fabric of the community. Inconsistencies in Falkland's alibi and recollection of the night of Mr. Tyrell's death excite Caleb to sleuth for signs of his master's guilt. After searching his master's estate for clues and conducting several undercover interrogations, Caleb becomes convinced that he has sufficient evidence to prove Falkland is responsible for the murder of Mr. Tyrell as well as the framing of two innocent peasants for his crime. Falkland's evasion of justice demonstrates how the historical and judicial record can be made to

distort the reality of events that took place, as the aristocrat with elevated status was able to manipulate the social and judiciary mechanisms by which memory is authenticated in the cultural memory. Caleb's investigation of Falkland's role in Mr. Tyrell's murder is met by a swift backlash, as the Lord once again draws upon his social status to rewrite history according to his own design.

In order to invalidate Caleb's accusations, Falkland concocts an alternate version of history in which he alleges that Caleb is a dangerous criminal who has stolen several expensive objects from his home. Falkland is able to discredit his opponent's version of history preemptively by creating an alternate version of the past where Caleb is typified as a criminal and an unreliable source of information. Status and reputation are markers that give Falkland the agency to amend history as well as outright invent it. Falkland mythologizes the past and, in doing so, justifies his entitlement to power; the systematic suppression of any alternate perspectives suggesting the contrary ensures that his claim to elevated status stands publically unopposed.

The competition between the two men, Caleb and Falkland, binds them in a contest where each tries to authenticate his version of the story to protect his honor in the public imagination. The rivalry becomes a testament to the importance of legacy, as both men fight to keep their honor and good name for future generations to remember them. The preservation of personal honor is one mechanism through which aristocratic clout is

retained within English society. A besmirched reputation in the public sphere means a loss of social influence and reflects poorly upon one's family name. The importance of preserving one's reputation impels Falkland's vicious campaign against Caleb, as he knows that the publication of his servant's discoveries will irreparably damage his social standing.

He killed Mr. Tyrrel, for he could not control his resentment and anger: he sacrificed the Elder Hawkinds and the Hawkins younger, because he could not upon no terms endure the public loss of honour: how can I expect that a man thus passionate and unrelenting will not sooner or later make me his victim.

(143)

Caleb immediately acknowledges the importance of reputation and the great lengths individuals with title and power go to preserve it in the historical record. The assertion that Falkland's defense of honor will be absolute is accurate—the lord uses every means his good reputation will afford to discredit and punish Caleb for attacking the source of his power.

In *The Dialogic Imagination*, Mikhail Bakhtin argues that because of the multiple layers of heteroglossia, novels provide a multi-faceted perspective of events. The *chronotope*, or space-time typology, becomes important because it allows for multiple value systems, languages, and perspectives to be present in the narrative simultaneously:

In the literary artistic chronotope, spatial and temporal indicators are fused into one carefully thought-out, concrete

whole. Time, as it were, thickens, takes on flesh, becomes artistically visible; likewise, space becomes changed and responsive to the moments of time, plot and history. This intersection of axes and fusion of indicators characterizes the artistic chronotope. (53)

The competing perspectives are fused with the narrative and function within the context of one another to allow for a comprehensive rendering not only individually, but also collectively. It thus becomes the burden of the reader to sort out these different (and often competing) points of view and to decipher what ideology or motives are causing each vantage point to operate in the manner that they do. In *Caleb Williams*, for instance, Caleb's perspective of events is influenced by and intertwined with the experiences of his textual double, Lord Falkland. Characters have the agency to impact one another via their actions; for instance, Falkland influences public opinion of Caleb by labeling him a criminal, and that directly changes Caleb's relationship with the world around him. Caleb's experience is still distinctly individualistic as his thoughts, actions, and decisions are still his own, in spite of the fact that his peril is the result of outside influences acting upon him.

Caleb's attempt to rectify his reputation and restore the truthful version of reality to the historical record is squelched at every turn by his master's manipulation of public opinion and the justice system. Caleb circumvents the normal avenues of enacting social change by waging a

guerilla campaign against Falkland's honor: writing down his side of the story for the community to read and assess for themselves. The novel is written from Caleb's perspective as a plea to the public to consider his version of history. Caleb realizes that once published, his tale will live on after his death and, although his side of the story was suppressed during his own lifetime, it will potentially appeal to later generations. The manner in which history is remembered influences the legacy that one leaves behind, and by bequeathing his version of the tale behind in writing, Caleb hopes to restore honor to his sullied name posthumously. Caleb's memoir ends with insistence that the true version of history, his version, has value to the world even though he doubts it will restore his honor in his own lifetime:

I began these memoirs with the idea of vindicating my character. I have now no character that I wish to vindicate: but I will finish them that thy story may be fully understood; and that, if those errors of thy life be known which thou so ardently desired to conceal, the world may at least not hear and repeat a half-told and mangled tale. (337)

The fact that Caleb does receive justice while he is alive is a direct consequence of his having recorded his memoir in print for the public. Despite all of the obstacles that Falkland places in Caleb's path to stifle the truth from coming out, the appeal to the public through written narrative is

able to undo the damage to his injured reputation and expose Falkland's gross abuse of his privilege.

The novel is written in the style of a travel narrative, pseudo-historical literature directed to the middle-class readership. The novel's form is effective in demonstrating how classism leads to abuses of the working class, because it is written in the lower style and depicts Caleb's struggle as heroic in the face of oppression. Caleb's courageous tale is a direct appeal to his peers and is so moving that it not only garners him public and legal support, but even inspires Falkland to confess and officially restore Caleb's good standing.

Falkland and other members of the public are swayed to accept Caleb's alternate version of events largely because of the honesty, passion, and genuineness with which he tells his story. Where every other forum had failed, Caleb's thoughtful articulation of his thoughts in writing was the only means of salvation. It is only once Caleb writes the truth and the community reads, internalizes, and interprets his story that Falkland's tyranny is overcome; the important role of writing in the text speaks to the cultural and political ascribed to literature in this era. Doubling plays an important role in the resolution of *Caleb Williams* because it is through Falkland's reading of Caleb's manuscript, and accessing the interior thoughts of his rival, that he is moved to concede his falsification of history and honor Caleb's truthful version of events:

But I see the artless and manly story you have told has carried conviction to every hearer. All my prospects are concluded. All that I most ardently desired is for ever frustrated. I have spent a life of the basest cruelty to cover one act of momentary vice, and to protect myself against the prejudices of my species. I stand now completely detected. My name will be consecrated to infamy, while your heroism, your patience, and your virtues will be forever admired. (335)

Falkland's confession hinges on his recognition that virtue and honor, as expressed in Caleb's literary tale, can uncover truth as well as invoke sympathy among readers. Caleb's improbable displacement of the aristocrat's narrative is achieved through the relentless demonstration of his bourgeois virtuousness in contrast to Falkland's tyrannical misuse of his aristocratic influence. The defamed Falkland's recognition that middle-class virtue is more *honorable* than his own suggests a conversion of cultural dialogism into hegemonic monologism where bourgeois ideology is prized over aristocratic.

Melmoth, The Wanderer also utilizes conflicted historical accounts of doubles as a primary theme, and these instances of dissent reveal important chronotopic intersections. However, Maturin's novel is groundbreaking in the sense that the permanent double, the elusive and phantasmal Melmoth, is always twice removed from the actual actors of the novel and is almost exclusively encountered via secondhand interactions or

in subsequent narratives within the novel. Storytelling thus becomes a central theme within the novel, and the acting agents are forced to construct a version of the tale solely through secondhand information as to the history of Melmoth the Wanderer. John Melmoth (descendent of the older Melmoth) constructs meaning from hearing and reading multiple incomplete and indirect accounts of individuals who claim to have either seen or heard of his ancestor's doings both locally and/or abroad. A comprehensive version of the phantom Melmoth's history is thus problematized by the vast gaps of time and fragmentary information within the tale; these vacant narrative spaces are left to the reader's imagination to reconstruct, yet the fact that the Melmoth's history is incomplete suggests the impossibility of uncovering the absolute truth about how past events transpired. The narrative is thus ironic in the sense that the junior Melmoth, a direct descendent the elder, relies on strangers' accounts of events to learn his own ancestral history.

Nowhere in the text is the disconnect between the modern reader and the historical narrative more pronounced than in Stanton's manuscript that Melmoth Jr. recovers and attempts to decipher in order to re-construct his ancestor's history. The description of the actual manuscript is that of a text in extremely poor condition, almost illegible to the reader: "The manuscript was discoloured, obliterated, and mutilated beyond any that had ever before exercised the patience of a reader. Michaelis himself, scrutinizing into the pretended autograph of St Mark at Venice, never had a harder time of it" (29). The actual manuscript is present within the novel, and its illegibility is

made apparent to the reader as large gaps of text have been destroyed because of the wear and tear of time:

Even Stanton's fears were subdued by his astonishment, and, turning to the stranger, who remained standing on the same spot, he asked the reason of such an outrage on humanity. The stranger, slowly turning round, and disclosing a countenance which—(Here the manuscript was illegible for a few lines), said in English—(A long hiatus followed here, and the next passage that was legible, though it was proved to be a continuation of the narrative, was but a fragment). (31)

The gaps in the manuscript appear at narrative moments that make deciphering exactly what is taking place completely up to the discretion of the reader. The story in question concerns the origins and history of the ancestral and phantasmal character of Melmoth, Sr., who has through some mystical means managed to achieve immortality or, at the very least, supernaturally long life. In the same manner that John (Melmoth, Jr.) must piece the story together for himself and make a judgment about the content of excluded or destroyed segments of the tales that he reads and hears, so must the reader make leaps in order to construct unity from the fragmented narratives. The gaps imply two key facts: first, that there was a record of the motives behind the phantom Melmoth's actions, but because the manuscript is incomplete it is impossible to know exactly what they were, and second, that the novel is not going to provide the reader with the full

historical account, but rather a history reconstructed from fragments of information and not receiving the entire narrative intact from one reliable source. The problem is that all means of knowing exactly how and why this transformation takes place has been lost to the historical record through corruption of the tale over generations of storytelling. The elder's legacy is indeed very real upon the lives and imaginations of his relatives and the victims who live to retell of his cruelties. John and his elderly uncle accede to a terrible tradition left unto them by their spectral ancestor in the form of their names, a mark that hurts their public standing in the eyes of individuals who know about their family's history, as well as in fear that he will return to the head of the household at some point.

Melmoth serves as an interesting double for John in spite of the fact that he only enters the narrative through second-hand accounts, such as letters, manuscripts, memories and stories. John's preoccupation with and curiosity about the specter causes a link between him and the figure of Melmoth; this bond arises from one inheriting the name and legacy, if not the deeds, of the other. Once again the gothic motif of yearning to know pervades the novel, but a distinction is made between positive acquisition and passive inheritance of knowledge, as well as what types of knowledge are appropriate to seek and which are not. John's pursuit of information revolves solely upon uncovering a hidden evil for the benefit that the community might curb it, whereas Melmoth's pursuit of demonic knowledge

was explicitly for the selfish purpose of immortality and personal desire for power.

The double provides the reader with a focal point in contradiction to the predominant historical memory. The alternative recollection of historical events provided by the double destabilizes the belief in history as a “real” or “true” record of the past and instead suggests a much more fragmented, alienated relationship of the original experience to the subsequent record. Both novels evince qualities of narrative ambiguity with regard to how events transpire, which suggests the record of history is left largely up to interpretation and also that it is subject to influence by individual and social agendas. The gothic double serves as a vessel through which divergent histories can be unpacked and unveiled—and the double also becomes an emblem for how biased versions of the past can be exposed as fallacious so that alternative models might see the light of day. The preoccupation with the past during this time period reflects culture’s desire to construct a version of the present free of outmoded traditions and heralds a future where multiple voices are free to contribute to the telling of a complex and multi-foliated narrative, as opposed to one cultural perspective speaking for all people.

Chapter III: The Mimetic Qualities of Artifice

The reputation which He enjoyed in Madrid was still dear to him; and since He had lost the reality of virtue, it appeared as if its semblance was become more valuable. He was conscious, that publicly to break through the rule never to quit the Abbey precincts, would derogate much from his supposed austerity.

—Matthew Lewis, *The Monk*.

The previous chapters have focused upon the interpretation of instances of doubling, primarily between sets of characters, in the gothic novel; however, the pervasiveness of doubling extends beyond merely the realm of the interpersonal and is infused into the very architecture and inanimate objects in these works. The importance of affiliating character with his or her environment cannot be overstated during this period and begs ample critical examination. The venue of the gothic novel extends the familiar boundary of spatial contours and allows for access to restricted and uncharted territory by opening a dialogue between the conventional and the remote. It is perfectly fitting, then, that an age characterized by colonial expansion, industrialization, secularization, and class conflict would manifest its anxieties about overwhelming cultural changes in literature. Enigmatic segregated space, combined with the frightening practices of individuals native to these environments, become the fixture of gothic

narrative: the descent of the venerable cleric, turned licentious miscreant, Ambrosio in the secluded monastery of the Capuchins in Matthew Lewis' *The Monk* (1796) and the uncanny rituals of the ancient Ayesha, who commands throngs of subservient cannibals deep in the African jungle in H. Rider Haggard's *She* (1887) are characteristic of the Occidental fascination with the fringe and its anxiety about the frontier. Structures and objects take on an elevated, mystical importance within marginalized settings found in the gothic and become essential, driving elements of narrative. The plethora of unconventional settings and artifacts in gothic novels provide a framework for noticeable doubling; the gothic landscape is characterized by being in and of itself a shadowy double of the conventional space that the typical contemporary reader would have expected to encounter in everyday life.

The first association one is likely to make at the mention of the gothic is the atypical setting, usually that of a haunted castle or an ancient manor, an indication that the location has elevated significance in the text. The monastery of the Capuchins in Madrid in Lewis' *The Monk* is an excellent example of an architectural space that affords copious textual doubling. A palpable spatial division is made between the sanctified world inclusive of the monastic structure and the secular world outside its walls, and the tension of the novel lies in the predicament of individuals traversing these spaces. Members of the clergy, because of the covenant they have undertaken, are expected to conduct themselves in accordance with the

credos of asceticism and celibacy set forth by the church and are, in turn, provided monastic sanctuary and elevated status in society. The monastic structure imposes a physical boundary between its inhabitants and the rest of society that is meant to prevent all things tempting and subversive to the values of the church from interfering with the sacred relationship between the monks and God. Within the walls of the monastery of the Capuchins is a sanctified space where presumptively chaste individuals congregate completely isolated from sources of amorality. Ambrosio, the anti-hero of the novel, is the beneficiary of this seclusion, since without temptation to divert him, he is able to garner an immaculate reputation, immense popularity, and authority within his vocation:

He was chosen superior of the Society to which he belongs; He had never been on the outside of the Abbey-walls: Even now He never quits them except on Thursdays, when He delivers a discourse in this Cathedral which all Madrid assembles to hear. His knowledge is said to be the most profound, his eloquence the most persuasive. In the whole course of his life He has never been known to transgress a single rule of his order; the smallest stain is not to be discovered upon his character; and he is said to be so strict an observer of Chastity, that he knows not what consists the difference of Man and Woman. (17)

The spatial context in which his is situated defines Ambrosio's spotless character; his placement within the monastery guards him against potential

temptations and is the reason for his reputation of morality and purity. Lewis suggests Ambrosio's ignorance of vice and his ignorance of the world outside the monastery plays a significant role in the crafting of his untainted reputation. Sin, from the perspective of this religious system, is a phenomenon believed to come from outside the sanctuary walls, not generated from within by its elect members.

The monastery of the Capuchins is the locus of religious idealism, an edifice where practitioners devote themselves completely to the church's teachings on chastely, purely, and piously living a model Christian life. Upholding these ideals is so critical to the church's authority that it confines them to the monastic property and isolates them from the rest of the world. In *Imagined Communities*, Anderson argues that nations and religious groups assemble and persist because they envision themselves as clearly defined entities different from other bands of individuals. Nations and religions flourish because of the common desire of individuals to imagine themselves as a part of a distinguished community founded upon practices and principles they believe to be superior to those of others. Communities imagine themselves sincere in their practices and beliefs, and the imagining that they live up to ideals gives them a united ideological front around which to rally. Anderson asserts that the imagined connection between individuals within communities is true of virtually all social networks large enough to impede direct personal interaction between all members: "In fact, all communities larger than primordial villages of face-to-

face contact (and perhaps even these) are imagined. Communities are to be distinguished, not by their falsity/genuineness, but by the style in which they are imagined” (6). The confidence in communal practices binds individuals who do not otherwise know one another to common ideology; the sharing of a vested interest in ideals creates cohesiveness even between strangers. The logistical impossibility of intimate contact between all members of large groups indicates that the manner in which a person imagines his or her fellow constituents is paramount to the survival of the culture; if a person imagines that everybody else is living by the same principles, then a shared interest among separate (and often isolated) members preserves the group’s cohesion. However, if individuals ever stop imagining that some portion of the group is operating in the best interest of everybody, then the illusion of “imagined community” is shattered and revolt may appear on the horizon.

Anderson’s concept of imagined communities becomes important in *The Monk* as the Spanish envision Catholicism to be the institution that guides the spiritual and moral wellbeing of their nation, and members of the church are believed exemplary members of the practices of morality, spirituality, and integrity. The public expects the clergy to operate at the highest standard of morality and integrity possible and, by doing so, church members set a good example for the rest of community to follow. This demand for ethical perfection arises because religious officials have been

given every advantage against vice and corruption, including a formal education, elevated social status, and protected living quarters.

The cathedral and monastery mark the boundary between public and sacred domains and reflect the imagined differences between the sanctimonious clergy, who are weary of the sinfulness of the outside world, and the general populace, who acknowledge and emulate the piousness of religious figures. It is in the best interest of both communities to imagine that the long isolation of religious men and women in church space makes them impregnable to sin, since the general populace looks to these esteemed individuals for redemption and guidance and the clergy employs that reverence to justify its elevated position. The novel affirms that residency in the monastic space, protected from sin and temptation, fosters the monk's venerable reputation:

Ambrosio's character is perfectly without reproach; and a Man who has passed the whole of his life within the walls of a Covenant, cannot have found the opportunity to be guilty, even were He possessed of the inclination. But now, when, obliged by the duties of his situation, He must enter occasionally into the world, and be thrown into the way of temptation, it is now that it behoves him to show the brilliance of his virtue. He is just at that period of life when the passions are most vigorous, unbridled, and despotic; His established reputation will mark him out to Seduction as an illustrious Victim; Novelty will give

additional charms to the allurements of pleasure; and even the Talents with which nature has endowed him will contribute to his ruin, by facilitation the means of obtaining his object. (21)

The church and its residents are directly opposed to the world that lies beyond its gates, with its hallowed enclave free of the taint of evil characterizing the outside world.

The site of the monastery mimes “the Garden” before the creation of Eve, where the monks recreate that mythical location sheltered from all outside sin; they tend the expansive gardens, live free from the seductive charms of femininity, and devote their entire existence to worshipping God. However, such a mapping of the world is only useful in an imagined community; the clergy are human beings and vulnerable to temptation should it breach the threshold of their guarded structure. Although the monastery indexes a time and place that predates sin, the fact that it is situated within a world where sin flourishes means that its affiliates are still subject to the same temptations as outsiders; they are just protected by a superior filtering system for vice. The descent of the monk Ambrosio from respected clergyman to murderer, blasphemer, and incestuous rapist is ultimately made all the more horrific because he has had every advantage in recognizing and resisting sin and because he is restricted to church property—an environment that one would assume is sin- and temptation-free.

The antithesis of two milieus, the church of impenetrable devotion and the outside world of negligent yet repentant sin, is made problematic by the constant interaction between the two imperfectly disconnected sites. Even before temptation seduces Ambrosio, the reputation of indomitable fortitude that he enjoys among the clergy and citizens of Madrid is discordant with the private desires that he struggles to suppress when alone. Ambrosio's covetous gazing upon the portrait of the Madonna in his chamber reveals that in spite of his sheltered lifestyle, he is not, as the general public believes, entirely beyond the reach of iniquity:

Oh! If such a creature existed, and existed but for me! Were I permitted to twine round my fingers those golden ringlets, and press with my lips the treasures of that snowy bosom! Gracious God, should I then resist the temptation? Should I not barter for a single embrace the reward of my suffering for thirty years? Should I not abandon. . . . Fool that I am! Whither do I suffer my admiration of this picture to hurry me? Away, impure ideas!

(41)

Ambrosio recognizes the conflict between his constructed identity, modeled on ascetic saints, and the worldly desires that he secretly harbors when he is alone. The seclusion from the outside world afforded by the monastery provides Ambrosio with a lack of opportunity to act upon his human impulses, and only as long as he does not have to face temptation directly, he is able to maintain his honor. Once the sanctuary of the monastery is

breached (by a nefarious clandestine feminine presence in the form of the temptress Matilda), Ambrosio loses the ability to suppress his desires.

Matilda destabilizes the foundation and transgresses the borders of the monastery, as she introduces sexual temptation and libertine philosophy into the community that had previously excluded it. Matilda becomes the catalyst for Ambrosio's fall by providing him influence that had never before been present—she coaxes him to indulge his desires and act upon impulse. During the course of their secret relationship, Matilda also offers Ambrosio information fatal to his ability to resist sin in the form of a worldly philosophy that excuses inappropriate behavior by downplaying the importance of the covenant he made with the church:

To me these reproaches, Ambrosio? To me, who have sacrificed for you the world's pleasures, the luxury of wealth, the delicacy of sex, my Friends, my fortune, and my fame? What have you lost, which I preserved? Have I not shared *your* guilt? Have *you* not shared in *my* pleasure? Guilt, did I say? In what consists ours, unless in the opinion of an ill-judging World? Let that World be ignorant of them, and our joys become divine and blameless! Unnatural were your vows of Celibacy; Man was not created for such a state; and were Love a crime, God never would have made it so sweet, so irresistible! (224)

Matilda's seduction of Ambrosio is twofold: first, her inappropriate sexual presence within the sterile environment of the monastery provides

temptation for the monk and, second, after he has succumbed to desire, she offers him a way to rationalize and justify continued aberrant behavior instead of repenting it. One mechanism Matilda employs to orchestrate the Monk's fall is doubling, constructing a version of reality where Ambrosio and herself share aspects of the same identity, the same secret pleasure, guilt, and sacrifice, a mutual shame that draws them into a bond that only they understand or experience. Matilda confuses the possessive pronouns *you*, *your*, and *my* in order to merge their separate perspectives into a shared consciousness. By using the language of the double, Matilda is able to construct an epic closeness that draws Ambrosio into her confidence and ultimately under her charms. Unknown to Ambrosio, Matilda becomes the puppeteer of his subsequent fall from the grace of God and allegiance to demonic.

If we understand the monastic cult as an imitation of the Garden of Eden, then the introduction of woman, followed by the subsequent breaking of the covenant with God and pursuit of forbidden knowledge, completes the allegorical fall. In *Imagined Communities*, Anderson avers that nations, like religions, are erected as imitations of ideals and structures from throughout history and because of their connections to the ideals of the past command powerful authority:

My point of departure is that nationality, or, as one might prefer to put it in view of that word's multiple significations, nation-ness, as well as nationalism, are cultural artifacts of a

particular kind. To understand them properly we need to consider carefully how they have come into historical being, in what ways their meaning have changed over time, and why today, they command such profound emotional legitimacy. (6)

The Spanish identity in the novel draws its authority from strong ties to the tradition of Catholicism; in this case, contemporary culture is infused with preexisting religious dogma, a doubling of church and state which allows the culture to operate as the heir to, and bearer of, the powerful historical symbols that the church represents. The monastery attempts to replicate the Garden of Eden from Genesis where the first humans lived before the advent of sin. The monk's descent functions allegorically and mirrors Adam's fall in paradise; both men live amicably in sinless worlds, but once temptation penetrates their cosseted sanctuaries, they both succumb to it. The model is inherently doomed because individuals do not exist in a world without sin and human nature is to succumb to temptation.

Subversion and seduction play an important role in the deterioration of Ambrosio's moral fortitude within the shelter of the monastery, as they also do in the fall of the first man and woman in the Garden of Eden. Ambrosio, like Adam before him, exists in an artificial environment free of sin, where without the presence of temptation, he is able to live in harmony with others who share his beliefs. Only through the seditious infiltration of the sheltered monastic space by Matilda (or in Genesis, by the serpent) does that temptation appear and instigate him to act upon his desire or go

against the godly ideals for which he stands. The allegorical doubling between monastery and paradise in *The Monk* functions as a valuable commentary on the nature of man-made structures that humankind believes will provide moral compass; it points out that all people, no matter their reputation, background, or position, are subject to temptation and that even the most sacred spaces are not impenetrable to sin or temptation.

In addition to infiltrating the monastery, Matilda orchestrates Ambrosio's demise by directly attacking the ideology by which the monastery maintains its power. Michel Foucault's "*Panopticon*" provides a useful model for understanding how culture is able to police desire by creating the illusion that individuals are constantly being monitored. The panopticon dramatically influences the behavior of individuals inside the structure because they believe they are under constant surveillance and at risk of retribution if caught acting inappropriately. Thus, the possibility of being seen and therefore punished is incentive enough to persuade people to follow the rules and even punish themselves for infractions:

In order to be exercised, this power had to be given the instrument of permanent, omnipotent surveillance, capable of making all visible, as long as it could itself remain invisible. It had to be like a faceless gaze that transformed the whole social body into a field of perception; a thousand eyes posted everywhere, mobile attentions ever on the alert, a long hierarchized network. (21)

The monastery has many characteristics of Foucault's panopticon; first, the monks are constantly under the supervision of church officials and peers who monitor their activities, and second, the monks believe they are being watched by the most omnipotent gaze of all, that of the all-seeing and all-knowing god. All of these mechanisms of observation are put into place in order to fortify the monastery from sinful temptations and to deter its members from acting upon their desires. Matilda's undetected residence in the monastery disrupts its stability as a functioning panopticon and reveals the ineffectiveness of the gaze to detect and punish. Her presence within the structure invalidates the power of church officials to adequately patrol or regulate the monastic space and provides Ambrosio the new insight that transgression without being caught is possible. The last obstacle keeping Ambrosio's desire in check, fear of the wrath of God, is dissolved by Matilda's alternative philosophy of the nature of divine forgiveness. Matilda argues that since God's capacity for mercy is absolute, sinful acts stemming from desire will be exonerated so long as one asks for pardon—in addition, she avows that God is responsible for creating all desire, good and bad, and that partaking in secular experiences must therefore be natural and noble:

Unpardonable, say you? Where then is your constant boast of the Almighty's infinite mercy? Has He of late set bounds to it? Receives He no longer a Sinner with joy? You injure him, Ambrosio; You will always have time to repent, and He have goodness to forgive. Afford him a glorious opportunity to exert

that goodness: The greater your crime, the greater his merit in
pardoning. (41)

The monastery becomes a defunct panopticon when Matilda unveils the seat of the illusory gaze to be unoccupied, as her inappropriate presence within monastic space confirms the powerlessness of the church to detect treachery. In addition to removing the risk of worldly punishment from the Monk's thoughts, Matilda's assertion that God's mercy is boundless and eliminates supernatural reprimand as a constraint for his desire to act sinfully. Once Ambrosio knows his actions, no matter how vile, are without consequences, he is unable to police himself and acts out his sinful impulses.

The blurring of artifice and identity extends beyond social and spatial constructions and can also be applied to mystical and symbolic objects that appear in gothic texts. These artifacts serve as intermediaries between bonded identities and are sources of tension that disclose aspects of shared interiority between binaries. One such item that contributes to the process of doubling is Matilda's mirror, which Ambrosio utilizes to voyeuristically observe the object of his desire, Antonia. The mirror is a supernatural relic supplied by demonic powers and allows the individual looking into it to observe the activities of another:

Amidst all my sorrows, amidst all my regrets for your coldness,
I was sustained from despair by the virtues of this Talisman.

On pronouncing certain words the Person appears in it, on

whom the Observer's thoughts are bent: thus though *I* was exiled from *your* sight, you, Ambrosio, were ever present to mine. (224)

Again, Matilda's language creates confusion between the italicized pronouns, which signify separate individual identities that implies a similarity between the two. The mirror itself is a crucible for conflating the identities of the observer and the observed. When one looks upon the surface of a mirror, the expectation is that the beholder will see in it the reflected image of the self; however, in the case of this mystical artifact, the observer instead gazes surreptitiously upon the object of desire. The mirror allows the looker to watch the activities of another, and while not physically present, the observer is able to see the beloved in their most private and unguarded moments as if an extension of the inmost self. Ambrosio uses the mirror to spy upon Antonia while she is in the bath, and the sight and experience of seeing her in such a venue drives him into such a frenzy of desire that he submits himself completely to Matilda's guidance to make his desire into reality. The mirror becomes the central fixture around which doubled identity of Ambrosio and Matilda is forged; by its means, they realize their unified ambition for Ambrosio's rape of Antonia. The pair shares Ambrosio's desire for the depraved sexual act, and the collaboration in planning and carrying out the rape draws the two closer together as doubles as they delve into the depths of dissolute and demonic activity. After Ambrosio has forsaken salvation in the magistrate's tower and is

whisked away from civilization by the devil, his first request is to be taken to his double, Matilda. The devil's response is: "Carry you to Matilda?" He continued, repeating Ambrosio's words: "Wretch! You shall soon be with her! You well deserve a place near her, for hell boasts no miscreant more guilty than yourself" (270). The demonic presence recognizes that both individuals have acted jointly and that their singularity is as absolute as it is wicked, so much so that their place in damnation is in close proximity to one another.

Objects and locations also play a role in the construction of doubles in H. Rider Haggard's *She* and are one of the primary ways that the novel is able to critique western conceptions ranging from gender to monarchic power. One instance where doubling occurs between a character and an object arises when the failing Vincey, Sr., bestows custody of his son Leo and an iron box with instructions for it not to be opened until the son's 25th birthday upon his friend Holly. The contents of the box, once opened, include a handwritten letter addressed to Leo from his long departed father, a series of ancient tablets, and several other documents regarding the youth's ancestral lineage. Both objects catalyze the textual doubling that will later arise between Leo and Ayesha. The letter from father to son is uncanny in the sense that it bridges large gaps between time and space and between the living and the dead to relate a message to Leo about his destiny to encounter his spiritual, ancestral double deep in the heart of Africa. The letter embellishes the mystical quest Leo is to undertake, as well as the

circumstances under which he receives the knowledge of such an adventure:

MY SON LEO—When you open this, if you ever live to do so, you will have attained manhood, and I shall have been long enough dead to be absolutely forgotten by nearly all who knew me. Yet in reading it remember that I have been, and for anything you know may still be, and that in it, through this link of pen and paper, I stretch out my hand to you across the gulf of death, and my voice speaks to you from the unutterable silence of the grave. Though I am dead, and no memory of me remains in your mind, yet am I with you in this hour that you read. (33)

The uncanny letter from beyond the grave prefaces the other contents of the box, which include several ancient historical texts that reveal in detail Leo's ancestral lineage and the tale of Ayesha and Kallikrates. The combination of the letter and the archaic texts in the box inspire Leo to undertake a voyage to the kingdom of *She-who-must-be-obeyed* as described in the manuscripts; the seeking out of the white queen ultimately leads Leo to discover that he is the incarnate binary of her ancient lover, Kallikrates.

On the African plain of Kor, Holly and Leo discover the lost civilization of the Amahagger, which functions as a double of British society. The African tribe shares similarities to England—in particular, the figureheads of both cultures are powerful women: Queen Victoria of England and Queen Ayesha, or *She-who-must-be-obeyed*, of the Amahagger. The explorers take

notice of the topographical and architectural structures of Kor and draw comparisons between it and their native England:

I did so, and we entered the great cave, into which the light of the setting sun penetrated for some distance, while beyond the reach of the light it was faintly illuminated with lamps which seemed to me to stretch away for an almost immeasurable distance, like the gas lights of an empty London street. (122)

Such a passage has two functions: it shows the imposition of the Occidental upon the strange and foreign landscape, but it also de-familiarizes domestic space, illustrating that the eerie and exotic cave palace of *She-who-must-be-obeyed* does not appear much different than an empty London street as Orientalism would posit. Although matriarchies govern both societies socially and politically, the voyagers discover that the customs and practices of the Amahagger are unlike those found in their native England. The English clearly see cannibalism to be repugnant, especially with regard to the custom of slaying and eating guests by “the pot,” since it is a direct violation of the occidental code of hospitality. Holly vocalizes his disgust with the native practice of eating guests: “it is hospitality turned upside down,’ I answered feebly. ‘In our country we entertain a stranger, and give him food to eat. Here ye eat him, and are entertained’” (101). The comparative techniques innate to doubling highlight the dissimilarities between the two cultures. Despite the wide range of exotic locations and geographies explored in the gothic, doubling of familiar and unfamiliar

spaces allows for a cross-cultural critique. Whether the reader is delving into the hidden recesses of the corrupt clerical world, consorting with the culture of supposed cannibals deep in the African jungle, or glimpsing the life of luxury inherent to the privilege of the western aristocracy, the familiar is always the lens through which the remote is viewed.

The rise of the middle class in Western Europe during the 18th and 19th centuries, particularly with regard to its accumulation of wealth, created in Europe new attitudes concerning values, morality, and power. During this period the gothic novel became the archetypical voice of this transition (though not necessarily an acknowledged one) both from a production and a consumption standpoint; through it, the middle class entered into a dialogue not only with members of its class but with the rest of the world. While it is true that the gothic novel turns its critical eye upon every facet of life and culture, it is certainly also true that it praised and privileged middle-class morality as the true cradle of human goodness. Characteristics emblematic of bourgeois values become the benchmarks by which the gothic critiques the other, and the defining ideals of the middle class—the benefits of hard work, the drive to self-improvement, the idealization of the family unit and virtuous domesticity—become the standards of integrity. The absence of these specific values, despite other similarities through which the middle class and the other are akin, suggests the dysfunction and immorality of the outside world, while simultaneously elevating the status and practices of the middle class.

In “The Necessary Gothic,” Nancy Armstrong asserts that the gothic was extremely effective in gleaning political, religious and social agency for middle-class upward mobility, serving as the platform for its superior social morality. By juxtaposing idealized symbols of the middle class with any object in opposition to it, authors could easily show the morality of the former and the degeneracy of the later simply by putting them into proximity and then writing sympathetically about the familiar and disagreeably about the other: “This is indeed the job of the nineteenth-century Gothic: To turn any formation that challenges the nuclear family into a form of degeneracy so hostile to modern selfhood as to negate empathetically its very being” (12). The depiction of non-bourgeois institutions, i.e. the Catholic Church, the aristocracy, or the orient, as saturated with corruption, ugliness, and depravity when compared to the wholesome portrayals of the family values and good work ethic of the middle-class degrades rival societal constructions and elevates familiar ideology. The immense popularity and success of the gothic, by virtue of its unrelenting criticism of the impropriety of pre-existing institutions, gives agency to the newfound middle class, resulting in the instantiation of a new cultural hegemony that looks upon the world exclusively through the lens of the bourgeois.

Rival hegemonic structures are popular fixtures of the gothic novel, often with doubling as a distinctive marker for their socio-political implications (both domestic and exotic). In narratives where European

protagonists delve into the unknown space of the other, doubling signifies connectivity between the familiar customs, traditions, and spaces of the Western world and the perceived mysticism and mystery of unfamiliar cultures. In Haggard's *She*, the doubling between Leo, a European explorer, and Ayesha, a formidable and frightening African queen with supernatural powers, suggests kinship with the ostensibly unknowable and uncanny world of the other, yet it also provides an environment where familiar virtues of the Western middle class can be tested under tension. In spite of Ayesha's insistence that Leo Vincey is the physical reincarnation of her ancient lover Kallikrates and heir to the kingdom of Kor (which, along with magical powers, entails eternal life), Leo's affection lies not with Ayesha but with Ustane, the servant girl who tends his wounds after he is injured. Vincey's preference for the tenderness of Ustane as opposed to the power, wealth, and beauty of Ayesha reflects bourgeois notions of the virtuous maternal models of femininity. The scenario displays the importance of *choice* between the role that virtue and morality play in good decision-making. Leo's preference for Ustane over Aeysha is rooted in his respect for the former's maternal virtues. Leo's preference echoes proper European notions of feminine morality where the highest honor bestowed upon Victorian womanhood is maternal virtue: "She is not another man's wife, and it appears that she has married me according to the custom of this awful place, so who is the worse? Anyway, Madam,' he went on, 'whatever she has done I have done too, so if she is to be punished let me be

punished” (201). Leo’s display of loyalty and compassion for Ustane is ultimately met with contempt by Ayesha, as the choice is undone through Ayesha’s use of magical power which completely annihilates her competitor. Vincey’s insistence that he should be punished along with Ustane, as they were both equally guilty of loving one another, shows the law of Ayesha to be an unjust and self-interested mechanism designed to acquire and sustain autocracy. Leo’s rejection of personal gain at the expense of virtue reflects the middle-class values and distrust for individuals who have the power to exploit the poor for personal gain. Middle-class trepidation of the unchecked power wielded by aristocratic institutions is mirrored in Leo’s exasperation over the loss of Ustane:

‘I let her be killed—not that I could help that, but within five minutes I was kissing her murderess over her body. I am a degraded brute, but I cannot resist that’ (and here his voice sank)—‘that awful sorceress. I know I shall do it again tomorrow; I know that I am in her power for always; if I never saw her again I should never think of anybody else during all my life; I must follow her as a needle follows a magnet; I would not go away now if I could; I could not leave her, my legs would not carry me, but my mind is still clear enough, and in my mind I hate her.’ (214)

Leo’s despair is absolute because he is aware that Ayesha has manipulated his ability to reason, which has cost him the ability to make virtuous

decisions. Leo compares such a state to slavery, in spite of the fact that his newfound position will wield status, power, and supernaturally long life, since in order to reap these rewards he is forced to act against the morals he believes to be right. Leo is to become king, yet for all his status and power, he has no agency to function by the virtues he believes to be just. The greatest fear of the honorable man in this narrative is that he might be made to find pleasure against his will in living a life divorced from the virtues and principles of middle-class Victorian England. The loss of values becomes more devastating than even the loss of power because it implies a segregation of the internal self with the nominal or symbolic self. Power becomes meaningless if it cannot be wielded according to one's will and, in fact, becomes detrimental if it forces the individual to act against what they believe and hold dear. The inability to act in accordance with his beliefs and values alienates Leo from his ideologically configured identity; Ayesha's influence technically gives Leo elevated status and power, but it comes at the cost of his agency and selfhood. The guilt Leo experiences becomes the only means of asserting his *true* self, while Ayesha's spell arrests his ability to act; this discontent signifies that his predicament results from coercion and not from willingness to trade values for power.

The moral accountability of individuals is also a vital theme in Lewis' *The Monk* as is evidenced by the condemnation of Ambrosio for selling his soul to the demon. Once Ambrosio has forfeited his claim to salvation, he is taunted with the information that if he had resisted one moment longer, his

sins would have been pardoned: “Hear, hear, Ambrosio! Had you resisted me one minute longer, you had saved your body and soul. The guards whom you heard at your prison-door, came to signify your pardon” (440). Ambrosio’s crimes are directly influenced by the ill-advice and trickery of demonic agents; paradoxically, the role of such forces leading up to his transgression means that he could have been saved had he only been himself. The only unforgivable sin the monk actually commits is when he refuses to take responsibility for his deeds. The act that causes Ambrosio’s forfeiture of salvation isn’t ultimately the incest, rape, or murder, but rather his moral unaccountability. The demon is the one that ensures transparency to the gaze of power, but also enables offenders to be both seen and punished. Ambrosio gives up the possibility of reconciliation between himself and the divine because he refuses take responsibility for his actions by publically confessing or apologizing for his crimes. The condemnation of the unaccountable reprobate is a sign of the subjectivity of the middle class toward self-improvement and moral responsibility reflected in the Gothic.

The importance of choice, and the moral and social implications of choice-making, governs narrative context; the repeated appearance of uncanny doubling provides a testing ground for proper and improper decisions. In *Simulacra and Simulations*, Jean Baudrillard examines how the replication of reality creates hyperreal space; constructing meaning from such spaces is flawed since these copies, or *simulacra*, are not only

abstractions in and of themselves, but abstractions of ideas, constructions, or realities that are intangible to begin with. In Haggard's *She*, the lost kingdom of Kor, a space unspoiled by European colonialism, is an artifact that exists with its customs, mysticism, and traditions intact—but it is not an authentic representation of unspoiled African culture, in spite of the first-hand observations of the author, because that non-familiar space and culture is a product of the European author's ethnocentric imagination and selective observation. The European novelist's writing of an authentic and unblemished version of the other, in this case indigenous Africa, is impossible because such a place exists only in the Occidental imagination, and any construction or evaluation of such space will be fundamentally marred by a predisposition to ordering it according to its own design. Baudrillard argues that objects in the natural world have an indefinite multiplicity of meanings, depending upon the context in which they are observed. Representations of reality never correlate to an exact mirroring of signifier and signified because they are dependent upon perspective for significance. Objects and structures are not charged with absolute or intrinsic meaning, but only conditionally ascribed value:

No more mirror of being and appearances, of the real and its concept; no more imaginary coextensivity: rather, the genetic miniaturization is the dimension of simulation. The real is produced from miniaturized units, from matrices, memory banks and command models—and with these it can be

reproduced an indefinite number of times. It no longer has to be rational, since it is no longer measured against some ideal or negative instance. It is nothing more than operational. In fact, since it is no longer enveloped by an imaginary, it is no longer real at all. It is hyperreal: the product of an irradiating synthesis of combinatory models in hyperspace without atmosphere. (167)

An imitation of reality, even when based upon actual observation and the most objective regard for factual detail, is inescapably subject to the bias of the author and reader. All reproductions of reality therefore must be considered with caution since they are duplications of other representations that are inherently unstable and always in flux. It is in the interplay between these volatile simulacra that useful information about how individuals and structures are revealed.

The meeting between Leo and the body of his former self, Kallikrates, in the tombs of Kor directly evokes Baudrillard's notion of hyper-reality, as it creates a situation where reality and identity are impossible to discern. Aeysha presents the explorers with the lifeless body of Kallikrates, who though dead for centuries is a perfectly preserved embodiment of Leo: 'And now, mine own, thou shalt see a wonderful thing—living, thou shalt behold thyself dead—for well have I tended thee during all these years, Kallikrates. Art thou prepared?' (210). The act of beholding the body of the dead self, as Leo does in *She*, creates identity confusion; whether or not there is a

discernable difference between Leo and Kallikrates aside from one being alive and the other deceased makes the scope of the doubling impossible to distinguish. Each double's separate association to a dissimilar geographical and historical context is the primary marker of distinction bisecting their identities. However, the extent to which split contextual experience drives the formation of identity in each subject is ambiguous; Kallikrates, departed for centuries, has no voice to either confirm or deny the authenticity of his alleged duplicate. This confusion of identity raises the question: if the original Kallikrates had lived in Leo's lifetime, would he have adopted the same values and beliefs as Leo? One problem in answering this question is Kallikrates, long dead for centuries, is unobservable and lives only in the imaginations of others. Any descriptor of Kallikrates is thus a replication (text, story, and memory) and will be charged with contextual and perceptual bias. The sorceress insists that the essence of the individual is preserved and that the replication of Kallikrates in Leo's person can be taken as proof of transubstantiation:

Behold now, let the Dead and Living meet! Across the gulf of Time they are still one. Time hath no power against identity, though sleep the merciful hath blotted out the tablets of our mind, and with oblivion sealed the sorrows that else would hound us from life to life, suffering the brain with gathered grief till it burst in the madness of uttermost despair. (211)

Holly, the most skeptical observer in the text, witnesses the supernatural encounter of the two doubles and confirms that his friend is a physical doublet, down to the smallest detail, of the body of Kallikrates: “For there, stretched upon the stone bier before us, robed in white and perfectly preserved, was what appeared to be the body of Leo Vincey. I stared from Leo, standing *there* alive, to Leo lying *there* dead and could see no difference” (211). Notwithstanding the appearance of the mystical and uncanny double, the notion that Leo and Kallikrates are one in the same is still questionable. Leo, having lived in temporal location unlike ancient Africa, would have acquired values, virtues, and notions of class profoundly different than his ancestor, Kallikrates. Ayesha states that the process of death and rebirth expunges all memory of the former life, but in spite of this erasure, an individual’s identity is preserved intact in the transition of original to replication. The problem with this line of thinking is that identity is relative, the culmination of experience, context, and perspective; therefore if memory, the manner in which data regarding context and perspective are erased, the subject loses the very distinctiveness that constituted his or her individuality—or worse, cannot differentiate between the self and the not-self.

Baudrillard emphasizes that the conflation between the real and the imitation exposes subjectivity of the other, ultimately revealing the instability of either object as having any absolute or intrinsic meaning: “Of the same order as the impossibility of rediscovering an absolute level of the

real, is the impossibility of staging an illusion. Illusion is no longer possible, because the real is no longer possible” (169). The postulation that Leo can exist as a stable replication of Kallikrates is unreasonable if individuality derives from consciousness and perspective. Leo cannot be the exact copy of his ancestor because it is impossible to demarcate Kallikrates as a stable or absolute entity; the dead king’s identity exists only in the memories and written histories of others, all of which are subjective, interpretive, and tainted by the biases of the individuals who recall him. Leo’s reluctance to assimilate the ideology of the other is nested in his perspective and experiences having lived immersed in the practices of the Western world, and this distinction demonstrates the importance cultural conditioning plays in identity formation. The choices that Leo makes reveal his identity as divergent from what Kallikrates’ would have been, as his decisions reflect consciousness unique to his perspective developed from experience, encounters, and familiarity with British culture. Leo’s preference for the maternal version of femininity, aversion to dictatorial leadership, and skepticism of the pillar of fire clearly mirror the values and beliefs of his contemporary western middle-class culture.

Historical and geographical context is shown to influence choice-making because when individuals are presented with multiple options, they tend to act in accordance with familiar cultural ideologies. Within a set of doubles, a character’s preference for one choice over another distinguishes how individuals that share commonalities are different. In the gothic,

choices that reinforce middle-class notions of morality will resonate positively because the genre seeks to replace preexisting models of aristocratic hegemony with the former. The critique of the double can be extended to every component that the imagination can fathom, for there is no space to which the gothic's gaze does not infiltrate. Gothic novelists implemented the double as a means to cull every object they could imagine as a site of hegemonic or ideological significance that perpetuates influence in the natural world in order to reveal how these constructions worked, what they meant, and what their impact was upon the world.

Conclusion:

In this thesis I have discussed doubling in the gothic and how the tension surrounding these pairs allows for hidden or taboo aspects of psychology and ideology to be revealed and critiqued. Readers have long been drawn to the obvious duality between doppelgangers in the gothic—for instance, Victor Frankenstein and his Monster or Caleb Williams and Lord Falkland—and understanding what is reflected by the saturation of binaries throughout the genre enlightens our appreciation of the complex socio-cultural changes taking place during this period.

The double is a unique motif in that it simultaneously obscures and clarifies; the ambiguity that doubling affords narratives through identity confusion allows works to critique societal structures and ideologies that would otherwise be taboo to attack outright. In order for doubling to take place between two entities, there need to be several commonalities and/or differences connecting them, which means that there will always be a multiplicity of points of references along which doubles align and diverge. These numerous points of reference afford contemporary readers a great deal of contextual information; the interpretation of this complex subtext provides a rare opportunity for us to glimpse upon the 19th century world through the lens that its own apprehensions, concerns, and critiques wrought.

The deployment of the motif of doubling critiques a seemingly infinite range of ideological constructions; I have singled out three different, but important, sites that the double is able to infiltrate: ideology and psychology, class and history, and agency with structure. The ability of the double to unveil hidden pockets of hegemony and ideology is boundless, and I have no doubt there are many more places to which this lens might be extended. In this thesis I have provided the necessary framework and technique for extrapolating and interpreting information shaped by sets of doubles, in hopes that readers will find this approach useful to their exploration of the gothic novel.

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